Welcome to the Presidential Leadership Academy Alumni Newsletter!

Nine months ago, in C-9 Atherton, the Inaugural PLA Class discussed communication strategies. Now, here we are, finally implementing the cornerstone: our newsletter. News of current PLA activities and opportunities for Alumni involvement are important, but the PLA is much more than just a collection of experiences, and this newsletter seeks to be more than just a log of events.

Two aspects of the PLA—the invitation to ponder complicated issues, and the sense of community that we built together—made the experience remarkable. Keeping these elements in mind, the content of this newsletter was developed.

The goals of the newsletter are threefold:
- To deliver updates about the current PLA classes and the PLA Alumni APG
- To offer continued leadership learning opportunities
- To help PLA alumni keep in touch and to sustain the feeling of community

Please enjoy the inaugural edition of the PLA Alumni Newsletter. Cheers to a happy, healthy 2013!

Features:
(Hint: Click each section title to be taken directly to that page)

Alumni Pulse
Gary answers the question, “What’s an APG, anyway?” Plus, meet the Alumni Board members.

PLA Update
Melissa and Lisa fill us in on the recent adventures and achievements of current PLA students.

Grey Matter
I’m sure we can all agree that one of the biggest adjustments to post-PLA life has been the lack of classes on Sunday evenings. But, not to worry, we’ve included some articles to rev up your critical thinking.

Catching Up
One of your former classmates attended the Inaugural Ball, another met Kenny Chesney’s steel drummer, and someone adopted a cat! In this issue, get caught up with Kaitlyn, Gary, Lindsay, Kristen, and Kelsey.
So, the PLA Alumni are organized into an APG, what the heck does that mean? An APG is an Affiliate Program Group of the Penn State Alumni Association. Now, the tricky part is that the Alumni Association actually delegates the responsibility of governing APG’s to the Academic College Alumni Societies under which each is housed. For us, that means the Schreyer Alumni Society. Basically an APG must be approved by a College Society, but then has free reign to form its own constitution and behave as it pleases.

In September the PLA APG was approved by the Schreyer Alumni Society, so we’re off and running.

Do I have to be a member of the Alumni Association to be a member of the APG? Nope, the APG can set its own membership criterion. Basically, if you were in or ever associated with the Academy, you can be a member.

So, why even be an APG? Why not just be a casual group of organized PLA Alumni? Well, the reasons are actually quite substantial. First off, you can potentially get some of the trickle down funding from your College Society and the Alumni Association. We have heard the SHC Society mention this before regarding us, actually. Next, you get the benefits that come with being connected with the greater Penn State Alumni Association community and its resources. Finally, it’s kind of like, “Why Not?” We have almost complete autonomy; I cannot imagine a non-APG structure that would be better.
PLA students traveled to New York City for 2012 Fall Trip, which took place October 13-15.

Ed Hintz shared these NYC highlights with the PLA Advisory Board

On Monday, we had many excellent presentations. First was Andy Sieg, who carefully prepared and discussed his experiences through the tumult of Wall Street; next was William Bratton, chief of police in New York and Los Angeles, who was leaving to consult with the President of Mexico. He explained how New York City was changed from an unsafe, uncontrolled city to one that is safer than nearly all other large cities in the country. (Dean Brady was skeptical, and did not stroll through Central Park after dark.) Dr. Ann Kirchner, Dean of Macaulay Honors College, who graciously allowed our group to meet and eat at the facility each day, followed Bratton. She explained the CUNY system and its approach to honors education. Finally, Dr. Herb Pardes, who just retired as CEO of New York Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, discussed the arc of his career and his approach to medical care. We had to pull the students away to get them on the bus to Penn State.

The Itinerary

Saturday, October 13
8:30 p.m. dinner at hotel

Sunday, October 14
9:00-10:45 a.m. brunch at hotel & Interview w/ Ed and Helen Hintz
11:00-1:30 p.m. tour of NY Historical Society
2:40 p.m. ferry leaves for Ellis Island
4:10 p.m. ferry leaves Ellis Island for Battery Park
4:30 p.m. bus leaves Battery Park for New York Central Hotel
6:30 p.m. leave hotel for Macaulay Honors College
7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Dinner
8:00 – 9:30 p.m. Interview w/ Poetic Jive and Cassandra Sotos, followed by performances and performance by PLA Alum Stefan Orzech

Monday, October 15
9:00 a.m. walk to Macaulay Honors College
9:15 a.m. arrive at Macaulay Honors College
9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Speaker – Mr. Andy Sieg
10:45 – 1:00 p.m. Speakers
1:15 – 4:00 p.m. board double decker bus for tour of New York City
Reading Suggestions:

The sophomore class topic this semester is: **How do we shape Penn State's future in the next 5-10 years?** To learn more about the field of Higher Education, PLA Students are encouraged to read [www.InsideHigherEd.com](http://www.InsideHigherEd.com) and [The Chronicle of Higher Education](http://www.chronicle.com) in addition to The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal.

