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THE MATTHEW

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Overcoming an Eating Disorder and Thriving in College

By AXEL KEICHER

In recent years, the number of people suffering from eating disorders has been on the rise in the western world. According to the National Eating Disorders Association, 30 million Americans suffer from eating disorders.

A study published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services discovered that 90 percent of the people suffering from eating disorders are women between the ages of 12 and 25.

One of the people in that 90 percent was Samantha Abear, 21, a degree-seeking student at John Cabot University who struggled with Bulimia Nervosa throughout her adolescence.

"There are a lot of taboos about disorders. If there's something that I learned about my struggles, I'm going to talk about it. If we all keep quiet about the issue then we are essentially hindering each other instead of helping each other," said Abear.

For Abear, it all started at a young age.

"The first time I actually experienced bulimia was in 7th grade. A friend of mine had told me that she tried to make herself throw up, so I figured I should try as well. I only did it a couple of times then, before my mother found out and confronted me about it. I swore I would never do it again."

Six months later, Abear was doing it after dinner every day. She had gained a lot of weight and was experiencing an identity crisis. One of her concerned friends stepped in and alerted the school therapist. She saw him three or four times, after which she got better.

Abear kept a good track record during her freshman year of high school as well. She lost 15 pounds in three months, through healthy diet and exercise. She was happier than ever, spending a great deal of time with friends and her new boyfriend.

Disorders of any kind, however, are sneaky.

"They are like an addiction. You can escape them for a while, but eventually you relapse. And that is what happened to



Photo Credit: Riccardo Pugliese

me in my sophomore year of high school," said Abear.

She relapsed, heavily. The eating disorder took full control of her life. She chewed gum all day, drank a lot of coffee, anything that could make her forget how hungry she was. All the while, she barely ate.

The effects of eating disorders are heavy not only mentally, but also physically.

"I remember that I would stare at myself in the mirror until I burst into tears. My eyesight started to worsen, my hair thinned, and I always had marks on my knuckles from sticking my hands down my throat," Abear said.

At this point her parents took action and sought professional help. Abear said her parents' decision was hurtful -- and left her feeling that they could not, or did not want to help her themselves.

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Letter from the Editor

It is hard to believe another semester has passed. In the past month, John Cabot University paired with Facebook and ItaliaCamp to host its largest Elevator Pitch competition to date. On November 17, the Guarini Institute held a group panel of accomplished scholars to discuss the Middle East. The drama club's Nonsense show, performed on Thanksgiving Day, was a smashing hit.

In the December issue, our writers explore student life —learning to budget properly, enjoying the true *gioia di vivere* of Italy, and, in light of the approaching holiday season, giving back to those in need. We also have a student profile on a young woman struggling, and ultimately overcoming, an eating disorder. This article, to me, is a reflection of the open, candid environment unique to the JCU community.

As always, we give a special thank you to the newspaper's advisor, professor Rosamaria Mancini, who has given us the freedom to publish what we deem important to the university. We would also like to extend our gratitude to faculty, staff, the university's administration, and of course, the students who contribute to this publication. Comments and criticism are gladly welcomed at newspaper@johncabot.edu.

Wishing everyone a happy holiday season,

Lauren Cater
Editor-in-Chief, *The Matthew*

Why We Should Care About Taxes ... And Journalism

By FRANCESCA MIRABILE

When Jesse Drucker, an international investigative reporter for Bloomberg News, encouraged his former Wall Street Journal (WSJ) colleagues to revolt against Rupert Murdoch's empire, he already knew journalism had to be used as a weapon for good. "Journalism can fix things that seem wrong," Drucker says. "It's a tool to correct world problems: homelessness, poverty, corruption — whatever they might be."

In his office on the fourth floor of a building in Piazza del Popolo, Drucker explains the reasons why he chose his career. Born and raised in New York City, Drucker interned at The Village Voice when he was only a high school junior. "The Voice was very different 26 years ago," says

Drucker.

"It dealt with more serious political journalism than now, and I worked as the assistant of an editor who was very passionate about gay issues." This is where Drucker developed his own passion for the problems that were not commonly talked about in mainstream media, especially those surrounding homosexuality and the outbreak of HIV throughout the country.

While majoring in History at Columbia University, Drucker organized homeless advocacy groups to help out in the community. Drucker jokes around, "I never wrote for the school paper, but I worked for the Radio Station at Columbia — although my main job was to play records."

