The first year of the decade, 2010, began with the earthquakes in Haiti, which were followed by the Gulf Coast oil spill. The near-depression of 2008-09 continued to wreak havoc even as the recession formally ended, and one of the last pieces of legislation passed by the government in 2010 was clearly a bipartisan, two-pronged approach at further stimulus and relief for those suffering from the consequences of the economic troubles. The rising influence of Asia, notably India and especially China, continued to play out in U.S. foreign and trade policy. The midterm elections were amazingly expensive, contentious, and extensively (if not always well) covered; & the House of Representatives will not exactly be a tea party for the Democratic Party. Yet the flurry of significant votes and legislation passed at the end of the 111th Congress suggested (again, for those familiar with history) that the media may need a new phrase to replace “lame-duck” to discuss post-election congressional meetings. Though they kicked the budget can down the road, the passage of New START, the repeal of DADT, the unsuccessful attempts to enact the Dream Act, and the aforementioned deal on extending the Bush era tax cuts for everyone regardless of income (including the 13 month extension of unemployment benefits for 99ers, the estate tax provision, and the 2% social security break for all workers) made this a rather significant congressional session whether you are thrilled, chilled, would rather have been billed, or wish it had all been killed. And, none of this even references the recommendations by the bipartisan committee looking at some of the really big issues we still face (social security reform, the deficit, and tax reform). 2010 was also eventful for the department. We added two new colleagues, Dr. Natasha Duncan and Dr. Rolfe Peterson (and Professor Lena Surzhko-Harned is no longer “visiting” but just one of the team), and as a result we were able to expand our course offerings for students. MCAP, the Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics got off to a great start in the Fall, conducting a widely cited poll and providing a superb learning opportunity for students. Homecoming was once again well attended by our alumni and – as always – quite enjoyable. Model UN, Model NATO, multiple Ad Hocs and other guest speakers, the Annual Christmas party & Beach Bash, and a trip to the American Association of Political Consultants conference kept students busy out of class too. In sum, if this first year of the decade is any tipoff to the nature of the rest of the decade, we may all end up fully appreciating the old Chinese (reputedly) curse “May you live in interesting times.” Speaking of interesting, let’s get to the alumni, and then faculty, updates. Thanks to all the alumni for staying in touch and sending in updates. It’s greatly appreciated.

WHO’S DOING WHAT: (ALUMNI UPDATES)

Maeve Kelly (Major ’07) – After nearly 3 exciting years with Senator Gillibrand, I've recently started a job with The World Economic Forum. I work as a Team Coordinator for Consumer
Industries in their NY office. In my second week I was sent to our hdqs in Geneva, Switzerland and will likely be back very soon. So far the job has been great (and a challenge) and I'm looking forward to Davos!

**Amanda Greenland** (Double Major ’09) – I have been meaning to contribute to the newsletter for a while, I always enjoy reading it and I appreciate you helping us keep each other updated! I am currently in DC working at the Pentagon in the office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. I am the youngest in my office by far which has turned out surprisingly well. I am enjoying learning from some highly experienced Intel veterans (and occasionally challenging some of their ‘old school’ ideas) I also have been able to take advantage of a ton of training opportunities ranging from classes at Georgetown to actual military training. I have found the policy/oversight side of Intelligence to be a very interesting dimension in the Intel world that I Mercyhurst (and the Poli Sci department in particular) prepared me well for. I am also finishing up a graduate certificate in asymmetrical warfare and throwing around ideas for my Masters.

**Nicole Kubit** (Major ’07) – I am still working at La Roche College and, with any luck, I will graduate this May with my M.A. in international relations from Webster University. I was promoted to the coordinator of the Study Abroad+Study USA Program at La Roche College in January, but I was working two positions until June when my replacement was finally hired. The best part about my new job is that I will have the opportunity to travel because I have to check out all of the short-term study abroad programs our department utilizes. I will be going to Paris in February, Italy/Greece in May and Vancouver in June. I also got a Kindle for Christmas this year, so now I won't have to lug around a bunch of books when I'm traveling for work!

**Sandra Grance** (Major ’02) – Still living and working in DC. I live in Capital Hill but spend most of my time traveling to state capitols. I've been working at the American Beverage Association for about 2 and a half years in the state and local government affairs department. We represent the non-alcoholic beverage industry. Think mixers… Coke, Pepsi, juices, bottled water, etc. I'm really enjoying it and gaining great experience working on multiple tax and environmental issues focusing on the entire east coast. Not to mention the negotiating and consensus building that goes into association work and dealing with major competitors. I am still running and have plans to run marathon numbers 5 and 6 in 2011 in Pittsburgh and New York City.

