SENIOR FEATURE: JENNA JEWELL

From five honor societies including Phi Kappa Phi, to connection leader, and president of the Society of Westover Fellows, senior Jennifer (Jenna) Jewell has made the most of her four years at Lynchburg College. Her passion for psychology has led to a close association with LC psychology faculty member Dr. Virginia Cylke. Indeed, her senior honors thesis focusing on inherent privileges associated with certain genders, races, and sexual orientations, which Jenna defended in April, is a product of her research with Dr. Cylke on discriminations within our society.

While juggling a double major in psychology and criminology (the criminology major added “just for fun”) and a Spanish minor, Jenna has still found time to do what she loves the most—getting involved in the Lynchburg campus. With the help of two planners and a strict adherence to her “academics first” policy, Jenna dove headfirst into the LC community as secretary of the Zeta Upsilon chapter of Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority, vice president of the Psi Chi psychology honorary, and the head assistant in the psychology lab, in addition to numerous other responsibilities and activities over the past four years. Her schedule is enough to make others gasp when she starts listing off her résumé, but Jenna firmly maintains that time management has allowed her to pursue her wide variety of passions, including Special Olympics and Lynchburg Grows, while keeping her sanity. Jenna’s late spring distinctions include the Richardson Award for outstanding work in sociology and “Outstanding Senior in Psychology Award.”

For many in the Westover freshman class, Jenna has had a profoundly positive influence as president of the Society. Freshman athletic training major Kelsey Shelton said, “She is an example that, if a student manages time wisely and exerts an effort to get involved in his or her community, it is possible to succeed academically while still investing in the next generation of college students.”

Jenna took on the office of president for this precise reason, wanting the Westover Honors Society to reach its fullest potential by ensuring that the resources of the program are completely employed. Fondly recalling her adventures as a Westover freshman on the annual fall retreat—and the bonds that were established and maintained over the past four years among the Westover Class of 2010—Jenna wanted to guarantee that Westover would continue to present students the opportunity to expand their horizons in academic, community, and social milieus.

This fall, Jenna will be heading to the University of Kentucky on a full scholarship to pursue her Ph.D. in social psychology, allowing her to continue researching inequalities in society. Eventually, she plans to teach at a large university where she will be able to continue her research on racial, gender, and sexual stereotypes.

Whether it has been organizing the Westover cookout in September or just taking time to encourage individual students to exploit the resources on campus, Jenna has certainly left a legacy within Westover and across the entire campus that will remain long after she graduates.
The experiences below tell part of the story of Westover scholar athletes! —Ed.

Tricia Clay is one of two assistant coaches for LC Women's Lacrosse, working primarily with the defense. Clay graduated from LC, where she played for women's lacrosse, as a Westover Fellow in 2009.

VM: Just to start off, I'd like to hear a little bit about your life, how you got to Lynchburg College, how long have you been playing lacrosse and everything like that.

Tricia Clay: ... I attended Virginia Tech for a year and I realized that it was really too big. I played club lacrosse there, but I kind of felt lost among the thousands of people. ... I remembered the visit I made to Lynchburg and the Westover Honors Program. ... so I got in contact with both Coach [Bruce] Reed and also Dr. [Ed] DeClair and told them that I was interested in transferring, and they really helped out with the process of transferring here. And after that I loved Lynchburg College, so I stayed a couple extra years.

How has being a member of the team helped you be a coach for the team?

It's really helped in the transition to my first year coaching because I already know all the players. I have a connection with them, I know what they can do on the field, I know their personalities off the field, so I really think that helps me communicate with them better because I did just play with them. But on the other hand, it's also harder because I'm their friend and now I'm supposed to be an authority figure, so it's a little bit hard in that regard. But I think the transition went really smoothly; everyone was really welcoming on the team for me transitioning into the authority role.

Do you see yourself doing this for a long time or maybe becoming a head coach of a lacrosse team somewhere? What are your plans for the future?

I hope so. Right now, I am also in grad school, doing the M.B.A. program here at Lynchburg College, and I think that's really helping me kind of explore more career options, but whatever I do, I hope that I have some time for lacrosse, whether it's coaching high school or youth, or even if I change my mind and decide to pursue a head coaching position at another university or college, I do hope to keep it with me in some form.

