

# LAURUS HONORUM

"HONORED WITH THE LAUREL"

Volume 3, Dec. 2010



## GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR



Happy New Year!! And welcome to our third Laurus Honorum newsletter. In this issue you will see updates on our December graduates and some alumni, as well as information on exciting new Honors courses, and stories about the events

and trips that Honors students have been enjoying this fall. Two groups of students went on class-related trips, one to New York City and the other to D.C., while we had some fun AHA!-sponsored activities, such as the Dorm of Doom “haunted” East Hall at Hallowe’en!

It has been a typical, frenzied fall, with over 800 students now registered in the Honors College. Students have been busy planning Alternative Spring Break trips, working on their thesis projects, preparing for the Marching Band trip to Spain in January, and generally living the full-court press life of an Honors student. Speaking of that, an Honors varsity basketball player is profiled, and you will meet some other students who exemplify the well-rounded and community-minded character of Honors students.

Things are quiet here right now. The students have left, and we are wrapping things up in preparation for another year. We take a break once in a while to sip our cocoa, enjoy the snow on our evergreen trees, and wonder what fun holiday adventures our students are having. We wish everyone who reads this all the best for 2011, and hope that the New Year brings good cheer and much happiness to all.

Dr. Leslie Sargent Jones  
Director, The Honors College

## HONORS STAFF ATTENDS NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL



Most of the Honors College staff went to Kansas City in October to meet with honors program and college colleagues from around the country. Over 1500 faculty and students met to share their latest ideas on best practices in honors education. Our own Advising Coordinator, Angela Mead, presented a very well-received paper on “First-Generation Honors Students: Using Advising to Encourage Success.” This is a topic that is getting a lot of press in higher education at present, and Angela has been invited to submit her work for publication, as well as receiving a grant to support her continuing research in the area (see p. 3). Dr. Dale Wheeler, Director of the Prestigious Scholarships Program and advisor for science majors, (right in photo), joined in on one of the NCHC City as Text™ voyages into the city, learning all about the Treasury Department’s mint in KC; he brought back “bags of money” – shredded, of course! The rest of us shared ideas for courses, advising, and programmatic development with others at the conference and came back ready to try some new things, so keep an eye out for those.



## HONORS STAFF MEMBER GETS GRANT FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH

Angela Mead, the Honors Advising Coordinator in the Honors College, has just been awarded a research grant from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). This grant will fund Angela's research on first-generation college students and academic advising for her dissertation for the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership here at Appalachian. Dr. Charlie Nutt, Executive Director of NACADA, writes that Angela's research "will significantly contribute to the field of academic advising." Dr. Janet Schulenberg, Chair of the NACADA Research Committee, wrote to Angela, "we are excited about the contribution your re-

search will make to our understanding of first-generation college students... We believe that your focus on academic advisors who were also first generation students is a particularly rich avenue of study." Once her dissertation is completed, Angela will submit articles based on the research to the NACADA Journal for publication. Angela will also be recognized for receiving this grant at the 2011 NACADA National Conference in Denver, Colorado, in October.



HONORS STAFF  
MEMBER PRESENTS  
AT UNC-CAUSE



In November, Honors Advisor and Technology Specialist, Zack Underwood, presented at the UNC-CAUSE conference. UNC-CAUSE is an organization for all 16 UNC universities' Information Technology staff in which new and exciting ideas are introduced and discussed as professional development. The conference was held in Wilmington, North Carolina and Zack presented on the topic of "Video Games as Instructional Tools." His presentation included facts and figures about video games in the classroom and also how video games were recently used in the course that he co-taught with Dr. Dee Parks and Scott Rice, HON 2515: Film Worlds, Game Worlds. Zack met with other IT professionals and learned new ideas that he is looking forward to introducing in other honors classes.

## ARTHURIAN LEGENDS VISITS RENAISSANCE FAIR



Jousting, juggling, shopping, food, drink, laughter, merriment and noisy crowds of people...all of this could be found at medieval tournaments. Students in the Freshman Seminar Course "Arthurian Legends" went to the Renaissance Festival in Huntersville, NC, to experience a modern version of a tournament. In the photo (left), students stand in line at Ye Olde Ticket Booth. In addition, students were asked to compare their experience of the modern "medieval" festival to their knowledge of medieval culture gained from class readings. One student was inspired from this particular course and built their very own mini-catapult, which was tested in the hallway of The Honors College Offices during class.

