

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

CAS Connections

2024 FALL TERM | ISSUE 10 | OCTOBER 23, 2024

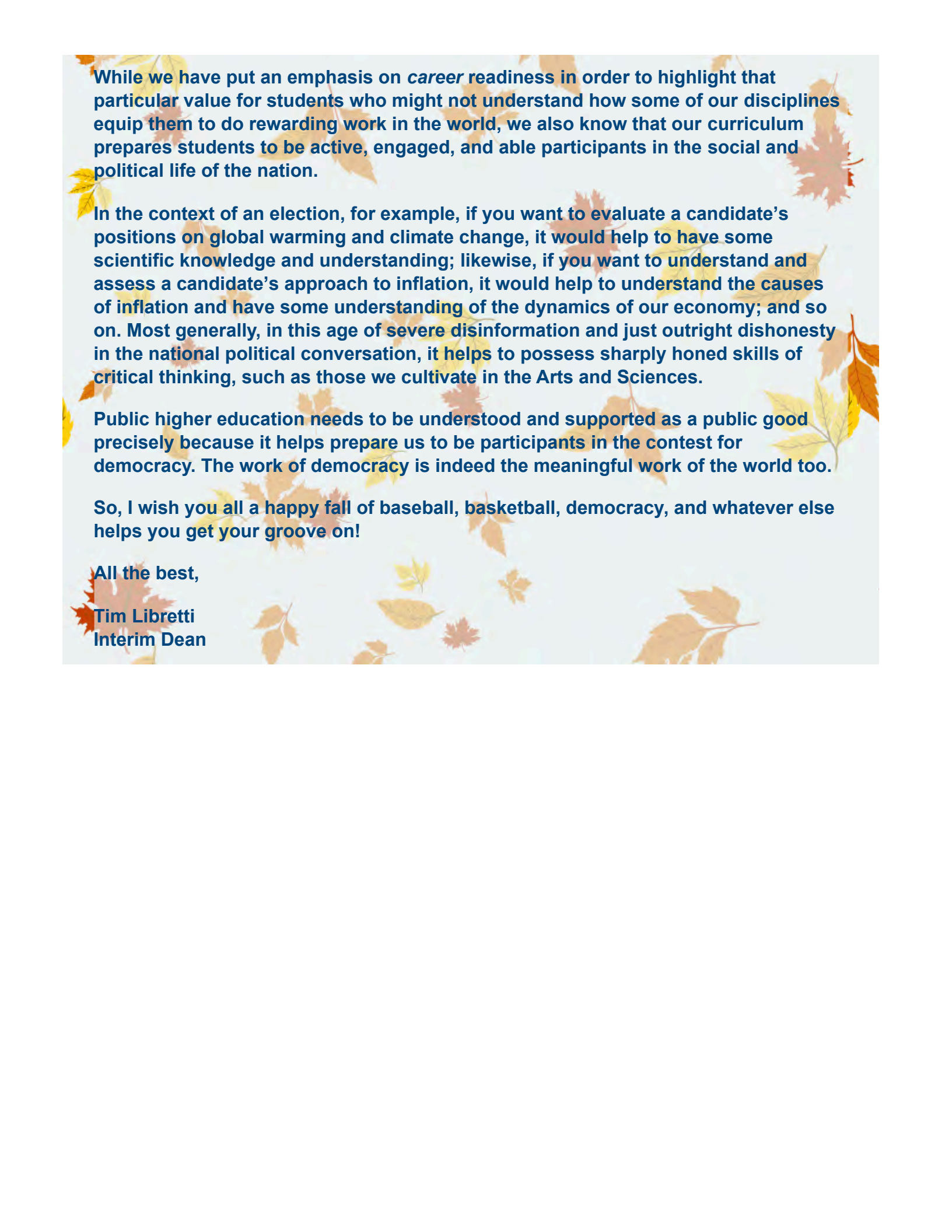
FROM THE DEAN

Greetings, CAS community!

I hope this issue of CAS Connections finds you making the best of the fall. And, to our students, I hope you are learning, growing, and progressing felicitously through the term. If you find yourself struggling, in need of guidance or if you just want to talk, you can always stop by the CAS office (BBH 158) for a snack and a conversation.

