FALL 2016
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
Honors Newsletter
honors.uiowa.edu
### Table of Contents

3 | **Word from the Director**  
   Art Spisak

4 | **Making Primetime Stand Out**  
   How professors teach Primetime in creative ways

6 | **National Collegiate Honors Council**  
   Honors at Iowa goes to Seattle

7 | **Highlights of NCHC**  
   Seattle in pictures

8 | **Self-Discovery in Honors**  
   Reflecting on Experiential Learning

9 | **Highlights of Self-Discovery in Honors**  
   The Honors Internship Poster Fair

10 | **More Than An Ambassador**  
   Tamar Kavlashvili takes on new role as ICRU Student Coordinator

12 | **Honors in Nursing**  
   How nursing students expand the honors experience

13 | **From Iowa City to Kinmen**  
   Interview with recent graduate Laura Wang

15 | **Student Profiles**  
   Five questions wtih Rae Corrigan and Andrey Sazonov

17 | **Share your Rhodes Dunlap stories**  
   Make your connection today

18 | **Honors says farewell**  
   ICRU Associate Director leaves for global adventure

19 | **Tell Us Your Good News!**  
   A celebration of achievements and opportunities

20 | **Meet the Writers**

---

Find the Honors Program on Social Media!

- Find us on [Facebook](https://HonorsAtIowa)
- Follow us on [LinkedIn](https://UniversityofIowaHonors)
- Visit our blog at [https://honorsatpowa.wordpress.com/](https://honorsatpowa.wordpress.com/)
- Follow us on [Twitter](https://@HonorsAtIowa)
- Follow us on [Instagram](https://@HonorsAtIowa)

---

**Claire Jacobson**,  
Newsletter Editor

**Bailey Zaputil**,  
Design Editor

**Holly Blosser Yoder**,  
Staff Adviser

---

**On the Cover:**  
**Journeys of self-discovery begin with Honors Primetime.** A field trip to Kent Park offered students of Shaun Vecera’s Primetime class the opportunity to experience the mental health effects of spending time in nature. Read more on page 4.

*Photo by Holly Blosser Yoder*
Greetings for the Fall of 2016 to our Honors program students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends.

HONORS PRIMETIME
It has been five years since I came to the University of Iowa to direct the Honors Program. Many good things were happening with Honors at Iowa before I came, and we have tried to improve those particular pieces. For example, our one credit hour pre-semester class for entering first-year students called Honors Primetime, which began in 2009, has increased in popularity over the years. This year we held our two group events at the Englert Theatre – a renovated vaudeville-era playhouse in downtown Iowa City that now serves as a community arts center and 725-seat performance venue. See below in this newsletter for more on Honors Primetime.

HONORS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
What is new to the Honors Program since I came in 2011? We’ve created and implemented a new honors curriculum that offers our students many options for honors experiences and honors credit. For example, in this newsletter you see a piece on the option for honors credit for study abroad and internship experiences. Honors students can now earn honors credit for both study abroad and internship experiences by adding a reflection component. See below for more information on that process.

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL CONFERENCE
Something else that is new with the Honors Program since my arrival is that we regularly have our students presenting at both our regional honor conference and the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) annual conference, which this year was in Seattle. Gifts from our donors make it possible to fund these trips for our students, who oftentimes have never before even been to a professional conference. You’ll see an article below on one of our staff and students who presented at this year’s NCHC conference. I was able to attend that particular session, which was standing room only. We also regularly include honors faculty and staff as part of the conference experience, and this year we had, for the very first time, two of our Honors Program Advisory Board members, Susan Hagan and Pat Rolston attending and presenting. Also, we had our student representative on the NCHC Board of Directors, Sean Finn, present. He presented to students at the conference on how best to take advantage of the NCHC, and he also attended the NCHC board meeting that was held immediately after.

Altogether, we had twelve (not including me) attending and presenting at this year’s NCHC conference, which is a record number for us. Because of my current leadership role in the NCHC, I was the conference chair this year and was kept pretty busy with moderating and officiating (although I did present, too).

PROFESSOR RHODES DUNLAP
Finally, you’ll see a call below for anecdotes and stories on Professor Rhodes Dunlap, the founder of the University of Iowa Honors Program (in 1958), and its director until his own retirement in 1981. Professor Dunlap, besides founding and then directing the Program for twenty-three years, was also a donor to the Program. Upon his death he left a major gift that we have used over the years for scholarships for our students. For example, last year we gave out over $100,000 to our students that came from the Dunlap account, an amount that has been typical over the years. Professor Dunlap was noted for his close involvement with, and concern for, students, so it’s good to note that many years after his death he is still helping support them. We are preparing a story on Professor Dunlap that will air in this newsletter in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of our program in 2018.

