New student dining hall

The John Felice Rome Center is building a new student dining hall (mensa) in the space pictured above, which will open in spring 2015. The walls will be glass, permitting abundant natural light, and there will be a wrap-around terrace for outdoor seating. These improvements, together with the new Anthony and Susan Brazier Piazza Information Commons and new executive education/conference space are enhancing the student experience at the Rome Center campus.

And what happened to Rinaldo’s, the coffee bar that had been in this space, off and on, for a number of years? The JFRC rebuilt the coffee bar just down the hall, in a space that had been used as the art studio. The JFRC transformed that room, and today’s students are enjoying a beautiful, brand new coffee bar. Watch for the next issue of Il Bollettino later this year for more renovation updates and exciting new plans for the campus.

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The “Mud Angels” of 1966

BY DR. PAUL KELLEY (JFRC ’66–’67)

The 1966 flood of the Arno River in Florence killed many people and damaged or destroyed millions of art masterpieces and rare books. It is considered the worst flood in the city’s history since 1557. With the combined effort of Italian citizens and foreign donors and committees, or Angeli del Fango (“Mud Angels”), many of these fine works have been restored. New methods in conservation were devised and restoration laboratories established. However, even decades later, much work remains.

I don’t recall exactly how many of us there were in that little caravan of one bus and two Alpha Romeos, organized by Father Pierre Riches, that took us to Firenze (Florence). Nor do I remember the precise day or date of that 280 km jaunt. I remember only that we left unconscionably early on a sunny morning, and that I was shoehorned into Joe Coleman’s (JFRC ’66–’67) Alpha, with Debbie (Sieg) Bowen (JFRC ’66–’67) riding most uncomfortably in the tiny space behind the two seats. We were among the first to arrive after the waters receded—the waters of the usually placid Arno that had, in an unimaginably short time, transformed a cultural treasure house into a tragic gurgling sinkhole.

I remember walking through the streets of this storied city—streets that had walked for the first time with such unbelled, dark-jewed, wide-eyed joy not three weeks before—and feeling my stomach lurch and my heart break a little more with every step.

I remember standing in the basement corridors of the Biblioteca Nazionale, where the mud was still ankle-, knee-, and in some places hip- and waist-deep, passing over our heads in a hands-to-hands chain gang the priceless mud-encased manuscripts of Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Goldoni, and hundreds of others, so that they could dry in the sun of the Tuscan plain.

I remember the musky, claying odor of river mud that had collected its detritus for hundreds of years before being thrown violently hundreds of years before being thrown violently in front of my eyes, in front of my heart, and my whole being. I remembered the sting of the inoculations for typhus and diphtheria that we were given in the Piazza Santa Croce and the tanker trucks of pure water and alcohol that were used to clean off the stubborn mud and whatever gunk it had brought.

As six or eight of us posed for a photograph, we laughed first at how utterly filthy and sodden we all looked and then at the ridiculous fact that no matter how much mud and dirt and water had attached itself to her, Debbie simply could not be anything but glamorous! These are my vivid memories of Florence in November 1966, one of my life’s richest experiences. It was only much later that I learned that I and my fellows, and those who came after us, were given a cherished name by the people of Firenze Angeli del Fango, Mud Angels. And I say proudly, I am one of Angeli del Fango.

We were among the first to arrive after the waters receded—the waters of the usually placid Arno that had, in an unimaginably short time, transformed a cultural treasure house into a tragic gurgling sinkhole.

Embracing Rome for a lifetime

When I landed in Rome, I was completely jet-lagged,” says Katie Vogelheim (JFRC ’77–’78) of her first semester at the Rome Center. “Waiting for luggage and the drive to campus took forever. But when I got out and walked down the driveway, a palpable sensation took hold of me. I felt like I was home.”

Three decades later, Vogelheim called her parents and told them she had to stay: not just the rest of that semester but for an additional semester as well. Her parents couldn’t afford to keep her there beyond one semester. John Felice got wind of her inclinations and eventually called Vogelheim’s father, unknown to her at the time. Felice said, “I understand your daughter and we would love to have you stay and I want to find a way to make that happen.” They worked out a loan that her family ended up paying back, which allowed her to stay for the spring semester as well.

“Attending the Rome Center changed my life,” says Vogelheim. “There was just something about Rome that got into my soul.”

Vogelheim lives with her husband in Tiberon, California, near San Francisco, and her son and daughter attend Harvard University. The family owns a home in Rome, a result of Vogelheim’s time there as a student but also a two-year period during which the entire family lived there.

“After I started bringing my husband to Rome, he fell in love with it as well,” says Vogelheim. “We thought about the importance of living abroad, and when 9/11 happened, we looked at each other and said, ‘Life is too short. If we’re gonna do it, we gotta do it now.’ So we moved to Rome with our kids and put them both in Italian schools. We stayed there for two years, and we really see Rome as our second home.”

