Welcome to THE MCAA QUARTERLY. In this newsletter you will find news, updates, and information regarding upcoming social, cultural, and professional development events occurring within the GSAS Master's College Alumni Association (MCAA) along the square, across the U.S., and around the world. The MCAA Quarterly also spotlights accomplishments of GSAS master's alumni. Building on the work of the GSAS Master's College Program Board, the MCAA is committed to fostering a supportive and enriching GSAS global community beyond graduation—we are the MCAA.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the President of the MCAA
MCAA Mission
Upcoming Event: The 2017 GSAS Threesis Academic Challenge
Spotlight on Success: Shafeka Hashash
Spotlight on Success: Alex Kane
Spotlight on Success: Anastasios Mirisis
Past Events
Announcements, Acknowledgements, and Achievements
Other Resources
Connect with the MCAA
Happy spring, MCAA!

Welcome to the latest issue of the MCAA Quarterly, the official GSAS Master’s College Alumni Association newsletter. With winter behind us, we look forward to all of the exciting events that spring has to offer, like the 2017 GSAS Threesis Academic Challenge and our annual Grad Toast to welcome another graduating class of master’s students into our alumni community.

We will once again be joining the Master’s College Program Board in hosting the GSAS Threesis Academic Challenge on April 22, 2017. As you already know, this is our largest and most exciting event of the year, and I wanted to personally invite each of you to attend. This is a great opportunity to revisit the Square, engage with current master’s students, and witness the wide range of research they are exploring. With big prizes up for grabs this year (over $6,500), they will present their thesis, capstone project, and/or other graduate-level work in succinct yet engaging three-minute presentations to an audience of GSAS faculty, peers, and alumni.

We encourage you to participate in the Audience Choice award—which has drawn out some friendly interdepartmental rivalry over the years—and come be part of this incredible event. Cheer on the accomplishments of master’s students and show support for the brave competitors who made it to the final stage! Be sure to also stay for the reception following the competition, where you can meet the finalists, mingle with current master’s students and GSAS faculty, reconnect with fellow alumni, and toast the participants of the tournament. In this newsletter, you will see spotlights from past Threesis finalists and learn how the experience helped them in their academic progress, career development, and overall personal growth. See the official Threesis invitation below and be sure to RSVP for the big day!

As always, there are exciting alumni events taking place, like the GSAS Alumni Grad Toast on May 12 (more information to come later this spring). Be sure to mark your calendars to save the date, and I hope to see you there.

If you have ideas for future events and programming, or a recent accomplishment you would like to celebrate, please feel free to reach out to the Master’s College Alumni Association at gsas.masterscollege.alumni@nyu.edu and share your thoughts and news. We want to commemorate each other’s milestones and successes!

I look forward to seeing you at Threesis on April 22, and throughout the spring semester.

Sincerely,

Katie Peterson
MCAA President
MA, Politics ‘12
MCAA MISSION

The Graduate School of Arts and Science Master's College Alumni Association—MCAA—is dedicated to establishing connections among master's students and alumni. The MCAA urges excellence, acknowledges accomplishments, and grants awards for highlighted achievements. Our mission is to reconnect alumni, facilitate a sense of community, and encourage the continuation of intellectual growth. By partnering with the Master's College Program Board, we provide help with the transition from student to alumni and keep everyone informed and involved.

A SPECIAL INVITATION TO THE 2017 THREESIS FROM INTERIM DEAN HARVEY

On behalf of the Graduate School of Arts and Science, Interim Dean Anna Harvey cordially invites you to attend the seventh annual GSAS Threesis Academic Challenge.

Date: Saturday, April 22, 2017
Time: Final Round begins at 4:00pm. Doors open at 3:30pm.
Location: Eisner & Lubin Auditorium, Kimmel Center, 60 Washington Square South, Room 401

The Threesis Academic Challenge is an academic competition for GSAS master's students. Students present the work of their thesis, capstone project, or other graduate research work (e.g. science experiment or research paper) in three minutes or less to a panel of judges in accessible language a non-expert can understand. Competitors are judged on how well they grasp the subject of their thesis, their ability to discuss the topic to non-experts, and presentation skills. Students compete for a grand prize of $1,000 and other prizes while learning to organize ideas and speak about them persuasively in a fun, academic atmosphere.

GSAS will award prizes totaling $3,000 and departments participating in the GSAS Threesis Incentive Program will award $300 to finalists from participating departments and programs. By attending the event you will have a chance to vote for the 2017 GSAS Threesis Audience Choice Winner.

