

# IR Matters!



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Greetings from the International Relations Department	1
Hope and Change in US Foreign Policy: Prof. Mitchell on President Obama's First Year in Office	1-3
Alumnus Profile: Tom O'Toole '00	4
Sigma Iota Rho, the IR Honors Society, Holds Inaugural Induction Ceremony	5
Hands that Give Are Never Empty: Derek Lombardi '10 on the Bucknell Brigade	6-7
From The Field: Linell Stabler '05 in the Dominican Republic and Haiti	7-8
IR Graduates Join Teach for America	8-10
Bucknell Students Present at a Student Social Justice Leadership Conference	7
Geographer John Agnew Delivers Talk on Globalization and Sovereignty	11
International Relations and Political Science Luncheon: Tips for Applying to Graduate School	11
Former Peace Corps Volunteer Speaks about Experiences in the Dominican Republic	12
Faculty News	12-13
Alumni News	13-14
Of Note: Campus News and Events	14

Dear International Relations Students, Alumni, and Friends:

Just a few days ago, we bid farewell to the Class of 2010, among them 48 IR majors and 9 IR minors who now join the ranks of our alumni. As you will no doubt gather from some of the following stories, it has been a busy and fulfilling year for us and we trust that it has proven the same for all of you as well.

In this issue of our newsletter, Professor Mitchell provides an analysis of President Obama's foreign policy achievements in his first year in office. Most of the remaining pieces address issues of "life after Bucknell," an appropriate theme at the end of an academic year. A number of them are stories on how Bucknell students and alumni have chosen paths that have led them to serve their fellow human beings in various capacities. As you thumb through the issue, you will meet students who have traveled to Nicaragua on the Bucknell Brigade or have chosen to serve with Teach for America. You will also read firsthand accounts of alumni who are grappling with issues of poverty and the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti. They provide examples of a range of opportunities that are available which can build on the foundations we seek to lay with our IR curriculum but importantly also put what we learn to use while serving populations that are at risk or disadvantaged. Two such examples which are featured in this newsletter are Teach

for America and the Peace Corps. Each of these stories demonstrates a resolve to, as Gandhi once put it, be the change one wants to see in the world. We hope you enjoy these reflections and perhaps even develop new ideas and directions of your own in the process.

As always, we look forward to hearing from you with feedback, suggestions, comments, and news and welcome submissions for our next newsletter.

Wishing you a great spring and summer,

Emek M. Uçarer  
Chair, International Relations Department



## Hope and Change in US Foreign Policy

It has become de rigueur, particularly among the mass media, to evaluate a president's overall performance at randomly selected points in time, such as after the first one hundred days in office. The first year also brings a crush of pundits attempting to distill the administration's performance into a few snappy phrases or even provide a grade. Of course, too much can be made of these analyses, particularly at very early stages of an administration when many

presidential initiatives have yet to have an opportunity to take effect. More importantly, given the complexity of international issues, subjecting any president's foreign policy to some overarching evaluation after a year is something that must be done with caution. With that said, in the spirit of the time, I will attempt to make some evaluation of Obama's foreign policy after the first year in terms of his foreign policy. It is safe to say that the administration's

## Prof. Mitchell, Cont'd

foreign policy has not equaled the dynamism of the President's rhetoric and there has not been significant transformation of policy. There are a number of reasons for this, which will be discussed further below, but a traditional vision of United States foreign policy, a demanding preexisting agenda, a pragmatic style, and real limitations on the United States are central factors.

Presidential candidate Barack Obama articulated a vision of US foreign policy that could easily be described as a classic form of Wilsonian liberal internationalism. As noted in his 2008 Foreign Affairs article, Obama came out strongly for the US to advance its interest in a multilateral context, support the spread of democracy, and alleviate poverty. With a revitalized military, Obama asserted that as president he would seek to continue the effort to combat terrorism and reduce the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In a July 2008 speech, Obama summed up his vision of the US mission in the international community.

*"Now, the defeat of the threats of the past has been replaced by the transnational threats of today. We know what is needed. We know what can best be done. We know what must be done. Now it falls to us to act with the same sense of purpose and pragmatism as an earlier generation, to join with friends and partners to lead the world anew."*

For Obama, the US has an obligation to lead the international community with the support of other actors, which is an idea no different than articulated by every President since Theodore Roosevelt. In fact, there was not much in candidate Obama's foreign policy platform that was a substantive departure from previous administrations. Indeed, it could be argued that Obama's policies were not a significant departure from many of those policies that emerged in the later part of George W. Bush's second term in office, when there was a moderating of the administration's policy approach. The difference between Obama and Bush are less about goals and objectives and more about approach. For example, Obama has advocated for the support of democracy as opposed to the Bush administration's commitment to actively spread democracy. The commitment to multilateralism is identified as a central element in Obama's policy, whereas unilateralism was an important element in the Bush Doctrine.

Since being elected, Obama has remained committed to these ideas and in the months after his election, he has personally involved himself in a diplomatic campaign to convey to the

international community that US policy was changing and he was committed to working with others to advance common goals. Borne by the enthusiasm of his election, Obama's public diplomacy has resulted in a change of World opinion toward the United States. The Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, published in July 2009, found that compared to Bush's last year, US favorability rating increased across all countries surveyed. The highest favorability was found among European countries, with shifts ranging from 25 – 47%. Even in the Middle East where US favorability is historically low, Obama's election led to increases of 4 – 5%. The Pew survey also identified a significant change in the belief that the US president is doing the right thing in terms of his policies. The percentage change across most countries was in the double digits, with a change of 79% in Germany on one end of the spectrum and 13% percent in Lebanon on the other. Israel was the one outlier where there was a one percent negative change in the belief Obama will do the right thing.

What this indicates is that Obama's policy orientation and his election have resonated with the international community. Yet, there is not much evidence that this capital has caused governments to alter their positions or change preferences, which would allow the US to "lead the world anew". The Copenhagen Climate Summit, the Middle East peace process, and tumultuous relations with China on trade and financial issues are a few examples of areas where Obama's foreign policy has struggled to reach its objectives. As a consequence, US policy has not changed beyond that which existed in 2008.

