

**TCNJ**



# The Graduate Column

FALL ISSUE

OCTOBER 2013

## Welcome to the Fall 2013 Issue of TCNJ's Graduate Column!

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Guest Article 2  
by Katie Stutz

Pictures from 4  
Katie Stutz's  
Trip

Spotlight on: 6  
Dr. Passe

Spotlight on: 7  
Dr. Ortiz

Meet the 8  
Students

Highlight On: 12  
Rwanda  
Summer 2014

Important 13  
Dates

Articles written by:

Alison Botto,  
Graduate Assistant



In this issue, we are pleased to introduce the new Dean of Education, a new Graduate Coordinator, and several outstanding students; plus we share information regarding the upcoming registration period, and an exciting new summer course in Rwanda!

On behalf of the Office of Graduate Studies, best wishes for an enjoyable semester.

We look forward to seeing you on campus.

*Susan Hydro*

*Director, Graduate & Intersession Programs*

## “Castles, Witches, and Kings” by Katie Stutz

This past June, I embarked on a magical and thrilling trip to the U.K for a Literature class with Dr. Tarter. As I look back on my journey now, the entire trip seems like a dream because it was truly extraordinary. Along with my fellow classmates, the student chaperone, and Dr. Tarter, I expanded my knowledge of British history, culture, and literature while visiting major landmarks and places relevant to our studies. While our class and itinerary focused mostly on Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII, and Harry Potter, we also saw three Shakespeare plays, and traveled to nearby cities or countries. Our home base during the trip, however, was Harlaxton Manor, which looked like a fairytale castle from the inside and outside. The castle was so vast that you could roam around the castle admiring the elegant rooms and finding new nooks and crannies. The “Gold Room,” our

classroom, had angelic paintings on the walls and ceiling, all bordered by gold and huge wall mirrors, so it was difficult not to gaze around at the intricate artwork during class. The English countryside is absolutely beautiful because the green grass stretches for miles and vivid yellow flowers dot the landscape like the Yellow Brick Road. Located in the countryside of Northumberland, Alnwick Castle was probably my favorite castle to visit because the Harry Potter broom riding lesson scene was filmed there. Our class actually took broom riding lessons at the castle from an eccentric, comical wizard. Even though none of us managed to fly, the experience proved magical. Other exciting Harry Potter field trips included the Official Warner Bros. Studio Tour in London, England and The Elephant House in Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Harry Potter Studio was overwhelming because there were countless sets, props, costumes, and designs from the movies. Standing right next to Privet Drive and the real Hogwarts model used in the films was incredibly exhilarating. Our class also enjoyed lunch at The Elephant House where J.K Rowling famously wrote Harry Potter on napkins. As I ate lunch, I grabbed a napkin and a pen to write a note myself, channeling J.K Rowling and the wonderful world she created. Just thinking about how I could be sitting right where she was when she first began *The Sorcerer’s Stone* was eerie but inspirational. While in Scotland, we also climbed Arthur’s Seat, the highest peak in Edinburgh, to experience a breathtaking view of the city. While I took many pictures on the peak, I felt like I simply could not capture the beauty or mood of the view with my camera. It was

## “Castles, Witches, and Kings” continued

one of those moments when you just have to gaze out at the landscape and enjoy feeling insignificant amid the vastness of the world around you.

I also visited Stratford-upon-Avon, the home of William Shakespeare and an adorable town that takes you back to the 1600s. I toured Shakespeare’s home, marveled at his original First Folio, and enjoyed *Titus Andronicus* and *As You Like It* at the theaters in town. Our trips to Hampton Court Palace, Henry VIII’s extravagant abode, and Hever Castle, Anne Boleyn’s childhood home, meanwhile brought famous historical figures to life in a way I had never imagined. I experienced the opulence of Henry VIII’s home and his fascinating life as a king married six times while I got goose bumps looking at the red ivy snaking across the front of Hever Castle, an eerie reminder of the bloodshed at her beheading.

