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COMMENTS FROM JESSIE, ASC

You have shifted and embraced various communication tools to stay in community. You know we are all in this together. Instead of being worried about what comes tomorrow, I have been humbled and appreciative by the encounters I get to have today. Thank you for your creativity. We all benefit. - Jessie Stewart

Now over a year later, those words are still true, but I am even more impressed with the pivots you have made. Let's be honest: on a global scale, this has been a turbulent time for most. Tragic for some. Desperately unfair. And for you: you had an idea of what school would be and look like, and it most likely did not meet expectations.



The clever T-shirt company Ray Gun is selling a most appropriate shirt for graduates that reads "Pomp and Circumstances Beyond Our Control: Class of 2021." And that is just it: we don't choose most things in this world. But you did choose school. And university life can go beyond walls and desks. More broadly, choosing to attend an institution like CSU is about being open to learning the larger lessons of what it means to be a productive citizen throughout our lives. And whether we liked it or not, the lessons got bigger and more immediate this year. College helps create a foundation for the art of living. You, then, keep building on that design. That is, being clearer on what you value, what you invest time in, what connections you foster, and what truly matters for your wellbeing.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

First off, I'd like to give a giant shout-out to all of you I-LA seniors who are graduating in a few weeks. Earning your BA in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts is always a tremendous accomplishment—and even more so during such a disruptive and uncertain time as a global pandemic. Of course, this also is true for all I-LA majors and minors: making it through yet another pandemic semester in a pandemic school year is a testimony to your perseverance and persistence in keeping on track toward your own eventual graduation. Difficult times are, yes, difficult but they are also inevitable since meeting such difficulty is both a fact and a necessity of life. And all of you have learned invaluable life skills beyond the classroom during this pandemic that do better prepare you for what comes after graduation.

In getting so close to graduation—and for those of you moving closer—we have worked (or you will work) with Interdisciplinarity as both our guiding Academic and scholarly focus and our means for working with key career skills that are in high demand in the 21st century career place. We have championed—as well as encouraged—a different view and understanding of what intelligence is and how we go about finding (and nurturing) the intelligence we have. Yes, Interdisciplinarity works with a sense of intelligence that is innovative and divergent—that the intelligence that each of us possess is unique to each of us, dynamic to each of us, and personally developed. Equally, Interdisciplinarity works with a model we call successful intelligence, which we define as: creative, analytical, and practical.

Our goal in I-LA is to provide you all with the widest degree of flexibility in how you put together your major in terms of your course selection as we also provide you with the key skills you need to excel in your careers after graduation as well as a larger intellectual, academic, and practical purpose to the courses you have (and will) select as you move closer to graduation. Interdisciplinarity is as much an opportunity as it is academic methodology, but it is also an approach to learning and intellectual pursuit that is tailor made for not only problem-solving but also the new emerging workplace environments that are fluid, flexible, multi-dimensional, and collaborative. Such environments require that one has the ability to work within diverse environments on issues and projects that require numerous perspectives and larger frameworks of understanding and application rather than simply one. Yes, the very thing you have been learning how to do each semester as you build for yourselves your own unique set of academic experience, professional credentials, and career skills.



A MESSAGE FROM PROFESSOR ROBINSON

We have had a record -number of students sign up for the legal studies minor over the past two semesters. This is a great minor to pair with just about any major. The Legal Studies minor is in the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts department and has a seven -course requirement. There is one required course called Contemporary Legal Studies (LB205 – taught in person and online year-round). In this course we study a different area of law each week. You will learn about 12 different areas of law such as criminal law, civil law, property law, contract law and landlord/tenant law. This is a great class to take if you are planning to attend law school or if you just want to learn a little bit about the law. The other classes offered in the minor range from Constitutional Law, Freedom of Speech, Mock Trial, International Law, Sociology of Law, Federal Indian Law and many others.



To learn more or to sign up for the minor, contact Gina Robinson, JD at gina.robinson@colostate.edu.

Alpha Iota Sigma Honors Society

Alpha Iota Sigma is a national honors society that recognizes and advances academic scholarships and achievements of undergraduate and graduate interdisciplinary students. CSU's chapter of Alpha Iota Sigma will be holding an induction ceremony to welcome new members in the Fall of 2021 and we encourage all I-LA members to apply for this rich opportunity for interdisciplinary research, connection, and collaboration. Every year, Alpha Iota Sigma hosts a Paper/Poster competition in conjunction with the Association for Interdisciplinary Studies annual conference, where CSU students have the opportunity to connect with other Alpha Iota Sigma students from various colleges and universities across the country.



This honor society is designed to promote excellence in interdisciplinary studies and is a terrific resume builder, allowing members the chance to forge a network with other honors students that can lead to great careers down the road. Please check out our Facebook page which is a great platform to facilitate virtual communication among all the student members and update activities with which the honor society members are engaged.

Please contact Professor Murillo at cmurillo@colostate.edu if you are interested in applying for membership.

A MESSAGE FROM DR. MURILLO

Last month, I walked with the wolves. I needed time with my family and the great outdoors, so we all jumped in the car and made our way to Wolf Adventures in Colorado Springs. I was amazed at what I learned, thought, and felt.

