



the Collage

Kutztown University's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Oct. 2017

interesting Internship

Kristyn Rohrer, a Sociology major at KU, interned for Reclaim Childhood, a non-profit organization working out of Jordan, using sports to psychologically heal and empower young refugee girls who have been affected by trauma.

Rohrer, one of eight interns, spent six weeks working in Amman, Jordan, where one-third of the population is refugees. The interns were responsible for running different sports stations: basketball, dance, frisbee and soccer. Each week, the group helped somewhere between 75 to 95 girls.

"Women don't have the opportunity to participate freely in sports. Reclaim Childhood gives females a safe space to do that. It's also used as an avenue for these kids who have been through a lot of trauma to form connections with other kids and to meet new people."



Kristyn Rohrer | Sociology

Rohrer continues, "We worked with local refugee coaches to come up with different drills and games to get the kids interested in sports, to learn how to play, and to do team building. With little kids you don't need to be able to communicate in words, you can play sports, make them laugh, make a silly face, but sometimes there were kids who had a bad day and they'd sit on the side. It was our job to go and sit with them. We wouldn't necessarily talk to them, but [we] just had to be there."

Outside of camp, Rohrer had other responsibilities such as grant writing, research and general camp clean up.

Optional Arabic classes were also available to the interns as well as opportunities to enjoy more tourist-like activities.

Despite the fact she didn't know Arabic, Rohrer and one other intern chose to live with a host family during the internship. She felt it was the best way to immerse herself in the culture and learn the language.

"We [also] got to go on trips through our language center. One weekend we went to Petra, Wadi Rum, and Aqaba... Wadi Rum was my favorite. It's where *The Martian* was filmed," Rohrer said.

Looking to the future, Rohrer is thinking about grad school and hopes to blend her interest in Middle Eastern Studies with Sociology. She wants to continue to take Arabic courses—she's currently taking one through Cal U's online program—and aims to work in the non-profit sector. "I'm definitely interested [in] doing work with refugees..."

"There are so many opportunities out there, you just need to look for them," said Rohrer, reflecting on her experience in Jordan.



NEW TENURE-TRACK FACULTY



Dr. Brooks Emerick
Mathematics



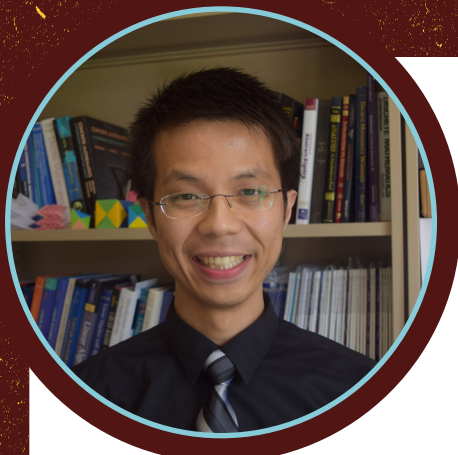
Dr. Candy Madrigal
Social Work



Dr. Dylan Schwesinger
Computer Science



Dr. Kristina Fennelly
English



Dr. Tony Wong | Mathematics

When students enter the classroom of Dr. Tony Wong, they are introduced to the fun of math.

“Solving math problems is like solving puzzles and playing games,” said Dr. Wong. “I often joke with people that when I retire – what will I do? I will literally just sit there and solve math problems. It’s like someone playing Sudoku.”

On top of teaching, Dr. Wong involves undergraduates in his research, some of which is also related to games, such as a competitive turn-based game of coloring the vertices of a graph, where the objective is to prevent yourself from running out of moves.

Dr. Wong decided on a career as an educator after an unforgettable teaching experience 13 years ago. He was still a high school student when he taught a summer course at his alma mater to students with an aversion to mathematics. During one lecture, the weather turned, and the typhoon signal was raised. Classes were suddenly cancelled; however, instead of packing and leaving, students unanimously requested Dr. Wong to finish the class. Since that moment, Dr. Wong has made it his mission to help students develop their interest in mathematics.

After obtaining his Ph.D. in Mathematics with a specialization in Combinatorics from Caltech in 2013, Dr. Wong immediately began teaching at Kutztown University. He teaches courses ranging from Trigonometry and Precalculus to Algebraic Coding Theory. He is the organizer of the Kutztown Appreciation of Mathematics Program (KAMP), where middle and high school students come to KU to learn fun aspects of mathematics. A permanent fixture in Lytle, Dr. Wong prepares students for math competitions. Last Fall, Dr. Wong lead his KU math team to victory in the 2016 Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges team math competition, where they defeated teams from other area schools.

Dr. Wong was awarded the 2017 John P. Schellenberg Faculty Award for excellence in teaching.

Faculty highlights

Over her decade-long career, Dr. Yun ‘Amy’ Lu has taught 20 courses at Kutztown University, and she has taken a personal approach to teaching in every one of them.

The formulation of her teaching philosophy occurred in the last year of her Ph.D at Wesleyan University. As a student teacher overseeing an undergraduate course, she recognized that not all of her students learned the same way.

“Students are different and so their learning approaches are different,” said Dr. Lu. “It is useful to know the students’ [math] background so that you could help them improve accordingly.”

Her philosophy is appropriate for Calculus, a class to which students bring a wide range of perspectives. Her favorite aspect of Calculus is that she, as an educator, gets to learn from her students.

“It’s kind of interesting to see the students with different backgrounds add their contributions [and] their point of view toward the course,” said Dr. Lu.

Outside of the classroom, Dr. Lu continues to think of her students, drawing from her personal life to improve her teaching. One of the ways she is evolving her approach is through raising her own children.

“I like to be with my family—my three kids—it helps me understand, by looking at my own children as a parent, how I can better understand students and their points of view,” said Dr. Lu.

Recently, Dr. Lu and her students co-wrote a paper on Metaheuristics which was published in a peer-reviewed journal. Dr. Lu was awarded the 2017 C. R. Chambliss Kutztown University Faculty Research Award, recognizing the very highest achievement in research and scholarship.

Dr. Yun (Amy) Lu | Mathematics



DEAN'S CORNER DR. DAVID BEOUGHER



We are excited to share this first edition of the reformatted LAS newsletter, *The Collage*. Students and faculty were busy over the summer in a wide range of experiences, including research, fieldwork, and internships too numerous to be able to mention them all. My hope is that the highlights provided give a glimpse into the opportunities available at Kutztown as the members of our community continue their academic journeys of discovery.

It is, indeed, good to be golden!

The Oct. 2017 edition of *The Collage* was designed, edited and written by Jesse R. Stayer '18, professional writing major, under the supervision of the CLAS Dean's Office.