



Johannes Moreelse *Clio-Muse of History*

# Indiana University of Pennsylvania History Department

## Alumni Newsletter

2024

Greetings from the History Department!

We concluded another successful year, and it is great to see our recent graduates heading off into the world eager to pursue their career goals. Our faculty are also engaged in many interesting projects and activities and continue to serve the department's needs. Dr. Soo Lu and Dr. Alan Baumler won this year's faculty service award. We thank them for their tireless service to our students and department. KDKA in Pittsburgh recently highlighted the interdisciplinary grant-funded Laurel Hill Settlement project Drs. Erin Conlin and Jeanine Mazak Kahne worked on last year. Check it out on the [IUP Facebook page](#). Learn more about faculty achievements on page 2 and our award-winning and graduating students on page 3 and 7.

Some of you may have heard about upcoming university changes. As part of IUP's restructuring plans, we will become the "History Program," housed within the new Department of History, Philosophy, Political Science, and Religious Studies. I will continue serving as Chair of the new department. Even as we merge into a new department, we look forward to continuing to highlight the achievements of our students and alumni.

Thank you to our alumni who took time to share their insights and experiences. I strongly encourage current students to check out our alumni interviews on pages 4-6. We hope that you will keep us updated on your lives and careers. We appreciate the advice you can provide our current students about the professional world that awaits them after graduation, and any suggestions for us on how we can better prepare them. Feel free to send me an email or give me a telephone call. We look forward to hearing from you.

R. Scott Moore, Department Chair

PS: We are very pleased that our departmental scholarships provide invaluable financial assistance to our deserving majors. We are always looking for assistance in growing these funds and appreciate your support.

### Dr. Lynn Botelho, retiring after 28 years

Dr. Botelho is retiring after 28 years. She leaves behind a legacy of teaching and scholarly excellence, and a strong commitment to the IUP's mission to be an inclusive, welcoming place that values all students, faculty, and staff. We will miss her in the years to come and wish her well on her next adventure.



### Dr. Scott Moore, adjunct director, Cyprus excavations

Dr. Moore was named the adjunct director of the Polis Chrysochous Excavation site in Cyprus. He received an IUP Senate grant for this summer's work in Cyprus/Greece. He also recently published a book chapter.

### Dr. Wang Xi, translates book

Dr. Wang Xi has published the Chinese translation of Eric Foner's *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2024). Foner's book, first published in 1988, won a Bancroft Prize and five other academic awards.



### Dr. Joseph Mannard, completes book project



Dr. Mannard used his sabbatical to complete the writing and revising of his book (working title): *Georgetown Nun to Washington Socialite: The Two Lives of Ann Gertrude Wightt, 1799-1867*. It is the first full-length biography of Ann Gertrude Wightt, also known as "Sister Gertrude." Wightt is an enigmatic figure in the history of the American Catholic Church and of the antebellum period generally. He examines Wightt's life—first as a Georgetown nun and then a Washington socialite—to reveal how it illustrates the intersection of gender, class, and religion in the nation's capital in that era. Dr. Mannard also organized a talk for our students by historian Kara French of Salisbury University to expand students' opportunity to learn from professionals in the field.

## Scholarship and award winners for AY 2023-24

### The Kadlubowski Memorial Scholarship

The Kadlubowski Memorial Scholarship is awarded each year to a student who plans to pursue a career in teaching. The scholarship is given in honor of Dr. Jack Kadlubowski, who taught the history of Russia and Eastern Europe at IUP for 36 years, from 1967 until his death in 1999.

**Jacob Winstead**

### The Eric Slebodnik Memorial Scholarship

The Eric Slebodnik Memorial Scholarship is awarded each year to a student who demonstrates a commitment to civic engagement at the local, national, or global level. The scholarship is given in honor of Sergeant Eric Slebodnik, a history major who was called to active duty during his junior year and was killed in action in Ramadi, Iraq on September 29, 2005.

