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Politeia

The Department of

POLITICAL SCIENCE

CALVIN COLLEGE

Alumni Spotlight: Congressman-Elect Bill Huizenga

Election Day was a “whirlwind” for Congressman-elect Bill Huizenga and his family as they traveled up and down the coast of West Michigan, all the while campaigning in various cities and finally ending the long Election Day at his home in Holland, Michigan. Huizenga has high hopes for his coming time in Washington. He is beyond grateful for the support he received in West Michigan and for the chance to make a difference. Huizenga first hopes to control spending and prioritize outcome based spending. Although he doesn’t believe that we can go back to the original health care system, he would like to see a more affordable and equitable health care system put in place.

Congressman-elect Bill Huizenga will take over as the U.S. Representative for Michigan’s 2nd Congressional District starting in January 2011. Huizenga graduated from Calvin in 1992 as a Political Science Major with a concentration in Latin American History. During his time at Calvin, Huizenga was able to travel to the Soviet Union, Spain, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and New York City. Traveling was very influential in Huizenga’s college career and he appreciated that Calvin professors encouraged him to go outside of campus to gain hands-on experience. Upon graduating from Calvin, Huizenga worked for Congressman Pete Hoekstra (who is his predecessor for Michigan’s 2nd Congressional District). Huizenga is



“thankful for Calvin and the strong Political Science Department.” He also believes that his liberal arts education at Calvin was well-rounded and he feels that it prepared him for his current career and his future in Washington.



Scholarship Created in Honor of Professor Penning

This past summer, Calvin College and the Political Science Department lost a beloved friend, professor, and colleague. Professor James Penning died at his home on Tuesday, July 13, 2010. His legacy and impact on the Calvin College campus will never be forgotten.

In his honor, the Dr. James M. Penning Scholarship was established and will be awarded to a student entering his or her junior or senior year. The student must have a minimum GPA of 3.2 or higher, be a political science major and be interested in state and local government. Financial need is not required. Some preference will,

however, be given to students who are interested in an internship in state and local government. The Political Science Department is excited to add this scholarship to the list of its other departmental scholarships. Alumni who are interested in contributing to the scholarship fund may send a check to:

**Dr. James M. Penning Scholarship
Development Office
Youngsma Center
3201 Burton Street SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546**

Students Work With Global Youth Connect in Bosnia

In mid-June, two Calvin students arrived in Sarajevo, Bosnia, for a month-long peace building and human rights program. Calvin junior Kelly Larsen and sophomore Eric Doornbos were among thirteen graduate and undergraduate students participating in the program, which was sponsored by Global Youth Connect. The Bosnia summer delegation is one of two programs organized by GYC; the organization also leads a winter program in Rwanda.

Global Youth Connect began with a shared vision among four friends, all genocide survivors (from Rwanda, Bosnia, Guatemala, and Cambodia). Their experiences had convinced them that the world needed activists, particularly among young people. In the words of the organization's founders, "Global Youth Connect is dedicated to empowering youth to advance human rights and create a more just world." Past groups have also spent time in Cambodia, Rwanda, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nepal; each delegation focuses on some aspects of human rights and peace building.

The Bosnia delegation particularly attracted Larsen, an international relations major and congregational ministry studies minor from Decorah, Iowa. "I'm especially interested in the role that communities of faith play in ethnic reconciliation," she said. Bosnia's current political and social climate is still in shambles from the war of fifteen years ago, despite extensive international and internal



reconstruction efforts. Though after the war much of the country's infrastructure has been rebuilt, genuine reconciliation remains elusive. Today, though media coverage has been limited in Bosnia, there remain a large number of non-governmental organizations, communities of faith, and international organizations working to achieve more holistic reconciliation, reconstruction, and development in this country.

The month spent by Doornbos and Larsen in Bosnia had two separate components. The first half of the trip focused on learning techniques used in peace building. The delegation members partnered with Bosnian high school students and engaged in a workshop led by Vahidin Omanvich, head of the Center for Peace Building in Sanski Most, a small town in the northwest of the country. Upon completion of the workshop, the GYC members in-

terned with local non-governmental organizations in Sanski Most. Doornbos interned with the Center for Peace Building, assisting with grant-writing; Larsen was a member of the documentation team and visited all three internship sites, chronicling the needs and challenges of the various organizations. The experience in Sanski Most gave Doornbos and Larsen firsthand experience with the social, personal, and political challenges involved in peace building, and an understanding of the inner workings of many NGOs.