As always, please feel free to contact me via email (art-spisak@uiowa.edu) or phone (319.335.1681) with any comments, questions, or concerns you have about the Honors Program. I’m happy to have such conversations.
Making Primetime Stand Out
How professors teach Primetime in creative ways

Every August, first-year Honors students have the opportunity to get a head start on their college careers. To be specific, a three-day head start. Honors Primetime gives students the opportunity to connect with their peers, meet University of Iowa professors and participate in hands-on workshops. The workshops vary in subject. Some examine the skillset necessary for writers, speakers and stand-up comedians. Others incorporate live owls and vultures in an endeavor to study the origin of birds. It is professors like Megan Gogerty of the Theatre Department, and Chris Brochu, who specializes in vertebrate paleontology, that make these workshops possible. For this year’s session of Primetime, Gogerty and Brochu were first-time instructors, offering up their skills and working closely with some of Iowa’s brightest, most motivated students.

After giving the keynote address at Primetime in 2015, Professor Megan Gogerty transitioned to the role of Primetime instructor for the 2016 class, incorporating many of her interests into one of this year’s workshops. As a published playwright and accomplished performer who has received many accolades for her work, she is a

Primetime’s success lies in its ability to “get you on campus and get you connected with people,” said Gogerty.

Students of Shaun Vecera, a professor in the department of psychological and brain sciences, and one of several first-time instructors for Primetime, visited nearby Kent Park to experience the mental health effects of spending time in nature. Photo by Holly Blosser Yoder
How professors teach Primetime in creative ways, cont.

firm advocate for Iowa’s Theatre Arts program. “The University of Iowa Theatre Department is one of the top theatre departments in the world when it comes to playwriting,” she said. Gogerty teaches undergraduate and graduate courses at Iowa: Comedy and Society, Script Analysis and a Stand-Up Comedy practicum, to name a few. When asked if students outside of the Theatre Department take her classes, she admitted, “Sometimes my class is a gateway drug to the theater.”

Her passion for her work is impressive, but it is more inspiring to see how much she values the talents and bravery of her students. “The audacity needed to stand in your truth and speak your mind is a huge eye-opener,” said Gogerty. Using techniques from playwriting, fiction and stand-up comedy, she pushed her Primetime students to be audacious and creative. Her workshop was titled “Storytelling.” She dubbed it “a class for writers and talkers,” but made it clear it was the students who drove the course’s trajectory.

“As soon as the students come in you have to meet them where they are and see what they’re interested in,” she said. Their task was to venture out into the community of Iowa City, interview people and come back to tell those stories as their own. It was an opportunity to be directly involved in the community. Primetime’s success lies in its ability to “get you on campus and get you connected with people,” said Gogerty. Professor Chris Brochu agrees, but he offered his students a different type of experience.

A graduate of the University of Iowa, Professor Brochu went to the University of Texas for his graduate degree before working at the Field Museum in Chicago for three years. His work in paleontology has led him all over the globe. Just this summer, when Brochu was asked to participate in Primetime, he was in East Africa. And once he arrived back to Iowa City, Brochu developed a workshop that focused on some concepts he covers in his classes. “I decided to draw from some material I’ve used in my Dinosaur class,” he said, “bird evolution and the origin of birds.” Age of Dinosaurs, the class Brochu mentions, is a popular choice for undergraduates on campus. Along with his Honors First-Year Seminar on dinosaur art and movies, the course has given Brochu the opportunity to work with Iowa Honors students. It was these same types of students that worked with Brochu in his hands-on workshop.

“We tried to make a working model of a bird’s wing,” he said, “with the muscles and everything using wood, string and pulleys.” Students got to work directly with the McBride Raptor Project and took inspiration from live owls, vultures and other birds in action. He describes the experience as a learning process for both him and the students. Even more exciting is the fact that Brochu can’t wait to come back next year and improve on the course.

“I was exposed to some exceptionally intelligent and enthusiastic students,” said Brochu. “The fact that the Honors program is doing something like this is to its credit.” Megan Gogerty echoed this enthusiasm. “It gives me hope for the future—our Honors students,” she said. “Every year we are refreshed with a new generation of people who are explorers and pioneers and are eager and are, kind of, waking up to the world.”

The University of Iowa may be a comparatively small part of this world, but for three and a half days, Honors Primetime gives students the opportunity to kick start their college careers, to connect and engage on campus and, with the help of passionate faculty like Megan Gogerty and Chris Brochu, carve out their home at Iowa.
Honors at Iowa goes to Seattle

A contingent of Honors professional staff and students went to Seattle, WA, October 12-16 for the annual National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) conference. “The theme was Know Yourself, with a focus on self-discovery and how Honors staff and faculty can facilitate that,” said Jessica Waldschmidt, Communications Specialist & Program Coordinator for the Honors Program.

