

LAURUS HONORUM

"Honored with the Laurel"

Volume 23, Winter 2016



**TO EVERYTHING
THERE IS A SEASON**



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Laurus Honorum (“honored with the laurel”) is the NCHC award-winning newsletter of the Honors College at Appalachian State University.

Published quarterly, the Laurus Honorum provides news to our students, parents, alumni, and the Appalachian community about Honors College events, programs, and stories featuring our amazing Honors students and alumni.

We want to share your stories and accomplishments so let us hear from you! You can find all contact information and updates at:



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AD ASTRA PER ASPERA

We are running a little late on our winter newsletter, but it allowed us to wait for the first BIG snow.

This issue highlights our latest Honorum Laurus Ceremony, with a record number of 12 graduates. Dr. Tom McLaughlin received the Honors College Special Award in recognition of his many contributions to Honors over his career at Appalachian; he will be greatly missed.

Other exciting reports include the Chancellor's Scholars' Fall Break trip to Dublin, several articles highlighting students' international study abroad trips, and an alumni update on White Coat Ceremonies at medical schools. We have our first A-Portfolio contest winner (she gets a free trip to NCHC in Seattle next year!) and an alumnae update from two graduate schools of public health. Dr. Wheeler went to NYC for the Fulbright Advisors Workshop and Dr. Waldroup and I presented at the NCHC national Honors conference in Chicago; I was elected to the NCHC Board of Directors in December and will serve for three years. Student research reports include three students at the Society for Neuroscience, and one student, Krysta Purcell, presented at the American Name Society.

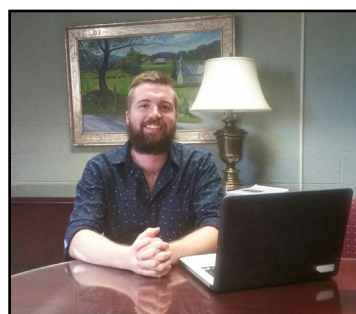
With this issue, my seven and a half years with Honors@Appalachian draws to a close and I wish you all the very best of luck for the future. I am leaving at a time when I could not be more proud of the accomplishments of the remarkable Honors staff and our exceptional students.





RECORD NUMBER OF DECEMBER DEFENSES

We had a record number, 12 students, defend their theses this round! Interdisciplinary thesis projects ranged from paintings, to chemistry lab work, to analytical of fiction. A smattering of photos illustrating the variety, from research to creative endeavors, are shown here. It is such a thrill to watch Honors students transform from knowledge consumers to producers. Congratulations to all Honors students who have successfully defended theses! These events are some of the most exciting in the life and community of The Honors College.



Check out our website for a list of thesis authors, titles, abstracts, and mentors:
<http://honors.appstate.edu/academics/thesis-examples>.



HONORUM LAURUS CEREMONY



In the Honorum Laurus ceremony, the Honors College celebrates those who have completed the requirements to earn the distinction of University Honors. Graduating students are bestowed the Honorum Laurus medal and with it officially “honored with the laurel.” The medal design reflects the logo of the Honors College, which in turn incorporates the mountain songbird of the Appalachian State University word-mark. Our graduates have now taken flight giving their song to the world; we wish them success and will follow their bright futures with pride and great interest.

On December 11th, the Honors College hosted the Fall 2015 Honorum Laurus ceremony. Only the most dedicated students graduate with University Honors. In this ceremony, we celebrated the accomplishments of twelve esteemed graduating Honors Students. Their hard work culminated with the completion of their Honors Thesis projects, which included the topics of video game maps, end-of-life care, stellar activity, and groundwater contamination. To see the Honors Thesis abstract of our graduates, visit our website: www.honors.appstate.edu/academics/thesis-examples.