To be fair, Obama entered office with an agenda largely set by on-going domestic and international issues that have served to command his attention and have offered few ideal solutions. In terms of the former, this was the case in terms of the global financial crisis, which forced Obama to focus on rescuing the domestic economy and working with other world leaders to develop a global stabilization package. As for the latter, Obama was presented with the war in Afghanistan and the instability in Pakistan, for example. Not wanting to abandon a threat Obama perceives to US interests and apprehensive about the implications of a long-term on public opinion, Obama found a middle ground on policy toward Afghanistan that resulted in on-going commitment with the creation of broad timetable. Obama's decision in the case of Afghanistan reveals how policy is a reflection of his decision making style. Obama's style is characterized by a desire to cast a broad net for information and listen to different perspectives, which he then uses to develop a pragmatic policy with the knowledge of the limitations of what is possible.



David Mitchell

Assistant Professor  
of International  
Relations and  
Political Science

*"Obama's policy orientation and his election have resonated with the international community. Yet, there is not much evidence that this capital has caused governments to alter their positions or change preferences, which would allow the US to lead the world anew."*

Prof. Mitchell

His Afghanistan policy is a prime example of this pragmatism. While Obama believes in the need to continue the war in Afghanistan as a broader strategy of combating terrorism, he is also aware of the war weariness growing among the American public and allies. Consequently, he chose a strategy that supported a troop increase that could continue to attack al Qaeda and support the Afghan government, but put in place a timetable that would make the military commitment palatable to the opposition. The desire to find a pragmatic solution that will still effectively address the problem in part explains the administration's protracted deliberations over the troop increase. One could argue that this style can be essentially risk-averse and lends itself to incrementalism.

The failure of the Obama administration to alter US foreign policy also has a lot to do with the real limitations that confront the US in dealing with an array of complex issues that do not lend themselves to easy solutions. Obama appointed former Senator George Mitchell as special envoy to the Middle East to take the lead in reinvigorating the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Those efforts have not produced any tangible results as neither side is prepared to make concessions that would effectively open meaningful dialogue. Israel has not satisfied Palestinian demands on settlement construction and the Palestinians remain divided between Hamas in Gaza and Fatah in the West Bank. The Israeli's do not believe that they have a viable negotiating partner because of Hamas' position on recognition of Israel and attacks on Israel. In this situation there is very little Obama can do when the parties are internally divided and have no faith in the utility in negotiations. A similar situation exists in relation to Iran and the development of a nuclear weapons program. Barring the resort to the US of force – which the administration has not rejected – from the administration's perspective there is very little that can be done aside from continuing negotiations and hope that the combination of diplomatic talks and sanctions will allow for the emergence of a viable solution. However, administration efforts are hamstrung by China and Russia, which have limited interest in alienating an important regional trading partner. Further undermining US efforts is the political upheaval in Iran, which initially caused the Iranian government to focus on internal issues and lately seems to be the source of mixed signals being sent by the Iranian government. The issues of Iran and Israel-Palestine are not the type of issues that will be resolved overnight, thus it is not surprising that within the first year of Obama's presidency there has been little progress.

The limitations on the administration's ability to influence events may not be random or a product of a lack of imagination on the part of the Obama administration – although this is something to consider. Another factor that is necessary to consider that is affecting Obama and may prove important for future presidents is the reality that the United States is no longer in a position to influence other states or politics as it has in the past. The consensus between the US

and other nations on a range of issues, which served as one of the pillars of US leadership has in many instances dissolved. This is a product of real differences of interest between the United States and other nations, importantly allies. Whether it is China on economic issues, Europe on climate, or even South Korea on North Korea, states are willing to assert themselves in ways that challenge or undermine US policy objectives. The differences in interests are exacerbated by perceived weakness – importantly economic – on the part of the US and increasing competition from other states that do not feel themselves dependent on the US. If one examines the foreign policy statements of countries, such as China, Russia, or Brazil they express a desire to foster multilateralism as a means to enhance cooperation, but also as a means to place constraints on the United States' freedom of action. States are not necessarily looking to create a confrontation with the US, but they do desire to ensure an independence of their own foreign policy and policy goals. Obama and future presidents will need to come to terms with the “new reality” and adjust US policy appropriately.

Obama's foreign policy in his first year in office, quite frankly, has not impressed. There are multiple factors that have produced this outcome. Obama entered office with an agenda that he did not choose and many of these issues do not lend themselves to quick and easy resolution. Added, there are a set of unprecedented domestic problems that have competed for administration time and energy. Last, Obama displays a decision making style that produces policy that does not lend itself to dramatic policy change and in some sense is risk-averse. This has meant that not much has dramatically changed beyond the rhetorical level.

What does this all mean looking forward? Unless circumstances change or there is the emergence of some dramatic set of events, we should expect Obama to work within the constraints that exist. This will mean more foreign policy characterized by slow incremental change. Areas where there is opportunity and seemingly less opposition (such as on arms control), we can expect more vigorous activity by the administration. Hope in US foreign policy? Yes, there's plenty of that. Change? We will have to wait and see.



David Mitchell, Assistant Professor of International Relations and Political Science.

*“Hope in US foreign policy? Yes, there's plenty of that. Change? We will have to wait and see.”*

*Prof. Mitchell*

## Alumnus Profile: Thomas O'Toole '00

After graduating from Bucknell, Tom began studies at Cornell Law School before transitioning to a Master of Public Administration (MPA) program to pursue a career in public/nonprofit management. Upon obtaining his MPA, he joined the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA), Cornell's research and teaching unit on public administration, as Assistant Director for Professional Development, in addition to obtaining an adjunct position as a Lecturer in Political Science at the SUNY Cortland. Due to the tremendous growth of CIPA's student population, his position evolved into more of an executive role, and he was promoted to Executive Director for Professional Development in 2006.

