

Getting to know some
of our ASDA Members!



Letters from the Editors

Mary Lovell, Class of 2022
Benjamin Gosselin, Class of 2021

Dear Reader,

I am so excited to share this ASDA Newsletter with you!

When I first sat down with Ben over the summer to decide what to write about, it became clear that we (students at MUSoD) all have more talents than just being at dental school sitting in lab, working with patients, and studying for hours.

Through this Newsletter, we want to showcase some of the amazing students MUSoD has brought together to learn the ropes of dentistry. The talented articles received blew me away. The walls of 1801 W. Wisconsin Ave. are filled with some outstanding individuals.

I hope you enjoy learning a little bit more about your colleagues, laugh a little in the process, and appreciate the uniqueness our school has to offer.

Yours truly,
Mary

To the readers,

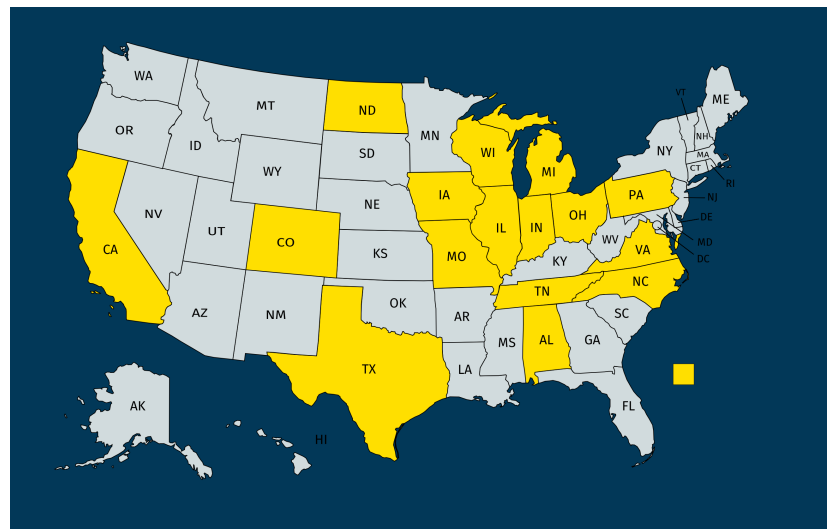
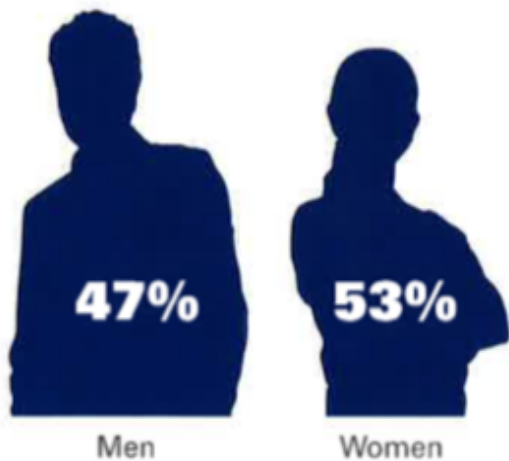
While editing and formatting this newsletter, I wanted to simplify the layout and format of this edition so that you are able to focus on the stories, backgrounds and unique skills/talents that you may or may not know about some of your/our classmates at Marquette University.

For those that contributed, thank you. For those that are waiting to contribute until the next edition, thank you as well. And to those who are here for a quick read, I hope you gain a better understanding of some of the unique students that make up MUSoD.

-Benjamin



MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY **CLASS OF 2023 PROFILE** (incoming Class of 2019)



Incoming students are graduates of the following colleges and universities:

Augustana College (IL)
Benedictine University
Butler University
Creighton University
Denison University
DePaul University
Ferris State University
George Mason University
Grand Valley State University
Illinois Institute of Technology
Knox College
Loyola University Chicago
Michigan State University
Nova Southeastern University
Oakland University
Pennsylvania State University
Regis University
Saint Louis University

St. Olaf College
San Diego State University
Southwestern University
University of Alabama
University of California–Riverside
University of California–San Diego
University of Chicago
University of Colorado–Boulder
University of Illinois–Chicago
University of Illinois–Urbana / Champaign
University of the Incarnate Word
University of Iowa
University of Kentucky
University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
University of Minnesota–Duluth
University of Minnesota–Twin Cities
University of North Dakota
University of Notre Dame

University of St. Thomas
Washington University in St. Louis
Xavier University of Louisiana

