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JOHNCABOT UNIVERSITY • STUDENT NEWSPAPER

**Edition 006**  
 APRIL 2017  
 JCU.MATTHEW.WORDPRESS.COM

**SUBMISSIONS:**  
 NEWSPAPER@JOHNCABOT.EDU

# GRADUATION: WHAT NOW?

BY MARIA DEL PILAR MURGUIA

What are we leaving behind? Did we take enough time to think about our legacy? What is going to happen to all our projects and ideas? Can I let it go?

These and many more are the questions that go through the mind of our student leaders as they are approaching their graduation day. Now, it is the time to start thinking about legacy – what inheritance they will be leaving to the organization and the people they have been working with. It is time to start sharing what they have learnt throughout their time at JCU and how their involvement has made the difference, on themselves and others.

First of all, it is important to acknowledge that, as a student and as an incredible human being, you have contributed to make your program better and your club work toward a greater success. You have built solid foundations for the program to be sustainable through the time, so that the next leader will be able to continue the work and erect something new on top of it.

Once I read an article that stated: “The best leadership legacies are consequences of success coming to those who are surrounded by people that want their success to continue. When you can inspire those around you to take a leap of faith with you, you are creating a legacy defining a moment in your leadership career. Whenever you have this opportunity embrace it. Capture the moment and

appreciate the inherent responsibility associated with it to guide and shape the overall experience.”

It is important that you develop a plan, not only to pass on your technical mastery and knowledge of your role, but also your wisdom and leadership values. You have learned many important lessons along the way, which are some of the most treasured experiences you can pass on to prepare your club’s leaders to carry on the torch into the future.

So where can you start? You can start by compiling a list of:

- All the tasks you mastered in your position
- What you would not do again and why
- Events, programs, meetings that went well and why
- Advices you have for the person who will take over your position
- Name of the administrators\staff\faculty you found helpful – depending also on the kind of events you were organizing
- Describe other important areas new officers would need to carry on (traditions, partnerships, co-sponsorships, fundraisers, themed weeks, etc.)

Once you have finished your list, you should create a transition binder where you will keep all this information. It is important also that you involve your club’s advisor in the process, so that she\he can make sure that your legacy is passed to the new leaders.



GRADUATING STUDENT LEADERS AT LAST YEAR’S PRESIDENT’S GALA. FROM LEFT: CRISTIAN TRACCI, SARA TRAYLOR, DAVIDE ORSITTO, GIORGIA MAIA, ENRICA PACITTO, GIULIA PRIMO, ALEKS VERESCHAK, GIUSEPPE SPATAFORA AND ENRICA BARBERIS.

## N4 NARRATIVE 4

BY SEYNABOU DIALLO

Opening up with a stranger is not easy at all, especially if you are shy, introvert, or you just care about your privacy. Telling an unknown person a meaningful episode of your life that has contributed to making you the person you are now is a real challenge. However, letting that other person tell your story in the first person in front of other people is a completely different thing. You would feel exposed, you would feel weak.

Wouldn’t everything change if the others did the exact same thing you have just done? You would be all on the same level, and you would really understand and respect the fact that everyone has struggles, regardless of the way they look. Understanding, empathizing, building trust, and respecting others regardless of their background through the exchange of personal stories is what the non-for-profit organization Narrative 4 (N4) is all about.

Founded in 2013, the group aims at going beyond barriers and stereotypes through storytelling, by operating in schools and universities of many countries across the world, in order to make the new generation of global citizens more empathetic, sensitive and aware.

The process is simple: after a moderator has paired two strangers, they spend some time together and share their narratives in a relaxed environment. Afterwards, the entire group

reunites, and each one reports the partner’s story in the first person. That is the essential step in the N4 method. In fact, listening to a story with enough attention to re-tell it in the first person means truly understanding what the partner is saying, thus empathizing with him. As I have been told during my first encounter, a Narrative 4 talk is synonym for making not new contacts, but new friends.

As bonding is a fundamental part of college life, and it is not very easy at JCU to bond with people outside of classes, having the N4 experience under the supervision of the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing of our university would be a unique opportunity. In fact, N4 student ambassador, Sophia De Vivo, has proposed to start holding some encounters at JCU. On March 17th, I participated in the pilot version. Based on the success, there are high chances that the project will be implemented into the community.

Although at first I was a bit skeptical about the whole “expose yourself” thing, after listening to one of the stories, I realized that it is truly relieving to share freely any major life experience or life story. By letting people open up about an otherwise secret story, Narrative 4 gives the opportunity to let sorrows go, while being supported by positive feelings of understanding and care.

JCU’s international community would benefit enormously. By building a mutual trust that strips away the typical narratives of cynicism and despair, we could build a new narrative for immigration, for the environment, for equality and peace.

## ALCOHOL AFTER MIDNIGHT ALONE

BY CHIARA PORPORATO

It is move-in day at John Cabot University and like every semester the JCU Housing staff, along with a team of Resident Assistants and Orientation Leaders, is at Fiumicino Airport ready to welcome a new group of students. Stations have been set up for the check-in process and the RAs were ready to scan passports, hand students their packets with the apartment keys, and take pictures of them. Deanna Mayer, Dean of Students and Coordinator of Housing and Residential Life, is also here.