**American History Courses – Too Social?**

Recently, The National Association of Scholars (NAS) published a report exploring the focus of American history courses at University of Texas and Texas A&M University. The report suggests that American history courses at the two Universities are disproportionately focused on social issues in history (i.e. race, class, gender, ethnicity). The following articles offer opposing opinions on the NAS findings.

**The Obsession With Social History** by Richard Pells | [Read it here](http://www.insidehighered.com)


**Much Ado about MOOCs**

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) have incited much debate in the academic community. Colleges and Universities across the U.S. are weighing the pros and cons of offering MOOCs for credit. The following articles offer insights.

**Learning from MOOCs** by Andrew Ng | [Read it here](http://www.insidehighered.com)

**MOOCs’ Contradictions** by David Touve | [Read it here](http://www.insidehighered.com)

**MOOCs’ Missing Pieces** by Gary S. May | [Read it here](http://www.insidehighered.com)

**Apocalypse Later** by Peter Stokes | [Read it here](http://www.insidehighered.com)

There are many, many more articles about MOOCs on [www.insidehighered.com](http://www.insidehighered.com). After reading any of the above articles, simply explore the “Related Articles” for more viewpoints.
What are you up to now?

I began work on the Obama campaign in the battleground state of Colorado in Douglas County (very red) in the middle of August as a field organizer. As part of the largest field operation in the history of politics, it was my job to recruit volunteers and subsequently form high functioning teams that worked independently. The job was from 9am to at least 10:30pm, if I managed to get everything done which was rare, 7 days a week. To say that I lived in the office would be a gross understatement. The experience of interacting with dozens, even hundreds of community members every week was a challenge I did not anticipate or ask for, but one I am entirely thankful for.

A day in my life generally included conference calls in the morning (local, state, and national) followed by many emails, event planning and preparation, followed by one-on-one meetings with top volunteers I needed to delegate work, a spin around the neighborhood canvassing, and finally a minimum of 150 recruitment calls. This is not to even mention all the behind the scenes work that went in to building canvass packets and training volunteers, and fielding questions, etc. I had the privilege to work to put on an event for the First Lady as well as assist with a visit from the President and the Vice President, respectively. In summary, I've never worked so hard or tirelessly at a job that could make you want to slam your head against a wall in one instant and immensely proud the next.

Since the campaign, I have slept a great deal and refocused on what I would like to do next. As it turns out, politics is just too much fun, so I am in the middle of a move to Washington, DC.

What have you been reading? Watching? Listening to? Any recommendations?

As far as books go, I've only been recently released back into the real world where there is time to read and so I'm hardly the authority on the matter, but the Kurt Vonnegut Letters has been most entertaining to me thus far.

Have you been back to PSU recently?

I have not had an opportunity to return to Dear Old State since leaving in August, but hope to be there much more now that I will be living on the east coast again!

What are 3-5 things that you would recommend people do if they’re ever in the DC area?

If you are in DC, please feel free to sleep on the floor of my forthcoming dwelling anytime.

If you are in Denver, go to the mountains for goodness' sake. Also, there is a ton of live music always! Eat some elk, you won't regret it.
Share a couple of random facts with us!
Recently, I attended the Presidential Inauguration as well as the Inaugural Ball and the Staff Ball where I was treated to live music from folks like Lady Gaga and Brad Paisley, as well as Stevie Wonder and Alicia Keys.

What has been the toughest thing to get used to about life post-graduating from PSU?
Managing people, especially volunteers, is no easy task - but few things have ever been as rewarding. Things ramped up immensely the last three weeks before the election and I worked 120 hours a week and travelled all over southern Colorado in a whirlwind I can barely remember. Campaign life is like everything and nothing that you have ever heard about it and I recommend it to everyone who wants to know just how hard they can push themselves and just how little sleep one actually needs! College life has nothing on campaign life.

Life has been quite the trip, post PSU. I hope it has been for all of you as well!