**Harley Ellenberger** (Major ’97) – My 7th election season here at CMAG went off without a hitch. I guess after 13 years, tracking the 4+ months of non-stop television ad campaigns all over the country becomes second-nature - although our interns and “rookies” would probably disagree. As production director, it is my job to make sure that daily operations proceed as smoothly as possible in our 10 person office. This year we serviced more clients than ever before, processed thousands of daily reports and transcribed thousands of TV ads. We’ve got several new projects planned for the off-year and will be ramping up for the onslaught of ads preceding the 2012 Presidential election. If you want to keep up on the world of political
advertising, we have a presence on all of the social media outlets – just Google CMAG to find us. Soon after Election Day, I rewarded myself for all those long days and nights with my annual 2-week deer hunting vacation in the mountains of central PA with a few of my buddies. Amongst the 6 of us we scored eleven deer total – the largest being a 7 point buck. I was fortunate enough to fill my own freezer with enough venison to last until next season. My wife Lynn (Savidge – also class of 1997) continues her work as full-time stay at home Mom. She’ll eventually get back to work in HR – probably after our youngest, Jacob (age 2 in March), starts pre-school. We were pleased that Samantha’s (now 5 years old) belief in Santa Claus remained strong despite some of the boys in her class trying to convince her otherwise. Hope all is well at the Hurst and we’ll plan on visiting campus again for Homecoming 2011.

Anna Patrick (Major ’07) -- I am still in Denver in my second year at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies. I will (hopefully) graduate this summer with an MA in International Development and will be on to the job search! I am putting together information to write a thesis on the implications of microfinance in Appalachia and I am currently working in the Office of Financial Aid at the University of Denver to pay the bills. I spent time this summer interning in rural Guanacaste, Costa Rica at a sustainable development cooperative where I learned how to build and use solar cookers and other solar technology and the very basics of sustainable agriculture. In my free time, I'm loving the Rocky Mountains and snowboarding as much as I can! I hope things are well with you and everyone in the Political Science department! Thank you, as always, for putting together this newsletter. It is always fun to see what other students have been doing (and also gives me great ideas for jobs)!

Lindsey Weber (Major ’05) -- Everything is going well here in Washington, D.C. I continue to lobby in the Financial Services world. Since the passage of the Dodd-Frank Act last summer there has been no shortage of work for us. We are in all-hands-on-deck mode right now writing comment letters mainly to the SEC and CFTC, as well as the newly created Financial Services Oversight Council, for our clients. I don't think we'll resurface or catch our breath until at least March (since most of the rulemakings have to be out by next summer). Otherwise, Michael and I are doing well...we just bought a townhouse in Old Town Alexandria. We're closing on January 31st and super excited to finally own a place. Next year seems like it will be a very busy hear for us -- very demanding jobs, settling into our new house, and planning our wedding to be held in August. All good things, though! Give my best to everyone - hope to make it back sometime soon.

Phyllis Roman (Double Major ’07) – Two and a half years out from Mercyhurst and I have almost completed my law school career here at DePaul. I have now met two Supreme Court Justices, Justice Thomas over the summer and Justice Scalia when he visited DePaul this fall - two down, seven to go. I have been working at a Plaintiff Injury firm for a year now as a law clerk and also externed with Judge Davis in the Circuit Court of Cook County (Chicago). As I enter my last term, I plan on watching da Bears take the division and look toward baseball season and my never-ending hope for the Cubs.
Amy Kovach (Minor '96) – I resigned from my position as course administrator/lecturer in the Biology Department at the Ohio State University. I moved to Athens (OH, not Greece—oh to be so lucky). I married in October (Jule Gardner Banville was in attendance—yay!). Because my husband is in his first year of a family practice residency, we took a short honeymoon to Cannan Valley National Wildlife Refuge near Davis, WV (if you travel there a great little burrito shop called Hellbenders Burritos should not be missed). I just started a position at Ohio University's College of Osteopathic Medicine as an administrator for 3rd and 4th year medical students.

Mike Foglio (Major '05) – I graduated from Atlanta’s John Marshall Law School in May and passed the July Georgia Bar Exam. I live in bustling Midtown Atlanta and absolutely love it. To keep my mind sharp while looking for permanent employment, I’ve been working as a project attorney with the Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council of Georgia. I provide trial and appellate support to District Attorneys and Solicitors General across the state, write training modules, help modernize state litigation manuals and provide counsel to the Legislative Liaison to the General Assembly. Also, having received a general civil mediation certification earlier this year, I’ve started the process of registering as a mediator with the State Office of Dispute Resolution. I anticipate 2011 will offer up plenty of thrills as I develop my practice, continue to make outstanding friends and find my place here in the Peach State. Best wishes for a happy new year. It’s going to be a good one.

