

Sibling Legacy: Former Professor Prewitt's Sister, Professor Prewitt

Ethan McElvaney '19
Staff Writer

As many know, professor Neill Prewitt, beloved communications teacher at William Peace University, left for a new job at Georgia State University. A few months later, his sister, Professor Laura Prewitt, was welcomed to Peace as an adjunct professor of English.

Laura Prewitt started her teaching career in 1993, helping freshmen learn English while she was at N. C. State University for graduate school.

"When I started out... I was focused on literature, writing, and just a love of exploring human questions [while] being in discussion with students about ideas and helping them find their own perspectives," she said.

Over the summer, she got back from teaching English in China. She has spent four years teaching there, two of them spent in Shanghai and two of them spent in Wuhan.

"I did two years at a university in each of those cities, both of them large, important universities. In Shanghai specifically, I taught all majors oral English, only oral English, for two years," Prewitt said.

She decided to start teaching these students in 1997 after being impressed with her Chinese roommate's strong relationship

with her native English Canadian professor who also taught in China.

"When China came out of a cultural revolution in the late '70s, it began to open up, about 1980. Native English-speaking teachers were in demand and that demand grew," she said. "I was not one of the very first, but it was still a very pioneering experience and I liked that."



Photo courtesy of Laura Prewitt

Professor Prewitt had some exposure to Chinese culture through the English as a Second Language class she taught international students at N.C. State, but she only knew three words of Chinese when she first went there and she found it as an opportunity to explore.

She and her brother grew up in Raleigh, yet they lived in Florida until Neill was 2 and she was 9.

"Neill is a wonderful person," she

said of her brother. "I think he is a very good teacher; we're really close, we're like best friends. He's a very supportive and giving person."

Laura Prewitt earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. It was not until close to the time she went to grad

school that she returned to Raleigh.

On the way there, she was once a student at Peace for the second semester of her sophomore year.

She also met a great friend of hers at Peace. In fact, her friend's graduation was actually how professor Neill Prewitt got introduced to the university.

"Neill got on campus for the first time when I brought him and a friend to witness the graduation of my good friend

Susan Briggs," said Laura Prewitt. "That's when he was first exposed to Peace, so actually, I brought him here!"

Currently, she teaches Public Speaking at Peace and she seeks to continue her mission to teach students to find their own ideals.

"I consider myself a facilitator, someone who can help prompt them in discovering and expressing," she said. "It's not so much that they discover their own opinions, they do discover their own opinions, but I think we're all growing all the time. We're all learning, we're all exploring."

Either way, professor Laura Prewitt is not worried about if she will in professor Neill Prewitt's shadow.

"I'm delighted to be associated with my brother, I have immense respect for him and I know he gave a lot to Peace students and Peace as a school, so I hope I live up to his reputation," she said. "We're different, we don't do everything the same way but I think that we do have a lot in common in terms of our orientation on teaching as educators and personally."

Superman, or Justin Coufal?

Meredith Lascalette '19
Staff Writer

Coufal is a young man from Washington state who attends William Peace University as a senior marketing major. He earned his associate's degree at Wake Technical Community College.

Justin has been married to Jennifer Coufal for almost six years now, and they have two girls, Freya (9 mo.) and Anna (4 yrs.).

Justin is employed at Range 37PSR, where he is a range safety officer and the department head of marketing and advertising for the range.



Photo by Meredith Lascalette

In addition to the many aspects that makes up Justin, he is a corpsman, a third class petty officer in the U.S. Navy, and with the Marine infantry at Camp Lejeune. While traveling the world to protect our country's ground and freedom, he earned First Battalion 9th Marines.

In Justin's free time, he likes to hunt, fish, go to parks with his girls, and compete in gun competitions.

At William Peace, we thank you for your service Justin, and we appreciate your hard work and dedication!

Life as The Peace Politician

Jeni Myers '21
Staff Writer

All kinds of students come to William Peace University. There's athletes, scholars, and even problem solvers.

However, WPU freshman Juan Pleitez came to Peace to help him with his future as a politician.

For now, Pleitez interns under State Representative Destin Hall. With only an eight-minute walk from WPU to North Carolina General Assembly, WPU was the place to be for Pleitez.

"Lots of days I get up, go to class, and as soon as I am finished, I run down to the assembly," says Pleitez. Learning to budget time has been a challenge for Pleitez, as every college student experiences. Yet he still manages to balance college and politics.

Samuel Hardison, a friend of Pleitez and freshman at WPU, feels his friend has accomplished time management.

"After seeing him manage to balance 16 credit hours and his internship all at once this semester is impressive," says Hardison.

Part of Pleitez's internship is to sit in on the gallery, take notes for his representative, and send notes to Hall's secretary to be revised.

All different types of problems come across the desk of Pleitez. One interesting time was when House Bill 2 was being debated in the assembly. The so-called "bathroom bill" barred transgender men and women from using the bathroom that they identify with.

"I specifically remember the tension in the air, every time I walked into the house, it was like a wall of tension just hit you," says Pleitez.

Every year at the North Carolina assembly, the state comes across new problems. This is what keeps Pleitez really excited about his internship.

"Yes, my days at the house are the most exciting, however my education comes first before anything," says Pleitez. How Pleitez manages his time as a student is, getting up every morning, going to class, after class, then going to the house, then homework.

Luckily, Pleitez has his friends to help him keep up to date at school and help him with the balance of his life as a politician and a WPU student.

"One of the best parts of my day is just sitting down with my friends, relaxing, doing homework like a college student," says Pleitez.

Pleitez friends would also attest that it's great to see him as a regular WPU student.

"It's good to see him just hanging out like one of us, and be a regular college student," says Hardison.

Now that the house is not in session, it seems to be a calmer atmosphere. Everyone is smiling and welcoming when you walk in.

While he can relax and enjoy the rest of the year, next year when the session begins will probably be one of the biggest challenges yet.

With new bills that need to be passed and new changes coming to the state of North Carolina, 2018 is a year for new changes. Elections for the House and Senate will take place in 2018.

"I know for a fact, if we did this profile within six months from now, I would have so much crazy stories to tell you," he says. "Everything would be completely different."



Courtesy of N.C. General Assembly



Peace Times Fall 2017 Staff
Photo by Catherine Harman

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