

ALUMNI CONNECTION

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HONORS PROGRAM | **FALL 2022**



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University of Iowa
Honors Program



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Livvi DiCicco & Airiana Mohr
Publications Editors

Thomas Duong & Lydia Guo
Design Editors

Holly Blosser Yoder
Staff Advisor

PAGE 01 Pictured: University of Iowa President Barbara Wilson conversing with honors students at a program event. Photo courtesy of Samm Yu.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

By Dr. Shaun Vecera



Photo courtesy of University of Iowa Office of Strategic Communication.

As you might imagine, the Honors Program has been the hub of much activity since our last *Alumni Connection* newsletter. I continue to learn in my role, but I'm a little further along on the learning curve than I was with my first newsletter this time last year. One of the best parts of my position, and of the program, continues to be the opportunity to work with my talented and dedicated staff colleagues and with honors program students.

On the staff front, I want to welcome some new additions to the program. Our first new addition is Administrative and Communications Coordinator

Veronica Sanchez. Veronica is a 2019 University of Iowa graduate in communication studies, and she has used her experience and talents to supervise our student staff and to keep the program working smoothly. I describe this position as being at the hub of everything we do in honors, and Veronica has become a valued colleague in a short time. Scholarship Coordinator Candice Wuehle is an Iowa graduate twice, with an undergraduate degree in English Literature and an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Candice brings a wealth of writing and teaching experience from both her PhD program at the University of Kansas and other positions. We're excited to tap Candice's skills to support our students' writing generally and their scholarship applications specifically.

Staff additions come with the news of others moving on. We've had three of our team move to exciting other positions on campus and elsewhere in the Big 10. Heidi Schmitt took her exceptional organizational skills—and other talents—to Facilities Management last August. We're excited for Camille Socarras, our previous scholarship coordinator, who landed a wonderful position as the assistant director of the Iowa Youth Writing Project (IYWP) at the university. Camille had a great rapport with many of our students and will be missed. Fortunately, she's still on campus, and we still see her regularly

and are working with her to make opportunities available for honors students as IYWP interns. And, inside this *Alumni Connection* you'll have an opportunity to learn more about the IYWP and honors interns. Finally, we recently learned that Alyssa Yao, our experiential learning coordinator, will be heading to Purdue for a new position in academic assessment and student success. We're excited for Alyssa because this position fits with Alyssa's interests in assessment. The position also connects back to Alyssa's first work with the honors program on an assessment project for a graduate program practicum.

On the student front, I want to highlight a new creative outlet in the program that was inspired and led by three students. (And, before I continue, I need to thank and credit our student editors for drafting the following section, which details the development of this new outlet.)

Julia Fout, Airiana Mohr, and Jacob Sammon, the three teaching assistants (TAs) for the Honors Publications course, collaborated to create a classroom initiative to supervise the creation of a new honors program publication, *Honorable Works*. We regularly highlight that the program is not about more work or harder work but instead about the pursuit of a deeper education within our respective majors.



Pictured: University of Iowa Honors Program students listening attentively to student speakers. Photo courtesy of Samm Yu.

As part of deepening their education, many honors students complete various projects to earn honors credit. Unfortunately, those projects might not always find an outlet and can slip away over time. *Honorable Works* is an opportunity for honors students of any year classification or discipline to share their work with the community. Whether it's a piece of creative writing, a summary of research, art or photography, the *Honorable Works* provides a platform for anyone.

I encourage you to view the inaugural *Honorable Works*, which appears on our website at this link.

The creation and development of *Honorable Works* took the considerable effort of many. In addition to thanking Julia, Airiana, and Jacob for their leadership and direction as TAs, I want to recognize and thank all of the students in Honors Publications who made possible this new outlet for other students: Jayli Carmichael, Dalton Elwood, Samm Yu, Molly Kilker, Katie Michalski, Maddy Padgett, and Gwen Peters. (And, please read more about Samm Yu's creative side in photography later in this issue.)

No recognition of the *Honorable Works* would be complete without also thanking and acknowledging the commitment of Holly Blosser Yoder for her support of this project and all of the other honors program publications,

including the *Alumni Connection*. Thank you, Holly!

I would also like to highlight Kate Glembocki's article below on the first year transition. Prior to becoming director, most of my honors program experience was with first-year students, by teaching an Honors Primetime session (our pre-semester bridge program), a first-year seminar, and making honors contract opportunities for students when I taught Introduction to Psychology. In all of these, I've seen the role that the honors program plays in helping provide students with a sense of community. I think that community is probably the program's most important contribution to students and student success. Here's the connection to psychological science that you were probably expecting: Social psychologists have identified connection and sense of belonging as one of the most important factors in retaining students in challenging classes and in college more broadly.

This semester, I worked with a colleague to make an honors contract opportunity for students who are enrolled in Elementary Psychology, a course that otherwise doesn't award honors credit. Twenty-five students and I have been reading and discussing Jennifer Ackerman's book *The Genius of Birds*, which has more relevance to psychological science than most

students would have expected. Beyond exposing students to ideas that were completely new, I had the opportunity to watch how the reading group developed into another community for students within the honors program. I've watched through the semester how students become more comfortable raising ideas and questions in the group and how they continue their discussions on their way out after we've finished. These types of interactions are hard to put a number or a grade on, but they impact our students by giving them shared experiences and introducing them to each other in a smaller context.

What created community for you in the honors program? Please feel free to share your experiences, stories, and memories about the program. And to re-connect with the program, follow us on Instagram (@uiowahonors) or on our LinkedIn group (aptly titled University of Iowa Honors Program).

Warmly,

Shaun Vecera
shaun-vecera@uiowa.edu
Director, UI Honors Program
Professor, Department of Psychological
& Brain Sciences

ADVOCATES FOR STUDENT GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

Former Undergraduate Student Government members are making an impact in politics, the justice system, and public service.

By Tyler Strand

For decades, UI Honors Program students have taken active roles in Undergraduate Student Government (USG). Through their experiences at Iowa, they come to understand the complex issues that face our communities and learn the importance of teamwork to address challenges and develop solutions. Many have also gained lasting friendships with other Hawkeyes who want to make a difference. Current UI third-year **Mariah McKenna**, a research assistant at the College of Engineering, is one of these students. “No matter your major, background, or involvement on campus, everyone is here to support each other,” she said. “We share the same goal and ambition to help students on campus and lead positive change.”



Mariah McKenna

Here are several honors and student government alumni who leveraged their experience into a fulfilling career:



Meredith DeBoom
(09BA)

Assistant Professor of Geography, University of South Carolina

Why I joined USG: USG is an excellent platform to make a positive difference on campus and in Iowa City. It also afforded me the opportunity to meet other students interested in public service and to learn more about campus, local, and state politics.

Career impact: USG strengthened my leadership skills—particularly in the areas of collaboration, vision, and communication—and boosted my confidence. The sense of vision I gained through USG enables me to think big picture in my work.

Best lesson: USG taught me how to be comfortable with contention and to build relationships with others not only despite our disagreements, but *through* those disagreements. The comfort I gained with difficult conversations and unresolved debates serves me well today.



Lauren Freeman
(17BA, 17BS)

Management Analyst, City of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

Why I joined USG: I was excited to represent student interests with university administrators, work on initiatives that could improve the student experience, and leave the university a little better than how I found it.

Career impact: USG operates just like government: we managed a budget, passed legislation, worked on projects that involved multiple stakeholders, lobbied for our initiatives to university administrators and elected officials, and listened to and advocated for students. I loved that I could see the tangible impact of my work on campus and wanted to translate that into a lifelong career.

Best lesson: Keep trying, even when you hear “no” or “we’ve tried that before.” It’s OK to try the same thing a few times if you truly believe it is the right thing to do.



Tom Niblock
(07BA, 07BBA)

Foreign Service Officer, U.S. Department of State

Why I joined USG: I wanted to get involved on campus in ways that would matter and make a positive, lasting impact on campus.

Career impact: USG provided an opportunity to show leadership, manage people and resources, and work through specific policy problems, all of which are part of my job today.

Best lesson: Losing an election by a huge margin in USG was a humbling experience but I learned a valuable lesson in how to recover from a setback, which has paid dividends throughout my career.



Nic Pottebaum
(13BS)

Health Policy Adviser, Office of Senator Charles E. Grassley

Why I joined USG: I was interested in politics and policymaking and simply wanted to serve.

