



Threshold Gazette

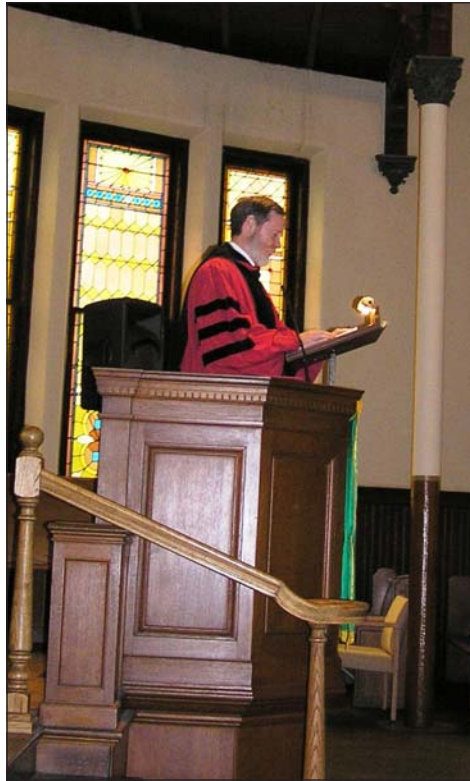
Threshold Graduates its 22nd Class

The Threshold Program at Lesley University graduated its 22nd class on May 6th 2005. The two-year campus-based program, founded in 1982 by Professor Arlyn Roffman, provides comprehensive training in vocational and independent living to young adults with learning challenges and other special needs.

Lesley University President Margaret A. McKenna compared our local sports teams, the Boston Red Sox and the New England Patriots, who both had winning seasons, to the Class of 2005. "Your perseverance, teamwork and dedication to your education and to each other make you, like our beloved teams, champions. We are all very proud of you," she said. President McKenna also acknowledged the strong friendships made at Threshold.

Welcome Class of 2007

In September Threshold will welcome its 24th class into the program. The class of 2007 hales from Idaho, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Vermont and Rhode Island. Our returning students come to us from California, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Georgia, Tennessee, Connecticut, Montana, South Carolina, Paris, France and Beirut, Lebanon. Welcome and we look forward to making some interstate introductions! □



Dr. David Rose, Co-executive Director of the Center for Applied Special Technology, delivers commencement speech.

The audience also listened as four members of the graduating class reflected about how the Threshold experience had affected them.

"I was nervous and scared when I came to Threshold two years ago," remembered Michele Capotorto. "Threshold has given me the tools to go out into the world next year in Transition Year, and work in the Early Childhood field."

Jessica Golden spoke about how she will

use the skills that she learned at Threshold for the rest of her life. She now enjoys cooking, and feels ready to pursue her career as a Teacher's Aide.

Mark Fuoco feels that he matured while attending the program, and has gained friendships that will last a lifetime.

Michael Simone offered advice for the class of 2006: welcome the incoming group of students, make them feel as comfortable as possible, have fun, and learn as much as you can. Each of graduating speakers thanked their families, friends, and the Threshold staff.

The Judith Kranes Award was presented to David Armbrister, and Michael Simone, two students who the faculty felt best exemplified the program's Core Values of achieving their responsibilities at school, work and in their community. Additionally, these students are recognized for their level and sense of character, kindness, responsibility and self-determination.

The commencement speaker, Dr. David Rose, Co-executive Director of CAST (Center for Applied Special Technology) read excerpts from Kurt Vonnegut's *Sunscreen Speech*. He also discussed the advances, and legislation occurring in education, and called the Class of 2005 "the future of education." He encouraged the graduates to continue with their education, so that further advancements with individualized learning can be made. □



Threshold Activities

Transition Year Students Travel to Chicago

During Spring Semester 2004, for the first time the Threshold Program began what would prove to be a very successful “experiment”. In collaboration with our counterparts at the PACE Program at National-Louis University – Chicago, we began a joint course of study via the World-Wide-Web. The culmination of which was a group visit from the Chicago students to Boston with the Lesley Threshold class hosting their counterparts from PACE.

Following-up on the success of the previous year, Threshold and PACE students again participated in a joint class over the internet during the spring 2005. This year it was our turn travel to Chicago as the guests of the PACE students.

Students spent the semester budgeting their money, making preparations to travel, creating packing lists, writing to pen pals and learning about each other. In separate classes, while PACE students prepared to host our visit, Threshold students prepared to be gracious guests.

Early on Friday, April 29th, eight Transition Year students, Jessie Bogese, Andrew DiNoia, Jennifer Keiling, Christina March, Jeff Meagher, Kate Medina, Peter Sloop and Kate Vering traveled to Chicago to meet the PACE students from National-Louis University. At long last they would have the opportunity to meet face to face and share their experiences of living independently.

