

Ex Libris

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GABELLI PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM, BOSTON COLLEGE

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Returning and Incoming Scholars Welcomed at Dover Retreat



All of the Scholars and staff smile together in front of the retreat house

By Patrick Sheesley '27

The Presidential Scholars convened for the first time in the 2023-2024 academic year at their annual retreat at the picturesque Connors Center in Dover, Massachusetts. This retreat gave Scholars a welcome chance to reflect on their summers, reconnect with friends, and begin outlining plans for the coming year before the start of classes.

The retreat began with a gathering of all the Scholars and Program administrators in the Estate Room. Associate Director Jennie Thomas gave a warm welcome to all the Scholars, new and returning, and announced Sarah Gregorian's promotion to the Program's Administrative and Fiscal Assistant. The Program Director Kathy Bailey then welcomed Scholars and had them introduce themselves and describe their summer experiences. These included working as interns, partaking in international cultural immersion experiences, or completing the GPSP Summer PULSE Program.

To further develop cross-class connections, the Scholars broke into small group discussions led by members of the senior class. These groups provided a valuable opportunity for the nineteen members of the class of 2027 to ask the upperclassmen questions about expectations for their next four years at BC. The unstructured nature

of these discussions created a relaxed and open environment that gave all Scholars a chance to get to know one another and share advice. After a productive morning and a filling lunch, the Scholars continued discussions in new small groups. Each Scholar found value in these conversations due to the wide variety of perspectives shared by Scholars across all years.

Following a brief break of playing frisbee, searching for the Charles River, and enjoying the sunny outdoors, each class gathered in meeting locations in the Connors Center. Seniors discussed their upcoming academic year in GPSP and post-graduation with Associate Director Jennie Thomas, Mackenzie Arnold '17 and Sarah Ganton '14. The juniors spoke with former Director Jim Keenan, S.J., Ameet Kallarackal '18, and Kari O'Neil '11 about planning their summer internships and post-graduation. Sarah Gregorian helped the sophomore class develop their highly anticipated social justice project. Freshmen met with Kathy Bailey to ask questions about GPSP and discuss details regarding their spring break trip to Ireland and the Summer PULSE Program. Many GPSP alumni returned for dinner following class pictures and an optional Mass. After, the Scholars continued to bond throughout the night whether through play-

ing games or relaxing on the porch.

The next morning, after a discussion of GPSP's plans for the upcoming year in the Estate Room, the class of 2026 presented their social justice project to all Scholars. This year's project aims to raise awareness at BC of wrongful convictions, educate BC students on public advocacy to support bills centered around post-incarceration support and services, and register BC students to vote. The sophomores' first event plans to feature an advocacy workshop and a panel discussion on the importance of voting and advocacy, especially relating to aforementioned bills.

The retreat concluded with the Scholars pitching their clubs to one another, especially in an effort to recruit freshmen. For example, Aalok Bhattacharya '27 joined EcoPledge following a recommendation from Liz Schwab '25. Grace Snell '27 is now a member of 'Full Swing' after hearing a pitch from Garret Eichlin '26.

In reflection, Mareks Zeile '27 offered the following thoughts when asked about the value of the Dover Retreat: "It was great to meet all of the upperclassmen and get to know our class better. I felt like we became a community." It is evident that this community of Scholars is excited and well-equipped for the year ahead.

Class of 2025 Travels for Language Immersion

By Moira Ujda '25

The International Perspective and Language Program, a cornerstone of the GPSP experience, sends the rising junior class into the world for a summer of cultural immersion and language acquisition. With the support of program-funded grants, Scholars design their own international immersions. Each summer experience is tailored to individual academic interests and goals. With experiences as unique as the students who crafted them, no two summers look exactly alike. Scholars return to Boston College with a vibrant combination of cross-cultural experiences and linguistic skills that will serve them for life.

