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The Honors
College

The Newsletter of The Honors College at the University of Houston

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College Applications and Enrollment Surge

The Honors College is enjoying a huge boost in application and enrollment numbers, thanks to the innovative efforts of its recruitment team and the support and collaboration of the University Office of Admissions.

The team, led by **Sarah Bhojani** and **Brenda Rhoden**, has been employing a variety of new recruiting strategies, including events like the Spring Invitational, Honors and the Schools visits, and open houses hosted in the Honors College and the Rockwell Pavilion. The addition of a “mid-career application,” primarily targeting outstanding UH students not already members of the Honors College, has increased mid-career applications by roughly 300%. According to **Dean Bill Monroe**, the recruitment increases are ahead of projections. “Thanks to the hard work of the staff and faculty,” Monroe said, “we expect to enroll 500 new students this year, with an average SAT of 1300 [combined critical reading and math]. We were not expecting to reach that goal until 2013.”



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SUPPORTING MAJOR AWARDS

It is almost midnight and Erica Fletcher is on her sixth cup of tea for the day. She is not fueling up for a late-night party or even a study session, though; Fletcher is involved in a very high-stakes competition.

Every year, approximately 1000 American students apply for two of the most prestigious nationally competitive scholarships, the Rhodes and the Marshall. Both scholarships provide U.S. students with opportunities to study in the U.K. The Rhodes Scholarship is for a two-year tenure at Oxford University, and the Marshall Scholarship offers American students the opportunity to attend almost any university in the U.K. In the past, the awards often went to students seeking a second baccalaureate degree, but now they are typically awarded to scholars pursuing a graduate education. Both scholarships also entail a more challenging—and dramatic—application process than many realize.

Fletcher's last-minute efforts are not due to a lack of planning. She has been working on her application for months, and years of academic success have prepared her for this point. But the sheer volume of materials required by the applications is enough to overwhelm most candidates. Applicants spend months drafting essays and personal statements, revising resumés, gathering transcripts, and corresponding with recommendation letter writers. Thankfully, the Office of Undergraduate Research and the Honors College are there to help.

The Office of Undergraduate Research is charged with assisting students at the University of Houston in finding and applying for external scholarships and fellowships. In addition to Erica's applications for Rhodes and Marshall, within the past year alone the office has provided support to applications for



Erica Fletcher
photo of Erica by Gregory Bohuslav

the Gates Cambridge, Barry M. Goldwater, Jack Kent Cooke, Merage, National Science Foundation, Boren, and Phi Kappa Phi scholarships. All of these awards are nationally competitive scholarships that support students' undergraduate and graduate studies, both within the U.S. and beyond. Erica also benefited from the advice of her mentors, **Drs. Jerome Crowder** and **Dan Price**, and over 30 other members of the University community. "From talking with the other applicants," Fletcher said, "it became very clear that no other scholarship advisors at other institutions had been as enthusiastic, dedicated, and detail-oriented as **Karen Weber** and Drs. Crowder and Price."

Erica began her academic career at the Honors College in 2007 at the age of 16. She started with one major—psychology—and has since added two more in anthropology and sociology. These interests have

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SUPPORTING MAJOR AWARDS



Conner Lund with Karen Weber; In February, Conner applied for the Boren Scholarship to study in Russia for an academic year.

converged in her research projects, most notably her two ethnographic films. Marianismo, completed as a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship project in 2009, explores the plight of HIV-positive Latina women. Her current project, a film about sex trafficking in Houston, is being conducted as part of her senior honors thesis.

Candidates for the Marshall Scholarship compete in eight regions of the U.S. for a total of 32 scholarships. Rhodes Scholar applicants in the U.S. are divided into 16 districts with approximately equally sized applicant pools, each of which will eventually send two students to Oxford. After sifting through hundreds of candidates' paperwork, the selection committees invite a handful of finalists to interviews each November. Because both programs consider students eligible in both their home state and the

state of their academic institution, Erica had the opportunity to meet, and compete with, students attending MIT, Harvard, Rice, and Georgetown. Interviews are conducted by experts in a variety of fields and can involve questions related to the student's field, current events, and even ethical or philosophical dilemmas.

*Once she was chosen as a finalist, Erica's excitement turned to nervousness in anticipation of the interviews. To help prepare her, the Office of Undergraduate Research arranged for a series of practice interviews and even a mock reception. "I was truly amazed by the number of faculty, administrators (including **President Renu Khator**), and students who volunteered their time to participate in the practice interviews and ask challenging questions. Once, **Dr. Helen Valier** did not look at me at all during a practice interview; another time she pretended to be extremely angry just to see how I would react. Learning to put on a smile despite her 'rudeness' came in handy during an actual interview, when one panelist pretended to be asleep."*

In the end, Erica invested literally hundreds of hours on her applications. The phone calls, emails, and weekend meetings with her mentors to refine her application were easily equivalent to adding another class to her course load. Although she did not receive the scholarships, the learning experience was something she could not have found in any classroom. "The process made me much more selective in the graduate schools to which I applied. I am now emboldened to find out more about what departments can offer me in terms of technical resources, faculty mentorship, and coursework flexibility."