When we arrived, we were greeted by four guides and two huge wolf-dogs, illegal hybrids that are typically euthanized upon capture if a sanctuary cannot be found. Wolf Adventures adopted eight of these beautiful creatures, allowing those of us who want to understand them a bit better to get a little closer to the myth that is the wolf. During our hike that stretched a mile and a half through the Pikes Peak region of the state, we learned so much about the wolves' back stories (oftentimes pretty harrowing), their pack ranks, and the unique personalities each one possesses that, in turn, create a kind of balance in the pack--a type of system oftentimes lost on humans. We could learn a lot from wolves.

Ghost and Spirit, highly intelligent and intuitive *wolfdogs* (more wolf than dog) welcomed us into their pack for a brief time and taught me a lot about companionship and balance--lessons that seem to un-complicate life. Where Ghost was clearly the Alpha, walking me and not the other way around, Spirit served as the Elder, providing that calm zen strength needed to temper Ghost, whose energy and charge could be slightly overwhelming. Together, they created a sense of *groundedness*, working in tandem to maintain balance. Ghost was able to lead because Spirit provided the quiet wisdom necessary for leadership and in that is teamwork. In times of hardship, strength can be found in numbers, as the wolves can certainly teach us. It is not only the pack leaders that drive this cooperative existence, but the contribution of each wolf's individual strength ensures the pack's survival. Working together yields the best results.

As we drove home, I reflected on the three hours I had spent with Ghost and Spirit, feeling so fortunate to have moved to a state where I am in such proximity to these majestic animals and the sanctuaries that provide for them, a truly special experience like no other.



A MESSAGE FROM THE PREVIOUS ILA NEWS- LETTER INTERN

Moving into 2021, I think a lot of us had high hopes for a much better year than the previous one and in some sense, it already is as we have learned to adapt to the “new normal.” Personally, I find myself acclimating to this online, socially-distant version of life. Though I am unsure if I prefer this new world, I have found myself enjoying this adjustment to a rather independent, at-your-own-pace structure. Thinking back to my first couple years at CSU, I never imagined I would graduate in this kind of academic climate, but I have been learning to make the most of every second.

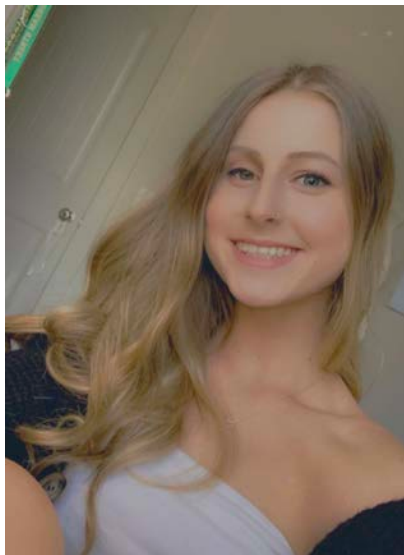
I found the ILA department shortly before COVID-19 first hit and it has been an interesting, yet rewarding experience ever since.

The faculty and staff have been extremely transparent in their efforts of helping students navigate the ILA world while also providing support in times of change. I have learned so much through the liberal arts classes I have taken and gained an abundance of skills that will help me confidently maneuver around the “real world.”

After I have officially graduated in May, I will be interning with the International Rescue Committee for the summer. This is an organization that helps individuals whose lives and livelihoods have been destroyed by disasters in hopes to recover and pave the way for a better future. Within this case management internship, I have the opportunity to work with refugees and assist them to connecting clients and community resources, as well as developing programs. After reading the job description and tasks, I know that it will be an experience that ILA has prepared me for through all the knowledge and skills that I have gained over the years.

Though this internship will most likely have a remote aspect to it, I plan to focus on the positives and all that I will gain from this exposure. I am beyond excited to start this journey as it is a wonderful opportunity to gain professional experience in a multi-cultural setting right after graduation. Hopefully, I can attain a long-term position with this organization after the internship ends.

Big thanks to the ILA department and everyone who has supported me through this crazy, yet worthwhile journey. These have been the best four years at CSU and I am unbelievably grateful for the experiences and thrilled for all that is yet to come.



NOTES FROM AN INTERDISCIPLINARIAN

What is an Interdisciplinary Dare?

The English word dare is a handy word for Interdisciplinary-ans. The online Oxford English Dictionary defines the word dare, as a noun, as meaning “[A]n act of daring or defying; a defiance, challenge.” Yes, something along the lines of Irish poet Seamus Heaney’s poetic persona daring to step out on the ice. It also denotes the obsolete sense of boldness or daring. Several of its other secondary/obsolete meanings interest me, as well. A dare can mean some contrivance for a daring or fascination lark, in the sense of being some mischievous fun (this sense is one that I think should be seriously fostered in any undergraduate interdisciplinary program). And it can also mean some ‘portion’ of something. As a verb, we use it to mean: to act boldly or courageously. To take chances and risks.

