

Application Part 2: Project Proposal**SOAR Research Proposal Summer 2018*****Building Community in the Kitchen: A Bethlehem Cookbook*****Faculty Mentor:**

Christopher Shorr, Associate Professor of Theater Arts, Theatre Program

Student Researcher:

Corinne Philbin, English Studies Major, Class of 2020

Start date and length of project:

June 4, 2018; 8 weeks

Description of the project:

“Building Community in the Kitchen: A Bethlehem Cookbook” is one piece of a much larger initiative: Touchstone Theatre’s 2019 *Festival UnBound*. Twenty years ago, after an almost 150 year history building the nation, Bethlehem Steel shut down steelmaking in Bethlehem. To help the community work through what was an undeniably traumatic event, Touchstone created and assembled a collection of artwork and performance into a festival called *Steelbound: Art of an Industry*. Now, as 2019 approaches, two decades after that extraordinary event, we face different, subtler challenges. Who are we, now that the Steel is gone? What are the greatest challenges we face as a community now that we are “unbound”? What are the values that will help hold us together as we face the task of shaping our collective future?

Bethlehem, as a community, was first defined by the Moravian utopian experiment. In 2019; *Festival UnBound* will take up the mantle of that dream once more and endeavor to understand, celebrate and envision this, our 20th century village. Through story gathering, group discussions, and collective creations, Touchstone and its community partners (including Moravian College) will explore where our history has taken us and begin to discover possibilities for an even better future.

For the festival, Christopher Shorr has initiated the creation of a community cookbook that tells the story of our community through the foods we cherish. Eating and preparing food has a unique way of defining who we are, and sharing that aspect of our identity brings us together. This project will involve researching the evolving neighborhoods and demographics of Bethlehem, the city’s iconic foods and landmark restaurants, the stories of the city’s residents and the foods they love. The project will continue after the SOAR research period ends, with recipe testing, book design and publication, and the launch of the cookbook at a large-scale community dinner and celebration during the 2019 festival.

Roles, Responsibilities, Schedule:

Ms. Philbin will work both independently and in conjunction with Professor Shorr to ensure the timely completion of each stage of the process and the quality of the final product. She will work in a lead researcher capacity for a subset of the project, and research assistant for the project overall. After a period of research to gain an understanding of the theory associated with the relationship between food, place, community, culture and identity, she will explore the specifics associated with this project: Bethlehem's history, neighborhoods, people, and food. Then she will engage in a hands-on story-gathering phase, interacting with the community and doing interviews. Finally, she will synthesize her findings and articulate them in both a scholarly reflection on local community, food and culture (a publishable article or conference presentation--we have identified the Lehigh Valley Engaged Humanities Consortium as a good prospect to pursue for this), and a website to share the stories and recipes with the community. These aspects of the work will support the larger project but will be authored by Ms. Philbin (or co-authored by Ms. Philbin and Professor Shorr if it is to be published in the final book as a preface, for example), so she will have clear elements that are hers.

In addition to providing ongoing guidance for the research, and insuring the successful hitting of benchmarks in the process, Professor Shorr will be developing the organizational constraints of the book, and adjusting the research focus accordingly. He will be managing the larger project and coordinating a team working on fundraising and marketing, as well as the specific elements of the book like photography, recipe editing, and publication design. Although not specifically "research," we hope that opportunities arise for Ms. Philbin to participate in some editing work as a valuable professional experience related to her English Major and goals for graduate education and career in journalism.

The project will run eight weeks, beginning June 4, 2018 running through July 27, 2018. The dates outlined below are subject to change depending on time needed to adequately complete each phase of the project, however, all aspects will still be completed within the ten weeks.

Weeks 1 – 2:

- Conduct research through community interviews, online databases, library sources
 - Relationship between food and community
 - Food of Bethlehem, past and present
 - Bethlehem Neighborhoods—official and unofficial
- Community outreach through social media and gatherings
- Outreach to groups and individuals engaged in similar work.
 - Meet to discuss support and intersection of projects

- Layout clear path to completion of student-led portion (identification of student-led sub-project to occur prior to start of SOAR work)

Weeks 3 – 6:

- Exploration of organizational criteria for book
 - Coordination of non-book elements
 - PBS series; Website; Blog posts; Videos
- Identification and vetting of recipe sources
- Story gathering: people & food
- Transcribing/Editing/Cross-checking stories

Weeks 7 – 8:

- Construction of book mock-up
- Framing research for possible blog and/or website materials.
- Consolidation of student-led research into article/presentation

Benefits:

Ms. Philbin will gain many benefits as a result of her research and her work on this project. She will strengthen her overall research skills utilizing the library resources and online resources. She will also increase her professionalism in the writing and journalism fields by carrying out a large workload and communicating with the Bethlehem community. There are many opportunities for publication as well as adding articles and interviews to her professional portfolio. Her work and research can be presented within a self-designed website for stories that are unable to make it into the final copy of the cookbook. She will carry these skills into her higher education beyond her undergraduate degree. Building on her experience as Managing Editor of *The Comenian*, she will develop her editing and interviewing skills. She plans on pursuing a career in journalism, and this project will give her the opportunity to interview and gather stories on a large scale. Ms. Philbin will also pursue opportunities to present her research not only in the finished cookbook and on the website, but in various conferences at Moravian and the Lehigh Valley.

