

Villanova

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“...each generation of Villanova graduates has released its own ‘glories of the spirit’...”

—Mary McAleese,
President of Ireland

At Reunion, a Record Turnout

Second Villanovan Wins a Gates Cambridge Scholarship

Studying Latin as a youngster led Daniel DiCenso '05 G.S. to become absorbed in the mysteries of Medieval chant.

BY MAUREEN MCKEW

In October, the fifth annual contingent of Gates Cambridge Scholars, selected from countries around the world, will begin their graduate studies at the University of Cambridge in England. The 38 successful candidates from the United States who have been offered these prestigious scholarships include Daniel DiCenso, who is a candidate for a master's degree in Classical Studies at Villanova University.

DiCenso will study for a doctorate in music at Cambridge. He is the second Villanovan to win this award since the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced the program in 2000. The first Villanovan was David Quinn '02 M.E., who has now completed his doctoral studies in engineering at Cambridge's Pembroke College.

The Gates Cambridge Scholarships are awarded on intellectual ability, leadership and the candidates' desire to serve their community and the world. The scholarships fund not only the full cost of graduate study at Cambridge but support living costs, study-related activities and some travel costs.

Di Censo, after completing a bachelor's degree in music and Medieval and Renaissance Studies from the College of the Holy Cross, earned two master's degrees from the University of Pennsylvania: the first in education (2001) and the second in music (2002). Since 2001, he has taught Latin and English at Seneca High School in Tabernacle, N.J.

At Cambridge, DiCenso plans to continue his exploration of chant, the sung prayer of the Church. For DiCenso, *exploration* is the ideal word for his aspirations. He looks upon the Medieval period, particularly the Carolingian era, as a mysterious time that needs more light shone upon it.

The Carolingian era takes its name from Charlemagne (742-814 A.D.), whom Pope Leo III crowned emperor of the Romans on Christmas Day in 800 A.D. Charlemagne's military expertise brought much of what is now western Europe

under his control, and his emphasis on converting his subjects to Christianity led to a flourishing of scholarship and reform.

Charlemagne's efforts to impart a sense of imperial unity impacted indigenous local cultural liturgical practices such as chant. As he attempted to unite his Frankish kingdom and align himself with the pope, one of the ways he chose to carry out his dual intent was by offering to unify the various kinds of liturgical chants, using Roman chant. To do so, he dispatched throughout his kingdom cantors trained in Rome. What eventually emerged was what we today call Gregorian chant. The mystery lies in distinguishing which aspects of chant were absorbed from Rome, and which retained their Frankish characteristics. There are tantalizingly few records, and DiCenso hopes to trace them.

DiCenso's natural intellectual curiosity was nurtured by his parents, Anna and Charles DiCenso, both of whom are educators in his hometown of Derby, Conn. His mother has been a math teacher at Derby High School for more than 30 years. His father, who spent 35 years at Derby, 12 of them as principal, also has served as interim superintendent of schools for the town. His sister, Maria, is a graduate student at Northeastern University, studying to be a pediatric nurse practitioner.

When Dan DiCenso was about 11 and studying piano, his mother arranged for him to have a Latin tutor. The boy took to the language and to Roman cul-



JOHN WELSH

In England, Daniel DiCenso will study music next fall at the University of Cambridge after completing his M.A. degree at Villanova University. He hopes to add "Ph.D." to his three master's degrees.

ture with an enthusiasm he would share with students of his own 15 years later.

The story of how DiCenso came to win a Gates Cambridge Scholarship is one that will make some scholars grit their teeth in envy. He had been accepted at Cambridge and was reviewing a list, provided by Cambridge, of financial aid opportunities. With no prior knowledge of the scholarship or that it was connected to Microsoft's founder, DiCenso saw the name "Gates Cambridge" and applied for it.



Senior Earns National Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Fellowship

BY HOLLY STRATTS

He was called for a finalist's interview, which took place at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. He sat waiting outside the interview room as other finalists took their turns. "The walls were really thin," he recalled. As he listened to the interviewees, he said, "I could tell how nervous they were. I wasn't really nervous myself. I'm 28 years old and I've been through a lot of interviews." When his turn came, he said, "The interviewers seemed interested in my topic."

