

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

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Political Science Alumni Newsletter

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Greetings!

It is our pleasure to send you the first edition of the *Providence College Political Science Alumni News*. Included in this first newsletter are profiles of the two newest members of the Department, Paola Cesarini and Ruth Ben Artzi. Their credentials are impressive and they have proved to be popular teachers and delightful colleagues. We have also included a profile of Professor Rick Battistoni who recently was elected to the Lincoln, Rhode Island School Committee. In the future we will continue to have a feature about the activities our current faculty and those who have moved on to other positions. Of course, you are proba-

bly more interested in what our alumni are up to. Each edition of the *Alumni News* will include profiles of alumni who have provided us with current information. Please keep us abreast of your activities. We will also describe some of the events that the Department has sponsored. We would love to have an increased alumni presence at lectures and presentations on campus. Check out the Department's web site for the latest events. We plan to send you a newsletter at least twice each year. We welcome your suggestions for the newsletter.

We are still in the process of tracking down alums for whom

the College has no working email addresses. If you know classmates who might be interested in what is going on in the Department or the activities we sponsor, please have them contact us. We plan to launch the alumni listserv (discussion group) soon. We will contact you as soon as we are ready to accept subscribers. Also, check out the web page for a profile of the "Alum of the Month." If you happen to be near PC stop by the Department in Howley Hall sometime and say hello. We enjoy seeing you.

-Dr. James Carlson, Political Science Professor and Director of Alumni Relations

Professor Battistoni Elected to School Committee

Dr. Richard Battistoni is one of Providence College's most respected faculty members in the Political Science Department. He is well known for his leadership in the field of community service, especially with respect to civic education and engagement. This includes receiving the Nation Association of Secretaries of State Medallion Award in June by Rhode Island Secretary of State Matt Brown which is awarded to individuals honored for making a difference in Rhode Island through the promotion of the civic engagement of young people

through schools. Dr. Battistoni's interest in education is also expressed through the Politics of Education capstone he will be offering in the spring.

Now Dr. Battistoni will apply his academic specialties to the political arena. On November 7th, he was elected to one of five seats on the School Committee of his hometown, Lincoln, RI. When asked about his interest in running for public office, Dr. Battistoni explained his concerns about the lack of public opinion in the Rhode Island school system. His campaign slogan, "Let's put the public's voice back in the

public schools" reflected his primary concern of including the citizens of Lincoln in the decision making process for its public school system. For Dr. Battistoni, the public voice and feedback is a critical element in the success of public schools and he fully intends for this voice to be heard.

Some of Dr. Battistoni's goals include strengthening the community service requirements and developing new Rhode Island standards for civic education (which will most likely be integrated with the social studies program), both of which he views as critical elements for the education of young people.



E-Mail Us!

PSCAlums@Providence.
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Robert Audette, Class of 1980

After graduation, Bob went on to attend Boston University School of Law where he received the American Jurisprudence Award in Insurance Law. He has been in private practice since he graduated and was licensed to practice in Rhode Island in 1983.

Bob is currently a member of the Association of Trial

Lawyers of America. In addition, he is on the Board of Governors of the R.I. Trial Lawyers Association, Rhode Island Bar Association and the R.I. Workers' Compensation Bench/Bar Committee. Bob is also working as a partner in the law firm of Audette, Bazar, Cordeiro and Grasso which is located in East Providence, R.I. His firm handles a variety of areas of civil practice in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts

including workers' compensation, personal injury, social security disability, family law, bankruptcy, business formation and transaction and estate planning.

Outside of practicing law, Bob coaches CYP basketball, little league softball and baseball in his hometown of Barrington, RI where he lives with his wife, Debbie and children Aimee (Class of '09), Emilie and Daniel.



