Congratulations! Two weeks ago the Honors College and the Office of the Provost hosted the annual Honors Convocation ceremony, and it was fabulous! The ceremony honors students who have won academic awards from departments and deans, as well as all the Honors students who are graduating from their tracks. This year we filled Shea Auditorium, with proud students, parents, professors, and friends! On May 13, we gathered at the Prudential Center for Commencement where 2015 Honors College graduate Rebecca Wance delivered the Valedictorian’s address, and 2013 Honors College graduate Miranda Van Dunk delivered the Address by a Master’s Degree Candidate (she is completing the BS/MS program in Communication Disorders). Almost 100 Honors students graduated this year, and we congratulate them all.

This will be my last note to you as Director of the Honors College at William Paterson University. I will spend the summer working with Professor Barbara Andrew who will serve as Interim Director of the Honors College next year. Dr. Andrew currently chairs the Philosophy Department, and she is a wonderful addition to the Honors College. Next year the University will conduct a national search to find a new permanent Director or Dean for the Honors College, and students will play a role in that process. In August I will begin my new job as Dean of the Pfozheimer Honors College at Pace University.

I will miss William Paterson University and my colleagues and students tremendously. I have enjoyed my ten years on campus, and together we have built a very impressive Honors College. I thank you all for the support you have given me, the times you have challenged me, and the many times you have made me laugh and realize how much I appreciate the work I do and the people with whom I do it. My new email address will be sdinan@pace.edu. Please keep in touch.

-sed

Dr. Dinan has enthusiastically served as the Director of the Honors College for ten years. Her dedication to the Honors College at William Paterson University has been invaluable to its foundation and growth. The students, faculty, and staff of the Honors College wish to extend their deepest gratitude to Dr. Dinan for her scholarship, support, guidance, and passion. Her presence will be greatly missed.
Manar Awad is a recent Honors graduate who presented her thesis this past April during Honors Week. She graduated on May 13 with a double major in Accounting and Finance. Manar completed her thesis in the Business track and was invited to present her research to the Board of Trustees Educational Policy Committee. Among those in attendance were President Kathleen Waldron; Warren Sandmann, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dean Siamack Shojai, Dean of the Cotsakos College of Business; Dr. Susan Godar, Interim Dean of the Cotsakos College of Business; Mr. William Pesce, William Paterson University Trustee; and Ms. Pamela Ferguson, Vice President for Institutional Advancement.

Manar impressed all with her research entitled, *Breaking the Barriers: How to Reduce Non Profit Organizations’ Struggle for Awareness and Increase Financial Prosperity.* Her research investigated the causes of financial distress of nonprofit organizations and examined methods through which organizations can increase their online presence and engagement with stakeholders.

The goal of the project was to raise awareness about non-profit organizations in ways that increase donations, volunteerism, and long term engagement. What sets this research apart is the fact that there has been little prior research that has explored the connections between the online presence and donations/volunteerism of non-profit organizations. Manar conducted student surveys and interviews with the goal of gaining an understanding of how students feel about non-profit organizations and their online presence. She is humbled and honored to have had the opportunity to present her thesis as well as represent her college in front of the Committee.

The Honors College wishes to congratulate Manar for her wonderful accomplishments!

“I was honored to have had the opportunity to present and to have represented my college.”

-Manar Awad
Track Time

The Independent Track is designed to accommodate students whose interests are outside of the other established tracks. Students who apply for this track work with the director of the Honors College to design a program that aligns with their needs and interests. In addition to working with the director, students must locate one or two advisors from appropriate academic departments that may act as mentors for them. Students are required to submit a three-page proposal to the director of the Honors College that describes each track class as well as the proposed thesis project in detail. All proposals must be approved by the director before students can be admitted to the Independent Track. Students in the Independent Track have produced projects with the following titles: 3D Printing and Designer Toys, Theoretical Investigation of Organic Semiconductor Heterojunction Potentials, and A Study of the Universe through Non-Euclidean Geometry.

For more information about the Independent Track, please contact the director of the Honors College or visit the Honors College website.

Interview with Alexa Zamora

Honors student, Alexa Zamora, is currently a sophomore majoring in media production. An avid Disney fan, Alexa recently took a semester off from her studies at William Paterson University to participate in Disney’s Fall 2014 Advantage Program. She recently spoke to Honors about her experiences in the program and her plans for the future.

Alexa’s program began in May 2014 and spanned until January 2015. As per program requirements, she registered for several seminar classes including a Disney Heritage Program in which she examined Disney’s film archives. As a media production major, the experience was fascinating for Alexa who appreciated the opportunity to examine films closely under the guidance of knowledgeable instructors. In addition to taking classes, Alexa was also assigned to the park’s custodial staff and worked on the east side of Disney’s Magic Kingdom.

