

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

Honors Newsletter

WINTER 2016

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On the Cover:

As part of the new major Engaged Social Innovation, student Helaina Thompson is combining her love of yoga instruction with business. Read more on Page 9.

Photo credit: Katie Kiesewetter

Word From The Director

My warm greetings for the Winter of 2016 to our Honors Program students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends.

TYNER MILLION DOLLAR PLEDGE TO HONORS

Our biggest news is that Richard Tyner, an alumnus of the University of Iowa who graduated with Honors in both political science and French, this last Fall pledged one million dollars to the Honors Program. The first installment of the pledge, which is \$100,000 annually for ten years, has already been made and will soon be put to use in supporting students. Specifically, half of Tyner's pledged gift is being used for a scholarship to support students who come into the Honors Program after they arrive at the University rather than as an entering student (students who are not eligible to enter Honors from high school can still gain membership to Honors by attaining a 3.5 university grade point average). This group of students qualifies for the Tyner scholarship. The other half of the million dollar pledge has been used to create the Honors Program Enrichment Fund. This fund will be used to enable current honors students to participate in what we call out-of-classroom learning experiences. These can include internships, study away experiences, presentations at professional conferences, and capstone projects.

For details on Richard Tyner and his pledge to Honors, see the article on page 4. You'll be impressed by both his humility and dedication to the university and students—a truly unique person, whom good fortune has brought our way.

HONORS STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FACULTY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Honors at Iowa had a sizable group (twelve altogether) of students, faculty, and staff at the annual National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) conference in Chicago in early November. Most of the group presented at the conference, including three of the four students. The fourth student, Sean Finn, was a candidate for a student NCHC Board of Directors position and went to the conference to experience an NCHC board meeting and then campaign. As the national organization for honors education, the National Collegiate Honors Council is governed by a twenty-four person Board of Directors, six of whom are honors students. These are elected positions that are highly prized and sought, and they also carry much responsibility. I'm happy and pleased to say that Sean was elected and will join his voice with mine as an NCHC Board member, as I continue my term this year as NCHC President Elect.

For more information on Sean, who got a substantially higher number of votes than the other elected student candidates, see the upcoming article in the spring issue. He'll represent honors students very well.

MAKING YOUR CONNECTION THROUGH HONORS AT IOWA IN A UNIQUE WAY

Our tagline for our program is Make Your Connection, and although it covers a broad range of types of connections—with



yourself, your peers, the staff and faculty, and your profession—when we came up with the concept we did not have in mind the type of connection we find that more than a few of our honors students have made—namely, marriage. For more on that very special type of connection, see the article below on the Honors Love Connection on page 17.

As always, please feel free to contact me via email (art-spisak@uiowa.edu) or phone (319.335.1681) with any comments, questions, or concerns you have about the Honors Program. I'm happy to have such conversations.

Art L. Spisak

Director, UI Honors Program

Dick Tyner's Gift: Supporting Honors Education

By Sophie Katz

As the presidential race enters primary season, donors all over the nation are throwing hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars at their favorite candidates—but Dick Tyner, who recently pledged one million dollars to the University of Iowa Honors Program, believes that there are better uses for his funds.

“I suppose I could give money to a politician, but why?” he joked. “We may as well concentrate on education. It’s about passing the torch to the next generation. If anybody can help solve the problems of the world, it’s the next generation.”

Tyner, an alumnus from the University of Iowa class of 1970, after a long career as an international lawyer in the Middle East, finally returned to campus in 2014 on a visit to the political science and French departments, his old majors.

“I thought it would be important to come meet faculty and see what’s going on,” Tyner said. “And at the last minute I thought, ‘Why don’t we meet someone in the Honors Program?’”

At the time, the Honors Advisory Board did not yet exist, but when it was formed in September 2014, the Honors Program remembered Tyner’s enthusiasm for the program and invited him to be a member.

“It’s about passing the torch to the next generation. If anybody can help solve the problems of the world, it’s the next generation.”
- Dick Tyner

“It seemed like Dick would be a good fit for the Honors Advisory Board,” Honors Program Director Dr. Art Spisak said. “He was excited about Honors and expressed an interest in it. Not too long after he visited, he had already made a couple of gifts to the Honors Program.”



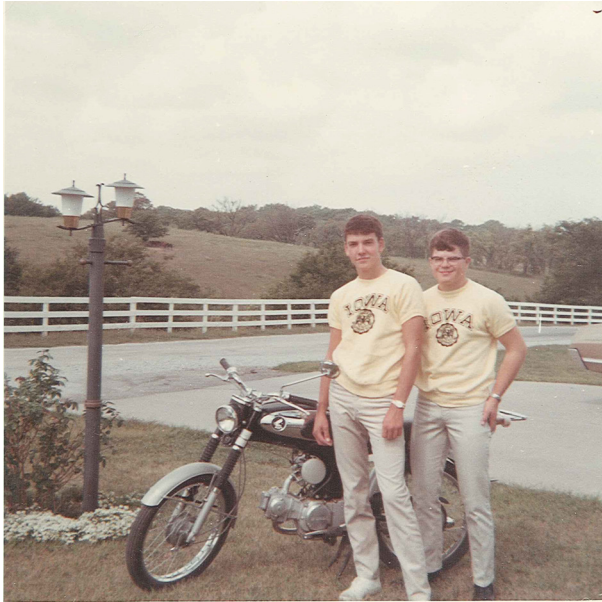
Tyner poses with Honors Program founder Rhodes Dunlap’s academic robes. Dunlap tapped Tyner for a national scholarship competition. Photo contributed by Dick Tyner.

Those gifts included a five thousand dollar donation for the Presidential Scholars Program, which is comprised of the eighty or so current Presidential Scholars. Tyner’s gift will help the current Presidentials with their out-of-class academic and community-building experiences. But Tyner didn’t want to stop there.

“Presidential Scholars and Old Gold Scholars are incoming freshmen,” he said. “What about people who get to the university and don’t have scholarships at all, but are excellent students? It could be for a variety of reasons that a student isn’t one of those scholars—he or she applied too late, for instance. It occurred to me that we needed a scholarship for students like that.”

Tyner also wants the recipients of the new scholarship to be students from small towns, like himself; he grew up on a farm near Shenandoah, Iowa, and still thinks of himself as a “farm boy.” According to Tyner, people from small towns oftentimes don’t get the same kind of advanced placement opportunities that

Supporting Honors Education, continued



Tyner, with his brother in the 1960s, grew up on a farm in western Iowa. Photo contributed by Dick Tyner.

people from larger towns do, and so they come to college without the advantage of good grades or knowing what they want out of their education.