In so many of the discussions and definitions of Interdisciplinarity I’ve come across, this idea of ‘the dare’ seems close at hand but just slightly out of reach. To step outside of one’s disciplinary perspective and expertise, to invite conflict as a part of any problem-solving process, to try to both tackle and resolve a larger issue more complex than can be dealt with in any one discipline, or to teach in a classroom co-taught by three instructors from entirely different disciplines, seems a very ‘daring’ and quite challenging enterprise. At times, it may seem even impossible.

Being that my academic credentials and interests are rooted in creative writing, literature, and, increasingly, fiction and narrative film, I can’t help but take a slight detour by looking a bit closer at the secondary definition of a dare—as being some contrivance for a fascinating lark. Some of my favorite works of literature or films can be read and analyzed as fascinating larks. For example, the novel *Molloy* by Samuel Beckett. Or Cervantes’ masterpiece *Don Quixote*, perhaps the greatest lark in all of history. Or The film *Our Beloved Month of August* by the Portuguese filmmaker Miguel Gomes, or Stanley Kubrick’s *Dr. Strangelove*. I’d even go so far as to daringly call Jane Austen’s *Emma* a fabulously fascinating and quiet lark. This element of the dare, I’d argue, has a solid place in my idea of the ‘Interdisciplinary Dare.’ The ‘lark’ as a subsidiary component of any serious-minded interdisciplinary integration is a core element to what I see as the ‘creative’ process that underpins any astonishingly new and larger perspective.

Creativity deserves a greater presence in our descriptions of interdisciplinary integration—or what I call the ‘Interdisciplinary Moment.’ And one of the best—and richest sources of interdisciplinarity—are the worlds of literary fiction and documentary/fiction (narrative) film.

But before I stray too far off the point. Daring ourselves to reach beyond disciplinary perspectives, daring ourselves to reinvest in our imaginative abilities—especially those we were so good at as children—daring ourselves to climb the fence of our own yards so as to see what’s beyond is a fundamental consequence of being interdisciplinary.

A MESSAGE FROM PROFESSOR SWANN

It was in late 2019 that I started reflecting on my career. Again. I had been teaching in the CSU Theatre Department for six years and was looking for the next challenge. I had already directed a children's theatre troupe and a summer camp, written a digital textbook for the Introduction to Theatre course, and was slated to direct a CSU production opening in Spring 2020. I was checking off many goals on my "To-Do" list, but I still felt like there was more I could (and should) do. I was an interdisciplinarian before that was really a thing in higher education. I had double-majored in Theatre and English and always enjoyed classes on philosophy, history and theory. Was there an opportunity for me to do more as an instructor? I saw a call to join Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts, and I answered. At the time, I'm sure I didn't really know what I was signing up for.



And then the pandemic hit. The play I was directing (Paula Vogel's *How I Learned to Drive*) got a single weekend of performances before the university's campus closed. Students and instructors alike were asked to shift and pivot in ways we never thought possible. And not everything worked out. My summer theater camp for kids was cancelled. I struggled to teach exclusively online while simultaneously managing an in-home preschool and 2nd grade classroom. Projects and trips were cancelled. Family members became isolated. We grew frustrated with technologies that promised to unite us but only pointed out the persistent distance between us. A favorite uncle of mine got Covid and passed away. Everything changed.

I was to start teaching LB173: Encountering the Global in Fall 2020 at the same time instructors, professors and administrators were trying to navigate higher education during a pandemic. What a way to start. And yet, on a personal level, this challenge came at the perfect time. I had watched BLM protests over the summer. Cancelled summer plans provided extra time to spend revising my theatre textbook. I spent months reflecting on the Eurocentric nature of my own education. I wanted better, both for myself and my students. In that way, LB173 was a great fit. times, it has also been one of the most rewarding.

The course allows me to pull materials from all over the world, from a variety of times, cultures, and perspectives, and tell the story of how humans have always been struggling to understand each other. It tells the stories of our successes and failures in this ongoing endeavor. An actor and storyteller by trade, a theorist by thought, this course is personally and professionally fulfilling for me. I have learned so much by teaching this past year, pushing myself and my students to broaden our horizons, try new things, and explore new cultures and perspectives. The conversations with students have been inspirational and aspirational. Though the past year has been extremely challenging at times, it has also been one of the most rewarding.

Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts gives students a unique, educational experience. Rather than teaching young minds to approach topics from one view, we teach them how to step back and assess all the angles, vertices, and sides of it. In a world that keeps trying to force us into one of two opposing camps, we show students that the world is so much more complicated than that. Best of all... there is room for all of us! It's invigorating to listen to students analyze perspectives they'd never before considered. Complete agreement is never the goal; only respect and consideration. ILA encourages listening and critical thinking; though not always trendy or exciting, these skills never go out of style. It's an honor to join this team of educators and students working to make our world a more thoughtful place.

STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITY

Comparative Legal Studies in Italy

We are all set up to head to Italy this Summer. The course is called Comparative Legal Studies and will count as a three-hour upper division course in the Legal studies minor. I will take 14 students to Italy to study the law in Italy. We will be based out of Florence, Italy and will travel to Rome and Venice during our three -week adventure. We will be visiting a law firm, a trial, will have various speakers from Italian attorneys and we will study the Civil and criminal law in Italy, the Mafia, Vatican Law, Media Law and how to form a business in Italy. We will do all of this as we eat our way through Italy. This is a class that is offered every summer. If you are interested in applying for Summer 2022, please contact Gina Robinson (gina.robinson@colostate.edu) or get on the CSU study abroad website.

I-LA STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS

As we are all figuring out how best to move forward and make the most of our time here at CSU, we want to remind everyone that one of the most treasured experiences students have—survey after survey confirms—are Study Abroad experiences. I-LA see these as a vital part of one's college experience and we highly encourage all of you to take advantage—if possible—any and all opportunities you have that allows you to travel abroad for study. We know that such a thought may seem daunting—especially during a global pandemic—but with vaccinations on the rollout, study abroad is once more, slowly but surely, becoming an option for you all.

In support of this, I-LA offers 5 Study Abroad scholarships open to all I-LA majors. These scholarships are for \$1000 each. We created these scholarships a few years ago as a way of helping make such opportunities more affordable. For more information about study abroad or about the I-LA Study Abroad Scholarships, check out the Education Abroad section on the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts Programs of Study webpage:

<https://libartsmajor.colostate.edu/programs-of-study/>

Hearing from Majors and Minors

Hi, my name is Xenia Fuentes. I was born in Mexico I moved to the US when I was 11 and lived in California most of my life. I knew how to say purple in English when I moved here and have been learning the language ever since. I have four brothers no sisters that has been fun for me, my brothers are amazing. Also, I did not have to share my clothes or room with any one and that was nice. I am a very family-oriented person my family and I are really close.



I love to learn new things, I wish I could afford to just be in school for ever, school is a bit challenging for me I think it has to do with my language skills. I just love school and I try to never let these challenges bring me down. I am pursuing a major of interdisciplinary liberal arts. My minor keeps changing; I am not sure what it will end up being, but hopefully I can figure it out before this semester is done. I am thinking film studies and or media studies? I live in Fort Collins and I have always wanted to go to school, and CSU is here, and my sister-in-law came here, and it feels like the right place to be.

I have grown so much in one semester at CSU it has opened my eyes to so many new things. I have learned to see things with a broader lens. I am excited to be here and to continue my education at this university. My goal is to become an occupational therapist. I want to be able to help people heal and I specially want to be a resource for my community. I know that I could help so many people that only speak Spanish and I want to be able to help them have the resources they need for better health. For me, my drive to college has been that my parents made a big sacrifice to move to a country they did not know to give their children a better life and I wanted to make sure that their sacrifice is not waisted. My father passed away 4 years ago and making him proud drives me every day in school and work. He is my motivation he taught me to work hard and never give up and so I do every day.

The proudest thing for me is to be here at CSU to have been able to get in to school. I am proud of this, every day I come to class. I worked so hard to learn a new language to graduate every place I did.

Being here at school is a dream come true and one of the proudest things for me to accomplish. I get to experience my dreams coming true every day. I am proud of myself! I work hard to get where I need and want to be in my life. I have jump through some big hurtles to make it to where I am. I have endured a lot of rejection. It took me 3 years of going back and forth with CSU to get in and there was time when I almost quit, I just don't know how to. I am proud of myself for pushing through the pain and making things happen for myself at school and in my personal life. I am very proud of myself.



Hi, my name is Devontay Tobe. I lived with my grandparents the majority of my life in Montbello Colorado and loved my community very much, there were times where it was very difficult for me as the environment around me outside of my grandparents was a very dangerous one surrounded by drugs and violence.

Although this is true, living in Montbello was what was best for me because it has equipped me with the tools to not only get to college but finish. I am pursuing a degree in interdisciplinary liberal arts with a minor in ethnic studies. I chose this minor because I felt it fit perfectly into the career I wanted to go into (which is teaching). I believe that to be an effective teacher you must be culturally competent for the students who are becoming more and more diverse.

I chose CSU because it was familiar to me after I attended this program at high school that allowed me to stay at CSU for the summer. It was also close to my grandparents which is important to me so I can be there for them when they need me. Going to CSU has aided my personal growth because it gave me challenges that I had yet to experience living in Montbello as well as opened my eyes to many different perspectives that I wasn't aware of.

My family and community have been my drive to finish college at a four-year university and I want to show them that if I can do it, they definitely can too.

After college, I hope to begin teaching and hopefully go return to my community of Montbello to teach and give back to my community. I think the path that I took getting to this point may be very common for students who end up falling through the cracks at school. You have a series of unfortunate events happen unexpectedly and then you're are suddenly way behind in your classes, leaving you to sometimes feel like your only decision is to leave.



I really feel proud of the fact that I was able to finish. It also allows me to encourage anyone and everyone who is having a hard time, to finish if you feel like this is something that you really can do this. The fact that even after all the roadblocks that have been placed in my path and I am still so close to finishing what I came here to accomplish makes me very proud of what I've done here.