Career impact: USG was an invaluable opportunity to serve the UI community and test every aspect of public service whether it was leading among your peers, managing a team, challenging your decision-making skills, or working with others who may not agree on the problem or solution.

Best lesson: Always assume a 'yes' is a 'maybe' and a 'maybe' is a 'no.' It will serve you well in politics and avoid misaligned expectations. You may not change an outcome, but you'll be better prepared for it.



Jacob Simpson
(18BA)

Community Resilience Liaison, Indiana Center for Rural Engagement

Why I joined USG: I was interested in a career in politics or government, and I thought USG would offer me valuable advocacy experience and networking opportunities. Once I was working in USG, I became more motivated by public service.

Career impact: Every day I rely on lessons and skills I gained from USG, especially because I work in higher education. I doubt I would be in my current job without that experience.

Best lesson: I learned the importance of trust. Whether applying for grants, conducting a research project, or launching social service programs, the foundation of success is the quality of trust between partners. USG allowed me to collaborate with students, administrators, faculty, and people outside the university. I learned how to listen for what matters to others, how to find common ground, and how to work from those points of connection.



Rachel Zuckerman
(17BA)

Special Advisor for Implementation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Why I joined USG: I was excited to collaborate with other student leaders to explore solutions to real challenges that students face. I was also drawn in by the idea of meeting like-minded friends and learning from older students who seemed exceptionally talented and passionate.

Career impact: The range and depth of experience you gain is invaluable. You get practice analyzing policy, managing budgets, engaging diverse stakeholders like lawmakers and administrators, and more. And the opportunity to make a substantive impact—at a relatively young age—is unmatched.

Best lesson: USG helped demystify the process of enacting meaningful change. I learned how to devise compelling and realistic solutions to difficult problems, build support for an idea, and look for areas of compromise—all essential skills for making a difference in the real world.

Tyler Strand

Tyler Strand is a writer and editor with the University of Iowa Center for Advancement.



REGENT REPRESENTATION

Get to Know Student Regent Abby Crow

By Katie Michalski

Every six years, the governor of Iowa selects an undergraduate student from one of the three state-funded universities: the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), Iowa State University (ISU), or the University of Iowa (UI) to serve on the Iowa Board of Regents.

According to the Governor's website, the Board of Regents was created in 1909 by the Iowa General Assembly and consists of a group of nine citizens who govern the public educational

institutions in the state (UNI, ISU, UI, and two K-12 entities: the Iowa School for the Deaf and the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired) through policymaking, coordination, and oversight, as provided by law.

The Board of Regents is well-known for making executive decisions that impact all state universities in Iowa, especially decisions pertaining to funding, tuition prices, and, in recent years, pandemic

protocols. Although eight members are typically established Iowans or otherwise accomplished career-oriented individuals, a student from a state-funded university occupies the ninth chair, according to custom.

In April 2021, Governor Kim Reynolds scheduled a meeting with honors student and health & human physiology major Abby Crow. Crow was offered the Student Regent position at the end of the meeting, and she has been serving on the nine-person Board of Regents ever since.

In her role as a student regent, Crow attends all of the Regent meetings, discusses student issues that affect Iowa's public universities, and votes on collegiate matters. Although Crow is only 22-years-old, most of her colleagues are nearing retirement.

"[The other regents] have so much knowledge and experience that they provide in meetings...I feel very supported and encouraged, and they are all very welcoming people who care a lot about the students that they are serving and the state as a whole," Crow remarks.

However, what Crow lacks in age, she supplements with her unique student perspective. Crow has been an important advisor on the student experience, especially in regards to



Pictured: Regent Abby Crow at the first in-person Board of Regents meeting post-COVID-19 in June 2021. Provided by Abby Crow.

BOARD OF REGENTS



Pictured: Board of Regents. Pictured Left to Right: Nancy Boettger, David Foster, Greta Rouse, Sherry Bates, Michael Richards, Abby Crow, Nancy Dunkell, Jim Lyndenmayer. Provided by Board of Regents.

current campus issues such as free speech and remote learning options. The other regents appreciate her honesty and tenacity. “Personally, I don’t feel uncomfortable asking difficult questions, or wanting to address problems that seem really tricky and nitpicky,” Crow said.

Nearing the one-year mark of her appointment, Crow has had an immense learning curve. Crow admits, “I acknowledge that I don’t know everything. When the finance committee meets, I freak out a little. I don’t know audits.” Despite her qualms, other regents have positive feedback regarding her experience.

Regent Greta Rouse, a former student regent herself, has the highest regard for Crow’s work. “I know the time commitment it takes to do this job well while still being a successful college student. Abby [Crow] has managed that balance extremely well. She has a passion for higher education, and her intelligence and drive make her an outstanding regent.”

Although Crow credits a lot of her academic and extracurricular background in aiding her in this new role, she acknowledges that her

“I know the time commitment it takes to do this job well while still being a successful college student. Abby [Crow] has managed that balance extremely well. She has a passion for higher education, and her intelligence and drive make her an outstanding regent.”

*- Greta Rouse
Regent*

time in UI’s Undergraduate Student Government has helped her the most. “Being able to speak through the microphone and command the attention of the room without feeling awkward or embarrassed...I’m better able to advocate and project my voice because of the work I did in student government,” she observed.

Crow was a senator and the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee for Undergraduate Student Government from fall 2019 to winter 2021. She is also an active member of Alpha Delta Pi sorority, a dedicated honors student, and a certified nursing assistant at the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics (UIHC).

As for the individuality of her position, Crow is generally satisfied serving as the sole student representative. “Maybe there could be more students; I feel like there could be more perspectives,” Crow suggests, “but I think nine is a really sweet number for decisions.”

Her colleagues seem to agree. Regent Rouse adds, “[Crow] is well-informed, well prepared and asks thoughtful, incisive questions about the issues that come before the Board. Students are well-represented by her.”

PRIDE AND POLITICS

Impact of Political Involvement as an Undergraduate Honors Student

By Jasmyn Jordan

According to the NBC Generation Lab Summer Survey, “34% [of class of 2025 students who were beginning their sophomore year] said they were optimistic about the U.S.’s future (down by 14 points from last year), and only 36% said they were optimistic about the world (down by 24 points).” Honors students John, Caleb, and Willie are just a few University of Iowa students who aim to increase these statistics. Their involvement in Young Americans for Freedom, Hawk the Vote, and University Democrats has positively shaped the campus’s political climate, and given them beneficial oppo tunities to add to their honors program experience.



Pictured: Hawk the Vote Ambassador holding an “I voted early” sticker. Provided by Hawk the Vote.

YOUNG AMERICANS FOR FREEDOM

John is a fourth-year computer science student who serves as secretary of the Iowa Young Americans for Freedom (YAF). Due to privacy reasons, John asked that only his first name be used. He has been a part of YAF since his first year of college after discovering the organization at the University of Iowa's Student Engagement Fair. John enjoys that YAF is simultaneously a place for like-minded students to socialize and a space for students to be immersed in effective activism. He has continued to be committed to YAF because of the unique and valuable friendships and connections he found there. John accepted the role of secretary on the YAF Executive Board to become a part of something bigger than himself and advance his leadership skills. His favorite part of YAF is planning and

"My experiences with YAF have given me a greater respect for the values of intellectual curiosity and creative engagement, which is at the core of what the honors program is all about."

- John



Pictured: Young Americans for Freedom Executive Board Members at Liberate America from Woke-ness Seminar in Dixon, Illinois. Provided by Jasmyn Jordan.

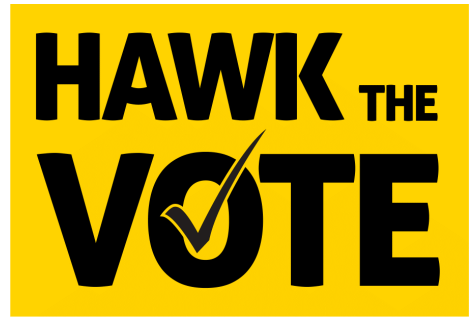
promoting speakers because he feels that these events leave a big impact on the community and motivate activists. As an honors program member, John has been able to fulfill his experiential learning requirements through volunteering with YAF. He believes that the honors program cultivates a culture of being open to new things which has inspired him to pursue a variety of productive and enriching experiences including YAF. Regarding honors,

John said, "My experiences with YAF have given me a greater respect for the values of intellectual curiosity and creative engagement, which is at the core of what the honors program is all about." Actively participating in the organization has motivated John to step out of his comfort zone and realize that being involved in something that does not fully align with his professional goals is still "meaningful and worthwhile in its own right."

