The Newest Honors Class
300 Incoming Students
Choosing a Challenge

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In the course of my interviews for this position, many asked why I wanted this job. Although the parallels with my research specialty (Russian history) make administration an interesting intellectual adventure, such activities generally are not as exciting as the archive or the classroom. Yet, my answer to the question was, and is, one connected to my interest in the past. As an historian, I found the opportunity to engage creatively with the legacy of the Honors Program—its foundations and the students that help create them—to be an exciting prospect.

In addition, I continue to be drawn to the transformative role that a Catholic and Marianist education intended to challenge high-achieving students can play in our lives and in the world around us. Indeed, on these pages you will get a good glimpse of how all of you—past and present—embrace your callings as students to explore the mystery of God’s creation in all of its manifestations. You continue to be torch-bearers of a Catholic intellectual tradition that spans two millennia. Furthermore, you have become models of “honor” with your courage, humility, thankfulness and faith—people who, like Mary, have trusted enough to say “yes” to what God asks of you. This legacy of scholarship, leadership, and honor drew me to this position and reminds me every day—even amid the clutter of time cards and meetings—that this is a program that makes a difference in the world in many ways. I am honored and blessed to be a part of it.

The University Honors Program thanks you for your contributions of talent, treasure, news, and humor over the years, and wishes you all the very best. Please keep in touch, visit when you can, and know that, as surely as your class picture hangs on the wall in Jill’s office, you are always a UD Honors Student. Peace,

David W. Darrow, Ph.D.

Welcome to HONORSlink—the latest edition of news and notes from the University of Dayton Honor Program.

Over the past four years the Honors Program has made great progress in serving more of the University’s most talented students. This fall Dr. David Darrow, Associate Professor of History and former Director of International Studies, took the helm as the Program’s fifth director.

Under previous directors, Dr. Steven Dandlaneau and Dr. Patricia M. Hart, the Program expanded its diploma options to all students in the University Honors Program. The Berry Scholars Program is winding down, with the final class having entered in the fall of 2009. Now more than 200 students each year enter UD as equal members of the Honors Program with the opportunity to earn a University Honors Program diploma. The Honors academic staff currently includes Associate Director Dr. Andrew Murray (Mechanical Engineering), who organizes and leads the thesis process, and Dr. John McCombe (English), who serves as Associate Director for Fellowship Advising.

Current Honors Program students now can earn one of four Honors Program diplomas through three pathways. Last year, 87 students earned diplomas and Honors keys from the University Honors Program. While the Honors Program is proud to offer opportunities and benefits to a larger group of students, it remains committed to building and maintaining a close-knit community. This year’s incoming first-year Honors students were invited to move in a day early and participate in a welcome program where they met upper class Honors students and learned more about the Program (see adjacent article). Also, first-year Honors students participate in Learning/Living communities where they take core courses with their newfound home. Because the Honors Program has never attempted to sponsor an event this large, extensive planning began immediately after the end of classes in April. Over the summer months, five “Leaders of Leaders” devoted a vast amount of time and energy to ensure that this event would run smoothly. And run smoothly it did! Beginning at 7:30 a.m., 64 student-leader volunteers arrived on campus to provide move-in assistance to incoming students. With over 200 students moving into 4 separate residence halls, the student leaders demonstrated superior skills in manual labor, traffic-directing, and alphabetization, all with never-waning smiles.

The HSW would not have been possible were it not for these crucial student volunteers, and they could not have been happier with the end result. A great majority of the student leaders reported satisfaction with their roles as leaders and expressed desire to participate in the HSW again.

The Leaders of Leaders (front to back)—Carol Harper, Natalie Berra, Stephanie Pugar, Jacob Rosen, and Zac Selch.

On-line issues of HONORSlink can be found at: http://honors.udayton.edu

Look there for our next issue in May!

