

LAURUS HONORUM

“Honored with the Laurel”

Volume 12, Spring 2013



Honors Students Take on the Quest!

WELCOME



A Word From the Director

It is finally spring in Boone! It was a long time coming, and we were still clearing snow off of our cars in the last days of March, but the pale skins of spring are now in bloom down on the honors bailey, soaking up the simmering rays and turning a worrisome shade of pink in their rush to tan. It is our first vernal season in this new complex, and it has been wonderful to watch the students use all the inner spaces in the winter cold, from the music of The Platform to the games in the library, and now the outer areas in the warming days of April, from soccer to sunbathing. Dr. Michael Dale held class out in the inner courtyard this week, and the hula hoops were not far behind. What a spectacular location for our new Honors College home!

In addition to stories about the newly-named Brad and Carole Wilson Honors and Engagement Community, you will find an exciting tale of travel adventure from



alumni Catherine Wood and Stephen Van Delinder, multiple travel pieces from spring break or study abroad, and reports on conferences and other student activities. One particularly noteworthy event was the NCHC and PSP-sponsored day of service at the Hospitality House. On the practical side, there is also an overview of fall courses and information about the new international education experiences available in Brazil. So jump in, sample a few articles, and come back in the summer for our next edition or, better still, send us your own story!

--Leslie Sargent Jones, Ph.D

Honors Students Take a Break for Some Winter Fun!



The Appalachian Honors Association (AHA), the student-elected organization for the Honors College student body, organized a fun excursion to App Ski Mountain in March. Several Honors students participated and enjoyed a brisk evening of skiing, snowboarding, and lots of fun! It was a great bonding adventure as the more experienced skiers and snowboarders helped the newcomers. AHA looks forward to planning another trip next year with an even larger group.



The New Home of “Castle-Honors”

After months of planning, preparation, and construction, the Honors College moved to its new home in January! Located on the east side of campus at 214 Locust Street, on the Corner of Brown Street, the new Brad and Carole Wilson Honors and Engagement Community is now complete with Appalachian Hall adjoining Summit and Cone Halls to form a castle-like rectangle with a beautiful center bailey.



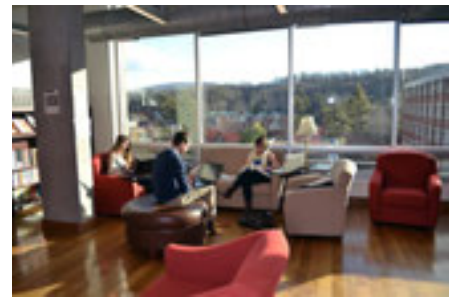
The new space houses a number of areas that will improve our services and environment for Honors Students. The second floor offers six new classrooms that will offer state-of-the-art audio and visual classroom technology. The arrangement of each classroom space facilitates active learning environments that foster open discussions among the students and professors. This floor also offers two great study areas. One area has been adopted by the Appalachian Honors Association (AHA!) as a new Honors musical venue called “The Platform” where students gather and perform on Thursday evenings.



Windows fronting both sides of the corner of Appalachian Hall provide energy and light as you walk up the stairs to the third floor, where the Honors College staff and faculty offices are located. Additional private study rooms and a resource center have been put to good use on this floor by students who seek quiet study time or to gather for fun and games.



There is also a spacious corner library that is lit up by windows covering an entire wall that overlooks a beautiful view of the campus. This cozy space provides a relaxing atmosphere where students can escape to socialize, study, or simply enjoy the view.



The hidden outside courtyard located at the center of the castle provided a cheerful playing ground for students when Boone got a blast of spring back on January 29th. Football and Frisbee made this a fun afternoon for students to enjoy a winter day of 62 degrees. Now that spring has arrived, Dr. Michael Dale transformed the courtyard into a classroom on April 9th!



Please come by to see our wonderful new facilities and get a glimpse of what’s to come in the Honors College!