DiCenso just learned he will be living at Magdalene College, which was founded in 1428 A.D. and which, to his delight, maintains the formal tradition of gowned students dining by candlelight each night. He promised to remain in touch with his colleagues at Villanova, in particular the Latin faculty. He said he enjoyed the community at Villanova as well as the University's dedication to its mission. He added that he wouldn't mind coming back to teach here some day.

Each year, the Villanova University chapter of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi participates in the national organization's Graduate Fellowship competition. This spring, Kristen N. Carey '05 A&S, who went on to graduate *summa cum laude* with a double degree, was awarded Phi Kappa Phi's \$5,000 Slater Fellowship, as well as \$750 from the Villanova chapter. The Slater Fellowship is one of only 12 named fellowships Phi Kappa Phi awarded in 2005 out of a total of 60.

Carey majored in biology, philosophy and Honors with a minor in health care ethics. She plans to attend Harvard Medical School this fall and to pursue either philosophy or bioethics in a joint Ph.D./M.D. program. Carey was a member of Villanova's team that came in fourth among the 36 collegiate teams in the National Ethics Bowl Competition, held in San Antonio in February. Her many other distinctions include being a finalist for the Marshall Scholarship. For her senior Honors thesis, she focused on "Responsible Parenting: A Stewardship Approach to Decisions of Child Welfare."

Ryan Costella '05 A&S received a \$500 runner-up award from Phi Kappa Phi.

During its 31st annual induction on April 17, the Villanova chapter inducted 116 members. The mission of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and largest interdisciplinary honor society, is to recognize and promote superior scholarship in all fields of higher education.

The chapter issues invitations to seniors in the upper 10 percent of their class, as well as to juniors in the top 7.5 percent of their class. Graduate students are nominated by their department chair. Faculty members who have demonstrated scholarly distinction also are considered.

Dr. David N. Nawrocki, chapter president, noted, "The Villanova chapter exists because of volunteers from the faculty and staff. It is a lot of hard work organizing the induction ceremony and dinner each year. We would not have succeeded without the contributions of Trish Burdo, chapter secretary; Lyn DeSilets; Peggy Chaudhry; Sohail Chaudhry; John Durmin; Jim Arrison; Holly Stratts; Christine Nawrocki; and Helen K. Lafferty."

Added Nawrocki, who is the Katherine M. Salisbury and Richard J. Salisbury Jr. Professor in the College of Commerce and Finance, "All the work and nervousness was worth it when I was able to congratulate our students on their induction."

Kudos for These National Honorees

The following Villanova University students were winners, finalists or recipients of honorable mention for national scholarships during this past academic year:

DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Scholarship

Winner: Alexi Kukuljevic '06 G.S. (Ph.D. in philosophy)

Fulbright Awards

Winner: Daniel Greenspan '06 G.S. (Ph.D. in philosophy)



Winner: Andrew Horne '05 A&S (philosophy), Austrian government teaching assistantship

Winner: Imran Punekar '06 A&S (biology, Honors Program)

Finalist: Kristen N. Carey '05 A&S (biology, philosophy, Honors Program)

Finalist: Lindsay Shoff '05 A&S (English)

Gates Cambridge Scholarship

Winner: Daniel DiCenso '05 M.A. (Classical Studies) (He will graduate in September.)

Barry S. Goldwater Scholarship

Winner: Morgan Jones '05 A&S (biology, Honors Program)

Marshall Scholarship

Finalist: Kristen N. Carey '05 A&S (biology, philosophy, Honors Program)

National Science Foundation

Honorable mention: Kathleen Halcovage '05 C.E.

Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Fellowship

Winner: Kristen N. Carey '05 A&S (biology, philosophy, Honors Program)

Harry S. Truman Scholarship

Winner: Diane Coffey '06 A&S (sociology, Honors Program)

Finalist: Thomas Emerson '06 A&S (English, Honors Program)

Morris K. Udall Undergraduate Scholarship

Winner: Kelly Doyle '06 C.E.