# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Note from the Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Education Honors Opportunity Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Meet the President: Nicholas Pottebaum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Writing Fellows Find New Challenges Overseas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Challenge &amp; Change in California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Music, Mentoring, Medicine: Emily Gross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Andy Stoll and the James Gang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Honors Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Watching for Opportunity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I offer you a very warm welcome for fall semester of the 2012-2013 academic year. I completed my first year here at Iowa as Honors director, and I feel the pride and excitement in being part of this university even more so than when I first came. I have found my co-workers across campus to be highly capable, dedicated, and supportive. The Honors Program itself offers incredible resources—both in personnel and otherwise; it’s hard to imagine a better place to work.

I want to let you know that a major change has occurred in Honors at Iowa. In our last newsletter you heard that the Honors staff was working to assess our current program to see how our students are making use of it. We wanted to see what the most active students in the program are doing with it so that we could then set program requirements to match. Using the data gathered from our self-assessment, the feedback from the two Honors advisory groups as well as various other individuals and groups across campus that are involved with honors education, the Honors staff made recommendations to the Provost to require a total of twenty-four hours of honors classes and honors experiential work for students to graduate as part of the University of Iowa Honors Program. These new requirements will take effect in the summer of 2013.

The effects of these changes in the Honors Program will be numerous. For example, they will bring our program in line with national standards for honors programs and colleges, and we will be able to verify officially—on the transcript—that our students have completed a certified honors experience. Also, the new program requirements will guide our students in using Honors to their best advantage. As it is now, students (and their
advisors) aren’t always clear on what they should be doing for their Honors experience. A third effect of the proposed changes is that having specific requirements will help the Honors staff acquire and allocate resources more effectively. For example, currently we sometimes have too few Honors classes in certain areas, and in other areas we are not able to fill deserving Honors courses. A program with well-defined requirements will make the management and implementation of honors opportunities easier.

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 proposed changes in the program. I’m always happy to have such conversations.

Art L. Spisak
Director, ui Honors Program
Since 1992, the Honors Opportunity Program (HOP) has proposed diverse possibilities to College of Education (COE) undergraduates. Through research with a faculty mentor as well as involvement in activities that expand the typical undergraduate experience, pre-service teachers graduate from the University of Iowa with Honors. As Rachel Revelez, a current HOP student, notes, “I like HOP because of the challenge it adds to my College of Ed experience.”

Consequently, HOP students become professionals with greater understanding of the potential for research in their classrooms. In addition to developing greater expertise in research methodologies, the program reinforces pride in academic scholarship and promotes innovative explorations of professional practice. These energetic, enthusiastic, and well-prepared educators are crucial to enhancing the educational foundations essential for the future.

HOP is open to all COE students who have achieved a University of Iowa GPA of 3.5 or above. With a letter of recommendation from a faculty member, any motivated student whose GPA does not meet the requirement may still participate in HOP. Students enroll in a weekly seminar in the spring semester; those who have class conflicts can participate via ICON.
HOP offers students in the Teacher Education Program an opportunity to understand the rationale for and policies related to human subjects research. Students complete the training required to ensure that research will focus on the welfare of those participating in the study.

Students who complete the requirements for HOP strengthen their resumes with the kinds of activities needed in school districts today. Students are encouraged to participate in honors organizations, take honors classes, and earn graduate credit; they dedicate time to volunteer in educational settings, often with diverse students; some go abroad to complete part of their student teaching experience.

The program expands students’ awareness of research conducted by COE faculty and staff and of opportunities through the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU). HOP promotes educational research that will improve participants’ teaching and better prepare them to consider graduate work. Research presentations promote confidence in sharing expertise in areas as diverse as approaches to remedial reading, the Songwriters’ Workshop at the Iowa Medical and Classification Center, street art, and role-playing games in education. As Mike Kedzie, a recent HOP graduate, noted: “When I joined I thought that the only benefit I would get would be a better-looking resume, but I have gained so much more. HOP gave me the opportunity to work with like-minded peers in the School of Education, introduced me to the research process, and helped me verify my interest in gifted education.”