When Alexa wasn’t occupied with classes or work responsibilities, she took advantage of opportunities to roam the Disney parks, visit the shops and restaurants of Downtown Disney, and explore Orlando. She is also grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and work with people from around the world.

Alexa’s experience in the Fall 2014 Advantage Program motivated her to apply to the Summer Alumni Program. She has recently been accepted and is looking forward to working on Disney’s attractions team.

News from Honors Faculty

Dr. Philip Cioffari, Director of the Honors Performing and Literary Arts Track, was recently presented with the John Fante and Pietro Di Donarto Literary Award by the Sons of Liberty. Sons of Liberty is the largest Italian American Organization in the United States. Each year, the organization presents the John Fante and Pietro Di Donarto Literary Award to an Italian American writer. The Honors College wishes to congratulate Dr. Cioffari upon receiving this recognition!
Honors Logo Contest

The Honors College and Honors Club recently invited students, past and present, to participate in the Honors Logo Contest. In total, seventeen original designs were submitted. Honors wishes to thank those who participated in the contest as well as those who submitted their votes online.

Sophomore student, Katherine Machere’s original design received the highest number of votes. Katherine is a sophomore pursuing a BFA in studio art sculpture and a K-12 education degree with special education certification. She has not yet chosen a track, however, she is considering the Independent Track as an outlet for her interests in art, education, and culture. Katherine’s logo design was inspired by her doodles, “...the lettering is what I always do to the top of my class notes,” she shared with Honors.

Katherine spent the Spring 2015 semester at California State University Chico in northern California as a part of the National Student Exchange Program. She recently took the time to share her experiences in the program with the Honors College.

**Honors College**: How did you find out about the NSE Program?

**KM**: How I found out about the program is actually a really funny story. During freshman year, my roommate and I were hungry one day, and we were looking for free food. We happened across free pizza so we listened to the presentation it was for, and it turned out to be way cooler than we bargained for. My interest spiked from there.

I wanted to apply because I didn’t really think that I’d ever get the chance to go to the West Coast if it weren’t for a program like NSE. I also found out that I could keep and utilize my scholarships if I did National Student Exchange as opposed to international. And lastly, I hate cold weather! I needed a break from the cold after last winter!

**HC**: What courses are you currently taking?

**KM**: I’m studying Art Education but because of the way William Paterson accepts education credits, right now I’m taking some really cool art classes. I have 7 classes, Glass Art, Body Sculpture, Basic Sculpture, Advanced Life Drawing, Asian Art History, An internship with the art gallery, and Intercultural Contexts Class. The Internship is great because it is through the Art Education program here so I work with young children in the art gallery after school and we do projects with them weekly, it really is what I want to do with my life so I enjoy it.

**HC**: Are you working on any interesting projects?

**KM**: Interesting Projects! Yes! You asked the right girl! Right now for my body sculpture class I am making an action figure of myself, it has to be to scale and have accessories and all! Also in glass art we’re learning mold making so I had my parents ship me a wax piece I made in foundry that I’m going to be casting in glass this week.

**HC**: What advice do you have for students who might be interested in the National Student Exchange Program?

**KM**: Advice for students who might be interested... DO IT!!!! Here’s why, If you’re an honors student at William Paterson, chances are you live close by, it was an affordable option, and you probably have scholarships just like I do. Through Plan B all of my scholarships were usable so I was able to study in Cali for the same cost I pay at William Paterson (plus a flight or two). It’s an awesome deal. They also have honors exchange, I met a friend here from South Dakota, and she’s enrolled in an honors class here while on her exchange. She’s taking an honors seminar class and said it was really cool. And besides that, NSE gave me the opportunity to come to the west coast, which never would have happened otherwise. I strongly recommend it! I’m having a great time out here.

If you have any questions about the NSE program, Katherine will be happy to answer them. Feel free to contact her at: macherek@student.wpunj.edu.
Stories from Students

Senior nursing students, Amanda Uhlick, Carolyn Woyce, and Emily Houwen, took their studies outside of the classroom this past January. The trio embarked on a six day mission trip that brought them to Haiti on January 5, 2015. The trip was sponsored by Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honor Society of Nurses, and Foundation for Peace, a non-profit organization that aims to unify the United States with materially impoverished communities such as those found in Haiti, Kenya, and the Dominican Republic. The organization works to provide healthcare, education, and economic opportunities meant to enable community growth and personal success to those living in communities with limited resources.

