

Spring 2012

The Promethean: Spring 2012

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THE PROMETHEAN

HONORS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2012 ISSUE

HONORS PROGRAM WEATHERGIRL WONDER WOMAN

BY KENT LESTER, ENGLISH ADOLESCENT EDUCATION MAJOR

I am constantly amazed by Brockport Honors students. Forget the stuffy, I-live-in-the-library stereotypes. These students take a high-octane, hands-on, and “let’s get messy” approach to academics. These are the students who go take a marine-biology class with scuba gear and a surfboard, and learn physics with catapults and cannons.

Just recently, I was privileged to interview one of these outstanding students. Jennifer Stanonis, who on top of being a meteorologist for Channel 7 Eyewitness News, is completing her calculus based meteorology degree in conjunction with Brockport’s Honors Program. Currently, she is working on her thesis for the Honors Program.

Between college, thesis work, running marathons (OMG!!!) reporting, a fiancé (and probably being a secret super heroine by night—with her resumé, who knows), she found time to answer the pesky questions of a Promethean interviewer.

We began by discussing her thesis: “So far,” she says, “I am looking at weather data over the past century at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport to see how Buffalo’s climate is changing. I am analyzing average daily temperatures, and precipitation amounts (both rain and snow).”

Interesting, I thought. That sounds quite similar to her career. Which it was. I was to discover that many Honors students, like Jennifer, approach their thesis as a tool and opportunity to engross themselves in an area of relevant and applicable interest, not just another necessary stepping stone on the way to the graduation stage.

“How have you related your thesis to your work?” I asked.

“I find many people and viewers are fascinated with the thought of climate change and global warming. My thesis project will hopefully answer more questions concerning climate change.”

Well, I confess that I wasn’t *before* the interview, but I was now. Intrigued, I continued to pester her about her experience with the Honors Program.



Photo: jenniferstanonis.com

Jennifer Stanonis, Channel 7 News.

(Continued on page 3)

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2010 Newsletter Award Winner

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY DR. DONNA KOWAL

As the semester draws to a close, students across campus are eager to wrap up their course work and transition to summer. Honors students spend their summer months engaged in a variety of activities—internship, family vacation, summer job, study abroad, thesis project research, outdoor sports, and more. It's also a perfect time to reflect on the past academic year—what went well, what didn't, unexpected events, achievements, new skills and knowledge acquired, etc. How will your experience this past academic year shape your goals for 2012-13? What should you do differently next year? Is it time for you to move out of your comfort zone and try something new? Should you get more involved on campus or participate in community service activities next year? Should you strive to manage your time better and avoid accepting more responsibilities than you can reasonably manage? Each of us can glean lessons from our experiences this past year.

Faculty do this, too. We reflect on the courses we taught, our scholarly or creative projects, our interactions with students and colleagues, and our participation in the campus community and academic discipline. We then establish some new goals for next year and sometimes those goals involve taking risks—adopting a new textbook or technology tool for a course, completely redesigning a course, investigating a new and unfamiliar research topic, joining a new committee or taking on a new leadership role, etc. Ultimately, this process of reflecting on the past and setting goals for the future is an ongoing cycle that helps each of us to grow and continually seek improvement. It's important to devote time to thinking about your personal and professional goals and aspirations as they relate to your efforts. And, if you need help identifying some goals and aspirations that fit your interests and abilities, make an appointment with your major advisor and/or with one of the Honors directors. Academic advisement isn't just about registering for courses; it includes support and assistance aimed at helping you carve a professional path for yourself.

Dr. Donna Kowal, Director of Honors Program

Congratulations to all Honors

Award Recipients!

Honors Program Outstanding Senior Award: Jessica Geraci

Honors Program Scholars: Brittany Bills



Jaime Glantz

Justin Jackson

Peter Kosek

Megan Walck



The Honors Program now has an official Facebook page! Become a fan by searching “**The College at Brockport Honors Program**” or by typing in the url below. Look for the big ‘H’ photo and get updates from the Program!

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/The-College-at-Brockport-Honors-Program/191729357528736?sk=wall>

HONORS PROGRAM WEATHERGIRL WONDER WOMAN BY KENT LESTER, ENGLISH ADOLESCENT EDUCATION MAJOR

“The Honors Program has been very helpful in supporting my studies in many ways,” she said. “The program supplies useful, daily tools in the Honors Program lounge, and the staff are always available to help you with your academic career, such as class selection and planning.”

Testify, sister.

Whether it’s computers access, advisement, a chat with Darlene, a couch to nap on, or one of Dr. Banerjee’s famous cups of coffee, the Honors lounge is a favorite haunt for students.