After packing up their dorm rooms in May, the Class of 2025 ventured out on journeys that spanned the globe. They took language classes, pursued research, interned, volunteered with NGOs, and more. From Australia, Luxembourg, and Israel to Morocco, Germany, and Hong Kong, Scholars embraced the worldwide opportunity of the IPLP summer. A few examples offer a glimpse of how Scholars made the most of their time abroad.

Maggie Hynes '25, a Human-Centered Engineering major, traveled to Thimphu, Bhutan this summer, where she did an internship with the Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck Super Fab Lab. This cutting-edge makerspace, dedicated to fostering learn-



Photo courtesy of Maggie Hynes

Maggie Hynes with the Paro Taktsang monastery complex in Bhutan

ing and creativity, provided her with a unique opportunity to apply her expertise while immersing herself in a new cultural context. Coming from her role at Boston College's Hatchery makerspace, Hynes was especially interested in the role makerspaces play in promoting economic growth and sustainability. Hynes played an important role in preparing the Super Fab Lab to host the annual Fab Conference, which draws representatives from Fab Labs worldwide. She managed a team of interns in planning various aspects and used her technical skills to develop materials for the conference, honing her proficiency with new machinery for fabrication.

Hynes experienced cultural immersion in a nation that has historically observed "the way Buddhist values interweave with areas of technology, the economy, and the environment" in Bhutan's capital city, Thimphu. Hynes especially appreciated having the opportunity to work with individuals from "a multitude of diverse backgrounds," and she looks forward to applying everything she learned in Bhutan in her future endeavors.

Hunter Linton '25 embarked on an eight-week journey in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil as part of the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) program run by the U.S. Department of State. CLS programs define their mission as providing rigorously intensive instruction in languages "essential to America's engagement with the world." Linton committed to immersion in Portuguese, using the language with his host family, in the classroom, and in everyday interactions. Even trips to the iconic Ipanema and Leblon beaches were opportunities to

practice language skills. The summer "reaffirmed for [Linton] the value of foreign language as a way to connect with other peoples and cultures around the world."

Beyond the classroom, Linton and fellow students delved into capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian martial art combining acrobatics, dance, and spirituality. This experience deepened his understanding of Afro-Brazilian culture and fostered friendships with local students. Linton will be using his Portuguese fluency working remotely on an internship with the U.S. Embassy in Brasília, Brazil this fall.

As the Scholars return to BC, they carry with them the impact of IPLP, both in language skills and the capabilities to foster connections that transcend borders.



Photo courtesy of Faith Drescher

Faith Drescher and Garrett McCloskey pose in Australia



Photo courtesy of Hunter Linton

Hunter Linton with Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

A Warm Welcome at Family Weekend

By Henry Reichman '27

Many proud parents met their enthusiastic children at the Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program's annual Family Weekend Open House on the afternoon of Friday, September 29th. Moved inside to the atrium of Fulton Hall due to tumultuous weather, dozens of GPSP students reunited with their families and introduced them to their friends, colleagues, and faculty mentors in an afternoon get-together that left a considerable impression on many.

The event was well-attended with over 100 family members coming from near and far to meet or reconnect with faculty mentors, GPSP staff, and Mario Gabelli. The mood was upbeat, with freshmen families learning about the Program, and bittersweet as senior families mingled and reflected on their children's four years on The Heights.

"It's very nice [having all of the GPSP community in one place]," said Aalok Bhattacharya '27. "It makes it a very family-like vibe, and everybody's so willing to help. So it's just really nice helping with transitioning [into college life]. [My first month]'s been good," he continued,



Photo credit: Scott Eisen

Sancia Sehdev '25, her mom, and her sister smile together with Jennie Thomas at the reception

"especially with [the GPSP] it's helped me situate a lot." This sentiment echoes the consensus of the first-years well, who, when not indulging in the well-apportioned and enticing hors d'oeuvres in the corner, were introducing their parents around and showing them how well the adjustment to Boston College and GPSP life has been so far.