FROM WISCONSIN

Marquette University
Cardinal Stritch University
Carroll University
Carthage College
Edgewood College
Mount Mary University
St. Norbert College
University of Wisconsin–Green Bay
University of Wisconsin–LaCrosse
University of Wisconsin–Madison
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
University of Wisconsin–Parkside
University of Wisconsin–Whitewater

Michelle Singapori, Class of 2020

Hello! My name is Michelle Singapori and I am a D4. Culturally, I am half Gujarati and half Nepali. Growing up in an Indian household, Hindi was the first language I learned and am able to speak it fluently. My mother and father also knew Gujarati, a language native to the state of Gujarat, so this was the second language I learned. English was spoken at home, but not as frequently. Attending nursery school helped me practice English and learn more about the grammar. In middle school and high school, I took Spanish classes. This has helped immensely in communicating with my patients and traveling. Furthermore, I am learning Malayalam with the help of my boyfriend. This language is commonly spoken in South India, in the state of Kerala. While I am proficient in Spanish, Hindi, and English, I continue practicing Gujarati and Malayalam.

Lastly, my dental school education has allowed me to learn the language of dentistry. During our first two years, many of our classes were focused on dental terminology, tooth anatomy, and understanding the different specialties. Now, as a fourth-year student, I am able to communicate with the dentists and hygienists in the clinical about various dental procedures. It astonishes me how quickly I was up these different languages.

I hope this inspires others to learn another language or even try something new. While it can be challenging and difficult to find time with our busy schedules, devoting time to things that make you happy is rewarding.



Xavier Goode, Class of 2021 *SNDA President*



The Student National Dental Association (SNDA)

For over the past two decades, the Student National Dental Association (SNDA) has been fulfilling its purpose of promoting good fellowship and cooperation among its members and aiding in the advancement of minority students in dentistry.

Marquette's chapter has furthered these purposes by providing dental workshops for inner-city high school students, hosting impression days for minority undergraduate dental students, and promoting an appreciation for cultural differences throughout MUSoD through events such as SNDA's cultural cuisine night.



Nationally, scholarships are made available to SNDA members from the National Dental Association (NDA), the doctoral organization post-graduation. It is inspiring to see a national network of minority dentists working towards the purpose of increasing diversity in medicine.



Jessica Romano, Class of 2023

My name is Jessica Romano—aka “Mom” to the D1 Class of 2023—so I found it necessary to “lead by example” and submit an article! I’m a nontraditional student, having been out in the “real world” for 5 years before starting the my life at MUSoD (as you can tell, I like “air quotes”). I worked for GE Healthcare on Electric Avenue here in Milwaukee straight out of undergrad.



I started my career as a chemist, manufacturing CT detectors for x-ray tubes. I climbed the ladder a bit and left GEHC as a Materials production team leader for the manufacturing of the x-ray tubes themselves.

In my 5 years at GE, as awesome of an experience that it was, I couldn’t get dental school out of my head. With a final dose of inspiration from one of my employees, I decided one night to start studying for the DAT and haven’t looked back! I couldn’t be (more stressed) HAPPIER!

Random fact: I never exfoliated either of my mandibular deciduous second molars OR develop my mandibular permanent succedaneous 2nd premolars. So, I had the primary teeth extracted and replaced with implants! (Man, I hope that was right...maybe Dr. Benson will give me a point back on my Unit 1 quiz...) Looking forward to the next four years and hoping the first two fly! #TealTide

Love,
Mom

Sabrina Swartz, Class of 2023



I am from Ionia, Michigan. I choose MUSoD because of the overwhelming sense of hospitality and friendliness. The faculty and students I met on Interview Day (a year ago, woah!) wow'd me. The community involvement, student involvement, and wholesome "family feeling" resonated with me ever since! Plus Marquette is placed in a city that is thriving, growing, exciting, and "happenin'" (such a change from my previous school) so that's only a plus!

My favorite experience so far has been Global Cuisine Night put on by SNDA. The first reason because, YUM. What a cool idea!

Secondly, because it opened my eyes (and taste buds) to variety of different backgrounds and different cultures. Even more so, getting to meet and talk to the cooks of these different backgrounds was a really neat experience.

My food of choice to talk about, and share my inner, somewhat embarrassing, feelings toward, is peanut butter. Mmm mm mmm. I believe there are two types of people out there: ones that think peanut butter is "alright, average" and those who love it. I am one of the latter. I like it on ice cream, like it with fruit, on toast, and of course, the infamous, peanut butter and jelly!

