

# Advances

Volume 9, Number 1 Summer 2008 News from the IU School of Liberal Arts

## Blomquist Named Dean



William Blomquist

**William Blomquist** took office as the new dean of the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI on July 1, 2008.

Blomquist, a Professor of Political Science in the School of Liberal Arts, served as Chair of the Political Science Department from 1995 to 2002. During that time he was instrumental in the development of the school's certificate program in paralegal studies and the minor in legal studies, two programs which have grown steadily since their inception.

As co-chair of the **Bulen Symposium in American Politics** at IUPUI, Blomquist has brought national and local political leaders, policy-makers, activists, newsmakers, and media personalities to campus. In fostering non-partisan

discussion of timely topics in the public arena, the Bulen Symposium continues to attract considerable attention in the Indianapolis community.

Blomquist is well known locally as an observer and commentator on politics and government. Internationally

recognized for his research on water resource management and policy, he is the author and editor of several books on the subject including the just published *Embracing Watershed Politics* from the University Press of Colorado with Edella Schlager. He has been a member of the Research Advisory Board of the **National Water Research Institute** for ten years, served on a committee of the National Research Council, and held appointments as a visiting scholar in universities in the United States and Europe. This past spring, Blomquist held a **Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Environmental Policy**, spending the semester in Turin, Italy.

Recognized as a fine teacher as well as an accomplished scholar,

Blomquist teaches courses in public policy, American government, and Indiana politics. He has received campus-wide teaching awards on three occasions since joining the IUPUI faculty in 1987.

"It is a true privilege to serve in this new role along with the outstanding faculty and staff of the School of Liberal Arts, and to succeed Bob White who has served our school so well," said Blomquist. "The liberal arts have been the core of university education for centuries, and yet, students preparing for lives in the 21st century have never needed the liberal arts more. I look forward to seeing our school continue to grow and enrich our students' lives and our community through great scholarship and teaching in the liberal arts."

Executive Vice Chancellor **Uday Sukhatme**, commenting on the appointment, said that he has very high expectations that scholarship in the School of Liberal Arts will be considerably enhanced and taken to new heights under the leadership of Professor Blomquist.

Professor William Blomquist succeeded **Robert W. White**, who has provided superb leadership for the School of Liberal Arts since 2003 and returned to full-time faculty service at IUPUI as Professor of Sociology.

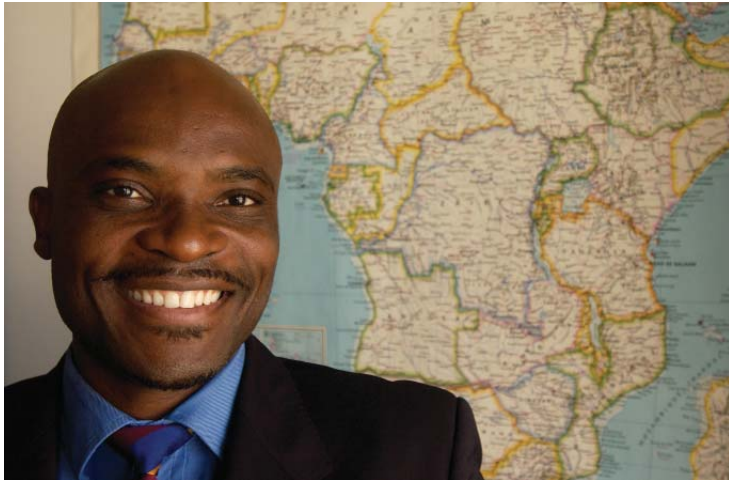
## About This Issue

From the opening of IUPUI's new Confucius Institute and the new bachelor's degree in international studies, to student exchange programs with universities in England, Spain, Japan and Jordan, and a curriculum spanning space, time, and place, the School of Liberal Arts is international to its core. Featuring a smattering of stories about the internationalization of Liberal Arts, this issue of *Advances* merely scratches the surface of our many international initiatives, programs, and interests.