Since Fall of 2016, Deanna Mayer has been greeting new students and introducing them to AMA, which stands for Alcohol after Midnight Alone. This new program which JCU has adopted is designed to educate all visiting students about consuming alcohol and staying safe while studying in Rome.

“Dangerous drinking is a problem at universities across the globe,” Dean Mayer explains. “But when you are studying abroad you may be bringing well-established habits of drinking, sometimes dangerous drinking, into an environment you do not yet understand.”

Indeed, to many students, studying abroad offers the first opportunity to drink alcohol legally. They can order drinks at bars, and buy wine at the grocery store. For the first time, there’s nothing holding them back.

AMA was developed after the Health and Well-Being office ran through some statistics and noticed that in most of the serious incidents involving JCU students three factors were always present: students were alone, it was after midnight, and they had consumed alcohol. Thus, AMA.

The intent of the program is to educate students. “We want students to understand that if they find themselves in a situation in which all three of these factors are at play--they are in a dangerous situation,” said Mayer.

Before AMA was adopted, students who applied for JCU Housing used to only attend the Housing and the Health and Wellbeing Workshops during the orientation week. However, often students went out the same night they flew into Rome without receiving any recommendations on safety. This led to many alcohol related incidents.

Last June, 2016, one of our visiting students, 19-year old from Wisconsin, Beau Solomon, died on his first night in Rome. Beau had come to John Cabot to attend the summer session. Marta Canigiula, Coordinator for Student Health Services and Wellbeing, said, “Deanna and I took what happened to Beau very personally.” The two decided safety tools and tips needed to be imparted at the earliest possible moment: the moment the students landed in Rome.

Now all students attend the safety session on their first day - a 15-minute presentation that advises them on how to stay out of danger. Tips include: getting a working cell phone, saving the JCU emergency number on it, always staying in group, and drinking responsibly. “The intention is not to be a downer,” says Mayer, “but to tell them, ‘Hey, this is a long semester. These first few days are especially dangerous. You are often jetlagged, you don’t know the area, and you may not have yet those trusted friends who will be looking out for you.”

In the intent of safety, JCU has also imposed a curfew on the first two days and organized nightly events, “to keep students out of the bar scene and give them an alternative way to make some friends and get acclimated”, says Canigiula. Some students have complained about the curfew, but Mayer feels the program is working.

The Housing staff registered a 95% compliance with the curfew and students have stopped by Mayer’s office to thank her and tell her they ‘get it’. “I think AMA is a really great idea,” says Micayla Mirabella, a 18-year-old student from New Jersey. “The emphasis that JCU puts on safety makes me feel comfortable living so far from home.”

## Picnic Farro Recipe

BY OTIS T BUMBLEGUS



- 500g perlato (pearled) farro
- 3 large carrots
- 5 firm grappolo tomatoes
- 1 pack of *dolce* peppers
- 1 box of fresh basil
- 1 mini can of corn
- 300g (or more) of *piccante* (spicy) provolone cheese
- 2 lemons
- Salt & pepper
- Spices: dried basil, oregano, parsley, crushed red pepper
- Extra virgin olive oil

(Continues on page 2)

(Picnic Farro Recipe continued)

So you're going on a picnic. Well isn't that just precious. Oh, everyone is supposed to bring food? Don't wimp out by picking up pizza al taglio or be the lame duck that brings napkins. Put on your big boy pants and make this super easy picnic farro.

First thing you're gonna do is cut up all those fresh ingredients. Peel the **carrots**. I mean Brazilian wax these *hombres*. Make 'em as smooth as a lubed up catheter. Chop those shaved babies into quarter-inch rounds. Lay each one flat and dice by cutting it 4-5 times horizontally and vertically. Set the diced carrots aside for later.

Nobody pronounces it toh-MAH-toh. It's **tomato**. Take each tomato and cut off the top and the bottom. Then cut it in half so it looks like you've got two letter D's. Heh. Double D's. Cut from the inside to get the seeds and goop out of there and don't look back. It's as useless as my Classics degree. Dice the outer portions into centimeter-by-centimeter sized squares. I will know if you don't make them even, and with God as my witness I will strike you down. Awesome. Set aside for later.

Get those **dolce peppers** out. More colorful than Prince's wardrobe, right? Too soon? Boo-frickin-hoo. Get all those seeds and the bland white parts out with your handy knife. Dice the peppers into tiny squares. Be sure not to let the oil from the peppers get into your eye. Or ignore that warning. Do it. Put a pepper right on your cornea. I couldn't care less. Set the diced peppers aside for later.

We're gonna do something fancy here. Jk. It's simple but people think it's refined. Take a few of the fresh **basil leaves**, stack them on top of each other, then roll them up into each other. Chop the rolls into thin strips in the same direction as the leaves were rolled. Continue to chiffonade the

rest of the basil. Congratulations, you can go on Iron Chef now. Set that sexy *basilico* aside for later.

**Corn**. Open a mini can of corn. Drain it. Set the corn aside for later. Voila. The only thing easier than that was sneaking alcohol into Gianicolo.

Now it's time to be like me after Chinese food and cut the cheese. Break out that bad boy **piccante cheese** that your mother tells you is no good for you, but you just can't fight the way your heart feels. Just freaking dice it into small cubes. Smaller. Yeah, smaller than that. I said small, numbnuts. Finally. Thank you. Set it aside for later.