DR. THOMAS MCLAUGHLIN: SPECIAL AWARD RECIPIENT

Dr. Thomas McLaughlin, Professor of English, received the Special Award for the Retiring Faculty Member for his contributions to Honors and spoke at the December Honorum Laurus Ceremony. He addressed the graduating Honors students about the importance of “having the courage to do the hard stuff.” Dr. McLaughlin has been at Appalachian since 1977 after having completed his Ph.D. at Temple University. He served as the Director of University Honors for four years from 1983-1987. He taught for many years in Honors and for those efforts continually earned the title “favorite professor” from Honors students. He was selected by the Honors Vanguard to receive the Teacher of the Year award in May 2015. For his service and impact on Honors at Appalachian, we are tremendously grateful to Dr. McLaughlin, and wish him the best.

DR. LESLIE SARGENT JONES: ELECTED TO THE NCHC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr. Leslie Sargent Jones has been elected to the Board of Directors of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC). Dr. Jones will serve a three year term with this organization in which she has been a leader throughout her professional Honors career. Election results were announced in late December.

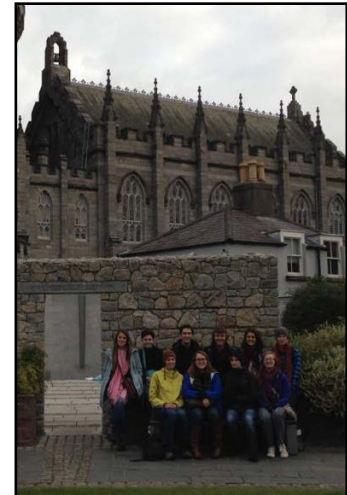
For full new article on the “2015 Election Results,” see:
<http://nchchonors.org/news/2015-election-results/>





FRESHMEN CHANCELLOR'S SCHOLARS: TRAVEL TO DUBLIN, IRELAND

Story by Elisabeth Wall



For the past four years, the freshmen Chancellor's Scholars, all recipients of a full scholarship to Appalachian State University, have traveled to Dublin as part of their International Education requirement. The students plan the trip from start to finish as part of a class, and are charged with connecting a portion of the experience to their individual college and career interests. Over fall break, Honors College Director Dr. Leslie Sargent Jones and Executive Assistant Jessica Yandow introduced the ten scholars to many of the Dublin standards: Christ Church, the Book of Kells, the National Museum, Dublin Castle and, one of Jones' favorites, "the magnificent Long Room at Trinity College. Google it," she said, "It's actually in the Star Wars series as the library of the Jedi." They also branched out with a visit to The Museum of Decorative Arts, a must see for several of the students interested in design, a trek along the seaside cliffs at Howth, and a Catholic mass celebrated in Polish.

For freshmen who have never traveled out of America, a trip like this is something of a challenge, Dr. Jones said. "It is such a pleasure to watch them gain confidence. To realize it's just people in another place after all." The students were particularly surprised by conversations they heard on the street, she continued, and they commented on "what a Babel it was... languages from all over the world—Russian, Spanish, Arabic, Iranian, Italian. That was not what they expected in Ireland."

"These students are all very bright and very individual," Dr. Jones said. "What they have in common is an intellectual curiosity. These students are all in tune, anxious to see it all. They are putting together the pieces."

Story originally published in *Appalachian Magazine*

Top-Left: Students enjoying lunch at a local restaurant in Dublin.

Top-Left: Students pose for a group picture in front of Howth Cliffs.

Top: Students pose in front of Christ Church.

Above: Emma Lassiter looking out over Howth Cliffs.



SEMESTER IN COSTA RICA STUDYING MARINE BIOLOGY

Story by Zachary Saint

Last semester I studied at Universidad Veritas in Costa Rica. During this time I took intensive Spanish courses, became fluent in four months (yes, it's possible!), and took two Biology field courses, Tropical Marine Biology and Land Vertebrates of Costa Rica. To try to convey in one page the amount of growth from those four months would not do it justice. Being in a new country takes you out of your comfort zone every minute that you're there, and new opportunities knock at your door every day. You just have to open the door and take a walk outside.

