



Religious Studies at UNO

January 2006

Brooks Lecture is 6 April



Rabbi David Sandmel from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago will be the speaker for the 2006 Brooks Lecture on Thursday, 6 April. Sandmel is Crown Ryan Professor of Jewish Studies. He is also the head rabbi for K.A.M.

Isaiah Israel in Hyde Park and an expert in Christian Jewish relations. The lecture will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the William H. Thompson Alumni Center.

Essay Competition open to all UNO undergraduates

Members of the events committee of the Religion Studies program at UNO have announced a special essay competition that will be open not only to religion majors and minors but also to other undergraduate students at UNO.

It is anticipated that the competition will give students the opportunity to make the connection between their areas of study and religion as they compose an essay about a religious topic of their choice. The competition has financial prizes for the top three essays.

The deadline for the competition is 5 p.m. on 3 April. Students may select their own topic for the essay as long as it is related to religion. However, those wanting some ideas of possible topics may either pick up a possible topics idea list in ASH 205 or visit www.unomaha.edu/religion where the flyer and the list of possible topics are posted.

The three top essays will be read by their authors on Thursday, 20 April, between 2:30 – 4:00 p.m. in ASH 306.

The presentation will be open to the public at no charge.

Movie Night to offer viewers chance to see and discuss films

The Religious Studies Program at UNO will hold a Movie Night 21 March at 7:00 p.m. A series of film shorts will be shown, including *West Bank Story*, *Fuel* and *The Art of Farewell*. Additional shorts will depend on availability. There will be an opportunity for discussion after the films. Refreshments will be available

Three graduate in December

Nathan Bonewitz, **Dawn Staszko** and **Nekiesha Dotzler** were among those receiving degrees at commencement ceremonies in December. Bonewitz and Staszko both received a bachelor of general studies with a major in religious studies. Staszko graduated Cum Laude. Dotzler graduated with a bachelor of science with a major in speech communication and a religion minor.

Faculty News

Dr. Paul Allen Williams was quoted during January in the *Omaha World-Herald* within articles on the film *Narnia* and “2006 Trends (under Faith)” and in the *Lincoln Journal Star* on religious options in Omaha. He also participated in a call-in talk show on Minnesota Public Radio this month during which one of the topics was *Narnia*.

From Feb. 10-11, **Julien R. Fielding** will attend the 27th Annual Meeting of the SW/TX Popular Culture and American Culture Associations in Albuquerque, NM.

On Feb. 10, she will take part in a panel discussion of Native American filmmakers Sherman Alexie and Chris Eyre (her paper, “Why are Native Americans Always Wearing Leather Breaches?” appeared in the *Journal of Religion and Film*, vol. 7 no.1, under the title “Native American Religion and Film: Interviews with Chris Eyre and Sherman Alexie.”) On Feb. 11, she will be one of three

presenters for the workshop "Teaching Native Americans and Hollywood Cinema." This is the first year that Native Americans and film will be discussed at the conference.

Dr. Sarah Voss has been notified that she will teach an online course for Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago next year. The course is called "Moral Math: A Window into Religion, Science, and Love." The intensive course with online aspects includes a five-day residency the week of January 22, 2007.

Dr. Voss is also the grandmother of a new grandson. He weighed in at 7 lbs 7.7 oz. She says he is "perfect in Grandma's eyes!"

Editors head to Sundance

Dr. William L. Blizek, founding editor of the *Journal of Religion & Film*, **Dr. Paul Allen**



Williams, editor and **Dr. Michele Desmarais**, associate editor, are covering the 2006 Sundance Film Festival and review films for

JR & F this month. They will be joined this year by

Dr. Beth Ritter, anthropology associate professor and academic program director for Native American Studies who will review Native American films for *JR & F*. A "Report from Sundance" will appear on the *JR & F* site (www.unomaha.edu/jrf) upon their return.

