

speaking of

UNIQUE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

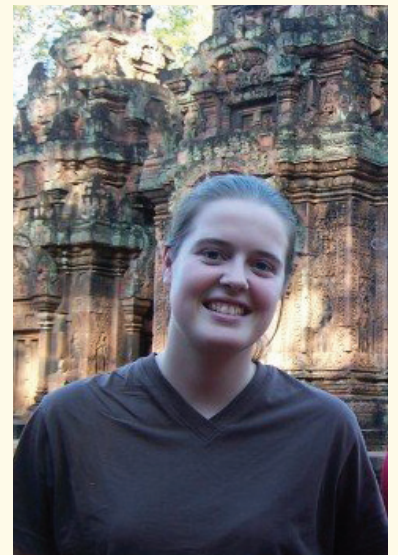
DC alumni share (in their own words) some of their most memorable academic events

My most challenging and rewarding academic experience at DC was researching the garment industry in Cambodia and touring the Cambodian garment factories during my McMaster trip. Looking back on things, I almost can't believe it was possible to coordinate meetings half-way across the world with a representative from the International Labor Organization as well as the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

I remember thinking it was going to be impossible, but Dr. Jo Ann Burkhardt reiterated the importance of being persistent. She was right! I learned the importance of practical and straightforward communication from the entire experience.

I am also grateful for my four-year experience of being a member of Students in Free Enterprise. The experience I gained giving presentations in front of large audiences and the skills I learned from managing projects have helped me in both my work life and graduate school. I remember the long hours of rehearsing our presentation while Dr. Buck (Buchanan) was looking at his watch timing us!

Renee Steffen '07
Athens, OH

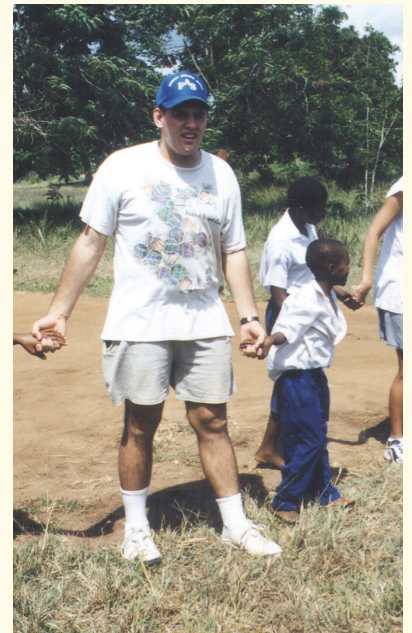


When I attended Defiance, our commitment to service was just beginning to take place, in and out of the classroom, and I was a member of the first group of Presidential Service Leaders, now called Service Leaders. We met weekly and were able to plan the future of the group, which was a great opportunity.

My most memorable experience at DC was when I learned our group would be going to Africa during my senior year to work at an elementary school. I didn't know what to expect when we went, but I knew I was excited about going to another country and experiencing their culture. What I never expected was for that experience to shape my goals for the rest of my life.

It was during this trip that I realized I needed to be in a profession that was dedicated to helping others. After travelling to Africa, I realized there was a much larger purpose for us as students than just attending class. I have been working at Defiance College since graduation, and it has been awe-inspiring to see how much our college has taken the initial concept of service and applied it to so many people in need, not only here in Defiance, but throughout the world.

Brad Harsha '99
Defiance, OH





My favorite experiential learning moments at DC were during winter term. During my junior year winter term, I did a month-long internship with Camp Kern near Dayton for my recreation major. While I did whatever was needed, one of my jobs was working with elementary age students who were bussed from the Dayton inner city to the camp for two and a half days. We had two sets of students each week. For the students, the camp was a whole new world. Some had never been out of the city and had never been on a trail. It was an opportunity for them to learn about birds, camping, wildlife and all things nature.