His current job entails oversight of all experiential learning and career management initiatives at CIPA--from traditional career services, to field study courses abroad. He observes: "Half of our students are from abroad, and the vast majority are interested in pursuing internship and employment opportunities with inter-governmental organizations, NGOs, federal agencies, and consulting firms that engage the public sector. This year alone, I have developed partnerships with the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, and the United Nations Division of Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. My IR degree provided me with an advanced understanding of the strategic priorities of these organizations, which has, in turn, allowed me to negotiate strong opportunities for professional engagement on behalf of our students. The program itself is also currently engaged in several development projects abroad, including engagements in Bosnia, Sudan, and Haiti. In addition, my focus on East Asian Studies has been critical, insofar as more than half of our international students are from the Asia-Pacific Region, and understanding their political, social, economic, and cultural priorities has allowed me to understand their needs and objectives better than someone without such exposure. I have also developed a relationship with the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG), through which I teach a course on "Comparative Public Administration: The Case of Seoul, Korea," every spring. This course features two components—an advanced graduate seminar taught in residence at Cornell, and a field study to Seoul, Korea, which serves as the culminating experience of the

course. As a complement to my executive responsibilities at CIPA, I have also been enrolled as a PhD. student in the Government Department for the past several years as an Employee Degree Program participant. Though my principal subfield is American Politics, in retrospect, I don't think I would have been as successful in my PhD. program without the strong foundations in research, analysis, and writing offered by the IR degree.

In terms of advice for students preparing for graduate school, developing strong writing skills is always critical, but equally important is developing strong reading skills. I think that most undergraduates move through reading assignments without thinking about them with any degree of depth. This is not conducive to preparing you for the kind of layered, highly analytical work that will be expected of them in graduate school (both law school and PhD. studies). One option for honing these skills is developing an honors thesis. It is the rare undergraduate experience that will enable you to develop a highly analytical project on your own and defend it to critical readers. Nonetheless, this experience most accurately captures the kind of innovation and self-awareness expected of both law and PhD. students. Further, understand the value of faculty mentorship. At Bucknell, I think many students take for granted the level of access they have to outstanding faculty, as well as their commitment to the academic and professional interests of their students. I developed mentor relationships as an IR student that I still rely on for professional advice ten years later. Faculty mentors can be outstanding resources for reviewing graduate school personal statements, assisting students with self-reflection on what graduate program is right for them, and connecting students to colleagues at target institutions. Students should also be open to exploring a variety of graduate school options. As an undergraduate, I think it was assumed by my peers that everyone interested in graduate school would either continue to law school or PhD. Studies, but there are a number of alternative graduate careers that are appropriate for IR students and alumni (MPA, MPP, MPH, MILR, MBA, etc.), and these should be explored just as carefully as the "traditional" JD/PhD. paths. Finally, students should choose a graduate program based on fit, and not name. Far too many students accept offers based on US News and World Report rankings, which is an extremely poor measure of a program's strengths. There may be a program that has strengths in an area a student is interested in, or offer more opportunities for mentorship/professional development, but is not top-ranked, and this might cause a student to dismiss the program altogether.

*"... understand the value of faculty mentorship. .. I developed mentor relationships as an IR student that I still rely on for professional advice ten years later. Faculty mentors can be outstanding resources..."*

*Tom O'Toole  
'00*

## Sigma Iota Rho, the IR Honors Society, Holds Inaugural Induction Ceremony



On April 6, 2010, the Delta Alpha Chapter of Sigma Iota Rho initiated their first group of seniors. This was also an occasion to pass the executive baton from the first executive committee to the newly elected officers. Professor Uçarer, who is currently serving as the group's academic advisor, formally installed the 19 graduating members, urging them to stay in touch, and continue to remain engaged. She thanked the current Executive Committee (Lindsey Schloss-President, Derek Lombardi-Vice President, Emilie Linsenmeyer-Secretary, and Hilary P. Smith-Treasurer) for their hard work in getting the chapter established in a short time and working very hard to develop programming. Lindsey Schloss, current president of Sigma Iota Rho, introduced the newly elected incoming Executive Committee: Cassie Castorino (President), Nicole Meyers (Vice President), Allie DeRosa (Secretary), and Kat Humphrey (Treasurer).

Congratulating the new officers, Lindsey observed: "After working with the current executive committee for the past year it is a proud moment to be able pass on the responsibility of running Sigma Iota Rho to a group of incredibly responsible and bright Bucknell students. The class of 2010 looks forward to returning as alumni and seeing the growth that Sigma Iota Rho will inevitably encounter and to contribute to Sigma Iota Rho and the International Relations Department in the future." Cassie, who is currently studying abroad and could not attend the initiation dinner, sent an acceptance email in which she said "I want to thank all of you for selecting me as President. It is

truly such a privilege and a total honor. I also want to thank the past Board of Executives, as well as ALL the members that comprise this organization, for beautifully establishing the foundation on which to allow SIR to further flourish and for setting a wonderful precedent for the next Executive Committee. I am looking forward to the upcoming scholastic year with great enthusiasm." The list of this year's inductees are as follows:

Andrew Clarke  
 Brianna DelValle  
 Natalie Elghossain  
 Nicole Fellows  
 Allison FitzPatrick  
 Maureen Gleason  
 Meaghan Gibson  
 Olivia Knodt  
 Emilie Linsenmeyer  
 Derek Lombardi  
 Daria Megotz  
 Kelsey Mills  
 Davis Rosborough  
 Cristina Sacco  
 Lindsey Schloss  
 Elisabeth Schneider  
 Hilary Putnam Smith  
 Hillary Anne Smith  
 Catherine D. Trieu

Congratulations! We wish you all well.

