



HONORS COLLEGE NEWS

SPECIAL EDITION ISSUE NO. 4 FALL 2023

HONORS AS LEADERS

The mission of the William Paterson University Honors College is to provide learning opportunities to high-achieving students and to encourage their involvement in research, leadership and service. In this special edition of our newsletter, we highlight some of the current students' many accomplishments. Their engagement in significant projects which impact our community and develop our understanding of the world is evident in their stories. I hope you enjoy reading about their dedication and accomplishments. I wish you a peaceful and restorative winter break!

- Dr. Barbara Andrew, Dean, Honors College

ONE STEP CLOSER TO GRADUATION

This year, 11 seniors, from different majors and representing six of the eleven Honors Tracks, presented their research or creative art projects. The research tracks are aimed at providing students an interdisciplinary outlet to supplement and enhance their college education. Every year, the projects are a culmination and reflection of the student's personal passions, academic interests, and career goals. This year was no different! For many seniors, they are also an excellent way to depict their strong analytical and research skills, creativity, and commitment towards producing exemplary work to prospective graduate programs and employers. Congratulations to all of the presenters and their thesis advisers for seeing these projects through—from concept to fruition. The 11 presenters and their thesis advisers include: Jason Braun (Dr. Timothy Newman and Dr. Martha Witt); Sara De La Cruz Jimenez (Dr. K. Molly O'Donnell); Rinesa Gerbeshi (Dr. Danielle Wallace); Sorang Jung (Dr. K. Molly O'Donnell); Matthew Mousseau (Dr. Lauren Fowler-Calisto and Dr. Timothy Newman); Hawon Park (Dr. Lauren Fowler-Calisto and Dr. Carol Frierson-Campbell); Nicole Pike (Dr. Lauren Fowler-Calisto and Dr. Carol Frierson-Campbell); Anna Sancilio (Dr. Bruce Diamond); Julia Sklow (Dr. K. Molly O'Donnell); Brianna Wynne (Dr. Carey Waldburger and Dr. Joe Spagna); and Crystal Yoon (Dr. Lauren Fowler-Calisto and Dr. Payton MacDonald).

IN THIS ISSUE



Pioneering Researchers



Annual Honors Coat Drive



#HonorsGives Back



Taking Leadership with Her, ft. Alumnus Julianna McVeigh '22



Looking Forward to Spring 2024

SAVE THE DATE!

Spring 2024 Honors Research Week

April 15-19, 2024

Showcasing the work of over 100 Honors College seniors! The full schedule and details will be available in the Spring.

FALL 2023 SEMESTER-AT-A-GLANCE

The diversity of our Honors students is not only reflected in the various majors they pursue, but also in the different ways they lead. Simply put, our Honors students are leaders in research and service—while at William Paterson and beyond! Check out some of the many accomplishments of our Honors students!

- The Honors College welcomed Dr. Danielle Wallace and Dr. John Malindretos as Track Directors of the Social Sciences and Business Tracks, respectively.
- 11 students in Dr. Amy Learmonth's Cognitive Science Honors Track applied to the Eastern Psychology Association Annual Conference being held in Philadelphia in late February 2024.
- 2 students in Dr. Marianne Sullivan's Global Public Health Track applied to the Northeast Regional Honors Council Annual Conference being held in Albany, NY in April 2024.
- Jessica David '24 won 1st place in the speed-selling activity and 2nd overall in the 16th National Sales Competition hosted by William Paterson.
- Recent graduate Ashley Shoemaker '23 started a position as an editorial assistant at Penguin Random House.
- Kourtney Scipio '24 and Jason Peralta'25 served as the two student representatives on the Board of Trustees.
- Tyler Sanchez '24 was accepted into Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine in Middletown, NY where he will be pursuing a DO.

#HONORSGIVESBACK

This semester, Honors was heavily involved in community service activities. Students participated in various individual and group activities that gave back to the campus community and local neighborhood. As always, Honors emphasizes service in addition to academic excellence. These events are great ways to make meaningful connections with other students, faculty, and members of the community, extend a classroom education to real-life, and have a positive impact on someone's day!



In September, many Honors students participated in Pioneer Service Ventures, hosted by the department of Campus Activities, Service, and Leadership. Out of the 133 students who attended, 96 of them were Honors students! Honors Associate Director, Jan Pinkston, also volunteered along with the students and assisted with the event. Way to go, Honors!



Honors is excited to be partnering with an organization called Paterson Cares. On November 18th and December 9th, Honors students made over 130 packets that included a sandwich, a granola bar, and a small handmade note of encouragement. The items were given to Paterson Cares, a collective group of volunteers who are concerned about societal issues affecting residents of Paterson. Paterson Cares volunteers distributed the sandwiches to people in need on the streets of Paterson.