HAWK THE VOTE

Caleb Slater, a fourth-year political science and philosophy student, has served as programming director for Hawk the Vote since January 2022. Created in 2018, Hawk the Vote is an initiative under the Office of Leadership, Service, and Student Engagement. Slater mentioned that the goals of the organization are to increase voter turnout on campus, both through educating students on opportunities to become engaged civically and through registering new voters. He joined Hawk the Vote after hearing about their efforts, his friends' involvement on the executive boards, and his desire to register more student voters since midterm elections were occurring soon. Slater said, "I thought it was important to make sure students would be able to use their voices at the ballot box. Many students simply forget, and many others don't realize that they can vote from their college town." He enjoys speaking to new people while tabling or delivering a presentation. His favorite topic to present is training students on finding internet misinformation. One of the given activities concerns

figuring out whether or not a social media profile is a bot. Slater expressed: "Many people don't realize how difficult this can be!" Slater applied for the programming director position because he felt that it suited him well since he planned events as a resident assistant and as the former president of University Democrats. Hawk the Vote has given Slater knowledge that he uses while working with the auditor's office and can utilize in the future. Slater appreciates the thorough knowledge of Iowa election law since he plans on attending law school. Hawk the Vote has also prompted rare connections with the University of Iowa and Johnson County communities for Slater's benefit. Hawk the Vote has given Slater advantages in knowing about how state government functions for his experiential learning course called Legislative Policy Seminar where he pursues research. Slater's goal is to "help build a group of civically engaged students who can help other students become civically engaged in the future!"



"I thought it was important to make sure students would be able to use their voices at the ballot box. Many students simply forget, and many others don't realize that they can vote from their college town."

- Caleb Slater



Pictured: Hawk the Vote ambassador registering students to vote. Provided by Hawk the Vote.

UNIVERSITY DEMOCRATS

Willie Zheng is a first-year pre-pharmacy student on the pharmacy assured admission track. He is heavily involved with University Democrats (UDems), and lives in the Political Matters Living Learning Community (LLC) in Catlett Residence Hall. Zheng has been motivated to be politically active ever since he was eligible to vote. He served as vice president of his high school's Democratic Party during his senior year to work towards electing Democrats at the state-level and nationwide. He was prompted to join UDems after learning about the organization's mission and purpose in the Political Matters LLC. Through UDems, Zheng has had the opportunity to go outside of his comfort zone and collaborate with advocacy organizations, political campaigns, and local politicians. He remarked, "Joining UDems will hopefully allow me to engage with voters here on campus and in the Iowa City area, to listen to their issues and come up with solutions, and expand my network of people, as it is my dream to run a successful campaign here in the state of Iowa." Zheng enjoys engaging with voters in Iowa City to discuss their issues and find solutions. Zheng hopes that these experiences will assist him with his first-year honors seminar class, titled Government and Politics At All Levels. During this course, group projects will begin soon, in which they will cover what national candidates accomplish in the community. Zheng joined the honors program to grow his

"Joining UDems will hopefully allow me to engage with voters here on campus and in the Iowa City area, to listen to their issues and come up with solutions, and expand my network of people, as it is my dream to run a successful campaign here in the state of Iowa."

- Willie Zheng

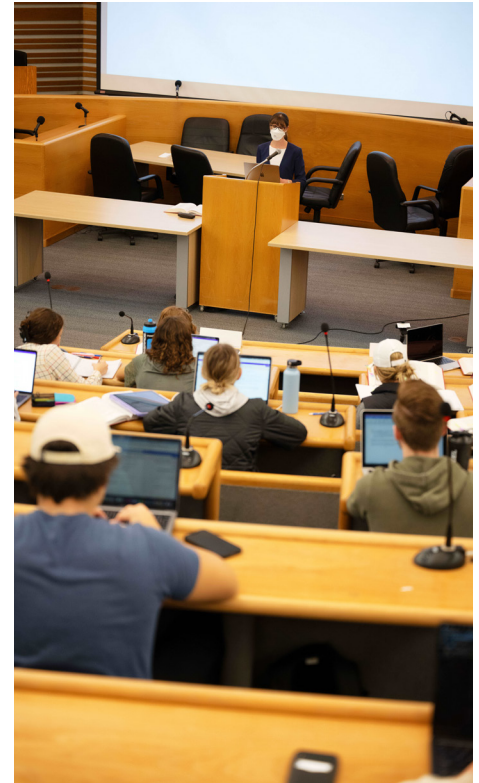


Photo courtesy of University of Iowa Office of Strategic Communication.

network and meet people with a variety of majors, goals, and achievements. Zheng's work as a Hawk the Vote ambassador overlaps with his UDems participation because he aims to get more young people to vote, which can be quite the challenge, due to college students being not as enthusiastic about or too busy to partake in politics. Zheng looks forward to changing this notion to ensure the protection of human rights.

By simultaneously participating in political organizations and the honors program at University of Iowa, students can grow their skills that will shape the destiny of their country and the world. Thus, college students can become more hopeful about the future, and confident in their abilities to change it, whether that be through voting in competitive and non-competitive elections or attending a political event.

I CALL THIS MEETING TO ORDER



USG students including Sierra Wicks (second from the right) pose for a photo outside the Supreme Court building in Washington D.C.
Provided by Sierra Wicks

Honors Civic Engagement Through Student Government
By Airiana Mohr

Every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m., the bang of a gavel signifies the start of Undergraduate Student Government (USG) Senate meetings where students, elected by their peers, present and vote on pieces of legislation pertaining to campus. USG has long been prevalent at Iowa and honors students are often deeply engaged. Nearly 100 students are involved in USG each year serving in one of its three branches: legislative (senate), executive cabinet, or newly reformed student judicial court, and honors students can often be found among its ranks. According to USG's Spring 2022 demographic report, just under 40 of USG's members were members of the honors program for the 2021-2022 academic year.

At Iowa, student government is part of a unique system known as "shared governance"—a process of decision-making where stakeholders are invited to advise and collaborate on key conversations affecting the outcomes and goals of the university. At Iowa, student government is included in the small number of groups who get a seat at the table, often having representatives on search committees, task forces, and operational conversations. For fourth-year honors student Patrick Johnson, participating in that system has been eye-opening. "Our shared governance structure is one of the strongest in the region. If there is an issue or change students would like addressed, we know that our voices will be heard," Johnson reflected.

At the core of Student Government's values is its dedication to civic engagement—a term that many students describe differently. For fourth-year honors student Sierra Wicks, USG helped her define all the aspects civic engagement encompasses. "I used to think of civic engagement as just voting, but now that definition is broader and includes things like advocating for specific policies, helping inform people about the actions of local, state, and federal governments, and even community service," Wicks said.

Wicks and Johnson are no strangers to

"Student government has given me first-hand experience navigating the legislative system and has helped me create countless connections with people working in politics. It has also given me the opportunity to organize large-scale advocacy events."

- Sierra Wicks

any of those components. Though both originally served as at-large senators in their first year (2019-2020), each has moved through the ranks, serving as committee chairs (2020-2021) and directors in the executive cabinet (2021-2022). USG has nine committees each led by a member of the executive cabinet, and all senate members are required to serve on two. As senators, Wicks and Johnson were able to find committees they were interested in and work on initiatives through them. Wicks focused on the governmental relations (GR) committee, while Johnson had interests in the finance committee.

For Wicks, a political science and ethics and public policy major, serving as the director of governmental relations has enabled her to dive right into the political system — an experience that will be valuable for her future. She has traveled to Washington D.C. twice to advocate for students with Iowa's federal representatives and led weekly trips throughout the spring to Iowa's state capitol to meet with state representatives. "Student government has given me first-hand experience navigating the legislative system and has helped me create countless connections with people working in politics. It has also given me the opportunity to organize large-scale advocacy events," Wicks said.

Wicks was one of the organizers of one of UI's biggest advocacy events—Hawkeye Caucus Day—a joint advocacy event at Iowa's state capitol between USG, Graduate and Professional Student Government, and university administrators. It was the first one held since 2019, and students were eager to speak to representatives about issues across campus and the state. For Wicks, this planning experience will be invaluable for her career. While she is not sure what she wants to do specifically, she mentioned interests in the Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, non-profit work, or positions that will play on her governmental relations work.