The students flew together from Logan airport to Chicago O’Hare via a domestic carrier. Upon arrival at O’Hare airport, the first task was to collect luggage and locate transportation to the hotel in Evanston, Illinois. After checking in to the Hotel, Threshold students spent their first day exploring downtown Evanston before meeting their PACE counterparts that evening.

At long last, after a semester sharing a class together every week, the students finally met face-to-face. That first evening the PACE students arrived at the hotel to escort the Threshold students to dinner at a local restaurant where they had reserved a special room to host their first evening together. Students exchanged t-shirts from their schools and were paired up with a “buddy” for the weekend. A wonderful dinner was shared, great conversation, and lots of pictures were taken. Students then went on to spend the rest of the evening playing pool at a local establishment.

Saturday started with breakfast at the hotel, then off to explore Chicago with our hosts. We took advantage of the excellent public transportation system and set off via train to visit Navy Pier. Prior to our visit we learned about the famous Ferris Wheel in class from our hosts and were eager to ride it. Navy Pier was reminiscent of Faneuil Hall



Threshold’s 2005 Transition Year students and faculty with PACE students from National-Louis University.

with its many shops and restaurants. Souvenirs were purchased, pictures taken and the piece de resistance – a ride on the Ferris Wheel.

After lunch we again availed ourselves of local public transportation and boarded a bus from Navy Pier to Millennium Park in the heart of Chicago. The visit to Millennium Park, similar to Boston’s Common and Public Gardens, gave us the opportunity to view the wide open space Chicago has to offer. It was a beautiful spring day and the park was replete with flowers. The highlights included a water fall, butterfly garden and the site of Chicago’s summer concerts in the park. It was a long fun-filled day that we ended with bowling,

pizza and the ongoing opportunity to build our acquaintances with our new friends and discover how they spend their leisure time.

Sunday was the planned visit to the PACE Program campus followed by tours of student’s apartments and a potluck lunch hosted by the PACE students at one of their apartments.

Finally, we all tramped back to the hotel which was within walking distance of our lunch locale. We collected our luggage and made our tear-filled good-byes to our new friends. Promises were made to keep in touch (promises that, even as you read this are being kept). □

Semi-Formal Dance is Huge Success

The 2005 Threshold Semi-formal dance took place again at the beautiful ballroom at the Tremont Boston Hotel. Over 100 people attended, including over 40 alumni.

Dinner was served at 8:00 pm, and was followed by a delicious dessert. The crowd danced to the music of David Natola until midnight.

It was great to see all of the alumni, some who traveled great distances to attend. Yasser Al-Meena, flew in from Saudi Arabia, Jacob Monke and Andreas Christiansen

traveled from Nebraska and New Jersey respectively. It was also wonderful to see all of the alumni who have attended the dance every year since they graduated.

The dance will take place again next year in April 2006... so watch your mail for the announcement! More and more alumni have been attending this exciting event each year. If you know an alum who is not receiving our mailings, have them contact the Threshold office to update their address. The Semi - Formal is a wonderful time to catch up with old friends as well as to make some new ones.



Alumni Corner

By Cheri Candelori, Class of 1996
Threshold Gazette Alumni Correspondent

Hello to all students, staff, and alumni. I hope everyone is enjoying their summer vacation - I certainly am.

The Threshold Alumni AOL Group has been closed. We have now created a new group called Threshold Alumni and Student you can find it at MSN Groups. It is listed, however it is **private**. Unlike the Threshold Alumni Group at AOL, all domains (i.e. Yahoo, AOL, MSN, optonline, etc.) can access the group. You can post messages, email, pictures and other information in the Alumni Directory, and much more is to come. So come on over to visit the Threshold Alum/Student Cafe. See Cafe contact info below. It is still in the works (so bear with us) and we are open to your suggestions. Group Managers are Cheri Candelori (Class of '96) & Eliza Desmarais (Class of '03).

Café Manager email:
threshalum@hotmail.com

Group email address:
thresholdalumniandstudentcafe@groups.msn.com

Group Webster: <http://groups.msn.com/ThresholdAlumniandStudentCafe>

Please email me with news of what you have been doing, and we will include an update in our next issue of the Threshold Gazette! My email address to ccnj74@hotmail.

Here's what some alums have been up to:

Dan Mitchell '93 and **Melissa Guthrie '92** were married in a beautiful ceremony on June 4, 2005. Alumni in attendance included **Moon Park '96**, **Robyn Gollub '93**, **Jim Levitt '89**, **Jen Jansen '88**, **Heidi Warner '94**, and Threshold's Director, **Jim Wilbur**.