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The Budgeting Issue of Studying Abroad

By LAUREN HEALY

"I just got off the phone with my mom," says Camille Dottore, a junior at Providence College who is studying abroad in Rome this semester.

"She said I spent \$10,000 so far. How did that happen? We're not even half way through?"

Spending money and lots of it. It is a common theme for students on their four-month study abroad adventure. Whether it is a flight to another European city, a night out with friends, or even that 2-euro cup of *gelato* after class, money adds up quickly and many students say they lose track of their budget within the first few weeks.

Anna Felberbaum, director of Cultural Experiences Abroad, says traveling, eating out and nightlife are biggest reasons students lose track of their budgets. She added that her students in the past have seemed more responsible with their money than now.

"The [students] have that top ten list of places they want to see and don't even see much of Italy," said Felberbaum.

The average study abroad student at CEA spends between \$4,900 and \$10,780 on meals, personal expenses and travel during their four months. On travel alone, between \$1,470 and \$4,900.

"I think students should research how much flights cost and how much trains cost. They may think it's a lot cheaper than it actually is," warns Felberbaum.

Hannah King, a junior study abroad student from LeTourneau University, says she spent a lot more money on traveling than she anticipated.

"The first trip I took was to Interlaken Switzerland, and I spent around \$1,000 dollars in just three days," confesses King. "That's absolutely disgusting."

Sheer laziness appears to be one factor in increasing costs. Some students book trips with tour groups when they could save by doing the research and booking on their own. Others wait until the last minute to book flights, and this causes them to spend more.

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Why We Should Care About Taxes ... And Journalism

Continued from front page

Then, for four years, Drucker worked as a fact checker for "The New York Observer." At the Observer, Drucker met one of his mentors, Peter Kaplan, who opened his door into the world of journalism. Drucker obtained a reporting job, covering city hall at the Newark-based "The Star-Ledger." The gig allowed Drucker to investigate and report on the issues that he was most passionate about – those ignored by the rest of the public.

In July 2000, Drucker started writing for the WSJ. Inspired by Pulitzer Prize winner David Cay Johnston and his thorough investigations, Drucker had the idea to create a new reporting position that focused on taxes. "When I told people I was going to write about taxes, they asked me what I had done to get the bosses angry," Drucker admits. "Truth is everyone thinks taxes are a dull topic, but they don't understand taxes are the main way wealth gets transferred."

Focusing on corporate taxes, Drucker began exploring a topic that he thought was not considered enough. "People don't pay attention to tax issues," Drucker says. "But there's billions and billions of dollars at stake when we are talking about corporate taxes."

When Murdoch's News Corp. showed interest in acquiring Dow Jones & Co., owners of the WSJ, Drucker pushed for a revolution in the offices of the publication. "The Bancrofts are under tremendous pressure to accept News Corp's offer," Drucker's letter to his colleagues reads. "And that pressure will only become greater in the likely event that Murdoch raises his bid." In July 2007, Murdoch bought off Dow Jones for \$5 billion. Drucker left the paper and started working for Bloomberg News in Rome, where he is currently based.

"There was a greater opportunity to do investigative journalism in long form at Bloomberg," explains Drucker, whose goal was to expose the fallacies of American corporations overseas. Drucker continues, "Europe is a great place to avoid taxes."

While in Europe, Drucker dedicated his investigations on internationally acclaimed companies, such as Google. In 2010, he wrote a series of stories showing that the company had avoided \$3.1 billion of taxes by shifting the majority of its foreign profits into accounts in Ireland, the Netherlands, and Bermuda.

"I am very proud of those stories," Drucker says, commenting on the pleasure of the reporting and how clearly he remembers the "aha" moment of solving the case. "It was literally one line of numbers in an enormous list I was checking," Drucker says. "If I hadn't looked for it, no one would have ever noticed."

Drucker passionately recounts the steps of his investigation processes and the pleasure of reporting on the job, commenting on the detailed work that goes into the analysis of court files, reports, corporate records, and interviewing people.

"If there is one piece of advice I would give to anyone who hopes to go into journalism, it's not to be dissuaded by the inevitable confrontations of the job," Drucker says. It might take time, but it is worth it, especially when it means practical results. In fact, after Drucker's Google story was published, Ireland started taking action to shut down tax shelters.