Peanut butter has always been in my life. From frozen Uncrutables as a kid, to Reese's and still now today in my pantry! Though, I feel a parallel between my personal growth and my love for peanut butter; we've grown and matured together over the years! I began my journey loving the good ole' classic, creamy, satisfying Jiff. A scoop as a snack, a scoop as a sweet treat. Jiff was the bomb; Jiff was all I needed.

But then a few years went by and I became a little more health conscious and a little less keen to the sweetness Jiff provided. What was next for me? Natural peanut butter, you say? Oil separating at the top? What is all this talk? I looked into it! I bought my first jar of natural peanut butter... and loved it! I liked the thought of just peanuts in my peanut butter (why was there ever anything else?!) and the nutty taste was more prominent. Nevertheless, I have grown even further. Recently, I have cut out the middle-man and started making my own peanut butter! I find it fun and make it creative by changing the recipe every now and then: adding cinnamon, maple flavoring, vanilla!

Maryam Tunio, Class of 2022



Growing up, there was a rule in our household—no English was to be spoken. I really did not understand this until decades later, seeing how my parents were trying to preserve their Pakistani roots after immigrating to another country. Today, I am thankful to have been raised in a bilingual household. I have gotten the opportunity over my lifetime to travel to my home country, and I returned during my D1 year after almost a decade. I saw everything with fresh eyes, the struggles of the people, the work that needs to be done, and the lengths my family had gone to, to build a new life in America. I was eternally grateful to be able to communicate with family and friends, and together, we thought of an idea.



The concept of oral health care is a privilege when people are struggling to meet basic needs such as food, water, and shelter. It's an afterthought, a luxury that only people with money can afford in Pakistan. The common way amongst the poor to “brush” their teeth is with soft wooden sticks. After having conversations like these with my family, we decided to gather children who belong to a local orphanage in our village, and give them all toothbrushes along with an oral hygiene lesson. I never thought young kids could be so excited about a piece of plastic, but seeing how desperately it was needed in many cases, gave me lots of hope for the impact that first generation dentists like me can have in their home country.

Courtney Pagenkopf, Class of 2023

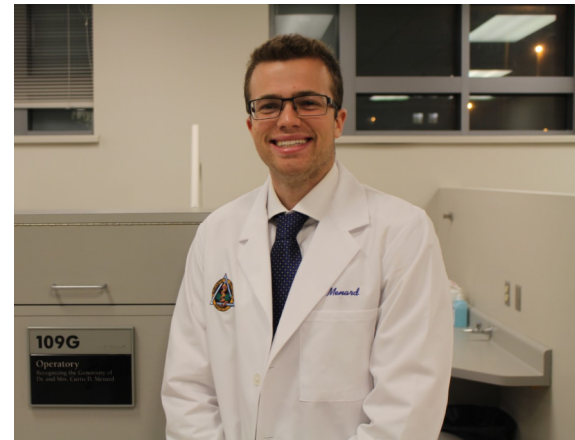


Hello! My name is Courtney Pagenkopf and I am from Wausau, Wisconsin. I chose MUSoD because I have heard great things from alumni and current students. I also heard everyone is like family and genuinely wants you to succeed. Last but not least, it is close to home. I wouldn't want to miss out on going up north or seeing my family! So far, my favorite experience at MUSoD was the Amazing Dental Race! My team had SO much fun and won best costume! #TeamRosie Fun fact about me...when I was little, I used to carry around a toothbrush, sometimes one in each hand. You could say I was destined to be a dentist.

Tanner Menard, Class of 2022

Hi, my name is Tanner Menard and I am currently a second year (D2) dental student at Marquette!

One thing that a lot of people don't know about me is that I am a pianist. I started playing the piano when I was in elementary school after attending a piano recital for my older sister. My mom thought it was important for her kids to learn to play an instrument to help instill values of commitment and discipline so she made it a "rule" in our house that my siblings and I had to be involved in something musical (choir, band, piano, etc.) from the third grade through 8th grade. On the drive home from the recital, I asked my mom if she could sign me up for lessons, and she said she would. In a few short weeks, I started with my first lessons. I remember really liking it at first. I loved pressing down on the keys, learning how to read sheet music, and progressing through the lesson books. My enjoyment didn't last long though. I quickly was over the "newness" of piano and often complained to my mom about my daily practice requirements. Forced to stick with it through middle school, I reluctantly followed through, and looking back now I am so glad I did. Not only did I play through middle school, but I decided to continue taking lessons through high school. By the time I graduated high school I had taken weekly lessons for ten years, had spent thousands of hours playing the piano, and had progressed enough to where I was performing signature pieces by famous classical composers. Since leaving home for college, I'm unable to practice daily and my skills have diminished but I still greatly enjoy playing whenever I get the chance. Thank you, mom, for making me stick it through!



