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Wisdom | Leadership | Service

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The Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal accepts submissions from non-members as well as members of Delta Epsilon Sigma. While student contributions are welcome at any time, each spring issue will reserve space for the Delta Epsilon Sigma Undergraduate Writing Contest winners. We will consider for publication a wide variety of articles, fiction, and poetry. Our primary mission is to serve the Catholic cultural and intellectual tradition, and we favor work commensurate with that aim. Submissions to Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal are peer reviewed by doctorally-prepared academics or other specialists. Submissions published in the Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal may not be afterwards published elsewhere without the express consent in writing of both the Executive Director and the Journal's editor.

Submit manuscripts (as Microsoft Word files) via email to the editor: Dr. Claudia Marie Kovach (ckovach@neumann.edu).

Indexed in Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory and Columbia University Libraries' web archive of freely-accessible e-journals.

MESSAGES FROM THE EDITORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Note the change of address of Delta Epsilon Sigma: Dr. Claudia Marie Kovach, Executive Director, DES National Office, Neumann University, School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education, BACH 302Z, Aston, PA 19014-1298.

Our last issue highlighted the timely interview of recent Holy Cross graduate, honor student, and Delta Epsilon Sigma member Billy Chilambula by Justus Ghormley. Dr. Ghormley directs the Moreau College Initiative (MCI), an academic division of Holy Cross College in Notre Dame, Indiana. It offers undergraduate degrees to men incarcerated at Westville Correctional Facility, a state prison in Northwest Indiana. After graduation, Mr. Chilambula remained with MCI for almost two years, serving as a mathematics instructor, teaching assistant, and writing center tutor. A native of Malawi, Mr. Chilambula views his education in the United States as a gift that compels him to find ways to give back to his community in Malawi. Billy Chilambula completed a sentence of over twenty years in March 2025. Upon release, he was taken into federal custody, and has now been deported to Malawi.

The new FaceBook closed group for Delta Epsilon Sigma members now can be accessed through the name *DES Connections*. Please join and keep the society updated with your chapter news. Additional online and social-media promotion of the society on Instagram and LinkedIn accounts remain under construction. Discussions continue about potential online conferences for chapter advisors and for student members.

To continue robust competition, the Delta Epsilon Sigma Executive Committee invites chapter advisors and their students to continue to participate in the various opportunities membership provides, including the Father Fitzgerald undergraduate writing completion and the Fitzgerald scholarships and fellowships. Undergraduates may also pursue the J. Patrick Lee Award for Service or the Harry R. Knight Undergraduate/Graduate Prize For International Service. Current graduate students may seek one of the Sr. Brigid Brady Graduate Awards (which, upon application, may receive renewal). See the Announcements at the end of this issue to find out more information.

As has become customary, the spring issue publishes the first-place winners of the Fr. Fitzgerald Undergraduate Competition in Scholarly and Creative Writing, and the fall issue publishes eligible second-place entries. The Announcements section of the spring issues reports the winners of the each year's competitions. Submissions for the forthcoming 2026 Undergraduate Writing Competition will remain due on or before Dec. 1st, 2026. Chapter advisors are encouraged to organize their own local contests. *Before sending the winning entries on to the national competition, advisors must require the student-authors to revise to correct all grammatical and mechanical (spelling, punctuation, wordiness) errors in their submission.* Please note that the Executive Board must receive all submissions in Word format (no PDFs) and that submissions are limited to 5000 words maximum. *Submissions that exceed 5000 words shall not be considered.* Use the format of in-text citation and Works Cited. **All Notes should be relegated to the submission's back matter as Endnotes (NO Footnotes).** Submissions may not contain copyrighted images (unless these images have been cleared by the copyright holder). For further specifications, see the pertaining section of the Announcements at the rear of this issue.

The Delta Epsilon Sigma website—www.deltaepsilonsigma.org—still invites your active participation. The site features information about the Society and its constituent chapters. It supplies the latest news, current and past issues of the *DES Journal*, instructions, and application forms for the various contests, awards, and other society business. The managers of the new FaceBook page, *DES Connections*, will garner from posted chapter activities appropriate news for inclusion on the website.

All published work in the *DES Journal* remains peer-reviewed by doctorally-prepared academics or recognized specialists in the work's subject-matter.

The Executive Committee continues to seek updated postal and email addresses of our membership. Please notify Dr. Claudia Kovach, Executive Director, or Dr. Ronald L. Smorada, Assistant to the Executive Director; Delta Epsilon Sigma National Office; Neumann University; School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education; BACH 302Z; Aston, PA 19014-1298.

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J. PATRICK LEE PRIZE FOR SERVICE INTERVIEW

Ms. Delaney Idema – Iona University

1. How and when did you begin serving others? Tell us please about your current experience in service as a busy student.

From a young age, I have been deeply committed to serving others — a value instilled in me through both my education and family. Having attended Catholic school from Kindergarten through high school, I was introduced to service early on. From fourth through tenth grade, I served as an altar server during Mass and regularly volunteered at community events such as Pancake Breakfasts and letter-writing campaigns for nursing home residents.

The importance of service was reinforced by my family. My father modeled kindness in everyday actions, my grandmother (Nana) consistently donated to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, and my other grandmother showed unwavering faith through acts of generosity. My twin sister, Shaye, inspired me by her selflessness — donating her birthday money to St. Jude and showing compassion to everyone around her. Their examples helped shape my desire to serve others meaningfully.

At Iona University, I carried those values forward. As a Resident Assistant, I recognized the power of community and launched **5 Cents for St. Jude’s**, a student-led initiative collecting bottles and cans for redemption. Every floor in my residence hall had a bin designated for the project, and over time, our efforts raised nearly \$400 for St. Jude. What started as a small idea turned into a unifying service effort that brought students together for a shared purpose — helping children and families in need.

Since graduating early from Iona, I have carried this same spirit of service into my career as a **middle school math teacher for seventh and eighth graders**. I now view teaching as a form of service — not only helping students strengthen their mathematical skills but also guiding them to become kind, respectful, and socially responsible young people. My Classroom, built on community, empathy, and growth, reflects the same values that have guided my service throughout my life.

2. Of the various kinds of service you have experienced, what type do you enjoy the most? Why?

The type of service I enjoy most is the kind that brings people together through simple acts of kindness and generosity. I find deep fulfillment in witnessing the collective impact of a group working toward a shared goal. Projects like **5 Cents for St. Jude’s** remind me that even small actions — when fueled by compassion — can create something powerful.

Today, as a teacher, I see service come alive in my classroom through collaboration, empathy, and teamwork. Whether helping classmates understand a concept, showing respect during discussions, or volunteering for a cause, I find joy in helping my students discover that service does not always require grand gestures — it starts with daily choices to do good for others.

3. As you have given to others, what do you believe you have gained in return?

Through service, I have gained perspective, patience, and gratitude. I have learned that leadership does not seek recognition; instead, it shows a quiet consistency in doing what is right—even when no one is watching. The ability to inspire others, no matter how small the effort, has been one of the most meaningful takeaways from my service journey.

Now, in the classroom, I see these lessons mirrored in teaching. Guiding students requires empathy and persistence, much like service work. Each day I'm reminded that positive influence happens over time and often in small, unseen moments that shape a person's character and confidence.

4. You indicate that your experiences with youth have been fulfilling. Explain how you think these opportunities have inspired your career choices and have deepened your understanding of Catholic social teaching.

Working with youth has always affirmed my belief that education and service go hand in hand. My early service experiences and time as a Resident Assistant showed me that people thrive when they feel valued, supported, and part of something bigger than themselves — exactly what I now strive to create in my classroom.

Graduating early from Iona allowed me to step into my vocation sooner: **teaching middle school math**. I see math as more than numbers — it provides an opportunity to teach perseverance, collaboration, and problem-solving in both academic and personal contexts. This approach stays rooted in Catholic social teaching, particularly the principles of human dignity and solidarity. My goal is for students to leave my class not only stronger mathematically but also more confident, kind, and compassionate individuals.

5. What have you learned that might give Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal readers insight concerning the current needs in the United States to address social problems?

My experiences have shown me that one of the greatest needs in the U.S. today is fostering empathy and community responsibility — particularly among young people. While financial and systemic inequities are significant, I believe change begins with education that emphasizes character and compassion as much as academics.

By teaching middle school students, I have seen firsthand how important it is to help them develop not only skills for success but also social awareness and empathy. Encouraging students to understand their role in their community — whether through classroom projects, service learning, or simple acts of kindness — builds a generation more prepared to face social issues with care and collaboration.