Emily, Amanda, and Carolyn met with Dr. Christina McSherry, former Director of the Nursing Honors Track, as they traveled to join approximately thirty other members of their mission group which included, William Paterson alumni, nursing students from other universities, and healthcare professionals. The group was housed in Deller’s Inn Hotel located in Croix-des-Bouquets. Throughout the course of their stay, volunteers visited a total of four local clinics and an orphanage. At each of the clinics, nursing students were paired with registered nurses as they prepared to assess and assist patients. Emily, Amanda, and Carolyn had opportunities to assess patients of all ages and provide them with medication and treatment options, a task that was made difficult by the limited amount of supplies. “The main goal was to address patients,” shared Amanda, “to establish eye-contact, and to communicate proper instructions to patients with the assistance of a translator.” In addressing their patients, students came to understand that their presence was valued by the locals, whose smiles and warm welcomes made it clear that their time and knowledge were well-received.

Interacting with locals was difficult as a result of cultural, linguistic, and educational barriers; however, Emily shared that it was not impossible. “We still made connections,” she stated, speaking about her experience visiting the orphanage. The students spent time playing soccer with the children of the orphanage. While verbal communication was limited, all three students felt that smiles, laughter, and personalized attention allowed them to reach the children despite cultural differences.

The places they visited were places where, “Happiness is not materialistic,” stated Carolyn. The trip, according to Emily, Amanda, and Carolyn, helped them to put things into perspective. As a result of their participation in this global cause, all three students have experienced the variety of paths open to individuals with nursing degrees, had opportunities to network, learned alongside experienced professionals, and heard stories from inspiring people that will motivate them as they look to begin their professional careers.

Club Corner

The Honors College Club recently held elections for the Fall 2015 Semester Executive Board. Election polls were open for a 24 hour period. Students had the opportunity to vote online or in-person at the Honors Office, Raubinger 154.

Thank you to all those who contributed to the election process. The following candidates received the highest number of votes and will enthusiastically lead the Honors College Club next semester:

Executive Board
President - Brandon Reis
Vice President - Stephanie Spies
Secretary - Jenna Schreck
Treasurer - Nejesea Brown

Operations Board
Social Events Coordinators - Jason Goolamadeen, Marina Bishara
Public Relations Coordinators - Janella Mae Tenorio, Izabela Grzebyk
Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference

This year’s Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference, sponsored by the National Collegiate Honors Council and the Northeast Regional Honors Council, was held April 9 - April 11 in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The Conference establishes a forum for research, discussion, and networking. It presents Honors students with the opportunity to present their thesis research to other university students and faculty members. Students can gain valuable presentation experience as well as have the opportunity to assess the reception of their research by a large audience.

The Honors College is proud to announce that four William Paterson Honors students presented at this year’s “Battlefields of Change” conference. Nursing students, Matthew Louie, Rebecca Lubitz, Trishia Omana, and Sara Williams attended the event with Dr. Susan Dinan, Director of the Honors College, and Jan Pinkston, Assistant Director of the Honors College.

In addition to presenting at the conference, students also enjoyed opportunities to visit the historic sights at Gettysburg before returning to present their research to the University community during Honors Week.

Students Honored at Red Dress Dinner

Each year, the Student Government Association funds a Red Dress Dinner during Women’s History Month. All proceeds of the event are donated to The American Heart Association. This year’s event was held on Wednesday, March 25. In attendance were honors students, Xiana Guiterrez and Trishia Omana, who were both honored at the event with Women of Vision Awards.

Xiana is a junior nursing student who was nominated by Maribel Rodriguez. She was recognized for her academic excellence, volunteerism, and the leadership roles she has taken on. Xiana is a student ambassador, orientation leader, President of the Brilliant and Beautiful Youth Dolls service organization, and has developed the WP Women’s Retreat, a program designed to support women in surrounding community organizations.

Trishia is a senior nursing student who was nominated by Jan Pinkston. She was recognized for the active community service roles she has taken on since high school, the leadership roles she holds in the Student Nurses Association at William Paterson, as well as her strength, determination, and dedication in achieving the educational and professional goals that she has set for herself.

Honors College students, Erica Park and Kristina Lynn Sternesky, were recognized for being Student Essay Contest winners. The Honors College wishes to congratulate Xiana, Trishia, Erica, and Kristina for their outstanding achievements and upon receiving honorable recognition at this year’s event.