After the experience in Sanski Most, the delegation returned to Sarajevo for a series of meetings with various international and non-governmental organizations currently in Bosnia. Among the meetings was an appointment with Deputy High Representative Dr. Rafi Gregorian, from the Office of the High Representative. The OHR is charged with ensuring the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords, the internationally-brokered agreement that

Continued on page 3

Student Studies at the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute



The Ralph Bunche Summer Institute is a five week graduate-level intensive program held at Duke University that is intended to show minority students interested in doing Ph.D. programs in political science what the graduate school experience is like. Senior Kay Varela attended the institute at the suggestion of Professor Stevenson who heard about it from the American Political Science Association. "After [Professor Stevenson] had me in

his constitutional law class, [he] thought it would be a good idea for me to attend after hearing some of my perspectives on race relations," reports Kay. The Institute focuses on Race and Ethnic Politics because the director (Dr. Paula McClain) is a leading scholar on race and politics. The program seemed like a perfect fit for Kay.

The program itself is very intense, more so than Kay had originally thought. But she asserts that Calvin prepared her for the institute every well. Twenty students are accepted from all over the country. The program requires students to take two classes simultaneously: a race and ethnic politics class and a statistics and methods class. At the end of the program, each student must write a final paper that is seen as the synthesis of these two classes. Kay wrote her paper on Latino distrust of the government and how that stems from the level of assimilation or acculturation they have experienced.

The five-week program leaves little room for extra-curricular activities. A majority of time is spent in class, labs and discussion sessions. It also consists of a lot of lectures from former Bunche alumni who have gone on to finish Ph.D.s. Meeting other students who have completed the program was Kay's favorite part: "To meet other students that have gone through this program and have benefited from what they learned there was inspiring."

Kay learned a lot during her summer at the Institute. For one, it taught her how hard graduate school is. It also taught her how well Calvin professors prepare students in terms of the amount of work and the level of scholarship they require. Kay said, "It was great to be exposed to an area of political science that I would not have necessarily known about."

For more information about the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute, visit: http://www.apsnet.org/content_6602.cfm

THE PAUL HENRY INSTITUTE

Fall Lectures



Ani Sarkissian spoke on "The Causes and Consequences of Religious Minority Repression in Muslim Countries." Dr. Sarkissian is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Michigan State University, where she is a core faculty member of the Muslim Studies Program and the Center for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies. Sarkissian holds a Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) where she received grants from the National Science Foundation and IREX (Individual Advanced Research Opportunities) to develop her dissertation on religion and democratization in Christian and Islamic societies.

Dr. Sarkissian's current research focuses on the role of religious, ethnic, and other identities in affecting political change. She is working on several projects on the topics of political tolerance, civil society, religious political parties, and the role of religious organizations in democratization.



Andrey Shirin, Adjunct Professor at the John Leland Center for Theological Studies (Falls Church, VA), lectured on "The Rule of Law in Russia: Problems and Perspectives."

Shirin holds a Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary where his dissertation was entitled *Postfoundationalist Zhivoznaniye: Splitting the Difference between American Pragmatism and the Russian Tradition of All-Unity*. Shirin asserts that the two philosophical traditions are complementary rather than contradictory. His research is focused on how Russian religious thought can contribute to contemporary discourses on relevant issues of the increasingly globalized world, particularly in regard to the formation of social ethics in modern Russia.



Tracy Kuperus, Adjunct Professor of International Development Studies at Calvin College, lectured on "Diminished or Diverse? An Examination of the Political Voice of Churches in Democratic South Africa." Before coming to Calvin College, Professor Kuperus taught in the political science departments at Westmont College and at Gordon College. Her research has focused on church-state relations in South Africa and the interaction between civil society and democratization in southern Africa. She is the author of *State, Civil Society and Apartheid in South Africa: An Examination of Dutch Reformed Church-State Relations*, and has contributed various chapters and articles to other books and journals on the topics of race, reconciliation and religious associations in southern African nations.

Students go to Bosnia, continued.....

ended the bloodshed in 1995. Dr. Gregorian provided valuable insights and analysis of the current situation in Bosnia. The delegation also met with the Deputy Chief of Mission at the American Embassy, representatives from the United Nations Development Programme, members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and various political parties and NGOs. One particularly notable meeting was held at the Bosnian War Crimes Chamber, which is the only state-level court in the world with the mandate and jurisdiction to prosecute war crimes. Fifteen years after the war's end, the work of the court remains far from finished. Altogether, the meetings in Sarajevo provided an extensive overview of the political and economic situation in the country, and they complemented the hands-on peace building work from Sanski Most.

The last weekend of the program was spent in the Srebrenica region in Bosnia's southeast. Srebrenica has the infamous dis-



tinction of being the site of the worse genocide on European soil since the Holocaust.

