

Honors College

PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO ENRICH
THEIR MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

Dr. John Chuchiak Appointed Director of the Honors College

The Honors College is pleased to welcome Dr. John F. Chuchiak, IV, Professor of Colonial Latin American History, as our newest Director. Dr. Chuchiak earned his Ph.D. at Tulane University and joined the faculty at Missouri State in 2002. He is the author of four books on Latin American history, as well as a series of scholarly articles and book chapters. Dr. Chuchiak has enjoyed a long relationship with the Honors College. He began teaching honors courses in 2004, including the *Freshman Honors Seminar*, *U.S. History to 1877*, and *World History to 1600*. In 2007, Dr. Chuchiak was named Rich & Doris Young Honors College Professor. In this role, he was instrumental in the foundation of *LOGOS: A Journal of Undergraduate Research* and in mentoring honors students traveling to professional conferences. In Spring 2011, Dr. Chuchiak was named to the Honors College Advisory Board. In addition to his Honors College responsibilities, Dr. Chuchiak continues to serve as Director of the Latin American, Caribbean, & Hispanic Studies Program and to teach graduate level courses in the Department of History.

Jacob Swett, an Honors College senior who served on the hiring committee that selected Dr. Chuchiak, commented, "Dr. Chuchiak is not only passionate about the Honors College, he's passionate about students and sincerely interested in student success. [He] has an incredibly clear and detailed vision for the Honors College and more importantly, a plan to achieve the vision." Senior Erin Hanson, who applied for a Fulbright Research Grant under Dr. Chuchiak's guidance, echoed these sentiments. "He has helped me to become a more successful student and he has been instrumental in helping me to define my goals for the future. He's a great professor and a fantastic mentor."

—Dr. Chuchiak plans to design Research Based Learning Communities that will introduce first-year students to scholarly research and to expand the number of upper-level courses sponsored by our program so that juniors and seniors may conduct research under the mentorship of honors faculty members. He also hopes to expand student participation in overseas study programs by raising money for scholarships and by leading dedicated honors study away programs to the Caribbean. He is actively exploring enrichment opportunities for honors faculty members, which may include research grants, conference funding, or the creation of distinguished professorships.



55 Honors College Students Graduated at Fall Commencement



55 Honors College students received their Bachelor's degrees at MSU's Fall Commencement ceremonies on December 19th. These graduates distinguished themselves in a number of ways:

- 9 students graduated *Summa cum laude* (GPA of 3.90+);
- 19 students graduated *Magna cum laude* (GPA of 3.75-3.89);
- 21 students graduated *Cum laude* (GPA of 3.50-3.74);
- 1 student graduated with Distinction in the Major (12 additional credits of Honors course work and completion of a Senior Honors Project. See page 5 for details.)

We are extremely proud of these young men and women and all that they have accomplished!

Student Research Featured in Undergraduate Journal

The Honors College is pleased to announce that *LOGOS: A Journal of Undergraduate Research, Volume 4* is now available at locations across campus and online. A team of 4 undergraduate student editors, 20 student peer reviewers, and nearly 40 faculty experts collaborated to produce this volume, which features publications by 18 students from 11 academic departments at Missouri State University. Volume 4 features topics ranging from a history of German nudism and an experiment on cheating in college courses to stereotyping in the *Twilight* series and several creative writing pieces.

LOGOS is published annually by Missouri State University's Honors College. The journal was created with the vision of serving as a hands-on experience for students to learn about the publication process and to highlight and support undergraduate research initiatives. For more information, visit *LOGOS* at www.missouristate.edu/logos or email the Managing Editor, Amy Legg, at logos@missouristate.edu.

Student & Faculty Delegation Presented at NCHC Conference in Phoenix, AZ

A student and faculty delegation from the Honors College attended the National Collegiate Honors Council Annual Conference in Phoenix, AZ from October 20th-23rd. The N.C.H.C. conference assembled more than 1500 participants from honors colleges and programs across the United States in order to discuss current issues and best practices in honors education.

Lynn Andreas, a senior majoring in Cell & Molecular Biology, joined Dr. Joshua Smith, Rich & Doris Young Honors College Professor of Biomedical Science, in delivering a presentation entitled *The Atypical Freshman Science Lab: Performing Inquiry-Based Research in an Introductory-Level Science Course*. The presentation highlighted BMS 110 *Introduction to Biomedical Sciences-Honors*, the introductory course for Cell & Molecular Biology students in majors within the College of Health and Human Services and the first in a series of science courses completed by many pre-health professional students. Andreas and Dr. Smith discussed how first-year students in BMS 110 design and execute their own lab experiments with the ultimate goal of tagging and cloning individual genes from the organism *Tetrahymena thermophila*. Dr. Smith requires his students to submit the results of their lab work to a research database; their findings later serve as foundations for additional research completed in upper-level biomedical science courses at Missouri State and other colleges and universities.