My senior year, I completed internship hours at Good Samaritan School in Defiance for my physical education major. I worked with two young boys, Tim and Jeff, who needed extra attention. I attended classes with them and helped them learn some basic needs, such as tying their shoes. Both were great learning opportunities, and I will always look back on them as wonderful experiences.

Sally Bissell '81
Liberty Center, OH



My first winter term at DC: I was lucky enough to have parents who understood the uniqueness offered by DC, which allowed me to head west with Professor Randy Buchman on his archeological dig in Arizona. What a wonderful and truly remarkable month it was!

I recall we stayed at a local hotel called the Rio Rico Inn. It was located just outside of Nogales, Arizona, and sat on top of a small hill overlooking the Arizona desert, a beautiful location. We traveled out to Arizona in a station wagon caravan, about 20 people in total. What a trip! Picture 16 or so college students off on an adventure, packed in four vehicles, headed to the southwest with minimal chaperones. Oh, boy!

The part that capped off the whole learning experience and made the trip unforgettable came in the last week we were there. As I was “trolling” in the site, carefully removing the layers of dirt, I hit a small piece of metal. We mapped the spot and continued to clear the dirt around the small metal piece and unearthed a Jefferson Davis cross sabers. This was an emblem found on early American military hats, and if memory serves me, from the mid-1800s. This emblem had been on a hat, a hat worn by an officer, a person who lived 100 years ago and walked these same grounds that we were standing on and amidst this vast desert, it was found by me!

Ken Provost '76
Warwick, RI



Like many freshmen, during the second semester of my freshman year I still hadn't decided on a major. I was taking a variety of classes, hoping to figure out what I would want to do with the rest of my life. Other than realizing I didn't want to be a doctor (blood, open wounds, etc., definitely not my thing), I had not yet caught a vision for my future. It was Dr. David Fred, my accounting professor, who helped me see my potential for a career in accounting/finance. I give Dr. Fred credit for being most influential in helping me identify my greatest gifts and putting me on a path to realize my potential.

Today, as a member of the Board of Trustees, I continue to be amazed by and give thanks for the caring Defiance College professors like Dr. Fred who see the promise in young people and so willingly take the time to provide them with encouragement, guidance, and support.

Phil Mallott '78
Westerville, OH

There are many fond memories from my years at DC, but thinking back on the academic highlights, I'm most grateful to Defiance College for instituting the 4-1-4 system and making available the unique Winter Term experiences during my junior and senior years. In January, 1968, the first year of the 4-1-4 system, I took Mr. Arthur Churchill's Political Science course on the United Nations. The 16 students in the class spent two of the four Winter Term weeks in New York City to visit the United Nations headquarters. During the first week in New York, we were given a tour of the UN, as well as briefings by various UN officials and delegations of such countries as France, China and the Soviet Union.

Each of us was to focus on a particular question, problem or an agency of the UN during our stay in NYC and write a report on it upon our return to Defiance. My roommate and I had chosen UNICEF, and we were allowed to spend some time with some of their officials. We were allowed time during the second week to explore the city, and took in the sights such as the Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center, Radio City Music Hall and New York City Library. What an experience this was – to be afforded an opportunity to observe the workings of United Nations firsthand, and to experience New York City! Even the bitter cold walks from the hotel to the UN headquarters, fighting against the sub-zero degree wind from the East River, are now fond memories.

Fumiyo "Cricket" (Sakai) Young '69 *(pictured with her parents on the DC campus)*
Haslett, MI



I specifically remember a project assigned in Professor O'Toole's Financial Accounting class. We were to take a company's annual report and analyze it. Getting that annual report was the first time I stepped foot inside The State Bank and Trust Company. Because of that project, I ended up getting my internship and have worked for the company for eleven and a half years! I got an "A" on that project and a career I love!

