

MY DIETRICH SCHOOL STORY

Pearl Galido: Connecting Art and Science

“My work focuses on the intersection of art and science,” says Pearl Galido, a University of Pittsburgh Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences senior majoring in studio arts and chemistry, as she describes her paintings hanging on the wall of the University Art Gallery. “These paintings investigate color, an important element of art and physical characteristic in science.”

The paintings are the culmination of the independent research project that Galido conducted as the recipient of a Summer Undergraduate Research Award (SURA), a program that partially funds student research projects through endowed gifts to the Dietrich School. Pearl worked closely with her faculty mentor, Associate Professor in the Department of Studio Arts Mike Morrill, on the project. (Read more about SURA on page 3 of this issue.)

The project—a series of five paintings based on thin-layer chromatography and color extension theory—is a great example of how she seamlessly merges her two majors.

Galido explains, “I spent the first four weeks of my summer analyzing organic molecules through thin-layer chromatography. I focused on separating chromophores in the materials that we engage with every day (like raspberries and spinach). These plates produced unique color palettes that I matched in oil paint. Using these color palettes, I created a set of five paintings based on color extension theory.”

She continues, “As a double major in chemistry and studio art, I have experienced how techniques utilized in each discipline can inform one another. Throughout my experiments in the laboratory, I was concerned not only with scientific technique but also with the aesthetic beauty of the results. Reciprocally, in the studio, I was aware of both the significance and presence of each color. Through this research, I invite others to investigate the similarities between science and humanities in an effort to nurture the complementary perspectives of each field.”

“I hope that the product of my research results in more students exploring different fields and enriching their undergraduate careers through the intersection of art and science,” she says.

It was Galido’s own pursuit of this intersection that sparked her curiosity and ignited this research. She began her time at Pitt intending to major in chemistry and minor in studio arts, but Barbara Weissberger, senior lecturer in the Department of Studio Arts, saw her passion and encouraged her to double major.

“I didn’t believe I had room in my schedule and was convinced that a double major was impossible. But as I took more classes, I realized I couldn’t imagine my undergraduate career without studio arts. That spring, I met with associate professor and advisor in the Department of Studio Arts



Lenore Thomas, who graciously sat down with me; scheduled the rest of my undergraduate career (with my chemistry major in mind); and assured me that a double major was, in fact, possible. I don’t know that I remember the details of that day, but I do know how I felt: I felt incredibly liberated from the fear of the impossible.”

Galido also notes how the well-rounded education she has created through the Dietrich School’s resources have uniquely prepared her for her life after graduation, especially her plans to attend medical school.

“As a future health care provider, it is of the utmost importance that I understand not only the mechanics of the human body but also how to engage the human body in meaningful relationships. Through my double major, I have developed the tools that will be useful for understanding and caring for other people. Studying chemistry and studio arts has introduced me to a plethora of amazing ideas, perspectives, and people. Chemistry gives me the ability to understand the world; studio arts gives me the ability to communicate with the world. By pursuing both of these majors, I have developed an awareness for the world we live in and the impact we can make.”



Galido’s research on display as part of the Studio Arts Summer 2017 Creative Research Exhibition, presented by the Department of Studio Arts; the University Honors College; and the Office of Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (OUR)

THE PITT PRIDE





MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

A Connected Community

When I talk to new students about starting college, the most common concerns I hear are about finding their place, figuring out where they fit in, making friends, belonging to a community—in short, students want to know that they'll find *connections* here on campus.

At the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, we believe that's what college is all about: making connections. We're here to help students not only find what they love to do but also find the people who love it, too, and the places where they can make it happen.

The Dietrich School is designed to connect students to their peers, our world-class faculty members, and the unique resources of the campus and the city of Pittsburgh. We believe that our students are not here just to get a degree. They're here to experience college: to grow and build the skills they'll rely on for the rest of their lives; to travel, whether that is around the globe or across town; to help their fellow students; to become leaders; and to do things that matter.

Creating connections and strengthening the Dietrich School community are priorities that are woven into the fabric of everything we do.

In their very first term, students can join an academic community, in which they'll connect with like-minded peers, build relationships with faculty members, learn the skills they will need to succeed in the Academic Foundations course, and even explore the city of Pittsburgh.

As students continue on, their individual academic advisor connects them to the campus opportunities and resources that are best suited to their personalized goals and needs. Peer tutors form a community all their own and help students develop individual study strategies. Programs like the New York City and London Field Studies programs connect students to the world beyond campus while providing them with the tools and expertise they need to conduct real, meaningful research.

