

In the Company of Friends

The Honors Program Newsletter

May 2017

Volume 6, No. 5

Office Hours

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Extended Hours
7 days a week
7:00am– Midnight

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Senior Banquet

Megan Carignan '17

The annual Honors Senior Banquet took place on April 24th. President Hopey spoke at the event, as well as Director Ellen McWhorter. President Hopey spoke about the importance of challenging yourself, and stated that, "My name is on your diploma forever... I know I made a difference in the world." The first annual Spirit of Honors Awards were given out as well, with awards going to Megan Bouchard, Joe Fisher, and Molly Malinowski. Congratulations to these deserving seniors, and thank you for your work for the Program in the last four years. We also thank Danielle Hart '15 for being the alumni speaker at the banquet, and for gifting the almost graduates with advice for their future. Please enjoy the pictures and quotes from our seniors below.

"I thought the senior banquet was a great event. It was awesome to talk to everyone and hear all of the accomplishments and future plans of the members of our graduating honors class. A lot of the people at the event were ones I had met freshman year in honors housing as well--it's crazy to see how much we've all grown and matured over four years."

- Leyna Tobey (Civil Engineering)



"I thought the banquet was a nice way to express appreciation towards us students for the time and effort we put in during the past four years. It is exciting to graduate and move onto a new stage in life."

- David Angelo (Math & Economics)

"I am very honored to receive the Spirit of Honors Award alongside Joe and Molly, but I would like to congratulate the entire Honors Class of 2017 on making it to graduation! To be honest it feels strange to be singled out in this way, because we all have built a strong cohort over these past four years and I feel the entire Class of 2017 embodies the Spirit of Honors. This class has truly put their heart and soul into the Program and I want to celebrate and congratulate them for that!"

-Megan Bouchard (Education & STEM)

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Culture Fest

Maria DAuria '20

On April 26th, the Honors Program hosted Culture Fest, which held a panel with international students and faculty, and students who have studied abroad. Students mingled with their peers while eating international foods such as rice dishes, cannolis, and spring rolls. A foreign language teaching assistant, Ana Rosalía Ventosa from Buenos Aires, Argentina, discussed her life as an Argentinian woman and what her life looks like now while living in America. Ana also explained the lifestyle and culture of Argentina. She described the tourist attractions and popular foods Argentinians eat. Furthermore, there were two students who shared their experience studying abroad: Kate McCauley, who went to Bilbao, Spain, and Amshula Divadkar, who went to Buenos Aires, Argentina. They both shared their favorite memories of studying abroad but also gave helpful advice to students who plan on studying abroad in the near future. Additionally, the students discussed the importance of studying abroad. They explained that it helped them understand culture outside of America more and opened their minds further once they came back to America.



North View

April may be the cruelest month, according to poet T.S. Eliot, but it also marks the time of year when winter blues transition into spring energy. Here in the Honors Program, April has been incredibly busy and - I'm happy to report - everything is coming up tulips.

The month began with a trip to NRHC, held in Pittsburgh, PA, where four Honors students shared their original scholarship with regional colleagues via round table, poster, and panel presentations. Joe Fisher, Mary Levine, Molly Malinowski, and Savannah Shairs - with the inexhaustible Lisa Cavallaro and I in tow - explored the city of bridges; heard an incredibly inspirational talk by Dr. Jim Withers, founder of Operation Safety Net, an organization that takes healthcare to the streets for the most vulnerable members of our population; attended panels and presentations on topics ranging from social justice to Artificial Intelligence to overstressed Honors students; and engaged in some lively conversations over meals and music. This kind of experience is invaluable both professionally and personally to students, faculty, and administrators, and I look forward to more and more Honors students submitting their work for presentation at NRHC next year. This year, our students made Merrimack proud!

It's almost finals week as I type these words, and with that realization comes both a memory and a tribute. In the past month we've also held our annual Senior Banquet and awarded our first ever Spirit of Honors Awards. The evening was lovely, and included a visit from President Chris Hopey, Provost Allan Weatherwax, and Vice Provost and former director of the Honors Program Kerry Johnson. The food was wonderful and the dinner conversation was so animated that many of us hung around for quite a while after the festivities were technically over. The winners of the Spirit of Honors, as determined by their peers in the Honors Program, were selected because they embody the Program's mission of promoting scholarship, leadership, and service; herein lies the tribute. Megan Bouchard, Joe Fisher, and Molly Malinowski, all graduating seniors, have gone above and beyond over the years and donated their blood, sweat, and tears to the Program and its advancement. Because of their hard work and devotion to leaving Merrimack better than they found it, we have an enviable Honors Student Council structure, Honors Ambassadors program, Peer Mentoring Program, and schedule of events to help our students balance intellectual work and play. They and so many other members of the class of 2017 have quite simply been an asset to the Honors Program. We will miss them dearly and hope they come back to visit early and often.

Last week we held our annual Ice Cream Social, this year turned into a Party on the Plaza. Even the weather came out in celebration of the last week of classes, and we braced for finals by leaning for a moment into ice cream, slushes, cotton candy, corn hole, and water balloons. I see how hard our students work, so it was especially nice at the end of the semester to see them enjoy some sunshine and sugar.

In these two weeks before graduation, I'd like to thank all of you, Honors students and graduates alike, for your help this semester as I acclimated to the new position. Each and every day in the Honors Commons reminds me of why being a professor - and now director - is the most fulfilling job in the world.

- Ellen McWhorter

A Look into Class of 2017: Jessica DeAlmeida's Plans After Graduation

Alison Tobin '18

What was your major, and what did you study as an undergraduate student at Merrimack?

