

Biographical Sketches of the 2012 *Agora* Writers

Ben Blanks graduated from Lynchburg College in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts in English (Literature Emphasis) and Philosophy-Religious Studies (Joint Major), and with minors in Medieval Studies and Creative Writing. While an undergraduate, Ben worked as a Writing Center tutor and as an assistant editor of the *Prism*, which is the Lynchburg College journal of undergraduate creative writing. He also was a member of SGA Senate and the English Club. Ben is currently pursuing a Master's of Library Science at North Carolina Central University. He hopes one day to work in an academic library or a digital archives department.

Katherine Flinchbaugh is currently a freshman at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Kate is a prospective English and Biology major, and she is planning to pursue a career as a physician. In her spare time, Kate enjoys traveling, reading, theater, and spending time with her family and friends.

Mikala Gallant is a senior at St. Thomas University in New Brunswick, Canada, where she is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts with double honors in English and Great Books. Mikala plans to attend Dalhousie University next year in Nova Scotia, Canada, for a Master's degree in English literature, with a focus on Shakespeare, as her interests include early modern writing as well as the history of that period.

Lisa Gervasoni, who comes from Richmond, Virginia, is a senior Communication Studies major with an emphasis in electronic media. Lisa hopes to attend graduate school upon graduating from Lynchburg College. She is a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Lambda Pi Eta honor societies. Lisa is also a member of LC Dance Works, and she enjoys photography, summer, and watching the weather channel.

Daniel Gibson is a freshman at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where he intends to major in biology and chemistry. Born in Urbandale, Iowa, Daniel is the youngest of seven children and was homeschooled through eighth grade before attending Urbandale High School. His interests include history, vocal music, World War II aircraft, and yearly attempts at gardening.

Callom Harkrader, who hails from the 2011 earthquake epicenter of Mineral, Virginia, is a senior at Lynchburg College. He is a psychology major with minors in history and theatre and was named the 2011-2012 Sommerville Scholar. In his free time, Callom reads Christian apologetics, plays with dogs, and makes pancakes.

Melissa Jennings is a senior at Lynchburg College, majoring in English with an emphasis in writing. She is the editor-in-chief of the 2012 edition of LC's literary magazine, *The Prism*, as well as a member of Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honor Society. As one of her English professors has said, "Melissa has taken a ridiculous number of courses in Renaissance literature." After taking a year off from her studies, Melissa plans to undertake a M.F.A. in creative writing and possibly a MLitt in Shakespeare and Performance.

Emma Kinsey, who comes from Frederick, Maryland, is currently a freshman at Lynchburg College, majoring in English with an emphasis in writing. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a career as an editor in the publishing industry and one day write a novel. Emma has had experience with writing in high school and has published once before in a short story contest. Emma enjoys reading, spending time with her family, driving her car with the music blasted, and being in the sun.

Win Matsuda is currently a junior at Pepperdine University, majoring in psychology. He is the current Secretary of Psi Chi, the psychology honor society, and the Vice President/co-founder of the Pepperdine chapter of Active Minds, an organization dedicated to increasing knowledge about mental illnesses in order to diminish social stigma surrounding such illnesses. After graduating, he hopes to earn a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology.

Grace Mattox is a senior at Lynchburg College, double majoring in graphic design and studio art with a minor in English. She is a member of the Phi Kappa Phi, Sigma Tau Delta, and Kappa Pi honor societies. In the summer of 2011, Grace traveled to Europe with Lynchburg College, visiting five countries, studying literature and political science. She is currently employed as a CADD Technician at Warner Engineering, and in her spare time Grace enjoys tennis and gardening.

Katie Petrik is a senior at the University of Notre Dame, dabbling in Arabic and the Program of Liberal Studies. In her spare time, she writes poetry and enjoys the outdoors. In her structured time, she appreciates gravity, gravitas, and gratuitous alliteration. Katie wishes you well in your pursuit of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful.

Amir Safavi is a sophomore at Columbia University, following a pre-medical curriculum. In his freshman year, Amir was chosen as a 2011 Core Scholar, and he currently serves on the Core Scholar Committee. Aside from his academic work, Amir is also a violinist, performing as recitalist and chamber musician in venues such as Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. Amir is originally from Toronto, Canada.

Zach Sandberg is originally from Laytonsville, Maryland. He is in his fourth year of studying Theatre (with an acting emphasis) and Spanish at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. He hopes to contribute to the body of human thought with a dynamic career in the world of artistic entertainment. Zach loves a good adventure.

Taylor Thompson is a sophomore at Columbia University, where he is majoring in history. Taylor is Director of Communications for the Columbia University College Republicans, and a senior editor on the *Columbia Political Review*. A native of Carrollton, Ohio, Taylor now spends his days hidden away in his secret lair in Manhattan, where he plots world domination and recites movie lines.