Anthropology ambassadors: UWM brings anthro talks to high school students

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

Thomas Malaby boasts an impressive set of academic credentials, including a PhD from Harvard University, intensive research on video game culture, and acting as chair of the UWM Department of Anthropology.

His most recent audience was more impressed by the hundreds of hours he had logged playing Skyrim.

Malaby was the latest guest lecturer to talk to Shorewood High School teacher Debra Schwinn’s anthropology class. This semester, Schwinn has been inviting faculty, staff, and graduate students from UWM’s Anthropology Department to provide guest lectures for her students so they can get more exposure to experts in the field.

“This is my ninth year here teaching anthropology,” Schwinn said. “I’ve always tried to get [my students] into the community so they know I’m not just making this stuff up. This is a new way for these students to look at and make sense of the world.”

The collaboration with UWM began when Schwinn enrolled in one of Malaby’s graduate seminars to brush up on her cultural anthropology. She is auditing the class alongside Master’s and PhD students, all of whom were eager to help her classroom mission.

“When I started last fall, people were immediately like, ‘Are you ever looking for guest speakers?’ That’s how it all started,” Schwinn said. “It’s not a big, institutional collaboration. It’s a group of people who love talking about and sharing anthropology.”

Anthropology is a large field. Schwinn has hosted five guest speakers from UWM this semester, with two additional volunteers already on the schedule for next semester. Speakers’ topics include everything from field archaeology to forensic science.

UWM Associate Professor Ben Campbell freaked the class out with a frank and very professional presentation about his research into the onset of puberty across different cultures, Schwinn said with a laugh. It was a good window into life in college for her juniors and seniors, she added.

Continued on page 13
Economics major navigates nonprofits with Argosy internship

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

The best job, Neriah Olson has found, is the one where you get to see how much you’re helping other people.

Olson is an Economics major completing an internship at the Argosy Foundation, a nonprofit that funds other nonprofits. It’s opened her eyes to an aspect of economics she’d never considered before.

“One of the reasons I was really excited about my internship at Argosy is because I don’t know exactly what I want to do,” Olson said. “I was able to narrow in on what I wanted to do, and I found out that I really enjoying nonprofit work, especially dealing with family planning and environmental and issues like that – which also ties into my interest in public health.”

The Argosy Foundation was founded by John Abele, the co-founder of Boston Scientific. The Abele family, including Chris Abele, the county executive of Milwaukee County, serve as the Board of Trustees. At the behest of the board, Argosy staff search out nonprofit organizations that the Foundation can partner with to provide funding to further the nonprofit’s mission and goals.

That’s where Olson comes in.

“About 60 percent of my time is reviewing grant proposals that nonprofits have submitted to Argosy. If we find an organization, or the board decides they want to pursue a certain organization, they reach out and have them submit a grant proposal,” Olson explained. “I review those grant proposals and make sure everything checks out. Then I go to my boss with my questions and my concerns that she can review and then bring to the nonprofit and ask them.”

She also makes sure donations are being used as promised, as well as researching nonprofits that fit within the vision the board has outlined. If the Argosy board wants to pursue a certain cause – say, environmental protection – Olson will find an organization that contributes to that mission and recommend it to her supervisors.

Continued on page 13
Biology PhD grad makes her mark at EPA
By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

There’s a tense political environment in Washington these days, but Carolina Peñalva-Arana is more focused on the actual environment.

Dr. Peñalva-Arana works in the Risk Assessment Division (RAD) of the Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT), a branch of the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention at the Environmental Protection Agency. She’s part of the team that assesses the environmental risks of pesticides, solvents, oils, and any chemical with an industrial use.

The RAD team also deals with biotechnology products – genetically engineered substances such as bacteria, plants, or animals. EPA’s OPPT deals mostly with chemicals produced by bacteria. Because biotechnology is such a quickly-evolving field, government regulation is often catching up on regulations and technology. Dr. Peñalva-Arana is part of an interagency group made up the EPA, FDA, and USDA tasked with updating and clarifying the agencies’ roles and regulatory policies associated with new products derived from these emerging technologies.