"Journalism is a difficult and complex profession, especially when it is related to the financial world," Drucker says. "But it is also an amazing tool. The hope is that some change will come out of it."

Elevator Pitch Winners Participate in European BarCamp in Milan

By VALERIA BORGHETTI



well as Riccardo Maiolini, co-founder of ItaliaCamp.

After hearing the selection of live and video pitches, the panel of judges elected Lucio D'Alessandro for the Business Idea category, a tie between Anthony Millimaci and Gina Semensi for the Social Cause category and Valeria Borghetti for the Personal Pitch category.

The prize was a trip to the European BarCamp in Milan November 28 and 29. Lucio D'Alessandro and Valeria Borghetti represented JCU at the event, which brought together entrepreneurs and researchers on the topic of Social Innovation. The variety in speakers was, geographical, generational and gender-driven, which made their debates interesting and fair. The diversity on stage allowed for intense discussions on what Social Innovation is, contextualizing it in a culture, economy, community and era. Riccardo Maiolini, organizer of the European BarCamp was pleased to welcome two JCU students in Milan, as he will be teaching as an adjunct professor in January.

The European BarCamp was held at the Accademia delle Arti di Brera, where Empress Mary Therese of Austria studied. The BarCamp aimed to bring voices, ideas and thoughts together on social innovation, with a European perspective that highlights points of view from different countries. The discussions ranged from how social innovation can impact unemployment in Italy, to promoting gender equality in Estonia, and helping communities in Portugal and Mozambique.

Profile Column: Ali Reza Arabnia, JCU Trustee

By WASIM KHIZARAN

Ali Reza Arabnia, an ordinary Persian man, who started his life in Iran, was recently awarded the prestigious title of Knight of the Order of Merit for Labor in Italy because of his extraordinary achievements in the business world.

Earning this award, however, was not easy. Born in Tehran in 1955, his young life was affected dramatically by the Iranian revolution. He lost all of his investments and was accused of being a terrorist. Even though Arabnia was shunned by his own society, he did not give up.

"Everything I have been through was painful for me, and I do not want to cause this pain to others," Arabnia said.

Instead, he promised to treat people well and devote his life to helping those in need. His mantra: treat people better than others treat you.

Today, Arabnia is the President and CEO of Geico, a company with a long-standing industrial tradition that has always played a leading role in supplying car manufacturers with complete automated paint plants. He is also one of John Cabot University's most successful graduates, and one of the university's 30 trustees.

Arabnia's face has graced the cover of many international publications. He received the official Knight medallion in October 2014 at the Presidential Palace in Rome. In addition, the Italian Republic awarded him for his merits in Republican affairs, which is Italy's highest civil recognition.

The businessman is active in different charity organizations, including Gate Bridge and New Hope Bridge that invest in young people by helping them find jobs and gain work experience. Meanwhile, his company, Geico,

pays for their education.

In addition, Arabnia created a youth group in Geico called Gnex. He employs a random number of students three days a week to come up with ideas to improve his company.

"He is a humble man who appears to be like anybody else. He did not use his success and his education to rule people; instead he uses these to help them," said Chiara Cervini, one of the members of JCU's business club who was invited to visit Geico.

"Based on my work experience in Geico, I understood that Arabnia is trying to build a model for future entrepreneurs in order for them to be not only great managers, but also great people," said Davide Menci, a former JCU student who interned in the marketing and communications department at Geico.

Arabnia made it to Italy after falling in love with an Italian woman, who he later married, while studying in England. Then in 1983 while studying at JCU, he started working as a consultant for Gecofin, his father-in-law's company. Arabnia graduated from JCU and moved to Nigeria to work as the CEO of Econi (engineering and contracting).



Photo Credit: Wasim Khizaran, degree-seeking student

But his father-in-law was forced to sell Gecofin because of financial problems. Arabnia did not want to lose the company to outsiders, and so he invested his own money and bought it in 1994, naming it Geico.

In 2005 Geico reached its highest record, until it faced the second wave of the economic crisis in 2008. The company, like the rest of the country, faced tough times; though Geico lost a lot, the company never gave up. To recover, Geico invited the CEOs of prominent Italian banks to see how great the company still was, how successful it would be if they invested in it.

Geico succeeded in convincing the CEOs. In 2011, Geico went global, forming an alliance with Taikisha Ltd of Japan.

