

Expressions^{1st}

THE NEWSLETTER OF

Thrive. Connect. Transition. Evolve. Advocate.

Generation @Scripps College

Scripps College

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A Letter from the Editors

Hello Scripps Community,

We are so excited to begin the 2016-2017 academic year! We have a lot planned for the Scripps First-Generation community and we can't wait to get to know all of you! September has come and gone with the blink of an eye but during that time we have transitioned into our positions as this year's Co-Interns smoothly. The First-Generation community has been an integral part of our experiences at Scripps and we are both elated to have the opportunity to continue to cultivate this space for current and future students.

The theme of this month's newsletter is Introductions and New Beginnings! In this newsletter, you will have the opportunity to meet our program's program coordinator, program assistant and faculty liaisons! We hope this newsletter finds you well and serves as a basic introduction to this year's program.

A big thank you to Leslie Schnyder, Daniela Canas Baena, Rory Spence, and Michelle Decker for your help as our program transitions under new leadership. Your continuous dedication, support, and encouragement makes this program a success.

Sincerely,
Leonida Radford '17 and Vivian Yu '17
First-Gen Program Interns

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Introducing Our First Gen Team

Greetings First-Generation @ Scripps Community! I hope your semester has been going well. I am currently serving as the Interim Staff Coordinator of the First-Generation @ Scripps Program. I am excited to welcome everyone back for fall term and to greet incoming students to campus. This summer we hosted our 6th annual pre-orientation program for incoming students. Thank you to the First-Generation @ Scripps Program planning team members for playing a pivotal role in the success of the program! It was amazing to witness the incoming students engaging in workshops, building meaningful connections, and learning about the campus community. My hope is to be a resource to the first-gen student community through supporting students in actualizing their learning, personal and social goals while at Scripps. At this time in the term, you may be engaging in many academic and social experiences that provide both excitement and challenge. During my time in undergrad, I felt overjoyed to participate in experiences that shifted my perspective about the world, which included diving in to my course work, getting involved with student organizations, and building relationships with my peers. I also experienced difficulty with navigating cultural isolation and concern about my ability to handle the rigor of an undergraduate education. Tapping into resources on campus and building a supportive community, assisted me with thriving in the midst of challenge. I hope that everyone will continue to stay engaged in attending programs, participating in faculty office hours, and building mentor/mentee relationships. I feel so privileged to serve the first-gen student community, and I look forward to getting to know everyone!



Leslie Schnyder



Daniela Canas Baena

Hi all! I am so happy I get to contribute to this newsletter once again! In case you have seen me around campus and are wondering, “*Didn’t she graduate?*” Yes, I did, but I am back as the Academic Resources and Services Program Assistant until the end of the semester, which means I am blessed to stay on the First-Gen team a little longer.

A little about me: I am originally from Colombia but grew up in Ontario, CA. I dual majored in Politics and International Relations and Foreign Languages (Spanish and Italian) and studied abroad in Italy. I am a Christian and my faith continuously fuels my passion for social justice. My favorite shows are *Gilmore Girls*, *Parks and Rec*, and *Veronica Mars*. Lastly, my favorite Motley drink is the Bowl of Soul with coconut tea and honey (shout out to Mikaela Gallardo ’19, who introduced me to this delicious and addictive drink). If you ever want to grab a Motley drink with me to discuss any of the above mentioned topics or just want to talk, come by my office or send me an email – I would love to continue strengthening my First-Gen network and supporting you!

Advice for first-years from a fellow First-Gener: During my time at Scripps I found incredible amounts of love and support from the First-Gen community, so I encourage you to invest time in building these relationships. I am sure you have already encountered other First-Gen folks across campus organizations and residence halls, but if not, I encourage you to join us for our upcoming cross-cohort events!

To the rest of the First-Gen community: I am so excited to be back and serving as a resource to the community I love oh-so-much! Stop by my office in DOS and say hi, I would love to know how you are doing and what I can do to continue to support you.

Our Faculty Liaisons: Michelle Decker



What do you teach?

I'm an English professor, but not the typical kind (I suppose!), in that I teach and research about Africa, and sometimes the Middle East and India. Right now I'm teaching classes on politics and art, the postcolonial novel, and poetry.

Best part about being an educator?

So many things! But I really love mentoring smart young woman. And subjecting my classes to terrible puns.

Your involvement in First-Gen/how did it come to be?

Right now Rory and I are the faculty co-liaisons. I first became involved when I attended the First-Gen retreat last February and spoke as part of the faculty panel. I was struck by the closeness and dynamism of the community and wanted to do more.

If you are first-gen, what is your favorite part about being first-gen?

I'm actually second-gen, but struggled with some of the things I think some first-gen students do--which is experiencing a big cultural gap when they first come to college--because I went to a rural public high school with very few academic resources. One of the things I like about this particular part of my background is that I think it's given me a very fine-tuned bullshit detector.

What is something that many first gen students struggle with?

I can only speak for what I struggled with as an undergrad, but I felt like the things I was learning for the first time were old news for everyone else. (Pro tip: they're learning too, but they just have better language for obscuring the fact they don't know things. See above for comment on bullshit detector.)

