

Ex Libris

Class of 2021 Takes in the Sites of Venice, Italy

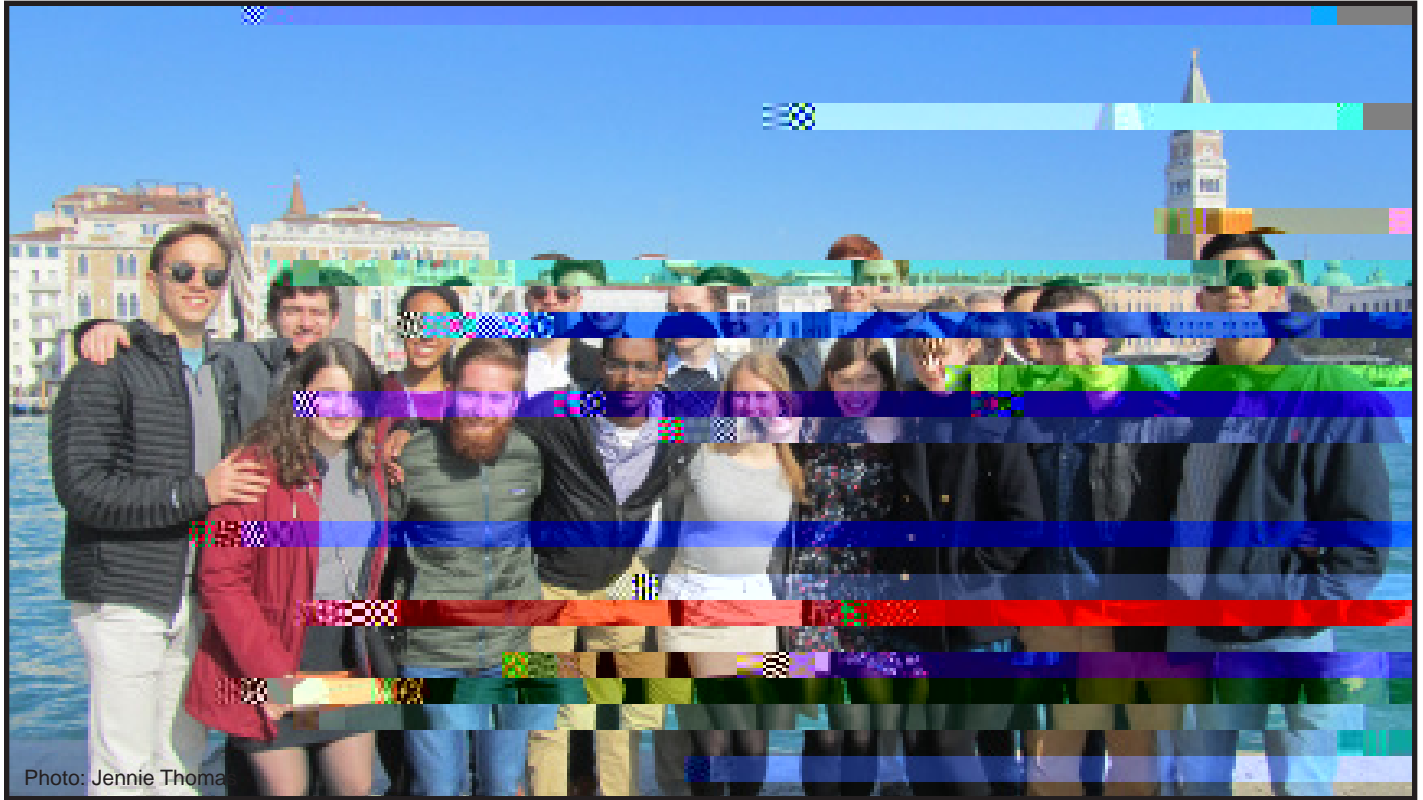


Photo: Jennie Thomas

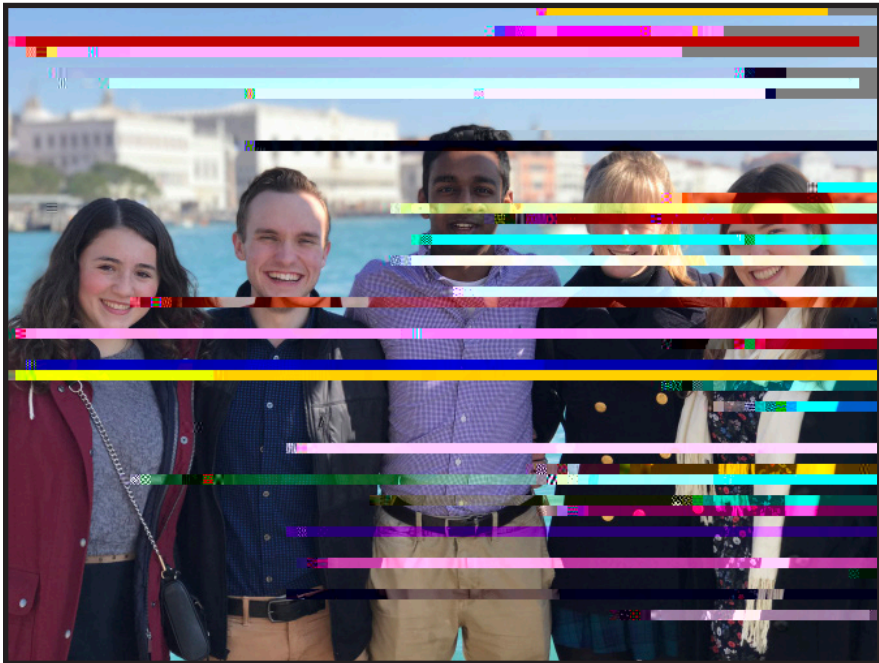
In the first week of March, the Class of 2021, accompanied by Jennie Thomas and Fr. Keenan, S.J, completed their inaugural class trip: a travel seminar to Venice, Italy. The trip, overflowing with Venetian art, history, and culture, exposed the Scholars to a foreign language experience early in their academic careers. This tour of Venice not only strongly positioned