Karen Eade (Minor '07) – It's always exciting to have updates from Mercyhurst. As long as all went according to plan with my finals last week....I completed the requirements for my masters of divinity this month! I'll be a counseling intern starting in January at a counseling center in Burlington, ON. I'm also engaged and going to be marrying a Mercyhurst alum in 2012! I would love to come back to Mercyhurst and get to re-experience one of your simulations. I will definitely stay tuned for details on that.

Michelle Olivares (Double Major '09) – Hello Everyone! I have made my way to London, where I have been since September. I’m a Masters student at Goldsmiths, University of London in the International Studies programme within the Politics department. I saved and brought a lot of my undergrad Poli Sci notes and thank goodness for that—I’ve referred to them quite often! The programme is only a year long but I knew that I would be moving here for the long term (hopefully) and I am currently applying for PhD programmes out here for the next few years. Just like in undergrad, my life basically consists of school and rowing. Since I can’t seem to go too long without having to have an oar in my hands, I joined the Curlew Rowing Club and I absolutely love being back on the water and my teammates are a great bunch of people. In fact, at a regatta here I met a Mercyhurst Alum who went to the school in the ‘80s, rowed under Dr. Belovarac (History dept), and knows Adrian Spracklen, the current rowing coach. Small world, eh? Anyway, cheers from London and best wishes to all for 2011!
Kristen Hudak (Major ’05) -- I wish I had news to report, but things are exactly the same for me here in DC. I'm still doing communications, public relations and writing for WebStrong, mostly in support of the Mid-Atlantic Sports Network (MASN), but also to a smaller extent, with some nonprofit organizations, political campaigns and law firms. On the side, I still write about the Washington Nationals for MASNsports.com, which continues to be fun and exhausting. I'm still volunteering with kids at a homeless shelter about once a month. It's been beyond rewarding. I'm also teaching religious education to third graders at church as part of a pretty innovative program. I am definitely searching for new career opportunities, so if anybody knows of any interesting openings, please pass them along (khudak11@gmail.com). I'm really looking forward to the reunion program next summer!

Lexi Toy (Major ’02) – How time flies. I just realized I don't have the same email anymore and wanted to make sure you had an update. Hope all is well! Things are pretty darn good right now so I'm waiting for the sky to fall. I'm still working for the Dept of Public Welfare. I'm now a Staff Development Specialist which means I get to take bright eyed and bushy tailed new hires and introduce them to the wonderful world of managing mandated self-sufficiency. I do enjoy being in front of a classroom but I really do miss being in the trenches as a worker. My hands used to be dirty and I loved every minute of it! Bonus: I get to clarify Federal and PA Welfare policy for the Pittsburgh region. Technically, I could just interpret things the way I want them to be viewed (which both you and I know is ridiculously dangerous). On another note, Joe, my boyfriend of 8 years has finally freaking proposed and we are getting married this coming August. The only thing bad I can say is that he is a Gannon Communications and Poli Sci Grad. Other than that he's pretty ok. :) 

Billy Byrnes (Double Major ’02) – I am in my third year of full time Campus Ministry work at Bellarmine College Prep in San Jose, CA. It is an all-boys Jesuit Catholic high school. I recently took nine students to Washington DC for the Ignatian Solidarity Network's Ignatian Family Teach In For Justice where we attended speakers and breakout sessions held at Georgetown University. The weekend culminated in an advocacy day on the hill where we met with our representatives on a few issues including the DREAM Act, closing the SOA, and sustainability efforts. We did a quick yet thorough tour of the main sites in DC with the students, including a tour of the field and dugout at the Washington Nationals Stadium. Another highlight was the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. My wife and I just celebrated our one year anniversary. We honeymooned for most of the summer in Europe, driving around the Peloponnese in Greece, hitting a few coastal towns in Croatia, and delighting in the cuisine of Italy in Parma and Le Marche. I pray everyone is well and will be enjoying the peace and joy of Christmas.

Lindsey Kole (Double Major ’07) -- Things are going well in DC. I was recently accepted into a Masters program at George Washington University. I will be working toward a degree in
Security and Safety Leadership. It's a program that is geared toward working professionals so I plan to continue working full time and attending classes at nights and on weekends. I'm looking forward to getting back into the classroom, although I have a feeling it will take some time to get used to again. Last summer Kristen Hudak and I were extras for the movie 'How Do You Know.' Unfortunately, we did not make it into the movie but it was a fun experience! Hope all is well!