Laura (Richardson) Kline '01
Defiance, OH



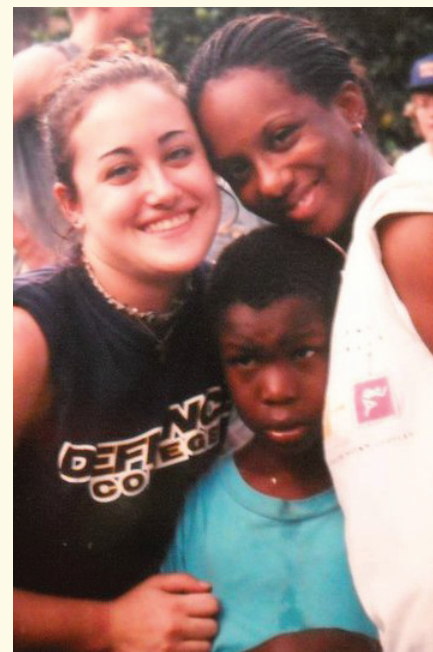
My favorite experiential learning moment at DC was when I was able to travel with the Defiance College Service Leaders to Jamaica for an international service-learning trip during my senior year. We travelled to Highgate, Jamaica, and worked with the young women at the Lyndale Home for Girls and the Swift Percell Boys Home. Our group successfully built a computer room onto a school high in the Blue Mountains in a remote area of Jamaica.

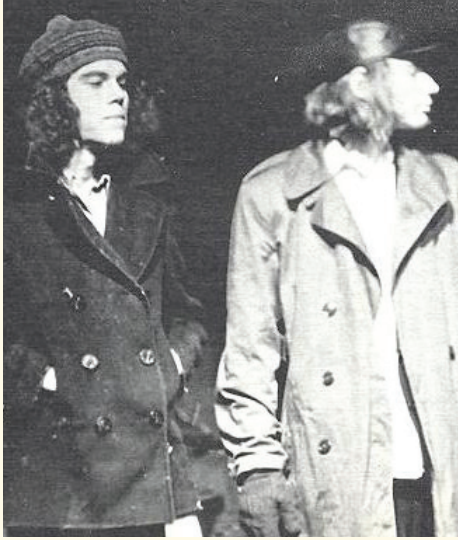
In Jamaica I was able to experience more than just the "food" and "fun" of a new culture. As service leaders, we immersed ourselves into the culture by getting to know the dreams and way of life of the students we worked with and the locations we visited.

As a Communication Arts major, I was able to take communication courses and apply what I had learned in the classroom to the "on the ground" experience in Jamaica. Traveling to Jamaica turned me into a world-wide traveler and still to this day remains one of my fondest experiences of Defiance College.

(The attached picture includes Anika McCants Brown – also an 02' alum – and a young boy that helped us build onto his school in the Blue Mountains in December of 2001.)

Mariah (O'Shea) Orzolek '02
Defiance, OH





Rick Mellerup (left), as Eagle and Mark Shy as Syracuse in *The Place* by Professor Curtis, 1973

In February of 1973, I was fortunate to play the part of “Syracuse,” a homeless person living in a camp with four others. The play, “The Place,” was written and directed by William K. Curtis, my professor of drama at Defiance College. Acting and playing a character role in this play was one of the highlights of my time at Defiance.

In high school, I was always cast in villainous roles because of my height and deep voice. Playing the role of Syracuse was different as it was a character role played with empathy and support for others. The characters in the play were Frank (played by Rod Drummond), Shoe (played by Max McGrew), Jody (Lee Richards) and Eagle (played by Rick Mellerup). Interesting to note, Lee Richards’ role of Jody was originally written as a male part named Jimmy. The part was changed to a runaway girl named Jody, a somewhat controversial topic in 1973.

Mr. Curtis said in an interview with *Defender* reporter Ginny Kennedy, that the “basic element of the human condition is needing each other. We all need to communicate.” Such was the theme of the play. Even though we acted as if we didn’t need each other, “The Place” was about staying together and caring for one another, no matter the circumstance. For me, it was a real first look into a wider world view and social issues.

