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Honors @ Georgia Southern

Spring 2010 Volume 2



Undergraduate
RESEARCH

Honors @ Georgia Southern Staff

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Nicholas Hoad:
Kristen Mitchell (page 15)

Katie Brookins:
Thomas Eisenhart (profile and Rotary), Keilyene Burgess with prof (pages 12, 26, 31)

Dr. Alan Harvey:
Bee Photos (page 29)

Kelsey Ryan:
Kristina Kegerreis, Ashley Akins, Bradley Wilbur, and a couple of homecoming shots (pages 8, 13, 21, 34, 35)

James Cutchens:
Amy Ruiz (Page 20)

Cover: Senior Ann Hedges and her research mentor, Dr. Michael Reksulak



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HONORS ANNUAL REPORT

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The University Honors Program provides transformative experiences for bright and talented students. Undergraduate research and creative activity can be one of the most transformative of those experiences. Working side-by-side with a faculty mentor on a substantial project gives a student a much deeper knowledge of the discipline and an appreciation for the ways in which knowledge is discovered and communicated. This issue provides highlights of a wide variety of the undergraduate research and creative activity completed by the honors class of 2010.

As always, the work of our students and our faculty extend beyond the classroom. In this issue, the reader will travel to China with Ryan Pickrell, one of our Boren Scholars; and to Japan with Rose Sheehan and Denmark with Anna Mcgaughey, two of our Gilman Scholars. In addition to the variety of other stories about the Program, we are featuring three poems from our students. Honors students and honors alumni are welcome to submit their poems or flash fiction for next year's issue. As always, I would love to hear from you. Drop me a line and stay in touch (submission of poetry not required).

Sincerely yours,
Steven Engel

Mission Statement

The University Honors Program provides a small college atmosphere in the context of a large comprehensive university. The program is designed to foster the development of a critical sense of inquiry, a spirit of creativity, a global perspective and an ethic of civic responsibility. A hallmark of the program is the emphasis on bringing ideas to life through undergraduate research, experiential learning and service-learning opportunities.

The University Honors Program at Georgia Southern University rests on a foundation of the following ideals that are inspired by the institution's emphasis on engaged learning.

Critical Sense of Inquiry

Honors students will explore a variety of approaches to research designed to foster the pursuit of knowledge. Students will develop the ability to question with a healthy skepticism toward accepted opinion. The culmination of the undergraduate experience is an independent research or creative project designed to exemplify a critical approach to inquiry.

Civic Responsibility

Honors students will demonstrate an ethic of civic responsibility and exemplify the motto of the program, "Humility before Honor." Students will be challenged to use their abilities and talents for the advancement of humanity and the pursuit of a greater good. The primary vehicle for the expression of civic responsibility is through service both to the university and the community.

Spirit of Creativity

Honors students will embrace the idea that creativity is a virtue that should be experienced by all students, regardless of discipline. This spirit involves a respect for different ways of knowing and an openness to intellectual discussion and challenge.

Global Perspective

Honors students will develop a perspective which allows them to approach their chosen discipline from an international point of view. This outlook involves the critical exploration of global concerns and generation of proposed solutions to international problems. Honors education provides this worldwide perspective through academic courses, study abroad opportunities and co-curricular experiences.



The housing market may be in a slump but it has turned out to be a great time for the University Honors Program to get a new home. In August 2009, the Program moved into a newly renovated Eidson House. Originally built as the President's Home in 1955, the building had been the campus home of Alumni Relations and Development since 1972 (see timeline). With the opening of the Bishop Alumni Center, this old house became available.

While the Bell Honors Program had its Honors House, that was a residence for just a few students and was across campus from the office of Bell Honors Director Dr. Hew Joiner. Also in a different location was the most important space

for the program, the honors seminar room, located in the library. Similarly, the University Honors Program bounced around in its first ten years from the Administrative Annex, to the interior design cottage and then to the Information Technology building. Now located in the Eidson House, the Program offices, student social space, and seminar room are under one roof.

As soon as it was determined that the Eidson House would be assigned to the University Honors Program, students and faculty participated in the planning of the renovation. Kimberly Anderson (pictured left), honors Interior Design major from Boonton, New Jersey, was instrumental in helping define the color scheme, furniture selection, and

layout of the furniture.

The house now features a student lounge, a spacious back porch, a seminar room, and a small kitchen in addition to the offices of the honors staff. With the support of student technology fees, the seminar room includes the latest technology and the building is wireless. At any given time, students can be found drinking coffee, studying, relaxing, or conversing in the lounge or on the porch. "I love Eidson House already," said senior honors student Cassie Beasley. "I go there to do homework, and I almost always have a chance to chat with other students who I wouldn't normally get to see because our classes are on opposite ends of campus."

For the upcoming fall semester, twelve classes will meet in the seminar room. Math professor Jim Braselton, who is scheduled to teach there in the fall, said "Having classes in the honors building forces it to be a gathering place for honors students ... it encourages a sense of culture and community among them."

To provide the proper setting in the house, the Program has acquired works of art from current and former students. Items added thus far to the honors permanent collection from current students include those from Elizabeth Debban (painting), Jeanne Henry (ceramics), Jennifer Youmans (photography), and Sara Whaley (drawing). In addition, three works from Bell

Honors graduate Ashley Anderson (2005) are on display in the student lounge.

The house's namesake was the seventh president of Georgia Southern, John Olin Eidson, serving from 1968-1971, and he was the last president to live in the house. "It is fitting that the University Honors Program is located in a facility named for Dr. Eidson," said Dr. Steven Engel, "since he and his wife have made the largest donation to the Honors Scholarship Endowment to date. The University Honors Program will continue to strive to further his legacy and build upon the tradition of academic excellence which he worked to establish during his tenure as president."

Kelsey Decker contributed to this article.

Eidson House Timeline

The story of the Eidson House began over 50 years ago. Here's a look at what made the house into the home it is today.



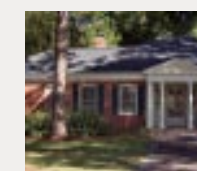
1955
President Zach Henderson and his wife Marjorie move into the President's Home as the first residents.



1968
Dr. John Olin Eidson becomes President of Georgia Southern College upon the retirement of Dr. Henderson. He and his wife Perrin move into the President's Home.

1971
President Eidson is appointed Vice Chancellor of the University System of Georgia. He and his wife are the last residents of the President's Home. The building is renovated for institutional offices and becomes the Alumni House.

1987
Building rededicated as Eidson Alumni House.



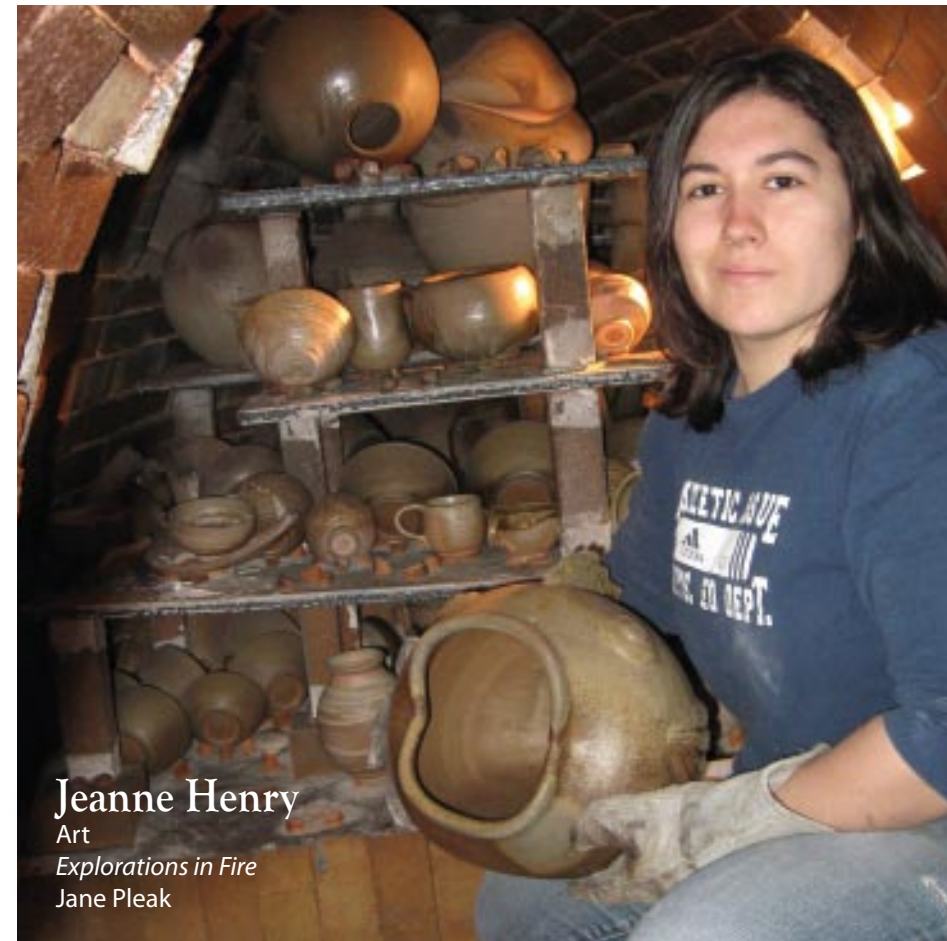
2009
University Honors Program moves in and building is renamed the Eidson House.



Undergraduate RESEARCH

Critical sense of inquiry. Spirit of Creativity.

These are among the four foundations of the University Honors Program. While these foundations underlie all aspects of the honors experience at Georgia Southern, they are demonstrated most clearly in a student's Honors Thesis or Capstone Project. The thirty-two student projects profiled here have been completed by seniors in the class of 2010. While they do not exhaust the extent of honors research and creative activity, they exemplify the range of interesting work completed by honors students.



Jeanne Henry
Art
Explorations in Fire
Jane Pleak

When senior Art student Jeanne Henry built a small wood burning kiln more than a year ago as part of a class, she didn't know that just months later she would have the opportunity to put her skills to use for a bigger project. The original kiln was still in use when Jeanne's newest endeavor was fired up for the first time. No longer working under the direction of a faculty member, Jeanne helped lead other students in the creation of the new kiln, which is much larger. "The first one was quite small. It didn't seem worth it to fire something that small for four days. We couldn't get enough work in there. This one's about four times bigger," she explains.

The students did not receive any funding from the school for the project, instead calling on local businesses to donate supplies. According to Jeanne, getting the community involved in supporting the arts was one of the most rewarding aspects of building the new and improved kiln. She has also enjoyed slowly mastering the ins and outs of wood fire kilns through hands-on work at every stage, from the initial design to the finished product. "That's how it is a lot when you start up on your own, so it's been a learning experience."

Ceramics made in wood kilns are glazed by ash settling on the pieces during the firing. "This is chaotic," Jeanne said. "It depends on how one

piece sits next to another and how the flame wraps around it...you don't know how it's going to come out." Jeanne used the kiln to complete some, if not all, of the finished ceramics pieces that are part of her completed Honors Capstone project. "It is my favorite. It's half way technical and half way 'let's hope this works,' and that's definitely my style of work." With respect to her finished pieces, she said that her goal is to discover what people want and need from their ceramics. "[I want to] make the perfect coffee mug," she said. "When you see somebody pick up something you made and they say 'Ah, that feels nice... I love the angle of the handle. I love the thumb imprint,' it makes you feel so much better."

After graduation, Jeanne will be getting her Master's degree in art education from the University of Georgia. When asked if she will miss the opportunity to work with the kiln she laughs, "I told my professor, 'I'm coming back, and I'm firing it.'" It is likely that she will be able to do just that. The new wood burning kiln is a much more durable structure than the old one, and ceramics students will be able to use it for many years to come. "This is one of the more permanent kilns that have been built here. I would say it would last about twenty-five years if people maintain it," Jeanne said. *CB*



Megan Ekstrom
International Studies
Who Are We?? The European Union Experience
Dr. Darin Van Tassell

Megan Ekstrom's interest in how people develop their individual identity comes from her own experience as someone who has lived in two countries. Ekstrom, an International Studies major, was born in Sweden. She later moved to America where she learned English as her second language, and in her time at Georgia Southern, she has taken on a third language, German, as a minor. This experience with two cultures and three languages gave her an excellent foundation for her Honors Thesis research on European identity.

Specifically, Ekstrom has been determining how European citizens develop identity, particularly a larger, over-arching European identity. "I have been examining the European Union to find out if a common European identity emerges," said Ekstrom, "or if people continue to hold onto their national identities."

Ekstrom has been utilizing the Eurobarometer, a research study conducted by European commissioners that asks Europeans about topics, including but not limited to their identity (the question of identity was recently added in 1992). Using the Eurobarometer, Ekstrom has been searching for trends.

On top of an already challenging topic, Ekstrom has had another obstacle to face—she only started the project last semester, giving her merely a year to complete it. However, Ekstrom is dedicated, and she has worked hard to catch up.

Ekstrom's mentor and thesis director is Dr. Darin Van Tassell, Associate Professor in the Center of International Studies and the Department of Political Science. He has been with Ekstrom throughout her research process, from forming her ideas in the beginning to writing out her research. Dr. Van Tassell is very passionate about Ekstrom's research, feeling that it is a publishable topic of great interest. *EM*



English major Ashley Akins can usually be found working. To find her, one might check the Registrar's office, her peer leader classroom, the volunteer involvement board, meetings of the CLASS Dean's Student Advisory Board where Ashley is president, or her apartment where she studies literature. Still, finding time to fit in an Honors Thesis was easy, especially if it meant spending her last semesters as an undergraduate with her favorite author, Jane Austen.

"A huge part [of the project] for me was choosing a topic narrow enough to write on in the time frame," she said. "I had a different topic originally. I scaled down."

Although Dr. Hemchand Gossai advises Akins on her thesis, "the baseline of my paper was from a previous class," Akins said. Dr. John Thomas Lloyd's Jane Austen course called for Akins to write a paper on Austen's 'free indirect discourse' writing style, which Akins developed and expanded into a narratology study of the author.

"Her style lends itself to the mystery genre," Akins said, rather than the romantic genre to which Austen's novels are typically attributed. "That's why they've survived as widely-read literature."

Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice*, for example, in free indirect discourse, a structure which slowly reveals clues to the reader. The reader can, in turn, identify and understand the clues others gave the main character before the character herself notices and comprehends their meaning.

"Elizabeth Bennet believes Darcy is a bad guy, essentially, but she has to read the clues others leave her," to discover that he is not. Austen uses this mystery, clue-based structure in all her other novels, except one.

In *Northanger Abbey*, Akins said, "Jane Austen talks to herself. She wrote a literary defense of her writing style, this style. She wanted to be appreciated."

Akins would like to work in federal or state government or for a non-profit organization, based on an internship last summer in the office of Representative John Barrow. Mercer University's public interest law program will help prepare Akins for her career beginning next fall, just as the internship led her toward her career path.

A significant part of her acceptance, according to Akins, and the three-year scholarship she received, rested on her academics, volunteerism, and service to the community which the University Honors Program facilitated throughout her final three years at Southern. Akins' first year she was dual-enrolled at Southeast Bulloch High School, where she is still deeply involved in the literature department.