While you were here, you were in the Westover program. How did that mesh with being a member of the lacrosse team?

I think it was really helpful because it gave me a lot of structure. I think that Westover classes are really challenging, and they force you to take more time to focus on your academics, and then also with the amount of time that I spent on the lacrosse field, I really had to manage my time well. I think the teachers, though, overall are really supportive of combining academics and athletics.

Did you do any other extracurricular things here at Lynchburg while you were an undergrad?

I did a bunch of different things, mostly with the Communication Studies Department—I was a communication studies major—so I wrote for the Critograph for a year, I was a member of different honor societies, like Lambda Pi Eta, which is the communication honor society, ODK, the leadership honor society, and Phi Kappa Phi, so I was a member of a lot of different things, but the bulk of my time was spent with the lacrosse team, especially in the spring because we practice and play pretty much every day.

Has your being a Westover influenced the way you see other Westovers on the team?

I definitely respect them, and I think that it's a challenge, but it's a good challenge. I mean, after four years, I felt really accomplished that I was able to do so much here. And I think it's well worth it.

How's the season going so far, you think?

We are having a really great season this year. We've really improved, and I think all the players we have this year have really bonded and taken leadership roles on the team. Right now, we are 9-3, and that's probably the best record I've seen, definitely since I've been here, but probably even beyond that.

Mitch Poole (#4) is a sophomore from Bel Air, Maryland, majoring in mathematics with a minor in Spanish. He plays midfield.

VM: How did you come to be at LC playing lacrosse as a Westover? That is, how long have you been playing lacrosse and what got you into it? Why did you choose LC? Why Westover?

Mitch Poole: I wanted to find a school that was both an athletic powerhouse and a great place to get an education. Lynchburg definitely meets both of these standards and my choice was easy. In fact, I did not even apply anywhere else. I wanted to be involved in Westover because I wanted to challenge myself academically and wanted to keep focus on my education while still having fun playing a sport.

What's your favorite part of lacrosse? Your favorite moment?

My favorite moment has to be my first collegiate goal earlier this season against Stevens Tech. The game was played in the worst weather I have ever played lacrosse in—freezing rain, winds, and unbearable temperatures (typical New Jersey)—and I scored an early goal in a very important game for our team.
Morgan Logue is a junior accounting major from Barrington, Illinois. She plays midfield and is the captain of the LC varsity women’s lacrosse team.

VM: How long have you been playing lacrosse and what got you into it? Why did you choose LC? Why Westover?
Morgan Logue: I love the sport . . . borderline obsessed with it. . . . I decided to come to LC because I had the opportunity to play lacrosse and still be able to focus on my studies. Westover gives me, and the other students, the opportunity to take a large variety of classes all revolved around the liberal arts. It allows me to diversify my knowledge.

Your favorite moment?
When we beat Marymount last year. We were down by 3 and down a player, there was less than 5 minutes in the game, and we came back and won by 1. It felt like we’d won the national championship!

Matt Manzo (#21) is a sophomore from Leesburg, Virginia, majoring in business administration with a minor in German. He plays midfield for LC men’s lacrosse.

VM: How long have you been playing lacrosse and what got you into it? Why did you choose LC? Why Westover?
Matt Manzo: My family is from Long Island which has always been a hot spot for lacrosse . . . so I’ve been playing since I was in middle school. Specifically, I remember watching my cousin play for Hampden-Sydney. I love bragging to him when we spank his alma mater every year. I chose LC because Coach Koudelka recruited me, and upon visiting, I decided I just loved the school. Also, because Coach is a good man, which is sort of rare for coaches (in my experience anyway). I just really had the feeling that I wanted to play on his team. Why Westover? Why not? I had the grades and there are plenty of benefits to joining the program. Seemed like a no-brainer to me. I also enjoy classes where students actually converse without being cattle-prodded.

Your favorite moment?
When we beat Marymount last year. We were down by 3 and down a player, there was less than 5 minutes in the game, and we came back and won by 1. It felt like we’d won the national championship!

