**Honors Graduation Highlights, Spring 2018 Jeff Vahlbusch**

**Alice Albl**

Alice did research on the impact of gardening education on undergraduates and preschoolers.

She served on the executive boards for Wellness Educators for Change, Advocacy, and Student Needs (WE CAN) and International Appalachian.

And she has been a SafeSite with the Great American Condom Campaign for her entire college career, educating fellow students on safer sexual health.

**Lindsey Bearss**

A member of the Honors College Vanguard, Lindsey studied abroad at Kingston University in London.

In Public Health, Lindsay collaborated on 3 research manuscripts and hopes to see at least one published before she starts her Master’s program.

In college she learned what it means to be an active citizen and feminist QUOTE “Being around so many motivated and intelligent women was empowering and made me want to continue advocating for marginalized groups of people in the future.” UNQUOTE

**Hayley Behm**

Hayley studied abroad three times while at Appalachian—in Peru, in London, and in Greece.

She joined the Watauga Rescue squad to give back to the community and learn more about the field of medicine.

She participated in a theater therapy research study that improved young adults’ speech and social abilities.

**Emily Berdal**

Emily has been involved in campus ministry with the Lutheran Students of Appalachian (LSA).

She worked with the Dance Marathon fundraiser and undertook an Alternative Service Experience to Belize to study Sustainable Agriculture.

She worked in the library in Digital Preservation.

She’ll be pursuing a Doctorate of Physical Therapy at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota.

**Sydney Blume**

A Chancellor’s Scholar, Sydney worked extensively with Outdoor Programs.

She engaged early and intensively with the campus sustainable gardens and will be Campus Garden Manager this coming year.

4. She developed professional proficiency in Spanish, helped by a study abroad semester in Spain.

5. “I'm proud of the person I have become here,” Sydney wrote. […] “I leave App as a better human” being.”

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| **Mackenzie Brown**  Mackenzie engaged in serious research at Appalachian, which helped her develop knowledge and confidence.  She traveled to Cuba with the Biology Department to to study conservation and biodiversity.  She will be attending Wake Forest University for a Master’s program in Biology but may accept an invitation to switch to a PhD program.  **Nick Cassidy**  Nick studied abroad in Melbourne, Australia, and was part of the App State Marching Band.  He worked at a Camp during summers, especially learning the joys of teamwork.  Nick will be joining the Red Ventures Sales Associate program in Charlotte, further developing his leadership and professional skills.  **Emily Cluen**  Emily served for two years as an RA, receiving the Leigh Lane Edwards Service Award and overseeing the Service and Leadership Residential Learning Community. After a gap year, Emily will pursue graduate school and a career in Student Affairs.  While an undergraduate, Emily also worked at two residential summer camps, interned with a camp-oriented nonprofit, directed a camp program for children with autism, and attended four American Camp Association conferences.  **Chamian Cruz**  Chamian was a News Reporter for *The Appalachian*, interned with *The Mountain Times Publications*, and freelanced for *USA TODAY*.  She is most proud of her stories on undocumented students at ASU, homelessness and hunger in this community, and student support for the Black Lives Matter movement.  She held leadership positions in the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and the National Society of Leadership and Success.  She undertook two Alternative Service Experiences, one to Ravenna, Ohio, to work with rescued farm animals and one to Patillas, Puerto Rico, to learn about sustainable forestry and help with hurricane relief.  **Kelly Dancy**  Kelly has worked closely with the Appalachian Educators Club and helped coordinate the Appalachian Social Justice Summit.  She worked or interned at schools in Caldwell and Watauga Counties, magnet and international schools in Washington, D.C., and English camps in Ecuador.  A member of the Honors College Vanguard, Kelly has also been a treasured student employee in the Honors College and is founding editor of the now almost famous *Honors Wednesday Memo.*  Kelly has been simultaneously finishing her undergraduate degree AND working toward a master’s degree in Reading Education, which she will finish next year.  **Amber Daniel**  Amber was an inaugural recipient of the Dean’s Scholarship in the Beaver College of Health Sciences.  She was a member of the varsity track and field team for four years.  She was an RA in White Hall, and studied abroad in London.  She was an Executive Board member for Wellness Educators for Change, Advocacy, and student Needs (WE CAN).  **Brooklyn Eschenbaugh**  Brooklyn taught English in Arequipa, Peru.  She was the “Physician’s Assistant small group leader” in the Health Professions Club.    Brooklyn says: “I have developed […] as a person and become a lot more well-rounded as a result of coming to App and being in the Honors College. […] I am thankful that Appalachian has given me such diverse experiences that were […] unrelated to medicine, yet still prepared me for my future.”  **Jaelyn Felder**  Jaelyn served as president of the National PanHellenic Council for two years.  She was named “Greek Woman of The Year,” an award made doubly special because she is the first black woman, and the first black Greek woman at Appalachian, ever to win!  Jaelyn studied abroad in London at the University of Roehampton, presented her groundbreaking Honors thesis research at NCUR, the National Conference of Undergraduate Research, and was recruited into Teach for America to teach English upon graduation from Appalachian.  **Sean Flaherty**  Sean interned as a financial analyst at Inmar, a multi-million dollar company in Winston-Salem.  He studied in Ireland with the music program and worked as a tutor at Appalachian in Accounting and Finance.  Sean used his accomplishments at App State to secure a job as an accountant for Spencer Stuart in Chicago.  **Kelly Flanders**  Kelly started for four years on the App State University Women's Soccer team.  She studied abroad in France, was a member and leader of Lutheran Students of Appachian (LSA), and received the Carolina Panthers Sam Mills Memorial Scholarship.  She was selected as an Outstanding Graduate in Mathematics.  She says: “I am proud to be graduating […] from a department and a university that have invested in me, greatly furthered my knowledge, and that truly care about the success of their students.”  **Evie Giaconia**  A Chancellor’s Scholar, Evie attended the Anthropology Department ethnographic field school in Ecuador in 2016.  Evie received a Clinton Global Initiative: University grant, the first CGI initiative ever funded at App State, to return to Ecuador to install a language lab in a local school, and develop a series of English-learning lessons in Kichwa.  Evie won the Theta Alpha Kappa Albert Clark award for best undergraduate paper—on Religion and Science Fiction.  Evie and her research partner also founded the (not yet official) Indigenous Languages Club at Appalachian State.  **Colleen Gillooley** |  |