Fall 2013 Course Line-Up

It is pre-registration advising time for those planning their fall semesters, and the line-up has those of us advising wanting to sign up ourselves. There are some new classes, like Biology, Technology and Culture, (from anthropologist Prof. Lapan) and Passport to Learning: International and Comparative Education, a global education class from Prof. DeSisto, that look wonderful, but there are also some old favorites, like Myth and Meaning, from Prof. Wentworth, and Wine Production Practices from Prof. Cohen, that many will be happy to see. A particularly unusual one from Drs. Dee Parks and James Wilkes in Computer Science is Massive Open Online Courses, which will have the students taking the MOOC of their choice and evaluating it during the semester; this should provide useful information for a potential publication on this exploding topic in education. China and Chinese Americans is a cross-listed course from English Professor Holly Martin that will be valuable to those in Global Studies, among many other majors, and any who missed the chance to be part of Prof. Hansell's Community-Based Art class last fall can join it this time and see what all the excitement there (and in Washington, D.C.!) was about.



The freshmen seminar line-up for the incoming class has some favorites, like Love and Death, Creative Life and Practice, and Arthurian Legends, but the new course Contemporary Brazilian Literature and Culture should help promote the international career paths of many majors. Science majors will be considering The Demon-Haunted World: Science and Critical Thinking, which will bring them face-to-face with the culture clash of evidence-based science and unfalsifiable conviction. Whichever one they choose will give them a heady introduction to the world of Honors courses and the life of the mind.

Honors Students Show Their Talent in Maya Angelou Performance

Honors students, Jenna Veal (far right) and Jane Bowers (third from left), put on an amazing dance performance during An Evening With Maya Angelou: The 29th Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration. The event took place on January 22nd at the Holmes Convocation Center, where hundreds had the pleasure of watching the beautiful dance piece that was performed.

Congratulations Jenna and Jane!





As they approach, they are provided with a space for their shoes so they may enter with socks or bare feet. Inside, viewers are able to play with stuffed animals and draw on a chalkboard wall. For the artist, fabric holds magic and love as it is passed from one person to another or is treasured throughout its existence. Rachel's recently passed grandmother, to whom she has dedicated the show, provided the fabric for this particular exhibit. Some pieces had been stored with receipts dating back nearly 30 years. By including this fabric, Rachel has given it the opportunity to be treasured by those visiting this cloth playground. When asked what the most satisfying part of the exhibition is, Rachel replied, *"I love the feedback I have gotten from the viewers. There is nothing better than hearing people say that I have helped them by doing something I love. Every time I see the chalkboard wall, I know I have made a difference for a lot of people. Nothing tops that."*

As part of her Honors Thesis research, Rachel Ginder's installation, *Perception*, was featured in the Looking Glass Gallery in the Plemmons Student Union from January 14th through February 5th. Through Rachel's use of bright colors and incorporation of childhood playthings, *Perception* reminds the audience of a less stressful and less complicated time in their lives. In her artist statement, Rachel says, *"Jovial art can have the same power and depth of meaning as the serious. I use play as a means of finding comfort in my fears, in the things I cannot face... I will defeat my fears. I make them feel safe."*



Throughout the semester, Rachel has been running a psychology stress-reduction study on the space, testing its ability to reduce stress at a pace comparable to biofeedback. The results will be published in her final Honors Thesis, *"Visual Art Installation Versus Biofeedback as Means of Stress Relief."*



The installation was created with the intention of lowering each viewer's stress by providing a quiet, worry-free space. When the viewer enters, they are greeted by a train that welcomes them to the child-like fort at the rear of the gallery.





The Life Raft Debate

On the evening of March 25th, three brave ASU faculty members participated in *The Life Raft Debate* hosted by the Appalachian Honors Association (AHA!). Despite the snowy, bitter cold weather, this funny annual event attracted over sixty audience members, who laughed, clapped, and cheered throughout the entire debate.

The story behind the event is that some sort of apocalyptic disaster takes place and the sole survivors are the audience members, who have built a raft and set sail to rebuild society from the ground up. They must bring along the three ASU professors for their wisdom and guidance in the new world. HOWEVER, there is only ONE additional spot on the raft. The professors must argue that his or her discipline is the one indispensable area of study that new civilization will need in order to flourish. The audience members then cast their votes for who will be the one to climb aboard the raft and help save humanity!