Jennifer also wanted to make special note of the Honors Program director, saying that Dr. Donna Kowal has been “very helpful.”

The interview continued and I kept discovering more about this fascinating weathergirl/wonderwoman.

She hails from northern California, and has worked and studied in Wyoming and Mississippi before ending up with us in Western New York. Amongst a slew of stories she has covered snow storms, tornadoes and the launch of the Discovery space shuttle. She loves animals and books, and is completely unprepared for the zombie apocalypse.

She credits her many achievements to inspiration from her parents, daily support from her fiancé, Ted Constantine, and watching Dianne Sawyer on ABC as a little girl. “I still watch her,” she confessed.

For more information on Jennifer Stanonis, go to: jenniferstanonis.com



Photo: jenniferstanonis.com

ALPHA CHI INDUCTEES: SPRING 2012 COMPILED BY DARLENE WATERS, PROGRAM SECRETARY

The following Honors students were inducted into The College at Brockport Omicron NY Chapter of Alpha Chi:

Jihan N. Abdurrafi, Communication
Caitlin M. Vandewater, English
Heather R. Gallant, Social Work
Sharon M. Hall, Social Work
Tracey A. Dickinson, Nursing
Meegan S. Marvin, Mathematics
Sarah A. Scheuermann, Biological Sciences
Kyle J. Walker, Biological Sciences
Nicholas R. Kinney, Business Administration
Oladoyin Omolara Zaccheus, International Business &
Economics



EDITOR'S FAREWELL

BY JUSTIN JACKSON AND JESSICA GERACI

I feel very privileged to have been able to work with some of Brockport's finest students to showcase the talents, recognitions, and achievements of Honors Program students.

I am thankful for everything the Honors Program has done for me to help make the most of my Brockport experience, from peer mentoring to leading Honors Club to building giant eagles for homecoming to traveling the country to share the Program that we all created. And after I graduate in May, these are the memories that will stick with me the most because they were unique and different from anything I ever thought about doing when I entered as a freshman. Without the Honors Program and the consistent guidance and encouragement from Dr. Kowal and Dr. Banerjee, I would not have been able to grow into the diverse leader that I am today. They have served as my constant reminder to stay focused not only on individual growth but also the community as a whole.

After leaving Brockport, I do have some cliché pointers for those still Brocking on. Try new things. Explore new opportunities. Make the most of your experiences here at Brockport and use the Honors Program to do so. As scary as Honors Improv might sound, take that leap and give it a shot. You can write that thesis, which sounds even scarier, but there are people there to help you along the way to reach that goal. Stop by an Honors Club meeting because they're usually pretty great people who just like throwing themed parties. Try a little bit of everything so that in the end, you don't have to wonder what would have happened if you tried.

Thank you to all the Honors students that have helped make The Promethean the nationally recognized publication that it has become. It is through your efforts that this newsletter exists and it is my hope that you will continue to contribute to this chronicle of Honors students and build the Honors community even stronger. It's your Program, so make it the way you want it.

Justin Jackson

In thinking about the myriad experiences I've had at Brockport, many of them carry a common theme: Honors. This program has given me the opportunity to be a leader, a follower, a team member, and an individual thinker. Each unique experience has added both academically and personally to my four years at the college. Most of all, I've learned that every experience is what you make it.

I'd like to say "Thank you" to everyone who's written for, submitted to, or edited the newsletter; to every mentor that's made a difference in the critical first semester of an Honors freshman; and my Honors professors who pushed me to think outside of what I thought I knew about the world. To those of you who have one to three years left at Brockport: be sure to take advantage of all of the opportunities Honors affords you. You never know what's out there for you to learn.

Jessica Geraci



Jessica Geraci and her sister (top)

Justin Jackson teaching at a local elementary school (bottom)

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: PURSUIT OF AN AMERICAN EDUCATION

BY JESSICA GERACI, MATH ADOLESCENT EDUCATION MAJOR

Odilia Coffta is a senior Honors student and McNair Scholar from Guatemala. She came to the United States in 2003 at age 20. Odilia wanted to attend college, but her family did not have the resources in Guatemala. Originally, she settled in Pennsylvania, where the only person she knew in the United States lived.

In Poughkeepsie, Odilia worked as a hotel bartender, where she met her husband. After they married, she moved to Brockport and began attending the College. As an Honors, International Studies, and Political Science student, and an employee of the Migrant Education Program in Cooper Hall, Odilia has a very busy schedule. This schedule has not kept her from high achievement.

Odilia presented her senior thesis, *Inca Sí, Indio También: Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Conflict in Latin America*, at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research in March, 2012. Using an ordinal time series logistic regression model, she examines the process of granting rights to indigenous people across Latina American countries, and possibly associated indigenous conflicts.