Still, Akins insists that her law studies will not diminish her devotion to literature. "I'll have a nice pause while I'm in law school," said Akins. "I highly doubt that this will be an end to my literary studies." **KB**



Ashley A. Akins

English
Free Indirect Discourse and the Discernment of Layers of Truth in Jane Austen's Novels
Dr. Hemchand Gossai



Kurt Barnes
Information Systems
Enterprise Systems and Supply Chain management
Dr. Ednilson Bernardes

Most consumers do not think about how their favorite product finds its way into stores, but Kurt Barnes does. Through his Honors Capstone research Barnes, an Information Systems major, has sought to demonstrate why these enterprise systems are a very important support element for supply chain operations. In studying "enterprise systems" with his faculty mentor, Dr. Ednilson Bernardes, Barnes evaluated "the importance of enterprise systems in the supply chain management field."

Barnes explained, "Enterprise systems are a type of information system (IT system) which were primarily developed to support and integrate the more financial aspects of companies."

This project required a great deal of hard work, dedication, and time, especially because Barnes faced the challenge of limited sources in the business literature, as there are not many studies showing how the use of enterprise systems affects a company's financial performance. Barnes is hopeful that more such studies will appear in the future, he said, as "more and more companies are beginning to invest in enterprise systems."

Barnes enjoyed working on his project as it

gave him an opportunity to study how enterprise systems are used and where they are used. "You really don't get to see that aspect [of enterprise systems] too often whilst doing your coursework," he said.

While working on this project Barnes also found out he had more in common with his mentor than originally thought. Both have a "somewhat fanatical love for aviation" and are licensed private pilots. Dr. Bernardes even convinced Barnes to join the Statesboro Squadron of Civil Air Patrol (which is an Auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force) where, he said, "I have to call him Major instead of Professor! Not many students get to learn that much about professors, or fly planes with their professors either for that matter, but I am very glad to have gotten to know Dr. Bernardes and I will definitely keep in touch with him after graduation."

Barnes believes that his capstone project has helped prepare him for his future career because, "as a future business leader and information systems leader, I need to be able to identify successful trends and assimilate them into my company. The better I am at recognizing new leading-edge technology, the more successful I will be." **NH**



Sarah Anzjon
Nursing
Probiotic Related Sepsis: Implications for Nurses
Dr. Rosemary Gee

Sanitation has become an obsession in our culture and these days every cleaning product promises to be a bacteria killer and germ destroyer. But will staying so clean prevent illness? Nursing major Sarah Anzjon is questioning the conventional wisdom.

"I'm looking at the hygiene hypothesis, which said that the more bacteria, viruses and infections you are exposed to, the less you get sick," she said. "So it's kind of like Lysol, Clorox, bleach and all those things are bad for us. And there's a lot of interesting papers that contradict the pre-

viously thought ideas about vaccines and immunity."

Anzjon is working in coordination with Dr. Rosemary Gee, a nursing professor, and chose a topic for her paper that she feels strongly about. "Infectious diseases are my passion," she said. "So I'm really interested in what people automatically assume, and once I started getting into [the research], it became even more interesting."

If time permits, she wants to analyze data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which surveys thousands of people

around the country by taking blood, asking questions about health behaviors and looking at things like antibodies and living conditions. "I'm going to see if I can correlate anything with antibody levels, which would indicate previous infections, in a positive way – they won't get the disease again – with things like where they live or income, the number of people in their family and things like that," she said.

Over the course of her research, Anzjon came across a treatment for some kinds of cancer from the 1970s – before chemotherapy was used

against multiple types – that approached treatments in a "counterintuitive" fashion.

"The way that they used to treat some types of lung cancer, and even bladder cancer, was with a strain of the bacteria related to tuberculosis," she said. "They would infect people with these bacteria and then they would monitor their tumor size. They could see that in some certain types of cancer, the tumor was actually shrinking, and these bacteria would elicit some sort of immune response in the individual that the cancer wasn't doing on its own. They were really boosting the

body's own immune system by infecting it with bacteria, so it's kind of counterintuitive, but it works."

Anzjon wants to continue working with infectious diseases after she graduates, as well. "I've applied to go into public health and get a master's degree in infectious diseases and infectious disease epidemiology," she said. "Lately though, I've really been seriously considering Peace Corps for a couple years and then going back to school, but definitely something in public health and infectious diseases." **KD**



Ava Conger
English
*The Power of Language
in The Handmaid's Tale*
Dr. Candy Schille

English major Ava Conger does not call herself a feminist, nor does she consider Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* a purely feminist work, but feminist literature interests her.

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, "society is hierarchically divided with women placed into specific roles based on their reproductive capabilities," Conger said. "My [thesis's] focus is to look at how power is usurped by the higher ranking male authority figures, primarily through the prohibition of female reading and writing."

Although *The Handmaid's Tale* is not strictly feminist, ("the lower ranking males in society have limited freedom as well" said Conger), Atwood does address historical issues of backlash against the feminist movements of the 1970s. The book is also dystopian, meaning the story is set in a futuristic society that varies the Utopian ideal, often through an autocratic or repressive form of government.

Dr. Candy Schille serves as Conger's mentor and referred Conger to Atwood's book after Conger expressed interest in dystopian and feminist literature. "She also listened to my ideas about what direction I wanted to go with the paper and helped me refine them," Conger said of Dr. Schille. "Ultimately, the novel underscores the power of language and how this power can be abused by language misinterpretation."

Conger read and studied the novel, as well as sought information through the interlibrary book exchange program within the University System of Georgia called GIL Express. Some resources were unavailable, but Conger also found that the time constraints of the loans proved problematic. "It is difficult to do a paper of this magnitude using GIL Express resources because, though honors students are generally allowed to keep library books longer, GIL Express books do not have the same due date extension," Conger explained.

Still, Conger is excited to have completed her project and is looking forward to attending law school at the University of Georgia this fall. "As of right now, I would like to go into environmental law. I believe it would be a way for me to utilize my talents to make a difference," said Conger. **KB**



Jenny Dickson
Biology
Prevalence of Lyme Disease in Ticks from Eastern Georgia and South Carolina
Dr. Lorenza Beati

Jenny Dickson knows that Georgia Southern University is the ideal place to study ticks. The university's Institute of Arthropodology and Parasitology is home to the U.S. National Tick Collection, a collection owned by the Smithsonian Institution that contains over one million specimens. Dickson, a Biology major, worked with the collection's curator, Biology professor Lorenza Beati, on an investigation into whether there are genetic differences between the strains of a lyme disease that infects *Ixodes scapularis*, a unique species of tick.

While this disease does not hurt the ticks, infected ticks can pass the disease on to humans. As Dickson said, "When an infected tick bites a person they can experience flu like symptoms"

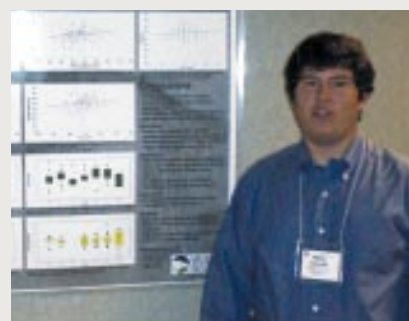
and a dark spot may appear around the bite. Her results (as of March) show "that there is not much lyme disease in the south" as compared to the north where the disease is much more prevalent.

Dickson's individual project is one part of a larger project about ticks. The National Science Foundation has funded this larger project, and thus Dickson's project with Dr. Beati as well.

Dickson became interested in studying ticks when she studied abroad in Switzerland last year. The purpose of the trip was to study Arthropods and the trip, combined with inspiration from Dr. Beati, convinced Dickson to focus on ticks for her capstone project.

"Going through all of the steps for the project was challenging," Dickson said, but she has learned a lot and enjoyed doing so. She also relished working with other students and colleagues whose projects have intersected with hers. Some students collect the ticks that she studies, and she has worked closely with them and other students.

Dickson currently plans to stay at Georgia Southern for graduate school. She wants to continue her work with Dr. Beati. She enjoys the challenge and the rewards it brings. One reward in particular stands out: her research has turned up almost no lyme disease in Southern ticks, but when a researcher from the north brought along some ticks with him that had the disease, she said, "It was quite a thrill to finally get a positive result!" Dickson knows that researching with Dr. Beati will yield more interesting results, and both look forward to working together in the future. **NH**



Wade Carruth
Biology
The Relationship Among Egg Size, Pelvis Size, and Female Size in the Gopher Tortoise, Gopherus Polyphemus
Dr. David Rostal

Senior Biology major Wade Carruth has worked at the Georgia Southern Center for Wildlife Education and Lamar Q. Ball, Jr. Raptor Center for over three years in a paying job that originally started out as a volunteer position. Carruth has always had an interest in animals, especially in reptiles. In fact, he currently shares his home with a whopping 25 reptiles!

During his junior year, he helped a graduate student friend from the Wildlife Center with her master's thesis on gopher tortoises. Less than a year later he would be performing some of the same tasks for his own research. The idea for his Honors Thesis originated from Dr. David Rostal, a professor who has been involved in a 15 year ongoing study of tortoises. Carruth's study branched off from this and focused only on the relationship between egg size, pelvis size,



Elizabeth Debban
Art
*Artistic Exploration of
Alzheimer's Disease*
Bruce Little

and female size in the gopher tortoise.

Starting his research in the summer of 2008, Carruth would travel three to four days a week to either George L. Smith State Park or Fort Stewart to attempt to capture gopher tortoises. The task involved covering a lot of ground and strategically plotting to find the tortoises. His task paid off as he captured 173 of them!

After capturing a specimen, he identified it as either male or female. If male, the tortoise was released. If female, the tortoise was placed in a large container and taken back to the Biology Department lab where it was examined further. An x-ray would reveal whether or not the female was pregnant, and if eggs were present a measurement was taken of each egg. The pelvis size of the tortoise was measured as well.

The focus of Carruth's study was to determine if there was a correlation between pelvis size and egg size. His theory was that the egg size was predetermined and that there was no correlation between the female pelvis size and the egg size. His data supported this theory and also revealed that it was better for a female to produce a larger amount of smaller eggs than a smaller amount of larger eggs.

The results of Carruth's project will go further than the Biology department. He has already presented it at the 2009 Paulson Student Research Symposium, and he has high hopes the paper will be published in the scientific journal *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* (CCB). His future plans which include graduate school at Georgia Southern and working in a zoological facility as a researcher. **ND**

Alzheimer's disease may not strike most people as the subject for a work of art, but Elizabeth Debban has used her Honors Capstone as an opportunity to create a series of pieces based around the illness that explores the physical and emotional damage it inflicts.

"Alzheimer's disease is one of my biggest fears for the future, whether it's for me directly or someone in my family, because losing your mind and your memories is equivalent to losing yourself," she said.

Debban has been incorporating Alzheimer's into her art since a Drawing II assignment freshman year. Now, working with Dr. Bruce Little and other professors, she's been able to create a series of pieces that integrate research with art forms involving different media, including drawing, embroidery, printmaking and encaustics.

In addition to researching the disease, Debban visited nursing homes to experience talking one-on-one with Alzheimer's patients. She also spoke with people who interact with those who have Alzheimer's because "it seems like everyone knows someone affected by the disease," she said.

During her studies, Debban found research regarding the effects of Alzheimer's on drawing. "One study," she said, "was clock drawing with Alzheimer's patients, where they had people at different stages of the disease draw a clock, and you could physically see how their brain was decomposing and how they were trying to think."

To represent the disease in her art, Debban often used puzzle pieces as a motif, representing memories and the missing pieces, but she has interactive pieces, too, to help the viewer connect emotionally because they control what's happening.

"I have this large, inflatable balloon with embroidered faces on it of the elderly, who're the group of people who usually have Alzheimer's disease, and I use when it inflates to symbolize the person's life inflating and filling with memories," she said. "When it deflates, it's like the brain actually shrinking, and you can see the wrinkles in the fabric as they form, and the different embroidered faces are hiding, so it's like memories hiding."

Through her work, Debban aims to evoke a sense of empathy from her viewers for those affected by Alzheimer's, as well as establish an emotional connection between the artist and viewer which, she feels, is "the most rewarding part of the process."

"Following graduation, Debban will work for a year as an independent artist and attend a MFA program for drawing and painting in the future to work towards her long-term goal of being an art professor." **KD**



Thomas Eisenhart

Chemistry
Zeolite Encapsulated Copper-amino Acid Complexes as Oxidation Catalysts
Dr. Shannon Davis

Chemistry major Thomas Eisenhart coaches soccer at Statesboro High, and played one year for Georgia Southern. As a 1906 Scholar, however, he found he prefers his academic work and research to time on soccer fields. Accordingly, Eisenhart's Honors Thesis research has been merely an extension of those priorities.

Using copper, which Eisenhart calls a "transition metal" for its ability to bind to other materials, Eisenhart seeks to prompt reactions, trying to mimic naturally occurring catalysts. He hopes the copper will break biomass down faster and more efficiently.

"Biomass—it's everywhere. It's leaves on the ground," Eisenhart said. "My overall goal is to develop materials that make producing biofuel from biomass more efficient."

Graduating after only three years, a full year of that time has been spent working in a research team of three, his fellow undergraduates studying cobalt and iron as potential catalysts.

"I've loved just being part of a research team and the camaraderie we have," Eisenhart said. "The 1906 scholars are kind of the same idea. Two groups of people who I wouldn't say I have that much in common with, but what binds us together is Georgia Southern."

Eisenhart presented his research at the American Chemical Society national meeting and conference in San Francisco this March. In September, Eisenhart will travel to Belfast, Northern Ireland to study under a Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarship for one academic year. (Read about his upcoming year in Belfast on page 26 of this magazine.) At the completion of that year earning a master's degree in clean chemical technology and management, Eisenhart will attend an analytical chemistry Ph.D. program at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. **KB**



George Barnhill
History
Another Kind of Soldier
Dr. Charles Thomas and
Dr. Anastatia Sims

While most people think of wars in terms of human casualties, George Barnhill couldn't help but notice accounts of a different kind of soldier. During a World War II history class taught by Dr. Charles Thomas, he kept running across mentions of animals in battle. "I would find references, little snippets about animals serving in war, but there was never a full article about it."

Intrigued, Barnhill decided to investigate, and he was amazed at some of the stories he found. "There are stories out there about animals that sort of epitomize everything that their species did. For example, there was a dog that fought with the Canadian regiment, and it was credited with saving 20-30 lives," he said.

Stories like this one lead Barnhill to the topic of the Honors Thesis project he has been working on with Dr. Thomas as his advisor. Entitled, "Another Kind of Soldier," his paper explores the roles of animals in the world wars. Barnhill is particularly interested in how the participation of animals changed human perspectives on animal rights. "When war broke out, the Red Cross heard about the need for veterinary assistance, so they started setting up animal hospitals for animals that were

serving. Even after the war was over, a bunch of them stayed open," he said. "Over time, you see this heightened appreciation of what animals are capable of. In World War I animals were listed as equipment, but by World War II you actually have some groups that are listing them as personnel."

Despite the number of amazing stories he's found, the research hasn't been easy. History tends to focus only on the human cost of war, and he has found it rewarding but challenging to find the information he is looking for. "We're never going to get every single story. We've got tastes of experiences, and from this we've got to patch together an understanding of what it was really like."

Barnhill hopes his research will help shed light on an underrepresented topic, and he thinks people who read it might discover a love of history through this unexpected facet of an otherwise familiar subject. "People think history is boring. This is not boring. This is interesting stuff," he said.

After graduation, Barnhill plans to attend the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University. **CB**

Kenneth Metasavage loves all things birds. He has always had an interest in our feathered friends, from their perfect flight skills to their dinosaur roots. A Biology major, Metasavage has focused his Honors Thesis on a specific bird species and their habitats. He did this under the guidance of his mentor, Dr. Ray Chandler, professor in the Department of Biology.

