SPRING 2018 - LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Submitted by Kate Goldyn on April 24, 2018 - 11:40am

As the days lengthen and the sun returns, things are bustling inside the Philosophy Department much as they are on the main quad outside Savery Hall. In April, we hosted our yearly Rabinowitz Symposium in Medical Ethics exploring the role of family and other loved ones in healthcare. This wonderful event will be followed by a Philosophy of Probability Workshop (April 28) and the Gerler Symposium "Race and Equity in Philosophy for Children" (May 4). Later in May, our PhD students will host a Graduate Students and Early Careers Philosophy Conference with a focus on climate ethics. Each of these events would be impossible without the generosity of our donors. Their support enables us to maintain an intellectually vibrant community with a thriving research agenda.

We also continue our efforts to reach out beyond our Department walls to contribute to broader conversations and community efforts. The Center for Philosophy for Children ran another hugely successful Ethics Bowl for high school students in February. The O'Hara Lecture Series in Philosophy of Physics drew a record crowd in the fall, and we have two new lectures planned for 2018-19. The Department offered an Epistemology for the Real World Workshop that grappled with “alternative facts” and the impact of social media on our democracy. As you can read below, our graduate student Dustyn Addington has launched an innovative podcast that finds philosophy in everything from urban development to gossip, Mark Zuckerberg to Taylor Swift. And Professor Michael Blake’s articles on the national census and deportation for The Conversation are generating interest worldwide.

Of course another rite of spring for the Department is graduation. We look forward to celebrating the achievements of our students at the Annual Awards Ceremony (June 1) and our Department Graduation Reception (June 8). While saying goodbye to students is bittersweet, graduation reminds us that teaching rests at the heart of what we do, and that classroom conversations live on in the passion and accomplishments of our alumni. We saw it when a group of dedicated Department alumni joined together this month to offer practical advice to undergraduates preparing for the job market. And we see it in the myriad of ways our alumni use philosophical skills to enrich their own lives and the lives of those around them. In this newsletter, you can read about the inspiring work of alumnus David Owens, who advocates for individuals wrongfully convicted in our legal system through the Exoneration Project.

With so much going on, we hope to see you soon around the Department! In the meanwhile, I invite you to read more in this newsletter about all the terrific things our faculty and students are doing.

People Involved: Andrea Woody
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