Celebrating a successful campaign
What are you up to now?
Currently I’m working for Deloitte, in Tysons Corner, VA, in the external audit segment. Someone once said that auditors “are the defenders and protectors of the financial markets.” So that’s at least what I like to think I do. I get to work with young people all the time, which is really refreshing.

I live in downtown Washington, DC, at 156 W Street NW. It’s a row house that I have with two roommates and it’s excellent. I have the basement space roughly all to myself, which is clutch. The neighborhood is Bloomingdale (#bloomingdaleDC if you want to creep).

What have you been reading? Watching? Listening to? Any recommendations?
**Movies:** Argo, Lincoln and Silver Linings Playbook were all excellent.
**Radio:** I’m a huge NPR geek.
**Music:** The (entire) Lumineers, and Of Monsters and Men albums. Also, I’ve gotten into Father John Misty, he’s a bit spacy, and I love to energy of Coldplay’s new live album.
**Print (gasp):** I now subscribe to the Washington Post, which I get delivered to my door for 23 cents a day! However, I told myself that I’ve been reading too much non-fiction so I picked up this gangster novel called “Live By Night,” it was a fun, quick read and satisfied my fiction desires for a bit.

What are you looking forward to in the next 6 months?
I am hoping to return to Spain this July with my girlfriend to visit and stay with my Aunt, who has a house in the Northwest of Spain.

Have you been back to PSU recently?
I was back at PSU for every home football game in the fall and loved every second of it. The best part about being back is being able to really truly enjoy campus with no worries.
Tell us about a project at work that you’re excited about
I’m sort of excited for everything at work because it’s all new at every turn. I like being able to hop around to different clients, so I’m excited to change clients in early February, when I’ll be working in Bethesda, MD and taking the Metro to work. I really like the idea of not using my car for days at a time, and having to pass through the downtown area every day.

Tell us about something fun you did recently in your new home
Recently I took a day trip out to Annapolis, MD, which is only about 31 miles to the east of Washington. Annapolis is, of course, home to the Naval Academy, but also is less famously the Maryland State capital, so there is a lot of history surrounding the town - not to mention great sights and food along the Chesapeake Bay.

What are 3-5 things that you would recommend people do in DC/Virginia if they are ever in the area?
1. **Union Market** In years to come, I think that the Union Market will be a place that everyone is told to go when they visit DC. Imagine having 6 food trucks, a butcher, a farmers market, one of the top 10 coffee bars in the States, an actual bar, and an upscale home goods store all under one roof. And then scatter seating all about, that’s Union Market. ([http://unionmarketdc.com/](http://unionmarketdc.com/))
2. **Library of Congress** There is an exhibit on display now which is a recreation of Thomas Jefferson’s library and it’s fascinating.
3. **14th Street/Logan Circle** This is an area of town with lot of trendy bars and restaurants, not to mention some fairly well preserved Victorian architecture. I think Carl Rove just made this the place of his new office, in case you’d like to pay him a visit.

Share a couple of random facts with us!
I try to listen to the two Spanish speaking radio stations in order to keep up my language skills; I think it’s fairly effective. Also, I’m toying around with finally taking a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) offered via coursera.com or edx.com. I’m sure some of you are familiar with these, any suggestions?

What has been the toughest thing to get used to about life post-graduating from PSU?
The toughest thing, as always, is time management. I find it more pressing than ever to make lists to keep myself organized. Because there is so much to do and see around the city, I try to map out my free time so that I at least have a rough outline of things I’d like to do. Some of the best advice I got this summer, before I moved, as to “take advantage of your weekends.” That’s really true. You can pack a lot of adventure into a weekend if you plan it out, even a little bit.

Also, the weather, as crazy as it may sound has been an adjustment for me. DC barely has a winter, which I did not realize before I moved. The average highs in January are right around 42 F, so a fairly big change from Pittsburgh or State College, whose January highs, as we all know, are in the low 30’s, if not lower. What can I say, I miss the snow!
What are you up to now?
I currently work at Epic, a healthcare software company located in Madison, WI. I have a technical position and am responsible for the operating room application for two different west coast hospitals. My job, as I’m sure is true for many other recent graduates, is both exciting and challenging. I’ve learned many different skills, including two new programming languages. No day is the same and I’ve really enjoyed learning about the healthcare industry.

