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Meet the First-Years: Introducing Franklin & Marshall's Class of 2022



Meet first-year, Kyra Lisse, passionate writer from Fort Washington, PA

BY KYRA LISSE
Class of 2022

How much does a polar bear weigh?
Enough to break the ice.
Hi, I'm Kyra.

I am so excited to kick off my F&M journey and become an official Diplomat. I mean, I've always been something of a diplomat. When I was younger—vocab-loving goofball that I was—I used to hold my chin between forefinger and thumb, raise an eyebrow, and announce in my most dignified voice that I was “diplomatic.” It seems only fitting that, a decade later, I would find myself leaving Fort Washington, PA and entering the home of the Dips.

But Diplomat is just one of my identities. I am also a passionate writer, a fierce editor (will revise papers for hugs), and an avid reader. I am fascinated by words and their origins and will kvell over

them if prompted (or unprompted, same difference). I go gaga for a good pun, which I admit is a bit of an oxymoron, “good pun,” but I digress. I love digressions. I am a bacon-eating vegetarian, an indie film fanatic, and the proud owner of a ten-year-old Havanese. When I'm not studying or out with friends, I like to rewatch episodes of *The Office* (but never “Scott's Tots”) or, on occasion, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Team Spike for the win). Either way, ice cream usually factors into the equation.

I am thrilled to say that I'll be joining the Brooks College House community. Don't worry, Brooksians: this small blonde has a big heart! On campus, I plan to be involved in the Writers House, *The College Reporter* (you might call this my editorial debut), *Active Minds*, and *Hillel*. I will likely (inevitably) major in Creative Writing, which comes as a surprise to no one. In the meantime, I can't wait to get to know you



Photo courtesy of Kyra Lisse

all, learn new things, and make some memories, F&Mily style. Come visit me—I have snacks.

First-year Kyra Lisse is a Contributing Writer. Her email is klisse@fandm.edu.

First-year, Abby Dotterer, writes about past experience and excitement for F&M

BY ABBY DOTTERER
Class of 2022

Growing up, I had never heard of Franklin and Marshall. Honestly, I hadn't until a year or two ago.

Considering that I am from a relatively small town on the outskirts of Oklahoma City, I always thought that I would go to our state university. This would be if I went to college, that is.

I am a first generation student in a family in which the women before me were raised to have kids at a young age, not to go after a degree.

However, things changed when my small family moved to Wyoming, the state with the smallest population and only two escalators. There, I found a love for writing and photography. While I have always been around cameras because I helped with my

mom's portrait business, I was able to discover new things about the trade along the way. In high school, I was mainly involved with newspapers, whether it be at school or interning at the one in our town, and I could be found in the library the majority of the time. I hope to do the same in college—but to possibly venture out of the bookshelves a bit as well.

It wasn't until my junior year that I

learned about F&M. I had applied to a journalism camp at Princeton University where the counselors talked about applying to smaller colleges on the east side of the country. I listened and slowly began to believe that it was time to explore other parts of the country.

During these next four years, I'm hoping to become an English major with possibly a history or German minor. Or even sociology, who knows—I definitely don't yet. When I'm not trying to catch up on the twenty seasons of *Special Victims Unit* or rewatching *Friends* for the millionth time, I look forward to continuing to write and to snapping pictures in my free time. I definitely have a secret (not so much anymore) dream to intern or eventually work at a major newspaper like the *Washington Post* or at a publishing company such as *HarperCollins*. There are just so many things I want to do while at F&M; I hope that there's enough time! While I am nervous to move away and get on my feet, I know that it's definitely going to be quite the adventure.

First-year Abby Dotterer is a Contributing Writer. Her email is adottere@fandm.edu.



Photo courtesy of Abby Dotterer

First-year Anna Phommachanthone is ready for next chapter at F&M

BY ANNA PHOMMACHANTHONE
Class of 2022

Knock knock! Who's there? It's Siliphone Phommachanthone... oh did I scare you with my name? Don't worry, everybody just calls me 'Anna.' I'm really not that intimidating, in fact, I'm a pretty quiet human being.