HOP students have received multiple scholarships, including the Rhodes Dunlap and the Collegiate Scholars Award. Seniors can apply for the David & Connie Belin Honors Award, recognition and a monetary award reserved exclusively for those who successfully complete HOP—and some of those HOP graduates have dedicated the Belin Honors Award to materials for their new classrooms, expanding a cycle of commitment to excellence in learning.
Meet the President: Nicholas Pottebaum

EDITORS' NOTE:
The 2012-2013 Student Body President Nicholas Pottebaum is a political science and economics major as well as an active member of the Honors program. Deeply involved in both campus affairs and research, he is an Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates Fellow, the Jacob A. Swisher Prize recipient, and a Harry S. Truman Scholarship Finalist. He took time out of his busy schedule to talk to us about his relationship with the Honors program and his numerous involvements.

Do you have any mentors? How did you build these relationships?

Many and at varying degrees. Most specifically, I have people who I have sought out in the university and from my past internships working for the Governor's Office and Rockwell-Collins. I built them like any other sort of relationship. Meaning, one that helps me professionally as a way to get to my career goals/aspirations and to develop my professional skills (e.g., public speaking). It took time and those relationships exist as mentors today because I value the advice they provide and I continue to work at these relationships constantly. That means checking in via email or in person every so often (whether it’s biweekly or every few months) through sitting down for coffee or lunch. Building relationships wasn't something I did well four or
five years ago, but since I have been at college, it is something I have really come to value. However, mentor relationships aren't just for selfish reasons, I continue these relationships because I value these people as dear friends, too.

What is your Honors research about? How has research shaped you intellectually?

My honors research is about county collaboration practices and county consolidations. The original report was to look at what sorts of cost inefficiencies and quality negatives exist for Iowa county governments. Then, the second report I worked on included a survey of Iowa county officials to look at the extent of county collaboration (i.e., local government to local government service coordination or sharing). The findings from the two reports presented that small populated counties are costly from a financial standpoint and do not provide a quality of service that they could if they collaborated more or had a greater county population based on a few models.

The second report was made possible by an Iowa Research by Undergraduates (icru) fellowship and the Jacob A Swisher Prize. The second report included a county government official survey that had a response of 66% (which is really good for a survey of this kind). This research over the past 2.5 years has really allowed me to expand my policy writing research skills. This includes an ability to lead a group of people who are my peers, a graduate student, and a professor on a research project. In addition, I have really independently dictated how the direction of the project went and the sort of output. The independence has been really beneficial to me. It has provided the leeway to be creative in policy research and development and research an area of policy that has really little research.

This is the second in a two-part study of Iowa county governments; the first report is available online at Iowa Policy Research Organization website (www.uiowa.edu/~ipro). The research suggests a need for policy to encourage greater collaboration in providing services with the goal of more efficient local governments in the 21st Century.
What is the Honors community like? What kinds of engagement and support does it provide?

The Honors community, for me, is a place where like-minded students can network, stretch themselves, and relax. Many people in the Honors community value the diversity of experiences and interest no matter if they come from a physics major background or political science. And that's a neat concept you can't find in other communities at the University of Iowa. Furthermore, the Honors community provides opportunities academically and socially to expand your horizons. I have had a meaningful and well-rounded Honors experience and I owe the program much credit to be my academic success. My experience has included: Honors Primetime, Honors Nexus (in Mayflower as a Freshman), ICFRC (mainly in my first-year), Honors seminars, Honors designations, the Iowa Policy Research Organization (IPRO), ICRU, Honors Ambassadors, Honors Peer Advising.

What advice would you give first-year Honors students?

