

# Stage Whispers:

## Geva Theater Actor Kyle Hatley unveils what its like to live in the limelight

By Kristina Livingston  
CAMPUS TALK EDITOR

It is rare for a liberal arts institution like The College at Brockport to have a relationship with a high-end regional theater company like Geva Theater Center. Geva, a Rochester-based arts organization, takes on the task of putting on six shows a year and sending instructors to guide theater academics in the pursuit of their demanding area of focus.

Thursday, Feb. 11, names such as Achilles, Patroclus and Agamemnon received a breath of life once again through one of the college's many theater-based opportunities.

"Stage Whispers" is a series run by the Organized Department of Theatre and Music Studies at Brockport, which allows for stu-

dents, regardless of major, as well as community members, a free private meeting and selection of performances with professional actors.

Geva Theater actor Kyle Hatley is the latest visitor, currently preparing to perform "An Iliad", a one-man show responsible for an adaptation of Homer's classic tale while bringing intensity and a unique historical perspective connecting the classic tale to dozens of wars throughout time.

Hatley spent his session in the Tower Fine Arts Black Box Theatre discussing his personal acting and directing experiences, but began by asking the burning question of his profession that is becoming more difficult to answer with each passing year: "How can you convince people to come see a 95-minute show of the 'Iliad?'" according to Hatley.

As for his own personal narra-

tive, Hatley converted himself from a future football star to one of the stage during his high school years, working on a number of plays and minor television show roles until he fell in love with the script of playwrights Lisa Peterson and Dennis O'Hare titled "An Iliad", which he took to the stage of Kansas City Repertory Theater.

Hatley brought life and energy to the theater, performing two short segments of "An Iliad", the second demanding he rattle off the names of over a dozen wars and be brought on the verge of tears, acting as the poet Homer connecting the Trojan War with others in history.

"Any chance you have to interact with anyone in the field to make you feel less alone in the questions you have [take advantage of it]," Hatley said. "It's important you break down those walls of fear. You

[will] begin to find confidence in yourself in that world."

Department of Theatre and Music Studies Professor Frank Kuhn praised Hatley's talent as well as his cooperation with the exchange of knowledge between his department and Geva's actors.

"It [Hatley's session] showed theater can be muscular, emotionally and mentally," Kuhn said. "Theater is not a wimpy activity. You need Kevlar."

It was clear Hatley wanted to be present with attendees to communicate the value in seeing goals come to fruition.

"The first week [of rehearsal for "An Iliad"] was me alone in a room like this [the Black Box Theatre] for nine hours a day," Hatley said.

The actor stressed in closing the importance of choosing a theater that will be fulfilling to you as op-

posed to theater "that is in love with itself."

"If you are serious about being a theater artist, you must always stay a student of the arts," Hatley said.

"An Iliad" by Lisa Peterson and David O'Hare will run from Feb. 4 to Feb. 21, at the Geva Theater Center in Rochester. The adaptation is directed by Jerry Genochio and showcases the talents of Kyle Hatley in one of the most remembered stories of all time, freshly revived and rejuvenated. Hatley is currently in early talks to take "An Iliad" on a military base tour.

Brockport students are encouraged by faculty to attend "Stage Whispers" to gain a firsthand look at the lives and minds of theater professionals and join in discussion with them.

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# Trip to the Dominican Republic is a home run

By Aaron Cerbone  
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The Kinesiology, Sport Studies and Physical Education Department at The College at Brockport had the opportunity to send eight students to spend time in the Dominican Republic over winter break.

The students and athletes, along with two leaders in the department taught, played and learned with girls at an elementary school and college students at an environmental school.

From Jan. 4 to Jan. 13, Brockport students and faculty were surrounded by baseball and Dominican culture, spending nine days earning credit for motor learning, advanced baseball or softball by participating in projects, training and games.

"We were immersed in their baseball culture," junior outfielder for Brockport's softball team Brianna Harris said. "Ours is nothing like theirs."

After spending time with the sport, students learned the culture of baseball in the Dominican Republic.

