

Northeastern Illinois University
College of Arts and Sciences

CAS CONNECTIONS

2024 Fall Term | Issue #9 | September 18th, 2024

FROM THE DEAN

Greetings, CAS community!

Welcome—or welcome back—to another academic year and another year of our CAS Connections newsletter. We love trying to do our best to keep our alumni, students, staff, faculty, and friends up to speed on all that's going on in the vibrant and active College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). We can't keep up, really, because the CAS is a hive of activity, but we hope to give you highlights—and we always welcome your input and ideas on what to feature.

If you don't know me, I'm Tim Libretti. I serve currently as the Interim Dean alongside my good colleagues, Acting Associate Deans Ken Voglesonger and Amanda Dykema-Engblade. We are happy to be heading up the CAS for another year and anticipate a productive and creative year under the leadership of our new President (former CAS Dean) Katrina Bell-Jordan. Having served at NEIU for 28+ years, she leads us with a deep understanding and care for our institution.

Ken, Amanda, and I meet this year with optimism, as we had a great summer meeting first-year and transfer students at orientations and sharing with them all the opportunities the CAS makes available to them. We are excited about all that this bright incoming group of students can and will accomplish at NEIU and beyond.

NEIU graduates bring so much to the world, and we know NEIU provides opportunities for students to access college in ways they might not otherwise be able to. It would be a great loss if NEIU and public higher education in general did not make a college education available to them. We all gain when we educate our students, which is why I typically find the question, "*Is a college education worth it?*" rather puzzling. The impulse behind this question is to doubt whether an individual will benefit financially from a college degree and tends not to wonder about the social benefit of making higher education available to all people.

We as a nation need to make higher education accessible and affordable for all who want it. We can't afford to neglect developing our collective talents and abilities in the way

college allows. As a society, we need people educated in STEM to tackle some of our most pressing problems. We need people learned in the Social and Behavioral Sciences to understand how we function as human beings. We need people educated in the Humanities who have a deep understanding of the range of human experiences. We need people learned in the Fine Arts to develop the aesthetic dimensions of our lives and worlds and to help us develop our creative outlets.

You may be attending Northeastern to develop your skills and abilities to build a better life for yourself, but you are also fulfilling a public good and helping meet a social need. We the people, through our government, invest in public higher education because **WE NEED YOU** to learn all that we have to offer here so you can help our world run, do the vital work of the world to meet our collective human needs, and address our social challenges. We depend on each other; we depend on **YOU**. But no pressure...

Our world especially needs the Northeastern student. The insights and experiences of our diverse student body brings a special vision to go along with the knowledge you are learning and producing. So many of our students come from marginalized populations that haven't had sufficient opportunity to contribute to shaping our world and offering insights to make our world more humane, equitable, and just. You, the Northeastern student, do that. You bring it to the world. And we need you to do that.

All that I've written here is part of the reason we're so excited to welcome our new students and welcome back our returning students. As we say at NEIU: **OUR MISSION IS YOU**. And, really, our mission is all of us—and it starts with **YOU**.

So, welcome back to another year of meaningful and hopefully inspiring work to all in our community—students, staff, and faculty. And to our alumni, always come back and join us, stay in touch, and let us know how you want to be involved in our mission and, of course, how we can continue to best serve you!

All the best,

Tim Libretti

Interim Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

IN THIS ISSUE

Letter From the Dean

Faculty Highlight: Dr. Scott Hegerty

Student Highlight: Tyris Manney

Alumni Highlight: Ed Remus

ChicagoCHEC fellows join NEIU'S 2024 Summer Data Camp

Alumni Impact: Renee Bracey Sherman

Upcoming CAS Events

College Undergraduate Scholars Program

Contacts & Links

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

Dr. Scott Hegerty

Professor of Economics

**Chair of Anthropology,
Economics, Geography &
Environmental Studies,
Global Studies, and
Philosophy**



What kinds of research are you doing?

Right now I am doing a lot of joint projects with colleagues, where I mainly do the statistics. Most of this is with the Warsaw School of Economics—I just got added to a grant where we examine how being part of a geographic cluster affects firm performance—but I'm also looking at trade and CO2 emissions with a colleague from Romania. On my own, I have a few projects in Urban Geography. The big one lately looks at whether ethnic diversity changes sharply at urban-suburban borders.

