Spring is one of our favorite seasons here in the department...not because it means that Summer will soon be here (well, maybe a little...) but because we get to celebrate our students! On May 7th, the department held an Honors Reception to induct members into the honors societies and to give scholarships and awards. We inducted the following students into Pi Sigma Alpha: Colleen Reynolds, Cheryl Amodei-Mascara, Patrick Matthew Conners, Charles Gilliam-Brownlee, Evin Alton Blevins and Jenna Ratica. We also inducted the following students into Phi Alpha Theta: Michael G. Smith, Jonathan Scot Thomas, Victoria Lynn Ventura, Patrick Matthew Conners, AmiJo Frazier, Shaun M. Klemans, Ryan J. Tobin and James S. Krebs Jr.

A few of our graduates were recognized with awards: Alisha Ruschel received the Edna McKenize Prize, which recognizes scholarship in history. Anna Gerald received the History Excellence Award, which recognizes our top major for the 2012-2013 year, and Rebecca Geiger received the Hart Award, which recognizes the best in Social Sciences.

Alumna Angelique Strothers is now the Coordinator of Creative Arts and Young Adult/Campus Ministry at the Macedonia Church of Pittsburgh.

We were also able to present some scholarships to our students. The first was the Edward McNall Burns Scholarship, which was presented to Patrick Connors, Bruce Grover, Jenna Ratica, Jessica Stanislaw and Denzell Sipe. The recipients of the Debra and Joseph Hardy Scholarship Fund for Excellence in the Study of Political Science were Bradley Minoski, Jessica Slabon, Alex Tolbert and Bruce Van Wormer. Congrats, guys!

And, while we are at it, let me tell you some of the really wonderful things that have been happening to your fellow majors and alums.

Lucy Fremeau was recently offered a job with Fox news, thanks in part to an internship she did here at Cal U.

Emily Martik will be continuing her education at Georgetown University.

Alum Patrick Madden got accepted into an Americorps program out in Montana. He will be working at Bannack State Park.

Rochelle Gillen, another recent grad, found a job as a community outreach director in Wexford with Live Well Chiropractic. As such, she is very active with networking in the north hills and invites anyone to connect with her on LinkedIn.
Political Science Alumni Jerry Morris, who works for the Democratic Caucus was recently promoted to Research Manager of the Public Safety Unit. He’s the youngest person to ever hold this position, and has been promoted after an amazingly short amount of time.

Colleen Reynolds was recently accepted into Penn State's MPA program.

Jeanne DiNovis was accepted by UCLA’s PhD program in Political Science.

Matt Hamel will start attending the Suffolk University Law School in Boston in the fall.

Jenna Ratica will be interning at the State Attorney General’s office this Fall as part of the Harrisburg Internship semester.

Jared Lordon and his business partner Kelly Patton were featured in the Food and Flavor section of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette in January. Jared runs his own smoke house, providing quality bacon, kielbasa and more in Pittsburgh.

Alumni David Orochena has been delivering aviation security courses for the Department of State’s Anti-terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program. The ATA program trains foreign government officials in police procedures that deal with terrorism. This has given him the opportunity to travel to Tanzania, Jordan, Egypt, Bangladesh and the Philippines over the last year.

Breanna Blose, Charles Gilliam-Brownlee, Joshua Cross, Adisa Hargett-Robinson, and Alex Tolbert attended the American Association of Political Consultants 2013 Pollie Awards & Conference Conference in Washington, D.C.

Charles Gilliam-Brownlee, Adisa Hargett-Robinson, Kembia Munsanje, and Ta’Lor Pinkston attended the Pennsylvania Progressive Summit. This trip to Harrisburg was made possible with scholarships from State APSCUF, Cal U APSCUF, and the Progressive Summit.

Charles Gilliam-Brownlee is also headed for Loyola University-New Orleans School of Law.

Alexandria Sabatini is headed for the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. She won the Fall 2012 President's Commission on the Status of Women Outstanding Undergraduate (traditional category) Woman of the Year Award.

But our students aren’t the only ones who have been busy, of course!

Dr. Paul Crawford was interviewed about the crusades and Iberia, via KFUO-AM, St. Louis, Studio A, by Roland Lettner, aired 1 PM (CDT), Feb. 16, 2013.