"I feel like it is equivalent to hockey in Canada or soccer in England," Head Coach Justin Beach said. "That is what they live for, they are trying to get off the island and [find] opportunities."

The Dominican Republic struggles economically and much of the population lives in poor conditions.

"We learned a lot about how lucky we have it," Beach said. "Just even to be able to brush your teeth in the morning with fresh water."

The Dominican Republic's infrastructure is not well-run due to the lack of money and/or the resources needed to maintain it properly. From plumbing, to roads, to sanitation, things are done differently because the country's focus is on its economy, not its public services and the environment according to Associate Professor of KSSPE Pamela Haibach.

"There is no place to put their trash," Haibach said. "They said, 'we're not at that point yet [of recycling,] we just have to find a place to put trash in general.'"

While visiting the environmental college the students were able to do eco-friendly work painting murals and trash cans, planting gar-



Photo courtesy of Associate Professor Pamela Haibach

**Eight students from The College at Brockport had the opportunity to go overseas to teach children about sportsmanship, character and baseball.**

dens at the college and creating benches.

"My group made benches," Perez said. "Everything they make is all straight from their garden. I made benches out of tree stumps and some wood from a tree they cut down in their own forest."

Along with working on the environment, students also worked with a group of elementary school girls by playing softball and teaching them new skills. The school, The Mariposa Foundation, was filled with girls ages five to 13 eager to play the game and fervent to win.

"[They were] Competitive little girls [who] did not like to lose," Haibach said.

The students had been told they would need to also work on the kid's sportsmanship and behavior there. This took much more time than anticipated.

"They [the girls] are more cutthroat," Beach said. "Girls were erasing the score on the scoreboard."

Stations were set up to work on drills and training as well as character and sportsmanship. Due to the level of competition and the rampant cheating a lot of time was spent on the latter.

"It was more like sportsmanship camp,"

Perez said.

The girls were competitive, but also excited to train. Although they did not have a bus to get there, they still made the journey to make it to school.

"They walked an hour just to get to Mariposa so they could be with us," Harris said.

The Mariposa Foundation, whose goal is "sustainable solutions to end generational poverty," according to *mariposadrfoundation.org* was founded by a Rochester local Patricia Thorndike Suriel. The foundation helps families break away from poverty by helping them find well-paying and safe jobs. Many children finish school at age 12 and start working to raise money for their family, some in jobs they should never have to work.

"When we were at Mariposa they were saying it is common for 12-year-old girls to go into prostitution," Haibach said. "It's kind of scary."

The Brockport students and staff taught the children and helped grow their character and they were able to see the impact the training and learning of sportsmanship had on the kids. Facing off against college students, they noticed a real improvement.

"They were competitive but their sportsmanship was excellent," Perez said. "You make a good play and they are all high-fiving you and happy about it."

Though the students could not communicate fluently with the Dominicans they encountered, they were still able to connect over a love of the game.

"You have the language barrier a little bit but there are some things that are just constant in baseball," Beach said.

The game was hard-fought, with Brockport struggling against the Dominican team of students and professors. Brockport eventually lost, unable to keep up with the Dominican players.

"We played them well and we went out there, you know, we put our best on the field and just came up short," Perez said.

It was obvious how invested the Dominican college students were in the sport and how much it meant to them.

"[The Dominican team] have the college type of pureness, where they are not necessarily making a million dollars but they are trying to," Beach said. "They are running hard, playing hard, trying to prove themselves."

The passion Dominicans have for the game was evident as they took a trip to a professional game. Fans jumped, screamed and danced more than the Brockport students had ever seen for an exhibition game.

Throughout the entire trip students and faculty experienced a baseball culture they had never seen and met many people they probably would not have connected with if not for the trip.

"I would recommend it for anybody," Perez said. "I hyped it up enough, hopefully they will want to participate next year."

This is the first year Haibach has done the trip and she anticipates doing it many more times in the future as it received overwhelmingly positive feedback, according to Perez.

This week Haibach will meet with representatives from International Education to talk over plans for another trip in the future. The departments may decide on the Dominican Republic again or possibly choose another country to visit and learn from.

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