What have you been reading? Watching? Listening to? Any recommendations?
**Book:** Divergent, by Veronica Roth

**Documentary:** Waiting for Superman – I’ve also been really interested in reading about our public education system and alternatives to traditional forms of education

What are you looking forward to in the next 6 months?
I’m going to be doing more traveling for work – spending some time in Oregon and Stanford. I’m also planning a few trips back east and hopefully I’ll have some friends and family come visit me in Madison.

This is from a recent trip to Chicago where I met up with my friend Leah (also a Penn State grad)
Have you been back to PSU recently?
I was there for a very short visit back in November. My favorite part of being back was just walking around campus and being able to see family and friends. It felt like coming home.

Tell us about a project at work that you’re excited about
There are many different projects that I’m currently involved in at work. One that I’m specifically excited about is an initiative to create and implement audits to try and proactively prevent common errors in the software. I’ve been helping to write and modify short software programs that check for common issues customers face.

Tell us about something fun you did recently in Madison
Madison is located between two lakes and in the winter the lakes freeze over and there are always areas for people to go skating and play pick-up hockey. I’ve been going skating with friends from work and it’s been great having a chance to be outside and enjoy the winter weather.

What are 3-5 things that you would recommend people do in Madison if they are ever in the area?
1. Try fried cheese curds
2. Go and see the University of Wisconsin. Their college town is very cool.
3. Everyone here is very active and outdoorsy. There is a really beautiful botanical garden.
4. Go to a Badgers football game

Share a couple of random facts with us!
I experienced my first Midwestern blizzard a few weeks ago. We got over 16 inches of snow in Madison!

There’s a slide between the first and the second floor of work that I take when I go to my car every day.

I got a cat named McKenzie! She’s an orange Tabby rescue cat from the Humane Society, and she’s about 2 years old.

What has been the toughest thing to get used to about life post-graduating from PSU?
The most difficult part about getting used to life post-graduating from Penn State is being away from home. Moving over 800 miles away from all my family and friends has been a hard adjustment. It is a very different kind of independence. It can be overwhelming at times, but it’s also very exciting.
What are you up to now?
I live in Nashville, Tennessee. I LOVE it. I am currently working toward my Master’s degree in Education in Learning & Instruction, specializing in Language, Culture and International Studies. I am a graduate student at Peabody College at Vanderbilt University. I am also the elected first year representative for my Teaching and Learning department in the Peabody Graduate Students Association (PGSA), which is Peabody’s student government. I am sure none of you are shocked to hear that I have taken a leading role on the social committee and am helping plan the spring gala in April.

What have you been reading? Watching? Listening to? Any recommendations?
Since I’ve been overwhelmed with reading materials for my classes and my Capstone culmination project, I haven’t been able to read anything non-school-related recently, but I can recommend a movie: Silver Linings Playbook. This was the funniest, most entertaining movie I have seen in a while, and I mean, come on... Bradley Cooper? Yes please.

What are you looking forward to in the next 6 months?
GETTING A JOB! I am applying for teaching positions from Pittsburgh to State College and everywhere in between, because I am ready to come back home for work. Wish me luck!!!

Have you been back to PSU recently?
I was back at Penn State a lot in the past couple of months, mainly to visit my boyfriend (awwww 😊). I went back one in October for Homecoming (which was so much fun!) and several times over Christmas break. My favorite part about being back for Homecoming was the atmosphere and the tailgating and, of course, the football. Over Christmas break, obviously my favorite part was the amazing holiday food.

Tell us about a project at school that you’re excited about
This semester is not only filled with schoolwork and job applications. I also have the extreme pleasure of writing a culminating Capstone Essay required for graduation. It’s like I get the opportunity to do a new thesis all over again! 😊 But in all honesty, I am thrilled for my topic. For my project, I have chosen to focus on inclusive 3rd-5th grade classrooms as my setting. I am studying how inclusive classrooms can help improve literacy skills of English Language Learners, and how allowing them to remain in the class for English lessons (as opposed to a pull-out program method) will result in better acquisition of English writing, reading and speaking skills.

Tell us about something fun you did recently in Nashville
Every day is fun. I go to country bars, hang out with celebrities (no joke! I recently got to hear a sneak preview of Blake Shelton’s new album from the President and CEO of Warner Music! It is AMAZING). I also run into Hayden Panettiere a lot, but haven’t gotten the nerve to ask
her to be my best friend yet. I live right in the area where they film the new show Nashville, so it is lots of fun to spot celebs everywhere. Recently, though, I have been going to this park with amazing hiking and running trails and a crazy set of stairs that would put Rocky to shame! It is called Percy Warner, and it is a lot of fun to go to on Saturday mornings. I have also been line dancing on Broadway, and even got to drive up and down Broadway in a Christmas Party Trolley. Yes, it was as cool as it sounds.

