

Welcome to the Penn State Learning newsletter for May! Now that finals are almost over, you can take a deep breath, smell the rain, and read this newsletter. In it you'll find a re-cap of the final semester all-staff party, an announcement of the GSG Award winners, information about summer tutoring, an interview with Stormy Stark, and a LONG list of people we'll miss after they graduate this week.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & RE-CAPS

1. On Friday, April 29, some of you went to Movin' On. Others of you--the fun-loving ones, we like to think--came to the Penn State Learning **Semester-End Meeting/Pizza Party** in 220 Boucke. We ate delicious Papa John's pizza along with various snacks and desserts provided by staff and tutors. Dr. Angeliqye Bacon-Woodard and Dr. Brendaly Drayton presented GSG Awards (see #2), soon-to-be-Dr. Duane Graysay presented certificates to graduating math tutors, and Cindy Clem acknowledged language tutor graduates, writing tutor graduates, and the Superlative Award winners from each tutor and receptionist group. Everyone then visited, said goodbyes, ate lots of pizza, and voted on which carpet we should use in the Teamwork Center renovations this summer (the blue-tinted carpet beat the green-tinted carpet by a landslide).

2. The inaugural **Guided Study Group Leader Awards** were presented at the Friday meeting/party. Sponsored by a former GSG leader, the GSG Awards acknowledge the exceptional work of two leaders each semester. Because we did not hand out awards in the fall, four leaders received the award this spring. This year's winners are **Jeff Ross, Natalie Morrissey, Nicole Williamson, and Ryan Creedon** (pictured below, in that order). Each leader received a certificate and a \$500 check. Congratulations, winners! Thanks for being awesome!



3. Interested in **summer tutoring**? If so, you've probably already informed your supervisor, but if not, here's the scoop. We'll offer math and writing tutoring by appointment in 220 Boucke (schedule below), and online tutoring in writing, math, and statistics.
 First Session (May 16-June 24): 3-5 p.m.
 Second Session (June 29-August 10): 12-5 p.m.

4. Remember that survey you took several weeks ago about a **Penn State Learning Alumni network**? We have not forgotten your responses (most of you expressed at least mild interest in such a network), and plans are in place to roll out an alumni platform this summer. Stay tuned.

5. The **Spring 2016 issue of [The Dangling Modifier](#)**, an online newsletter by and for peer tutors of writing, is now live. The Dangling Modifier is the brainchild of Penn State writing tutors who launched the newsletter in print version in 1994 and have edited it since. This year, writing tutors Nicole Antkiewicz and Meghan O'Leary solicited, edited, and wrote content for the newsletter for internship credit. Writing centers from all over the nation are represented. Check it out!

MAY GOODBYES

It's been another busy, fun, and educational year at Penn State Learning. As graduation approaches, it's time to say goodbye and good luck to tutors and receptionists who are graduating or moving on to bigger and better things.

- GSG Leaders:**
 Katherine Cristofano
 Kyle Hilliard
 Christopher Pomerleau
 Jeff Ross (semester abroad and then graduating)

Language Tutors:

Michelle Bruni
Abdulaziz Dahlawi
Sara Getson
Rebecca Hovingh
Kyu Jin Jeoung
Katie Krissingner
Moldir Kulamkadyr
Ruoyi Li
Nabila Muhamad Zawawi
Yosuke Ota
Ilana Shtivelman
Justin Sorice
Andres Sousa

Math Tutors:

Nevin Brosius
Blake Burger
Matthew Easton
Melissa Hensler
Yi "Peter" Hu
Yiwen Hua
Jessica McKinley (student teaching in fall, then graduating)
Phillip Miller
Opeyemi Ositelu
Gabrielle Steiner
Olga Vinogradova
Jacob Wisser
Diana Zhang

Receptionists:

Milan Byrd
Catherine Corbett
Asher Dubin
Anne Forbes (already graduated but leaving PSL)
Taylor Harvey
Allison Webster

Writing Tutors:

Adam Baylor
Kristen Bouloubasis
Phoebe Canagarajah
Shannon Cantor
Dana Cinque
Christin Coleman
Krysta Ermine
Shelby Foster
Katrina Frerichs
Fatama Ibrahim
Laurel Kandianis
Maria Landschoot
Madison Lippincott
Daniel Magerman
Melissa Martin
Bryant Obeng
Tobi Otulana
Esther Park
Jake Pelini
Katherine Robinson
Evan Rosenberg
Libby Rush
Claire Silva
Jordan Todd
William Vaeth

