

Annual Date Auction

By Amber Coe, HC XIV

HSA will be hosting the 3rd annual Valentine's Date Auction on February 10th at 7:30 pm in Sykes Theatre! This year we will not only be raising money for HSA but for the organization Bringing Hope Home. This philanthropic organization raises money to help families who have children with cancer. Half of the proceeds from the date auction will support the branch of Bringing Hope Home recently added on campus. We have a great group of strapping young gentlemen this year! In addition, we will be holding a raffle, so make sure you get some raffle tickets! If you aren't interested in bidding, stations will be set up to make Valentine's Day cards for Barclay residents involved in Traveling Across Generations (TAG) and for the children of Bringing Hope Home. There will also be a donation bucket available. We have a lot to get excited about this year, so we hope to see everyone there!



Date Auction Participants, 2013

The Freshman Experience

By Allison Velez, HC XIV

This fall, 43 incoming freshman were welcomed into the Honors family! Each of them has had to make the adjustment from their previous lives to a new environment. While such a transition is unique for every student, there does exist a unified, fundamental foundation that each student can relate to; this is the freshman experience.

In order to gain insight as to what the freshman experience has been like for the students of Honors XV, Casey Mulholland has shared with us some of her experiences that she has had at West Chester thus far.

Many students enter college worried that they will be unable to find an organization that they identify with, but our students come into their first days already belonging to a community. When asked how being a part of the honors program has affected her first semester, Casey shared that she felt as if she were given a sense of family: "You come in and already have an established group of friends!" She explained further that it was slightly more difficult to make friends in her non-honors classes because she was already used to spending so much time with a particular group of people, but that her fellow honors students "...are all great people..." and she is thankful to have had them to start the semester.

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The Freshman Experience (Continued from Page 1)

Other influences that the honors college has had on Casey's first semester include her involvement with the Honors Student Association. She has committed a substantial amount of her time to the annual fundraiser Dance for a Chance by joining the corresponding committee and has taken advantage of numerous service projects sponsored by HSA including the Goose Creek Clean-Up and the AIDS Walk Philly.

After hearing her describe these experiences, I asked Casey if she felt that she had made the right decision in choosing West Chester University and the honors program. I asked her to take her time in responding because choosing a college or university is a big life decision that more and more students across the nation are misjudging, but she did not need time to think her answer over. "Yes and yes," she replied, "All of the stressing I did (senior year) about college has paid off because I chose to go here." She elaborated by adding that college is new, and scary, so the transition will obviously be a difficult one, but choosing this school and this program has made that transition smoother and more comfortable.

In response to her answer to the previous question, I then asked Casey if there were one or two favorite experiences she has had in her honors classes. She laughed and immediately responded by saying that every one of Dr. John Helion's classes (HON100- Self Awareness) are a blast, but a more specific experience was the "Board of Directors" assignment in Dr. Kevin Dean's seminar (HON352- Personal Leadership Development: Lessons from South Africa), a paper-like assignment in which the students evaluate the people in their lives who are most important to them and the roles those people play in their personal success. "I even texted some of my friends and told them about the assignment, letting them know they were on my Board of Directors!" she exclaimed.

The experiences Casey has shared paint a realistic picture of the freshman experience that each and every one of our freshmen is living. It is plain to see that the honors program continues to be successful in enriching the lives of its freshman students and making their transition from high school to college an enjoyable one.



Casey Mulholland, HC XV, is a first-year English: Writing and Psychology major.

An Unparalleled Learning Experience

By Marissa Caldwell, HC XIII

As a university well known for its excellence in teacher education, it should come as no surprise the sheer number of students majoring in education at WCU, and therefore in the Honors Student Association. Although many education majors student teach in the spring, HSA had several students who were student teachers during the fall semester. In talking with two student teachers, I hoped to glean information that would provide insight to future student teachers.

Tiff Wheeler, senior Music Education Major, Flute speaks about her experience during the first half of her semester at Penncrest High School, teaching grades 9 through 12 in concert band, wind ensemble, marching band, AP music theory, and a music technology course. Tyler Mertens, graduating senior Middle Grades Preparation Major, taught 6th grade Math, Language Arts and Astronomy during the fall semester.

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Director's Corner

Looking Back, Looking Forward

Dr. Kevin Dean



In addition to long winter's naps and dreams of sugar plums, I spent a good deal of my winter break working on the 2008-2013 five year review of the Honors College. To those of you who like to complain about long projects, you will be pleased to know that the final document was 132 pages (not counting 6 appendices). To my pleasure, I receive a very complimentary note from the coordinator of the campus review with a little note telling me that the maximum page limit was 30! Oh, the joys of editing.