Growing up, I always associated the fall with baseball, with the culmination of the Major League season in the World Series. Now I also associate fall with basketball as we find ourselves in the midst of the WNBA playoffs and finals (at least as I write). The WNBA and its success are about so much more than basketball. The league, or at least its players by their very composition, has long represented a challenge to racism, misogyny, and heterosexism. The league's success, I like to think, registers an element of our culture's strength in eroding these anti-democratic forces of prejudice, discrimination, and outright dehumanization. The WNBA players, in fact, have a proud history of protecting American democracy, especially during the 2020 elections—just check out the documentary *Power of the Dream* to learn this story.

As we approach an intensely consequential election and have the opportunity to exercise our civic privilege of voting, it seems worth reflecting on the role and value of the liberal arts and sciences in U.S. culture and society. Recently in the College of Arts and Sciences, we've done a lot of talking about our Career Readiness Initiative, which focuses on the core competencies students cultivate in our classes across the Arts and Sciences curriculum. These core competencies prepare our students to do the meaningful and necessary work of the world, which employers say they value and seek in job candidates.

The background of the page is a light blue gradient with numerous falling autumn leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and brown scattered throughout. The text is centered and written in a dark blue, sans-serif font.

While we have put an emphasis on *career readiness* in order to highlight that particular value for students who might not understand how some of our disciplines equip them to do rewarding work in the world, we also know that our curriculum prepares students to be active, engaged, and able participants in the social and political life of the nation.

In the context of an election, for example, if you want to evaluate a candidate's positions on global warming and climate change, it would help to have some scientific knowledge and understanding; likewise, if you want to understand and assess a candidate's approach to inflation, it would help to understand the causes of inflation and have some understanding of the dynamics of our economy; and so on. Most generally, in this age of severe disinformation and just outright dishonesty in the national political conversation, it helps to possess sharply honed skills of critical thinking, such as those we cultivate in the Arts and Sciences.

Public higher education needs to be understood and supported as a public good precisely because it helps prepare us to be participants in the contest for democracy. The work of democracy is indeed the meaningful work of the world too.

So, I wish you all a happy fall of baseball, basketball, democracy, and whatever else helps you get your groove on!

All the best,

Tim Libretti
Interim Dean

IN THIS ISSUE

From the Dean

Student Highlight: Anika Tracy

Faculty Highlight: Dr. Steve Frankel

CUSP Feature: Christina Esparza-Cassidy

Gensburg-Markham Prairie Visit

NEIU Night at the Chicago Sky

Art + Design Fall Fest

Mather High School Cross Country

Inauguration of President Katrina Bell-Jordan

Step Up For Recovery

Chicago Marathon

New Social Work Scholarship

Dr. Joe Hibdon SACNAS Award

Upcoming CAS Events

Contacts & Links

Student Highlight



ANIKA TRACY
PHILOSOPHY &
POLITICAL SCIENCE

What's your major?

I'm studying philosophy and political science. Or, political science and philosophy; I never know which one to put first. I guess it changes depending on the day. I've got a paper for a philosophy class due in two days, so, philosophy seems to be at the forefront right now.

What are your career goals?

I really value the mental muscles I build from doing academic work, so I plan on attending graduate school. Eventually, though, I think I'd like to work in government at the federal level.

What do you like about NEIU so far?

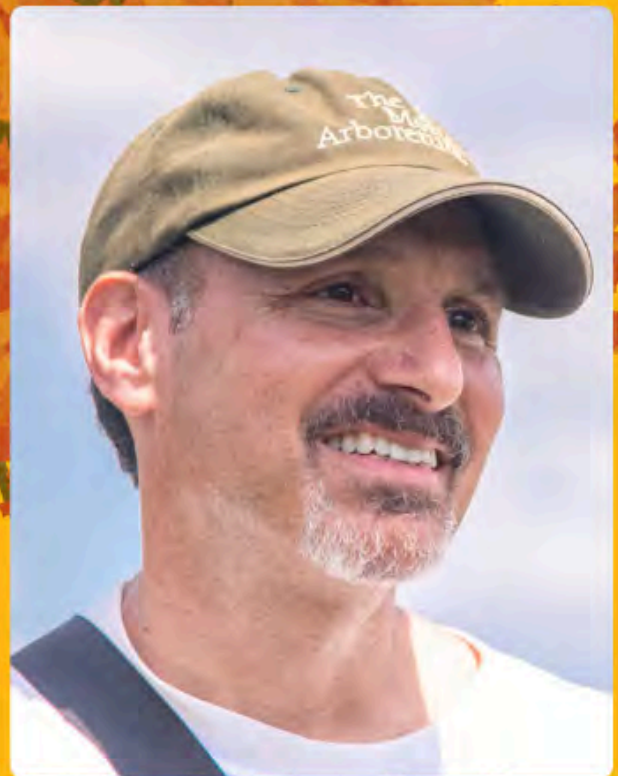
I do like the space—physical and social—that NEIU provides. Our main campus is a secluded, walkable size, and it has trees and grass and things that make going to class or wandering around enjoyable. I like seeing my peers and professors out and about, too, and all the fliers showing off activities that NEIU people are putting together. The web of health and career-related student support services is also great, and I've witnessed very caring faculty here at CAS. They'll make the effort to check up on you or to recall their interactions with you, which is nice.