### *Sigma Iota Rho*



*Sinensis: Prudence*

*Ideodoi: Ideals*

*Rhomi: Power*

### *Incoming Sigma Iota Rho Executive Committee*

*Cassie Castorino  
 (President)*

*Nicole Meyers  
 (Vice President)*

*Allie DeRosa  
 (Secretary)*

*Kat Humphrey  
 (Treasurer)*

*Check out the Sigma Iota Rho web page (which is currently under construction) at [www.bucknell.edu/~x60952.xml](http://www.bucknell.edu/~x60952.xml)*

*See also*

*[www.sigmaiotarho.org](http://www.sigmaiotarho.org)*

## Hands that Give Are Never Empty



*Derek Lombardi' 10 in Nueva Vida, Nicaragua  
January 2010*

*"The roughly eight days we spent in Nicaragua this January were as inspiring as they were challenging... Through service-learning experiences, we can personally contribute to the elimination of the various circumstances that lead to underdevelopment, instability, crisis and poverty, which often predominate our studies."*

*Derek Lombardi  
'10*

Over the course of my first three years here, many of my hallmates, classmates, and friends had made the journey to Central America with this organization and returned with only terrific things to say about the people, the places, the project. But how could I possibly share in this experience? My knowledge of Spanish was fading, my academic interests and abroad experiences focused primarily on Europe, and my financial aid could only get me so far. Clearly, the opportunity to take part in the University's international development endeavor in a third world country would be relevant and advantageous to my studies. But it was only after those three years of hearing about the profound personal effect that traveling with the Brigade had had on my peers that I realized that this was something from which I could no longer excuse myself. It was my last chance to make that journey, meet those people, see those places, and support that project. I submitted my application and some three months, a whirlwind of preparatory meetings and activities, and a frenzied string of flights through Honduras and El Salvador later, I was welcomed to that storied place by the gracious staff of the Jubilee House Community.

The roughly eight days we spent in Nicaragua this January were as inspiring as they were challenging. About half of our stay was devoted to physical labor for the ongoing construction of a spinning cooperative and assistance at a medical clinic in Nueva Vida. The co-op, known as Genesis, has been in the works for three years, during which its employees have worked tirelessly with no pay as they gradually build up their facility. Our Brigade assisted with digging and cementing latrines for the plumbing lines that will eventually provide the building with running water. We could hardly keep up with the Genesis staff – mostly middle-aged women whose strength and tenacity were unrivaled by our group of supposedly hard-working college students. Despite our visible struggle, the women made it clear that our input and effort were valued, offering useful tips and compassionate laughter as

they worked by our side.

The rest of our time was spent hearing guest lecturers and visiting cultural sites, including an emotional stopover at La Chureca, Managua's massive municipal dump where thousands of homeless individuals live. There we interacted with a group of children at a feeding center, who took pleasure in many of the same playtime activities that we once reveled as kids – piggyback rides, building blocks and the like. Their playfulness and love were simultaneously heart-warming and heart-wrenching, reflecting their innocence but also such a dire need for tenderness and attention that they would readily trust complete strangers to provide them with that care. In every location it was easy to sense the gratitude, hospitality, and overall kindness of the Nicaraguan people, a resilient bunch in spite of their position on the margins of our global society. Though Nicaraguans have so little in terms of material possessions, they are a people with so much to give to a student, an IR major, an individual. The sheer joy they took in interacting with us was in itself an expression of their appreciation. The motto we Brigadistas took on this year was "*Manos que dan nunca estarán vacías*," a phrase meaning "*Hands that give are never empty*" that is inscribed on a wall in Managua's national cathedral. This saying should remind us especially as students of International Relations how well-equipped we are to make a difference.



It was moving to witness the impact Bucknellians have had on this community – from the special plaque commemorating the organization's role in establishing the Nueva Vida medical clinic, to the Genesis workers outfitted in our trademark orange t-shirts. These are mere physical representations, however, of an almost uncanny relationship between our community and theirs.

The fact that we were able to forge such connections and engage in this cultural exchange is emblematic of an overarching humanity that we should fight to see acknowledged. It was in Nicaragua that I was finally able to witness firsthand the impact of the policies and politics that we discuss so extensively in the classroom. Through service-learning experiences, we can personally contribute to the elimination of the various circumstances that lead to underdevelopment, instability, crisis and poverty, which often predominate our studies. The Bucknell Brigade is just one example of how we can put what we learn into practice, step beyond theories, and instead take on the very duty of improving the lives of others around the world.



Derek Lombardi '10

The January 2010 Brigade dug a latrine for the co-op facility. Photos courtesy of Derek Lombardi '10

*For more information on the Bucknell Brigade, visit the Brigade [Website](#).*

## From The Field: Linell Stabler '05 in the Dominican Republic and Haiti



*Linell Stabler '05 with a little girl while distributing Christmas gift bags in Ceuta Abajo, a community in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.*

One of my most memorable life experiences was my years as an International Relations student at Bucknell University. The beauty and order of the university was an inspiration as I worked to meet my educational goals. But after five years and fourteen trips to Santo Domingo, I have fallen in love with the chaos that is the culture of the Dominican Republic. I now also enjoy the vitality and energy of Dominican music; I can ride anywhere in the city by car, bus, or motorcycle without blinking my eyes and not having 10 heart attacks in a 10-mile ride; I understand that the patterns of life are vibrant and absolutely logical for such a tropical paradise; and I have determined to make whatever contribution I can to help alleviate the effects of poverty

for as many Dominicans as possible.

Since my first trip in 2005, I have had the privilege of introducing dozens of people to the Dominican Republic. My non-profit organization, Advancing Communities by Educating and Serving (ACES) has helped to fund clean water projects, fund community health clinics, build a community school, set up a community computer lab, fund day-long medical outreaches, and provide food baskets to starving communities.

Most recently on January 12, as my group of travelers and I were enjoying a fine Dominican meal in a restaurant in the old colonial section of the city, we began to hear reports of an earthquake in neighboring Haiti. Over the next few hours, we began to realize the magnitude of the devastation and its effects on Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and the world. Our group went right to work helping to organize donations at a drop-off point at a church. And later, after the group departed for the US, I had an opportunity to go to Port-au-Prince to participate in a YMCA food outreach. The following words are some that I sent home by email after returning back to Santo Domingo from that outreach.

"After braving an all-night van ride that included getting lost, having two flat tires, losing our van air conditioning, and dodging a capsized 18-wheeler flatbed truck of bags of wheat, we arrived at Jimani (at the Haitian border) at 5:30 this morning. It looks like a MASH facility, with international emblems on all the tents, trailers, meal wagons, and first aid

*"Needless to say, this experience has impacted me personally and the work of ACES organizationally. In addition to our current development projects in Santo Domingo, we are now gearing up to escort service groups to the Dominican Republic for the purpose of aid work in Haiti."*

*Linell Stabler '05*

## Stabler '05, Cont'd

stations—all very surreal at 5:30 AM. We were all required to get tetanus shots, rubella shots, and malaria pills, and then to register that we were going into the country.