“I never thought I would get a chance to work with environmental policy as a scientist. That’s been a part that I’ve really enjoyed,” she said.

It was a long road to the EPA. Peñalva-Arana arrived in the United States at age 12, a political refugee who fled a brutal civil war in El Salvador. She “worked [her] butt off” through middle and high school in California to be accepted to Oberlin College, where she majored in Spanish Literature and Biology.

“I did a research experience for undergraduate at the Great Lakes Water Institute in Milwaukee, and that’s how I was introduced to animal behavior in water systems and to UW-Milwaukee. I realized that I liked research,” Peñalva-Arana said. Three years after graduation from Oberlin, “I called Rudi Strickler, my PhD advisor at UW-Milwaukee, and asked if he would take me on as his PhD student.”

At UWM, Peñalva-Arana found herself fascinated by aspects of animal behavior, and especially by how animals detect chemicals in the water. Much of her work revolved around a keystone aquatic species called *Daphnia*, or water fleas. *Daphnia* are commonly used in chemical testing to determine the effects chemicals may have on aquatic species.

In a stroke of perfect timing, when Peñalva-Arana graduated from UWM with her PhD in Biological Sciences in 2007, Indiana University had a postdoctoral fellowship opening, where she was able to help annotate the newly-sequenced *Daphnia* genome.

By this time, Peñalva-Arana had already had her first taste of work with the EPA. While completing two years of her PhD education at UW-Madison, she had earned funding for her *Daphnia* research through an EPA STAR/GRO Fellowship. After her postdoctoral experience at Indiana University, she began casting around for other work.

“I did a postdoc at the EPA. I love the vision of the EPA, which is to protect human health and the environment. I love that I get to take my knowledge and do something impactful, and also that you get to think about policy and you get to think about how regulation works and how you implement acts and rules that come out,” she said.

Continued on page 14
The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has received three awards from the National Science Foundation to fund research instrumentation. These awards, called Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) grants, are highly competitive, with a limit of three on the number of annual applications from a single institution.

“It is quite unusual for an institution to receive multiple MRI awards in a single year, and it’s certainly unprecedented at UWM,” said Mark Harris, interim vice provost for research.

The three grants, which total just over $1.7 million, will fund equipment that supports research and teaching in the fields of chemistry and biochemistry, engineering, astrophysics, physics and medicine.

The instrumentation and a short description of the purposes of each include:

**An essential instrument for chemical analysis**

A nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectrometer is the go-to instrument in both academia and industry to identify unknown substances, to reveal arrangements of atoms within molecules, and to study how molecules interact.

“When performing basic chemical analysis, the two most important pieces of information are structure and mass,” said Graham Moran, UWM professor of biochemistry. “There’s no method comparable to NMR for establishing the unique connectivity of atoms within a molecule. It’s a powerful tool that is essential to all chemistry disciplines.”

The grant funding will be used to replace the aging instrument the Chemistry Department currently has.

**A new way to image proteins and advance drug discovery**

Beginning with an initial MRI grant in 2011, UWM Physics Professor Valerica Raicu developed new technology that offers a color-coded view of the distribution of proteins and how they work together inside a living cell.

Raicu also established the UWM Small Business Collaboratory, a facility where campus and commercial researchers could use the tool, called a two-photon microscope. He has collected input from users in the last two years and will use the new grant to build the second generation of the equipment.

Wider availability of this technology will open up a new way to research cell signaling and provide an untapped source of pharmacological targets, Raicu said.

**Studying space through gravitational waves**

The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) is the name given to the largest and most ambitious project ever funded by the NSF. After a recent upgrade, LIGO detectors last year found evidence of gravitational waves, which are ripples in space and time emitted by violent celestial events.