Find something you are really passionate with and do it well. Having a variety of experiences is good, but not having a single thing that is meaningful can compromise what you do and the sort of depth that comes from doing one or two things really well. For me, that has been the Iowa Policy Research Organization (IPRO), a two-semester course sequence focused on writing legislative policy briefings through the Honors Program and Political Science Department. I participated as a student in the course (or seminar) beginning as a Freshman under Professor Caroline Tolbert and then served as the undergraduate teaching assistant my sophomore into junior year under Professor Rene Rocha. My time in IPRO was not only meaningful in terms of my academic experience, but reinforced and provided opportunity for a career in the public policy field.
What is one thing about yourself that would surprise other people?

I am a huge soccer fanatic. From the moment I was able to walk I played soccer in pee wee league to club soccer to being on varsity in high school all four years. The game itself has been meaningful and I continue to follow closely. My soccer interests today particularly lies in us mens soccer. Being around me during a us mens soccer game (friendly or a competitive match) is probably not an ideal situation if you want to see my calm and collected self (haha, only joking!). Soccer is meaningful for me as a sport, but also as a method to better understanding the world. Actually, one of my favorites books is *How Soccer Explains the World* by Franklin Foer.

⭐️
Editor's Note:
The Writing Fellows Program at Iowa engages selected honors students from a wide range of majors as peer tutors in writing-intensive courses. The program trains the fellows, and assigns them to courses across the curriculum. Under guidance from a course professor who has chosen to participate in the program, each Honors Writing Fellow works closely with 10-12 students to improve their writing. This fall there are 37 writing fellows, and the program continues to expand.

My hand trembles slightly (imperceptibly, I hope) as I raise the dry erase marker to whiteboard. I'm trying my best to exude a sort of youthful and authoritative self-confidence—but I know that my authority is really as hollow and tenuous as the authority of any student teacher, its flimsiness (and my nervousness) easily detectable by the finely-tuned intuition of impatient and eager high schoolers. Meanwhile, the thirty-some students in Madame Sordet's English class at the Lycée Professionnel Saint Jean de Montmartre, a vocational school on Paris' north side, are trying to shout over one another:

“American Pie!”
“Brooklyn!”
“Gangsters!”
“Uh... how do you call it... pom-pom girls!”
“Big cars!”
“Big buildings!”
“Money!”
“High School Musical!”

I've asked them what words and ideas they associate with America, and I'm scrawling their responses less-than-legibly in red dry erase marker on the whiteboard. I've been given the somewhat overwhelming task of incorporating English language lessons into “lessons on American culture”—a far broader topic than what can be covered in forty-five minutes once a week. I'm simultaneously embarrassed and amused by their dubious map of the American cultural landscape, and I'm already piecing together a sort of Statement of Intent: “We’ll engage in some mutually beneficial, collaborative elucidation this semester!
Let's destroy some stereotypes! Let's become better citizens of the global community!” My thoughts are adrift in a sea of optimism and and best intentions. As they ask me have I ever been to Miami and do I listen to Rihanna, I become determined to teach my students about (read: make them appreciate) certain aspects of American pop culture that are near and dear to me, hoping to convince them that America does, in fact, have a history of vital and valid artistic endeavor. We're more than just an efficient churner-outer of (very) commercially viable drivel; the French students, in turn, will teach me what it's like to be a teenager in Paris. But this turns out to be more difficult than anticipated.