“People who just haven’t had the opportunity or weren’t motivated before but came to the university and found their passion—those are the students who should be awarded this scholarship,” Tyner said.

So, in October 2015, Tyner pledged one million dollars to the university, half to go to the Honors Enrichment Fund, and the other half to create a new scholarship for small-town students who reach a 3.5 GPA while at the university and are invited to be a part of the Honors Program.

But how does a pledge become a scholarship?

“The money is an endowment,” Dr. Spisak explained. “The University of Iowa Foundation invests the money in a diversified portfolio that is projected to grow over time. About 4.5 percent of the fund is available each year as the spendable part. You keep the

principal invested so you have money year after year, so you’ll be able to award the scholarship continually.”

This million dollar pledge will come from Tyner in \$100,000 yearly installments, the first of which the university has already received. The first installment is all for the new scholarship, while later installments will be split between the scholarship and the Honors Enrichment Fund, which supports out-of-class experiences like study abroad and internships. This will undoubtedly be a big help for University of Iowa students who, like Tyner, don’t figure out what they wanted to do with their education until long after their freshman year.

Tyner is eager to help the next generation as soon as he can. Many people choose to leave money to their alma mater in wills, but Tyner sees a benefit in giving money to the Honors Program while he’s alive. “That way,” he said, “I can see the good that comes from the donation, and I can help tailor the gift to the needs of the Program as we go forward.”

“It occurred to me that the initial donations didn’t have to be the end of this,” he continued, referring to his previous gifts to the university. “I realized that there was no reason why I couldn’t do more for the university. I could make a much larger contribution to the Honors Program—the part of the university that was the most meaningful to me. Seeing faculty again, and the new students, has meant a lot to me.”

And his support means a lot to those who receive it, too. As a member of the University of Iowa Honors Program and a Presidential Scholar, I thank Dick Tyner for his generosity and his belief in my generation.

If you would like to help an honors student participate in out-of-classroom learning experiences, please visit www.givetoioiwa.org/2016hp and select the Honors Program Enrichment Fund. For more information on this fund and other ways you can support the University of Iowa Honors Program you may contact either the Honors Director, Dr. Art L. Spisak at art-spisak@uiowa.edu or at (319) 335-1681, or Susan Hagan, J.D., Executive Director of Development for the UI Foundation at susan-hagan@uiowa.edu or at (319) 467-3696.

NCHC Conference: Honors at Iowa in Chicago

By Onae Parker



Dr. Art Spisak, Suzanne Squires, Lindsay Marshall, Bob Kirby, Jessica Waldschmidt, Christina Crowley, Kelly McElroy, Sean Finn, and Monisa Saravanan before the Gala. Not pictured: Holly Blosser Yoder. Photo by Honors Program.

Twelve UI faculty and students set out for Chicago this past November for the 50th annual National Collegiate Honors Conference (NCHC). Since 1965, the NCHC, devoted to the support and enhancement of honors education, draws honors staff and students from its 850+ institutional and individual members to an annual professional conference in the fall. Honors members from across the country and across the world mingle experiences through a showcase of presentations, roundtable discussions, and information sessions.

Special plenary speakers are also featured in NCHC conference. This year's speaker was Emerson Spartz—founder of the rapidly popular MuggleNet and now CEO of Spartz, Inc.—, who spoke about how things go viral on the internet.

Our Honors at Iowa faculty and students kept themselves busy in Chicago presenting, attending other presentations and events, and looking out for ideas to use back on campus. Among the several presentations they gave was “The Power of Presence,” by Honors Advising Director Holly Yoder and UI juniors Monisa Saravanan and Kelly McElroy, who explained the positive effect of honors students serving as resources for incoming and current honors students—examples of this support include Honors Peer Advising and Honors Summer Ambassadors. Honors Director Dr. Art Spisak, Assessment Director Suzanne Squires, and UI senior Christina Crowley presented on “What Honors Students Want from Their Honors Program.” They presented their findings about students’ academic choices and expectations from the Honors Program through data acquired by tracking 804 students over six years. Said Crowley, “This was an incredible experience... I now know I can hold my ground and speak with confidence about my research to the most knowledgeable of honors faculty and staff.”

UI sophomore Sean Finn, a student representative running for a two-year board position in the NCHC, accompanied Dr. Art Spisak to the meeting of board directors, where he successfully campaigned for the position. Dr. Spisak, an NCHC member since 2006, aside from presenting of four different venues, was also occupied with other leadership duties at the conference, as he will be the president elect of the NCHC for 2016 and the president for 2017. Dr. Spisak is the chair of the planning committee for the 2016 NCHC conference in Seattle.

“I now know I can hold my ground and speak with confidence about my research to the most knowledgeable of honors faculty and staff.”
- Christina Crowley

Apart from the academic and informative experience, the conference provides opportunities for networking and fun. A conference favorite is “City as Text,” a program in which participants explore certain areas of the host city, write a report on their discoveries with their group, and then present their experience to a larger group. Crowley, who participated in this program, said, “By the end, I almost felt like a local!” Indeed, Chicago itself largely contributed to the entire experience at the conference; McElroy said that his best memories included Chicago’s deep-dish pizza and “exploring downtown with three amazing friends.” The conference then ended with a flourish—a gala that offered good food, good entertainment (Chicago’s “Second City” performed) and good memories.

Homecoming Court and Honors: Honors Students Taking the Crown

By Bailey Zaputil



In 2006, James Ankrum was elected UI's Homecoming King after four years serving his school and community. Photo contributed by James Ankrum.

Homecoming is one of UI's largest and oldest traditions. Full of parades, festivities, and games, it is a celebration of the school and its Hawkeye Spirit. No place is more true than in the homecoming court, where a king and queen are crowned for being model Hawkeyes. Interestingly enough, many of these model Hawkeyes are also a part of the Honors Program, a fact which may surprise outsiders, but makes sense on closer inspection.

Associate Director of the Honors Program, Dr. Bob Kirby, said that the reason so many honors students are eligible for the homecoming court is because both programs have similar values.

"To a great extent, the homecoming court is selected based around scholarship, commitment to the university, engagement beyond the classroom," Kirby said, "which were all things that Honors promoted as values as well."