Take two **lemons** and roll them between your palms to get the juices flowing. Chop each lemon in half and squeeze all the juice into a small bowl. Get the seeds out, unless you want to eat seeds. Set aside for later.

Now that we're finally done with all the prep, let's cook. Start by putting some water on to boil. I don't know exactly how much - use plenty. Don't be that dumb-dumb that puts in like half a liter. Be smart. You're gonna want to make that water as salty as the coochie of that octopus lady from The Little Mermaid. Yeah, pour it in. That's what I'm talking about. Don't be scared. Keep going, baby. The safe word is "rhinoceros." Pour the farro into your colander and rinse it off. A colander is a "strainer", you idiot.

Once the water is boiling with anger like a grammar Nazi that noticed a misused semicolon, dump in the **farro**. Stir it around. Reduce heat to low-ish or something like that and cover. It's gonna cook like pasta, but there's really no need to stir it around in the same way. Keep that lid on. If it starts to boil over, reduce the heat and take off the lid until it settles down. Hell, it doesn't even need the lid - I just think it just cooks better if you do use it. But what do I know. I'm a college kid. It usually cooks in about 15 minutes or so. Just be tasting it along the way and you can tell when it's done by actually eating some of it, because that's the smart

thing to do. Don't even get me started on those turds that throw pasta against the wall to see if it sticks. Those are the people that are ruining us. When it's done, strain it in the colander. Leave it there.

Now take a giant saute pan and set the heat to medium-high. Throw in the **carrots** and **corn**. Let 'em saute until the carrots become soften and become aromatic. If you need to know what that means, drop out of college immediately. Add in the peppers and tomatoes and continue cooking until the tomatoes lose some of their firmness. It should look like a Viagra commercial in reverse. Ideally there should be some browning on the carrots and tomatoes. Now add in the cooked farro. Mix all the ingredients around so the veggies are mixed evenly throughout. Yes, I know tomatoes are fruits. Shut up. Drizzle in some extra virgin olive oil. Rachael Ray calls it EVOO. I call it the nectar of the gods.

Now spice this ish up. Use the salt and pepper shakers like Shake Weights and get it all in there. Be gluttonous but not stupid. Add in way more dried basil and oregano and parsley than you think is necessary. Trust me. If you're not a scaredy cat like my girlfriend, grind in some **crushed red pepper**. That's it, baby. Oh yeah. Mix it all around again then throw in the fresh basil. Like actually throw it. Wind up from halfway across the kitchen and chuck it. When it's all getting toasty and there's some browning texture appearing on farro, turn off the heat and break out the biggest bowl you have.

Dump the farro mix into said bowl and add in the piccante cheese cubes. Mix it all about and watch in wonder as the cheese melts and spreads throughout the mix like an invasive species. Once nicely mixed and it looks all pretty, drizzle in the lemon juice. There. You can cook. You're welcome. Now get to the picnic. You're running late. You're always late, you lazy turd.

Total price: under 15 euro, excluding spices.  
Makes 6-8 servings.

# Mama Pasta: Where Tradition is Shaken Up with Innovation

BY CRISTINA DI LEVA

Despite it serves only Italian pasta dishes and looks like a tourist trap, *Mama Pasta* is actually a fresh, innovative and inexpensive little restaurant located inside the small alleys of Trastevere. The peculiar characteristic of this all-about-pasta restaurant is that the customers are able to see the preparation of their customized pasta dishes, which are shaken inside a cocktail shaker before being served for takeaway or sit down.

The restaurant was the owner, Alessio Bosi's, dream. He wanted to bring the real tradition of pasta back to the heart of Rome. Here, away from the chaotic and congested city center, the atmosphere is different and new: there is time to think, to walk along the narrow streets of the neighborhood and look around, while eating a delicious plate of takeaway pasta.

*Mama Pasta* offers nine different types of pasta: from *mezzamanica* to fresh *gnocchi*, plus daily specials. These nine types of pasta are combined with ten types of sauces: from the classic *amatriciana* to the most peculiar *ravioli* stuffed with cod and covered in a cream of peas and pepper.

"I come here almost every day, and I can't stop eating this shaken pasta!" said a regular customer while eating a plate of *spaghettoni all'amatriciana*. *Spaghettoni all'amatriciana* comes with sprinkles of *pecorino* cheese and a pinch of pepper. Its salty tomato sauce perfectly marries the "*al dente*"

*spaghettoni*, which is surrounded by bits of soft *guanciale*. *Gnocchi al ragù*, following the tradition of Emilia Romagna, melt in your mouth leaving an aftertaste of sweet tomato sauce and ragù made of minced beef.

The more requested dishes often vary according to its customers: hungry students, workers on their lunch break, the "trasteverino" who wants to try something new, and inevitably, tourists who want a traditional plate of pasta. Regular customers, however, prefer *mezzamanica alla carbonara*, *piccio*, and *fettuccine al ragù*.

"I had *gnocchi all'amatriciana* and it was very flavorful!" said a JCU student who recently tried the food at the restaurant. She continued, "it's very cheap, less oily than Tiber food and it's convenient if you don't have time to cook pasta at home." A dish of pasta might start at 4€ up to 7€.

The name "Mama Pasta" comes from the typical Italian mother, "mamma," who used to spend a lot of time making handmade pasta on Sundays with tradition and love for the family. "My idea was to launch the restaurant in a take-away style, but now we're also giving more space to our clients inside the dining room," Bosi added.