A member of the Honors Vanguard, Colleen was president of the organizing committee for an AIESEC national conference. AIESEC is a student-run, international non-profit focused on international leadership development.

She spent time in Cali, Colombia, as an AIESEC volunteer, working with mothers to improve nutritional health in the community.

She served as a research assistant under Dr. Lisa Emery in the Psychology department for 2 ½ years.

**Ashley Goodman**

Ashley has been the editor of the Arts and Entertainment Desk with The Appalachian News Group and won the 2017-18 Best Reporter of the Year Award.

She was an RA in Bowie Hall.

She is also an editorial intern and writer at Appalachian Voices, a nonprofit environmental advocacy group dedicated to protecting the Appalachian Mountains.

**Janet Hammond**

Janet won the Robert D. Warren Scholarship from the History Department twice, and was chosen "Outstanding Senior" in History.

She has been a member and leader of Alpha Omicron Pi sorority.

Amazingly, her research paper for RhetComp 2000 was published in *WriteClick*,the English Department's academic journal.

She interned at the Rowan Museum in Salisbury, North Carolina, and was invited back for a paid internship this summer.

**Maggie Hancock**

Maggie mentored and interned at the Western Youth Network.

She studied abroad in India with the Social Work department.

She was part of the research team in the Development in Social Cognition Lab.

She played for and helped to manage the Appalachian Quidditch Team through three national championship runs.

She’s embarking on a Master’s Degree in Educational Psychology and Applied Developmental Science at the University of Virginia.

**Lydia Harris**

Lydia served as the President of the Rotaract Club at App State for two years, and a member for four. She is also board member and program chair of the *Rotaract Atlantic Network.*

She worked as a *Research Assistant* in Biochemistry under Dr. Megan Culpepper.

She volunteered at the Community Care Clinic in Boone and was able to use her Spanish to communicate with Spanish-speaking patients.

