The Ascent

March 2005

A DAEMEN COLLEGE LEGEND
GRADUATES IN MAY

By Julian Reder
News Staff Reporter

After seven years, Head Resident Assistant, Geoff Abraskin will be graduating in May with a doctorate in physical therapy. Students have come to know and like him through his important role in the Office of Residence Life among other student-related activities. The Daemen College administration, faculty, and staff respect and admire his achievements in leadership roles and the field of physical therapy. Geoff Abraskin exemplifies the very best Daemen College has to offer.

Abraskin is originally from Poughkeepsie, NY. His sister is currently attending junior college. Abraskin’s mother is a teacher. His father passed away in 2002 and was a teacher as well.

Abraskin heard about Daemen College from a guidance counselor in high school. The counselor told him that there was a small college in Buffalo that was ideal for students interested in physical therapy. Abraskin visited several colleges in Buffalo with his father, but disliked them. When he came to Daemen, he immediately felt a connection with the campus.

STUDENTS SPREAD AIDS AWARENESS IN AFRICA

By Erin Wilbert
News Staff Reporter

While most Daemen College students spent their winter break anxiously crossing off the days until their return to Daemen, four physical therapy (PT) students trekked across the continent of Africa. Physical Therapy majors, Ali D. Kanji, Sara Hertlein, Jessica Vieth, and Benjamin Plucknette traveled to Tanzania, a country in East Africa. Their mission: to advocate HIV and AIDS prevention, and share their knowledge of the field of physical therapy with Tanzanian orthopedic health professionals. While in Tanzania, their time was split between Aiding Youth for Life (AYL), a group advocating AIDS awareness in Africa, and physical therapy presentations at the Aga Khan hospital in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The four PT students gave presentations to physicians, residents, and patients in the Aga Khan hospital. Their first workshop discussed the knee, including diagnosis, prevention, treatment, and follow up. Their second workshop covered the back and spine, discussing its many intricacies. Both presentations were given by PowerPoint, and covered symptoms and treatments of the 26 most common joint problems. The physical therapy students expect to return in the near future (next year, if possible) to continue sharing their knowledge with physicians in Africa.

The trip, facilitated by Ali Kanji, also focused on continuing AYL’s work from previous trips. Aiding Youth for Life, a non-governmental organization, has sponsored 32 North American students traveling to East Africa.

Kanji and his fellow interns first outlined their objectives and hopes for the group during the first trip, three years ago. They were unsure where to focus their energies in assisting AIDS prevention. The group’s first exposure to the AIDS phenomenon occurred on their second day in Africa, at a hospital in a small Tanzanian village. The hospital had barely enough beds for half the patients. In the hospital’s women’s ward, there were 62 beds and 92 women (patients), Kanji said. Some women were sharing beds; some were lying or sitting on the floor. Of those 92 women, 86 were HIV positive. The poverty and devastation witnessed at the hospital served as emotional fuel for the student interns in their fight against the disease. This sparked the desire to make an impact in the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

[At first] We had no idea how we wanted to make an impact, Kanji explained. We were overwhelmed. AYL decided to target adolescents ages 12-24, since it is the largest amount — a whopping 60% — of the population living with HIV or AIDS. Kanji and fellow student interns began working in schools, believing this would enable them to reach the largest amount of people at a time. The group’s hope proved right. To date, AYL has established chapters in 10 schools in Tanzania, reaching 8,000 students.

Perhaps the highlight of the group’s adventure this Christmas was Kanji’s meeting with the second Prime Minister, Ali Hasan Mwinyi. During this meeting, Kanji adamantly advocated the expansion of AYL’s program to all government-owned secondary schools in the country.

(Continued on Page 5)
Daemen Students Survive Shock Treatment

by Francine Carson
News Staff Reporter

Only Daemen students would enjoy shock treatment. I hear it's kind of fun. Twisted, right? I'm not talking about pool or electroshock though. I'm talking about culture shock. On the contrary to electroshock, which could cause memory loss, culture shock ingrains an experience in a person's mind.