For one thing, teaching high schoolers is une chose complètement différent from tutoring undergraduates—the latter are typically more mature, more patient. They want to be educated (usually). The amount of tuition that they pay each year has long since surpassed the meaning of the word “absurd”; they want their money's worth. As an Honors Writing Fellow at the University of Iowa, I've been trained to work closely with a student, tightening the structural and organizational aspects of his or her academic writing, augmenting a paper's clarity—and the average undergraduate has little trouble maintaining focus during this often tedious and trying kind of work. But for high schoolers, this is a different story. It was laughable, in hindsight, to think that I might get through the vocabulary lesson required for these wonderfully squirrely and enthusiastic Parisian teenagers to be able to understand HAL's conversation with astronaut David Bowman. When educating high schoolers, “classroom management” becomes an important concept.
Although I was less-than-totally prepared to run a high school classroom, I was able to adapt my teaching style to accommodate the situation—another skill that I've gained as an Honors Writing Fellow here at Iowa—and I'd like to think that both teacher and students learned a lot. I learned, for instance, that French high schoolers don't set their own schedules—they receive their lists of classes on the first day of school; I learned that American high schools' electives and extracurriculars (e.g. music, sports, arts, etc.) are handled in France by clubs that are independent of both public and private schools; I learned that French students begin to specialize in a subject by the time they're in middle school (which is both a blessing and a curse). My students learned that not all Americans own a gun, that America is a huge and wildly diverse place, that there's more to it than just New York City and Los Angeles. Most of all, we learned together that teaching is a process of give and take—and there's much to be gained in the way of perspective and insight by both the student and the teacher.
My summer was inspired by two goals: change and challenge. Last spring as I looked to my final summer vacation as an undergraduate, these two words were the motivation behind a leap of faith. I was offered a job in Palo Alto, California. Knowing only a few people in the area, the idea was unsettling. Did I really want to leave my friends, family and familiarity of Iowa City for a land of start-ups and Stanford grads? I was apprehensive, but I knew I would forever regret passing up an opportunity that would serve as a key piece in the puzzle of my personal and professional growth. On May 29th, I boarded a plane and headed west.

During my time in Palo Alto, I had a two-part internship with the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children’s Health and Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital. For the first seven weeks I served as a donor relations intern at the foundation, an organization dedicated to raising funds to ensure the health and well-being of children in the Bay Area and beyond.

As a donor relations intern, my principal project was facilitating the second annual Packard Summer Scamper, a 10k race. Although my primary career interests are wellness and health administration, this position allowed me to explore a different aspect of the healthcare industry, while challenging my skill set and permitting...
both personal and professional growth. In this role, I fulfilled tasks ranging from event planning to accounting. Everyday offered that element of surprise that originally inspired my journey west.

I spent the second portion of my internship in the hospital’s business development and strategic communications department, an area that brought an entirely new set of challenges. During my time in administration, I wrote a series of articles exploring Packard Children’s healthy hospital initiative: a program that has served as a catalyst for healthier hospital environments nationwide.

As a children’s hospital, Packard is dedicated to providing compassionate care to the children and families they serve, but recent health screenings revealed the employees fall short when it comes to their own personal wellness, and unfortunately, Packard employees are not the only ones.

The healthcare workforce is among the unhealthiest workforces in the nation. Many blame the long irregular hours for undermining their health, but Packard Children’s and Stanford Medical Centered developed a plan dedicated to reversing this alarming trend. Two of the steps taken were changes to the building and the elimination of sugary sodas and fryers in the cafeterias.

These changes were not met without opposition, however, and because I wrote these articles, I found myself in the midst of the controversy. Through my writing, I was able to see a health administration from several different levels. I had the opportunity to interview a diverse set of Packard employees, each offering a different take on the hospital’s newly developed initiative, as well as their take on my future career path.

As I reflect upon the work I did with Packard Children’s, I am proud of a race that raised over $600,000 and a series of articles that were well received by Packard employees. Beyond those tangible experiences, I take the most pride in my courage to go, to leave my friends, family and familiarity behind to accept change and take this challenge.

†
Music, Mentoring, Medicine: Emily Gross

Name: Emily Gross  
Year: Senior  
Hometown: Indianola, IA  
Major: Integrative Physiology & Pre-Medicine  
Minor: Music

What instruments do you play and how long have you played them?

My main instrument is the flute. I also play the piano. I’ve played piano since second grade and flute since fourth grade—so, way too long. I wanted to give up after the first week of playing flute because I got light-headed all the time, but I’m glad I stuck with it.

Do you have any words of wisdom or advice for incoming students?

One would be to take your classes seriously, but also be sure to get involved because such a big part of your experience is what you do outside of classes. Getting involved is a great way to make friends. Another thing is to talk to your professors. Everyone says it, but it really helps to put yourself out there and get to know your professors. It makes class less intimidating knowing that they’re real people, too.