Featured as this year's professors were Dr. Pamela Lundin from Chemistry (center), Dr. Donna Lillian from Women's Studies (right), and Dr. Chris Osmond from the College of Education (left). Each did an amazing job in the presentation and responding to some challenging questions from the audience. In the end it was Dr. Lundin who won the coveted spot on the raft and the wood-burned oar trophy.

Special thanks to these three professors for providing the audience an incredible evening of fun, laughter, and adventure!



AHA! members pictured with Drs. Osmond, Lundin, and Lillian.



Dr. Lundin pictured with oar trophy.



The Vagina Monologues

From November 2012 to February 2013, Honors student and advertising major, Shelby Forsyth, directed *The Vagina Monologues*, an annual production on Appalachian's campus. *The Vagina Monologues*, a play by Eve Ensler, is a series of stories written or inspired by women. The purpose of the Monologues is to bring awareness to issues as lighthearted as pubic hair, the life of a dominatrix, and reclaiming the word "cunt," and as serious as rape, sexual abuse, and genital mutilation.

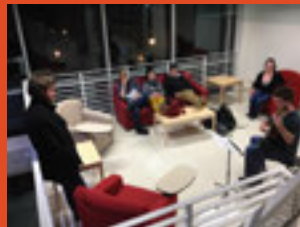
Shelby and the cast began rehearsals in late November and rehearsed every week up until the performances. The show ran for three nights over Valentine's Day weekend, selling out its final night. It raised over \$6000 for the V-DAY Campaign, which helps women and girls across the world in various ways.

Shelby plans to direct the show again next year. If you would like to be a part of next year's show, please stop by the ASU Women's Center, located in the International Hallway.



Shelby Forsyth (front row on left) with cast.

Honors New Musical Venue: The Platform

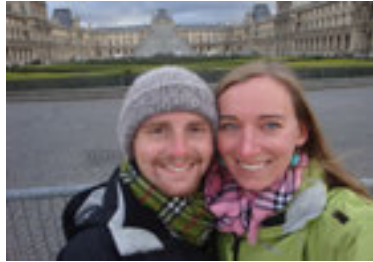


The Appalachian Honors Association (AHA!) transformed a space on the second floor of Appalachian Hall into a new musical venue called "The Platform." Students have gathered throughout the semester on Thursday evenings to socialize over hot drinks and to enjoy the musical performances of many talented students!





Meet the Thumbtackers



Meet the Thumbtackers, Catherine Wood and Stephen Van Delinder, both 2010 Heltzer Honors College graduates who dropped everything to follow their dreams of backpacking Eurasia for one year.

Three years ago, Catherine began dreaming of long-distance backpacking from Portugal to Beijing. *"I knew it would be difficult and risky, but backpacking Eurasia was something I needed to do,"* she notes, *"I realized in my heart that I had to accomplish the dream at a young age or always look back and wonder 'what if?'"* As an undergraduate, Catherine traveled with the Heltzer Honors Program to Vienna for a summer study in politics and architecture. She also traveled with the Walker College of Business to China as a Holland Fellow. Her experiences with ASU fueled her love of travel and gave her the courage and skills to plan for the extended trip. She just had to talk boyfriend Stephen into taking the jump with her, and it wasn't a difficult sell. He was hesitant, as this would be his first time traveling outside the U.S., he recalls, *"It was a leap of faith and the adventure of a lifetime! How do you say no to that?"* There were a lot of issues to address and obstacles to overcome, but few people accomplish their dreams without taking risks.

It started with a dream; Stephen bought a world

map and Catherine bought some thumbtacks. Before long, they had a map full of pushpins and a spool of thread to tie them all together. Structuring an extended trip required both planning and flexibility. They came up with the name "Thumbtack Travel" and launched a website to chronicle their journey - Thumbtacktravel.com – be sure to check it out!

The Thumbtackers had started careers, worked to save pennies and gain experience, and planned for possible worse-case scenarios. They knew that quitting their jobs at the height of an economic downturn could spell disaster for the future, but it was worth the risk. Although they were happy in their jobs, Stephen worked in outside sales and Catherine was in audit for a large bank, they wanted more.