For 12 days, Daemen College business and Spanish majors and professors were transferred from the second largest city in New York State and relocated to the second largest city in the world, Mexico City. They departed for Mexico Jan. 6, 2005. Students attended Daemen College's study abroad partner, Universidad La Salle (University La Salle). New people, surroundings, and customs made the transition from American to Mexican culture difficult and at times awkward, said Junior Business major Arline Cruz.

Students lived with local Mexican families during their stay. The families were hospitable and selfless. Some families only understood a limited amount of English. This made conversation frustrating at times. Another junior business major, Maria DeSapio, expressed her feelings by saying, "Conversations resembled a game of charades when the two cultures tried to communicate. Expressions helped us express our thoughts. Despite communication troubles, the families attempted to make all students feel safe and comfortable. Mexican families could comfort their temporary guests, but they could not control the physical environment, which the students were exposed to.

Blatant geographical changes affected students. Their bodies felt the abrupt altitude change from Buffalo (500+ ft. above sea level) to Mexico City (7200 ft. above sea level) upon landing at the Mexico City airport around midnight, Central Standard Time. Before departure, students were told to eat less and limit alcohol intake. At altitude, digestion is slower and alcohol's effects increase. With that information in mind, and passport in hand, they now had the chance to directly explore the Mexican culture.

The intersession trip immersed American Spanish and business students in Mexican society. Odd stares and looks freely circulated among the dark skinned and dark eyed Mexican people when the contrasting light skinned and light eyed, combination of Daemen students walked among the crowded, busy, Mexico City streets.

(Continued on Page 6)

Daemen Rocks!

By: Kathy Horschel
New Staff Reporter

On the night of February 5, 2005, the tension was high. There was complete silence while everyone waited. And the winner is... What I am talking about is the Battle of the Bands that was held here at Daemen. The night was filled with nine very talented bands. The night also proved that Buffalo has deep roots in the independent music scene, but that's another story.

The band Undefined was one of my favorites of the night as well, they had an amazing guitarist, and he could have fit right in with Metallica. They were one of the harder bands of the night and really kicked butt. Perhaps the most unique bands of the night came up next. The jazz fusion of Uncle Joe's Medicine Show and the Hill Billy Rock of Louisiana Purchase. 

Louisiana Purchase was the only band not from the area. They were from Louisiana; they had a washboard and a banjo, yet the crowd was dancing up a storm during their set.

(Continued on Page 8)
Looking back on Black History Month...

A Pioneer in Social Work: Renee Daniel

By Shemisa Ali
New Staff Reporter

Renee Daniel, associate professor of the social work department, is definitely a remarkable woman, and truly a pioneer in the field of social work.

A Philadelphia native and a graduate from Columbia University, with a degree in sociology, Daniel lived in St. Croix in the Virgin Islands for four years before she made her permanent move in 1980 to reside in Buffalo.

Originally, Daniel aspired to become a doctor. I asked myself how can I be a doctor when I can’t even stand the sight of blood, she says. But, it wasn’t long before Daniels found a line of work that would suit her perfectly - social work. I love to work with people, she says. I love helping people I just love it. The basic portrayal of a social worker, Daniel says, is someone that removes kids from their parents care. She alludes to the fact that people are often misinformed about what social workers actually do.

Social workers help people, and you can find workers actually do. Social workers help people, and you can find

Social workers help people, and you can find

So, what brought her here to Daemen? I love teaching, she responds with much enthusiasm, clearly proudful in the work she does. My first teaching experience was wonderful, she said. I love how teaching opens minds There’s nothing like it. After just her first year of teaching at Daemen, Daniel was the chair of the social work department. Seventeen years later, she describes the social work department as family oriented and very tight-knit. Her primary focus is to continue building the department.