6. What would you like to share about your plans to become a mathematics teacher? How specifically does service fit this profession? How will your undergraduate degree enhance your ability to provide needed service to the human family?

As a middle school math teacher, I see teaching as a daily act of service. Beyond equations and formulas, I aim to create a classroom culture grounded in respect, curiosity, and compassion. I incorporate real-world applications of math — such as

budgeting, statistics, and problem-solving — to help students see how these skills can be used to serve others and improve their communities.

Service fits naturally into education because both are rooted in helping others grow. I plan to continue service projects like **5 Cents for St. Jude's**, involving my students in choosing causes they care about. Such involvement empowers them to see math not just as an academic subject, but as a tool for change.

7. Tell us about your views regarding the importance of developing a sense of community to address social problems. Explain the connections you find in the sharing of your personal gifts.

Building a sense of community remains essential to addressing social problems because it reminds us that progress is a shared responsibility. When individuals feel connected and valued, they become more motivated to contribute to collective solutions. In my classroom, I strive to build that same spirit of community. Whether through group projects, peer tutoring, or shared service initiatives, I teach my students that everyone's strengths matter. Sharing my gifts — leadership, organization, and compassion — helps others recognize their own, thus creating a ripple effect of kindness and accountability.

8. What other service experiences have especially inspired your choice of career path? Are there other service opportunities that you would like to pursue?

My most influential service experience was creating and leading **5 Cents for St. Jude's**. It taught me that leadership is about empowering others to act. Seeing my peers unite for a cause reinforced my desire to guide young people toward both academic and personal growth.

As a teacher, I now continue that mission. I am inspired to create classroom experiences where students can connect their learning to real-world impact — for example, using math to plan fundraisers, design community projects, or solve practical challenges. I hope to inspire my students the same way service once inspired me.

9. What do you find most difficult about service? Can you think of a time when things did not go as you expected or you questioned your purpose?

The most challenging part of service becomes maintaining motivation when participation or understanding is low. During my St. Jude's project, many students misunderstood the purpose or misused the bins, a frustrating result after so much careful planning and communication.

That experience, however, strengthened my leadership. I learned that effective service requires patience, persistence, and clear communication — lessons that now guide my teaching. When challenges arise in the classroom, I remind myself that meaningful change takes time and consistency.

10. Do you think all university students should engage in service? Why or why not?

Yes, I strongly believe all students should engage in service in some capacity. Service does not need to be large-scale to be meaningful; small acts of kindness, peer support,

or involvement in local initiatives all matter. These experiences build empathy, leadership, and humility — qualities that benefit not only individuals but society as a whole.

As someone who began this journey as a student and now lives it daily as an educator, I have seen how service shapes character. Encouraging students to serve prepares them to become thoughtful, compassionate adults — a lesson that extends well beyond the classroom.



Delaney Idema



J. PATRICK LEE PRIZE FOR SERVICE INTERVIEW

Ms. Olivia VanDaele, University of Portland

1. How and when did you begin serving others? Tell us please about your current experience in service as a busy student.

I have always valued serving my community and helping others. Even as a child in 5th grad, my best friend and I started a fundraiser for our local children's hospital. We asked our peers and the whole school to make bracelets and donate them to a box we made located at the front office of our school. Then we donated all the bracelets to the children's hospital in our community. We made posters, donation boxes, and even spoke at our assembly. We set everything up ourselves, and this activity really began my excitement and eagerness to serve my community. Now even as a busy college student, I still find time to volunteer and serve my community because it is part of who I am. I value and enjoy serving others, and I make sure I set time aside for this service. I am still very involved in the A Moment of Magic nonprofit organization even as a senior college student doing my student teaching. I have prioritized service by taking one or two days a month completely set aside to volunteer at a children's hospital in Portland as a Princess through this organization. Volunteering for this organization brings me a lot of joy and purpose. Serving my community has always been a privilege and opportunity for me to grow as a community member.

2. Of the various kinds of service you have experienced, what type do you enjoy the most? Why?

I enjoy serving the children in my Catholic church community the most. I have had the opportunity to be a Vacation Bible School camp leader for many years, and I love being able to lead the children in my group through various activities that bring them closer to God. I feel closest in my faith when I get to worship with them.

3. As you have given to others, what do you believe you have gained in return?

Especially when I serve underprivileged children through A Moment of Magic, I gain a sense of admiration for their strength and perseverance, and humility for the opportunities that I have been given in my own life. I gain purpose and perspective for the life that I have and how I can help others in any way I can. I can spread God's love to my community through my service and time.

4. You indicate that your experiences with youth have been fulfilling. Explain how you think these opportunities have led to you career choices and to Catholic social teaching.

One volunteer experience in particular inspired me to choose a career in Catholic social teaching. Volunteering for Vacation Bible School at my community Catholic church for several years as a camp leader gave me the opportunity to connect my faith, love for serving my community, and passion to work with children. I felt like I was truly making a difference to spread the word of God to the children in my group each year. This experience helped me realize that this type of service is something I want to do for the rest of my life. Seeing God's love through each child inspired me to be a teacher.

5. What would you like to share about your plans to become a mathematics teacher? How specifically does service fit this profession? How will your undergraduate degree enhance your ability to provide needed service to the human family?

I have always loved math since I was a little girl in elementary school. I was a part of the mathletes team in 5th grade and always completed a math workbook during the summer. In high school and college, I began to realize that math and STEM were stereotyped as male dominant fields and interests. I was one of only a few girls in my AP Statistics class in high school. That is why I became so passionate about teaching math. I have always advocated that math is for everyone and have always tried to be a role model for girls in STEM. I hope that as an educator I can encourage everyone in my class to see themselves as mathematicians. One of my favorite activities is to have my students draw their idea of what a mathematician looks like and then to revise their drawings and draw themselves as mathematicians. I find service to be closely related to teaching because my main goal remains to serve my students and prepare them to be kind, compassionate, and strong leaders after they leave my classroom. I care deeply about all my students and spend extra time outside of required student teaching hours to ensure they are all successful and feel like they belong. My undergraduate degree has given me so many skills and opportunities that have shown me how to be an excellent educator. I have had the opportunity to be in a classroom all four years of school at the University of Portland. I have seen more than five different classrooms and had the chance to talk to many different teachers about how I can be the best teacher I can be. Now, as a student teacher, I feel challenged to figure out how I can do this work and perform on my own, all the while enjoying the support of my university faculty, professors, my supervisor, and my cooperating teacher. I have so many support systems through my undergraduate program that I am confident I will be an amazing teacher on my own next year after I graduate. I am so grateful for my experience at the University of Portland. I value the education that I have received here and how much I have grown over the past four years.

6. Tell us about your views regarding the importance of developing a sense of community to address social problems. Explain the connections you find in the sharing of your personal gifts.

I believe it is very important to build a sense of community. I have had the pleasure of being a part of many different communities through my involvement. I thus feel that I have solid support around me and many people I can count on. This kind of community and the positivity that comes with it are important for everyone. Especially in a school setting, community becomes essential in the development of children's social, emotional, and academic learning. When it comes to sharing my personal gifts, I may not be able to donate or raise money for a cause, but I can give all my time to my community. Giving my time and effort has been an important aspect of the service that I am able to give as a college student.

7. What other service experiences have especially inspired your choice of career path? Are there other service opportunities that you would like to pursue?

Other service experiences that have inspired by choice in career path include volunteering for children's soccer camps, serving my school community as a leader among my peers, and volunteering for my local library helping families with the summer

reading program for children. In the future, I hope to work with programs similar to the BookMoBus Summer Reading Program that I volunteered for in high school. This program took a bus filled with books and activities around each elementary school every Wednesday during the summer. We held “read alouds” and crafting activities, and we loaned books to local children and families in the community. This involvement became a great opportunity to serve children in the community through literacy and summer education. This kind of participation with the community, and especially with children, directly connects to my passion for teaching and educating my community.

8. What do you find most difficult about service? Can you think of a time when things did not go as you expected or you questioned your purpose?

Something that can be difficult about serving in a local children’s hospital is the personal sadness and grief I feel when encountering children in a vulnerable space such as a hospital room. My community of other volunteers in this organization often have discussions before and after these visits to discuss what we may encounter and how we feel after. It is important to know our role in that space and do our best to bring joy and play to these children while understanding that we cannot fix medical issues. This type of service remains extremely rewarding when we can put a smile on the faces of these children, but it can undoubtedly be emotionally difficult as a volunteer to witness the children’s pain.