Outside my door waiting for me was a whole country of new people, so different yet so similar at the same time. I lived and studied in the hustling and bustling capital city, San Jose; however, like all of Costa Rica it still had a familiar, laid-back atmosphere to it. I lived with my host



mom Helga, her son Antonio, and two other American students Drew and Morgan (shown in photo left with Zach back right). I could not have asked for a better living environment; through Helga and her friends who would visit, we were given a small looking glass into the world of a Costa Rican family. Living in a Spanish-speaking country AT LEAST doubles your learning speed. And there's something magical about talking to native speakers in Spanish. Through speaking their language, you gain entry into a deeper level of connection and understanding.

Study abroad is an investment in yourself and my advice is to DO IT! Studying abroad, if you let it, will transform you personally and professionally by opening your mind to new experiences and people. You won't regret it!



Above: Our Marine Bio class exploring the intertidal zone in Cahuita, on the Caribbean coast.



Right: Zach on a boat on the way to snorkeling in the coral reefs of Cuajiniquil (Pacific Coast), a biology class field trip.

Left: Zach with friend Becca in Montezuma, on the Southern Pacific coast.





FALL SEMESTER WITH NOLS IN NEW ZEALAND

Story by Taylor Petty

The bush is full of idealism. The trees are conspiring to change the world. I spent the Fall of 2015 canoeing, hiking, and mountaineering in some of New Zealand's beautiful backcountry with the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). My cohort of ten students spent 77 days living simply and learning leadership, communication, group dynamics, and technical skills. In the following, I share an adapted excerpt from my journal.

It is 9 A.M. in a snowy bowl high in the Southern Alps. Three tents sit on a small ridge. The plan was to pack up and leave in a half hour. That plan was scrapped a few hours ago when we woke up to the sting of wind, rain, and hail. Braving the rain four cooks boiled water on stoves that refused to light. They served their tent-mates a quick breakfast. And now we wait. The tent floor is wet. Sleeping bags are wet. Puffy jackets are wet. Not



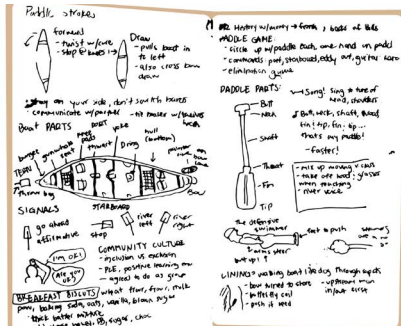
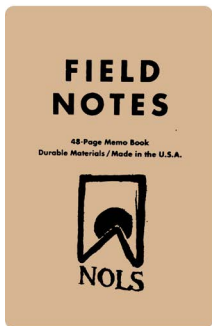
Left: A scenic view from my favorite alpine camp.

Bottom Left: Here I am displaying a great option for natural toilet paper.

Bottom Right: A rope team grouping up before summiting Mt. Anderson.



much is dry. My rain jacket works as well as a holey grocery bag. Guy lines slip. Poles bend. Zippers fly open. Cook sets fly away. A tent rolls down the hill. We lean on tent poles to hold them up. We laugh. We joke. We tighten the lines of our neighbors' tent. We collect rocks to secure anchors. We check in with each other. What else can we do? Harsh situations bring us together. We can't help that we are exposed and the weather is terrible. So we hold to humor. We hold to each other knowing that's all we have. Any man who can pull on his wet rain gear and leave the semi-dry tent to help secure a friend's tent is a man made of gold. And I've got ten of those here with me. I'm a lucky kid.



Far left: My dirty, smelly expedition team after 70 days of sleeping in tents.

Left: High on Lake Man Saddle gearing up for a long day of hiking.



TRAVEL TO ISRAEL WITH BIRTHRIGHT

Story by Alyssa Taylor



I am so lucky to have spent 15 days in Israel over our winter break. Between touring the country with the Birthright Israel program and spending time with my family in Israel, I was able to get a taste of the rich culture and history that lies throughout this incredible nation. Birthright allowed us the opportunity to get to know eight Israeli soldiers who spent five days traveling the nation with us. The soldiers are the same age as American college students, yet our lives entirely different. Getting to know them and hearing their perspective on Israel was by far the best part of my trip. Other highlights included



snorkeling in the Red Sea (photo left), spending a day floating in the Red Sea, and camel trekking in the Negev Desert (photo far left). This was my first experience traveling abroad and I'm positive it won't be my last.



