LETTER FROM THE GSA PRESIDENT

Fellow Graduate Students:

On behalf of the Graduate Student Association, welcome! Your GSA stands ready to serve you throughout the upcoming academic year. We are working on expanding our services and I invite you to read our strategic plan for the year. This document outlines some great initiatives and can be found on our website: gradstudents.cua.edu. Besides the strategic plan, you'll find many great resources and opportunities to be involved in our University community. Please take a few minutes to visit our site and continue visiting throughout the year as we make updates!

Again, welcome! Feel free to contact us anytime throughout the year.

Yours in Service,

James J. Lewis
President, Graduate Student Association

WELCOME TO NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS

WELCOME RECEPTION | The GSA would like to extend a warm welcome to all incoming graduate students. We are excited to begin the new academic year with you and are looking forward to your contributions to the University community. To facilitate getting to know each other and to provide a chance for you to meet both GSA and University officials, we would like to invite you to a reception being held in the atrium of the third floor of the Pryzbyla Center on Friday, September 2. The reception will go from 5 PM to 7 PM. Light refreshments will be provided.

WEBSITE UPDATES

Please visit gradstudents.cua.edu | Do you need information on conference funding or would you like to inquire about sponsoring a lecture? The GSA website is home to most up-to-date information on GSA events and items of concern to the graduate student community. You can also find practical tips for graduate students, volunteer and employment opportunities, and the latest information on the work of the GSA Senate.
September 16, 2011 | Crabfest is the Graduate Student Association’s annual fall celebration featuring crab, good picnic food, some beer, and lots of great entertainment. It’s a great chance to reconnect after the summer or to meet others in the graduate student community. This year Crabfest will feature the following performers: Deep River, Rock Creek Jazz, deVocals, juggler Rich Potter, and the Caribbean American International Steel Orchestra. Further details can be found on the website.

**CONFERENCE FUNDING UPDATES**

New Funding Caps

One of the primary goals of the GSA is support the academic endeavors of graduate students by defraying some of the costs of attending conferences. Because the number of students seeking funding has increased, we’ve needed to make some changes in order to ensure access to funding for the entire graduate student community. The new funding caps can be found on our website.

**HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE**

A Note From Treasurer Joshua Canzona

In July the graduate student community was informed that the university health insurance plan would no longer include dependent coverage. This change was announced to the graduate student community so late that our colleagues who relied on the dependent coverage were left with less than sixty days to secure a new policy. Concerned students contacted human resources directly and appealed to their student government for support. As a result, the university has provided an option to buy a six-month extension on currently active dependent coverage. This is not a perfect solution but it shows that your voice has influence in this university. For more information please see my full letter.

**THE GSA AND GRADUATE STUDENT LIFE**

Graduate Student Lounges & Pryzbyla Center Grand Piano

As you return to campus this fall, take note of two significant improvements to our surroundings. First, a number of the graduate student lounges (Gowan 407 and 407a, Caldwell 125, Pryz 105-B and 105-C, O'Boyle 320 and 325, and Marist 19) have undergone renovations, and outdated furniture and drab surrounding have been updated, making the space more conducive to creating community among graduate students. A special thanks to Marcel Brown, the GSA Senate, and the office of the Provost for these needed improvements. Second, the Music GSA, assisted by the GSA Executive Committee, has purchased a grand piano for the Pryzbyla Center, for use by the entire University Community.
**Upcoming Events**

Baseball, Theater, Hiking and More!  |  The GSA sponsors many social and culture events each semester, highlighting the many opportunities the DC area has to offer. After the GSA’s best year yet in facilitating social and culture events for graduate students, we’re off to a great start for the 2011-2012 academic year. Please visit the Events page on the website for dates and details and look for information on reserving your place in subsequent emails.

**125,000 Hours of Service**

Volunteer Opportunities  |  This year celebrate CUA’s 125 anniversary and to make a statement about the University’s Catholic identity, the University community is coming together to serve our larger community through participating in 125,000 hours of service. The graduate students of CUA are a significant part of this volunteer effort. You can find out more about the 125,000 Hours of Service at cua.edu/125, including information about specific opportunities and how to report your hours.

**Informative Footer**

Library Locker Space  |  Mullen Library is offering locker space for PhD candidates and graduate students for the Fall 2011 semester. You can check out a key at the circulation desk. Space is available for PhD candidates beginning August 22. All other graduate students may reserve space beginning August 29. Lockers must be cleared out and all keys returned by Saturday, December 17. For more information contact the circulation desk.