What are 3-5 things that you would recommend people do in Nashville if they are ever in the area?

If y’all want to come down to Nashville, there are a few must see things: Number one would be a place called Centennial Park, where Nashville is home to an exact replica of the Parthenon in Greece. It is AWESOME. Number two would be strolling along Broadway to bar hop and hear some amazing raw talent on every street corner and in every bar. Also, stop by Boots and More to get buy one get two free cowboy boots. I have several pair already and I wear them proudly. Number three would be eating at a fantastic restaurant called Puckett’s. It’s got the best southern BBQ you’ll ever eat, and hosts from The Chew frequent this joint, so you know it’s good! My final suggestion would be to make a reservation at the Bluebird Café on a Friday or Saturday night. This place is a very laid back bar that has a maximum capacity of 75, and hosts incredibly talented and well-renowned song writers as well as new talent trying to make it big. They perform their songs for the bar and have a lot of fun while doing so. Last time I went, I hear a man who deemed himself the “Tractor Man” because he wrote both popular tractor songs: “She Thinks My Tractor’s Sexy” for Kenny
Chesney, and “Big Green Tractor” for Jason Aldean. (One final “fun fact” about Nashville – I joined the Nashville PSU Alumni Association, and the President of the chapter, Lisa, is married to a wonderful guy named Melvin who has been Kenny Chesney’s steel drummer for over 14 years! He is a huge PSU fan!)

Share a couple of random facts with us!

So as far as new hobbies go, mine is kind of a big one. I have been training for about 5 months now for a Tough Mudder in May in Jacksonville, FL. For those of you who don’t know, a Tough Mudder is like a Warrior Dash on steroids. It is a 12-13 miles trail run, but every half mile of so is a military obstacle to complete. You can google it, it is terrifying but lots of fun! I met some new friends at the local Vanderbilt gym, and we formed a team of 6 to compete on May 19. We train 4-5 days a week, and have tons of fun while doing so. I have quickly become a “mud-link” and am working for my “tough mudder” status by May!

What has been the toughest thing to get used to about life post-graduating from PSU?

Post-PSU life is sad, but inevitable. My four years at Penn State were without a doubt the happiest years of my life, however I am so thrilled and excited about the new opportunities and friendships that Nashville has provided to me. Of course, post-PLA life is devastating and I miss all your lovely faces, so I highly encourage you to come visit me in Nashville and see this amazing city! I will forever bleed blue & white, and forever be indebted to Penn State and the amazing opportunities it gave me, but I am so thrilled for the next chapters in my life and can’t wait to share them with you all!
What are you up to now?

I started working for Lincoln Financial in July. I’m in a rotational program augmented with cross-departmental learning, leadership opportunities, and professional development training. Partially because of all the different aspects of the program I’m in, there is a lot of variety in my day-to-day tasks, which is fun. I also like the fact that I get to experience several different business units and job functions before I settle down in one place. My job for the first rotation is “Life Competitive Intelligence Analyst,” which basically means I am responsible for researching, recording, organizing, and distributing information about the pricing and product changes that are made by our competitors in the life insurance and long term care insurance markets.

Each rotation lasts one year, so I’ll switch to a different role in the beginning of August. I’m not yet sure what kind of work I’ll be doing or where I’ll be living at this time next year, but right now, I’m in Hartford, CT.

Even though I work in downtown Hartford, I live and spend most of my free time in a first-ring suburb called West Hartford. My apartment is within walking distance of a cute town center area with a ton of shops, restaurants, and bars; there’s even a movie theater! I am also a short drive or train ride away from both NYC and Boston, which has been fun.

What have you been reading? Watching? Listening to? Any recommendations?

Documentaries: I recently reinstated my Netflix subscription, and I’ve been watching TONS of documentaries. There are very few documentaries that I don’t like, but these two are stellar:
- The Queen of Versailles (2012) it’s gotten a lot of hype, all of which is well deserved
- The Thin Blue Line (1988) I watched this in a documentary class at PSU, and it was so good that I chose it as the first thing I watched after my Netflix hiatus

Book: The Omnivore’s Dilemma, by Michael Pollan

What are you looking forward to in the next 6 months?