A YEAR IN GERMANY

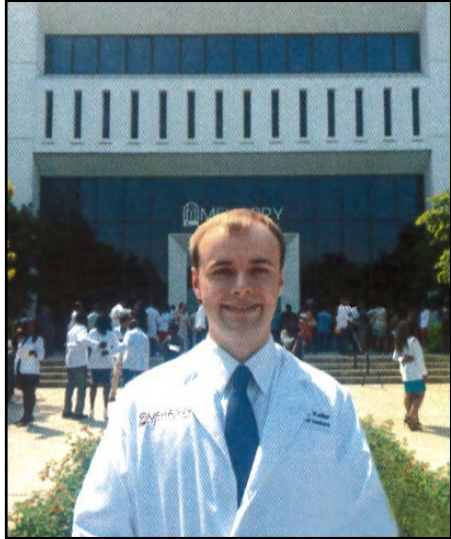
Story by Ryan Hellenbrand

Photo left: Ryan is shown far right.

I arrived in Freiburg about 3 months ago as an exchange student at the University of Freiburg. At Appalachian State University in Boone, I am majoring in German Studies (Global Studies) and Sustainable Development. I am now in my fifth semester and I wanted to spend an entire year in Germany in order to understand "sustainability" with a global perspective. I chose the University of Freiburg because of its variety of course offerings, and I am particularly interested in forest science/forestry. Because the environment is more closely connected with culture than one imagines, stories that people tell about the geography of a region reveal the value that people see in their landscape and what they expect from their physical surroundings. Freiburg and the Black Forest are very similar to my home in the Appalachian Mountains. As an international student, I find it important to get to know the place in which I live up close; to understand the stories and the faces that make a place a community; to connect people with one another. That is how one comes to belong.



WHITE COAT CEREMONIES



Carson Keller (2013) (photo left) Danielle Russell (2015) (photos right and center) are shown here in their proudly earned white coats. They were attending their eponymous White Coat Ceremonies at the University of Meharry Medical College, and South Carolina School of Medicine, respectively. At Appalachian, Danielle was a Chemistry major who targeted medical school throughout college and spent a summer in India on the Honors College clinical experience program. Carson realized he was called to medicine a bit later, switched to Biology, and also spent a month on an Honors College clinical experience, but in his case to Bloemfontein, South Africa. Congratulations to both of them, and best wishes as they slog on through the next three and a half years of medical school!

EMMA LASSITER WINS APORTFOLIO CONTEST

Honors Freshman and Chancellor's Scholar Emma Lassiter has won the inaugural HON 1515 Freshman Honors Seminar APortfolio contest this Fall 2015 semester. For her APortfolio project, Emma has been awarded a trip to the National Collegiate Honors Council annual meetings in Seattle, WA, this coming November. Congratulations to Emma. We look forward to many more winning APortfolio projects from Honors students in the future.

Emma Lassiter [site map](#)

[Home](#) | [Academic Studies](#) | [Musical Studies](#) | [Involvement & Leadership](#) | [Global Studies](#) | [Audio](#)

Home

Welcome! My name is Emma Lassiter, and I am a First-Year Choral Music Education Major at Appalachian State University's Hayes School of Music.

Following my Bachelor of Music degree, I intend to continue my studies and earn a Master of Choral Conducting and finally a Doctor of Musical Arts. I then hope to direct choral activities at the university level.

In addition to the Hayes School of Music, I am also a member of the Appalachian State University Honors College, as well as a recipient of the Chancellor's Scholarship (see links to each program below).

Outside of academics, I have also trained as a martial artist and earned my Second Degree Black Belt in Karate. I have since enjoyed teaching the practice to students of all ages. I dabble in poetry and fictional writings in my spare time, and hope to successfully compose a musical piece by the end of the academic year.

