Nationality Rooms Newsletter

Nationality Rooms and Intercultural Exchange Programs at the University of Pittsburgh

http://www.nationalityrooms.pitt.edu/news-events

Volume 102
Fall 2017

THE SCOTTISH NATIONALITY ROOM

Dedicated July 8, 1938
The dignity of a great hall bearing tributes to creative men, ancient clans, education, and the nobility of freedom is felt in the Scottish Nationality Room.

The oak doors are adapted from the entrance to Rowallan Castle in Ayrshire. Above the doors and cabinet are lines lauding freedom from The Brus by John Barbour. On either side of the sandstone fireplace are matching kists, or chests. A portrait of Scotland’s immortal poet, Robert Burns, dominates above the mantel. Above the portrait is the cross of St. Andrew, Scotland’s patron saint. Bronze figures representing 13th– and 14th-century patriots William Wallace and Robert the Bruce stand on the mantel near an arrangement of dried heather. The blackboard trim bears a proverb found over a door in 1576: “Gif Ye did as ye should Ye might haif as Ye would.” Names of famous Scots are carved on blackboard panels and above the mantel. Student chairs are patterned after one owned by John Knox. An aumbry, or wall closet, provided the inspiration for the display cabinet.

The plaster frieze bears symbols of 14 clans whose members served on the Room’s committee. The wrought-iron chandelier design was inspired by an iron coronet retrieved from the battlefield at Bannockburn (1314). Bay windows, emblazoned with stained-glass coats of arms, represent the Universities of Glasgow, St. Andrew’s, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh. Near the bay’s crewel draperies is the room’s cornerstone, carved with Scotland’s national flower, the thistle.
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR
E. Maxine Bruhns

We have completed the 30 - Diversity Oral History interviews – one for each existing Nationality and Heritage Room. The costs were helped by a NRIEP $4,700 contribution, and a Provost’s grant of $4,700. I, personally, donated $20,000 to complete the funding.

Representatives from each Room met in the Braun Room (CL 1201) where three film cameras and recorders were manned by David Cherry, Joe Nolfi, and Tom Altany.

The interviewees brought artifacts and photos appropriate to their Room and I served as the interviewer.

For 40 years such an oral history was lacking in all of our Rooms. This project filled a real need.

The 30-minute interviews will be made available to schools, churches, ethnic organizations and individuals at a reasonable cost. Each interviewee will receive a complimentary copy and a copy of each one will be kept in the NRIEP permanent files.

We extend our most sincere thanks to all who participated in this project.
MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL
Jennie-Lynn Knox, Chair

What does the Irish Nationality Room mean to me? I was recently interviewed by Maxine Bruhns, our Director of the Nationality Rooms, to talk about my involvement in and Chairing the Irish Nationality Room. As I prepared for my interview, I reflected on what the Irish Nationality Room means to me... why am I involved? History Tradition... Honor... Respect... Family... Love... my parents come to mind. Many years ago my father researched our family tree, going back to 1632 to my sixth great-grandfather, John Knox. Numerous Johns, Alexanders, Roberts, Georges, Sarahs, and Ann are part of my family. Edmund (editor of “Punch”), Dillwyn (great mathematician), Wilfred (Greek scholar), Ronald (Anglican Priest who translated the Bible), Penelope (author of “The Knox Brothers”), Anna (who married Rev. James Porter who was hanged for his letters “Billy Bluff”), Alexander (who, along with his brother James, immigrated to America and became Louisiana Senator and Attorney General respectively). Alexander also owned Oaklawn Manor Plantation, owning a slave, Charles Stuart, who was freed and wrote an article in Harpers magazine in 1884 entitled “My Life as a Slave”. My grandparents, James Robert and Mary Reid, who immigrated to America in 1905/1906, married in 1906, and built their home by hand in Emsworth Borough, Pittsburgh, PA. In rereading my father’s book What the Irish Room Means to Me, where he reflected on his unwavering service and dedication to the Irish Nationality Room, the community, and his love for Ireland, I understood that all of this was/is a symbol of the life and spirit in the hearts of the pioneers immigrating to America with hope, elation, quiet joy. As I walked from my car recently to the Cathedral of Learning for a meeting, I looked up at the majestic building and was overwhelmed with honor and great humility that I now was a part of this great tradition of Irish culture and furthering the work for “the Glory of God and the Honor of Ireland.”

AFRICAN HERITAGE ROOM COMMITTEE
Donna Alexander, Chair

On June 11th, we participated in the 17th Annual Reading Extravaganza 2017, Summer Reading festival at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Our scholar, Hannah Eko, was on hand to read to the children. The parents had an opportunity to hear about our African Heritage Room.

On August 10th, we had our first Celebratory Reception to welcome Dr. Valerie Kinloch, the new Renee and Richard Goldman Dean of the University of Pittsburgh School of Education.

On November 16th, Aniah McLeod and Ogechukwu Opaigbeougu, 2017 African Heritage Room recipients of a scholarship in memory of Lillie May Lesesne, will talk about their experience in Africa at the Frick Fine Arts Building.

CZECHOSLOVAK ROOM COMMITTEE
Cestmir Houska, Chair

On March 25, 2017, the series on famous persons in Czech and Slovak history continued with the seminar on Jan Amos Comenius presented by Dr. Craig Atwood. Participants learned about Comenius’ pansophy, pacifism, and educational reforms within the context of his life in the 17th century and Comenius’ legacy in the 21st century. This series will continue with a seminar on T.G. Masaryk, the first Czechoslovak President in the near future.

The Committee members welcomed Ruth Crawford Mitchell Czech/Slovak Fellow, Jiří Pánek who is conducting research on gentrification of the Lawrenceville area. On October 22nd, Pánek shared his research work and experiences with participatory approaches in geography.

The Room Committee together with Český Svět are hosting a Christmas party on December 17th at the Wilkins School Community Center.

Plans and programming for the 100th anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement (May 31, 2018) were discussed. The Pittsburgh Agreement was one of the milestones leading to the establishment of Czechoslovakia on October 28, 1918.
CHINESE ROOM COMMITTEE  
Dewi Wong, Chair

The Chinese Room Committee held a fundraiser dinner on October 29, 2017, at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel in Station Square. This year we honored Mr. Kai Lin, President of OCA (Organization of Chinese Americans). All proceeds benefit the Chinese Nationality Room scholarship fund.

GREEK ROOM COMMITTEE  
Nick Giannoukakis, Chair

The Room Committee sponsored a book presentation and book signing by Dr. Avram-Willis, a survivor of the Holocaust in Greece on September 17th. On November 3rd, we held a concert entitled 50 Years Maria Callas: a Musical Tribute. An art tribute to Maria Callas preceded the Main program.