The theme is a result of the leadership of Iowa’s own Dr. Art Spisak, who served as the chair of this year’s conference, and recently transitioned into the role of President of the Board of NCHC. “As conference chair, my role was directing the conference planning committee,” which chose the theme, Spisak said, and “set up the proposal selection process, deciding who was accepted to present at the conference.”

“He also spoke about how his experience as a Native American growing up on a reservation affected his worldview and his path through life.”

Waldschmidt and student staff member Katie Kiesewetter led a successful session on Online Presence, including tools such as social media, the website, and the Honorable Messenger, “and how it impacts the program on a greater level,” Waldschmidt said.

Additional presentations were given by Advising Director Holly Blosser–Yoder, Assessment Director Emily Johnson, Anastasia Hertz, and Ben Ross; the Belin Blank Center’s Education Support Services Manager Dave Gould, Navya Mannengi, and Ben Ross; and Associate Director Bob Kirby with Advisory Board members Pat Rolston and Susan Hagan. Kirby also presented individually on the topic of undergraduate research. Also participating was NCHC student board member Sean Finn, who co-chairs the Student Affairs committee.
Highlights of NCHC

Jessica Waldschmidt, Katie Kiesewetter, Anastasia Hertz, Sean Finn and Navya Mannangi head out for dinner at the “Space Needle”.

Sherman Alexie, keynote speaker for the conference, with Jessica Waldschmidt.

Advisory Board President Pat Rolston and Honors faculty Dave Gould each presented at the conference.

UIHP Director and NCHC President Elect Art Spisak at the conference podium.

Katie Kiesewetter and Jessica Waldschmidt presented to a standing-room-only crowd about “The Power of Online Presence”.
As of Fall 2016, a reflection process consisting of pre- and post-experience questionnaires and a narrative piece has become the basis for earning honors experiential learning credit for interning and studying abroad. There are no restrictions on the format of the narrative, which may be anything from a written essay to a podcast or comic strip, but Honors Experiential Learning Director Andy Willard hopes that students will use the narrative and corresponding questionnaires as “vehicles to gain insight into themselves and how they have been affected by these experiences.” He sees these new components as a means of providing “deliberateness” and “structured reflection” in keeping with the Honors Program’s ongoing mission to foster self-discovery.

Previously, students who wanted to earn experiential credit for either interning or study abroad worked with Willard individually to develop an independent project relevant to their interests. This is no longer required, although students who choose to complete an independent project in addition to the narrative will be able to earn twice as much credit as students who do not. Willard estimates that about four students each semester choose to work with him to complete a project, and hopes that the narrative option will allow more students to earn credit as well as helping them to engage more consciously with their experiences.

And indeed, this engagement is a repeated theme in both the narrative and independent project. At the Honors Internship Poster Fair on October 7, each of the seven students who presented emphasized the personal relevance of their independent projects. Sometimes the discoveries the students made were specific and highly career oriented – one student emphasizes the success of mindfulness as a coping technique, and another found that the benefits of training far outweigh the costs.

Other students made more generalized or personal connections, such as Melissa Lauer, who interned with Living History Farms and worked to recreate a series of historical ‘projects’ from 1885 – sort of like Pinterest, if it had existed 130 years ago. Lauer focused on the rewarding nature of the work she did and wonder of being able to recreate history, however imperfectly.

Self-discovery is a complex, ongoing, and often unconscious process. With the addition of the narrative option for Study Abroad and Internships, Honors at Iowa hopes to make this process more intentional, to enable students to engage more fully with themselves and with the broader community.
Highlights of Self-Discovery in Honors

As part of the Experiential Learning process, students may intern with approved researchers and companies and create an independent research project of their choice. Seven honors students presented their posters in Fall 2016. The Honors Internship Poster Fair allows students to present their work and findings from their internships.

Students who conducted independent honors projects while interning presented their work October 7 to a mixed group of students, faculty, staff and family members. Jacinta Jargo, far left, discussed her poster on developing leadership and basic human resources. Joshua Wicks, who examined how private equity firms make decisions, said that the independent project definitely enhanced his learning from the internship experience. While other interns were just “heads-down,” doing their work, he was learning more about the private equity industry. “It was cool to take a step back and look at why we were doing things the way we were,” said Wicks.