Anything interesting we should know about you?

I was able to do a semester in Prague through NEIU's Office of International Programs. Actually, that photo of me is from a day trip I took to Karlovy Vary while I was there, in the Czech Republic. When I visited, they were setting up for the annual Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, which I didn't know was a thing at the time. The city also has a bunch of thermal springs with fountains you can drink from. The water tastes very metallic-y.

Faculty Highlight

DR. STEVE FRANKEL
BIOLOGY



What is your educational history?

I got my Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. My thesis was in plant chemical ecology with research in the rainforests of Panama.

What are your research interests?

My research focus at NEIU has been on prairie ecology focusing on the impacts of fire on the prairie ecosystem.

What do you do at NEIU and beyond?

I am a Senior Instructor in Biology. My teaching focus is ecology and plant biology. In addition to General Ecology, I also teach Local Flora and Economic Botany with the goal of getting students to better appreciate our local habitats and the world of plants.

I am involved in the maintenance of the campus natural landscaping, including running the prescribed fires of the prairie and swamp white oak savannah. I am also a member of the Tree Campus USA committee and the management team for the Gensberg-Markham Prairie. I work with the University Professionals of Illinois and the Illinois Federation of Teachers to increase the investment in and support of public higher education in the state.

What are your hobbies?

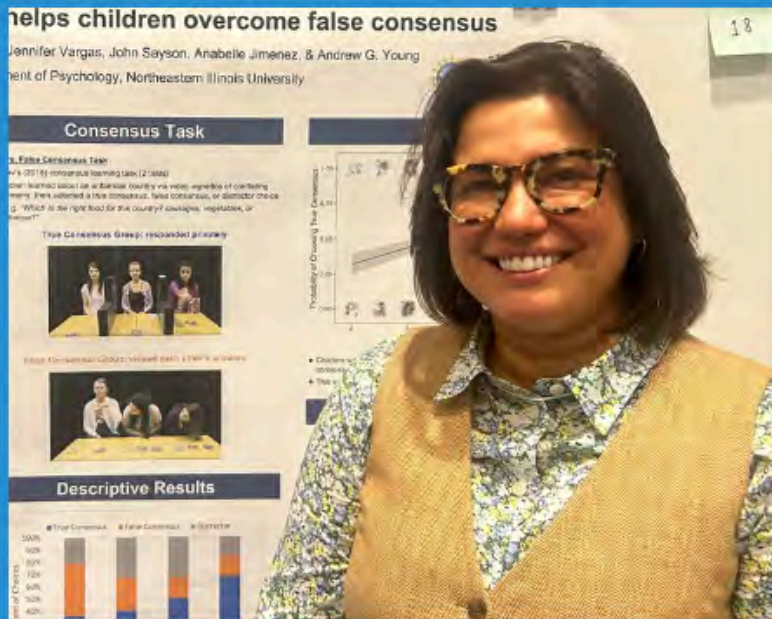
My hobbies include running, gardening, brewing beer and mead, hiking, and camping.

What is your favorite thing about NEIU?

The thing I most value about NEIU is the opportunity it offers to our students. I see so many students who have work, family, and financial obligations that would overwhelm most people, yet they still do outstanding work in the classroom and are setting themselves up for a better future. I feel like NEIU understands the challenge our students face and all of us here support them and their goals.