Johnson, a double major in political science and economics, served last

year as the director of finance where he helped allocate funding from the student activity fee and managed the organization's finances. This year, he serves as the student body president. "If you would have told me four years ago that I would be where I am today, I would have laughed at you," Johnson said.

While Johnson may not have been expecting his current role, he is well prepared for it. Johnson spent the last few years not only looking at the internal operations of the organization but also connecting with students and seeing what issues matter to them most. Johnson cited the positions he has held as both a committee chair and director for the success he has had in connecting with student organizations. They often connect on the basis of funding, but the conversation grows from there. Johnson, who hopes to go to law school after graduation, mentioned that the connections he has made, the cross-disciplinary areas of advocacy, and the projects he has pursued have prepared him for the rigor of law school.

Both Wicks and Johnson encourage students who are passionate about bettering campus and creating change—the reason they both decided to pursue the organization—to consider running for election in the spring. For them, the benefits reach beyond just making a better campus. "You can empower yourself to create that change through USG, all while opening doors, making connections and friendships that will last a lifetime." Both mentioned the networking and experience that can benefit every student regardless of major. They also reflected fondly on projects they've been able to pursue that they know will benefit students

For Wicks, her time in USG has come to a close. This fall, she worked on a campaign as a finance staffer—an opportunity that comes only every few years, and one that she was excited to pursue. For Johnson, he is hard at work in his new position and looking forward to how much his administration will accomplish.



President Patrick Johnson and Vice President Vera Barkosky pose with Herky at the Iowa State Capitol for Hawkeye Caucus Day. Provided by Patrick Johnson.

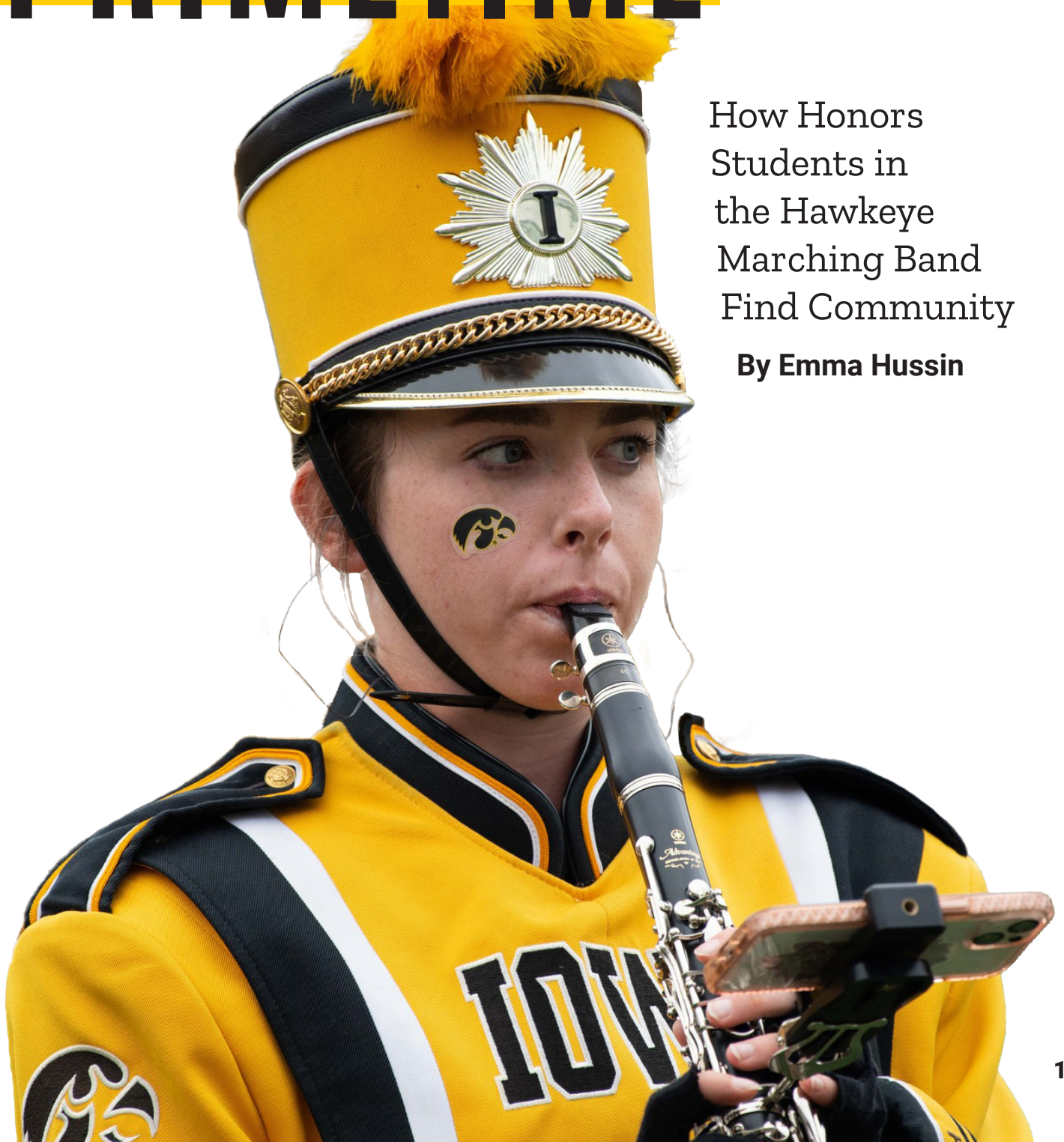
For students who are interested in Undergraduate Student Government (USG), information can be found at:

<https://usg.uiowa.edu>

IN TIME WITH PRIMETIME

How Honors
Students in
the Hawkeye
Marching Band
Find Community

By Emma Hussin



For typical first-ear University of Iowa honors students, early move-in day seems like a breeze. After spending most of the day lugging various types of Room Essentials™ furniture up the stairs and hanging one-too-many command strips on the wall, students are free to relax, mingle with people on their floor, and explore the campus. They excitedly await the start of their first college course during Honors Primetime where an array of possibilities call to them; unless they are a member of the Hawkeye Marching Band (HMB).

Much like students participating in Primetime, members of the HMB move in early. However, they attend a band camp instead of Honors Primetime. The HMB maintains a rigorous schedule, practicing for nine hours each day in the week leading up to the beginning of the semester. Daily rehearsals consist of learning marching fundamentals and drill movements in preparation for the HMB's first pregame and half-time performances at the University of Iowa's Kinnick Stadium. Dr. Emily Hill, associate director of the UI Honors Program, recognized the difficulty in attempting to fit HMB students into Primetime. "We've tried to work with the marching band in the past," said Dr. Hill. "But students are required to be in class for a certain amount of time in order to get the semester hour credit for Primetime, and students in the band can't do that due to rehearsals." Even though students cannot participate in Primetime, HMB camp does provide first-ear students with the unique opportunity to experience college life before the semester begins.

Josie Burkett, a first-ear honors student and clarinet player in the band, considered how she felt when she discovered she would have to miss Primetime. "There were some things I was bummed to miss out on," Burkett said. "But I thought the main purpose of Primetime was to make friends, and I would already be doing that in marching

**"Your
[instrument]
section becomes
your family very
quickly, and
each section has
traditions and
occasions that
make you feel
like a part of
something really
cool."**

- Jenna Zimmerman

band." The orientation and the first day of camp welcomes only first-ear members, giving them a chance to get comfortable with their fellow peers as well as the student leadership in the band that guide the camp. The trek to the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Complex, where the band hosts their daily rehearsals, allows first-ears to navigate and learn the Cambus system with the help of the experienced band members and get to know one another on the rides across campus.

Access to older students gives first-ear members an inside view of

college life that Primetime doesn't offer. Jenna Zimmerman, a fourth-year honors student, clarinet player, and undergraduate staff member for the HMB, reflected on the benefits she received as a first-ear student in the band. "The biggest thing was having access to upperclassmen, especially some close to my field of study, biology," Zimmerman said. "It was really nice to have that relationship with older students because they're so wise when it comes to classes and college life." During her time on the student leadership team, Zimmerman recalled how she felt as a first-ear and paid special attention to making new band members feel welcome and comfortable. "Your [instrument] section becomes your family very quickly, and each section has traditions and occasions that make you feel like a part of something really cool." With activities such as outings to Coral Ridge Mall and section lunches, the student leadership team dedicates meaningful time in order to ensure that each new member of the band feels at home. In addition to section hangouts, each first-year member of the HMB gets assigned an upperclassman "buddy" towards the back half of the camp on the basis of a student's major and instrument section. The buddies serve as a friendly source of information, and as an introduction to getting to know the older members within the section. This system fosters community building within the HMB by encouraging interactions between all members of the band, regardless of age.