The articles are written by students over the spring 2008 semester as part of their *English W390 Professional Writing* course taught by faculty member Anne Williams. The course provides students with real-world writing experiences. Serving as the Liberal Arts News Bureau the students covered events, wrote press releases, interviewed students, and composed faculty profiles all while developing skills that will serve them well in the future. You will find a piece by each of the students here, and be sure to watch for their good work on our website in the coming months.

# History Comes to Life: A Professor's Path

By Sam Krauter, BA English 2008



Professor Didier Gondola

Recalling the first day of Spring Semester classes in January of 2007, I needed only three more credit hours to meet my history requirements for graduation. Shelving my pride and opening my mind, I enrolled in a 100-level freshman African History course

Course descriptions say something about their authors, but faculty are much more than words on a syllabus. As Professor Gondola confidently addressed the class that first day, delivering an articulate, thoughtful, and truly charismatic opening speech, I knew I was in the presence of an extraordinary individual who I wanted to learn from and about.

**Didier Gondola** was born in the Congo in 1966, and he spent the first eleven years of his life in the Congolese countryside, living in "total freedom" with his brothers and sisters amongst the mango, avocado and many tropical trees indigenous to his equatorial home. Professor Gondola's childhood playground was limitless: "All of our activities were done outside of the home. The playground was really everywhere outside: it was in the streets and in the fields, and we were all very safe. Sometimes I would go to see my aunt who lived five or six miles away, and I would walk, either by myself

or with my sister."

Dr. Gondola is now one of a number of Congolese living in the Indianapolis area, where he passionately engages in a number of civic organizations whose purposes range from facilitating the transition from Congo to raising awareness of the current conflicts within the nation of Congo. One prong of his civic service is spearheading the creation of the **Congolese Association of Indiana**. Dr. Gondola speaks from experience, "A priority for me, ever since I've been in Indianapolis, has been to serve as a connection between the African community, more precisely the Congolese community, and the mainstream Indianapolis community. The transition is very difficult because of language barriers, culture barriers, and the cultural transition from a third world country to a very modern and post-industrial society."

Didier Gondola's childhood portrait of safety and freedom is striking in light of the current situation in Congo. Dr. Gondola is a founder of the group **Midwestern Voices for the Congo**, and the conflict in his native Congo is of significant concern to the members. "Even now, as we speak, 45,000 people die each month as a result of this war. From 1998 - 2008 it has taken the lives of almost

5 million people, making it the bloodiest conflict since WWII." Workshops run by Dr. Gondola use figures like these to educate and raise awareness of this war; a war that has been "largely silenced by the western media."

Education has always been important to the professor. While growing up, his father was a teacher and headmaster of the local elementary school. He expected

his son to do well in school, go to college, get a good degree, and be successful with his career. Although his father was an educator, a career in teaching and academics did not enter Gondola's mind until when he was studying history in France.

At eleven, he left the Congo for France to stay with his uncle in Paris. He laughed as he recalled with great detail his first day in Paris: "It was July 15th, the day after Bastille Day, and the streets were completely littered with garbage from the celebration. This was supposed to be paradise!" After earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in Computer Science and History, respectively, Dr. Gondola earned his Ph.D. in African History from the University of Paris 7 and took a job teaching French at Cornell University. His first opportunity to teach history came in 1997 when he accepted a position at Macalester College, a private liberal arts college in St. Paul, Minnesota. Today, he is an Associate Professor of History at IUPUI, where he has taught for the past nine years.

Still very much an international traveler, Dr. Gondola frequently visits his home nation-most recently on research for one of his forthcoming publications entitled *Tropical Cowboys*.

"The youth of the Congo in the 1950s was very much mesmerized and influenced by American western films, and it developed into its own subculture-with its own language, slang and attire." His research focuses on issues of masculinity and postcolonial identity at the intersection of global and local culture. It turns out that many of these "Tropical Cowboys" were instrumental in the struggle for Congo's independence. Many of them went on to hold high political offices and become very influential figures in postcolonial Congolese politics. His research on the tropical cowboys will continue this coming year when he completes a Fulbright, awarded by the U.S. government, in Kinshasa, the capital of Congo.