The restaurant, located on Via del Moro 37, does not only serve takeaway pasta dishes, but also has a sit-down dining area, furnished in a '60s style, with bright colors and motifs.

Looks can be deceiving, but from those who have tried it, *Mama Pasta* is worth the try!



AMATRICIANA PASTA

PHOTO BY CRISTINA DI LEVA

## SHATTERING STIGMAS PERFECTIONISM

BY CASSIDY SLOCKETT

I want you to imagine a time when you felt like you weren't good enough.

Most people, at one point or another, have experienced this - maybe you were rejected by that job you applied for, or ignored by the person you like.

Now, I want you to imagine going through every little detail in your day and feeling like you weren't good enough. This is perfectionism. This means overthinking conversations before and after you have them. It means seeing a whole diet as a failure just because you had one bite of junk food. It makes you question whether your boyfriend's compliment was actually genuine. I mean, how could anyone ever think you look good in those jeans?

Yet, nobody will ever tell you that you have a problem. Nobody will ever say, "Hey, can you stop trying so hard? Can you stop studying so much?"

Trying to be perfect is a glorified illusion. Sure, perfectionism helped me excel at pretty much anything I put my mind to. It helped me to get straight A's through school. It helped me to manage to "be skinny" while ignoring my health and my hunger. It helped me win community service awards, athletic competitions, and scholarship money. But perfectionism was also there to tell me that each of these accomplishments were not sufficient. I needed to try harder, do more, be better.

Whenever I had achieved something, perfection was there to remind me to set my sights higher. This problem told me that just straight A's wasn't enough, so I took extra classes and joined more clubs. Perfectionism told me that my body was not thin enough, so I'd eat less and run more. It told me that just going to university wasn't good enough, so I had to finish university at 19 years old and immediately apply for graduate school. And even still, graduating

at 19 wasn't enough, because I would never be the doctor or engineer or Olympic swimmer that my dad wanted me to be. This feeling of never being good enough can stem from a number of factors. In the past, it was because of how I was raised. As a 7 year old, I was grounded for not swimming fast enough in a competition. As a 9 year old, I was forced to run laps around the block to "stay in shape," even though I had a concussion and a skull fracture. As a 12 year old, I wasn't allowed to visit the hospital for a broken toe until after school. Perfect attendance in middle school is, in fact, more important than broken bones. When I turned 13, my father began to tell me that I needed to lose weight. Not only did he want me to be an Olympic swimmer, but a super sexy one!

I learned from a young age that I could only receive my dad's "love" and approval if I was exactly the person he wanted me to be - which I quickly realized, I wasn't. Nonetheless, it took me much too long to learn that this was not actually my fault. Somewhere in all of this mess, I do still believe that my parents just wanted what was best for me.

At some point though, these rigid expectations stopped being my parents demands, and turned into the voice inside my head, incessantly reminding me that I will never be good enough.

I am learning that I cannot continue to sustain this way of life. I am learning to believe that I actually am enough. There really is nothing beneficial to dragging yourself from class to class after being in the hospital all night - just to say you had perfect attendance. There is nothing wrong with taking five or six years to graduate university. And trust me, I feel no better for doing it in two. In fact, I regret having rushed through the best time of my life. If anything, I've learned that people don't actually see my accomplishments as impressive. They just look down on you for being so young. So how do you move past this? How can you finally accept that you actually are good enough?

I have been told that you have to look at yourself in the mirror and stop seeing yourself as parts. You must instead see yourself as a whole, made up of little bits and pieces that are not inherently good or evil (pretty or ugly, really). You are not good, nor bad. You are not perfect and you are not a failure. You are too complex to be labeled this quickly. This is okay, because life is not lived in black and white.

The only way to "get better" from trying to be perfect is to let go - imperfectly. Isn't it the funniest thing, that, the only way out of perfectionism is to imperfectly stumble and fight your way out?

I have been told to take my "failures" as learning opportunities. Being a doctor didn't work out. Am I sad? At one point, yes, I was upset I wasn't smart enough. But, thank god I'm not a doctor. I'd be miserable.

You must learn to put your health before work. This means skipping class because you are sick. This means going to sleep at a reasonable hour instead of studying.

Most of all, you must make time for your relationships every day. You must learn to treasure those who do love you and who do care about you, and stop looking for love in family members who won't give it. Stop looking for love and approval in people who are incapable of giving it. You must care for them like you want them to care for you. And please, never expect for them to be perfect. They will make mistakes, but it doesn't mean they love you any less.

I am far from perfect and I am working each and every day to get better, by being less perfect. I am learning to stand up for myself, to show myself love and compassion, and to spend more time cherishing my friends and less time ignoring my health. I am also hoping, perhaps, that in writing this, there is at least one person out there who now feels just a little bit less alone.



BY POLINA KUZNETSOVA

“Let’s cook borscht,” my mother said one evening. She had come to visit me in Rome, and was tired of eating pasta. I gladly supported the idea. Three months without Russian food had been tough. We went to a Russian grocery store in the Vatican area, “*Galychna*,” to find ingredients for the *borscht*, a traditional Russian soup.