However, there are some components of Honors and homecoming that do not necessarily overlap, Kirby said. "I think for homecoming, when they look for the court, they are looking for students who have had a strong impact on the university, that have really put themselves forward to broadly engage themselves in activities, university-wide. And that could be through student government, leadership positions on campus, or actively going out and helping with recruiting students, so they are very public figures on campus. Many honors students don't play that role at all as they may want to focus in on a very specific area that they hope to move into for the future."

However, a strong mixture of both personal and interpersonal efforts may lead to success in the court. For example, in 2006, James Ankrum was crowned homecoming king alongside queen Kristi Musser. Ankrum graduated the same year with a BSE in biomedical engineering, went on to receive a masters in engineering design at Cambridge, and then a doctoral degree in medical engineering and medical physics through Harvard-MIT. Ankrum is now an assistant professor at Iowa, teaching biomedical engineering, and a researcher at the Fraternal Order of Eagles Diabetes Research Center.

But before that, he was a UI honors student, something he believes contributed to his potential as a homecoming court candidate.

"I don't know if most people realize this, but honors is always very well represented in the homecoming court," Ankrum explained in an email interview.

"Honors provides opportunities for students to be challenged and encourages students to pursue life-changing opportunities. These are both qualities that

factor into success not just in the homecoming court but graduate school and job applications as well."

Besides honors, Ankrum was also involved in many other activities, "the combination of which prepared me for many different future opportunities." He performed research with Dr. Wilder and Dr. Rahmatalla for over three years, served the community through 24/7 student ministries, tutored through the Engineering Tutor Center, and was the president of both the student Biomedical Engineering Society and the Engineering Honor Society Tau Beta Pi.

***"Honors provides opportunities for students to be challenged and encourages students to pursue life-changing opportunities."
- James Ankrum***

"I think honors students are naturally well qualified to compete for a spot on homecoming court. The homecoming court is always composed of great students who embody a certain drive and ambition that they can make an impact in this world, a quality often found in honors students," Ankrum said.

Honors Students Taking the Crown, continued

To apply to become king or queen, students must submit an application to the Center for Student Involvement & Leadership. Criteria asked for in the application include GPA, a letter of recommendation, and a two-page essay. The essay requires applicants to write on why they chose Iowa for school, why they think they deserve to be queen/king, their experiences, achievements and contributions at UI, and advice they would give to the next generation. From there, a board examines the applications, chooses the royalty, and that year's king and queen.

However rigorous the requirements for homecoming court may be, the end results are fun and enlightening, according to Ankrum.

"It was fun. My roommate, Tom Niblock, was also on court with me and I was friends with several of the other members of that year's court as well. Being involved in so many different activities you sometimes can lose sight of the greater campus, and homecoming week events were a great chance to be reminded of the big, diverse, wonderful community we have at the University of Iowa. Being king on homecoming was special, the sash got the homecoming court invited to pretty much every tailgate on the way to the game and even gained us access into the President's box to watch the game."

Ankrum encouraged everyone to apply. "Go for it! It is a really fun experience and you can never have enough practice writing essays and interviewing as these are skills that everyone needs for fellowships, job applications, and graduate school applications."



2015 Homecoming King Colton Jensen and Queen Elizabeth Mills
with Vice President for Student Life Tom Rocklin.

Photo from Iowa Now.

Do you have what it takes to be homecoming court material?



Every fall, students have the opportunity to apply for homecoming court, leading to the chance to be homecoming king or queen. However, the process is especially selective. Candidates must send in an application, recommendation letters, and be approved by a special board before they can move onto the court. The following are what applicants had to answer for the 2015 application process.

- a. What do you think the University of Iowa homecoming King and Queen represent and why would you be a qualified candidate?
- b. What factors played a key role in your decision to attend the University of Iowa? Over the years, has your view of the UI changed? If so, how?
- c. What do you feel has been your greatest achievement at the University of Iowa?
- d. Who do you admire most? In what ways do they inspire you?
- e. After your experience at the University of Iowa, what advice would you share with incoming freshman regarding how to be a successful student?

Engaged Social Innovation: Honors Pilots a New Major

By Katie Kiesewetter



Iowa student, Helaina Thompson, combines her love of yoga instruction and community with Iowa's new major, Engaged Social Innovation (ESI).
Photo by Katie Kiesewetter.

When attending a higher education institution like the University of Iowa, oftentimes students think learning can only occur in the classroom. This year, however, things are changing due to a new interdepartmental major—piloted by honors students—called Engaged Social Innovation (ESI). By taking their ideas out of the classroom, ESI students use what they have learned to develop creative solutions to social problems.

Engaged Social Innovation is not a standalone major; students are required to have an existing major and pair ESI with their current program of study. The idea is that students will take their passion for their primary major and tailor their studies in order to take their learning into community settings to change what they see as a social problem for the better.

As far as the in-class approach to this major, when ESI students are not out changing the world, they receive instruction in rhetoric, entrepreneurship, and community-building skills that they may apply to their creative, experiential projects. The benefits of this specific approach leave ESI students with knowledge from traditional coursework as well as applied fieldwork skills and new community connections.

According to Dr. Art Spisak, director of the Honors Program, “Engaged Social Innovation is a highly unique major. It allows honors students to apply the knowledge and expertise they gain

from their first major to a problem or issue in the community while they are still students at the university. These capstone projects—where they spend their final semester working in the community actually applying what they’ve learned—makes them all the more marketable since they come away with experience in the field. Also,

What is ESI?

The Engaged Social Innovation major track combines course work and experiential learning with a capstone internship designed to implement student-designed projects. By focusing on coursework with a strong hands-on component, the track encourages students to learn in multiple ways, both in and out of the classroom.

they’ve benefitted their community with their work—something that can be very fulfilling.”

Helaina Thompson, an ESI student also majoring in both health science and journalism & mass communication, created a highly unique project this semester, bringing her passion for yoga instruction to the Fatherhood Academy at the Iowa City Dream Center. She is working on designing a yoga class targeted towards fathers who are learning to reconnect with their children.

Honors Pilots a New Major, continued

Unique projects like this truly display how individualized this major can be. Prioritizing students' passion and involvement, early project and capstone possibilities are seemingly endless.

One faculty member who works closely with Helaina and her fellow students is David Gould. Gould, among other duties here at the university, teaches the course Life Design: Building Your Future. In this class, students are encouraged to take a test drive at building a project in order to prepare them for their capstone at the end of their college career.

