



Honors College Alumni News

The Alumni Newsletter of the Honors College

Connecting
Honors
Alumni

Dean's Welcome State of the Honors College



ISSUE NUMBER 1

In the intervening years since many of you left the university, what was known as the Honors program became the Honors College in 1999 thanks to the efforts of then Texas Tech University President Donald Haragan and the Board of Regents. Since that time, the number of students we serve has increased, as well as the number of services that we provide. Study Abroad; service learning; two unique degree programs; the establishment of an Honors faculty; grooming students for prestigious national and international scholarships; an Honors residential program; an unusual advising program; small, weekly discussion groups; and so much more are just some of the many opportunities that we provide to these students, making us one of the most comprehensive Honors colleges in the nation.

Besides our expanding program offerings, the Honors College has just had a wonderful year in terms of Honors student accomplishments. In the fall of 2007 we had a

total enrollment of over 800 students with an incoming class of 245 freshmen. The average SAT score for this freshman class was 1304. In the spring of 2007 our graduating class of Honors student's was 136. Our students continue to win Goldwater, Truman, and Gates/Cambridge (we had 3 out of 76 nation-wide in the last three years, a truly impressive production for the Cambridge, England equivalent to the well known Rhodes scholarship) scholarships, demonstrating their national competitiveness and the strengths of the university.

It has been a great institution that collectively we have been building, and a great story that we have to tell. Thanks for being a part of that story over the last few decades, and please let us know more about you. We would like to tell your story in order to help you stay connected with your Honors roots and to help facilitate opportunities for alumni to mentor to graduating students.



NEW HONORS STAFF MEMBERS

The Honors College welcomes new staff members Irene Cox, Thomas Reynolds and Dr. Richard Verrone. Mrs. Cox is Assistant to the Dean, Mr. Reynolds is the college's Clerical Specialist and Dr. Verrone is the Coordinator for Undergraduate Research.

Friday Lunch Discussion

On Fridays at 12:00 pm in the Forum (McClellan Hall), the Honors College hosts a popular Lunch Discussion series. The hour-long Lunch Discussion is designed to be an informal yet intellectually provoking discussion of a particular topic of interest. The discussions are led by a member of the Texas Tech University community who usually has some unique knowledge and expertise on the topic. Free lunch is provided each week.

All Honors College students and alumni are welcome and encouraged to attend! To discover weekly topics, visit the Honors website, www.honr.ttu.edu.

To read an electronic version of this newsletter, visit www.honr.ttu.edu



Jerry and Susan Pittman Contribute to the Honors College

The Honors College would like to thank two very special people who care greatly about education, especially the education of Texas Tech University Honors students.

Jerry and Susan Pittman have generously donated funds that will specifically be used for educational enhancement such as study abroad, class field trips, and visits to historical sites. Susan and Jerry are both committed the Honors ideals of breadth of education.



Garrett Cypert, Jolie Scott and Hayden Roan

Phi Kappa Phi Emerging Scholars

The Texas Tech University Honors College is proud to announce that three of our own honors students, Garrett Cypert, Jolie Scott and Hayden Roan have been selected to receive the Phi Kappa Phi Emerging Scholar Award. This prestigious national award recognizes outstanding rising sophomores studying at Phi Kappa Phi member institutions. Each year, Phi Kappa Phi grants 60 Emerging Scholar Awards of \$250 each.



Staff Retreat

New staff members Dr. Richard Verrone and Thomas Reynolds enjoy a day at the track during the annual staff retreat.



Honors Alumna Dr. Jaclyn Cañas Shines at TIEHH

Jaclyn Cañas graduated from TTU with highest honors in May 2001 and stayed at Texas Tech to attend graduate school. She earned her Ph.D. in Environmental Toxicology from Texas Tech in Aug 2005. After graduation, Jaclyn then moved to Corvallis, OR where she did postdoctoral training at the Environmental Protection Agency’s Western Ecology Division. In fall 2006, she returned to

TTU as an Assistant Professor of Environmental Toxicology at the Institute of Environmental and Human Health. Jaclyn now teaches and trains graduate students. In addition, she is a mentor for a Howard Hughes Medical Institute student who is also a member of the Honors College.

Jaclyn states that her favorite Honors class was a Humanities course that was taught by Dr. Ken Davis. “The class helped me to embrace the arts and humanities. Ever since that class I have kept a passion for art and music.”

Her favorite Honors professor is Dr. Susan Tomlinson. “She was a great mentor and was actually responsible for getting me into undergraduate research in environmental toxicology which changed my whole life. I chose to go to graduate school instead of medical school at UT San Antonio. She also encouraged me to do a senior thesis and as a result I graduated with highest honors. I am thankful for her in pointing me in the right direction!!”



Dr. Jane Winer, Dr. Monty Strauss and Dr. Carol Edwards



Recent Honors College Graduate Kelly Metz and family

Honors College Hosts Winter Graduation Banquet

Friday December the 14th, the Honors College hosted its annual Winter Graduation Banquet at the McInturff Center.

The banquet attendance topped 200 with many faculty, staff and family of the graduates joining to congratulate the honors students. This fall, the Honors College boasted 32 students that graduated with Honors and one student, Rebekah Wilks, who graduated with Highest Honors. Rebekah’s thesis was titled “A Systematic Comparison of Diabetes Mellitus Type 2 and Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome.”