CUSP STUDENT FEATURE

The College of Arts and Sciences aims to raise \$150,000 for the College Undergraduate Scholars Program (CUSP). This program will support student research and creative opportunities that are vital to student success. But don't just take it from us—see what one of our students has to say about their CAS-funded experience:



CHRISTINA ESPARZA-CASSIDY

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES MINOR IN PSYCHOLOGY

“The first day of the SCSE Summer Research Program Laura West and Dr. Cantù expressed something I had never heard before: ‘You are a researcher, see yourself as one.’

Since then I have learned to review literature with a keener eye, drafted research goals, conducted a study, learned to collect, transcribe and manage data, co-designed a research study, found belonging with fellow researchers, formed my first research question, received coaching from Dr. Young and the SCSE team, wrote a research abstract, applied for my first conference, attended workshops on science communication, was awarded my first travel scholarship, received an invitation to present at SACNAS NDiSTEM 2024, learned to design a psychology poster, presented at a symposium, noodled on my research question for weeks and months after my internship ended just for fun, and soon I’ll travel to Phoenix to present at my first conference.

After all the SCSE team and summer research program taught me, I finally do see what they saw in me on that first day. I am finally a researcher. And for that I am eternally grateful, and looking forward to the day I can pay this transformative experience forward.”

[Click here to support students like Christina!](#)

Gensburg-Markham Prairie



In September, Associate Deans Amanda Dykema-Engblade and Ken Voglesonger visited NEIU's Gensburg-Markham Prairie with President Katrina Bell-Jordan. Naturalist Martha Lopez-Salazar and ecology professor Dr. Steve Frankel taught them lots about the prairie's plants and wildlife. Thanks again to the biology department for such a fun, educational afternoon!

Gensburg-Markham Prairie, managed by Northeastern Illinois University and the Nature Conservancy, is a 110-acre remnant of the tall-grass prairie that once covered the state of Illinois. This outdoor education laboratory provides student internship and research opportunities. Saved from development by NEIU in the 1970s, the prairie is now a dedicated Illinois Nature Preserve and National Natural Landmark. It includes large portions that have never been plowed, making it one of the highest-quality prairie sites in the Midwest, supporting rare plant and animal communities that aren't found in more highly disturbed prairie restorations.

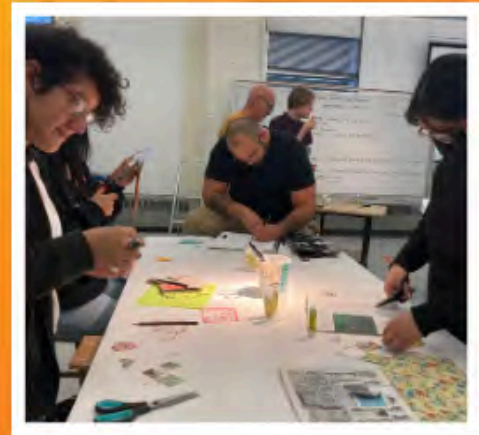
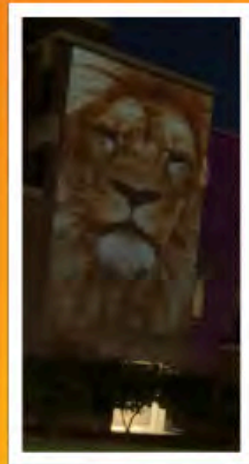
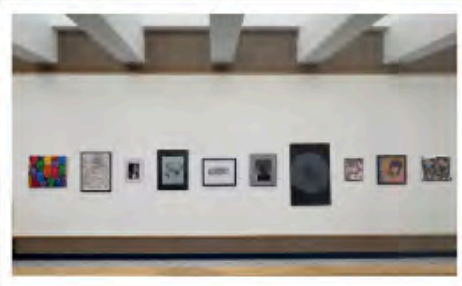
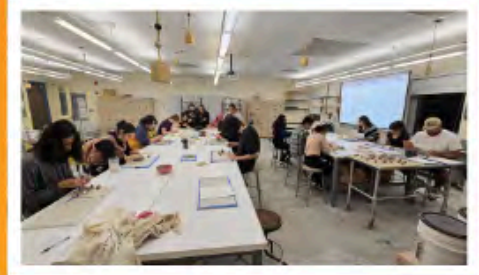
"I enjoy connecting with people and building bridges between communities of color and nature. I am very happy to have joined the Biology Department's team to preserve the prairie and include students in the process." - NEIU Naturalist Martha Lopez-Salazar

NEIU Night at the Chicago Sky



On September 15th, as part of our partnership with the Sky Cares Foundation, NEIU cheered on the Chicago Sky in their game against the Phoenix Mercury! More than 200 members of our community enjoyed the game, and the Dean and Associate Deans had a great time tossing out shirts to the crowd. Thanks again to everyone who came out, and thank you to the Chicago Sky for hosting us!