Relevant Information:
[Hayes School of Music](#)
[ASU Honors College](#)
[Chancellor's Scholarship](#)



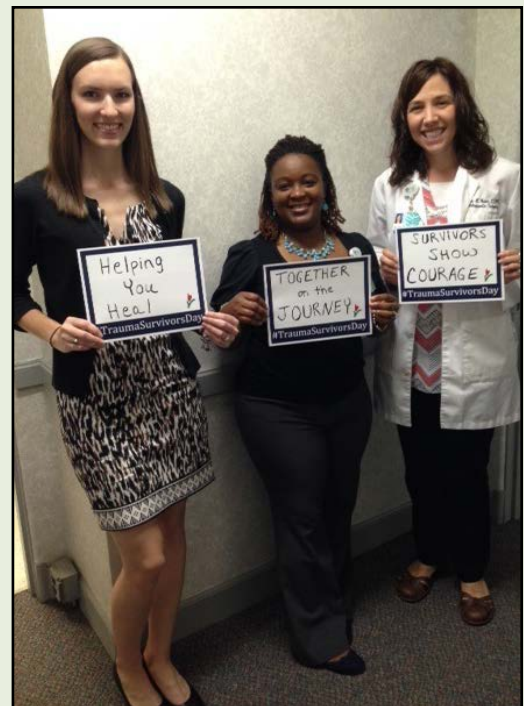
ALUMNAE WORK IN PUBLIC HEALTH



Miranda Cook (2013) is currently pursuing her MPH at Emory University. She is a Research Assistant in the Division of Reproductive Health and recently attended the OpenCon 2015 conference on open science held in Brussels. She and her fellow attendees met with European Union policymakers to discuss steps they can take to help researchers make science more open. Speakers at the meeting included Mike Eisen (PLOS), Jimmy Wales (Wikipedia), and Jennifer Hansen (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation). She is shown in the picture (above) at the bottom left helping to hold up the conference banner.

Having completed her Masters in Public Health from UNC-Charlotte, Meghan Kusper Wally (2012) (shown far left in photo below) is currently a research coordinator at Carolinas Healthcare. She is working on a reserach project with prescription drug overdose reaching 10,000 patients every month. As she shares, *"My supervisor has a Ph.D. in public health and is a very accomplished researcher, so I'm learning a lot. She gives me a lot of independence to come up with ideas for papers and grants and writing those, so I feel very challenged and fulfilled. We are certainly intervening at the population level, which is exciting and why I switched from medicine."*

Other than her job, Meaghan reports, *"I'm working to publish the results from my masters thesis and planning a trip to Scandinavia in the fall!"*





ANNUAL NCHC MEETING IN CHICAGO, IL



The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), the national organization for all honors programs and colleges in post-secondary education (over 900 institutions), hosted its 50th annual meeting in Chicago, Nov. 11-15. Drs. Jones and Waldroup represented the APP Honors

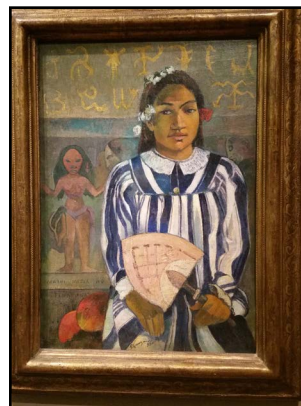


College at the meeting in three different sessions. Dr. Waldroup led a roundtable discussion on *“Honors Cut-Out Sections: A Useful Middle Ground,”* and Dr. Jones gave an invited presentation on the advantages and challenges of trying to transition from an honors program to college in a session entitled *“Assessing the Institutional Impact of Honors.”* Dr. Jones also was an invited consultant during one of the NCHC Consultant Center sessions; these useful settings provide an opportunity for honors staff to consult with others on specific issues they may have with their honors programs. The conference was a wonderful chance to learn from both new and old colleagues (like Dr. Michael Lane, now at UMES but previously the Associate Director here at ASU!) on the latest innovations in honors education. One of the main recurring topics was the growing trend of students arriving in honors with dual enrollment, AP, and IB credits that lead students to think they should complete university (and honors) in just two more years. There will be ongoing discussions on this topic and others as the honors movement nationally (and internationally) develops.