The final document, 29 pages (and a much smaller font and smaller margins than the first...and 9 appendices) demonstrated some amazing accomplishments for which we can all be proud. Students in the Honors College demonstrate proven academic excellence as evidenced by over 50% graduating **summa cum laude** and a retention rate of 93.2%, 7% above the university average. In addition, 88 members moved directly from WCU to graduate disciplinary based programs or professional schools in medicine, pharmacology or law. 72 HSA members were inducted into **Omicron Delta Kappa** (the university's most prestigious academic society celebrating scholarship, leadership, and service); 92 members were inducted into **Who's Who Among Students at American Colleges and Universities** (the top recognition from the Division of Student Affairs celebrating accomplishment in academics and leadership). Members of the Honors College participated in international scholarship and service as 53 students and 7 faculty leaders traveled to **South Africa** in 2008 and 2010 and 11 students traveled with President Weisenstein to **Russia** in 2013. Honors students gained recognition for **outstanding campus leadership and service**; 18 students won 24 individual awards and Michael Jendzurski was named the Ali-Zaidi Winner as top graduate in PASSHE (2013). HSA won 6 awards, including Organization of the Year (2011) and Service Organization of the Year (2012 and 2013).

The past five years has also witnessed a deepening partnership of scholarship and service between the Honors College and the **Learning Assistance and Resource Center**. Through the collaborative leadership of Professor Gerardina Martin, 150 honors students received formal tutoring certification through the **National College Reading and Learning Association**. Honors Students have performed thousands of peer tutoring hours.

Some of the most dramatic growth has occurred within HSA. itself. As of 2008, H.S.A. had six standing committees: Awards & Recognition, Community Service, Fundraising, Housing, Public Relations, and Recruitment. The organization now boasts **26 committee chairs/program directors** with the following **eleven standing committees**: Alumni, Award & Recognition, Community Service, Curriculum & Community, Diversity, Fundraising, Housing, Public Relations, Recruitment, Social, and Sports & Recreation. Committees become "standing" when they have actively existed for a minimum of four years and involve the need for regular meetings of groups of students. Due to their special nature, the following **7 programs have standing director/leader positions**: Aid to South Africa – Executive Director, Graduate Fair – Coordinator, Historian, H.S.A. Happenings – Editor, Student Government Association (SGA) Representative – Senator, Traveling Across Generations (TAG) – Director, and Webmaster.

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An Unparalleled Learning Experience (Continued from Page 2)

Both students express the wonderful experience they had while student teaching and shared some of their newfound wisdom about what to expect. Tyler explained that while he was confident that the education department at WCU taught him how to plan meaningful lessons and instruct students, he was less prepared to manage the classroom. He didn't know how to discipline students, "such as what to do with a student who simply does not respect my authority as teacher and does not want to learn." While Tyler loves teaching his classes, especially astronomy, his least favorite part of student teaching is dealing with paperwork, politics, and dealing with student behavior.

According to Tyler, his expectations of student teaching, including hard work and very little free time, were accurate in the beginning of his placement. But by halfway through the semester, he says that he could anticipate with accuracy how each day would go.

Although student teaching requires hard work and dedication, both Tyler and Tiff agree that the experience is well worth it. Tiff told me a story about her last day at Penncrest, when her students serenaded her: "Five students sang while the rest played an assortment of instruments (from string bass to bongos), and they played a very nice arrangement of 'Maria' from West Side Story, but instead of using those lyrics, they wrote their own about me and titled it 'Miss Wheeler.'"

And Tyler was surprised by the creativity of his students, when they rose to the challenge of drawing an outer space themed picture on the back of their test of phases of the moon. He told them he would judge the pictures when he graded the tests and choose a favorite, the winner of which would receive a high five. Some of his favorite masterpieces included the Apollo 11 landing mission, the origin of the moon, and an interstellar police chase.

Through their interviews, Tyler and Tiff affirmed both the dedication and hard work that goes into student teaching, but also the high reward of working with their students and seeing them succeed. As Tiff sums it up, "I knew it would be intense, and I was told it was like having a full time job, but I couldn't fathom—and knew I couldn't fathom—what it actually was like. It's definitely stressful, but extremely rewarding."

Director's Corner (Continued from Page 3)

With all these laurels and accomplishments, it would be easy to take a deep breath and contemplate a long winter's nap, but that is not our nature. Under the leadership of the **WCU Dream Team**, a special two year visioning group (Michael Jendzurski, Chair; DJ Matsko, Cierra Mautone, Sam McGinty, Lisa McMahan, Dan Hinderliter, Christopher Whittall, Kristina Lail, Ansu Bensen, Tyler Mertens, and Olivia Kenney) and the 2013 and 2014 executive board led by Dan VanHassent and Christine Klingaman, students actively engaged in creating a vision, that in partnership with the Honors Council, resulted in **15 goals Honors will embrace for the coming five years**. These include:

- 1)** Promote Academic Excellence;
- 2)** Clarify Capstone Project;
- 3)** Continue Program and Curricular Assessment;
- 4)** Enhance Advisement;
- 5)** Advocate and Explore Additional Resources for Honors;
- 6)** Promote Globalization;
- 7)** Alumni development;
- 8)** Enhance Campus Presence for Leadership Development and Service Opportunities;
- 9)** Enhance Retention and Diversity Efforts through Funding;
- 10)** Enhance Retention Efforts through Opportunities for Interpersonal Engagement;
- 11)** Institute a Technology/Website Action Plan;
- 12)** Enhance Public Relations Efforts Highlight Student Success to External Groups;
- 13)** Revisit Opportunities for Involvement and Ownership by Honors Council Members;
- 14)** Clarify Honors Budget; and
- 15)** Continue Assessment and Build in Reflection Time.