This fall, Honors started offering Saturday Service at the Father English Community Center in Paterson. Each week, groups of Honors students spend at least two hours working at the regional food pantry, accepting donations, and stocking and organizing shelves.



On December 5th, a group of Honors students visited Children’s Day Preschool and Family Center in Passaic. They learned about the 130 year history of the school and how they are meeting the goal of providing preschool students with education, nutrition, health, therapeutic, and support services that establish a strong foundation for them to succeed in school and life. The students loved reading and interacting with the preschoolers.



ANNUAL HONORS COAT DRIVE

Text on the history of the coat drive and the kick-off, including quotes by James Bally and Carissa Ostolaza (JAN) approx. ½ page



The success of the annual Honors Coat Drive is due to the support we receive from the entire University community. For example, Susan Astarita and the staff of the Registrar's Office collected coats and donated them; individuals like Gamin Bartle, Chief Information Officer for WP stopped by the office with donations.

We are proud to say that we were able to collect a total 337 items this year!



MINI COAT DRIVE

Hosting a Mini-Coat Drive is a great opportunity for students to lead in their local community by collecting coats at their place of employment, former high school, or through a local organization. Many students form stronger ties to their communities by collaborating with stakeholders and other members. The Mini Coat Drive requires hard work, dedication, and leadership skills. Thank you to all students for taking on this responsibility and working with towns that mean so much to them.

Adham Mustafa



Adham is a junior, majoring in Biology and in the Global Public Health Honors Track. Adham and his family are engaged in their neighborhood and community. Adham collected coats and other items from his home in Clifton. Adham credits his parents and community leaders in mosques and elsewhere for teaching him the importance of donating to others. Even if it is the smallest bit of help, every little step builds to bigger steps, said Adham. "I believe that if a community stands together we can really be able to make the world a better place to live in."

Patricia Gwozdz



Patricia is a senior nursing major who has already completed her requirements for the Clinical and Neuropsychology Honors Track. The idea of running a her own mini-coat drive really appealed to her because it allowed her to play an active role in helping others. She noted that is always easy to show up to an event already organized, and while that is still contributing to the cause, she wanted take the opportunity to do even more than that. "I wanted to organize an event that could make a difference in someone's life."

For Patricia, the topic of the social justice issue of poverty and the distribution of wealth, weighed heavily on her mind, and her. For example, a majority of my collection came from her town, Sparta, New Jersey. She found that according to the U.S. Census, the median household income of Sparta in \$145,000, 86% of the population is white, and 2.5% of the population lives in poverty. When she compared this to Paterson, NJ, which is the location of the Father English Community Center, the average household income is \$48,540, 62.6%, they are Hispanic or Latino, and 25.1% live in poverty. Patricia noted that it really put into perspective how, although she lives in the same state only about an hour away, people's lives are so different.

Jessica David, Jordan David, and Isabel Nemeth



Isabel Nemeth a senior Psychology major in the Global Public Health Track worked with the David sisters (Jessica, a senior in Political Science and in the Social Sciences Track and Jordan, a sophomore Biology major). This was Isabel's and Jessica's second annual mini-coat drive at Holsten's, their place of employment and the beloved local ice cream parlor in Bloomfield. Inspired by the success of last year's coat drive, Isabel and Jessica were eager to repeat the experience, and this time they invited Jordan, to join them. Not only is she an employee at Holsten's, but she is also a WP Honors student, mirroring Isabel's and Jessica's academic commitments. Holsten's holds a special place in our hearts as all three of us have worked there throughout our entire college education. Despite the challenges of balancing school and work, it not only helped them financially through college but also felt rewarding to see the outcome of the coat drive at the place that supported our education for the last three years. They are especially thankful to their bosses, Chris Carley and Ron Stark, for helping them bring their vision to life. As New Jersey natives, the trio feels that it is particularly meaningful to give back to the community they grew up in, especially the during the holiday season, and they all agree that the annual Coat Drive is their most favorite civic engagement event offered by the Honors College.





On December 13th, the Honors College held the Civic Engagement Recognition and Pinning Ceremony. Students who hosted a Mini Coat Drive were recognized for their hard work and dedication. This was also an opportunity for students to receive their Honors College lapel pin. Every year, this is a celebratory event to highlight all the good that our Honors students do!

Pictured (left to right): Jordan David, Isabel Nemeth, President Richard Helldobler, Patricia Gwozdz, Jessica David, and Dean Barbara Andrew.

THANK YOU!

In addition to thanking the entire UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY for your help and support, we would like to extend a special thank you to the following individuals and departments for their efforts and assistance in making the Coat Drive successful!

The Honors Club President, Anna Segelken, and Executive Board members Carmine Coscia, Angie Marcucilli, Isabel Mujia, Justina Saad, Kourtney Scipio, and Cami Vasquez.