The connections Pitt students make don't stop at graduation. Once you're a Pitt student, you're a member of a lifelong network of Pitt students, faculty, and alumni.

And once you're a Dietrich School student, you're a lifelong member of our connected community.

Professor John A. Twyning
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies

STUDENT PROFILE

By Catherine Gannon, First-year Student

Learning in the Real World: My Experience in the Quebec Academic Community



I never expected that I would get the opportunity to travel to a foreign country in my first term of college.

Yet, thanks to the International Studies: Quebec Academic Community, I spent my very first fall break exploring the city of Montreal, Quebec, Canada, applying what I had learned in my classes to the real world.

Our detailed study of the First Nations tribes in the Quebec region in the Introduction to French-speaking Canada class became poignant as a museum curator narrated an exhibit on First Nations artifacts and culture.

My confidence in speaking French soared when, while lost in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts trying to find an incredible counterculture exhibition, I maintained perfect French with a security guard. (This extremely gratifying moment—and the entire experience of traveling to a foreign country and being able to communicate in that country's language—has empowered me to continue my study of French!)

And I was able to make really good friends through the experience that I wouldn't have made otherwise. By missing airline flights and spending extended time together during our trip, I really felt bonded with the eight other people in my Academic Community. Sharing food in restaurants and going on intellectual excursions through the museums of Montreal turned into searching Pittsburgh for the best pierogies and spontaneous outings to the Andy Warhol Museum after we returned from our trip. Our Academic Community provided a unique and incredible platform to develop friendships over our shared interests in French and traveling, and I hope to keep these friendships throughout college and beyond.

The trip to Quebec was just one of many unexpected joys and advantages that I gained by participating in this Academic Community, and connecting to Pittsburgh and my classmates was just the start of the connections made through this experience.

As a member of this Academic Community, I took several classes with the same small group of students: the French Canadian history course I mentioned above, which chronicled the French tradition and heritage in Canadian history, explored the nuances and idiosyncrasies of the French Canadian dialect, and closely examined the relationship between Anglophones and Francophones throughout Canada in the past and present; a French language class that corresponded to each student's prior knowledge and competence with the language, which ranged from students who were advanced to those who were complete beginners; and Academic Foundations, an introductory course in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, which helped to ease our transition to college and gave the members of the Academic Community a chance to connect with Pitt and the city of Pittsburgh.



Catherine Gannon, second from left, with the members and instructors of the International Studies: Quebec Academic Community at St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal.

While participating in this Academic Community, I had the opportunity to connect to faculty members in the early parts of my college career, which will be really beneficial for the rest of college. In addition to being the amazing professor who taught us Introduction to French Speaking Canada, Brett Wells serves as an academic advisor in the Department of French and Italian Languages and Literatures and an advisor for students studying abroad. I am eternally grateful that I was able to develop a positive relationship so early in my college career with him, as he will undoubtedly be a tremendous source of wisdom and advice for my studies and study abroad in the years to come.

My advice to any incoming first-year students interested in joining an Academic Community is not to hesitate—it's a fantastic experience! In general, I feel that it's tremendously important to seize all of the incredible academic opportunities the University offers first-year students, including Academic Communities. Follow your passions and interests and take advantage of all the unique ways you can enhance your knowledge through experiential learning and study abroad during your time at Pitt.

FACULTY PROFILE

Yolanda Covington-Ward Fulfills a Prophecy of Liberation

Adapted from an article that appeared in the Dietrich School's December 2017 *Snapshot* e-newsletter, as.pitt.edu/snapshot

In some ways, the year Yolanda Covington-Ward, now an associate professor in the Dietrich School's Department of Africana Studies, spent in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a Fulbright scholar represented her own lifelong journey toward liberation. Her odyssey began in a housing project in New York's South Bronx, where she was born the oldest of six children in a family headed by a single mother. In the fifth grade, one of Covington-Ward's teachers sparked her interest in African culture. In middle school, a guidance counselor had the entire class apply to A Better Chance, a program that placed children in prestigious schools they would not otherwise be able to attend. Covington-Ward was accepted, and she was sent to live in a home with six other girls in a wealthy school district in a Philadelphia, Pa., suburb. Yearning to escape the responsibility of helping to care for her younger siblings, she tasted freedom, but it came at a price.

Though she excelled in high school—both academically and in extracurricular activities, participating in student government, track, and basketball—Covington-Ward could not help but feel a widening disconnect.