Soon after this play, we lost the venerable “Sisson Theatre” forever to an act of arson.

Mark Shy '75
Columbus, OH



I took an animal psychology course at Professor Bray’s winter term, just 2-4 weeks. He passed around lamb patties I think, some kind of meat, and I just couldn’t eat it. Nancy McDonald (now Mack) was with me taking the course. I think we both became vegetarians for a while. However, I learned a lot about how individuals involved with animal care process grief, and it was a very interesting class!

Chris Palmer '82
Defiance, OH



I would have to say that working on my senior capstone with Dr. Somnath Dutta and Dr. Spiro Mavroidis was one of the most beneficial and memorable experiences. In trying to detect paracetamol, which is the active ingredient of Tylenol, in the stomach content of fly larvae, Dr. Dutta, Dr. Mavroidis, and I had the opportunity to experience the life cycle of fly larvae firsthand and in doing so we caused a minor fly infestation in Tenzer/Rowe Hall. We then had the ultimate challenge of developing a method to test the extracted stomach content on the gas chromatography mass spectrometry. However, in running the multiple trial and error experiences, I had the opportunity to gain a true understanding of how the GC/MS works which has ultimately led to me being recently hired as a forensic analyst.

Then, after a year of hard work I had the opportunity to travel with Dr. Dutta, Dr. Mavroidis, and other science majors to Wittenberg University to present my project at the Eighth Annual Meeting of The Ohio Academy of Science. The skills I developed during the project and ultimately the opportunity to work side-by-side with Dr. Dutta, Dr. Mavroidis, and the entire science faculty were both very rewarding and beneficial.

Samantha Stegeman '09
Valparaiso, IN

I had many memorable academic memories at Defiance College, but the event that left an indelible mark was when I finally understood what the true difference was between going to a small college like Defiance as opposed to attending a much larger college or university.

My senior year I had a Criminal Justice seminar which was at 7:30 in the morning, one of the required courses for all CJ majors. I had worked late the night before (I was a “bouncer” at an old night club named Route 66 which was a few miles north of campus, and I needed money like any other poor college student), so when my alarm went off at 7 a.m., I just turned it off and went back to sleep.

About 30 minutes later a younger fraternity brother was pounding on my door and yelling that I had a phone call. I got up after, I am sure, thanking him in a not-so-flattering manner, and trudged down the hall to the pay phone. I said hello, and I was greeted by Professor Don Knueve asking me where I was. I told him at the TKE House, and he said, “Well, everyone is at class and we are all waiting for you.” I told him I would be there.

I quickly dressed (the uniform of the day for most college students: sweats and a baseball cap) then walked the short but cold December walk up the street to Schaufler Hall. I remember starting the walk mad and agitated; however, by the time I got to the hall, my agitation was replaced with a smile.

Now it has been nearly 25 years since that cold December morning, and I still smile when I reminisce about it. I truly believe this event epitomizes my academic experiences at Defiance College. I too believe Defiance College and its academic mission are predicated on professors and groups of peers who truly care about each other and education. I know in my heart had I been at any larger institution of learning, that call from a professor like Dr. Don Knueve would have never come, and that is the spirit of Defiance College.

Dave Behrend '86
St. Simon's Island, GA



My favorite academic experience at Defiance College was the over-all experience I received from attending DC. Having transferred from a much larger university, I was introduced to a completely different academic experience when I first stepped on the DC campus. Not only were the class sizes smaller, but I was given the opportunity to really get to know my professors, the faculty, and staff. I developed lasting relationships, and can honestly say I remain in contact with the staff I was closest with to this day.

Today, I am truly living the dream with the education I received while at Defiance College; and it is through the help and guidance of faculty and staff members that I was given the opportunity to embrace my career as a television news producer. I strengthened my leadership and communication skills in the classroom, developed experience and a foundation through my on-campus position in the marketing department, and gained friends, authority figures and mentors in the process. Thank you to DC!

Kate Steward '10
Edon, OH