the freshmen for future travel abroad, but also had the side-effect of bringing the youngest GPSP class together as a cohort. Venice was the perfect stage for a trip like this. In many ways a museum on a lagoon, the city in Northeast Italy is comprised of about a hundred church-studded islands connected by arching footbridges. The city's might as a republic peaked around the time of the Italian Renaissance and resulted in an identity unique in its aesthetic style and mix of cultures. The rich history of the city unfolded for the scholars as they walked from island to island, with the story of Venice well

explained by Fr. Keenan, whose time spent living in Italy resulted in a remarkable command of all knowledge Venetian. On Monday March 5th, the freshmen settled in for a red-eye fight from Boston to Frankfurt, Germany. Late in the morning on Tuesday, the Scholars arrived in Venice, with their excitement compensating for any effects of jet lag or sleep deprivation. The group arrived at their place of stay for the week, the Centro Spirituale e Case di Riposo in the Cannaregio neighborhood. The building was at one time the palace of a prominent Venetian family, but has since become a convent. The

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For some, the first few days of February are a slow-moving time of the semester, but, for the Presidential Scholars, this short period couldn't be more exciting. The first week of February marks the Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program Selection Process, affectionately known as GPSP. Every year, the top 55 students from Boston College's early action applicant pool are invited to BC as candidates for the GPSP. Over the course of four days, the prospective Scholars (lovingly dubbed "prospies") partake in a myriad of interviews, lunches, seminars, group conversations, and activities, each of which is designed not only to provide the Program directors with insight on each student, but also to introduce each student to the GPSP,



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A Price on Life: Slavery in the 21st Century

After months of brainstorming and planning, the sophomore class of the Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program hosted an educational and captivating panel to raise awareness on the issue of human trafficking. “A Price on Life: Slavery in the 21st Century” gave Boston College students and professors a glimpse into the discussion on the complex realities of human trafficking in Boston. Held in November, this sobering and illuminating conversation was focused on sex and labor trafficking featuring survivor and advocate Jasmine Marino, from Greater Boston; Medical and Executive Director of

Massachusetts General Hospital’s Freedom Clinic, Wendy Macias-

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Sophomore Class Becomes Men and Women for Others on trip to Nicaragua

Photo: Kathleen Bailey



Reinvigorated by a few relaxing weeks away from campus, on January 7th, the GPSP Class of 2020, along with co-directors Fr. Jim Keenan and Professor Kathy Bailey, spent an informative and reflective week in Managua, Nicaragua-- a trip saturated with the realities of third-world poverty, a frustrating political system, and, above all, inspiring encounters with the hope and dedication emanating from members of groups dealing with significant challenges.

The week began with an engaging lesson in history from Mark Lester of the Center for Global Education, who summarized the recent history of Nicaragua, highlighting U.S. involvement in Nicaraguan politics and the recent changes in political power. The Scholars, who had been familiarized with certain details of the revolution by reading Fr. Fernando Cardenal's Faith and

Joy, came to realize the lasting presence of the issues left behind by the revolution, particularly regarding the current President Daniel Ortega. This meeting set the stage for the remainder of the trip.

Following lunch at CGEE, the sophomores met with María Teresa Blandón and spoke (aided by their translator and guide, the warm and uplifting Elisa Vanegas) about the history and continuing struggles of the feminist movement in Nicaragua. María Teresa's strength, dedication, sense of humor, and experience made for an engaging and enlightening address.

The next day, following a tour of the downtown where the group encountered historic landmarks such as the Plaza de la Revolución, known for its role in the Sandinista Revolution, the sophomores enjoyed mid-morning crepes at Pastelería Margarita. They met with Silvia Nadine,

a member of the Movimiento Renovador Sandinista (MRS), a political party vying for a position in the Nicaraguan government. Despite the setbacks faced in recent years by the MRS and Nicaraguan democracy as a whole, Silvia's unwavering determination was inspiring.

Later, the trip took a different turn, as the group met with Silvia Cisneros, a nurse belonging to the Acahualinca Women's Center. The center, despite the battle for funding and resources, has improved the lives of women in one of the poorest parts of Managua through education, medical care, and counseling.

On Wednesday, the students toured a factory in a free trade zone and observed workers on the production line after meeting with members of the factory's management. This was followed by a trip to the American Chamber of Commerce, where development

policies and foreign investment in Nicaragua were discussed.

On Thursday, the group attended a meeting of the organization Pro Mujer, an organization helping entrepreneurial women start small businesses in some of the

received a Fulbright combined research scholarship to Vienna, Austria to study refugee integration policies.

was awarded the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

was successful in applying for an Individual F30 Fellowship from the NIH for full support of his MD/PhD training

at UC San Diego. Also - this year, he will be funded by a travel grant from the Knights Templar Eye Foundation to present his ongoing thesis research at the annual meeting for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology in Honolulu, HI.

got married on April 7th to Kyle Hawkins, and is now Associate General Counsel at Hennessy Advisors, Inc. in

Austin, TX

was recently awarded tenure and is now Professor of Law and Martin Luther King, Jr. Hall Research Scholar, at UC Davis School of Law.



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