Gretchen Ulery (Major ’95) -- Happy Holidays to you! I hope you have some great plans to spend the holiday with family and friends. I'm leaving tomorrow night to head to Cleveland and see everyone who can make it in to town. It's just a short trip as I have to come back here to close out the year on my account but hopefully it will be relatively quiet. I'm still a California resident and it looks like I'll be out here at least through 2011. I'm having quite a good time of it (finally - the first 6 months out here were AWFUL) and am kicking off the year with a trip to Sweden with my sister. I know - Sweden in January, right? But the timing couldn't be helped. Have some other travel scheduled to NYC, Boston, etc but otherwise should be busy starting the 2011 plan with my team. Can't really say that much else is new here....[Editor’s Note: Gretchen is still with IBM and stationed in SF]

Zach Smith (Minor ’05) – Merry Christmas Dr. C and to the entire Mercyhurst Campus. I do miss seeing the Hurst's halls decked for Christmas and covered in snow. Work for Booz Allen is still keeping me quite busy and is very interesting. I am still supporting an organization structuring the Department of Defense's Counter WMD plans and strategies. Outside of work Kara and I are fully settled into our house and community. I have joined the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department and am in training to be an EMT/Firefighter. It's extensive and exhausting but very rewarding giving back to our new community. That pretty well sums up what is new and occurring in my life. I wish all of you and yours the best for the New Year. Cheers.

Dana Hyland (Major ’05) -- After 3+ years at EPA, and bouncing around to 6 different positions under my fellowship, I finally settled into my last one in the Climate Change Division! I am thrilled to have a place to call home now and I get to work with a fantastic group of people. I am working as the special assistant to the director of our division and it definitely keeps me hopping. Every day is different and there's a lot going on, which I really enjoy. There will no doubt be plenty of challenges in 2011, after the new Congress comes in- it will be interesting to see how it affects the executive branch. Other than work I haven't been up to much lately, just getting ready for the holidays and looking forward to spending time at home with family. I hope everyone has a wonderful start to 2011!
**Erin Hooks** (Major ’04) – Hope all is going well with you and with everyone at Mercyhurst. I don't have too much to report at this time. I'm still living in Niagara Falls and I am a social worker with the Niagara County Department of Social Services. This job definitely brings back a lot of memories and lessons from our Public Administration class. As crazy as it is though, I absolutely love it and am considering going back to school and possibly getting my Masters degree in social work. Other than that, everything is going great.

**Alyson Pinter** (Double Major ’05) – Anyway, as far as updates go, everything is going fabulously for me! Horses are good, job is good, life is good! I've changed positions at work, and am enjoying my new focus and some excellent coworkers. Its already gotten me some very high-level exposure to some senior folks--over the summer I was given the sole lead of managing a crisis (sorry, that's all I can say!) and it worked out very well, I received a lot of praise for how I handled it and the various taskings and responsibilities it involved. I've also gotten addicted to an Israeli form of self-defense training called Krav Maga...I've gotten my fair share of cuts and bruises, but I really enjoy it! I've been training now for close to two years and have started teaching a few of the beginner classes as well--and for those of you in the DC area, we offer a free week of training if you're interested! (www.kravworks.com) The horses are good, never been healthier, and I've been thinking about getting back into the show circuit next summer. Best wishes for a wonderful new year--I'll keep in touch and let you know the next time I'll be in Erie! (I stopped by in August, had lunch with Dr. Ripley!)

**Rich Wagner** (Major ’96) -- No news is good news. Rachel and "E" are now a little over a year old and starting to walk, work is fine, etc. I am going to make an attempt to come up in June and will make sure to pack my Thomas Jefferson bobble head for Dr. Federici.

**Kristen Brown** (Contract Major ’03) -- Happy Holidays!!! I am at work trying to get a major proposal out the door so that I can scoot out of here for the rest of the year. Things are going well. My COO and boss both got terminated, and my working relationship with my new boss is much more productive and positive, though my old boss LOVED me. (I didn't want to make it sound like we didn't get along, because I believe in business if you don't get along with your boss, it's usually your fault... if you want a job you make it work any way you can, even if it's less than fun). On the gym side, we are adding a bunch of new programs come January. We developed an in-house program called Shredded that's going to be like a hard core sports team workout (think suicides, Indian runs, basketball drills, etc.). I heard you are a newcomer to the gym, so hopefully you will try something I teach! At 6am I do Body Max and Body Pump. At 6pm I do Rock Bottom and Shredded, and on Sat. mornings I do Body Pump. I would love to see another friendly face (was that a hard enough sell, lol?).
Rob Vescio (Major ’96) – On the professional side, I have left my employer (GSP CONSULTING) and am moving over to the law firm Cohen and Grigsby to launch a government affairs practice group beginning January 1st. My new email will be rvescio@cohenlaw.com. On the personal side, the family keeps me busy. My two boys, Andrew (4) and Alexander (2) are growing up fast. Sorry for the brief update. More next time. Happy New Year.