But analyzing the massive amount of data they generate requires high-capacity computing resources. The instruments funded by this grant will facilitate the ongoing discovery and study of the exotic astrophysical events throughout the universe that produce gravitational waves.

The equipment will have a broad international impact, said Patrick Brady, UWM distinguished professor of physics, because it will be available to members of the LIGO Scientific Collaboration, a group of more than a thousand researchers worldwide.
Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies major Shana Wilson graduated this month and wants to use her degree to tell the stories of voiceless communities. [https://youtu.be/Gg_Q6L0-n3c](https://youtu.be/Gg_Q6L0-n3c)

Merry Wiesner-Hanks edited the nine-volume *Cambridge World History*. She says a project of this caliber speaks to the excellent research happening at UWM. [https://youtu.be/gtmwRQX5NvA](https://youtu.be/gtmwRQX5NvA)

Pre-med student Rachel Gremminger finds her research at the UWM Field Station to be one of the most satisfying parts of her UWM education. [https://youtu.be/PPYUkPOcAps](https://youtu.be/PPYUkPOcAps)

Mandy Potapenko ('07, BA Women’s Studies) directs the Milwaukee Community Justice Council, working to ensure a fair and effective justice system. [https://youtu.be/I9NnEZMdxOA](https://youtu.be/I9NnEZMdxOA)

Audra O’Connell’s ('08, BA Comparative Religious Studies) uses the lessons she learned in classes at UWM to help her in her job combating homelessness among Milwaukee’s youth. [https://youtu.be/ROn4SzL6vm4](https://youtu.be/ROn4SzL6vm4)

Video Stories

Mandy Potapenko ('07, BA Women’s Studies) directs the Milwaukee Community Justice Council, working to ensure a fair and effective justice system. [https://youtu.be/I9NnEZMdxOA](https://youtu.be/I9NnEZMdxOA)

Merry Wiesner-Hanks edited the nine-volume *Cambridge World History*. She says a project of this caliber speaks to the excellent research happening at UWM. [https://youtu.be/gtmwRQX5NvA](https://youtu.be/gtmwRQX5NvA)
Film and journalism bring grad to forefront of Milwaukee Film

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

Megan Benedict has eclectic tastes in movies. Her favorites are A Single Man, directed by Tom Ford, and the old Gene Kelly musical Singin’ in the Rain. Naturally, she’s a Film Studies graduate.

Benedict also majored in Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies. Today, her job is a perfect marriage of the two: Benedict is the Communications & Press Manager of Milwaukee Film.

It’s the culmination of years of work; Benedict began working for the organization as an intern while she was attending UWM. She chose the school after visiting the Union Cinema and falling in love with the programming. Winning the New Directions Scholarship from the College of Letters & Science sealed the deal.

Her time at UWM proved to be a wonderful experience, especially when it came to internships.

“I had a professor named Susan Kerns, who at the time was in charge of the Education Department for Milwaukee Film. She handed us all program books for the Milwaukee Film Festival,” Benedict recalled. “I went and I made my parents drive down two hours to come with me, and I took friends with me to go see movies. I just really fell in love with the festival. The next year, I was a volunteer in the office and in the theater venues, and in the following year I became an intern.”

During her first internship, Benedict worked on the program book. The next year, she returned to Milwaukee Film as a programming intern, and then became a seasonal marketing assistant after graduating from UWM in 2013. She served her time at Sundance and Cannes, working as an intern at each of those prestigious film festivals. Then, in 2014, while working a season position at Sundance, she was recruited back to Milwaukee Film as Artistic & Executive Director Jonathan Jackson’s executive assistant.

She took one promotion and then another, until she eventually landed her current role. It is an intense labor of love. Benedict is in charge of managing Milwaukee Film’s media sponsorships, coordinating press timelines and writing press releases, serving as the project manager of the program book released with each annual festival, and much more.