INDIAN ROOM COMMITTEE  
Rashmi Ravindra, Chair

Deepak Wadhwani, Indian Nationality Room’s Architect-of-Record gave a presentation on April 7th, on the history of the Indian Nationality Room in the Indian Nationality Room.

It has been the endeavor of the Indian Room Committee to bring all Indians from different regions, faiths and languages together under one umbrella. Every year we hold India Day to celebrate India’s achievements since its independence. This year we held the annual India Day Celebration on Sunday, August 13, we honored Mark Nordenberg, Chancellor Emeritus, for his services to the University and the city. He has been a big supporter of the Nationality Rooms. For the first time Mayor Bill Peduto attended the celebration as well.

M. Nordenberg, E. Bruhns, B. Peduto

IRISH ROOM COMMITTEE  
Jennie-Lynn Knox, Chair

Committee members have been very active in furthering the great culture and traditions of Ireland. Members have been busy working on a new brochure to be distributed at all events.

John Webber celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Irish Nationality Room dedication on May 18th, with a real Irish welcome to Room visitors as well as Homecoming in October.

Bloomsday was celebrated on Friday, June 16th, with the reading of James Joyce’s Ulysses. This will be an annual event in the Irish Nationality Room.

The Second Annual Celtic Culture event was held on Sunday, October 15, at Frick Fine Arts Building. We celebrated Celtic Culture with the members of the Scottish and Welsh Nationality Rooms, enjoying Irish, Scottish and Welsh dance, music and storytelling.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Irish Room Committee, please contact the Nationality Rooms Program office.

ISRAEL HERITAGE ROOM  
Rabbi Jonathan Perlman, Chair

On Monday, November 27, 2017, the Israel Heritage Room Committee in conjunction with the University of Pittsburgh Jewish Studies Program, will host a lecture by Dr. Jodi Magness to mark the 30th anniversary of Israel Heritage Room. Dr. Magness’ presentation will focus on her current work on an archeological dig at Huqoq, an ancient 3rd-century synagogue in the western Galilee, deemed to contain some of the most beautiful remains in any dig in the Holy Land. The lecture is free and open to the public.

The Committee is looking for opportunities for joint programming with other nationality Rooms. Other countries with Jewish populations could be a source of such programming.

KOREAN HERITAGE ROOM COMMITTEE  
Soyeon Lee, Chair

Korean Heritage Room Committee, Korean Association of Greater Pittsburgh, Nationality Rooms and Intercultural Exchange Programs and Asian Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh proudly sponsored the 2017 Korean Music Festival, directed by Younga Reitz and Yong Chae Lee, on Saturday, November 4th, at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium.
**POLISH NATIONALITY ROOM**  
Larry Kozlowski, Chair

Polishfest ’17, a “family-oriented festival” of Polish music, song, dance and culture, will be presented on Sunday, November 12, 2017 from noon to 5:00 p.m. in the Cathedral of Learning’s Commons Room.

This cultural event is FREE and open to the public. Now in its 34th year, a full schedule of continuous activities is being planned including live folk dancing, cultural displays, Polish Gift & Import Mart, Polish food and folk-art demonstrations, children’s “make-n’take” folk crafts, Polish bakery, ethnic foods and polka music.

**SCOTTISH ROOM COMMITTEE**  
George Balderose, Chair

The Room Committee hosted a delegation of visitors from Glasgow, Scotland, who are members of the 100 Resilient Cities. 100 Resilient Cities, pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation (100RC), is dedicated to helping cities around the world become more resilient to the physical, social and economic challenges that are a growing part of the 21st century. The visitors toured the Scottish Nationality Room and then were guests at a High Tea Reception in the Croghan-Schenley Room on September 7th, hosted by the Scottish Room Committee.

**TURKISH ROOM COMMITTEE**  
Nur Lider, Chair

On July 15, an award-winning author from Istanbul, Tülin Kozikoğlu, read “Riza the Angry Spider” from her highly popular “Leyla Fonten” book series. This was an interactive reading session with the author and the children narrating and acting the story page by page while talking about “anger” as a feeling.

On September 9, we held a fundraising concert at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium. The Neotolia music band, led by singer-songwriter Nazan Nihal and pianist-composer Umar Artun, explored traditional Turkish folk music through the lens of contemporary composition, jazz, world music and improvisation.

**YUGOSLAV ROOM COMMITTEE**  
Ken Kornick, Chair

The Room Committee was a partial sponsor of the film festival “Balkan and Central Asian Women Filmmakers: Finding their Own voices in Post-Socialist Cinema.” The four films were shown at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium. Each film was followed by a discussion sessions. The films were the work of women directors from Bulgaria, Boznia-Herzegovina, Kazakhstan and Romania.

The Room Committee also collaborated with the Russian and East European Studies (REES) in the Slavic and Eastern European Fall Festival on October 29th in the Commons Room.

**WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL CLUB**  
Jennie-Lynn Knox, Chair

Women’s International club held a very successful authentic Japanese Tea Ceremony led by Yoko Motoyama and Sally Schurko on May 7th. Officers for the 2017-2018 term were sworn in.

Our annual fall luncheon/meeting was held on October 8th. Lynnea Lombardo, Darcy Foster and Caileigh Carei gave a presentation about their studies abroad. Also we were given a demonstration on terrarium planting by scholarship awardee Kyle Wyche who traveled to the Amazon Rainforest this summer.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the WIC, please contact the Nationality Rooms Program office. All are welcome!!!
ROO M S I N P L A N N I N G

IRANIAN ROOM COMMITTEE
Ali Masalehdan, Chair

Stephen Altherr was selected to be the Architect-of-Record for the construction of the Iranian Nationality Room. Facilities Management will formally award a contract to Mr. Altherr. Stephen Altherr will work with Nadar Ardalan on the conceptual design of the room. Mr. Ardalan, currently at Harvard University Graduate School of Design, is a recognized world leader and expert in the field of sustainable and culturally relevant design with a particular focus on the Persian Gulf Region.

PHILIPPINE NATIONALITY ROOM TASK FORCE
Fr. Manny Gelido

The PNR Task Force has had a very busy year fundraising so that the construction of the Philippine Nationality Room can begin in May 2018. They held a Philippine Movie Marathon and on August 6 held a “Merienda Cena” (high tea) - Saklohohan (rescue) fundraiser. PAPG and FAAP provided an entertainment. Josie Crooks provided music entertainment.

The PNR Task Force met the required minimum for the Facilities Management to bid for the construction of the Philippine Nationality Room. The Room is scheduled for construction in May 2018.

FINNISH ROOM COMMITTEE
Seija Cohen, Chair

Nonica Frölanderulf, retired professor from the University of Pittsburgh, participated in the Finnish Ex-patriate Parliament meeting, June 16-17, 2017, in Helsinki, Finland, representing the Finnish Room Committee. The Parliament formally recognized the Finnish Nationality Room project as a significant contribution to the preservation of the Finnish cultural heritage in the United States.