9. Do you think all university students should engage in service? Why or why not?

Yes! Service is incredibly rewarding. Through volunteer work and service, I have had opportunities to be included in supportive communities, learn more about my own community, gain skills and perspective that will guide my future career goals, and it has allowed me to make a difference in my community. I am so grateful for the service opportunities I have been given, and I am so grateful that I am able to give my time and effort to these organizations and spaces. The service that I have been involved in has shaped the person I am today and the educator I will be in the future.



Olivia VanDaele



THE LORD IS PRESENT

CORCORAN AUSTBARR*

God Bless America chimed hauntingly on from the automatic bell tower, the soft tit-tat of plump rain dying on metal paneling like a background act. The true bell swayed, in reality, almost imperceptibly to the homes below, but the high rising mist and tilted drizzle created the illusion of a vivacious oscillation. Yohan Bauer, seemingly sinking even deeper into his own wrinkled skin, wasted away in a helpless darkness, a desolate and dry bedroom. His open window let in the cold he sought, but too the songs he abhorred.

“That damned bell,” he grumbled to himself. “Can’t get a wink of damned sleep.” It was eleven in the morning. Service had only just begun.

Yohan ruminated, day in and day out, on a false life—one where he had never stepped foot in Kansas and let himself be housed next to those zealous Methodists nuts. He dreamed of a far off and impossible reality of comfort, a wife, and sight, most of all. Instead of making something of Topeka, Kansas, he reviled it with a religious vigor, and opted to loathe his everyday. “If only,” this, “If only,” that. “Couldn’t God have—instead?”

His nephews, Friedrich and Louis—not fully of German heritage; half-breeds, as Yohan would remind their mother—bought Yohan this house over two decades ago, when he was more of a passively bitter old man than a disgruntled one. He appreciated it as far as he wasn’t the one paying the mortgage, but this neighborhood was no Lauterbach, and it never would be. The American stench and Christian venom ran through Topeka’s streets and flooded Yohan’s home.

Most of Yohan’s neighbors had never seen him. He got his groceries delivered to his door on a weekly basis (plain, easily digestible foods like canned mushroom soup and instant oatmeal) and made a point to cloister himself like a nun. The only exceptions were the monthly, non-negotiable family visits he reluctantly agreed to in exchange for the home, and today. Rumors abounded of the house’s vacancy (or haunting, depending on who you asked) about as quickly as the scurry of the mischief of rats that made a home of Yohan’s walls. It didn’t help that the crashing of pans at odd hours whenever Yohan took a heavy fall went unexplained for the passers-by. Steps went quick past the Bauer residence.

Feeling his taut hands against the walls, Yohan lifted himself from his misery chair and began to make his way to the kitchen, the room farthest from the neighboring church. He’d resolved to boil a pot for tea on his own without the help of Anina, his rather patronizing though younger sister, giving not a thought to his own safety nor her many warnings. The wallpaper slapped and peeled against his palms, a sensation which made him mutter startled incoherencies. Anina often told him to get it redone, refurbish everything for a more “American colonial” feel, but he was no American, and the dingy atmosphere had no bearing on his life.

Yohan dropped heavily into the motorized chair with rusting wheels he kept by the dining room door, as his legs were soon ready to give, and made his squeaky way toward the gas stove, excruciating inch by excruciating inch. The ghost of the gospel seemed to follow right by his side, intensifying rather than waning the farther into the kitchen he went. Softly, the whistle of *praise God, from whom all blessing flow* vibrated in his skull

* Corcoran Austbarr, a student at Mount Saint Mary’s University, won second place in the short-fiction category of the 2024 Father Edward Fitzgerald Undergraduate Competition in Creative and Scholarly Writing.

and reverberated off of the walls. For a moment, the wheels of his chair seemed to turn in, sharply scraping against the floor as he tried to move. Cursing, his hands rushed to his head, deathly cold on his face as he beat against his eyes.

“God damn them,” he protested, still giving his all to move in that prison of a chair, even just a bit. “God damn them. God damn them all. Those- those bastards.”

He went on and on to himself, his chair slowly spinning in a shaky circle as he unintentionally approached the counter. The scratching, which would leave marks on the floor he would never see, could not be heard above the singing, not to him. To anyone else, Yohan was simply a probably senile old man, rolling about in a senseless tantrum to the sole sound of his own whining. Scratch, profanity, scratch. His arms began to flail, beating against the seat of his chair and whatever else was unfortunate enough to be caught in his wake. He knocked his fragile knuckles against one of the knobs of the stove; a sputter, and ablaze it went.

His hysteria came to an end with a sharp cry as he tumbled harshly out of his chair with red fingers. His German profanities finally overcame the dying hymns, and the crackling of the lit stove took center stage, light ruffling of wind-blown curtains to accompany it.

He could not focus his attention on any one spot. The stabbing in his hip; the searing of his flesh; the throbbing of his heavy, lopsided head. But despite all the pains that coursed through his body, Yohan’s mind cursed the one thing he felt so totally outside of himself: “God, damn you.”

It had been years since Yohan had a firm grasp on time, but he knew it took him ages to make his careful way back into his seat. The beds of his right fingers were pierced with each meeting—collision—they encountered. If he were a crying man, there would have been no better time than this. But stoic as he was, he clawed his way right back into what Anina cynically dubbed his “electric chair” and carried on. He had only then needed to follow that familiar heat to caress the stove in search of the knob. With a crisp click, the stove turned off as fast as it went on, and the kitchen was quiet again. Stoic, but not stubborn, he left the tea for nephew Louis to handle.

He expected the boys and their mother today, which, unsurprisingly, didn’t warrant any changes at all to his routine. Was he to tidy up? Make himself presentable? No, and it would’ve been a joke to suggest such, especially when the only notice he received was a message on his answering machine the night before. These visits only meant the ache in his chest deepened in great impatience for a nuisance, a burden, and an inconvenience to grace his steps. He rolled in silence around his home, the map of which he could draw with his wheels, like a slow runaway train.

The church next door was letting out by this time, perhaps the only pleasantry that Sunday ever offered him. Their praise was like condescension, violent incessant tauntings for him alone. For the boy who slowly lost his sight before the cross for twelve years before he caught on to all the tomfoolery being fed to him. What blessings ever flowed to him? What favor or grace had he received? How was his faith rewarded? Blindness. Darkness. Descension into a colorless hell for the rest of his sorry life. If Yohan could see the crucifix Anina hung secretly above his front door, oh, what he would say.

The doorbell sounded once, twice, thrice. Anina. The boys.

“I’m comin’,” he yelled with indignation, still using up all the battery his abused chair was juiced with. Impatient with the stutter of his own old hands, Yohan fiddled frustratedly with the lock until he finally jiggled the door open. The chair beep-beep-beeped as he backed into the corridor to make way. His begrudging European mumbblings were not understood by the one stood before him.

“I knew someone lived here,” the voice said with triumph. “I just knew. X’cuse me, sir.” The beeping stopped.

Yohan nearly erupted. “Now who the hell are you?”

If it weren't for the precautionary gate, located just before the outside steps and installed by Friedrich at his mother's request, Yohan would've rolled right into the poor boy, and right down the stairs, too. His chair pressed and pressed against the gate, begging it to give way until slowly, the chair died, announcing its death with a robotic power-down sigh. Yohan still pushed the joystick forward with all he had.

“Listen a minute, sir,” the boy said, unlatching the gate. He let himself in and grabbed hold of Yohan's chair, turning him politely around to push him back into the house. Yohan, however, would not attest that any courtesy was present in the child, and swatted at the son with his worn down slipper-shoe. The boy paid it no mind, only turned his head away from the weapon, trying to spot a light switch on one of the walls.

Nice and far from the door, though left open for his convenience, the boy set Yohan square in the middle of the living room and stood to face him, a snaggletoothed smile plastered on his hopeful face.

“Hi, sir. My name's Luke. Who are you?”

The nerve, Yohan thought, of this boy to strut into *his* home and ask who *he* was. English was lost on him, and he raised his slipper once again, spitting words both unintelligible and threatening to the child. German, it was.

“Woah, sir! Slow down!” Luke backed away with raised hands, careful not to be within arm's length. “I was just wonderin', don't you want some canned food from the church? We got plenty left over from donations, and I thought, ‘if someone lives there, *they've* gotta want it if no one else does.’” Luke's innocence was blinding and pure, a charity Yohan hadn't seen in himself in sixty-six years. It was repulsive, it was beautiful, it was God in a boy.

The old man, now both bitter *and* disgruntled, found himself once again, and rose with a spring out of his chair, shoe swinging above his head.

“The hell with you, boy! Take that foolishness somewhere else! I've *got* food, I've got food. The hell, now!” he screamed. Luke scrambled for the door, but not without a final word:

“The Lord is present, sir! He likes you even if you're a mean old man!” and off he was, leaving Yohan to menace at the wall.