The traffic in Port-au-Prince was very bad, but we were told that it's worlds better than last week. There are destroyed buildings everywhere, but in one neighborhood there were on average 5 out of 7 leveled buildings in every single block. It's mind-boggling. In many of them there are people still trying to move rubble, looking for loved ones. We were struck by the magnitude of the necessary clean up for the city—it is not going to be something that ordinary citizens will be able to handle. Everything is concrete and concrete blocks – the clean-up is going to take years.

We arrived at the destroyed YMCA building and unloaded the donations inside their security gate. By the time the truck had backed inside the fence, there were hundreds—**hundreds**—of people lining up to receive them. Again, mind-boggling. For the most part, the distribution went without a hitch until the donations were gone and there were still hundreds of people pushing against the fence and trying to climb the walls. They kept saying "I'm hungry, I'm hungry, I'm hungry". There were five police officers there, as well as 30 YMCA workers, so they managed the crowd control. I saw only one officer threaten the crowd with his weapon. Otherwise, the activity was very orderly. When I took a break, I sat with a young woman on the other side of the street. She had a full leg brace on her left leg and couldn't stand in the line. I asked if the broken leg happened in the earthquake, and she said yes. When I asked if her family was okay, she said that she had lost her mother and a brother. A little boy beside me piped up to say that he had lost both his mom and dad. My God...

We finished our work in the late afternoon and headed back to Santo Domingo. The return trip didn't take as long because we didn't have any of the previous frustrations – just clean sailing away from indescribable tragedy."

Needless to say, this experience has impacted me personally and the work of ACES organizationally. In addition to our current development projects in Santo Domingo, we are now gearing up to escort service groups to the Dominican Republic for the purpose of aid work in Haiti.

With all this international activity, I am so grateful for the International Relations training I received at

Bucknell University in international economics, international law, and human rights, to name just a few areas. Fortunately, Bucknell's beautiful campus and orderly culture is a perfect complement to the Dominican Republic's chaos, and I love them both!



Linell distributing food at the YMCA in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 2010.

Linell Stabler '05

To get more information about ACES (Advancing Communities: Educating and Serving), please visit <http://www.bucknell.edu/x56719.xml> or [www.acesnorthamerica.org](http://www.acesnorthamerica.org)

## IR Graduates to Teach for America

Two members of the IR Class of 2010, Derek Lombardi and Betsy Schneider, are getting ready to start their two-year assignments with Teach for America (TfA), a US nonprofit organization that recruits college graduates and professionals to teach for two years in low-income communities in the United States. A number of IR students have taken this path after graduating. We asked Derek and Betsy what drew them to TfA. Here's what they said.

*Why did you decide to apply for TfA? Also, can you briefly describe the application/selection process?*

**Derek:** TfA has a pretty prominent recruiting role on selective college campuses, and Bucknell has its own student recruitment representative. I was

*"The traffic in Port-au-Prince was very bad, but we were told that it's worlds better than last week. There are destroyed buildings everywhere, but in one neighborhood there were on average 5 out of 7 leveled buildings in every single block. It's mind-boggling. In many of them there are people still trying to move rubble, looking for loved ones."*

Linell Stabler  
'05

## IR Graduates to Teach for America, Cont'd

mainly drawn to the organization after my experience working with a "green job" training program in some of Washington, DC's low-income neighborhoods last summer. It was there that I witnessed first-hand the poignancy of our nation's education gap. My team members had only fading hope of a college education and often had to decide between coming to work to collect minimum wage to pay for lunch or attend summer school classes to pass on to the next grade. After speaking with several representatives over the course of the fall semester, I decided that there would be no better opportunity to take on such a meaningful and productive task—educating America's underprivileged youth. Few of my classmates will share the ability to so profoundly impact individuals immediately after graduating. The initial application is quite simple - personal, academic, and professional information with a resume and letter of intent describing why you are driven to end educational inequality. A final interview, which lasts for about half a day, consists of a five minute sample teach (I taught the Pythagorean theorem), group discussion with other interviewees about issues related to modern education in low-income communities, short skills and writing assessments, and a personal interview session. It was definitely a challenge but also quite enlightening and fun.

*Betsy:* I decided to apply for Teach For America because I have known that I want to work with kids for some time. Whereas before I thought I wanted to work for an NGO abroad, I realized that the United States public education system needs all the help it can get. I applied because I saw how successful Teach For America corps members were with their students and it inspired me. The application process consists of a very basic online application with a cover letter and a resume. The cover letter asks for certain specifics on why you want to join Teach For America, your goals for your classroom, what you hope to accomplish, etc. After the preliminary application, many go on to a phone interview and then is the final lesson-plan interview. This asks you to create a 5-minute lesson plan on any subject of your choice. During the interview, your interviewers and fellow-interviewees (a group of about 12) are your hypothetical students and you have 5-minutes to teach your lesson and hopefully achieve your lesson objective.

*Where will you be posted and what will you be doing?*

*Derek:* I have been assigned to teach high school math in Charlotte, North Carolina. The position is full-

time and I will receive the same full salary as a typical new teacher. The Charlotte corps is one of TFA's fastest growing and will include close to 250 teachers this year. Most of my summer will be dedicated to a rigorous training program called "Institute" at Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi. Our time there will be spent teaching in local summer schools under the supervision of veteran educators in order to learn the fundamental knowledge and skills that TFA has discovered to be essential for highly effective beginning teachers. In late July I will finally make the permanent move to Charlotte for our last bit of training, which begins our preparation for the new school year. The commitment to teach is a two-year minimum, and during that time I will spend as a corps member I will receive support from the regional network and ongoing professional training and development.

*Betsy:* I will be posted in Charlotte, North Carolina teaching English as a Second Language for elementary students in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district in urban Charlotte. Charlotte has a high Latino population with Spanish being the top language spoken other than English in the district with Vietnamese and then Jarai/Mnong/Rade/Koho following (not very closely) behind. I had never heard of some of these languages before doing my research about the ESL demographics in the district and am very interested and excited to see who I am able to meet and work with.