Social Work is the most eclectic field out there, Daniel says. The skills you learn you can use them anywhere and in anything you do. In commemoration of Black History Month in February, I asked her what things, issues, or people would you like individuals to know about or honor during Black History Month? Daniel responded: Well, as a faculty member, I encourage students to learn more about themselves.

There’s not enough of respecting one another. It’s time we honor the unsung heroes.

Beverly Weeks

I think if we reflect more on the spiritual side of things, and get right with our faiths, and God, everything will eventually fall into place and our struggles in life wouldn’t be so hard, and there would be more unity.

Lorraine Floyd

I think we should honor all the people in Africa who unfortunately lost their lives to Aids.

Gudiya Msuku-Parks

There is so much more to celebrate about African American history than what we generally know about, that goes unrecognized, untold, or never taught- just the whole history and culture no one really takes the time to learn about.

Sabrina Papes

Shemisa Ali asked some Daemen professors:

What things, issues, or people would you like to honor during Black History Month?

Abraskin, continued from Page 1...

Abraskin credits his year in Canavan Hall with providing invaluable experience that would prepare him for more responsibilities. His second year as an RA was different because he was assigned to building 110, an upperclassmen residence hall. After two years of experience, Abraskin decided to apply for the head resident assistant position. Abraskin’s maturity and natural leadership ability made him a clear choice for this important position. I was ecstatic when I found out, he said. “I called Greg (former Head Resident Assistant, Greg Vogurtian DPT ’04) and told him.”

Abraskin’s position has been incredibly difficult in many aspects. I get called in for the big stuff. This includes parties, domestic problems, and drugs. Abraskin says that being an authority figure is not easy. Students only see the serious, no-nonsense side of the Head RA. Abraskin enjoys seeing residents when it does not involve his duties. They get to see who I am, he says.

In addition to being a cornerstone of the Office of Residence Life, Abraskin has been the president of the Student Physical Therapy Association, treasurer of the Rugby Club, Student Alumni Ambassador, admissions tour guide, member of the committee for dining services, started a lacrosse club, and played intramural soccer and football.

When asked to describe one particular good memory, Abraskin responded by saying: There are too many good memories. Daemen is a good place. It’s like your home. It feels like Poughkeepsie. We have a great RA staff. I have good friends in the DPT classes. Graduation, that’ll be a tough day. It’ll be a happy, but sad day at the same time.

Abraskin’s defining moment during his college career was at the end of his first semester of sophomore year. He was placed on academic probation and on the verge of having to leave. Abraskin consulted with John Thiue, the former Executive Director of Academic Support Services. Abraskin improved his grades and ended up on the Dean’s list. I like that feeling of being on the Dean’s list, said Abraskin. I wanted to get into PT again. Since his sophomore year, Abraskin has achieved his academic goals and is now completing an internship. As for his future, Abraskin already has a job. He plans to go back to Poughkeepsie and live with his mother. Abraskin plans to pay off his college loans and travel around the country in order to open clinics.

When asked whom he would like to thank for his incredibly successful years at Daemen College, Abraskin thanked the RA staff and DPT Class of 2005 for their friendship and support. I would also like to thank all the faculty and staff who have left their mark, the people who molded me into who I am today,” he said. “They know who they are.

Abraskin has contributed to many facets of student-life and accomplished a great deal in physical therapy studies. His seven years will culminate on the day he receives his doctorate in physical therapy in May. As a scholar, he is a model for current and future students. As an individual, he is a model for what every young person should grow up to be. He is a man of maturity, focus, and responsibility. He may be leaving in May, but his contributions will be felt and acknowledged for many years to come. The countless residents he’s helped will remember and appreciate his diligence and kindness for the rest of their lives. Geoff Abraskin will be sorely missed.
The Idea People

S.D. Wright

Commentary

Ten thousand years ago a man stood atop a precipice, watching a herd of antelope below. He lifted his bronzed shoulders to angle and aim what looked to be only a curved tree branch. In fact the man had developed from almost nothing a tool and a weapon: a tight, elastic strip of bark was knotted to both ends of that branch. He released his grip on the bark. From the thrum of the bowstring an arrow rocketed into an animal's throbbing heart. Exalted, he shouted to his compatriots as he climbed down into the valley below. Waiting for him nearby was his tribe, women and children, eager to eat of the bounty. A transfixed group of young hunters watched him explain his invention, but what we call a bow-and-arrow would surely have been described then in a much more primitive tongue than ours now.