The event also held great meaning to upperclassmen. "Obviously [my parents'] encouragement played a big role in putting me here in the first place, so much gratitude for that," said Joshua Gorniak '26. For several Scholars, it was refreshing to bring their

parents back to say hello to others, and to showcase the camaraderie they've built in their years on The Heights. They were able to express thanks once again to leaders like Professor Kathy Bailey and Jennie Thomas for their continued guidance over time.

Many upperclassmen regaled their internships and studies abroad of the previous summer to friendly parents, both previously known and unknown. Parents met each other, exchanging handshakes, information on where they're from, and mutual appreciation of the great Program their kids are in. A mother of a member of the Class of '25 said about her daughter. "She's always had a fantastic time, she's had so many experiences and opportunities that have been given to her." Putting into words what most of the parents surely felt in their conversations and interactions at the event.

But by far the highlight of the event was a surprise appearance by GPSP's eponymous benefactor: Mario Gabelli. In a speech that ranged from the inspirational to the hilarious (with "a wonderfully similar

sense of humor to Dave Letterman" - Henry Reichman's dad remarked), Gabelli discussed his own impressive upbringing, the need for ambitious young people to not just work from nine to five but from "five to nine" - the other hours on the clock. Mario Gabelli also reflected that "[Scholars] will stay with this community that is five-hundred strong now...and so you'll develop a network that will help you in your career, and that's an important part."

It's hard to think of a better way than this to describe the legacy of such an event.



