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THE HONORS COLLEGE

at

Rutgers University—Camden

FALL NEWSLETTER



Director's Column

The Honors College Turns Twenty

By Dr. Timothy Martin

The academic year 2017-18 marks the twentieth year of the Honors College, founded in 1997 by my friend and colleague Allen Woll. It's been satisfying, during my five years or so on the job, to work with our talented and engaging students and fun to get to know them.

Though much has changed, a few important things endure. Our academic program has remained constant over twenty years: students still take six Honors courses, including three seminars, two composition courses, and a larger, sophomore-year course. Academic advising, featuring our one-on-one meetings in the summer, continues to be the most important and maybe the best thing we do. And our students are still among the most visible on campus. The chancellor's office calls regularly when they need student profiles for campus publications or personable guests for an alumni dinner.

We're much bigger than we were twenty years ago, with 500 members, about eight percent of undergraduates. We've grown not just by increasing our class coming straight from high school: we now admit well-qualified transfers, and several years ago we began to recruit high-achieving "rising sophomores," students who may have found that college began to bring out the best in them.

Our recent growth has enabled us to appoint a new assistant dean, Erin Lucas, who, with Krista Wehlen and Laura Collins, gives us an outstanding, three-person team. Herself a graduate of the Honors College, Erin earned a B.A. (2008) and an M.A. (2010) in English here. In February of 2013 we moved from our seedy premises in the library to a newly-designed home at 319 Cooper St. that we've already begun to outgrow.

We've created an engagement requirement that our early graduates won't recognize. Every term our students give some time to experiences that expose them to new interests and help them make connections. Participation on athletic teams and in student organizations counts, as well as community events like a Breast Cancer Walk or a Service Night at the Cathedral Kitchen in Camden. Honors continues to create its own social programming, including our IMPACT orientation day and a visit to Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge.

To mark our 20th anniversary, the Honors Alumni Association is organizing a celebration on April 28th at The Big Event in Cherry Hill. We'd love to see our students and alumni there. Stay tuned for details.

Semester Spotlight: IMPACT Day 2017

August 27th, 2017

After an eight-year sunny streak, IMPACT Day 2017 delivered an Honors College first: a dreary, rainy forecast! Luckily the deluge couldn't dampen students' spirits; a class of about 130 incoming Honors College students (including freshmen, transfers, and rising sophomores) ventured out into Philadelphia for a day of camaraderie and culture.

IMPACT Day celebrates the start of the new academic year by pairing our newest students with upperclassmen leaders for a field trip to an "off-the-beaten-path" Philly museum or landmark. This year's seven destinations included perennial favorites: the Mutter Museum, the Chemical Heritage Museum, Pennsylvania Hospital, Eastern State Penitentiary, the UPenn Archaeology Museum, and the Mural Arts Philadelphia walking tour. At the Fairmount Water Works, our new location for 2017, students learned about sustainability initiatives and water stewardship in Philadelphia.



Semester Spotlight: Owls in Autumn

November 15th, 2017

A group of Honors College students visited Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge in Medford to learn about the native owl inhabitants of New Jersey. Denise Peters, Director of Education at Cedar Run, introduced our crew of wildlife lovers to three of Cedar Run's resident owls, all of whom are unable to return to the wild due to injuries. Students were shocked to learn that Nazar, an eastern screech owl, weighs no more than an iPhone, and that Hoodini (*sic*—so named because he once "escaped" from his equipment during training), an adorable great horned owl, is actually an apex predator. The star of the evening was Squam, a blind 16-year-old barred owl who won the students' hearts with his calm demeanor. Squam even demonstrated his signature "hoot" for the crowd!

After the indoor program, our band of adventurers explored the wooded areas of the refuge in search of wild owls. None appeared, but it was still a beautiful night for a hike.



News of Our Students

- **Sean Alexander** (Biology '20) completed a Wildlife Care internship at Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge (*pictured top left*).
- **Kacey Dougherty** (Chemistry '18) completed a NASA Summer Research Internship through the New Jersey Space Grant Consortium (*pictured top right*).
- **Salma Kamal** (Political Science '19) completed the United Nations Summer Study Program in New York City.
- **Katrina DeWitt** (Biology '18) completed a Research Experience for Undergraduates program in Ecology at Miami University of Ohio.
- **Bielka Gonzalez** (Accounting '20) completed PricewaterhouseCoopers' prestigious "PwC START" internship (*pictured bottom left*).

Student Voices

By Luke Allen (Political Science '18)

During the summer of 2017, I participated in The Washington Center program in Washington, D.C. As part of the program, I had the privilege of interning in the House of Representatives for established California Congresswoman Doris Matsui. In addition to working on Capitol Hill, I took an academic course in Middle-Eastern Politics and attended professional development workshops.

There was never a dull day working for Congresswoman Matsui. While I did my fair share of traditional office labor, I was also given many more interesting tasks: I attended briefings on behalf of the office, researched legislative issues like social welfare programs, and responded to constituent mail. I also worked extensively with the office's Communications Director, drafting social media messages and designing informational material. My experience in Washington solidified my desire to attend law school and inspired me for a possible career in politics myself.

This summer would not have been possible without the financial contribution I received from the Honors College. Their financial support allowed me to have the best summer of my life!

Luke and Congresswoman Matsui are pictured bottom right.



HCAA Announcements

HC Alums: Did you know that the **Honors College Alumni Association** has an active Facebook community? Join today for real time updates and opportunities to get involved! Community service, networking, casual meet-ups, a member-of-the-month spotlight...we've got it all!

Also, and this one is important: please take a moment to update your contact information with the **Rutgers Alumni Association** to be sure you don't miss any news from the HCAA.

Save the Date

Holiday Gift Wrapping Extravaganza

Thursday, December 14th:

5:00-7:00 pm, Campus Center South ABC

Join the HCAA and the Honors College for our Holiday Gift Wrapping Extravaganza to benefit the Ronald McDonald House.

Participants should bring a new, unwrapped toy donation or at least one empty shoebox. We'll supply the holiday cheer!

The Honors College 20th Birthday Bash!

Saturday, April 28th:

The Big Event, Cherry Hill, NJ

Celebrate 20 years of the Honors College with old friends and new! More details to come in the Spring semester.

Giving to the HC

As the season of giving approaches, please consider making a contribution to the Honors College.

Direct contributions to our **Scholarship Fund** help the Honors College provide financial support to our students as they pursue unique study opportunities, learn abroad, or otherwise supplement their education with meaningful experiences.

Donations to our **Gift Fund** help with programmatic expenses incurred by the Honors College and help fund our signature events and field trips!

Keep in Touch with the HC



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