In addition to their home there, they built a business called Rome Luxory Suites, a group of three boutique hotels near the Spanish Steps. They visit Rome several times each year. Vogelheim worked as a senior executive at General Electric for 18 years in their global networking business. Then she moved from technology to consumer-based businesses, first with BMG Records and then an Internet startup. Eventually she started her own consulting business. Today she oversees the hotel business in Rome, runs the John and Katie Hansen Family Foundation, and is a member of four boards, including the Loyola Rome Center Foundation Board of Directors.

“I feel privileged to be involved with Loyola and am so impressed with Father Garanzini, who has developed a strong commitment to the Rome Center,” says Vogelheim of her work on Loyola’s Rome Center Foundation. “And Emilio Iodice is a world-class educator.” Rev. Michael J. Garanzini, S.J., is president and CEO of Loyola, and Emilio Iodice is vice president and director of the Rome Center.

Vogelheim and her husband started their family foundation 10 years ago to encourage their children to engage in philanthropy. Their giving focuses on education and child and maternal health. Five years ago, they began funding an annual scholarship for students who otherwise couldn’t afford to go to the Rome Center. The scholarship supports five students a year.

“I am a big believer in financial aid for the Rome Center,” says Vogelheim. “When you can give students this kind of once-in-a-lifetime experience, they inevitably give back in many ways.”

When Loyola’s insieme campaign began, the matching funds offered as part of the campaign made a big difference to Vogelheim and her husband. They decided to endow a scholarship in perpetuity with a gift of $500,000.

“I’m thrilled with all the progress at the Rome Center and continue to be proud of my alma mater,” says Vogelheim. “Our class still gets together every couple of years, and I tell everyone they would be so proud to see what the Rome Center has become.”
Where in the world are Rome Center alumni?

Enjoy this peek into where fellow alumni reside and the locations of current JFRC alumni chapters.

ARE YOU REPRESENTED HERE?
Go to LUC.edu/jfrcalumni/directory to update your profile so fellow alumni can find you.

13,766
Total alumni

106
Reside outside of the US

TOP 5 COUNTRIES
1. United States 13,660
2. Italy 31
3. Canada 10
4. United Kingdom 9
5. Mexico 4

ALUMNI BY THE NUMBERS

Dots on the map represent the approximate locations of alumni based on their current address on file with the Office of Alumni Affairs.
Ancient history brought to life

Alexander Evers (pictured right with JFRC students) is assistant professor of Classical Studies and Ancient History, arriving at the JFRC in 2005 after having taught at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. He obtained his PhD in ancient history at the University of Oxford (2002), and alongside his extensive teachings in Greek, Roman, and Early Medieval History, he is an active researcher. He has concentrated his research on the African provinces of the Roman Empire in late antiquity and written a number of articles on aspects of life in the cities of Roman Africa. His book Church, Cities, and People: A Study of the Petes in the Church and Cities of Roman Africa in Late Antiquity was published in 2010.

Dr. Evers’s current project focuses on Rome itself, within the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. It will result in a monograph and a series of volumes of essays on the Avellana, following a number of conferences (further details at LUC.edu/collectioavellana). He has also appeared in numerous TV documentaries for the BBC, National Geographic Channel, and the History Channel.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

What are students studying these days?

You may remember one of several mainstay history classes when you were at the John Felice Rome Center, or perhaps a particular topography class caught your eye. Here are a few examples of courses available to students at the JFRC today.

+ **THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT GREECE, TO ALEXANDER THE GREAT**

  Students journey through time from the earliest days of the Greek world—before the Trojan War—to the rise of the Greek city-state or polis, which eventually produced the famous landmarks we are familiar with today. Students study ancient Greek society and culture, examining contributions from numerous scholars, while establishing hypotheses and determining subjects of further inquiry. The drama of Greek history, society, politics, and culture is discussed.

+ **EMPERORS, BISHOPS, BARBARIANS—THE TRANSFORMATION OF ROME**

  Students are exposed to an in-depth perspective of the third to eighth centuries AD, which was regarded until recently as a rather turbulent period. Theories of decline and fall by phenomena such as barbarian invasions, socio-political and military and economic crises, and the rise of Christianity dominated the historiography of this era. Students develop an understanding of how the period was actually a gradual transformation, where barbarian invasions did not destroy the walls of Rome and that the arrival of Christianity did not cause the fall of classical culture.

+ **ITALIAN CULTURAL HISTORY: FOODS AND WINES OF ITALY**

  Students dive into the history of Italian cuisine and wines, including the development and progression of taste and how it has been affected and defined by historical events. A dynamic pattern within society is reflected by intersections among history, culture, food and wines, with students gaining a unique understanding of regional vs. Italian tastes through on-site visits and guest speakers.