"[Courses] you are taking should inform and change your perspective at the end of the semester. It's not a total about-face, but it is the ability for you to be able to take what you've learned and tweak your plan so you are able to shape this to become more focused as you go," Gould said.



ESI Students pose with Lt. Governor, Kim Reynolds. From l-r: David Gould, Allison Schafer, Dr. Bob Kirby, Jessica Graff, Penny Constantinou, Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds, Ben Marks, Christina Sullivan, Art Spisak, and Gina Cheiffo. Photo by the Honors Program.

This speaks to the borderless nature of the Engaged Social Innovation major. Students are able to really drive what it is that they do.

"There is something exciting for any student to realize they are the architect of their own education," Gould said, "and from the community's perspective, the idea that students are using their education to do good while they are in school." With an instructor like Gould, the inspiration is very likely to be reciprocated by the students. Creating projects that are bigger than themselves, ESI students are doing things not for themselves, but for others.

Gould believes that in a state like Iowa, full of small communities, there are many opportunities to work on a number of issues. Iowa's Lieutenant Governor, Kim Reynolds took notice and invited ESI students to the capital to see what they have been

doing. The ESI program has become more than school; it's real world experience. Gould used a sports metaphor, emphasizing what ESI students are doing is "not mock stuff, not fake stuff. This isn't practice; this is the game."

Gould said that his favorite part about his involvement with ESI is the course he teaches.

"It is the hardest class that I ever taught, and it is the most rewarding at the same time. The reason is that it is almost like raising children. Every single one of them will hit obstacles and need to be picked up, but they are bright. They want to do meaningful things. They care. We struggle through it together. I don't always have answers for them, but in a way we became very close and were able to work through these things together because they care deeply about what they are doing."

Honors students interested in this pragmatic way of learning are encouraged to apply to this unique program with caring instructors and meaningful opportunities. To learn more, visit the ESI informational page at www.honors.uiowa.edu/engaged-social-innovation.



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opportunities
and updates**

Honors in DC:

Once an Honorable, Always an Honorable

By Nate Hua

It seems like everywhere and anywhere I go, I meet fellow Hawkeyes. Doesn't matter if it's on a boat in the middle of the ocean, at a small bar in Colorado, on a guided hiking tour in Hawaii, at a coffee shop in Charleston, or wherever else, a classic "Go Hawks!" from the void around me is bound to draw my attention and produce those same, proud words from my own mouth in return.

Moments and networks like that should be celebrated. And they are. In the form of Hawkeye Caucuses.

This year, from November 3rd-5th, the Hawkeye Caucus was held in Washington D.C. An alumni outreach and gathering event, the Hawkeye Caucus is designed to recognize and appreciate the network of Hawkeye alumni all over the nation that continues to dedicate themselves to the University of Iowa.

For the Honors Program, this year's Hawkeye Caucus was a special one—the first one for the program. Associate director Bob Kirby traveled to D.C., spending the first night at dinner with honors alumni and Honors Advisory Board members Mike Brooks, Jacek Pruski, and Tom Niblock, strengthening the bond between honors alumni and the Honors Program.

At the Caucus, Honors—the only undergraduate program in a sea of university administration—was able to spend quality one-on-one time with administrative staff, emphasizing the supportive and catalytic role of the Honors Program student education. Honors alumni Mike Brooks, Jacek Pruski, Tom Niblock, and Lana Zak shared their honors experiences from their time as undergraduates to administrative staff, highlighting the success that the Honors Program has had in student engagement. Associate Director Bob Kirby spoke with many administrators including Dan Reed, the Vice President of Research, about the Honors Program—how it encourages the pursuit of knowledge, experience, and self discovery as well as how the program is evolving to even better facilitate its mission statement.

Conversations having turned gears and relationships having strengthened from the caucus, something continued to ring for the Honors Program even as the caucus ended.

"Make Your Connection." It's the Honors Program's slogan. It's something that was done at the Hawkeye Caucus. It's something that Bob, Mike, Jacek, Tom, and Lana talked a mighty deal about. Honors alumni are so well connected with each other and the program, but how can alumni become even more connected with what is most important about the Honors Program—it's current students?

Why not mentorship?



Honors Associate Director Bob Kirby promoting Honors at Iowa at the Hawkeye Caucus. Photo by UIowa Photography Services.

Honors alumni are all across the nation and world, pursuing all sorts of endeavors. Their experiences are not only incredibly valuable to themselves, but to current students—prospective dutiful citizens of society and the world. So many honors students are constrained to the knowledge of only a small window of opportunities, endeavors, and careers, but if they knew of people who had been in similar shoes during their undergraduate time and went on to pursue undertakings beyond that small window, honors students could dive into a whirlwind of new prospective ventures.

The hope is to establish a database in which honors students can approach the Honors Program and be matched to an alumnus with experience corresponding to the students' interests. And as honors students are able to develop relationships with alumni, making their connections, hopefully they will be able to gain more insight into the world outside of university—because networks like that should be celebrated.

So in the future, maybe it will be more than just a quick, passing "Go Hawks" that gets shouted out from the void; maybe deeper connections will be made.

Alumni and Friends:

Advising Honors

By Taylor Claman



Director of the Honors Program Art Spisak welcomes the board and guests at the fall dinner. Photo by Jessica Waldschmidt.

After graduating from the University of Iowa, honors students go off to pursue vigorous career paths, which sometimes mean having to travel around the world. For alumni Tom Niblock and Lana Zak, this is exactly what their careers have looked like since leaving Iowa City.

With his undergraduate degree already completed, Niblock continued his education in a master's program at Princeton in international relations and public policy. After Princeton, Niblock joined the Foreign Service with the U.S. State Department and served two tours at the U.S. embassies in Beijing, China, and Islamabad, Pakistan. He then returned to Washington D.C. and has since been working in a couple different State Department offices. Currently, he works in the Office of International Religious Freedom, where they promote the fundamental human right of religious freedom all over the world. While on campus, Niblock was involved with activities like the Hawkeye Marching Band, UI student government, and a few organizations at the Tippie College of Business.

Zak, too, has had an exciting career since graduating in 2000. Zak works as a correspondent for ABC News—you may see her on television, hear her on the radio, and even interact with her online. Through her job, Zak has had the opportunity to report from Korea, Hong Kong, South Africa and throughout the United States. ABC has recently relocated Zak from New York to Washington D.C. where she now covers politics and government. Before graduating, Zak was President of the UISG, a student proctor at the Blank Honors Center and active in the Human Rights Council, and she was also a resident assistant.

