

ROBERT AND PATRICIA GUSSIN SPIRITAN  
 DIVISION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS  
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# ROBERT & PATRICIA GUSSIN SPIRITAN DIVISION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

NEWSLETTER

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## Hannah Scipio and John Foster: 2014 Gussin Spiritan Division Students of the Year

By Uhuru Hotep



Hannah Scipio  
 Business



John Foster  
 Secondary Education  
 International Relations

### 2013 - 2014 GUSSIN SPIRITAN DIVISION STUDENTS (PARTIAL ROSTER)



Mallory Accamando Jonathan Anker Spencer Bergstein Ciara Bryan Spencer Caravaggio Daniel Ciaccia Alexandria Clark Jillian Clark Mason Cook



Anna Cordero Emily Constantino Mark Dandrea Garrett DeOre Kayla Dolison Courtney Drennen Bryan Fegley Leigha Fesmire Morgan Fochler



Annie Harner Max Heinaurer Connor Kirchgessner Nicholas Kneidinger John LaMarca Brandon Malinak Matt Marchese Peter Marino Drew Marcus



Mary McCloskey Hannah Mowod Nicholas O'Clair Taren Peoples Matt Pierce Jordan Pollard Madelyn Scheel Nicholas Sepesy Colby Simpson

Hannah Scipio is a sophomore student from Loyahanna, Pa enrolled in the School of Business majoring in supply chain management. While attending Derry Area High School in Derrick, Pa, Hannah was recognized as a MVP in track and soccer. She also joined the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and earned a spot on her high school's honor roll.

Since her arrival at Duquesne, Hannah has been an active member of Circle K International, a community service organization with more than 13,000 college student members in 17 countries. As public relations chair of Circle K's Project Eliminate, she is helping to raise awareness of maternal neonatal tetanus, a disease that afflicts pregnant women. Lastly, while earning the Honors Award for making the Dean's List, Hannah competed in Division One cross country and was chosen "Rookie of the Week" by her coach and team mates.

**"THE GSD HAS GIVEN ME A WIDE ARRAY OF OPPORTUNITIES..."**

About the Gussin Spiritan Division, Hannah states, "From the moment I began looking into what the Division has to offer, I knew I had a chance. The GSD has given me a wide array of opportunities and experiences that have helped me grow in many aspects. Academically and socially, the Division is a great portion of my success."

After she earns her degree, Hannah plans to work for a medium-size corporation like American Eagle or Dick's Sporting Goods. ■

John Foster is a sophomore student from Reading, Pa majoring in secondary education and international relations. An alumnus of Berks Catholic High School, where he excelled in football, basketball, volleyball and track, he was also recognized as a Pennsylvania high school public speaking champion.

Since his arrival at Duquesne, John has been elected president of St Ann's Living Learning Center, president of Towers Living Learning Center, and president of the 100 Black Men of America's Duquesne University chapter of the Collegiate 100. He has been the recipient of a Michael P. Weber Scholarship, as well as the School of Education's Rising Star and the Gussin Spiritan Division's Shining Star awards. Finally, as a freshman student, John was inducted into Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society, the nation's oldest and largest honor society for first-year college students.

**"THE DIVISION'S CLASSES AND PROGRAMS CHALLENGED ME."**

Regarding the Gussin Spiritan Division, John states, "Through the Division, I learned to challenge and then push myself in ways I have not done before. The Division's classes and programs challenged me to break out of my comfort zone."

Once he completes his undergraduate studies, John plans to attend graduate school. He wants to first work for the federal government and then teach history. ■

## Introduction to the Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs

Standing as a hallmark of Duquesne's dedication to education for the mind, the heart and the spirit, named for the Spiritan congregation and endowed by alumnus, Dr. Robert Gussin and his wife, Dr. Patricia Gussin, the Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs specializes in helping students of varying backgrounds develop their full potential as students and citizens of the world. The Division's performance-tested system of personal guidance and learning assistance supports the student's transition from high school diploma to college degree.

The Gussin Spiritan Division helps freshmen and other students new to Duquesne maximize their chances of college success. While there are many factors that will impact that success, chief among them is a solid transition to college life. Successful college transitions are made when the student:

- Adapts to new learning environments and new learning situations.
- Understands the role of personal responsibility in college, career and life success.
- Refines the academic skills necessary for college success—reading, writing, editing and critical thinking.
- Relies on high-quality academic support such as tutoring, counseling and other interventions should problems arise.