Albert Veverka (Major ’05) -- Everything here is pretty much the same. I still love my job serving as Judge Emery's law clerk. We are currently preparing for a couple of homicide trials in the new year, which should provide a change of pace from our typical work in civil law. I currently play on a USTA tennis team, and we recently won our section and we will be moving onto to regionals in the summer. I am actively involved in our bar association and all of the activities surrounding the holidays. Recently the courthouse was decorated for the holidays and we had an evening gala for charity. I will also be attending the Pittsburgh Penguins alumni game on December 31, as part of the winter classic. I am very excited to see Mario Lemieux lace up his skates one more time! I hope all is well at the Hurst. I hope everyone has a Happy Holidays and a very prosperous and fulfilling New Year.

Brian Cagle (Minor ’04) – In July I started a new job. I am now an Assistant District Attorney in York County, PA. I am handling a general caseload except for homicide, sexual assault, child abuse, and juvenile cases. I am responsible for cases from the preliminary hearing stage through the first appellate brief. Last week I had my first guilty verdict in a jury trial! In case anyone is interested, the York County DA's Office handles about 9,000 adult criminal cases every year and another 2,000 juvenile delinquency cases. We have 26 attorneys including the District Attorney. Other than the job, nothing else is new with me. Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Sarah Belotti (Major ’09) – At the end of this past summer I left my non-profit job and returned to "school" at Canisius College to get my paralegal certification. I loved the class and the material, and LOVED being back in the classroom. I am now working as a paralegal for Duke, Holzman, Photidias and Gresens here in Buffalo. I assist two partners at the firm and one associate. Our practice mostly concentrates on commercial litigation, construction law and labor and employment. I LOVE IT. I am so challenged everyday and feel like I am learning so much. I would have never guessed that I would find construction law so interesting. I am definitely using a lot of my research skills from MC and a lot of the skills I learned in Legal Research and Writing. I love what I do! I feel like I am in my professional playground (as cliche as that sounds) I have also considered potentially pursuing law school, and am starting to look at some programs that may be appropriate for me.
Tony D’Abruzzo (Major ’03) – Good Ole Doc C, Greetings from Sunny Philadelphia. First off, a belated congrats are in order to you for your San Fran Giants. Great World Series win and even better divisional playoffs. It wasn’t easy secretly rooting for your team being surrounded by Philly fans and their very sad demeanor after Howard struck out. Priceless memories. As of October, I'm now working for the Philadelphia Police Department. I was brought in to assist on analyzing data on a grant program aimed at finding better solutions to reducing crime in specified areas of the city. It’s been fairly interesting thus far and my role has been more involved the programmatic side than analysis. In theory, I'm about 5 months behind on work since city budget issues held my hiring up that long (I interviewed in April), so its been a little stressful. All in all, it’s a decent job and more of the type of work I wanted to do following grad school. There isn’t much advice I can give to students these days other than working in the public sector can be frustrating. A person told me once to always remember why you got into public service when things are frustrating. Years later, that man killed himself, but its still good advice and something I remind myself of these days. There isn’t much else to report on with me. No marathons since May. I might run Pittsburgh again if I can fit it in this year. As always, give my best to the rest of the Poli Sci crew.

Sladjana Milicevic (Minor ’10) – I am still waiting for my clearance, working at the Intell Department and living the dream daily. I will be moving to St. Louis shortly (pending on the clearance), embarking on a new adventure and working for our beloved government. I don't know anyone in St. Louis and I've never been there but I'm sure that it's a great city based on the facts of the day I've been reading (obviously logical reasoning ha ha). Did you know that iced tea was first served at the St. Louis state fair in 1901? Anyways, I hope that 2011 brings great successes!

Casey Kilroy (Double Major ’03) – I'm doing very well, working on my second contract with Seabourn Cruise Line, currently out in the warm waters of the Caribbean. Definitely missing being home for the holidays, but very thankful to be doing what I love...performing! I finished my first CD recording last month "Five Foot Two." It is currently for sale in the college bookstore (with a portion of every CD going to the Emergency Book Fund!). It is also for sale on my website, and digitally through t-tunes and CD Baby. It has some great tunes from "The Great American Songbook," and I was so blessed to work on the project at an Erie recording studio with local musicians and having the graphic design done by a Mercyhurst Alum Christa Wilson Penner ’04 and the Photography by Mercyhurst Alum Rachel Mason Lusky ’04. (Nothing wrong with a little shameless plug!) The packaging is a new concept called a digipak, and uses recycled paperboard, soy based inks and even a recycled plastic tray for the CD itself. It's something that I'm very proud of, and breathing a bit easier now that it's out of my hands in on the shelves!

