

MSUM Political Science 2009 Alumni Newsletter

Dear Political Science, Legal Studies and International Studies Alumni

Greetings once again from the Department of Political Science at Minnesota State University Moorhead. We've had a very unusual year. Between budget fears and flood fighting we are thrilled to have survived and we move strongly toward 2009-2010. Among the faculty, Phil Baumann enjoyed a semester on sabbatical in the spring while I handed over my chair position to Paul Kramer. I am delighted, however, that I shall have the opportunity to continue working with our alumni. Andrew Conteh, of course, did too much to put into a single sentence.

Our students, faculty, staff, local alumni and professor emeritus all worked together to save the Fargo-Moorhead area from wide-spread destruction during the emergency in March and April. The university was the center of volunteer coordination for Moorhead and was required to close for two weeks during the battle. Like those of you here during the 1997 flood, it was once again college students from MSUM, Concordia and NDSU that were essential to filling and placing over 5 million sandbags in Moorhead, Fargo and elsewhere. As I told my students in class upon our return, they had participated in a form of public service that is rarely asked of U.S. citizens and they responded magnificently.

The flood did mess with some scheduling and events, but it gave us an excuse to hold a party. We gathered as many students and local alumni who could to participate in our "We Need a Party" Party. It was an informal gathering at the Moorhead Bennigan's for food and fun. The event was so successful that we hope to turn it into an end-of-year tradition. Watch your mailbox for invitations.

Thanks so much to those of you who allocated all or part of your donation made during the university phone-a-thon to the Department of Political Science. Your donations enabled the Model UN Team to continue to compete in the annual Model UN Arrowhead Regional Competition. In addition to the Political Science Department fund, we now have two additional specific funds to which you may donate. One fund is the *Andrew Conteh Model UN Team Fund* and the other is the *Political Science Student Internship and Research Fund*, which will be used to help fund student travel for internships and professional conferences. As tight budgets continue to be a reality, our support for these student activities will be more and more dependent on the continued generosity of our alumni. A pledge card and self-addressed postage paid envelope are included for your convenience. Donations of any size will be greatly appreciated.

Please feel free to send your latest news to me at headrick@mnstate.edu. I encourage you to read more about our department activities at our website <http://www.mnstate.edu/polsci/>. There you will also find contact information for the entire faculty. We also invite you to join us on Facebook. You can join our group "MSUM Political Science" and catch up with former classmates and faculty.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Dr. Barbara Headrick, Alumni Relations Director

Alumni News

Our graduates continue to utilize their Political Science majors/minors in a wide variety of fields. Thanks to all of you who have sent recent updates on your careers. Not only is it great to hear from you, but it is very helpful for current students to see the many different career opportunities available to Political Science majors. Check out the latest news from your classmates at <http://www.mnstate.edu/polsci/alumni.cfm>. While you are there, please take a moment to send us an update on your latest news. I've included a few highlights from this year's alumni updates.



Political Science Alumni Mayor Mark Voxland ('72) and City Manager Michael Redlinger ('01) lead Moorhead's flood fighting victory. Redlinger was also recognized this year as MSUM's Outstanding Young Alumni.



Justin Schwegel ('06?) is working for the Peace Corps in Guinea. As he recently wrote another professor, "I love the work here,...coming to Africa is probably the best decision of my life."

Trisha Dewar ('08) is now attending Harvard Law School, but she was able to join us at our pre-graduation party. The picture features Trisha with the new plaque she donated for the Pi Sigma Alpha scholarship winners.



Student & Department News

Student Academic Conference No flood could stop the Student Academic Conference at MSUM. Twelve Political Science students presented research at the 11th Annual Student Academic Conference. To see all the students' research efforts and more on this ever-growing annual event (begun by the efforts Dr. Andrew Conteh), go to <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadconf/>.



Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society The flood-fighting efforts forced the cancellation of annual Pi Sigma Alpha Banquet, but we were able to honor our new initiates and scholarship winner at our “We Need a Party” Party. Current students, alumni and staff gathered to celebrate surviving the challenges of this year’s long winter and soggy spring. Troy Olson was the recipient of the 2009 Curtis Amlund Outstanding Student Award. Troy will be spending fall semester studying at Oxford University and plans to continue his education in law school.



Model United Nations Twenty-five team members of the Model UN team, accompanied by their faculty advisor Dr. Conteh, competed in the 2009 Arrowhead Model UN Conference in Mankato. This important program helps students build practical diplomatic skills and develop a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by nations across the globe.



Fifteen students joined the ranks of the Political Science department alumni this year with one graduating with Distinction in Engagement in the College of Social and Natural Sciences, four graduating Magna Cum Laude and one Cum Laude. Several of our new alumni are heading off to law school and graduate school. Well done graduates!



Dr. Conteh worked with MSUM officials as the campus hosted the (second annual) Naturalization Ceremony in September. Seventeen people from ten different countries became U.S. citizens at the held on the MSUM campus.



The Political Science Department helped to sponsor the January 20th Inaugural Celebration. More than 800 attended the event to watch President Obama take the oath of office.



We send you our best wishes for all your endeavors and look forward to hearing from you.

Political Science Department

<http://www.mnstate.edu/polsci/>