"Every time I had to take the train back home and go from the lush suburbs of Philadelphia to the graffiti of the Bronx, it was an eye-opener," she recalls. Her siblings were struggling in overcrowded and underfunded public schools; eventually, three of them would drop out before graduation.

"They were not following the same trajectory, so it was very difficult for me," she says.

And while she was surrounded by mentors and peers at her new school, Covington-Ward felt the stirrings of a longing she hadn't previously known: to learn more about her own culture.

"I think this was my own response to being in a majority-white environment for the first time ever," she says. In New York, she never saw white children unless she went downtown. But in suburbia, missing her family, she began to explore the ideas that her fifth-grade teacher had first introduced. She purposely selected African American writers as the topic of her English assignments, for example.

She attended Brown University on a full academic scholarship, enrolling in a prestigious eight-year program that included acceptance to medical school. Though she enjoyed biology, she chose the program largely because she thought becoming a doctor would enable her to take care of her family financially. Yet she also continued drifting toward Africana studies, balancing the classes she loved with her pre-med workload.

Her career path changed during her junior year, when she spent a term studying abroad at the University of Ghana.

"I think that experience [studying abroad] also confirmed for me [that] if I'm going to do something with my life, this is what I want to do," Covington-Ward says. She discussed her decision with her family, getting their blessing to leave the medical school path, "and I never went back," she says.

When she applied to Pitt's Department of Africana Studies for a tenure-stream position in 2007, Covington-Ward was impressed by the department's faculty, history, and community engagement as well as the opportunity to collaborate with so many other programs. She was hired by the department, completed her PhD in 2008, won a postdoctoral fellowship from the University of Michigan, and then started teaching at Pitt in 2009.

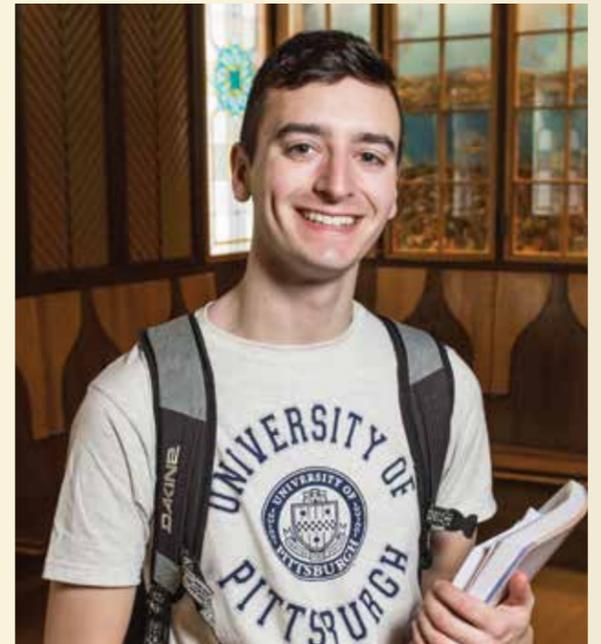
"The school values interdisciplinary research, which is one of the reasons I was interested in it," she says. "I think the intellectual environment here is very stimulating. I appreciate having students who come from a more diverse economic background and at different stages in their lives as well."



Connecting Outside Your Comfort Zone

by Bryce Yoder

Dietrich School Peer Advisor



Being in a new environment and surrounded by new people can be daunting. I experienced this as a new student at Pitt, and I continue to experience it with every new opportunity I pursue. But in my time at Pitt, my greatest experiences have come from making decisions to embrace the unknown and go outside of my comfort zone.

One of the things that students hear repeatedly during orientation is the importance of getting involved on campus. Whether it be a club, sport, or ensemble, everyone encourages you to go out on a limb to try something new that may interest you.

As a first-year student, I took this to heart: During my first week on campus, I scheduled a last-minute audition for the Heinz Chapel Choir, and was invited to join in the spring term. Being the only new member walking into a choir of 50 was just as stressful as the academic transition I had experienced a term earlier, if not more so. Learning to fit myself, both vocally and socially, into the ensemble was a scary challenge. However, my fear soon faded as I found not only a group of 49 other talented performers but also friends that I would not have made otherwise.

Later, as a student majoring in history, Spanish, and Arabic languages and linguistics, I had the incredible chance to study in Seville, a beautiful historic city in southern Spain. So at the start of my junior year, I once again packed up for college, but instead of driving across the state to Pittsburgh, I was flying across the ocean raked with the same nervousness I'd had two years earlier. Living with a host family and attending a foreign university, I found myself again navigating similar challenges of integrating myself into yet another new environment.