Tim Krysiek (Minor ’05) – In April I moved from Houston to London to take a position in corporate strategy with Statoil, the Norwegian oil and gas company. My workload varies, but typically I contribute to strategy projects for the international management committee and the board of directors. I spent most of the summer shuttling back and forth to Norway and most of
the fall working with our offices in Beijing and Moscow. Living in London has been fun. I found a flat in the Marylebone neighborhood of west London, just north of Hyde Park. Since moving to the UK, I've made it back the US a few times for work and once for vacation on Martha's Vineyard. I'm looking forward to an extended stay at home in Pennsylvania over the Christmas holiday.

**Jenelle Remington** (Major 10) – I have been working at a law firm as a legal assistant for 6 months now in downtown Rochester, NY. I work in foreclosure, definitely not where I expected to be nor do I see it as my future but for now it is a job with benefits, PTO and some very nice and funny co-workers! Hope all is well.

**Stephanie Williams** (Minor ’10) – Currently I am working and living in the DC area as an intelligence analyst. However, I have not given up on my hopes of grad school. My dream is to enroll next spring in Georgetown's Center for Peace and Security Studies as their joint J.D. and M.A. programs would marry my interests quite well. However, even if I don't manage to get into GT I still plan on pursuing a Masters in something poli sci related; most likely foreign policy or international relations. Other than that life is fairly ordinary. On a side note, today when I came across Thomas Friedman in my research, I did have a American Foreign Policy flashback that consisted of gazelles, lions and outsourcing.

**Andrea Hashim** (Minor ’04) – I am still living in Scottsdale, Arizona, where I most recently took on a new career! I was working in Development and Artist Services at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts the past three years, but was offered the position as Dance Program Director at Glendale Community College (GCC) in Glendale, Arizona (still in the Phoenix area, you may have seen the Super Bowl in Glendale a few years back?) The job is everything I thought it would be... Dance is housed in the Performing Arts Department, my office literally runs as if I was in the movie FAME- opera students practicing in one classroom, band, piano, and trumpets in the other, acting students practicing their lines and dance students roaming from room to room! It is really incredible. My job duties include teaching 15 units a semester, choreographing for the dance company, advising, supporting my adjunct faculty and other misc. administrative roles in keeping the program running. GCC offers a two-year degree, Associates of Fine Arts in Dance, in which many of my students are in the business of transferring to 4-year programs, hopefully some future Mercyhurst Alumni will be in the mix!! :) My time at Mercyhurst certainly served me well for taking on this job, not to mention my political science classes, i.e. - Leadership, have equipped me for this new role! During my advising meetings, I am consistently pushing my students to explore different routes of education, I think I have few that share my similar interests of poli sci and dance.... I often feel like a proud mother watching these students excel. All in all, everything in Arizona is fantastic! I am currently home in California enjoying the holidays, my family says hello to all! Cheers to the OMNIBUS Bill (sarcasm, of course),
Christie (Stratthaus) Grisetti (Major ’98) – I really don’t have much to report as everything has remained the same! I have been with the same company for 10 years, married for 8 years and my daughters are now 5 and 2 ½. Working full-time and raising my girls keeps my schedule full. I think of Mercyhurst often and hope to get back up to visit in the near future; maybe for the reunion in June.

Melissa (Poliseno) Burke (Major ’03) – Hope all is well in Mercyworld...nothing too new with me, I just got back from Miami for the Bills-Dolphins game and we actually WON this year!!! It was such a great trip after a long year of work! I still really love my job and where I work. In addition to insurance defense, I started our firms Workers' Compensation Department so I am excited about that :-) . Just getting ready for the Holidays in snowy Buffalo but I love it!!

Brian M. Maurelli (Minor ’05) -- Greetings from the snowland of Minnesota. I have returned from Afghanistan this past September after spending 11 months there. I then went on leave traveling the world to see Australia and the Philippines. If you think people in Erie can't drive try driving in the Philippines with five cars across in three lane highways. I am currently stationed in Minnesota for another year before I receive my next assignment.