The small shop was crammed with a variety of Russian delicacies. On the right, there were Russian chocolates, *Alyonka*, familiar to every Russian-speaking child. We noticed a refrigerator with typical Russian seafood – salted herring, beluga, caviar and Kamchatka crabs. Right next to it there were a variety of Ukrainian and Siberian dumplings – with cherries, potatoes, mushrooms, meat and Russian ricotta cheese. On the other side, wild berries for traditional Russian tea shimmered with the bright tints of red and orange. The smell of sweet milk chocolate drifted in the air mixing with the tangy scent of smetana (sour cream).

The atmosphere in the shop transported us to an older Russia, or better yet, the USSR. Everything seemed to be made in the style of the old Soviet food store called Sel’po, which means, “Village shop.” One usually found food as well as other household goods – books, cosmetics, vinyls or kitchen supplies – each corner stuffed with

products in seemingly random form. At *Galychna*, fish is found next to hand cream shelf, while tea is close to chocolate. Weird for a foreigner, charming for a Russian.

Stores like this no longer exist in Russia. They have been replaced by large supermarkets. “Sometimes Russians come here not only to buy our food but also to get back to their childhood”, the shop owner reflected. Smiling Yuriy Gagarin seemed to agree from a poster on the wall. In fact, Russian grocery stores can be found in many European countries, as they are always in high demand from Russian-speaking immigrants. In Germany alone there are over 1000 Russian stores and their annual income is nearly 300-500 million euro. “It doesn’t matter for how long you live abroad. You can never really get used to bizarre outlandish dishes”, says Tatiana, a customer at *Galychna*.

Interestingly, some of the products sold here in Rome cannot even be found in Russia anymore. “Those sweets ‘Little Bear in the North’ I used to eat them when I was a pioneer!” my mother laughed, her eyes shining with nostalgia. We looked at many other products with outdated names – they sounded amusing to me. This is all because many Russian products sold here are actually produced in Germany by Russian immigrants, who miss their cherished food. These manufacturers often live in the past and name their products as they were called during their childhood: “Pushkin’s fairy tales”, “herring

for Vodochka” or “mother-in-law’s pickles”. This last item, for example, comes from a well-known Soviet custom, that a bride’s mother always tries to impress the future husband with the various dishes on her table. Lemonade “Barsik”, with a picture of a ginger cat also made us laugh – Barsik is a typical cat name in Russian-speaking families.

“It was a nice and safe time,” said my mother with sadness, still observing the chocolate bars. “We never had to worry about anything. We went to the cinema theater, ate plombir (Soviet vanilla ice cream) and drank fruit lemonade. The only concern we had was not to stain our red pioneer ties with it”.

*Galychna* is not only a good place to find ingredients for borscht; but it is also a place to socialize with fellow countrymen. Often there are Russians, Ukrainians or Belarusians hanging out at the shop and discussing local news or memories of old life with the owners or other customers. My mother and I instantly got into one of such conversations. I was listening to the fascinating tales about “the tastiest milky buns in world,” about the strawberry chewing gum that, “felt like a real strawberry from the garden,” and a mysterious pastry, “chocolate potato.” Part of me was sad that I would never have an opportunity to try any of these in my life.

Address: Via Santa Maria alle Fornaci, 6

## Expedition 196: A Declaration for World Peace

BY CASSIDY SLOCKETT

Have you ever dreamed of traveling the whole world? It is something many people aspire to do, but it is also something that can be difficult, if not impossible to do. Traveling the world takes bravery, resourcefulness, good health, openness to other cultures, and a decent chunk of time and money. Cassie De Pecol, a triathlete and entrepreneur, had this same dream. In a recent article with *The Daily Mail*, she explains, “Since school, I’ve had this desire to visit every country in the world, intrigued to learn more about every culture, natural habitat, and religion.”

How did she do it?

At 25 years of age, Cassie De Pecol bought a one-way ticket to Europe, and proceeded to travel to 26 countries. Having only \$2,000 of savings from babysitting in her bank account, Cassie survived off of bread, sleeping in train stations, couch surfing, and working in boutique hotels for a living. After this trip, Cassie knew she wanted to do more with her life than simply travel.

With her travel experience, Cassie launched “Expedition 196” at The World Domination Summit, in Portland, Oregon. Her goal was to inspire the millennial generation, especially women, and completely offset my

carbon footprint. These travels were no holiday, as this young woman boarded over 255 flights, planted trees in over 50 countries and went through five passports, most likely jet-lagged 100% of the time.

Expedition 196 allowed Cassie to speak as an ambassador for the International Institute of Peace Through Tourism to over 16,000 university students in 36 countries at events like the IPTT World Symposium in South Africa. Recently, she spoke at Bethlehem University in Palestine. Cassie has taught others about world peace through economics, and responsible tourism through regeneration and sustainability of the environment. She discussed how “tourism can be a mediator between peace and conflict, and a way to further friendship among nations as well as providing humanitarian assistance.”

In order to work in certain countries and to enter others, Cassie needed to obtain the “Global Citizen” title. For example, countries like North Korea do not even allow US citizens to take a bus or a train. Later, she began working for the Institute for Economics and Peace.

In February of 2017, Cassie, 27, broke two Guinness World Records: “Fastest Time to Visit all Sovereign Nations” and “Fastest Time to Visit all Sovereign Nations - Female.” She is also the youngest American to travel to every sovereign country in the world.

