Pussy Riot Members Visit Purchase College

Russian political activists Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina, former members of the Russian arts collective known as Pussy Riot, visited Purchase College-SUNY.

Purchase, NY (PRWEB) February 14, 2014 -- Russian political activists Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina, former members of the Russian arts collective known as Pussy Riot, visited Purchase College-SUNY on Friday, Feb. 7, 2014 to meet with Suzanne Kessler, dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences, who also serves as chair of the board for Rehabilitation Through the Arts (RTA), an organization that brings innovative arts programs to five prisons in New York state. The Purchase College meeting was arranged for the two world-famous Russian performance artists and political activists to discuss prison conditions in Russia and the United States with Dean Kessler and members of RTA.

While the meeting was not publicized or open to the press, Allee Manning, a Purchase senior majoring in journalism and gender studies, was invited by the journalism program to cover the event exclusively for The Purchase Beat, the college’s acclaimed music and arts magazine, as well as The Purchase Phoenix, a separate digital publication.

In her insightful article, “Pussy Riot: An Under the Radar Visit to Purchase,” published February 10, Manning says that the Pussy Riot activists have refocused their attention on Russian prison reform since their 21-month jail sentences ended on Dec. 23, 2013. The Purchase visit occurred during a week in which the two young activists also appeared on “The Colbert Report,” made a speech at the annual Amnesty International concert after being introduced by Madonna, and visited with New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“I had been following their story since we discussed the trial in a journalism class called ‘Covering the Arts’ with Professor Andrew Salomon, who founded The Purchase Beat, and who serves as a faculty advisor,” recalled Manning. Salomon, along with Ross Daly, a journalism professor at Purchase, who serves as chair of the School of Humanities, encouraged Manning to cover the Pussy Riot meeting.

“From the time I started in the journalism program at Purchase College, professors have said that we will cover important people and events someday,” Manning said. “It’s exciting that it has happened sooner than expected.”

For more on this historic meeting, read Manning’s article at: http://www.thepurchasebeat.com/pussy-riot-an-under-the-radar-visit-to-purchase/

About Purchase College–SUNY

Purchase College, part of the State University of New York (SUNY) network of 64 universities and colleges, was founded in 1967 by Governor Nelson Rockefeller. His aspirations for Purchase were to combine on one campus conservatory training in the visual and performing arts with programs in the liberal arts and sciences. Today, Purchase College–SUNY is a community of students, faculty, and friends where open-minded engagement with the creative process leads to a lifetime of intellectual growth and professional opportunity. For more information about the College, visit www.purchase.edu
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