Mary Lovell, Class of 2022 Newsletter Co-Chair

I published a book in dental school, say what?!



14 years ago, a now classified F5 tornado ripped through Stoughton, Wisconsin. I was 9 years old, and my brother was 7. My mom and I wrote this story from the perspective of a mother-daughter reuniting with each other.

About an hour before the storm, my dad took us to the American Red Cross to watch him give blood for the first time, while my mom stayed home to get ready for a funeral the next morning in her hometown of Menominee, Michigan. What we didn't know was the irony of the entire story—the Red Cross would be at our door just hours later delivering food, water and basic necessities that we all of a sudden lacked.

For too long of a time, we didn't know where my mom and my dog, Madison, were, if they were safe, or if they were alive. On this day, we lost 2 Stoughton community members, a countless number of pets, millions of dollars in property and businesses, and miles of agricultural land.

The title of the book "Glass Storm" comes from the glass that my family picked out of the grass, our home and our belongings for the long months after the disaster. The sound of glass haunted us for a long time—we used snow shovels to move pounds of glass in to bins.

Months later while unpacking boxes in our new home in Michigan, we found glass scattered throughout our belongings.

One other significant aspect I wanted to describe was the thumbprint Angel my brother made for my mom for Mother's Day. When my mom walked up to the kitchen from the basement after the tornado was gone, she was in complete shock and was scared to death. She looked around and saw complete destruction. Except for the thumbprint angel that was hanging off a broken light fixture by a thread. All of us to this day don't know why it remained untouched by the ferocious winds, but how entire homes were leveled right off their foundations.

This book took 14 years to write, and is my family's blood, sweat and tears. My mom and I wanted to write this book to recognize the goodness of people on that day. We are so grateful to every firefighter, police officer, EMT, service worker, volunteer, neighbor, and our friends & family. My family is thankful for their heroism and extraordinary examples of sacrifice. It was truly humbling to see our community come together like that, and we thank them immensely.

And finally, I want to emphasize the purpose of the book: to show the power of volunteering, and coming together as a community in times of tragedy. Unfortunately, natural disasters are part of everyday life in the United States and around the world, especially with the recent hurricanes in the Bahamas and southern US. My family has lived through devastation like that, and it feels like all we can do is look at our TV's, pray, and feel helpless. But again, I say, the power of volunteering and giving back is how our world thrives.

Drake Lindholm, Class of 2023



My name is Drake Lindholm, and I am a current D1 student. My passion outside of dentistry is traveling. I have been lucky enough to travel throughout most of the USA, over 30 countries, and five continents. My interest in travel started when I was 10 years old when my family moved to London, England for my dad's job. While there, I was exposed to how enriching experiencing other cultures can be. Since then I have undergone many travels on my own, and with friends. I spent a summer volunteering in Peru, a semester learning Spanish in Spain, and six weeks backpacking Europe. Most recently, I spent four months backpacking Southeast Asia with my girlfriend before starting dental school. My favorite place on the trip was Vietnam.



Traveling is a great hobby because it forces you to get out of your comfort zone and experience something new. Many people don't travel because they are nervous about getting out of their comfort zone. I can certainly relate to that, I am often nervous before going somewhere new, but I have yet to regret experiencing a new place. Besides fear of the unknown it seems like time and money constraints seem to be what holds most people back. As a current first year dental student I can certainly relate to having time and money constraints. However, I have always made time to travel, and again, never regretted it. As for money concerns, traveling truly isn't as expensive as most people think, especially if you are willing to experience living in hostels or places off the beaten track.

Christina Copoulos, Class of 2023

What is something no one knows about you?

I am a black belt in tae-kwon-doe. It took me four years, but I did it!

What are your interesting talents, hobbies, favorite sports, etc?

I love to color, do yoga, walk my dog, watch football and soccer, and find new recipes to cook.

Tell us about another language or country you are familiar with:

I am 100% Greek and can speak the language as well. I was born in America but have visited family in Greece multiple times. :)

Tell us about a job you had before or during dental school?

Before working as a dental assistant for a year, I was a CNA in the Spinal Cord Injury unit for two years at Froedtert Hospital. I met a lot of great people to work with and learned many life lessons while working there.

What is your favorite food and how did you fall in love with it?