Private Charity Displays Realities of Rome's Homeless

By ERIN BERGE

Wearing a navy blue suit and a paisley silk scarf, a dapper middle-aged actor named Domenico Fumato overlooks a fluctuating line of scruffily clad men and women, all waiting for a free piece of bread or pizza.

Today, however, Fumato is not acting: he's directing. His stage is an outdoor corner on Piazza Mastai, in the Roman neighborhood of Trastevere. His "actors" are a group of homeless people and his message is to show Romans the reality of a deep economic crisis.

Fumato started *La Ronda del Caffelatte e Dolci*, a private charity, five years ago in a theater. Volunteers now feed the homeless breakfast and coffee every Tuesday and Thursday morning at 9 a.m. in Piazza Mastai, sometimes with their own pocket money. "It is not a conventional way to feed the homeless," Fumato concedes, "but the aim is to foster a welcoming and compassionate environment".

Just off the busy Viale di Trastevere, volunteers scurry to spread Nutella and jam on slices of day-old bread, alongside espresso with milk and sugar. A tram full of local residents frequently screeches by.

Many of the people who attend La Ronda's free breakfast sleep on the sidewalk of Viale di Trastevere or on the embankment of the Tiber, and have been for years. But a good number, especially among the younger adults, have only recently become homeless.

Loss of employment is the most common cause of homelessness in Italy. And in a period of economic struggle, more than half of Rome's 8,000 homeless have been living on the street since losing their jobs, according to Italy's National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT).

The Italian state rarely provides help to those without an income or a home, even in times of increasing poverty. "The idea of a community shelter is more prevalent in the United States than in Italy," Fumato claims.

On the other hand, it is common for church organizations across the country to host charity services for those in need. According to ISTAT, 90 percent of the homeless population use these charity resources for food and shelter.

La Ronda, however, is not connected to the church. It is completely independent, run by volunteers and funded by private donations - including every slice

of bread pizza pizza, and even the tables found underneath the food.

Fumato, who says he was taught to enjoy the

"spirit of good-deeds" in his childhood in Ravenna, started La Ronda after meeting with Paolo Coccheri, an artist from Florence who started a similar program 20 years ago.

The first La Ronda service was set up in a theater, which hosted the production of a play named "Friends of the Street" in 2011. Homeless members of La Ronda acted along with Fumato in this play, representing the poor who had to suffer without help from society.

"La Ronda is a work of social art in which every artist can create his or her own story and set in a social context of their choice," Fumato explains.

Now located in Piazza Mastai, La Ronda's crowd of customers and volunteers display a similar stage-like presence every Tuesday and Thursday morning.

A Roman grandmother, a short, feisty volunteer, usually takes the lead role on this unusual stage, shouting colorful words in Italian. Two men waiting in line act as side-commentators, while silent "extras" wait patiently for their caffèlatte.

Behind these personas is a harsh reality. Most of them carry their belongings over their tattered winter jackets, or in a plastic grocery bag and do not care for the occasional newscaster or *paparazzo* that shows up at the end of the "performance."

"This isn't a show or a circus," one homeless recently yelled to a visiting reporter, according to volunteer Sarah Hammond, who discovered the organization two years ago. She explained that "some people just want to go under the radar, take their breakfast and not be bothered."

According to Hammond, the homeless enjoy the friendly human interaction provided by La Ronda, something they do not often get from passersby on the street. Customers like to come by La Ronda to say hello to old friends and keep the relationships they have with the local volunteers.

One homeless man, who took advantage of these breakfasts regularly, now volunteers to help other homeless members.

After most have gone through the breakfast line, small cliques start to form around the piazza. Two old men sit together on the fountain steps while a young man and an elderly woman enjoy a coffee together on the stone benches.

Julia Del Papa, community service and cultural program coordinator at John Cabot University, says older members are often seen letting newcomers go ahead of them in line for their first La Ronda breakfast.

"I can't imagine myself in a state of hunger, being polite and allowing someone to go in front of me," Del Papa marveled.

La Ronda's loose structure, similar to an improvisation show, allows this kind of flexibility in the line. With few rules and regulations, volunteers and members easily interact with each other in an ever-changing environment.

While the loose structure helps to create a vibrant atmosphere, the lack of steady funding creates uncertainty—when the food is gone, it's gone.