What do you do for fun?

Dance; swing on the swing at the top of the hill in Elysian Park, near where I live; write bad poetry.

If you were stranded on an island, what book, album, and person would you bring?

This question is impossible! I wish I could do the thing where you wish for more wishes (more books, people, music...). Ok. Here goes.

Book: William Carlos Williams, *Imaginations* (This is one of my favorite books. WCW is brilliant; his poetry always surprises me, even when I reread it for the millionth time.)

Album, Bon Iver, *For Emma Forever Ago* (this album changed my life. It's a bit sad, but maybe if I listened to it every day, it would motivate me to get off the island to escape it.)

Person: My best friend, Michael, who is hilarious and brilliant and would distract me from the sun, which I don't much like.

What motivates you every day?

On my best days: the possibility of being surprised--by the goodness of others, my own strength, or free food in the humanities lounge.

Describe yourself in five words.

Generous, Witty, Self-Effacing, Resilient, and Zealous

What is something you are looking forward to this academic year?

Not being a first-year professor anymore...! And helping to build a stronger and more inclusive community at Scripps.

Our Faculty Liaisons: Rory Spence

What do you teach?

I teach neuroscience classes and introductory biology labs as well.

Best part about being an educator?

I learn so much from the students every day. The students are so motivated and intelligent, it pushes me to continue my own education, and I love that.

Your involvement in First-Gen/how did it come to be?

I have always tried to be involved with making sure education is attainable for everyone regardless of who you are or where you are from. Mary Hatcher-Skeers introduced me to the first-gen program at Scripps and it just sounded like something I wanted to be part of.

What is something that many first gen students struggle with?

Just don't doubt yourself. You're here at Scripps because you have worked hard to be here and you deserve to be here. If you get lost or struggle along the way, that's okay. We all get a bit lost and struggle from time to time, and just remember the first-gen mentors, volunteers and fellow students are here for support if you need it.

What do you do for fun?

Hiking with my wife and puppies. Swimming at the Scripps pool. Gardening. I enjoy cooking as well, so most nights I try and make an effort to prepare a decent meal.

If you were on stranded on an island, what book, album, and person would you bring?

Book - "How to survive on an island if your stranded" -does that book even exist, if not someone needs to write it now.

Album - "Pet Sounds" Beach Boys and there isn't even a close second.

Person - my wife because she might read this and I don't want to get in trouble.

What motivates you every day?

You know, I sometimes think about this and the best answer I can give is that I just really enjoy life and I want to live it the best I can. Boring answer I know, but that's the conclusion I always come to.

Describe yourself in five words.

How is that even possible?

What is something you are looking forward to this academic year?

Well I am teaching a new class this semester about Neurological Disorders and I am having fun with that so far. Also is winter break an appropriate answer? Just joking, I'm looking forward to summer break because it's longer.



First-Gen News in Higher Education

[Dominique Jordan Turner Receives Women's Leadership Award](#)

On September 16, 2016, Chicago's WNBA team, the Chicago Sky honored [Dominique Jordan Turner](#) with the #RedefinePossible Women's Leadership Award. This award recognizes women who "serve as an inspiration to others by making a positive impact in the community and redefining possible for those around them." Turner is the CEO and President of the college access and success program Chicago Scholars. Chicago Scholars is a college access space that creates high quality educational opportunities for first generation, and under-served students across Chicago.



Turner, herself, was the first in her family to graduate both high school and college and lives by the motto: "I'll find a way or make one." Turner received her B.A in Business Administration from Clark Atlanta University and continued her education at Marquette University where she obtained her M.B.A and worked as a volunteer for the Peace Corps in the Republic of Panama. Aside from working with Chicago Scholars, she is also involved in other leadership programs such as Leadership Greater Chicago, IMPACT through Chicago Urban League and University of Chicago, the Trinity Fellows Program focusing on Urban Leadership, Black Girls Lead, and much more.

To Turner, winning the Redefine Possible award means: "It's about taking the rules that are put on society and throwing that out the window and creating and writing your own rules and believe that anything is possible." Turner's dedication to underserved youth and first generation students is an inspiration to us and motivates us to strive towards excellence in paving our own paths at Scripps.

Parting Words

We look forward to getting to know everyone and building community with all of you!



PAST AND FUTURE FIRST-GEN EVENTS:

- **Community Dinner, walk your dinner over from Malott!**
 - Thursday, Oct. 6th from 5:15 to 7:00 pm in Balch Conference Room
- **Lunch with Professors Michelle Decker and Rory Spence**
 - Thursday, Oct. 13th from 12:00 to 1:00 pm in Malott's S. Meeting Room
- **Scholarly Research Workshop with Jennifer Thompson**
 - Tuesday, Oct. 25th from 5:30-6:30 pm at Honnold Mudd's Keck Learning Room

We Want to Hear From You!

To inspire our readers and recognize your accomplishments, we would like to feature your story in one of our upcoming newsletters. Please send us a personal article or poem depicting your experience as a first-gener to: firstgeneration@scrippscollege.edu