SINCE THE LAUNCH OF INSIEME PER IL FUTURO, the $12 million campaign for the John Felice Rome Center, many exciting renovations have taken place at the center’s now-permanent home. An existing chapel was renovated to become an ultra-modern information commons, where JFRC students can study and connect during their formative time abroad. The information commons was feted with an opening celebration on January 25, thus completing Phase I of the campaign. The information commons is a model of energy efficiency and sustainable development, maximizing the use of energy consumed and minimizing the impact on the environment, and is a beautiful work of architecture. This facility is one of the most technologically advanced libraries in Rome, an appropriate home for the largest collection of English books in the city. To learn more, visit LUC.edu/insieme.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

• The JFRC also completed its first phase of solar panel installation on the west wing, which houses dormitories, the chapel, and the Sala Chandler, among other rooms. The panels are now providing almost half of the electricity used on campus.

• The JFRC is also renovating two elevators which have been shut down for more than two decades, and Rinaldo’s was updated to prepare it for new management.
Italy is famed for its antiquities, but preservation can present quite a challenge. Pompeii's 2000-year-old "House of the Gladiators" made news when it collapsed last fall. We chatted with JFRC professor and antiquities expert John Nicholson to discern the state of Italy's cultural treasures and what can be done to protect them.

How long have you been studying the antiquities of Italy? • For about 30 years, I have been teaching a course on Art in Rome, which includes visits to ancient sites. I also lead student tours to Ostia Antica (the port of Rome in antiquity) and to Pompeii.

Over the years, have you witnessed changes in the quality of the antiquities, for better or worse? • Italy has an immense patrimony of ancient art and architecture to preserve. There have been changes both for the better and for the worse. Here in Rome, an important area in the ancient Forum, the newly restored House of the Vestal Virgins, has re-opened to public visits. A few days ago, a complete but progressive restoration of the Colosseum at the expense of a private donor was announced. This is a very positive development since it relieves some of the tremendous financial pressure on the Italian state.

On the other hand, the situation at Pompeii has deteriorated. Several important sites, the House of Vetii and the Stabian Baths, have been closed for several years for restoration, but very little seems to have been done. The collapse of the House of the Gladiators has also been much in the news.

What is the cause of that degradation? • There is no single cause for the degradation. A period of heavy rains and the inattention of the authorities at Pompeii contributed to the damage in that case. In its recent budget, the Italian government made substantial cuts to the Ministry for Cultural Goods, which has sounded alarms for the future.

What can be done to preserve antiquities? • Once again, Italy's immense patrimony makes effective preservation a very difficult task. Adequate funding is necessary both from the state and private benefactors. Also, an awareness and sense of responsibility on the part of Italians and the millions of tourists who visit Italy are essential. Another cause of degradation is the habit of removing...
Benvenuto a Roma!

Missing Massimi? Take a high-energy student-led tour of the JFRC with our “Benvenuto a Roma!” video. Visit LUC.edu/benvenuto.

International law training at JFRC

A new Master’s of Law degree program, called PROLAW, will be offered at the John Felice Rome Center beginning in September 2011. The program will prepare students to promote the rule of law in developing countries and countries in economic transition. It is open to U.S. and international law school graduates and is the first one-year program of its kind to offer legal training to law school graduates with an emphasis on the application of practical skills.

Graduates of the program will be qualified to act as advisors in countries seeking to transform their legal systems and working toward the legal empowerment of their citizens.

William T. Loris (JFRC ’66–’67), a lawyer and alumnus of the JFRC, has been named the PROLAW program director. He most recently served as director general of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), based in Rome, which works to promote the rule of law and good governance in developing countries, countries in economic transition, and countries emerging from violent conflict.

PROLAW is supported by a $1.1 million grant from the Global Development Program at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Nicholson Q&A, continued

“souvenir” bits and pieces of ancient objects. Preventing this also requires a stronger presence of attendants and guards on the sites.

How does one preserve and protect an antiquity while maintaining its authenticity? • Preserving the authenticity of an ancient building, work of art, or artefact is a very complex problem. For example, removing a statue or painting from its original site results in a loss of authenticity, but also ensures its safety and preservation. Some houses at Pompeii have been partially reconstructed to give the public an idea of the original appearance. So, complex decisions have to be made in balancing the authentic work and demands of preservation, information, and numerous other factors.