Several honors students are packing their bags for upcoming study abroad trips. Students have applied and been accepted to programs ranging from Spain to South Africa. The Honors College is helping these students reach their destinations thanks to the Heltzer Honors Program for International Education Scholarships. Students receive a scholarship to travel abroad and fulfill their required international education experience for the honors curriculum. Trips range in length from two weeks to up to a semester abroad. Almost twenty students have been given travel grants in the last two years to help them become more global citizens.

2010-2011 Recipients (thus far, in alphabetical order)

Ryland Bradley	Bailey Hamrick
Jonathan Carpenter	Molly Hansen
Rachel Ginder	Tyler Holbrook
Emily Hager	Kathryn Manis
	Eleanor Shingledecker

## STUDENTS PURSUE STUDY ABROAD OPTIONS







## CHANCELLOR'S SCHOLAR SUCCEEDS IN CLASSROOM AND ON COURT



Over the past four years, senior Chancellor Scholar JR Archer has pursued University Honors and also been on the men's varsity basketball team (#24 on right in photo). "I've had to learn how to balance my time between a challenging major, applied physics, and a very demanding schedule for basketball" said JR. As a Physics major, JR takes challenging courses every semester and works to complete his homework in business centers and hotels across the nation as the team travels. He recently completed his senior honors thesis on top of his regular coursework.

"My thesis is based on the work I did this summer in the Mechanical Engineering Department at NC State University. The project is the design and manufacture of a direct injection diesel fuel injector that varies the angle of fuel spray to optimize performance and minimize emissions. My role on the project was primarily to use computational fluid dynamics (CFD) to run computer simulations for fuel leaving the injector. I am writing my thesis on the combustion theory of why it is beneficial to change the angle of spray, as well a description of the CFD methods that I used in this project." JR is just one of many students who are not only full time students, but also varsity athletes, leaders and global citizens in The Honors College.

## DORM OF DOOM



Ghosts, Ghouls and even a Pokemon showed up for the annual AHA! Dorm of Doom Event. Students gathered in East Hall on October 28, 2010 and enjoyed skits, and

a scary movie. Students were also able to paint pumpkins for more pictures visit <http://www.honors.appstate.edu> and click on Photo Galleries. Right, Hannah Gray (Pikachu) and Katie Williams stand with others for the costume contest.



## ALUM WORKING TOWARDS SPEECH PATHOLOGY CAREER

Since her time at Appalachian State as a Mountaineer, Stephanie has been venturing to new mountains...and deserts! Shortly after graduating in 2008, Stephanie packed her life into two suitcases and left for Senegal, West Africa, where she was to serve for almost a year as an Ambassadorial Scholar for the Rotary Foundation. Stephanie was awarded the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship after receiving guidance from ASU's Prestigious Scholarships Program. In Senegal, Stephanie, who was a double major in French and Communication



Disorders, pursued her interest in speech-language pathology by completing a master's thesis and degree in Linguistics and Research at l'Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar. For her research, she evaluated the needs for speech-language-voice therapy in Dakar and what healthcare services are currently available to address those problems. As a community project, Stephanie co-led a speech-language therapy group for young autistic children at a public hospital, conducting the group in French and the local language, Wolof. During her time in West Africa, Stephanie was very grateful to have had the opportunity to go backpacking in Mali and the Cape Verde Islands, as well as going to the International Rotary Conference in Burkina Faso.

Now that she is back on this side of the world, Stephanie is a student in the M.S. Speech-Language Pathology program at UNC Chapel Hill. She is very happy to be close to home with her family and friends, but still has wander-lust, as she hopes eventually to practice speech-language pathology in developing countries in the Caribbean.

## STUDENT STUDIES IN NEW ZEALAND FOR FALL SEMESTER



On July 14, 2010 senior Ryland Bradley departed on a 30+ hour trip to the second largest city in New Zealand, Christchurch. Ryland has spent the fall semester in New Zealand and is returning at the end of December 2010. She has experienced lots of thrilling and educational moments while in New Zealand, including living through the 7.1 earthquake in September as well as volunteering with relief efforts. As an exercise science major, she has taken courses in her major and also in areas outside of her major, one of her favorites was Maori art (art of the indigenous people of New Zealand).