"I compared the habitats of urban and rural Loggerhead Shrikes (*Lanius ludovicianus*) in Bulloch County," said Metasavage. "The bird is known for the behavior of impaling its prey on barbed wire and thorns, for nuptial displays, and for storing food." He said that this particular species is in decline but reasons for this decline are unknown. "I tested the urbanization theory that basically said that city building is the reason for the decline," he said.

Metasavage faced many challenges when conducting his research. "Searching for the birds was quite difficult since they are known for having large territories and they also look very similar to the common Northern Mockingbirds in the area," said Metasavage. "The habitats were compared and there were no significant differences between shrikes living in urban areas than ones residing in rural areas. Thus proving that decline in Bulloch County is not due to urbanization."

Praising the Honors Program, Metasavage says that it inspired him to complete his project. "I would not have considered doing research without being in the Honors Program." **EM**



Kenneth Metasavage
Biology
A Comparison of Habitat Use Between Urban and Rural Loggerhead Shrikes in Bulloch County
Dr. Ray Chandler



Kristina Kegerreis
Exercise Science
The Effect of a Collegiate Soccer Season on Performance and Recovery-Stress Score
Dr. Stephen Rossi

An interest in one sport often leads to an interest in another, which is exactly what happened to senior Georgia Southern University tennis player, Kristina Kegerreis. Playing tennis since she was six-years-old led to her earning a full tennis scholarship. However, interests in all college sports

In an era when many students in college enter with clear majors and career paths in mind, Tyler Thompson arrived at Georgia Southern curious to discover where his life would take him. It was not until he completed all his core classes within his first two years that he declared Political Science as his major, with International Studies as his minor, and devoted himself to a serious interest in the People's Republic of China.

For much of his life Thompson had always had some interest in China. His father, a career journalist, had been to China years before. Fascinated by this foreign land, he knew that one day he would want to travel there, and last summer he did just that through a study abroad program. Thompson said, "The country had resounding subtlety." He explained, for example, going to a park and seeing thousands of people rather than a dozen. These differences maintained his interest in the Chinese people and their society, and were considered in stark contrast to his life back in Georgia.

When Thompson started his Honors Capstone project he knew his focus would be on China, he just did not have all the details sorted out. "I struggled with my topic," Thompson said, "until last year spring semester in my Asian poli-

tics class." Participating in a discussion about the democratization of China sparked the idea that led to his research project, "Democratization in China: Leave it to the Industries." His plan was to closely examine the expanded view on democratic trends in the People's Republic of China.

What distinguished Kegerreis' study was that it covered an entire competitive soccer season including pre, mid, and post season. Dr. Rossi obtained permission from Coach Kevin Kennedy for his athletes to be studied, and over the course of the session, 17 soccer players participated. The study concentrated on the drop jump performance characteristics of rate force development, jump height, relative peak performance, and recovery-stress state. The aerobic fitness levels of college soccer players at specific points throughout the season were also evaluated. All of the variables tested are common areas of interest to soccer coaches. Each one helps to assess their players' aerobic ability in order to examine and improve their training sessions during the year.

The study's procedures involved each athlete performing drop jump testing and filling out a "recovery stress state" questionnaire. "Recovery stress state" refers to the stressors that a player encounters while playing a sport. Examples of such stressors include physiological, psychological, internal stressors, and external stressors. From this



Tyler Thompson

Political Science
Democratization in China - Leave it to the Industries
Dr. Krista Wiegand

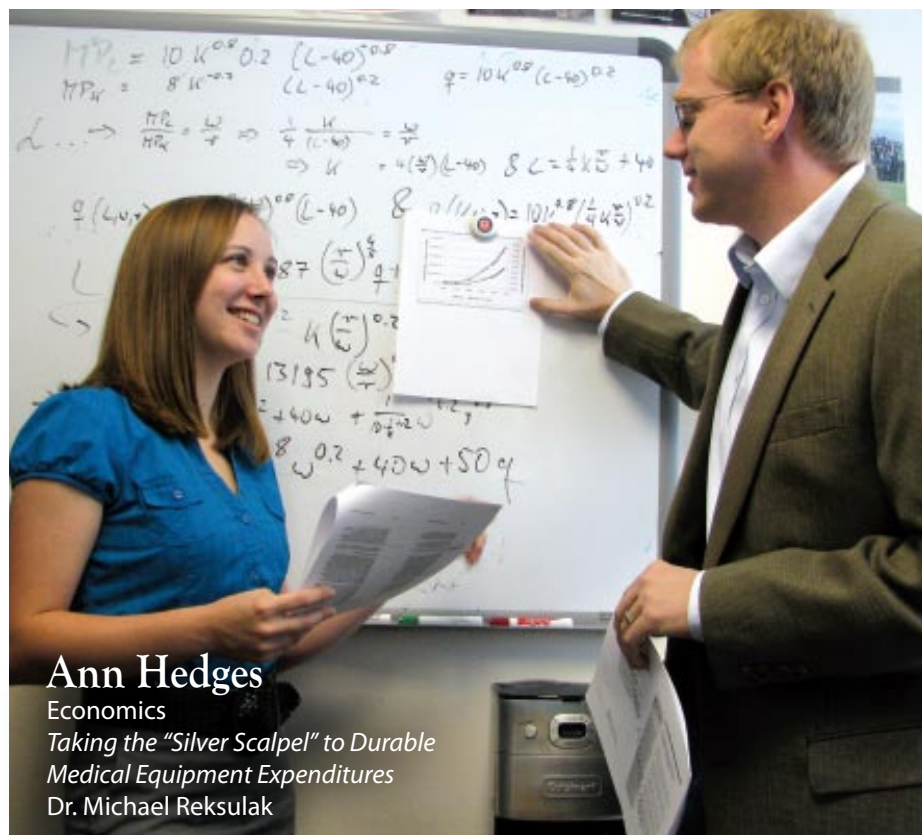
ritory of China. The Chinese company typically provides the factory buildings along with the land use rights and the labor. The foreign company will bring in the equipment along with the necessary technology to put all of this into working progress.

As Thompson began his research, he started to become familiar with the current information available on democratization in China. "The majority of my research involved reading," he said. As time went on, by gathering more and more information he was able to formulate a well-developed theory of why and how China is moving towards democratic trends. Assisting in Thompson's work was his advisor, Dr. Krista Wiegand, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, who ensured that he stayed on track with his project over the long span of time he was working. **ND**

Kegerreis could determine the level of stress of the players and how well they were trained. Testing the athletes three times before, during, and after the season, participants were given the same instructions at each time on how to properly execute the task. Verbal instructions and visual demonstrations were given to each athlete. Each athlete was required to perform a self selected general and specific dynamic warm-up before the drop jump test.

Balancing the requirements of this project along with the tennis team obligations taught Kegerreis to make sure she met her deadlines. What helped her was "being on a set schedule" and knowing how much time she had before something was due. The demands of the project such as the writing and research were something that she learned to appreciate through the end product. Knowing that she accomplished something of this magnitude, Kegerreis felt an edge was added to her resume.

Kegerreis' future plans include working toward an advanced degree in physical therapy, and she will begin a Physical Therapy program at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia this summer. Eventually she would like to work in orthopedics, in outpatient therapy, and own a physical therapy clinic. She knows that another project similar to this is in her future, and she is confident that she possesses the experience necessary to be successful. **ND**



Ann Hedges

Economics
Taking the "Silver Scalpel" to Durable
Medical Equipment Expenditures
Dr. Michael Reksulak

The rising cost of health care affects more than doctor exams and prescription drugs. Patients often need durable goods like canes, wheelchairs, hospital beds, etc. And the cost for the use of those items adds up just as quickly. Economics major Ann Hedges is examining how changes to Medicare policy affecting durable goods are supposed to help lower their costs.

This research is also resulting in a paper Hedges co-wrote with her mentor, Dr. Michael Reksulak, an Associate Professor in the School of Economic Development, entitled, "Taking the 'Silver Scalpel' to Durable Medical Equipment Expenditures: A cautionary tale of competitive bidding in medical markets."

The changes incorporate a competitive-based pricing method for the purchase of durable goods through Medicare, and Hedges has investigated how a proposed plan that could result in a 20 percent price reduction has been stymied. "We are looking at the fact that it was written into the bill almost a decade ago, and it is still not enacted. I am trying to determine why it has taken so long," said Hedges.

The bill has had two incarnations, one in the early 2000s and one more recent version. In two cases of testing the competitive-based pricing revealed savings, but the policy still has

not become standard.

The moving target of an unsupported policy has been only one challenge Hedges faced in pursuing her research. "One main problem was the data analysis and collection," said Hedges. "It was difficult finding available data."

With the recent national debate over health care reform and the recent health care bill, Hedges has seen her topic become even more relevant now than she had anticipated.

"Now with Obama in office, the Healthcare issue is getting a lot of awareness," said Hedges. "It is interesting how much more important this issue has become even since I began researching it."

Hedges has been working with Dr. Reksulak ever since she took a course from him as a freshman, and they began talking about her research project when she was a sophomore. "It has been a great research experience working with a professor on a paper," said Hedges. "You get to see it from their perspective of preparing it to be submitted to a journal."

This intersection of economics and politics has prepared Hedges for a future in public policy. "I enjoy learning economic theories that can be applied anywhere and using cost-saving analysis to look at these policies to see what's gone wrong." *EM*

Working with Dr. Heidi Altman, Anthropology major Kristen Mitchell has been studying folklore and how original folklore stories differ from their modern incarnations.

The focus of her project is a comparative study of folklore from a linguistic standpoint. Mitchell has always been interested in folklore, but last year she was inspired by Dr. Altman to examine the different forms folklore stories have taken over time.

Over the course of her research Mitchell has found that, "folklore stories reflect the times they are in." For example, the women in the original versions of the stories she studied tended to be, "very submissive, endure and forgive despite what happened to them, and not speak often."

Modern versions of these stories, however, offer the female point of view. The female characters, "have names, the power of voice, and stand against men."

Mitchell also noted the originals, while

much more gruesome than their modern versions, often had happy endings where the lady married the prince and "lived happily ever after." In contrast, the modern versions do not always have such a clear-cut happy ending, but the characters discover something about themselves.

Mitchell worked with many tales, including *Cinderella*, *Diamonds and Toads*, and *Rumpelstiltskin*. While many readers have seen the Disney versions of such tales, Mitchell noted that these movies are for entertainment, whereas the written tales were created to teach a lesson. The written versions are thus of a much darker nature than the Disney films.

For Mitchell, the challenging part of this research was the linguistic angle from which she approached it. She has studied cultural anthropology and it took some effort to properly work from a linguistic perspective.

In the fall, Mitchell will begin her graduate program in Library Science at the University of North Texas where she will continue her love of folklore as well as the study of it. *NH*

Kristen Mitchell
Anthropology
Anthropology and
Gender in Fairy
Tales from Grimm to
Modern Day from a
Linguistic Anthropology
Perspective
Dr. Heidi Altman



Caitlin Madigan
Chemistry
Determining Inhibition with
Dynamic Light Scattering
Dr. Karen Welch

Most undergraduate projects have as a final stop the professor's desk or a classroom presentation. However, Chemistry major Caitlin Madigan has already discussed some of her research at two national meetings of the American Chemical Society and is well into her fifth semester of research that examines the bonding of carbohydrates and receptors in the human cell in an attempt to find carbohydrate replacements to act as a drug against disease.

"The cells in your body have receptors on them, which you could think of as one Lego. Then another 'Lego' would come and bind to it, and sometimes the binding is reversible, so it can unbind, and sometimes the binding is permanent," Madigan said. "So what we're looking to do is find one 'Lego' to bind to this receptor, but this receptor is already a receptor for galactose, so we're trying to find something to replace galactose."

Madigan has been working on this project with Dr. Karen Welch since her sophomore year, when she became initially interested in conducting research. "It's really cool because the idea is we could find something that would prevent other things from binding and essentially might be able to cure something, like diabetes," she

said. "That's what got me started; she was already working on the project when I joined her, so it wasn't really my idea, but it was something I was interested in."

She said she hadn't had much chemistry when she started, so initially she worked on computer-based rational design, which searches a database of molecules. "We had [the basic set of atoms that we wanted], and the computer could find things that were like it or almost exactly that, or some things that don't look like it at all but act like it," Madigan said. "The computer searched over 10,000 molecules, so it took awhile. Then, after it gave back a list, we took the top 100 and we went through and looked at them visually and tried to pick out the ones that we thought would be the best and that we were interested in."

But she also feels starting her capstone early has afforded her opportunities she otherwise wouldn't have had. "I had the opportunity to present last year at the American Chemical Society national conference in Salt Lake City, and that was a really fun experience," she said. "This year I had the opportunity to go to the ACS again in San Francisco. The research has brought about so many more opportunities than I ever could have imagined – not only the direct research and

the presenting, but the fact that Dr. Welch has been able to help me in so many other areas."

This year, contracting Instrumental Analysis with Dr. Shannon Davis and Physical Chemistry II with Dr. James LoBue for the University Honors Program has also given her the chance to start a "new, independent tangent" to the research for her project: trying to find the concentration at which the molecules aggregate, or if they aggregate at all.

"It's using a fluorometer, and it's definitely not anything like the computer work that I did or the hands-on well-plate work or the synthesis work, so I would say there have been four major parts," she said. "My favorite part, I would say, has been the well-plates; it was just so hands-on, and at the end of the day there was an answer. And also, there's the fact that every time I turn around I'm learning something new about something I thought I already knew."

After graduation, Madigan plans to attend the Medical College of Georgia for either medical school or graduate school. She has been accepted to graduate school to pursue a Ph.D. in neuroscience, but is still waiting to hear about medical school. *KD*

While the majority of students in college choose one major en route to their degree, Michelle Wehner has taken on the task of double majoring toward earning a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Recreational Emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation. To add to the complexity of her ambition, she also completed two separate Honors Capstone projects before graduation, a task no honors student has attempted before. She, however, was not deterred, and with help from Dr. William McIntosh, Dr. Lorne M. Wolfe, Dr. James D. Bigley and her father, Wehner had just the right amount of guidance that she needed to carry out her projects professionally and to completion.

Wehner's psychology project, entitled Exploring the Use of Different Types of Educational Interventions to Change Attitude and Behavior, used both written and video formats to try to measure attitude and behavior of psychology student participants toward Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches. As a young child she had a constant fear of the insects resulting from an incident. Wehner was forced to confront that long-time fear when she began working at the Georgia Southern Center for Wildlife Education and Lamar Q. Ball, Jr. Raptor Center and was entrusted with cockroaches. After getting over her phobia through exposure, she was interested on examining incidents and fears like hers through science and experiment.

A total of 47 undergraduate psychology students, 35 female and 12 male, took part in the experiment. Wehner hypothesized that the video format would be more effective than the written format. She constructed both the video and written format herself. With the help of her father, Wehner composed the six minute video in the back yard of her own home. The results of the experiment showed the males were generally more accepting of the Hissing Cockroaches than the females. Wehner explained, "I discovered several interesting results, one of which is that college students seem to learn more from a video than written material." The students that participated in the video group demonstrated a significant increase of knowledge compared to those in the written format group.

Wehner's second project fell under her Recreational Emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation, and was entitled Motivations, Benefits, and Constraints for a Wheelchair Basketball Program at Georgia Southern University. For this project she worked in a group with three other students, Ashley Crews, Emily Walker, and Carolyn Dunlop. This group of students worked together to discover motivations, benefits, and constraints for participation in an intramural wheelchair



Michelle Wehner
Psychology
Exploring the Use of Different Types of Educational Interventions to Change Attitude and Behavior
Dr. William McIntosh

Recreation Management
Motivations, Benefits, and Constraints for a Wheelchair Basketball Program at Georgia Southern University
Dr. Brent Wolfe and Dr. James D. Bigley

basketball program, a program made possible by an \$11,700 Quality of Life Grant from the Christopher & Dana Reeves Foundation. Wehner and her group sought to determine who was aware of this program and who was interested. Their procedures included surveying students around campus. Wehner and her fellow group members discovered the majority people surveyed had heard of wheelchair basketball but were not aware that it was coming to Georgia Southern. In the end, they concluded the program should be advertised more around campus.