A few years and many accomplishments later, both Niblock and Zak find themselves coming back to their alma mater and instead of playing in the marching band or teaching in the BHC, these alumni are a part of the newly created Honors Advisory Board.

The board, founded in 2015, is comprised of eighteen members—seventeen of those being active members in its processes. Together, this board has started to meet semi-regularly to discuss what can be done, as an outside network, for Honors at Iowa.

“Their viewpoint and support are essential to both us and our students. It keeps us in tune with the world outside academia and also with the international community,” Director of the Honors Program Dr. Spisak wrote in the Fall 2015 Honors Newsletter.

Dr. Bob Kirby, Associate Director of the Honors Program, expressed that the board has high hopes for a more established manner of interacting with current students to provide learning opportunities, like internships or jobs, possibly via an online discussion board.

“In the short time the board has been in existence, we’ve already made great progress in creating additional opportunities, and I hope to continue that in the near future as well,” Niblock said, who is president of the board.

Other members of the board include attorney and Fulbright winner Dick Tyner, University of Iowa Foundation Executive Director Susan J. Hagan, and Dr. Ali Husain with Frederick Gastroenterology Associates in Maryland.

Women Who Rock:

An Honors Class Meets a Music Critic

By Katie Kiesewetter

Curious about what fellow Honors at Iowa students have been doing in the classroom, I took a trip to Donna Parsons's Honors course, Issues in Popular Music: Women Who Rock. In this class that covers students' literary, visual, and performing arts general education requirement, Parsons offers students a unique perspective on female rock musicians and how their music, lyrics, and diverse images have aided in the development of American and British cultures. From the Supremes to Amy Winehouse, the class learns about many powerful women and the ways their complex branch of rock and roll relate to and were influenced by key social justice movements in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. During my visit, the women (and men) who rock this class in 205 Phillips Hall were expecting a special guest via Skype session: Allan Kozinn, a renowned critic, reviewer, journalist, author, and Beatles scholar.



Donna Parsons teaches a wide range of unique classes like *Harry Potter and the Quest for Enlightenment*; *World of the Beatles*; and *Popular Music in the United States*. Photo contributed by Donna Parsons.

Keeping to the musical theme of the class, Parsons invited Kozinn to speak with her students in order to help them understand what it takes to write about music. Students came up with questions for Parsons to send to Kozinn ahead of time. After a brief biographical lecture telling his own musical story, Kozinn answered these questions and offered invaluable information to Parsons's ambitious students, and ambition is exactly what he encouraged.

In reference to why she specifically chose Kozinn to speak with the class, Parsons said, "Every semester I meet students who want to pursue a career in music criticism, but they are unsure how to make that dream a reality. Allan Kozinn is a world-class music critic who has reviewed performances by the leading classical music ensembles and artists in venues across the east coast. He is also a Beatles scholar who has taught undergraduate courses in popular music."

When talking about his life, Kozinn expressed that he always wanted to be involved with music, whether it be performing or writing. His parents told him he was "insane to major in music and expect to make a living." Yet, he did not let that stop him. While attending Syracuse University,

"Every semester I meet students who want to pursue a career in music criticism, but they are unsure how to make that dream a reality."

- Donna Parsons

Kozinn petitioned the journalism school so that he would be allowed to use music credits towards his journalism degree. Unfortunately, he was a bit ahead of his time for Syracuse. In order to meet his goals, Kozinn took approximately 187 credit hours and eventually graduated with separate degrees in music and journalism. Everyone in the room seemed awestruck by this number, but it obvious that this class of honors students knows what it's like to have ambitious goals.

Parsons encourages her students to take what they learned from Kozinn and apply it to daily classwork: "In our discussions of songs and video clips I ask my students to critique what they hear and see. I encourage them to speak their minds. Allan emphasized that 'a critic has a personal opinion.'

He acknowledged that as a critic 'you bring your tastes to your writing.' I want my students to understand that their opinions matter—that their ideas are just as valuable and informed as the student sitting next to them or in a classroom at another research institution."

One major point of advice Kozinn gave when discussing how he writes reviews was to "get fascinated by what's going into the songs... It's not just 'hey that's nice; I like it.' It's really sort of poring over what you've heard." One student asked Kozinn what

An Honors Class Meets a Music Critic, continued

he loves to see in the artists he reviews, and Kozinn answered that he is, “interested to see how hard people work before they make it. It takes a lot of work, a lot of tenacity, and the willingness to come back after being told no so many times.” Words like this can be applied to any sort of discipline, musical or otherwise. All honors students should think of their work this way: be fascinated, pour over it all, and always know that it takes hard work to make things happen.

Students who are interested in taking additional rock-themed classes taught with Parsons’s musical knowledge should check

out her other course listings like World of the Beatles and Popular Music in the United States. While these courses are not housed in the Honors College, students are always encouraged to contract non-honors courses for honors credit in areas they find interesting. Parsons also teaches the famous Harry Potter and the Quest for Enlightenment honors class, offered in the spring.

If you’d like to learn more about Honors at Iowa course offerings or how to contract a non-honors course for honors credit, visit www.honors.uiowa.edu and click the “Current Students” tab.

IPR Interview: Donna Parsons

Harry Potter Enlightenment

By Emmy Szymanski

This past fall, Iowa Public Radio’s Charity Nebbe interviewed UI Professor Donna Parsons on her Harry Potter and the Quest for Enlightenment class in order to find out more about the course and why this subject matter is worth being studied. In this interview, Parsons discusses how this class came to be and the adventure that her and her students embark on once the semester begins.

A professor in the School of Music, Parsons repertoire of classes include World of the Beatles, Issues in Popular Music: Women Who Rock, and Popular Music in the United States. Parsons also teaches for the University of Iowa Honors Program with an equally unique set of classes, such as: Sound and the Victorians, Jane and the Austenites and Harry Potter and the Quest for Enlightenment.

Parsons is a bit of a celebrity on campus. Even students who have not yet stepped foot on campus have heard of the unique classes she teaches and are eager to sign up for them—if there is room, that is.



To listen to Parson’s interview, you can go to: <http://iowapublicradio.org/>

Global Perspectives: India Winterim

By Emma Husar



Through India Winterim, students studied abroad in India and visited cultural and historical locations. India Winterim's unique program allows students to study in a variety of disciplines and communities. Photo credit to UI Study Abroad.