How has being a Westover and a lacrosse player affected one or the other?
Obviously the workload is different being in Westover. While there is far less busy work, I find myself having to allot more time to prepare for classroom discussions. Lacrosse is a huge balancing factor for me. Instead of going home after class and slacking off in front of the TV, computer, or whatever . . . I go work my *** off doing something I love for three hours a day. When I get back I do my work for school and then I relax. Ironically, having less free time helps me keep my priorities straight—although, sometimes deadlines get very tricky.

What are your plans after graduation?
Do you plan on staying involved in lacrosse in any way?
After I graduate, I hope to be accepted to and attend the Culinary Institute in New York. I may have to find a job in the real world first, but after I get some capital I would like to get into the food industry . . . my ultimate dream being to open a high-end restaurant. I love to cook and I love to eat, so attending a school where my courses revolve around such things sounds like a blast. If time allows, I imagine I would stay involved with lacrosse as much as I can. Lax isn’t a sport you can just stop playing or cut ties with . . . it’s just way too much fun. Playing on a post-grad club team or coaching would be very enjoyable.

What’s your favorite part of lacrosse?
Your favorite moment?
My favorite part of playing lacrosse here is the mob-mentality, the “band of brothers” feeling that I get from knowing that there are 47 other guys who have got my back. That and standing out on Shellenberger on game night. The feeling can’t be matched, nothing comes close. No specific favorite moment.

DISTINCTIONS IN TRACK AND FIELD

Kelsey Shelton

[Inducted this year into both Phi Eta Sigma and Omicron Delta Kappa, Kelsey Shelton has distinguished herself not only in academics and sports but as the originator of the “Pre-DPI” club, for students interested in pursuing the college’s new doctorate in physical therapy. Kelsey plans to be one of its first graduates.—Ed.]

The nerves, the adrenaline rush, the aches, the pains, the relief, the feeling of accomplishment, the desire to achieve more, and the enjoyment of runner’s high are daily experiences of Westover athletes competing on Lynchburg College’s track and field team. Like any other sport, track is time consuming. It means exhausting afternoons, early Saturday mornings followed by spending all day at a track meet, and, on everyone else’s day of relaxation, lifting.

Participating in track and field may be mysterious to some: after all, it’s painful. Also, most think that such an individualized sport would have less of the important team characteristics that are associated with more familiar “team sports.” But current LC Westover participants will say that one of the most important reasons to run is the team’s notorious feeling of family. They eat and hang out with the team, in addition to living with or near each other. Track and field athletes are drawn into the uplifting, almost surreal, connection among teammates.

NCAA Academic All-American mid-distance runner, Westover Ashley Meyer ’10 understands the struggles of balancing school and track: 2009 ODAC Outdoor Runner Up-1500 Meters, 2009 ODAC Indoor Runner Up-One Miler, 2009 ODAC Outdoor Third Place-800 Meters, 2008 ODAC Outdoor Runner Up-500 Meters plus academic and leadership honoraries Phi Eta Sigma, Phi Kappa Phi, and Omicron Delta Kappa. When she finishes her graduate work at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Dental School, Ashley will be the fastest dentist in town!

Exercise physiology major Dan Cutright ’12 competes in distance events while keeping his grades in athletic training out in front of the pack. Ashley Saba, who studies between events at track meets, topped off her “Freshtover” year with an invitation to join the freshman academic honorary, Phi Eta Sigma. Joining her there is teammate Kelsey Shelton ’13, who adds significantly to the team as Varsity Women’s Track and Field Conference Winner in high jump and Conference Winner in 4x400m relay. Track and field experiences show that Westovers can be first class scholars as well as top athletes!
If senior Westover Fellow Jon Jerrild had a personal motto, it might be, “remain open to possibilities.” Early in his senior year of high school Jon first heard of LC through the postcard that arrived in his Norwalk, Connecticut, mailbox. After visiting the campus and meeting faculty, he chose one-on-one interactions with professors over the large-school experience offered by the University of Connecticut. He also opened himself to the Westover Honors Program, which he now sees as one of his best decisions, citing the value of its multidisciplinary courses and its community of academically motivated students. He sees living together with other Westovers in his freshman year as the beginning of his strong sense of belonging at Lynchburg. Jon says, “The best part about being in the Westover Honors Program was being around like-minded individuals who value education and knowledge as much as I do. The vast majority of the students push themselves to go above and beyond what is expected, both in and out of the classroom, and I feel privileged to be part of such an accomplished and dedicated group of students.”