ART + DESIGN FALL FEST

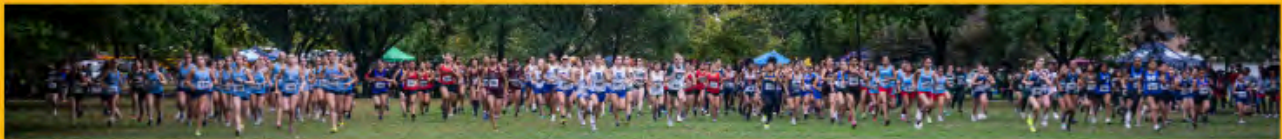


On September 25, Northeastern's Department of Art + Design held its first ever Art + Design Fall Fest! There were close to 200 attendees, which included current NEIU students, faculty, staff, deans, prospective students, and community members. The fest included a projection mapping showcase on the side of Bernard Brommel Hall; an Art + Design open house for prospective students, including tours of the Art + Design Department's studio facilities; interactive art activities across Art + Design's studio spaces; a juried exhibition featuring creative works from community colleges across Illinois; and an art party for current Northeastern Art + Design majors and minors.

The goal of the event was for people, whether they're art and design majors or not, to get to know the department and think about art and design in new ways. It was also an opportunity to show off Northeastern's state-of-the-art facilities, including new student exhibition spaces, a Mac lab, a ceramics studio with multiple kilns and a raku firing area, a photography studio equipped for both analog and digital processes, a fully equipped printmaking studio, a letterpress studio, and a sculpture studio with dedicated areas for clay modeling as well as metal and wood shops. Additionally, NEIU has a Fab Lab which features cutting-edge 3D printers, a large-format CNC router, multiple laser and vinyl cutters, and a large-format laser cutter.

The Fall Fest was a HUGE success! Thank you to everyone who came out and participated, and thanks especially to all those who put in the hard work to make sure the events ran smoothly. We look forward to seeing you again next fall!

Mather High School Cross Country



We are excited to announce that Northeastern Illinois University has sponsored the race bibs for three of Mather High School's recent cross country meets! The deans of the College of Arts and Sciences had a great time talking to students, parents, and spectators. Thank you to everyone who helped facilitate these events, and congratulations on a job well done to all the runners!

2024 Inauguration



On October 4th, 2024, NEIU inaugurated its eighth president, Dr. Katrina Bell-Jordan in a beautiful outdoor ceremony. The theme of her inauguration activities was "Education, Excellence, and Empowerment." Dr. Bell-Jordan plans to embody this theme throughout her presidency, helping NEIU continue on its path to providing a worthwhile education to every student—no matter how non-traditional—and to setting each student up with the best future prospects possible.

Dr. Bell-Jordan said during her speech, "It is an honor to serve as the eighth president of Northeastern Illinois University and it is with a deep sense of responsibility that I accept this leadership role. I look forward to the next chapter in NEIU's long history of teaching, leadership and service, toward progress and prosperity, and to the success of our students and our graduates."

When she was Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Bell-Jordan made her mark on our entire college. We remember her time in the Dean's Office by the positivity she spread and the efficiency with which she accomplished what needed to be done. As she moves on to this next great venture, we wish her the best of luck, and we have full confidence in her abilities to continue to be a great leader.



PEER Services
STEP UP for
RECOVERY

October 6, 2024
1 - 3 PM

Evanston Lakefront
Sheridan Rd. & Davis St.

Step Up for...

**SUBSTANCE USE
PREVENTION**

**REDUCING
STIGMA**

**AFFORDABLE
TREATMENT**

**MENTAL
HEALTH**

**COMMUNITY
WELLNESS**

Help us make
substance use
treatment
affordable for all!



**REGISTER
SPONSOR
DONATE**

peerservices.org

On October 6th, the College of Arts and Sciences was proud to be a sponsor of PEER Services' Step Up for Recovery event. This was an uplifting, family-friendly celebration of community resilience, featuring a 1-mile lakefront walk, Community Resource Fair, children's activities, music, raffle prizes, and sweet treats.