This winter break over 100 Iowa students furthered their education and learned to bridge cultural gaps in India. India Winterim is a study abroad program where students can escape the frost and snow of their winter breaks and indulge in the mild climates across India. However, it is not merely an escape to a warmer climate—it is a mission to enhance one's ability to “develop solutions to solve real-world problems.”

This opportunity is open to almost anyone on campus—undergraduate students, graduate students or community members with a specific interest in the areas of study can all apply. The 2015-2016 session, which ran from December 27 until January 17, had six courses: Sustainable Development: The Kerala Experience; Medicine in India: A Hospital-Based Experience; Healthcare and Entrepreneurship; Serving Children with Disabilities, Empowering Local Women, Assisting Older

Adults; Pain, Palliative Medicine, and Hospice Care: Learning from Each Other; and Development of Resilient and Sustainable Agricultural Watersheds.

These programs offer unique opportunities, providing Iowans experience helping those abroad. By way of lectures from University of Iowa professors and local representatives of partner organizations, students engage in a whole new world that broadens their perspective to places far beyond the confines of a classroom in Iowa City.

However, most of the lessons are not taught during lectures (like they are at the University of Iowa) but by way of hands-on, on-site excursions in order for face-to-face time with the people and Indian culture, as well as confronting some of India's social and environmental problems. Excursions include visits to local Non-

India Winterim, continued

governmental organizations (NGOs), engaging with their clientele, and visiting hospitals, museums, temples, and other significant historical, cultural, and environmental sites.

Through the course Sustainable Development: The Kerala Experience lead by Professor Jerry Anthony and located in Kochi and Trivandrum, Kerala, India, students are introduced to economic and urban development trends in Kerala. They study the environmental implications of those trends, and how individuals and organizations have attempted to facilitate environmentally sustainable development. Working alongside two course sponsors, “Inspiration”—an organization dedicated to building nature-friendly and sustainable designs for people looking to develop businesses and construct buildings in India—and “COSTFORD”—a nonprofit that, for four decades, “has been developing cutting edge lower-cost construction technology”—students observe how sustainable development can seriously improve the living conditions, where pollution and overpopulation pose serious health problems to the people and the environment.

Mary Heer, a student in the Entrepreneurship and Healthcare class taught by Bob and Kristy Walker, spent her break at the Aravind Eye Hospitals. These hospitals in Madurai, Tamil Nadu India were founded by Dr. Govindappa Venkataswamy in 1976 and are known for treating cataract-related blindness in India and being monetarily accessible to the population. “I’m in love with this place,” said Heer. The Winterim course not only offered assistance to the hospital but helped students learn effective problem-solving skills, how to analyze organizations in financial and economic terms, and how to work in professional group settings. These skills enhance UI students’ ability to interact with people on a global scale, analyze problems from places with a far different culture and background than their own, and to learn how to reach out to those in need now and in their futures.

These students, learning a wide variety of skillsets while helping people across the globe, have Professor Rajagopal of The Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences to thank. He founded the INDIA (India and Iowa) Winterim program in 2006 and has continued to direct it each year. The India Winterim program is open to students of all majors in good academic and disciplinary standing who have a clear interest and commitment to the specific course topic.

As student Bailey Zaputil puts it, the India Winterim “allow[s] students to travel abroad and consider social and environmental issues and how they intersect.”

Through India Winterim, students experience a country full of music, dance, folk traditions, and rites and rituals, thus expanding their ideas of culture and service. They then return to Iowa City with an enhanced understanding of the world and their place in it.



Top: UI Students partake in the Pongal Festival, Pondicherry. Bottom: UI Students at the Taj Mahal Gate, Agra. Photos from UI Study Abroad.

Honors Love Connection: Couples Brought Together by Honors at Iowa

By Eilidh Sperry

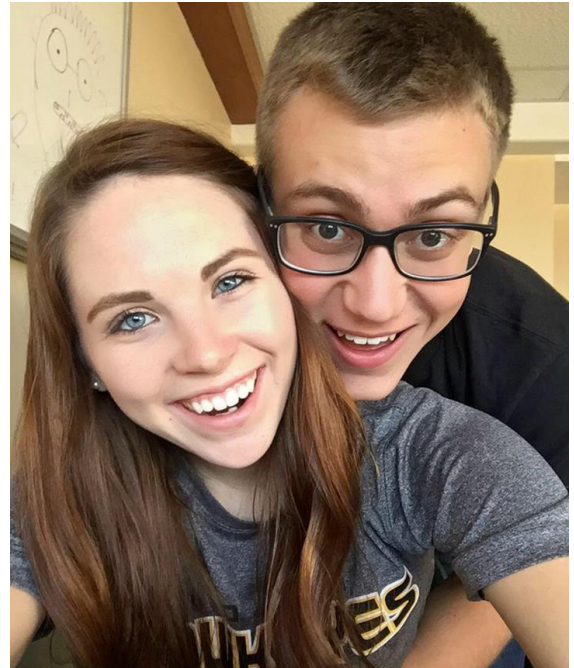
In the winter days between Valentine's Day and the approach of springtime, there is something in the air. People walk down the street hand-in-hand. Couples sit in their favorite coffee shops, talking over cups of tea. And the corners of the Blank Honors Center are filled with pairs studying. This is the time of year when friendships turn into something more, when fairytales begin in the snowy streets. And for many honors couples, the Honors Program is where their stories start. Some of these couples have just begun dating, others are married and some even have children.

FIRST COMES LOVE

Many stories and relationship begins with a once upon a time, and for the following two freshmen couples, their stories began at Daum, the Honors Residence Hall. Jenah Black and Jeffrey Clark moved onto the same floor at Daum and met early in their first semester when they attended a movie night to watch *Fight Club*. They became friends and, after a few months, started dating. Through sharing their interests, such as chess and the musical *Hamilton*, they got to know one another better. And while it is their first year at college, both have big goals for the future. Black is a double major in linguistics and psychology, and hopes to attend graduate school to pursue a PhD. Clark is pursuing an English major and a history minor. He wants to become a writer and perhaps attend graduate school.

Movie nights in Daum seem to be the beginning scene of the story of many honors couples. Douglas Sands and Kaitlin Reither arrived early this fall for Honors Primetime classes, but did not meet until Reither and her roommate had a movie night showing *Mulan*—which happened to be both Sands and Reither's favorite Disney movie. The couple, who live on the same floor in Daum, soon developed a relationship and have grown close over the past few months. While Reither studies biomedical science (on the pre-med track) and possibly microbiology, Sands is working on a major in English with an emphasis in creative writing. Reither plans to attend medical school after graduation, while Sands wants to go to the Iowa Writer's Workshop and become a fiction writer. Though they are flexible with their relationship and future together, Sands tells Reither that he would be happy to be her "bread-baking, book-writing space heater" while she is attending medical school.