“God damned little- zealous believing brat. Oh, God damn it,” he cursed, alone.

Yohan hobbled toward the door and slammed it shut, casting himself in an all consuming darkness. Worn out from such a start, and perfectly maddened like never before, he stomped and swore himself back to his sad, empty bedroom. As he made his way, the answering machine sounded: due to circumstances out of their control, Anina and the boys would see him tomorrow instead. A message he took no note of, but would've made him somewhat pleased if he had.

He slammed his bedroom door too, because he could; because it gave the anger something to punish other than the boy. He threw each article he wore onto the ground, stripped to his skin, and forced himself into bed. There he lay, irritable, on a mattress covered only by a thin sheet and a slightly thicker sheet. Gradually, the anger was too exhausting to bear, and he fell into a desperately needed slumber. A frigid, active slumber.

He was not free in his sleep as he had desired, far from it. Rather, peace seemed to make itself the enemy of those who enmied God. Within the cavernous corridors of his mind, the words echoed, not in Luke's voice, but some other's: *the Lord is present*. And it became *the Lord is here and the Lord is watching*, swirling on top of each other like a horrific symphony. The early morning's hymn sang somewhere below the noise to the gonging of the bell, and eyes seemed to penetrate the dream from outside of it. He rolled violently over with a series of hoarse coughs, forced back into full awareness.

Steadily did he make himself erect, bowing slightly as he caught his breath. Yohan, who always seemed to have a remark, had nothing to say, only shivered at the strange chill that slid down his spine; so unusual for a lover of the cold such as he.

As the brilliant Christ-shaped light raged on at the foot of his bed, illuminating the whole scene, Yohan rolled back over in a stupor, leaving that hand of righteous fire outstretched and waiting once again.



THE TURTLE QUEEN AT LYFORD CREEK

JACOB KLAUNG*

“Turtles are a kind of bird with the governor turned low.”

--Edward Hoagland, *The Courage of Turtles*

In Rockford, Illinois, a golf course bobs up and down beside a small sidewalk path on the city’s outskirts. Fat old men always play on that course. Between the sidewalk path and golf course five miles of woods twenty feet wide and a creek wind to and from the golf course to the woods, under the sidewalk, and back again. A subdivision lies on the other side. The creek is named Lyford Creek; the road is named Lyford Road; and the golf course is, of course, Lyford Golf Course. A landscape dominated by ugly city birds, squirrels, golf balls, cigarette butts, and beer cans surround me as I quite often walk my dogs on the path.

The walkway lies in the middle of a thin line of woods separating a subdivision of rich old people, a park, and a golf course. But the sidewalk path has little traffic. The tree line was created to block the sight of one annoying group of people from another—a non-man’s land of trees. The woods out there appear sterile and hard to explain, a place you would drive past or look upon at a red light but never get out and walk through. Or, if you were an idiot, dump garbage in.

I could see something lying in the middle of the sidewalk; it looked like a boulder. I glanced back cautiously, wondering if a grumpy old troll was waiting to set us up. But as I approached, I saw it wasn’t a boulder but a monster with a shell the size of a trash can lid. A bomb-proof lizard. A dinosaur carry-over to the concrete age. I saw the reptile before my dogs did, but it didn’t register until they alerted me through a crazy barrage of barks and growls that it was, in fact, real.

In the face of all this chaos, the beast lay in the sun and paid no attention to all the noise my dogs made. With each tug, the dogs got closer and closer to the giant, but she was not fazed. I finally got them away far enough to where I could settle them down. I couldn’t believe what I saw—a beast, belonging in the wild woods and marshes—not a sidewalk next to a golf course.

But this behemoth acted as if the world surrounded her—as if it had for years. She had no fear. Not even the barking of neurotic dogs could scare her. She was not fazed by the mere presence of us tiny mortals, for she was the immortal Turtle Queen.

Her big, scaly body sprawled out in the hazy July afternoon—so big, in fact, that it took up an entire section of the sidewalk. I looked down at her head; her eyes were closed. She was either dead or asleep. I was not sure. The large creek was wide, providing no way around her.

I was about to end the walk and turn the canine circus around, but as I did, she awoke, and in her slow lizard brain the wheels of survival began to spin. She picked up her head, full and swelling with years, and slid off the sidewalk path and into the

* Jacob Klaung, a student at Loras College, won second place in the creative nonfiction category of the 2024 Father Edward Fitzgerald Undergraduate Competition in Creative and Scholarly Writing.

fast-moving creek below. After a few seconds of the turtle's absence, my dogs stopped barking—apparently satisfied. We walked over to the concrete slab where she had been sitting moments before and stood peering into the murky water.

* * *

Seeing such a huge old thing was remarkable. I wondered what her story was. Where did she come from? I began to think of the turtle as a sign, an omen—something of good luck.

I had often traveled the walking path and had never seen her before or a living thing bigger than a softball, for that matter. Was this she-turtle passing through? Was she a phantom? A longtime resident who only rose from the murky depths like Godzilla? I couldn't decide.

She was massive, which meant she was old. What was her age? She could be a hundred for all I knew. I began to imagine. Was she just a hatchling when The Civil Rights Act passed? Or had she fixed her shimmering black eye on the moon in 1969, right before the first human leaped out to meet it?

The Turtle Queen gave off an aura of contentedness or satisfaction, as if she had purpose to her existence. How long had she roamed this earth? A circus of dogs hadn't even fazed her; she must have seen it all. She had been alive longer than me and might live longer than me still.

But what had brought her to this spot? Maybe she was on some journey, a spiritual endeavor so long and perilous it required a nap in the sun—a respite. I decided on that. She was going someplace with the certainty only a turtle exudes. I bid the Turtle Queen safe travels as I stared into the amber water she had sunk into moments before. I turned back and decided it was time to leave the Lyford Creek walking path. She was on a journey, and I wished her all the luck in the world.

* * *

The Turtle Queen made me think of all the scaly and slimy friends I had made in my life. I have always had an appreciation for reptiles, fish, and amphibians. Not long after I was old enough to walk, I would take critters home. Frogs, crawdads, shiners, snails, turtles, tadpoles, newts, snakes, scud, toads, salamanders, minnows. The desire to bring nature inside with me and make a shelf-bound ecosystem seemed instinctual. I loved the outdoors so much and wanted to bring it indoors. I wanted my home to become theirs, but I began to learn, as I grew, that these poor, forlorn souls didn't belong behind glass or in buckets.

One time while I was watching a pet toad, I came to a realization. I saw his golden eye shoot to oblivion—a thousand-yard aquarium stare. He gazed into an invisible void, depressed looking—sad. He talked to me from behind that glass wanting so badly to leave. And I could hear him tell me this. He had a home or a place he longed to go, possibly a family. I could see he was spiritually gone; he needed to be reunited with the

natural world—a world of perpetual journey and cycle. I cried and freed my private zoo, learning from the talking toad that animals have a purpose and places that call them. A call that the Turtle Queen at Lyford Creek answered.

* * *

A week passed, and I had forgotten about my turtle friend. Even as I drove Lyford Road, a shortcut to the highway from my apartment to my parents' house, I didn't think of her. The drive to the highway from my place was short, but it was raining horses and cows that day. Forget the cats. So, I drove slowly toward the highway to see my parents.

Up the road a ways, I saw a massive thing. Roadkill? A bloated raccoon? It was black. The rain made it impossible to know for sure. The heavens began to drown out vision and slow down time. Wind began to rock the car like a mother. The falling horses and cows became elephants and rhinos. The wipers worked overtime—so hard in fact that I thought they might melt the windshield, exposing me to the torrent outside. I turned on my hazards and slowed the car, almost stopping in the middle of the road. It was bad. Someone was angry, and I did not want to find out who or what they were mad at.

As the car, crawling very slowly, like a rowboat, got to the black mass on the side of the road, I saw it. It was the Turtle Queen.

A car had struck her, no doubt, and I pulled over. The comfortable dry air transformed to water upon opening the car door. I walked around the front of my car, and there she lay, and the worst part of all—she was still alive.

The bedlam of the scene was remarkable. A hole the size of my fist was gaping on her side, and a fracture ran up her spine. Her innards were strewn out from her body like pale ribbons in the wind. The heavenly rain tugged at her organs as it ran down her body. The mouth was submerged in a pothole. She would raise her head and gasp, making sounds I thought only suffering mammals, not reptiles, made. It was so loud and chilling that I could hear her over the heavy chanting of the angry sky. She lay her head back down in the water, blowing bloody bubbles from her nostrils, repeating the labored cycle. With every suffering breath, the fracture in her midnight-colored shell would open a little revealing ruby flesh. Her tail and one of her legs were missing, pulling more cold blood from her body to the tumbling water in the ditch. The water flowed quickly—on its way to Lyford Creek.