Another project on which he is currently working involves the 2005 French riots. These riots took place in the segregated French outer cities (banlieues) where many of the working class and minority groups reside. He is co-editing *Frenchness and the Diaspora*, a volume addressing "Issues of diversity, citizenship, assimilation, integration and the contradictions of the French universalistic ideals."

Didier Gondola is an exceptional teacher whose path to the front of my classroom has spanned not only three decades, but also three continents. Speaking with the confidence of worldly experiences and transcontinental education, Professor Gondola challenges his students to absorb history and humanity. He challenges us to see in any single human being a "little bit of yourself, a little bit of the goodness of God, and to respect that person regardless of gender, social background, ethnicity, language or religion. You have to respect all people because they all have an equally fascinating background and history. You have to believe in people and in humanity."

# Cultural Exchanges: Two Students/One World

## Iana Tarnarova

By L'Meese Osborne, BA English 2008



Iana (right) with the article author, L'Meese, at their commencement.

As a non-native speaker, **Iana Vassileva Tarnarova** knows better than most the difficulties and intricacies of the English language. Since coming to the United States at age thirteen, she has worked hard to master the language of her new country. After high school, Iana chose to stay close to her family in Indianapolis and attend IUPUI. Now a brand new college graduate, she plans graduate study in teaching English as a second language.

By earning a degree in English at IUPUI, Iana sought to help others avoid the difficulties she witnessed as her school-teacher mother struggled to transition into the American workforce from the family's native Bulgaria. Iana envisions a career and life breaking down language barriers. Although she has not yet decided if she wants to teach English to adult learners before or after they come to the United States,

Iana believes IUPUI has provided her with the tools to create a life for herself in the United States or elsewhere: "IUPUI has introduced me to great professors who have helped me so much in

learning about the language as well as giving me confidence."

Bringing her knowledge of cross-cultural communication into her studies as an English major with a concentration in linguistics, Iana has proven that hard work pays off. However, she does not attribute her success solely to hard work; she is fully aware of the integral role her professors have played in her accomplishments as a student. Although she is unable to pick only one favorite class, Iana does have immense gratitude

for **Susan Shepherd** and **Kim Lovejoy**, both professors of English, because they gave her the tools to express herself as a "writer and learner without being judged." Iana finds particular comfort in the fact that she was not the only one given such opportunities. "Just because English is my second language I didn't get treated any differently than the rest of the students...I am proud to say I was treated as an equal inside the classroom."

Although Iana and her family have lived in the United States for ten years, they still maintain a firm pride in their Bulgarian heritage, as well as citizenship in both countries. With opportunities afforded to her as an international student in the United States, Iana has chosen to give back through her pursuit of education at IUPUI in the School of Liberal Arts. Iana leaves encouraging advice to other international students: "I call myself an American and I love this country...you can do it and being an international student gives not just one perspective on life, but many."

## Lora Perry

By Colleen Card, BA English 2008



Lora Perry on her study abroad adventure.

As her train passed through the countryside of the Netherlands and on to Strasbourg, France, French major **Lora Perry** admired the vivid countryside. She passed through a picturesque stretch of the Rhine Valley, past vine-covered hillsides and picture postcard villages. Arriving in Strasbourg, Lora delighted in its quaint, village structures and its medieval heritage. Located along the Rhine in the capital of Alsace, the city provides a rich cultural setting for students. As a gateway to Europe, it is home to the Court of Human Rights, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. Students benefit from the broad cultural diversity of its pan-European atmosphere.

Perry, a 2007 winner of Liberal Art's **Beaudry Summer Study Abroad Scholarship**, funded by Professors James and the late Agnes Beaudry, used the support to study in Strasbourg, France last summer at the **University of Marc Bloch**. At the University, Lora's classes included lectures on the diverse history and culture of France, followed by field trips to museums and historical sites such as the Strasbourg Cathedral de Notre-Dame, known as one of the most beautiful Gothic cathedrals in Europe, with stained glass windows dating from the 14th and 15th centuries, 17th century tapestries, and an ancient astronomical clock, a curiosity known around the world.