On weekends, she has gone on extreme expeditions including bungee jumping 440 feet over a river, hiking on a volcano and hiking a glacier. When asked about her travels she says, "In correlation with catching the travel bug I also caught the adrenaline bug. Now I live to travel and to push the limits. The more daring life is the more I feel alive."

## APPETITE FOR LIFE

Students and professors in the fields of business, humanities, health sciences, and social sciences have been out to eat in many of the area's fine restaurants. From the business dinner, one student commented, "We did learn some more about having faculty mentors and what our honors thesis should look like. They told us about our study abroad options, and what they personally recommended. I am glad that I got the opportunity to talk with them." Professors enjoy the evenings, as well. Dr. Wilson enjoyed talking to the students and sharing her personal experiences with them. She hopes that she will be able to see them again!



## AIM HIGH UPDATE

AIM High students are busy learning about how they can prepare themselves for graduate school. In October, they learned about selecting a faculty mentor. They found out how to write proposals to support their research projects that they work on with professors. On November 6th, students had the opportunity to find out what prestigious scholarships are available to them in their discipline areas. AIM High will then have a break until January 11, and at this meeting will talk about graduate school opportunities and how to apply. Bottom right, Dr. Alan Utter speaks about how to obtain financial research assistance from the Office of Student Research.





## CHANCELLOR'S SCHOLARS EXPLORE ENERGY ISSUES IN NYC

This fall, Drs. Johnny Waters and Kristen Cockerill led the 15 Chancellor's Scholars through a course on "Wrestling with Wicked Problems." One of those problems, not surprisingly, was the energy crisis. The students were challenged to think of this, and many other problems, from the perspective of: what would you do to solve this problem? They researched and wrote professional white papers on aspects of today's tough issues, and part of their investigations involved visiting sites in NYC where such problems are addressed, such as the United Nations, (students even visited the UN, see Kenneth Kennedy and Anna Gannett in photo below). They spent four days over fall break experiencing some of these difficulties and seeing first hand how issues like homelessness, energy overuse, and climate change are affecting one of the world's largest cities. While the problems remain, we now have 15 students who are a little closer to helping us find answers to these "wicked problems."



## NEW HONORS "WINE PRODUCTION PRINCIPLES" COURSE

Dr. Seth Cohen is the Director of the Appalachian Enology and Viticulture Program, and he is teaching an Honors spring course called "Wine Production Principles." He is part of a group whose goals are to develop the vineyard and winery industry throughout the Appalachian Mountains, promoting economic development and agricultural sustainability in the region. The Program has close ties to the thriving mountain and steep slope wine industry in Europe, and is researching new and more sustainable ways of growing wine grapes that are best suited for the particular growing conditions found here in the southern Appalachians. Dr. Cohen is very excited about teaching this subject to Honors students, and 15 lucky students over 21 will be joining him in January to explore the growing wine world of this area.

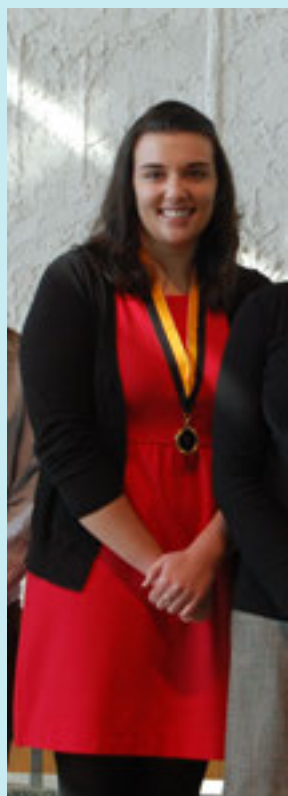
## **GRADUATES CELEBRATE AT HONORUM LAURUS**

The Honors College graduated seven students with University Honors during our Honorum Laurus ceremony on Saturday, December 11, 2010. Each of these students completed the rigorous Honors College requirements and wrote and successfully defended their Honors thesis. All of the Honors College graduates have exciting plans for their immediate future and we are confident that they are all on their way to wonderful careers. Emma White is applying to medical school, Anna Dowling is applying to graduate schools in clinical psychology and David Towarnicky is applying to professional business programs. Megan Perdue will be attending Indiana University at Bloomington to pursue a Masters in Public Administration in public and environmental affairs. Emily Hostetter will be working in Boone while Anastasia Gray is moving to Washington, DC. Holly Shepherd

will be interning with the Disney Internship Program in the spring. We are very proud of these students and their accomplishments, and look forward to graduating more scholars at our May Honorum Laurus ceremony. Congratulations, and best wishes for your bright future!



