New Road to Rome for Columbia Faculty

Columbia University faculty have a new opportunity for exchange with the American Academy in Rome. Representing the faculty, Professor of History David Grove will be the college’s first director for the 2006-07 academic year. He will spend the year in Rome teaching and conducting research.

Questions for Paula Zahn

With the news of Pope John Paul II’s death earlier this year, and Paula Zahn interviewing New York Times Columnist Monssignor Lorenzo Albacete about his close personal friendship with the Pope, many wondered if the Pope did know that Albacete would one day be interviewing him at Columbia University. On Tuesday, November 15, Zahn came to campus at Albacete’s invitation to participate in an event cosponsored by the Columbia Camus Campus Ministry and the Crossroads Cultural Center. Albacete peppered her with questions designed to reveal what she was like as a person and a media professional. He asked, for instance, for her comments on Nietzsche’s famous saying, “There are no facts, only interpretation.” Zahn responded that she believes in objectivity, emphasizing that the primary duty of journalists is to be “truth seekers.” She also affirmed that she is as passionate about her job as she is about her faith. She explained that Albacete would one day be resident in her family, and that the Pope had a sense of humor.

Casting a Wary Eye on Accountancy’s Future

With the proliferation of accounting firms in recent years, the Big Four—KPMG, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, and PwC—and the SEC, have raised a number of questions relating to corporate accounting and the auditing profession. These questions have raised concerns among public policy officials and regulatory officials, who have to make many judgments about the costs and benefits of zoning, economic development, public transit and other matters that may shape the future of a community. The American Assembly, a Columbia affiliate, has been tracking the accountancy profession for more than two years. It recently completed a year-long project focusing on whether America’s current “accounting model” can deal effectively with contemporary business practices.

Urban Health Study Gets Shot in Arm

Are New Yorkers healthier than the average American because they walk so much, exercise in parks and eat healthier foods? A Columbia study is examining the link between body size and New York City’s built environment with the help of $1.6 million from the National Institutes of Health. The project, led by Andrew Rundle, assistant professor of epidemiology at Columbia University, seeks to identify factors that affect physical activity and the environment. The project will look for how local food stores and restaurants can influence exercise and diet, particularly in low-income neighborhoods. The project will also examine whether urban planning and public policy can help to improve health in New York City.

Legislative Report

Congressional Internship Information Session

By Ellen S. Smith

On Thursday, November 17, the Office of Government and Community Affairs held an information session to discuss opportunities with 2006 Congressional Internship Programs in Washington, D.C., as well as in District offices. Vice President Maxine Griffith opened the evening by stressing the importance of internships in determining future careers. An internship can help students decide whether to become a lawyer, a doctor or a policy analyst, a journalist, or a government official or, rule out such a choice, she explained. Griffith also announced a new grant program designed for students to work with the Community Affairs Office to help economically disadvantaged students complete DC-based internships. Details about the application, program, and funding opportunity will be available in December.

Fifty students attended the gathering in Wallach Hall. All are Columbia students whose Internship coordinator Brian Nogy (ISP’07) host- ed. Government Relations staff several students talked about their intern experiences last summer, including those who were in the internship program and the program of events organized for the internships.

Those interested in applying for next summer’s internship should submit a formal application and meet with Government Relations staff. Employers and internship site will identify the most appropriate opportunities and also submit materials on behalf of Columbia connections often help students land a good internship post. Former interns and Columbia graduate, now a policy analyst Capitol Hill and work in local District offices.

During the summer of 2005, Government Relations placed 30 students in congressional, federal, and District internships, and 100 stu- dents of all Columbia students attended internships organized by Columbia alumni, including Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Congressman Gutierrez (D-IL), and White House staffer and Policy Director for the First Lady, Sonya L. Medina. For more information, go to www.columbia.edu/cu/fedrec/