Monique Ouimette, Class of 1999

Following graduation, Monique entered the Master of Public Policy program at American University in Washington, DC. Upon completing her graduate studies, she began work for the Center for Collaborative Education in Boston, a non-profit organization with a mission to improve public education. Her work with the Center for Collaborative Education has centered on

several diverse topics including family engagement, leadership development as well as network-wide quantitative outcomes. In addition to such projects, Monique has also had the opportunity to work directly with teachers and students in Boston on a data-based inquiry at the school level. Overall, her work over the past five years has helped contribute to the educational opportunity for urban students.

Monique is still employed

with the Center for Collaborative Education and is currently researching doctoral programs that will help combine her interest in education with another of her passions: the environment.

For fun, Monique enjoys spending her time dancing. She will be performing in December, her first group performance since her time with the PC Dance Company. She also has found time to travel, spending most of July of this year in India and France.



Benjamin B. Downing, Class of 2003

Benjamin B. Downing graduated summa cum laude from PC with the class of 2003. Since his departure from Providence, Ben moved to Washington D.C. where he worked in the offices of U.S. Representative William Delahunt (D-Quincy) and Richard Neal (D-Springfield). He even-

tually joined the staff of U.S. Representative John W. Oliver (D-Amherst). Under Representative Oliver, Ben was quickly promoted to a position serving as the Representative's senior advisor on housing, budget, tax, homeland security and foreign affairs. In addition, Ben also managed to find time to work with local elected officials and citizens to address various issues where the federal government was involved.

Today, Ben is in the process of completing a MA in Public Policy at Tufts University's Department of Urban and Environmental Policy & Planning. Furthermore, Ben was recently elected to represent the Berkshire, Hampshire & Franklin state senate district. In his free time, Ben has also found time to volunteer in the Hurricane Katrina and Rita relief efforts in the Gulfport, Mississippi area of the Gulf Coast.

New Faculty: Paola Cesarini

Meet Paola Cesarini, one of Providence College's newest Political Science faculty members. Cesarini was born in Rome, Italy. She received her undergraduate degree in her native country at Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali. She came to the United States on a Fulbright Scholarship and attended graduate school at Columbia University. Before coming to Providence College, Cesarini spent five years employed by the United Nations as well as five years of employment with the World

Bank. She also was a professor at Columbia, SUNY, NYU and Bentley College.

Cesarini is the co-editor of "Authoritarian Legacies and Democracy in Latin America and Southern Europe" which was published in 2004. Other publications include co-authorship of the article "Interdisciplinary Approaches to Human Rights Scholarship" and a chapter on institutional reforms found in *America Latina-Prosepetrive e opportunia negil anni 2000*. At Providence, Cesarini specializes in Comparative politics. In the spring, she will be offering a capstone seminar on Democracy

and the Past: Exploring the Transitional Justice Nexus in addition to teaching Development of Western Civilization. In the past, she has offered courses on the politics of anti-Americanism and the challenges of democratization. When asked about teaching in the DWC program, Cesarini explained her interest in venturing into a parallel discipline. Finally, when asked about her favorite part of PC, Cesarini responded, "That's easy. My favorite parts about Providence are my colleagues and the political science students."



"My favorite parts about Providence are my colleagues and the political science students."

New Faculty: Ruth Ben-Artzi

This year, the faculty of the Political Science Department was expanded with the recent addition of Professor Ruth Ben-Artzi. Dr. Ben-Artzi, originally from Israel, completed her undergraduate work at the University of Haifa in northern Israel, and she later continued her studies with an emphasis on international relations and regional development at Columbia University in New York City. Prior to coming to Providence College, Dr. Ben-Artzi worked as a teaching assistant at Columbia, a visiting professor at Hunter College in New York, and an instructor at the University of Pennsylvania, where she completed her post-doctoral fellowship as well. Originally, Dr. Ben-Artzi was attracted to PC because she found the situation offered a good position in the field at a high-quality liberal

