

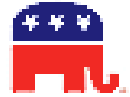


CALVIN

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Politeia



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The Official Newsletter of the Calvin College Political Science Department

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Students Flock to Political Science Building.

The Political Science building was one happening place in the fall of 2004. Students flocked to the Political Science building to discuss politics, go to class, and watch debates. Many events occurred in the Devos Forum as the elections grew nearer. Also it provided a center for quiet study and a coffee from the vendor as students read over the material from their class.

Run, Chris, Run!

Christian Meyer, Calvin Graduate, bids for State Representative slot



Christian Meyer should be satisfied. An attorney at the highly respected Grand Rapids law firm: Warner, Norcross & Judd, Christian has moved up the ranks, earning a reputation for being a serious, effective attorney practicing primarily in the areas of real estate law and litigation.

In addition, Christian is raising two young daughters while serving his community by being a board member on the Interurban Transit Partnership (formerly Grand Rapids Area Transit Authority) since 1999.

However, Christian is looking to make his mark in another field: practical politics. Though this is not surprising coming from a Calvin College political science graduate, the road he took is.

After graduating from Calvin College, Christian received his Masters in Political Science from Notre Dame. Working with the well-known Paul Henry (after whom the Henry Institute was named) Christian had a bright future. With a degree he didn't know what to do with, Christian enrolled in The University of Virginia's law program. After graduation, Christian moved back to Grand Rapids to join the respected firm: Warner, Norcross & Judd.

Running as a Republican in a traditionally Republican district that includes much of East Grand Rapids (including Calvin College) Christian looks to have a good shot to fill the seat vacated by term-limited Jerry Kooiman, also a Calvin alumnus. However Christian won't let partisanship get in the way of representing his neighbors:

The way things should be handled, can be partisan but we need to work together. Partisanship is just a means to an end, and that end should be serving the community." Calvin graduates should be familiar with the office, Jerry Kooiman first winning office in November, 2000. Calvin graduates in such important roles shouldn't surprise anyone. Christian spoke about this unique aspect of Calvin graduates.

"The mayor has said about Calvin graduates that 'they are always concerned with doing the right thing, they are smart, knowledgeable and very inquisitive.' He really hit the nail on the head. Calvin educates you broadly, particularly the idea that we are doing Kingdom Work, we are agents of renewal, seeking justice; this is what serving in politics should be."

Run Chris Run!
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Rep. Jerry Kooiman, for whose seat Christian will be running is not surprised by a Calvin graduate being up for the job. "Calvin has a long history of political involvement, Christian shares many of the same values as I, and I think he will do a great job in two years when I am done."

Christian has a lot of work ahead of him in this race, indeed the majority of it is still in front of him. Although the campaign trail is a little ways away Christian is already getting his advisors and staff in order.

"Everyone I asked to advise me, all my top choices, said 'yes' to me, which was a blessing. They are Doug Koopman (Calvin College Professor), Deb Kay, Richard Damstra, Brad Haverkamp, Bob Jonker, Mary Bratt, and Andy Baas. I will spend most of 2005 raising money for my campaign before I can hit the trail in 2006. 2006 will start with hiring a campaign manager."

Christian will take a leave of absence from Warner, Norcross & Judd if he were to win election. He is looking forward to the opportunity to serve his district and state in this new role.

"Through the reformed doctrine, we are reconciled to God, and through government we are reconciled to each other. Government is about seeking just resolutions...Politics is about having a plan for the future, working to reform plans. Education and Medicare are high on those priorities, but most importantly, politics is about forming our proud vision for our life together."

New Face around Political Science: **Joyce Steigenga**

Visitors to the Political Science Department have noticed a new face this school year. Joyce Steigenga, a Hudsonville resident, has taken the reins as the administrative assistant to the Political Science department. Joyce, who has worked at Calvin part time since August, 1998, decided this summer to look for more hours here at Calvin. "I am a firm believer in looking for, and going through the doors that God opens," Joyce says.



On a typical day Joyce can be found working to help the professors from 9am to 3pm. Her assistance has proven vital to the smooth operations those in the Political Science department have come to enjoy. Her cheery smile and willingness to help makes visitors to the department feel welcome. Her faith is evident in her sunny countenance.

"I am confident at this time that God opened the door in the Political Science Department for me," Joyce said.

She isn't the only member of the Political Science department who has enjoyed her move. Bill Stevenson, the Department Chair said: "Joyce has been a delightful and very welcome addition to our department, especially given the beginning-of-semester craziness that began her time here."

Although she is the newest member of the Political Science Department Joyce has recently taken on training two student helpers to assist her in her work. With this additional help and Joyce continuing to gain experience, the Political Science department will only get more efficient in the future. It doesn't seem like Joyce is going anywhere soon either. "It (the Political Science department) is a great place to work; the professors are always grateful for and flexible in the assistance that I am able to give them." The Political Science Department is glad to have you Joyce, and welcome to the team.

Notes from the Political Science Department

- The search is on as Calvin prepares to welcome two new professors into its midst. Candidates are now currently going through the final stages of the decision-making process as Bill Stevenson and company make these important decisions. Stay tuned to future issues of the newsletter to find out who the new professors will be.
- The Political Science Department has made an exciting new addition to the department website. This section highlights recent graduates and what "they are up to" in the real world. Calvin graduates are currently engaged in a wide variety of positions, including students at law school, those starting careers, government positions, US Armed Forces, pursuing graduate studies, studying abroad, or even engaged in Canadian Diplomatic Services. Detailed information can be found on the web at: http://www.calvin.edu/academic/pols/aftercollege/new03_04grads.htm
- James Robin King has just received news that he has been awarded a Fulbright grant to spend the 2005-2006 academic year in Jordan.