One weekend I traveled to Paris with classmates where I fell in love with the glittering Eiffel Tower at midnight and went to a

mass spoken in French at Notre Dame the following morning. The lock bridges near Notre Dame added to the city’s romantic ambience as well as the delicious crepes and baguettes. While I enjoyed Paris, I loved the historic atmosphere of London because the city offers countless opportunities for exploration and learning. Even though I would have been thrilled to extend my trip longer, this trip was an unforgettable journey with new places to see and new things to learn. I’m incredibly lucky to have experienced this study abroad opportunity during my Master’s Program. The trip was my first graduate class right after my undergraduate graduation so it was truly a memorable excursion. Since this experience pushed me to become more adventurous and take full advantage of my time in Europe, the opportunity made me more comfortable travelling and eager to

travel again in the near future. The trip held personal meaning because I have always been fascinated by London’s history and landmarks; therefore, enjoying my travels while acquiring graduate credit at the same time was beyond amazing. Dr. Tarter set the parameters for my paper and presentation, but I had the freedom to choose my own topic and discuss it with Dr. Tarter. Although the class was wonderfully travel-intensive, I did apply literary theory to literature on a graduate level and presented my analysis to the entire class. Even though I was a year older than most of my classmates on the trip, age was irrelevant; our class got along well together regardless of the gaps among grade levels. I will definitely be returning to England in the future, and I highly recommend the Harlaxton trip to anyone, undergraduate or graduate, who is interested in the years to come.

**Article written by:  
Katie Stutz**

## Pictures from Katie Stutz's Trip

Katie Stutz at  
Alnwick Castle  
in England



Katie Stutz at  
Arthur's Seat  
in Scotland



## The Office of Graduate Studies nominated for The Helen Shaw Staff Excellence and Special Achievement Award



**The Office of Graduate Studies was nominated for the Helen Shaw Staff Excellence and Special Achievement Award by Dr. Alan Amtzis. "The Helen Shaw Staff Excellence and Special Achievement Award was established by the Helen Shaw Endowment in January 2003 as a memorial in honor of Helen D. Shaw, Class of 1936. The award recognizes the essential role TCNJ staff members play as full partners in the College's educational process and institutional activities, and acknowledges their commitment to varied models of excellence that display the dedication and breadth of staff contributions to the College."**

## Spotlight On: Dr. Jeff Passe



Introducing Dr. Jeff Passe, the new Dean of the School of Education! Before coming to TCNJ, Dr. Passe worked at Towson University where he served as Chair of the Department of Secondary Education. Earlier in his career, he worked at the University of North Carolina - Charlotte for twenty-three years. While there, he worked on many leadership projects as the faculty president.

Dr. Passe's most recent notable project highlights a middle

school in Maryland, at which he facilitated a vital partnership between Towson faculty and middle school teachers, exemplifying collaboration in the classroom.

Additionally, Dr. Passe was the president of the National Council of Social Studies. As "the voice of Social Studies," he worked on restructuring the organization and lobbying Congress.

Dr. Passe initially didn't know where The College of New Jersey was located. What attracted him to the College was his initial impression of the school Web site and his belief that amazing work had already been done here. He noticed that, unlike most schools, the College had a clear mission statement and a great

emphasis on liberal arts. Dr. Passe enjoys TCNJ's uniqueness and is committed to maintaining its image. His goal and vision for the School of Education is to create a partnership with a nearby school district, similar to his middle school program with Towson, but at a higher level.

Dr. Passe enjoys live folk music, sports, and politics. He is a self-proclaimed "newspaper junkie." His advice for graduate students is to understand that graduate school is a chance for deeper study. He recommends students delve deeply into fields of study and work with scholars to maximize their impact.

Welcome to TCNJ,  
Dr. Passe!

# Spotlight On: Dr. Lisa Ortiz



The Office of Graduate Studies would like to congratulate Dr. Lisa Ortiz on her new position as Graduate Coordinator of English! Dr. Ortiz has been at The College of New Jersey for fourteen years, joining our team of educators shortly after completing her graduate degree at Wayne State University.