I am from Ephrata, Pennsylvania, but my home is in Luang Prabang, Laos. Coming from a third-world country when I was young, my only true goal in life was to get a good education. To be completely honest, I have no idea what I want to do and I went through high school learning everything I possibly could, just so I could have many options. I stressed myself out to the max my senior year of high school, but it taught me the right way to love life and not waste any moment of it. By trusting the process instead of looking for the end result, I am ready to dive into the world of F&M.

Some of my interests includes

practicing yoga, cooking, learning languages, photography, and anything food related! I love taking care of my health and being creative whenever possible. I am always doing something productive with my time—whether it's in sukhāsana, shopping at the local farmer's market, learning how to read my native language, or taking photos and editing them for my friends.

As of right now, I am hoping to joint-major in Biology and Business with a minor in Studio Art, but that plan might change. I like to think of life as a journey going through a series of mountains; the journey could be harsh and steep like the way up or it could be easy and exciting like the way down. Life is about enjoying the journey, not worrying too much about the destination. Speaking of enjoying life, this summer, I was blessed to be able to go back and visit my native country. Being born all the way in Southeast Asia, I was beyond excited to go back. I experienced a different way of life and was

able to witness how other people live and their perspectives on the world. This month and a half journey back to Laos refueled my strive for success and renewed my excitement for learning. I am ready to brace my next

chapter at F&M, not only for me, but for my family and country.

First-year Anna Phommachanthone is a contributing writer. Her email is sphommac@fandm.edu.



Photo courtesy of Anna Phommachanthone.

Caroline Martin may live close, but is excited to explore F&M, Lancaster city

BY CAROLINE MARTIN
Class of 2022

From the moment my acceptance packet arrived, everything felt surreal. Only then, did it finally hit me that I would be graduating high school and starting on with the next chapter of my life. I could not be more excited to continue my academic career at Franklin & Marshall College and be an official Diplomat.

I graduated from Elizabethtown High School and have spent all of my life near this area. It truly is a great community, and I'm happy to be able to show it off to my new classmates and peers. In fact, over the summers, I have worked as a show host in the entertainment department at Hershey Park, a local theme park—I would highly recommend it to any rollercoaster lovers. Although I'm very familiar with Lancaster county, I'm excited to explore more of the city.

Currently, I am interested in psychology and creative writing. In my senior year of high school, I had the privilege of interning with a successful published young adult author, Maria V. Snyder. This experience was

truly eye-opening and reassured my love for writing. My love for psychology stems from my sister. She recently graduated with a psychology degree from Lebanon Valley College.

In high school, I was very active in extracurriculars, and I am excited to be able to continue to explore my passions through F&M's organizations and clubs. I was a writer for my high school's newspaper and the head editor for its literary magazine. During my years at Franklin & Marshall College, I would love to become involved with similar clubs. I'm very passionate about social activism, and I want to join many groups that will allow me to express myself as well as my opinions.

Perhaps the thing I'm most looking forward to in college is acquiring further independence. Although scary, I am finally starting to feel like an adult. While this definitely has its downsides, such as figuring out how to use a washing machine and other daunting responsibilities, I'm excited for newfound freedom.

It's no secret that college is dif-

ficult, and I fully expect that. I'm well aware how stressful college life can be, but it's reassuring to know that all the first-years are in this together.

First-year Caroline Martin is a contributing writer. Her email is cmartin9@fandm.edu.



Photo courtesy of Caroline Martin.

First-year, Elena Ye, excited to join The College Reporter at F&M

BY ELENA YE
Class of 2022

This is Elena from F&M Class of 2022, and I am so looking forward to joining this big family in just few days. As a new member of Franklin & Marshall, I have promised myself that I need to make some contribution to my school. So I decided to apply this special program!

Let me briefly make a personal introduction. I am a Chinese girl—I was born in China and raised there for the past 17 years. I used to be a shy girl.