On September 8, Frank Eld, log cabin construction expert, gave a presentation at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium and also met with the Finnish Nationality Room’s Architect-of-Record, Stephen Altherr.

NATIONALITY ROOMS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES
Maryann Sivak

• Construction of AV Credenzas for the Italian, Chinese, Greek and Norwegian Nationality Rooms are being built. These AV Credenzas are designed to match the style of the Rooms. French and Lithuanian AV Credenzas were completed few years ago.

• On May 15, we began video interviews for the NRIEP Oral Histories. We received a $4,700 grant from the Provost. NRIEP matched $4,700 and E. Maxine Bruhns donated $20,000 in order to complete the project. It is currently being edited.

• On May 22, we hosted 34 international ambassadors and their spouses who visited the Nationality and Heritage Rooms. We met them on the balcony facing Bigelow and welcomed them informally. E. Maxine Bruhns, was able to speak German with the Austrian Ambassador and informally with many African Ambassadors and others. Maxine and Michael Walter hosted the ambassadors for which we had Rooms. We kept it informal and they applauded when we mentioned their nation’s name in the African Heritage Room. Each Ambassador was given a Nationality Room Book and a Dedication Book of their Room. The next day, Maxine learned from Chancellor Gallagher that they were very impressed by and proud of “their” Nationality Rooms. You can read more about it by going to: https://www.pittwire.pitt.edu/news/culture-innovation-build.
Intel ISEF (International Science and Engineering Fair) unites students from more than 70 countries, regions, and territories each year. Approximately 200 interpreters are needed to work with students in conversational or scientifically-informed interpretation. The greatest demand is for Arabic, Mandarin, Russian, and Spanish, but there is an anticipated need for more than 15-20 languages. No scientific background is required. We are recruiting volunteers who speak other languages, even if the ISEF students do not require an interpreter. This is especially true for judging day (Wednesday, May 16) because they provide calmness to the students by speaking in their native tongue. The dates are May 13-18, 2018 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. You can sign up at student.societyforscience.org/volunteers. For questions please email: isefvolunteer@societyforscience.org or call 770-317-1268. If you need more information please email Sharon Snyder at ssnyder@societyforscience.org or Maryann Sivak at mhs35@pitt.edu.

During the Pitt Homecoming Welcome Event, the NRIEP and UCIS invited all Pitt alumni to tour the Nationality Rooms. This was a special outreach to Homecoming Alumni. Nationality and Heritage Room Committee members greeted and welcomed Pitt Alumni to their Rooms and shared history about their Room and ethnic communities.

On October 16th, E. Maxine Bruhns and Marty Chetlin, Israel Heritage Room’s Architect-of-Record, toured the Israel Heritage Room with the Consul General of Israel in New York, Dan Dayan.

On October 31, E. Maxine Bruhns conducted the Ghost Watch in the Early American Room on Halloween evening. The West Virginia grandmother failed to make an appearance but more than 2,500 watched the event livestream on University of Pittsburgh facebook. Catula, Dracula’s cat was a big hit.

Each year we give comp tours to various organizations throughout Western Pennsylvania. This includes organizations such as Alzheimer’s Associations, Arthritis Foundation, Bushy Run Battlefield Heritage Society, public and private schools, Carnegie Science Center, various ministries, Family Hospice, fraternities/sororities, Meals on Wheels, various neighborhoods, Private Industry Council, Providence Connections, Sporting events, golfing outings, various coalitions. We send them two certificates, which will admit two adults and two youths each to tour our Nationality Rooms, which are located in the Cathedral of Learning at the University of Pittsburgh.

The Nationality Rooms, home to one of Pittsburgh’s richest histories and unique art collections, inspired this Fall’s exhibition at the University Art Gallery. The exhibition, opening November 10, 2017, will display original artifacts related to the Nationality Rooms, drawing on rich resources and relevant collections. This exhibit is being sponsored by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, in collaboration with the History of Art and Architecture Department (HAA) and based on a previous internship. Aleksandra Carapella, a fourth-year PhD candidate, spent ten weeks researching and identifying art, ethnographic, and archival materials from the Nationality Rooms collections and archives, which are rarely shown to the public. She ensured that the artifacts’ dimensions, display requirements and conservation condition fit in the exhibition and anticipated issue with object handling and exhibiting. These objects will be creatively juxtaposed along with pertinent archival material, such as photographs, donor correspondence, postcards, newspaper clippings, and travel logs from Nationality Room Committee members, preserved at the University Library System Archives. The exhibition material will be further selected and mounted during Prof. Shirin Fozi Jones’ undergraduate HAA Museum Studies Exhibition Seminar on migration and memory. The organization of the exhibition into thematic sections will explore how the Nationality Rooms imagine immigrant experiences through the lens of a contemporary visitor and how this perspective might change in the 21st century. The exhibition will also feature watercolors by Andrey Avinoff, the Director of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History from 1926 to 1946. Avinoff painted powerful images of the Nationality Rooms during their creation. This collection will further illuminate the long history of the Nationality Rooms and raise important questions about Pittsburgh in the 1930s and 1940s, and what the city and the University represent today.
TOURS AND INFORMATION CENTER
Michael Walter

Tour Guests:
Fall 2017
Statistics July through September
Adults about 3200 visitors
Youths about 700 visitors

Notable Tours:
Three tours from Mainstay Life Services (July), The City of Pittsburgh Controller’s Office (August), Zheijiang University, China (August), Birmingham University, UK (September), Bloomsburg University (September).

We also received and are still receiving many First-Year Programs, Intro To Arts & Sciences freshmen on tour, who have been visiting us with their instructors.

Quo Vadis News:
The guides elicited a big response from interested freshmen and some upperclassmen at the Student Activities Fair in August. To date, eleven new trainees are learning to become guides.

Other News:
• The History of Art & Architecture Dept. and the University Art Gallery will mount an exhibition in November focused on artifacts stored with us in the NRIEP. The students formed teams and were tasked with considering immigration and identity and from a possible list of 100 objects (predetermined from the online catalog in Spring 2017), the students chose about 30 objects. Quo Vadis President Reagan Harper is one of the undergraduate teaching assistants, and QV guide Patti Smith is one of the student team members.

• On September 18, the Cathedral of Learning had a sprinkler system main water break. It seems to have originated on the third floor and came out of elevator shafts and down stairwells. Though the building was evacuated, we were able to access some of the affected Nationality Rooms. Where there was standing water on floors, it was removed overnight as the event was occurring and afterwards. Air movers and dehumidifiers were deployed throughout the first and third floors and in individual rooms. On the whole, the damage appears to be minimal though three Nationality Rooms’ wooden floors may have to be replaced: the English, the Yugoslav and French.