I was soaked, cold, and disturbed. How purposeful and content she had been on that hazy, warm day when I had last encountered her. And now this? I stood almost three miles from where I last saw her a week ago. She traveled all that way to get to the road—was around for all these events—this time. All of that was lost and wasted because someone's secular travels had interrupted her spiritual calling. And they didn't even care to stop.

I waited for her to die. But she wouldn't. She began to look at me with eyes of intellect—it wasn't pain but the failure of it all that bothered her, I could tell. Her journey, wherever she was going, was lost, and the world was the worse for it. She had the same look as the toad, only her box wasn't translucent. It was the dark and watery corners of

death. The walls were closing in, but as I stood there, she would not die. I waited five minutes, then ten. She began to struggle and breathe more heavily, becoming increasingly uncomfortable with life. And the rain fell with a vengeance.

What brought us here? I thought. Why must our paths cross like this, and for what purpose? A big hunk of something important washed away from her insides, and she began to blow more bloody bubbles out of her nose, but still, death would not take her.

I ran to my car, my clothes weighed down by the rain. It was heavy, dreamlike, and strange, and for a moment, I wished I had just kept driving. But as I got to my car on the other side of the road, I saw her leg detached and lying far away from her suffering body.

I knew what I had to do. I opened the door and found the Bowie knife in the seatback pocket. Removing the sheath, I closed the car door and returned to the turtle. I thought I might look like a lunatic, so I kept the knife close to my leg. But the road had been and was empty—eerie, really, and I felt like I was the only person in the world. I was hoping she was dead when I came back with the knife. But as I looked upon her, she was still breathing heavily, blowing bloody bubbles, and ready—hoping to die. She spoke to me like the toad. The sky began to sing an unearthly song. And I grabbed her by the neck, forgetting her beak had the power to take off a finger, but she did nothing. I slid the knife under her chin, and I could feel her spirit drain away with the deluge.

She went limp instantly. She was dead, and as I stood, a volley of wind and water stung my face. The air hissed and laughed with delight at the sick law-of-the-jungle Shakespearean drama the Turtle Queen and I had just performed. I felt defeated.

I pushed the Turtle Queen's large, old body into the ditch. The funeral procession of water was four feet high, and I hoped her body would find Lyford Creek, the place where I had met her. I went back to my car, crawled in, and thought about that original journey—where she had hoped to go and what the point of all this was—and then the rain let up.



Displacement in Fictional Place: Finding Tolkien's Shire in Our Ecologies

Ryan Kelly*

Monumental works of fiction remain important for a myriad of reasons, but one major reason remains its ability to create a compelling and endearing world. For example, countless readers wish they could go to Hogwarts, often, more than their current schools. In this way, JRR Tolkien created his fantasy world of Middle-earth so appealing in the face of modern cynicism that it has stayed a tentpole in the cultural zeitgeist since the release of the *Hobbit* in 1937. It has become so prevalent, however, that Tolkien's Middle-earth has not only homogenized our perception of fantasy worlds but can replace the values of our current place; it has created cultural displacement through the commodification of a fictional place. Homogenized fantasy ideals cause cultural displacement from physical worlds. Furthermore, it creates a moral framework based on another's views, practices, and placed cultures. Readers then force their own place to conform within the ideals from these fictional cultures and ecologies rather than discovering the transformative relationships in their own place.

The intention of an object or practice has a large impact on whether it is displacing or not. The practices of those such as Kimmerer, placed in her own ecology, are created in a highly relational way that preserves her intention. While Tolkien's works form a compendium of countless stories written throughout his life, by the time he was writing the *Lord of the Rings*, he was clear about his intention of creating an Anglo-Saxon mythology akin to that of the Norse tradition. His story stays thus significantly tied to a specific culture and time period, as well as Tolkien's own religious practices. Catholic cosmogony shows a clear influence on Tolkien's Ainulindale, the creation myth outlined in his *Silmarillion*. Eru creates the world with the "generative power of his word" and song just as God does in Genesis 1 (Castillo 69). Other cultural connections appear throughout the series, and to remove these stories from this context would do a disservice to the reader. Tolkien was creating a placed cosmogony; by blindly forcing this cosmogony onto our own placed lives, he conceals aspects of lives and culture outside of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. While certain methods of reading texts and cultural artifacts can prevent this form of displacement, the cultural significance and purposefully endearing nature of these books have made its relational ideals universalized. The way forward is to unpack Tolkien's relationship to his land and place ourselves in the same way, within our own ecologies.

The cultural significance of Tolkien's Legendarium as works of fiction cannot be overstated. Middle-earth has become so widely influential across all fantasy that it becomes difficult to find modern fantasy without his effects. His prolific influence on literary history is not the issue; rather, the reader's adoption of a placed ideal without discovering what made it impactful in its own location causes a disconnect. Cultural scalability, in this case, arises in the reader's interpretation instead of the creator's intent. Tolkien's world could be argued as falling victim to a cultural supply-

* Ryan Kelly, a student at Mount Saint Mary's University, won second place in the critical / analytical essay category of the 2024 Father Edward Fitzgerald Undergraduate Competition in Creative and Scholarly Writing.

chain capitalism defined as the “transformation from unscalable processes to scalable inventory” (Tsing 519). He wrote non-scalable beliefs that, when mindlessly consumed without thought or creativity, become a scalable inventory of displaced ideas. Tolkien crafted a precise world within its execution of his goal of a cosmogony; however, Tsing describes the use of precision as “aesthetic pleasures” that “projects only our fantasy” (506). It is up to the readers to prevent homogeneity by reading with deep skill and maintaining the transformative reciprocal relationships already present in the text.

Although the ecological issues presented in Middle-earth are intriguing and raise a mirror to contemporary problems, the solutions presented in Tolkien’s *Legendarium* are not necessarily scalable when applied directly. Creating literature and art that asks “placed” questions can be productive in society, yet the concern presents itself in interpretations that take a “placed” idea, or solution, without adaptation. Because Middle-earth was primarily created during World War One and at the end of Britain’s Industrial Revolution, Tolkien’s ideas and ecological paragon derive from a direct result of experiences that may not be interpreted in the same manner removed from context. But the ecological destruction of Isengard remains relevant still in many of the same ways, whereas his romanticized methods of living in the countryside stay rooted in the times of the Enclosure Movement and cannot be cleanly, “scalably,” applied in the exact manner he suggests. The issue of commodified homogenous culture, evident in shallow readings of Tolkien’s works, demonstrates how fictional works can flatten reality outside of the new ideal the consumer has bought. This effect brings with it ecological implications that influence how people view land and further displacement from ecological realities.

An undeniable aspect of Tolkien’s world that readers particularly gravitate to includes the rich, expansive, and specific locations. These details create ideals of these lands, such as the Misty Mountains, Kingdom of Doriath, or the Plains of Rohan, that readers seek to find in their own worlds. Blind application of displaced ideas about the beauty of nature remains most evident through the wilderness ideal found in Cronon’s critique of the Frontier Myth. Cronon critiques the US’s ideas of pristine and sublime land. He describes our attitude toward the landscapes of the United States frontier as seeing a “bold landscape of frontier heroism, it is the place of youth and childhood, into which men escape by abandoning their pasts and entering a world of freedom where the constraints of civilization fade into memory” (Cronon 16). In this exact manner readers prescribe similar ideals unto their fictional stories, and vice versa. Walking through national parks can feel like an adventure through Middle-earth, and reading of long journeys can remind one of personal encounters with the US wilderness. Because of these magical realms with scope and spectacle, readers can often feel let down or discouraged by their own location wishing they are elsewhere. For example, Mount Saint Mary’s University, located on Mount Catoctin, forms a special feature of the Mount’s ecology and the culture. In comparison to other fictional mountains such as the Lonely Mountain, however, the majesty and transformative relationships of Catoctin can be easily disregarded. This example demonstrates the applicability of Cronon’s critique of the Frontier myth in how people consume places, even fictional ones. The Lonely Mountain, meant to balance a sense of awe and homeyness, becomes thematically present in Bilbo through Tolkien’s writing achievement; however, readers must find what makes the Lonely Mountain special in their own homes. To do so, readers need a method of interpreting fictional works in the context of ecological practices.