THE CRAFT OF WRITING



Honors writing consultants Shannon Harrison and Catherine and Colleen Seitz confer in the Writing Center.

A recent study by sociologists at New York University and the University of Virginia showed that more than a third of students showed no improvement in critical thinking skills, even after four years at a university. With their heavy load of writing assignments, graduates of the Honors College aren't likely to end up in that bottom third. Especially now.

To support the writing efforts of Honors students, the College has recently instituted three new programs: Senior Honors Thesis Writing Studios, Peer Writing Tutoring for Human Situation students, and Craft Talks from our own professors and other writing experts.

The Senior Honors Thesis Writing Studios—working through the University of Houston Writing Center—support students engaged in projects that require an entirely new level of writing and research. “The studio provides a backbone for the document,” explained **Sarika Patel**, a senior finance major writing a thesis on the emergence of liquefied natural gas (LNG) as a global commodity.

“A thesis is an overwhelming project, and many undergraduate students are unaware of exactly how much dedication and discipline it takes to complete it. But the studio helps students with the logistics of the thesis—it helps me create goals and stay on task since it is an independent project. Going about such a big project can be scary; it’s nice to know that there are others out there just like you who are feeling the same thing.”

The fear that strikes thesis writers can be just as intense for a freshman making his or her first foray into college writing in Human Sit. That’s where the value of peer tutors—upper-level Honors students who have already experienced the rigors of Human Sit—is most apparent.

“Every time before I write a paper, I always freak out—I never know what to write about, and my ideas get jumbled up as I write,” said **Kelley Poblete**, who worked with peer tutor **Erica Fauser** before turning in her first Human Sit paper of the semester. “But when I met with Erica, she showed me places where my explanation was lacking, or places where I repeated myself in multiple statements. Afterwards, I felt great about my paper.”

Last fall, Honors professors delivered four Craft Talks—on style, interpretation, writing process, and argumentation—that packed the Commons with eager freshmen (and more than a few upperclassmen) looking to improve. These new programs promise great things for the quality of Honors students’ writing—and for the development of critical thinking skills in higher education, and beyond.

COMPETING IN THE JOB MARKET



Alumni Zeke Ziliak and Steven Hecht; Shell representative Tom Durkin

On the first Friday of every month, Honors students get a leg up the career ladder with the workshop series “Career Fridays.” In sessions with alumni, representatives from Houston-area businesses, and career counselors or consultants, students hear about career and internship opportunities with local employers and receive practical guidance about preparing for the workforce.

“‘Career Fridays’ are another resource we can offer our students as members of the Honors College,” said **Dr. Christine LeVeaux-Haley**, assistant dean for academic programs and organizer of the series. “We believe that access to experienced professionals of all fields will prove invaluable to our students as they get ready to take on today’s job market.”

On November 5th, students got some frank advice from Honors alumni **Steven Hecht** (’88, Accounting)

and **Zeke Ziliak** (’98, Biology) on landing their first post-graduation job. In a session entitled “Morning Breath, Motor Mouth, and Other Mistakes Job Candidates Make,” Hecht and Ziliak explained how (and how not) to make it past the interview stage.

From the usual tips—following up with a handwritten note—to the unusual—consulting a Brooks Brothers catalog—Hecht and Ziliak addressed everything from resumé formatting and interview attire to handling yourself at a company cocktail hour. Because job interviewers may not always have time to prepare for a candidate interview, Ziliak stressed the importance of coming to the interview ready to take charge and sell yourself. “Most candidates who get interviews are already qualified—you have to bring the extra piece that makes you stand out,” he said.

Students put Ziliak’s advice to good use with workshops on constructing resúmes and enhancing interview skills. On February 11th, students met with **Tom Durkin**, a campus recruiting and university relations representative from Shell Oil, who critiqued their resúmes and offered suggestions for improvement.

Senior management and management information systems double major **Catherine Nguyen** was impressed with Durkin’s individual approach. “At Bauer College we get drilled on various aspects of the job search all the time, but one-on-one time with an HR representative at a major employer like Shell was incredibly helpful,” said Nguyen. “Tom was very approachable and gave everyone as much time as they needed at the event.”

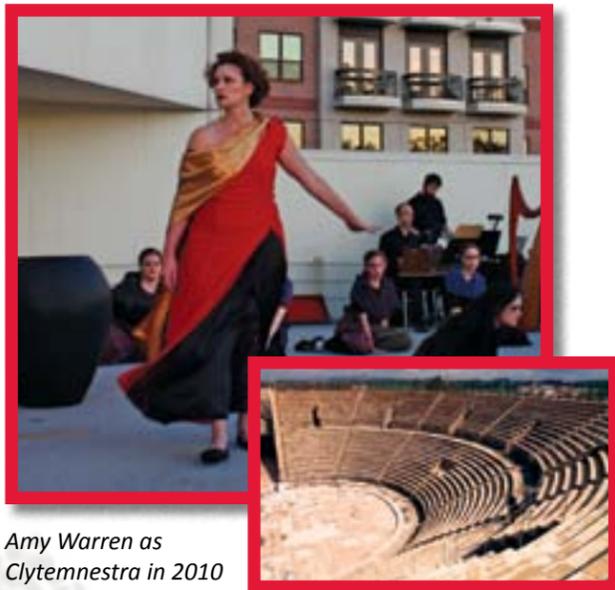
Other “Career Friday” installments this spring included a session on interview skills on February 25th, taped mock interviews on March 4th, and an etiquette training session on April 1st.