Photo courtesy of Jennie Thomas

Football tailgate featuring GPSP alumni, current Scholars, and staff



Photo credit: Scott Eisen

Mario Gabelli smiles with his former intern Hector Tyser '25

Class of 2024 Complete Internships

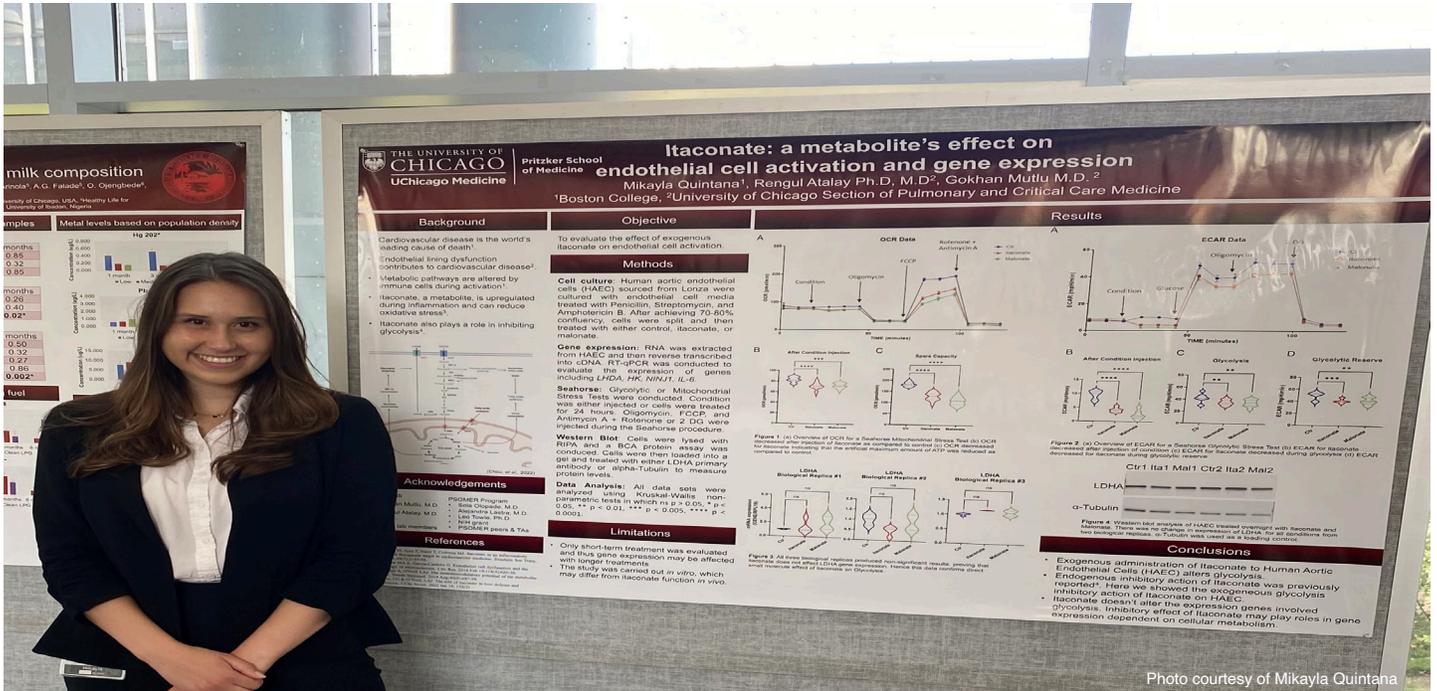


Photo courtesy of Mikayla Quintana

Mikayla Quintana '24 presents her research on metabolite effects based in The University of Chicago

By Eden McPherson '27

The Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program's summer internships illuminate the Program's value of global leadership. By immersing Scholars in the professional world, with the support of GPSP alumni and renowned professional opportunities, the junior class has a summer of formative experiences that will help them in their future endeavors.

Katy Gilmore, an English major, interned at Creative Media Agency (CMA) in Boston. Through her internship at the CMA, she acquired crucial skills for her future career as a writer. Katy mentioned that she learned valuable insight into manuscript publishing processes, and Boston's literary scene. Overall, Katy learned many life skills that would ultimately prepare her for success in the future. Katy networked with GPSP alumni and "was applying to publishing houses and agencies for a while, starting in March of my junior year. Eventually, CMA got back to me."

Katy's example inspires rising juniors, reminding them that GPSP alumni and staff are eager to connect them with opportunities, while also promoting self-reliance and finding individualized opportunities that Scholars are interested in. Katy's internship revealed to her what makes great writers great.

Fran Hodgens had a similarly rewarding experience with his internship. As an accounting for finance and consulting, and business analytics student, Fran sought out internships at consulting firms to advance his future. Fran commended the GPSP and alumni which further helped him secure his internship at the Boston Consulting Group. Scholars who had previously interned at the firm, such as Will Peters '21, connected him with the company. In addition to GPSP alumni, the Program's emphasis on global leadership and cultural immersion separated him from other applicants.

Fran faced challenges as an intern. "When you join a team, you often join as the only in-

tern. I had to learn about the energy industry, electricity, and public utilities in the United States on my own, as the people I worked with didn't necessarily have the time to explain those concepts." Fran had to research independently to excel in the firm. If he hit a wall during his research, he asked questions and learned a lot.

Both Fran and Katy's junior year internships taught them life skills that will help them in their personal and professional careers. They both found it important to determine what would make them stand out from other candidates. They, along with their classmates, benefited greatly from the experience.



Photo courtesy of Chris Ficeto

Chris Ficeto '24 official picture for Capitol Hill where he interned with Congresswoman Jahana Hayes

Class of 2026 Bonds During Summer PULSE



Photo credit: Caroline Ahn

Scholars smile for a picture in Greycliff (left to right, top to bottom row): Evan Dao, Jared Aimone, Garret Eichlin, Lauren Heinzelman, Samiksh Jain, Joshua Gorriak, Courtney McDonald, Sarah You

By Martin Kentas '26

To kick-off the summer of 2023, the Class of 2026 scholars participated in the GPSP Summer PULSE Program, where they lived together in Greycliff Hall and volunteered with eight Boston-based community partners. Each Scholar worked with two organizations over the six-week Program and performed a wide range of tasks, such as preparing meals at Haley House, tutoring inmates at the Suffolk County House of Correction, and distributing articles of clothing at St. Francis House. The Scholars volunteered in Boston every week from Monday to Thursday, and on Friday, they attended seminars led by BC theology professor Meghan Sweeney. Each week, different guest lecturers from BC's faculty attended the seminars and led conversations centered around different social justice topics including food insecurity, lack of access to education, and criminal-legal system issues.