This trend of adapting and fitting myself into different roles continued when I returned to Pitt and accepted an internship on campus in the Advising Center, and it will continue with every job I take and every place I move to in the future. As I continue to work as a peer advisor, the academic, social, and personal transitions I have experienced will help me to prepare other students for the same types of situations. I hope to not only share how to take advantage of the academic opportunities that I've had with incoming students but also encourage them to forge their own paths at Pitt. These unknown paths, though daunting, are endlessly rewarding.

ENGAGING STUDENTS COMPLETELY

Summer Research Connects Students

Adapted from an article that appeared in the Dietrich School's summer 2017 *Snapshot* e-newsletter, as.pitt.edu/snapshot

"Research has the ability to empower students in a way that few other kinds of experiences can," says Patrick Mullen, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (OUR). "Being part of a program like this, you get to see students learning from other students."

The program he's referring to is the Summer Undergraduate Research Awards program, overseen by OUR, which seeks to broaden research opportunities for the most diverse group of undergraduates possible. Through the program, 20–25 students receive partial funding to complete independent research projects.

While the research each student is conducting may be independent, the experience is one that connects this community of students in a unique and meaningful way. Participants from across all areas of study meet biweekly throughout the summer to discuss the broad themes of their research and why the rest of the group should care about it. The goal is to help students think about their projects in ways that are new and different.

That interdisciplinary mash-up is the soul of a liberal arts education, says Mullen.

"Seeing the [ability] that research has to affect students from all across the University is really powerful for me," he says.



Sarah Koros, with the support of her mentor Dr. Brock Bahler, blends her majors in religious studies and sociology through ongoing research on Marx and spirituality. Her research was supported in part by the SURA program.

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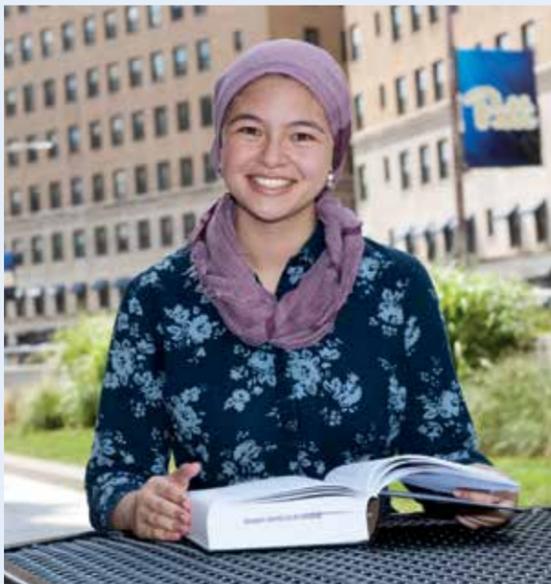
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Summer Classes Connect Students to Peers, Faculty, Pittsburgh



“Smaller classes allow me to get to know my classmates and professors better,” says Mariam Shalaby, a Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences student pursuing music and the natural sciences (pictured at left).

Small class size—which allows students to connect to each other as well as to the University of Pittsburgh’s world-class faculty—is just one of the many benefits of summer sessions.

By taking summer classes, students can:

- catch up on needed credits,
- get ahead of schedule for the fall term,
- focus on difficult classes one at a time,
- enroll in classes that fill quickly during the school year,
- complete general education requirements,
- complete pre-med requirements, and
- stay on track to graduate on time.

Summer sessions even allow students to take advantage of the unique connection Pitt has with Pittsburgh’s outstanding resources.

Haruko Arango-Kautz, a student studying emergency medicine, explains, “Summer sessions allowed me to begin doing clinical research at UPMC Presbyterian. I couldn’t have had that amazing experience if I didn’t attend summer sessions.”

And with the flexibility of enrolling in classes during 4-, 6-, and 12-week sessions, students can take summer classes without forgoing summer jobs, internships, or family vacations.

Registration for summer sessions is now open. For more information and to check out specific course offerings in all disciplines, students should talk with their advisor or visit summer.pitt.edu.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

20	Friday	Last day for undergraduate day classes
23–28	Monday–Saturday	Final examination period for undergraduate day
28	Saturday	Spring term ends; official date for degrees awarded in spring term
29	Sunday	Residence halls close; annual Commencement Convocation

MAY

2	Wednesday	Spring term grades must be approved by instructors
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For deadlines and information regarding financial aid, visit oafa.pitt.edu/financialaid.

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Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

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