The Thumbtackers bought one-way tickets to Amsterdam and, from the moment they hit the ground, knew they had made the right decision. Traveling by bus, boat, rail, camel, motorcycle, tuk-tuk, and of course on foot,



The Gobi Desert in China

the Thumbtackers traveled 7,800 miles from Amsterdam to Bangkok. They hiked the Himalayas in China, cliff dove in Croatia, zip-lined through the jungles of Laos, and explored the roof-top terraces of Istanbul, but decided the experience was worth much more than that. It gave them an opportunity to leverage their experiences going forward.

Catherine points out, *"Our educations at Appalachian State taught us to think outside the box. We used our trip to propel us into the industries we wanted to be in. Inside of the 50 days following our return to the States, we both have jobs in our desired field."*

(continued on page 9)



Motorbiking Across Thailand



...Thumbtackers (continued from page 8)

Stephen dreamed of pursuing a career in digital marketing, but realized how difficult it is to switch industries without experience. He used their website, Thumtacktravel.com, and the social marketing from their trip to get a foot in the door. He is now a Digital Marketing Specialist with a business consulting group in Raleigh.

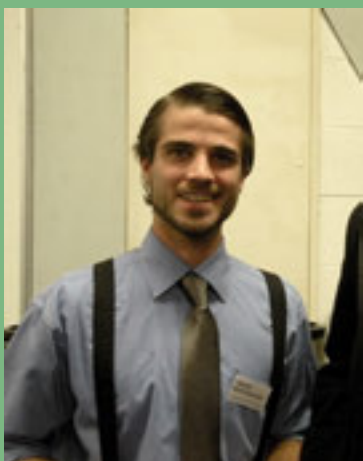
Catherine is also now in her much desired field of international business. She accepted an internal audit/international consulting role with a large NC textile manufacturer that has a presence in China, India, Mexico, and Pakistan. Despite coming back

to the states a few months ago, she's ready to hit the road again and give her passport some much-needed exercise – only this time it will be for work.

Tandem biking in X'ian



Timothy Hefflinger Presents Honors Thesis Research in London



In November 2012, Honors graduate, Timothy Hefflinger, traveled to London to present a portion of his Honors thesis, The “Discipline” of Mainstream Economic Development: Creating Docile Bodies, at the University of East London (UEL) Undergraduate Conference. The conference focused on assessing progress in international development, and his work applying Michel Foucault’s notion of discipline to international development proved to be a fruitful and discussion-stimulating addition to the presentations.

Hefflinger was selected by a panel of professors from UEL to have his his essay published in the UEL Journal on International Development, an honor bestowed upon only five other presenters at the conference.

In expressing his gratitude to all at ASU who helped him through this process, he reports he looks forward to what lies ahead. *“As I begin to apply to graduate schools this coming autumn, I will surely be highlighting this experience and the critical skills I’ve earned by traveling and presenting my work abroad.”*



Marissa Helps Children's Home in Georgia

Like most freshman, Marissa Stockstad was looking for something exciting and out of the ordinary to do over spring break. When her plans fell through, she found herself looking into Alternative Spring Break trips. Although homesick, Marissa was ecstatic when she found out she would be spending a week with ten other wonderful people doing service work at Murphy-Harpst Children's Home in Cedartown, Georgia.

Murphy-Harpst's mission is "to provide a safe and nurturing environment where severely abused and neglected children can thrive and heal." Spending a week in service to children who simply needed love and support was something Marissa could picture herself doing, and after the week was over, she admitted, "I wouldn't have had it any other way." At the agency, Marissa painted the new recreation center, as well as a ceiling tile that was placed in the new building. She was able to spend time with the children during their lunch and dinner, as well as during after school activities, such as chorus, art, or outdoors. "Despite everything these kids have been through, they are so willing to share their joy with a complete stranger. It really was amazing and truly eye-opening."

Not only did Marissa get to know some of the 57 kids, aged 8-18, who are currently living at Murphy-Harpst, she also got to know ten other ASU students who enjoy service as much as she does. Marissa explains, "For me, this trip was not just about service. It was about learning who I am and helping these kids learn who they are too. They are not just a sad story, but they are children with feelings, hopes, and dreams. And they helped me discover that too." Marissa recommends that everyone go on an Alternative Spring Break trip at least once, and to be open to the new discoveries it provides.