I’ve been hoarding my vacation days (I didn’t use ANY in 2012) so that I can go on vacation with my family this spring and summer! My Dad potentially has a business trip to Italy this spring, so if that ends up happening, I am definitely planning on tagging along and overindulging on pizza, wine, and caprese salad.

Have you been back to PSU recently?

I’ve been back twice, and I have plans to go back a couple more times this spring before my friends who still live there graduate! The first time I went back to help my company at the Career Fair, and the second time I went back for Homecoming Weekend. Both trips were awesome. Every time I go back, my heart says, “YAY, I’m home!!!” as I’m driving through downtown State College...then, moments later, I get a horrible sad feeling in my stomach
because I realize it’s not permanent. It takes about forty-five minutes for the sad feeling to go away, and then I have a ton of fun for the rest of the time I’m there. Before I go home, I usually end up doing some damage at McLanahans buying new PSU swag.

Tell us about a project at work that you’re excited about

I’m working on a team of seven to develop a company-wide mentoring program. We are still in the beginning stages of the project, so we’re currently researching mentoring program structures, best practices, and case studies. We are also talking to HR managers across the company to determine the needs, wants, and expectations of employees in each business unit. Over the next several months, we will develop plans for the program strategy, structure, launch, and sustainment. I love this project because its focus is completely different from my day-to-day tasks, and it is an outlet for both creative and strategic thinking.

Tell us about something fun you did recently in Hartford

I joined an intermural volleyball with a group of my friends from work. We play every Wednesday from January through March. Our team name is “I’d Hit That.”

What are 3-5 things that you would recommend people do in Hartford if they are ever in the area?

1. First off, anyone who wants to visit me in CT before I move (probably) in August is more than welcome. Seriously, come anytime. I have an extra bed with your name on it!!
2. Spend some time outdoors: there are many scenic parks and trails.
3. Elizabeth Park, in West Hartford, has a giant rose garden (America’s oldest) with over 800 varieties! If you think a rose garden sounds lame, don’t…I used to think that too. That was before I went to this park. It’s gorgeous and it smells amazing.
4. Go to the Westport Country Playhouse, which is on the CT coast, about an hour away from the Hartford area. I have yet to do this, but it is on my list. Apparently, this playhouse brings in a lot of big name performers, and after the show the performers mingle with audience members at an adjacent restaurant.
5. If you like sushi, go to Feng, in downtown Hartford for happy hour ($3-5 rolls!). Also, if you like Thai food, get the lunch special at Blue Elephant Trail in West Hartford Center. For phenomenal tableside guacamole, go to Besito, in West Hartford Center.
Share a couple of random facts with us!

On January 22, I got stuck in the elevator at work. It was a very brief incident (less than a minute before the elevator got back on track), but the elevator did stop, I had to ring the alarm, and then it dropped half a floor before it regained function. Since then, I have not taken the elevator. Unfortunately, I work on the top floor of my building. So, I now walk up 10 flights of stairs every morning while holding my computer bag, purse, lunch, and coffee. If the day ever comes that I can make the daily trek to my desk without feeling my heart rate go up, I will feel very accomplished.

I’ve started seasoning popcorn with Old Bay (plain popcorn, not the buttered kind, if you want to try this at home). I thought I was a popcorn visionary when I came up with this, but then, the third time I made the snack, I happened to read the side of the container: “Sprinkle OLD BAY generously on French fries, com-on-the-cob, steamed veggies and even popcorn!” Even though I can no longer lay claim to the idea, I highly recommend it.

What has been the toughest thing to get used to about life post-graduating from PSU?

There were many aspects of life as a PSU student that I knew I would miss, and I was right. One thing came as a surprise, though, and it’s been a difficult adjustment. I never realized how much activity I did at school just by walking everywhere. I spend the same amount of time (if not more) exercising as I did when I was in school, but I am completely sedentary while I’m at work, and it’s so unhealthy! I recently replaced my desk chair with a balance ball, and I created a chart to remind myself to walk to the water cooler, grab something from the printer, or even just stand up and stretch at least once every 30 minutes. I also established an informal “lunchtime walk” rewards system with my friends at work; I award one smiley face per walk, and then I give people homemade food as a reward for accumulating a certain number of smiley faces! Even though I’ve been making a lot of efforts to stay mildly active at work, I still feel like a complete bum after a long day of sitting at my desk!
The January 2013 edition of the PLA Alumni Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Mack Brady.

May light perpetual shine upon him

Photo credit: www.mackbrady.com