THEN COMES MARRIAGE



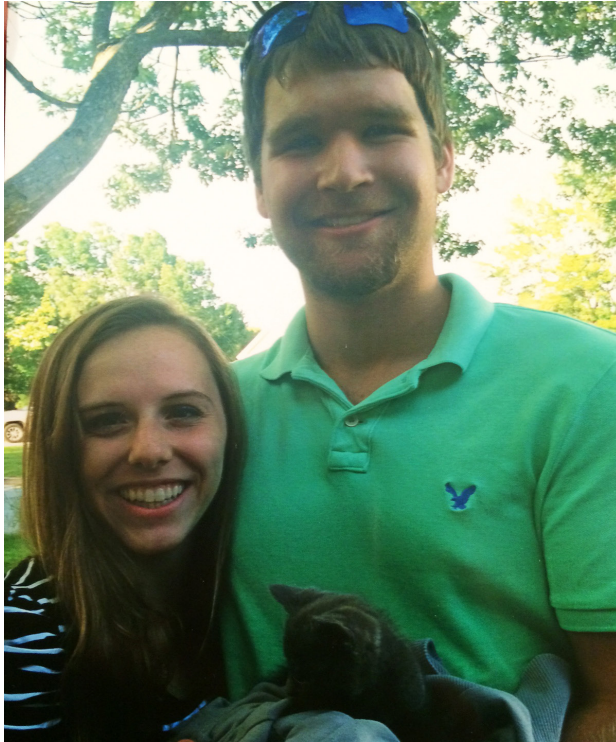
*Douglas Sands and Kaitlin Reither in Daum Hall. The couple met at a movie showing of *Mulan*, both Sand's and Reither's favorite movie.*

There are many honors couples who met through the program and have married. One of these couples, Mallory and Will Tollefson, started dating in 2013, during Mallory's first year at UI and Will's second year as an undergraduate. They met while they were both working in a computational biochemistry research laboratory after an Honors Contract Course had sparked their interests. They dated during the next year and in the summer of 2014, Will proposed to Mallory. They married five months later and afterwards Will graduated in 2015 with a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering with both UI and College of Engineering honors. Mallory is currently working toward a degree in biomedical engineering, while Will works as a software engineer at Rockwell Collins. They also have adopted a cat, whom they named Rotamer after a chemistry term.

THEN COMES A BABY IN A BABY CARRIAGE

Honors couples have had children of their own, and James and Laura Ankrum are one of these couples. Their story began when

Couples Brought Together by Honors at Iowa, continued



Mallory and Will Tollefson met in 2013 through Honors research. Two years later, they were married. Photo provided by couple.

they met in their Honors Rhetoric class during their first year as students. As they edited essays and speeches, they began to get to know one another and to realize that they had many of the same friends. During their time at the university, James and Laura developed their relationship, matured together and supported each other through their studies; Laura majored in music education and bassoon

performance, while James studied biomedical engineering. They became engaged in 2007, before James's graduation, and they married two weeks after Laura graduated in 2008. Now they live in Iowa with a two-year-old son and a six-month-old daughter. James teaches at UI as an assistant professor of Biomedical Engineering and is an investigator at the Diabetes Research



James and Laura Ankrum met in Honors Rhetoric as freshmen. The couple is now married with two children. Photo provided by couple.

Center, while Laura works part-time at Thirties Inc. as a Social Media Coordinator.

In any situation where a group of people are brought together, it is inevitable that friendships and relationships will form. The Honors Program is no different.

In any situation where a group of people are brought together, it is inevitable that friendships and relationships will form. The Honors Program is no different, and over the years, many couples have met each other at events through Honors at Iowa. Through classes, living in Daum Hall, or

the many opportunities provided by the Honors Program, many relationships have been created. All of these stories, whether they are just starting or are well into their happily-ever-afters, are examples of the Honors Love Connection: the couples brought together by the Honors Program.

Fall Undergraduate Research Festival: Featured in photos



New at the annual Fall Undergraduate Research Festival this fall, prospective honors students and their families attended the event. ICRU Director Bob Kirby, who also serves as associate director of Honors at Iowa, together with Research Ambassadors Lance Heady, Megan Helms, and Anya Kim give the visitors an overview and talk about what they could do as students at Iowa!



The University of Iowa Honors Program's Outreach Team, represented by (l-r) Courtney Bright, Hannah Gallo and Molly Georgia, live-tweeted the event.



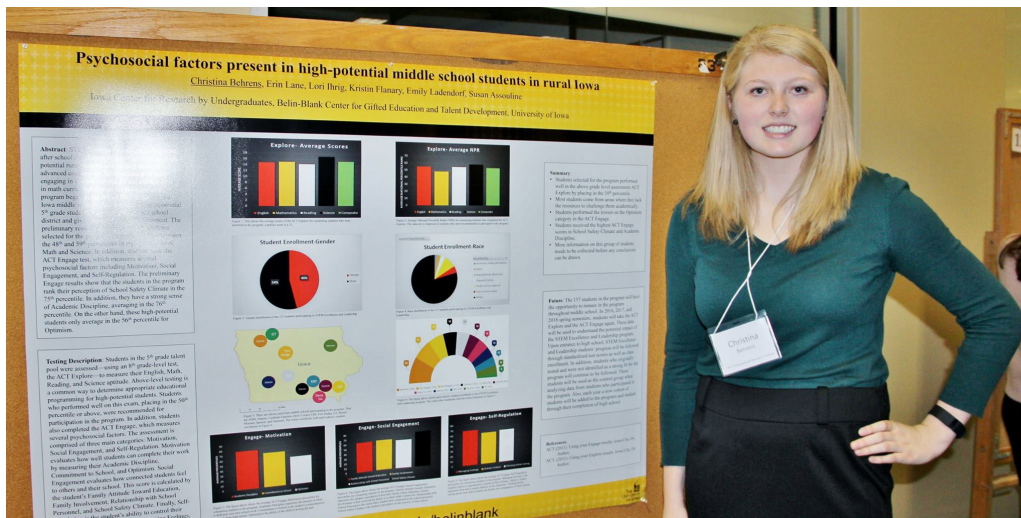
Daniel Coulthard demonstrates an aspect of his and Brandon Caswell's research titled "Geochemical and Petrographical Analyses of Off-Axis Volcanism on Snæfellsnes, Iceland." Coulthard majors in Geoscience and Environmental Science.