*What do you expect to be your biggest challenges?*

*Derek:* One of the biggest challenges will certainly be teaching math – which is a subject I always enjoyed but also one in which my practice has been limited since high school I am grateful for my background in Economics, which will have kept my quantitative skills sharp, and I am confident that TFA's training programs will provide me with the tools and techniques to teach math. I have also only briefly dabbled in the formal field of Education, taking just one course here at Bucknell, so it may be difficult to become acclimated to the profession. The ultimate challenge, however, will be to break through the legacies of classism and learned helplessness that have plagued our educational system for years. I will need to reach every student and instill in them the idea that they are capable of success, and then help put them on the path toward achievement.

*Betsy:* I expect my biggest challenge to be the initial frustrations of not being able to communicate with my students and their parents. I also think one of my biggest challenges will be the shock of working with students who live in the United States,

*“After speaking with several representatives ..., I decided that there would be no better opportunity to take on such a meaningful and productive task – educating America's underprivileged youth.”*

*Derek Lombardi '10*

but who have not been afforded the opportunities that they deserve based upon the fact that they are immigrants or come from an ethnically-diverse background, low socio-economic area, etc. I know I will become frustrated if I can't get through to a child right away, but I am also excited about this challenge because it will mean that I will have to build relationships with my students in order for them to make significant academic gains.

*What skills do you expect to gain from your assignment?*

*Derek:* While in Charlotte I will be taking classes at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte to work toward obtaining a full teacher's license in just a year. I will also be enrolling in a Master of Arts in Teaching program, which I can complete by the end of my two-year teaching commitment. I also hope to build upon the leadership skills, dedication to positively impacting others, and personal accountability that have propelled me into the field of teaching.

*Betsy:* I expect to gain a sense of urgency and passion towards improving the public education system. I expect to gain boatloads of patience and extraordinary organizational and planning skills. I hope to broaden my horizons culturally and linguistically. I expect to grow quite a lot as a person because I know that I will be stretched to my limit and have to work so hard for my students; I know that they will challenge me in ways that Bucknell has never done, and I know that at times I will probably want to give up, but I also know I can't/won't.

*What do you hope to do after your TFA assignment?*

*Derek:* The commitment to teach is only two years, but I intend to remain committed to ending educational inequity for a lifetime. At some point I would like to get an additional Master's Degree in Public or International Policy with a special focus on Education. Studying International Relations has truly shown me the threat that an undereducated populace poses to a workable democratic society. I hope to use what I learned from the IR program here, and what I will learn from my experience in Charlotte, to continue making a difference in developing communities around the world, likely through the government or non-profit sector.

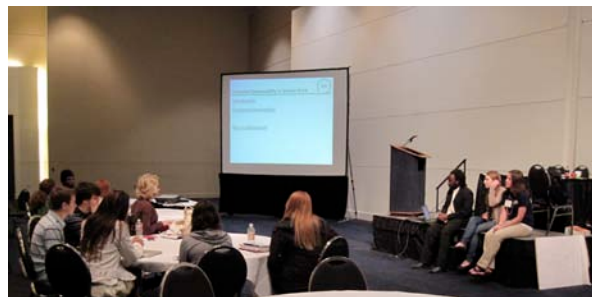
*Betsy:* After TFA, I hope to continue teaching or working with young people, whether it be in an NGO or nonprofit like Teach For America or continuing to work and perhaps move up the ranks in the public education system, maybe implementing policy initiatives or immigrant rights in the local community. Teach For America has developed a new program

called Teach For All (which is worldwide) that may be of interest to IR majors in the future.

*For more information on TFA, visit their [website](#).*

## Bucknell Students Present at a Student Social Justice Leadership Conference

In our last newsletter, we featured the work of the student organization Bicycles against Poverty. In March 2010, three BAP members presented a workshop in Little Rock, Arkansas. The Department of International Relations was pleased to be able to partially support their travel to the IMPACT Conference.



Muyambi Muyambi ('11), Kylie Brandt ('10) and Molly Burke ('10) presented a workshop at the 23<sup>rd</sup> IMPACT Conference, held in Little Rock, Arkansas from March 19-21, 2010. The IMPACT Conference is the largest gathering of students and campus administrators in the United States and is held annually to teach participants about how to effectively address social justice issues. The team of students, all officers in the student organization, Bicycles Against Poverty (BAP), ran a workshop titled "Economic Sustainability in Service Work: Using Technology as a Means for Success." The workshop stressed the importance of social entrepreneurship when developing a project and additionally focused on using technology as a tool within the model. The group then used BAP as a successful case study. BAP is a microfinance bicycle project that initiated its pilot project in July 2009 in Gulu, Uganda. By facilitating the workshop, the Bucknell students learned how to effectively run a workshop and discussion. Additionally, they were able to attend several other workshops, which taught them appropriate skills when working with social justices issues through service work. Overall, the experience was wonderful because they were able to teach, learn, and gain a new perspective by interacting with college peers!

*Molly Burke '10*

*"I expect to gain a sense of urgency and passion towards improving the public education system. I expect to gain boatloads of patience and extraordinary organizational and planning skills. I hope to broaden my horizons culturally and linguistically."*

*Betsy Schneider '10*

## Geographer John Agnew Delivers Talk on Globalization and Sovereignty



The Department of International Relations hosted John Agnew, Distinguished Professor of Geography at UCLA on April 9, thanks to a generous gift from Gail and Charles Dombeck P'10. Agnew participated in informative discussion in a seminar format with a group of faculty drawn mainly from International Relations, Political Science, Geography and Environmental Studies. The seminar addressed issues from Agnew's book, *Hegemony: The New Shape of Global Power* (Choice Outstanding Title Award, 2005). He also delivered a public lecture on Globalization and Sovereignty which is the title of his book, which also received the Choice Outstanding Title Award, 2009. The lecture drew around 180 persons—mainly students a number of faculty/staff and others.