**Rebecca Howell**

Rebecca credits her Honors thesis research on celiac disease with giving her this realization: “I have a purpose!” She writes: “Learning how to do the research […] was such a valuable experience, but having […] people being excited and interested in the research that I was doing was hands down the most exciting thing I've experienced in my undergraduate career. It has made me incredibly excited to get out in the world and make a difference now that I know my passions are needed and wanted, all thanks to the research I did while at App State!“

Rebecca also earned the Nutrition Academic Achievement Award.

**Will Johnson**

Will was actively involved with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society

He engaged in research in the Integrative Muscle Physiology Lab, including his Honors Thesis on Skeletal Muscle Inflammation,

AND—the week he defended his thesis—he also competed at the collegiate cycling national championships in Grand Junction, Colorado.

**Rachel Jordan**

Rachel names the Chancellor’s Scholarship as the reason she was able to attend college. She is also a member of the Honors College Vanguard.

She took a leave of absence, worked full-time as a Christmas tree farmer and wholesaler in the area, and returned to Appalachian to study conifer response to climate change.

She worked for Wake Forest University in the remote Manu National Park in the Peruvian Andes.

She recently received a prestigious National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship to work toward her PhD in Botany at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

She names Appalachian’s faculty “supportive and devoted,” and praises this university’s laudable dedication to the development of undergraduate research experiences.

**Zoe Kaplan**

A Chancellor’s Scholar, Zoe studied abroad in Coleraine, Northern Ireland.

She spent three years on the board of Hillel and was a member of the board of the Temple of the High Country.

She interned with the literary agency Dystel and Goderich, the book production company Neuwirth and Associates, both in Manhattan, and for the online science fiction/fantasy magazine Lightspeed.

She served three years on the board of IMPULSE, the premier international undergraduate neuroscience journal, which is housed here at App State.

**Shaina Katz**

Shaina studied abroad in London, Israel, Morocco, and Jordan, and was invited by an Israeli professor to collaborate on a book on King Hussein.

She was awarded the first Arabic Critical Language Scholarship ever to be earned by an Appalachian student. She advanced in her Arabic language studies in Morocco from Novice Low (a beginner) to Advanced in just two months.

She worked at the only halfway house in Israel for newly released Arabic speaking prisoners.

And: she played rugby on a team in London.

**Emma Labovitz**

Emma is a grateful recipient of the Wilson Scholarship.

She served as a peer leader and a board member for Alternative Service Experiences, domestic and international.

She studied abroad in India, engaging directly with victims of trafficking and working to empower the women within the context of their own culture.

She served as a much-requested Campus Ambassador.

**Mackenzie Laney**

Mackenzie studied abroad through the Sociology Department in London, Edinburgh, and Amsterdam.

She worked for the Watauga County Schools Extended Learning Center.

She helped to bring the international organization called “She’s the First” to Appalachian, fighting gender inequality through education and advocacy.

She will start the Masters of Social Work program at Appalachian this Fall.

**Nile A. LaTowsky**

Nile is proud to have been selected as a member of Entropy Dance Crew.

He worked as a student orientation undergraduate leader (SOUL).

He undertook undergraduate research in Psychology and presented at the Society for Industrial-Organizational Psychology conference in Chicago.

He was selected for the prestigious position of Student Director of Orientation at App State for the 2017-2018 academic year.

**Jacob Leblanc**

Jacob studied abroad in Prague, Czech Republic

He is a founding member of APPDESIGNx design collaborative

He was an ‘Industrial Design Society of America’ Student Merit Winner for 2018.

And he was recently hired as a design intern at SBFI in Asheville.

**Emily Lucero**

A member of the Honors Vanguard, Emily has presented her research on viruses that fight cancer at two professional conferences, and her poster was selected from over 100 competitors, both undergraduate and graduate, to receive the Student Poster Award for cell/molecular biology.

Emily undertook an Alternative Service Experience in Guatemala, and eventually led three ASEs: one to the Nag’s Head Nature preserve, one to a sustainable farm in Costa Rica, and one to San Francisco. She is proud to have led “a life of service and community” so far and will continue to do so in medical school and beyond.

**Cole Maita**

Cole took part in two study-abroad trips to Italy, Switzerland, and France.

He achieved the "top student overall" award in the Walker College of Business and is graduating with University Honors and with Honors in Business.

