

I Fought The Law—And The Law Won

by Karl Brautigam '04
Norwalk, Conn.

As I get ready to graduate from Hobart College, the intensity increases—what am I going to do with my life? How can I make my family proud? What is the best way for me to put what I have learned at this place to good use? All of these questions and thoughts cross my mind every day. My answer: social justice work.

Since my arrival at Hobart in the fall of 2000, I have been trying to figure out what I have wanted to do. I came in with a passion for computer science and Spanish, so I stuck with it, and in the process had some of the most inspirational educators (David Eck, John Vaughn, Carol Critchlow, Donna Albro, and Alejandra Molina to name a few) and advisers (President Gearan, Dean Capraro, and Mary Schneider). I will miss all of them when I leave Geneva this May for “the real world,” but I will not forget the gifts they gave to me. They challenged me—to get involved (in student government, in cultural organizations), to learn more, and to follow my interests. These interests have led me to internships at Smith Barney, Yale University, the Geneva Historical Society, a summer term at Yale, and halfway around the world at Middlebury’s C.V. Starr School in Madrid. However, none of these experiences singularly contributed to my desire to go to law school. Enter Donna Albro and the Peer Education in Human Relations program at the Colleges.

Being a PEHR minor and teaching PEHR 212 *Making Connections*, I (along with my fellow facilitators) try to teach a fresh generation of HWS students about the issues of racism, sexism, classism, disability discrimination, homophobia/heterosexism, anti-Semitism and hate crimes. It was through my work in the PEHR program at Hobart that I took a stand on issues that our society faces on a daily basis. I feel that going to law school is the next step—I either want to go into international law or public interest law. My deeply rooted background in Spanish language (including study abroad experiences in Mexico and Spain), coupled with the experience of growing up with a sister with Down’s syndrome, has allowed me to become someone who will advocate on behalf of those who would not ordinarily have the ability to defend themselves.

Leaving Hobart College means leaving behind educators who have inspired me and who have made me a better person. The funny thing about Hobart is how I am constantly reminded of the school’s motto etched on the Hobart shield (found on the north end of Coxe Hall): *Disce* (Learn)! I can say that my learning will never stop. Hobart has given me the tools and the foundation to build my future. It is entirely up to me as to what I want to make of myself. Lastly, I am also reminded of the Latin inscription on the Chapel sundial, *Pereunt et Imperateur*, which means “they [the times] pass away and are charged to us”—telling us to make the most of our time while we are at this wonderful place. Enjoy it. Enrich it. Take advantage. Learn!



HOBART COLLEGE
Geneva, New York 14456

Hobart Heritage

Vol. 6, No. 2

a publication of
the Hobart Dean’s Office

April 2004

Gentlemen of the College,

Students at Hobart College have taken very seriously their opportunities to engage in experiential forms of education, claiming that not only academic courses, but co-curricular experiences play a crucial part in their education. Students, faculty, and staff resist the model of the “Ivory Tower” for many reasons, one of which is to allow for a space where students and faculty can test and develop ideas within the context of our communities. It is in the environment of Capitol Hill, Geneva General Hospital, a Boston investment firm, a Romanian “Gypsy” village, the Geneva Head Start, or the Hobart Student Government, the studios of WEOS, Boswell Field, and Bartlett Theatre, that students are best able to test theories, practice methods, and develop skills that will be applicable to their lives after college. Student demand for out-of-class experiences has been rising and the institution, understanding the power of this pedagogy, has developed more opportunities for students and coordinated efforts in this area.