What is your favorite thing about NEIU?

Definitely the fact that we have such a big impact on people's lives. A college degree—or even just one class—can change not only someone's earning power, but also their view of the world. Plus, everyone is super interesting, and I get to hear about their businesses, side hustles, or YouTube discographies.

What are your hobbies?

I'm a musician, and used to play bass in bands. I was in a Gospel Choir in Milwaukee for years, and we would go on bus tours to small towns across Wisconsin(!). I play guitar and drums as well. Right now I write songs to get a laugh out of people and have smuggled a guitar into BBH. I also read a lot of weird sci-fi when I get the chance.

Why did you decide to work in an academic environment?

I originally thought I was going to work for the Federal Government, and wound up interviewing at a few places around D.C. It got weird—at one point a bunch of applicants were taking the psych eval in a computer lab (I passed!) and since I got done pretty quickly I wound up helping some others understand the questions. That whole experience helped me realize I'd rather be in the classroom.

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Tyris Manney

**Communication, Media,
and Theatre Major**



Tell us about yourself!

Hello, I'm Tyris Manney. I'm 26 years old and from the southside of Chicago. I'm currently a senior at Northeastern Illinois University, and I'm a part of the Communication, Media and Theatre major – focusing more on the media side.

What are your career goals?

In my heart, I believe I will live a big life, so I have multiple career goals. As a student, I'm currently studying film, and my goal is to dig up lost histories of Black people all around the world and tell their stories through documentary and feature film. A lot of our history was lost, tampered with, and/or not truthfully told, so I want to deliver the truth. I will also teach film classes at the post-secondary level. I'm applying for grad schools this fall (wish me luck). I have a deep passion for writing and my goal is to write books. I actually submitted a manuscript of a book I wrote this summer. I also plan to do some acting in the future as well.

Moreover, I'm the founder and owner of a skincare company aptly named 'Tyris Manney Beauty'. Our mission is to empower individuals to embrace their true beauty and discover confidence through our extraordinary skincare products. We offer five unique products that cleanse, tone, exfoliate, and moisturize skin to perfection. Each of our products are 100% organic, plant-based, formulated for all skin types, and each under \$35. In addition, as a part of our social impact initiative, we are starting a program called 'A Moment For Mental Health'. It's a program aimed at gifting four free therapy sessions to underrepresented and low-income individuals in Chicago. I'm very excited for the future of my company and can't wait to see where it goes.

What do you like about NEIU so far?

There are many things I like about NEIU. I think the biggest thing is the support I receive from my department. For instance, the CMT department Chair and Professor Cyndi Moran is the absolute best, and I can always count on her. Edie Rubinowitz is the sweetest and at the forefront always strives to help her students. I really appreciate them both. The unwavering support from the CMT department is something I couldn't have received anywhere else.

Is there anything else we should know about you?

I'm really focused on becoming the best me that I can be and with work and school a lot of my time goes towards that. I do, however, have two dogs and I enjoy taking care of them both. They bring me a lot of joy. I also enjoy traveling.

I recently got the awesome opportunity and privilege to go to Palm Springs California to pitch my business at the NGLCC Conference and I won \$5,000. The experience was like no other. I met a lot of great people, and I received guidance that will carry to the next level. I worked so hard on my pitch and when I was done, I felt great because I did so good. Palm Spring was hot. It was around 115 degrees each day, but the people and culture are great. I will never forget that experience.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Ed Remus



Undergraduate Education

In 2008 I received a Bachelor of Arts in Geography from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. My second major was Philosophy.

Graduate Education

In 2010 I received a Master of Science in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In 2019 I received a Master of Arts in History from Northeastern Illinois University.

Current Position

Social Sciences Librarian at the Ronald Williams Library at NEIU.

How did the history MA program prepare you for your job?

As a member of the NEIU Libraries faculty, my job consists of teaching, research, and service. The History MA program prepared me to excel in each of these areas. My job involves teaching history students how to conduct their primary and secondary source research. I serve not only undergraduate and graduate History students at NEIU but Chicago-area junior high and high school Chicago Metro History Day contestants as well. I have even assisted some NEIU History faculty members with their research! The intensive primary and secondary source research I conducted as a student in the History MA program prepared me to provide this expert-level research training and assistance to historians at each of these levels.

