

University of Maryland Newsdesk.



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Graduating Seniors Shine

• 9-11 Inspires Student To Become Volunteer Firefighter



Tommy Nguyen, Damascus, son of Vietnamese immigrants, is a student volunteer firefighter in the College Park Volunteer Fire Department because of 9-11. "I know this sounds kind of cliché," Nguyen said, "but after 9-11 when I saw all those guys going into the buildings, unselfishly helping others, I knew I wanted to do my part." Like the 14 other University of Maryland

students in the fire department, Nguyen lives at the firehouse and takes calls every night and on weekends. He is a criminal justice major, will go to work for Ryan Homes after graduation and work toward an MBA, and eventually law school. Nguyen is a graduate of St. John's College High School in Washington, D.C.

• First Baltimore Incentive Awards Graduates



Three members of the first class of Baltimore Incentive Award scholars will graduate this spring. They were pioneers in the University of Maryland 's Baltimore Incentive Awards Program, which gives full scholarships, as well as mentoring and support services on campus, to a graduate of each of the nine participating high schools in the city of Baltimore . The winners demonstrate academic ability, uncommon persistence and maturity, despite adverse life situations. The Baltimore Incentive Award graduates all majored in criminology and criminal justice.



Ima Bassey, Western High School - She will work at the Law Offices of Abdullah Salim for a year while preparing to enter law school in fall 2006;

Reginald Jones, Edmondson Westside High School - Reginald is considering a career with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms;

Essence Jordan, Southern High School - She is considering a teaching career.

- **After 9-11, Making a Difference in Uganda**



After 9-11 Josh Goldstein of Rockville decided it would be up to his generation to make a difference in the world. Pursuing a vision of Generation Y becoming globally connected and civically engaged, Goldstein went on a fact-finding trip to Uganda , organized a day on campus to celebrate global citizenship, and helped create a mission for civic engagement and leadership on campus. Goldstein recently received the national Howard R. Swearer Humanitarian Award, annually given to five college students who exhibit outstanding public service.

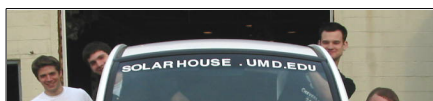
He is using the \$1500 from the award to set up a micro-finance project to give Ugandans small grants to help better their communities. After graduation, Goldstein plans to open a public relations firm to encourage investment and development by Americans in East Africa. Josh is a graduate of Wootton High.

- **Blood, Sweat and Success**

In his freshman year, microbiology major Ben Ruder started the Red Terrapins, a student organization that coordinates with the Red Cross to host blood drives on the University of Maryland campus. In the four years since, campus blood donations have increased by 400 percent. Ruder's program was so successful, that after graduation, he will launch Donors for Life , a company working with the Red Cross to coordinate and book blood drives with 27 Maryland universities and colleges. "I realized the utter disorganization of blood drives on campus when I first got here in 2001," says Ruder. "First off, there were very few blood drives. And they were uncoordinated and they often competed with each other." The website, www.redterps.com, features university blood drive schedules, donation information and sponsorship opportunities.



- **Engineers To Stay On To Build Solar House**



Several local engineering graduates will stay on in College Park to spend the summer in a hot



warehouse near campus, hammering, nailing and figuring out how to make solar energy run an entire household. They are senior members of the university's team that will compete in the 2005 Solar Decathlon, a national event sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy. In October, Maryland and 17 other college teams from around the country will bring their solar homes to the national mall in Washington

to see which of them has designed and built the best example of a home that is run completely on solar power. The summer work will be the nuts and bolts ending to the team's almost two years of planning, designing and raising money for their entry. This is Maryland 's second team to compete in the event. The Solar Decathlon seniors include: Rob Murray , Glenn Dale, Md., Project Manager - Eleanor Roosevelt High School ; Dan Vlacich, Olney, Md., Assistant Project Manager - Montgomery Blair High School; Drew Harmon, Cheverly, Md., Media Group Leader - Eleanor Roosevelt High School; Nehemias Iglesias, Washington, DC Structural Engineering Team Leader - Watkins Mill High School; Tom Serra , Glen Burnie, Md., Construction, Group Leader Project Manager - Glen Burnie Senior High; Dan Feng, Gaithersburg - Wootton High School

- From Coal Country to Langley Park

When Paul Nevenglosky came to the University of Maryland from the coal town of Hometown , Pa. -- population 1399 -- he was used to seeing stripping pits and reddish-orange streams, and wasn't used to hearing much Spanish. Four years later, Nevenglosky is getting ready to start a career cleaning up the environment and ending his stint as coach in a soccer program he started at an elementary school where almost all of the kids speak Spanish. Through Beyond These Walls, a University of Maryland student organization that works in the local community, Nevenglosky created



the "Little Terps Youth Soccer Program" at Langley Park-McCormick Elementary School. The program has grown to include more than 20 coaches and 50 kids. "I didn't speak any Spanish before the program, and I still don't 'speak' any," Nevenglosky said. "The kids are learning English in school and that's what most of them speak when talking to me. A few words like Hurry up!, Faster!, You're Crazy, Good Job, Hello, Goodbye, I sometimes say in Spanish and they get a kick out of it." Inspired by the environmental damage he had seen in the coal regions, Nevenglosky majored in biological resources engineering at Maryland . He will graduate with a 4.0 average and stay in the area to start a job as an Environmental/Water Resource Engineer for Greenhorne & O'Mara engineering consulting firm, in Greenbelt. He plans to stay involved in the Langley Park community.

