J.T. Tieder, a political science major at Washington College, has been awarded the 2016 Roy Ans Fellowship. His project is titled “The Changing Face of American Synagogue Architecture: The Role of Social and Theological Change.”

Tieder, a member of Kappa Sigma and a student dispatcher for Public Safety, will study 20th-century approaches to synagogue design theory, including debates surrounding the role of architectural modernism. His project will situate these debates within the changing composition of American Jewry in the 20th century and debates among Jewish theologians, rabbis, and architects.

J.T. has arranged a wide range of interviews with architects and rabbis on the architecture of sacred space, and has secured access to important archives on this issue. “I am extremely eager to get started on this project,” Tieder said. “I am most excited to interview notable members of the Jewish community as well as renowned architects. Their first-hand knowledge will be relied upon heavily in my research.”

The Roy Ans Fellowship in Jewish-American Studies offers a $2,500 stipend for a sophomore or junior completing a research project related to the Jewish-American experience in any area of study offered by Washington College. “Being awarded the Roy Ans Fellowship will afford me the opportunity to study a topic of which I am greatly interested. It will allow me both the time and resources needed to develop clear conclusions on my research topic,” Tieder stated. “Without the Roy Ans Fellowship, none of this would be possible.”

This fellowship is open to students of all religious backgrounds and beliefs. The fellowship is administered by the Institute for Religion, Politics and Culture and is made possible by the generous support of Roy P. ’63 and Nan Susan Ans.
On December 4, the Hillel hosted Shabbat services and an oneg in the Hillel House. Rebecca DeSantis ’16 led the services, and the event was well attended by students and community members.

“During the service, the Mourner’s Kaddish was said in honor of our friend and fellow student, Jacob Marberger,” DeSantis said. Marberger died November 21, 2015.

Conducted in both Hebrew and English, the service included some creative readings and lively music.

Those in attendance used the new prayer books purchased by Hillel last year: the Mishkan Tiflilah published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of Reform Judaism.

DeSantis, who will serve as Hillel President again this spring, said that she really enjoys these prayer books because of their inclusive readings, the inclusion of Hebrew, English, and transliteration, and the variety of musical choices available.

“After the service, students and community members had a chance to mingle and munch on refreshments while looking over the other great sections of the Mishkan Tiflilah. Hillel is excited to welcome students who may be more interested in attending Shabbat services with the new and more inclusive prayer book. That will lead to a more diverse Hillel community.”

A Look Ahead for Hillel

Washington College’s Admissions Office recently created a new position among its student team. Katie Reinl ’18 took on the role of Hillel Student Ambassador, beginning in January. We asked Hillel President Rebecca DeSantis ’16 to talk about this new initiative in student recruitment, as well as her aspirations for the organization she is helping to foster.

Q. Can you give us an overview of the role of the Hillel Student Ambassador for Admissions? How will this impact Hillel?
A. The new Hillel Student Ambassador will be a liaison between Hillel, Admissions, and the Office of the President. The task will be to bring all three offices together to develop Hillel initiatives while also helping to recruit new students interested in Jewish life on campus. This position is a great new development for Hillel. It will help to facilitate more cooperation across the offices to build more support for our programming and bring more Jewish students to our campus. I am very excited for the progress that this new position will foster for Hillel.

Q. What are your aspirations for Hillel in 2016? What are you excited for?
A. I am very excited for this upcoming semester for Hillel. After attending the Union of Reform Judaism Biennial Conference this past November, and speaking with other Hillel leaders across the country, I have some great new programming ideas for Hillel. I hope to work closely with the Office of Intercultural Affairs to develop programming focused on outreach. We are looking to boost our membership, especially among this current first-year class. Making the Hillel House more accessible is also a high priority for the spring semester. We want more students to use the house for studying, cooking, or relaxing, and we are working to find a safe way to provide this.

Q. As a past president as well as the current president of Hillel, what accomplishments are you most proud of?
A. I am most proud of the connections that Hillel has been able to forge throughout my years of leadership in Hillel. We have built a relationship with the local Jewish community as well as the Jewish community in Easton. I am also very proud of the events we’ve been able to put on in the last few years. During my first year of president, I was very happy with the blanket making community service project, the shabbat dinners we made, and speakers we were able to host. On a personal note, I’ve been able to build so many strong relationships...
I have been transformed from a thick-haired, strong-armed man to a rather small and codgerly fellow with a white beard.