After completing two projects of this magnitude, Wehner feels a boost of confidence. All the hard work and dedication that was involved paid off in the end. "I now know that an assignment of this size is possible," she said. Although she did have a job, Supervisor at the Center for Wildlife Education and The Lamar Q. Ball, Jr. Raptor Center, while accomplishing these proj-

ects that caused stress, Wehner described it as "good stress." She loves working at the Wild Life Center with the animals which helped with relief from her projects.

In addition, Wehner's projects have already begun to prepare her for the future and shape her career. She spent this semester as an intern at Bend Parks and Recreation's Special Recreation Department in Bend, OR, completing an internship course for her therapeutic recreation degree where she is working with park recreation's special recreational program on opportunities for adults and children with disabilities. As for the future, Wehner has high hopes. She is currently contemplating on applying for graduate school. No matter where her life might take her, Wehner plans to "live life full of diverse experiences and leisure activities." She sees herself being involved with animals, animal therapy, and wildlife. **ND**



Sierra Mitchell
Chemistry
Approaches Toward the Synthesis of Polyaryls Using the Lactone Concept
Dr. Karelle Aiken and Dr. Karen Welch

Making molecules has occupied Chemistry major Sierra Mitchell and her advisor, Dr. Karen Welch, for the past three semesters. "We've been synthesizing polymeroles as biologically active precursors," Mitchell explained. If successful, the molecules she made as an undergraduate will eventually mimic glycogen in the human body and act as inhibitors against enzymes that could create diseases.

"Since no one's made [these molecules] before," said Mitchell, she and Dr. Welch "have to troubleshoot, look for a good source, and tweak the conditions."

Dr. Welch serves as the research advisor for an organic chemistry course Mitchell took. Based on Mitchell's work during the class, Dr. Welch invited Mitchell to join the project. The research will also continue at Georgia Southern after Mitchell goes to Georgetown University for graduate school.

"[The project] will probably go to the biochem department," said Mitchell, who plans to

continue researching during graduate school at Georgetown. "I'm tired of a definite set schedule. I'm looking for freedom," she said, seeking more "flexibility" in scheduling her classes and research.

"I'll work in organic [chemistry] at first, but I'll try to work with an analytical chem person," she said, as her undergraduate research has been a blending of the two disciplines. Mitchell presented her research, with the help of the Honors program, last October at SERMACS, the Southeastern Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Mitchell presented a poster of her work to leading chemists in every field.

"It's kind of intimidating," Mitchell said, "But no one really grills you because you're an undergraduate. They want you to keep researching."

Mitchell will certainly keep researching, and she knows she will be welcomed at future SERMACS events, as will those Georgia Southern students who continue her research. **KB**

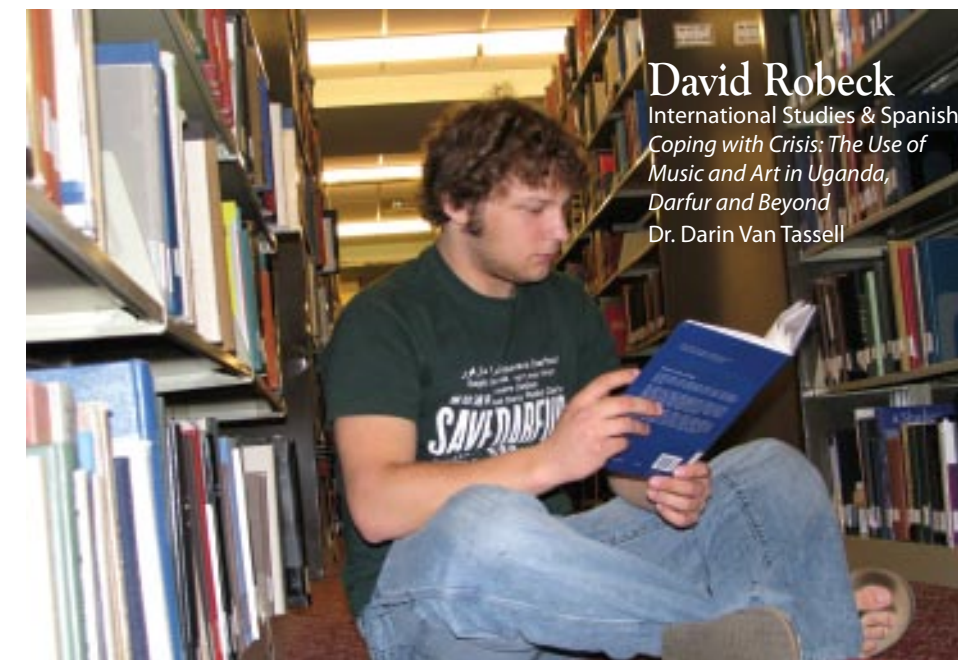
David Robeck believes in the power of art. For his Honors Thesis, Robeck is examining the role of music and art in psychological relief for people, particularly children, whose lives have been torn apart by war.

Robeck is an International Studies and Spanish double-major and Music minor, as well as a percussionist. He is also an officer in STAND, a student-run organization addressing violence and genocide. (Read an article about Robeck's work with STAND on page 32 of this magazine.) Robeck draws upon research on conflict in Darfur, Sudan and Uganda and also sees application of the process for victims of natural disasters such as the recent tragedy in Haiti.

Robeck used many sources in his research process. He acquired most of his information through interviews. He interviewed some people that ran organizations using music and art to assist war-affected children. Using his connections through STAND, he was able to interview a colleague at a conference. Robeck also turned to the internet and library resources to gather much of his research.

"The feedback was kind of overwhelming," said Robeck. "The benefits of using art and music are pretty clear. In the past, people have observed how music affects the mind, the anthropology of music, the impact of war, and other similar topics, but I have never seen anything that covers what I hope to."

Robeck has crafted an argument that examines some of the unconventional ways victims of traumatic events cope. He has found that a wide



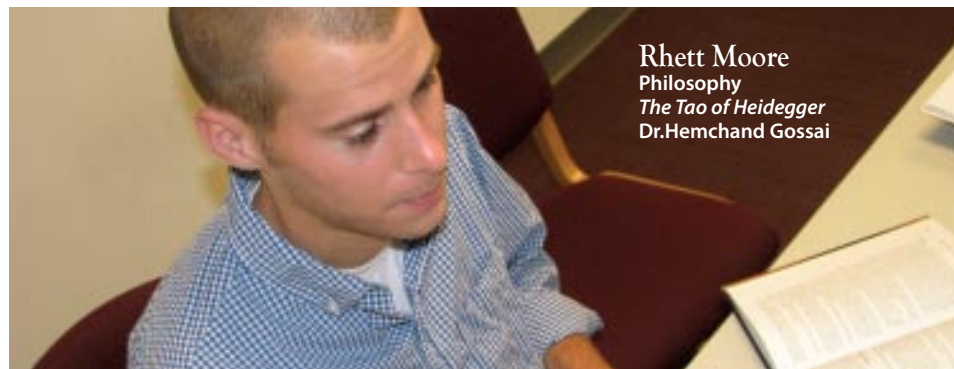
David Robeck
International Studies & Spanish
Coping with Crisis: The Use of Music and Art in Uganda, Darfur and Beyond
Dr. Darin Van Tassell

range of activities are being used to help the people put their lives back together. Throughout his research process, he has been under the guidance of his mentor, Dr. Darin Van Tassell, the Associate Professor in the Center of International Studies and the Department of Political Science.

"I have concluded that psychological relief can come from music in many ways," said Robeck. "For example, as former child soldiers return home, members of their community are having them participate in production of artwork and

learning musical skills; some of them are even being given video games to help them cope. This helps them get their mind off of their tragic past experience and help them to put it in the past."

After Robeck graduates, he hopes to continue his studies by going to graduate school or possibly entering into the Peace Corps, which Robeck said would provide "an opportunity to serve and improve my Spanish." As for long-term plans, Robeck would like to work for the government or for an NGO on global issues. **EM**



Rhett Moore
Philosophy
The Tao of Heidegger
Dr. Hemchand Gossai

Philosophy major Rhett Moore knows that the search for truth is not only a practical endeavor, but also a fun one as well. His Honors Thesis, which began as a term paper for a class on existentialism, focuses on the similarities between the ideas of ultimate truth in the work of German philosopher Martin Heidegger and Taoism.

Though it might seem that such a weighty topic would leave the researcher little room for creativity, Rhett's favorite part of the finished paper is a dialogue he imagines between himself and Ron Burgundy, the comical main character in the movie *Anchorman*: "We discussed some of the main points of the capstone. I think that was the most fun I had." The idea for the con-

versation was inspired by Plato's dialogues. "I spent almost an entire semester covering Plato's dialogues in Ancient Philosophy," said Rhett. "I thought it would be interesting to try to write one myself."

In addition to the humorous aspects of his paper, Rhett thinks that the real world importance of his research is clear. "There are some practical tools that can be derived from these philosophies," he said. He knows that what he has learned has had an impact on his own life. Regarding the personal significance of his project, he said, "These philosophies remind me to focus on the now and not over think my surroundings. They remind me to 'be here.'"

Moore had his choice of law schools this spring, and after mulling over acceptances from Georgia, Georgia State, South Carolina, LSU, Mercer, Samford, and Santa Clara University, decided on Mercer where he was also awarded a scholarship. **CB**



Alexandra Rakoczy
Marketing
Georgia Southern University's Marketing Concept: Adapting the Brand to Meet an Evolving Academic and Economic Climate
Dr. Linda Munilla

"Large scale, small feel," is a phrase familiar to every Georgia Southern University student, but what does it really mean? As a Southern Ambassador, Marketing major Ally Rakoczy said she was instructed to incorporate "large scale, small feel" into her tours. Thinking about this phrase

in the context of the university's growth gave her the idea to analyze how viable this tagline will be over the next few years.

Working in coordination with Dr. Linda Munilla of the Department of Management, Marketing, and Logistics for the past year and a half, she began intensively researching how effective this phrase has been for the university this past semester.

"I'm just trying to find what I love about the university so much and convey it in a way that helps the university adapt to changing environments," she said. "It's something I've been familiar with for a couple years now, and I really wanted the chance to sort of pick it apart and find out the root of the matter and find out what's really going to work and not work."

"Small feel," Rakoczy said, is relative, so she's

spent some time trying to figure out what that means. Over the course of her research, Rakoczy has interviewed marketing faculty and sales faculty, among others, from Georgia Southern.

"It's been so interesting learning about what people really think when they're allowed to tell you their opinion," she said. "It's very enlightening to how they formulate those opinions and how they're supported by the current atmosphere in the university."

Rakoczy said the whole experience has been a great learning process. "Hopefully by the end of it, I will have gotten some answers, created some solutions, and made people more aware of Georgia Southern and where it could be in the next five years." After graduation, Rakoczy said she will start her career as a recruiter for Aerotek. **KD**



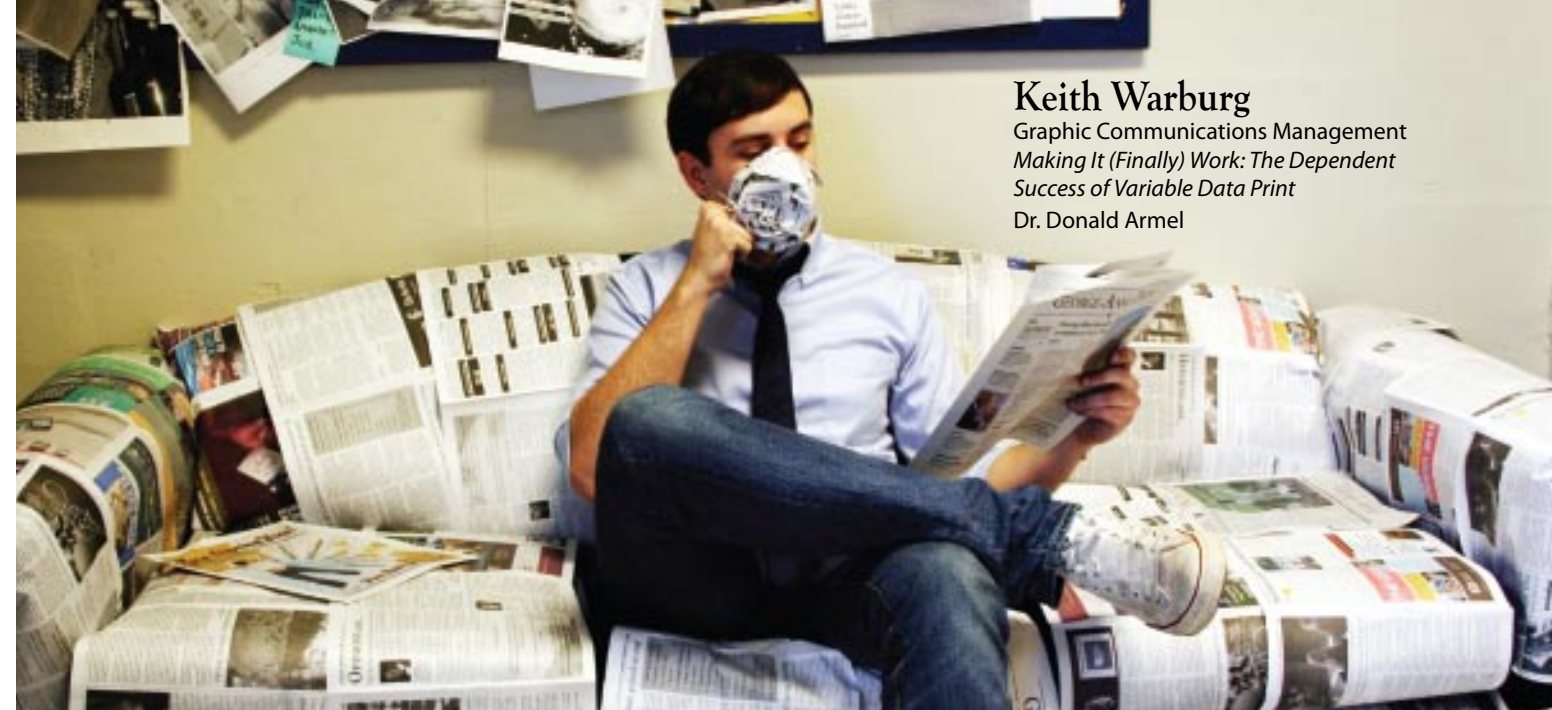
Jessica Sparrow
Biology
Temperature Variations Within and Among Loggerhead Sea Turtle (Caretta Caretta) Nests Across the Season
Dr. David Rostal

From May through early August of 2009, Biology major Jessica Sparrow trekked the beaches of Blackbeard Island off Georgia's coast, searching for loggerhead sea turtle nests and recording data from the instruments she placed inside each.

"I wanted to work in a conservation field and since Loggerhead sea turtles are a threatened species, this was a great place to start," Sparrow said. Her record of work on environmental issues extends to her activism through the Student Alliance for a Green Earth and to her Honorable Mention for the Morris K. Udall Scholarship, a national scholarship which recognizes undergraduate students who have demonstrated

a commitment to careers related to the environment.