In addition to the Honors program, what other organizations have you been involved with?

I’m really involved in Medicus; I’m the Vice President this year. I’m also in the wise mentoring program and volunteer at hospital. I’m involved with Campus Conversation Partners, where I speak with ESL students to help improve their English. I’m doing Dance Marathon for the first time this year.

Tell me about your experience as an icru ambassador.

Our goal is to promote undergrads getting involved in research. We talk at Hawkeye visit days and the undergraduate research festival. Research is one of the defining things that I’ve gotten involved in. There are so many research opportunities and
positions out there that it can be overwhelming. With so many opportunities, it can be hard to get from point A to point B. Research has been such an important part of my experience, so it’s really rewarding to be able to help other students get involved.

What skills do you find yourself using in both your music and integrative physiology coursework?

I would say one thing is that the work ethic has to be there which is probably true for anything. I’d say they are both areas of study where you should be working little by little everyday either studying or practicing. You really can’t slack off and not do anything for a week—you have to do it everyday. Attention to detail is a huge thing for both, too. They are very different in a lot of ways, which is why I like doing both, but the skill set is very similar to be successful in both.

Congratulations on earning the Rhodes Dunlap Collegiate Scholarship. How does it feel to have all of your hard work recognized?

It’s really nice. A lot of times the work can seem draining and you kind of wonder, what’s it all for? It’s nice to be recognized and good to see that people see what you’re doing is important. It’s also really cool to see other students be successful and to learn about what they’re doing. It’s nice to have a pat on the back to make the late nights and hours of studying seem worth it. I’m very appreciative.

What has been your most rewarding experience in the Honors Program?

A combination of two things—both mentoring capacity. I’m in charge of the Presidential Scholars Mentoring Program. Mentoring freshman through that program and iCRU as a research ambassador have been great experiences. It’s nice to be able to pass along your experience and make someone else’s transition easier than yours was. It’s fun to mentor incoming honors freshman because they’re so gung-ho and ready to get involved.
How do you balance school work and extracurricular activities? How would you advise students to successfully balance college life?

It’s definitely hard. I think it comes down to using the little chunks of time that you have throughout the day. It’s easy to go on the computer and mess around or go on Facebook, but if you take the time to do homework or reading during the little chunks in the day, you have time for extracurricular activities in the evening. If you choose fun activities that feel social, your extracurricular activities can double as fun time. My mentees are my good friends—so even though I’m required to meet with them, it doesn’t feel like a requirement.

How did you get involved in the Honors program, and how has it helped you?

When I was a freshman, I went to the Honors activities fair at the Belin-Blank Honors building where you walk around to all of the different rooms and learn about the programs. It was a good experience and I was able to meet other students. It’s helped in a few ways. First, I’ve met other students who are motivated and have a similar work ethic and goals. Secondly, having a supportive Honors staff who want students to go above and beyond academically and with extracurricular has been really helpful. The staff is supportive in helping students get Honors commendations and pursue other areas of interest.

What’s one thing that you want to do before you graduate?

There are so many things. I have a list of all the restaurants in Iowa City. I want to eat at every ethnic restaurant before I graduate. I don’t go out to eat a lot, so I’m not doing very well, but it’s definitely on my list.
Andy Stoll has kept himself busy since graduating from the University of Iowa in 2003. A Jack of All Trades, Stoll has spent four years traveling around the world, worked as a filmmaker and entrepreneur, has spoken at a variety of universities and leadership conferences, dabbled in photography and cooking, the list goes on and on. Stoll, who clearly has a lot on his plate, made time to speak with us about his experience as an honors student.

Stoll’s fondest memories of his time as an honors student are of the James Gang, which started out as “bunch of honors kids who wanted to experiment with interesting ideas.” The James Gang, named the Iowa City Press Citizen’s Person of The Year in 2006 (beating out even Kirk Ferentz), is a nonprofit that benefits our community through connecting creativity and service. Now a recognizable non-profit in Iowa City, the James Gang started off as a fun way for honors students to be creative. Stoll attributes the success of the James Gang to the Associate Director of the Honors Program, Bob Kirby. “I say often, that if it weren’t for Bob Kirby encouraging us and not stopping us when we began to move outside the bounds of academia . . . the James Gang wouldn’t exist”.