DIONYSIA'S GREAT GREEKS

Dionysia 2011, the signature annual event from the Center for Creative Work (CCW), begins on Friday, April 8th and features Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.

Following the success of *Dionysia 2010* last March, which brought almost 600 people to campus, this year's celebration features many of the same events: an *Ekphrastic* art show, a pre-show Agora, and a special rooftop performance at Khon's in Midtown.

With this year's production of *Agamemnon* joining previous years' productions of Euripides' *The Children of Herakles* and Sophocles' *Electra*, CCW has now produced a surviving play from each of the three great Greek tragedians. As in previous years, this year's play features a fresh translation made by Honors professor **John Harvey**, director of the Center for Creative Work. The result is something even more violent and shocking than your normal translation.



Amy Warren as Clytemnestra in 2010

"Even when we had our first cast reading, just reading the words off the page for the first time, it was absolutely invigorating," said **Jana Trojanowski**, the stage manager.

Students, parents, friends, and alumni are invited to share food and drink during Friday's pre-show Agora, which is modeled on the Dionysiac festivities of ancient Athens. Like the Athenians, attendees join in a procession from the Honors Commons to the Wortham Theatre for Friday's show.

"Alumni can see how the Honors College has evolved into a dynamic creator and promoter of the arts," said Dr. John Harvey. "Alumni can also witness how the Human Situation has created a full experience—from reading a Greek tragedy in the fall to enjoying not only one but three performances based on that tragedy in the spring."

In addition to *Agamemnon*, this year's Dionysia includes two other productions influenced and in-

Story continued on next page

Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*
April 8–9, 8 pm & April 10, 2 pm,
Wortham Theatre
April 11, 8 pm, Khon's bar
TheHonorsCollege.com/Dionysia

Also part of Dionysia 2011:
Agora – Opening Night Reception
April 8, 6:45 pm,
Honors College Commons

Yes, Cassandra
Interstate Fringe Festival

*Klytemnestra: The Original
Subversive Female*
divergencevocaltheater.org

DIONYSIA'S GREAT GREEKS

spired by CCW's production. **Brandy Holmes** presented *Yes, Cassandra* at the Interstate Fringe Festival in New Orleans on March 18-19, and Divergence Music & Arts will produce a world-premier opera dance theater production called *Klytemnestra: The Original Subversive Female*. Both Holmes and **Misha Penton** (Divergence Vocal Theater's artistic director) expand on their *Agamemnon* roles (Kassandra and Klytaimnestra, respectively) in the productions they've created. Said Holmes, "It's a different cut, but from the same cow."

Through the Dionysia, Honors students bring their knowledge of the Greeks to the larger community. "For most humans on the planet, seeing a Greek tragedy is rare," Dr. Harvey said. "But for Honors College students and alumni, it's the norm." Holmes concurred: "The Honors College students have thrown themselves into this process in ways some professionals are too scared to try. Beyond the fact of their vast knowledge of Greek literature, this kind of work requires a certain level of emotional awareness in order to make bold choices. They've really stepped up to the plate."

HONORS STUDENTS EXCEL IN DIPLOMACY



Twenty Honors College students, representing Kuwait and Oman, earned multiple awards at the 4th annual Model Arab League

(MAL) Regional Conference, held February 26-27 in the Honors College. Co-sponsored by the Bilateral US-Arab Chamber of Commerce, the conference attracted 140 students from 12 southwest schools. Honors College alumna **Blair Ault**, a 5-year MAL veteran, volunteered her time as Secretariat-General, while senior **Andrew Hall** and sophomore **Safa Ansari-Bayegan** chaired the economic and political committees, respectively.

Team advisor **Jodie Köszegi** believes that the model was the ideal preparation for the greater challenges of the 2011 National Model in Washington, D.C., the weekend of April 1-3. "This team has grown into the most prepared, cohesive, and exciting team." She commented, "this might be our most fearless team yet."

To ensure qualified students can attend the national conference, MAL alumni are being called to contribute to the newly established Model Arab League Scholarship fund to provide scholarship assistance to delegates whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent them from attending. The Honors College has pledged to match alumni contributions to the fund.

The current team is convinced that MAL alumni will rally to the cause. Safa Ansari-Bayegan said, "The trip to the National Model in D.C. is an amazing learning experience, both inside and outside of committee." Köszegi added, "MAL is an outstanding leadership development opportunity, and students who participate in the National Model become eligible for a number of scholarships, study abroad opportunities, and internships to which they might not otherwise have access."

To contribute, send a check or money order payable to the "University of Houston" to Jodie Köszegi's attention in the Honors College.