Class of ’86–’87
Reunite in Chicago

The JFRC class of 1986–1987 will be holding a class reunion in celebration of their 25th anniversary, September 9–11, 2011. For more information, please contact Marina Mihailovic Cato at marinamcato@rcn.com.
JFRC education inspires foreign service

Jeanne Briganti (JFRC Spring ’00) could just have easily skipped the career panel she attended during her time at the Rome Center. But she didn’t, and it set in motion the events that led to her current job as press attaché for the Polish embassy in Warsaw. “One of the panelists was an officer at the embassy,” Briganti recalls. “I was going to graduate the year after getting back and didn’t know what I was going to do. I remember thinking, ‘this sounds so exciting!’ I got back, and, that next semester, took the exam. And that was it.”

Briganti is now serving her second assignment in Poland—the first, from 2005–2007, was in Krakow. Her responsibilities as press attaché and spokesperson include working with contacts in Poland to get out the messages of the U.S. embassy as well as keeping an ear to the ground in the Polish press and reporting on sentiments toward the U.S. back to colleagues in Washington. She also does press for promotional events: for example, the New York Philharmonic performed in Warsaw last year, and Annie Leibovitz recently opened a photography exhibit there. At the time of this interview, the embassy was preparing for a visit from President Obama.

“That’s one of the fun and exhausting things about this job—there never is a typical day,” says Briganti.

Briganti and her husband (who was a classmate at the JFRC) return to Rome several times each year and visited the JFRC in March of this year. “We got to see Rinaldo and Nella,” she says. “We remembered a lot of good times, the blood oranges, and travelling. We regret that we didn’t stay a full year. The semester went so fast.”

Briganti recommends the foreign service to any JFRC alums, who, like her, got a taste of life abroad and are hungry for more. “Rome is my favorite city, but Warsaw is second. This has been a great opportunity for me, and I really thank the Rome Center—not just for a great education, but for planting the seed for the foreign service.”

And the officer who spoke at the career panel that day? “I had never before thought that this would be my career,” says Briganti. “I don’t know who he is, but I hope he reads this.”

I really thank the Rome Center—not just for a great education, but for planting the seed for the foreign service.

— JEANNE BRIGANTI

JFRC alums appointed to top positions

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel has named JFRC alumnus John Tolva (JFRC Spring ’93) chief technology officer. Previously the director of citizenship & technology for the IBM Corporation, Tolva has been a member of the alumni board since 2006.

Patrick J. Rocks (JFRC Fall ’79, CAS ’80), who has served as the general counsel to the Chicago Public School System since 2005, will continue to serve Chicago in this position after being reappointed by Emanuel.
My favorite place in Rome is not an important or big place. Every day all the students see it: the JFRC garden. Why is it my favorite? One reason is that during the day when it’s sunny it is a perfect place to do my homework. I can sit on a blanket on the grass. If you don’t want to sit on a blanket, you can sit on a bench. Here I don’t have Internet so the only thing I have to do is my homework. The flowers, the crisp breeze, the friends, and the peace make this place my favorite.

During the afternoon many students come here: it is a perfect place to meet your friends and help them with homework, or simply for a nap under the sun light. The sun light is not too strong, because most people don’t like it too strong. The JFRC garden is next to the university but it’s as if it’s hidden from Rome. I can think and focus on what I have to do.

You can also eat there. You can bring food or a beverage from Rinaldo’s or the vending machines. If you prefer, you can also buy something at the grocery store and bring it there. It is a perfect place to have a picnic with friends. Or to play calcio, or scrabble while the cats are running in the garden. This is why the JFRC garden is my favorite place.
Forza Roma: the experience in students’ words

I thank you for your assistance as the funds helped to make my experience in Paris and London a very enjoyable one. Right away, we learned of a bakery where each morning we would get breakfast. The owner became very familiar with us and in the four days we spent there we developed a sort of bond to the point that she would bring us our orders without us having to even say exactly what we wanted. In addition, I noticed my French slowly coming back to me despite not having taken the language since my early High School years. Even more surprising was the fact that if my French failed me, my Italian seemed to always bridge the gap, something for which I was grateful.