+ **CASE STUDIES IN HISTORY AND THE ARTS: THE TRANSFORMATION OF ROME**

  Students are exposed to an in-depth perspective of the third to eighth centuries AD, which was regarded until recently as a rather turbulent period. Theories of decline and fall by phenomena such as barbarian invasions, socio-political and military and economic crises, and the rise of Christianity dominated the historiography of this era. Students develop an understanding of how the period was actually a gradual transformation, where barbarian invasions did not destroy the walls of Rome and that the arrival of Christianity did not cause the fall of classical culture.

CAREER MENTOR PROGRAM

Alumni forge partnerships for professional growth

The John Felice Rome Center Alumni Board recently introduced a career mentor program, in support of the professional ambitions of young alumni. Initiated by board member Gemma Allen Nader (JFRC ‘64–65, BS ’66), this program connects experienced professional alumni with recent graduates, and it has already fostered several successful connections.

Nader conceived the idea after being approached by Loyola University Chicago’s School of Law Career Services. Nader was open to meeting with a young law alumnus and inquired if there were any JFRC alumni among the interested new grad, in case such an affinity could enhance a mentoring relationship. The first young alumni she met with, Andrew Stevens (JFRC Fall ’10), had studied at the Rome Center, and this proved a great fit. “We bonded over the study abroad experience,” Nader says, “and I felt he had a maturity that living in Rome can help foster.” Stevens and Nader plan to continue their mentoring and professional connection after he finishes law school.

Since its introduction a year ago, the program has produced other successful connections. Julia Coppi (JFRC Fall ’12) is pursuing a career in obstetrics and gynecology. Upon reviewing the list of JFRC career mentors, she requested Kristin Witkowski (JFRC Fall ’01), a current OB/GYN in Wisconsin. Beginning with an introductory phone call and moving toward regular e-mail correspondence, Coppi visited Witkowski over fall break for a job-shadow opportunity. Coppi experienced the day-to-day activities and emergencies of the profession, including a live birth and two surgeries, and confirmed OB/GYN was indeed her calling. Coppi is thrilled to have Witkowski’s guidance in navigating medical school, residency, and her future career path as an OB/GYN and greatly values that job-shadowing experience.

Young alumnus Joe Siegert (JFRC Fall ’06) aspires to a career in broadcast television. He selected JFRC career mentor Dr. Paul Kelley (JFRC ’66–77), who has an extensive background in the broadcast television industry, including production and sales. Despite Kelley living on the east coast and Siegert being in Chicago, they maintained a mentor relationship via phone and e-mail and were able to meet in person when Kelley traveled to Chicago. Kelley has been able to provide Siegert with valuable advice and direction as well as introductions within the industry.

Interested in career mentoring?

If you are a young alum interested in participating, please review the list of JFRC career mentors at LUC.edu/jfrcalumni/careermentor and contact Casey Allison, JFRC Alumni Relations, at calison@LUC.edu.
Meetings of the minds

In the last eight years, Loyola University Chicago has worked to bring together scholars from around the world while providing opportunities for students to present their work in a formal academic setting. Here are a few highlight events from this past academic year at the JFRC.

APRIL 24 (THURSDAY)
The final banquet for students, faculty, and staff was held at Parco Massimi. A trophy was presented to the winning soccer team composed of students, faculty, and staff at the JFRC soccer tournament. Then six professors presented academic awards for the most outstanding student in their respective classes.

APRIL 25 (FRIDAY)
The first day of a two-day celebration of student creativity commenced with a witty, bilingual adaptation of the Latin classic, “The Braggart Soldier” (Miles Gloriosus). The play was followed by a sculpture exhibit and Prosecco in the art studio and a reading of original student works of fiction by the English 318 classes, “Writing Rome, Reading Rome.”

APRIL 26 (SATURDAY)
The second day of celebrating student creativity featured solo vocal performances of Italian music from opera to art songs to contemporary ballads. The participating students were trained by Dr. Delia Surratt, Conservatory of Rome and voice professor at the JFRC.

APRIL 27 (SUNDAY)
The final event was a film festival with three short films from the Communication 299 class. The majority of student singers, writers, sculptors, filmmakers, and actors had never taken a fine and performing arts course before they came to the Rome Center. The dean of faculty, Dr. Susana Cavallo, says, “The fine and performing arts classes at the JFRC give students a chance to explore for the first time their creativity in the inspiring setting of Rome.”
AUG. 22, 2013
Chicago GOLD Alumni Aperitivo
The JFRC Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) reconnected at this annual get-together. And now we look forward to this year's JFRC GOLD event on August 7 at J. Rocco Italian Table and Bar in downtown Chicago where we'll be joined by none other than the JFRC's own Professor Alexander Evers! Register at LUC.edu/jfrcalumni/GOLD.