Dr. Joe Spagna for driving the van and transporting student volunteers to Father English and the College of Science and Health for the use of their van.

Mr. Jim Shelley, Director of Physical Plant Operations for providing a van to deliver the coats to Father English, and also to his team, Leo Lugo and Khalid Sanders for delivering and driving the van.

Dean Tony Bowrin and his staff for hosting a collection box at the Cotsakos College of Business at 1800 Valley Road.

Ms. Johanna Prado, Associate Director, Center for Degree Completion and Adult Learning (DCAL), for hosting a collection box at the School of Continuing and Professional Education at 1600 Valley Road.

Ms. Susan Astarita and the Office of the Registrar for collecting coats in their department.

Ms. Becky Baird, Director of Residence Life, for loaning us the Residence Life bins to assist with transporting the donations.

Ms. Donna Minnich-Spuhler and the Department of Campus Activities, Leadership and Service (CASL) and the Student Government Association (SGA).

Honors Graduate Assistant, Nicole Joachim, and Honors Student Interns, Jess Momanyi and Helen Yousaf.

Honors College Peer Leaders: Madison Knueppel, Isabel Mujia, Anna Segelken, Owen Walter, and Helen Yousaf.

HONORS RESEARCH DAY

First-Year students in the HON 1000: Honors Research Seminar courses presented individual or group projects on research related to their specific course section. Like every year, an interdisciplinary group of faculty and staff introduced students to college-level research and research methods through these courses. A special thank you to all of the faculty and staff who worked with the students.



Justice, Equity and Joy in Public Education

Dr. Darlene Russell and Mr. Neil Grimes

The seminar's core research question orbits around how can the themes of justice, equity, and joy in PK-13 settings be integrated into the PK-13 educational experience. This theme will be showcased in students' research presentations as they consider what factors and systems influence pedagogy, and how justice, equity and joy can be explored and championed in PK-13 settings. Research methodologies will include surveys, inter-

Writing for Wellness

Dr. Martha Witt

Informed by James Pennebaker's groundbreaking work on the health benefits of expressive writing, students respond to specific prompts as they chart their own writing journeys. Students end the semester with a greater appreciation for narrative's possibilities and the role that artistic expression can play in their own and others' development.



Immigration in Film

Dr. Keumjae Park

Students are examining various issues related to immigration. Topics include identity, integration and acculturation, children of immigrants, healthcare, and immigrants' influence on American music. Some students are exploring other topics including animals and conservation and the education system.



Marine Fossils from the WP Campus Region

Dr. Martin Becker

Well-preserved Devonian marine fossils (~ 400 Mya) occur scattered throughout wooded areas around the William Paterson (WP) backyard. These fossils were transported in boulders from the Hudson Valley region of New York State during our last glacial episode. The lithology of the fossiliferous boulders is distinct from our local volcanic basalt and consists of sandy limestone. The WP backyard fossil assemblage is significant and archives the complexities of sea-level and climate change as well as evolution of marine organisms. This assemblage also offers a straightforward body of evidence by which humans can appreciate timing associated with



The Impacts of Social Identity and Bias on Self and Society

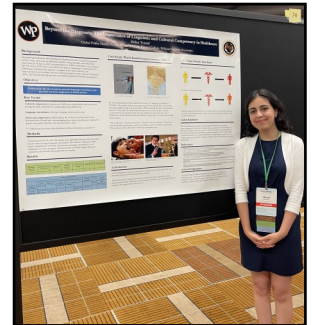
Dr. Elizabeth Harkins and Mr. Tony Joachim

Students examined various, overlapping, structural social inequities and the impacts of bias. They participated in a guided research experience that connected theory to research. Each student chose a topic that connects how structural inequalities have been built and maintained, the impacts of these inequalities, and tactics to rectify disparities with a particular focus on bias.