In contrast with the ease of making friends with her fellow bandmates, Zimmerman worried about finding friendship within the honors program. "I lived in Daum as a first-ear. I was 'the roommate who was never here,'" she said. "But that wasn't an issue at all. I had no trouble integrating." Daum Hall is the only residence hall on campus restricted to honors students. Rather than a single

floor serving as the Living Learning Community, the entire residence hall is composed of members of the honors program. Students connect outside of an academic environment through community-building events like movie nights and scavenger hunts.

The honors program seeks to ensure that each of its members find their place, even if they miss out on Honors Primetime to take part in one of the best college marching bands in the country. First-year students engage with the honors program through a required first year honors seminar. Ariana Neziroski, a first-year honors

student and clarinet player, is enrolled in the seminar about futurology. “We only meet up once a week, but I still really enjoy the class,” Neziroski said. “I like how the professor brings current topics into our discussions.” Honors-only classes provide students with the opportunity to learn with like-minded individuals that share the same passion for academic rigor and critical thinking.

The honors program provides an array of opportunities for students to get to know their fellow honors classmates, well beyond the week of Honors Primetime. Zimmerman currently serves as the vice president

of the Presidential Scholars Program, Neziroski hopes to do a chemistry-related project through honors, and Burkett looks forward to eventually studying abroad.

Community exists everywhere at the University of Iowa. In classes, student organizations, or residence halls, students are encouraged to find a place or two that feel like home. For honors students in the HMB, a sense of belonging and community develops at various points across campus, from the Blank Honors Center, to the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Complex, to the football field



Picture: Jenna Zimmerman performing the “Hercules” half-time show at the Iowa vs. South Dakota State football game. Provided by Tim Schoon and Brian Ray.

FIRST-YEAR, FRESH FACES

Advice for the Honors First-Year Transition

By Kate Glembocki

The college transition is difficult for everyone, especially when students are faced with homesickness, challenging classes, and new environments. However, with this transition comes many new and exciting opportunities. For honors students, these opportunities are wide-reaching and great for building connections. In the end, being successful in the first semester takes strength and using the right resources. Overall, if you're struggling with the new transition as an honors student, these insights may be just what you need to embrace the new college experience.

The Division of Student Life offers numerous resources to incoming students. Many are focused on community building and creating a sense of belonging. Vice President for Student Life Sarah Hansen has over 25 years of experience working with students and understands the ins and outs of the college transition. According to Hansen, "One of the most important things we know is that the sooner you find a sense of community, the more likely you are to succeed. So we do a lot of things around community building. The honors program is a great example." When it comes to college, finding a sense of belonging is crucial. The community that surrounds you, peers, faculty, and staff, is what makes

"That ability to be uncomfortable and embrace the ambiguity of life at college is super important. Students experience that in all different ways; some of our highest achieving students have the hardest time with that. So I would just say cultivate that comfort with discomfort."

*-Sarah Hansen,
Vice President of Student Life*

up your experience on campus. When it comes to being a high-achieving honors student, having a close community is vital to academic success.

Along with this, the college transition provides unfamiliar experiences and perspectives. Some students embrace these new changes, while other students find it difficult. As Hansen pointed out: "The most important thing you can get used to is being uncomfortable. Being comfortable with being uncomfortable is a part of growth. And staying in your little comfort zone is not going to help you be the full Hawkeye that you can be." Switching out of old mindsets and expanding to a broader worldview is key to college success. For example, many of the structured mindsets taken from high school are limiting. College is an uncertain time, and the standardized step-by-step process of high school doesn't always translate well into university life, especially if you were high-achieving. As Hansen explained: "That ability to be uncomfortable and embrace the ambiguity of life at college is super important. Students experience that in all different ways; some of our highest achieving students have the hardest time with that. I would just say cultivate that comfort with discomfort. Try something that scares you." Being open to new experiences is important in being a successful

student. Luckily, college is the perfect time for experimentation. Mistakes are expected, in growing as a student. There's no one right way to do college, and many first-ear students learn to embrace that.

One place where, honors students have found communities is in the honors residence hall, Daum. When asked about her experience in Daum, Hannah Zipf, a first-ear honors student, said: "We're always together. We're more than just floormates. We're like a family. And I think that helps with the transition because when people miss their families, it's not as hard when you find this new family to be surrounded by." Daum offers a wide range of floor events and activities that have brought students together. "We have so much fun. Whether that's bowling in the hallway, movie nights, trivia nights, etc., we're always together, and that's my

favorite," Zipf remarked.

On top of that, students find that the honors program itself helps in connect them. The honors program has plenty of resources, such as Honors Primetime and honors-specific classes and activities to get students together. Keagan Kirkpatrick, a first-ear honors student, stated, "I feel like the honors program definitely benefited me in making friends. Living in [Daum] and doing primetime has helped me build a community and have fun, especially in the first week"

Many students reported that having an honors-centered community allowed for an easier first-ear transition, resulting in less homesickness and a better sense of belonging.

Nick Theuerkauf, a first-ear staying in Daum, remarked, "Everyone's been super nice. And if you ever have a question on homework, there's always

someone on the floor who's a genius in that topic. It's so nice being with other academically minded people." Beyond simply academic and emotional support, the friendships created in the residence halls are great for having fun and getting your mind off school. Maile Huffman, a first-ear Daum resident, said while laughing, "I like when it's eleven o'clock at night, and I hear [other students] screaming down the hall. That's pretty nice. It's great to be with people who have a similar track of mind." The best advice for a smooth transition is to focus on the community around you and understand that discomfort is part of the process. With the transition to college in mind, it's important to realize that ambiguity will always be part of college, and there's never one right way to be an honors student.



Pictured: First-year Daum residents posing for a photo with President Barbara Wilson during OnIowa Week. Provided by Keagan Kirkpatrick.

WRITE ON

Honors Interns and the Iowa Youth Writing Project

By Hannah Cargo

Is Iowa City a City of Literature for all ages? The Iowa Youth Writing Project (IYWP), a community-based program, hopes to address just that. Sophie Wagner, a first-year honors student, notes that “writing can feel inaccessible when you’re a kid,” with programs being either expensive or far away. IYWP remedies that by connecting children and teens with volunteers of all backgrounds. The goal? Fostering a love and skill for writing. This fall, IYWP began its programming again with help from the University of Iowa Honors Program.

As a part of the honors program, students can gain experiential learning credit. This allows students to take a more adventurous, hands-on style approach to learning. Serving as an intern in IYWP is one of those opportunities. Student interns work with kids of many ages and backgrounds, as IYWP extends from kindergarten to twelfth grade and across eastern Iowa. Volunteers and interns in the IYWP regularly host writing events, after-school programs, or other artistic events in classrooms. They also plan for larger community events, like author visits or college admission essay courses. As Camille Socarras, Associate Director of IYWP put it, “Who doesn’t want to spend an hour a week with funny kids?” The focus for honors students is adaptivity. They serve as a bridge between the Magid Center for Writing, which is the project’s university partner, and the larger community. Like any other internship, students are building skills like communication, event planning, and flexibility, but they also get to build exciting relationships.

“IYWP shows kids that it is possible to get your work published [...] that writing isn’t as unattainable as it’s sometimes made out to be. Or it just shows kids that writing is fun.”

- Sophie Wagner

To the students working with IYWP, the internship is an exciting new way to interact with their community. Wagner is a newly accepted member of the programming and coverage crew team. This involves photographing and arranging media output for IYWP events. Wagner hopes to improve her skills in journalism and said she is “excited because [IYWP] gives me an opportunity to see a lot of different places.” Although most of the activity within the IYWP is still adjusting back to in-person events, interns and volunteers can expect to travel at least weekly to school events.

When it comes to volunteering at IYWP, there is also a deeply emotional impact. Many people feel a sense of dedication to the community, the craft of writing, or children’s well-being. Socarras said, “As an Iowa City native, it’s important to me to actively contribute to my home community.” The University of Iowa, being a creative writing hub, is full of students who were fortunate enough to be encouraged in their youth. Many feel they should return the favor. Wagner, who also calls Iowa City home, remembers once being a student in the IYWP. She said, “There was a day when we had to walk around Iowa City and write about what we saw. We did a similar thing in Honors Primetime, and it brought me back to that.” Creating that timeless love of learning is a crucial part of IYWP.