**Kaylee Becker-George**

**Alice Schuster Award** for Outstanding Achievement in the B.A. Program in History.

**Lorilie Blose, Samuel Bigham, Abigail Vinson**

**Judith McDonough Award** for Outstanding Achievement in the Social Studies Education Program.

**Kaylee Long**

### Charles D. Cashdollar History Scholarship

The Charles D. Cashdollar History Scholarship is given each year given in honor of Charles Cashdollar who taught history at IUP from 1969 to 2005.

**Nathaniel Chamberlain and Abigail Vinson**

### Joseph M. Mastro Memorial Scholarship

The Joseph M. Mastro Memorial Scholarship is awarded to student(s) enrolled full time pursuing a Social Studies, BSEd degree. It is awarded in honor of Joe Mastro who taught history at both the high school level and as a professor at IUP from 1969 to 1989.

**Megan Gent and Trent Jones**

### Topics paper award

Each year an award is given to the student whose paper is selected as the best paper in the topics courses for the academic year. The winning paper is selected on the basis of the strengths of the paper's thesis and research, as well as the quality of writing, arguments and documentation.

**Olivia Wanat**

**" Colonial Independence: A Comparison of Puerto Rico and the Philippines"**

**College of Fine Arts and Humanities Dean's Merit Scholarships**

**Jane Register**



Our scholarships and awards are supported by donations from alumni and friends of the History Department. To make a donation please contact the department or contact the Office of Annual Giving at 724-357-5555 or email [iup-giving@iup.edu](mailto:iup-giving@iup.edu).

Awardees in attendance at the spring graduation gathering (from left to right): Kaylee Becker George, Sam Bigham, Lorilie Blose, Olivia Wanat, and Kaylee Long.



## Alumni Interview

**Amber Dworek has worked for various institutions of higher ed and currently is the Director of Admissions for the Carnegie Mellon University, Information Networking Institute (INI).**

### What do you do for a living and how did you get from IUP to the career you have now?

I assist with the applications and admissions process for the INI. I graduated from IUP during the Great Recession and worked as a substitute teacher while I looked for a permanent position. When that did not pan out, I decided to pivot and look for a new career. I wanted to help students, especially first-generation students like I had been, so I looked for jobs where I could do that in a different way. I first worked as an admissions counselor visiting high schools and connecting with kids. I followed this career path through several institutions as I cultivated my skills. I was fortunate to work with great mentors. Last year I was recruited by CMU (via LinkedIn) to lead the admissions program for the INI.

### Looking back, what do you find most rewarding about your time at IUP?

The History Department was amazing. I had such great experience with the faculty. Classes were fun and interesting. You can move through college and life just checking the boxes, but if you really want something out of it there are faculty willing to help you push yourself. I felt like I could always talk to someone in the department, and I felt supported.

### How has your background in history helped you?

I remember Dr. Ricketts telling us that history is a puzzle and you have to learn to put the pieces together based on the evidence. That's much of what my job today entails. I recruit and advise students about the INI program, their options as graduate students, financial resources to make it possible, and the impact the degree can have on their careers. I use historical data to help us make decisions that will yield successful results. Much like taking a history exam where you analyze an event and evaluate and explain the impacts, I regularly engage in impact analysis. I truly believe that the critical thinking skills I developed as a history major helped me break apart and reassemble information in usable ways. My current position entails project management. My history training equipped me to be organized, break down complex concepts into manageable pieces, and present information to diverse audiences.

### Do you have any advice for current students?

If I had known earlier in my career that graduate school was an option (and that different, additional funding sources are available for grad school), I might have left subbing rather than waiting three years only to discover I wasn't going to be able to secure a full-time teaching position. I would also encourage



**Amber Dworek, class of 2010**

students to take more risks while they are younger. At that point in life, you often can take a lower paying job and build a career from the ground up. That builds credibility and expertise that is often valued later. Take advantage of every opportunity that arises and go the extra mile. Do a little bit more than what is asked of you. You never know the impact you have on people and building a good reputation will open new doors. It's a small world in most industries. People notice when you work hard and prove yourself. Use resources like the Career and Professional Development Center. Go to talks on campus. Ask alumni and other people (in person or online) about their jobs. Most people like to talk about themselves; learn from them about what kinds of careers are out there. People in the INI often use LinkedIn to connect with people they don't yet know but are interested in getting to know or hoping to work with some day. I also like a quote from Will Ferrell at a commencement speech a few years ago talking about finding a career path: "Enjoy the process of your search without succumbing to the pressure of the results."