Marissa posing with her ceiling tile placed in the new recreation center at Murphy-Harpst.



Marissa and her group holding a thank you sign given to them by the children at Murphy-Harpst.



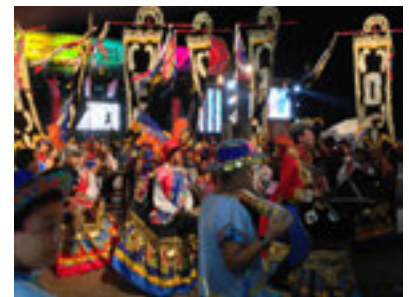
INTERNATIONAL

International Honors Opportunities Expand in Brazil

The International Honors opportunities are about to get bigger: want to go to Brazil? Dr. Jones and Celeste Crowe, Director of the Health Professions Advising Office, traveled to the cities of Fortaleza and Recife to visit three partner schools in those beautiful, north coast cities. The University of Fortaleza offers a chance for students to go for a month and shadow students being trained in a number of schools, including medicine, dental, and PT. The Federal Rural University of Pernambuco in Recife has a veterinary school and, in addition to the chance to shadow vet students in their clinical years, there are research opportunities in zoonotics, reproductive science, and milk testing! The Catholic University in Recife also has research laboratories doing molecular biology research in medically related topics and available for short experiences. Students interested in going to Brazil should start studying Portuguese now, and start shopping for sunscreen, as it is ALWAYS beach weather at 3° south latitude!



Above: The beautiful campus of the University of Fortaleza



Above: Celeste Crowe and Dr. Jones enjoyed the excitement of “Carnaval” in Recife, thanks to Dr. Leucio Alves and his wife.

Getting the Full Experience in Huejotzingo

Heather Newman, a Junior Chemistry and pre-dental student, is in Puebla, Mexico this semester studying at Universidad de las Americas Puebla (UDLAP). While there she learned that there is a very popular annual event in a town just a few minutes outside Puebla, the Carnival of Huejotzingo. Many people come to see the unique parade where “los Huehues” reenact the different struggles for power that have taken place in Mexican history between groups such as the Arabs, French, Spanish, and indigenous people. Carnival-goers of all ages dress up to take part in the festivities and arm themselves with rifles that shoot out smoke. Although Heather did not dress up and did not plan on taking part in the reenactment portion of the festival, an unexpected retreat of the troops into the main street placed her in the front lines. Unfortunately, she was quickly wounded in battle, as she felt something graze her leg. Immediately, people surrounding her reacted to help by flagging down an ambulance and loading her on board.

After taking one for the team (although she never did find out what hit her, maybe a period bullet? and was not sure what team she was on!), she got to experience firsthand the healthcare in Mexico. In the local hospital, a very friendly staff cleaned her up and gave her some meds, and the UDLAP staff followed up with subsequent care. In the end, she didn't receive a Purple Heart, but all the medical care was completely free! Now, all she is left with is the memory and a sweet scar. Let this be a warning to others attending events that mix ancient weapons with revelry!





King Arthur Students Explore England

On March 10th, fifteen Honors students from Dr. Alexandra Hellenbrand's "King Arthur" Honors seminar class joined together in packing their bags and celebrating what would be a spring break week without classes. However, rather than heading home or driving to the beach, these students grabbed their passports and met Dr. Hellenbrand and Dr. Jones at Charlotte Douglas International to begin what would become an unforgettable journey – the quest for the legend of King Arthur. Bath, England, served as "home base" for these fifteen young Arthurians during the week, but their adventures took them as far as Salisbury, Glastonbury, London, Winchester, and Wales.

After two months of reading-based discussions and speculation about Medievalism and the origins of King Arthur, the group was ready to spend a week walking where the Romans and those before and after walked, taking their learning beyond words on a page.

The days were spent touring, climbing, photographing, and simply standing in awe as history hummed around them. The group's excitement and engagement were made evident by the impromptu discussions of history and literature that took place throughout the day and by the "show and tell" that occurred after each visit to a gift shop. Each day ended with the most intense quest of them all – the quest for food. Students bonded as they explored the streets of Bath, interacted with the locals, and helped one another identify the various coins in their pockets.