The highlight of the year is the Milwaukee Film Festival, held each fall. Many of the films revolve around central themes – films created by local directors, for example, or films created by African American directors. Benedict’s favorite theme is the Worldviews program, a selection of foreign narrative films. That’s the one she plans each year.

“Because of our placement in the year and our market size, sometimes we struggle with getting the films that we want to bring to Milwaukee,” she said. “It is extremely gratifying when you bother a distributor for six months to show at the festival and they finally say yes. You get to show it to a Milwaukee audience, and they go nuts for it.”

Continued on page 7
As secretary of commerce, Hoover took a sophisticated but humane view of the U.S. economy. As biographer Kendrick Clements notes, “Philosophically, he believed in limited government and volunteerism, but temperamentally, he inclined to government activism and strong leadership.” Hoover intended to balance the interests of capitalists, labor, and consumers, mitigate poverty, ease the hard edges of competition, and help raise the standard of living for all Americans. Especially concerned with the status of the working poor, he envisioned a safety net for the indigent, but one that was not wholly constructed and implemented by the government.

Taking a large view of what had been a modest office, Hoover was soon an octopus at the center of government, his tentacles probing into every nook. Every important component of the executive branch seemingly had an umbilical cord attached to the Commerce Department. He generated ideas and dispatched his assistants to every American state and to far corners of the globe to implement them. Hoover devised a well-rounded, all-inclusive program aimed at each major sector of the economy. Commerce quickly became the most efficient department in the cabinet, perhaps in the entire government. Hoover performed many duties that fell between departments or within other departments, or were outside of government entirely, chairing numerous government and quasi-government committees and commissions. Among his committees were the Colorado River Commission, which planned a dam on the river at Boulder Canyon, ultimately named the Hoover Dam. He continued to administer the American Relief Administration and planned a seaway to connect the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean via the St. Lawrence River. The necessary pact with Canada was not ratified by Congress until the Eisenhower administration.

By the end of 1921, Hoover had established himself as one of the dominant members of the administration.

Herbert Hoover is, for many Americans, synonymous with the Great Depression. What is less well-known is his successful career as an official in the administrations of Woodrow Wilson, Warren G. Harding, and Calvin Coolidge prior to his election in 1928. In his new book, “Herbert Hoover: A Life,” Glen Jeansonne argues that Hoover’s tarnished legacy should be reexamined. Read it all by visiting http://amzn.to/2io8lv1.

One success was a film called The Tribe. Benedict saw a still photo from the film in the lineup at Cannes and knew immediately she wanted to bring it to Milwaukee for the 2014 festival. The film’s dialogue is delivered completely in Ukrainian Sign Language, presented without subtitles. The audience has to rely entirely on body language to understand the plot. And what a plot – “It’s like a mafia movie with Ukrainian student who happen to be deaf,” Benedict said. “The first time we showed it, a woman passed out. It’s a little intense. … The jury really liked it as well. I felt really good about that.”

Benedict just marked the end of another successful festival that saw nearly 77,000 attendees, an 8 percent increase over last year. Planning for a growing event presents a unique set of challenges, but they’re challenges she enjoys.

She directs a lot of credit to UWM for setting her on the path to her job.

“This the professors that I had were wonderful resources for me. They have helped me get jobs, internships,” Benedict said. “They’ve introduced me to people who have helped me in my career. When people ask me what I’ve taken away from UWM, it’s that my professors led me directly to a career because I talked to them. They knew my strengths and weaknesses and knew what I would be good for before I did.”
Passings

Barry James Teicher passed away on Nov. 25. He was 70 years old.

Barry was a UWM alumnus, graduating with his Bachelor’s degree. He majored in English and Anthropology. He continued his education at UW-Madison, earning a Master’s degree and PhD.

Barry taught at DuPage Community School in Glen Ellyn, Ill., before he took a job at UW-Madison as the university’s oral historian. He stayed on the job for 25 years, creating an extensive and fascinating archive of interviews and histories highlighting leading scholars and administrators.