PHRONESIS JUNIOR FELLOWS



Phronesis professors Sue Collins, Richard Armstrong, and Christine LeVeaux-Haley

Honors sophomore **Catrina Kim** loved The Human Situation so much that when the two-semester course ended, she wanted to continue the intense reading, questioning, and conversing that characterize the Human Sit experience. As one of the first *Phronesis* Junior Fellows, Catrina can continue doing all three.

“I’m a piano performance major, so almost all of my classes are in music,” she said. “But I decided to apply for the [*Phronesis* Junior Fellows] program because of Human Sit. What I really enjoyed about Human Sit was reading those difficult texts and having engaging discussions about them. And, being part of this group is a way for me to continue that.” The *Phronesis* Junior Fellows began with a small group of eight last fall, and doubled in size this spring. Fellows are nominated by Honors faculty on the basis of outstanding academic achievement, intellectual curiosity, and most importantly, a passion for exploring the difficult questions that arise when one refuses to separate the ethical life from political action.

“The idea is to provide a place for questions of politics and ethics to be explored outside the classroom setting, and to do it in a way that will take advantage of visiting speakers and scholars,” said **Dr. Jeremy Bailey**, associate professor of political science and coordinator of the *Phronesis* Junior Fellows.

The Fellows take on a course of intense, structured reading on top of their normal class schedule. Meeting every few weeks for discussion, they engage with high-level readings that challenge them at a new level. “We’ve had some amazing opportunities to read a lot of texts that we wouldn’t be reading in most of our political science classes,” said **Andrew Hall**, a senior. “We’ve read some challenging texts by prominent scholars.”

The Fellows—joined by some faculty and alumni—have already participated in colloquia with two visiting professors. Last November, before the Honors Academic Tailgate, they met with **Dr. James Ceaser** from the University of Virginia; and in February, they met with this year’s Ross M. Lence Master Teacher, **Dr. Michael Zuckert** of the University of Notre Dame. This kind of close contact with nationally recognized scholars is one of the chief benefits of the *Phronesis* Junior Fellows program.

“As a *Phronesis* Junior Fellow, I get to know professors from other universities who are renowned in their fields,” Andrew said. “I would have less chance to meet them if I attended their own university!”

Thanks to grants from the **Jack Miller Fund** (\$15,000), the **Veritas Fund** (\$15,000), and the **Koch Foundation** (\$10,000), each Fellow receives a small stipend to offset the additional time commitment of readings and meetings, and *Phronesis* can offer support for visits from other scholars. “Our students are our best asset, and the Honors College and the University do a really good job showing off our students’ abilities in the arts,” Dr. Bailey said. “We hope that the *Phronesis* Junior Fellows Program might be a similar opportunity to show off our students who are passionate about these questions of ethics and politics.”

HONORS AND THE SCHOOLS

The Honors College is giving high school students an early introduction to the college classroom through its new Honors and the Schools program. By bringing Honors faculty and special guest lecturers to schools throughout the greater Houston area, the Honors College hopes to develop closer ties with potential students and their teachers. Honors and the Schools has recently sponsored classroom visits to Pasadena-Sam Rayburn, Carnegie Vanguard, Fort Bend-Dulles, Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, DeBakey High School for the Health Professions, Bellaire, St. John’s, Memorial, The Woodlands, and The Kinkaid School.

“We’re changing hearts and minds,” said **Dr. Helen Valier**, who has so far given talks at Dulles, Carnegie Vanguard, and The Woodlands High School. “Most of the students I’ve met had never heard of the Honors College and didn’t really know about all the

opportunities here at the University, but they were very bright and open-minded. They really reminded me of our Honors students.” Professor Valier added that being able to meet with teachers who get a new class of students every year may go even further to raise awareness for the College.



Ross M. Lence Master Teacher Michael Zuckert visited The Kinkaid School on Feb. 17.



In November, visiting Honors scholar Mient Jan Faber lectured to students at Strake Jesuit, Memorial, and DeBakey high schools in Houston.



High school students in an Iliad seminar at the Honors College, taught by Professor Rob Zaretsky (pictured on right) and Brian Johnston, an English teacher at Sam Rayburn High School.





Nathaniel Stich and Andrew Hall dressed as Founding Dean Ted Estess and Thomas Jefferson for the SGB Honors Halloween Party on Oct. 30.



Komron Kasnavia, Haitham Swaidan, Pete Watson, and Jason John attended the Bauer Honors Scheduling Bash on Nov. 2.



Student Joehan Garcia



Professor Kim Meyer



Professor John Harvey



Professor Robert Cremins



The second annual Pie-a-Prof on Dec. 7, a fundraiser for the Houston Chapter of Invisible Children, was an opportunity for students to “pie” their Human Situation professors. The event, held with the end of semester party, included Professors Iain Morrisson, Andy Little, John Harvey, Kim Meyer, Gabriela Maya, Robert Cremins, Hayan Charara, Steven DiMattei, and others.



Lindsey Slavin and Sylvia Garcia presented posters at Undergraduate Research Day 2010 on Oct. 14.



Bill Monroe, Catherine Martin, and Melissa Dziedzic joined the all-night reading of *The Great Gatsby* on Jan. 21.