Even with working as an ambassador and opting for budget food and accommodation options, traveling is still not free. About \$198,000 (€184,700) of travel funds was given by sponsors and donations like Cliff Bar, Air New Zealand, and DogEared Jewelry. Also, she is able to stay in eco-friendly hotels as long as she promotes them.

While Cassie has been able to walk the streets of Paris, she has been detained at the airport in Libya and accused of being a spy. Nonetheless, Cassie believes that tourism has the potential to reconcile conflicts between countries and has no plans to give up, until she has left a legacy of spreading peace around the world. As a solo female traveler, she visits countries that are politically unstable, not as appealing, and perhaps downright dangerous. She told *The Daily Mail*, “I just hope that I’m able to inspire young women (and men) around the world to go after goals and feats, which so far, people think can only be done by man.”

As for the future, Cassie De Pecol plans to visit Antarctica. But first, she will race in an Olympic Triathlon in San Diego. Follow Cassie on her mission to achieve world peace, along with her 407 thousand followers on Instagram at @cassiedepecol.



@CASSIEDEPECOL INSTAGRAM PICTURES

## ACADEMIC OVERSIGHT & WEIGHTED GRADING

BY JONAH MAYER

Anyone who tells you that lower average GPAs doesn’t matter is lying. In fact, a recent study by PLOS One found that a higher GPA, as well as attending a school with a high average GPA, provided a considerable boost to those applying for an MBA. It is not surprising then, that a GPA (one of the most valued variables on an application) is influential. In an American system where schools like Yale give 62% of the population A’s (2012), and inflated grades continue to rise, it seems foolish that a school would restrict or depress their average grades. Even worse would be a school without a system for generating grade equity between those classes with easier or tougher graders. This school does exist, and it is John Cabot University.

Now JCU may argue that, “if everyone gets an A, then what value do they have?” But if students are suffering real harm for a variable that is weakly correlated to academic success, the university is not doing anyone a service. This is coupled with no system for evening out the effects of excessively tough graders, giving grades little objective value. Low average grades and tough grading is encouraged by John Cabot’s academic policy. The policy recognizes a “C” as “satisfactory” meaning that teachers must break this policy to have internationally competitive grades. It is questionable if the university even believes that a “C” is satisfactory as several courses require a “C-” to proceed. Slightly less than satisfactory is hardly failing.

Despite this issue, a survey conducted of over 20 random JCU students on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied), averaged a 2.89 in terms

of concern about lower average grades at JCU. While showing a moderate amount of concern, the lack of anxiety could be linked to a lack of experience with the American grading system. This is substantiated by the fact that study-abroad students averaged about a 4, over a point higher than degree-seekers.

While lower grades hit students hard after they leave JCU, the system for academic complaints is corrosive to the entire learning process. Polling regarding “filing complaints and general oversight” was incomplete as one in three reported not knowing enough to grade the system. The majority of others reported high degrees of uncertainty. Students rated JCU’s effort to inform them on the system for filing complaints as a meager 1.7 out of 5, with all but two students reporting a 1 or 2. The most troubling was the indication that the system makes students feel that JCU doesn’t care about their feedback. This was confirmed when students were asked about their level of confidence that anything would be done about their complaints. Students averaged a 2 out of 5, and those who had previously made complaints uniformly gave 1’s, making it clear that the system does not encourage feedback.

This reality is a blow to hard-working students. With a deeply flawed system for filing complaints, students must go through an arduous process of appeals before reaching the academic council. One student claimed that after confronting her teacher over a grade, she was told that she could appeal, but that it was a waste of time, given that she was more likely to receive a lower grade and the exam would be looked at by the teachers’ peers.

## JOEY REVIEWS

### HUNT FOR THE WILDERPEOPLE

BY JOSEPH ARMENIO



Believe it or not, this is going to be my last Joey Reviews. I’m graduating in May, but hey, we had some pretty good times. I hated on *Suicide Squad* and praised *Doctor Strange*. I’ve touched the heart and souls of my thousands of fans. Let’s face it, I became a cultural icon at this university. So when deciding what movie I should do for my last review, I must admit, I had a hard time choosing. Usually, I choose to review movies that are currently in Rome. It gives the reader an opportunity to find out what movies are playing in English here, as well as getting a good sense whether they should go see it or not.

With the current movie selection, there is no chance in hell that my last movie will be about *Beauty and Beast*. Or the 72nd installment of *Fast and Furious*. I think this one is called *Fate of the Furious*. Who knows. No one is checking anytime soon. I could be right or wrong, no one cares. The point is, I’m not going to review those movies.

I’ll instead review a movie from last year that is currently available on DVD, or, let’s be honest, illegal download. *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, is a movie that I feel is incredibly underrated. It’s this pretty crazy movie from New Zealand directed by Taika Waititi. Its funny, sad, and clever. It’s a film that really shows off the expertise of the director. He has a sort of Wes Anderson vibe to his style that creates a nice viewing experience. If you liked *Moonrise Kingdom*, you would love this one. Trust me.

The acting was nice and the two main characters had great chemistry. Nowhere close to Danny Devito & Arnold Schwarzenegger chemistry, but close. I think I’ve shown this movie to everyone I know - and they all said it was anywhere between “meh” and “fantastic” That’s a pretty good range if you ask me.