However, in 2016, I went to US to finish my high school years. Everything changed. I started to express myself, I joined the chorus, I started to play lacrosse, and I started to learn how to edit the yearbook. Actually for the past 17 years I've spent in China, I have learned painting for a long time but never had a chance to express this ability at school. However, in my US high school, it was a different story. My painting teacher saw my interest in painting, so she suggested that I join the yearbook group. At first, I was

a little bit confused about the editing, typesetting, double checking process, etc..., but the good thing was that all my classmates were so patient. They taught me everything from gathering the news and to editing the layout. What's more, they taught me how to add my painting to the yearbook. During this process, I became obsessed with this work. I was so proud to say "I made this" when my friends were reading the yearbook.

I am very interested in web design because I am a person who really

likes designing things. I used to design clothes, so now, I would like to design websites. I would like to make the school website more attractive and more interesting. Furthermore, I think joining the newspaper could considerably enhance my writing skills. So I really hope that I could have a chance to be the lucky member of The College Reporter!

First-year Elena Ye is a contributing writer. Her email is sye2@fandm.edu.

PIT participant reflects on entering his first year at new college

BY JEREMY MAUSER
Class of 2022

As I type this, I am sitting at my already-messy desk at the foot of my bed during the final minutes of Thursday, August 23. Although the transition to "college life" is smooth for the most part, there are certain aspects that require some serious attention. For instance, I completely forgot that today was my mom's birthday because we're now on opposite sides of the state. Also, there isn't anybody here to tell me when I should hit the hay, so I'll probably be super tired at PIT tomorrow after yet another late night. But perhaps my most terrifying realization is that I can eat however many cupcakes I want while at D-Hall. Regardless, I can tell that my experience at Franklin & Marshall—especially after my taste of the college life from PIT—will provide me with priceless knowledge and experience for my two favorite activities: learning and leading.

In the past, I always prioritized learning and leading above most

other activities. Reading was always a favorite pastime of mine, be it a classic American novel or an article on the global economy. However, my interests did not stop with acquiring this knowledge; I enjoyed passing it on through leadership.

Whether I was working my way up within Greensburg-Salem High School and eventually becoming the senior class president, or playing a pivotal role in my mock trial team winning the Pennsylvania State Championship, or even performing in a principal role in a musical through my school or the community, I always found myself guiding others with my knowledge and experience. But even though I became so active at my previous school, there is one thing that my time at PIT is teaching me: I enjoy it when people don't know me. Sure, I came in knowing some first-years, and people recognize me from social media, but I love walking across Hartman Green and seeing fellow students who couldn't possibly guess my name.

But it goes without saying that this isn't the only aspect of PIT that I enjoy. Few things make one feel as accomplished as helping the local community, and in doing so, I am already making memories with wonderful first-years (Arts & Culture PIT group for the win!) and upperclassmen (special shoutout to Kelly Minard and Wendy Sherman for lending me their pink shirts) who help make F&M so special.

And as my time as a PITer comes to an end, I'm starting to think about the future more seriously. I am grateful that I am such a dedicated learner and

leader as I begin this awesome next stage of my life. It will certainly come in handy not only as I study somewhere in Brooks at 3 a.m. during finals week but also as I hopefully serve as a leader of some sort. I can't wait to make more friends, continue pursuing the interests that I developed earlier in life, explore new and exciting activities and subjects, and contribute to such an amazing community.

First-year Jeremy Mauser is a contributing writer. His email is jmauser@fandm.edu



Photo courtesy of Jeremy Mauser

First-year examines rom-com movies

BY LILLIAN WARD-PACKARD
Class of 2022

From *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to *Sixteen Candles*, audiences have long appreciated the humor of a romantic comedy. But in recent years, true rom-coms have become hard to find. The early 2000s were a rom-com golden age, giving us *Miss Congeniality*, *Legally Blonde*, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, and many more. Post 2010, however, this flood slowed to a trickle, and those that remained shifted slightly. *Silver Linings Playbook*, for example, follows the traditional rom-com format closely but would fit in poorly with early 2000s rom-coms, given its R rating and harsher tone.