Barry is survived by his wife, Jude. Read more about his life and work at http://bit.ly/2fMipfu.

Alumni Accomplishments

Rachel Reiss ('16, Masters of Public Administration) was selected as the new city administrator for the city of Glendale. Reiss previously served as Glendale’s human resources director and assistant to the previous city administrator. http://bit.ly/2gJ3zyR

Kari Lee Collins ('15, MA Urban Studies) was chosen to receive the Hamline University Women in Public Service Conference’s “Public Service Rising Star” award, which recognizes women who, with less than 10 years of experience, have worked for the public good in public service.

Shannon Van Roo ('15, BA Political Science) was named the Women in Trucking Association’s December Member of the Month. Van Roo is the marketing regulatory affairs analyst at Acuity in Sheboygan, Wis. http://bit.ly/2gZJfGh

Kristin Bayer ('08, BA Journalism and Mass Communication) joined the Zizzo Group, a Milwaukee marketing firm, as a senior account executive. She will manage day-to-day client contacts and monitor client projects and budgets. http://bit.ly/2hkxnih

Reggie Newson ('95, '03, BA and MA Political Science) was named vice president and chief advocacy officer of the health care system Ascension, responsible for developing and implementing strategies for advancing the system’s legislative and regulatory goals. Newson is a former member of Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker’s cabinet. http://bit.ly/2huoOkA


Tom Christensen ('09, MPA) was lauded for his service to Caledonia as its village administrator in a piece covering his upcoming performance review and potential raise. http://bit.ly/2gBMYVU

Dike Okoro ('08, PhD English) was named as a finalist for the Cecile do Jongh Literary Prize. The $500 prize is annually awarded to a Caribbean author whose work best expresses the spirit of the Caribbean. Okoro was shortlisted for the prize for his poem “Fishing.” http://bit.ly/2hguQ7g

Michelle Grabner’s ('84, BA Art [Peck School], '87, MA Art History) art is currently being exhibited at the James Cohan gallery in New York City. The works include a series of bronze sculptures, large scale painting, and works on paper. http://bit.ly/2hD1a5o

Stephen Scaffidi ('83, BA Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) is the mayor of Oak Creek, Wisc., and was named the 2017 Municipal Executive of the Year by the Milwaukee Business Journal. http://bit.ly/2hQLQ52
Upcoming Events

Planetarium Show: Life of a Star

Do you ever look up at the night sky and wonder how those stars got there? The UWM Manfred Olson Planetarium is answering that question with the new Life of the Star show. Planetarium Director, Jean Creighton, will discuss the evolution of the star, all the way from birth to black holes.

Where: Manfred Olson Planetarium, 1900 E. Kenwood Blvd.
When: Fridays Jan. 13-Feb. 24, 7-8 p.m.
Cost: $4
More Information: uwm.edu/planetarium/

Science Bag: Microbes in Motion

Bacteria have evolved elaborate machines to swim through liquids and to crawl over surfaces. This free show, led by UWM Biological Sciences Professor Mark McBride, will explore their ingenious strategies, how they control their movements, and the experimental approaches used to study this miniature "traffic."

Where: 1900 E. Kenwood Blvd., Physics Rm. 137
When: Fridays Jan. 6-27, 8-9 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 15 at 2 p.m.
More Information: uwm.edu/science-bag/

Laurels, Accolades, and Grant Awards

Graduate student Alexandra Frankel (Anthropology) took second place in the Society for Humanistic Anthropology’s 2016 Ethnographic Fiction and Creative Nonfiction writing contest for her story, “Waiting for Firat.” Frankel was also offered a position as the editorial assistant at the American Anthropological Association and will finish her thesis as she begins her new job in Washington, D.C. http://bit.ly/2fRNkKC

Bernard Perley (Anthropology) received the President’s Award from the American Anthropological Association for his service as an active member of its executive board over the past three years.