Dr. Melanie Blumberg presented a conference paper called “Teaching Campaign Management: November Madness,” with William Meloy and Cheryl Amodei-Mascara at the 2013 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Palmer House Hotel, Chicago, IL, April 11-14, 2013. While there she was also the conference panel chair for “Best Practices in Civic Engagement.” She was also a direct mail judge for the American Association of Campaign Consultants 2013 Pollie Awards & Conference. The AAPC Pollie Awards are the equivalent of the film industry's Oscars.

Dr. Melanie Blumberg and Dr. Michael Hummel successfully ran an American Democracy Project Program focusing on “Leadership and Public Service.” There were many panels, including ones on-
Leadership & Diversity, moderated by Ayanna Lyles, with panelists: Sy Alli, Gary DeLorenzo, and Michael Hummel and Student Leaders on Campus, in the Community, and in Politics, which was moderated by Anthony Rodi and included as panelists many of our majors, including Breanna Blose, Cameron Cochran (not a major, but interested), Courtney Cochran, Lucie Fremeau, Charles Gilliam-Brownlee, Adisa Hargett-Robinson and Alex Tolbert. The Keynote was called Passion or Pension? Leadership and Public Service and was delivered by the Hon. Theresa Dellick of the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court-Juvenile Division.

Dr. Craig Smith received two FPDC grants for $1,239 to conduct scholarly research (June 2013, University of Kentucky).

Dr. Clarrissa Confer took part in the working group at the Future of Civil War History conference at Gettysburg College in March 2013.

Dr. Clarissa Confer also attended & took students to the Eastern American Indian History Conference 2013; WVU Native Elder in Residence program with Pawnee Nation supreme Court Justice Walter Echohawk. She also took students on field trips to Antietam battlefield, Johnstown Flood Memorial and Nemocolin Castle.

Dr. Michael Slaven serves on the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences Advisory Board, West Virginia University, (beginning his second term) helping with strategic planning, funding issues, college mission, outreach, and evaluating nominations for outstanding alumni awards. This is also Dr. Slaven’s second year serving as a judge for the Carmichael Area History Fair.

Dr. Joseph Heim gave a public lecture “The Legitimacy of Authoritarian Governments in the Arab World after Syria and Libya” as part of the Act 48 Continuing Ed Service for High School Teachers conducted by CERIS (Consortium for Educational Resources in Islamic Studies) at the University of Pittsburgh in February 2013.

On March 8th, many of us gathered to take part in a memorial service honoring Dr. James Wood. His wife, Judy, and several of their children and grandchildren came to campus while members of the department shared memories. There was much laughter...some really wonderful stories were told, and Dr. Sean Madden smoothly moderated the event and keep spirits high. It was a good time to celebrate a man who will never be forgotten. The Annual Soul Food Dinner drew a huge crowd of hungry guests this February, who feasted on chicken, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, and more. The venue change from Jozart’s to Gallagher Hall was successful (Not as cool looking...or homey...but also no stairs! And plenty of supplies to access when we ran out!) Many people brought food to donate, and several students, including our Student workers and members of the fencing club helped out. Awesome music and friendship marked this occasion.

Also, April 12th was the Hip Hop Conference. We had ESPN’s Stephen A. Smith at the convocation center, discussing, with Hip Hop Conference Alumni William Boone Sports, Hip Hop and Race. This was the keynote that capped off a day filled with serious discussions about Hip Hop and Sports, including a panel with our former adjunct, Tim Konhaus.

Our clubs have been busy, as well. The History Club took several field trips to places such as Jamestown, Virginia and New York City.
Interested in Donating?

The Department of History and Political Science funds several scholarships every year. The system is simple...so much money is placed into the account, and the scholarship funds that are given away are from the interest accrued from the funds. The more money in the account, the more we can help students. Our May newsletter lists the fortunate recipients.

The Audrey Beth Fitch Scholarship: Benefits students who would like to go and present papers at conferences.

The Deborah and Joe Hardy Scholarship: Given to a Political Science Students who are either a Junior or Senior, with a 3.0 grade point average and a demonstrable financial need. Yearly.

The Edna B. McKenzie Prize: Created by June Dowdy in memory of her mother, this prize goes to a history major who has earned at least 60 credits and have a GPA of at least 3.0. Yearly.

The McNall Burns Scholarship: Can go to a History, Political Science, economics or social science major, and must have a 3.0. Yearly.

Every cent donated will go directly into the account. Please, if you can, consider helping our students. If you are interested, please email our secretary, Cindy Speer, at speer@calu.edu for more information.