It's important to remember that these early 2000s rom-coms were far from perfect. Some, like *Love Actually*, are surprisingly sexist when you look closely. With a few exceptions (*Saving Face* is one) American rom-coms from this time featuring characters of color and non-heterosexual couples are almost nonexistent. However, criticisms of the genre too often focus on the idea that rom-coms are inherently frivolous female entertainment, rather than taking the time to consider the flaws and strengths of individual films. This failure of criticism puts us in the uncomfortable position of having to defend the value of rom-coms as entertainment and art, while also acknowledging the many ways they fall short.

2017 saw a resurgence of the traditional rom-com with Oscar nominee *The Big Sick*, but it wasn't until 2018 that the phrase "rom-com renaissance" began to pop up all over Twitter. This June, Netflix released the romantic comedy *Set It Up* to the enthusiasm of many. Apart from

a slightly more feminist tone and a more diverse cast, the film is nearly identical to an early 2000s rom-com, right down to the NYC setting. Netflix is also responsible for *The Kissing Booth*, a small-scale disaster in both story and abysmal handling of sexual harassment that somehow found an adoring audience nonetheless.

Thankfully, many of 2018's rom-com successes have been more original and progressive. *Love, Simon* resonated deeply with audiences partially because it marked a departure from the typically heteronormative rom-com mold. Two recent releases, *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* and *Crazy Rich Asians*, are being celebrated for bringing some much-needed Asian representation into the world of the rom-com. The genre isn't just flourishing—it's changing for the better.

So the rom-com is back, and it's evolving. Why now? Maybe for the sake of escapism. The world can be terrible, and sometimes we just want to watch people who are prettier than us have love lives that are more exciting than ours. Maybe it's because—as the tagline for *Love, Simon* put it—everyone deserves a great love story, and we're finally seeing more than just cookie-cutter romances in the mainstream. Maybe love stories simply make for good, compelling narratives, and we only search for reasons to justify their popularity because of their lightheartedness. Whatever the cause, the rom-com renaissance is just one more sign that the power of the rom-com should be respected.

First-year Lillian Ward-Packard is a Contributing Writer. Her email is lwardpac@fandm.edu.

Letter from Editing Staff

Dear F&M Students,

As the 2018-2019 school year begins, it is important for students to go in with an open mind. It can be tough to reorient oneself to the challenges and tight scheduling that comes with each upcoming school year; however, it is imperative that students adapt to the difficulties that may present themselves during the year at F&M. In order to succeed and to thrive, students must grapple with time management until they find a structure that works for them. Additionally students must seek out the environments where they are able to be most successful. College is a balancing act, and it takes time. However, it is a rewarding process. The start to a new year in college means new challenges to conquer, classes to explore, and classmates to meet.

To our new first-years: the editing staff of The College Reporter wishes you a great first semester but would also like to remind you that each one of you is new to the college experience. All of you are anxious about trading new waters, meeting new people, and

getting acclimated to a new environment. You have the same main goal. It is important to tackle the challenges that you may encounter academically and socially with the knowledge that you are not alone and that everyone on this campus was once at the same place you were.

Thank you for everyone that contributed to the First-Year edition of The College Reporter, Volume 55. The newspaper is a vital way for students to express their opinions and write on topics that most interest them. It is also a great way to improve writing skills and to contribute to the F&M community. We encourage you all to explore all the clubs that interest you, including The College Reporter, which will have its first interest meeting on September 3rd at 7pm. More information on the meeting to come!

We look forward to an exciting academic year—full of enthusiasm, scholarship, new friendships, and great memories.