Dr. Hellenbrand and the whole class waiting for a train!



Taking in the view from Glastonbury Tor.



Dr. Jones and the class at Stonehenge.

The lasting effects of this educational experience are still coming to light even weeks after the trip. Anyone who walks into Appalachian Hall 163 on a Tuesday or Thursday during Dr. Hellenbrand's King Arthur class will sense not just enthusiasm for the topic and learning in general, but the comfort and friendship that can only come through an experience like this one.

Contributed by: Emily Johnson, Honors Student



Honors Pre-Law Advisor Attends North Carolina Bar Association Conference

On March 28, Lisa Kirscht, Honors Pre-law and Business Advisor, traveled to Elon University School of Law to attend the NCBA's second annual diversity conference, "*The Admissions Game: Increasing Diversity in the Pipeline to Law School.*" Kirscht met Deans and representatives from all seven of North Carolina's law schools, who were also in attendance to provide information that ranged from admissions to career services.

The one-day conference was sponsored by the NCBA Minorities in the Profession Committee and focused on the alarming trends of decreasing numbers of minority lawyers occurring over the past ten years, as well as the decreasing number of minority applicants to law school. In addition to these important issues, panelists discussed the value of legal education today, important considerations in the admissions process, and tips for success in seeking a career in the legal profession.

Kirscht returned from the conference armed with incredibly valuable information to share with the Honors pre-law students to better assist them in paving their way to law school and beyond.

IMPULSE Review Team Presents at Conference

Members of the ASU review team for the journal IMPULSE recently attended SYNAPSE, a regional conference intended to promote undergraduate research in the field of neuroscience. This year's meeting was hosted by the University of South Carolina. After listening to both professional and student presentations, members of the review team participated in informational workshops. These ranged in focus from the process of applying to graduate school to discussion of alternative careers in neuroscience. Several members of the review team also led a workshop explaining the purpose and goals of IMPULSE. Later, members were allowed to view other undergraduate presentations, encouraging students to publish in IMPULSE and to consider joining the review team.

Contributed by: Kyle Sasser, Honors Student



From left to right standing: Dawn Woodard, Grant Canipe, Danielle Russell, Kyle Sasser, and Melina Rucker. Front row: Miranda Cook, Walker Stevens, Elisabeth Artz, and Casey Carlay.



Dr. Dale Wheeler, Director of the Prestigious Scholarship Program (PSP), was recently awarded a grant from the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) to fund a project called "Appalachian Fresh Produce for Those In Need." This is a community service-learning project for the students in the AIM High program at ASU. Their mission is to enhance the existing gardens at Hospitality House by planting and growing fresh and nutritious food for lower income working families in Watauga County. Along with the Hunger and Health Coalition, the Hospitality House is one of the largest providers of food to low income families in Watauga County. The gardens at Hospitality House were created to increase access to fresh produce for its Bread of Life Community Kitchen and Food Box Program.

Dr. Dale Wheeler Uses Grant Award to Help Hunger in Watauga County



The project will be documented with photographs and a story that will be featured on NCHC's website. A video documentary, created by Honors student Justin Davis, will be presented at NCHC's annual conference in New Orleans in November 2013.

Additionally, watch for photos and a story about the project on ASU's webpage at www.appstate.edu.

On Saturday, March 23, eight AIM High students, along with the PSP graduate assistant, Tori Ford, worked diligently on the project by planting fruit trees and building raised garden beds at the gardens. Additional fruit trees that were not planted will be placed on a nearby plot of land owned by the Hospitality House, which will be developed into an area where low income families can pick their own fresh fruit. The students enjoyed the experience and look forward to returning in the future to assist in planting the remaining trees and building additional garden beds used to plant vegetables and herbs.





Next Laurus Honorum Arrives in the Summer!

Watch for our summer newsletter and read about the spring Honorum Laurus, international study abroad adventures, theses highlights, and much more!

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If you would like to donate to the Honors College and support our talented students, please visit our website and click on the image above, which is located at the bottom of our home page at www.honors.appstate.edu.

For more information on how to donate, please email or call the Honors College. We appreciate your support and generosity!

The Honors College Newsletter

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