I’ll cut this review a little short because I want to talk a little bit about who I’m selecting to replace me as the school’s Chief Film Critic. Yes, that’s my title, and yes I gave it to myself. When it comes to reviewing films, I wouldn’t trust anyone but Joel Hashop. He has great passion for films and questionably immoral humor. It’s the perfect combination for criticizing movies. He liked “Hunt for the Wilderpeople.” So people, next year, make sure to look for “Joel Reviews.” Plus, our name’s are practically the same. It’s going to be great.

In terms of grading for *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, I’m giving it an A+. Don’t question my judgement. This is my last review, I can do whatever I want to.

Butt butt skiddily butt butt.

# ASK Ms. Cabot

Dear Ms. Cabot,

*I'm a study abroad student, and I feel like there is so much of Rome that I haven't seen. I only have a few days left, so I want to see some more sites before I leave. What are your favorite places in Rome outside of Trastevere?*

Grazie mille!

Mr. Wanderlust

Mr. Wanderlust,

It is so easy to get stuck inside a bubble of places you usually go no matter what city you live in. I know I've spent some weeks in Rome not venturing too far outside of Trastevere (and then kicked myself later for not exploring more!). Rome is a massive city full of millennia of history, so there is no shortage of places to go and visit. Here are a few of my favorites.

## The Orange Garden // Giardino degli Aranci

The Orange Garden is a beautiful park on the Aventine Hill and about a thirty minute walk from Trastevere. It's named for the picturesque rows of bitter orange trees that line the park and that have been there for centuries. You can get a great view of the city which makes it a great destination to get your last-minute Roman photo op. Make sure you take a peek through the keyhole at the door to the Villa del Priorato di Malta. You may have to wait in line, but it's worth it for the beautifully-framed view of St. Peter's Basilica.

Villa Borghese

The Villa Borghese gardens are my favorite in Rome. Located on the Pincian Hill, you can walk from Trastevere to the entrance to the gardens at Piazza del Popolo in about 40 minutes. The main villa you need to visit is the Galleria Borghese where there are a number of Bernini, Caravaggio and other Renaissance pieces. The gardens are also great if you're a fan of the outdoors, and you can rent a bike to ride around or a rowing boat on the lake around the gorgeous Temple of Aesculapius. If you are looking for more rest and relaxation, the gardens are a great place to have a picnic with friends or read a book in the grass.

Baths of Caracalla

The Baths of Caracalla are a must-see if you feel like you have not yet gotten your fill of Ancient Rome. The walk to the baths is about 36 minutes from Trastevere. Named after Emperor Caracalla, the baths were the second largest public baths in Rome. I like them because they're among some of the best preserved ruins in Rome. Since you can walk through them, I found that they were more engaging than some other Roman ruins. Visiting the baths with a tour guide really does help bring the ruins back to life. If you're a film buff, the Baths of Caracalla are where Marcello and Sylvia dance together in the party scene of Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*.

I hope this gives you some ideas of places to visit. Enjoy the rest of your time in the eternal city. Make every day count!

Yours truly,  
Ms. Cabot

**Barilla Center**  
FOR FOOD & NUTRITION



BY CRISTINA DI LEVA

Barilla Center for Food & Nutrition (BCFN) Foundation held its first official event at John Cabot University last March 21, 2017. The theme was "How to Promote Food Sustainability." Professor Margaret Kneller introduced the lecture, which was carried out by Dr. Elena Cadell, researcher, consultant and representative of the BCFN Foundation.

The lecture focused on the importance of promoting sustainable agro-food especially among young people, to create awareness and generate a world where "food is produced and consumed in a sustainable way for the benefit of current and future generations."

BCFN Foundation is a private non-profit apolitical institution working as a multidisciplinary and autonomous think tank founded in 2009. Its president, Guido Barilla, is also known as the current president of the Barilla company, famous Italian food brand. The foundation analyzes the economic, scientific, social and environmental factors related to food in a cause-effect relationship and produces a high scientific value content to inform and guide people toward daily choices regarding food and nutrition, health and sustainability.

During the lecture, Dr. Cadell emphasized

one of today's greatest paradoxes: "for every undernourished person, there are now two obese or overweight people in the world." While 36 million people die every year from malnutrition and famine, 3.4 million die from being overweight. Additionally, she continued, the phenomenon of obesity has nearly doubled worldwide since 1980 and keeps growing. In other words, while one part of the population eats too much (and poorly), the other eats too little.

Dr. Cadell also showed the double food and environmental pyramid developed by BCFN Foundation, which "demonstrates a direct relationship between the nutritional aspects of foods and the environmental impact created in the production stage and when they are consumed."

BCFN Foundation, in partnership with Thomson Reuters Foundation, launched the Food Sustainability Media Award, which Dr. Cadell introduced to both John Cabot University students and professors. The Media Award aims to recognize the work of professional or non-professional journalists in "reporting and communicating issues related to food security, sustainability, agriculture and nutrition" in the categories of written journalism, photography and video. Applications can be sent until May 31, 2017.

For more info, visit: [www.goodfoodmediaaward.com/#about-the-award](http://www.goodfoodmediaaward.com/#about-the-award).

Interest meeting TOMORROW!  
(Tuesday, April 25th) at 2:30 pm in  
Guarini's Lemontree Courtyard  
FREE pizza and drinks!