He became an E-Commerce Specialist at Avadim Technologies.

And he was the Lead Brand Ambassador for Amazon Prime Student, overseeing the implementation of marketing efforts for Amazon in the Southern U.S.

**Mary Kate McCann**

Mary Kate studied abroad at the University of Lille in northern France.

She worked in the ASU Child Development Center, and she spent 3 semesters working as an RA in Summit Hall with what she calls “an excellent and hilarious staff.”

She spent 3 years as a member of Mountain Ayres A Cappella, which she calls “the prime source of my joy here at ASU.”

**Caleb McMahon**

A Chancellor’s Scholar, Caleb studied abroad in Vienna focusing on culture and the arts.

He presented a paper on jazz bassist and composer Charles Mingus and civil rights at the National Council on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in Memphis

He performed with his brass quintet at the national College Music Society conference in San Antonio.

And he’s off to Michigan State University to pursue a Master’s of Music in Jazz Studies this fall.

**Mandy Mericle**

Mandy studied abroad at the University of Cork in Ireland, focusing on traditional Irish music.

She worked as a theory tutor in the Hayes School of Music Research, Learning, and Technology Lab and as a teaching assistant for Music Theory, Aural Skills, and Music History courses.

She presented her research on Verdi's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research in Memphis.

**Caitlyn Murray**

Caitlyn highlights all the “wonderful opportunities to conduct research through the Honors College and in her Social Work courses.”

She is the recipient of the Social Work Academic Award for 2017-2018 from the Beaver College of Health Sciences.

She worked as an Investigative Assessment Social Work Intern with Child Protective Services at the Catawba County Department of Social Services.

She is starting a Master of Social Work program through East Tennessee State University.

**Joseph Nuhfer**

For his Honors thesis, Joseph created a scheduling web application that enables students to choose courses and automatically receive a set of best schedules to choose from.

Joseph also helped create a fully functional database system for a non-profit in Boone.

Joseph will now begin a job at Duke Energy. He says: “It was only during this interview process that I truly realized how much I’d been prepared to go into the professional field by my studies at Appalachian.”

**40. Tanner Orders**

Tanner is graduating from Appalachian, The Honors College, and the Biology Department Honors Program in only three years.

He worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and as a Medication Aide, gaining skills that he hopes to employ as a physician.

He has been a competitive member of the Appalachian State Archery Club and credits that experience with helping him hit his life—*targets—without, well, quivering.*

**Meghan Pavelka**

Meghan is the Editor-in-Chief of *IMPULSE: The Premier Undergraduate Neuroscience Journal*.

She has researched under Dr. James Denniston and Dr. Mark Zrull Psychology for 3 full years, assisting with 9 conference presentations and publishing a paper as first author.

She volunteers weekly at the Community Care Clinic of Boone.

She also participated in a clinical shadowing program in South Africa observing emergency medical and surgical cases in many hospitals in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

**Ella Perrin**

Ella is currently studying Italian history and culture in Florence, Italy.

She conducted research under Dr. Zwetsloot in Exercise Science, researching inflammatory and anti-inflammatory proteins and their response to exercise and diet changes. She also worked as a volunteer coach for Girls on the Run.

She is heading to medical school at Wake Forest, and she says ”This is my proudest accomplishment […], and I could not have done it without all of the amazing opportunities that I have been given at App!”

**Annie Pharr**

Annie traveled with the Cycling Team to Montana for the collegiate mountain bike nationals. Appalachian won 2nd overall club team in the nation, and Annie earned 2nd place individually in Short Track, 4th in cross country, and 4th for overall omnium.

She helped put on the CowBelle Classic, a women's road cycling event, and used sociological research methods and film to analyze and learn from the experience.

She is a recipient of the USA Cycling Stenner and Kuck scholarship, earned by only two females and two males in the nation annually.

Annie also worked as a mentor with the Western Youth Network.

**Alyssa Phillips**

Alyssa took part in a faculty-led trip to study the flora and fauna of Australia and New Zealand. She says: This “made me want to use my degree to help improve agricultural practices so we can protect the patches of biodiversity that are left.”

She helped Operation Smile become an active and productive club on campus, serving two years as president and raising over $1000 to buy supplies for medical missions work.