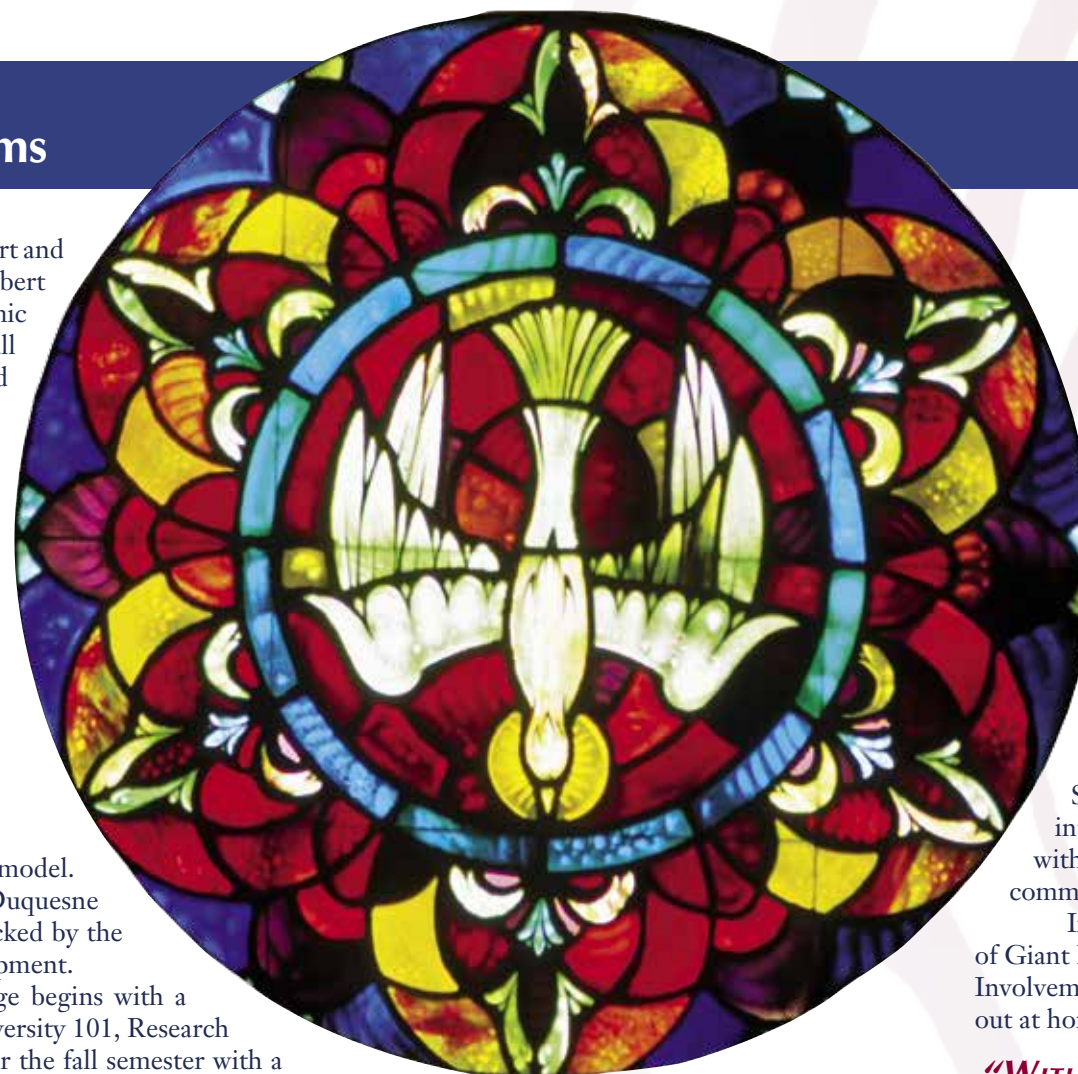
The Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs operates on a cohort model. While the Division freshmen are immersed in the same core curriculum as other Duquesne first-year students, Spiritan Core courses are taught by University faculty hand-picked by the Division because of their commitment to the Division's approach to student development.

The Gussin Spiritan Division student's transition from high school to college begins with a summer semester during which the student is registered for Core English 101, University 101, Research and Information Skills and Academic Strategies. The student returns to campus for the fall semester with a University transcript showing six earned credits and with an armful of friendships developed during the summer semester.

The academic year continues this development through coursework, academic advisement, tutoring when needed and counseling. It culminates with an end-of-year review during which assessment of academic and affective growth is discussed with the student. Assuming all Division requirements are completed and all prerequisites for the intended major are satisfied, the student transfers to the college or one of the schools to pursue that major. Otherwise, the student is retained in the Division until all requirements and/or prerequisites are met.

That many Division students have gone on to complete their degrees at Duquesne or elsewhere—and some have pursued or are pursuing graduate degrees—attests to the soundness of our approach to academic and affective development. Obviously, the transition Gussin Spiritan Division students make during this first-year lays the foundation for their progress toward their degree.

Our work is intended to help the student selected for admission to the Division accept personal responsibility for academic success or failure. Their success is our success. ■



## Alex Noonan Receives Shining Star Award

By Uhuru Hotep

Alex Noonan, a sophomore psychology major from Pittsburgh, Pa, received the Shining Star Award at the 17th Annual Gussin Spiritan Division Reception held February 21 in the Duquesne University Power Center Ballroom.

Prior to coming to Duquesne, Alex, a graduate of Central Catholic High School, organized and was elected captain of Central's rugby team. He is also an active member of the Boys Scouts of America and over the past nine-years, he has held numerous leadership positions that prepared him to become a Duquesne student leader.

Alex was awarded the Director's Circle certificate of achievement in 2012, a Michael P. Weber Scholarship in 2013, and most recently, he was inducted into Phi Kappa Theta fraternity where he enrolled in the emerging leaders program with the intention of becoming a leader within both the fraternity and the Greek community.

In addition to his academic and fraternal responsibilities, Alex is a student employee of Giant Eagle Supermarkets, Inc., and he also works on campus at the Center for Student Involvement where he helps organize campus events. Finally, Alex is responsible for helping out at home with the daily upkeep of four younger siblings.

***"WITHOUT THE DIVISION PUSHING ME, I NEVER WOULD HAVE MADE THE ACADEMIC OR PERSONAL PROGRESS I HAVE THUS FAR."***

Regarding the Gussin Spiritan Division, Alex states, "The Division is responsible for many of the successes I have had since starting at Duquesne. Without the Division pushing me, I never would have made the academic or personal progress I have thus far. In high school, I had a lot of difficulty maintaining good grades, but the Division helped me to turn that around."

The Shining Star Award, created in 2008 by Michael P. Weber Learning Skills Center employee Mary Dowd, is given periodically to students and faculty who demonstrate exemplary commitment to the Gussin Spiritan Division's mission and goals. ■



Alex Noonan  
Psychology

### Friends of the Division

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- Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Center for Accelerated Learning

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The mission of the Gussin Spiritan Division is teaching, caring and building futures through a community of excellence.