Michael Zuckert, the 2011 Ross M. Lence Master Teacher, visited Feb. 17-18. Zuckert lectured on Jefferson's moral philosophy, *The Tempest*, and slavery at the Constitutional Convention. Zuckert is Nancy Reeves Dreux Professor and Department Chair of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame.



Dave Shattuck, Associate Dean of Engineering and director of the new Honors Engineering Program, spoke with parents of a prospective student at an Honors College Open House. A record-breaking 270 high school seniors attended the three open houses hosted this year.



Dean Bill Monroe



Student Gabriela Pita



Professor James Ceaser

The 2010 Honors College Academic Tailgate, on Nov. 11, featured a lecture by James Ceaser on the meaning of the midterm elections. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni enjoyed food, conversation, and the presentation. Ceaser is Harry F. Byrd Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia and a visiting senior fellow at the Hoover Institution.



Abdulrahman Ibrahim, Amy Mohammed, and Sarika Patel posed at the 2010 Honors Retreat at Camp Allen. Over 250 freshmen attended this annual event, which kicks off the fall semester.



Many students attended the Honors Writing Craft Talks. These four fall lectures, offered by Professors Robert Cremins, Gabriela Maya, Iain Morrisson, and Tamara Fish, supported students in developing their craft.

YOUNG PRESIDENTS VISIT HONORS



The Honors College produces leaders in many fields, including the arts, academia, law, and business. So, it's fitting that the Honors College welcomed the Gulf States Chapter of the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) for their educational meeting last November 3rd.

That morning, over 40 Houston business leaders enjoyed a lunch, an introduction to the Honors College, and an independent educational presentation in the Honors Commons. For many, the day was their first encounter with the space, students, and staff of the Honors College—and one that left them impressed.

"From the Honors Commons to the student ambassadors, the Honors College was a wonderful setting for our meeting," said **Todd Reppert**, Education Chairman of the Gulf States Chapter of YPO and President of Main Street Capital Corporation. "We believe the University of Houston and the Honors College are under-utilized assets within the Houston business community and are therefore trying to raise awareness among our local business leaders."

The Honors College and YPO have quite a bit in common. Like the Honors College, YPO is an organization that promotes lifelong leadership and education through exchange of ideas. Like the Honors College, YPO insists on admitting only the best. And like the

Honors College, YPO provides opportunities for its members to engage with additional sectors of the Houston community.

Results are already in. Several Gulf States' YPO Chapter members who attended the November event are working with the Honors College to create internship opportunities for Honors College students within their local businesses.

And Honors College senior **Erica Fletcher**—named one of *Glamour* magazine's Top College Women of 2010—recently spoke about her documentary on Latinas with HIV/AIDS at YPO's 2011 Global Leadership Summit in Denver (see sidebar).

Hosting the Gulf States Chapter of YPO is yet another way that the Honors College is engaging with Houston leaders, expanding opportunities for our students. This partnership highlights the importance of the Houston community's support of the College, and of the College as an incubator of Houston's future leaders.

Erica Fletcher participated in a panel discussion with young humanitarians at YPO's 2011 Global Leadership Summit in February.

"Our panel discussion focused on our inspirations and motivations for doing humanitarian work, and my favorite part about the trip was speaking about my research on HIV/AIDS and sex trafficking," Fletcher said. "I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to talk about issues that are very meaningful to me, like the importance of sex education and women's empowerment."

ONE THOUSAND YEARS OF HONORS



Sara Khan and Adrienne Huntsman

Honors College students make significant contributions to the University and the city of Houston during their time on campus and beyond. Through work in the Honors curriculum—pondering the "human situation" and how best to apply the skills they learn at the University—and participation in the Honors community, Honors students develop vision, confidence, and a sense of responsibility.

The *One Thousand Years of Honors* campaign provides an opportunity for dedicated alumni and friends to invest in these outstanding students. The scholarship idea, originally conceived by Honors advisory board member **Ben Bosco**, aims to provide incentive scholarships of \$1,000 to 1000 students over 10 years, thus supporting a thousand years of Honors education. "We thought this would be a good way to help the maximum number of students," said Bosco, a businessman from Utica, New York, who wants to support Houston by supporting students at the University. For many recipients, such scholarships can be the deciding factor that brings them to Houston.

Honors biology and creative writing sophomore **Sara Khan**, recipient of the Wilhelmina Robertson Scholarship, says that her award enticed her to leave her home state of South Carolina and come all the way to

Houston. According to Khan, her Honors scholarship is the "blessing that makes attending the University of Houston possible." As an out-of-state student with a competitive scholarship of at least \$1000, Khan qualifies for a tuition waiver that makes out-of-state education affordable. And the University of Houston, with its unique combination of a renowned creative writing program and access to the Texas Medical Center, was exactly where Khan, who plans to be a doctor but also loves literature, wanted to be. "I also wanted to be a part of something more select, which is why I applied to the Honors College."