Loggerheads dig massive underground nests in which between 100 and 126 eggs incubate, the internal temperature of the nest determining the sexes of the hatchlings. As only one in 10,000 hatchlings will survive to adulthood and females generally wait for two years between nesting periods to replenish fat and nutrients, sex ratios must be specific for the species to survive. Sex determination occurs in the middle third of the six week incubation period, with lower temperatures producing all or mostly male hatchlings and higher temperatures producing all or mostly females.



Keith Warburg
Graphic Communications Management
Making It (Finally) Work: The Dependent Success of Variable Data Print
Dr. Donald Armel

Readers of newspapers and magazines often page through numerous advertisements as they find the story they want. But what if those advertisements were customized to their tastes and interests? Would they page through or would they pay attention and act on the information? Keith Warburg, a Graphic Communications Management major is examining exactly these types of appeals. Working with Dr. Donald Armel, Warburg's research focuses on variable data printing and its applications in the printing industry.

Variable data printing is a system of printing using new digital technology. In conventional printing, a plate runs the same image over and over, but this form of digital printing allows printing to be customized to the person receiving it based on collected data.

"It's a new way of marketing to people on a level we have yet to do before," Warburg said. According to Warburg, the technology for digital printing came around in the early millenni-

um and was still slow and expensive at that time, but in recent years technology has sped up, so there has been more of a market for variable data printing.

"Variable data printing still is much more expensive per piece than conventional printing is, so the customer has to pay more, but we're seeing as much as 33 percent increase in response from readers," he said. "That's what marketing is all about – to get readers to respond to what you're putting out there."

One of the most important things Warburg found in his research was the importance of the relevance when personalizing messages. "People aren't going to look at it if it's not important," he said. "If it just has their name on it, then they're like, 'Okay, everything in the mail has my name on it, it's not that big of a deal.' But if it's something that concerns them, something that's relevant to them, they're more likely to respond."

The process of designing something that can be printed in a customized fashion is fairly

simple, but it must be precise, and that is what Warburg said complicates things. "There's a lot of preparatory work that goes into it, because the whole process of variable data doesn't happen until it goes to print," he said. "It's as it hits the printer that it pulls from Excel and InDesign and prints."

Warburg said variable printing is one of the "biggest innovations" that is affecting the design industry right now.

"One of the things I'm hitting in my project is that more companies have to go out and hire people with this marketing background," he said. "So preparing myself through the Honors Capstone is giving me the chance to make myself a little bit more marketable as an employee later on."

Warburg will be attending graduate school at Georgia Southern and pursuing a master's degree in higher education administration. After achieving that, he would most prefer to work with student media at a university. **KD**

"Temperature variation is crucial to predict sex ratios and determine if there is a male or female bias," Sparrow said. To record these variations, she buried three dataloggers in each nest, one at the bottom, one near the middle, and the last near the top.

Most loggerhead studies only use one temperature datalogger so little is known about how temperatures vary within different parts of the nest. Sparrow and her mentor, Dr. David Rostal, developed the project and sought funding through the Chandler Foundation and COUR grant (College of Undergraduate Research) for the ninety-nine dataloggers Sparrow required, each costing

\$100. The instruments recorded temperatures every two hours, allowing Sparrow to accumulate data.

"There is a significant difference in temperature within nests but not across the season. Thus, the bottom datalogger temperature was always significantly different from the top and middle" Sparrow explained. "The only accurate way to know sex ratios is to euthanize the hatchlings and dissect them to determine their gender," Sparrow said. "This season the dataloggers showed temperatures... implying mostly females."

Sparrow examined the single datalogger temperature data from the Eastern Seaboard in years

past, showing that there are male-biased years and female-biased years.

"Nature has a way of balancing the sex ratio," said Sparrow. "However, with global climate and the temperature rising more dramatically, it has yet to be seen how sea turtles will compensate."

This fall, Sparrow will attend College of Charleston's master's program in environmental studies and hopes her research can continue after her.

"I would like this study to be continued," she said. "It would be nice to continue this project to support or reject these findings in multiple seasons." **KB**



David Styer
Information Systems
*Open Source Software
Development: A Website
Analysis and Model Curricula*
Dr. Adrian Gardiner

What if a consumer did not have to purchase a license to buy a computer software product, but could obtain it through free access to the code behind it? That code, called “source code” is the method used by programmers to specify what actions should be performed by the computer and is exactly what constitutes a program. Every software product a consumer purchases is created through program source code, a collection of statements and information written in readable computer programming language. David Styer, an Information Systems major, has focused his Honors Capstone project on “Open Source Development,” a concept that gained hold with the rise of the Internet.

Styer decided to use Open Source Develop-

ment as his topic because it is a relatively new and controversial concept in the technology field that is widely used but not widely taught in universities around the country. He described it as an “interesting issue that is a huge deal in the software industry today.” Not only is open source used in many of the classes that Mr. Styer took during his college career, but he explained his classes required him to use and understand the tool. Georgia Southern University is no different from other universities in not offering a course in open source technology, which Styer discovered through research into other institutions course offerings.

When Styer began his project in Fall 2009, he was unsure of the results he would uncover.

Music Education major Amy Ruiz knows that the economy places funding for music and arts education in a precarious position and in fact, many music programs survive only through fundraising by students and parents at the school. Her Honors Capstone project examines the various arguments music teachers need to make to convince school boards and administrators of the value of music within the curriculum.

“I know music programs are being cut at some schools,” she said. “And I will have to argue to for any programs I work in. Music reaches beyond the music classroom. It’s connected to English, to history, to science and math. It’s also very athletic.”

Working with Sarah Hancock in the Department of Music, Ruiz investigated the various strategies teachers use in their arguments to

maintain music programming, and she interviewed a number of public school teachers in the Statesboro area and in Gwinnett County to try to understand the pressures and issues they face. Finally, she also interviewed other students to find out their experience in high school music classes.

“It is surprising how often music teachers have to defend their programs to school boards, to parent-teacher associations, and to school administrators in charge of fundraising,” she said. And lately, some districts have had to close music departments completely.

Her immediate plan after a stint in student teaching and graduation next fall is to earn a Master’s in Music Education and teach at the high school level. “I want to share with the students the impact music had on my life,” she said. “My music teacher had a great influence on me

He wanted to clearly define Open Source Development. His next step involved delving into the Internet to find colleges that either used or taught open source. “I used web surveys to examine lists of colleges, while taking a closer look at three different departments, Information Technology, Information Systems, and Computer Science,” he explained. All three of these departments are the most likely areas to find use of the open source tool. However, Styer discovered the open source concept is not firmly addressed in these or any other departments. The closest thing he found was a reference in research papers and consulting papers, and every now and then a reference in a class. But, open source was never included in any course curriculum.

Styer mentioned one interesting discovery he made while during his research. He came across a symposium that addressed the issue of Open Source Development and its rising importance, but the group did not know how to solve the problem of teaching the topic. This obstacle is one that Styer himself faces in his project as creating a curriculum for a semester long class on the concept, uses, potential, and availability of open source code is another one of his goals.

“The most difficult part for me was the hump of getting going,” Styer explained when asked what the most challenging part of the entire project was. He learned how to manage the intensity of a large project and the energy and patience required to accomplish it on time. Styer enjoyed discovering new information and finding the answers to all his questions on the intensifying topic. Open Source Development will continue to be a controversial issue but its use will increase because of the advantages it can offer. *ND*



Amy Ruiz
Music Education
*Beyond Bar Lines:
Music's Integral
Function in Schools*
Sarah Hancock

and helped me so much. I want to do that for other students.” In addition to teaching choirs and giving voice lessons, Ruiz has other goals in mind, too. She wants to earn another degree and eventually teach at the college level.

This capstone project has shown Ruiz what music teachers encounter in the public school systems, and she said, has helped her “formulate my own argument and better understand the perspectives of students and teachers.”



Kristi Winger
Political Science
*The Language of Rape Trials:
How to Stop a Sex Thief*
Dr. Brett Curry

It is often easier to avoid research topics that are difficult on a personal or an emotional level in favor of safer subjects, but Political Science major Kristi Winger is not one to shy away from a tough issue. For her Honors Thesis, Winger is working under the direction of her advisor Dr. Curry to analyze the ways in which language is used in the courtroom during sexual assault trials.

Inspired to action by the stories of loved ones who suffered sexual assault, Winger is using an interdisciplinary approach to evaluate court transcripts. “I’m going to try to identify why people in the courtroom said things. I’m interested in what effect that has on the listener and on the

person who is being questioned, and whether or not it influences the direction of the case,” she explained.

The project has been difficult in part because of the sensitive nature of the cases she is reviewing. “My topic isn’t one that people are comfortable discussing,” she admits. “I really didn’t want to get into the emotional aspect of the topic.” The research itself has been daunting as well. “I’m just trying to stick to the language part right now, only what’s said in the courtroom, but that leaves out a lot. Body language is considered language too, but that’s not in the transcripts.”

Despite the complexity of her task, Winger

is optimistic about the real-world value of this particular avenue of research after completing an internship at the state capital. While there, she was able to discuss her thesis with representatives who were writing legislation that could affect sexual assault cases. “The current laws don’t let victims prosecute after so many years, but they’re trying to change that,” she said.

Ultimately, Winger hopes that completing this project will help her to understand more about the subtle uses of language in trials so that she will be well prepared for her future career. After graduating, she plans to attend Mercer Law School. *CB*



Clayton Whitehead
Exercise Science
*Monitoring the Effects of Training Load
Changes on Stress and Recovery of
Collegiate Female Swimmers*
Dr. Stephen Rossi

Athletes at the collegiate and professional levels are known to go through a rigorous training regimen to prepare for the season. But can an athlete train too much? And can that overtraining cause greater harm than good? Clayton Whitehead, a senior Exercise Science Major, has

been working with Dr. Stephen Rossi to monitor the effects of different training loads on stress and recovery over a competitive season in female swimmers.

When Clayton began this project, his chief challenge was deciding where to start. There is a vast amount of literature on the subject of exercise science, and finding what information was applicable to his topic proved to be a tough undertaking. As he sifted through the information he needed, Clayton discovered that he often read journal articles and would end up having to do more research to understand the articles. While his entire project was certainly a difficult one, it was these initial steps that proved to be the most challenging. Clayton mentioned that his work seemed overwhelming at times.

Clayton’s project is important to the field of

exercise science, as overtraining can cause serious problems for athletes, most obviously in the form of physical injury. Clayton summed up the value of his project by stating: “it is important that early signs [of overtraining] are detectable so that overtraining can be prevented. My research demonstrates a tool that can be used to possibly detect early indicators of overtraining before it becomes an issue.”

After graduating from Georgia Southern, Clayton plans to attend graduate school at the University of South Carolina. There he intends to earn a Master’s in Public Health. With regards to his Honors Capstone project, Clayton said: “Overall, I enjoyed the project. Although it was difficult at times, it was the perfect opportunity to learn more about an issue that impacts several athletes.” *NH*

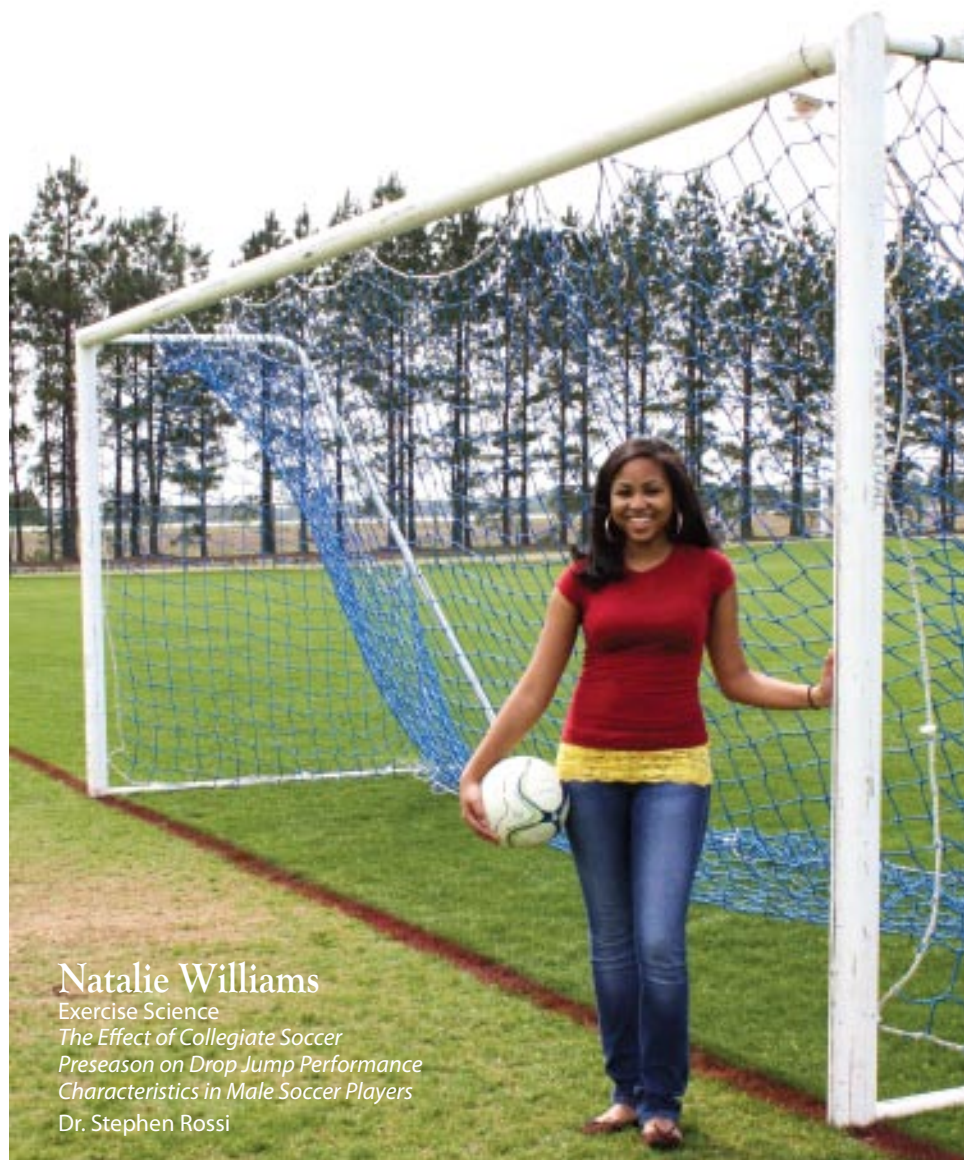
A whole team effort was needed for Exercise Science major Natalie Williams to complete her latest research project, and Georgia Southern's soccer team was happy to provide the assist in helping her reach her goal.

"I am doing research on seasonal changes in drop jump performance and perceived stress and injury in soccer," she said. "Basically, we're just tracking stress in soccer through their preseason and their seasonal competition to see if there're any changes – if they get more stressed throughout the season – and then we're also looking at drop jump performance to see if it gets better as the season progresses."

Williams is working with Dr. Stephen Rossi, the exercise science professor who thought of the topic. Originally, Williams wanted to test the vertical jump of college students and college athlete to find out how it affected their maximal leg strength, but as the soccer team was already in season, this was a more feasible subject to tackle.