According to Hammond, volunteers can never predict the amount of food they will have, or the amount of homeless people who will show up. The group tries to provide enough food for everyone by bringing pre-packaged snacks for latecomers, but they sometimes have to throw out the bread because it is too hard to eat.

Along with pre-packaged snacks, volunteers often bring umbrellas to shelter the food in case it downpours. Lacking an indoor location, Fumato must cancel the breakfast if rain floods the piazza.

Volunteers quickly react to changing conditions and do their best to accommodate everyone who shows up to La Ronda for the short hour and a half of service.

At the end of which, in the vein of a well-earned bow after a theater performance, Fumato often gathers a few volunteers to smile for a digital camera, celebrating another successful morning of serving breakfast to the homeless.



Overcoming an Eating Disorder and Thriving in College

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Now, however, Abear understands that finding a treatment center was the correct decision.

"For my Sweet 16, I checked into the Alexian Brothers Health Clinic intensive outpatient program in Hoffman Estates, IL. I ended up staying there for a month. They basically just fed me there, I had to eat everything on my meal plan -- otherwise I couldn't go home. We had breakfast all together, men and women of all ages and weight groups. The philosophy is that regardless of what the type of eating disorder is, they all come from the same place."

Being in the clinic wasn't easy for Abear. She was scared and angry about the entire situation, and especially about missing a month of school. At the time, she felt school was the only thing going for her. She also feared that her classmates would speak badly about her if word spread that she was in a treatment center.

"I told only my two closest friends. Not even my teachers knew why I missed a month of school. I told them I had [mononucleosis]," she said.

Abear says that the eating disorders, however peculiar, are not about weight. At their deepest level, they are a way of creating an illusion of control over one aspect of life, when everything else seems to be spiraling out of con-

trol.

It wasn't until her junior year in high school that Abear decided to share her story, via a feature story she wrote for her school's newspaper. The response to her article was positive. Abear said that no one bullied her, or spoke badly about what she had been through. She felt that describing her struggles was liberating, especially because she liked the idea of being able to help others by sharing her experience.

Researchers are trying to discover why there are such a high number of people suffering from eating disorders. One of the possible reasons mentioned most often is that of the image of people portrayed in the media. Abear agrees with this theory.

"Almost all images in the media are photo-shopped -- even the photos in John Cabot University's brochures. In a society where images of role models are being airbrushed, how can we have realistic aspirations? I sincerely believe that the point of this strategy is to create a sort of destruction within the human, so that, because we feel bad about our image, [advertisers] are able to sell us their products, whether they are beauty products, clothing or anything else," she said.

Back when she was struggling heavily with her eating disorder, Abear could barely leave the house. One of the most important pieces of her recovery

process was participating in a Rotary Youth Exchange in Germany before finishing high school. It forced her to move past her disorder. She was able to "disconnect" from the eating disorder and build confidence again.

"Getting better is a process. It sometimes happens to take one step forward and two steps back. Samantha is still affected by her past from time to time, but she doesn't let it dictate her life anymore. She is a really strong person, tolerant and empathetic towards other people's struggles, considering she went through a struggle herself," said Chiara Di Maio, 20, a degree-seeker at JCU and Abear's longtime friend and roommate.

Abear is now majoring in communications at JCU. She is healthy, outgoing and has a great group of friends. She is a Dean-List student and president of the Theater Society. Abear sometimes amazes herself, thinking about how far she has come from five years ago.

"Although it was a struggle I think that everyone has something they struggle with. Having been in a state of grief makes you more amenable in being able to sympathize with others. You must never lose hope. As long as you hold on to that tiny glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel, things will be OK, someday," Abear said.

Is Soccer Preventing Conflict?

By JANINE HOLDER

At a lecture on "Soccer As Genocide Prevention? On Sports and Ethnic Conflict", Professor Lars Rensmann discussed how soccer can help nations in conflict.

Rensmann explained that soccer, played widely around the world and often involving countries facing serious conflicts, can aid in social resolutions during times of hardship.

Soccer provides the opportunity to help players -- and on a larger scale, the fans. The game allows countries to experience their own kind of a social rehabilitation. The sport increases interactions between countries that have been past enemies.

During the World Cup 2006, the Ivory Coast's intense civil war stopped simply to allow the game to be played.

Rensmann also said that the social aspect of soccer provides potential benefits. Sports have a "ripple effect" when it comes to interacting with others. The peace that is shared between players and fans can inspire social groups interact peacefully with one another. The game proves that people can play competitively, yet still get along.

