

**The University of Scranton
Panuska College of Professional Studies**

Celebration of Remembrance Ceremony

Nov. 17, 2017

Student Reflection

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My latex-gloved hands shook from their place by my side, ruffling the paper-like gown I donned, and I shuffled my bootie-ed feet back and forth. I shivered, due to either the seemingly sub-zero temperature inside the lab, my unsettled nerves, or both. My eyes traveled around the room, resting momentarily on each of the sheet-covered bodies scattered intermittently on steel tables that seemed to glare back at me.

On that first day in the Gross Lab, I had no idea what to expect, and I was afraid. I had heard of bodies being donated to science, but I never imagined myself in a room with *eight* of them. I wanted nothing to do with the cadaver lab, and viewed it as only an anxiety-provoker, of which I already had too many. My classmates and I learned the rules of the lab and what we would be looking at this semester, and suddenly came the moment I had been dreading since I learned about the Gross Lab the fall of my freshman year: part of a body was uncovered; it was then that I realized what an incredible sacrifice had been made for our benefit.

Each one of the bodies before us were people who lived out the idea of *magis* – doing more – even in death; they chose to donate their bodies to our education so that one day we, too, will follow in their footsteps and practice *magis* in treating our clients. The Gross Lab experience has also fostered the idea of *Cura Personalis* within us; we are learning how to care for people respectfully and in their entirety, in both their life and death, making sure each person is more than a diagnosis or an ailment.

I'm not sure if I believe in the god that is most often taught here at Scranton, but I do believe in something, a higher power; how else can one explain the perfect complexities of the human body, or a person's selfless wishes to donate theirs to science? As members of the helping professions, it is our job to make sure that these gifts are not wasted; we must be present in every experience we are given, and most importantly, be thankful for those whose ultimate sacrifice made this part of our education possible.