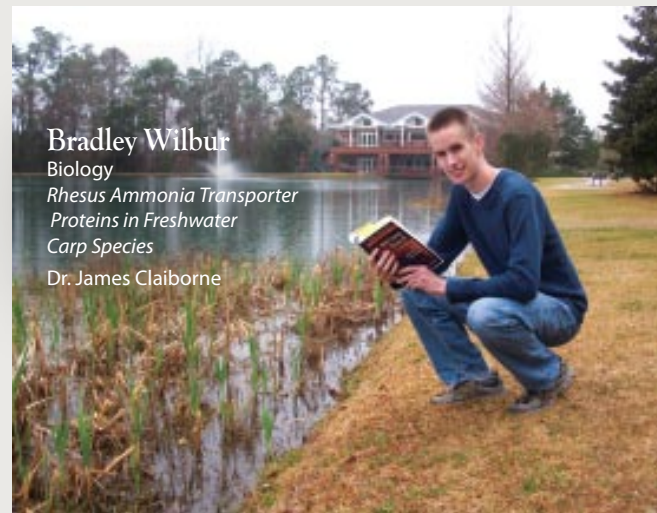
In this project, the data were collected through surveys in which players could rate their "perceived stress." For the preseason, surveys were done at the beginning and at the end; for the seasonal competition, the surveys were given at the beginning, middle and end.

Following graduation Williams will pursue a Masters in Public Health at Georgia Southern University. **KD**



Natalie Williams

Exercise Science
*The Effect of Collegiate Soccer
Preseason on Drop Jump Performance
Characteristics in Male Soccer Players*
Dr. Stephen Rossi



Bradley Wilbur

Biology
*Rhesus Ammonia Transporter
Proteins in Freshwater
Carp Species*
Dr. James Claiborne

Zebra fish and goldfish have kidneys as well as gills, which secrete sodium chloride as a byproduct of moving ions through a membrane. In gills, the membrane separates the 'inside' from the 'outside' of the fish and is the topic of Biology major Bradley Wilbur's Honors Thesis.

"Ions moving makes us 'living,'" Wilbur said. Wilbur has spent the past year and a half studying zebra fish and goldfish, measuring the levels of sodium chloride that indicate how ions are moving across the fish's membranes. A similar process of ion movement occurs in the human kidneys and both processes, in gills and kidneys, are coded in the species' genetic sequence. Wilbur hopes to use his research to understand human diseases also coded by DNA.

"Cystic fibrosis, for example, is all because of one little gene that has one little problem," said Wilbur. His research seeks to discover the properly functioning gene sequence of zebra fish and goldfish and to discover how mutations disrupt those genetic instructions.

Wilbur spent his first year of research finding primers, sections of the



Jaime Thompson
Information Technology
Video Production Studio Tutorial
Dr. Christopher Kadlec

Jaime Thompson shares a passion for production. As an Information Technology major with an emphasis in Web and Multi-Media Foundations, Thompson wanted to create a Video Production Studio for her Honors Capstone project.

Thompson called on a colleague to assist her with physical construction of the studio. She has also had the help of her mentor, Dr. Chris Kadlec, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Information Technology. Once the construction is completed and the studio tested, Thompson will be producing a video tutorial instructing users how to operate and use the facility. She will then publish this tutorial online.

In building her studio, Thompson faced a

major challenge. Having borrowed the equipment from the university or the IT Department, Thompson was missing most of the operation instructions and manuals and had to research the products online to figure out how to assemble them.

Thompson is very passionate about her research project, eager and excited to expand her knowledge of IT. "I wanted to take a different approach to the regular IT projects like website development, networking, and database projects," said Thompson. "I felt like this project was an opportunity for me to try something new, to demonstrate that IT is not only all about computers, but it expands far beyond that. With the video production studio, of course we use computers, but with this I have the ability to do so much more with the studio production package, the switch, and the green screen. Video production has always intrigued me, and now I finally get the chance to expand my knowledge base and learn something that I might never have learned."

Thompson is extremely grateful to have had this opportunity. "The Honors Program has given me an enriching educational experience that I couldn't have received otherwise," said Thompson. "It has allowed me to meet and work with many wonderful people with designing, creating, and implementing websites, and I truly appreciate the chance that I had to expand my knowledge through the Honors Program."

Thompson has recently been offered an internship with the Office of Sustainability and Public Safety, where she will be able to use her experiences with the web first-hand. She intends to leave the studio at the school, where future students will be free to use it as they please. **EM**



Jessie Thiemann
Writing and Linguistics
Manifestations
Sonya Huber

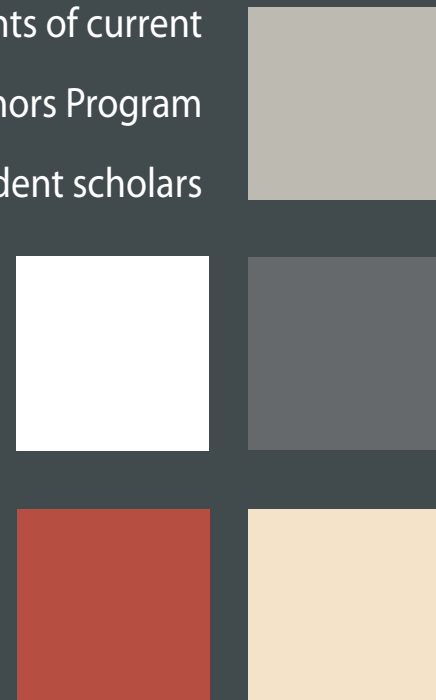
Writing & Linguistics major Jessie Thiemann has always loved reading fantasy, but she didn't have the chance to try her hand at writing it until she began the novel that she is working on for her Honors Capstone under the guidance of Sonya Huber, Assistant Professor in the Department of Writing and Linguistics. "Most of my short stories were realistic fiction," she said. "I'd have ideas for fantasy stories, but they were always of too large a scope to fit into a short story. The honors capstone is really the first opportunity I've had when I feel like, okay, I can do this now."

Thiemann began outlining her novel, *Manifestations*, in 2008. *Manifestations* will be the tale of the struggles facing a group of siblings who are unexpectedly chosen as religious figureheads. Since its inception, the project has changed a number of times. "It was very different from what it is now," Thiemann noted. "Watching it grow and evolve has been the most interesting part."

According to Thiemann, the most important difference between the early and final stages of the work has been understanding what her writing said about herself. *Manifestations* has become much more than something written only for its value as an enjoyable read. As she writes, Thiemann is discovering and considering her own views on herself and society. "Fantasy and sci-fi are great genres for metaphors, for pointing out societal issues or personal issues in a non-threatening way. I'm definitely seeing different themes that are really important to me in the story," she said.

Those themes include the dynamics of sibling relationships under pressure and the responsibilities of religious figures in society. Thiemann is the eldest of three siblings, and she is considering a career in the ministry in the future, so these are subjects that have great personal significance. She hopes that the finished novel will be balanced between serious themes and entertainment. She said, "I hope that whoever reads it will be able to see some of themselves in the story, and just enjoy it, have fun reading it, because it's been fun overall to write." After graduating, Thiemann plans to work for a year and then move on to either graduate school to earn her MFA in Fiction or seminary school, and of course, she is going to continue revising her novel. **CB**

Highlighting the
achievements of current
University Honors Program
student scholars



Honors in action



Kendra Mosley Wins Boren Scholarship to Study Abroad in Russia

University Honors Program student Kendra Mosley has been awarded a National Security Education Program David L. Boren Scholarship for study in Moscow, Russia during the 2010-2011 academic year. The Statesboro, Georgia native, ROTC Cadet, and History and International Studies major seeks to use her senior year abroad to develop her Russian language skills and immerse herself in the Russian culture.

Drawing on her experience from a study abroad program in Estonia during 2007-2008, Mosley is well-prepared for another year in a foreign country. "The year I spent in Estonia mentally prepared me to face the adversities of studying abroad," she said. Mosley plans to travel around the country, but she is focused on her goals. "I plan to earn my minor in Russian, and I also plan to complete my honors thesis research which will focus on Russia," she said.

Mosley's education in history and international studies led her to become more globally aware and set learning about another culture as an academic goal. "Dr. Steven Engel, Director of the Honors Program, told my freshman orientation class about the opportunities available for study abroad," she said. "That message stayed with me and the program was very helpful as I applied for this award."

Boren Scholarships are awarded to students who wish to study in countries of critical im-



Rose Sheahan Returns from Japan

More and more college students in America take advantage of study abroad programs, but very few do what International Studies major Rose Sheahan did, which is go live in another country for a whole year. Awarded a Gilman International Scholarship by the U.S. State Department, Sheahan studied at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies in Japan and immersed herself in the culture and way of life of Japan.

"Experiencing the culture firsthand gives a person the opportunity to learn new things," Sheahan said. "For example, I learned about the traditional origins of the popular dishes. Learning the history of food adds to an understanding of the culture," she said.

During her first semester, she enrolled in Japanese language courses. "My study of the Japanese language was, at first, a bit shaky but as I joined clubs and made more friends in Japan, my listening and speaking skills started to really improve, and I became more confident in my skills," she said. Last September, Sheahan took the placement exams given to exchange students who wish to study the Japanese language. Sheahan scored well on her exams, and for her second semester abroad she was enrolled in courses such as Issues in Global Business in Japan and Introduction to the History of Japanese Diplomacy.

Sheahan returned to Georgia Southern this semester and has been busy fulfilling her Gilman requirement of promoting cultural awareness between the U.S. and Japan through the creation of the Japanese American Friendship Alliance, a new student group at Georgia Southern. The club now boasts 17 members and discusses food culture, hosts movie nights, and plans field trips.

She has also been volunteer tutoring American students learning Japanese and Japanese students learning English so she can keep her language skills sharp. However, doing so has led to a career decision as well. "I really like helping people learn languages, and it has motivated me to become a teacher," she said. Sheahan hopes to teach English in Japan and eventually earn a Masters in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages).

In describing her overall experience as a student in Japan, Sheahan said, "I love Japan, even though the society and culture are vastly different. However, it has taught me that I am able to adjust and get used to the feel of other ways of doing things.

"Study abroad has made me a much more global person. And after a year, I really feel a part of both countries."

Nicholas Hoad

portance to U.S. interests. Language learning is a key component of study for many undergraduate recipients as is developing a cultural understanding of the country. Boren scholars also must commit to a year-long service requirement in a government agency with national security responsibilities.

Upon her return to the United States, Mosley will be commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the

U.S. Army. Her plans following graduation are to become either a military intelligence officer or air defense artillery officer. Still, she also has plans for more studies. "I want to attend graduate school for Russian studies and history. My goal is to become a military advisor to the U.S. Army on Eastern European and Russian affairs. I also want to be a Russian history professor at some point," she said.



Thomas Eisenhart to Spend a Year in Belfast as Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar

Senior Chemistry major Thomas Eisenhart counts Bob Frigo, former assistant-director of the University Honors Program, as a mentor and close friend. But when Eisenhart applied to earn his master's degree abroad, he did not expect to follow so closely in Frigo's footsteps.

The Rotary Foundation has awarded Eisenhart the Academic-Year Ambassadorial Scholarship to study in Belfast, Northern Ireland for the 2010-2011 academic year. Frigo studied as a Rotary Scholar and met his wife, Professor Stefanie Frigo of Georgia Southern's Department of Writing and Linguistics, at Queen's University in Belfast. Eisenhart will begin classes at the same university in September. "The Rotary makes you write down five schools [where you would like to study], and they pick the final school for you," said Eisenhart. "I had no idea that Queen's University is where Bob went."

Eisenhart grew up in Statesboro and has called Georgia Southern his home for the past three years, but has travelled extensively. Last summer, Eisenhart backpacked alone through Italy, Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Spain. Booking one hostel ahead, Eisenhart ended his trip in Madrid, Spain, where he waited on standby for six days to fly back to Atlanta. "After seven weeks spent on the road in seven countries that didn't speak English, I'm not really worried about going to the grocery store [in Belfast]," he explained.

As a part of the clean chemical technology and management joint degree program at Queen's University, Eisenhart will earn his master's degree in just one year. He is also one of just five students accepted to the program annually. "[The program is] relatively new, classroom based, and it involves a thesis. That's a lot for one year," he said. He'd also

like to travel more during that year. "[University students] only get two weeks out of the country per semester, but we get a three week holiday for Easter, so I'm hoping to escape to somewhere warm with sunshine."

Eisenhart first learned of Rotary International scholarships in fall 2007, during a presentation by University Honors Program Director Steven Engel. Two and a half years later, with a year of research on efficiently converting biomass for biofuel, Eisenhart has the rest of his education well planned.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has agreed to defer Eisenhart's enrollment into an Analytical Chemistry Ph.D. program until after his year as Rotary Ambassador in Belfast is complete. *Katie Brookins*

Read about Eisenhart's research on page 12.

Anna McGaughey Earns Gilman Scholarship to Study in Denmark

Anna McGaughey has found happiness abroad. As a winner of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship and a University Honors Program sophomore, McGaughey is studying in Denmark to investigate claims that it is "the happiest country in the world."

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and the Institute of International Education, the Gilman award provides money for student travel and studies overseas. McGaughey is attending Roskilde University, and she loves every minute of it. "My schoolwork is with mostly Danish students, and it has been great to talk with them," said McGaughey. "The style of Roskilde University is so completely different than anything I have done before—it is mostly group work and research, and I have definitely been stretching myself as a student. I love Copenhagen and Roskilde."

Part of her preparation for stretching herself as a student came from two honors classes she took as freshman: Dr. Trey Denton's Honors



First-Year Seminar on happiness in a consumer society and Dr. Debra Sabia's Honors American Government. It was in Dr. Denton's seminar where she learned about Denmark's claims to happiness. McGaughey is using her travel to understand the lifestyle behind this claim, particularly as it relates to health care and health care policy, an interest she developed in Dr. Sabia's course.

Though she is studying hard at Roskilde, she is also learning a lot about culture. "My favorite part of the day is at dinnertime when there are

20 people in the community kitchen cooking really strange food combinations and discussing the differences in our respective cultures. This weekend I plan on going on a daytrip to Malmo, Sweden with a group of people," she said. "My favorite things about studying here would be learning how to take trains, meeting new people, having to sniff things in the grocery store to figure out what they are, walking down cobblestone streets next to buildings that are at least 200 years old..." Happiness, indeed.

Emily McBride



Ryan Pickrell Spends a Year Abroad in China

For someone who has never travelled outside the country, spending a year abroad may seem rather daunting. However, junior History major Ryan Pickrell was up to the challenge of studying abroad in the People's Republic of China.

As a freshman at Georgia Southern, Pickrell decided to minor in Chinese language and travel to China for advanced study. Two years later, Pickrell was awarded the nationally competitive Boren scholarship and the Coca-Cola scholarship to fund his year spent at Huazhong Normal University.

At Huazhong, Pickrell takes five language-specific courses. "The classes are taught completely in the target language, and that does increase the difficulty," Pickrell said. "Having Chinese language explained in Chinese is challenging, but my language ability has progressed greatly. After two years of study, I can now communicate without any problem, and I'm extremely excited about

that."

Aside from his coursework, Pickrell has also experienced the wonders of China, including he said, "Walking on the Great Wall at Mutianyu, about two hours outside of Beijing. The wall had snow on it, and there was snow in the mountains, it was amazing." His time in China has allowed Pickrell to gain a perspective of the world outside of the U.S. "My overall experience has been phenomenal," Pickrell said. "In just 6 months, I've traveled to 9 different cities, have the ability to talk to anyone I meet, and have been a part of a world completely different from my own. It is by far the greatest experience of my life. I'm extremely thankful for the opportunity."

Pickrell plans to return to the U.S. in August of this year. After graduating from Georgia Southern in May 2011, he wants to attend graduate school, possibly Hunan Normal University in Changsha, Hunan, China. *Katie Brookins and Nicholas Hoad*

Julia Shull and Amanda Pennington will Teach For America

Georgia Southern University honors students Julia Shull (above) and Amanda Pennington (right) have been selected to participate in the Teach for America program starting next summer. Their participation makes them the second and third University Honors Program students to be selected for this prestigious service award in the last two years.