When asked about his most memorable experience volunteering at his placements, Garret Eichlin '26 described how much he valued serving members of the Boston community on a recurring basis at St. Francis House. He said, "I personally enjoyed not only learning how to work with strangers while in the clothing department, but also how to develop relationships with residents who returned every week!"

Sarah You '26 shared a similar sentiment, remarking, "The most profound aspect of my experience with PULSE was the deep and meaningful connections I fostered with the clients. Through this opportunity, I not only learned their names but also had the privilege of truly getting to know them as individuals, even forming friendships with some of them. These relationships had a transformative effect on me because they dismantled many of the implicit biases I held before starting the Program."

While each Scholar had a unique combination of placements and set of volunteering experiences, they all felt a profound sense of connection with the people they served and left the program inspired to continue their involvement in service and social justice initiatives during their time at BC and beyond. In fact, the Scholars' work with Suffolk County House of Correction and lecture with BC Law Professor Sharon Beckman inspired the theme of their upcoming Sophomore Social Justice Project: Wrongful Convictions and Public Policy Reforms.

Outside of their placements, the Class of 2026 Scholars took advantage of the many things to do in the Greater Boston Area. Among the many day-trips the Scholars took were outings to Crystal Lake (a hidden treasure in walking distance from BC's campus discovered by Jared Aimone '26), Newbury Street (where the Scholars enjoyed bubble teas and bookstore hop-

ping), and the Blue Hills Reservation in Milton, MA! The Scholars also journeyed to the Xfinity Center in Mansfield, MA toward the end of the six weeks to see Two Friends (an EDM duo) live in concert. Over the last weekend of PULSE, Amelia Gaffney '26 hosted Scholars at her house in East Greenwich, RI, where they enjoyed an evening picnic on Narragansett Beach and a day in Newport exploring the historic Cliff Walk and mansions.

The GPSP Summer PULSE Program proved to be an invaluable opportunity for the Scholars to deepen their commitment to social justice work, better understand the city of Boston, and strengthen their bonds with each other. The Scholars look forward to building upon the knowledge and experiences they gained through the Program in their Sophomore Social Justice Project!

Welcome GPSP Class of 2027!



Aalok Bhattacharya
Westport, CT

Kate Bishop
Fayetteville, AR

Riley Coopwood
Memphis, TN

Samuel Craft
Scituate, MA

Alyssa Cutrona
Wilmington, DE

Manny Espinoza
Metairie, LA

Kendall Liesching
E. Greenwich, RI

Catherine May
Denver, CO

Eden McPherson
Catonsville, MD

Halit Ozgur
Saugus, MA

Connor Nicholas
Westerville, OH

Henry Reichman
Delmar, NY

Patrick Sheesley
Brookhaven, GA

Grace Snell
Lawrenceville, NJ

Rohit Srinivasan
Andover, MA

Anne Stewart
Waltham, MA

Callie Walsh
Alexandria, VA

Harley Wolters
Honolulu, HI

Mareks Zeile
Greenwood Village, CO

Alumni Announcements

Mark Noferi '96 - (a judge on the U.S. Department of Justice's Board of Immigration Appeals), recently authored a published decision, Matter of C-G-T-, 28 I&N Dec. 740 (BIA 2023). The decision sets policy for immigration courts nationwide. The decision held that an asylum seeker's failure to report harm to authorities is not necessarily fatal to an asylum claim if reporting would have been futile or dangerous, and provided guidance for abused children. The decision also held that immigration judges should not expect an asylum seeker to hide his or her sexual orientation if deported, in analyzing asylum claims

Caitlin (Peterson) Hawkins '08 and husband Kyle welcomed their third child, Helen (Nell) June Hawkins on August 2

Jonathan Pike '10 has recently joined the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign as an Advisory Board Member

Joe Zabinski '10 was selected as one of Healthcare Innovation's 40 Under 40 for 2023, and he and his wife welcomed their daughter Celine Brigid in July



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