MAY BIRTHDAYS**Lauren Runkle, Writing Tutor, May 5**

Year: Sophomore

Major: Materials Science and Engineering

Time at PSL: one semester



Lauren Runkle, Writing Tutor, May 5

Year: Sophomore
Major: Materials Science and Engineering
Time at PSL: one semester

Post-grad plan: to live by myself in a teeny tiny apartment in New York City

What did you want to be when you were small? My dream job for most of elementary school was to be a mailman. I thought they had it made.

What is the worst birthday gift you've received? On my 17th birthday, my friends surprised me by decorating my car while I was at work. Apparently I didn't pull all the streamers and balloons off before I drove home, and I got pulled over by a cop. \$500 fine for littering, but at least he wished me a happy birthday.



Esther Park, Writing Tutor, May 8

Year: Senior
Major: Public Relations, French & Francophone Studies, Global & International Studies
Time at PSL: I became a tutor Spring semester last year.
Post-grad plan: I will be working full-time in NYC, under L'Oreal's Management Development Program

What is one of your favorite books? One of my favorite books has to be The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri. Her writing speaks to my soul.

What makes you laugh the most? I have a weakness for corny jokes. Once I start laughing, I can't seem to stop!

Would you rather have the ability to fly or be invisible? Why? Definitely the ability to fly. Being able to get places faster would be the best ability I could ask for.



Katrina Frerichs, Writing Tutor, May 12

Year: Senior
Major: Animal Science
Time at PSL: Since Spring 2014
Post-grad plan: Attending veterinary school at Purdue College of Veterinary Medicine

What was the last movie you went to? What did you think of it? Zootopia, and it was amazing.

What is a special talent or skill you have? I play the French horn.

Who is your favorite superhero? Spiderman, hands down.



Nikki Williamson, GSG Leader, May 14

Year: Sophomore
Major: Kinesiology
Time at PSL: One year
Post-grad plan: Personal trainer + business owner

If you could sum up your life in a book title, what would it be? A Series of Unfortunate Events.

Fun fact: I was born without a joint in my one thumb, so I can't bend it and it has no wrinkles on it.

If you could share a meal with any 4 individuals, living or dead, who would you choose? George Washington, Brendon Urie, Mother Theresa, Shakespeare



Gabi Steiner, Math Tutor, May 27

Year: Senior
Major: Risk Management, Enterprise Risk Management Option
Time at PSL: 3 years
Post-grad plan: Working at Macy's as part of the Executive Development Program

If you could eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be? Meatloaf and mashed potatoes

What can you not go a day without? Coffee

Nabila Muhamad Zawawi, Arabic Tutor, May 7

Year: Senior
Major: Risk Management, Actuarial Science Option
Time at PSL: About 2 years
Post-grad plan: Going to grad school in the UK

If you could go back in time, what year would you travel to? Why? I would want to go back to the day I was born because it's nice to not get stressed and play all day long when we are young, isn't it?

How many pillows do you sleep with? 6! 3 bed pillows, and 3 big plushies: a cat, a dolphin & a bear.

Emily Fucinato, Writing Tutor, May 1

Shannon Cantor, Writing Tutor, May 9

Thad Achmad, Math Tutor & Receptionist, May 10

Jake Pelini, Writing Tutor, May 15
Phil Miller, Math Tutor, May 18 **Kristen Sanchez**, Writing Tutor, May 23 **Oluwatobi Jewoola**, Math Tutor, May 24 **Yiwen Hua**, Math Tutor, May 31

FUN FACTS



If a mailman spoke at your commencement, what might he say?

"I would say – because I'm a family person – don't underestimate your family because your family has a big impact. Listen to what your parents have to say because they've been there. The experience your family's had could help you in your decisions. That's what I would say. It's all about the family. I can't imagine not having my wife and two children.

-[Mike the Mailman](#), now-retired, on what advice he'd give to students as they embark on their careers

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If Brendon Urie spoke at your commencement, what might he say?

"The future should be exciting, you know? It shouldn't be a nerve-wracking experience."