Intrigued by the influence of monetary decisions on global affairs, Jon chose to major in financial economics. Initially he thought that courses examining money, credit, and banking would have considerable practical application throughout his life. But beyond that, Jon discovered an enduring interest in studying topics in economics such as “cost drivers,” which he developed into the focus of his Westover Honors thesis. Jon’s life after LC is likely to involve a career in financial management and, eventually, an M.B.A. His strong commitment to academics has given him an excellent résumé that includes Dean’s List honors every semester, membership in the National Society of Phi Kappa Phi, and a semester of study in Austria at LC-sister school, Fachhochschule Vorarlberg.

Of the Westover Honors courses he has taken, Jon especially enjoyed “1968,” a colloquium which focused on one of the most complex and turbulent years in United States history. Growing up, he says that he was vaguely aware of the Vietnam War but never had fully understood what it had been about; that changed appreciably during class discussions. For Jon, the course illuminated dramatically the interplay between politics and culture that drove much of the news of the entire Vietnam era, especially the year 1968. Dr. David Lipani, his instructor in the course and professor of English, notes: “Jon is an enormously talented young man whom I admire not only for his intellect and work ethic but for his quiet self-assurance. He’s not one to call attention to himself: instead, he goes about his business unobtrusively, performing always at the highest level and letting that performance speak to the quality individual he is.”

Looking back on his time at Lynchburg College, Jon expresses amazement at how involved he has been in a variety of activities: a member of the investment club, vice president of Sigma Nu (and so a member of the Order of Omega, the Greek honorary), a PASS tutor in economics (which he terms, “one of the best jobs on campus”), and co-anchor of “Three Guys and a Mike,” a radio program that he and a couple of friends started, prompted by others to share their impromptu banter about their day-to-day experiences. Clearly he has combined fun with achievement in balanced proportion during his years at LC.
Many Westover students this year have taken the opportunity to give papers at off-campus conferences in Virginia, North Carolina, and even California. Some participated in BigSURS, the Big South Undergraduate Research Symposium, held at Radford University, in April. Others presented at the VPSA (the Virginia Political Science Association Conference, Norfolk, November), the VPA (the Virginia Psychological Association Annual Conference, Norfolk, April) or at the VSSA (the Virginia Social Science Association Conference, Petersburg, March). Some have even presented at more than one off-campus conference. They are all opening doors to their future success. Congratulations to all of these junior and senior Westover scholars!

Charlotte Arbogast ’10:
“College and Community Partnerships: Alliances for Success” (with Denise Scruggs, Director of the Beard Center on Aging at LC), the 2010 Southern Gerontological Society Annual Meeting (Richmond, April)

Ashley Longstreet ’10:
“Developing an Effective Water-Soluble Receptor for Pyrene Derivative Dyes,” Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond, April)
“Development of a GC/MS Method to Analyze Cichoric Acid Content in a Commercially Available Echinacea purpurea Glycerin Extract,” the Virginia Blue Ridge Section of the American Chemical Society (Radford, April)

Mark Reiner ’11:
“Heterosexual Privilege: With Privilege Comes Power, with Power Comes Responsibility,” VPA

Lorriann Garcia ’10:
“Hiding in Plain Sight, Anti-Predator Behavior of an Orb Weaving Spider,” BigSURS

Danielle Miller ’10:
“Czech Accession into the European Union: Improvement or Deterioration for the Roma Community?” VSSA

Taelor Skinner ’11:
Seven [untitled] poems, the “Power of Poetry Symposium,” Virginia Military Institute (Lexington, April)

Jordan Taylor ’10:

Jenna Jewell ’10:
“Right-wing Authoritarianism and Career Choice among Criminal Justice Majors: A Test of the Pre-Disposition Model,” VPSA
“Framing Social Issues: With Privilege Comes Responsibility,” VPA