Hearing from Majors and Minors

Hi, my name is Kara Shechter. I was born and raised in Aspen, Colo. I did a lot of outdoor activities while growing up. I skied and snowboarded all winter long. I played a few sports, mostly figure skating and track. In high school I took a lot of health-related classes and found a love for helping people out. I am pursuing a degree in interdisciplinary liberal arts with a double minor in military science and sociology. My minors are Military Science and Sociology. I choose them so that I could get my degree completed in a timely manor and they seemed fairly interesting. Military Science is because I am in ROTC and will be commissioning after I graduate this summer. I choose



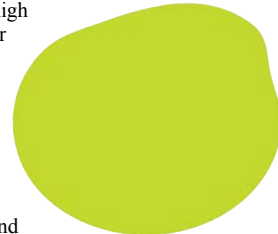
to do Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts so that I can study a wide range of subjects.

I choose CSU because I wanted to be in state, yet far enough away from home that my family wouldn't come visit me while I was at school. I also choose CSU over other Colorado schools because they have a skating team here where I would be able to continue my skating while at school. While here I have been able to continue my skating and I have learned more about what makes me happy. I was able to realize that in the future I would like to work in the medical field.

My family is what drove me to go to college. I was always good in school and they all wanted me to continue my education knowing that I would succeed. When I got done with high school I wanted to join the Army and after talking to my family and friends I learned that I was able to join as well as continue my education. After getting to CSU my friends have been what has kept me going. Between my freshman and sophomore I joined the Army Reserves. I competed in competitive figure skating until recently (stopped due to the pandemic). I am just about to finish my degree and commission in the Army. I am training my dog for search and rescue. I helped put on the St. Jude Up Till Dawn event and fundraiser here at CSU. After college, I am going to commission into the Army as an officer. I would like to go back to school to become a physician assistant, and have the Army pay for me to become a physician assistant. I also plan to make the Army a career, so doing at least 20 years in service. I want to have a career in the medical field.

After my time in the Army I would like to work in the ER for a few years. I would say that I am proud of myself. I know that I have accomplished everything that I have set my mind out to achieve. I have been able to continue to do sports in school while serving and getting my degree. Once I graduate I will have met all the requirements to become a physician assistant in the Army. Becoming a physician assistant has been the one the thing that I have always wanted to do and knowing that I have done everything I need to do to apply to become one.

Hi, my name is Samuel Brown. I was born in Guatemala, adopted and lived in California for 10 years and then Tennessee and then did middle and high school in Missouri; I grew up in a poor family and college wasn't an option and so I went into the military. When I was Stationed at Ft. Carson in Colorado Springs and heard of the satellite college there but didn't like the city so about the time I was exiting the military I told my wife then that I wanted to live in Colorado and told her to find a job there and she found a career in Ft. Collins. I knew of the university and liked the city so I applied and got accepted.

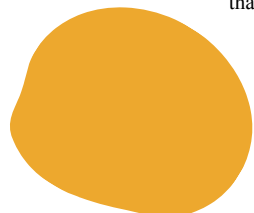


CSU has great resources to help veterans and not aware of RDS was able to get the accommodations that I need to obtain my degree.

Here at CSU I am pursuing a major of interdisciplinary liberal arts with a minor in political science. I like Politics because it is diverse and you can go into different disciplines within political science such as a lawyer, lobbyist, congressional member, researcher and President of the United States. What really drove me and inspired me to go to college is not having the opportunity after High School. Now that I am older and have applied for jobs, I was eliminated because I didn't have a degree.



My degree will also give me a sense of pride and accomplishment. What I am most proud of is my 10 year old daughter seeing me attend; I have had to bring her a few times but have told her that she has to go to college after high school. There are times when I sometimes question what I have accomplished, especially coming from my past. I joined the military, served in two branch of services, the Army and the Navy, and although I am a disabled veteran, I try not to let my disabilities define me and keep me down. I am proud of my family, I own a nice house, and I am a senior in college; given the obstacles in my life, I'm still here fighting.



Hearing from Majors and Minors

Hi, my name is Hallie Marker. I am from Highlands Ranch, CO- it is about an hour and a half south of Fort Collins. I've actually been an athlete for a really large portion of my life, and I still am, but because of this I had limited time to focus on my true passions. They took the backseat when it came to my priorities, and because of this I ended up just settling for a degree in English last year at Fort Lewis College.



Luckily, I transferred here to be closer to home and to better manage my time...and it has paid off! I am pursuing a major in interdisciplinary liberal arts. My minor right now is Horticulture. I actually took horticulture for the first time ever last semester and I ultimately found it really interesting.

Plus, thanks to Interdisciplinary, I had the opportunity to sift through my interests and be able to take horticulture. I chose CSU for a couple of reasons, one of which is because it had a certain familiarity to it, being that a lot of kids from my high school ended up coming here or CU Boulder. I also favored CSU because the atmosphere is much more relaxed and understanding, not to mention Fort Collins is a beautiful town with beautiful people. Because the environment is so inviting, it has tremendously helped my academic career because I feel comfortable reaching out to my professors and other students.