Jason Cleary '89 and **Heather Jones '91** recently became engaged.

Windy Harris '93 just purchased her first condo in Cambridge, MA.

Belated congratulations to **Pam Furst-Weiss** and her husband Alan on the birth of their beautiful daughter Emma.

Liz Callahan '02 is doing beautifully at Bay State College, where she is pursuing her Associates Degree.

Q&A with Eddie Hanlon

Q: Why were you interested in coming to Threshold?

EH: I was interested in Threshold because I wanted to live on my own and get away from my town and see the city. I loved it because I can take the train to Boston and see my Sox and Celtics.

Q: How was your first year?

EH: My first year went really well. I got to meet a whole new group of kids from all over and staff. They helped me stay on track.

Q: What have you enjoyed about your experience at Threshold so far?

EH: Oh there are so many things, but what I think I have enjoyed the most was just being in the city and waking up on a Saturday morning and knowing I was on my own.

Q: What were your biggest challenges and/or concerns when you first arrived in September?

EH: I only had one. That was whether or not I would wake up in time for class each day because my mom used to wake me and say, "Get up, time for school and make sure you don't wear your PJ's to school."

Q: Do you have the same worries now that you have finished your first year?

EH: Nope, I get up and go to class. But I still go to class in my PJ's sometimes. Kidding.

Q: What was your favorite class and why?

EH: Oh that's a hard one, but I liked Marcia Mishley's Business and Support Services best. I liked this class



because she helped me when I had problems at work and that made me think, "Now I can do it and I am ready for anything."

Q: What will you be doing this summer?

EH: Sleep! No, I am working two jobs. I work with a plumber redoing homes and helping him clean up a new shop he just bought. My second job is in a cemetery. I am doing landscaping, and its not that bad because I get to be in the fresh air and I enjoy working with my bosses.

Q: What advice can you offer to incoming first year students?

EH: It can be really scary to do something new, but you will all have people that know you can do it, and in the end, will be so proud of you. I wish the class of 2007 good luck this fall and I hope to become friends with you. If you want me to show you around campus, I will. ☐

"Paws for a Cause"

Carole Noveck

As we all know, every individual with a learning disability has some challenges to overcome. Some people have additional concerns such as limited vision, or mobility issues. Ann Tracey, a graduate of Threshold from one of our first classes, 1989, has been dealing with her extra challenge, a seizure disorder. This condition has led to many complications, strokes and cerebral palsy.

Ann decided that she was not going to be held back in her goals to live independently with epilepsy. She moved into her own apartment last year, and began to work with Triangle, a non-profit organization in Malden, MA, devoted to working with people with disabilities. Ann was awarded *Triangle's* 2005 *Self-Determination Award* because she has worked so hard to improve the quality of her life.

She recognized that she needed help to feel comfortable living alone. She learned about assistance dogs, which are specifically trained to support people with particular disabilities. She wants to have a seizure-response dog. These dogs provide protection and companionship for people with epilepsy. The dogs are highly trained to sense a seizure coming on, protect and seek help for their master.

"Paws for a Cause" is an agency that provides and



Ann Tracey with Carole Noveck

trains dogs for this purpose. There are no funds available to buy the dogs, so Ann has taken on her next challenge. She needs to raise \$18,000 before she can get on the list to own the dog.

Next year, Threshold will help Ann get closer to her goal. On Saturday, October 1, 2005, we will host a walk with a cause. Students, faculty, administration, alumni and other interested walkers will get sponsors who will support this effort. This event will be fun and hopefully will help Ann get closer to her next goal. Maybe Threshold will gain a mascot. ☐

The Threshold Program
Lesley University
29 Everett Street
Cambridge, MA 02138-2790

The Class of 2005



Pictured here are Ryan Endres, Eric Cohen, Bernadette Cleary, Michelle Capartorto, Ebony Benitez, and David Armbrister.

Ways to Keep In Touch. . .

1. **Threshold Group at MSN:**
[http://groups.msn.com/
ThresholdAlumniandStudentCafe](http://groups.msn.com/ThresholdAlumniandStudentCafe)

2. **Threshold is also on:**
Classmates.com

Directions:

Go to classmates.com
Go to Join College Directory
Find the state.
Find the City: Cambridge.
Find the College: Lesley
University-Threshold Program
You're In!!

Please Note: If you would like to be able to email other alumni, you have to get a membership. A one-year membership (GOLD) costs about \$39.00. A Basic (Free) membership lets you list your name, profile, but you cannot email other alumni.