Shull, a political science major, was selected primarily for her demonstrated leadership qualities and scholarly achievement during her four years as an honors student. Pennington, also a political science major with a minor in economics, has been a 1906 Scholar in the University Honors Program, and cites her participation in a service-learning course focused on literacy as instrumental in her preparation for this opportunity.

Teach for America's mission is to end inequity in educational opportunity by placing teachers in low-income rural and urban schools. Founded in 1990 and working with 500 teaching corps members, the program now boasts 7,300 teachers and over 16,000 alumni.

Pennington sees working with Teach for America as an opportunity to give back and make a change in students' lives. "My experiences have allowed me to own my education, and I have seen firsthand the difference I can make. The education gap is prevalent all over our nation, but the most heart-breaking part is that the rest of us have the tools to solve the crisis and many of us do nothing."

Shull learned about this program while on an internship in Washington, D.C. where she had an opportunity to talk to former Teach for America corps members. "I was extremely taken by the sincere passion and devotion they had towards working to close the achievement gap in U.S.," Shull said.

To be selected for a position in the Teach for



America corps requires a balance of achievement in the classroom with leadership roles in campus and community organizations, which Shull and Pennington accomplished throughout their four years as honors students at Georgia Southern University. Both cite participation in the University Honors Program with preparing them for the rigorous application and interview process.

Shull, who graduated last December, completed her honors thesis under the mentorship of Dr. Darin Van Tassell. "He was very supportive, and I cannot tell you how much his support throughout the years has made such an impact on my life," Shull said.

Pennington credits her mentors at Georgia Southern and advice from University Honors Program Director Steven Engel for giving her an



advantage in the interview process. "I have been through so many interviews with the Honors Program, and I felt like I had an advantage in answering their questions," she said. She is finishing her Honors Thesis project this spring.

Both graduates will work in Atlanta area schools during their time with Teach For America.

Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society recently awarded senior honors student Jessica Spaleta a \$6,000 scholarship for her hard work in both the classroom and the community at Georgia Southern.

Spaleta, an Exercise Science major from Charlotte, North Carolina, maintains a 4.0 GPA and has served as the student liaison between student volunteers from Georgia Southern and Keep Bulloch Beautiful.

Phi Eta Sigma is a national honor society for

college freshmen with a fall GPA of 3.6 or higher. Spaleta has continued to work with first-year students as a peer leader and peer instructor in First-Year Experience courses, and she will also participate in the upcoming "Conversations with Professors" program for freshmen this August.

"I enjoy working with first-year student and volunteering in the community," Spaleta said. "I have a passion for bettering the lives of others around me. Giving back to Georgia Southern and the community is fun and part of who I am."



Biology Students Busy as Bees in Research Methods Course

Students choose the University Honors Program at Georgia Southern because they want the challenge of rigorous coursework and the opportunity to develop creative work and conduct research while working directly with faculty. This past year, the students in the honors section of Research Methods in Biology had just such an opportunity to participate in hands-on field research that is part of a larger global project to monitor wasp populations.

Dr. Alan Harvey, associate professor of Biology, led the team of eleven students in the project, part of a larger U.S. Geological Survey endeavor that involves other U.S. institutions as well as universities in Canada, Great Britain, and the Czech Republic. Not only did the students learn about research methods in biology, but they had the opportunity to contribute to studies of wasps around the world.

According to Harvey, the class is designed around the core skills all biology students should have in common, namely design and develop experiments, collect, synthesize and analyze data, and present findings in written form, posters, and presentations.

Sophomore Chet Joyner appreciated the opportunity to experience the combination of in-class, in-lab, and in-field work that this class offered. The entire process of creating, developing, and presenting a research project gave him insight, he said, into "all the stuff you take for granted until you actually do it."

The class worked together in developing a method for trapping and counting yellow jackets.

Using plastic bottles and three kinds of bait—apple juice, cider vinegar, and beer—the class set up 36 traps around campus and another 36 traps in nearby George L. Smith State Park. Over the course of the semester the traps caught more than 1,400 yellow-jackets.

"That was one of the biggest surprises," said sophomore Tabitha Williford. "The fact that few were caught by vinegar was not a surprise."

Students teamed up in groups and were responsible for data collected within a single class experiment. Each student completed at least four hours of field work during the semester which involved setting up traps, straining traps, replacing bait, and taking down the traps at the experiment's end. By placing the traps around campus and at the state park, students could compare how the different baits worked in different habitats, and in both urban and non-impacted environments.

Students had to confront the unexpected out in the field. As Tabitha Williford said, "The appearance of mold in some of the traps would deter insects."

The environment also required adjustments from the students as well, "Out in the field, modifications are needed," said Chet Joyner. "You have to think, let's tweak it a bit to solve issues." According to Joyner, the experience will give the students in the class an advantage because they have been exposed to how things do not always go as planned in an experiment.

For Professor Harvey, that was one high point of the class. It was great to see "when they had these mini-epiphanies—when they had those 'got

it' moments—in the experiment, or when they could start anticipating what they would find," he said.

While students provided individual analysis for in-class projects, they also presented their group's research, methods, and findings in a poster presentation at last fall's Biology Symposium. "That was a little intimidating," said sophomore Jessica Cain. "But now I feel more comfortable with the process of presentation. Plus, I'm pursuing a research opportunity in the summer, and I am confident that I have the skills and the background—a good foundation—to take it on."

Chet Joyner agrees, "The class prepared me to know what to expect and how to work my own way in my own projects." But it also helped him learn how to work on collaborative projects as well, "Learning how to communicate with everyone in the class and coming to consensus on approach" are good lessons, he said. "Plus, you need that coordination going out into the field. This experience was worth it for that."

The Honors Research Methods in Biology is a new course designed specifically for the Departmental Honors Sequence in Biology, coordinated by Dr. Bill Irby.

Students in the class were introduced to methods that they could take into any field in biology and a thinking process that would be useful across the sciences. "This class went extremely well and was successful," Dr. Harvey said, "because of what the students put into it. They now have experience struggling through the issues that everyone deals with in a project."

Jessica Spaleta Wins National Phi Eta Sigma Scholarship



CHANGE Leader Allison Beasley works with Oxfam International

Last July, honors student Allison Beasley, a junior Political Science major, joined fifty student leaders from across the United States gathered at Eastern Nazarene University in Massachusetts for a weeklong leadership training experience sponsored by Oxfam International.

Oxfam is a group of non-governmental organizations spread across three continents. Beasley explains that these NGOs are dedicated to seeking smart solutions to global problems. “Oxfam is focused on sustainable change, not just giving money to people who may not know what to do with it or how best to use it,” she said. To be a

part of such an elite group, Beasley endured a lengthy application and interview process in order to participate in this experience.

During her time in Boston, Beasley attended a number of different student sessions focused on leadership training. Oxfam also offered educational sessions for the students in the organization’s three main initiatives of Climate Change, Vulnerable Communities, and Extractive Industries.

The students were also given the tools and skills they would need to begin Oxfam programs on their home campuses.

The Climate Change initiative seeks to educate individuals and seek proactive solutions to the changing world climate. The Vulnerable Communities initiative equips communities to handle misfortunes, including crop failures and natural disasters like the 2004 tsunami. The third initiative, Extractive Industries, seeks to educate individuals whose land is being purchased by multinational corporations. Oxfam works to ensure that these individuals are aware of potential risks to the environment and their health and that they receive fair prices for their land and labor.

“At the end of training week,” Beasley said, “we chose an initiative and were told in more depth about that.” Beasley selected Vulnerable Communities, which adheres to the motto, “The Right to Know and the Right to Decide.”

Beasley and the campus organization have lobbied Representative Saxby Chambliss to support the Vulnerable Communities bill coming into the House of Representatives this year.

The Extractive Industries Transparency Dis-

closure Act, if passed, would force multinational corporations under the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to publish the funds that they pay to countries where they operate.

“The SEC controls all upper multi-national corporations—Chevron, Shell,” Beasley explains. “So the people in these [impacted] communities can get a fair share of the money being paid to their country, to go toward necessities like water, education, and environmental clean-up when these corporations leave.”

Beasley and her Oxfam-designated team collected 450 appeal cards, all signed by students, which they presented to one of Chambliss’s staffers in his Atlanta office. The team also hosted a call-in day, during which 150 students called Chambliss’s office to encourage the senator to vote in favor of the bill, which should come to a vote in May.

The team was also in charge of the October 2009 Hunger Banquet, held annually at Georgia Southern during Hunger and Homeless Week. “Students are given the opportunity to experience what it’s like to be impoverished, to live on two dollars a day, for example,” Beasley said.

As a 1906 scholar, Beasley credits a Spring 2008 honors leadership seminar taught by former assistant director of the UHP Bob Frigo as one of the turning points in her college education. The assigned book, *The End of Poverty* by Jeffrey D. Sachs, “opened my eyes to injustice,” she said. “We do have a global responsibility, [we] who are able to have a university education...We have the ability to change it, not be complacent.”

Katie Brookins

Meet the New Assistant Director



Francis Desiderio became the new Assistant Director of the University Honors Program last November, and since then has been immersed in almost every facet of the program’s operations. “One of the questions a student asked me during the interview process started out with, ‘Say Dr. Engel hands you a big stack of applications to the program...’ and that is exactly what happened. I got here just in time to start reading the November

round of applications and the projects haven’t stopped,” he said.

His previous experience includes both teaching and work in university-community partnerships, particularly courses in urban studies and service-learning projects in Atlanta.

“A lot of my effort so far has been working on new service-learning programming for honors students,” he said. “And we’ve planned an alternate break trip to Atlanta for a week this May. I also taught a section of the Global Citizens course to the freshman class of 1906 Scholars.”

Before coming to Georgia Southern, Desiderio was a Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow at Georgia Tech’s School of Literature, Communication, and Culture and a Visiting Assistant Professor in the

Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts at Emory University, where he earned his Ph.D. At Emory, he focused his research in the fields of American studies and urban studies. His dissertation was on the designs and developments of architect-developer John Portman.

Desiderio also earned a Master’s degree from the Department of Popular Culture at Bowling Green State University, where he wrote a thesis on the urban art landscapes of Detroit outsider artist Tyree Guyton. His undergraduate degree in English is from the University of Detroit.

Dr. Desiderio is accompanied in the move to Statesboro by his wife, Jennifer Stocking, their two boys, John and Christopher, and their beagle, Tiggy.

I Am Just Me

By Michelle Wehner

The log rolled back
Revealed a spider fat and black
“I am just Me”
Said like a plea
As the boot came down
—quieted the sound.

Snake sleeping silent
All gentle and pliant
Curled in the sun,
Unable to run.
“I am not what You see
I am just Me”
Said with a sigh
As down came a hoe
To quiet the cry.

Proud wings beat
Fast and fleet
Me—that’s all
Sung in shrill call
A barrel is aimed
The proud is lamed.
A figure falls...

And what are you
Said to the shrew
The trap laid flat
Closed with a clap.
I am just Me.
I am just me

And what is your plan
Asked of the man
I am just Me.
Complex and free
They ripped out the tongue,
Punctured the lung,
Gouged out the eye,
To silence the lie.
Burned at the stake
For being so fake
I am just Me.
I am just me



Keiylene Burgess: “Avoiding Lawsuits in Academe: The Customer Service Solution”

Keiylene Burgess has been thinking about the role of the college student as a customer and recently had the opportunity to present a paper on that very topic at the 2010 meeting of the Southern Academy of Legal Studies in Business in San Antonio, TX. For the paper, entitled “Avoiding Lawsuits in Academe: The Customer Service Solution,” honors Junior Finance major Burgess collaborated with Dr. LaVon Wilson of the College of Business Administration. Dr. Wilson chairs the COBA Educational Outcomes Assessment Committee, on which Burgess serves as an assistant. Burgess’s and Dr. Wilson’s research is a study of the effects of customer service on universities. A conversation about state policies sparked the idea for the paper: “We started talking about the initiative that Sonny Purdue released, basically asking all state agencies to focus on customer service,” said Burgess.

Working closely with Dr. Wilson has been one of the most fulfilling aspects of the research process according to Burgess. She appreciated the chance to examine the subject from the viewpoints of both a student and a professor. “I brought the student perspective to it, and Sonny Purdue has said that the students are the most important customers. Students don’t really think of themselves as customers...” she notes. “The idea really did catch me off guard, and working with a faculty member has given me a perspective of how this will work from the

faculty/staff side.” Burgess was particularly interested in the effect the customer service perspective might have on student expectations. “If you decide that you’re supposed to be being served by your university, are you going to think ‘Well, I don’t have to work as hard’ or ‘I don’t have to take the initiative?’” she wonders.

In addition to presenting her findings to a group of professionals, Burgess had the opportunity to participate in a focus group that was reviewing a new supplemental study aid. “It tracks the effort of students,” she explains. “It lets professors know when they were working and how much time they spent on the assignment.” Dr. Wilson said that Burgess’s contributions to the focus group session were “very constructive and insightful.” As a student, Burgess brought a different perspective to the table. “Being able to give feedback as a student was a unique experience for me and also for the company,” she said.

Burgess’s presentation in San Antonio was a success. “She did an excellent job and received rave reviews from those in attendance. I was extremely impressed by her presentation,” said Dr. Wilson. “She represented Georgia Southern, the College of Business Administration, and her department very well.” Dr. Wilson and Burgess plan to continue researching and working to get the paper published. *Cassie Beasley*

On the Editor

By Jack Preston Lavender

A man of hunched back and purposeful stride
Stalks coolly my thoughts at night
The High Controller of cerebral tide
In my peripheral site

Abnormally tall, he's normally dark
His gaze preys on words unsaid
Ripping and spilling and killing for lark
His dinner lives in my head

Expert of arson, the clown loves to torch
Children and clouds and candy
That man kills sweet words with horrible scorch
Leaves just the sad or randy

Oh, I could kill him; I have not a doubt
With dull verse comes poisoned wine
But that lout would burn worlds on his way out
And so his absence is mine



David Robeck Fights Genocide with STAND

As genocide began in Darfur, Sudan, many students around the United States decided to stand against it. Thus was born STAND, Students Taking Action Now Darfur. This organization has chapters in multiple universities and seeks to make Americans aware of the situation in Darfur while also advocating for politicians to take action. David Robeck, senior International Studies and Spanish major, acts as Georgia Southern's Public Relations Officer for the local chapter of STAND.

Robeck explained that the scope of the organization now covers more countries, "STAND has expanded from being an organization that dealt with just Darfur to one that addresses the conflicts in Sudan, Burma, and the Congo." STAND develops various plans and actions to try to raise awareness about these conflicts.

Robeck said that the local GSU organization screens documentaries about these wars to campus and community audiences and participates in larger events addressing conflict and genocide. Last year, for example, Robeck and other STAND members attended a convention in Washington, D.C. called Pledge2Protect. At this conference the STAND members had three goals. The first was to raise awareness about the conflicts, which they achieved this through a YouTube campaign. Second, they held a convention in D.C. to bring

the genocide to the attention of American politicians, and it was there they met other speakers from around the world who spoke of the conflicts in Sudan, Burma, and the Congo. Third, after the convention STAND conducted a signatures campaign. Around 50,000 people signed the petition for the government to help end the conflicts, and STAND considered the event a major success.

Since then, Robeck has helped new chapters of STAND "get organized" in the Southeast while also working to continue raising awareness on the GSU campus. Currently, he said, STAND at Georgia Southern is planning a 5k run to fundraise for their partner organizations.