On July 11, 1995, Bosnian Serb soldiers and paramilitaries invaded the United Nations safe area of Srebrenica. After disarming the Dutch peacekeepers and evacuating the women and children, the Serbs proceeded to massacre over 8,000 men between the ages of 14 and 89. Their bodies were buried in mass graves scattered throughout the coun-

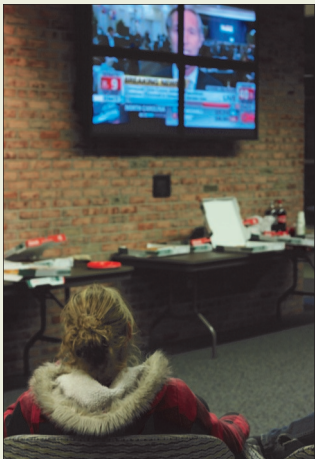
tryside. To this day, only approximately half of those killed in July of 1995 have been identified and their bodies given a proper burial. The Global Youth Connect delegation went to a memorial on July 10th to watch as 758 separate sets of remains were carried from the former United Nations headquarters into the cemetery. The delegation spent the evening and following day participating in the memorial service among thousands of mourners and international observers.

The experience—though heart-wrenching and terrible—put flesh and blood to the stories of the conflict, reminding delegates once again of the desperate necessity for activism in a world still affected by war.

Global Youth Connect delegations run annually, with a summer delegation to Bosnia and a winter delegation to Rwanda. More information can be found on the organization's website at:

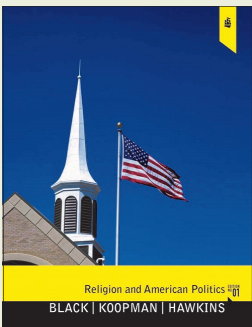
<http://www.globalyouthconnect.org/>.

Department News



Political Science Election Day Party

Students gathered in the Devos Center Lobby on election day to watch the results with faculty and fellow students.



Religion and American Politics: Classic and Contemporary Perspectives

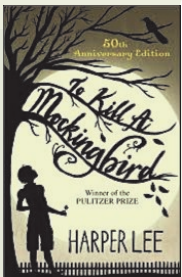
Be sure to check out a new book authored by Calvin professor Douglas Koopman, along with colleagues, Amy Black and Larycia A. Hawkins. *Religion and American Politics: Classic and Contemporary Perspectives* combines both original content from leading scholars and excerpts from classic and contemporary writings. The goal of the book is to help students explore connections between religion and political culture, movements, institutions, and actors.

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Political Science Department
Politeia Editor: Stephanie Brinks
www.calvin.edu/academic/pols/

Professors' Picks



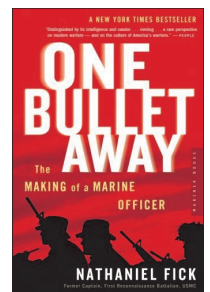
To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee

It's the 50th anniversary of *To Kill A Mockingbird*. I re-read the book recently, and had a much greater appreciation for the lessons it provides than I did when I read it as a high school student. The complexity of the characters, the way Harper Lee describes small-town life, and the lessons the book teaches about integrity in the face of insurmountable odds and hatred make it worth a (re)read. The world could use a few more people like Atticus Finch, Scout, Jem, Calpurnia, and of course, Boo Radley!

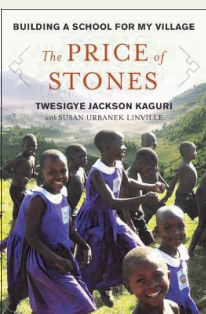
-Dr. Patterson

This is a truly remarkable memoir by a young Dartmouth College graduate, a Classics major, who served as a U. S. Marine Corps Reconnaissance officer from 1999 to 2006. The dates of his service are important, because Lt. Fick found himself first in post-9/11 Afghanistan and next leading a platoon of men from the elite First Reconnaissance Battalion into Iraq in March and April, 2003. Fick's story is more than a history of the Iraq invasion from one who was "at the tip of the spear." It is a profoundly sensitive reflection on war--its horrors and its appeal-- as well as on honor, on fear, on camaraderie, and on patriotism. His descriptions of particular events and people, and of his own struggle to make sense of those events and people, are as perceptive and thoughtful as one is likely to find from a "warrior" in our time.

One Bullet Away by Nathaniel Fick



-Professor Stevenson



The Price of Stones: Building a School for My Village by Twesigye Jackson Kaguri

The book tells the story of Twesigye Jackson Kaguri's efforts to build a school for AIDS orphans in his home village in southwest Uganda. While there are have been several stories of Westerners attempting development projects in poor countries (e.g., *Three Cups of Tea*), this is the story of an African in the diaspora giving back to his home community. As a professional with a successful position in the United States, Kaguri could have supported his Ugandan community through remittances or by helping family migrate to the USA. Instead, he recognized that the most crucial issue for his AIDS-ravished community was to provide a long-term investment in the education of all the community's children. The book details his challenges and successes and provides an uplifting read. Kaguri will speak at Calvin's January Series on January 18, 2011.

-Dr. Patterson