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Message from the Dean



It's that time of year - a time of giving and thanks - whether that means showing those in our lives who are important to us that we are grateful for them or by showing generosity to those in need (staff here the College "adopted" four families through the Salvation Army to provide gifts and other needed items).

I'd like to personally thank all of you. You are the core of this College, and I am truly inspired by your dedication to our students and to Northeastern.

Thank you for all that you do, and I truly hope that you and your family have a wonderful holiday season and a happy New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John LaBrie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John LaBrie
Dean

Boston Ballet Dancer (and Student at the College) Profiled on WBZ News

[Isaac Akiba](#), a soloist with the Boston Ballet and current Bachelor's of Liberal Arts student at the College of Professional Studies, was featured last week on WBZ news, the local CBS affiliate. Isaac is part of the unique partnership between Northeastern and the Boston Ballet where dancers can pursue a college degree while dancing. The academic program works around their demanding dance schedules.

Read and watch the clip [here](#):

Explorations of Theory in Everyday Life



That's the subtitle of a new book, [Constraints of Agency](#), edited by Craig Gruber and his colleagues in a series titled *Annals of Theoretical Psychology (Volume 12.)*

The book's publisher, Springer, notes that *Constraints of Agency* explores the basic concept of agency and develops it further in psychology, using it to better understand and explain psychological processes and behavior.

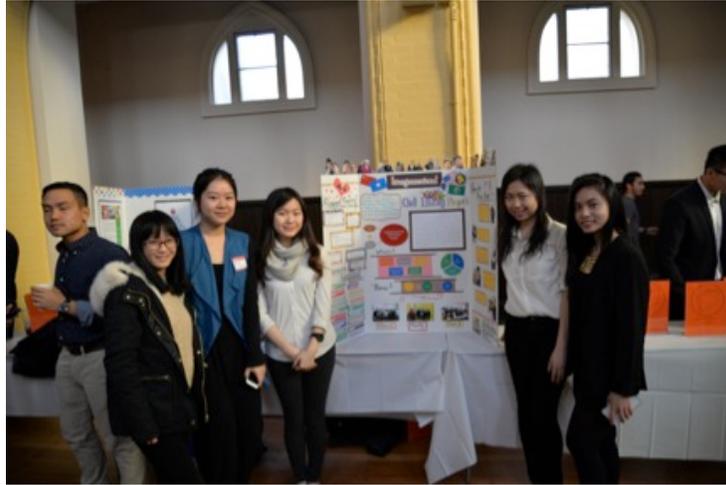
More importantly, this book seeks to put an emphasis on the role of agency in four distinct settings: history of psychology, neuroscience, psychology of religion, and socio-cultural theories of co-agency."

Dr. Gruber is a social and developmental psychologist and is faculty director of the graduate programs in Homeland Security and Criminal Justice.

In the preface to *Constraints of Agency*, Dr. Gruber describes how the book began with a conversation: "While sitting on a train with my friend and colleague Hroar Klempe, we began discussing the role of agency and agentic behavior in an individual. Our discussion included items such as: what is the nature of the Agency, the neuroscience behind it, and how does psychological thought inform and be informed by agentic processes." He ends the preface by inviting the reader to join the conversation.

NU Global Faculty Make Experiential

Student Project a Reality



NU Global students at the Service-Learning EXPO

Many international students study in the United States in hopes of improving their English and getting to know American history and culture. This semester, service-learning students in the NU Global American Classroom program were able to achieve both goals not only through textbooks, but also through hands-on engagement in the Boston community.

On December 4, 30 American Classroom students celebrated the culmination of a semester-long intergenerational and intercultural oral history project. Student participants, along with older adult partners whom they had interviewed for eight weeks, faculty members, advisers, and service-learning supervisors, gathered in the Curry Student Center on campus to close out the semester. Many attendees then proceeded to present at the Service-Learning EXPO, hosted by The Northeastern Center of Community Service. NU Global faculty members Julie Miller, Ilka Kostka, Nita Desai, Haley Malm, and Ted Miller collaborated with staff members of Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), a Boston-based nonprofit organization, to make the multi-pronged project a reality.

Over the course of eight weeks, students were partnered with low-income older adults, all of whom volunteer in school settings with young children with special needs as part of ABCD's Foster Grandparents Program. Students designed interview questions, interviewed their adult partners, and wrote essays based on their data. After collecting these stories, the students compiled extensive biographies with thematic and citation-driven significance, ultimately leading to polished oral history projects. One student wrote, "The oral history project contributed to my English skills not only in listening, speaking and writing, but I also built my relationship with my partners by understanding and sharing memories with them... I hope that I

can have more opportunities to do things like this in the future."

Faculty members Julie Miller and Ilka Kostka have been invited to write a manuscript about this project for an edited book on service-learning and English language learning and look forward to continuing their collaboration in the upcoming months.



The Curry Student Center gathering of students, foster grandparents, faculty and advisers on December 4



Faculty and ABCD staff. From left to right: Nita Desai, Haley Malm, Sarah Primeau (ABCD), Ilka Kostka, Julie Miller and Nicci Meadow (ABCD)

Northeastern Holocaust Awareness Week:

January 27-29

The Impact of the Holocaust on the Next Generation

Presented by Northeastern University's College of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Northeastern Humanities Center with the Holocaust Awareness Committee.

Seventy years after the liberation of Auschwitz, a commemorative and educational series -- including lectures, a panel, a survivor talk, and a film screening -- reflects on the Holocaust's legacy in the 21st century.

All events are free and open to the public. RSVP is encouraged.

[View the 2015 Holocaust Awareness Week Program](#)

Improving Healthcare by Design



Francesca Grippa PhD, lead faculty in the Bachelor of Science in Management program, and her colleagues recently published a research paper in the *Journal of Healthcare Information Management* about improving patient care by making architectural changes to their work space and improving communications processes.

Their paper, titled, "Increasing Interactions in Healthcare Teams through Architectural Interventions and Interpersonal Communication Analysis," appeared in Volume 28, Number 4/Fall 2014 of the journal.

In their abstract, Grippa and co-authors stated that they "assessed the effect of interventions to existing architectural space to remove environmental distractions, improve communication processes, and promote team effectiveness." And, they noted that "[t]he goal of this research is to define a framework that optimizes the development and delivery of care in patients with complex and chronic health conditions by improving communication among members of an interdisciplinary care team."

Grippa's research areas include innovation management, knowledge management, team dynamics, organizational creativity and leadership, semantic analysis, and organizational network analysis.

Julie Baker Presents and Is Appointed to Advisory Committee



Julie Baker, lead faculty member in the Bachelor of Science in English program [presented](#) at The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Annual 2014 Convention in Washington, D.C., on November 23. Baker presented as a member of the panel, "Identity and Composition Stories for Empowerment." Her abstract was titled "Making it Matter: How Stories Can Empower Persuasive Writing in the Composition Classroom," and she showed, through her session, how stories can be used to empower students' confidence in the writing process and enhance final drafts of their persuasive essays.

Baker has also been appointed to the NCTE's Achievement Awards in Writing Advisory Committee for a three-year term. The Committee will advise staff on the nature, policies, and procedures regarding the [NCTE Achievement Awards](#), including issues such as developing a specific plan for involving more public schools in the awards and revising the structure of the awards to mitigate the negative effects of competition on student identity and learning, among many others.

We Want to Hear from You!

What information would you like to receive in the next issue? We welcome all suggestions, and will do our best to incorporate your ideas into future communications. Thanks in advance for your input and support. To submit a note, send an email to cpsnews@neu.edu.