

DECEMBER - JANUARY 2023

# HSA Happenings

Edited By: Mackenzie Taylor and Finn Schmidhuber

TO BE HONORABLE IS TO SERVE



## HSA Happenings is...

A student-produced monthly newsletter created and distributed by the Honors Student Association. Its purpose is to supplement the West Chester University community's knowledge of the Honors Student Association's activities and endeavors.



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# Letter From the Editor

Hi H.S.A. Members, Alumni, and Prospective Students!

Welcome back! I hope you all had a fun and relaxing winter break and holiday season!

With demanding schedules and countless responsibilities during the fall semester, all of us students needed a well-deserved break; as such, this abbreviated edition combines what students did during the last couple of weeks of the fall semester and over winter break. Notably, the trip to Norway for the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony was hosted for the first time post-pandemic! Within this edition, we have a few students from the delegation sharing their experiences during the trip and reflections after, as well as the more consistent Honors Student Association updates.

Hopefully you all have had a fantastic start to the semester, and I look forward to continuing to share all of the wonderful accomplishments our honors cohort achieve in the coming months!

Sincerely,

Mackenzie Taylor

*Mackenzie Taylor*





# Save the Date!

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Looking Ahead...



## Nobel Forum

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March 24th  
and 25th

## Backyard Gatherings

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March 31st and  
April 21st



## Crossroads

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April 22nd

# Save the Date!

# BETTER TOGETHER DAY!



**THURSDAY  
FEBRUARY 23RD,  
2023!**

**IN SYKES  
BALLROOM  
@11AM-2PM!**

A day of interfaith education in which spiritual and religious groups from the on and off campus community convene in Sykes with interactive activities, service events, and educational materials to promote an understanding of their respective religious or philosophical tradition!



**BETTER TOGETHER DAY  
SPEAKER EVENT IN  
SYKES THEATRE @8PM!**

**SCAN ABOVE TO SIGN  
UP FOR THE EVENT!**



**LEARN MORE? FOLLOW US  
ON @WCU\_INTERFAITH**

# Wellness: New Semester

By: Ellie Poplar



During the months of December and January, West Chester University Honors College students endured finals and their winter break.

Finals are a stressful time for most college students, especially during the time of December. Students work hard to balance their mental health, physical health, and social life while preparing for finals. During finals, it is beneficial to prioritize certain classes over others and take breaks between study sessions for different classes. It is also crucial to get a good night's sleep and eat breakfast. Staying motivated, being positive, and being patient are the key to success during this time.

The reward of good grades on finals makes all that pressure worth it. However, the transition from college to being home can also feel strange for college students. They go from having so much stress and weight on their shoulders to having no academic obligations. It is beneficial to take time to recharge physically and mentally, spend time with friends and family, and maybe even get a job to make some money. Preparing to return to school for the Spring semester is important as it helps students come in with an open mind, feel less stressed about classes starting up again, and organize themselves for a new semester of learning. Practicing self-discipline and self-motivation are skills that students can do to stay on track during the start of the Spring semester.



# Community Service

By: Emily Miller

Throughout the winter—and even on winter break—it can be hard to find the time and energy to volunteer. Especially when the weather is cold or wet outside, trying to find some way to serve the community without facing the elements is a difficult task. Luckily, there are remote volunteering options, so anyone can help the community even when Mother Nature is at her worst:

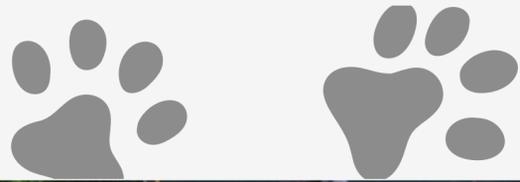
- 1.) [freerice.com](http://freerice.com) -- Help garner grains of rice by simply answering trivia questions.
- 2.) Help stave off loneliness by volunteering to call an elderly person in a retirement home. If you call any retirement home, such as Barclay Friends or The Hickman Home, they'll typically have a program where you can call a resident once a week.
- 3.) Smithsonian Digital Volunteers -- Located at: <https://www.si.edu/volunteer/DigitalVolunteers>, the Smithsonian has several opportunities in their archives department and beyond.
- 4.) Know another language? Translators without borders, located at: <https://translatorswithoutborders.org/>, provide volunteer translation services online. Help bridge linguistic gaps across the world!
- 5.) <https://www.zooniverse.org/> - Even with its wacky name, zooniverse helps researchers conduct widespread, digital research using volunteers. You can help identify endangered animals, answer survey questions, and provide data for research that gives back to the local community—and even the world.

There are countless other remote volunteer opportunities out there, but these are the top five I've found to be the most effective and available. Good luck, and happy volunteering!

P.S.: Make sure to log your hours!