Adrienne Huntsman, an Honors junior in political science, says her Honors scholarship has allowed her to focus less on financing her education and more on getting the best education possible. "In a family with three children in college, tuition is expensive. My Honors scholarship allows me to continue my education without picking up extra loans." Through her studies in political science as well as her minor in *Phronesis*, the burgeoning politics and ethics program offered by the Honors College, Huntsman is preparing for a career in human rights.

"Being able to offer Honors scholarships in addition to what the University provides goes a long way in the effort to recruit the best and brightest students to the Honors College and to the University," said Honors **Dean Bill Monroe**. "And by supporting the education of good students, the Honors College is investing in great leaders."

*The Honors College is currently seeking lead gifts for the One Thousand Years of Honors campaign. For more information, contact **Shannon Parrish** at 713.743.9973.*

PATTERSON FAMILY LEGACY



Top Picture: Scott Moncrieff and Stephanie Patterson Moncrieff, and Randall, Julia, Linda, and Audra Patterson at Linda's recent doctoral organ recital; **Right Picture:** Randall and Linda at Patterson-Moncrieff wedding

From the Honors Program of the late 1970s to the Honors College of today, the Patterson family of Round Top has seen it all. And no matter during which era they attended, they have found what they were looking for.

When **Randall Patterson** ('79, Accounting) arrived in 1976, he was looking for two things: a college that would admit a 17-year-old high school junior, and a job.

"I needed a job to get through school, so I worked for Exxon through the University's Comprehensive Education Program," he said. "I can't stress the importance of that enough: that Houston has a strong employment base that allows people to work through school and earn a salary that makes ends meet."

But making ends meet wasn't Randall's only challenge. Randall met his match in his first English course with **Dr. Lorraine Stock**. After earning a C+ and then a C- on his first two papers, he had to ask for help.

"I just went in to see Dr. Stock, and she showed me in detail how to analyze what I was writing," Patterson recalled. "And by doing that, I gained a tremendous skill in writing that has opened lots of doors for me."

At that time, the Honors Program was a small group of 30 to 40 students who took special Honors sections of core courses, lived in a tight community, and lounged together in a room underneath the library that might or might not have been officially off limits. Among those first Honors students was Randall's future wife, **Linda** ('83, Music), who graduated from the program in 1983.

Their two daughters—**Stephanie Moncrieff** ('09, Interdisciplinary Studies) and **Audra** ('12, Biomedical Engineering)—have followed their parents by attending what is now a much bigger and more established Honors College.

Like her father before her, Audra appreciates the attention that she has received from her professors. "The Honors College has allowed me to form mentor relationships with outstanding faculty members, and has provided great research opportunities that I may not have even known about on my own," she said.

Stephanie, an education major, turned an undergraduate internship at the Rice School into a full-time teaching position there after her graduation.

"I liked that the Honors College provided a challenging addition to the curriculum, as well as a more intimate community inside a large university," Moncrieff said. "I am very thankful to the Honors College for providing that welcoming community." Thanks to families like the Pattersons, that community now extends across generations.

HONORS' NEW ADVANCEMENT TEAM

Adopting a model now used by many colleges and universities, **Dean Bill Monroe** has established an advancement team to integrate alumni relations, development, events, marketing, and communications for the College. In addition to the dean and **Shannon Parrish**, now senior director of development, new members of the team include **Beth Kungel Borck**, the College's new director of development, **Laurie Cedilnik**, coordinator of events, and **Libby Ingrassia**, the College's communications director.

Beth, who joined the staff in January, is an Honors College alumna with over seven years of experience working in the University of Houston System. As a development associate for Main Street Theater, she coordinated the grant proposal process and served on the gala committee. Most recently, she has organized and promoted events for the UH-Clear Lake Career Services Office and collaborated with the University's Office of Alumni & Community Relations to solicit alumni and potential donors.

Laurie, who joined the College last July, completed an MFA at the University of Houston and a 2-year stint as editor-in-chief of *Gulf Coast*, the national literary magazine published by the Creative Writing Program. Prior to coming to Houston she was on the staff of *Newsday*, an account executive at Verso Advertising, and an editorial assistant at Penguin. While running *Gulf Coast*, Laurie had the opportunity to work with members of the Houston community on fundraising, readings, and special events.

Libby, also an Honors College alumna, joined the College in January of 2010, soon after completing a Master of Liberal Studies degree at Rice University. As the College's director of communications, Libby



Top Picture: Bill Monroe, Beth Kungel Borck, and Shannon Parrish; **Bottom Picture, Back Row:** Laurie Cedilnik and Bill Monroe; **Front Row:** Libby Ingrassia, Beth Kungel Borck, and Mallory Chesser

brings valuable experience as a technical writer and a monthly magazine editor, a marketing vice president for a small technology company, a program director for a worldwide user group, and a high school English teacher.

Mallory Chesser, coordinator of the Honors and the Schools program, assists with writing, editing, and special projects; **Sara Gabler Thomas**, a recent alumna and service year intern, provides staff support for the team. Together, the advancement team collaborates with other staff, faculty, and alumni to design and promote major events, such as the Lence Residency and *The Great Conversation*. The team is currently working to develop the Honors College alumni network and promote the *One Thousand Years of Honors* campaign.