The Iowa Youth Writing Project is especially important now; after the past few years, many children are eager to take part in school programs. If IYWP’s printed collections of youth writing show anything, the kids are



Pictured: Students at Horace Mann Elementary embrace an IYWP volunteer, 2015. Provided by Camille Socarras.

brimming with creativity. Wagner finds the program’s work inspiring, which is just what the community needs: “IYWP shows kids that it is possible to get your work published, and that writing isn’t as unattainable as it’s sometimes made out to be. Or it just shows kids that writing is fun.” Socarras thinks that kids need creative collaboration even though it is often dismissed in favor of scientific fi lds. She said, “I think it’s so easily forgotten that creativity is a

skill. Being able to express yourself—knowing yourself—also contributes to being a successful STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math] person.” Socarras believes that honors students are working to make sure that children feel heard and seen, both artistically and personally. Volunteers remind them that they matter.

So is Iowa City a City of Literature for all ages? IYWP answers with a resounding “yes!”

For those interested, the IYWP volunteer form is open to anyone and located on their website:

<https://iywp.org/work-with-us/volunteers>

SECURING A DREAM JOB

How Students Prepare for Internships

By Jade Utech

Students and young professionals with internship experience are 35 percent more likely to get at least one job offer after graduating than those without internship experience. The University of Iowa takes advantage of this, adding career preparation to the traditional focus on gaining knowledge.

The UI Honors Program is a beacon of support for prospective interns. The program encourages students to explore internships as a way to fulfill their experiential learning requirements. Honors peer mentors often refer students to the Pomerantz Career Center (PCC), where students can schedule an appointment with a PCC advisor specializing in finding internships. The PCC also provides mock interview training and assistance for writing resumes. Due to its resource variety, the PCC has a 95 percent job and graduate school placement rate, according to the University of Iowa.

The University of Iowa's accounting program encourages students to do at least one internship during their college career to give them hands-on career experience. After a student finishes their internship, they feel more confident about their classroom performance and ability to communicate professionally. Additionally, the accounting industry hires associates a year in advance, and internships are an effective way to



Photo courtesy of University of Iowa Office of Strategic Communication.

secure a full-time offer after graduation. With a shortage of new accounting graduates, firms are competing for students' attention. It is common for students to have multiple offers that will translate into full-time positions.

The accounting program provides several opportunities for aspiring accountants to connect with accounting firms. Their flagship event, Meet the Firms, happens every year in September. The 2022 event was held on September 14th. It hosts prominent companies such as Deloitte, PwC, John Deere, and Principal Financial. At Meet the Firms, students interact with firm representatives to learn about internship opportunities.

Kevin Den Adel, an accounting professor at the University of Iowa, says Meet the Firms is an excellent opportunity for students to put their names out there and obtain their first internships. "Meet the Firms allows our students to get a chance to interact with a variety of employers within the accounting industry," Den Adel said. "Most of my students get their first full-time jobs from their internships, so Meet the Firms sets students up for a career after graduation."

Den Adel said that he sees several positive developments in students that have attended. "Most students, especially younger ones, gain more confidence after speaking to companies at Meet the Firms... When they get to the interview stage of applying for an internship, they are more prepared in answering questions and having conversations in a professional setting."

Ryan Stoakes, a fourth-year honors student and accounting major will graduate with his accounting and finance degrees in May 2023 and has accepted a full-time offer with Plante Moran for August 2023. Stoakes emphasized the importance of internships in improving communication and professional skills, two things that accounting firms look for in prospective employees.

Complementing the career center and departmental efforts, the University

"Through the assignments I did for honors over the summer, I learned more about my likes and dislikes, which helped me know what I wanted to pursue within accounting. The program also does an excellent job of teaching someone how to reflect, which is essential for knowing your path after your internship."

- Ryan Stoakes

of Iowa Honors Program provides students with opportunities to reflect on how they have grown during their college experience.

"Through the assignments I did for honors over the summer, I learned more about my likes and dislikes, which helped me know what I wanted to pursue within accounting. The program also does an excellent job of teaching someone how to reflect, which is essential for knowing your path after your internship," said Stoakes.

Applying for internships is a daunting task. Students go through several interviews before receiving an offer. Many feel nervous and unsure of how to make connections. Den Adel offered some advice for prospective students: "Make sure to get out there and see what is available around you. Try to attend as many recruiting events as you can. Companies often give students opportunities to meet recruiters who can give you a career opportunity."

From a student perspective, Stoakes believes that having a positive attitude and a readiness to learn from others is a great way to gain confidence.

"Put yourself out there. Don't be afraid to reach for your goals. Apply for any position that sounds interesting to you, even if it sounds difficult "

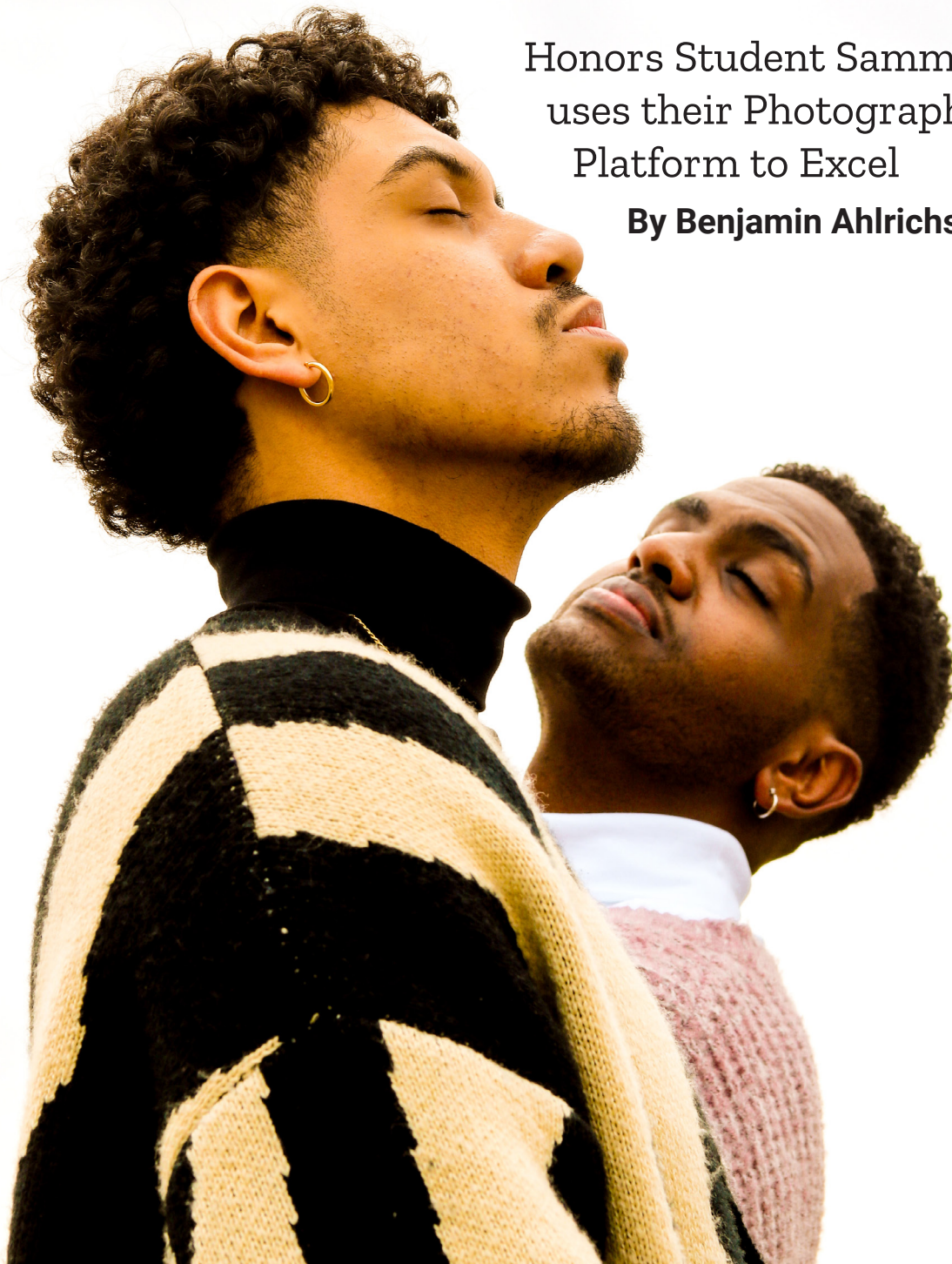
Check out the University of Iowa Honors Program blog *Note to Self* where honors students reflect on what they gained from internships!