Currently, I have a double major in Psychology and Spanish, as well as a double minor in Women's and Gender Studies and Social Justice. During my undergrad, I have focused greatly on mental health, specifically the stigma surrounding it, as well as broader social justice issues, such as immigration reform and the feminist movement.



What are your plans after graduation?

I will be remaining at Merrimack College and acquiring a Masters of Education in the Community Engagement Program. During this time, I will also be completing my fellowship at Fidelity House Human Services in Lawrence, MA, a nonprofit that works to provide resources and other services to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Do you feel prepared for your plans after you graduate?

I feel very prepared for my plans after graduation. I am extremely content with all that I have done at Merrimack College and I know that it is my time to move on to another chapter in my life. In a way, I have the mentality of Julius Caesar in the fact that "I came, I saw, I conquered," and, now, I am certain that it is time to do the same on a new journey.

Are you nervous for anything?

The only thing that I am nervous about is having to move into my own apartment. I am originally from Brockton, MA and, because I cannot live on campus as a graduate student, I will have to move nearby so that I don't have to make the commute every day from the South Shore to the North. While I have definitely acquired the skills to live on my own during the past four years, it is still an incredible shift from living on campus for four years to being completely on your own.

Faculty Spotlight: Lisa Fuller

Haley Mallett '20

Lisa Fuller is currently an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Merrimack College. Fuller graduated with a Bachelor's of Arts in Philosophy with Honors from the University of Toronto in 1999. She went on to obtain a Master's in Philosophy from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver only two years later, before returning to Toronto to receive a Doctorate also in Philosophy. Since then, she has taught at a wide range of universities including the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom, and the University of Albany in New York before coming to Merrimack. According to Fuller, her main areas of academic interests include political philosophy and biomedical ethics, which she teaches here at Merrimack.

Next semester, Fuller will be teaching two sections of Honors Introduction to Philosophy. She explained that her version of the class focuses on the "understanding of the Self and the Other." Fuller also added that issues addressed in her class include "whether essentially we are minds or bodies, whether we each have a fixed 'inner' nature or are simply the sum total of our actions, and whether race and gender are essential to personal identity."



Fuller enjoys teaching at Merrimack because of the smaller classes sizes, and the Augustinian values the college holds. She also feels that Merrimack is generally "a very friendly place to work." She especially enjoys working with the Honors Program because honors students are "enthusiastic and enjoy challenging work." In her philosophy classes, this allows the class "as a whole to develop a deeper understanding of the material." Fuller is looking forward to next semester, and working closely with the Honors Program, specifically the incoming freshmen who will be the majority in her introduction classes.

Research & Creativity Achievement Conference

Alexandra Wolf '20

On Tuesday, May 2nd, Honors Students participated in the first annual Roundtable discussion at the Research & Creativity Achievement Conference. Students engaged in conversations at small round tables and presented information and resources regarding a particular topic they researched. The roundtable format, rather than lecture or panel-style delivery, was lively and interactive among the leaders and participants who attended. During the event, nine students presented. Out of the nine students, seven spoke about the research done for their Honors senior capstone project. Below is the list of the 2017 Roundtable discussion presenters and the titles of their projects:

The Prevalence of Injury in a NCAA Division II Collegiate Football Program
David Bailot '17, Athletic Training Major

The Stigma Within: Understanding Mental Health Services at Merrimack College
Jessica T. Dealmeida '17, Psychology & Spanish Major

Sustainability in Business: Adapting to New Trends
Derek DeCastro '17, Environmental Studies and Sustainability

Cancer as a Metabolic Disease
Javaria Haseeb '17, Biochemistry

Pre-Service Teachers: Enough Preparation for Gun Violence in Schools?
Molly Malinowski '17, Human Development & Elementary Education Major

Discover yourself - Study Abroad!
Kaitlin McCauley '17, Business Management Major

Life or Death? How Race, Sex and the Death Penalty Collide
Savannah Shairs '17, Criminology and Spanish Major

Kindness in the Classroom
Ashley Tomich '17, Human Development & Elementary Education

Bridging the Divide: The disconnect between Police Officers and the Black Community
Mary Levine '18, Political Science and Criminology Major

The Tree Model: Youth Deviance in Urban Cities
Kevin O'Neil '19, Political Science, Social Justice and Criminology Major

Alumni Reunion

The first alumni reunion will be held on June 3, 2-3:30, for the 175 Honors Program graduates since 2012. We look forward to seeing as many alumni there as possible! Be on the lookout for an email invitation and feel free to reach out to Lisa Cavallaro, Program Manager for more information. RSVP by May 26th.

Goodbye Seniors!

Congratulations to all the seniors graduating this May! We have enjoyed having all of you in the Program for the last four years, and we look forward to your continued involvement in the future in the role of alumni. Our seniors will be entering into a variety of graduate schools and industries, and we are sure they will excel in their future careers.

Some of the graduate schools students are attending are Merrimack College, University of Connecticut, Boston College, and Sarah Lawrence. Students will also be entering full time positions out of college, including Software Engineer, Entry Level Structural Engineer, Audit Associate, Environmental Engineering Staff Professional, Business Development Marketing Coordinator, Tax Associate, Customer Relationship Advocate, and many others. We look forward to the continued success of our alumni.

"The Honors Program gave me a sense of something more than just a community. When I moved into my home for the next four years, I instantly found my family in the Honors Program. We challenged each other and grew together, knowing that, no matter what, we were always there for each other."

- Jessica DeAlmeida (Psychology & Spanish)

Dave states that the Honors Program has become part of his identity. "It was the first thing I became a part of and have had so many memories being in the program. It is amazing to look at the program as it is right now and think back to what it was when I came into it..."

- David Bailot (Athletic Training)