arts school, which she believed would be an excellent place to start her career. She was also drawn to PC because of the collegiate department and great faculty, in addition to the advantage of teaching small classes and her fondness for the New England area. Since her arrival here, Dr. Ben-Artzi has found the atmosphere welcoming and agreeable, although the new experience of teaching at a smaller, Catholic, and less diverse institution differs greatly from her previous experience. Thus far at Providence College, Dr. Ben-Artzi has enjoyed teaching classes such as Introduction to Politics, International Relations, and Middle East Politics, and she is excited about her seminar class for next semester concerning Political Economy, one of her foremost interests. Although she has not had much

chance to gain many experiences outside of teaching yet, Ms. Ben-Artzi has found that conferences have been beneficial to her teaching at PC, and she hopes for other opportunities, such as travel and research, in the future, especially because her teaching is informed by her research. With regard to her academic plans in the near future, Ms. Ben-Artzi has an article under review at this time, and a manuscript of hers has been sent out to publishers for consideration with the working title of *Banking on Development: The Great Expectations in Regional Development Banks*.



More Alumni Updates

Alum of the Month:

Mary Ann Trasciatti, Class of 1985

After graduation Mary Anne Trasciatti earned an M.A. in communication studies from Emerson College in 1991 and a Ph.D. in communication from the University of Maryland in 1999. While she was going to school, she met and married Steve Caslowitz, a music teacher from Rhode Island, and they had three children: Michael, Sam, and Bridget. Presently, Ms. Trasciatti is the Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Chair of the Speech Communications Department in the School of Communication at Hofstra University. She teaches courses in the history of rhetoric, persuasion, political communication, and popular culture. Her research concerns the role of rhetoric in the forma-

tion of subjectivity and collective identity for early twentieth century immigrant and labor activists in the United States.

Ms. Trasciatti has published articles in books and journals, and she is the co-editor of *Representing Sacco and Vanzetti* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), an interdisciplinary volume of essays on cultural and political legacy of the Sacco and Vanzetti case. Currently, she is writing a book on literacy, citizenship and Americanization, 1885 – 1920. In her spare time, Ms. Trasciatti enjoys spending time with her family, watching old movies, riding her bicycle, and baking.



Recent Department Events and Speakers

U.S. Congressional Candidate Jonathan Scott, the Republican candidate facing Patrick Kennedy visited to discuss his platform and motivation for running

U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd visited in October to discuss U.S. policy regarding the war in Iraq

Politics on Tap: Students were able to meet representatives from Lincoln Chafee and Sheldon Whitehouse's senatorial campaigns and inquire about political issues pertinent to college students.

The Price of Democracy: A Debate on Money and Politics

R.I. House of Representatives candidate Jennifer Lawless visited to discuss the difficulties of breaking into Rhode Island politics

Stephen Oleskey, lawyer, visited to discuss his experience representing several Guantanamo Bay Prisoners

2nd Annual Political Science Pie Baking Contest



Scott Avedisian, Class of 1987

After his graduation, Scott attended graduate classes at the University of Rhode Island and also completed the State and Local Program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. In addition, he is also a graduate of Leadership Rhode Island.

As early as high school, Scott was involved in government. His early career accomplishments included serving as a page to the late U.S. Senator John Chafee, a legislative aid to the Rhode Island Senate, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Republican Party and Deputy Campaign Manager for Lincoln Almond, Governor of Rhode Island. From 1995-2000, Scott was a member of the staff at the Rhode Island State House.

In February of 2000, Scott was elected the 15th Mayor of the city of Warwick, RI in a special election and has since been re-elected four times. Once elected, Mayor Avedisian became the youngest person ever elected Mayor in addition to already being the youngest person ever elected to the War-

wick City Council. Prior to this election, Mayor Avedisian served five terms on Warwick City Council.

Aside from his election, some of Mayor Avedisian's accomplishments include his award of the Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from the New England Institute of Technology and his receipt of the Senator Jack Reed Advocacy Award from the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, presidency of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns. Mayor Avedisian has also served two terms as the Vice Chairman of the Rhode Island Republican Party and been elected to the six previous Republican National Conventions. This year, he was one of eight US Mayors to participate in the Jerusalem Conference of Mayors in Israel.



Contributions by :

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