Agnew seeks to liberate globalization, sovereignty, states, and power from territoriality, which dominates in mainstream International Relations and Political Geography. He treats these categories as expressions of historical social relations, in effect contesting the notion that interstate relations are technical relations between things called states. He applies four sovereignty regimes which he calls "classic, integrative, globalist, and imperialist, each with different geographical characteristics" which taken together he calls "effective sovereignty", and he "rejects the view that globalization is producing an homogenized world set to engender a single worldwide model of sovereignty. He emphasizes the migratory propensities of state, sovereignty and power, juxtaposing the concept of hegemony against empire, and argues that while the concept of imperialism retains its substantive relevance the idea that the US possesses the wherewithal to be an empire today is contradicted by the facts. His concept of hegemony draws on the work of Antonio Gramsci who insisted that coercion is the

armor of hegemony. He is mindful that capital accumulation is a global process that depends on forms of security and order that require the use of force. Responses to Agnew's lecture were positive. The high level of student attendance and reaction during the question and answer session suggested that students were attentive and found the lecture stimulating and intellectually challenging.

## International Relations and Political Science Luncheon: Tips for Applying to Graduate School

At least six graduating IR seniors will be attending graduate school next year. In order to engage interested students in a conversation about graduate study, the IR Department held a joint luncheon with the Department of Political Science for students interested in pursuing graduate work on April 19, 2010. Two featured speakers, Andrea Halpern, Professor of Psychology and Bucknell's graduate school advisor and Tom O'Toole '00 who is the Executive Director of Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (whose profile you can read on p. 4 of this newsletter) spoke on strategies for selecting an appropriate graduate program and provided tips for preparing competitive applications. Both speakers cautioned against making graduate school the default option for delaying entry into a difficult job market. They recommended reviewing carefully one's career goals and then seeking a program that would be a good fit. Importantly, they advised students against limiting their search for a graduate program only to top ranking schools and urged them to look carefully into the curriculum offered by a prospective graduate school, and the research and teaching portfolios of professors students would like to work with. The graduate school search ought not to be merely looking for an institution; it ought to fundamentally be about finding a suitable mentor. Both speakers also urged students to approach their Bucknell faculty mentors for advice about graduate schools and prepare applications that are not generic but show evidence that demonstrates genuine familiarity with the prospective graduate program. There are a number of resources on campus that can help with the various stages of this process: Start with your faculty advisors. Approach your own Department's graduate school advisor. Enlist the help of Bucknell's Graduate School Advising Coordinator. For more, peruse the university's graduate school advising [website](#).

*Tips for  
Applying  
to  
Graduate  
School*

*Consider your  
career goals.*

*Consult  
knowledgeable  
Bucknell  
faculty.*

*Research  
potential  
programs.*

*Search for  
someone who  
will be an  
effective  
mentor in  
graduate  
school.*

*At the same  
time,  
articulate why  
you would be  
a suitable  
mentee.*

*Do campus  
visits if you  
can.*

## Former Peace Corps Volunteer Speaks about Experiences in the Dominican Republic



*The Peace Corps will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. For further information about the Peace Corps and the application process, please visit their [website](#).*

In April, IR was pleased to sponsor a visit by Lisanna Stamos Gonzales, a Peace Corps alumna who spent two years in the Dominican Republic as a Peace Corps volunteer (2002-2004). Lisanna spent two days on campus meeting with students and campus groups related to Latin America, attending classes on appropriate topics, and making a well attended campus-wide presentation on her experiences as a Peace Corps volunteer in Gualate, Dominican Republic (DR). Each year, a number of Bucknell students, including at least two from this year's graduating class, join the Peace Corps and many more apply for the opportunity. In her presentation, Ms. Gonzales provided information about the application process. The Peace Corps was established in 1961 to "help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women, promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served, and help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans." She explained that most Peace Corps volunteers work in one of the following fields: Education, Health & HIV/AIDS, Business & Development, Environment, Youth, and Agriculture. As a volunteer, she lived for two months with a barrio family in the capital Santo Domingo, during which time she took intensive Spanish classes for four hours a day. She specialized in health and studied the history, culture, politics, and economics of DR. She later moved to her Project site in Gualate where she helped initiate and implement projects such as the building of an aqueduct, community health education, a microcredit bank for women's empowerment, a ceramic stoves Project to help reduce deforestation

and pollution, and a highly successful soccer program for female youth with the help of Bucknell's soccer program. She credits her work with the Peace Corps with the sharpening of her leadership and organizational skills. Describing her Peace Corps experience as the "toughest job you'll ever love", she highlighted both the challenges and joys of the community organization and empowerment work she did in the DR, which led her to a new career: after returning from the DR, she enrolled to receive a degree in nursing from the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and currently works as a Registered Nurse at Duke University Hospital in Raleigh, NC. For more information on the Peace Corps, please visit their [website](#).



*Photos courtesy of Lisanna Stamos Gonzales*

## IR Faculty News

**Professor Shinko** attended a Conference entitled "After Liberalism" at The London School of Economics in the fall of '09. Her conference paper "Ethics After Liberalism: Why (autonomous) Bodies Matter" has been selected as the lead article in the special edition of *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. She is currently working on a book chapter, "An Introduction to Postmodern Approaches to the Study of International Relations", for publication in a forthcoming text on IR Theory. She is co-authoring a text on *Theories of International Relations* with Dr. Jennifer Sterling-Folker from the University of Connecticut. And she is also at work on her own text on *Postmodern IR* which will be published by Palgrave Press. She was invited to work with a group of international postmodern scholars on a journal/book project on the international politics of fashion. As part of this project, Professor Shinko is exploring how certain ways of clothing the body serve as politicized practices of resistance.

## IR Faculty News, Cont'd

**Professor Uçarer** presented two papers at the International Studies Association annual convention. The first, entitled "Humanitarianism and the Pooling of Sovereignty: The European Union's Evolving Asylum Regime" provides a critical exploration of the European Union's practice in the protection of the right to asylum in light of its humanitarian rhetoric and obligations. The panel on which this paper was presented was co-organized by Denis Kennedy '05, a Bucknell IR graduate who is currently writing his dissertation at the University of Minnesota. The second paper, entitled "Almost Equals?" explored the (tenuous) approximation of the rights of long term non-EU citizen residents of the European Union in the EU territory. As a pleasant aside, Professor Uçarer was delighted to catch up with a number of Bucknell IR graduates at this conference, some of whom are currently finishing their PhDs and others with already established academic careers.