Soccer is a universal language. Its rule system is the same throughout nations.

The Sweetness of Doing Nothing

By BYULSAM AHM

Il dolce far niente. The sweetness of doing nothing. Delicious idleness. I first read the phrase in the memoir *Eat Pray Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert. It is an Italian expression praising free time, hanging around, just relaxing and enjoying life. I can see it around me. People gossiping and bantering over coffee. An old Italian man sitting on a bench, licking chocolate *gelato* in front of a gelateria. People talking incessantly, whether they are Atac metro workers or shop keepers or advertisers. People wandering by the fountains and the monuments of Rome.

I wanted to wash out this work-obsessed Korean blood and soak in the Italian culture of *dolce far niente*. I wanted to taste the sweetness of doing nothing. I wanted to feel relevant without doing anything.

I woke up one morning. I didn't feel like going to school. What a lame excuse to tell the professor. But I was spiritless and lethargic. Every move I made was sluggish. 'Oh, the hell with my life,' I thought. I managed to get myself to my first class, but on my way to the next class, I stopped at a *pasticceria* on Via del Moro, with no other purpose than to stuff my stomach.

That was when I saw a pizza I had never seen before. I saw *carciofi* glistening with olive oil, shredded pieces of *prosciutto cotto*, green olives, *mozzarella*

di bufala - all scattered artfully over the pizza. What a delicious-looking harmony! Knowing I was taking a risk tasting this pizza, I courageously asked the staff to give me a slice. The waiter asked "Caldo?" I shouted exuberantly, "Si!"

I took my tray to a table on the other side of the bar, and sat on a high chair. Next to the bar, I could see the kitchen through the glass. The cooks sprinkled mushrooms on the flattened dough of an unbaked round pizza. A few people stopped by for their daily bread.

I looked at my pizza. The dough had turned crispy and the cheese had melted over the garnishes. I took a bite.

As I savored every bit of it, all the worries disappeared. Everything is okay, I thought, and everything will be okay.

I picked up the extra olives and stuffed them in my mouth, clearing the tray. I was neither working nor studying. I was just sitting in a *pasticceria* satisfying my hunger. There I was, doing nothing more than composing a clumsy little poem about a piece of pizza.

Increasingly I found myself enjoying the sweetness of doing nothing. I walked around Rome, looking for the pretty artifacts that I like to collect, and stopping at bars to take a rest.

To better understand the notion of *dolce far niente*, I asked one of my Italian classmates if he knew something about it, and if

he himself enjoyed it. He is a senior, still struggling with a math class he needs to pass in order to graduate.

"Basically, in Italy you live your life. You don't put work first so that work becomes your life. That is why there are so many strikes and days off."

"Do you take part in this *dolce far niente*?"

"Unfortunately, I do. But I am not happy about this."

"Oh, but why?" I was surprised. I'd heard Alessandro liked to ride motor boats along the Amalfi coast in the summer, so I was hoping he enjoyed *dolce far niente* and would elaborate on the wonderful things one can do to pass the time.

"Because it is counter-productive. Since everybody is easy-going it takes very long to get a thing done here."

I mused over the word 'counter-productive'. What is being productive? Produce something that can be consumed? Is writing an amateur poem in a *pizzeria* counter-productive?

Dolce far niente is slowing me down but it seems to be taking me in the right direction.

My last step in my quest to understand *dolce far niente* is Maria, the concierge in my building. She is always chatting with the tenants. I often see her sitting on the edge of the staircase, engaged in deep conversation with whoever is passing by. When she goes out she often stops by a shoe shop to take a look at the leather

shoes.

With hope, I wrote down some questions. "What is your idea of *dolce far niente*?" "What do Italians do to enjoy *dolce far niente*?" "Do you like *dolce far niente*?" "Would you recommend it?" I took my voice-recorder, since I was not very good at understanding Italian, and I thought my friend could help me translate. I was very proud to be 100 percent ready with my journal and my voice-recorder.

It took quite some time to ask her for an interview since there were people chatting with her as usual. I finally approached her. However, my plan to record the conversation collapsed. She didn't trust voice-recordings. Another middle-aged woman next to her said I might as well just write the interview down in my note pad. They took a look at my written questions, and said things to each other in Italian. I could sense that it was nothing good. "Stupide!" Maria said, and she went off to put the mail in the mail-boxes. Just like that.