Rebekah Wilks was a banner bearer for the

Honors College during Saturday’s graduation ceremony in the morning and Kelly Metz was banner bearer for the afternoon ceremony.

Dr. Carol Edwards, the new Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, was the keynote speaker for the evening. She addressed graduates and emphasized the importance of keeping their imagination, being creative and not letting obstacles stand in their way. After receiving their medallions from Dean Bell, students took the opportunity to say a few words about their Honors experiences. Many of students spoke about the benefit of small classes but a majority of the students said their time studying abroad, made possible by the Honors College, will stand out as the high point of their college experience.

Honors Welcomes New Faculty Member Dr. Isis Leslie



Professor Isis Leslie, the newest addition to the Honors College, is a half-Nigerian, half-Jamaican political and social theorist. She joins us most recently from Washington DC where she taught at Georgetown University and acted as a consultant to the American Political Science Association. Professor Leslie grew up in Chicago and studied theater at Roosevelt University until she discovered political theory during a year “abroad” at University of Toronto. She subsequently decided to pursue a doctorate in that field at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

In her free time, Dr. Leslie devours fiction, including science fiction, and film. She thinks her favorite film of all time may be *Being There*, but Dr. Leslie likes film of all genres, from Woody Allen to the *Bourne Ultimatum*, to foreign and obscure art house fare.

Dr. Leslie is also fascinated by psychology as it relates to political science and theory, but she is also intrigued by the field as a whole, from the most recent developments in neurology and cognitive science, to language development, and even body language. Her interest in psychology informs her pedagogy and she strives to incorporate recent insights in psychology into her approach to teaching, especially the ideas that writing, discussion, and exploration of real world application of theoretical ideas facilitate learning.

Although Dr. Leslie is accustomed to metropolitan cities, the child of a mathematician and an English professor (along with her six other siblings), she feels quite at home in our university environment of Texas Tech and looks forward to learning more about the area.

Honors Alumnus Sean Knowles

Sean Knowles is a 2001 Honors College and College of Business graduate from Texas Tech and currently is seeking his Master of Business Administration from Duke University, the Fuqua School of Business. He is also a professional staff member working for the subcommittee on Military Construction and Veteran Affairs within the U.S. Senate appropriations committee in Washington, D.C. His job entails negotiating public laws allocating military spending, analyzing construction projects, and drafting legislation and committee reports.

While Sean was a student at Texas Tech, he “had some great experiences through the Honors College and the President’s office in particular ... that led directly to my career in Washington. Specifically, the Honors College seminar on the American Experience in Vietnam showcased the great value the Honors College added to my education. As a finance major, this topic was far outside my discipline, but the class was very well taught. It forced me to think critically about history, international affairs, and the role of America’s military in the world. This was a



Chancellor Kent Hance and Sean Knowles

skill set I didn’t expect to need, but one that I certainly employed over the last 4 years, when I was traveling around the world to oversee U.S. government spending on military bases in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, South Korea, and Germany.”

Sean attributes his interest in the inner workings of government to the Texas Tech President’s Congressional Internship program. “The President’s Congressional Internship program placed me in the office of U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison for the fall semester of 1999, which, in addition to being a great experience, led to my full-time job working for the Senator after school.”

Class Notes

Laura Sparrow nee Bell (class of 2003) and her husband Mark celebrated the birth of their son Benson Chase on Dec. 10, 2007

Kristin DeBusk (class of 2004) married Nathan Stone on August 25, 2007. Kristin’s currently working on her Ph.D. in American History at the University of California, Davis.

Katie Mitchell nee Armstrong (Class of 2004) and her husband Travis celebrated the birth of their son Ethan on Sept. 27, 2007.

Alexander Walther (class of 2006) and **Christine Palmer-Walther** (class of 2006) were married on Jan. 6, 2007. Christine is working on her PhD in Developmental Psychology at the University of Pittsburg. Alexander is an associate Forensic Accountant at Parente Randolph in Pittsburg.

Kristen Sparks (class of 2006) is working as an English Teaching Assistant in Graz, Austria through the Fulbright Commission/Austrian American Education Council.

Rashonda Hayes (class of 2006) is completing her second year at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary where she’s working on her M.A. in Christian Education.



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The Honors College
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Class Notes

Jerry Adams (class of 1997) and his wife Sarah celebrated the birth of their son, Daniel Nathan, on March 2, 2007. Jerry completed his Ed.D. in December, 2007 with a dissertation titled, "Development and Testing of an Initial Model of Curricular Leadership Culture in Middle Schools." Jerry is currently employed as the high school principal in New Deal, Texas and is also an adjunct professor at Wayland Baptist University - Lubbock campus.

New E-Friends Tool for Honors Alum

E-Friends allow members to connect to people in their personal networks and community, creating a new online interactive resource that is based on a trusted network of friends and associates on the internet.

If you have used Friendster or MySpace before, then you should be able to easily navigate the Honors E-Friends site. Once you register with E-Friends, then you invite people

you know to join your personal or professional network. Your Honors friends will come to E-Friends and invite fellow Honors alumni. As the network grows, members will have more opportunities to interact easily with people they know, make friends, and use the E-Friends network to keep in touch with fellow Honors alum.

Visit the Honors College website www.honr.ttu.edu to sign up for E-Friends and find out where your Honors College friends are now or contact Janet Veal, janet.veal@ttu.edu, Coordinator of External Relations.

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Honors students in Oklahoma, City for the 2007 Great Plains Honors Council annual conference