1980s

Aristotle Economon ('89, Economics) randomly encountered Honors alum **Loren Israel** ('90, Psychology) in Cincinnati at their 3rd grade daughters' Christmas choir concert. The two had not seen one another in over 20 years! Pictured here, from left, Loren, his wife Maya, Ray Bernardini, and Aris celebrating Aris' 20th anniversary of his 29th birthday. economon@bluewin.ch



Loren and Maya Israel, Ray Bernardini, and Aristotle Economon

1990s

Kim Hooker Ballesteros ('90, Speech Communication) moved back to Houston last summer after spending four years in San Antonio. Her family is happy to be back home, and Kim is enjoying her new job with the Friends of Fondren Library at Rice University. This summer Kim plans to begin a Graduate Certificate Program in Children's Literature at Penn State's World Campus while finally pursuing her dream of writing travel books for children. kim.ballesteros@rice.edu

alumni news

Robert McNeil ('90, Biology) recently reached 20 years of service with Baylor College of Medicine and was promoted to Senior Sponsored Programs Analyst for Pediatric Neurology and Developmental Neuroscience. He is currently managing the development of the newly announced Blue Bird Circle Clinical Research Center at Texas Children's Hospital. Robert's recently launched website, neuralimages.org, shows interesting movies and pictures of neurons and neuronal proteins taken from his prior work in basic science research. rmcneil@bcm.tmc.edu

Bernie Luger ('92, Chemistry) completed his M.Ed. in spring 2010 and is enrolled in the Ed.D. program at Boston University, where he's participating in a project that has him traveling all over the city seeing what the big universities are doing to help inner city schools. bernieluger@gmail.com

Rob Gabel ('93, Chemical Engineering) recently joined Machinima Inc. as SVP of Advertising Performance. Machinima creates online videos for video game enthusiasts. Rob is still living in Los Angeles with his wife, **Vivian**, and their two boys. The Gabel family host-

ed a group of 12 UH alumni last fall for the UH/UCLA game and a wine-tasting trip in the Malibu hills. robgabel@yahoo.com

Kathy Hagan Quigley ('93, Mechanical Engineering) is a project engineer with EDG Inc. Consulting Engineers. She has been with them for nine years working on domestic international oil and gas projects where she had the opportunity to work three years on a rotation in Angola, West Africa, for offshore construction projects. She is currently working on the Chevron/Sonangol Mafumeira Sul project. Kathy is living life to the fullest with her two girls, **Alexandria** (10) and **Elizabeth** (7), who love skiing, gymnastics, and Girl Scouts. khquigley@yahoo.com

Nicola Clegg ('98, Biochemical & Biophysical Sciences) completed her post-doctoral research in 2010 at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, where she coordinated the development of a new drug now being tested in patients with metastatic prostate cancer. She recently moved from New York City to the San Francisco Bay area, where she joined the Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research as a project manager in oncology. nclegg@gmail.com

alumni news

2000s

Stephanie Coker Meyers ('00, Health) completed her Ph.D. in Nursing in December 2010 at UT Health School of Nursing, where she is now serving as an assistant professor in the Department of Integrative Nursing Care. Stephanie.E.Meyers@uth.tmc.edu

Julie Westra ('02, History) and her husband, **Joel** ('98, Political Science), welcomed their son, **Jude Willem Westra**, on October 9, 2010. Julie has begun a new position as in-house counsel at Priority Health. The Westras are living in Grand Rapids, MI. julie.westra@gmail.com



Marisa Bonneaux Emmons ('03, Biochemistry) completed her Family Medicine Residency at Christus Santa Rosa in San Antonio, Texas, in June 2010. She is now working as a Family Medicine Physician in San Antonio. She and her husband, **Matt** ('03, Finance), welcomed their second son, **Colin Matthew**, in

November 2010. The entire family, including big brother **Ryan**, are all doing great! marisaemmons@gmail.com



Kevin Hinrichs ('03, Computer Science) and **Victoria Claus** ('02, Accounting) were married in August 2009. They recently moved to Anchorage, Alaska. Kevin continues to work as a software developer for Houston-based PAS Inc. while Victoria works as a forensic accountant. lightning44@hotmail.com, victoriaclaus@yahoo.com

Emily Howard-Wilson ('04, Interior Design) and her husband **Alan** welcomed **Liam Rree Wilson** into their family on August 13, 2010. emily_howard@gensler.com



Back Row: Josh Breeden, Andrew Stubinski, Meryl O'Bryan, Jack Middlebrooks, Josh Willis, Jason Grutter; **Front Row:** Dixie Aragaki, Bill Monroe, Stephanie Staley Mielke, Scott Dewey, and Paul Burgess



Magda, Elenka, and Justin O'Neill with Bill Monroe at a Los Angeles-area alumni event.



Top Picture: Mike Kelly, Stuart Long, and Bill Monroe; **Bottom Picture:** Bill Monroe and Regent Carroll Robertson Ray at the Lence Dinner on Feb. 18.

Faculty News

Robert Cremins read his short story, "The Other Kind," for the first time at last year's Common Ground seminar. The story will appear in the summer issue of *The Dublin Review*.