SEPT. 14, 2013
DC Alumni Community Service Kick-off
Alumni in the Washington, DC, area packed over 2,500 pounds of food for the Christ House on Wheels (CHOW) program, which delivers food to people in need in outlying areas of the local Diocese, comprising 21 counties. Starting with breakfast and an inspirational introduction from the Christ House director, alumni filled over 65 boxes of food. This year's DC alumni service event will be held in November 2014, so keep your eye out for an invite. If you have an updated e-mail address, please send it to Casey Allison at calliso@LUC.edu.

SEPT. 20–21, 2013
Class of ’72–’73 40th Reunion
The class of 1972–73 held their 40th reunion in Chicago, raising $30,000 to name a classroom in memory of their fellow classmate, Patrick Tucker (JFRC ’72–’73, BA ’75). The classroom will be built as part of the renovations taking place at the Rome Center, funded by the JFRC’s Insieme campaign.

OCT. 18, 2013
JFRC Chicago Alumni Aperitivo at LUMA April 24–27, 2014
Alumni joined Emilio Iodice, director of the JFRC, at the Loyola University Museum of Art (LUMA) to learn of the largest current commitment to the JFRC—one million dollars. This momentous gift from Anthony F. Piazza, II (JFRC ’62–’63) will support capital improvements as part of the JFRC Insieme campaign. After Tony’s heartfelt speech paying tribute to his late wife, Susan Brazier Piazza (JFRC Spring ’63), alumni toasted and enjoyed the LUMA exhibits on display.

DEC. 14, 2013
JFRC Chicago Alumni Give Back
Organized by JFRC Alumni Board member Claire Dittrich (JFRC ’77–’78), alumni came together to pack hundreds of gifts for the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The organization’s case workers then delivered gifts to designated families in time for Christmas Day.

This year’s event will be on December 6 with family members and guests welcome. If you have an updated e-mail address, please send it to Casey Allison at calliso@LUC.edu.

FEB. 7, 2014
JFRC St. Louis Alumni Give Back
A spring happy hour brought St. Louis alumni together to reconnect and give back to their community through Feeding America in St. Louis. JFRC Alumni Board President John Kurowski also made a special announcement of a formal establishment of the JFRC St. Louis Alumni Chapter!

We look forward to this summer’s St. Louis alumni event on July 26 at the downtown location of Robust Wine bar! Register at LUC.edu/jfrcalumni/slt.

ANNOUNCEMENT
Meet me in St. Louis
The John Felice Rome Center is pleased to announce the JFRC St. Louis Alumni Chapter!

With the establishment of this chapter, JFRC alumni in St. Louis will now have an organized way to get together locally and keep in touch. We look forward to future opportunities to network and reconnect with St. Louis alumni, including service and social events, alongside support for alumni who are new to the area.

This chapter will be led by three chapter ambassadors: Joe Kurowski (Spring ’06, Fall ’07), Jill Gilbert (Fall ’86), and Sera Koehler (Spring ’16), who will not only plan fun gatherings but also be the voice of St. Louis-area alumni to communicate future ideas and requests.

Thank you for your continued support of the JFRC, and we look forward to the success of our newest chapter!
Calendar of events

Visit LUC.edu/jfrcalumni for a complete list of upcoming events.

CHICAGO GOLD ALUMNI APERITIVO
August 7, 2014 • 6–8 pm • J. Rocco Italian Table and Bar
REGISTER: LUC.edu/jfrcalumni/GOLD

The John Felice Rome Center Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) gather at this annual event for a chance to meet and reconnect with fellow young alumni. The evening will include an open bar of premium wine and beer as well as a variety of hors d’oeuvres at the newly opened J. Rocco Italian Table and Bar.

CLASS OF ’73–’74 40TH REUNION
September 5–7, 2014 • Chicago, IL
REGISTER: www.jfrc73-74.com

We look forward to seeing the class of 1973–74 for this momentous occasion, which includes gatherings throughout the weekend and time to reconnect and toast one another.

CHICAGO ALUMNI APERITIVO
October 18, 2014 • 5–7 pm • LUMA (Loyola University Museum of Art)
REGISTER: LUC.edu/jfrcalumni/luma

Join us for an evening at LUMA alongside fellow alumni in downtown Chicago at Loyola’s Water Tower Campus. Enjoy an exclusive tour of the Crossings and Dwellings exhibit followed by a reception of premium wine and beer and hors d’oeuvres.

DC ALUMNI GIVE BACK
November 2014

Join fellow alumni in the DC area for an opportunity to give back to the community. Led by DC Alumni Chapter Ambassadors Ben and Mary Pietrzyk, we look forward to seeing you for this annual community service event. More details to come.