I love a homemade dish my 'yiayia' (Grandma in Greek) makes called 'pastitsio'. I would describe it as a "Greek lasagna with a touch of cinnamon." I've grown up loving this dish, since it was always made by my closest family members.

Tell us about a unique experience you have had with the world of dentistry:

When I first started working as a dental assistant, I met a sweet older lady who was extremely terrified of dental procedures. Another dentist was shadowing the dentist performing the procedure that day, so I was told I did not have to assist. As I was walking out of the room, the lady stopped me and asked if I could stay and distract her by singing or telling a story because I helped her feel so comfortable. It was nice to feel so valued by a patient and validated my want to work in the field of dentistry!

Who has been an inspirational person in your life and why?

My mom has been my role model all my life. She has gone to college twice for two different associate's degrees and has always supported me going far in my education. Since I have seen her work so hard, I know I can work just as hard. I am so lucky to have such supportive parents.



Rachel Thornton, Class of 2023

Quick fact: I chose MUSoD because I knew I would be surrounded by people – students and faculty alike – that would encourage and support me.

Hi! My name's Rachel Thornton, and I'm a D1 from Verona, WI. I'm originally from Ireland where all of my extended family still live. So yes, I am a ginger, and no, I don't have a soul. I have a 2nd degree black belt in karate just in case and also enjoy golfing and playing Ultimate frisbee. To pad my resume for dental school

I worked as a scorekeeper for intramurals as well as at a mini golf place. One unique experience I've already had with dentistry is getting a 3rd degree burn at a dental lab, eek. Finally, I love muffins and aioli, but not together. Really excited to be here at MUSoD and hopefully get involved with ASDA!



Kara Kaltenbrun, Class of 2023

Why did you choose MUSoD?

I chose this school because I wanted to stay closer to my nuclear family while joining a new family with all my dental friends at MU. I also went to MU for undergraduate, so the transition was way simpler. Also, I like to think Mr. Trecek and I are best friends.

What is something no one knows about you?

I have my hunters and boaters license. I've even shot recurve bow for a while and got really into that. TBH, though, I don't particularly like hunting and fishing, and I'm not particularly good at it. Last time I practiced with clay pigeons I got 2/25. I enjoy other outside activities more such as hiking, biking, rollerblading, camping, but not running. Also LOVE water sports. Anything over 12 reps is cardio. Also, totally random, but I did a Buffalo Bill re-enactment for 3 days and did the whole dress up in a corset and sleep in a canvas tent.

What are your interesting talents, hobbies, favorite sports, etc?

I play flute and did so very competitively in high school, I was actually set to major in Flute Performance at UW Madison if I didn't come to Marquette. I did gymnastics throughout high school as well, and I now do a lot of gym lifting lol. My favorite music genres include Reggaeton and Broadway theater, couldn't be any more different. Karaoke is one of my favorite pastimes and I love to perform. My ideal role would be Fiona in *Shrek the Musical*.

Tell us about another language or country you are familiar with:

I studied abroad with 5 different programs over the course of my undergraduate, and visited a total of 9 different countries: Argentina, Cuba, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, Spain, Jordan, Ireland and England. I majored in Spanish Lang Lit & Culture and Latin American Studies and I did a semester in Buenos Aires in Fall 2017. I lived for a month in both Havana, Cuba and Madrid, Spain. I also did a service learning program to Bogotá, Colombia. I had a roommate that studied abroad at Marquette from Amman, Jordan for a semester here at MU and went to visit her the summer of 2018 to meet her family and explore the country.

What is your favorite food and how did you fall in love with it?

My favorite food is EGGS. You can ask anyone, specifically Michael Druck who literally witnessed me carrying, not only one hard-boiled egg into the library in my pocket, but TWO hard boiled eggs. I'm really into scrambled eggs with Colby jack cheese with peppers, mushrooms and tomatoes at the moment. Please don't send me snaps of eggs past 10 pm because I will need to get up and make some. I also eat like 12 protein waffles a day in these rough time-crunch times.

Tell us about a unique experience you have had with the world of dentistry:

I have done Spanish interpreting at the Chavez location of SSCHC for the dental hygienist that works primarily with pediatric patients. Their approach is public health guided so it was more based on prevention and education. I have gotten to work with some of the Hispanic population of Milwaukee to learn more dental vocabulary (which isn't taught in undergraduate courses) and US-Spanish dialect.

Who has been an inspirational person in your life and why?