Cynthia Freeland has been volunteering for more than a year now at the no-kill animal shelter Friends for Life. She helps care for and socialize cats and kittens and greets visitors who might be interested in pet adoptions.

Stuart Long, professor of electrical and computer engineering at the Cullen College of Engineering, was named a life fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, effective January 1, 2011. He became an IEEE fellow in 1991, a designation given to those with "an extraordinary record of accomplishments in any of the IEEE fields of interest." Many of Long's scientific achievements center around electromagnetics and the development of antennas now used in military and wireless communication applications. His specific citation was for "contributions to the development of microstrip and dielectric resonator antennas."

Gabriela Maya had an original short play, *Selkie*, produced at the Mildred's Umbrella short play festival, *Museum of Dysfunction III*, in December 2010.

faculty news

David Mikics's *Who Was Jacques Derrida? An Intellectual Biography* was just issued in paperback (Yale 2009). *The Art of the Sonnet*, by Mikics and **Stephen Burt** (Harvard 2010), was chosen as a *First Things* notable book of the year. Professor Mikics is on leave this term taking care of his new baby boy, **Ariel**, in Brooklyn, NY, with his wife, **Victoria Malkin**. Ariel was born on November 5, 2010, at NYU Medical Center and has been cooing, gurgling, laughing, and otherwise getting used to the human situation. The whole family has been enjoying the snow, though Ariel is still too young for snowball fights.



Staff News

In January, **Brenda Rhoden** served as a judge for the Houston READ Commission's Great Grown-Up Spelling Bee.

Established in 1988 by the Mayor and City Council, Houston READ Commission oversees the Mayor's Coalition for Literacy, an association of more than 150 literacy sites in Houston.

Sara Gabler ('10, English) and **Andrew Thomas** ('10, English), both service year interns at the Honors College, were married on October 16, 2010. They are looking forward to traveling with Honors to Ireland this June.



This year **Karen Weber**, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research, served on the Gilman Scholarship selection committee, which is a nationally competitive fellowship that funds study abroad opportunities for college students. She was also the University representative for the Children's Defense Fund Beat the Odds Scholarship selection committee. This program awards funding to graduating high school seniors who have overcome significant challenges.



Recently Inducted Society of Fellows

Back Row: Elizabeth Gregory, P. Shiv Halasyamani, Lannis Kirkland, Francesca Behr, Susan Scarrow, Jerald Strickland, David Mikics, Clifford Dacso, Keith Hollingsworth, Richard DeFrank, and James Pipkin; **Front Row:** Karen Farber, Dan Wells, Matthew Nicol, Casey Dué Hackney, Marie-Theresa Hernández, Alison Leland, Stuart Dryer, Martin Melosi, and Jeffrey Church; **Fellows Not Pictured:** Andrew Achenbaum, Simon Bott, Geoffrey Brune, Lawrence Curry, Andrew Davis, John Hardy, j. Kastely, Frank Kelley, John Lienhard, Ralph Metcalfe, Donald Lutz, Kathryn Peek, Joe Pratt, Tyler Priest, Martha Serpas, Gregory Weiher, and Lowell Wood

The designation "Fellow of The Honors College" recognizes University faculty and staff, as well as friends of the College, for their contributions to Honors education. A Fellow may assist the College in many ways, including serving on senior honors thesis committees, teaching Honors courses, and providing counsel to Honors students and the College.



Outstanding First Year Students Honors Convocation ~ September 2, 2010

Back Row: Luis Rodriguez, Stephen Mulvahill, Nguyen "Kim" La, Catherine Seitz, Colleen Seitz, Safa Ansari-Bayegan, Jana Spitzley, Nina Spitzley, Catrina Kim; **Front Row:** Isaac Norris, Leigh Shultis, Chris Powell, Jessica Gull, Casey Goodwin, Derek Schilling, Simon Tice; **Not Pictured:** Molly Heiman, Ann-Marie Leba

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PATRICIA AVERILL



It is with sadness that we share news of the death of **Pat Averill**, beloved Honors alumna, former staff member, and former professor. She passed away December 20, 2010, after being diagnosed with inoperable cancer nearly five years ago.

After graduating summa cum laude in psychology and earning the award for Most Outstanding Senior Honors Thesis in 1987, Pat worked for the then-Honors Program in academic and student services. Pat went on to work at The University of Texas Harris County Psychiatric Center and The University of Texas Medical School at Houston—where she received several honors for outstanding teaching, mentoring, and research—after earning a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Houston in 1993. As a student, Pat was persistent, and she demanded the best from her teachers and herself. When she became a staff member and then a member of the teaching faculty—she taught PSYC 1300H for many years—she maintained those same high standards of excellence. Pat is survived by her husband **Jim**, daughter **Kelly**, son **John** ('01, MIS), and three grandchildren.

To honor her memory and her achievements, the Honors College has founded the Patricia Averill Scholarship, which will be awarded to an outstanding psychology major each year. To contribute to the scholarship fund, donors should contact **Beth Kungel Borck** at 713.743.3220 or bkborck@uh.edu.