PEER Services reduces the harms of substance use, addiction and stigma by engaging youth and adults with innovative prevention programming and by supporting people on their path to recovery through holistic, evidence-based treatment. They provide affirming services to all in need, regardless of their ability to pay.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the walk!

[Click here to learn more or donate!](https://peerservices.org)

Chicago Marathon





On Sunday, October 13th, the CAS worked an aid station for the 2024 Chicago Marathon. Our team consisted of students, faculty, staff, retirees, and friends of the college. Everyone did a fantastic job handing out water and cheering on around 50,000 runners--thank you to everyone who came out to help, and congratulations to the runners who participated!

New Social Work Scholarship

The Social Work Department has received a scholarship donation of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per year from the Polly Ternoir Family. Polly Ternoir earned her Bachelor's degree in Social Work at the age of 52 in 2013, but unexpectedly passed away in March 2024. The Polly Ternoir Legacy Scholarship Fund is aimed at annually supporting 3-4 Social Work students at Northeastern Illinois University who, like Polly, are non-traditional students. We are very grateful for the generous contribution from her family. They have our sincerest condolences and thanks.



Dr. Joe Hibdon will be recognized with a 2024 SACNAS Presidential Service Award at the National Diversity in STEM Conference (NDiSTEM) October 31 - November 2 in Phoenix, Arizona.

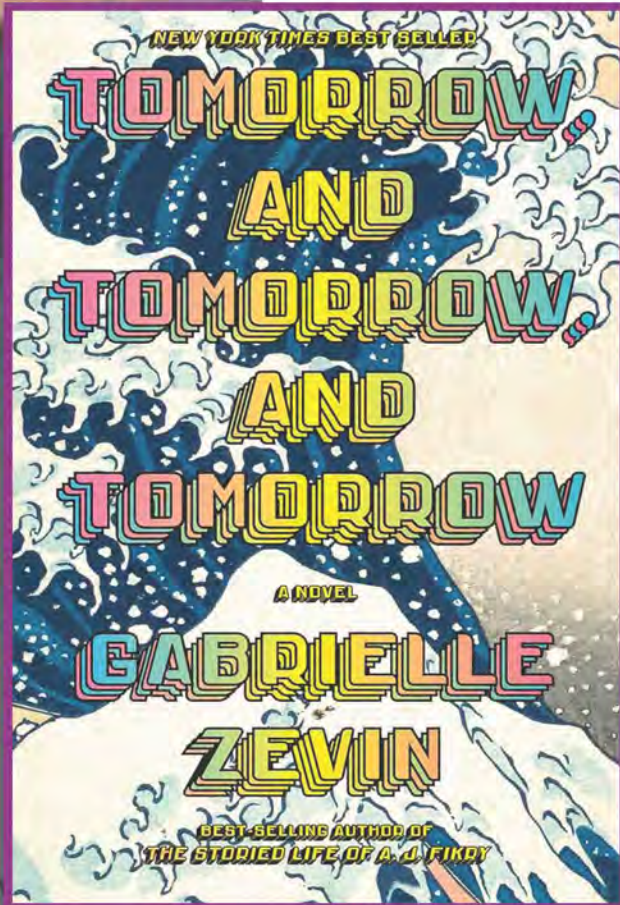
As announced in the letter to Dr. Hibdon, "This award is in recognition of your long-term commitment to SACNAS, the many contributions you have made to the Society, and the strong leadership you have modeled. SACNAS Presidential Service Awardees like you are mentor-scientists with exemplary service records and deep commitment to SACNAS, its mission, and its members. I am grateful for your tireless dedication!"

Congratulations, Dr. Hibdon!



Upcoming Events
in the CAS

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

Jiaming Lou,

Undergraduate English Major

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.

Study Tour of Belize

Students at NEIU have an opportunity to visit Belize, one of the most biologically and culturally diverse areas in the Western hemisphere! We will explore **rainforests, mountains, beaches, and coral reefs**, learning about geography and environmental concerns in this fascinating Central American country.



We are currently recruiting students for this year's GES 388 course, which takes place over **Spring Break 2025** (about March 15-March 22, 2025). This is an **ELE-X** course and all students are welcome regardless of major. Expected student cost over and above tuition is about **\$1895**, not including spending money.

