

A Reflection with Brendan Mahoney, *The Proceedings of GREAT Day* Editor

What's great for you about GREAT Day?

Mahoney: GREAT Day is an excellent day to just enjoy what this school community is capable of doing. For us as editors of this journal, though, there's an added excitement of seeing what might potentially appear in our issue next year. As we walk from presentation to presentation on this day meant to celebrate Geneseo's achievement, we're acutely aware of how far this achievement can go. Every year we're lucky enough to publish some of Geneseo's most innovative academic and creative work, and GREAT Day is the very first look we get into which innovative works we get to publish next year.

What impact do you think GREAT Day has on our campus culture?

Mahoney: The answer that comes to mind first, as we are an academic institution, is simply that it adds an awareness or emphasis on academic excellence, but it's important to remember that neither Geneseo nor GREAT Day only celebrates academic work. There are plenty of students at this school training for skills that reach far beyond academia. GREAT Day allows for a celebration of those skills in addition to purely academic ones. GREAT Day's effect on campus culture, therefore, should not be thought of so narrowly as emphasizing academic achievement. Rather, it emphasizes all achievement and ensures the students of Geneseo that, no matter what they're currently studying, they have a space to showcase any and all of their skills.

Why does undergraduate research in general matter to you?

Mahoney: Selfishly, undergraduate research matters to us very much as it's what allows us to produce this wonderful journal every year. But, more generally, undergraduate research gives plenty of young academics the opportunity to think creatively. Rather than being enlisted to do the grunt calculations on a math problem or to collect 400 sources for some graduate student's dissertation, Geneseo's focus on undergraduate research allows its students to challenge themselves and grow as researchers by expecting them to set their own goals and pursue them largely on their own. This allows Geneseo to produce the kinds of graduates who leave with a sense of confidence and go on in their careers to accomplish things that make us proud of publishing their work.

What's your interest in the specific topic being researched in the following paper?

Mahoney: Our interest at the time of accepting this piece was obvious; the relationship between the American media and Middle Eastern conflict has long been criticized as a warped and biased one. Recently, our interest has become more prescient than ever. There is a very real need for clear and unbiased communication between the American public and the people of the Middle East, or else there is a very real chance that people will die. Foreign policy decisions cannot be made based on the narratives woven by television personalities, and Katherine's work in dissecting those narratives is valuable.



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