### Have you read any good books lately?

Emily Oster is one of my favorite authors. She's an economist at Brown University and researches and writes about the cost of being a parent. She discusses opportunity costs and how they impact our perspective of being a "good parent." She examines the data behind various studies we hear about that often create major anxiety for women about motherhood. Her work is interesting and useful.

*Amber married Christopher Haupt in 2020 and their son Nolan was born in 2022.*

## Alumni Interview

Caitlin Kalgren is a social studies teacher at Marion Center.

### What do you do?

I am a 7-12 Social Studies Teacher at Marion Center Area School District. I teach 8th Grade American History and an elective course, Criminology, for 10th-12th graders. I also assistant direct the musical each year, co-advise student council, and have restarted the Mock Trial Team for students. I am currently very happy teaching Social Studies, and it's a huge bonus directing, advising, and coaching students outside of the classroom.

I recently completed my master's degree in Instructional Design from IUP (2024) to help me explore classroom technology and design quality instruction for any learner. Since I now have my MA, I am applying for an Instructional Technology Specialist Certification from PDE. This certificate will allow me to work with and educate teachers (not students) on implementing educational technology within their classrooms.

### What do you find most rewarding or challenging about your career?

The most rewarding part of teaching is watching students grow academically and in all aspects of life. Because I am also involved outside of the classroom, I get to build meaningful relationships with students; knowing that I am helping foster their personal growth is so heart-warming and humbling. This feeling is what makes teaching worth it—even on extremely bad days.

The most challenging part about teaching is the rise of poor student behavior/choices and how to reignite their desire to learn. This is really challenging and very hard to navigate, but my colleagues and I work together to provide support for these students as we try to understand the root of the issue. I look forward to growing in my career. As the years pass, handling difficult situations gets easier, as does the teaching workload. It becomes easier to balance planning and preparing for your classes each year.

### How did you get from IUP to the career you have now?

It's a long story, but I will stick to the main plot points! I took several long-term subbing positions, the last one being at Marion Center where I hoped to secure a full-time position. When I applied for the full-time position in 2020, however, they chose another candidate. I was disappointed but stayed and continued subbing. They offered me a full-time job in 2022! My advice to students—don't get discouraged if your dream job



Caitlin Kalgren, class of 2020 (BSED); 2024 (MA)

doesn't pan out immediately. Keep working towards that goal and don't lose heart!

### How has your background in history helped you in your career or life?

My middle school students love it when I am absolutely (as they call it) "cringey" with teaching history. Honestly, a history nerd has brought me a lot of success in the classroom, so don't be afraid to indulge the students in every silly fact you know! I also use relevant historical media in class to boost engagement. My favorite lesson of the year involves singing "You'll Be Back" from *Hamilton*. Stay up on the media- there are so many fun songs, video games, and other activities related to history, you just have to find them!

I made sure to get involved in the History Department and took advantage of other organizations and events on IUP's campus. I truly attribute some of my leadership and organizational skills to belonging to college groups. I also believe in the power of networking, so hanging out in the History Department and getting to know my professors and peers was exceptionally helpful. Your History Department peers and professors don't only serve as networking points, they were the best support system I had at IUP, and I am forever grateful for that! In summation, maximize your time and presence at IUP, and that will make all the difference in jumpstarting your career

*Caitlin is engaged to fellow IUP SSSED graduate, Jackson Sturrock (BSED 2022). She volunteered to give him a campus tour. Her advice—take advantage of every opportunity. You never know what might happen!*

## Alumni Interview

### Greg Wharton is the Planning and Sustainability Coordinator for the Mount Lebanon Municipal Government

#### What do you do?

I work in municipal government. Municipal governments strive to provide the services that create the conditions we associate with living in a “developed” nation. We do the things that keep communities safe, clean, and make people’s lives easier—public safety services, sidewalks, quality utilities, trash collection, tree planting, parks, etc. I love my job because I like seeing the direct impact in the community. The resident’s tax dollars pay my salary so it’s my job to provide excellent service in return.