The Honors College has sent students to the NCHC Annual Conference for three consecutive years, with the aim of supporting undergraduate research and providing students the opportunity to develop the skill sets necessary to make professional presentations. The Honors College is currently exploring fundraising opportunities that will allow students attend the 2012 NCHC Annual Conference, which will be held in Boston, MA. If you are interested in supporting opportunities for students to complete and present original research, please visit our website.



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Staff Spotlight: Janelle Melton

We are very proud to announce that Janelle Melton, our Administrative Assistant, was selected to participate in the 2011-2012 University Staff Ambassadors program. Janelle was one of only twenty-five staff members university-wide selected to participate in this development program.

The U.S.A. program has four primary objectives:

- To provide staff an opportunity to learn about all of the divisions and campuses within the University System;
- To provide interesting and fun professional development opportunities to staff;
- To promote a better understanding by staff as to the value of their role within the University and their contribution toward our mission of "developing educated persons"; and
- To foster increased communication across departments, divisions, and campuses by creating a bond among the members of each class.

Participants complete 12 program days throughout the year and collaborate on team projects that explore challenges in university operations.

Janelle's participation in the program has already paid immediate dividends to the Honors College. She has discussed our strategic vision with the University Provost, strengthened our working relationship with the Honors Program at the West Plains campus, and educated staff members from across our campus about the mission of the Honors College and the outstanding work being completed by our students.

Katherine Botts presented research on Thomas Hart Benton

Honors College students are actively involved in undergraduate research projects. Katherine Botts, who graduated with distinction in December, provided an excellent example of the impact that original research can have upon a student's development when she publically presented her own scholarship this past summer.

On July 16th, the Bonniebrook Museum outside Branson, MO, celebrated Thomas Hart Benton Day. Benton, a Missouri-born American Modern artist, was a member of the Regionalists, an art movement that merged elements of academic art with modern idea and Midwest American subject matter. The Bonniebrook Historical Society sponsored the day's events, which brought together art historians, musicians, professors of music, art appreciators, and Thomas Hart Benton enthusiasts.

Katherine's presentation compared the work of Benton to El Greco, a Greco-Spanish Mannerist painter. While Benton had been compared to many other artists, little previous research existed on his apparent study of El Greco. Katherine explained how a visit to Paris in Summer 2010 inspired her work: "I was walking through the Louvre, and I happened by an El Greco. I thought 'those clouds look really familiar' and I realized they reminded me of clouds I had seen in Benton's paintings. I suddenly wondered if Benton was influenced by El Greco." This insight culminated in a research paper for her *Modern Art- Honors* class. Katherine presented her work at the Intercollegiate Art History Symposium in April, 2011, where one of the art history professors recommended her work to the organizers of Thomas Hart Benton Day.

Katherine reflected, "There were many benefits that came out of this experience. I had some great networking opportunities, I met inspiring people, and I was privy to wonderfully intellectual conversations about a topic that fascinates me. Presenting about Thomas Hart Benton also helped me realize I really enjoy participating in events that promote the arts in any way possible. It was a key factor in my decision to pursue graduate studies in art history."



Bear in Mind: Honors College Blog

The Honors College is pleased to announce the launch of *Bear in Mind*, a blog created to allow honors students opportunities to share their experiences with one another and the world. Early postings discuss issues including study away, managing stress, and the transition from high school student to first-year university student. Visitors are encouraged to post questions and comments for discussion with the student authors.

Bear in Mind is the brainchild of Honors College senior Cynthia Johnson and is produced and managed entirely by Honors College students.

Bear in Mind is available as a hyperlink on the Honors College website.

Dr. Joshua Smith named recipient of Young Honors College Professorship

Dr. Joshua Smith, Assistant Professor of Biomedical Science, was named 2011-2012 Rich & Doris Young Honors College Professor, based upon his outstanding record of student evaluations, direct service to the Honors College, and active support for high impact initiatives involving undergraduate students. Dr. Smith earned his Ph.D. in Pharmacology at the University of Minnesota and joined the faculty at Missouri State in 2008. His research interests focus upon the study of DNA repair at the cellular level, which has important implications for cancer research.