For David himself, he said that "many alumni stay in touch with STAND and I hope to be one of those alumni." If David goes to a graduate school with a STAND chapter, he hopes to join them and continue his participation in the organization. The best part of the STAND experience for David, "was meeting Romeo Dallarie (commander of the UN peacekeeping forces in Rwanda during the genocide there). He was inspiring and a really nice guy. Also, the conferences were cool, because meeting like-minded people is always fun." *Nicholas Hoad*

Read about Robeck's Honors Thesis project on page 17 of this magazine.



Synergy and Learning Meet: Dr. Thomas Case on Honors

Dr. Thomas Case, the current department chair for Information Systems, has taught at Georgia Southern University for the past twenty seven years, and he has been a valuable mentor and instructor for honors students for more than two decades. His teaching philosophy for honors courses depends on three essential components of the classroom experience coming together. When reading assignments, engaged students and an experienced instructor come together, "the result is almost unforgettable for the professors and the students," he said. "The synergies are almost impossible to describe" when students and professors start to share their ideas.

Dr. Case's experience with honors students began when the Bell Honors Program asked him to teach an orientation seminar for incoming freshmen. Together, he and his students studied Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. Three years later, Dr. Case saw the opportunity to step in again when the teaching arrangement for an economics seminar dissolved unexpectedly.

"There was a need," Dr. Case said simply. "I would have taught [the course] as uncompen-

sated overload every year for a chance to work with the students." And they worked hard. With a stack of assigned books "about a foot high", including Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, Dr. Case led his students in an economics course that integrated elements of subjects the students were more familiar with: history and literature.

"I never felt I had to put any limits on the level of challenge I placed on any tests or papers," explains Dr. Case. "I was never disappointed."

Bell Honors students took, of their three required honors courses, two classes together during their first two years. By the end of sophomore year, when they took the required economics seminar, they had bonded.

These bonds naturally led to "head-butting" during discussions. One pair in particular, "a very bright male and a brilliant female...both really got inspired and worked up." Their verbal jousting still amuses Dr. Case, who often felt like a referee. "It wouldn't matter who said what, the other was going to take [an opposing] side."

Dr. Case feels that these intense intellectual discussions are of great benefit to honors stu-

dents, and the originality of his students continues to surprise him. Going into these discussions, which Dr. Case feels is instrumental to honors students learning, the individuality of his students still surprises him. "No matter how predictable you think [your students] are, they put things together in ways you don't anticipate."

For Dr. Case, this is what the University Honors Program does for its students. Honors classes create an atmosphere for faculty and students alike to come together and learn from each other in a positively charged atmosphere of debate and mutual respect. The synergy that emerges in this situation makes honors classes unique.

"The program needs to get bigger so more students have those experiences and faculty get to experience the honors students," said Dr. Case. "I will always be a big advocate for the Honors Program. I would love to see a critical mass of honors students in the university."

"The Eidson House serves as a first step. No matter how big or small the space, it'll never really hold how big the college should be or its importance to the university." *Katie Brookins*



THE 2009 HONORS
HOMECOMING
CELEBRATION
NOVEMBER 13 AT THE EIDSON HOUSE



SAVE THE DATE
HOMECOMING 2010
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 5 2010

Alumni updates

Bryan Kight

(UHP, Finance and Quantitative Analysis, 2002)

and Christin (Patty) Kight (2002) announce the birth of their first child, Annaleise Renee. Bryan is currently a financial analyst for AT&T in Atlanta.

Shahnjayla K. Connors

(UHP, Biology, 2003)

was published in the February 2009 issue of *Oncogene*. She earned her Ph.D. in Medical Sciences at the University of Florida. Her research focuses on the biological and social factors that contribute to breast cancer disparities in the U.S. and around the world.

We welcome news and updates regarding both Bell Honors Program and University Honors Program graduates. Send us your information and photos to: sengel@georgiasouthern.edu

Honors Survey

In December 2009, honors alumni were invited to participate in a survey of both Bell Honors and University Honors alumni. Seventy-three people responded to this survey—nearly 20% of those for whom we have e-mail addresses. Overall, the survey yielded very positive results from both BHP and BHP alumni.

94% Answered yes when asked if they had to do it all over again, would they enroll as an honors student at Georgia Southern University.

72% Are enrolled or have completed a graduate or professional degree.

87% rate their education as an honors student at Georgia Southern as strong or very strong.

61% offered to participate in recruitment of new students, mentorship of current students, planning of honors alumni events, or assistance with honors fundraising. Committees are forming now to work on these issues. To volunteer, contact Dr. Steven Engel at sengel@georgiasouthern.edu

We periodically will send out a survey to find out what honors graduates are doing, but we would like to hear from you at any time.

The data provided on these pages provides an overview of the current state and recent growth of the University Honors Program.



HONORS ANNUAL REPORT

Bell Memorial Oak Tree Collapses After Storm

On February 1, 1997, the large oak tree next to the Williams Center was dedicated to the memory of Orell Bernard “Red” Bell.

Arguably the oldest and largest tree on the campus it was a fitting memorial to the long-standing friend and benefactor of the Bell Honors Program.

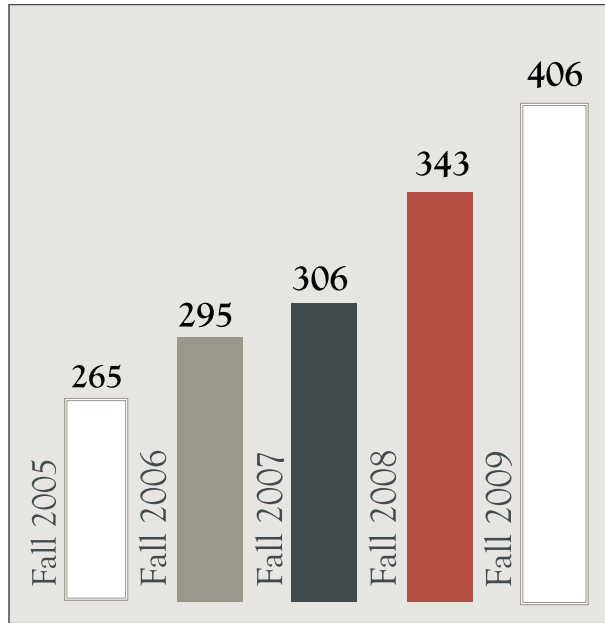
Nearly thirteen years after this dedication, the oak fell in a large windstorm on January 24, 2010.

Photo Courtesy of Katherine Kennedy Georgia Southern Student Media



2009-2010 by the numbers

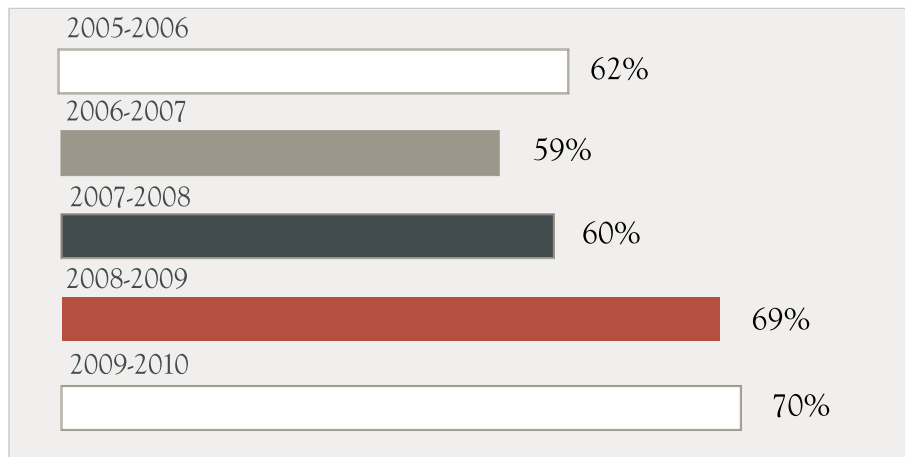
Number of Honors Students



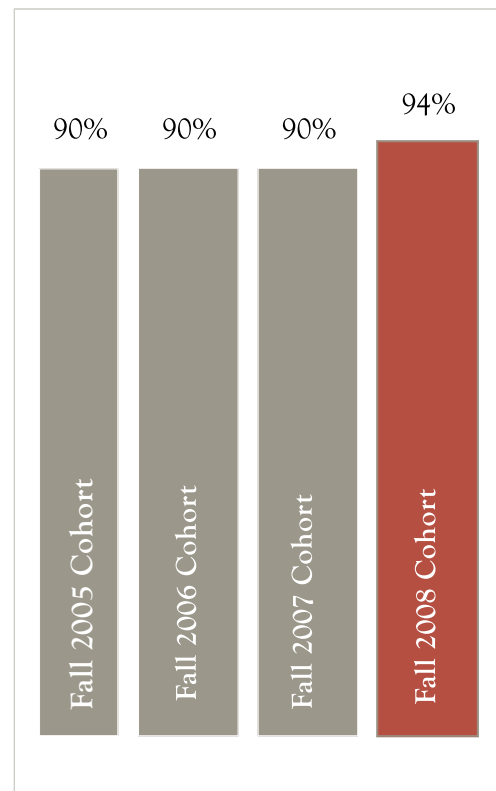
Honors 2009-2010 Data

406	Honors students (49% men, 61% women) (83% Caucasian, 17% non-white)
350	Georgia residents (88%)
13	States represented
18	Countries represented
94%	Freshman retention rate
85	Honors courses offered
144	Faculty teaching honors or mentoring honors students
4750	Hours of service and leadership

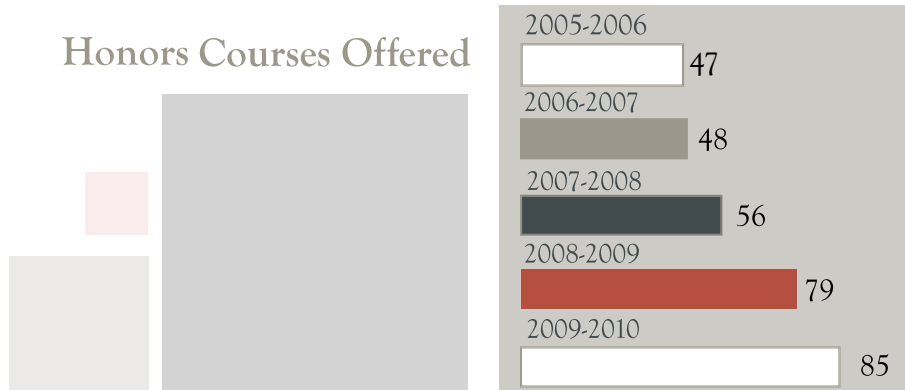
Honors Students On Dean's List



Honors Freshman Retention Rates

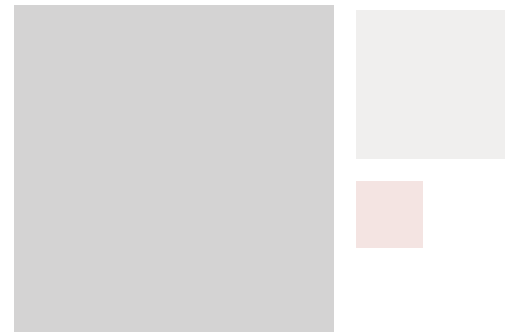
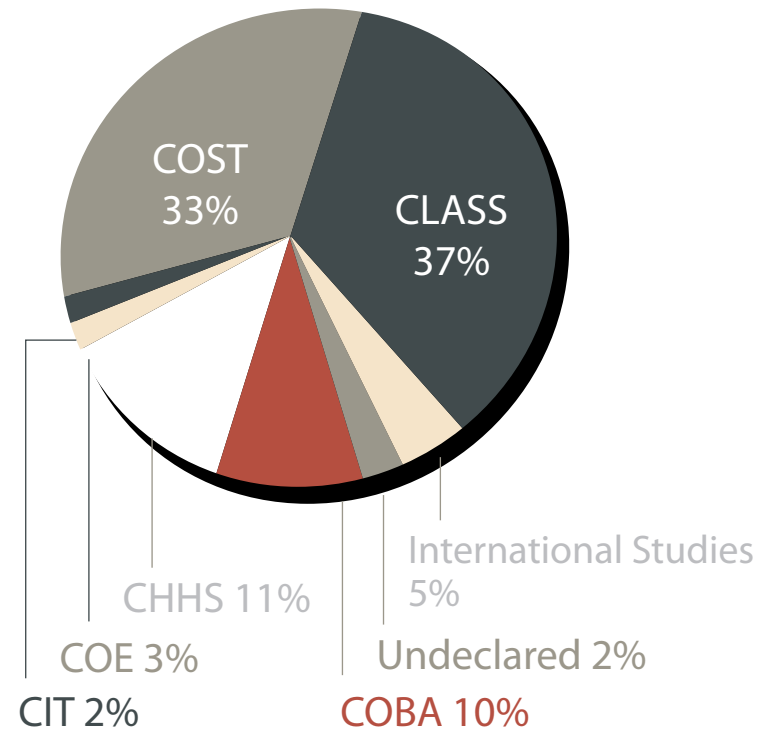


Honors Courses Offered



Honors Students By Academic College

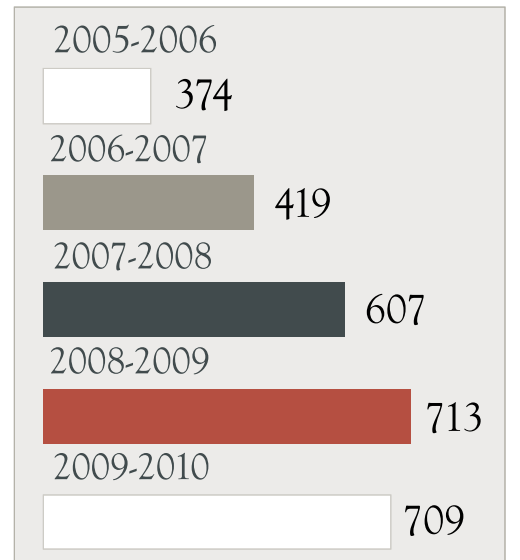
Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS)	149
Science and Technology (COST)	136
Health and Human Sciences (CHHS)	46
Business Administration (COBA)	42
Education (COE)	14
Information Technology (CIT)	10
International Studies	20
Undeclared	8



2010 Incoming Freshman Class Projections

153	New freshmen
144	Georgia Residents (94%)
6	States represented
1268	Average SAT
28	Average ACT
3.8	Average GPA (unweighted)

Program Applicants





Honors Undergraduate RESEARCH FUND

Undergraduate Research is one of the hallmarks of the University Honors Program. Every honors student must complete a substantial research or creative project prior to graduation. Many of these projects require considerable costs in supplies, travel and time. The Honors Undergraduate Research Fund helps defray the costs for the growing number of honors students.

There are 650 Honors Alumni.

If each were to make a one hundred dollar donation, we would raise \$65,000.

With \$65,000 we could:

Purchase 3,250 pieces of glassware for use in scientific experiments

Purchase 2,800 copies of Plato's Republic

Purchase 135,000 pounds of clay for ceramics students

Purchase 43 tickets to Paris for students to examine the archives at the Bibliothèque Nationale

Purchase 2,000 gallons of paint for art students

Purchase 175 tickets to San Francisco for students to present at the American Chemical Society

Provide overload salary funds for faculty in eleven College or Departmental Honors sequences

Donations are tax deductible. Their value is immeasurable.

To make a contribution, contact Dr. Steven Engel at sengel@georgiasouthern.edu