Sincerely,
The Editing Staff
The College Reporter

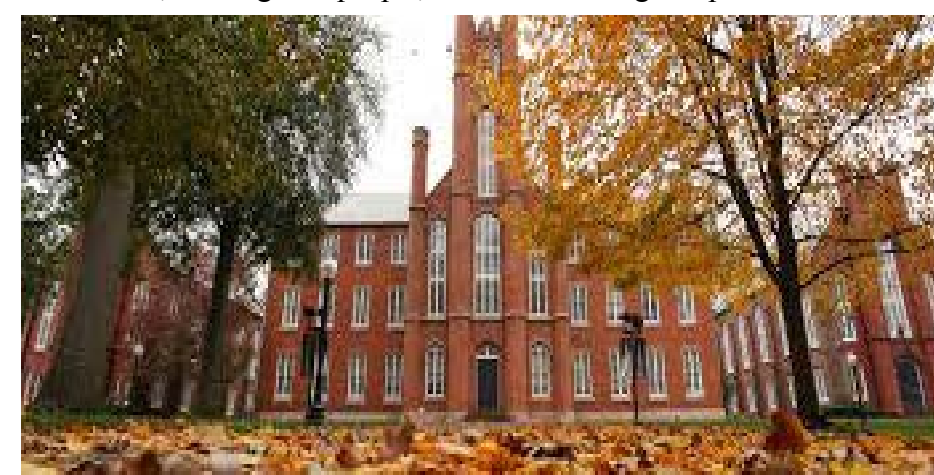


Photo courtesy of insidehighered.com

Meet Vincent Pecora, avid tennis player, aspiring neuropathologist

BY VINCENT PECORA
Class of 2021

Hello, everybody! My name is Vincent Pecora and I am an incoming first-year this year at Franklin & Marshall College. However, due to my performance on IB and AP exams, I have been granted one full year of credit and am officially a sophomore! I will be able to declare my major in BFB: Neuroscience this spring as I hope to become a neuropathologist in the future.

I have immersed myself in hospital and healthcare-oriented environments throughout high school by interning at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and working in the Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit this summer at Rush University Medical Center. One of my favorite activities is volunteering, so I am participating in the pre-orientation PIT Program and have established a NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) sibling recess program at Rush Hospital, which I oversee every

weekend.

I am very passionate about academics, but I also enjoy playing tennis and running! I was the captain of my varsity tennis team and hope to continue playing club sports throughout my undergraduate career. I plan to run primarily as a form of exercise but may join a running club if the opportunity presents itself.

I am also very passionate about supporting the LGBTQ+ community and helping create environments in which all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, can find solace. I led the Sexuality and Gender Alliance at my high school and definitely intend to continue participating in Franklin & Marshall's own SAGA club this year.

I am most excited for the research opportunities that may be available to me this upcoming year as I have enjoyed my time working in a research lab exploring different neurophysiological mechanisms underlying brain injury for the past few summers.

I cannot describe how excited I am to attend F&M, and I look



Photo courtesy of Vincent Pecora

forward to participating in such a wonderful and diverse community for the next three years!

First-year Vincent Corona is a Contributing Writer. His email is vpecora@fandm.edu.



The College Reporter

Transparency. Accuracy. Credibility.

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The College Reporter was formed in 1964, as a successor to The Student Weekly, which was formed in 1915 by the union of The F&M Weekly, founded 1891, and The College Student, founded 1881. The crest of The College Reporter was designed in 2004 by Kim Cortes '05.

The College Reporter is a weekly student-edited newspaper, published every Monday except during exam and vacation periods. The website was created by Tim Jackson '12, Christian Hartranft '12, Joshua Finkel '15, and Lauren Bejzak '13. The subscription rate is \$51 per year.

The Editorial Board, headed by the Editor-in-Chief, has sole authority and full responsibility for the content of the newspaper. The College Reporter and its subsidiaries are designated public forums. All content is selected and printed by a board of elected or appointed students. The Masthead Editorial is the majority opinion of the Editorial Board. No other parties are in any other way responsible for its content, and all inquiries concerning that content should be directed to the Editor in Chief. All opinions reflect those of the author and not that of The College Reporter, with the exception of the Masthead Editorial.

Claire Moacdieh discusses PIT, pre-orientation program at F&M

BY CLAIRE MOACDIEH
Class of 2022

The PIT program was the first thing I heard about in terms of coming to campus early. When I first got the email, I just assumed it would be a general opportunity to help around the community and that I would just be doing small tasks around town. Other, older people had told me that it was worth the experience, but I still wasn't convinced. Who would want to willingly volunteer their time—and thus, the last days of their summer—with a bunch of people they didn't know? I wasn't expecting to make many connections in my group, and I definitely wasn't expecting to be so involved. I thought we would do our job for the day, return to the dorms and sit around for the rest of the afternoon, maybe getting familiar with F&M's campus and surrounding area.