Another part of my teaching role involves partnering with NEIU faculty to organize panel discussions of controversial topics featuring scholars with differing political points of view. In collaboration with History faculty and students, I've organized viewpoint-diverse panels on topics ranging from [political realignment](#) and [the political status of Puerto Rico](#) to [abortion law](#) and [the Second Amendment](#). I was able to curate these discussions thanks in large part to the broad range of ideological viewpoints to which I was exposed in the History MA program; this exposure began with Professor Mateo Farzaneh's historiography course, the first class I took in the program.

A second area of my job involves conducting scholarly research. My research has focused in part on the history of socialism in the United States. I put my secondary source research skills to the test by writing a bibliographic essay (in parts [one](#) and [two](#)) on the historiography of the Socialist Party of America during the lifetime of Eugene Debs. What began as a four-page paper proposal for Professor Francesca Morgan's "Readings on Nineteenth Century America" class in 2017 eventually grew into a 15,000-word essay published in *Choice*!

Likewise, I drew on the primary-source research I conducted for Professor Joshua Salzman's 2019 seminar in twentieth century American history to deliver two academic conference presentations, [one](#) on an abortive, late-1960s attempt to re-found a mass socialist party in the United States and [the other](#) on one particular socialist organization, Social Democrats, USA, that emerged from the dissolution of the Socialist Party of America in 1972-73. My research on this latter topic will be published as an article in the forthcoming (third) edition of the Encyclopedia of the American Left.

Finally, I honed my ability to analyze texts in the Marxist tradition while completing an independent study with Professor Charles Steinwedel. I deployed these analytical skills during [a 2021 conference presentation](#) addressing how three thinkers within the American Trotskyist tradition approached the issue of civil liberties.

A third part of my job involves serving on committees of librarians dedicated to defending intellectual freedom at the state and national levels. On these committees, we frequently discuss situations in which an individual or organization finds a library's materials or programs to be objectionable on moral and/or political grounds and attempts to have said materials or programs removed from the library. Over the past decade, such challenges to library materials and programs have come from both politically conservative and politically progressive directions, with challengers in each case arguing that removing certain library materials or programs would serve the interests of "the community" or "the people." Thanks to the historical perspective I gained in the History MA program, [I have been able to theorize](#) these conflicts as recent iterations of a longer-standing tension between liberty, on the one hand, and democracy, on the other. This historical framing has bolstered my ability—and, I hope, the ability of my fellow librarians—to publicly defend our profession's core value of intellectual freedom, grounded as it is in liberty.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Conducting scholarly research is a little bit like solving a puzzle. It provides a similar feeling of satisfaction at the end. Research is also an intensely collaborative process. Oftentimes the most difficult part is discerning what you really want to know. I enjoy working with students and faculty to help them figure out what they need to find and working with them to find it. I also enjoy conducting my own research, so much of which has stemmed in one way or another from the education I received during the History MA program.

ChicagoCHEC fellows join NEIU'S 2024 Summer Data Camp

by Jaweriya Azeem, 2023 ChicagoCHEC Fellows cohort



The Research and Statistical Services (REST) team within the NEIU Center of Health hosted a 3-day Summer Data Camp entitled “Be Prepared for Applied Data Research” for students. This year we were excited to have our 2024 ChicagoCHEC cohort join these events. During the camp, participants learned about the fundamentals of data, data wrangling, analytics, statistical modeling, and more. The camp prepared participants to complete an independent research project, providing them with the necessary skills for advanced research experiences offered at NEIU and beyond. The Summer Data Camp at NEIU is a free program, and participants who complete the program received a Digital Credentials Badge which they can display on their professional network accounts like LinkedIn.