Lora explains that Strasbourg resembles Indianapolis in size and is a "very pedestrian friendly city," with large numbers of people walking about. She thoroughly enjoyed strolling to the local shops and purchasing bread, cheese

and fruit from proprietors with whom she quickly established a familiar repartee. Since the students' living quarters provided limited means to preserve and prepare food they often gathered to dine as a group in one of the many local eating establishments.

The small group of students from IUPUI that Lora traveled with benefited from the support of Professors **Larbi Okada** and **Amy Reinsel** during their stay in Strasbourg, where they were encouraged to make their own daily living decisions.

Lora brought home many memories of her European experience, as well as fine chocolates and traditional Alsatian wine glasses. She would like to return to Strasbourg one day, as well as explore other international opportunities. She is presently considering a study abroad program in Africa. Her studies in French and Biomedical Engineering, with their inclusion of international experiences like that in Strasbourg, have encouraged her to consider working abroad in the future.

Lora is grateful for the opportunity provided through the Study Abroad Program at IUPUI, and her advice to students who wish to travel and share the same experience is, "Don't limit yourself. Spend time outside of the area you are studying in and get to know the community."

Want more news? E-mail [LibArts@iupui.edu](mailto:LibArts@iupui.edu) to subscribe to the Alumni E-mail Newsletter!!

# When Opportunity Called, He Answered

By Colleen Card, BA English 2008



Professor Gilbert Nduru at home in IUPUI's new Campus Center.

In bold letters the word "Opportunity!" sprawls across the wall calendar in the office of visiting Associate Professor of Geography **Gilbert Nduru**. As part of a faculty exchange program with Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya, during the spring semester Nduru provided IUPUI students with an opportunity to learn about the physical world around them---but there is even more to learn from the life of this energetic, intense man.

Struggling to survive life on the streets as a young boy in Kenya, Nduru had few opportunities. He recalls foraging like a animal, fighting to survive from one day to the next until an uncle rescued him and took him to his grandmother's home. Alienated from his immediate family, he knew he was "not a favorite son," and would receive no traditional inheritance from his father. He realized that the best inheritance he could give himself was an education.

With the help of his uncle, Nduru began to attend primary school but found the fees for high school too expensive, and soon he was expelled for non-payment. Undaunted, he borrowed notes and books from other students and pleaded with school officials to let him take final exams at the end of the school term. His determina-

tion earned him a high school scholarship, enabling him to continue his education. He pounced upon the opportunity, his hunger for education proving even greater than the hunger he once experienced on the streets.

Nduru's life exemplifies the determination and tenacity that has helped him become what he describes as "an accomplished scholar, a good example that you can come from nowhere." He trained as a high school teacher with an emphasis on geography and history, fascinated with "how man interacts with the natural environment over time and space." He first pursued an MPhil in Physical Geography and later a PhD in Human Ecology. Currently working as the Chair of the Department of Geography at Moi University, Nduru reveals, "Geography to me is everything. It is an art and a science which satisfies my curiosity and my intellect."

Nduru traveled to Indiana just days after political unrest overtook his city of Eldoret. A member of the Kikuyu tribe, which was being targeted with violence, he barely made it out, going from unprecedented violence and the summer heat of Kenya to Indiana's winter cold. He found the cold weather "quite a shock." He

observed the changes in his behavior due to the shorter days and longer nights: "As a geographer this is like a laboratory." He recognized the value of this first-hand experience with Indiana weather as compared to book learning.

Nduru would like to raise

awareness of his country's struggles. He has recently proposed the idea of "Kenya Day" to be held at IUPUI. He would like it to be an event that draws the community and campus together to experience the foods and customs of Kenya, to be educated about his country, and to raise funds to aid his countrymen.