Above: Dr Waldroup visits Cloud Gate, fondly known as “The Bean,” a reflective outdoor sculpture by Anish Kapoor in Millennium Park.

Right: A painting by Paul Gauguin in the Art Institute of Chicago.

Right: The Chagall Window in the the Art Institute of Chicago.





DR. WHEELER IN NYC WITH FULBRIGHT ADVISORS



Dr. Dale Wheeler, Director of the Prestigious Scholarships Program, Professor of Chemistry, and Honors College Academic Mentor, traveled to New York City December 2-4 to meet with a select group of Fulbright Advisors. This workshop was the second, follow-up meeting of Fulbright Advisors organized by the Institute of International Education (IIE); the twelve participants were chosen out of a total 75 applications from advisors at member institutions.

The goal of the workshops was to increase the number of Fulbright applicants and successful applications. In this second meeting, participant advisors observed the evaluation process and the selection of semi-finalists from the applications that were submitted this past October. In these workshops, Dr. Wheeler also had the opportunity to share experiences and learn from peer advisors at other institutions. With the help of these workshops, Dr. Wheeler has already increased the number of Fulbright applications at Appalachian.

Fulbright Grants are 9-10 month experiences and include: round-trip transportation to the host country, room, board, and incidental costs, accident and sickness health benefits, and in many countries, book and research allowances, mid-term enrichment activities, full or partial tuition, and language study programs. Eligible students are seniors in the year they apply.

For more information about the ASU Fulbright application contact Dr. Wheeler at (828) 262-2083 or wheelerde@appstate.edu



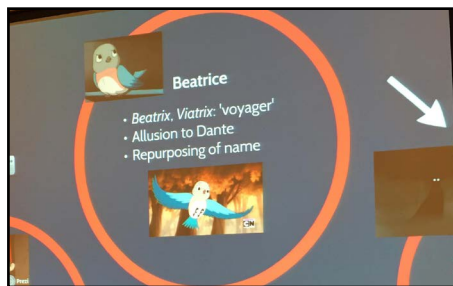
Above: Dr. Wheeler (second from left) with three fellow participants out enjoying the city after a full day of observations.

Right: The group of twelve select Fulbright Advisors participating in the workshop with Dr. Wheeler (back row forth from right).



KRYSTA PURCELL PRESENTS AT AMERICAN NAME SOCIETY

On January 8, 2016, Krysta Purcell presented her paper, "Exploring the Unknown: An Onomastic Study of Over the Garden Wall," to the American Name Society at its annual meeting in Washington, D.C. The American Name Society is a scholarly society devoted to the study of names and naming, which meets annually with the Linguistic Society of America, the American Dialect Society, and other language-focused scholarly organizations. Krysta's presentation grew out of her Honors Thesis, which she successfully defended in December 2015. Krysta presented her paper in a panel that



included two senior faculty members presenting papers on aspects of names in Shakespeare's plays and a doctoral student who won this year's Emerging Scholar Award.

Krysta's paper more than held its own in this panel of strong papers, and Krysta demonstrated poise and professionalism both in the presentation and in the question period that followed.



STUDENTS PRESENT AT SOCIETY FOR NEUROSCIENCE IN CHICAGO

Three students from the IMPULSE journal team at Appalachian University went to the Society for Neuroscience annual meeting in Chicago in October to present a poster on international opportunities with the journal. Hannah Johnson (pictured on the left)



Christa Adjei (right), and Sarah Snouse (not pictured) had the chance to promote the journal at three consecutive four-hour poster sessions, and then again at the concurrent Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience meeting. They, along with Dr. Mark Zrull (Psychology) and some students from his lab, enjoyed the intensity of the cutting edge talks at the meeting. All came back energized and ready for another year of research and journal work in preparation for the next round of presentations. In fact, Rachel Sledge and Elisabeth Moore are already making plans to present their abstract in Copenhagen at the 2016 Federation for European Neuroscience Conference!



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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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