In the spring 2011 semester, she was admitted to the Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honor Society, Alpha Chi Honors Society and was a recipient of Who's Who among Students in American Universities. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue a dual degree in Public Administration and International Relations. This focus will lead her toward her goal of working in a non-profit organization.



Odilia Coffta

HONORS CLUB OFFICIALS: FALL 2012

COMPILED BY DARLENE WATERS, PROGRAM SECRETARY

Congratulations to the following Honors students who will be the Honors Club officers for the 2012-2013 year:

President: Samantha Schulman, Health Science

Vice-President: Nicole D'Arcangelis, English

Treasurer: Cody Luetzger, History

Secretary: Nicole Fuller, Psychology

The class representative positions will be voted on at the beginning of the Fall 2012 semester.



SENIOR THESIS TITLES

COMPILED BY DARLENE WATERS, PROGRAM SECRETARY

Below are a sample of some the Honors Program Senior Thesis titles from this year's graduating Honors class:

"The Human Power Project"

"Classroom Physical Activity Breaks and Physical Activity Levels of Children"

"Physical Therapy: Rehabilitation and Restoration of Balance in Elderly and Female Athletes"

"How Recreation Helps Marine Wives Cope with Deployment"

"US Policies Toward Guatemala During the Cold War"

"IFRS: Are Professors Prepared to Teach?"

"Factors that Influence the Effectiveness of Animal-Assisted Therapies"

INSIGHT FROM A PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER EDITOR

BY MELISSA BRODERICK, ALUMNUS

"Take charge of your education." These words drifted towards my strategically-chosen window seat in a Tuttle South classroom, and lodged themselves into my drowsy consciousness. This command was uttered by Dr. Donna Kowal in a "Protest and Public Opinion" class which I had chosen for my second semester as a freshman (Which would make it the Spring of '06. Meemph!) solely because it filled multiple General Education requirements with a mere 3 credits. I only remember the above as being part of a side note she was making about a larger idea, but these were the words that crept in and had the most resounding impact on my life.

Leading up until this point, an ingrained rule-following attitude combined with an eagerness to learn caused me to successfully and skillfully complete assignments and courses in high school and college so far, but it honestly never occurred to me to literally take charge of the opportunities I had at my avail. While my fresh perspective and goals did not suddenly materialize the moment I stepped out of that classroom, I became aware that this command became my mantra as I approached the coming year. I finally relinquished my undeclared status and planted myself in a major and two minors. I joined Sankofa. It was the following semester that I even decided to join the Honors Program, and the semester after when I responded to an email seeking editors for this newsletter!

Even though this exact phrase doesn't completely apply to where my life is right now, the core significance of it does, as I now supplement the last word with whatever applies at the time. Take charge of your career. Take charge of your social anxiety. Take charge of your dishes (Oh dirty dishes, why must you reappear with such frequency?!). Take charge of your life. These words likely impacted me so strongly because they offer both freedom and a challenge on multiple levels. It is a reminder that the decisions you are making right now are literally molding you, and it is totally up to you to shape your life as you see fit. It is a reminder to pay little regard to what other people are doing and stay focused on your own goals. It is a reminder that in order to achieve what you are capable of, you really do need to take charge and make it happen. If you are not actively and offensively pursuing it, you really can't expect things to fall into place.

As an Honors student reading this newsletter (all the Honors students read this, right? Thought so.), you know you are already on the right track, but I really encourage you to not rest too comfortably in your current position. Keep striving and pushing yourself and remain open to the opportunities that curiously seem to jump out at you when you adopt a "take charge" perspective.



Melissa Broderick

WHY I TEACH IN THE HONORS PROGRAM

COMPILED BY JOHN LACOURT, ENGLISH/ADOLESCENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MAJOR



Photo: brockport.edu

Dr. Joseph Ortiz, Intro. to Honors

“Although I've only taught ‘Introduction to Honors’ (HON 112) once, I would more than gladly teach it again. One of the truly nice things about the course is the range of student interests and majors represented, which can have the effect of generating lively and informed class discussions. I particularly like the fact that with the Honors group I feel more confident about experimenting with different teaching strategies and with different texts. For example, in the fall I taught Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (a work I have taught several times) alongside Arthur C. Clarke's *2001* (a work I had never taught before). This was an exciting way to approach science fiction, but I might not have done so with a class that wasn't already performing at a high level.”