Dr. Ortiz is excited at the opportunity to be a coordinator in the department. Most of all, she is looking forward to working with the cohort of five-year MA students and assisting them with the transition from the

undergraduate to the graduate level. Dr. Ortiz's advice for graduate students is to get to know the faculty, staff, and Office of Graduate Studies. She believes fostering these relationships can lead to useful recommendations and unique opportunities. In her own words, "It's our pleasure to help, not just our job."

In her work at TCNJ, Dr. Ortiz has been collaborating with the new Graduate Assistant and the Graduate Student Representative to create a graduate conference for the English department. While Dr. Ortiz seeks to institute change on a larger level, she still enjoys interacting with students, and teaching the graduate course: Inter-American Women's

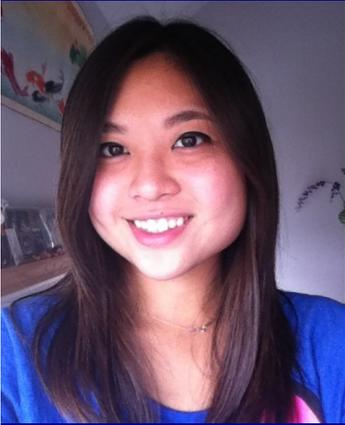
Autobiography this semester. This course consists of the study of the life writings of women in nations across the Americas.

In her spare time, Dr. Ortiz enjoys bicycle riding and ice skating. Recently, she participated in "Summer Streets: NYC," a seven-mile bike ride from the Brooklyn Bridge to Central Park. She tries to attend this event with her family every year.

Dr. Ortiz recommends that graduate students visit the English department's Web site often for exciting upcoming events. "Monday Afternoon Chats" will be available online soon, as well as other social and professional events.

We wish Dr. Ortiz the best of luck in her new position!

## Meet Your Fellow Graduate Students



**Dorothy Chan**

Introducing Dorothy Chan! Dorothy is a graduate student in the Family Nurse Practitioner program.

Dorothy completed her undergraduate degree at The College of New Jersey as a Nursing major and decided to continue through school and earn her Master's degree. She is a full-time graduate student and works at Hackensack University Medical Center in intermediate care.

Dorothy enjoys the excitement that comes with taking a new course, so her favorite class is the one she is in now: Primary Care II. This course focuses on OBGYN and com-

pleting clinical hours. The class is "new, fresh, interesting, and hard," says Dorothy. Dorothy's favorite part of the program is her classmates. They spend a majority of their time together and know the faculty well.

Dorothy has many clinical hours she must complete as part of the program, including hours in: pediatric, women's health, and adults. Her first semester, she completed her hours at Robert Wood Johnson Hamilton. The next semester, she completed her pediatrics hours with a doctor. This semester, she is completing her hours at Catholic Char-

ities in New Brunswick, and her OBGYN hours in Lambertville.

Dorothy will walk at graduation in Spring 2014, but will officially graduate in Summer 2014, after she completes her Capstone project on educational intervention. Once she graduates, she would like to work in a hospital. She is very interested in rapid response and trauma.

Dorothy enjoys walking on the boardwalk, relaxing, and reading. Her advice for graduate students is to work on time management. "You need to have the internal will to do it," says Dorothy. Good luck this semester, Dorothy!



**Alexis Merlino**

Introducing Alexis Merlino! Alexis is a graduate student in the Special Education 5-year master's program.

Alexis was impressed with the prestige and rigorous academics of The College of New Jersey and decided to enter the 5-year program. She was very involved in Christian Fellowship

(she was president her junior year) and PRISM (a LGBT club). She is currently creating a LGBT Bible Study with her friend and working on making it an official club.

Alexis is interested in the severe disabilities population and has focused her studies on blindness. She is cur-

rently learning Braille. Her favorite course has been Reading in Literacy with Dr. Anthony because the course had a practicum component that allowed the students to teach a Poetry Tutoring workshop in Trenton. What Alexis enjoys most about the program is that the professors are all active

## Introducing Alexis Merlino continued...

in the special education field and extremely knowledgeable.