I conduct research and develop proposals and plans to support EV and solar infrastructure, work with developers and residents on zoning projects, and identify and prioritize current and future projects and write grants to secure funding if needed. I use skills I developed as a history major. I research past projects to determine what worked and what did not, synthesize and interpret the outcomes of those projects, and help the staff determine the future trajectory of where we want to go with ongoing and new projects.

#### How did you get from IUP to the career you have now?

In 2018 I switched from Marketing to History after seeing an (unconfirmed) statistic that “most public officials” study history I decided to change my major. (In hindsight I would recommend researching “facts” like that before making life decisions, but it turned out well for me so no complaints!) I wanted a degree that was broad, one where I would learn skills that would enable me to pursue a variety of jobs and not be pigeonholed in a narrow career path.

I was interested in municipal government work but didn’t know much about it so I did three internships to learn more. I worked for Indiana and Allegheny Counties, and Reserve Township. I was the “Dwight Schrute” of the Township; I stuffed water bills when the printer was down and did whatever was needed to help provide services to people.

I couldn’t get a fulltime government positions after graduation since it was the peak of COVID. I worked retail and decided to start graduate school at IUP in the fall. One month in I was offered a full-time position with Etna Borough. One of my previous internship supervisors emailed the Etna municipal manager and recommended they hire me. I cannot emphasize enough: networking is so important. Use your connections to build a career. I eventually moved from Etna to Cranberry Township, and finally to my current job with Mt. Lebanon Municipality. I completed my master’s degree in 2022 and was selected to be a scholar with the Rural and Urban Leadership program (Penn State Extension.) It was a 2-year leadership program that promotes engagement in public issues, networking, public decision making, strategic design, lasting relationships, and civic engagement (graduated 2024).



Greg Wharton, class of 2020 (BA); 2022 MA

#### How has your background in history helped you in your career or life?

There are two things that stand out the most—being a great researcher and writer. They are immensely important to my work, especially when grant writing. It’s also important I communicate clearly with community members. A community member recently complimented the quality of writing and clarity of explanation in an email I sent answering a question. (Sometimes I even get to use direct knowledge from class—Dr. Wang Xi taught us how to read and understand the Constitution!)

#### What is your advice to IUP History students?

Step out of the history realm and try new things. Add a minor or certificate. Join an organization. Use your network of professors. (Dr. Perry in Poli Sci helped connect me with local government officials.) Do an internship. They help you develop professional experience; you become a hireable person when you can demonstrate your ability to do a job. Don’t overthink an internship—just get the experience whether it’s in your field or not. You learn from every experience. Show you can be a professional. If you’re not sure what you want to do, job shadow. Volunteer. Get your foot in the door and leverage that into other opportunities. NETWORK. All my jobs have come from networking. Pursue all kinds of opportunities.

Take advantage of the history department faculty’s experience. One of the reasons my fiancée and I think so highly of IUP is that, unlike a larger school, you can engage directly with your faculty and that experience has a direct impact on us as students. The faculty served as mentors beyond the classroom. I really value the educational experience I received. I think highly educated people play an important role in guiding young people into becoming highly educated people.

*Greg is engaged to IUP alumna Allison Lampman ('22)*



**Alumni Interview**

**Bradley Rohlf, PhD, is a Social Sciences Instructor at Bladen Community College**

**What do you do?**

I have been a professor for 15 years. I currently teach communication and history at Bladen Community College in Bladen County, North Carolina. I taught history, communication, and English at Mount Aloysius College in Cresson, Pennsylvania prior to that. However, I have also held a wide range of other jobs over the years since finishing my undergraduate degree. I have worked as an archaeologist, a genealogist, a census bureau supervisor, a public relations manager, an assistant editor for an academic journal, a call center supervisor, a cook, and even as a janitor. All of my prior employment has given me valuable experience, insight, and knowledge that I teach my students in each of my classes.

**What do you find most rewarding or challenging about your career?**

Having the opportunity to help students realize their potential. As a college student, I struggled to find and realize my full potential until I went to grad school. I had some ability but had a tough time putting in the work and dedication necessary to succeed. I had a few professors at IUP that helped me realize what I needed to do to achieve my goals. Without them, I cannot say that I would have succeeded in achieving these goals. I love to help guide my students along their journeys to success, no matter how smooth or rough that path may be. Ironically, this can also be the most challenging part of my career.