The James Gang evolved from honors students and their friends hosting concerts and donating the $5 cover charge to charity, to supporting endeavors like Mission Creek and the Iowa Youth Writing Project. Stoll credits the honors program and the
James Gang with helping him develop the skills necessary for success in life and some important friendships, “I met some of my best friends in life through the honors program”.

Stoll says that the reason he had such a positive experience in the honors program was because he got involved with things other than only academic pursuits, Andy’s advice to undergraduates is, “Get involved by volunteering in the community, maybe go out and start an organization or a nonprofit, or travel the world - getting real world experience outside of just the books and the academia is really important and doing that in the honors program was as important as taking the honors seminars and coming in for the special study sessions. I think that stereotypical honors students are A+, super good students, but if that’s all you do in college you’re missing huge amounts of the experience.”

Stoll has had some really interesting experiences and worked on a variety of important projects, but what’s his dream job? “If I could be anything in the world, I’d want to be a rock star, like Bruce Springstein.” Although he admits that he can’t sing or perform, Stoll says that he admires the way in which rock stars can stand in front of a crowd and “influence hundreds of thousands of people.”

He may not be Bruce Springstein, but it’s clear that Mr. Stoll has an amazing impact. Social good is at the forefront of every project in which Stoll is involved. Andy expressed his passion for public speaking and advising young people on how to do good and get involved in their communities.

Andy Stoll mentioned that his dream was to be a professional pencil sharpener when he was little. While he may have fallen short of that goal, Mr. Stoll has accomplished quite a bit, and we can definitely expect great things in the future. Wherever he goes and whatever he does, Andy Stoll is still an honors kid at heart.
**BEFORE:**
In the past, the Honors Program has hosted a variety of small events, usually attended by ten to twenty students per event. These opportunities included study breaks, lecture luncheons, scholarship seminars, study abroad information, and volunteering. One of the best-attended programs during the 2011-2012 school year was *The Hunger Games* movie event. About one hundred students attended the midnight premiere. Students procured tickets by attending a lecture given by a classics professor, who examined the parallels between Greek myths and the plot of *The Hunger Games*.

**NOW:**
The Honors Program will be bringing back some old favorites, incorporating new ideas, and trying a fresh approach this school year. Instead of planning multiple small events each month, the program will host a few large events over the course of the semester. This strategy aims to draw more students and make each event an exciting, educational experience. Events will always feature an expert on the topic, usually a professor with a PhD who has been published in his or her field or has exceptional experience in travel or research.

**EVENTS:**
This fall, the Honors Program took students to see the Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles perform a show entitled: *It Gets Better*. Also planned, the “Psychology Olympics,” will explore the human brain in an entertaining way. Programs such as Centerstone’s trip to the Putnam Museum in Davenport, or the Honors House BBQ Welcome Event—known as living-learning community events—are becoming popular traditions. Smaller events haven’t been cut completely, though; Honors will be hosting at least one study break this year around exam time.
The Honors program’s student staff members (also known as studs) live up to their name by designing and implementing these honors programs, under the supervision of the Honors Professional Staff. Student staffer Onalee Yousey, a political science and international studies major, coordinates the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council, which hosts luncheons with experts on world issues. Like many of the student staff members, Onalee juggles the demands of classes, part-time work in the honors program, and undergraduate research. Oh, and she studies Arabic! She’s in good company; student staffers are generally sophomores or older, studying in a diverse set of programs. They number about twenty, depending on the needs of the program, and hail from as close as Iowa City and as far as Indonesia. “Their diverse experiences contribute to the variety of programs they design,” said Yousey.