My grandmother is my role model. Her generosity and perspective on life is insanely admirable and I wish to incorporate her positivity and mindset into my own. Her #1 motive in life is to put others first and encourage them to be their best selves, and I love her for that. Her and both my parents have been huge influences on my own personal values and life.



Suzanne Kukec, Class of 2023

- Pre-trip inspection? **Check.**
- Counselors on board? **Check.**
- “Old Town Road” queued up? **Check.**
- Time to head to my first stop.



This is what my mornings consisted of this past summer when I drove a school bus for Banner Day Camp in Lake Forest, IL. Every day I picked up 30 kids from their homes, drove them to camp, played the song “Old Town Road” at least five times, proceeded to be a counselor at camp, and then drove them home in the afternoon.

In order to become a bus driver, I had to acquire my Class B commercial driver’s license (CDL). In addition to training how to drive a bus, I had to memorize my hour-long route. This consisted of about 25 different houses I had to stop at down the narrow streets of Highland Park, IL. When I say these are some of the narrowest streets I’ve ever driven down, I mean it. There were several times when I had one of my bus counselors help me maneuver in between two parked cars or around a tight turn. Unfortunately, I did not have an accident free record. There was one time when I scraped a landscaping truck.

For anyone that has ever driven a bus, they know that one should never put the bus in reverse unless it is absolutely necessary. Well, when I made a wrong turn down a dead end, it became one of those situations. Immediate panic took over my body as soon as I realized I was stuck in a dead end, but I had to remain calm in front of the kids.

In my attempt to turn the bus around, I managed to get the bus stuck between two trees with just a matter of inches between the bus and each tree. While local residents started to come out of their homes to record the worrisome and embarrassing situation, a 30-minute FaceTime call with my bus supervisor and several back-and-forth movements allowed me to finally free the bus and proceed to camp.

It was a huge responsibility having the safety of children’s lives in my hands. While it was one of the most fun jobs I’ve had, it was also one of the most tiring and difficult. A bus driver can never get lazy about their job; they must constantly be alert of everything going on around them. I gained even more respect for anyone who drives a commercial vehicle and appreciate everything they do to keep people safe. I also gained more patience for when I get stopped by a school bus; it was very frustrating (and illegal) when people did not adhere to the stop arm on my bus. Overall, driving a bus is something I’ll never forget and an experience I am grateful to have had.



Hanfrey Deng, Class of 2023

I'm from Los Angeles, California. I like playing guitar, traveling, and occasionally dancing salsa. I chose MUSoD because I liked the supportive & collaborative atmosphere here.

I love playing the guitar. I started around 3 years ago, when I was studying for the DAT. From the beginning, I was amazed with how music could be produced from this piece of wood with six strings pulled over it. I started out learning simple four-chord campfire songs, just to be able to play music. It was so easy, and I was hooked!

Guitar has ebbed & flowed with my life. For a few months, I was into playing lead guitar when I was listening to hard-rock Led Zeppelin every day. Then I had a acoustic phase, where I was listening to mellow ballads & intricate fingerstyle songs. And then in my last year of undergrad I had my performance phase, where I would participate in open mics every few weeks. This culminated with my participation in my university's large musical show, which required that I dressed in goth & take weeks to rehearse for.

Surprisingly, guitar has imparted lots of lessons in me. It's trained me to be a more independent self-learner, since I get better at guitar by learning songs. I can more organically progress by learning the new techniques & chords associated with a song. I also learned that deliberate practice leads to visible progress. I might start learning a song and sound terrible. However, after a few weeks, I always see progress. My improvements in muscle memory, timing, & overall groove always show if I put in the hours practicing.

I believe that guitar will stick with me forever. When I first moved from California to Wisconsin a few months ago, my guitar was one of the first things I put on my packing list. My guitar grounds me, and I can always count on it when I need something to distract me from life for a little while.



Samantha Mandel, Class of 2023



What is something no one knows about you?

I grew up spending a lot of time outdoors, especially fishing. I was able to get out in the water a lot this summer back home in Michigan before this big dental school transition which I'm grateful for. I caught my very first musky in August that I'm very proud of!!

What are your interesting talents, hobbies, favorite sports, etc.?

I have a black thumb, the exact opposite of a green thumb. I kill every plant that I buy.

Tell us about another language or country you're familiar with.

I studied abroad to Italy and Australia, and would love to go back someday. Each country is entirely unique and beautiful in its own way! I left a piece of my heart in each place.

SPECIAL THANKS
to those who submitted short biographies for this
edition of our newsletter!

Interested in helping write or compose the newsletter?

Contact: mary.lovell@marquette.edu