The National Institutes of Health’s Adolescent Brain and Cognitive Development (ABCD) study aims to follow 10,000 children for 10 years to investigate childhood neural development. UWM was recently officially added as one of the 21 national sites for the study. The initial four-year grant for the study at UWM was awarded to Krista Lisdahl, Chris Larson (both Psychology), and Paul Florsheim (Zilber School of Public Health).

UWM’s was ranked No. 1 among the Nonprofit Colleges Online’s list of the 25 best online bachelor’s in History degree programs.

Octavio Santos (Psychology) was awarded the 2017 American Psychological Association/American Psychological Association of Graduate Students Award for Distinguished Graduate Student in Professional Psychology by the APA. The award will be presented at the APA Convention in August 2017.
Planetarium Spotlight

2016 marked the golden anniversary of the UWM Manfred Olson Planetarium. With the help of our excellent staff, our 50th year was a stellar success! Over 13,000 people visited this year, which is the highest annual attendance in over 25 years.

We hosted a lot of fun and experimental shows this year, in which the performing arts have played a prominent role. A Night Under the Caribbean Sky was a great joint project with the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) that highlighted the musical rhythms of three cultures: Cuba, Haiti, and Puerto Rico. Our Music Under the Stars series included live music performed by the Collegium Musicum, while Tale of Scale features students telling their own stories about the cosmos as part of a collaboration with Dr. Robin Mello of the Peck School of the Arts.

Food also made many appearances; we brought back a staff favorite, Stars and S’mores, along with an ice cream social before our Journey to Jupiter shows!

The most elegant event this year was our Celestial Celebration; a gala including a silent auction, a beautiful meal, and a special star show unveiling our new program, Uniview. Uniview has been used widely across our shows, including our free stargazing events.

The celebration continues in 2017 with Jean Creighton’s 10th year as Director of the Planetarium. In that time, we have welcomed over 100,000 people to admire the cosmos. With new birthday packages and more school programs, we hope to draw even larger and more diverse crowds to the planetarium. Along with those, we are working closely with other departments on campus, such as the Japanese Program for the Evening in the Land of the Rising Sun series, and the Department of Sociocultural Programming to host events highlighting astronomical connections from cultures around the world.

People in print


Mark Speltz (‘09, MA Public History) was featured on the Smithsonian Magazine’s website for his new book, “North of Dixie: Civil Rights Photography Beyond the South.” [http://bit.ly/2gL2nHj]

Jessica McBride (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) discussed how the media may need to engage in some self-reflection after the election on the Joy Cardin Show on WPR. [http://bit.ly/2gz67Zv]

Several UWM students, including Katerina Vergara, Brandon Andregg, Danielle Miller (all Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies), Michael Armanious (Biology/pre-med), and Elias Payne (Biology) shared their Thanksgiving traditions with WUWM. [http://bit.ly/2glXowc]

Sprezzatura is a new pop-up concept featuring Italian cuisine that will debut in Milwaukee in January, according to OnMilwaukee. One of its founders is Jordan Burich (‘14, BA Anthropology). [http://bit.ly/2WqN7Y]

Michal Chabo (Economics) and his brother John are Syrians who narrowly escaped the ravages of the Syrian Civil War. Now they are living, working, and attending school in Milwaukee, trying to build their new lives in America. Read more of their story in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [http://bit.ly/2gL2ttr] and hear it in their own words on WPR [http://bit.ly/2h0w3Nx].