I have absorbed the wisdom of the greatest thinkers through the many books I’ve read and I have seen the sometimes-unbelievable events of the world unfold before my eyes.

I watched the Cold War die only to see the rise of terror. I’ve known boom times and depressions. I have experienced professional triumph and disaster, marriage and divorce, friendships forged and lost.

Along the way one thing I gained for sure was a healthy respect for the miniscule gap that lies between glory and catastrophe.

In recent years I determined to write a book about Baltimore’s first football team, the Baltimore Colts.

left Washington College, more or less for good, almost 30 years ago. In that time I have been transformed from a thick-haired, strong-armed man to a rather small and codgerly fellow with a white beard.

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Jack Gilden ’87, a former College Relations intern covering men’s lacrosse, is still obsessed with sports. Now, the marketing executive is writing a book about Baltimore’s first football team, the Baltimore Colts.

X  Of Glory and Catastrophe

as head coach than Vince Lombardi (96) and Bill Belichick (222) combined. And yet, around Baltimore, it was a little-known fact that the two men hated each other. Unitas told one close friend, shortly before he died: “If Shula was standing right here and he was on fire, I wouldn’t piss on him to put it out.”

Despite this, the Baltimore Colts of the 1960s enjoyed tremendous success. Unitas won two NFL MVP awards under Shula’s tutelage. Shula was named coach of the year three times during his seven-year Baltimore reign. The Colts won more regularly for Shula than the Packers did under Lombardi.

But while Green Bay won five titles in the decade, the Colts could only manage two embarrassing championship losses, one to Cleveland and one to the Jets. Both were stunning upsets. As soon as Unitas and Shula parted ways, they won three of the next four Super Bowls— Unitas with the Colts in 1970, and Shula in ’72 and ’73 with Miami.

To unravel the mystery of their strange chemistry, I journeyed from Massachusetts to Florida and conducted about 20 in-person interviews.

I sat on Don Shula’s sofa as he described to me his own massive temper and mistakes. I listened to Joe Namath get a little weird as he talked astrology and strategy in describing how the lowly Jets, 18-point underdogs, took down the mighty Colts.

I went out drinking with Jimmy Orr into the wee hours of the morning. The receiver who was both kind of slow afoot and a scorching deep threat explained that something had gone wrong between the two men. “Shula lied to me,” Orr said Johnny U once told him. “But I don’t know about what.”

I talked to coaches and journalists, all in pursuit of a great football story and, perhaps, a keen insight into the depths of human understanding.
Born and bred on the Gulf Coast, Mason Sheen ’17 developed a passion for competitive sailboat racing after one of the most devastating natural disasters to affect the United States—2005’s Hurricane Katrina. A business major and skipper on the Washington College varsity sailing team, Sheen has learned how to turn adversity into opportunity. “It is in our nature to better ourselves. When an opportunity comes, we need to have the perseverance to follow through.”

It is this passion that landed Sheen an internship with Rondar Raceboats, a world-class British sailboat manufacturer with more than 20 world championship wins under its belt. Rondar builds the Viper 640, one of two boats the Gulf Yachting Association (GYA) selected as a finalist for its Capdevielle Championship Series. As a Past GYA Junior Commodore, Sheen had a unique perspective on what the GYA wanted to accomplish, as well as the network to help secure this potential seven-figure contract.

“I enjoyed immensely being the voice of young sailors,” he says. Sheen is particularly grateful to the company and his internship host Dan Tucker (vice president of sales and marketing for Rondar Raceboats North America) “for letting me help write history. I could not have asked for a more perfect dream internship.”

Sheen and Tucker met in 2008, when Sheen called Rondar and asked if he might be able to sail a Viper in Charleston Race Week while looking at colleges. “In sales, you always want to say ‘Yes,’ as you never know where something might lead,” Tucker recalls. “Here’s this 18-year-old kid with the chops to call me and ask. I knew he wasn’t a boat buyer, but he’s connected to the GYA, which I know might be important someday, so why not?”

The Gulf Yachting Association has used only two sailboats to date in its 100-year history of the Capdevielle Series. Moving to the high-performance Viper 640 would be a huge advancement. Sheen visited yacht clubs from Sarasota, Florida to Houston, Texas, speaking to sailors, managing day-to-day social media, and assisting with strategic planning to convince the 33 member clubs to vote for the Viper 640.