Around the pitfire that night, as the smoke boiled up to the sky, the women stared at our man admiringly. Other tribesmen mutteringly hailed his genius. He could only answer questions, and shine in the spotlight he had earned for himself. We can not assume that he had any great awareness of the historical effects of his invention. But I hope and pray that, at the moment this man perished, he knew something of the immensity of what he had done. He had contributed a means by which the human race could prevail. And before his sinewy arms snapped the tree limbs, or his fingers handled the string, it had been but an idea. It is from ideas that man wins his victories.

Let us return now to our time, and the theatre classroom of a small college in Amherst, NY, named Daemen. It is the year 2004, and two students stand before lecterns facing each other in debate. Staring confidently into the audience and choosing wisely his words, there stood a young man defending the policies of his nation's leader. Another student waited to give his oration, him too an ardent advocate of a certain set of policies, those ideas represented by another leader. Their dialogue illustrates, and their differences address, something vital about America. Here ideas may be contested freely and openly, and from this discussion is born better ideas and more sophisticated approaches. (The author here wishes to thank James Felicita for agreeing to debate him, and doing a fine job at it too.)

Ideas spur evolution, not of the organism itself but evolution in man-made creations: change in society, in culture, and, not least of all, in government. And they have changed America. Thomas Paine knew this: his writings helped inspire the creation of our country. Before Garrison and Douglass, a man had to abdicate his freedom to another in America because of his skin color. Before the suffrage movement, women could not vote. All of these accomplishments were from ideas born, and in more than just a poetic sense of the word an idea is a bone-tipped arrow, whistling toward its target, fashioned so as to try and face a challenge. Some ideas have been wildly off mark, and others more effective. But regardless man languishes without them. I am writing this article primarily to suggest that Americans — and Daemenites in particular — become idea people again. Our nation is sorely divided, and visceral reactions to members of another political party abound. But realizing as I do that conservatism and liberalism are both valid perspectives (with one superior, of course), it might require a

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Probably, The First Great Zombie Movie of the Millennium

Mackenzie Lambert

Commentary

Zombie movies, as of late, don't resemble the zombie movies I grew up with. For example, I liked Zack Snyder's remake of Dawn of the Dead the first time it was called 28 Days Later. The first horrible zombie movie of the new century, Uwe Boll's House of the Dead, featured both the traditional zombie, in addition to the fast zombie. I often hear people acclaim about how cool running zombies are. Well, for one, a running zombie is a contradiction. The voodoo tradition where zombies originated from had them being slow, limbering dead people. How could they run with stiffened joints caused by rigor mortis? Beside the point, running zombies are nothing new. The Lucio Fulci/Bruno Mattei directed film, Zombi 2, had fast zombies that wielded machetes. Claudio Fragasso Zombi 4 had gun-totting zombies. Umberto Lenzi had running zombies that more resembled vampires in the schlockfest, Nightmare City. Dan O'Bannon used running zombies to a hilarious exponent in the horror-comedy classic, Return of the Living Dead. Up until now, there hasn't been a commercialized running zombie movie in the tradition of George Romero or Lucio Fulci. That is until, the British-made romantic comedy with zombies, entitled Shaun of the Dead, directed by Edgar Wright, was released.