OnMilwaukee profiled Susan Firer (emerita English) and her newly released collection of poetry titled, “The Transit of Venus.” [http://bit.ly/2gLCqUE]

History does a poor job remembering the accomplishments of Herbert Hoover argues Glen Jeansonne (emeritus History), whose biography on the former president was reviewed in the New York Times. [http://nyti.ms/2gINVVQ]


Student Trevor Jung (Urban Studies) loves his hometown of Racine and was featured for it in The Journal Times. [http://bit.ly/2glthFb]

WUWM’s Lake Effect program marked the anniversary of the discovery of Mars by inviting Jean Creighton (Planetarium) to discuss the red planet. [http://bit.ly/2gGDnBi] Creighton also outlined some of the year’s most notable astronomical happenings. [http://bit.ly/2hz5dMR]

When several counties in rural Wisconsin that voted blue in 2012 flipped to red this year, students led by instructor Jessie Marbles (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) traveled to find out why and reported their discoveries to TMJ4. [http://bit.ly/2gjLC7]

If you’re addicted to Daytime TV, you’ll want to listen to Elana Levine’s (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) interview about the creator of One Life to Live and All My Children on the Advanced TV Herstory podcast. [http://bit.ly/2gJfWEL]

NPR’s Senior Vice President of News Michael Oreskes lauded local NPR affiliate, WUWM, run under the aegis of the College of Letters & Science, for its record of collaboration and service to the community, in an article for the Nieman Foundation at Harvard. [http://bit.ly/2g12ify]

Daniel Lotesto (Mathematical Sciences) raised concerns about a redesign of the SAT college entrance exam, as described in a Daily Mail article [http://dailym.ai/2ibwuWK] and JoanneJacobs.com [http://bit.ly/2hzyoIY].

Animals do have a sense of numerosity, according to experiments by Rafael Rodríguez Sevilla (Biological Sciences) reported on by Science News. [http://bit.ly/2gZAvzS]

Dyanna Czeck (Geosciences) gave a talk at the Neville Public Museum Geology Club in Green Bay, Wis. in November titled, “Mountains in Wisconsin: Our Tectonic Legacy.”

Continued on page 12
Roman officers may have drunk beer with their troops, said PhD student Joshua Driscoll (Anthropology) in a BBC article.  
http://bbc.in/2gZ9DjB

Kathy Dolan (Political Science) was cited in a Newsweek article for her conclusion that party affiliations trump affinity for one’s gender, according to this election’s exit polls. (http://bit.ly/2FJTqOP) She also told Uninvision that Wisconsin’s new Voter ID law may have driven down minority voting turnout. (http://bit.ly/2gDVmp4)

A study by Margo Anderson (History) was cited in Mises Institute editorial addressing the link between the Census and tracking religious or ethnic groups. http://bit.ly/2gJNO4f

Many states have been pushing back against transgender rights, Cary Costello (Sociology) told Bloomberg Law. http://bit.ly/2gvaHu

The Milwaukee County Zoo is an economic driver of the region to the tune of $155.5 million annually, according to a report generated by the Economics Department and reported on TMJ4 (http://bit.ly/2h17suK) and CBS 58 (http://bit.ly/2ggq1fr).

Student Andrea Lozano (Political Science) told WUWM that she worries how President-Elect Donald’s Trump proposed immigration policies will affect her education. http://bit.ly/2hgQkkF

Joe Peschio (Foreign Languages & Literature) asked WUWM’s show “Bubbler Talk” about the North Point Water Tower in Milwaukee, which never actually held water. http://bit.ly/2hmojbD

Michael Gordon (emeritus History) added his name to a long list of history professors on the History News Network warning that divisive, racist rhetoric is not a new phenomenon in the U.S., and can and has previously led to an erosion of civil liberties. http://bit.ly/2hGa2Yt

On line or in line? Pe-cahn or pe-can? The hosts of the Today Show debated phrasing based on a study conducted by the UWM Linguistics department. http://on.today.com/2gM923t

There’s a growing number of female breadwinners among modern families, but those traditional gender roles are hard to shake, Noelle Chesley (Sociology) said in a blog post for Work in Progress. http://bit.ly/2hR1Hji

Amanda Seligman (History) went on WUWM to talk about her new book exploring the phenomenon of Chicago block clubs. http://bit.ly/2i0M1c0