I was placed into the Community Development group, and I wasn't sure what to expect. I'd never developed a community before, and I honestly had no idea what it meant; I thought I'd be building houses or painting fences. In short, I was expecting to have to rely on physical strength that, admittedly, I don't have. No one in the other groups knew what Community Development was either, so going in, I was very disoriented. At the same time, all the advisors were very friendly and welcoming, so I quickly found my place. Even though I had gotten

somewhat acquainted with the people in my group, I was still a little skeptical about the program.

On the first day, however, my group went and cleaned two homeless shelters in downtown Lancaster, and I realized community development meant more than heavy labor. We got to directly impact other people's lives by doing something as simple as cleaning gunk off cupboards. I was hit with the same humbling feeling the next day, when we washed windows at a retirement home. Many of the old people living there were grateful for our help—because for them, looking out their windows was the equivalent of walking around in a park. I was glad I could make such a large impact in a seemingly small way.

Each day was packed with service opportunities and different activities to get to know each other in the program. Immediately after getting back from our varied job sites, we were split up into different teams to compete in Color Wars: F&M's (slightly) less competitive version of the Olympics. There, we would play games with our teammates, who were from the other groups. This really helped us connect with the rest of the people in the program, people we wouldn't normally be spending time with.

Through the program's three-day duration, I got to know everyone in my group, and I finally realized why joining PIT turned out so much bet-

ter than I had expected. By working together in a close-knit group, I was able to benefit the community and make connections along the way. PIT is a great introduction to new and exciting experiences at college. Joining this program was an absolutely wonderful experience, and

now I feel ready to conquer college and anything else that might be thrown my way.

First-year Clair Moacdieh is a contributing writer. Her email is cmoacdieh@fandm.edu.



Photo courtesy of Alex Pinsk.

Samantha Griffith's passion for community service led her to F&M PIT

BY SAMANTHA GRIFFITH
Class of 2022

I have lived a privileged life. Don't get me wrong, it hasn't been perfect, but I have never had to worry about having a roof over my head or where my next meal was going to come from. This has inspired my passion for community service. I feel that if I am lucky enough to have all these opportunities then it is my responsibility to help give similar opportunities to everyone else, or at the very least to help in any way that I can.

My passion for community service started when I was only 5 years old. I distinctly remember walking into my first Girl Scout meeting (decked out in my brand new vest with the matching hat and skirt) and talking to my leader about what we could do to help the homeless community in Sacramento. This one interaction sparked nearly 7 years of volunteering at the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services. Working with my troop, we hosted school supply drives, food drives, and even worked the weekly distribution "market" for low income families. The summer before 7th grade I moved

from Sacramento to Gig Harbor, Washington (if you haven't heard of it, don't worry, most people haven't) which is about an hour south of Seattle. As soon as my Mom and I got settled in Gig Harbor, I started looking for a new Girl Scout troop and new places to volunteer. I ended up finding both which I stuck with all the way until I graduated high school just 2 months ago. The Children's Museum of Tacoma became my home away from home. I was able to work with underprivileged kids and help give them a place where they could just play and be curious about the world around them.

When I wasn't volunteering at the Children's Museum I spent most of my time participating on my high school's Speech & Debate team. Being a part of this team taught me so much about myself as well as about the world around me. Having to constantly know about what was happening around the globe inspired my passion for politics. Through prepping for debate topics and volunteering in my community I learned that there is a massive disconnect between what the government thinks people need and

what people actually need.

At Franklin & Marshall, I am eager to take advantage of all the opportunities the school provides both in community service and for political engagement. I will be participating in the PIT pre-orientation program and I am so excited! As of right now, I plan

on double majoring in Business and Government. I am so excited to get to know the community at F&M and I cannot wait to start soon!

First-year Samantha Griffith is a contributing writer. Her email is sgriffi1@fandm.edu.



Photo courtesy of www.fandm.edu.