The practice of mapping is thus illustrative of issues tied to the role of fiction

in displacement. Many fictional works have to establish a geographical landscape for the readers to inhabit as the story unfolds. Because the relationship of the land to his characters stays vital to Tolkien, Middle-earth has become renowned for having such detailed maps with nearly every edition. This unique supplement has created personal relationships with the landscapes of Middle-earth beyond Tolkien's colorful descriptions, as well as tangible placement within a large world. The various forests, caves, kingdoms, and cultures are all placed not only with the history of the *Legendarium* but on a map used by both the reader and the characters. Maps, of course, function in a similar way in reality. For example, on the Mount Saint Mary's University campus, prospective students are given tours and maps of campus to experience the campus as students do. A benchmark experience for freshmen becomes for them to know their way around campus without a map or assistance, yet too often this exercise becomes just a superficial knowledge of routes to daily locations. Instead, mapping a community takes a much deeper knowledge of the place, practices, and experiences. In this way, by reading the *Legendarium* the readers are forced to engage with the world in a manner that places them through the character's experiences, more than running late to class can. The campus's utility map gives a location to get to and from class, whereas fictional locations exist specifically for enjoyment. Through this same process, mapping a fictional world such as Middle-earth can be easier than that of one's community, such as the Mount Saint Mary's University campus. Mapping, in an abstracted sense, also pertains to the collective knowledge of a subject through experience, for example, mapping out one's genealogy. In this way elements, such as Tolkien's cosmogony, can be easier to consume through fiction than approaching the Bible. The medium of fiction itself can lead to quick cultural adoption and eventually commodification.

Tolkien's Shire therefore functions as a culminating example of fictional places displacing readers from their real locations through homogenized cultural ideals. The Shire as described in a few of his works represents the intersection of Tolkien's highest ecological and social ideals. For example, the founding of the Shire was born from a desire to get away from war; "the land they found was rich and kindly...; they heeded less and less the world outside... until they came to think that peace and plenty were the rule in Middle-earth and the right of all sensible folk" (Tolkien 5). The inherently positive attributes of the Shire and its culture have been sought after by readers since its inception and its charm has only grown in the years since as the world gets further removed from the idyllic countryside Tolkien grew up in. During his time, the Shire represented home as something that could be achieved or returned to, particularly relating to his trauma from WWI. Although tainted by modern life, as demonstrated in the *Scouring of the Shire*, people may possibly rediscover their roots through the moral lessons learned across the series, such as trusting in God, living with the land, and helping one's neighbors. While these lessons can still be learned today, it becomes less and less possible to return to Tolkien's exact picture of "placedness." Tolkien's implied practices must thus be examined and interpreted in its new context. The Shire reflects a non-scalable ideal that has homogenized ideals of home, family, and wholesome living into a commodity. Readers wishing for their place simply to become the Shire become displaced from reality and real ecological solutions.

Similarly, Kimmerer's *Honorable Harvest* presents an antithesis to homogenized cultural and ecological ideas and practices. The *Honorable Harvest*, much like Tolkien's *Legendarium*, remains a canon of practices placed in their specific context of relationships. Kimmerer describes the *Honorable Harvest* as rules "that govern

our taking, shape our relationships with the natural world, and rein in our tendency to consume” (Kimmerer 180). The Shire shows a specific framework of practices and ideals that hold value outside of its context if properly interpreted. Similarly, the Honorable Harvest shows how “details are highly specific to different cultures and ecosystems, but the fundamental principles are nearly universal among people who live close to the land” (Kimmerer 180). The Shire presents details specific to Tolkien’s experiences and personal ideals. The Hobbits’ society is “generous, and not greedy, contented and moderate, so that estates, farms, workshops, and small trades tended to remain unchanged for generations” (Tolkien 9). Yet, these specific practices can be relational in a manner that aligns with Honorable Harvest concepts of production for the well-being of all including the land, autonomy of the land, and relational awareness. Thus the Shire-ideal appeals universally to completely different cultures. Another aspect that Kimmerer describes is the lack of cautionary literature in regards to the environment across European culture, a fact that Tolkien knows as a philologist. Does the displacement caused by Tolkien’s literature derive from how overtly ecological it is? Indeed, Western minds may not be educated in a manner to interpret with as much nuance and reverence as an indigenous person, one more connected to nature and place. The disconnect has become what to do then with the appeal beyond merely daydreaming. As long as one is close to the land, fully internalized ideals of the Shire can be applied to their specific place in a rooted manner.

Just waiting and wishing for a Shire to come to them, readers have become displaced, but “being placed” means to stay in communion with the land through practices and culture. Tolkien expressed his own “placidness” through his *Legendarium* and the ecological ideals of Middle-earth. He intended to create a mythology for England, yet the practices and ideals of his writing can still be internalized and expressed in one’s own contemporary community. In the same way that Greek mythology remains in modern thinking and culture, Tolkien’s works can serve a similar role. However, as a highly entertaining, digestible, and beautiful work of fantasy fiction, its appeal has been distilled into a commodity removed from any context. Locations and cultures such as the Shire have become the standard for ideal living without any contemplative thinking for how to adapt its practices into one’s own ecological relationships. While mainly a picturesque image of the British countryside, the Shire is just as much a fantasy location as his more magical realms of Minas Tirith, Mordor, and Valinor are. Tolkien’s works have scaled not strictly as commercial products, but as commodified ideals of what our places should be like. Through this process, his creations have become a non-scalable form of “placidness” distributed to the masses. This construction does not diminish the potentially powerful ecological practices Tolkien prescribed; rather, readers need to unpack his works beyond acceptance of them merely as agreeable works of fiction. One method of doing so is in the same guise as Kimmerer’s Honorable Harvest: remain close to the land to be able to observe its autonomy, authority, and relationships. The details and cultural implications of the exact practices used can come from a variety of sources, including Tolkien. The best path forward solving the ecological crisis requires integrating different modes of thinking across disciplines, including those of fictional works. The step of internalizing the themes of the text becomes the most important because it provides the creativity, diversity, and indeterminacy that prevent cultural and practical scalability. By interpreting authors, such as Tolkien, and applying them in accordance with personal reciprocal transformative relationships, people can become more placed in their own world.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

WINNERS OF FALL 2024 FR. FITZGERALD UNDERGRADUATE WRITING CONTEST

Creative Nonfiction

- 1st Place – “Eternal Wonders of the English Language,” Ashley Kenia, King’s College
- 2nd Place - “The Turtle Queen at Lynford Creek,” Jacob Klaung, Loras College
- Honorable Mention – “Finding my Rhythm,” Moesha Facey, Mount Saint Mary’s College

Critical Essay

- 1st Place – “The Malevolent Beholder,” Dominic Mailloux, Loras College
- 2nd Place – “Displacement in Fictional Place: Displacement in Fictional Place: Finding Tolkien’s Shire in Our Ecologies,” Ryan Kelly, Mount Saint Mary’s University

Poetry

- 1st Place – “Beneath the Stars, Unseen,” Julianne Dee, King’s College
Scholarly Research
- 1st Place – “Specimens of a Bygone Era: American Attitudes Toward German Immigrants in the Gilded Age,” J.P. Hurt, Holy Cross College

Short Fiction

- 1st Place – “Mother,” BethAnnie Hartman, Loras College
- 2nd Place – “The Lord is Present,” Corcoran Austbarr, Mount Saint Mary’s University
- Honorable Mention – “My Date with Adam Ingram,” Colette Costlow, Saint Francis University
- Honorable Mention – “Mourning Doves,” Abigail Steigerwalt, Neumann University



**WINNERS OF THE 2025 SCHOLARSHIPS
FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDY**

Sister Anasobi Winifred, Caldwell University

Helen Brewer, Regis College

Hugh O'Sullivan, Holy Cross College

Kristina Packowski, Saint Anselm College

Molly Mohr, Villa Maria College

Rory Heer, Loras College

Rylie Owen, College of Saint Benedict

Madeline Rose McCartney, Saint Mary's University of MN

**WINNERS OF THE 2025 FELLOWSHIPS
FOR GRADUATE STUDY**

Allison Shephard, Niagara University

Bradley Szotko, Holy Cross College

Karlie Schleich, Villa Maria College

Taylor Samuelson, College of Saint Benedict

Melanie Winzenburg, Saint Mary's University of MN

Laura Camila Segura, Loras College



AN INVITATION TO POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTORS

- The editor of the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* invite contributions to the Journal from the readership. Submit manuscripts via email attachment to the editor, Robert Magliola (magliola.robert@gmail.com), with copy to the editor, Claudia Kovach (ckovach@neumann.edu).
- All attachments should be sent as Microsoft Word documents; no PDFs please. Submissions should be limited to 5000 words at maximum. Submissions to *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* are peer reviewed by doctorally-prepared academics or specialists in the pertaining subject matter.