Krista Lisdahl (Psychology) is leading a local effort to collect data as part of the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) study, a decade-long study to learn more about human development, as reported on WUWM. (http://bit.ly/2hrzGcK). Lisdahl also spoke on WBUR on how to talk to children about marijuana use during a time of shifting legalities. http://wbur.fm/2ic63mJ

Vox made a case for the discovery of gravitational waves being the “scientific breakthrough of the year.” UWM Physicists were part of the discovery and Sarah Caudill (Physics) is quoted in the article. http://bit.ly/2hvYCm9

Knowing exactly when a mother conceived can improve outcomes for her and her child’s health. Abbas Ourmazd and Russell Fung (Physics) received a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop an algorithm to reduce the uncertainty factor in that timing, according to Urban Milwaukee. http://bit.ly/2i0JUoq
Malaby’s topic was easier to stomach; he discussed how games – anything from fox hunts to today’s online video games – can be ritualized or used at the behest of institutions to accomplish certain goals. The online game “Fold It,” for example, was created by researchers looking for new ways to fold proteins. The way a protein is folded impacts the protein’s effects on the human body, and may have applications for curing diseases like cancer or Alzheimer’s. However, searching for the optimal folds was expensive and time-consuming because the sheer amount of possible protein structures was astronomical. The game yielded better results in a much shorter amount of time.

“The best players of these games were able to find folds that were great candidates for retroviral vaccines,” Malaby told his audience. “It might lead you to think about games in your lives in new ways. … Game design is an art form because it’s about designing something that grabs your attention, and right now, there’s an enormous amount of money riding on whether they can grab your attention.”

Her students have loved each guest lecture, Schwinn said, and it showed in the thoughtful questions posed to Malaby after his talk. Could he talk to them more about his research into gambling in Greece? Are all games inherently competitive? Does he play the video game Counterstrike?

(No, Malaby said – he prefers role playing games like World of Warcraft or collaborative games like Rock Band.)

With every lecture, Malaby hopes Shorewood students walk away with a better understanding of anthropology and research.

“We should be studying whatever people find meaningful. If people find video games as meaningful – which clearly they are – we’d better be looking at that,” he said. “If students can find that something that excites them and captures their attention, whether it’s computer games or something totally different … I think that will get them looking to educate themselves and grow and gain the tools they need to understand it and be creative.”

The students aren’t the only ones who benefit from the partnership; Malaby thinks this collaboration with Shorewood might yield positive results for the UWM Anthropology Department.

“It’s very rare for high school students to have much of an introduction to anthropology. This is great,” Malaby said. “We’ve started talking about it as maybe providing some lessons for us, and perhaps a model about how we might reach out to other high school programs around the area.”
Alum in the EPA

continued from page 3

The postdoctoral position eventually turned into a full-time job, and Peñalva-Arana enjoys her current position in the RAD. Working in a government agency comes with its own set of challenges and rewards.

“You want to protect the public and you want to protect the environment, but everything the EPA does needs authority that is granted by Congress. Just because we see a problem doesn’t mean we can address it until Congress tells us to address it,” Peñalva-Arana said. “Things like fracking, for example. Congress was very specific that we could only work on the effects of hydro fracking on drinking water. We couldn’t look at ecological effects.”

And, she added, the general public has some strong opinions on the role of the EPA – everything from praise for protecting the environment to criticism for “killing jobs” and “over-regulating industry.”

What’s rewarding is that Peñalva-Arana finds herself on the forefront of new science and policies every day. Biotechnology in particular is a growing field with new questions to explore. For example, how will genetically engineered algae affect the environment? Can you create new organisms using a genetic chassis and inserting genes of interests to scientists? What policies should be in place to ensure the environment and the public are protected?

That last question is why she recommends that science students learn more than just the science.

“Be diverse in the classes that you take and the experiences that you pursue. You shouldn’t be so narrow-minded in pursuit of your degree that you don’t consider what else is out there,” Peñalva-Arana said. “For me, working at the EPA, working on policy questions, science policy, was not something on my radar at all. But I’m loving it.”