Alumni News

After an intense three year push to get her Bachelor of Arts in Religion, the question, "What's next?" has kept **Janet McClearen's** (2005) mind churning. Then someone told her about hospital chaplaincy. She applied and was accepted into the Clinical Pastoral Education Residency Program, 2005-2006, at The Nebraska Medical Center. As a resident, she works alongside staff chaplains serving the spiritual and emotional needs of the multi-cultural/religious patients who enter the med center for treatment from all across the country and around the world.

Past experiences, coupled with her religion degree, prepared her to interact with and support patients and their families during their sometimes routine, and sometimes traumatic hospital stays. This continuing education experience is adding feet to the head knowledge gained at UNO.

Following graduation, **Christian Quello O'Connor** (2005) interned with the Girl Scouts Great Plains Council from December through May and then stayed on to help them with additional things. Her 2005 summer was filled with working day camps and finishing up her coursework at Metro Community College. She now works as an assistant to Joe Frost, president and part owner of HomeSmartz and has also been working with Jason Hellman, a loan officer at the company. She also looks forward to increased responsibility this spring.

Nikki Strayer (2004) has added a second degree to her resume, graduating with a bachelor of education degree in December 2005. She and Bob Gass were married in October 2005.

Our Students

Steve Bowman, senior religion and history major at UNO, spent last semester studying abroad in Salzburg, Austria.

Bowman said that although he had intense classroom studies, no classes were held on Friday and he had no classes on Monday so he consistently had a four day weekend. Although his coursework was concentrated in history, Bowman said religious studies was very much a part of his experience as well because of the part religion has played throughout history.

He also had the opportunity to travel in 14 western and eastern European countries including an 11 day trip through Prague, Czech Republic; Budapest, Hungary; and Poland, where Auschwitz was among the places he visited. He also spent Halloween night at Bran's Castle (Dracula's castle in Transylvania) in Romania and traveled to Turkey. He also took advantage of the many cultural events in Salzburg, which is the birthplace of Mozart and came home with a special appreciation for Mozart's music.



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Student

Essay Competition

First Prize
\$500

Second Prize
\$300

Third Prize
\$100

Competition Rules

1. Open to all UNO undergraduate students
2. Essays should be on a topic in religious studies
3. Essays should be no more than 2700 words, double spaced, type written
4. Essays should be submitted to the Religious Studies Program, ASH 205, by 3 April 2006 before 5:00 p.m.

The three winning essays will be read by their authors at a special religious studies colloquium.

Call the Religious Studies Program office, 554-2628 or Dr. William L. Blizek, 554-3347, for additional information.

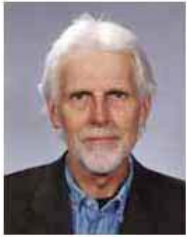
Three scholarships available to religious studies students

The Religious Studies Program in the Department of Philosophy and Religion will offer three scholarships for Fall 2006.

Juniors or seniors in the College of Arts and Sciences should pick up a Ron Burke Scholarship

brochure in ASH 205 and apply for the \$2,500 Ron Burke Scholarship and two smaller Ron Burke Memorial Scholarships by 28 February, 2006. Students are asked to write a short essay as part of their applications. The awards will be announced before the end of the semester.

Dale Stover Scholarship exceeds \$12,000



The Dale Stover Scholarship Fund has exceeded the \$10,000 goal set earlier this year by friends and family who wanted to honor Stover for his devotion to students and learning since coming to the University of Omaha at Nebraska

over 30 years ago.

Although the initial goal has been reached, donations are still welcome for the scholarship

because the larger the endowment, the greater the amount of the scholarship that can be offered

Scholarship donations welcome

Donations are welcome for any of the religious studies scholarships. Donations may be made to the Ron Burke Scholarship Fund or the Dale Stover Scholarship Fund by sending your check to the University of Nebraska Foundation, 8712 West Dodge Road, Suite 101, Omaha, NE 68114 with the name of the scholarship written in the memo line.

Share your milestones

Please send news about your milestones (new positions, promotions, marriages, births, future education, etc.) by sending it to Religious Studies

Program, UNO, ASH 205, 6001 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68182-0265 or to Kathy Schwartz at kschwartz@mail.unomaha.edu,

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