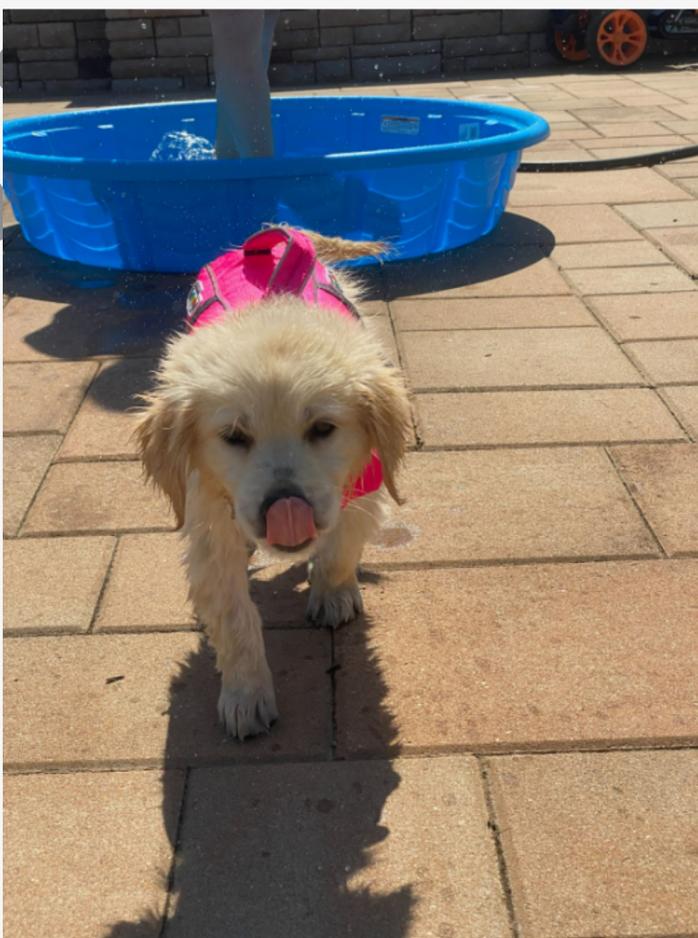
# Pets of HSA



Provided by Maddy Oehme



Provided by Jacob Moser



Provided by Gianna Marro

# Compassion in Action: Reflection on the Nobel Peace Center

By: Abby Boquist

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Representing WCU and the Honors College at the 2022 Oslo Peace Days was an immense honor. As a museum-lover, the most impactful experience for me was visiting the Nobel Peace Center, a museum dedicated to the evolving legacy of the Peace Prize.

At the time of our visit, a portion of the Center commemorated the work of 1922 laureate Fridtjof Nansen, a Norwegian polymath who received the prize “for his leading role in the repatriation of prisoners of war, in international relief work and as the League of Nations' High Commissioner for refugees” (“Nobel”). The exhibit moved beyond Nansen’s work, however, and highlights the people and organizations working in real-time to support the 100 million people displaced globally.

Titled “Compassion in Action,” the exhibit depicts human compassion as a revolutionary act of peace. Visitors examine six tables throughout the exhibit. On one side, the first five tables highlight five global crises resulting in mass displacement and, on the other side, a person or organization who used their skills and resources to support displaced people within their community. Evan Atar Adaha, the Hellenic Rescue Team, Sister Angélique Namaika, and more stand as examples of local leadership in action. As guests approach the final table, they face only a small mirror that asks them, *Hva kan jeg gjøre?* (What can I do?).

This exhibit has followed me across the ocean. The beauty of the Nobel Peace Prize lies in its ability to promote peaceful human actions in response to overwhelming violence, discord, and injustice. Though the prize is awarded on a global stage, the question *what can I do?* gives equal importance to the actions of individuals within their local communities.

Get involved with local nonprofits here and visit the digital exhibit here.

## References

The Nobel Peace Prize 1922 (n.d.). The Nobel Prize. Retrieved January 30, 2023, from <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1922/summary/>.

# Experience at Nobel #2

By: Edith Bradley

Being invited to the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony in Oslo was an honor and a privilege that the Honors College made possible. One of the most impactful moments during the trip was meeting Henrik Syse, the previous vice-chair of the Nobel Committee and guest professor at WCU this semester. He was able to share in-depth knowledge of the inner workings of the weekend, helping us understand not only the Committee's duties but also what the laureates were going through during the weekend.

Watching the ceremony live was like a dream, and after our conversation with Henrik, we knew how much effort was put into pulling it off. I could not believe we were sharing this experience with people like the King and Queen of Norway. The Nobel Forum took place the next day, and there we saw Jocelyn's hard work pay off. I was so impressed with her research and the quality of questions presented to the guests, especially Hillary Clinton. While the trip was short, I will always be grateful I pushed through the jet lag and exhaustion and was able to have such a unique experience.



# Experience at Nobel #2

By: Jocelyn Brown

I was excited to receive some friendly faces after a semester in Oslo. While I was at work at the Nobel Institute on Thursday, the students were able to settle in and visit the Nobel Peace Center, a museum that focuses on the history of the Nobel Peace Prize. At the end of my work day, they were able to stop by the Institute for a quick tour and a chat with Olav Njølstad, our director. On Friday, I met up with them for dinner with Henrik, as Edith describes. Then on Saturday, the real show begins.

As part of my internship, I arrive at Oslo City Hall bright and early to help seat guests for the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony. After doing so much work around the laureates, it was incredible to see them in person and hear their moving speeches. That night, we had a special dinner for Nobel staff at the Grand Hotel, where the laureates stay. Sunday was the Nobel Peace Prize Forum. This year, the theme was Afghanistan: Finding a Way Forward. I was incredibly excited, as I had already spent a year researching Afghan refugees. Again, I arrived early to help seat people and hand out programs. I edited the script and questions with our moderator, Erik Aasheim. I was able to cap off an incredible day by meeting Hillary Clinton, one of the Forum speakers. I am eternally grateful for my time working at the Norwegian Nobel Institute, and I cannot wait to see what our partnership brings next.



Erik Aasheim



# HSA Executive Board



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