She’ll be attending the University of California, Davis, to pursue a PhD in Plant Biology, with full financial support.

**Liz Pope**

Liz was a Media Production Intern for University Communications at App State, hosting a podcast for incoming freshmores to help answer questions about life at App and becoming part of the UComm family, whom she calls “some of the best people I know.”

At UComm Liz discovered her love of audio documentary, and this ultimately led to the creative side of her Honors Thesis, a 30-minute podcast episode exploring the impacts of technology on our ability to connect with ourselves and with each other.

She also completed a major internship at an advertising agency in Raleigh and thinks that she may well have found her career.

**Joanna Powers**

In Kappa Delta sorority, Joanna served on the executive council and as Panhellenic Delegate.

She served as Vice Present of Order of Omega, the leadership Honor society for fraternity and sorority members.

She traveled abroad to France and Italy on a 6-credit faculty-led trip studying two related topics: Catholicism and Secularism and Love, Sex, Power in Christianity.

**Emily Rabe**

Emily studied for a semester in Melbourne, Australia.

She is a proud member of the sorority Delta Zeta, dedicated to philanthropy and volunteering.

Emily is graduating with majors in Marketing AND Supply Chain Manage-ment, with University Honors, and a minor in Fashion Merchandising.

She is also proud of moving to Boone and Appalachian from Michigan in 2014, knowing no one at first, and of finding her way here. “Appalachian,” she says, “will always be a part of my heart and my home.”

**Caroline Cooper Rushing**

Caroline was a member of the women’s club soccer team all four years and led the team as an officer for the past two.

She volunteered at the Community Care Clinic as an intake nurse.

She has been accepted into the accelerated Master’s Program in Exercise Science at App State and should graduate next May.

**Paige Schurter**

Paige served as an RA in Gardner Hall, and she is a proud member and officer in Beta Alpha Psi, the international honor organization for accounting, finance and information systems.

She is also a founding member and Vice President of Appalachian Accountants, a club for undergraduates.

Paige interned at Gould Killian CPA Group, working in tax and helping to prepare tax returns for partnerships and individuals.

**Lily Shaw**

Lily taught Lindy Hop at the Appalachian State Swing Dance Club, creating Lindy Hop enthusiasts and starting scholarships for Lindy Hop events.

Lily traveled to Sweden with funding from the Wilson Scholars’ program to research her Honors thesis on Lindy Hop at The Snowball, one of the biggest Lindy Hop events in the world.

Lily also studied abroad in Costa Rica.

Lily taught for College Access Partnerships here at Appalachian, an organization that helps “students from the Appalachian region of North Carolina find their own unique path to a college education.”

**“Carter” Smith**

Carter served as president of the Appstate Climbing team.

He received two awards from the Department of Recreation Management: Outstanding Senior and Outstanding Research Contribution.

He has been active in Outdoor Programs—going on expeditions as far away as the Tetons in Wyoming and Banff in Canada.

He worked as a TA and/or Risk Manager in several courses for Recreation Management, which also led to a job with Outward Bound.

**Maggie Smith**

Maggie worked and led in Dr. Michael Opata’s Biology lab and is first author on a manuscript now in review at the *Journal of Infection and Immunity.*

She presented two posters at the American Society of Microbiology conference at NC State competing against students from all over North Carolina. She won two of the six total travel awards given out at the conference, one for each of her two posters!

She also used her German on an Honors College trip to Austria to study art, architecture, classical music. All I can say is *“fantastisch!”*

She is off to graduate school in Biology at the University of Michigan!

**Samantha Steyl**

Samantha played four years on the women’s soccer team here at App.

She won the first Garrett memorial scholarship from the Honors College for her research and presented at major national conferences in Chemistry and Biology.

She won the American Chemical Society “Excellence in Scholastic Achievement” award AND the Chemistry Department’s Outstanding Senior award.

She studied abroad and shadowed doctors and nurses in public hospitals in Cambodia.

**Brooke Sweeney**

Brooke is a proud recipient of the Chancellor's Scholarship, which enabled her to travel abroad to Dublin, Ireland.

She also served on the Chancellor's Scholarship Interview Committee for the past three years.