Go to our website for the **trip itinerary** and more information!



Application DUE Friday, October 25, 2024

Have questions or need the application form? Please contact
Dr. Dennis Grammenos (d-grammenos@neiu.edu)

Department of Geography & Environmental Studies

Northeastern Illinois University



Learn more here!

STUDY ABROAD FAIR

**THURSDAY,
OCTOBER 31ST
11:00-4:00 IN
ALUMNI HALL**



**INFO FOR STUDENTS AND ACADEMIC
ADVISORS!**

STUDENTS CAN LEARN

- **WHAT THEIR OPTIONS ARE**
- **WHAT THE APPLICATION PROCESS IS LIKE**
- **AND THE MULTIPLE BENEFITS OF STUDYING ABROAD!**

FACULTY CAN LEARN

- **NEIU'S STUDY ABROAD PROCESS**
- **HOW TO ADVISE THEIR STUDENTS ABOUT STUDY ABROAD!**

● ● ● WE'LL ALSO HAVE:

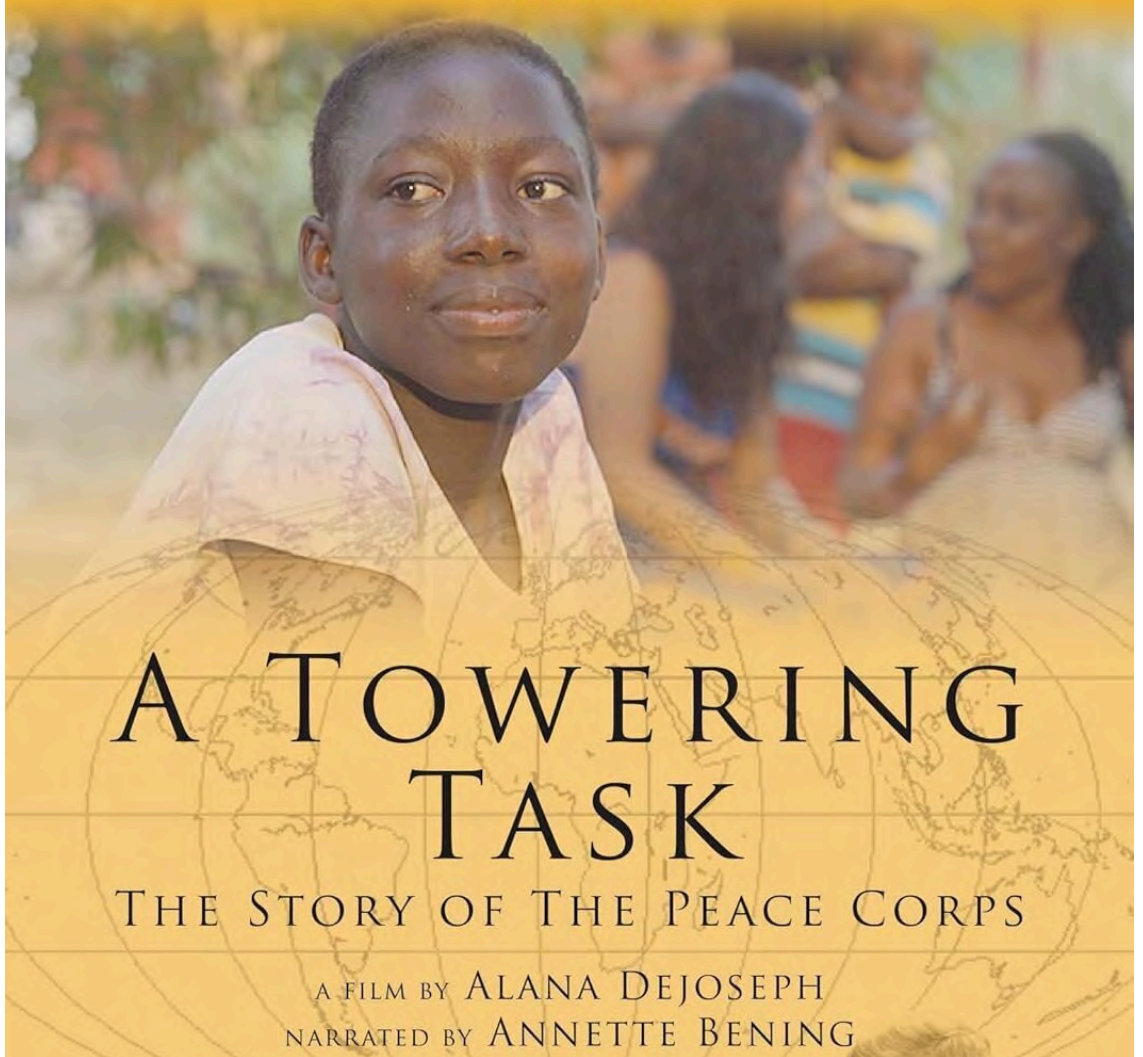
- **TABLES MANNED BY EXCHANGE STUDENTS FROM OUR PARTNER UNIVERSITIES**
- **COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES FROM CONSULATES IN CHICAGO**
- **PEOPLE TO TALK TO ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS**
- **POPCORN!**