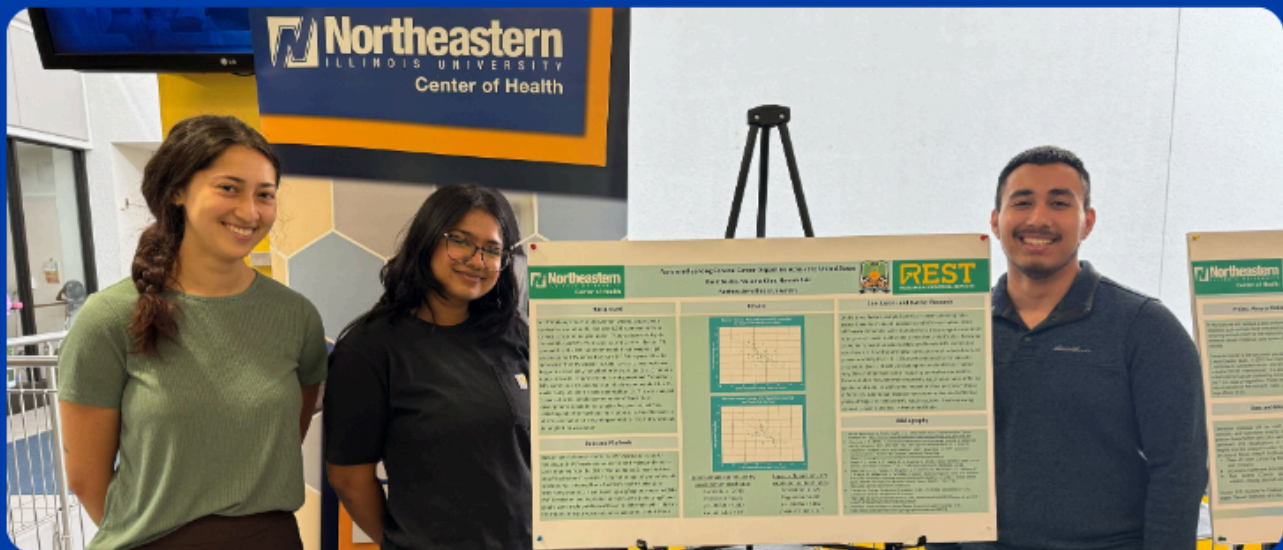
The 2024 Summer Data Camp was held in person at Northeastern Illinois University’s Main Campus. Campers participated in 3 sessions on June 11, 12, and 13 from 9AM to 1PM. In addition, campers had the opportunity to complete team-based research projects and poster presentations. Campers who completed a project and poster presentation competed for prizes of 1st (\$300), 2nd (\$200), and 3rd (\$100). Posters were presented at the camp’s Research Jamboree on Friday, July 26th, 2024. After the poster presentations and Jamboree, guests and participants came together for lunch where the competition winners were announced. We are thrilled to announce the winners of the competition, which includes many of our fellows:

3rd Place: Valeriia Kondrushyna, Narges Mohammadi, Mary Arreguine-Casimiro, Agata Soltys, Alejandro Trejo, and Delia Castrejon

2nd Place: David Bastos, Masuma Khan, and Hannah Paik

1st Place: Lawannah Boyde, Ariunaa Tsegmed, and Abraham Celio

Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who participated!



ALUMNI IMPACT



Renee Bracey
Sherman

PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR | SOCIOLOGY MINOR

NEIU alum Renee Bracey Sherman is a renowned reproductive justice activist, abortion storyteller, and writer. She is the founder of We Testify, an organization dedicated to supporting people from all walks of life who share their abortion stories and shifting the public perception surrounding abortion access. She is also an executive producer of *Ours to Tell*, an award-winning documentary; a co-author of an upcoming book, *LIBERATING ABORTION: Claiming Our History, Sharing Our Stories, and Building the Reproductive Future We Deserve*; and a co-host of the podcast *The A Files: A Secret History of Abortion from The Meteor*.

With a resume like that, it's no surprise that Renee would be outspoken in today's volatile political climate. In late July, she authored an article for *Teen Vogue* detailing her take on the Republican National Convention. Specifically, she targeted JD Vance and his opinions about women and people of color, titling her article, "JD Vance Doesn't Want All Women to Be Trad Wives, Just White Women." Renee dove in to Vance's platform, revealing the unsettling truths of the Republican party's vision for America: one where white women are subservient to their husbands, and women of color are exploited to uphold the "traditional" American family.

Check out the links below to read Renee's article or learn more about her.