The College has committed itself to helping students learn from real world experiences, and this commitment is most evident in the creation of the Salisbury Center. The Salisbury Center, located in Trinity Hall, houses a variety of offices, including the Offices of Career Development, Public Service, Global Education, Pre-Law, and Pre-Health. Students can now find, under one roof, opportunities for internships, job shadowing, service-learning, and study abroad. Add to the Salisbury Center the creation of the Finger Lakes Institute, which will engage our students and faculty in hands-on research of the Finger Lakes region, and it is clear that the institution is also taking seriously the concept of learning through experience. Not only does the College, through the Salisbury Center and Finger Lakes Institute, house and coordinate experiential opportunities, but it has also increased the availability, diversity, and richness of experiences. For example, on average per semester, 100 students study abroad, more than 90 do internships, and approximately 115 are engaged in service-learning experiences. These numbers only reflect experiential learning for credit!

Students also learn from their involvement in the campus community, whether serving as a Student Court Justice, an RA, the president of LAO, or the starting goalie. Students who are involved in extracurricular activities have the opportunity to exercise, apply, and develop their skills outside of the classroom. The non-academic on campus experiences are equally valuable to students and contribute much to the intellectual and social development of the student body.

I hope that students will view their out-of-class experiences as opportunities to learn, test, and practice new skills, theories, and methods all within the context of the communities we live in. Please find the following student narratives a testimony to the impact experiential learning has on students at Hobart College.

David Mapstone '93
Assistant Dean



From Pediatrician to Politician

by Jeremy A. Cooney '04
Rochester, N.Y.

As an eager-eyed first-year at Hobart I knew exactly what I wanted to do: I was absolutely set on becoming a pediatrician. I took the introductory biology and chemistry courses, I got involved in the pre-health professions club, and I even shadowed a physician. But during my sophomore summer something changed. I found myself constantly trying to find ways to link my dreams of pursuing a career in medicine to public policy. I thought about public health, but that was not for me. I needed to be on the front lines of issues about which I was passionate—social welfare policy, urban economic development, and education. I knew that my place was not in a hospital, but rather in city hall. Needless to say, I changed my major to public policy studies.

My junior year is when my future ambitions seemed to become more apparent. I was fortunate enough to obtain a Student International Initiatives Fund grant through the Partnership for Global Education to study the Roma or “gypsy” culture when I was studying in Romania. I can recount an experience when I was in the small and destitute rural village of Bonsida. There I was trying to better understand their plight as I interviewed, with help from a translator, the village representative. My presence and talking to them was their first and, for some, only chance to get their message and need for help out. I knew, right then, that I had a responsibility to fight the daily battles for those in society without a voice.

The following summer I interned in Washington, D.C., with Congresswoman Louise Slaughter from the 28th district of New York. The experience of working side by side with her staff in managing her legislative efforts to improve our nation inspired me to devote my time after Hobart to public service.

Wherever I end up after commencement this spring, I know I will be striving to make a difference in the lives of others. My experiences in Europe, on Capitol Hill, in the classroom, and with serving as president of the Hobart Student Government have enabled me to give back to society in a meaningful way, and for that I am truly grateful.

HOBART HERITAGE is published periodically by the Hobart Deans Office. For more information about upcoming issues or if you have any questions, contact Dean Capraro at ext. 3300.

Remember the Past, Look to the Future

By: Matthew Simpson '04
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

My experience began in May 2003 when I boarded a plane in New York City headed for Warsaw, Poland, accompanied by five other Hobart and William Smith students as a member of the March of Remembrance and Hope, an international Holocaust studies program. For the next 10 days, my fellow HWS students and I traveled across Poland visiting cities that were devastated by the Holocaust during WWII. We stood next to execution walls and barbed wire, we went inside gas chambers and crematoria. Professor Michael Dobkowski, who is an expert on Holocaust studies, accompanied us along with our guide, Steve Berger, who lived through a work camp in Hungary but lost 36 members of his family to Auschwitz. I'll never forget the day when Steve, standing next to me in front of a collapsed crematorium in Birkehou, whispered, “my sister died here.”

On the surface it may be difficult to see the connection between this experience and my aspirations to be a trade lawyer specializing in NAFTA and U.S.-Canada relations, but with each day the nexus becomes more and more apparent. Crimes against humanity are a global issue and, regardless of where they occur, we share a responsibility as members of the global community to make sure they never happen again.