She interned with a non-profit organization in Chennai, India, working to prevent the sex trafficking of women and children and to rehabilitate victims and their families.

She recently accepted a nomination to the Accelerated Admissions Program in Romance Languages at Appalachian and will start working toward a Master’s Degree in French this fall.

**Rachel Tapia**

Rachel played in the Marching Band for four years, including 2 as section leader.

She received the Chancellor’s Scholarship, the Ella Thompson Hobbs Scholarship in English, and Jeni Gray Memorial Scholarships in English AND in Music. She is also a member of the Honors Vanguard.

She was chosen as an "Outstanding Senior" in English.

She has also joyfully worked in the App State tutoring center, especially with students of Spanish and non-native speakers of English.

Rachel’s plan? to become a professor of Linguistics.

**Connor James Watts**

Connor almost didn’t do his Honors study abroad in England: a week before departure, he found his passport had expired, had to detour through New Orleans to get a new one, and then catch up with his classmates later.

He completed an ancestry project for an Honors seminar—and discovered that he was distantly related to the professor! (We build close relationships with faculty in Honors!)

For an Honors History seminar, Connor built, decorated, and demolished a gothic-style cathedral made entirely of gingerbread. He writes: “That was probably the most delicious class assignment I worked on here at Appalachian State.”

**Ashlyn Whitesell**

Ashlyn joined the Marching Mountaineers her first year at App, and she studied abroad in Spain.

She served as a research assistant to Dr. Nicholas Shaw in Chemistry, which she calls “the most valuable experience […] in my undergraduate career.”

She presented research at the American Chemical Society conference in New Orleans and contributed to projects that will lead to scholarly publications in the future.

**Lyndsay Wilcox**

Lyndsay is the recipient of a Dean’s Scholarship to the Beaver College of Health Sciences, and she traveled to France and Italy to study religion and art.

She served as chapter president of Kappa Delta, then as president of the Panhellenic community.

She interned with Arts for Life at Brenner Children’s Hospital, teaching pediatric Hematology and Oncology patients and their siblings painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpting.

She has also been interningwith the Guardian ad Litem agency in the 24th Judicial District, advocating for children.

**Natalie Willmschen**

Natalie served as an RA and won the Resident Assistant Community Builder of the Year Award for 2016-2017.

She traveled to Honduras with the non-profit Sharefish, working with the local community to solve systemic problems with education.

She was involved in the Appalachian Dance Ensemble.

And she helped to create, establish, and lead the Cooperative Baptist

Student Fellowship group on-campus.

**Emily Yontz**

Emily studied abroad at the University of Wollongong in Australia.

In her senior year she made the Appalachian State Cheerleading Team.

She **is currently completing** **/ just completed** her final weeks of student teaching Mathematics at Dlangezwa High School in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Next year, she will begin work towards her Master's Degree in Mathematics at App State with a concentration in Secondary Teaching.

**Silas York**

Silas was elected to an officer position in Beta Alpha Psi (the international honor organization for accounting, finance, and information systems students).

He studied abroad in Vienna, Austria, with the Honors College, gaining interest in art, music and architecture.

He interned with the accounting firm Price-Waterhouse-Cooper in Charlotte, NC.

He will be attending the University of Virginia for a Master of Science in Accounting in Fall 2018, with a merit scholarship.

**Emily Young**

Emily received the award for the outstanding student in the Walker College of Business.

She helped to found the Walker College of Business Service Week

She helped to foster and develop younger students through her roles in Beta Alpha Psi, the international honor organization for accounting, finance and information systems students, and App State’s Walker Fellows.

**Dominic Ysidron**

Dominic studied abroad in Spain, with a short side trip to Morocco.

He completed a professional internship in clinical psychology at Appalachian.

He worked as Lab Manager for the Morality & Social Cognition Lab (Department of Psychology, under Dr. Andrew Monroe).

In Dominic’s words: “it is professors like Dr. Monroe who guided my decision to come to Appalachian in the first place: faculty who are willing to invest in undergraduate students and support them in reaching their highest potential.”

Dominic is bound for doctoral studies in Clinical Health Psychology at Ohio University in the fall. “I'm grateful above all else,” he wrote, “for the opportunities that this University and the Honors College have afforded me.