[Read Renee's article here](#)

[Read more about Renee here](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS



SHPE
Leading Hispanics in STEM.

Northeastern
Illinois University

FALL TREATS FUNDRAISER CHIPS-PIES-COOKIES

17-18 SEP, 2024

12:00PM - 4:00PM

STUDENT UNION (NEAR THE CAFE)

Live & Learn in Spain

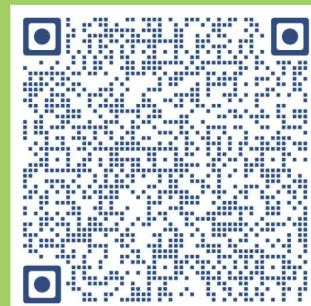


Take HIST 344: **History of Islamic Spain**, a **two-week** NEIU course at the University of Seville and live at its dormitory. Package includes visit to 10 historic sites in **Seville**, a 1-day trip to **Cordoba**, a 1-day trip to **Cadiz**, and a one weekend trip to **Granada**. All majors at all levels from all colleges and universities are welcome. Come learn more about this rare opportunity.

INFO SESSION IN-PERSON & via ZOOM

Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 3-4 PM
LWH 3094

Pizza will be served but not on Zoom! 😊
For info/link, email history@neiu.edu or
call Dr. Farzaneh at (773) 442-5821.



SCSE LOGO DESIGN CONTEST

Attention all NEIU Students!
The Student Center for Science Engagement is looking for a new logo and we want YOU to design it! This is your chance to create a logo that embodies the mission and spirit of our center, as well as showcase your design skills.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Logo must be in PNG format
- Maximum of 4 colors including background
- All designs must be original
- Logos must be submitted to the Google Form using the correct title format (See QR code link)

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER, 20, 2024

Logo finalists will be selected by the SCSE and posted through our newsletters, social media, and around BBH. Voting will be done by the NEIU student body.

FOR MORE INFO
AND TO SUBMIT:



Questions? Email SCSE@neiu.edu



Click here for more info and to submit your entry!

September 25

6-9PM

ART + DESIGN FALL FEST



**Exhibition opening +
projection mapping showcase +
interactive art studios + tours**

**FINE ARTS CENTER
5500 NORTH ST. LOUIS AVENUE**



Join the College of Arts and Sciences!

VOLUNTEER



at the
BANK OF AMERICA



Chicago Marathon®

We will be handing out water to runners and cheering them on!
Bonus: you get a free jacket and hat for volunteering!



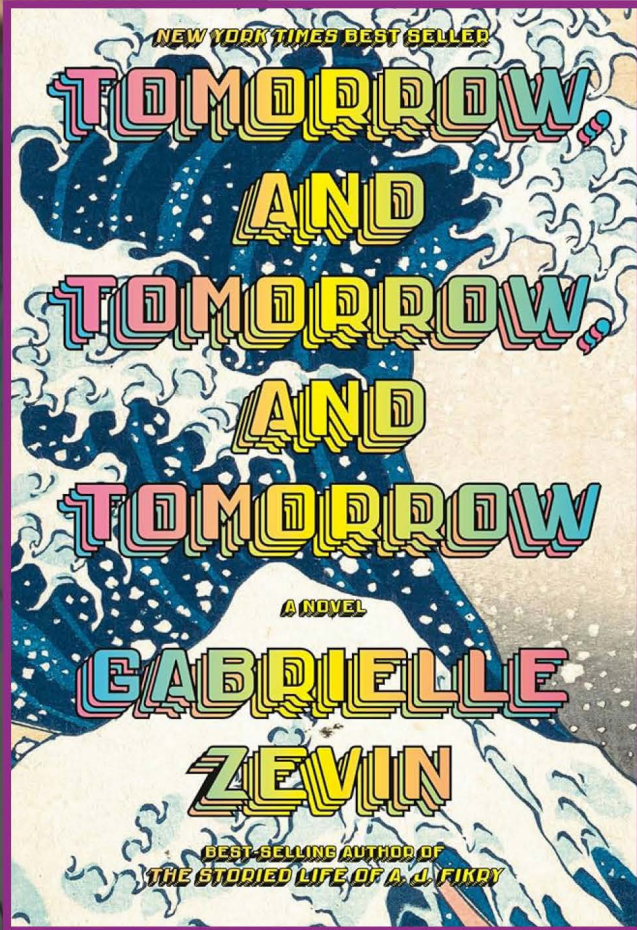
SUNDAY
OCTOBER 13, 2024

SHIFT: 5:45 AM - 2:30 PM

RSVP by Friday, October 4, 2024 at 5pm

Email a-dykema-engblade@neiu.edu for more information!