Special thanks to the Wasserman Center for Career Development, the Subject Librarians of Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, and every department and program at the Graduate School who participated in the Threesis Incentive Program, without whom this event would not have been possible.
Shafeka Hashash stands out among many alumni. She completed her bachelor's and master's degrees through a joint five-year program, graduating in May 2016 with a Bachelor of Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies and a Master of Arts in Politics (specifically political economics). Prior to graduating, Shafeka was also a finalist in the annual GSAS Threesis Academic Challenge. She made it to the final rounds and took the stage to present her master's thesis on the fight for civil rights for the physically disabled, her own blindness being a source of inspiration for her work.

Looking back on her master's program at the Graduate School, Shafeka remembers it being a welcome change from her undergraduate program. Especially with smaller class sizes, she was able to really form personal relationships with each of her professors. She recalls the supportive administration and staff of the department as well, with whom she also built relationships. “I felt that way about a lot of my graduate professors…because the classes were so much smaller, I grew much closer with them.” Shafeka particularly values the way her professors and staff gave her advice about life, next steps to take in her career, and where to go from NYU onwards.

Threesis was an important experience during Shafeka's master's program. “It was unique and different...win or lose, it was just a good opportunity. It was also very accessible because [Threesis] isn’t just about the visual.” The academic tournament focuses on distilling a master's thesis, capstone project, and/or other graduate-level coursework and conveying it in language appropriate for a non-specialized audience. Competitors are allowed one single, static slide to accompany their three-minute presentations. Shafeka recollects how helpful the Threesis staff were as well, making adjustments from visual cues to audible ones. “[Threesis] is really about the person,” she said of the competition’s focus on an individual’s ability to create a comprehensive pitch about their research. “I think just by design, Threesis is very accessible.”

Upon graduating, Shafeka has continued her work around civil rights. She was awarded a fellowship by the International Council on Disability, which allowed her to work with the Women’s Refugee Commission in Washington, D.C. Following the three-month fellowship, Shafeka worked at Cornell Tech on disability equality, with a focus on technology. Most recently, she moved to Atlanta where she hopes to continue working in the field. See Shafeka’s 2016 Threesis presentation here.
Alex Kane is an alumnus of the NYU Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute, frequently hailed as one of the greatest journalism programs in the country. Of the Institute’s many dynamic graduate programs, Alex pursued Global and Joint Program Studies, in which a select group of master’s students each year have the opportunity to earn a joint degree in Journalism as well as one with a Global Studies focus. For Alex, that was Near Eastern studies. “It was a unique way to gain expertise in a part of the world I’m interested in and learn how to best write about the region journalistically,” he explained. The program, informally known as “GLOJO,” crosses with various other disciplines, such as Africana Studies, French Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Russian and Slavic Studies, and more.

The best part of being a master’s student for Alex was working on his thesis, which earned him a spot as a finalist in the 2016 GSAS Threesis Academic Challenge. Alex had heard about Threesis through a departmental email and liked the idea of having hard deadlines to adhere to, which would help move along his research and even complete his thesis prior to his program’s deadline. “I had a great time during Threesis. I gained the ability to condense a complicated topic into a three-minute presentation—a skill that all journalists should develop,” Alex said. Working on his project on Israeli surveillance and the “war on Facebook” was one of the highlights of his time at the Graduate School. “Embarking on an intensive, months-long project that involved travel to Israel/Palestine that [then] resulted in a long-form feature that was published in The Intercept, was the best experience I had.”

Since graduating in May of 2016, Kane has been working full-time as a freelance journalist, earning bylines with Vice News, The Intercept, Al Jazeera and The Nation, among others. Alex was also awarded a grant from In These Times, an independent, nonprofit magazine dedicated to advancing democracy and economic justice, informing movements for a more humane world, and providing an accessible forum for debate. Read Alex’s article, published March 2017, here.
In his first semester of graduate school, Anastasios A. Mirisis entered the 2016 GSAS Threesis Academic Challenge and won the Audience Choice award. “I had data I could present,” he explained, when asked about his decision to enter the competition. “I thought, this is a good opportunity to share my research with a wider audience.” His research into the formation of long-term memory in the brain and a genetic mechanism possibly involved in Alzheimer’s disease clearly struck a chord with the audience. As an undergraduate student at NYU, Anastasios studied neuroscience, where he came to appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of the studies, with research stemming from biology, physics, and psychology. Anastasios took a three-year break after completing his undergraduate degree, in which he ran his family’s construction business and supported his brother through college. But his fondness for the academic environment led him back to Arts & Science at NYU, where he reconnected with former professors. He accepted a job offer to manage Dean Carew's lab, where he witnessed the collaborative relationship among the student researchers, who contributed their expertise to each other’s work. He soon was pursuing a graduate degree of his own with the Department of Biology, enjoying the collaboration of the lab, and continuing his research into the brain to understand the biological basis for memory.

