



the Collage

Kutztown University's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Oct. 2019

Faculty highlight

“Going overseas is always very interesting,” explained Dr. Stanley as he reflected on his recent adventure to China. He started in Beijing, visited cities in north China, and finished in Shanghai. On the trip, he conducted research, spoke with Ph.D. students, and explored future study abroad opportunities for KU students.

Dr. Stanley, professor of the History Department, studies China with a focus on American missionaries. Stanley teaches a variety of history courses including *The Missionary Enterprise and Christianity in China*. He traveled for seven weeks during the summer to research, explore, and connect with the reason why he chose the field: family.

Stanley’s family connections to China date back to 1862 when his great, great grandfather became a missionary. Fast forward, and Stanley’s father was born



Dr. John Stanley | Department of History

takes you from Beijing to Shanghai in about four hours, a 12-hour car ride. Even with advancement, locals still strive to preserve the history through museums and the maintenance of historical buildings.

This trip was special because Stanley visited The Great Wall of China for the first time. After finally seeing one Wonder of the World, he learned some lesser known history about the last defenders of Shanghai by visiting the

One portion of the trip focused on visiting the cities where missionaries he studies worked. While there, he saw the schools and churches his ancestors helped establish. He even saw his great, great grandmother’s gravestone in a museum storage room.

Stanley also conducted research using Shandong Provincial archives. With those materials, he can now discuss other types of social welfare projects, such as famine relief and agricultural work. While researching, Stanley discovered that the Shandong Christian University’s agricultural extension project was through the theological school, not the main university.

Stanley gave presentations to Ph.D. students at Shandong University, Shanghai University, and East China Normal University. Stanley planned the presentations to encourage discussion about the role of protestant missionaries in late 19th and early 20th centuries China in regards to their mission education work, medical education, and other social welfare projects. Stanley approached these discussions with an open mind. “Here are my thoughts. Now, what is your perspective?” He shared his work and findings and also got invaluable feedback from the students. From the discussion, Stanley and the students came to the realization that more primary sources are necessary to have an informed discussion on these issues.

One of the most exciting parts of the trip was looking into study abroad programs for the students of Kutztown. He talked with Shanghai University to find a link for art, history, and business students. As he walked the city streets, he thought about what sites and experiences would show the connections that still exist between China and the U.S., such as the old campus of Shandong Christian University in Jinan that was founded by American Presbyterians. He hopes to have something in place by summer 2021.

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in China during a time of war. His connections with the country run deep, both professionally and personally. “This [area of study] allows me to do family history while also combining U.S. history and Chinese history,” he said. “It just provides a very different perspective.”

Stanley last visited China in 2013, and he noticed how things have changed. “It has progressed lightyears beyond what I remember.” In China, you use cash or mobile payment—no credit cards. A high-speed train

museum honoring them. The defenders were ordered to remain in the Sihang Warehouse and eventually perished, but while there, they held back the Japanese as others retreated during the Second Sino-Japanese War.

With every part of his summer adventure, Stanley accomplished something different. He experienced China with the mindset of discovering something new, and he hopes everyone travels this way. “Relax,” is his advice. “Everything changes day to day.”



Carolyn Rene | Social Work

"I am going to try to figure out all the ways the environment holds people back," decided Carolyn Rene as she grew up and discovered her place in the world. Carolyn, a junior Social Work major, became interested in people in impoverished and marginalized positions at a young age due to her upbringing as a Haitian-American immigrant. Her work as a research assistant on a project involving Haiti has allowed this passion to find a focus through her identity.

Carolyn's involvement with the project began Fall 2018 with an unexpected introduction to Dr. Svistova, the faculty member running the research project. The opportunity to visit Haiti was essential for Carolyn because she did not think of her Haitian identity frequently before the trip. While she does speak Haitian Creole fluently, she established her own identity as African-American since she was not raised in a prominently Haitian community. The trip permitted Carolyn to think about her American privilege and how

it affects her Haitian connection.

Before Carolyn went to Petit-Goâve, Haiti, she read literature reviews to learn about the history of Haiti and how the U.S. views it. She also examined microfinance organizations that operate in Haiti that give banking access to underrepresented communities. These organizations are the essence of the research. The team presented this initial research at a conference at Millersville University in Spring 2019.

Over the summer, Carolyn flew to Haiti for six days to experience the culture firsthand and obtain crucial interviews with community leaders. "I think it was important to go there in terms of learning how to humanize people and how to see people as people and not stereotypes."

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The trip was not on Carolyn's radar before she enrolled at KU. It happened, she went for it, and it turned into an amazing experience. While Carolyn is proud of her time in Haiti, she wants to discuss it in the most honest and real way. She strives to present her experience with all its struggles and nuances. There were times plans fell through, and the team had to work together for the sake of the research. Carolyn learned from those struggles and will use these lessons in future research.

Occasionally, Carolyn felt uncomfortable and did not like what she saw. But at

Student highlight

the same time, she saw the beauty of Haiti and its people. "You're in a place you haven't been before, and you're trying to make those connections. How do you go about that in a very human sense?" That mindset shaped her trip. She now sees how important openly understanding a group of people is and the impact of that acceptance. Communities in Haiti are still struggling from the 2010 earthquake, and they need support to rebuild, grow, and prosper.

Though the trip is over, Carolyn's work is not done. She is currently transcribing the interviews that were conducted in

Haiti. She hopes this research project is not her last encounter with Haiti. She plans to participate in a Haitian community and to also continue to learn about the culture by studying Haiti's history as well as its political and economic circumstances.

Other students can explore their fields and passions by following Carolyn's footsteps. "Get out of your comfort zone," said Carolyn. "Do something you enjoy, but if you see something that you aspire to be, don't be afraid to do it because now is the time. You make your experiences real."



New Tenure-Track Faculty



Dr. Rodica Petruta Bunaciu
Department of Biology



Dr. Sandra Leonard
Department of English



Dr. Kelly McBride
Department of English

The October 2019 edition of *The Collage* was designed, edited and written by Courtney Morstatt '21, Professional Writing major, under the supervision of the CLAS Dean's Office.