**Professor Waller** continues to work on aspects of crime and the law in colonial Kenya. He has recently completed a preliminary article on policing and the community and another on the use of collective punishment. He also has a murder case in draft.

**Professor Watson** is scheduled to participate in the 35th Annual Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) Conference in Barbados during the week of May 24-28, 2010. Professor Watson organized two panels for the CSA conference. One panel deals with Global Capitalism, Neoliberalism and Violence in the Contemporary Caribbean at which he will deliver a paper on Transnational Capitalist Globalization, Violence and the Caribbean. The other panel is on Migration, Sovereignty and Globalization with Reference to the Caribbean Region. Professor Watson will chair both panels. Professor Watson also spoke at three campus events that addressed issues about Haiti during the spring semester--Haiti Beyond the Headlines, International Women's Day, and Halos for Haiti.

**Professor Zhu** was invited to speak in February about China-Africa relations at Morehouse College in Atlanta. In March he organized, chaired and served as the discussant for a panel on Chinese foreign policy at the Association for Asian Studies annual conference in Philadelphia. His new book, *China's New Diplomacy: Rationale, Strategies and Significance*, has just been published by Ashgate. He'll be spending Summer 2010 at the National

University of Singapore as a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at its East Asian Institute.

## Alumni News

In this section, we hope to highlight news from our alumni. Let us know what you are doing by sending us an email to [international-relations@bucknell.edu](mailto:international-relations@bucknell.edu). We would also welcome short submissions on projects or perspectives.

**Jennie (Smith) Welch (2007)**. I have just returned to school to get my Masters in Public Administration at the University of Delaware. I am also currently working with the Delaware Academy for School Leadership (DASL) which has broadened its reach out of the state of Delaware and has begun working to develop effective school leaders and administrators in Tobago. This partnership with Tobago school leaders has largely been focused on factors affecting student achievement, using data to lead change, and performance appraisal of teachers training. As DASL continues to grow and its work to improve public education expands, this work is increasingly reaching beyond state boundaries. As a Bucknell IR alumna it is exciting for me to be a part of projects that have a global impact. As a Bucknell student I interned with Refugee and Immigration Services, which gave me the opportunity to work in an ESL class and tutor several refugees and assist them with the transition towards U.S citizenship. Upon graduation I utilized my IR and Economics degrees to work in international finance, and then moved into a full time position in fundraising and development for the National MS Society. I have always had an affinity towards public service and am excited about how my MPA degree and my new work with DASL will allow me to continue on a path towards marrying a global perspective with public administration. Articles like the one featured in the most recent newsletter regarding the Bicycles Against Poverty program demonstrate that Bucknell students and alumni are doing just that.

**Ali Zimmerer (2008)**. I am continuing to use my knowledge I obtained from IR classes at Bucknell as I am now working for the Department of Homeland Security. In January I will begin my Master's in Public Administration with a concentration in International Management. I am hoping to move to an international affairs office that specializes in



*The IR Faculty teach a wide array of courses and engage in interesting research—this summary will give you a sense of what we are currently working on.*



**Department of  
International  
Relations**

Bucknell University  
Lewisburg, PA  
17837

Phone 570-577-  
1540

Fax 570-577-3536

E-mail [international-relations@bucknell.edu](mailto:international-relations@bucknell.edu)

**We're on the Web!**

[Visit the IR  
Department.](#)

See the International  
Relations [Fact Sheet](#).

*We'd love to hear  
from you. Send your  
updates and/or your  
short submissions on  
projects or perspectives  
to [us](mailto:us).*

*The **IR Matters!**  
newsletter highlights  
events and people in  
the Bucknell IR  
community. The  
publication appears  
once a semester and  
welcomes feedback  
and submissions from  
students, alumni, and  
faculty.*

## Alumni News, Cont'd

relations with Latin America and the Caribbean within the department soon. I will continue working full-time while I go to night classes at graduate school. Glad to hear everything is going well at Bucknell and I look forward to future additions of the newsletter.

## Of Note: Campus News and Events



Bucknell Forum: Nobel Peace Prize Laureate [Jody Williams Says Change Starts Small](#).

Ask the Experts: IR Professor [Zhigun Zhu Assesses US-China Relations](#).

Ask the Experts: IR Professor [Stephen C. Stamos Assesses the Economy](#).

[Bucknell Magazine: IR at 25](#). The cover article of the most recent issue of the Bucknell Magazine was on Bucknellians working in the field of diplomacy. Take a look at the article on our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the same issue.

Bicycles against Poverty's [Uganda Bike Program Inspires Engineering Projects](#).

Geographer [John Agnew Discusses "Globalization and Sovereignty"](#).

[Bucknell Forum: Panel discusses 'Leadership.'](#) A panel of experts on civic engagement and

humanitarian action will discuss "Leadership, Change and the Impact of Individuals" Tuesday, April 6, in the final event of the Bucknell Forum series, "Global Leadership: Questions for the 21st Century."

[Haiti Relief Fund raises more than \\$40,000](#)

Bucknell University's Haiti Relief Fund has raised more than \$40,000 in relief money and supplies going directly to Haitian charitable organizations.

[John Bravman named Bucknell's 17th president](#).

John C. Bravman, a distinguished professor and academic leader at Stanford University, has been named the 17th president of Bucknell University by unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees, announced Board Chair Kenneth W. Freeman.

[Shields named dean of College of Arts and Sciences](#):

George Shields, an accomplished chemistry professor and founding dean of science and technology at Armstrong Atlantic State University, has been named dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Bucknell.

Three IR students, [Lindsay Baker '11, Russ Leggett '12, and Holly Schoch '12](#), will write study abroad blogs in Fall 2010. Lindsay previously blogged from Cairo, Egypt, and Seoul, South Korea, and will post from Amman, Jordan, during the fall semester. Russ will blog from Buenos Aires, Argentina and Holly will blog from Granada, Spain.

Bucknell [graduates 900](#) on May 23, 2010.

[Bucknell Reunion to Welcome Thousands June 3-6](#).