Casey Gilliam ’11:
“White and Everything Else: Harry H. Laughlin’s Promotion of Dr. Walter A. Plecker’s Virginia Racial Integrity Efforts,” BigSURS

Haylee Nelson ’10:
“Blending Liberation Theology and Social Action: Catholic Activism and Government-Sanctioned Violence in El Salvador from 1970 to 1990,” VPSA and VSSA

Katie Frick ’10:
“Lacrosse Helmet Facemask Removal Timeliness Using Cordless Screw Driver, FM Extractor, and Combined Tool Approach,” BigSURS

Jon Marks ’10:
“Jubal Early’s Trains: The Battle of Lynchburg in Historical Memory,” Phi Alpha Theta Biennial National Convention (San Diego, January), Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference (Lynchburg, March), and UNC Charlotte Graduate History Forum (Charlotte, March)

Jon Jerrild
“An Analysis of the Determinants of National Health Care Expenditure in the U.S.”

Jenna Jewell
“Understanding Privilege: Measuring Attitudinal Change Related to Three Areas of Social Privilege Based on Contextual Framing”

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Dr. Kevin Peterson, mathematics professor, has taught “all but two courses” in the Math Department at LC, but in the 2010-11 school year, he’ll be devoting much of his energy to another passion—LC’s Year of Conservation and Sustainability, which Peterson is helping to promote.

As well as being the main contact person for the year’s theme, Peterson will teach an honors colloquium in the spring semester that is centered on problem-solving. “There’ll be a lot of mathematics in it, but it won’t be only solving mathematics problems,” he says, “so we’ll also tackle problems in economics, problems in social justice, problems in environmental issues, probably look at some things in sustainability as well. . . . There’s a [Westover] colloquium in the fall called ‘Environmental Activism’ taught by Dr. [Tom] Shahady, and then my course will be problem-solving, so they’ll kind of piggyback off one other.”

“We’ll have a lot of big speakers in next year,” Peterson says. “We’re looking at maybe having [environmentalist author] Bill McKibben in—we’re looking at having a bunch of local activists in, in sustainability.”

Peterson has been living many of his ideas about conservation for years. “I ride my bike [to work] when I can,” he explains. “I carpool almost exclusively after that. I try to drive my car or truck to work maybe one time a week.” He and his wife are attempting to start a small “demonstration farm—and ‘farm’ makes it sound bigger than it is—for people to try to learn to live more sustainably, more self-sufficiently,” he says.

“We started . . . I don’t know what you want to call them, but we call them ‘Garden Blitzes.’ What we do is we find people who want to put in a garden who may not know anything about gardening and we get nine, ten people to go over to their house and get their garden started.”

“Peterson views the goals of the Year of Conservation and Sustainability as long-term investments. “I call it Year One of Conservation and Sustainability because I want it not to be a thing where we say, ‘Oh, well, that year’s over, now we’re done.’”

WESTOVER HONORS SOCIETY RECIPIENTS OF ACADEMIC AWARDS FOR 2009-10

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Jon Jerrild (PKP)
Robert Hill Award in Economics

Madeleine Coultrip (PKP)
Achievement in Graphic Design

Sarah Cates (PKP)
Charlotte Quarles Outstanding Music Minor Award

Senior Mathematics Award

Loriann Garcia
Mahan-Osborne Outstanding Senior in Biology

Caitlin Gibb (PKP)
Female Scholar Athlete of the Year

Jacob Bishoff
Elsie Bock Writing Award

Taelor Skinner
Belle M. Hill Creative Poetry Award

Curtis Hancock
Mervyn W. Williamson Award (Literature) Award for Best Computer Program

Ashley Longstreet (PKP)
Outstanding Chemistry Student

Conor McFarland (PKP)
International Relations Initiative Award
Raymond E. Morgan Award

Haylee Nelson (PKP)
Outstanding Senior in International Relations

Jennifer Jewell (PKP)
Paul D. and Grace Richardson Award
Outstanding Senior in Psychology Award