The film centers on Shaun (Simon Pegg), who is going through tough times. He's not going anywhere in life due to his slacker friend, Ed (Nick Frost). His flatmate, Pete (Peter Serafinowicz, the voice of Darth Maul in The Phantom Menance), is on his case about sorting his life out. His relationship with his girlfriend, Liz (Kate Ashfield), is at a point of being ego-shell-sensitive. He has a rocky relationship with his stepfather, played by Bill Nighty (Love, Actually). All the while, zombies start to appear throughout the city. Shaun decides to round up his family and friends, only to hide out at the place he knows best: the local pub.

What makes this specific zombie film stand out is that the zombie situation is not the focus of the film. Usually, the characters react to the zombie menace and put personal feelings aside. Instead, Shaun tries to patch up his relationships and put them as a higher priority over his own survival. This gives Shaun a character a noble quality often absent in horror films, at least not seen since Peter Jackson's Dead Alive.

Unlike recent zombie films, this has gory moments not often seen. There are bloody headshots, impalement defaces a zombie, and one character is, literally, torn apart. There are commentaries, featurettes, outtakes (one being Pegg and Serafinowicz imitating John Lennon and Paul McCartney respectively), and deleted scenes.

Like the title says, this may be the first great zombie movie of the 21st century. That is, until George A. Romero's fourth living dead film, Land of the Dead, hits theatres on Oct. 21st of this year. The cast includes Dennis Hopper, Asia Argento, and John Leguizamo. Make-up effects legend Tom Savini, in addition to Shaun of the Dead's Simon Pegg and Edgar Wright, will be making cameos as zombies.
Kanji came out of the meeting hopeful, having discussed the prospect of passing a protocol for his request within the next one and a half years. Kanji, Sara Hertlein, Jessica Vieth, and Ben Plucknette concluded their amazing experience by climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, the tallest free-standing mountain in the world. Three and a half days and 45 miles later, the Daemenites reached Uhuru Peak, the tallest point in Africa, standing at 19,000 feet. Kanji stated that it was a fitting end to an interesting adventure for the four students. In summarizing the experience, Kanji reflected, It made us realize everything we have here and made us not take advantage of everything we have, he added, It increased my [our] desire to want to give something back.

The latest installment of...

The Tree That Binds the Worlds

By Dan Crofts

Commentary

We could see the oblong structure...probably a long house even from a distance. Several half-naked natives pranced about in an unruly fashion. Each individual wore a mask that depicted a typical forest beast; such as a wolf, or a bear.

We managed to keep ourselves hidden among the surrounding trees and shrubs. Olaf motioned for us to stay where we were, as we crouched down upon the green earth. A moment later the chanting and prancing came to a halt. One of the participants signaled for the others to stand quiet for a moment, and a period of anticipation followed. All of the natives seemed to wait for a sound that would indicate our presence, and we all waited for their inevitable search.

By the time they had begun to approach our vicinity, it was too late to attempt an escape. We remained perfectly still and silent, hoping they would turn away. Any warrior who carried a sword had his hand on it at that moment.

In an instant, we were all seized and dragged into the sight of the chief. I noticed that no man could get a hold of his sword, so tight was the enemy's grip. As soon as we were brought to our knees, several sharp arrows were held to our necks.

Within seconds, a tall, sturdy, half-naked man with strange paintings on his chest and cheeks began to approach us. The other Indians cleared the way for his approach, which led me to believe that he was their leader. He stopped a moment to carefully survey what was to him a very strange lot. Next, he marched directly over to Olaf. Perhaps the horned helmet gave me to believe that he was their leader. He stopped a moment to carefully survey what was to him a very strange lot. Next, he marched directly over to Olaf. Perhaps the horned helmet gave him away as the leader of the group.

Who are you? he asked.

How this was possible, I could but wonder. This was an Indian tribe in pre-colonial America, and the leader appeared to be able to speak English! That's what I thought, at least.

Who are you? the chief asked, once more. And why have you come to my lands?