• "Change is always a little bit strange."

• "I didn't even go to graduation."

Source: [Brendon Urie Quotes](#)

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If Jhumpa Lahiri spoke at your commencement, what might she say?

"You are still young, free... Do yourself a favor. Before it's too late, without thinking too much about it first, pack a pillow and a blanket and see as much of the world as you can. You will not regret it. One day it will be too late." - *The Namesake*

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If a meatloaf spoke at your commencement, what might it say? Probably nothing. But if you google "meatloaf and graduation," you'll get a [Yelp review](#) of Lunchbox Eats, a cafe in Memphis, TN, that serves a "Graduation Burger" made from meatloaf and mashed potatoes.

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If a really articulate genius baby spoke at your commencement, what might it say? "If you think babies have less stress than college students, listen to this: 'Studies show that babies – even newborns -- get distressed when their caregivers become emotionally unresponsive (Yoo and Reeb-Sutherland 2013). By 6 months, many babies can distinguish between happy and angry body language (Zeiber et al 2013), and they seem to be very sensitive to background hostility.' So there."

Source: <http://www.parentingscience.com/stress-in-babies.html>

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If a French horn spoke at your commencement, what might it say? "[An article in The New York Times](#) has called me one of the most treacherous instruments to play. I'm a wild card, they say." (French horns are not good commencement speakers.)

PSL PROFILE

Stormy Stark, 205D Boucke: A Brief Interview

Because she keeps the same hours the Guided Study Group leaders keep, many of you have probably not met Mary Anne "Stormy" Stark. Stormy began her work as a supervisor of the GSG leaders in the fall; this year, she has observed countless GSG sessions and mentored leaders while also finishing her Ph.D. She will officially graduate this weekend and move on to her next life adventure. Here you will learn a little more about Stormy, her work here, her career goals, the story behind her name, and what kind of animals are living in her Mom's house right now.

Tell us about your role at Penn State Learning.

My role at Penn State Learning is primarily to supervise the Guided Study Group leaders. For the most part, I get to watch a lot of really smart students help their peers learn new information. Supervising the GSG leaders is a lot of fun and I get to see a lot of different ways of sharing knowledge, which is super cool! The work the GSG leaders do is so important and I will miss getting to work with our leaders.

What do you like most about your work here?

Hands down, the people at Penn State Learning are the best part. The supervisory staff is a wonderful group who have gone above and beyond to help and support me. Angelique is the perfect professional mentor who has taught me so much about how to create successful programs for students. The GSG leaders are very intelligent and very funny and getting to learn about their students, their goals, and their backgrounds has been one of my favorite parts of this year.

You're almost done with your dissertation. What is it about? What do you want to do as a Ph.D?

I actually finished a few weeks ago. My research is focused on rural educational leadership. My dissertation was about a group of people who were forced to relocate when the Shenandoah National Park was built in Virginia. I wrote about the education and knowledge that helped those people survive and what types of formal and informal learning most impacted them and continues to impact them today. As a rural educational leader, I want to create programs that help students in the mountains of Virginia get greater and better educational opportunities without sacrificing their culture to get them. I'm excited to return home and start work that combines the most special parts of my community with the most innovative educational ideas available.

How will you celebrate your graduation?

My family and friends are coming to State College to celebrate with me. I plan on celebrating with a lot of love, laughter, and champagne. I like for special life events to focus on the people I am with above anything else.

How did you get the coolest, most superhero-esque name at Penn State Learning?

When I was born, [my mom] wanted to name me Stormy Gale (like the wind) but my grandparents all said that was a hooker's name. So they named me Mary Anne Elizabeth after my grandmothers and an aunt in the family, but my Mom said, "she's my child and I will call her what I want." So I have always been called Stormy, and my closest friends and family call me Stormy Gale.

What are three things you've experienced that would surprise or fascinate us?

1. My family lives on a working farm so I spend a lot of time surrounded by animals. In fact, there are 3 baby lambs living in my Mom's house right now and being bottle fed.
2. My undergraduate degree is in theatre and I worked professionally as a sound designer. One of my first jobs out of college included working on a show that started regionally and opened off-Broadway.
3. My best friend and I have been best friends for almost 30 years, which is longer than most of our GSG leaders and tutors have been alive! 😊

