

University

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LIFE STAFF

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The Templeton Foundation recognition of George Fox University includes several references to the importance of faculty and University leaders as role models — inspiring and setting examples of responsibility, helping in the character development of students (see story, page 1).

With 33 years of experience in teaching and mentoring, Glenn Moran, professor of education, says mentoring at Christian universities takes on much more significance, and that true mentoring — building relationships with God and with others — stimulates dual growth.

“The protégé gains in the spiritual realm, the classroom, or the workplace, while mentors renew their energy, increase their motivation, and feel valued,” he says. “It has to be a two-way street or it won’t work.”

Two examples of George Fox faculty helping students in their walks with Christ and on their way to careers follow:

Carrie Jo Vincent

“I can love you very much as a person and still flunk you as a student,” says Carrie Jo Vincent, assistant professor of drama. She doesn’t say that threateningly, but as a big-time believer in “tough love” who makes her ground rules and expectations very clear to her students.

It’s part of her process of mentoring her students that extends beyond the classroom.

A life in theatre is incredibly rewarding, but also physically, emotionally and psychologically draining, Vincent says. “I learned early on the importance of developing a support system to help me take risks.”

Now she is helping her students do the same, and more. Vincent strives to show students how she integrates her family life (a married mother of two) with her profes-

sional life. That mentoring shows.

Tonya Lynne Wildhaber, a senior communication video production major from Raymond, Wash., credits Vincent for being “a professor, a mentor, a ‘mom,’ and most important, a friend.”

Vincent teaches students far more than theatre competencies, Wildhaber says. She leads by example and inspires students to hold on to their Christ-inspired dreams and passions.

“Carrie Jo is more than a teacher and more than a mentor,” Wildhaber adds. “She’s an amazing woman of God, a humble servant who seeks to serve and encourage those around her. I hope that Christ grows in me so some day I can be a mentor.”

“Thanks for Being My Friend”

George Fox represents a fresh start for four students from Kosovo.

Four students say their path to George Fox University this fall took them through a hell on earth. With emotional scars from the recent war still vivid in their minds, the ethnic Albanians from Kosovo are pursuing a new life in Oregon.

The refugee students are among 45 throughout the United States receiving scholarships at 22 private liberal arts colleges as part of a program coordinated by Carol Detweiler, wife of Richard Detweiler, president of Hartwick College in New York. The Detweilers are former Peace Corps volunteers who, because of their international experiences, wanted to offer scholarships to two Kosovars to attend Hartwick. Detweiler asked her husband if other schools would be interested in doing the same.

About two dozen schools across the country responded. George Fox is the only one in the western United States.

“I felt it was something that fit our mission as an institution,” said Dale Seipp, director of undergraduate admissions, who was quick to act on the inquiry from Detweiler. “In our Quaker tradition, we realized we could provide an education to people coming from a war-torn environment.”

Seipp said Detweiler’s program identified a top group of college-age students from among the Kosovar refugees, most of whom came to the United States through Fort Dix, N.J. Those who wanted to take advantage of the program were then enrolled in interested schools based on the students’ academic interests and on the regions to which they had been relocated. In the case of the George Fox students, they and their families had moved to either the Northwest or California.

Most of the students are receiving scholarships for up to five years. That includes one year to study English as a second language. As refugees, the students are eligible for federal financial aid, and George Fox created a financial aid package for them that includes the federal aid, grant money and work-study funding.

About 20 percent of the students’ costs aren’t covered, and the University is pursuing additional funds through church groups and refugee programs.

“I believe our students from Kosovo are contributing a perspective to our student population and community that is valuable to understand,” said Andrea Cook, vice president for enrollment services. “They are all aware of the Christian environment and lifestyle expectations of our university, and are very grateful to have the opportunity to study here,” she said.

The four students — Mirsade Bejiqi, 21; Mentor Visoka, 18; Latif Latifi, 20; and Blerim Berisha, 19 — were given an opportunity to tell the George Fox community about a world very different from the Newberg campus during one of the University’s Peace Suppers. Those attending watched in stunned quietness as the four students showed graphic slides of the horrors of “ethnic cleansing” they witnessed in their country from Slobodan Milosevic’s Serbian forces. The color photos depicted mutilation of not only adults, but children as young as 2 years old.

“The Serbs said they didn’t kill anyone but soldiers, but these pictures speak the truth,” said Latifi, who fought tears as he spoke.

“I want to be strong. I don’t want to cry, because crying won’t make me feel better,” said Bejiqi.

“You don’t know what you have until you lose it,”

about 200,000 people.

“I’ve made a few friends that understand things, (even though) they are Americans,” she said. “Usually when you mention that you are from Kosova, American students say ‘cool.’ I hate that. Usually American people think everything is cool today. Which it is not.”

Less than cool, in Bejiqi’s opinion, are the lifestyle standards at George Fox. “There are too many rules here,” she said — but with a grin. She describes herself as a Muslim who is nonetheless comfortable attending a Christian university.

Bejiqi hasn’t yet chosen a major, but is leaning toward art. In the meantime, she is having great fun with her new close friends, who also include some international students from Taiwan as well as several Americans.

said Berisha.

Bejiqi told how she and about 50 friends and family members hid during the war in the basement of a neighbor’s home with hardly any food and water. When Serb soldiers finally arrived, they took her money and threatened to kill her if she and the others didn’t leave quickly. Despite days without food or clean clothing, she and the others made their way toward refugee camps in Macedonia.

“I saw too many dead bodies,” she said. “Even now I have nightmares.”

Berisha told of studying secretly in private homes after Serbs closed schools to ethnic Albanians. His Muslim father was fired from a university teaching job.

The Kosovo Liberation Army and Serb forces fought battles near Berisha’s home. When the NATO air strikes began, he and his family fled Kosovo.

“NATO brought life back to Kosova (as Kosovars call their country),” he said. “Now the people are free in Kosova and have a chance to rebuild their lives.”

Today, distance and the passing of time have separated the students from the circumstances that caused such pain. All four say they are enjoying their new lives in America, and at George Fox. While all expect to return to Kosovo on visits during the next several years, they are focused for now on American college life. All are enrolled for their first year at George Fox in the English as a Second Language program, then they will begin regular studies toward their chosen majors next year.

“I like everything here,” said Bejiqi, who studied English back home and who is most fluent in the language among the four. Bejiqi, like Visoka, is from the Kosovar city of Prishtina, which before the war had

When Florence Lienard graduated from Pacific College (as George Fox University was known in 1927), she was close friends with everyone in her senior class.

But then Lienard — who will be honored as the University's oldest living alumnus at a special luncheon on Feb. 12 — says her graduating class included just seven students.

Over the past half century, Lienard,

Milleni -

ALUMNI NOTES

Editor's Note: Because some alumni news submitted via our Web site was never received, please resubmit news