History major Taylor Finch's poster titled "Powerless, with a Guitar" explored music and student protest at the University of Iowa between the years of 1965 and 1971. Finch's mentor was Landon Storrs, History.

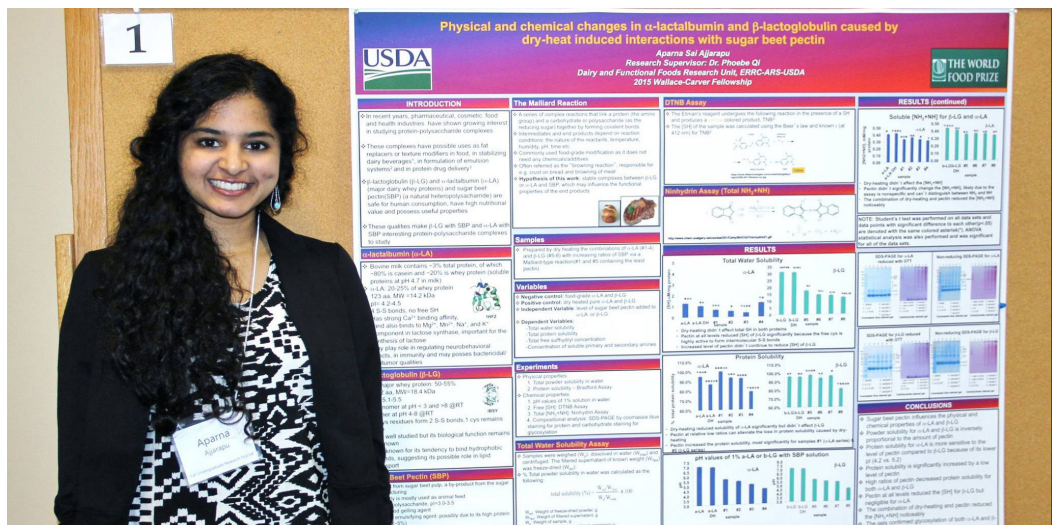
Featured in photos, continued

Bailey Hadnott presented on her study of Airborne PCBs in and Around New Bedford Harbor Area: A collaboration of the University of Iowa and Boston University Superfund Research Programs. She majors in Environmental Engineering. Mentors are Keri Hornbuckle and Andres Martinez, both of Civil/Environmental Engineering.



Christina Behrens, majoring in Psychology, presented on psychosocial factors present in talented and gifted middle school students in rural Iowa. By implementing a program called STEM Excellence and Leadership in 11 rural schools, Behrens was able to study and assess students for different psychosocial factors.

Aparna Ajarapu with her poster presentation about physical and chemical changes in β -lactoglobulin and α -lactalbumin caused by dry-heat induced interactions with sugar beet pectin. Ajarapu is a Biochemistry major. She was mentored by Phoebe Qi, Dairy and Functional Foods Unit, Eastern Regional Research Center, United States Department of Agriculture, Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania.



Highlights of Winter 2016:

Featured in photos



NCHC Conference

Sean Finn, Christina Crowley, Monisa Saravanan, and Kelly McElroy having fun at the Gala. Photo taken by Lindsay Marshall.



Alumni and Friends

Associate Director Bob Kirby, Advisory Board Members Brett Williams and Susan Hagan, and honors student James Ottavi. Photo by Jessica Waldschmidt.



Honors in DC

Alumni Jacek Pruski, Mike Brooks, and Lana Zak with Honors Associate Director Bob Kirby. Photo taken by UIowa Photography Services.

Meet the Writers

Honors Students at Your Service



Taylor Claman

Taylor Claman is a second-year Theatre and Spanish major, acquiring a writing certificate, and a member of Gamma Rho Lambda sorority. She loves plants, cats, and raw vegetables. She plans to study abroad in Argentina this fall and hopes to attend the Irish Writing Program next summer.



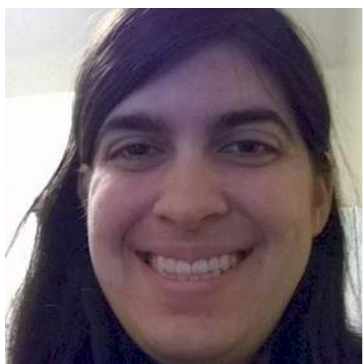
Nate Hua

Nate Hua is a senior about to graduate in May. He's hoping to do some traveling and eat chicken nuggets and procrastinate adulthood for as long as possible! Go Hawks!



Emma Husar

Emma Husar is a junior at the University of Iowa majoring in English. She loves to read and write, and plans to do so for years to come. From time to time she writes articles for the Honors Newsletter and quite enjoys her time discovering all the interesting opportunities the University offers as well as academic endeavors on which her peers embark!



Sophie Katz

Sophie Katz is an English and Psychology double-major in the University of Iowa Undergraduate Creative Writing Track who loves writing and reading more than anything. With a little luck, a lot of work, and just a bit of pixie dust, she hopes to live her dream of writing stories for Disney.

Honors Students at Your Service, continued



Katie Kiesewetter

Katie Kiesewetter is a sophomore majoring in English and Studio Art with a minor in Art History. Kiesewetter works for the Honors Program as a Student Admin, is on the Honors Outreach Committee, has also been an Honors Summer Ambassador, and conducts undergrad research through ICRU.



Onae Parker

Onae Parker a freshman from Adair, Iowa, who is currently studying Japanese, and plans to add another major in the near future. I enjoy classic literature, good coffee, Star Wars, and cats.



Eilidh Spery

Eilidh Spery is a freshman from Colorado and is majoring in English. She enjoys writing, reading, traveling, and playing guitar, and plans to pursue a career in creative writing.



Emmy Szymanski

Emmy Szymanski is studying English and French and has mixed feelings about graduating in less than four months. After graduation she plans on attending the Denver Publishing Institute to start a career as a copyeditor and translator, and then she will finally adopt a puppy.

Bailey Zaputil

Bailey Zaputil is a sophomore studying English and Journalism, with a certificate in Entrepreneurial Management. She enjoys drinking coffee, hanging with friends, working out, and reading books.





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