**How did you get from IUP to the career you have now?**

I went to IUP for my B.A. in history and M.A. in history (concentration in public history). I started teaching history at Mount Aloysius College (the Mount) as an adjunct professor 15 years ago thanks to an IUP history department Facebook post. I was accepted into the IUP communications media Ph.D. program, and I earned my Ph.D. while teaching at the Mount. That is what got me primarily focused on communication research and instruction, which is my main scholarly discipline now. I struggled to find a full-time faculty position in Pennsylvania. I took a full-time position at Bladen Community College, which is about an hour from Wilmington, North Carolina. This is my fifth year here, and I absolutely love where I am. I live a few miles from the beach, and Wilmington has a lot of interesting history. For example, I live just a few miles from where the famous pirate Stede Bonnet was captured before his execution, and the USS North Carolina battleship is permanently anchored just up the road in the Cape Fear River.

**How has your background in history helped you in your career or life?**

History gave me a strong background in research, writing, and communication. These are all skills that are highly sought after



**Bradley Rohlf, class of 2008 (BA) and 2008 (MA)**

in today's job market despite the crazy amounts of technology we have at our fingertips. History got me started teaching and helped pave the way to where I am today because of my multidisciplinary background. I was the first IUP history graduate student to do their Master's internship at Colonial Williamsburg. (A really cool experience, but it unfortunately did not result in permanent employment due to the Great Recession.) The research skills I learned as a history student helped me immensely in my doctoral studies in communications media. I won two national research awards in 2015 at the National Communication Association Conference in Las Vegas. One was a first-place award for a sole-authored paper about film in American society. It was pretty awesome to beat out scholars from numerous big-name R-1 universities around the country and have people ask me with genuine interest, "Where is this IUP?"

**What advice would you give to IUP history students who want to pursue a career like yours, or IUP history students in general?**

Develop a multidisciplinary background both academically and professionally. As far as I remember, dual majors and minors were relatively rare when I started college. Now, these academic and career pathways are becoming very highly desired in the workplace. Just like consumers at the store, employers want bang for their buck. Fortunately for me, I eventually followed that path to some extent. For some of my friends and colleagues, they had to dramatically shift gears to find good jobs outside their original academic discipline. Dual major or minor to help set yourself apart. Strongly consider STEM fields, and even trades such as plumbing, carpentry, welding, etc., especially if you want to work in public history. Those skills and fields pay very well. Versatility is the name of the game. Also, be prepared to move to find a good job. The world is a much larger place than it was even 20 years ago

## Class of 2024



Keep an eye out for our new graduates on LinkedIn or via the IUP Alumni network! From left to right: Lorelie Blose (winter 2023 graduate), Olivia Wanat, Samuel Bigham, Elizabeth Muchesko, Hailey Dodson, Madison Gatskie, Annabel Patterson, Dylan Joos, Kaylee Long, and Jarrid Adams.

**Are you interested in helping our IUP students network and pursue potential career opportunities? If so, please contact Dr. Erin Conlin ([elconlin@iup.edu](mailto:elconlin@iup.edu)), our departmental internship coordinator.**

We are always looking for internship opportunities for our students in Pennsylvania and outside the state. In particular, we are looking to expand our relationships with non-public history alumni, institutions, organizations, government agencies, and companies so that students interested in studying history, but pursuing careers outside the field, can get some hands-on work experience through internships.

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Are you willing to be interviewed for our Alumni Interview feature? Want to talk to our students about your career sometime? Let us know. We welcome any information about what you are up to.

Information or queries can be sent to.  
Erin Conlin [elconlin@iup.edu](mailto:elconlin@iup.edu)

PS: Have you worn your IUP apparel someplace interesting? Send us a picture and we'll highlight you in next year's newsletter!

PPS: Nearly all of our alumni mentioned listening to audiobooks when we spoke. If you aren't familiar, check out the "Libby" app to access free audio and ebooks through your local library!