20 One Book
24 One Chicago



NEIU Community Conversation: *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow*

Join a conversation about *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow* with Northeastern Illinois University faculty from across the campus, who will offer brief opening statements to start the discussion.

Panelists will include:

Bradley M. Greenburg,

Professor of English / Chair of the English Department

Lauren A. Meranda,

Assistant Professor of Art

Christopher R. Merchant,

Associate Professor of Psychology

Moderator:

Tim Libretti, Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

Thursday, **October 24,** 2024

6:00 - 7:00 pm

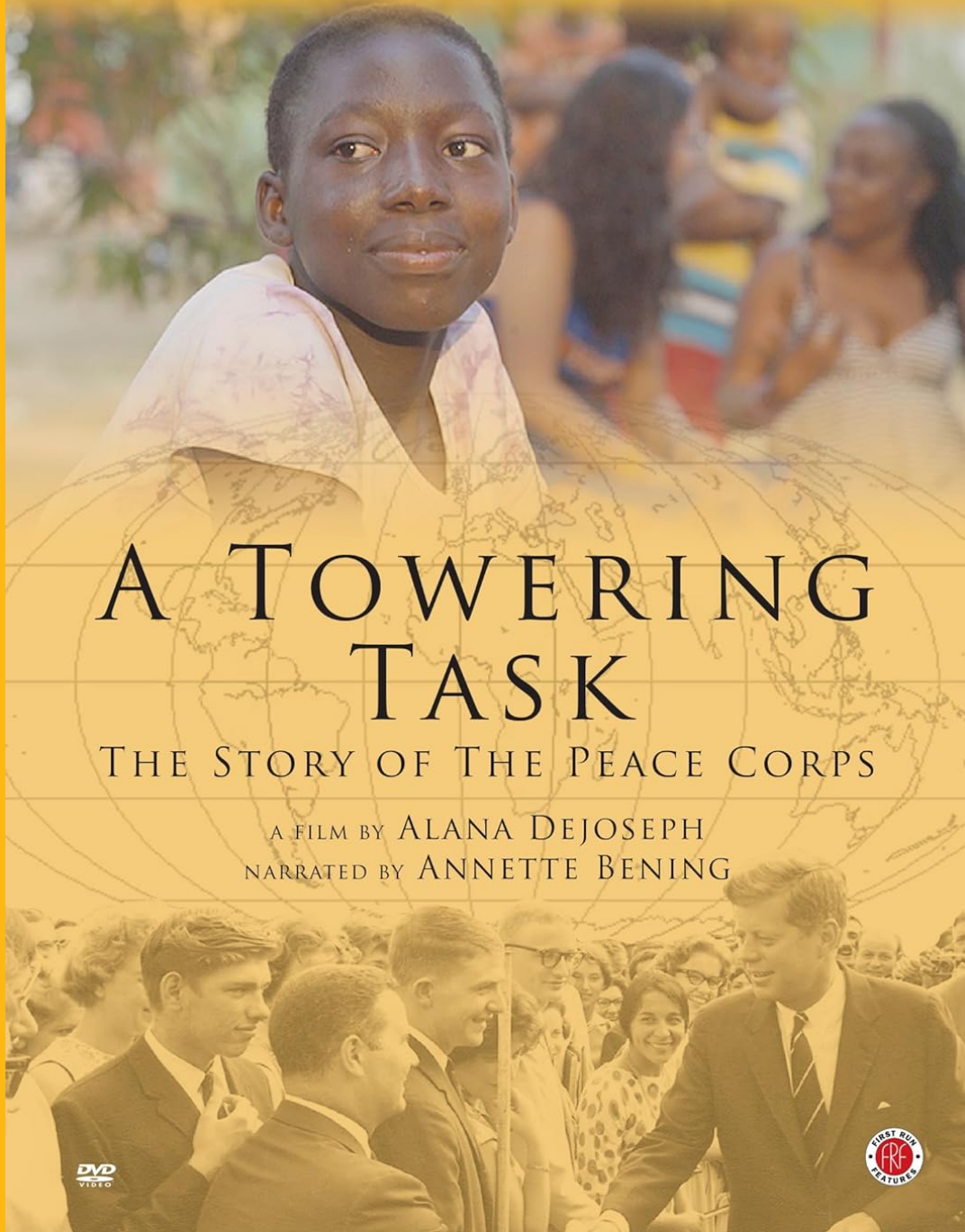
Student Union 214 / SU214

Please call (312) 747-8184 or email access@chipublib.org to request accommodations. Requests must be made at least 14 business days before the event.

The Peace Corps Prep Program presents:

"ENLIGHTENING AND UPLIFTING!"

- PAUL THEROUX



Wednesday, November 13 | 6pm-9pm in BBH 101

The film will be followed by a Q&A with returned volunteers from the Peace Corps, NEIU's Peace Corps recruiter, and NEIU's University Programs Representative.



CHICAGO FILM SOCIETY

Fall 2024 Film Series

Wednesday, September 11 @ 7:30pm
PRACTICALLY YOURS
Directed by Mitchell Leisen (1944)

Wednesday, October 2 @ 7:30pm
VAGABOND
Directed by Agnès Varda (1985)

Wednesday, October 9 @ 7:30pm
SPECIAL EFFECTS
Directed by Larry Cohen (1984)



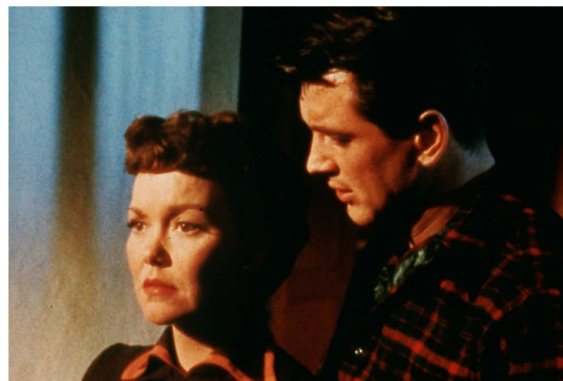
Wednesday, October 16 @ 7:30pm
TROUBLE IN PARADISE
Directed by Ernst Lubitsch (1932)

Wednesday, November 6 @ 7:30pm
SIMPLE MEN
Directed by Hal Hartley (1992)

Wednesday, November 13 @ 7:30pm
MOONLIGHT AND PRETZELS
Directed by Karl Freund (1933)

Wednesday, November 20 @ 7:30pm
ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS
Directed by Douglas Sirk (1955)

Wednesday, December 11 @ 7:30pm