The journal is open to a wide variety of topics and genres. Particularly welcome are submissions addressing issues of concern to Catholic colleges and universities. *The Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal* editors encourage contributions from all readers, both DES members and non-members.

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA NATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

Delta Epsilon Sigma has a national award to be presented to outstanding student members of the society who are completing their undergraduate program. It provides a means by which a chapter may bring national attention to its most distinguished graduates.

The National Office has a distinctive gold and bronze medallion that it will provide without cost to the recipient's chapter for appropriate presentation. A photo and brief profile of recipients will be published in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*. Qualifications for the award include the following:

- Membership in Delta Epsilon Sigma.
- An overall Grade Point Average of 3.9-4.00 on all work completed as an undergraduate.
- Further evidence of high scholarship:
 - a grade of "A" or with the highest level of distinction on an approved undergraduate thesis or its equivalent in the major field, or
 - scores at the 90th percentile or better on a nationally recognized test (e.g., GRE, LSAT, GMAT, MCAT).
- Endorsements by the chapter advisor, the department chair or mentor, and the chief academic officer.
- Nominations must be made no later than six (6) months after the granting of the undergraduate degree. Include with the nomination a 300-dpi photo and a three-sentence abstract of the student's accomplishments, including the ways the qualifications for the award have been met.
- **The calendar deadline for the submission of names of proposed recipients of this award is February 15th. Please send nominations to the Office of the Executive Director: DESNational@neumann.edu.**

THE HARRY R. KNIGHT UNDERGRADUATE/GRADUATE PRIZE FOR INTERNATIONAL SERVICE



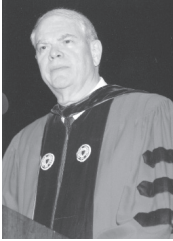
Harry R. Knight

Through the generosity of the Knight family and named for a professor and long-time member of Delta Epsilon Sigma, this award supports a student who wishes to offer service to others outside of the United States by assisting with travel costs up to \$2500.00. The transformative nature of such efforts provides benefits to the student as well as to those served. New skills related to work, language, and culture can enhance resumes and refocus existing career plans. A required reflective report, submitted after the student returns, will be published with photos in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*.

Requirements: Applicants will submit the following items:

- three-page proposal, which includes a statement of specific details of potential destination, travel costs, length of stay, assistance goals, and how the applicant's goals correspond with the mission of DES.
- brief CV with biography including career goals, other completed service, and academic accomplishments.
- official transcript of coursework.
- letter of recommendation which addresses the candidate's character, academic work, and potential to contribute to society.
- **All documents must be sent electronically to the National Office (DESNational@Neumann.edu) by March 15th.**

THE J. PATRICK LEE UNDERGRADUATE AWARD FOR SERVICE



J. Patrick Lee

Delta Epsilon Sigma offers the J. Patrick Lee Award for Service. This annual undergraduate competition was established to honor Patrick Lee, who served as National Secretary-Treasurer of Delta Epsilon Sigma with dedication and commitment for over 20 years, and whose leadership transformed the Society. As a tribute to Dr. Lee's praiseworthy ethical character and judgment, awards of \$1000 will be given to student members of Delta Epsilon Sigma who best embody the ideals of Catholic social teaching through their engagement in service. Student winners of the award will also be profiled in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*.

Guidelines for The J. Patrick Lee Undergraduate Prize for Service:

- In order to participate in the contest, the student should submit a 300-dpi photo (preferably highlighting the candidate's service) and a personal statement of 500-1000 words to his/her chapter advisor. Personal statements should reflect on the service experiences by responding to the following questions: How does your current and past engagement in service reflect the tenets of Catholic social teaching and enrich the local, national, or global community? How will you continue or expand your service in the future? **Students are encouraged to be as specific and thorough as possible within the word limit. Please do not simply repeat information listed on the entry form. Make every effort to explain service involvement instead of just listing service activities.**
- The student should also submit one letter of recommendation written by someone in a professional position who can attest to the type and extent of the service in which the student has been engaged.
- Chapter advisors should select one student from their chapters to nominate for the prize.
- Nominated students must be undergraduates at the time of nomination.
- Nominated students must be members of Delta Epsilon Sigma.
- **Applications must contain a complete official entry form to be considered.** Please visit the DES website, www.deltaepsilonsigma.org, for this form.
- Advisors should submit all entries electronically as MS Word Documents (no PDFs, please) to the National Office at Neumann University, Executive Director: Dr. Claudia Kovach, Neumann University, Division of Arts and Sciences, Aston, PA 19014-1298, (610) 558-5573, FAX (610) 361-5314, Email: DESNational@neumann.edu.
- **The deadline for nominations from advisors is December 1.**

THE FATHER EDWARD FITZGERALD UNDERGRADUATE COMPETITION IN CREATIVE AND SCHOLARLY WRITING



Fr. Fitzgerald

The DES Board is proud to honor Fr. Edward A. Fitzgerald, the founder of Delta Epsilon Sigma. Fr. Fitzgerald conceived the notion of a national association of Catholic scholastic honor societies in 1938 and chaired the Committee of Founders that wrote up DES's Constitution in 1939, thus initiating the national association.

This contest remains open to undergraduates (members or non-members) in an institution that has a chapter of the society. Manuscripts may be submitted in any of six categories:

- Poetry
- Short fiction / Drama
- Creative nonfiction/personal essay
- Critical/analytical essay
- Scholarly research in the non-empirical humanities
- Scholarly research in the empirical sciences and in the social sciences

A first prize of five hundred dollars and a second prize of two hundred and fifty dollars in each of the six categories will be awarded. No award may be made in a given category if the committee does not judge any submission to be of sufficient merit. **Winners must submit a 300-dpi photo of themselves to accompany the publication of their essays in the *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*.**

General Guidelines: Either MLA or APA documentary styles are acceptable (except where they may deviate from the instructions contained here in the *Journal's* "Guidelines"). Publishing restrictions do not permit the Chicago Manual of Style. All prose should show double-spacing, appear in Word format (no PDFs), use 12-point font, and include just one space between words and sentences. Number all pages. Citations should use the "in-text plus Works Cited" format. Relegate all explanatory notes to the submission's back matter as Endnotes (no footnotes!). Do not include headers or footers. The author's name should not appear after the cover page to assure anonymity during judging.

The first phase of the competition is to be conducted by local chapters, each of which is encouraged to sponsor its own contest. A chapter may forward to the national competition only one entry in each category. Preparatory to student revision, editorial comment and advice by a faculty mentor is expected and appropriate, as is correction of grammatical and mechanical (spelling, punctuation) errors, as long as it is the student who--in the final analysis--implements them.

Proofread carefully to reflect the standards of your college or university. Adhere to all guidelines, including conventions of grammar and punctuation. Also follow formal academic requirements of language and style (such as avoiding excessive wordiness and redundancies). The *DES Journal* reflects Catholic values. *Gratuitous use of profanity or vulgarity will not impress the judges and will not merit publication.*

Poetry: Writing in this category should be original poetry, either in verse or prose form. A long poem should be submitted singly; shorter lyrics may be submitted in groups of two or three.

Short Fiction / Drama: Writing in this category should be original fiction or drama, such as short stories, plays, or stand-alone sections of longer pieces. Fiction should total 1500-5000 words, either in a single work or, in cases of very short pieces, in groups of two or three.

Creative Nonfiction/Personal Essay: Writing in this category should communicate some dimension of the worldview or feelings of the writer. Writing should be true—as affirmed by the writer—but may be creative in structure or form and may make use of character development, dialogue, or other techniques of creative writing. Creative nonfiction pieces or personal essays should total 1500-5000 words, either in a single work or, in cases of very brief pieces, in groups of two or three.

Critical/Analytical Essay: Writing in this category should investigate a text, or a social or scholarly issue, through a critical lens. Examples of this type of writing may include textual interpretation or expository or argumentative essays in which original research is not the primary aim. Essays in this category should total 1500-5000 words. Provide appropriate in-text citations for all direct or indirect (paraphrased) quotations. Integrate brief quotations properly with correct punctuation.

Scholarly Research in the Non-Empirical Humanities: Writing in this category should present primary or secondary research that provides and elucidates some original insight on a social, ethical, cultural, or humanistic question. Emphasis will be paid to the quality, depth, and presentation of the piece, and proper adherence to conventional documentation format (MLA or APA). Such scholarly research should include an abstract (situated at the beginning of the paper). Provide appropriate in-text citations for all direct or indirect (paraphrased) quotations. Avoid block quotations and integrate brief quotations properly with correct punctuation. Follow all requirements for formal academic writing by avoiding casual or conversational language such as contractions or informal vocabulary. Avoid using the first person, overusing verbs of being, and including other examples of wordiness. Papers in this category should total 1500-5000 words.