For Professor Shorr, this project continues a line of professional work and scholarship involving large-scale community-building projects: “Dear Tamaqua—In a New Light,” used language, music and light to turn a mile of city streets in the Pennsylvania coal-region borough of Tamaqua into a transformative community experience; “Journey from the East”— a play which combined the mythic Chinese Journey to the West with the mythic American Western— premiered in Spring 2015 with a large-scale outdoor production in Bethlehem inspired by the influx of Chinese into Southside Bethlehem and exploring American anxiety about a "rising China" on the world stage; Sycamore Rouge, a professional non-profit theatre and arts center he founded, addressed a range of social, political and economic problems in the in Petersburg, VA community. In addition to his career as a professional theatre artist, Shorr has been a professional restaurateur and food/hospitality consultant.

Application Part 3: Student Statement of Purpose

Title of Project: “Building Community in the Kitchen: A Bethlehem Cookbook”

Faculty Mentor: Professor Christopher Shorr, Associate Professor of Theater Arts, Theatre Program

Student Researcher: Corinne Philbin '20, English Major

On campus housing: Yes

Discussion of Rationale:

Food has always been a core element that carries traditions and brings communities together. It is a way that people can spread their cultures and teach others about how food impacts their lives. Our own community of Bethlehem, PA, has its own traditions associated with foods. Touchstone Theatre, Moravian College Theatre Company’s partner theatre, will be holding “Festival UnBound” in October 2019, highlighting music, dance, community dialogue, art, and theatre from our “20th century village” that is Bethlehem. Professor Christopher Shorr is initiating the creation of a cookbook, “Building Community in the Kitchen: A Bethlehem Cookbook,” that tells the story of our city through the foods we cherish. This cookbook will be launched and presented at “Festival UnBound.”

I have always been interested and fascinated with food and how it impacts societies and cultures. Through doing this SOAR project with Professor Shorr, I will be able to delve into these fascinations and gather a more robust appreciation for Bethlehem. I will also be able to increase my abilities as a journalist by conducting interviews with various chefs and community members of Bethlehem, and as a scholar through extensive research about the history of Bethlehem and its foods. As the Managing Editor of *The Comenian*, Moravian’s student-run newspaper publication, I have had the opportunity to develop editorial and management skills this SOAR project will enhance. I will be able to gain real-life exposure as a research assistant for the book as well. Obtaining outside experience doing research is vital to becoming a better journalist and overall writer.

In the past, I had the experience of interviewing professionals respected in journalistic and contemporary writing fields, such as Jeffrey Toobin and Alison Hawthorne Deming, for *The Comenian*. These experiences allowed me to hone my professionalism and gave me insight as to what goes into professional journalism and writing. These skills will be valuable in doing this SOAR project, because I can use them to better my research and contribution as a whole.

The idea of building community in the kitchen is a crucial one in society. The cookbook will examine various areas and neighborhoods within the Bethlehem community and highlight specific foods that are important and special to them. Our city of Bethlehem has changed and evolved throughout the years and centuries, and the book will examine these changes in relation to the foods as well. These ideas tie into many of the areas of study in which I am interested and

want to pursue in the future. Because I will be gaining better skills as a writer, editor, and researcher, I will be able to articulate my appreciation for food and local culture in a more concrete way, and develop a deeper understanding of their relationship to community and identity. This SOAR project may also lead to the opportunity of becoming a published co-author or contributor, which has been an aspiration of mine and will show potential future employers my accomplishment. I will also plan to showcase the various interviews and stories of community members on a website that can be added into my professional portfolio, as well as write articles about their stories as well as my overall experience completing the project.

Expected Outcomes:

The main contribution that I expect to make with our SOAR project is to be the primary researcher during the first phase of development of the cookbook project. My role will be to research the cultures and foods of various communities within Bethlehem--including those that have a high profile, and also those that might be less well known. I will meet with community groups to explain the cookbook project, and gather leads for possible people foods to feature. Then I will follow up on those leads and collect photos and stories from these various people. After I have completed compiling a large list of stories and possible people and foods to be featured, I will work with Professor Shorr to focus the list to the ones that will be featured in the cookbook. Those stories and recipes that do not make it into the cookbook will be compiled in a website that I will create to showcase the Bethlehem community on another platform. I will also share some people's stories in *The Comenian*, and write articles highlighting them to further boost support for the cookbook as well as shed light on unique Bethlehem foods and traditions.

Taking on the role of primary researcher will allow me to expand my dexterity as a journalist and writer as well as build my professionalism in this field. I will use this experience to continue growing past the undergraduate level and set the stage for graduate education. I also hope to share my research in conferences around the area, such as the Lehigh Valley Engaged Humanities Consortium, which focuses on the history of Bethlehem. I also plan on sharing my work in Moravian's various scholarly conferences, such as Student Scholarship and Creative Endeavors Day. The website and finished cookbook will be my main areas of showcasing my research besides these conferences.

This SOAR project will give me the opportunity to exercise my strengths as a journalist in a way that is unique to what I will be pursuing in the future. I find the subject matter one that is not discussed or showcased enough in our Bethlehem community. Through this SOAR project, I aim to make people's stories and cherished foods known and appreciated. I am passionate about discovering and representing the various communities, hidden or not, in our city.