The Peace Corps Prep Program presents:

“ENLIGHTENING AND UPLIFTING!”

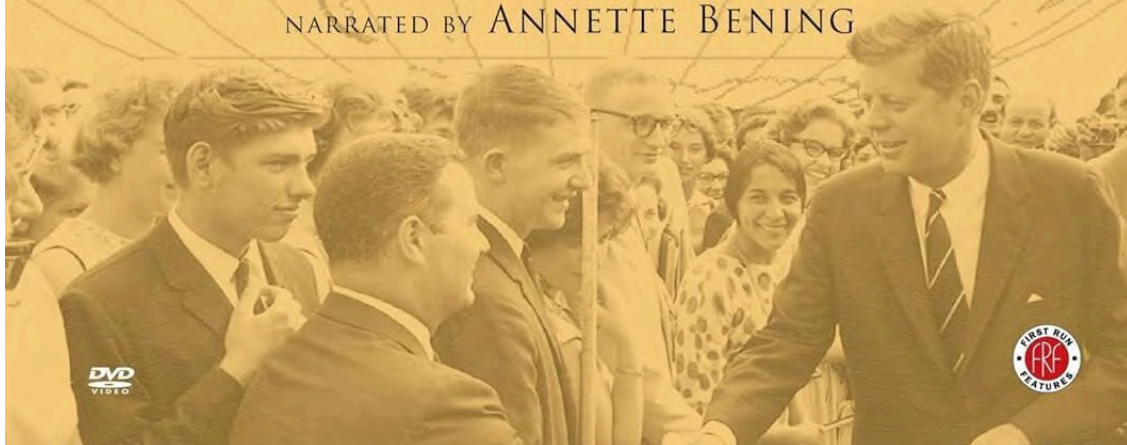
- PAUL THEROUX



A TOWERING TASK

THE STORY OF THE PEACE CORPS

A FILM BY ALANA DEJOSEPH
NARRATED BY ANNETTE BENING



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 and creative 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 creative endeavors and sends our students to national conferences and exhibitions to present their work. Our students routinely win awards at these events, receiving recognition for their work and standing out from students from all over the nation.

What's the benefit?

These research and creative opportunities build confidence and capacity in our students and help them realize they can positively impact the world through the learning 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, creative endeavors, student conference and exhibition travel, and more. With enough support, we can fund any project a student can dream up!

[Learn more about CUSP here](#)

[Donate here!](#)

Contacts

College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office

cas@neiu.edu • 773-442-5700
Bernard Brommel Hall 158
5500 N. St. Louis Ave
Chicago, IL 60625

Tim Libretti

Interim Dean
t-libretti@neiu.edu

Ken Voglesonger

Acting Associate Dean
k-voglesonger@neiu.edu

Amanda Dykema-Engblade

Acting Associate Dean
a-dykema-engblade@neiu.edu

Bruce (Alan) Mace

Business Manager
b-mace@neiu.edu

David Nissim-Sabat

Director of Pre-Professional Advising
d-nissimsabat@neiu.edu

Peter Goldman

Administrative Assistant/Contracts Administrator
p-goldman@neiu.edu

Debra Williams

Student and Faculty Program Support Specialist
d-williams28@neiu.edu

Leah Lewis

Program Assistant
l-lewis23@neiu.edu

[Pre-Professional Advising information](#)

[CAS Website](#)

Follow us on social media!