- **Sri Lankan Student Turns Hope into Business to Help Tsunami Victims**

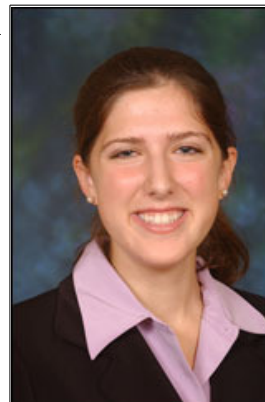


When Manjula Dissanayake of Sri Lanka arrived here 4 years ago to start classes at Montgomery College, the UM honors business major planned to graduate and use his knowledge to help his home country pull out from its economic and political slump. The December '04 tsunami that killed thousands of Sri Lankans, and affected his own family, sealed his career plans in a big way. He wanted to help, so he went door to door in his Silver Spring neighborhood. "I realized that wasn't going to help," he says, "so I decided to do an entrepreneurial activity instead." And so he started the Wave of Hope Foundation, did a marketing

campaign and website and organized fundraising events. From May 20-27, the Wave of Hope Foundation will sponsor a web-based auction for Sri Lankan tsunami relief. Manjula hopes to have raised \$20,000 by June, enough money to finance permanent shelters for 100 people. He wants to stay in the Washington area and continue Wave of Hope. His parents have come to College Park from Sri Lanka for graduation. It is their first visit to the United States.

- **Ending Injustice at the Coffee Bar**

Melissa Boteach, of Reisterstown, Md., brought her passion for alleviating injustice straight to the campus coffee bar. After learning of the economic hardships faced by Latin American coffee farmers, the government and politics and Spanish major organized the Fair Trade Coffee Advocacy Club (FTC) at Maryland. FTC has successfully brought free trade coffee to campus venues, and its members are still working to encourage the entire university, as well as surrounding businesses, to use coffee that is approved by and comes from democratic cooperatives that guarantee fair wages to coffee farmers. Boteach also organized a clothing/medicine drive for Argentine residents while studying in Argentina. Boteach received the prestigious Truman Scholarship in 2004, and is one of 12 recipients nationwide of the George J. Mitchell Scholarship. The Mitchell scholarship will fund her master's degree studies in equality studies at University College, Dublin Ireland, beginning next fall.



- **By Way of Frostburg, Bolivian Student is Commencement Speaker**



Student commencement speaker Fernando Balderrama, a triple major in international business, economics and French, lived in Bolivia for 14 years before coming to Frostburg, Md. as an American Field Service student. Balderrama grew up seeing the hardships and political unrest affecting people in developing countries, a life experience that led to his career goal of helping to equalize the global economic landscape. At Maryland, Balderrama has been active in a number of community service groups. He will attend the London School of Economics in the fall. His AFS family in Frostburg is like his family. Though

Balderrama is an American citizen - he was born in Texas - he had never attended American schools until he was in Frostburg. "I was thrilled to be able to join in activities such as playing the saxophone in the school marching band and playing tennis for the school varsity team" -- and teaching his fellow students to salsa dance. Balderrama is fluent in Spanish, English and French.

- **Out of the Pack - 3 Pisner Quintuplets to Graduate**

After spending their entire academic careers together, three of Maryland's famed Pisner quintuplets, of Olney, will graduate from the university, to strike out on their own. As Terps, the quints shed their group image and the cameras that followed them for much of their childhood. They enrolled in different courses, opted to live apart and took in all campus had to offer -- often without their siblings. "Maryland definitely allowed us to be as close or as far apart as we wanted to be," says Shira Pisner, a communication graduate who, along with her four brothers, turns 22 in June. Shira is embarking on events planning and hopes to specialize in trade shows. Michael created a logo and corporate identity for an interior designer firm as an intern, and wants to parlay the experience into a magazine design position. Ian seems to be the only one with entrepreneurial genes. He's hoping to work in advertising then start his own firm. A fourth quint who had been at Maryland, Devin, transferred to Salisbury to be with the fifth quint, Eliot.

- **Single Moms Make It Through Tough Years**

Everything is going to turn out great for Patsy Warnock, of Beltsville - but she hasn't always been so sure that would be the case. The fire protection engineering student has a job as a fire investigator waiting for her at ATF, and finally, some time to breathe in her life. Warnock is a single mom. When found out she was pregnant she almost quit school, but decided she'd keep plugging. "One of the best mistakes I've ever made," she says. Her daughter's father, a Marine Corps reservist, had been helping raise their 2 and half-year-old daughter until he got shipped out to Iraq. That left Warnock as a true single mom, to juggle school, an internship with ATF, jobs like driving a UM shuttle bus to keep food on the table, being gone from 7 a.m. till 8 p.m., studying late at night and attending to the needs of a toddler. Amber Simco's five-year-old

daughter will be cheering her single mom when she gets her master's degree in environmental policy. When Simco arrived at Maryland to start graduate school, a two-year-old in tow, she was hit with the daunting pressures of being a single parent in graduate school -- night classes, deadlines, earning money, being a mom. So Simco added more responsibility - she worked with the Graduate Student Association to make the campus more family friendly for student parents and was a member of the President's Commission on Women's Issues. She says she's seen improvements.

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