<https://honorsatiowa.wordpress.com>

CAPTURING THE MOMENT

Honors Student Samm Yu
uses their Photography
Platform to Excel

By Benjamin Ahlrichs



Photographer, honors student, and member of the Presidential Scholars Program (PSP) Samm Yu stretches the impact of their creative platform from Blank Honors Center (BHC) all the way into Iowa City's streets. Yu, a second-year, studies psychology and is also pursuing a Certificate in Critical Cultural Competence, as well as a minor in Chinese.

Though Yu is a student in the honors program, they are also one of the few student-staff members for the program. Yu began working with the honors program at the beginning of 2022 through the Honors Publications course, their first article being a photo essay on the PSP's Valentine's day card-making event. Throughout the event, Yu was given complete creative control. They staged photos, created and used their own props, and captured images representing the program. Yu said they had a lot of fun with the event, "[It] allowed me to have a creative direction role, something I have never ever done before."

After these initial events, Yu got more involved with the honors program. Yu also took photos for an honors program bingo night. PSP hosted the event to raise money for war relief in Ukraine. The event gave Yu experience in working with their peers and served as a volunteer opportunity for the required spring PSP seminar.

During their first year, Yu also became involved with several literary magazines on campus. Yu served as the art and photography editor for the first-year literary magazine *Ink Lit Mag*. They got involved with *Ink* after learning about the publication during their Honors Primetime class, *On Paper, in Print: Publishing at Iowa*, taught by Director of the UI Magid Center Daniel Khalastchi. The experience allowed Yu to use their photography skills in a different manner. Yu said, "I used a lot of my photography skills in *Ink* to talk about art, and I ended up realizing that I have a lot more arts knowledge than I previously had thought." Working on *Ink* staff also allowed Yu to advocate representation while curating pieces for



Pictured: Samm Yu holding their camera. Provided by Samm Yu.

the magazine as an art editor. Yu said, "My art is a lot about representation. With my own business, in my own space, I don't think I would have access to that kind of influence"

Representation is a central value of Yu's art as a photographer, but also as a business owner. During the spring

semester, they had the opportunity to direct and shoot the cover image for UI literary magazine *Patchworks*. The *Patchworks* editor reached out to them after hearing about Yu's past work with photography through the university. Yu knew they wanted to use their platform to bring representation

to the magazine. *Patchworks* had never featured masculine-presenting models on the cover. Yu knew they wanted to use the magazine cover as a platform to give Black Folx space in a predominantly white setting.

They explained, "I was intentional about finding Black male models to be spotlighted and take up space on this cover. It was important to me, *Patchwork's* editor-in-chief, and the models that the shoot evoked softness and a gentle harmony with nature and each other." Using their creative control, Yu accomplished all of these things, reaffirming their mission as an artist—to use their platform to uplift underrepresented communities through art.

Recently, Yu got selected as a semifinalist in a national sweepstakes giveaway hosted by Bubblr, promoted by Olympic Gold Medalist Suni Lee. It asked young people across the country to post a social media video explaining how they would use the reward. In Yu's video, they shared their plan to use the money to establish a fund, that would allow for low-income folks to utilize their photography services for free.

"I feel a lot bolder when I take photos. I feel like I can advocate for myself when I have a camera with me."

- Samm Yu

After watching their video, Yu was selected to move forward to the final round of the giveaway.

After learning about moving forward in the giveaway, Yu states "[I was] really surprised and happy, and excited too." Despite not making it to the final round, Yu received \$500 and a brand package from Bubblr [the brand hosting the competition]. Alongside the money, Yu also received exposure from the competition. "It has to be worth something. I had to post a ton of photos and make a lot of content, which led to me leaning on the community. [I had] people show up for me in so many amazing ways."

It all boils down to Yu's passion for photography. Their work in the honors program has allowed them to grow as a photographer and artist, but has also encouraged personal growth for them as well. "I feel a lot bolder when I take photos. I feel like I can advocate for myself when I have a camera with me," they said.

In a final note, Yu offers advice to incoming first-years and new members to the honors program, "My biggest advice would be to consistently show up to events. It's a great way to be involved and see the same people over and over again, without making big commitments. Going to community events and showing up in these spaces also helps to build relationships with the people who plan these events." Yu also encourages attending Multicultural Student Association events. "I built great bonds, reinvested in other people's clubs, and attended women of color network events, where I found communities of color and learned about identities and how communities come together."

They have already begun continuing their work with the honors program this semester, taking photos of several events including the PSP Presidential Welcome at UI President Barbara Wilson's house in September. Yu is living proof that dedication and passion for your craft can take you anywhere you need to go.



Pictured: UI Mascot Herky handing out juice boxes to PSP students at a spring PSP event. Provided by Samm Yu.

LIKE A 5K

Designing a Publication

By Julia Fout

Do you ever, when reading an article from an Honors Publication, like you are now, find yourself curious as to how each piece you've read is so cleanly allotted to only one or two pages, even though the amount of text on each page seems to vary? Do you ever peer closely and wonder why some pieces of text, like our titles, have different spacing between their letters? No? Perhaps these incredibly tedious elements fell below your conscious reader radar. Indeed, this is part of these design elements' purpose.

All of these—even minute—details communicate meaning and pique intrigue. Without effective color blocking, pull quotes, images and font choices, our publication would be reduced to lonely words on a page. These articles do not miraculously appear on the pages. Blood, sweat, and hours-at-a-time Zoom meetings are behind every color choice, type-setting, quote pop-outs, and caption: essentially every element you see that makes your experience differ from strictly reading words. This crucial work that infuses our publications with energy is the result of designers like our very own Thomas Duong and Lydia Guo.

Without much design experience myself, I was eager to sit down with Thomas and Lydia to ask them about their personal relationships to design:

JULIA: *What do you like most about design?*

THOMAS: I really enjoy putting together a visually appealing page. It makes it super fun for the reader to interact with but also makes it easier for the article to be even more meaningful to people.

LYDIA: I put a lot of effort into our designs. It is something that I am very proud of... especially now with stressful classes—it's just a break from everything. I feel like it's something I'm good

at and I really like it. But putting on your headphones, listening to music, grinding out designs and seeing that everything is falling into place... that's probably one of the best aspects of it.

JULIA: *What initially drew you into design work?*

THOMAS: I'm not exactly sure why I was involved in design in the first place. I just stumbled into it.

(All three laugh.)

But again, that feeling of satisfaction for design resonated with me. There's always so much you can do with design—there is always so much you can improve with it.

I feel a sense of accomplishment in coming up with an idea and putting it onto a page. There is always an end goal that you have to meet and once you meet that end goal for designing, it feels like the same way you feel after finishing a 5k race.



Pictured: Thomas Duong and Lydia Guo on the 4th floor of BHC. P ovided by Julia Fout.

LYDIA: Designing immediately pulled me in. I was taking a lot of art classes in high school. Art has been something I have always liked... it was an outlet for me to explore the world when there were things that stopped me from doing that... that's where my love for art was born.

In terms of the work we do for the honors program, we both thought these design positions would be a great way to still get involved with design because that was something I defin tely felt I was missing in my first year of college. Since we are both science majors, we did feel disconnected from all the work that we did in high school, so it was a great way to pull that into our undergraduate journey and continue design- ing.

In terms of these publications, Thomas and I, we touched every single page, every single page we did something. We fit in here.

- Lydia Guo

Not only that, but entering college where there's such a huge population of students, I just wanted to find a community—find something I was fam- ilar with because pre-med courses are pretty tough. I didn't know exactly where I fit in.

In terms of these publications, Thomas and I, we touched every single page, ev- ery single page we did something. We fit in he e.

JULIA: *So far, we've been talking about design's most appealing facets, but not every aspect of the process is easy. What can you say are the most chal- lenging parts?*

THOMAS: Honestly, there are a lot of growing pains in trying to come up with

ideas or experiencing difficult in putting my ideas on the page. That stuff took me forever to get down.

LYDIA: Yeah, the problem is, in design, there is no one correct way.

THOMAS: Often it takes so long to put everything on the page. Once you have all the design elements it's not that bad because all you have to do is rearrange things, add some other features and that all comes together pretty quickly...