GIFT SHOP
Phil Johnson

The Nationality Rooms Gift Center (located on the first floor of the Cathedral of Learning) is the place to shop for your Holiday gift giving needs! Looking for something different that you won't find in the big box stores, online or at other retailers? Stop by the Gift Center for handmade leather journals from India, Amber jewelry from Lithuania, hand-carved, decorated wooden boxes from Poland and that all-time Holiday favorite, hand-made Russian nesting dolls, all at reasonable prices!
COMMITTEE HAPPENINGS, EVENTS, NEWS AND SCHOLARSHPS
Cristina Lagnese

Happy Fall, Happy Halloween, शुभ दिवाली (Shubh Diwali) and Greetings to everyone! You will see from the calendar of events in the newsletter how busy the committees have been and there are more to come before the year ends. As I write this, we are in the midst of preparation with the Greek Room Committee for the Maria Callas Tribute on November 3rd and the Korean Heritage Committee for the Korean Music Festival on November 4th. We invite you and your friends to check out those events which interest you. I always discover something new. When I attend these cultural happenings, I feel grateful that my parents brought me to this country. It reminds me how rich we are with traditions brought over from the old countries. These traditions passed on to our children make us a strong country. Thank you Nanay at Tatay!

Decorating Day- Saturday, November 11
You have received the information from Michael Walter (mpw14@pitt.edu) about Decorating Day. The office will provide refreshments on the first floor across from Michael’s office (CL157) and near the Croghan-Schenley Room (CL156). Please let Sage (SSL27@pitt.edu) know how many people will decorate your Room so we may order the food accordingly.

Holiday Open House- Sunday, December 3
If you have not sent in your participation form for Holiday Open House, please do so as soon as possible. It was due on October 31st.

This is a festive occasion when all the Rooms are decorated traditional holiday motifs. Visitors will enjoy music, dancing, presentations by Quo Vadis guides and committees selling ethnic food and novelty items. We encourage you to sell your tastiest foods as this is what our 2,000 guests will look forward to buying. We also remind you to highlight the food items on your table rather than the tchotchkes. Of course, activities for children and adults are also nice, i.e. calligraphy, henna, coloring.

You will receive the layout of the Commons Room and your place very soon. We rotate everyone’s place each year and roughly allocate the same square footage. We would love to please everyone, but sometimes this is not possible. My wish for this year and every Holiday Open House, is that everyone sells a lot no matter where they are located. We must use existing furniture and are ordering additional tables and chairs.

For those with a vendor, please emphasize to your vendors that they must give 25% of their profits to the sponsoring committee and $12 for the rental of their table.

Other Committee News
We welcome new members and officers of the Armenian Room Committee. They are Levon Janpoladyan (Chairperson), Mikael Matossian (Secretary), Armina Hakobyan (Treasurer), Sean Nonnemacher and Leslie Joyce. We are fortunate to have the Hagopian and Traina family as part of the committee to guide the new members.

We also welcome Rita Zabelina (Chair) and Uliana Kozhevnikova (Vice-chair) as officers for the Russian Room Committee. Christine Metil (Slavic Language) will serve as the Treasurer of the Committee. Thank you Rita, Uliana and Christine.

Coloring Book Update
The coloring books have been selling briskly based on the proceeds we are receiving from the committees. The Gift Center and the University Book Store have also ordered them. We hope to sell more for the holidays.
QR Codes
What are these? They look like the image above. To receive credit for attending an event, students scan the code with a mobile app called Suitable. These codes are generated and displayed for most of our events.

The Nationality Rooms have teamed up with OCC (Outside the Classroom Curriculum). OCC strives to get Pitt students engaged and involved on campus. They are encouraged to attend various programs, events and activities which contribute to a holistic and well-rounded education. Students receive OCC credit for attending our events.

Students also receive UCIS credits towards their respective certificates for attending a Nationality Room event so we have QR codes for these as well. Our hope is that student attendance and participation will increase.

Pitt Giving
Several committees have been requesting a way to give donations and send in membership dues online. Although this has been talked about for a few years, it’s finally happening.

We have successfully worked with Institutional Advancement to give the Nationality Rooms Program a place in their drop down menu. The majority of the committees have been assigned three designations: GENERAL GIFT, SCHOLARSHIP GIFT and COMMITTEE DUES. Please check them out at http://www.nationalityrooms.pitt.edu/node/560. We sent each committee the url links so you may include them in your membership letters or newsletters.

2017 Ruth Crawford Mitchell Czech/Slovak Fellowship
This year’s recipient is Dr. Jiří Pánek, Senior Lecturer at Palacký University, Olo-mouc. He has been collaborating with Dr. Michael Glass, University of Pittsburgh Urban Studies Program, in studying the Lawrenceville neighborhood which has undergone what some people may call “gentrification.” His goal is “to analyze the perceived quality of life and public space in the neighborhood.”

The Czechoslovak Room Committee has welcomed him to Pittsburgh and invited him to present at their last meeting.

2018 Summer Study Abroad Scholarships
The scholarship information sessions have started. Applications are due in January 2018. For details on this Summer Study Abroad Scholarships and Fellowships, please look at the FUNDING tab of the Nationality Rooms website, http://www.nationalityrooms.pitt.edu/funding.
This year we awarded 53 Summer Study Abroad Scholarships totaling $182,500.

UNDERGRADUATE

ARBUTINA, Kristin - Hungarian Room Committee Scholarship (In honor of Endre Csoman) - Budapest and Debre- cen, Hungary - "My first favorite memory from my trip was the excursion on the second weekend to a city called Mohacs. We toured the center of the city, visited a museum of traditional costumery, and then visited a small outdoor farm/restaurant area. We were greeted by women and men in traditional Hungarian folk dress and handed glasses of homemade lemonade and a shot of palinka, traditional Hungarian fruit brandy. A group of men inside the terrace-area of the restaurant played upbeat music on string instruments. We were then able to sample all of the varieties of fruit palinka that the family made at their farm, walk through the rows of fruits and vegetables they grew, and all took a seat on rows of tables and benches they set up for us."

CAREI, Caileigh - Women’s International Club Grant - Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Conducted a fieldwork investigation on the work of Brazilian filmmaker Ana Carolina (a.k.a. Ana Carolina Teixeira Soares) - “Keep your mind open. Be ready to make amazing life-long friends, and don’t be offended if your personal bubble shrinks about 6 inches. Brazilians are all about food, and drinks. Be ready to go out and enjoy your evening with a variety of different kinds of food.”

COCO, Noah - Helen Pool Rush Grant - Cape Town, South Africa. Study American foreign policy as well as participate in service learning and conduct research on affordable housing within South Africa - "I worked with the federal government in the state department or in the intelligence community, and studied American foreign policy in Africa, visited an American consulate, and studied the socioeconomic realities of local South Africans encouraged me to continue down this path. I experienced a new perspective on the global processes that I have been learning about in an academic setting, and the role foreign policy can play in influencing these processes.”

