A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND HEALING

Students Plant Butterfly Bushes in Memory of Holocaust Victims

The DU chapter of Zeta Beta Tau (ZBT) fraternity, DU Hillel and DU’s Center for Judaic Studies (CJS) came together in October to plant two butterfly bushes at the on-campus Holocaust Memorial Social Action Site in memory of those who perished in the Holocaust. The site invites people from all backgrounds to come together in dialogue and bridge-building, in the spirit of diversity and inclusion and in the service of repairing the world.

“The planting was inspired by the famous poem ‘The Butterfly,’ composed by Jewish poet Pavel Friedmann in the Terezin Ghetto in 1942 before his deportation to the Auschwitz extermination camp where he was murdered in 1944,” said Dr. Sarah Pessin, director of the Center for Judaic Studies and the Holocaust Awareness Institute. “The butterfly bush, named for its natural ability to attract butterflies, recalls Friedmann’s closing line, ‘There are no butterflies, here, in the ghetto,’ while also offering a message of hope and healing,” she added. Read more...

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

DU Alumnus Appointed Tech CEO

Forty-one million people across the globe use Symplicity, a web-based employability platform that helps schools, nonprofits and businesses manage their career services activities. Matthew Small (BA ’95, political science) intends to raise that figure even higher.
With more than 20 years of law and technology experience in the higher education sector, Small recently became Symplicity’s President and CEO.

Ever since he was an undergraduate student at DU, Small has found success by being nimble and open to risk. As a freshman he simply knew he was interested in foreign politics, so he followed his passion: he eagerly worked on research assignments as a political science major, landed a gubernatorial campaign internship and studied abroad in Israel. When he visited campus last spring to meet with current students, he said that those experiences proved pivotal for his corporate and international legal work.

“It was 2002. Bottom of the tech bubble, not a single IPO. And I was newly engaged. But my fiancée and I decided to jump off the cliff and go for it,” said Small of his decision to leave his technology law practice to become in-house counsel of a then small education technology company: Blackboard. Read more...

[Photo: Small is presented a Master Scholar Award while on campus in April]

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Costume Designer Helps Students Find “Their Voice”

If clothes make the man, as Shakespeare had penned, then costumes make the actor. Costume designers like Janice Benning Lacek, assistant professor in the department of theatre, use research, artistry and collaboration to help transform an actor into a character.

Lacek has been designing professionally for nearly 30 years. As a theatre major at a small liberal arts college, she was involved in every aspect of production, and often found herself working in costume design. It wasn’t until several years later, when she realized that acting was not really for her, that she found her “voice” in costumes.

“I tell my students when you design costumes, you get to play all the parts, and you don’t have to memorize lines!” Lacek said. “I also tell them to listen, go to rehearsal and watch.”

Costume designers read the scripts very carefully, often many times, to glean information about the characters, action or play. Then they conduct extensive research: historical, visual and fashion—everything they need to learn about the world of the play and the clothes in it. Read More...

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

A Love for Spanish and Teaching Takes Student to South America

Growing up, Rebeka Lee and her parents spent their summers in Peru working with children. From these summer trips, her love of the Spanish language and the people of South America grew, as did her frustration with not being able to fully communicate with the people and the children she met. Lee decided that she wanted to dedicate her life to helping children in South America, and realized in order to do that she needed to become fluent in Spanish and learn about how countries develop.

Lee, a junior majoring in Spanish and International Studies, has known that she wants to be a teacher since she was in second grade. As a child she felt anxiety about being separated from her...
parents while at school, but a teacher helped her through it and inspired her to become a teacher herself.

“Every day when I would walk into school, she would give me a hug and a huge smile and make me feel really welcomed and loved,” said Lee, a Denver native. “She not only told me that I would be safe at school, but showed me through her actions and allowed me to dream big. I knew when I met her that I wanted to become like her when I grew up.”

“Being a teacher isn’t all about getting kids to learn textbooks and memorizing and studying for exams. It’s about being a mentor and a friend and allowing children to dream dreams and accomplish goals.” Read More...

FEATURED EVENTS

RECITAL: December 11, 3:00-4:00 p.m. - 18th Annual Holiday Carillon Recital
Join us for this annual performance by DU Carillonneur Carol Jickling Lens, who will play her holiday favorites. A video camera in the playing cabin will capture how the instrument is played and project on a video screen below for all to watch. Those who would like to climb the 95 steps may take a tour of the tower. This free concert is open air and will be played snow or shine on the Williams Carillon at the Ritchie Wellness Center.

FACULTY LECTURE: January 5, 4:00 p.m. – No Acting, Please: The Paradox of Contemporary Acting Technique
Many people believe that performing a role in a play or film entails becoming an entirely different person. Another assumption is that determining the correct emotions for a character leads to strong acting. At this lecture, these assumptions will be debunked, and you will be introduced to the (sometimes paradoxical) ideas behind contemporary acting technique. This lecture, presented by Anne Penner, assistant professor of theatre, will be held in the Anderson Academic Commons Special Events room. Register here.

#GIVINGTUESDAY: through January 2, 2017
Check out new crowdfunding projects on Giving Tuesday, including the DU Debate Team and the Spanish World Debate Championship. Check on the project and follow #givingtuesday.