But the initial thought and putting everything together in an organized concise manner is super difficult

LYDIA: For me, it's fun arranging the elements to make them fit. But a major pet peeve of mine is when the text columns don't match up at the bottom.

THOMAS: It's like a puzzle, you can't change the pieces.

JULIA: *How did you go about learning how to spot design faux pas or using various software?*

LYDIA: Neither of us really received any formal design training from an experienced designer. There was no one to directly teach us how to use Adobe Illustrator. So that was the biggest challenge: mastering those programs.

THOMAS: Yeah, the programs can be pretty tricky. You have to stick with it, there is a learning curve but once you get over it, you'll have skills you can use for everything.

JULIA: *What is one piece of advice you would want to go back and tell yourself when you first began design work?*

LYDIA: I wish I was more flexible, as I used to be very hesitant to try a lot of different styles. Designs may need to be tweaked depending on the content and themes of the article, so I would remind my past self to stay open-minded.

THOMAS: Designing is much like writ-

"There is always an end goal that you have to meet and once you meet that end goal for designing, it feels like the same way you feel after finishing a 5k race."

- Thomas Duong

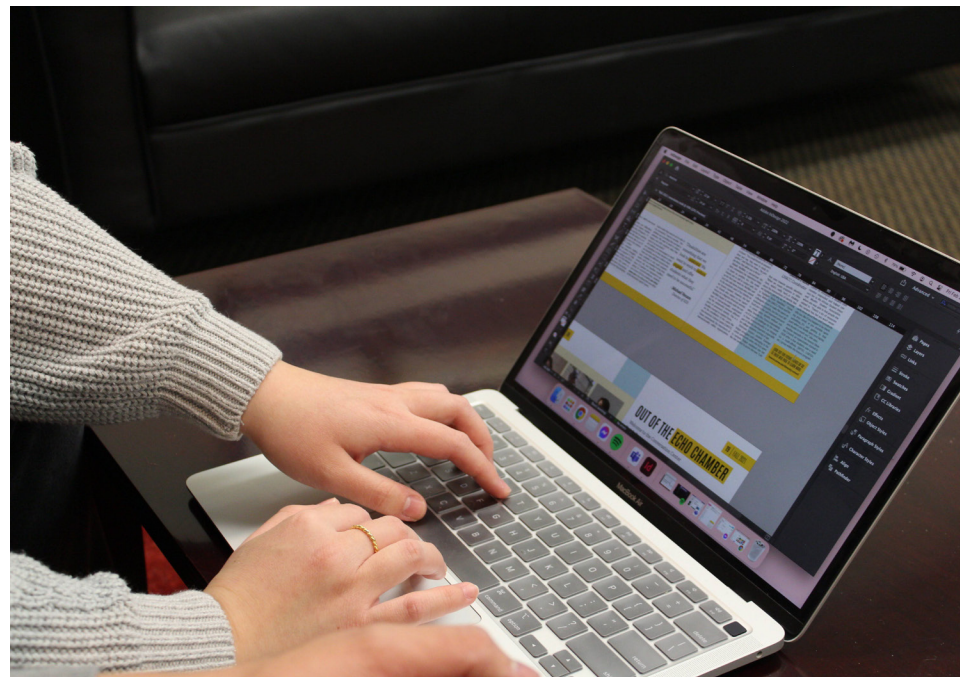
ing. It's essential to have some sort of plan going in. There will be rough drafts and imperfections, you just need to put that all out on the page first then go back and rework everything. I would tell myself that it's really important to have just something at least...then go from there.

JULIA: *Do you have any words of advice for people interested in or just becoming interested in design?*

THOMAS: I don't think you necessarily need to have a huge grasp of every design skill, but just knowing a little bit about some key elements is extremely helpful.

LYDIA: Don't be afraid to learn from others.

This is something I was nervous about. I didn't want to copy anyone's design, but inspiration is hugely important. If I didn't search for inspiration, I would struggle a lot. Learning from other people's artwork is important, you can understand what is trending, find out what styles you like, or even consult online tutorials.



Pictured: Thomas Duong and Lydia Guo working on designing a newsletter. Provided by Julia Fout.

MEET THE TEAM

Honors student writers and editors



Holly Blosser-Yoder

Holly serves as the advisor to Honors Publications, the student editors and writers who produce the Honors Newsletter, Alumni Connection and many articles on the Honors Program blog. A writer with an interest in history and culture. Holly is the author of *The Same Spirit: History of Iowa-Nebraska Mennonites*.



Livvi DiCicco

Livvi is a third-year student from Phoenixville, PA, majoring in English & creative writing with minors in philosophy and French. She enjoys writing speculative fiction short stories and is working on an original period romance novel. In her free time, she either reads or creates digital art.



Thomas Duong

Thomas is a fourth-year student from Iowa City, Iowa, with microbiology and biomedical sciences majors on the pre-medical track. Besides his studies, Thomas plays the snare drum for the Hawkeye Marching Band, is an undergraduate researcher, and served as president of UNICEF Iowa. He enjoys sports, biking, and traveling.



Lydia Guo

Lydia is a fourth-year studying biomedical sciences and is a design editor for Honors Publications. She serves as an undergraduate research assistant, honors student administrative assistant, and unit mentor volunteer at the UIHC. In her free time, Lydia enjoys oil painting at her local art studio.



Airiana Mohr

Airiana is a fourth-year student from Machesney Park, Illinois studying neuroscience with minors in Spanish and psychology. Aside from her studies, Airiana spends most of her time in her research lab or working with the numerous student organizations she is a member of.



Benjamin Ahlrichs

Benjamin is a first-year student from West Des Moines, Iowa, majoring in English and creative writing and journalism on the pre-law track. While at the University of Iowa, he hopes to progress in his skills as a reader, writer, and editor.



Hannah Cargo

Hannah is a second-year student from the Dallas-Forth Worth area in Texas. She's majoring in creative writing and environmental planning and is enjoying her time in Iowa. Hannah hopes to make the world a better place (and maybe have some fun while doing it).



Kate Glembocki

Kate is a first-year from Phoenix, Arizona, majoring in English & creative writing on the publishing track with a second major in business marketing. She hopes to hone her skills in publishing and go on to work as an editor or book designer.



Emma Hussin

Emma is a first-year student from Tulsa, Oklahoma majoring in English and creative writing and journalism and mass communications. She hopes to learn more about literature while studying at the University of Iowa. Outside of school, she enjoys reading, writing, composing music, and playing the clarinet.



Jasmyn Jordan

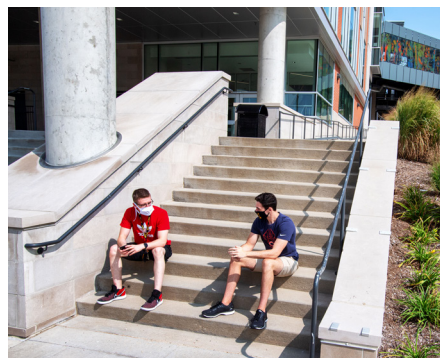
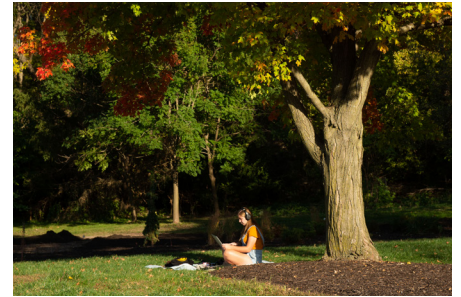
Jasmyn is a second-year student from Normal, Illinois majoring in political science and international relations on the pre-law track. Aside from her studies, Jasmyn is Vice-Chair of Young Americans for Freedom, a member of Phi Alpha Delta Pre-Law Fraternity, a Student Reporter for the College Fix, and working on two political campaigns.



Jade Utech

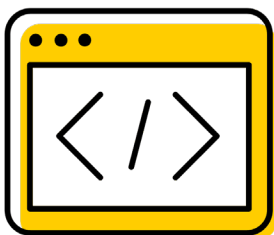
Jade is a fourth-year student from Sioux City, Iowa, majoring in accounting. She enjoys reading and cooking in her free time. While at Iowa, she plans to develop her communication skills.

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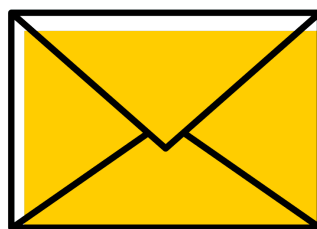
Photos courtesy of the University of Iowa Office of Strategic Communication.

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