We have exciting times before us. Everyone in the Honors community, the faculty, staff, current students, and alumni have vibrant roles to assume as we look towards the next five years and where our collective journey leads. We are a community of change, and I hold faith that the best is yet to be!

Congratulations to the Fall 2013 Honors College Dean's List Students

Honors Student
Association
HSA Executive Board:

President

Christine Klingaman

Immediate Past President

Daniel VanHassent

1st Vice President

Brianna Plaxe

Treasurer

Christopher Whittall

Director

Kevin Dean

2nd Vice President

Samantha McGinty

Secretary

Sarah Walker

Administrative Asst.

Donna Carney

Aid to South Africa
Zachary Wooten

Alumni
Melissa Christie

Alumni Database
Samantha Sallade

Awards &
Recognition
Amanda Gilbert

Buddy Coordinator
Rebecca Bannan

Community Service
Alex Sheriff

Curriculum &
Community
Dana Fillman

Dance for a Change
Jackie Iovine

Diversity
Abbie Ganas

Fundraising
Amber Coe

Grad School Fair
Ansu Bensen

Historian
Haley Paiva

Housing
Marissa Giovinazzo

HSA Happenings Editor
Marissa Caldwell

International Outreach
Carl Korsnes

Library Resources
Lauren Leonard

Music & Arts
Jonathan Ruths

Public Relations
Brooke Hillman

Recruitment
Kristina Lail

Seminar
Recruitment
Nicole Medeiros

SGA Representative
Tony LaFratte

Social
Ahleah Miles

Sports &
Recreation
Katie Rincavage

Technology
Lisa McMahan

TAG
Emily Polefka

Web Master
Joseph Cosentino

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

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| Kelsiann Acer | Kelley Gallagher | Andrew Phillips |
| Jennifer Allen | Kaitlyn Galtere | Brianna Plaxe |
| Shannon Alvarez | Caitlin Gardner | Kaitlyn Plush |
| Anastasia Amand | Amanda Gilbert | Emily Polefka |
| Rebecca Anderson | Jaclyn Giovinazzo | Rachel Polgardy |
| Nicholas April | Marissa Giovinazzo | BreAnne Pospiech |
| Aysha Azam | Johanna Hattier | Julia Powers |
| Rebecca Bannan | Nicole Hearn | Janice Rabian |
| Brittany Baumeister | Jamie Henry | Jamal Reddick |
| Elana Beckett | Eric Herrmann | Lara Roche |
| Ansu Bensen | Megan Hess | Kathleen Rollman |
| Stephanie Binder | Daniel Hinderliter | Emily Roth |
| Anthony Blubello | Skye Hisiro | Jonathan Ruths |
| Victoria Bresnan | Taylor Holt | Mary Sadow |
| Genevieve Brogdon | Jack Hontz | Samantha Sallade |
| Steve Broome | Brittany Iatarola | Danielle Sherman |
| Rachel Brown | Keerthy Joseph | Elizabeth Sherman |
| Rachel Butera | Kellen Kane | Alexandra Sheriff |
| Marissa Caldwell | Olivia Kenney | Shannon Shiring |
| Amy Cander | Carl-Fredrick Korsnes | Abigail Shore |
| Hannah Caplan | Timothy Kuscavage | Abigail Smith |
| Samantha Cappello | Anthony LaFratte | Samantha Stalford |
| Melissa Christie | Kristina Lail | Emily Stockmal |
| Hannah Clark | Lauren Lawlor | Devon Stroup |
| Christina Colosi | Elise Lerario | Sara Stull |
| Cameron Cooper | Tracey Malandra | Miranda Thiessen |
| Alissa Conway | Paige Maloney | Chan To |
| Joseph Cosentino | Evan Marabella | Brian Tracey |
| Daniel DeBrakeleer | Shelby Martin | Margaret Tracey |
| Kristen DeFrank | Jennifer Matuza | Jennifer Tsan |
| Kelly Dennin | Katie McCollum | Allison Velez |
| Lauren Devan | Samantha McGinty | Andrew Wagner |
| Hannah Djalleta | Lisa McMahan | Sarah Walker |
| Rebecca Dobson | Nicole Medeiros | Kristen Waltz |
| Benjamin Doersom | Tyler Mertens | Laura Wayne |
| Lindsey Donahue | Amy Millar | Victoria Wermert |
| Madeline Driban | Nicholle Mills | Tiffany Wheeler |
| Matthew Dummeldinger | Wesley Miriello | Christopher Whittall |
| Stephanie Evangelista | Carrie Morton | Erin Yentz |
| Sean Farrell | Ashley Murphy | Emily Yohe |
| Dana Fillman | Matthew Nolt | Rameez Zaman |
| Patricia Finn | Haley Paiva | |