John Marks
Outstanding Achievement in Museum Studies
W.W. Ferguson Award for Outstanding Scholarship in History

Ashley Meyer (PKP)
Outstanding Senior in Biomedical Science Award

Laura Davis (PKP)
Outstanding Senior in Psychology Award

Charlotte Arbogast (PKP)
Robert L. Hill Distinguished Senior Award
Heritage Green Assisted Living Gerontology Award
Sarah Cates, a Westover Honors mathematics major and music performance minor, has made her mark across a wide range of pursuits in her time at LC. They all came to fruition in late spring of her senior year when she defended her Westover thesis in mathematics, performed a beautiful senior voice recital, and sang with professionals in the Opera on the James spring production. Additionally, Sarah has been an important part of the excellent varsity field hockey team, which has won ODAC championships for the four consecutive years that she has been goalie.

Sarah Cates with baritone Michael Mayes (Danilo) in The Merry Widow.

This spring, many graduating Westovers have received wonderful offers for the pursuit of their advanced degrees. Two, John Marks and Jenna Jewell, have received “full ride” offers into Ph.D. programs—Rice University (in history, for John) and the University of Kentucky (in social psychology, for Jenna). Katie Frick heads to Syracuse University to complete her M.S. in athletic training, while Charlotte Arbogast will work toward her M.A. in gerontology at the VCU Medical Center. Ashley Meyer will continue her interest in biomedical science in the D.D.S. program at the University of Missouri, while Ashley Longstreet’s pursuit of chemistry will take her to Florida State University’s Ph.D. program. Lorriann Garcia will begin her Ph.D. in biology at Texas A&M. Ashley Payne and Laura Davis are both headed for law school, Ashley to the University of North Carolina and Laura to Boston University. Haylee Nelson will work toward her MA in international affairs at American University while Jordan Taylor will begin the master’s program in history at James Madison University. The Westover Honors Program is very proud of these students who have transformed their undergraduate careers into stepping stones toward advanced and professional degrees.
In late March, Dr. Nancy Cowden took a small group of Westover students to the new Belk Observatory at the Claytor Nature Study Center. Junior Caitlin Gibb reports that the trip began with “a feast at the legendary China Royal Chinese Buffet. . . Dr. Sumerlin and his crew of local volunteers greeted us as dusk settled in, and we took the grand tour of the surprisingly small, but extremely expensive facility.” The entire facility cost $450,000, virtually all of which came from private gifts and foundation grants. Of that, the main telescope and mount together account for around $75,000. Dr. Sumerlin wanted the students to have the “rare opportunity to see Mercury, especially as an easy naked-eye object. The binoculars just made it brighter. Most of the time, Mercury is too close to the sun and/or too low in the sky to see easily.”

While students thought the tiny red lights in the facility were “eerie,” Dr. Sumerlin tells us that they guide the way in the dark and “preserve our night vision, so we [can] see fainter objects. It takes about 30 minutes for the human eye to fully dark-adapt, for the pupil to fully dilate, and about one second of a bright white flashlight to lose that!” Cell phones . . . not invited.

As the night progressed, Caitlin reports that “we were ultimately invited to access the pride and glory of the entire observatory, the Margaret G. L. Gilbert Telescope and the most memorable part of the tour— viewing Saturn and its rings.” Dr. Sumerlin paints the scene for us: “It was a moonless night, with the moon below the horizon until midnight, which allowed us to see the Milky Way stretched overhead, its dark dust lanes mottling the soft glow of billions of stars. The Orion Nebula, a stellar nursery, glowed from the energy being pumped into surrounding gas clouds by hot young stars. And of course there was Saturn, whose rings are currently not as tilted toward us as they are sometimes, and therefore not as bright or spectacular. But that allowed us to see some faint moons of Saturn that linger near the planet, and are otherwise very difficult to see.”

Westover plans another such excursion next year, hoping that the planets and stars and heavens will again cooperate with a stunning display.

If students are interested in becoming volunteers at Belk Observatory, please contact Dr. Sumerlin.

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The Belk Observatory at Lynchburg College’s Claytor Nature Study Center in Bedford houses the Margaret G. L. Gilbert Telescope.