FROM JERSEY TO CHICAGO

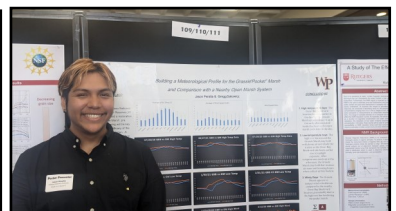
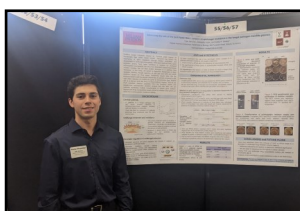
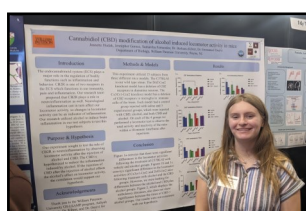
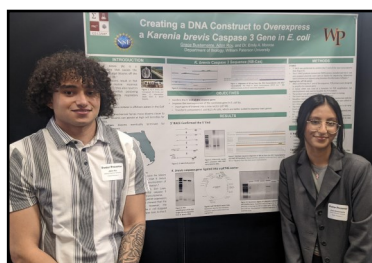
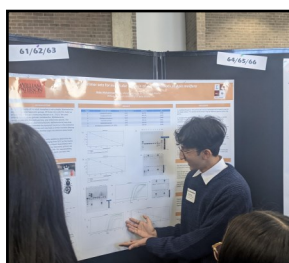
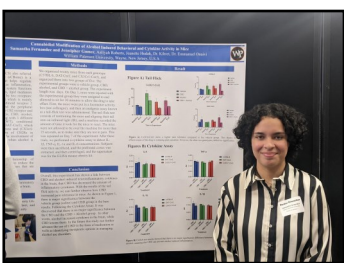
Medicinal Biochemistry major and member of the Global Public Health Honors Track, Helen Yousaf '24, took a step out of her usual lab setting in November to attend the National Collegiate Honors Council Annual Conference. The peer leader and office intern presented her research titled, "Beyond the Diagnosis: The Importance of Linguistic and Cultural Competency in Healthcare". Her research was the preliminary work she had conducted for her thesis, the rest of which she will present at Honors Research Week next Spring 2024. She says "The experience was very fulfilling. I really think this research is relevant now and I am just very grateful to have had the opportunity to present it to a larger audience, and hopefully make an impact!" The goal of her research is to really analyze the way in which healthcare is provided through a sociocultural and structural determinants of health lens. "Health perceptions and approaches vary around the world and are shaped by much more complex factors than they seem. It's vital that patient care reflects this." While at the conference, Helen was also awarded the 2023 John J. Hanigan Award which is given to one student per year who demonstrates a history of service and commitment to the spirit of volunteering. We are so proud of Helen and all of her accomplishments as an Honors student at WPU!



RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY GIVES STUDENTS PRESENTATION EXPERIENCE

In October, students in the William Paterson Garden State-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (GS-LSAMP) program presented their summer research projects at Rutgers University. The program is funded by the National Science Foundation with the goal of encouraging underrepresented students to gain opportunities in STEM fields. Participants benefit from mentoring, scholarships, and opportunities to engage in relevant research. This past summer, over a dozen Honors students held research positions in the Biology and Chemistry labs on campus and the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve. Congratulations to all the presenters for their accomplishments! We love to see our Honors students excelling and following their passions.

Featured Honors students, from left to right (top row): Samantha Hernandez, Didar Yahia, Adon Roy, Brianna Wynne, (bottom row): Jakia Uddin, Jeanette Hudak, Tyler Sanchez, Jason Peralta



ONCE AN HONORS LEADER, ALWAYS A LEADER



As an undergraduate student majoring in **public health education and promotion**, Honors student **Julianna McVeigh '22** was nothing short of busy. In more ways than one, she was a leader on campus, even winning the **2021 Scholar Leader Award** by the **Student Government Association**. She managed a busy course load while interning at the **Ridgewood Health Department** and being an Office Assistant in the **Honors College Office**. Her leadership skills were evident in her active involvement all around campus, whether that was serving as **President of the Honors College Club** and the **National Panhellenic Conference**, being a member of the **Public Health Coalition**, or being **Secretary of the Order of Omega Greek Honor Society** (just to name a few things!).

After graduating and moving on to pursue her **Masters in Public Health (MPH) in Health Policy (Climate Change and Health concentration)** at the **Yale University School of Public Health (YSPH)**, it seems those leadership skills haven't left her. In fact her skills have enhanced. Julianna continues to have a busy schedule as she is a teaching fellow in in practice-based courses such as the Health Policy Practicum. But her involvement continues to extend beyond the classroom by working with the Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity and interning at Yale Law School in their Environmental Protection Clinic.

In her words, "Each opportunity has been so enriching and FUN!"

All of her accomplishments so far culminated to a very special full-circle moment when she attended the **American Public Health Association's 2023 Conference in Atlanta, GA** in November. While attending sessions on environmental justice and park equity, she ran into her **Global Public Health Honors Track Director, Dr. Marianne Sullivan**. She also ran into her "Intro to Public Health" professor, **Lisa Gulla**. Reflecting on her whole experience, she says "It was so exciting to see people who shaped my interest in public health and to be advancing my education in health policy!"

At Yale, Julianna continues to embody the same spirit of a leader she did while at William Paterson and it is fitting to say "Once an Honors leader, always a leader!"



LOOKING AHEAD

Looking forward to the Spring 2024 semester, we will continue partnering with the Honors Club on card writing for senior citizens and health care heroes. We will also continue working with the Father English Community Center on Saturday Service and other projects.



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