Alexis will graduate in Spring 2014 and would like to use her master's degree to teach children with low

incidence disabilities in low income areas. In her spare time, she plays the piano, guitar, and harmonica, reads her Bible, and writes. Her advice to graduate students is to explore new

things and build strong relationships with students and professors. "Get involved in all that you can," says Alexis.

Good luck this semester, Alexis!



Introducing graduate student Jena-Rose Coluccio! Jena-Rose is in the Counselor Education program on the School Counseling track.

Jena-Rose completed her undergraduate degree at The College of New Jersey as a Criminology major with minors in Psychology and Spanish. She was very involved on campus, holding leadership positions in: Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity, Circle K, Order of Omega Honor Society, and Alpha Phi Sigma Honor Society .

While participating in a class that went to Albert C Wagner Youth Correctional Facility (class took place every Tuesday for 4 hours at the facility) and interning

at the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, Jena-Rose was able to experience the ability to help others. In turn, she saw how that help was appreciated by the inmates. This understanding inspired her to move toward counselor education. She then chose to study school counseling because she enjoys working with a younger population. "I also would like to positively impact the lives of others early, to help them stay on the right path for later in life," says Jena-Rose.

Jena-Rose thoroughly enjoys the Counselor Education program. She is excited to learn from her professors and classmates. "Talking to others, listening to others, sharing your own story, and really connecting with your peers is so meaningful and also so important in a program such as counseling, because it sets the foundation for how you interact with others later as a counselor," says Jena-Rose. Her favorite

course has been Career Counseling with Marion Cavallaro because of the experiential learning activities that were included in every class. As part of her practicum, Jena-Rose is interning at Antheil Elementary School in Ewing, NJ. She has loved this experience, so far, and values that every day is different and exciting.

Jena-Rose plans to graduate in May and would like to use her master's degree to become an elementary school counselor. In her spare time, she enjoys hanging out with family and friends, walking her dog, and going on adventures. Her advice to graduate students is to "find something you love to do, and do it. Also, make sure you take everything you can from every opportunity and experience thrown your way," says Jena-Rose.

Best of luck in your practicum this semester, Jena-Rose!

## Meet Your Fellow Graduate Students



Introducing Rachel Hendrickson! Rachel is an MEd Special Education student.

Rachel began her college career at Mercer County Community College (MCCC) as a Humanities and Social Sciences major. After finishing at MCCC, she transferred to The College of New Jersey and graduated with her BA in English/Secondary Education. When she decided to teach, she knew TCNJ would be a great school for continuing her education.

Rachel currently works full-time at a high school and chose the MEd program because she wanted to better serve her students and cater to their unique needs. "I learned just weeks into my first year of teaching that I had so much more to learn in order to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Special Education helps me to understand what each

of my students needs and gives me the tools to make sure they are getting just that. Being in graduate school also keeps me current in my field, since differentiation is so much more than just a buzzword in education," Rachel explains. Her favorite part of the program is the level of discussion in her classes and how the professors treat students as their peers. She enjoys hearing both professors and students alike sharing their own experiences. Rachel has valued the classes she has taken with Dr. Peel, who has taught her practical application to strategies as well as theories.

Rachel plans on graduating within the next year or so. "I want to use this degree to give my students the best education possible. It is so easy for teachers to see teaching as mechanical after just a few years,

and I never want to be like that. I want to use my education to continue offering my students new and unique experiences that allow them to reach their full potential," Rachel says.

In her spare time, Rachel loves to play tennis. She plays in local leagues, tournaments, and teaches tennis classes. Rachel also enjoys running and reading Young Adult literature. Her advice to graduate students is to make the most of your experiences and participate in class. "The best part of being a graduate student is sharing experiences and learning from one another; take advantage of that," Rachel says.

Good luck this semester, Rachel!