Dr. Priya Banerjee, Honors Global Health

“I taught my first Honors class several years ago – it was called, ‘Contemporary Issues in Health.’ The course was an upper-level writing course and it turned out to be one of the best experiences I have had teaching at Brockport. My class size was small, consisting of only twelve or so students, and all of them talkative, articulate, and engaged. These students wanted to know more, found themselves reading more, discussing more, and going beyond the requirements of the course. That semester, we discussed the ethics of embryonic stem cell research and the intricacies of gun control legislation in the United States. This is my twelfth year at Brockport, and I have taught many Honors sections over the years; this semester I am teaching an introductory ‘Global Health’ class. As expected, my students are attentive and motivated in addition to being great writers and thinkers! This is why I enjoy teaching Honors classes.”

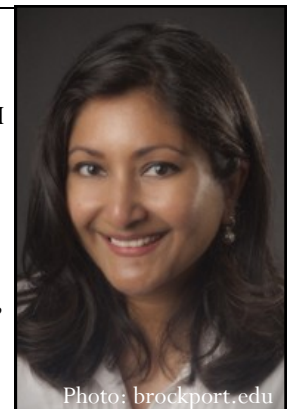


Photo: brockport.edu



Photo: brockport.edu

Dr. Matthew Mulvaney, Honors Introduction to Psychology

“I had taught in the Honors Program because I had wanted to teach students who were uniquely interested in challenging themselves, and who were interested in an experience that would go beyond the traditional academic format. I wanted to work closely with motivated students. I was excited to work with students who would want to go beyond typical course work and to engage with material at a much higher level.”

Dr. Barbara LeSavoy, Honors Sex and Culture

“It is pretty amazing to do what I do, and that is to be around engaging students and colleagues discussing and analyzing important women and gender issues. I love this. But it is even more remarkable to do what I do with a class of exceptional students. I am privileged enough to instruct Honors Sex and Culture each fall. It never fails to surround me with students who are smart, interesting, diverse, and willing to engage myself and each other as we uncover and move around complex pieces of women and gender studies knowledge. I forge meaningful relationships with students who are studying across disciplines. This year, I nominated the spring '12 recipient of ‘The School of the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Award’, a brilliant Honors student who I met in my fall '08 Honors WMS 360 class section. Really, teaching Honors WMS 360 is about the surplus value of my work: rich in dimension, challenging in experience, and extraordinary in its scholastic potential.”



Photo: brockport.edu

HONORS CLUB HOSTS "I LOVE THE 90s" PARTY

PHOTOS BY JUSTIN JACKSON

On April 1, the Honors Club hosted their second themed party "I Love the 90s." Over 130 people attended the event to enjoy classic 90s hits from Rock 'n' Roll Club, delicious snacks such as Dunkaroos and Gushers, games such as Tommy Pickles' Diaper Toss, and more. Stay tuned in the fall for the announcement of the next themed party!



THE CREATIVE HONORS STUDENT: ART AND POETRY

Purple

By Amber Karpie, Biology

In the key of blue, please,
Don't wallow in its sadness,
Strum the chords of dissonance,
Make it live once again,

In the key of yellow, please,
Majors takes minors dancing,
As sound streams smile along,
Skipping beats to startle hearts,

In the key of red, please,
Give me a bass line of pain,
Something loud and ferocious,
Enough to mask my steaming,

In the key of purple, please,
Purple? Is that a folk tune?
Or a string quartet? No, no,
It's the song I can't sing inside.

So

By Amber Karpie, Biology

I feel so content I could cry,
And it's so silent I could just scream,
And I'm so stable I'm collapsing,
And this nightmare feels like a dream,

I feel so angry I could laugh,
And it's so fair I could finally cheat,
And I'm so strong I could break,
And this happiness makes me weep,

I feel so hungry I could starve,
And it's so cold I could feel heat,
And I'm so kind I'm lying,
And this brisk day feels like a week,

I feel so useless I could help,
And it's so pointless I could care,
And I'm so wrong I'm justified,
And this stormy night feels so fair.

Popcorn

By Justin Jackson, History/Childhood Inclusive Ed.



Night Outside My Window

Anonymous

Crickets chirp steely legs into a thunder
night.

Naked is when you can breathe with the
world, hearing every peep.

Calling to brothers and sisters they do not
know,

But with a wave like a father who connects
them all.

Not scared as a group of one by a rustle on
a roaring night.

One that shivers and chills the sternest of
men.

HONORS EVENTS SPRING 2012 (IMPROV NIGHT, BRUNCH)



Contribute to *The Promethean*!

The Honors Program Newsletter is an award-winning publication dedicated to the Honors Program faculty, students, and alumni. Articles are written by Honors students and are designed to provide information to the Honors community. Content will include a variety of topics, including research, Honors program news and events, student and professor spotlights, experiences, and creative work. For submissions or more information, please contact Justin Jackson at jjack4@brockport.edu.

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Prometheus sculpture on cover created by Arno Breker.

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