Michael Hast:
GSD Student of the Year
By Amy Del Río-Gazzo and Uhuru Hotep

Michael Hast, a sophomore business management and information systems management double major in the A.J. Palumbo School of Business Administration, has been selected as the 2013 Gussin Spiritan Division (GSD) Student of the Year. Hast played baseball and soccer at Upper St. Clair High School and took part in Athletes Taking Action, a membership program for student athletes.

When asked why he chose to attend Duquesne University, Hast cites the school’s location and atmosphere as two main factors, along with family ties to Duquesne—his grandfather is an alumnus. Hast is a working member of the Duquesne University chapter of Society for the Advancement of Management, where he is sharpening his networking and leadership skills.

“I am proud to have been selected to represent and serve the Division.”

He attributes his success to the support provided by his professors, the Learning Skills Center, student advisement and the Gussin Spiritan Division, which gave him the opportunity to achieve academically and to grow in personal confidence. Regarding his selection as GSD Student of the Year, Hast said, “Words cannot describe the feeling of being named GSD Student of the Year. It is truly a great honor and I am proud to have been selected to represent and serve the Division.” After completing his undergraduate studies, Hast intends to work as a business analyst or project manager.

John Foster:
2013 Michael P. Weber Scholarship Recipient
By Erin Hess and Uhuru Hotep

John Foster, a freshman secondary education major from Berks County, PA, is the 2013 recipient of the Michael P. Weber Scholarship. After being named a Pennsylvania high school public speaking champion, Foster graduated from Berks Catholic High School, where he was known for his leadership abilities as well as his football, basketball, volleyball and track skills. Recently, Foster was inducted into both the Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society and 100 Black Men of America’s college student organization, the Collegiate 100.

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He ascribes his current success to the Gussin Spiritan Division. He believes everyone in the Division has helped his spiritual, social and academic growth, and for that he remains forever grateful. Foster commented, “The Division is not the place where one goes to get one’s questions answered, but rather where one goes to have one’s answers questioned. Division students are challenged to become the best they can be.” After completing his undergraduate studies, Foster plans to attend graduate school though he remains undecided on the schools to which he will apply. He hopes to one day become a politician or a college professor.
The mission of the Gussin Spiritan Division is teaching, caring and building futures through a community of excellence.

The Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs operates on a cohort model. While the Division freshmen are immersed in the same core curriculum as other Duquesne first-year students, Spiritan Core courses are taught by University faculty hand-picked by the Division because of their commitment to the Division’s approach to student development.

The Gussin Spiritan Division student’s transition from high school to college begins with a summer semester during which the student is registered for Core English 101, University 101, Research and Information Skills and Academic Strategies. The student returns to campus for the fall semester with a University transcript showing six earned credits and with an armful of friendships developed during the summer semester.

The academic year continues this development through coursework, academic advisement, tutoring when needed and other interventions should problems arise.

Successful college transitions are made when the student:

- Adapts to new learning environments and new learning situations.
- Understands the role of personal responsibility in college, career and life success.
- Refines the academic skills necessary for college success—reading, writing, editing and critical thinking.
- Relies on high-quality academic support such as tutoring, counseling and other interventions should problems arise.

The Gussin Spiritan Division helps freshmen and other students new to Duquesne maximize their chances of college success. While there are many factors that will impact that success, chief among them is a solid transition to college life. Successful college transitions are made when the student:

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