Scholarly Research in the Empirical Sciences and in the Social Sciences: Scientific writing does not just include writing about science; it shows the technical writing scientists use to communicate their research to others. Predicated on the rigors of scientific inquiry, scientific writing must reflect the same precision as that demanded in the research process. Writing in this category thus demands precision (the precise use of words and phrases), clarity, and economy because the writer is communicating highly technical information to others who might, or might not, be as knowledgeable; they may be from a different discipline; they may, or may not, be a native speaker of the language used. Many journals have international audiences, so precise communication helps prevent misunderstandings and mistranslations in other contexts. Communicating facts, figures, and methods used in research—as well as the description of the results—has to be precise and exact. The research question, hypotheses, methods, analysis, and conclusions must be stated clearly and simply.

This category should present primary research elucidating original results of scientific research. Emphasis will be paid to the writing quality, depth, and presentation of the piece, and proper adherence to the appropriate disciplinary documentation format such as that of the American Psychological Association (APA); American Chemical Society (ACS), used in chemistry and some of the physical sciences; American Institute of Physics (AIP); the American Mathematical Society (AMS); the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME); and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). Scientific scholarly research should include an abstract (situate it at the beginning of your paper).

Incorporating the stages of the scientific method, the scientific research paper begins with an abstract followed by the introduction, methods, results, conclusions, and acknowledgments. The introduction discusses the issue studied and discloses the hypothesis tested in the experiment. The step-by-step procedure, notable observations, and relevant data collected are all included in methods and results. The discussion section consists of the author's analysis and interpretations of

the data. Additionally, the author may choose to discuss any discrepancies with the experiment that could have altered the results. The conclusion summarizes the experiment and will make inferences about the outcomes. The paper will typically end with an acknowledgments section, giving proper attribution to any other contributors besides the main author(s). Keep all graphs, tables, and figures at a minimum, and never include visual materials as a substitute for verbal description and explanation. Papers in this category should total 1500-5000 words.

Specific Guidelines for Preparation of All Submissions:

- Prose manuscripts of 1500-5000 words should be typed and sent electronically in 12 point Times New Roman font.
- One space is permitted between words and sentences.
- Include a cover page with title, name, university, and home address.
- The page following the cover (the beginning of the actual text) should contain only the title and no other heading.
- The pages must be numbered, the lines double-spaced, and in Word format (**no PDFs, please**).
- Scholarly papers should attach an abstract, include primary and/or secondary research, and present some original insight.
- Documentation should follow one of the established scholarly methods.
- Advisors as well as faculty mentors are expected to take an active role in providing additional comments to students.
- **Advisors and faculty mentors should approve and send all entries to the Executive Director of Delta Epsilon Sigma (DESNational@neumann.edu) by December 1.**

Final judging and the announcement of the result will take place no later than May 1st of the following year. Winners will be notified through the office of the local chapter advisor.

THE SISTER BRIGID BRADY, O.P., DELTA EPSILON SIGMA GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD



*Sister Brigid Brady,
O.P., Ph.D*

Named in honor of Sister Brigid Brady, O.P., Ph.D., The DES Graduate Student Award will grant \$1000 to each of up to three (3) graduate student members of DES per year who have shown a strong commitment to graduate study and maintain the Society's ideal of service to others. The award is renewable for an additional year for one awardee during a given year. Sister Brigid served as a National Executive Board Member, Vice President, and past President of the Society, and was a remarkable Religious, educator, and woman. She spent sixty years as a Dominican Sister, forty-three of which she dedicated to teaching at Caldwell University. Sister Brigid challenged and aided her students to excel. A scholar of Medieval Literature, Shakespeare Studies, and the History of the English Language, Sister Brigid was among the first professors at Caldwell to introduce classroom technology as a way to broaden student learning. A Renaissance woman, Sister Brigid also

handmade her own harp and was deeply committed to the Arts. In addition to her service to DES and other societies, Sister Brigid frequently presented and published papers at the Conference on Christianity and Literature, an international society of scholars dedicated to the study of Christian themes in literature.

Requirements: Applicants will submit the following materials:

- a three-page essay, which includes a statement of (a) career goals, (b) academic accomplishments, (c) scholarly activity, and (d) how the applicant's goals correspond with the mission of DES.

- a brief CV with biography (no more than three pages).
- an official transcript of graduate coursework.
- a 1,500-word sample course paper.
- a letter of recommendation which addresses the candidate's academic work and potential.
- **All documents must be sent electronically to the National Office (DESNational@Neumann.edu) by March 15th.**

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA FATHER EDWARD FITZGERALD SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Delta Epsilon Sigma sponsors an annual scholarship and fellowship competition for its members. Junior- year members may apply for one of ten Fitzgerald Scholarships at \$1,200 each, to be applied toward tuition costs for their senior year. Senior-year members may apply for one of ten Fitzgerald Fellowships at \$1,200 each, to be applied toward tuition costs for first-year graduate work. These scholarships and fellowships are named after the founder and first Secretary-Treasurer of DES, Most Rev. Edward A. Fitzgerald of Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa. The awards will be made available on a competitive basis to students who have been initiated into the Society and who have also been nominated by their chapters for these competitions. Applications may be obtained from the website (deltaepsilonsigma.org) or from the Office of the Executive Director (DESNational@neumann.edu). **The deadline for submitting applications for the DES scholarships and fellowships is March 15.**

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA DISTINGUISHED LECTURERS PROGRAM

Each year, Delta Epsilon Sigma offers an award of one thousand dollars for a speaker at a major meeting sponsored or co-sponsored by a chapter of Delta Epsilon Sigma or by a Catholic professional society.

The society also offers awards to help subsidize lectures sponsored by local DES chapters. An application for one of these must be filed with the Office of the Executive Director thirty days in advance; the maximum award will be two hundred dollars. The award requires a follow-up report with photos and promotion on the DES Website and in the DES Journal.

All applications should be directed to the Executive Director: Dr. Claudia M. Kovach, Neumann University; School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education; Aston, PA 19014-1298, (608) 558-5573, FAX (610) 361-5314, email: DESNational@neumann.edu.

THE DELTA EPSILON SIGMA STORE



Item Description	Price
Red Unisex 1939 T-shirt	\$23.00
Grey DES Chapter Polo Shirt*– unisex	\$54.00
Men's Fitted DES Red Chapter T-shirt*	\$30.00
Ladies Fitted DES Red Chapter T-shirt*	\$30.00
Horizontal Certificate Frame with Medallion	\$91.00
DES Gold and Maroon Double Honor Cords	\$12.00
#502 Key Charm - gold kase	\$31.00
#502 Key Charm - 10K yellow gold	\$525.00
#503 Key Tac - gold kase	\$32.00
#503 Key Tac - 10K yellow gold	\$500.00
#502D Key Charm with 2pt. diamond - 10K yellow gold	\$562.00
#503D Key Tac with 2pt. diamond - 10K yellow gold	\$538.00
ML/02S Staggered Lavalier - sterling silver	\$32.00
7.25" Rope Bracelet w/ lavalier - sterling silver	\$72.00
18" Rope Necklace w/ lavalier - sterling silver	\$86.00

* 12 Shirt Minimum

Pricing subject to change

To Place Your Order :

Order on-line at: www.acgreek.com/deltaepsilonsigma

or call: 800-659-7801



THE DES NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOLASTIC HONOR SOCIETY EMBLEM



The emblem of DES contains the motto, the name, the symbols, and the founding date of the society. Delta Epsilon Sigma is an abbreviation constructed from the initial Greek letters of the words in the motto, *Dei Epitattein Sophon*. Drawn from Aristotle and much used by medieval Catholic philosophers, the phrase is taken to mean: “It is the mission of a wise person to put order” into knowledge.

The Society’s Ritual for Induction explains that a wise person is one “who discriminates between the true and the false, who appraises things at their proper worth, and who then can use this knowledge, along with the humility born of it, to go forward to accept the responsibilities and obligations which this ability imposes.”

Thus the three words on the *Journal’s* cover, Wisdom · Leadership · Service, point to the challenges as well as the responsibilities associated with the DES motto. The emblem prominently figures the *Chi Rho* symbol (the first two Greek letters of the word Christ), and the flaming lamp of wisdom shining forth the light of Truth.

DELTA EPSILON SIGMA JOURNAL
Neumann University,
School of Social Sciences
Humanities, and Education, BACH 302Z
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