To sum it all up, I chose CSU for the community. After these past two years, especially with spending so much time alone in quarantine, I have come to realize that my priorities shifted and I am more interested in artistic and intellectual pursuits. So what drives me to continue my education now is entirely my own ambitions and, of course, making my parents proud. One thing that I am proud of myself for accomplishing during my time at CSU is having one of my short stories published. I love creative writing, and I have for a while, but for the first time ever I can consider myself somewhat of a published author! Which was extremely exciting. When I graduate school, I want to immerse myself in a creative job. My biggest dream is to become a voice actress, which you don't necessarily need a degree to do.

However, with Interdisciplinary Studies I can achieve this goal more efficiently by thinking outside of the box and viewing my decisions from different perspectives. On a day to day basis, I like to find little things to be proud of. Like making my bed or brushing my teeth. Since COVID hit, mundane things became more difficult, and I pride myself for keeping up with these little things. But when I look at the entire scope of my life, I am extremely proud of who I am. I am meant to be here based on all of the successes and hardships that I have gone through, and so I must embrace all of it; even those things that I am not so proud of.

Hi, my name is David Rothenburg. I grew up in the Chicago suburbs. Our community was white collar, wealthy, unadventurous. It never suited my taste. I became heavily involved in music my Freshman year of high school and by eighteen it was all I wanted to do. I joined a band and flunked out of college my third semester. I tried to go to the local community college, but didn't have success there, either.

So, I licked my wounds, started working for an independent concert promoter, touring regionally with the band, and I founded and produced a small music festival. My experiences during those years solidified my love for live events and adventure, which led me to Colorado in 2013.

I am receiving a major in interdisciplinary liberal arts with a minor in media studies. I chose Media Studies for my minor because it has the most applications to my career. For 15 years, I have worked hands-on with audio and lighting equipment at concerts and corporate events. Once COVID hit, live events started migrating to digital platforms and the work of event production began looking more like broadcast television. The Media Studies minor has given me a good primer on the history and technology of media, as well as a critical eye for video production.

Finishing my degree after a 15-year gap will bring me incredible pride. I don't care if I ever use my degree in a specific career or if I have a perfect GPA... a liberal arts education just makes you more prepared to handle the world. For fifteen years, I carried the shame and guilt of never having gotten my degree. But it turned out that shame and guilt weren't enough to compel me to finish – if they were, I would have done it the first time around. I had to be ready and focused, driven to achieve this ac-



complishment for myself and no one else. I am extremely proud of that.



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Hearing from Majors and Minors

Hi, my name is Molly Gillman. I am from New York. I grew up about two hours north of the city, and spent close to half of my time in the Adirondack Mountains skiing, and working as a ski instructor. I am also a Jewish woman, and my Jewish identity has been an important part of my life. I jumped around to a few different majors in different fields during my first year at CSU, it wasn't until the spring of my freshman year that I landed in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts. I have chosen a Spanish language minor, and I am looking at potential double majors in an environmental science field.

I think I've always had an interest in interdisciplinary style learning, I just didn't have a label for it. I like the ILA major because of the freedom it gives me not only to study a wide variety of disciplines, but to learn how those disciplines relate to each other in complex ways. I knew I wanted to do environmental and sustainable work, and I think being proficient in a second language is a really valuable skill.

ILA gives me the opportunity to do both of those things. I chose Colorado State because I wanted an experience that was going to be totally different from the Northeastern United States, and it is! Colorado State University has given me close to unlimited opportunities for educational and social involvement. I have found several groups of people who I identify with more than I ever thought I would. Living so far from home, I have gained great experience in independence, while still feeling supported by so many different factors at CSU.

I think college was always just an expectation growing up. I knew that I wanted a higher education, that I wouldn't feel totally fulfilled if I finished my education after high school. The military was not something that I had a huge interest in, and I didn't feel that trade school would give me that satisfaction either. Going to a four-year institution felt right for me because I wanted to study so many subjects, I felt that I still had so much to learn, both in the classroom, and out in the world away from my family. I wish I had a firm grasp on what lies after graduation for myself, but I really have no clue! I'm interested in going to graduate school, possibly here in Colorado,

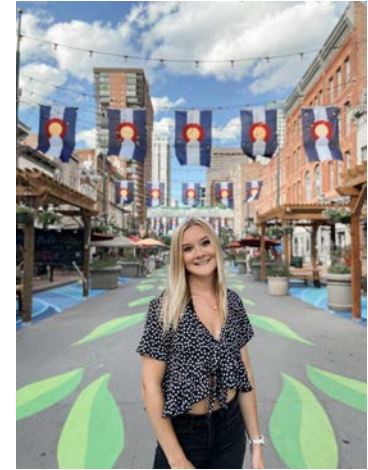


or going back to the Northeast and attending grad school there. I may also find that I don't have a need for any further degrees after I graduate and that's ok too.

Ideally I would like to do non-profit work in an environmental field, either doing policy work, or field work. I know I want to do hands-on work, and I want to see the changes that I will be working towards. I am extremely proud of the work I have put in as a member of my sorority, Sigma Alpha Epsilon Pi. I serve on the executive board, as well as hold two chair positions. I have loved putting in the work to make improvements to our operations. We have only been on campus for a few years, so we are still learning as our sisterhood grows. I have loved having a part in the early stages of our organization. I work very hard to be proud of myself.