Olaf was silent for several seconds, gasping for breath. I understand none of your words, declared Olaf. But I intend to make it known to you that my gods will take grave vengeance upon you and your people if you harm us!

In that instant, I realized that neither the Vikings nor the Indians truly spoke English. Each group had its own distinct language. Fortunately, I had wished, while in the cave of the Rock Sprite, that I could understand everybody, and that everybody could understand me.

They do not know our tongue, declared the chief, looking to his tribesmen. But soon, they will know our arrows, and our spears.

Wait! I shouted, unable to wait any longer to test my ability. We mean you no harm!

At that moment, everyone Indian and Viking alike looked upon me in astonishment.

That was how I came to be used as an interpreter. When I spoke to the Indians, they could understand me but the Vikings could not. When I spoke to the Vikings, it was the other way about. To me, each group spoke in the clearest English.

Through me, Olaf told the chief of our mission. He mentioned the sacred object he sought in order to rid his homeland of the cold death that had enveloped it. When it came time to translate, I asked the chief if he possessed any object of great sanctity.

Within seconds, those around me cleared the way for a stout young woman bearing a large, ripe ear of corn. To me, this was nothing. My companions, on the other hand, marveled at this golden object that was, I remembered, once completely unseen in Europe.

Olaf offered to buy this single ear from the tribe. Through my translation, the chief made it clear that the crop was exceedingly precious to his people. If he were to give it away, we would have to ask for something very valuable in return.

Tell him, Olaf began, addressing me. Tell him that I will give him my helmet, in exchange for a single ear of this magnificent oddity. Tell him that this helmet signifies immense power and authority. With it, he may forever maintain dominion over his people and his enemies.

The chief gladly accepted. I must admit, I didn't expect him to agree so readily. I was pleasantly surprised to hear him give his warriors the order to release us, and equally pleased with the immediate exchange: helmet for corn.

Feeling pleased with ourselves, we made our way back to the ship. It had never occurred to one of us, not even Olaf himself, that the leader of the group could not hold true authority over the ship's crew without the horned helmet. This came into my mind as soon as we reached the ship, leaving the helmet behind. Luckily, I was the only one on board who thought of this, therefore there was no attempt at any sort of mutiny. However, Olaf had broken a sacred tradition by trading in his helmet, and the sea would not easily forget it.
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Idea People, continued from Page 4

combination of both or a complete re-thinking of either to address our nation's challenges. America ought to return to the business of problem-solving again.

And the problems facing America are a-many, from international terrorism, to ceaseless violence in Israel, to global warming.

Let us be liberals, and let others of us be conservative. But remember that in the end that the perils of our century might not be averted by either philosophy, nor our problems solved. The great crises of the past were not resolved by emotions, but by ideas. And each of us is blessed with a mind. History is awaiting our use of it.

Corrections: The article submitted last month by S.D. Wright to the Ascent appeared as if it was written by a man drunk or otherwise incapacitated. He apologizes, and asks of his readership — all seven of them — to show some forbearance.

Therapy, continued from Page 2

The majority of business majors, similar to their host families, were only equipped with basic Spanish skills. Translators, tour guides, and University La Salle students, regularly attended the same events Daemen students attended.

On certain days, business and Spanish majors separated due to different schedules and activities. All students visited Xochimilco, Coyoacan, the Frida Kahlo Museum, Teotihuacan Pyramids, Bellas Artes, and the Diego Rivera mural museum, to name a few. Everyone had the opportunity to participate in salsa lessons with a great instructor who appeared to have rubber hips. Could he move!

Not even the salsa instructor's suave moves could persuade anyone to trade in their plane ticket home. The time went by quickly. Once students adjusted, it was time to leave. The business students returned to the States Jan. 17, 2005. Spanish students continued their journey to the picturesque city of Guanajuato, Mexico and returned to the States on Jan. 21.

Did the shock treatment work for everyone who visited Mexico? You'll have to ask them. I am sure all the students and professors have endless, unforgettable, stories to tell you about their unique experiences. Maybe you could benefit from a treatment? Piensalo (think about it).