Introducing Kelly Gorton! Kelly is in the Master of Education Reading Program. She completed her undergraduate degree at The College of St. Rose in Albany, New York, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. Kelly chose to attend The College of New Jersey's MEd program because "I realized when I was doing my undergraduate student teaching, I did not feel comfortable or confident on the best practices in teaching Reading to

students. I decided on Literacy to help in the classroom and because I have such a passion for language and literacy," she explains.

Kelly's favorite parts of the program are the discussions in class, learning new techniques, sharing experiences with her peers, and connecting with the professors. Her favorite classes have been: "The Writing Process in Literacy Development," "Language and the Teaching of Reading," and "Content Literacy."

Kelly is starting her practicum for reading this semester and plans on graduating in the spring. "I would like to use my new knowledge of Reading and literacy to help the children in my own classroom become better

readers. I would also like to be able to effectively spread a passion for literacy throughout the community. Eventually, after I have some experience in the classroom, I would like to become a literacy teacher or coach and help struggling teachers know how to better help their students," Kelly says.

In her spare time, Kelly enjoys traveling with her husband and hosting BBQs at their house for family and friends. Her advice for graduate students is to understand that you get out of the program what you put into the program. "You have to want to learn or you will not learn," explains Kelly.

Good luck with your practicum this semester, Kelly!



# Highlight On: Rwanda Summer 2014

This Summer, a new Global Graduate course will be offered in Rwanda. The 3 credit course is entitled “Global Perspectives on Mental Health Services- Rwanda Summer 2014” (COUN 597-10), with tentative travel dates of June 13- June 23. As part of the course, there will be two to three pre-departure meeting/trainings (TBA).

This course was developed by Atsuko Seto, Ph.D. and Beth Fier, M.A. from the Department of Counselor Education. Atsuko and Beth have been working intensely for two years to make this course a reality, with the support of Dr. Mark Kiselica and Dr. Jeff Passe.

The purpose of this course is to provide an opportunity for students to learn about mental health services in Rwanda and implement Photovoice (a medium of photography that allows individuals to depict their challenges and hopes through photographs) to promote self-empowerment of underserved groups.

While in Rwanda, students will be able to work with non-government organizations: Les Enfants de Dieu (Street Boys) and the Rwanda Women’s Network. The students will give the individuals an outlet to share their voices and their stories by facilitating small groups and utilizing Photovoice .

The Global Engagement Institute has developed the itinerary for the course. Through this experience, students will visit landmarks in Kigali, such as: Kigali Memorial Center, Millennium Village in Mayange, Ndera Neuropsychiatric Hospital, and Akagera National Park.

This course is open to Graduate Students from all programs with a passion for learning about different cultures. For more information, contact the Center for Global Enhancement at [goglobal@tcnj.edu](mailto:goglobal@tcnj.edu) or Atsuko Seto at [seto@tcnj.edu](mailto:seto@tcnj.edu).

Details will be available online soon at: <http://cge.pages.tcnj.edu/tcnj-rwanda-summer-grad-students/>

# Mark Your Calendar!

## Deadlines for Applying for Graduation:

**December 2013 Graduation:**

**Friday, September 20**

**May 2014 Graduation:**

**Friday, February 14**

**August 2014 Graduation:**

**Friday, February 28**

**If you have not yet applied for  
December graduation, contact**

**Records & Registration at**

**609-771-2141.**

**A \$35 late fee will apply.**



## Fall 2013/Spring 2014

**Spring & Summer Registration Begins:**

**Tuesday, November 5**

## Fall Break:

**Monday, October 28 & Tuesday, October 29**

## Thanksgiving Break:

**Wednesday, November 27 -**

**Friday, November 29**

## Last Day of Fall Classes:

**Tuesday, December 17**

## Winter Session:

**Thursday, January 2—Friday, January 17\***

**\*Dates for travel and blended courses may vary.**

## First Day of Spring Classes:

**Tuesday, January 21**

## Add/Drop Week for Spring Classes:

**Tuesday, January 21 - Wednesday, January 29**