This experience has vested in me the motivation to conduct my life, both personal and professional, in a manner that respects the horror of the past, and appreciates the hope of the future.

Chosen by Art

by J. Michael Nolan '04
Orchard Park, N.Y.

After being in Los Angeles for a total of 11 months over the course of a year and a half I learned not only the realities and tribulations of artistic movement, but more importantly I learned that to make it in a world that lives by various restrictions and guidelines, there has to be a voice that we find for ourselves that echoes out what we want to be and who we want to address. In other words, we need to follow our own path and teach people what we have experienced and push them to the same level we want to be on, in order to develop ourselves as a complete individual who has goals and works toward attaining them.

When I was in Los Angeles I tried to soak up as much from the entertainment world as I could. Basically, what I found was that although millions of people are trying to make it as screenwriters, actors, directors or playwrights, each has his or her own vision and his or her own contributions to be given to art. Although young there, I met people who looked at my work and took to heart what I was striving to achieve. It is these people who I am proud to say became my friends in the industry. It's also fair to note that art is not chosen, it chooses you. When I came back to school, I felt privileged to work with fellow actors at HWS by training them and interacting with them with respect to my own work, in order to move us forward on all of our paths as we pursue art at our academic institution.

As I leave school and continue to pursue the arts, the greatest joy is that my fellow students have helped me learn and I only hope that I have done the same in some way for them. As I move on from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, I hope that I can continue to draw from my experiences here and move forward pursuing the arts in a similar, unique fashion.



The Experience of a Lifetime

by Jesse Andrew Saperstein '04
Pleasant Valley, N.Y.

My time at Hobart and William Smith Colleges has taught me a few very important lessons I often repeat in the form of quotes (a.k.a. clichés). One of those quotes is “You miss 100 percent of all shots you don't take.” Michael Jordan originally spoke these immortal words, although the wisdom has applied to many of the experiences, good and bad (but mostly good), I have had during my four years as an HWS student.

I am involved in the Hillel club on campus and every year I was given a chance to go on a free trip to Israel for college students, ages 18-26. For three years I would always throw the information away because I was too lazy to visit the Web site or I said to myself, “A free trip? Exactly what time was I born yesterday?”

I do not know what possessed me to look up the information around 2 a.m. one night when I was taking a break from not doing my work. I signed up for the Outdoor Adventure trio because it involved hiking. My dream is to hike the Appalachian Trail in support of AIDS research, starting in March 2005. It will take a good five to six months! Unlike the Israel trip, however, I will not have a hotel dinner buffet to welcome me after the end of each day of hiking.

Yes, the trip I took did involve plenty of hiking through the beautiful, mountainous, 70 degrees warm (in January) Negev Desert. I also stuck a hand-written note in the Wailing Wall—one of the holiest places in the world. I rappelled off a 90-foot cliff in the Ramon Crater and thought, “Yeah, baby! Who's the man now?” And yes, you do float in the Dead Sea. You could not sink if you tried. More importantly, I did not have to rationalize a missed chance with the hassles of international travel or statistics on Middle Eastern terrorism. As I said to my group on the last night, “It scares me that I could have been at home right now doing God knows what. Probably nothing.”

It touched me to learn about the perseverance and triumph of my religion for well over a thousand years. I am sorry to say, however, I did not have such a religious experience that I will join a kibbutz or enlist in the Israeli army (I did bring home an Israeli army hat, however). This two-week adventure taught me how important it is to step outside one's comfort zone in favor of a novel, sometimes precarious, experience. I am proud of myself and my fellow HWS students for the times they have been courageous enough to have done just that to benefit the Colleges community and, most importantly, themselves.

The Appalachian Trail will hopefully be my next big adventure. It comes with a 90 percent failure rate, but “the journey of thousand miles must begin with a single step.” In this particular case it is over a thousand miles.