CONTE, Christina - Savina S. Skewis Memorial Scholarship - Buenos Aires, Argentina. Intern in business setting. Study business and Spanish language - "I saw the different ways that a non-profit organization runs in Argentina and I took part in helping with their everyday tasks. I think my time abroad reinforced my career goals and made me more certain on my intended major. The internship that I did included a lot of marketing and some operations management which made me more certain with which side of a business I would like to take part in."

CRISTINZIANO, Madison - Italian Room Committee Scholarship - Rome, Italy. Study the Italian language and history - "I really embraced the language and I am now more comfortable than I ever was with speaking. It has inspired me to continue learning and take more Italian classes at Pitt, and it also inspired me to begin learning Spanish as this will help me even more in my future."

EVANKOVICH, Maria - David L. Lawrence Memorial Scholarship - Cochabamba, Bolivia. Study contemporary issues facing Bolivia’s diverse population and volunteer in the community through a service learning placement - "One moment from my time abroad that stands out in my mind centers around a three-year-old little girl named Hilda. She was severely malnourished and had Edema. She arrived at the malnourishment center, probably around my third week there, and always wanted to be held. All she wanted to do was sit on someone's lap and be cuddled. However, she would never smile, no matter whatever crazy antic I would try. Near my final days at the center, I walked in and Hilda finally gave me a smile. That smile made everything worth it. Even if all I did was brighten her day just a little bit, I felt like I made a difference in her life, and helped her on the path to recovery."

FORSTER, Darcy - Women’s International Club Grant - London, England. Study history, literature and intern at a museum - "Due to the fact that I did not have many assignments that related to museum work during the first few weeks of my placement, I began seeking out projects that would help the museum. I stayed late one day a week to write a small article for the volunteer newsletter, and I worked with the Education Manager to find connections between Ben Franklin and the topics that were being studied in school by different grades of students. Together, we began developing a new outreach program that she will take in the future to schools to spread information about Ben Franklin."

GAUR, Shivani - Helen Pool Rush Scholarship - Lima, Peru. Study medical Spanish, community medicine and healthcare - "In Peru I was able to study medical Spanish – learn how to interact with patients using Spanish and basic anatomy terms. Additionally, I was able to shadow physicians and nurses in a health clinic where Spanish was the sole language spoken. It was interesting seeing health care abroad and what other nations emphasize compared to what the United States emphasizes. Also, to see how clinics worked when resources and funds were low, but demand extremely high."
HARRIS, Megan - Japanese Room Committee/Toshiba International Foundation Scholarship - Tokyo, Japan. Study Japanese society, politics and culture - "So much of Tokyo is so vibrant and exciting. It can be such a friendly and outgoing city. So often I would find myself at a busy, loud restaurant, practically yelling in broken Japanese while laughing and talking with locals, who often used us foreigners as a chance to practice their English as well."

JOSEPH, Tanisha - Chinese Room Committee Scholarship (In honor of Tom Chen) - Kunming, China. Study the Chinese language and culture - "My understanding of why the relationship between China and the US is so important was further cemented, as now I see there is political, economic, and emotional significance attached to it."

LACEY, Cecilia - Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Scholarship - London, England. Study comparative Sign language and research at London’s Deafness Cognition and Language Research Centre - "My experience abroad in London reinforced my career goals. It was an incredible experience to see the far-reaching effects of sign language and the impact it has on individuals' lives in another country."

LEATHEROW, Teresa - Herbert E. Lieberkind/Danish Room Committee Scholarship - Copenhagen, Denmark. Study environmental sustainability and engineering concepts - "The daily aspects of Danish living- the pace of life, the use of bicycles as a main transportation method, the minimalist and simple but smart designs of public spaces and infrastructure- are things I significantly appreciated and will miss."

LOMBARDI, Lynnea - Women’s International Club Scholarship - Seoul, South Korea. Study the mass media and popular culture of Korea - "What I will remember the most is interacting with Korean people. The locals were extremely patient with and encouraging of my Korean ability. I made good friends with whom our primary language of communication was Korean. I told elderly shopkeepers about how my great uncle had been in the military in Korea long ago, and they cheerfully gave me a discount."

LYONS, Clayton - Austrian Room Committee Scholarship - Graz, Austria. Study the development of medicine through History of Medicine and Healthcare course - "During my time in Austria, I was able to visit various healthcare delivery sites including: a hospital, a pharmacy, a medical school, a school for mentally-challenged individuals, a homeless shelter, a nursing home, and a free clinic for those without insurance. All of these organizations displayed differences with their counterparts in the US, but the starkest difference was Austria's focus on prevention. As a result, I have developed an interest in public health and am strongly considering pursuing a Masters in Public Health in addition to my MD degree."

McAFOOS, Ilana - Mary Campbell Cross/Irish Room Committee Scholarship - Galway, Ireland. Study the architecture and archaeology of the castles, churches and cloisters of Medieval Ireland - "We were [excavating] a castle site outside of the city of Galway. I had been placed in the trench that included the ruins of the courtyard castle wall. In the second week of the program we uncovered a line of stones underneath the rubble from the castle wall and the professor gave us the opportunity to try and interpret the new context ourselves. I observed that one of the stones went underneath the existing wall and suggested that it was later paving placed to cover the trench of the wall and to allow horses to enter the castle boundaries. This interpretation was deemed correct and this was the first moment that I realized how much we had learned in only one week working on a project."

McLEOD, Aniah - African heritage Room Committee Scholarship (In memory of Lillie Mae Lesesne) - Iringa, Tanzania. Study the determinants of health and the Swahili language of Iringa - "For our last day in Iringa, our health class traveled to a local orphanage. At the orphanage, we divided into groups and either interacted with the children or led a project. My group built a tippy-tappy for the orphanage. A tippy-tappy is a hands-free hand washing device made from sticks, rocks, cement, and gravel. I and my team assembled the tippy-tappy with two of the girls from the orphanage. We set up the tippy-tappy outside and next to the playground as well as the bathroom to encourage hand washing before meals, after using the playground, and after using the bathroom."

MELCHER, Eleanna - Austrian Room Committee Grant - Vienna, Austria. Study advanced German language and Austrian and German cultural history - "I found it extremely interesting to be in Europe at a time of such political dissonance in both Europe and the United States. By being questioned about my home, and my views, in the context of Austria and Germany, I was able to better substantiate my own ideals."

MISCHLER, William - John H. Tsui Memorial Grant - Beijing, China. Study Chinese language - "My worldview is stronger as a result of my trip to China. Everytime my opinions were challenged I would have to re-evaluate my position giving me a stronger understanding of why I hold my views."