Collaboration is an important pursuit for Anastasios, and a large reason why he came to GSAS, along with the prestige of his department. While participating in the Threesis he came to appreciate anew the importance of this collaboration. Presenting his research for a general audience, Anastasios was confronted by the limitations of their knowledge in his field. When attempting to explain the specifics of his studies in molecular biology, he was challenged to step back from the technical details of his research and see the larger thrust of his work—utilizing biological knowledge to better defend against a heartbreaking disease. He advises future competitors to make a presentation the audience will enjoy. “And practice, both for specialists and for people outside your field.” Winning the Audience Choice award was particularly exciting for him, as it proved he had succeeded in his goal of reaching a larger audience. “It was very rewarding to convey my subject to the audience and see that they understood and valued my work.” Anastasios has a bright future ahead of him in academia, and he remains committed to his ethos of interdisciplinary collaboration. “The only way for science to move forward as a whole is by integrating all fields of knowledge.” Watch Anastasios’ Threesis presentation here.
PAST EVENTS

Paint 'n' Pour with the MCAA

The MCAA kicked off the new year with the return of one of its most popular events, Paint N Pour. GSAS master’s alumni met for an evening of creativity and merriment. In the spirit of its mission to foster a sense of community, MCAA members and friends channeled their inner artist, each creating their own beautiful masterpiece while reconnecting with fellow alumni in a friendly and intimate atmosphere. Thanks to everyone who came out for a fun night of painting and pouring! Check out the event photos on the Facebook event page.

Introducing the MCAA Roundtable
Inspired by the GSAS Master’s College Program Board’s “Café Discourse” event, the MCAA introduced its own adaptation of the series with the MCAA Roundtable. The MCAA Roundtable is a platform that brings together master’s alumni from diverse fields for lively conversation on weighty yet modern topics in a laid-back environment. The topic for the first gathering was the State of Modern Political Discourse: How We Talk When We Talk about Politics. The discussion encouraged dynamic conversation through consideration of the following questions: How do we find common solutions to hard political problems in today’s radioactive political climate? How do we stop alienating each other? How did we get here – what are the key factors that lead to such a toxic civic space, and how do we begin to heal them? Be sure to join us for the next MCAA Roundtable by following along with the MCAA on social media. Read more about the event on the Facebook event page.

The MCAA LinkedIn Headshot Photobooth

To welcome spring, the MCAA hosted its first professional development event of 2017 with a LinkedIn Headshot Photobooth. GSAS master's alumni from a wide range of graduating classes visited the NYU Wasserman Center for Career Development to mix, mingle, and network over wine and cheese while receiving a complimentary headshot. Whether you needed to refresh your LinkedIn profile, finally take a real professional photo, or upgrade your social media, thank you for joining the MCAA for an event exclusively dedicated to supporting the professional development and overall success of the master's alumni community. Check out photos from the event on the Facebook event page.
ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, & ACHIEVEMENTS

There’s much to be proud of as a member of the MCAA. We’re thrilled to join in the celebration of success for the GSAS master’s alumni and faculty listed below. Congratulations to all on stellar accomplishments. Your success continues to build the prestige of the Graduate School as you make your mark in the world.

Dr. Humayun Chaudhry (MS, Anatomy ’89) was recently installed as Chair of the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities. Read More

Maggy Donaldson (MA, Journalism/French Studies ’15) won an International Labour Organization Award for Excellence in Reporting on "Breaking Stereotypes on Labour Migration" for her article in Guernica, "A Far Cry from Van Gogh". Read More

Kristina Shull (MA, Draper Interdisciplinary Program in Humanities and Social Thought ’06) spoke with NYU Arts and Science Alumni about her work bringing attention to the immigrants being detained in the U.S. Read More

Matthew Lansburgh (MA, Creative Writing ’15) released a collection of stories, Outside Is the Ocean, which was selected for the 2017 Iowa Short Fiction Award. Read More

Computer Science professor Evan Korth (MA, Computer Science ’00) spoke at the 2017 NYU Entrepreneurial Festival. Read More

Help us share your accomplishments—if you would like to be featured or know of a fellow alum or faculty member who deserves recognition, email gsas.masterscollege.alumni@nyu.edu with your idea for an article or announcement.

THE NYU ALUMNI CARD

Make sure you know about the NYU Alumni Card, a fantastic way to receive discounts on entertainment, dining, travel, transportation, shopping, financial services, insurance, and more. Visit the NYU Alumni site and learn about your benefits and how to obtain and activate your card. Read More
Take advantage of the resources offered to alumni through the Wasserman Center. Alumni have free access to job postings at NYU CareerNet and are eligible for three 45-minute appointments with NYU career counselors. Read More

CONNECT WITH THE GSAS MCAA COMMUNITY

- Like us on Facebook
- Follow us on Twitter
- Follow us on Instagram
- Connect with us on LinkedIn
- Join the MCAA
- Email us
- Visit our webpage