I work hard to cut myself a break and reflect on all the good I have done in the past. I am guilty of losing sight of the bigger picture, which is just being happy with where I'm at. I tend to feel like I could always be doing more, or I could be doing better, but really, I'm doing well already, and that's enough. I will always strive to do better in life, in all aspects, but I have been trying to slow down and appreciate how far I've come academically, socially, and mentally. Life is not always an easy ride, I was taught that from a young age, but I am learning to appreciate the little things that make it worth it.

Hi, my name is Elizabeth Fulton, and I am from Parker Colorado. I was born in Denver Colorado and when I was 3 years old my family and I moved to Belgium. This was a great experience and I'm so happy I got to live somewhere outside of the United States for a few years.



I have a brother named John and a sister named Catherine and we are triplets. John goes to CSU as well and is on the track team here and Catherine goes to Northern Arizona.

I am a transfer junior this year and spent my first 2 years of college at Kent State University. I went to Kent State to be on their gymnastics team but unfortunately division 1 athletics did not work out for me. I then decided to transfer, and it was the best decision I have ever made. I chose Colorado State because as soon as I visited it felt like the right place for me. I fell in love with the campus and the city of Fort Collins immediately. I also wanted to go to a school that was still in my home state but not too close to home. Colorado State also offered the minor I wanted to pursue in Real Estate. My minor is Real Estate.

I choose Real Estate because I have wanted to be a real estate agent ever since I was a little kid. You don't need a degree to become a real estate agent so that I why I decided to major in interdisciplinary liberal arts and minor in real estate. My goal is to get my Real Estate license this summer so I can have it during my last year of college. After I graduate from Colorado State my goal is to become a successful Real Estate agent in Colorado. In my life one of the major people who drove me to go to college was my club gymnastics coach. Being a college athlete was always my dream and my coach was the person who made that dream become a reality.

Even though college gymnastics did not end up working out for me and am still very thankful for him helping me get to that point. I was also very self-driven to go to college and I knew it was something I always wanted to do. The thing I am most proud of that I have accomplished here at Colorado State is finding some of my best friends. Because I have been an athlete my whole life I have always had built in friends. Transferring to CSU during a pandemic, I was very nervous that I would not be able to make friends but as soon as I got here I put myself out there and meet some of my best friends who I know I will have lifelong friendships with. I have gone through a lot in my life, some good and some bad, and I am so proud of where I am today. Transferring to Colorado State was the best decision I have ever made, and I am so much happier here than I was at Kent State. I am also so proud of all that I have accomplished in my life so far and I'm so excited to see what the future has in store for me.

Hearing from Majors and Minors

Hi, my name is Cade Taormina. I am pursuing a degree in interdisciplinary liberal arts. What originally attracted me to interdisciplinary studies was how it overlapped with almost every major on campus. This made it really easy to join this major and after understanding what the major is fully about, I think it is perfectly suited for me. I am minoring in Business administration and real estate. I am in my 3rd year here at Colorado State University and on pace to graduate next may with a relaxing senior year of only twenty-two credits.

So far through my interdisciplinary studies career which has only been this semester, I have learned a lot of things. It really opened up my horizons, and I understand that there is never a correct answer for the majority of situations. The thing I find so fascinating is how through all of these different fields of study there is a different approach and for many of them a different solution for each situation.



I have really enjoyed my time so far in this major, and plan to stick with it throughout the next two semesters here at CSU. I plan on doing some sort of marketing or business analyst position for a company. I have been applying trying to figure out some work for the summer. I feel like I am an on the fly learner and whatever I end up doing I will learn quickly and be a valuable asset wherever I land.

Hi, my name is Isa Castaneda. I grew up in Westminster, Colorado. My parents both immigrated to Colorado from Mexico and encouraged me to visit Mexico often, so I feel really connected to my culture in that way. I grew up low income, and moved around a lot, so I learned to adapt. As a child, most of my motivation to attend college came from my parents.

However, as I grew older, I understood the sacrifices they made for me to be here and I improved my intrinsic motivation. I am here because I want to be, and I believe that is why I am succeeding. I chose Colorado State University because I wanted something away from home but not too far and CSU has really nice views. It gave me an opportunity to improve skills like budgeting and being on my own.



I haven't been here long, but I am proud that I'm on the dean's list, as well as being able to juggle 20 credits at 19 years old. It's been tough being away from my family, but I am proud that I have been able to do things on my own. I am receiving a major in interdisciplinary liberal arts; I haven't fully made a decision on a minor yet, but I may do 21 credits of a language instead. I plan to become a translator and interpreter and go abroad as much as possible. I also want to volunteer my skills at places that mean a lot to me like schools and immigration courts. Although it may sound conceited, I am extremely proud of myself. I have climbed over multiple obstacles to get here. I am a Latina Woman, and we all know that that alone makes it difficult to be taken seriously in the academic world. I am proud that I have found a new sense of confidence and I'm willing to learn from every single mistake. I'm not perfect, but I appreciate being able to improve myself.