THE CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE
Directed by Gunther von Fritsch
& Robert Wise (1944)



Wednesday Nights in the NEIU Auditorium (E-106)

Sponsored by the
Department of Communication, Media and Theatre



Donate to

CUSP!

What is CUSP?

CUSP stands for College Undergraduate Scholars Program. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) is raising money to provide students with valuable research opportunities they would not otherwise have. We empower students on the CUSP of success!

What does the CUSP do?

Each year, the College of Arts and Sciences funds dozens of student-faculty research projects and sends our students to national conferences to present their research. Our students routinely win awards at these conferences, receiving recognition for their work and standing out from students from all over the nation.

What's the benefit?

These research opportunities build confidence and capacity in our students and help them realize they can positively impact the world through the learning and research they are doing with College of Arts and Sciences faculty.

Why donate?

We want to create a sustainable funding stream to support student research projects, student conference travel, and more. With enough support, we can fund any research project a student can dream up!

[Learn more about CUSP here](#)

[Donate here!](#)

The logo features the word "CONTACTS" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font with a white outline. The text is centered within a yellow, wavy-edged shape that resembles a stylized speech bubble or a drop. A blue line curves around the bottom and sides of the yellow shape, creating a sense of movement and depth.

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CAS Website

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this newsletter and stay
up-to-date with all that
happens in the CAS!