(from left) Trishia Omana and Xiana Guiterrez holding their Women of Vision Awards at the 2015 Red Dress Dinner

Rebecca Lubitz and Trishia Omana showing off their William Paterson gear at the conference

(from left) Matthew Louie, Trishia Omana, Sara Williams, Rebecca Lubitz

(from left) Matthew Louie, Trishia Omana, Jan Pinkston Sara Williams, Rebecca Lubitz, Dr. Susan Dinan
In the November/December issue of the Honors College Newsletter, we challenged you to put your knowledge of the Honors College faculty/staff to the test. Congratulations to Dr. Carole Sheffield who correctly identified the greatest number of faculty/staff baby photos. Thank you to all who participated. Be sure to check your guesses below!
荣学生接受教学邀请，前往牛津

Eric Dolan是一位近期的荣誉毕业生，他被授予广播新闻学学位，并辅修媒体研究。他通过表演和文学艺术路线完成了荣誉论文。在春季学期准备论文报告的同时，Eric在纽约公共图书馆的表演艺术部门实习，并计划在春季假期前往牛津，协助Rob Quicke博士举办讲座。Eric利用空闲时间与荣誉学院分享了他的经历。以下是他说关于他令人兴奋的经历。

荣誉学院：你当前的实习职位是什么？
ED：我目前是纽约公共图书馆在林肯中心表演艺术部门的博物馆部门实习生。

HC：该职位包括哪些职责？
ED：由于我的背景涉及无线电，对早期电视剧和无线电戏剧有极大的兴趣，我被委任了在我们的电台广播前在纽约公共图书馆的档案中寻找剧本的任务。我还帮助策划了即将展出的展览，帮助构建了展览，为文物写了描述性的文字。

HC：你是如何找到或申请该职位的？
ED：我是在InternMatch网站上找到并申请的。我创建了一个帐户，并在上面搜索机会，最后发现了这个职位。如果互联网没有疯狂地将我与纽约公共图书馆和表演艺术部门联系起来，我可能根本就不会知道这个职位。

HC：你期待从这次经历中获得什么？
ED：有一种绝对的满足感来自于给旧手稿注入生命。我有机会浏览图书馆，找到一部由其创作者用铅笔标记的剧本，并将其带入大学校园，这是60年前首次表演。这是一个非常特别的事情，也是我想要在博物馆而不是商业媒体环境中获得的非传统媒体体验。

HC：你能告诉我们关于你的教学机会吗？
ED：我和Sebastian Escobar将帮助Rob Quicke博士在剑桥大学的Christchurch举办国际学院广播讲座。我们将有机会在观众面前发言，并帮助Quicke博士构建他的演讲框架。

HC：你是如何获得这个职位的？
ED：我从进了广播电台的第一天起就一直在与Quicke博士合作，最初是音乐总监，然后是他的记录公司College Radio Day Records的总监。当他在剑桥大学得到学术休假时，他与我们联系，表示希望我们在英国访问期间帮助他举办讲座，同时也能作为一个个人学习经历。Quicke博士是我在大学见过的最独特的教授，他希望我能通过这个机会在学术上成长，他的意图被他的个人和创造性的旅行愿望所超越。

HC：你最期待什么？
ED：尽管讲座本身将是令人难以置信的，但我从未离开过这个国家，所以只要我没有时差或一般性疲劳，那一步踏出飞机到国外的那一刻将是非常令人难以置信的。

HC：你认为这个机会将如何引导你未来的学术成就？
ED：我希望它能让世界上的研究生发抖，但我认为这主要是关于我从这次经历中获得的无形成长。我期待着教育机会，整个体验的专业性质，但更重要的是，我想分析并体验一个外国文化；我想从一个局外人的视角看待美国，看看它如何塑造我的创意风格。
Ask an Honors Student...

What are you most looking forward to this semester?

As a upper division curriculum (UDC) II nursing student, I am most looking forward to our clinical rotation in obstetrics during the spring semester. Hopefully throughout those 4 weeks we can witness a birth! But even if we don’t, it will still be awesome to interact with and care for mothers and babies.

-Anoush Kalachian
Nursing Class of 2016

Honors Students Host Book Talks

Dr. Ronald Verdicchio and students Eman Al-Jayeh, Bria Barnes, Kelly Ginart, Amani Kattaya, Megan Perry, and Paige Rainville, have been hard at work promoting the publication of their book, *Images of America, Prospect Park*. Published in December 2015, the book chronicles the unique history of Prospect Park, New Jersey, a borough rooted in Dutch traditions. Since the publication of the book, the research team has hosted book talks and signings at Ridgewood Public Library, The Passaic County Historical Society at Lambert Castle, and the Botto House American Labor Museum in Haledon. The team has also recently been interviewed by Marc Medley and Phillip Gorokhovsky for William Paterson’s Brave New Radio and plans to continue to explore forums through which to present research findings.

