As the fall 2013 semester is upon us here at Coe, it is time for another Department Newsletter. The previous academic year (2012-2013) was another good one for the Department. Our new young faculty in the Religion Program – Meira Kensky and Chris Hatchell -- continue to attract many good students to the program and they continue to excel as both teachers and scholars. Last year the Religion Program graduated 11 majors and minors. Among these graduates are the following:

Peter Miller, who wrote and defended a senior honors thesis and who has started on a Masters of Theological Studies Degree at Vanderbilt University. Peter also won the Eutsler Prize as the outstanding senior religion major.

Chris Brummitt, who is now attending law school on a scholarship at Denver University.

Christey Sharpshair, who is now attending a graduate program in alternative medicine in Minnesota.

Rachel Tingley, who has taken a position as a financial advisor at Colorado Technical University.

Ben Buckmaster, who has taken a position with a technology company in the Chicago area.

Tess Warner, who is Coe's Americorps/VISTA representative in the Office of Service Learning and Campus Engagement.

Kristine Gift, who is working in Cedar Rapids at Learning RX, while applying for graduate school in Middle Eastern Studies.

And Joseph Sorenson, who works in town as a youth counselor at Foundation 2 Youth Shelter.

Meira Kensky won the C.J. Lynch Outstanding Teacher award at Commencement Ceremonies in the spring of last year. The award is given annually to a member of the faculty who has exhibited excellence as a teacher and scholar. She is truly deserving of the award and the Department is very proud of her accomplishment. She also reports that she has three articles forthcoming in the next three years; one in an issue of Early Christianity, one in a festschrift, and one in a volume based on the proceedings of a conference on the divine courtroom in which she participated. Chris Hatchell has continued work on his book which is forthcoming with Oxford University Press, Naked Seeing: The Great Perfection, The Wheel of Time, and Visionary Buddhism in Renaissance Tibet. He also traveled to India last summer on a Coe Research and Creative Endeavors Grant. This trip enabled him to make preparations for future research projects and publications. He visited Menri Monastery, the main monastery of the Tibetan Bön Tradition, and used the library there and consulted with the monks regarding manuscripts that describe the life of Tönpa Shenrab, the founder of the Bön tradition.

Last spring the Philosophy Program graduated six philosophy majors. These were: Chris Brummitt, Christey Sharpshair, Lynnette Volden, Connor Morgan, Nathaniel Kurtz, and Sara Ohlman. As noted above, Chris Brummitt and Christey Sharpshair were also religion majors. Chris is now in law school at Denver University, where he has a scholarship, and Christey is studying alternative medicine in Minnesota. Sara Ohlman is studying law at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, where she has a scholarship. Lynnette Volden is working for AmeriCorps in rural Vermont.

Lynnette Volden won the Eutsler prize for outstanding accomplishment by a senior philosophy major. She successfully wrote and defended a senior honors thesis. Chris Brummitt and Connor Morgan both gave papers at the St. Louis University Undergraduate Philosophy Conference last spring. Chris Brummitt's paper dealt with issues in political philosophy and Connor Morgan's paper dealt with the free will problem. They were joined at the conference by Professor Lemos and several philosophy students. The papers were well-received and, as usual, a good time was had by all.

Professor Hoover devoted a good bit of his summer to preparing a new course that he is
teaching this fall on the subject of aesthetics. He is also looking forward to presenting a paper on Leon Batista Alberti, a renaissance philosopher, at a conference in Berlin this fall. The conference will focus on issues concerning Pythagorean harmonics. Professor Hoover will also be teaching a May term course with Professor Emeritus Ed Burke in Italy this coming spring. Professor John Lemos' book, *Freedom, Responsibility, and Determinism: A Philosophical Dialogue* (Hackett Publishing), appeared in print in March of last year. It is a beginner's guide to the subject that will be useful for instructors who cover the topic in their courses. He will be giving a paper on the free will issue at the annual Tennessee Values and Agency Conference this fall at the University of Tennessee. The conference this year is devoted to the topic of libertarian views of free will and noted scholars from around the country will be giving presentations.

The Philosophy Program welcomes back Steve Campbell for his second year of a two year Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship. Steve taught three courses for the department last year and he will be teaching three more for the department this year. It has been a real pleasure having him here, and his presence in the department has allowed us to diversify the offerings of our program. He has been active as a scholar during his time here. Last year he gave a number of papers at philosophy conferences. His most recent publication, “An Analysis of Prudential Value,” came out in *Utilitas* at the start of the fall semester.

That's the news here. If you have news that you would like to share with the department, then please contact us.