What's Going on at Daemen in March?

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<td>Movie: Motorcycle Diaries</td>
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<td>9:00 PM, Amherst Pepsi Arena</td>
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Facing Anorexia Nervosa on Campus

MATTE RELEASE--(COLLEGIATE PRESSWIRE)--Feb 22, 2005—Robin, 23, has struggled with anorexia for 11 years. During her sophomore year of college, she experienced her worst of times. "I'd tell myself I couldn't eat until I got a task done," says Robin. "I'd chew gum or drink coffee if I felt hungry." At mid-term, she was 20 pounds thinner than at the start of the semester.

"I was in denial about it. Completely," says Robin. "I thought that if I could just get straight As, it would go away." In the flurry of college life, anorexia might feel taboo, but eating disorders thrive in the demographic. Roughly 95 percent of people with eating disorders are between the ages of 12 and 25. It's difficult to understand the struggles of someone with this potentially fatal disease, but showing empathy and encouraging that person to see a doctor or counselor can help a friend's life -- or even save it.

According to the National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA), anorexia nervosa is a psychiatric disorder characterized by an obsession with weight loss despite an ever-thinning body. Some of the early warning signs include preoccupations with weight or losing weight, extreme dieting, or excessive exercising. Some individuals with anorexia also resort to more drastic measures to shed pounds such as starving themselves, or purging by making themselves vomit or using laxatives. In the meantime, their academic and athletic performance may appear normal, and even successful.

Anorexia is a serious illness that has the highest fatality rate of any psychiatric disorders. The cause of death is often not starvation, but a slow degradation of the body. According to NEDA, the general lack of nutrition leads to a weakened immune system. Anorexia is known to be the cause of many medical problems ranging from brittle bones, chronic fatigue, hair loss, dry skin, to more serious complications such as kidney failure due to severe dehydration, irregular heartbeat, or extreme low blood pressure.

What causes anorexia? Current research may help to reveal further insight into this complex disorder. Walter H. Kaye, psychiatrist at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, says that it is thought anorexia results from a complex interplay of hereditability, biology and environmental factors. "There may be an underlying genetic susceptibility that makes some individuals more sensitive than others to environmental factors, like the cultural emphasis on dieting and slimness." Dr. Kaye is currently leading a four-year international study that seeks to understand the relationship between genes and anorexia. The study is looking for families where at least two relatives have or had anorexia. It involves phone interviews, questionnaires and a blood sample (Details about the study can be found at wwwangenetics.org or by calling 1-888-895-3886). Learning how genes contribute to anorexia will help in developing more effective treatments that may eventually save lives.

Treating anorexia at college requires a combination of psychological and medical interventions, according to Craig Johnson, Ph.D., Director of the Eating Disorders Program at Laureate Psychiatric Hospital in Tulsa, Okla. Students with less severe cases may need therapy once a week. More severe cases may require hospitalization.

Approaching a friend who has an eating disorder can be difficult. Denial is one of the cardinal features of someone who is struggling with the illness says Dr. Johnson. He recommends that you gently approach the individual and express concern about specific behaviors that you have observed such as excessive exercise, purging or extreme dieting. If they are unresponsive to the gentle inquiry, then it may be necessary to contact their parents or someone in a position of authority. Dr Johnson stresses "It is very important that you alert someone, because people die from these illnesses."

Robin, a recent college graduate, was more fortunate. Although she never talked about her eating disorder with her friends and never sought counseling for it, she is now maintaining a healthy weight and outlook. "I have a job where I work with talented, passionate people. Successful people, who didn't get to where they are because of how thin they are," she says.

Nonetheless, Robin never goes out to eat, as a rule. Her rule suggests that she still struggles with the notion of eating and weight. How does she feel about an article on how friends can begin to understand what someone with anorexia goes through? "That's awesome," she says.

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