Honors students are always encouraged to make suggestions about the program and contribute ideas. A suggestion box sits prominently atop the 3rd floor reception desk in the Honors Student Center. “Hearing feedback helps our program grow and change to fit the needs of the students who benefit from it,” Yousey commented. As always, information about these and other honors events, as well as staff biographies, scholarships, research opportunities, and honors advising is available on the honors website, www.honors.uiowa.edu.

(L-R) Student Staffers: Sophie Amado, Suzanne Carter, and Onalee Yousey
Donate Today!

Would you like to give back to Honors at Iowa? There are many ways you can support our program, including scholarships to students, funding for students to present at professional conferences, and stipends for Honors study abroad. It’s easy to give back—just click “DONATE TODAY” to visit our Foundation website!
Iowa City: a UNESCO City of Literature, home of the Iowa Avenue Literary Walk, and host of the renowned Iowa Writers’ Workshop. Iowa City and the University of Iowa are inseparable from the rich artistic culture of the area. Talented students from across the nation travel to the University of Iowa to pursue the University’s writing programs and to gain practical experience. While many are familiar with the volume and quality of scientific research, the University of Iowa and Iowa City area also provides a variety of opportunities for students to conduct research and creative work in the humanities. The University of Iowa School of Journalism’s Iowa Watch is one that has proven useful to talented writers.

At IowaWatch, a nonprofit news service created at the university, six of the seven student staff members are active Honors students. Past Honors students who have worked with IowaWatch graduated with full-time job offers at the Sioux City Journal and Burlington Hawk Eye, among other publications.

Stephen Berry and Robert Gutsche founded IowaWatch to give these go-getters more opportunity for real life journalistic experience. “...I could give these [journalism] students the continuity of reporting supervision and additional
editing that their work needed,” Berry stated. Providing a source of assistance for Iowa journalism students was Berry’s chief goal when he co-founded The Iowa Center for Public Affairs Journalism, or IowaWatch. Through this program, associated students have published approximately 100 stories since its founding in 2010. Fourteen of the seniors who participated received job offers within three months of their graduation this past May.

Working with the students themselves is an enjoyable and inspiring process for Berry. “I love being around people who love journalism, and IowaWatch attracts people like that. They may be one-third my age, but we speak the same language, and it’s called journalism,” he said. Students are chosen to participate in the program based on their dedication and loyalty to involvement in journalistic work.

A senior double majoring in journalism and political science, Emily Hoerner is one such student. As a current reporter and web designer for IowaWatch, Emily has received the opportunity to cover events such as the Iowa Straw Poll and President Obama’s visit to Davenport. In addition to being able to share work with other news organizations, Hoerner appreciates the fact that IowaWatch is nonprofit. “IowaWatch has just been

a great experience in learning about nonprofit journalism, a field that I believe is growing in importance all over the country,” she stated.

While IowaWatch is funded by organizations such as Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, the Ottaway Foundation and SourceMedia Group, executive director-editor Lyle Muller hopes to one day develop self-sustaining revenue streams. One of Muller’s long-term goals is to branch out to journalism students at neighboring universities and create connections with other Iowa news organizations.
When asked what he loved most about working with IowaWatch, Berry responded with five words: “Working with these young reporters.” While meeting for lunch with two of these students recently, he noted that journalism was the key part of their conversation. “In class, they are my students; at IowaWatch, they are reporters, and in that capacity, they become my colleagues,” Berry stated.

Flocks of students come to Iowa City each year, eager to begin their studies in the arts. Through periodicals and projects such as IowaWatch, University of Iowa students are granted a chance to participate in humanities research. They have the chance to make the most of their time in Iowa City, a center for tradition and opportunity in the arts.
THANKS TO

Our Contributors and Advisors

Laurie Croft
Kirstin Miller
Nicholas Pottebaum
Michael Fetterman
Michelle Demeroukas
Andy Stoll
Emily Gross

Kirstin Miller
Jennifer Brooke
Erin Marshall
Lauren Glantz
Holly Blosser-Yoder
Art Spisak
Bob Kirby