OPAIGBEOGU, Ogechukwu - African Heritage Room Committee Scholarship (In memory of Lillie Mae Lesesne) - Iringa, Tanzania. Study East African culture and health issues - "Religion is a big part of Tanzanian culture so make an effort to attend at least one religious service even if you are not religious--this is akin to a foreigner attending a football game in America. Also, I suggest trying as much local food as you can as long as you do not have a weak stomach."
ROONEY, Kim - John H. Tsui Memorial Scholarship - Shanghai, China. Study language and culture and examine constructs of Chinese identity. Analyze interracial adoption narratives and their construction of race and family - "Being in China also made me realize how much I want to return, and it made me less certain of the one-track career path I'd laid out for myself before the trip. I've decided to switch from pursuing a certificate in Public and Professional Writing to pursuing a minor in Chinese, and I'm more willing to chase opportunities that life presents as they come rather than singly focusing on becoming an editor."

TAYLOR, Linton - Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Scholarship - Madrid, Spain. Intern in the workplace and learn about Spanish culture - "My second week at work [in Spain] there was a networking event in the office with professionals from all over the world that came. It was a nice view into what my future as a business student will be like. It was professional, but also laid back. We talked, we sang, and we danced. Unforgettable night."

TESSITORE, Isabella - Helen Pool Rush Grant - Madrid, Spain. Intern in the marketing field - "Spain definitely has a more laid-back culture than the U.S. In the U.S., we really are constantly running around to the next task. I enjoyed the more relaxed culture and learned to enjoy myself during the day instead of always thinking about my plans for later."

WEAVER, Hamilton - Swiss Room Committee Scholarship - Geneva, Switzerland. Study multilateral diplomacy and French language - "Even though I lived outside Geneva, I thoroughly enjoyed my homestay. I felt as though I was fully immersed in Swiss culture by living in a homestay. My program did not have any planned excursions, however my friend and I spent almost every weekend traveling throughout the country."

WEEKS, Carolyn - John H. Tsui Memorial Grant - Beijing, China. Study Chinese language and modern Chinese culture - "The types of 'human rights' that we consider inalienable in the U.S. don't really exist in China, and most people aren't concerned. I found that the people I spoke to just wanted to live a comfortable, normal life, and if censorship or other government restrictions didn't interfere with that goal, they didn't care about it."

WYCHE, Kyle - Savina S. Skewish Memorial Scholarship - Napo, Ecuador. Study tropical ecology in the Amazon Rainforest - "One of the hopes I had for this trip was to learn more about various species of tropical plants and the different physiological methods they use to obtain nutrients in poor soils. Fortunately, by working with our guest lecturer Dr. Lee Dyer, a specialist in Lepidoptera and plant species, I was able to learn about 12 common plant families with the three largest being Asteraceae, Orchidaceae, and Fabaceae."

GRADUATE

BAUMAN, Sara - Dr. & Mrs. Ryunosuke Shiono Scholarship - Accham, Nepal. Research a collaborative filmmaking method for collecting and disseminating data on menstrual hygiene management in mid-west Nepal - "One memory that stands out to me, is when we gave the youngest and quietest girl in the group a camera to create her video. We really didn't know what to expect in terms of footage, but when we watched from afar, we saw her thrive. She told her story quietly, but boldly. She shared practices that have been deep rooted in her family for generations, and her film was so intimate and captured her life in a way that gives me goosebumps every time I watch her video."

BERESHEIM, Daniel - Israel Heritage Room Committee Scholarship - Tel Aviv, Israel. Conduct oral histories with engineers who are developing artificial intelligence - "Israel looks to America as a cultural model in many ways. I actually think visiting Israel reinforced some beliefs I have about my home country more strongly than any of those about the rest of the world. Seeing systemic inequality alongside generous social services made me realize that we experience many issues in the U.S. that we cite as major problems in other countries."
CASE, Benjamin - Stanley Prostrednik Scholarship - Johannesburg, South Africa. Study the ways in which student activists view the effect of different types of tactics used in the #FeesMustFall movement that successfully prevented nationwide university tuition hikes in 2015 - "My time in South Africa definitely reinforced my interest in and commitment to my research in social movements. As with any area of knowledge, the more you understand, the more you know that you don’t know. I learned more during five weeks than I could have hoped, but part of that was learning the blind spots I had in my research design to begin with. I now want to return to Johannesburg in the next year to deepen my research, in particular by talking to students at the technical colleges, who I now understand were central to the development of the student movement there, although they received very little media attention."

COAKLEY, Emilie - Ruth Crawford Mitchell Memorial Grant - Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Study the formation and interfaith community-building at the Roman Catholic Center for Liturgical Music - "Not only did my time abroad reinforce my career goals—to learn about and teach music and religion, with a focus on Catholic music in Indonesia—but it affirmed with startling accuracy the fit of a project at the Center for Liturgical Music in Yogyakarta for the kind of work that I am equipped to do and the kind of theoretical questions that I will examine."

CONNELL, Sarah - Austrian Room Committee Scholarship - Vienna, Austria. Study the visual culture surrounding veneration of Christ’s Holy Blood as it manifested in late medieval and early modern Austria - "I have visited Austria before, but I always learn something new. Staying with Airbnb hosts helped me to connect with local people and better understand their perspectives and experiences."

DRESANG, Haley - Stanley Prostrednik Health Sciences Grant - Bogotá, Colombia. Examine the relationship between semantic memory and language in Spanish-speaking adults with and without aphasia - "It was an incredibly valuable and rewarding experience for me to work with people with aphasia in my non-native language. I was also honored by being asked to serve indefinitely as a Visiting Professor at the university. This was unexpected to me, but signifies that their department sees value in maintaining cooperation and communication."

HAYES, Jordan - Fred C. Bruhns Memorial Scholarship - Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. Research media representations of cell phone use among forcibly displaced people. Conduct study of digitally literate practices among Syrian refugees - "My interest in human rights led me to consider conducting research with Syrian refugees. My specialty in literacy studies invites consideration of the consequences of digital literacy, which I take to include the use of symbolic technology supported by infrastructure. Refugees remain central to the human rights framework, and their use of technology has become a point of media attention and academic inquiry. A preponderance of media representations and academic studies emphasize Syrian journeys to Europe. By locating my study in Iraq, my work shifts this perspective."

ISOM, Kelvin - Helen Pool Rush Grant - Eldoret, Kenya. Intern at the Legal Aid Centre of Edoret offering pro bono legal aid services to those affected and living with HIV and AIDS - "This internship reinforced my passion and need for human rights reform and advocating for social justice and representation for those who cannot afford representation or those who do not understand the legal system and need a voice. My time abroad will certainly affect the type of classes I choose to take in the following semesters here at Pitt."

KENNEDY, John - Ivan Santa-Cruz Memorial Scholarship - Santiago, Chile. Comparative analysis of the coup of Chilean President Salvador Allende in the relation to the coup of Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz - "My family is from Latin America and Santiago reminded me of Guatemala City. However, my perceptions changed on the Southern Cone area of Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina. I was able to see in person how remarkably distinct it is from the rest of Latin America, and how this geographic and cultural isolation has made its traditions unique."