His larger hope is to foster an even stronger partnership between Moi University's Geography Department and the geographers of the IU School of Liberal Arts, expanding and enhancing the faculty exchange program and building on the already-established relationship

between the two universities. Nduru returns to Kenya this summer where his IUPUI connections will continue through a research study on traditional agriculture with Geography Professor **Rick Bein**. He believes that Moi University provides "an entry point for community service" in addressing the multiple needs of the people of Kenya.

As a scholar and teacher, Nduru knows the past continually influences the present. In Kenya as in the United States, names are part of individual identity, passed through the generations. Gilbert Nduru changed his traditional family name to one that seemed more fitting. Perhaps to help him remember the life from which he came, he chose Nduru, a Kiswahili word meaning "crying for help" and in his native language "a squirrel." The word, a powerful reminder of his humble past, reminds him today that an opportunity well used can transform life in ways seemingly unimaginable. It is his goal to provide similar life-changing opportunities by bringing Kenya and America one step closer together.

## Get a life.

### A life membership, that is.

Have you considered becoming a life member of the IU Alumni Association? Your membership supports and includes membership in the **IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI** alumni association.

Your cost is lower over the long term than an annual membership, and you'll receive all IUAA member benefits for life!

**It's easy and affordable** to become a life member with our **Easy Life** no-interest 10-month pay plan. **Discounted life rates** are available for **recent graduates** and **seniors**.

Join this loyal group of alumni and friends — our life members!

It's a great way to support IU and IUPUI — for life!



For details and to join call (800) 824-3044 Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (EST) or visit us online @ [www.alumni.indiana.edu](http://www.alumni.indiana.edu).

# Learning to Teach Spanish...Globally

By Maggie Moore, English major



Last July, Adam Ballart received a certificate from the University of Salamanca in one of the university's oldest rooms, "El Paraninfo".



The Jazz Festival in Salamanca's famous plaza.



The Summer 2007 students in Salamanca, Spain.

With 100% job placement for graduating students, the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Spanish degree is a degree built for the era of globalization. In the Spanish Program and the Department of World Languages, it allows IUPUI students not only to travel and study abroad, but to absorb another culture first hand and build a career based on their experiences.

In conjunction with the **Universidad de Salamanca** in Spain, MAT students receive an international teaching degree. The program, originally directed at Indiana high school teachers required by the state to complete continuing education credits, is now also popular with new bachelor's in Spanish recipients who decide that they want to teach.

"I entered the MAT Program because I wanted to make a career transition into teaching. I have always been interested in the Spanish language and culture, so it just made sense to continue my education and career in a field that I was excited about," says **Adam Ballart**, who is spending his second summer in Spain and will finish his MAT degree this fall. "The University of

Salamanca is a prestigious campus that offers many historical and cultural landmarks for study abroad students. I appreciate the intense classroom atmosphere and the relaxed out-of-class experience."

Together with the BA, students must have advanced coursework in Spanish in order to embark upon the 37 credit degree. Completed in three semesters at IUPUI, the students are also required to spend two summers in Spain taking courses at Salamanca. Students become familiar with what they will be teaching through personal experience. The program is likely to broaden this experience in the future by complimenting the sessions in Spain with coursework in Mexico.

In Salamanca, students can stay in the university dorms, stay with a Spanish family, or live on their own in an apartment. "If they live with a family, their experience will be quite different and they will get a lot more of the real, everyday culture," says Professor **Herbert Brant**, Spanish Program Graduate Director.

**Marta Anton**, Associate Professor of Spanish and

Program Director, says, for example, that students don't realize what an important role food plays in culture until they live with a family. "A student will open the refrigerator and see a whole fish with head and eyes and everything and they're really grossed out and they say 'Yuck! Am I going to eat that?' Spanish house wives won't buy fish without the head because [that's how you tell] if it's fresh. So it's those little details, how people interact with each other, [that can be] shocking for students." It's often very enlightening for the students to see how another culture's simple traditions, such as what they eat and how they prepare it, vary from American customs.