## **HONORS THESIS EXPLORES BENEFITS OF THESIS PROCESS**



Senior Emily Hostetter analyzed a unique subject for her honors thesis/project: she investigated the thesis process itself to find how academically beneficial it is to students and faculty. The thesis process is a part of curricula for Honors Colleges and Programs across the nation, and faculty, staff and students speak and write anecdotally about how wonderful the thesis process is for students, but little research literature had been produced on how it helps students. Through surveys and interviews of Appalachian alumni and faculty, Emily found that students and faculty reported that the thesis process helped students in academic areas such as writing, researching, and oral communication regardless of if they are completing a thesis in their own major or in a different subject.

Dr. Leslie Sargent Jones and Zack Underwood mentored her through the process. Emily was an Exercise Science major and her thesis was in the area of Higher Education and pedagogy. She graduated with University Honors in December 2010 and attended the Honorum Laurus Ceremony (shown at left).



## JERRI HELTZER RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS



Mrs. Jerri Heltzer, one of Honor's greatest supporters, received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree for her significant contributions of service and leadership to ASU in the December, 2010, ASU Graduation. Mrs. Heltzer and her late husband Harry have helped students who wanted to attend Appalachian State University but lacked the financial support to do so for many years now, finding ways to help the students be self-sufficient and learn how to further their education, even with limited finances.

In 2005, the University's Honors Program was named the Heltzer Honors Program in the couple's honor, and this program has now become the Heltzer Honors Program for International Education within the new Honors College. Since the University Honors curriculum includes a requisite international education experience, Mrs. Heltzer's continuing and critical support helps students fulfill that requirement. Thanks to her gifts, students have studied in countries from Japan to Uganda, Costa Rica to Taiwan, globalizing their curriculum and bringing the world back to APP. Thank you, Jerri!

## HONORS CLIMBER COMPETES INTERNATIONALLY

Honors freshman Ryan Scurfield missed a few days of class in November, as he was competing in the Pan American Youth Championships held in Ibarra, Ecuador, November 22-26. Climbers from countries all over North and South America, including Venezuela, Ecuador, Mexico, Canada, and the USA, came to climb in the three disciplines of the event: bouldering, sport climbing, and speed climbing. Ryan competed in bouldering and placed 4th in the 18-19 year-old male category. The United States Team did very well with the most gold medals and podium finishes. We are proud of Ryan's participation in this international competition and know that he represented the USA well. He is keeping his climbing skills up here in the bouldering fields of the Blue Ridge, so if you take a hike out in the woods, don't be surprised to find him working a problem on the rocks. Climb on!



## ALUM CONTINUES STUDY OF LEECHES



Since graduating from ASU, Anna Phillips has been working on her Ph.D. in Biology at the City University of New York and the American Museum of Natural History. She is working on the evolutionary relationships and diversity of leeches by using morphological and molecular data (and she is standing in a leech-filled swamp in the photo!). Her project has involved expeditions to Africa, Asia, and Australia and several international collaborations with other scientists. Anna worked on the foundations of this study as an undergraduate intern (National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates) at the American Museum of Natural History, as well as through PSP-supported research at Appalachian. As she reports, the then-Heltzer Honors Program “played a major role in my undergraduate experience and helped provide opportunities that have led me to where I am now.” Great job, Anna, and enjoy your “*African Queen*”-like leech adventures!



## ACHIEVING THE HONORS THESIS

These individuals graduated with University Honors in December. There are lots of students just like the December graduates who need to travel to do their research, others need help with their performances, and laboratory research is almost always expensive. Would you like to help support tomorrow's physicians, artists, educators and philosophers? We can use your donation to help provide this life-changing experience.



### Anna Dowling

The effect of gratitude on autobiographical memory recall and closure



### Anastasia Gray

The effects of the one-child policy on consumer behavior in China



### David Towarnicky

Foreign direct investment in Madagascar



### Emma White

Introductory endeavors with a piano

## The Honors College Newsletter

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