I was dumbfounded. Millions of thoughts came into my head. 'I would have stayed in my comfort zone if I had known that I was going to get hurt like this. See! Italians just hate me! Oh, why can't things go smoothly like the interviews in the newspapers or in the memoir *Eat Pray Love*! Oh miserable me. Woe is me!' After torturing myself for a while, I came to the conclusion that she was offended because

I thought of her as a perfect example of *dolce far niente*—a lazy person.

On my way back to my apartment, I saw her and shouted "Scusami!" She stepped up to me and said. "No! No! La domanda è stupida!"

As my Italian is poor, I got a sense of what she was saying from her furious gestures.

"Do you seriously think that Italians sleep all day, eat a lot, and go to bars all the time because they carry large bellies? No! No! How do you think they pay taxes? How do you think they buy houses?" She pointed to her apartment.

"The questiona are stupid!"

"Oh," I said, still dumbfounded.

On the other hand, I was glad that I was free from emotional agonies.

I shouted "Grazie!" with sincere gratitude, and she shouted back "Prego!"

Maybe *dolce far niente* is the creation of the haves, the bourgeois and the aristocrats, reinforced by American tourists who come to Italy to seek pleasure and relax. I don't know.

"Sayings often contradict themselves," one of my professors once said to me.

My ideals about Italy were crashed, but I felt one step further to the truth. I was again, lost.

The Budgeting Issue of Studying Abroad

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"I wish I had planned all of my trips as soon as possible," says Jeff Kurt, junior at the University of Arizona. "I booked a trip last minute and spent €100 instead of €40. That's absurd," said Kurt.

Eating out and spending money on food can also drain students' bank accounts faster than most anticipate. A CEA study abroad student will on average spend between \$1,470 and \$2,940 on food throughout the semester. Many students tend to think that the euro holds the same value as the dollar (the euro is currently trading at \$1.25).

"When you first come here you tend not to make the difference," admits Brynne Murphy, junior at Providence College. "But spending €5 on a sandwich does not mean you're spending \$5."

But King admits to spending a lot more money on food and treats than anticipated regardless of the currency difference. "When all of your friends are spending money, it's hard to be the only one not doing the same," she says. "It's a constant struggle between wanting to save money and not being left out."

Clubs are common places for study abroad students to meet, and one of the top places where students spend money. "Students tend to go out more than just the weekends, and those euros add up quickly," says Felberbaum.

Kevin Gleason, junior at Providence College, crafted a weekly budget before coming to Rome, but had no idea that nightlife would be so expensive.

"When I woke up the next morning I realized I'd spent over €40 in less than two hours. That was a big reality check for me."

Even though many study abroad students struggle with their spending abroad, some manage they budget carefully. Hope Perri, a former JCU student, studied in Rome during spring of 2013, and then in London the spring of 2014. She initially learned some lessons the hard way, but ended up budgeting properly for the rest of her semester in Rome and her semester in London.

"It was hard for me to realize that I couldn't eat out every meal," says Perri. "I knew that if I wanted to eat lunch out and dinner out on weekends that I had to make dinner at home during the week."

She also came to realize that she couldn't travel abroad every single weekend so she stuck to her budget and enjoyed her time in Rome.

"Students need to prioritize the things they really, really want to do and should keep in mind that the moment they find things they didn't plan on doing they have to take it out of their budget," says Perri.

She suggests that students set up their game plan and stick to it.

"I allowed myself 700 euros for travel, and a 411 euro monthly budget," she

says.

"I stuck to it and I'm so glad that I did."



Photo Credit: Emily Wilson, degree-seeking student

LIVING TRASTEVERE

A Haven for Steelers Fans in the Eternal City

By LAUREN HEALY

The typical travel day for a tourist in Rome includes a Papal Mass at St. Peter's Basilica, a tour of the Coliseum and a cup of *gelato* or two. But for Steelers Nation, there is an additional stop: La Botticella, a pub, that has become the official hangout for Steelers fans visiting the Eternal City.

Giovanni Poggi, 43, the owner and head honcho of the joint, never imagined his bar turning into a Pittsburgh shrine.

Poggi opened La Botticella, formerly a wine merchant's shop in a narrow cobblestone alley just off Piazza Navona, in his early 20s. The name La Botticella, or Little Barrel, came to Poggi when he first unlocked the doors.