Dr. Smith has served as an advisor and a course instructor in the Honors College since 2009. His course, BMS 110 *Introduction to Biomedical Sciences-Honors*, is among the highest rated general education courses offered by our program. The students in this course are expected to conduct intensive laboratory research involving the cloning of genes from the *Tetrahymena thermophila* organism. Upon completion, students are required to upload their findings into a national research database. Researchers at Purdue University and other top research institutions have used these results in order to advance their own studies.



Dr. Smith deepens the research experience for his students by inviting them to serve as his lab assistants and by encouraging them to submit the results of their work for publication in science journals. In April 2011, Dr. Smith took seven Honors College students who worked in his lab to the Midwest Protozoology Society Meeting in Peoria, IL. One participating student wrote, "It was a lot of fun witnessing the reactions of professors when they found out I was at the meeting with a poster of my work and only a sophomore in undergraduate school at Missouri State University. I felt very fortunate to be able to participate in this unique opportunity to meet other students and professors involved in similar research and to really get a chance to apply what I have been learning about." In October 2011, Dr. Smith took another Honors College student to Phoenix, AR for the National Collegiate Honors Council Annual Conference, where the pair made a formal presentation on the incorporation of intensive research opportunities into first-year science courses [see story on pg. 2].

Alongside his advising and teaching responsibilities, Dr. Smith also represents the College of Health & Human Services on the University Honors Committee, one of the governing bodies for our program.

Did You Know...

...that 89% of our Fall 2011 graduates earned scholastic honors (final GPA of 3.50 or better), compared to only 15% of all other graduates?

...that 70 Honors College faculty members have completed the university's Master Advisor Training Program, which has been nationally recognized as an Outstanding Advising Program by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)?

...that Honors College student athletes had an average GPA of 3.82 in Fall 2011, compared to an average GPA of 3.72 for all Honors College students?

Citizen Scholars

Two Honors College seniors were selected to receive the Board of Governors Citizen Scholar Award for 2011-2012:

Deanne Vassalli, Marketing/Sales

Samantha Warner, Agricultural Communications

The award annually recognizes six students who have made significant accomplishments while enrolled at Missouri State University. Preference is given to upper class students who have contributed to the University, advanced the University's public affairs mission, have been significantly engaged in extra-curricular accomplishments, and/or in significant service activities in the community. Recipients were personally recognized by the Board of Governors at their campus meeting on December 16th. The Honors College is proud that ten of our students have been recognized as Citizen Scholars in the last three years.

Student Recognized for Graduation with Distinction

Students in the Honors College have the opportunity to graduate with distinction in their major. In addition to completing all general requirements for the Honors College, these students must complete 12 credits of honors course work in their major program, including a senior research project worth at least 3 credit hours. The following student graduated with distinction in Fall 2011 and was given special recognition at Commencement:

Katherine Botts, Design/Illustration

Senior Honors Project: *Children's Book & Implementation Guide for the Ozarks Literacy Council* • Directed by Professor Sherry Cook, Senior Instructor, Marketing Department

Dr. Larry L. George Scholarship Update

In Fall 2010, the Honors College announced the creation of the Dr. Larry L. George Scholarship, endowed through the generosity of the George family in order to honor Dr. George's four decades of service to the Honors College and Missouri State University. Dr. George regularly taught Honors College courses, including *Freshman Honors Seminar*, *Hero & Quest*, and *Ethics & Sport in America* and continues to serve on the Honors College Advisory Board.

We are pleased to introduce the first recipient of the Dr. Larry L. George Scholarship, Ms. Amy Hurley of Springfield, MO. Amy joined the Honors College in Fall 2011 after having successfully completed the honors program at Ozarks Technical Community College, where she served as President of the Honors Student Council. Amy is majoring in Sociology with a minor in Criminology. She plans to continue her studies in graduate school and to earn a Master's Degree in either Criminology or Social Work, with an emphasis upon juvenile justice and rehabilitation.

The Honors College Scholarship Committee will select the next recipient of the George Scholarship in April 2012.


The George Scholarship is an open account, meaning that additional contributions may be made in honor of Dr. George by family members and friends. If you are interested in contributing to the George Scholarship, please visit our website.

Contact the Honors College

We are always happy to answer questions and give more information on our program. Please select one of the following ways to contact us at your convenience:

Call **417.836.6370** or visit us in **University Hall Rm. 212** Monday—Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Email us at honorscollege@missouristate.edu

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www.missouristate.edu/honors

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