# FROM THE EDITOR

Dear JCU community,

This is my last issue as chief editor. Yes, this is it! The day has finally arrived, I will be graduating in two weeks. Of course the future looks terrifying, but I am also grateful for all I accomplished in these years in John Cabot.

These last weeks are a good moment to look back to my university journey and reflect on what I have learned. I wanted to use my last editorial as an opportunity to officially say goodbye and leave some tips to my younger classmates. I don't want it to be a list of "things you should know in college," but simply a collection of lessons I have learned and would like to share.

My college years have been very important for my personal growth. I have discovered so much about myself and the people I love. I have met good friends and achieved many great goals. When you arrive to the same position I am in now, you will feel the same. Work hard so that when you reach your final senior month you can look back to the significant experiences you have lived through. Try new things, take risks, take opportunities and learn.

It's incredible to realize how important these four years are in your life and in the process of becoming a full-functioning adult (what a terrible word...sounds like a threat). Stop for an instant and remember of all the 'firsts' you have gone through, or that you are about to go through. First home-cooked dinner by yourself, first time in Europe, first 12-page paper, first laundry, first time in an Italian car, first tattoo, first full conversation in another language and so on. Yes, you can panic a little, but please appreciate all these moments. I don't know many people who are lucky enough to attend one of the most multicultural Universities in Italy, learn from people of all nationalities and eat pizza every day.

As I was saying, I learned so much about myself in these years. I think of this as a process, a series of steps, rather than a single "aha!" moment. Through my interactions with people, my successes, failures and ventures into new activities, I slowly began to piece together not only who I am, but also, who I want to be. I learned more about my interests, my personality, my strengths and weaknesses, as well as the qualities I admire in others and hope to see in myself one day. Growing up and trying new things also teaches you what you are not. In college, I learned that it's useless to try to be something you're not. By trying to be like other people, you kill the inner strengths that are unique to you. Being yourself will leave you much happier and people around you will sense your genuineness and appreciate you.

For example, I used to be the girl who couldn't say no. I wanted to please everyone. It took me some time to realize that saying "no" isn't about being weak, missing out or offending others. Instead, it's about being smart and understanding what you reasonably can and cannot accomplish. I suffered, I learned, I changed. I tell you: You need help? Ask for it. You want to help? Donate your time. Be kind, listen and always take care of yourself. Self-love is not selfish, it is important. You matter. Don't try to do an internship, a job, five classes and perhaps sport and a school club. You are human, and you are also learning. Sleep, a lot. Believe me, you need it. When you wake up, then you can and will move mountains.

Another one of the greatest lessons I have learned is to make the most out of what you have. Life isn't all rainbows and sunshine. Colleges don't just hand you scholarships, jobs don't just land in your lap, and plans to study abroad don't just appear in your day planner. First, something or someone has to make opportunities available and possible for you, and often, that person is you. You have to be the one to reach out, to talk to other people, to apply, or raise the money. If you really want to do something, start creating the opportunity for yourself.

I became Editor in Chief of *The Matthew* about a year ago and since I felt blessed to be able to make so many changes, and to have an impact on the JCU community. I managed a newspaper that had existed for many years before me and gave it a fresh look: new content, new ideas and new initiatives. I have made mistakes, and often felt lost and tired, but I persisted. I talked to people, was active, took all the opportunities I was given and made them grow. I was of course helped by many people: I am very thankful for the amazing friends and people who were next to me.

(Important note: don't be so hard on yourself and RELAX.)

This example brings me to another really important point: care. Yes, you have to care for things to change. One of the best lessons I learnt in these years is that to advocate for myself or for something I care about. This is very important to learn. Make sure you don't miss that class! I've understood that my voice is louder than I thought and that I must say what is important to me. I've learned that you have to fight for something- you choose what- but you must have something at heart and take a stance. It may be gender, race, animal rights, immigration or peace. You choose, but please, please fight for something. Care. Otherwise, you are wasting your potential. You can also choose doing something more, even on a small scale: it can be that one professor who does not respond to your emails, a class, or simply the vending machine for your favorite snack. Care. Accomplish your goal, chase down people, speak up. Oh, and perseverance is important. If it's important to you, persist. College teaches you that whatever you do, there is a lot of competition; that you might not get that job, or the person you like, so just do it. Perseverance and care will get you places in life.

Many people have told me how *The Matthew* started looking a lot like me. It is true; there is a lot of me in here. It's been a nice "work in progress" since September and I am very happy for many of the articles that were featured. My biggest pride is the "Shattering Stigmas" section that I started in November, which I hope will be continued in the new semesters.

I would like to acknowledge everyone who was involved in this year's newspaper and tell them from the bottom of my heart: thank you! From my team, to the President and Deans, to faculty and staff. Thank you to Cassidy, Lydia, Polina, Cristina, Allie, Maggie, Joey, Prof Mancini, Prof Gutierrez, Alessia, Julia, Valentina, Pilar, Alessandra, writers and friends.

Good luck with finals everyone.  
Alla prossima JCU, I'm off to Santo Domingo!

Yours,

Enrica Barberis  
Editor-in-Chief



ENRICA BARBERIS WITH HER AWARD FOR "OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE JCU COMMUNITY"

## Need bragging material for your resume/CV?

Many newspaper members are graduating this May and we need new

- photographers
- aspiring journalists
- creative writers
- graphic designers
- editors/proofreaders
- social media guru's
- Wordpress experts