"I didn't have any tables starting off, so I put out a bunch of barrels," says Poggi. Some kids started calling it 'the little barrel' and the rest was history.

Poggi, born in Rome, emigrated to Canada with his family when he was four. They moved back to Rome when he was 14, and he's been here ever since. He developed his love for the Steelers when he was a child in Canada. Their winning streak in the 70's certainly helped.

Visitors at the cozy pub are greeted by a three-foot statue of Jesus sporting a Steelers helmet. A Steelers Country sign hangs on the back wall, along with other Pittsburgh paraphernalia: Terrible Towels, Sidney Crosby and Troy Polamalu jerseys and dozens of Western Pennsylvanian college pennants.

Poggi opened La Botticella as a regular pub without a particular identity. The Steeler theme developed quite spontaneously over the past ten years as study-abroad students from Penn State and Duquesne elected the pub as their home away from home. Poggi started to play Penn State football games, along with Steeler games on Sunday.

"Fans started pouring in," said Poggi. "We usually get at least 30 people or more on game days."

Former study-abroad student and Pittsburgh native Jason Bertocchi, program manager at Best Buddy's Italia, has lived and worked in Rome for the past two years. He can remember watching the games in 2007 when he studied abroad at John Cabot University, and seven years later he still makes it to just about every Sunday game.

"It's not like watching it with my best friends at home, but being here with a bunch of Pittsburgh fans is a close second," said Bertocchi.

Within the past few years, word about the black and gold pub has spread through the Pittsburgh area. Just about every Pittsburgh-born tourist in Rome has stopped by to check it out.

Dan Higgins visited the bar last month with his wife and another couple from the Peters Township Area. They heard about the bar from other Pittsburghers who visited between tourist stops on their vacation in the Eternal city.

"We went on Saturday to watch the Penn State game, and just had to come back on Sunday for the Steelers game," said Higgins. "The bar is really cool, has a great atmosphere, and the owner is a super nice guy."

Ryan Quigley, pharmacy technician and Duquesne University alumnus, came to Rome last week and stopped by to see the place himself.

"It was awesome. They had a Duquesne pennant hanging up right in the middle of the bar," said Quigley. "I heard about this place from friends at home, but had to see it for myself."

Michael Magestro, a Steeler fan who now lives

in Oregon but was formerly from New Brighton, was in Rome eating dinner with a friend on a recent Sunday night. They looked up 'Steelers bar in Rome' and came to La Botticella.

"Even though I moved to Oregon, I'm still a die-hard Steelers fan, and I think this bar proves that the Steelers Nation is truly everywhere," said Magestro.

Poggi himself has friends in the Pittsburgh area and visits every Thanksgiving.

"There is just something about Pittsburghers. They're good, down-to-earth people: they're my kind of people," said Poggi with a grin.

Bertocchi has been going to La Botticella for years and has observed customers come and go.

"This little bar," Bertocchi said, "is probably more important to Pittsburgh than it is to Rome."



STUDENT PORTRAIT: Eric Horowitz, a student at John Cabot University in Rome, enjoys his spaghetti al ragù.

Photo Credit: Adam Kotin, study abroad student

U.S. Diplomat Visits JCU

By VALERIA BORGHETTI

"A Day in the Life of a Diplomat: How to join the U.S. Foreign Service" was the first of a career series to be launched at John Cabot University. To kick-off event, the Women's Leadership Initiative, Business Club, Guarini Institute for Public Affairs and International Relations Society welcome U.S. Foreign Service Specialist Carolyn Brosious on November 7. Brosious is currently serving at the U.S. Embassy's economic office in Rome.

After describing the organization of the U.S. Department of State and the accessible paths towards a career representing the U.S. around the world, Brosious went on to explain the different foreign service specializations. Through a detailed explanation of job opportunities and career choices, the diplomat went through what it truly means to represent the United States overseas.

"If you thought that you had no possibility of joining State Department, you were wrong. There are many majors that can be applied to so many positions as Foreign Service Officers and Specialists worldwide," said Brosious during the seminar.

Brosious is a Villanova University graduate from her beloved state of Pennsylvania, where she received her bachelor's degree in Political Science and Chinese, and her master's degree in International Relations and East Asian Studies. Before joining the State Department, Brosious worked for the University of Pennsylvania, international student program, Teach for America and the Wharton Executive Education program.

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