

4-20-2020

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Spina, Eric F., "Virtual Stander" (2020). *President's Blog: From the Heart*. 216.
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Virtual Stander : University of Dayton, Ohio

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Monday April 20, 2020

Virtual Stander

By Eric F. Spina

Connor Holzer and Noah Leibold thought they'd be cracking scientific secrets about the biochemistry of an oyster's shell at a poster session in a packed Kennedy Union ballroom at the Stander Symposium this week.

Instead, the roommates — one from Cincinnati, the other from Erie, Pennsylvania — will present their research findings live from their childhood bedrooms at 1 p.m. (EST), Wednesday, April 22, thanks to the interactive magic of Zoom technology.

Welcome to the Virtual Stander.

Many scholarly conferences became casualties after the pandemic abruptly closed campuses, but not this one. The organizers regrouped and recreated the daylong event in a virtual format that will showcase the research, scholarship, and artistic achievements of an

amazing 500 students through 270 mentored projects.

From anywhere in the world, students, faculty, researchers, prospective students, *and* family members will be able to join live discussions, watch recorded presentations on demand, and peruse PDFs of poster presentations.

“Students have put in years of work, and they need to be recognized,” said Connor, the symposium’s first student co-chair in its 30-year history. “This is a big, school-wide effort. It stays alive because the student body and the faculty care about it.”

Indeed, they do. For the intellectually curious, Stander offers a smorgasbord of creative endeavors. The River Stewards will share a children’s book they wrote about the Great Miami Rivershed. Communication major Emily A. Callam will examine race and culture “though the ethical lens of social justice” in the Academy Award-winning documentary *American Factory*. Education major Anthony A. Dalpiaz will show the relationship between media literacy, social media, and anxiety levels in first-year students who are high users of Twitter and other social media. Graphic design majors will unveil concepts for visually transforming the stairwells in Kennedy Union to capture the UD student experience.

The re-imagined Stander is an ambitious, impressive effort from symposium coordinator Andrea Wade, faculty co-chairs Katy Kelly and Ryan McEwan, student co-chair Connor Holzer, and the programming committees. Behind the scenes, Maureen Schlangen, e-scholarship and communications manager in University Libraries, created the digital platform on eCommons. An added bonus: each project has its own web address that students can use on resumes, graduate school applications, LinkedIn, and social media.

So, what’s the oyster’s secret? You’ll need to join me at the Stander to discover why its shell holds promise. (Hint: think future environmentally friendly materials).