What do you get when you combine 584 family members, 244 incoming Honors students, 64 student leaders, and 1 day? And no, the answer is not a headache. On August 20, 2010, the Honors Program hosted its first ever Honors Students Welcome (HSW). Inspired by a previous Honors summer orientation program designed for a smaller group of students, the HSW was an effort to provide all incoming Honors students with the opportunity to meet with peers, Honors Program faculty and staff, and the wide array of opportunities awaiting them at the University of Dayton.

After lunch it was time for the incoming students to willingly part from their parents and meet in small groups while Dr. Darrow hosted a parent question-and-answer session. The students were placed into small groups based on the criteria of residence hall and wide array of academic majors in an attempt to provide them an opportunity to meet and speak with students who have similar interests and live nearby. Through scavenger-hunting, and ice-cream-eating, incoming honors students became much more comfortable with their newfound home.

Sound like a productive day? It had just begun! For the next three hours students were given the opportunity to sit in six modules covering topics such as national fellowships, student organizations, education abroad, service, scholarship, and the benefits of being in the Honors Program. With mounds of information clouding their brains, students moved to a farewell dinner during which they had the opportunity to win what Dr. Darrow likes to call “fabulous prizes” through a raffle drawing.

If you find it exhausting simply reading about all the events of one day, it is nothing compared to the drooping eyes of the incoming Honors students. However, despite the long day, students felt that the experience was positive and beneficial. One survey comment noted that “it helped to make things less overwhelming both socially and academically.” So, the HSW was able to accomplish its main goal to acquaint new students with UD and the Honors Program. With the largest class of students in UD’s history, the Honors Program anticipates the most active participation in the Program to date. The future Honors Students Welcome events are sure to continue to provide Honors students with an unforgettable introduction to their next four (or five) years at the University of Dayton.

Hoping to know each other better and share service, scholarship, and the benefits of being in the Honors Program. With mounds of information clouding their brains, students moved to a farewell dinner during which they had the opportunity to win what Dr. Darrow likes to call “fabulous prizes” through a raffle drawing.

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Bilocerkowycz feels she was first inspired to undertake the project when she was studying abroad in Ireland. “I did a lot of creative writing while I was abroad, and it’s a project that seems to have empowered me just enough to opt for the creative thesis,” she said. “I was living on the outskirts of Dublin and taking a Modernism course from a Dublin professor. We read parts of Joyce’s Ulysses, and his daughter, says Bilocerkowycz. Rather than a weakness, doubt is sometimes dismissed as a weakness. Faith, O’Connor asserts that disbelief can, in itself, serve as a source of redemptive suffering. With the litany of words and suffering, I will examine the paradoxical impulses of belief and disbelief in my creative thesis. This work will attempt an honest depiction of modesty and its refusal to approach belief or disbelief with any sense of gravity. Bilocerkowycz also feels that working on this project has allowed her to explore her own artistic direction as a writer. The opportunity pre­­vailed in the Honors thesis work has pushed her to work on this project, something she says she may not have done on her own.

In addition to her thesis work, Bilocerkowycz is applying for a Fulbright Fellowship to teach English in Armenia. “Armenian Orthodox culture is very unique, and it has produced some great writers. It is also a former Soviet state, like Ukraine, and that resonates with my background.”

In addition to her writing, Bilocerkowycz is also teaching college courses in American literature and contemporary literature, and she plans to pursue a Ph.D. in creative writing. She is currently working on a novel that explores the intersection of faith and doubt, and she hopes to have it published soon. She also feels that her Honors experience has empowered her to pursue her writing career and has helped her to develop her own unique voice as a writer. She plans to continue writing and exploring her creative ideas in the future, and she hopes to one day have a successful career as a writer. She feels that the Honors Program has provided her with the support and resources she needed to pursue her writing passion and has helped her to grow as a writer. She feels that the program has been a valuable experience for her and that she would highly recommend it to other students who are interested in pursuing a creative writing career. She would like to thank the Honors Program for their support and encouragement and she hopes to continue to grow and develop as a writer in the future.


2003 Chris Hunt: I am currently in my eighth year at the law firm of Keeler, Hough & Gunning LLP in Columbus, Ohio. I primarily practice in the areas of employment, workers’ compensation, personal injury, and general civil litigation. In 2001, I joined the firm’s labor and employment practice, and I have represented employers in a variety of industries.