LARSON, Ellen - John H. Tsui Memorial Scholarship - Beijing, China. Research Classical Chinese at Beijing Language and Culture University for MA thesis - "As Cao Fei’s international studio assistant, I was responsible for managing international projects, exhibitions, and collaborations. I translated documents from Chinese into English as well as English into Chinese and served as an interpreter when international guests, curators, and collectors visited the studio."

LaSORDA, Kelsea - James W. Knox Memorial Scholarship - Capetown, South Africa. Research on preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV in South Africa - "The first day of field work really stood out to me. I was out with community health workers in an informal settlement of the Ikhwezi Township. I was overwhelmed by the smell, by the cramped housing, by walking through the mud, by all the people, and by the Xhosa being spoken all around me. It was a very valuable experience though, and it stands out to me because of how quickly after that first day I adjusted."

MALANYCH, Alexander - Israel Heritage Room Committee Grant - Jerusalem, Israel. Research on LGBT ritual innovation at local synagogues, minyanim, and Jewish LGBT organizations - "I don’t think that I can adequately describe the feeling of walking toward the Western Wall. Each visit to the Old City was different and exciting, not only because of the labyrinth alleys, but also because the Jerusalem Light Festival happened while I was there. The mix of the ancient and the new—projections on the Hurva Synagogue or light sculptures toward Damascus Gate—it’s breathtaking."
MARTIN, Anjali - George F. & Mary Ann McGunagle Scholarship - Nkhoma Mission, Malawi. Research motivation, rationale and success of agricultural intervention at improving crop yield - "The research was the critical moment and purpose of the trip, but becoming a Malawian; being accepted into homes and welcomed into churches; being considered a daughter, a sister, and a friend; becoming an aunt to three amazing little boys. Those are the moments which make the trip's effects last far after I've returned home."

MONTEVERDE, Irene - Helen Pool Rush Grant - Siena, Milan, Italy, Belgium. Research jazz in Italy, documenting the music of Geri Allen, who will play duo with Italian trumpeter Enrico Rava - "This experience surpassed my expectations of how it would affect my career considerations. I am grateful for the time I spent with Professor Geri Allen on her last tour, and my precious moments with her will continue to guide me professionally and academically. Her commitment to mentoring me in the last months of her life is an inspiring example of tenacity and grace. She allowed me to witness the ups and downs of an intense European tour schedule through six countries and introduced me to respected industry professionals."

MORRIS, Jymirah - Stanley Prostrednik Health Sciences Scholarship - Managua, Nicaragua. Research the utilization of the Global Mental Health Assessment Tool in patients with traumatic brain injury - "Nicaragua is called the Land of Volcanoes and Lakes and it is the nature that stands out to me the most. The country was absolutely beautiful. My time was filled with exploring nature that I had never seen before. I climbed volcanoes, fed monkeys, and looked out over lagoons with new friends. In addition to the nature, the people I met will also stand out to me. Whether they were travelers like me, or locals, I made some really great friends and I will always cherish those friendships."

MUNDY, Olivia - Dr. Douglas Radcliffe - Umstead Memorial Scholarship - Milan Italy. Intern with U.S. Department of State at the U.S. Consulate General - "Something that really stood out to me while interning in Milan, was how welcoming and kind all of the Italians working in the Consulate were. From the very beginning I felt so comfortable and included, and everyone always made a point to greet one another and converse when they passed each other at work."

NEWTON, James - Josephine & John McCloskey Memorial Grant - Lilongwe, Malawi. Research the diagnosis and care course of pediatric respiratory disease in Malawi with the intent to identify potential targets for intervention - "Though one of the poorest countries in Africa, Malawi is known as 'The Warm Heart of Africa.' People there are very open and friendly. They are also very religious. According to one taxi driver, their greatest passions are 'football and the word of God.' Seeing their devotion was inspiring to me. Observing these happy people, in spite of their lack of worldly possessions, has influenced my outlook on life.""}

RALAMBO-RAJERISON, Gabrielle - Wendall Wray Memorial Scholarship - Antananarivo, Madagascar. Research the relationship between love, ancestor worship, and the formation of racial identity/anti-Blackness ins Madagascar - "I was blessed enough to witness a Famadihana. The intricacies of it are difficult to break down, so I'll turn to Wikipedia: 'Famadihana is a funerary tradition of the Malagasy people in Madagascar. Known as the turning of the bones, people bring forth the bodies of their ancestors from the family crypts and rewrap them in fresh cloth, then dance with the corpses around the tomb to live music.'"

SALTER, Cynthia - Ruth Crawford Mitchell Memorial Scholarship - San Jose & Ciudad Quesada, Costa Rica. Research with maternity care-providers exploring birth trauma and conduct in-depth interviews with them - "During my time in Ciudad Quesada, I was impressed by the way that local collaborators made my research project their own, and worked so hard to help me accomplish the tasks I needed to complete. They wanted me to learn as much as possible about the maternity care system, and they were willing to invest their time and energy in my project. I found that I slowed my pace and my expectations to accommodate the slower lifestyle and work process. I found I was able to accept and be grateful for what we were able to accomplish without focusing too much on the parts we could not achieve."

SANDERS, Sophia - Josephine & John McCloskey Memorial Scholarship - Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo. Research women's leadership and community development in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo - "Some standout memories from Rwanda include the walking tours led by women's groups in various quarters of the vibrant and diverse capital city as well as going to the heartbreaking but necessary genocide memorial museums. These experiences provided me with new insights into the Rwandan identity and history as well as a deepened understanding of how communities move forward after horrific violence.""}

SMITH, Laura - Dorothy Bradley Brown Physical Therapy Scholarship - Chichicastenango, Guatemala. Intern at a physical therapy clinic to learn and gain experience in international medicine - "My experience in Guatemala corresponded well with the career considerations I set forth in my application. My time there did reinforce my career goals and I know for sure that physical therapy is the right choice for me. I learned so much about physical therapy but also about how it looks different in a different culture."
VINCI GUERRA, Rachel - Helen Pool Rush Scholarship - Les Cayes, Haiti. Program evaluation of the “Fi Ki Fo” (strong girl) girl’s empowerment at Pwoje Espwa orphanage and to intern for a foster care program - "Haitian culture has a lot of differences from U.S. culture but also a lot of similarities. Some of the differences that are most difficult for me to come to terms with are the differences of gender perceptions. Women and girls here face sexism that is at a different level than what I have experienced in my own life."