Tsunamis: By the Numbers...

3,700-World Vision staff members working actively in Asian counties affected by the tsunamis.

296,000-number of presumed dead from the disaster.

500-miles per hour waves sped away from the epicenter before reaching shore.

9-magnitude of the earthquake that shifted 620 miles of plates, triggering the deadly waves.

950-million dollars pledged by the US to help the rebuilding and recovery efforts in Indonesia.

World Vision

*Interested in Donating?
Info can be found on the
web at
www.worldvision.org*

Agent of Renewal: Cassie Wyssbrod

December 26th is traditionally the calm after the storm. Following months of heavy shopping, making merry and celebrating many people around the world take a collective sigh of relief on the day after Christmas. In 2004, however, this day held an event that would impact much of Indonesia and the entire world for a long time to come. At 0059GMT a massive underwater earthquake occurred, the magnitude of which had not been seen for over forty years. This earthquake triggered massive waves which rocked much of Indonesia, causing, at last count, over 296,000 deaths. While we all were aware of the tragedy that was unfolding half a world away, few of us felt the effects as acutely as Cassie Wyssbrod.

Cassie, a Holland, MI, native and Calvin graduate was at home when she learned of the earthquake, and later the devastation wreaked by the tsunami. An employee of World Vision International, a Christian relief agency, Cassie knew the call would not be long in coming. Indeed while her tree was still up she was packing water purifiers and other necessities as she prepared to travel to Banda Aceh, Indonesia, to help the natives there. Aceh was the province hardest hit by the massive waves and Banda Aceh was a devastated city. Cassie went and served in a displaced persons camp. In an interview with the Holland Sentinel she described the environment:

"There are things (that have been destroyed) that you don't even think about," such as dentists offices, fishing boats and grocery stores, she said.

Cassie discusses the resumption of normal activities by a people that have been devastated by a disaster of amazing proportions:



Cassie with children of Banda Aceh

"People I've been working with are in a displaced persons camp," she said. "While the disaster is real, people have been living their lives. Mothers are having babies. The good news is that there's water and food and relief coming in."

When Cassie returned to the United States some weeks later it was hard to come to grips the devastation she had seen.



Indeed many of us when faced with the images of the waves crashing into houses and boats could not begin to comprehend the difficulties that would face the people of these countries and villages. Happily for us there are people trained and willing to help out in the far reaches of the globe. Cassie Wyssbrod is one of those people. Shaped by her faith and Calvin Education, Cassie is a Christian, a Calvin alumnus and importantly, a humanitarian.

Teaching Political Science during the Elections

With Professor Doug Koopman



"Most of my POLS 317 class, Parties and Elections, attended rallies in GR that featured President Bush, Vice President Cheney, and Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, as part of their requirements for the class. I gave all of the students in my 101 introductory classes five extra credit points if they guessed better than I did on the outcome of the Electoral College. I guessed 293 votes for Kerry, so most of my students received the extra credit."



Reports, Layout and Editing by Kevin Fuller

Political Process Blooms at Calvin

Calvin alumni aren't strangers to the political stage. In this issue alone we see the involvement of Christian Meyer, a Calvin graduate in the race for State Representative, but what about current students? The Political Science Department can be proud of its current students. The Devos Center wasn't the only place buzzing around campus during this election cycle. The entire campus felt the tension and excitement which led up to the November 2nd elections. Posters, some official, some homemade filled many of the windows of dorm rooms around campus and pins and stickers also adorned clothing and bumpers.

Students got involved with many grassroots organizations to help their favorite candidate. They did this by attending rallies, making phone-calls, handing out literature or helping transport people to the polls. When the results came in a majority of Calvin students were pleased. Prior to the election a full 77% percent of Calvin students said that they were planning on voting for George W. Bush in the upcoming election. This fact was discovered in a poll conducted by Shiko Nguru, which was cited in *The Chimes*. Professor Corwin Smidt discussed the political landscape at Calvin College:

"Historically, Calvin has drawn students from a population that has been more Republican than Democratic, in their affiliation. It is also true that the Evangelical Church as a whole has become more Republican over the past twenty-five years and that Calvin students are being drawn from both the traditional CRC constituency, and increasingly, a broader Evangelical constituency."

Many students used their close living quarters as effective tools for attempts to "convert" followers to their particular candidate. On campus debates, televised and live, added to this. Not limited to merely watching the televised debates, Calvin students held their own debate between three members representing the three presidential candidates. Smidt talked about his role as moderator for this debate:

"I wouldn't say that either side *won* (the debate) but all did an excellent job researching their candidate and it was fairly well attended, each student did an excellent job promoting his candidate's position."

This year was indeed an exciting time to be a Political Science major all around the country but in particular here at Calvin College. The students and teachers added to the electric atmosphere and provided opportunities for political debate and discussion to take center stage, before it moves again to the wings for another four years.

Professor Goi Receives Grant



Samona Goi, Calvin Professor, was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Fellowship Grant in the summer of 2004. Her project involved writing an article on the political theory of Hannah Arendt. It is called: *Why "We the People" should Learn to Doubt ourselves: an Argument for a Political Ethics of Critical Self-Doubt*. Professor Goi was required to spend two months researching and writing the article. She has a draft she plans on presenting at a conference next fall, and will submit it for publication following that.