(from left) Amani Kattaya, Bria Barnes, Megan Perry, Eman Al-Jayeh, Kelly Ginart at the Botto House American Labor Museum

Paige Rainville, at the WPU Radio Station

(from left) Dr. Ronald Verdicchio and Dr. Susan Dinan at Passaic County Historical Society’s Lambert Castle
The Life of Pi Suite

Honors College: Which Honors Track did you select and why did you select this track?
Miguel Rodriguez: I selected the Performing and Literary Arts Track (PLA) because it seemed to align perfectly with my career interests of writing and performing. I also chose the track because I very much enjoyed having Professor Cioffari as my College Writing teacher. Working with him on my thesis was a complete joy. He really encouraged me to think outside the box.

HC: Can you tell us about your thesis project?
MR: My thesis project is really the culmination of all my musical and extra-musical work while at William Paterson. Even though I have been primarily studying music, I have developed a real appreciation for storytelling during my time here. I wanted to bridge these two things in an explicit way for my project. I decided to use one of my favorite novels/movies, The Life of Pi, and attempt to bring it to life as a suite of music. I incorporated a string section into a traditional style jazz instrumentation to hopefully achieve a cinematic sound. In my completed work I included a detailed explanation of how I analyzed passages from the book and translated the words into musical information. It was very fun being creative and thinking of different ways to express emotions in visceral musical ways.

While it’s easy to get wrapped up in the competitive nature of music school, this project really brings me closer to the root of why I play music. It’s for the audience and myself, not for the other musicians. I wanted to remove thoughts from my head like “I have to follow these rules,” or “it needs to be this complex”. I just want to create things that people can understand and really digest. For most people, jazz is something totally foreign and incomprehensible. I believe this comes from musicians wanting to excite and please other musicians. I hope that non-musicians can enjoy what I have put together.

HC: What do you see as the value of completing an Honors Thesis Project?
MR: I think doing a thesis project on a subject you really are passionate about can do many great things for your career. Also, in my experience, it has opened me up to different career paths I never imagined before. That is a big part of the Honors College experience for me - getting exposed to other peoples’ interests and collaborating in different ways. Overall, I think no matter how abstract or simple an idea you have for a thesis, there are practical uses for it. And whatever you do can take you right where you want to be. It can be a real boost.

Miguel Rodriguez is a 2015 Jazz Studies graduate. He recently spoke with Honors about his thesis project entitled, “The Life of Pi Suite” which he performed for the University community on April 23. See what Miguel had to say about his experiences in the Performing and Literary Arts Track.
This year, approximately sixty-five students presented their completed thesis projects during Honors Week. Graduating students submitted their work to the Honors College on May 1. Students took the opportunity to sign the 2015 board before leaving. Thesis reports will be filed in the Honors Office, Raubinger 154. All are welcome to stop by and browse the creative and original work of Honors students past and present. Be sure to check out this year’s graduates as they posed with their bound thesis projects!
Sneak a Peek at Honors Week

Honors Week 2015 was a great success! Congratulations to all students who provided both informative and entertaining thesis presentations. The Honors College wishes to thank all faculty members who have mentored student presenters as well as the students, faculty, staff, members of the University administration, parents, and other guests who attended Honors Week activities.
Students Present at New York City Conference

The Association for Psychological Science held its 27th Annual Conference in New York City on May 21-24. Among those in attendance were Eman Al-Jayeh, Samantha DiMeglio, Nicole Manzetti, Michelle Ginart, and Torri Jamie, all Honors students from the Cognitive Science Track. In addition to attending lectures and symposiums, students presented their Honors Research during poster sessions. “I never would have imagined that I would have attended an international conference and presented an original research study,” shared Michelle Ginart. “None of this would have been possible without the Honors College, my thesis advisor, Dr. Obrecht, and track director, Dr. Learmonth. This has been one of the best experiences of my college career, and it has opened some doors to future education and career options that I had not previously considered.”
UPCOMING EVENTS

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Commencement 2015

Approximately one hundred Honors students participated in the 2015 Commencement Ceremony held at the Prudential Center in Newark on May 13. Honors College graduate, Rebecca Wance delivered this year’s Valedictorian Address. Honors alumni, Miranda Van Dunk ’13, delivered this year’s Address by a Master’s Degree Candidate. Honors wishes to congratulate Rebecca and Miranda for their outstanding achievements as well as all students who graduated in 2015.

Did you know?

William Paterson Honors is on the web! The Honors College website is updated on a weekly basis. Be sure to visit it and our Facebook page regularly for important dates and Honors Club project updates at http://www.wpunj.edu/honors-program/.

The Honors College Newsletter is published several times per semester and is written by honors student, Kelly Ginart.