WARING, Kathryn - Stanley Prostrednik Grant - Bielefeld, Germany. Research the institutionalization and treatment of epileptics in Germany before, during, and after World War II - "About halfway through my trip, I was trying to find a park I’d heard about in a part of Bielefeld (Germany) I’d never been to before. I ended up getting lost and, while trying to get my bearings, stumbled across an outdoor market with a beautiful fountain in the center. I didn’t find the park, but I did find an older woman who used to work at the institute and spent about an hour talking to her about her experience there."

WEAVER, William - James W. Knox Memorial Grant - Leon, Nicaragua. Study the history of leftist Evangelicalism in Nicaragua’s Sandinista Revolution - "As always (this was my ninth visit to Leon) my constant interaction with the people gave me an incredible experience of cultural and linguistic immersion. The openness and hospitality of the Nicaraguan people is something I will always remember."

WEBER, Anna - Polish Room Committee - Szuben, Poland. Research the development, history, and impact of Oflag 64, the only Nazi POW camp for American officers in Poland - "One that comes to mind, not just because it was my last, was an interview with a 93-year-old grandfather of a friend of my interpreter. Afterwards, the friend told me his grandfather had been very nervous to talk to me — he hadn’t thought he had anything remarkable to say. The first half of the interview was about his daily life during the war and right after, or what he could remember of it. But gradually, as we were thumbing through his old documents and paperworks, it came out that he had been a member of an underground resistance against the early Communist regime in Poland post-war, that he had been arrested, interrogated, beaten, and jailed for several years. To him, this wasn’t particularly interesting or important; to him, this was just what you did."

WELCOME NEW STAFF
Maryann Sivak

Sage Levy is the new Administrative Assistant for the Nationality Rooms Program. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Eckerd College in St. Pete, Florida and a Master of Education degree in Administration of Higher Education from Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts. While traveling the world, she developed a special interest in international education and study abroad scholarships. In her spare time she volunteers for Youth for Understanding, a high school exchange program, and is an avid knitter.

Molly Greth - a undergraduate student in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, studying Sociology and Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies. She started working in the Nationality Rooms as a Student Worker in September 2017. Some of her duties in the office include sending mail and emails, making flyers for events, keeping up with our social media accounts, and various projects. During the Spring 2018 semester, Molly plans on studying abroad in Greece, The Czech Republic, and Ireland.
Alex Andrews is a junior in the College of Business Administration pursuing a dual major in Marketing and Human Resources. He is also completing a certificate in the Leadership & Ethics program. As a student worker in the Nationality Rooms office, he assists in organizing files, contacting the various committees, completing necessary assignments, and even helping with events such as this year’s Open House. Alex intends to study and complete an internship abroad this coming spring semester in Florence, Italy.

IN THE NEWS
Maryann Sivak

Edgar Braun served as Austrian Honorary Consul from 1997 to 2016. During that time, he was tasked with protecting trade, economic, cultural, scientific, and tourist relations between the USA and the Republic of Austria. He also provided assistance and consular protection of Austrian citizens and institutions. As Honorary Consul, Edgar would return stolen artwork to its rightful owners, assist in finding loved ones and help students obtain resident permits in Austria. He was active on the Austrian Room Committee serving in various capacities as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary. In 1988, he received “Goldenes Ehrenzeichen für Verdienste um die Republik Österreich. In 1992, the Austrian Government awarded Edgar the Gold Medal for Meritorious Service—Officer’s Cross. In 2006, he received Acknowledgments of Grateful Recognition by the Provinces of Styria and in 2010, Lower Austria. On December 4, 2017, Edgar will receive the "Grosses Ehrenzeichen für Verdienste um die Republik Österreich" (Grand Medal of Honor for Distinguished Services to the Republic of Austria) medal. This medal will be awarded to Edgar by His Excellency Dr. Helmut Boeck, the Austrian Consul General, in the name of the Austrian President in our Austrian Nationality Room.

IN MEMORIAM
Maryann Sivak

Martin Gerhard passed away on March 9, 2017. He was born in Germany in 1939, and immigrated to the US in 1958. He was active in the German Nationality Room for many years. He had a great sense of humor and loved to joke with all that knew him. He was a member of the East Pittsburgh Saengerbund, Teutonia Maennerchor and a founding member of the Alpen Schuhplattlers.

Alice D. Smolkovich passed away on July 10, 2017. In 1954, Alice received Nationality Rooms scholarships which allowed her to travel to Yugoslavia, the birthplace of her parents. She was the past Chairman of the Yugoslav Nationality Room Committee. She loved ethnic music of Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. Her home was always opened to visitors form other countries who were staying in Pittsburgh for work or study for an extended period of time.

Adelaide (Heidi) Novak passed peacefully on September 16, 2017. Heidi was born in Graz, Austria in 1926. Together with her husband Joe, she and family immigrated to America in 1957. Joe and Heidi were instrumental in raising funds for the creation of the Austrian Nationality Room and Austrian Nationality Room Scholarship for Summer Study in Austria. Heidi was also active in the Austrian-American Cultural Society, St. Francis Hospital where her husband, Dr. Joseph Novak, was Chairman of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Memorial contributions may be made to the University of Pittsburgh, Austrian Room Scholarship Fund in memory of Heidi Novak.
2017

November 10 - Exhibit - “Narrative of the Nationality Rooms: Immigration and Identity in Pittsburgh” - open to public from November 10 - December 8, 2017 - University Art Gallery, Frick Fine Arts Building.

November 11 - Decorating Day - All the Nationality Rooms decorated for the Holidays

November 12 - Polishfest ’17 - Commons Room, Cathedral of Learning from 12:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.

November 16 - African Heritage Room Committee - Scholarship Reception at 7:00 p.m., Frick Fine Arts Auditorium.

November 18 - Russian Room Committee—Andrey Nemzer Concert - Frick Fine Arts Auditorium - 7:00 p.m.

November 27 - Israel Heritage Room Committee—Lecture by Jodi Magness entitled More Than Just Mosaics: The Ancient Synagogue at Huqoq in Israel’s Galilee”, Room 324, Cathedral of Learning at 7:00 p.m.

December 3 - Holiday Open House - Commons Room, Cathedral of Learning from 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

December 4 - Private reception for Edgar Braun recipient of the Grand Medal of Honor for Distinguished Services to the Republic of Austria.

December 10 - Women’s International Club Christmas Luncheon - University Club, Oakland - 12:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m.

2018

January 8 - Undergraduate applications due for the NRIEP Summer Study Abroad Scholarships

January 17 - Undergraduate application finalists for the NRIEP Summer Study Abroad Scholarships will be notified

January 18 - Graduate applications due for the NRIEP Summer Study Abroad Scholarships

January 26 - Graduate application finalists for the NRIEP Summer Study Abroad scholarships will be notified

January 29 - February 28 - Interviews of the finalists and selection of awardees.

March - TBD - Nationality Council Meeting

March - TBD - Greek Room Committee—Greek Independence Celebration

March - TBD - Festival of the Egg