“It was a 24-7 job because I could never stop thinking about what we could do,” Sheen recalls. “I had dreams about strategy. I’d wake up and immediately call my boss. I believed that the Viper was the right boat for the GYA but it was an uphill battle because we were the underdogs.”

On September 5, Sheen flew home for the GYA annual meeting to witness the historic vote. “As I tallied the votes, my heart was racing as if I were on the last leg of a race. By one precious vote, we WON!”

“Mason impressed me over and over again,” says Tucker. “He has a great work ethic, whether rigging and scrubbing a boat for a demo, or poring over contact lists and providing the insight and background that only a local could. But most importantly, he understood the challenge we faced to win this, and had truly remarkable strategic insight for a young college student. He was a vital part of our team.”
In Memoriam: Jacob Marberger ’18

AT THE FAMILY’S MEMORIAL SERVICE IN PHILADELPHIA ON NOVEMBER 25, PROFESSOR JOSEPH PRUD’HOMME DELIVERED A EULOGY FOR HIS PRIZED STUDENT, JACOB MARBERGER ’18.

We are called together by the death of our beloved friend Jacob, a coming together made necessary by those thousand shocks and heartaches that all human flesh is made heir to. Oh, but I—and we—come not to mourn, no, but to celebrate. For as that seer whom Rabbi Shimoni calls the greatest of all the prophets—Isaiah—writes to remind us: Death itself shall be swallowed up in victory. And not just that, but the life led by this remarkable young man, Jacob, is fitting not only for celebration, but for emulation. Here is a role model for us all. A model scholar whose mind was brighter, whose wit sharper, whose love of learning more unshakable than any I have known in 15 years as a college professor. I pray all my students this day and every day would be just like Jacob: would have that softness that endeared him to his fellow students; would have that rapier intellect that would let not a single solecism or sloppy syllogism rest unchallenged; would be as decent, as kind, and as loving to their core.

Jacob. Jacob was a light in my life. A man blessed with incredible intelligence, intelligence matched with unsurpassed compassion, with unexcelled excitement for the life of the mind, with unbounded optimism in the future and potential of every human being. Oh Jacob! Jacob brought out the very best in me as a teacher, and the very best in those students fortunate to have him in the classroom.

You know, one time, I remember Jacob asked me about the early reign of King Shameser the Vth of Assyria, and, well I thought myself a good student of Near Eastern religions. I remember another time he asked me about the early days of the administration of William McKinley, and, well, I thought myself a good student of the American presidency. On both occasions Jacob responded to my honest ignorance with that kind smile, that affectionate touch that was so quintessentially Jacob: “That’s OK,” he said, “we’ll learn together.” Oh and that’s just what we did. We worked together in my freshmen seminar, we worked together on economic history and philosophy, we worked together on a research project on religion in public life, and I, I always was the greater learner, learning from him nuance and detail, perspectives and visions I had never dreamed imaginable.

His enthusiasm was infectious and his insight staggering.

Dr. and Mrs. Marberger, you named your son so well. Jacob was indeed a wrestler, was indeed a young man worthy of the name Isra-el, that wrestler of Hebrew scripture. Jacob wrestled with ideas, he wrestled with texts, he wrestled with me to get to the truth—always to get to the truth. He was a man after my own heart.

Because I thought so highly of Jacob, I nominated him for a slot in a highly competitive conference on political theory and invited him to present his papers at major disciplinary conferences. And I know, I know he taught those conference attendees as much as he taught me. Indeed, Jacob taught all whom he met lessons not just about Near Eastern kings and long forgotten presidencies, but about honor, about kindness, about loyalty to principle.

Jacob leaves an enduring legacy. This legacy will be remembered by all of us. And remembered by few more than I. It’s a legacy I’ll treasure until that day I too meet that kind maker, that kind maker of all human flesh.

So Jacob, let me say to you the words of an Irish playwright, one of the world’s very best: May the nourishment of the earth be yours May the clarity of light be yours May the fluency of the oceans be yours May the protection of the ancestors be yours.

Amen, I pray, and all of us pray, that Jacob’s memory be a blessing to all who knew him, and all who loved him. May he rest in peace.

The campus gathered in early December to celebrate the life of Jacob Marberger ’18.
Those who do not wish to receive future Shalom newsletters should call the Office of College Advancement at 800-422-1782, ext. 7801.

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