Jule (Gardner) Banville (Contract Major ’95) – I wish my update included plans to not miss The Simulation. If ever there was incentive needed to leave Montana in June... Alas, it's too freakin' expensive to fly east out of Missoula, Amy Kovach's wedding being the exception (two updates for the price of one!). Careerwise, I was hired as the editor of NewWest.Net, a five-year-old website covering issues important to the Rocky Mountain West (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah). In that job, I came to conclude that wolves in the west is as testy a subject as abortion in most places. The site also covered drilling and mining pretty extensively, some politics, some ag and farming, and has carved out a decent niche writing about and reviewing Western authors (newwest.net/books). It was a good gig, but after six months, I opted to go part-time and hand over the wheel to someone else. I continue to run projects for the site from home, where I have a busy 1-year-old. Back in the day, I took an independent study course from Ole Doc on Feminist Politics. I didn't realize that 15-plus years later, I'd be thinking about some of the issues we discussed while navigating the tradeoffs that are inevitable when you have both a kid and an education and value both. I'm holding out for another opportunity to teach at the U of Montana Journalism School, which looks likely. Teaching, I found out in the last year, is much more fulfilling than editing and moving copy. Who knew? Hope all is well with everyone else. As I dig out of the pre-Thanksgiving snow, I almost yearn for Erie winters. More brutal, maybe, but shorter!
ALSO, I want to thank a number of alums who provided a non update update (e.g. Dani, Breanne, Beth, Chuck), and all of you who made it to Homecoming. THANX.

FACULTY NEWS:

Dr. Federici is nearing completion of his book on Alexander Hamilton to be published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2011. He is also working on a volume of essays by various scholars titled The Modest Republic. He wrote an article on the state of intellectual conservatism for the Political Science Reviewer and has accepted an invitation to publish a 6,000 word essay on Alexander Hamilton for the Encyclopedia of Political Theory.

Professor Surzhko-Harned had a productive Fall term and is looking forward to the eventful New Year. The Model UN team won top awards in all three scrimmages in the Fall and are getting ready to take on representing Spain in the National Model NATO conference in DC, February 17 -20. The New Year opens with a professional conference of the Southern Political Science Association for LSH. She’ll be presenting a paper entitled “From Soviet ‘Super Woman’ to an ‘Independent Woman’: Gender and Political Behavior in Ukraine.” A paper entitled “A Generation Apart: How the Post-Communist Transition Shaped the Post-Soviet Values” which LSH has co-authored with the help from Caitlin Handerhan and Klara Wisniewska as part of the Faculty Guided Research is under review for publication in the journal of Communist and Post-Communist Studies. A second paper produced from this cooperation has been accepted to the European Studies Association Conference to be held in Boston MA in early March of 2011.

Dr. Morris has been spending his time in the Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics (MCAP). Using the center's computer-assisted telephone interviewing facility, Dr. Morris, Dr. Peterson and more than two-dozen students conducted a poll of residents of Pennsylvania's third congressional district during a two week period in September. The results, which showed a substantial lead by Republican candidates for the House of Representatives, Senate and Governor, was published in the Erie Times News and included on more than a dozen websites dealing with the 2010 midterm elections (e.g. cnn.com, realclearpolitics.com, nationalreview.com). Dr. Morris, Dr. Peterson and the center's intern, Mercyhurst student Shon Fedorko, are now preparing for a second study: Social Capital and Civic Engagement in Erie County. The study is funded by the Erie Community Foundation and will replicate social capital studies conducted in 2000 and 2006 by other researchers. Outside of work, Dr. Morris is busy chasing Logan (18 months) around the house and running Gracie (8 years) to and from piano, choir and dance (and fly fishing from time to time).

Dr. Peterson and his family happily joined the Mercyhurst family this year. His work with Dr. Morris to launch the MCAP and to carry out the center’s first election poll was equal parts challenging and rewarding. He seized the opportunity to integrate the survey research into his public opinion class by blending the practical training of the center with the theoretical
background of public opinion and polling. The students seemed to enjoy the class, while definitely enjoying the pizza the MCAP provided on calling nights. In the spring, he is coauthoring a research paper on Arlen Specter’s party switch in 2009 using original data from the Mercyhurst Poll, as well as working with Professor Surzhko-Harned and undergraduate research assistants on a study of Twitter use by Members of Congress. On top of this work, he is currently penning a memoir of his first winter in Erie. The story revolves around a first person account of competitors bested, adversaries faced, elements survived, and meeting the challenges that arise from walking out your front door. The story is tentatively titled “Portrait of a Man and his Snowblower.”

Dr. Duncan had a good fall term and is settling well into the winter term. She feels very much a part of the Mercyhurst College family, and is excited about the spring term, where she will be teaching classes on international relations and comparative politics. In addition to teaching, she is actively working on a few research projects with the help of Rachel Brown, a political science major. She presented two of these papers at the North American Regional Science Conference in November. She will also present another paper at the International Studies Association Meeting in Montreal, Canada, in March 2011. In the fall term, an article of which she was a co-author was published in the academic journal Terrorism and Political Violence. She also has an article under review at the academic journal World Politics. Dr. Duncan is the new advisor of the Phi Eta Sigma honor society. She looks forward to continue teaching at Mercyhurst College, collaborating with students on research projects and being an active member of the Mercyhurst family.