Brant says that the first thing that students notice when they visit Spain is that the Spanish have a completely different time schedule. "There is a time in the day when no business transactions are made. That is the 'siesta.' It's a break to go home and spend time with family and friends." Typically, work starts later in the morning, around 10 a.m., with a siesta in the afternoon, and then people go back to work around five or six o'clock and close up shop around 10 p.m. They have a nice dinner with their families, and go to bed around 2 a.m."

Professor Anton talked about the responses she sometimes gets from students who've just started their semester in Spain. They often tell her, "The lady of the house is mad at me!

She's screaming at me, she says, 'Come on, come on! Eat! Eat!'" Anton laughed and explained that it's not anger, it's encouragement. It's their way of saying "See how well I'm taking care of you?"

Classes at the Universidad, exchanges with homestay families, and partaking in the cultural life of Spain, all contribute to the graduate experience in ways impossible state side.

**Soledad Makarena Saldias**, another student seeking the graduate degree, says, "I entered the MAT Program because I was inspired by my undergraduate language professors at Marian College. Living so long outside my home country [Chile] made me appreciate and value a lot more of my culture."

Saldias dreams of teaching culture classes or sociolinguistics here in Indiana "because I've made my home in the U.S.A." With the MAT degree, Saldias can use her Chilean background and what she learns in Spain to teach students in Indiana about Spanish and Latin American traditions, beliefs, ideas, and lifestyles.

The collaboration of IUPUI and Universidad de Salamanca enables Saldias and her fellow students to do more than simply complete a set of degree requirements. Instead, they have truly international experience with in depth and personal cultural knowledge, giving them an upper hand, not only in the job hunt, but also when they are in the classroom, teaching what they love.

*Advances* is a publication of the IU School of Liberal Arts Office of Development & External Affairs.

Editor  
Gail M. Plater  
gplater@iupui.edu

Managing Editor  
Genevieve Shaker  
gshaker@iupui.edu



IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI  
Cavanaugh Hall 441  
425 North University Boulevard  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

# Frances Dodson Rhome

---

## 1916-2008

Perhaps it wasn't coincidence that led **Frances Dodson Rhome** to complete a doctorate from IU in 1969, the same year that IUPUI was formed, and nearly 32 years after she took her B.A. degree from UCLA and nine years after earning her M.A. from the University of New Mexico.

Although a newly minted Ph.D., Dr. Rhome's life experiences made her an ideal addition to the new campus in Indianapolis where she joined the faculty of this new, experimental venture that combined two major universities on one campus. As one of the Founding Faculty of the English Department, she and her colleagues built the foundation for one of the school's most popular degree programs. She herself had had

early exposure to the joys of literature, art and music which lasted her lifetime, and guided her vision to ensure that all students, no matter their challenges, would benefit from the kind of well rounded education those disciplines provide. Her interests led her to a distinguished career as a professor of Renaissance literature with emphasis on William Shakespeare, Greek tragedy, women's literature, and Southwestern literature, and translated into a life spent in community service.

She was a life long Democrat who embraced the women's movement early on and was active in the efforts to get the Equal Rights Amendment adopted. She served as the IU system-wide coordinator for Programs for

the Handicapped, IU system-wide Title IX coordinator, and Director of the Indiana University Affirmative Action Office. While at IUPUI Dr. Rhome originated weekend classes and classes at off campus sites for non-traditional students. She made the humanities available to people in the greater-Indianapolis community to whom such education was otherwise inaccessible and during the Carter and Reagan presidencies served as a congressional appointee to the National Endowment for the Humanities. She later became Executive Director of the Institute for Humanities Research. She was honored as the School of Liberal Arts Outstanding Faculty member in 1986, along with The Sagamore of the Wabash.



Among her legacies is the **Frances Dodson Rhome Scholarship**, which supports students in English or Women's Studies. She is survived by her son **Robert C. Rhome**, daughter-in-law **Anne**, and their family.

*Memorial gifts may be made to the Frances Dodson Rhome Scholarship Fund through the IU Foundation, 950 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204.*