2004 Kinza and Shahyan: We are a financial services company in St. Louis. I am currently in my first year of residency at the moment. My wife and I are living in Lexington, Kentucky, where we were married at the beginning of April 2010, at St. John’s Cathedral in Boise, Idaho. I am assigned as a parish priest on the diocese of Idaho.

2005 Taylor Campbell: I have been working for Procter and Gamble in R&D. Here’s what I received my Masters degree from the University of California-Santa Barbara in 2007 and have been spending time over the last month with family in Denver, Colorado. I am currently working toward a Ph.D. in biological anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin and plan to continue my work in paleoanthropology.

2006 Sarah Stoddard: I am currently in my ninth year of teaching at the University of Dayton. I am working on my PhD in educational psychology and am currently working on a project that examines the effects of technology on student engagement.

2007 Brian: I am an assistant professor of educational psychology at the University of Houston. My research focuses on the role of technology in education and how it can be used to support diverse learners. I am particularly interested in the use of educational technology to support students with disabilities.
HONORS STUDENTS ARE NEWEST CHAMINADE SCHOLARS
Six of the Chaminade Scholars recently announced are Honors students from the Class of 2013. Congratulations to Emily Hascher, Nicholas Fahrig, Colleen Federici, Kara Kindel, Sarah Kociuba and Emily Motz!

MEGHANN WYGONIK RECEIVES “SMART” MONEY
The U.S. Department of Defense awarded junior civil engineering major and Honors student Meghann Wygonik a SMART scholarship—Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation—that will provide funding for full tuition, a $1,000 book allowance, other education-related fees, paid summer internships, health insurance and a job after graduation. Wygonik, who graduated from Kiski Area High School near Pittsburgh, said she is excited to return home for her internship and post-graduation employment with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District.

NATIONAL GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO JULIA FAETH
Julia Faeth, a senior Honors student majoring in chemical engineering, has been awarded a 2010-2011 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship. Faeth is currently conducting research under Dr. Sukhjinder Sidhu with the Sustainable Environmental Technologies Group at UDRI.

In addition, Faeth was recently awarded an American Institute of Chemical Engineers National Scholarship based on academic performance and involvement in chapter activities.

DAN PRINdle SELECTED TO NATIONAL GOOD WORKS TEAM
University of Dayton senior offensive tackle and Berry Scholar Dan Prindle has been selected to the 2010 Allstate AFCA Good Works Team. Allstate Insurance Company and the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) annually select the team, which is one of the most prestigious off-the-field honors in college football. Prindle is the first UD player ever selected to the Good Works team.

NICHOLAS PESOLA WINS UD’S RILEY AWARD
Nicholas Pesola, a senior Honors student and psychology and Spanish double major, was the winner of the 2010 Riley Award. This University of Dayton award recognizes a junior student who has exercised sustained leadership through involvement with student initiatives, exemplifying the educational and service values of the University. Nick is an active member of the UD and City of Dayton communities. He also devotes attention to service trips and immersion experiences that benefit the residents of other states and countries.

JOHN MCGINNIS AWARDED NATIONAL CLINTON SCHOLARSHIP
John McGinnis, junior international studies and Spanish major, was recently awarded a William Jefferson Clinton Scholarship to study at the American University in Dubai for the Spring 2011 semester. This scholarship entitles John to a 100% waiver in tuition and housing during his stay, allowing McGinnis to continue his studies in the Arabic culture and language.

January
21 Honors Art Exhibit Open House
31 Honors Students Symposium: Senior Registration Due
31 Hull Applications Due

February
11 An Honors Evening at the Dayton Philharmonic

March
11 Honors Students Symposium
11 Honors Students Reception

April
1 Juniors: Thesis Proposal and Grant Request Documents Due
8 Seniors: Theses Due
13 Joseph W. Stander Symposium

May
7 Honors Graduation Brunch
8 Graduation