Dr. Ripley has completed his first six months as a full-time administrator (Dean of Faculty in the Office for Academic Affairs) and is adjusting to life on the dark side. In an effort to avoid a “cold turkey” break from faculty life, he was part of two faculty teams teaching interdisciplinary courses for first term freshmen during the fall term. Dr. Ripley was the resident political scientist for “Urbanology” --- a course on urban issues and social science perspectives on urban life --- and “Irish Identities” --- about the literature, politics, and religion of Ireland in the 19th and 20th centuries. He thoroughly enjoyed both courses. These team-taught Interdisciplinary Studies (or IDST) courses now part of the core curriculum for incoming freshmen, in some sense replacing the old FYI, but with much more emphasis on introducing first year students to the academic life of Mercyhurst. In his new administrative role, Dr. Ripley has been asked to serve as the co-chair of the Middle States self-study (re-accrediting process) which takes place every ten years. This process (which borrows some of the basic techniques from the world of policy analysis, familiar to veterans of our department’s Public Administration course) is a chance to examine how Mercyhurst is doing in a wide variety of areas --- from coursework to student services to budgeting to living our professed mission --- and seeking ways to make improvements. Many (but not all) of the tractors, agricultural artifacts, and Ohio State paraphernalia have made the move from Preston Hall to his Old Main office.
**Dr. Clemons** had a very busy, but rewarding, Fall Term. For one thing, he inherited the popular Senior Project course from Dr. Ripley and enjoyed working with the seniors in this important capstone course, and reading their political memoirs. He also again taught “Exploring Law: Ideas with Teeth” as one of the college’s interdisciplinary courses. The other professors in this course are President Thomas Gamble (psychology), Dr. Peter Benekos (Criminal Justice), and Attorney Merry Schultz (Business). And, fear not, students in my fall section of Geopolitics once again traveled to Planet Mandala. He and Dr. Peterson also accompanied students to Akron University for the American Association of Political Consultants conference on applied politics. Homecoming was a highlight, with more than a dozen of our alumni joining the faculty for this annual chance to visit and sharing with current students their tales of paths traveled relating to graduate and law school experiences, working at think tanks, overseas opportunities, internships, private sector employment, and applied politics (not to mention important stuff like marriage and children). On a related note, he has started working with the folks in the Alumni/Development Offices to coordinate the Political Science part of the June 2011 Reunion Weekend (more below). It was also an honor to be asked to give the talk this fall at the Erie County Foster Parent Association Recognition Dinner, a nice event honoring the individuals in this community who provide this valuable service of love to so many children. Plus, an article he co-authored appeared in the fall edition of the Journal of Public Affairs Education. If you happen to be teaching public policy in a graduate, undergraduate, or possibly high school course, it might be of use to you. (Okay, so granted that is unlikely, nonetheless, here’s the link: [http://www.naspaa.org/jpaemessenger/index.asp](http://www.naspaa.org/jpaemessenger/index.asp)

Finally, thanks again for sharing your updates and also for letting me know how much you appreciate reading about the extended Mercyhurst poli sci family all of you are a part of. Happy 2011.

*REUNION NEWS*: Early this June (3-5) the Political Science Department is going to be part of the big Reunion Weekend this year. Information about the event, registration, pricing (very reasonable), and such is available at the following website: [http://reunion.mercyhurst.edu](http://reunion.mercyhurst.edu)

As I noted in an earlier email, the academic programs being featured are Political Science, Criminal Justice, and Hospitality Management. While open to all alumni, classes featured include 1961 (50th anniversary), 1971 (40th anniversary), the 35th generational (1975, 76, 77), 1986 (25th anniversary), the 15th generational (1995, 96, 97), and 2001 (10th anniversary). Also,
they are celebrating the following sports teams: Baseball & Softball, Men's and Women's Basketball, and Men's and Women's Rowing.

Along with all of the other events, receptions, etc. your poli sci department will be offering you a couple of opportunities to attend "Alumni College" while here (as well as a chance to meet with all the faculty).

One event will be a simulation, and Dr. Ripley has graciously agreed to co-author a new simulation with me. More information on this will be available on the reunion website down the road.

A second event will feature Dr. Federici lecturing on his forthcoming book on Alexander Hamilton, which hopefully will be in print by Reunion time.