Hi, my name is Kai Randel. I was born in Berkeley, California but I grew up in Denver. My family moved here before I started third grade so I'm almost a native. Growing up I lived a normal suburban life and spent most of my time at school, playing sports, or with friends. I was lucky enough to experience a childhood of both American and Japanese culture.

I am pursuing a major in interdisciplinary liberal arts with a minor in Japanese. I chose to minor in Japanese because my mom's side of the family is from there and I wanted to achieve more fluency. I grew up speaking/reading/writing the language at a basic level but not enough to have complex conversations about advanced topics such as science, politics, or economics. This minor should help me get advanced enough in the language to move there someday and never need any English translations of anything. I arrived at Colorado State University mainly through the process of elimination.

While I applied to many out of state schools I eventually decided not to pursue those options. CSU was the right fit for me because it was close enough to be able to visit my family but far enough away that it didn't feel like I was staying in the same place. The in-state tuition made things more affordable, and the final reason was because I had a handful of good friends coming here as well.

As a kid my parents always told me to go to college and their parents expected similar things from them as well. Friends made a big impact on choosing CSU specifically, but not necessarily the decision to go to college itself. Another major contributing factor was that without a college degree I wasn't sure what to do. I didn't have a specific dream to go all in and pursue, and so going to college felt like the best option for me.



My eventual goals are to attempt some form of entrepreneurship but first I want to gain experience in different fields and become a versatile employee that can shift between different industries. Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts is something that will help me accomplish this, and it's a good fit for me because I struggled to commit to a more specialized and specific concentration of study and career path.

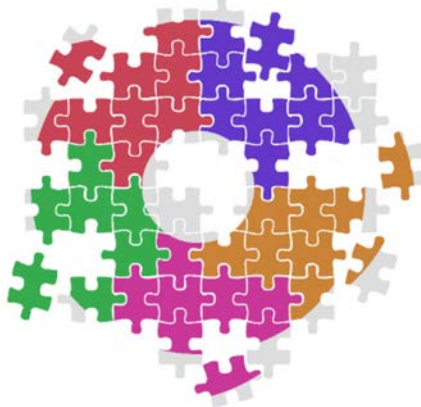
HEARING FROM LEGAL STUDIES MINORS

Hi, my name is Charlotte Pardo. I am a Junior studying Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts and Legal Studies. As a freshman, I had no idea what I wanted to study. Once I took Introduction Legal Studies as a sophomore, I loved it. It helped people with everyday issues in creative ways.



I also took a Mock Trial Class. It was an exciting hands-on experience where I worked with a team of my peers on a mock murder case. We learned about all of the components of a trial and a lawyer's job from research to opening statements to examinations of witnesses. Our Legal studies program at CSU provides access to that many don't take until Law Schools like water law and constitutional law

My class time experience prepared me to for the LSAT exam a year early and get a jumpstart on my law school search. It also prepared me to work for CSU Student Legal Services, where I provide information to CSU students and direct them to legal services. SLS has also allowed me to gain experience in many aspects of the law. Lastly, I have also been a Pre-Law Club officer. The club provides access to the legal community and opportunities to become involved locally.

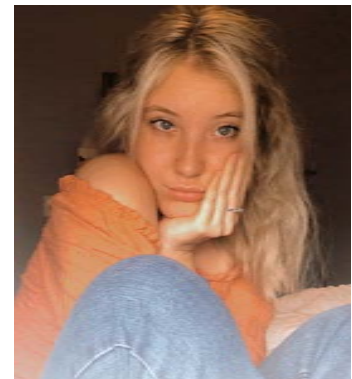


GREETINGS FROM THE I-LA NEWSLETTER INTERN EDITOR

Hi, my name is Josey Burgess and I am the spring newsletter intern. I am from Brighton, Colorado and have lived here for all of my life. I chose to come to Colorado State University because, like many of my peers, it was close but not too close to home.

I am pursuing a major in interdisciplinary liberal arts with a minor in history and criminal justice. I originally began as an international studies major but after many failed French attempts I figured out it was not for me. I was first introduced to interdisciplinary liberal arts through my advisor at the time, who knew I couldn't just focus on one area of study; this is how I became an ILA major and the ILA newsletter intern.

I would argue that the ILA major allows its recipients the potential to be whatever they want to be. This is because you can adopt any minors that you would like while still learning many different things. My long term career aspirations are changing more and more everyday as I continue to push myself and gain different skills. I have decided that as a career goal I would like to join a government agency such as the DEA, FBI, or CBI. I want to join an agency like this because I want the ability to help people and be in a career that is selfless.



In regard to my personal goals, ultimately like everyone else I want to graduate college and make my family proud but even more so I want to make myself proud. I want to become someone that I am proud to be every single day and with interdisciplinary liberal arts here at CSU I have had the opportunity to find myself more and more each day.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: We want to both thank and applaud Josey for the outstanding work she has put into making our spring 21 I-LA newsletter top-notch in every respect. Way to go, Josey!