–James Smith (JFRC Spring ‘11)

I had such a fantastic time in northern Italy. Now I can certainly say I have traveled all around Italy and I can even say that my perception of Italian cities in general has changed due to this week. Thank you so much for your help, this is something I will remember forever my time spent abroad this year.

–Brooke Feery (JFRC Spring ‘11)

After deciding to study in Rome, Switzerland was the one destination I had to see before the semester was over. Our visit to Lucerne was especially unique because we went on the Monday before Fat Tuesday. As part of their Mardi Gras celebration, the whole town was closed in order to celebrate and instead of going to work, the citizens dressed in costumes and filled the streets as families, bands, and themed groups. Slightly reminiscent of Halloween, the costumes got more and more detailed as the day went on. Overall, my visit to Switzerland was one of the most enjoyable trips I have ever taken.

Thank you for your support and encouragement to travel.

–Jessica Miro (JFRC Spring ‘11)

The Greece trip introduced me not merely to the wealth of history and culture Greece has to offer, but it brought me even closer to my fellow JFRC students. The memories and experiences from that trip are the most valuable souvenirs of my time abroad. Because you helped me make this trip possible, I have made friendships that I know will last a lifetime.

–Melanie Stein (JFRC Fall ‘10)
AS WE GAIN MOMENTUM, many of our alumni and friends have joined us by making substantial donations to create more opportunities for our students and improved our academic environment. Partner with us to promote and strengthen the JFRC. To learn more, visit LUC.edu/insieme.

“"My gift was in honor of John Felice and Dr. Fink, an art history professor. Dr. Fink was as great a teacher as John Felice was an administrator. He inspired me by opening my eyes to the world of art and art history—I value my education in this area. In some ways, it inspired me to start my business."
– Richard Bell, Lewes, DE (JFRC ’67–’68)

“I attended college and the Rome Center on scholarship, and I wouldn’t otherwise have been able to attend. I worked two jobs every summer to get spending money for my time in Rome. Therefore, I want to support kids who couldn’t otherwise afford to attend. My year at the Rome Center was the single biggest learning experience of my life."
– Helen Frye, North Granby, CT (JFRC ’75–’76)

“I want to help Emilio Iodice’s and Fr. Garanzini’s efforts to improve this permanent home for the JFRC as a way to perpetuate John Felice’s vision and memory. If succeeding generations of students can experience half of the impact my experience has had on me, especially in terms of lifelong friendships, my small contribution will be well worth it."
– Matt Cappiello, San Francisco, CA (JFRC ’66–’67)

“Rome was an experience money couldn’t buy…This wasn’t just a year abroad—it was a special year. People made the difference. John Felice was there all the time. He set the tone and was the guiding light."
– Janice Butler Bart, San Diego, CA (JFRC ’65–’66)

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CAMPAIGN PROGRESS  
Jan 1, 2010– May 1, 2011

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(Friends of the JFRC)
Mary Kate Felice  
(’63–’64, Retired JFRC staff)

Current committee members
John (’73–’74) and Constance Kurowski
Philip O’Connor, PhD  
(’68–’69) and Lynn Carlson
Anthony (’62–’63) and Susan Piazza (’62–’63)
Joseph Silliman, PhD  
(Spring ’62)
Stay in touch!

Alumni Website
Check out the new look of the JFRC alumni website. Learn about reunions, events, and news, read the blogs of current students, and even stock up on JFRC gear to showcase your alumni pride. Visit LUC.edu/jfrcalumni.

Facebook
We launched the official Facebook page dedicated to the JFRC. We want to stay connected with all JFRC alumni and friends and keep you up-to-date by sharing news and pictures from our students in Rome and our alumni events in the States.

Now, more than 500 people “like us” and this number grows every day demonstrating the passion and depth of support the JFRC enjoys around the world. “Like us” at facebook.com/JFRCfriends.

Linkedin
We also created a JFRC Linkedin Group to serve as a resource to Rome Center alumni who are interested in enhancing their professional life through networking, career opportunities, and knowledge sharing.

Stay connected with fellow JFRC alumni at linkd.in/JFRCalumni.