Ryan Wedoff, computer science major, interned at Microsoft in Fargo, North Dakota. Wedoff’s research started with the question, “Why is Microsoft in Fargo, North Dakota?”
More Than An Ambassador
Tamar Kavlashvili takes on new role as ICRU Student Coordinator

Senior Tamar Kavlashvili has been involved in undergraduate research since her sophomore year, and for the past year has worked directly with the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU), the University of Iowa’s extensive undergraduate research program. One of the Ambassadors for this program, Kavlashvili views student research as highly beneficial to students and something which everyone can try. Now a Student Coordinator for ICRU, she has a message for undergraduates at Iowa: “All research, even if it has no significant findings or results, is worth it and teaches you something, and you should not be afraid to get involved.”

Undergraduate research might be one of the most overlooked opportunities when students begin college, but Kavlashvili was interested in doing research before she even came to the University of Iowa. She met with ICRU staff during her freshman year and began narrowing her interests in research areas. Kavlashvili, a biology major, states that “the motivation in my work is that it’s directly applicable to humans,” and because of this, she found a research position in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Leslie Lab. For the past two years, Kavlashvili has researched hormonal therapies for gynecological cancers. She views this research as one of the most important aspects of her education because it has helped her to think differently and served to define her career path.

Her involvement with ICRU, however, does not end with her own research. Kavlashvili chose to become an ICRU Ambassador out of a desire to share her experiences with other students. Her role as Ambassador includes many different activities; she primarily meets with students to discuss their hopes and plans for research, but she also facilitates different events on campus. Last year, the ICRU Ambassadors created the first annual ICRU Undergraduate Research Conference, and they are currently organizing this year’s conference. Kavlashvili also helps to organize other events, such as the Research Bootcamp series, and the Fall and Spring Undergraduate Research Festivals (or FURF and SURF). This year she added the position of Student Coordinator to her list of roles within ICRU.

“All research, even if it has no significant findings or results ... teaches you something.”
- Tamar Kavlashvili

As part of ICRU, both as an Ambassador and an undergraduate researcher, Kavlashvili has availed herself of many valuable opportunities. She recently presented at the Cell Symposia conference in Chicago, meeting scientists from all over the world, and has presented at other conferences in Iowa City. She was also part of a three-minute research pitch competition where she had to translate her research into language for a general audience, a learning experience which she said was exceptional. All of these events relate to Kavlashvili’s favorite part of being an ICRU Ambassador: talking about her research, either to students or in these larger settings.
Tamar Kavlashvili takes on new role as ICRU Student Coordinator, cont.

Research has shaped Kavlashvili’s experience at the University of Iowa and has been a “source of self-discovery.” Her work in Leslie Lab has helped her to understand the concepts in her classes, has defined her career path and has shown her that “everything requires research.”

She believes there are huge benefits for those who do research, not only intellectually, but in terms of real-world skills. And she encourages anyone who is passionate about their field and interested in research to pursue it.

Kavlashvili plans to pursue graduate studies in the United States or Europe in biomedical sciences after graduating from the University of Iowa in spring 2017. Her ultimate goal is to run her own lab in academia and develop alternative cancer treatment strategies, as well as advocate for science communication.

Honors at Iowa Alum Connection
Are you an alum or friend of the University of Iowa Honors Program? Make your connection at our website, and get involved!

Photo by Claire Jacobson
Honors in Nursing
How nursing students expand the honors experience

One of the most competitive degree programs at Iowa, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) is not only academically rigorous but is the only undergraduate healthcare degree which requires clinical practice in addition to coursework. Some students may choose to further enhance their experience by pursuing Honors in Nursing. Sophomore Lexi Breitbart and Dr. Ellen Cram, Associate Professor (Clinical) and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs at the College of Nursing, share their experiences and explain the college’s program.

According to Cram, nursing is a very diverse and rapidly changing field. “In the BSN programs, we cannot teach every aspect of professional nursing. Honors in Nursing is a way for students to get more depth in an area of interest or explore a topic or practice area not in required courses,” Cram said. “Students do a semester-long seminar that focuses on skills in persuasion, respectful dialogue and deeper understanding of controversies in the profession. Students then complete a scholarly project with a faculty mentor. Depending on the student’s interest, the project could focus on children, older adults, hospitalized patients, nurses or any aspect of health.”

Cram explained that, “Students who have been admitted to the College of Nursing who have earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher in nursing courses are invited to participate. Participants work with a faculty mentor to develop the project, review the related evidence and determine the product of the project. Products are tailored to match the needs of the audience for the project. For example, if the project is to persuade legislatures that tanning beds should be banned to reduce skin cancer, the product might be a presentation to policy makers in legislative offices.”

Lexi Breitbart, who is only a part of the honors program but will pursue Honors in Nursing, that honors allows her to interact with likeminded people in the nursing program, and allows her to “go above and beyond” as she studies to become a nurse. “I believe I get a more in depth analysis in my classes because they are Honors, and I think that this contributes to my worldview,” she said. She continued that honors benefits her “especially in terms of the independent coursework. It will allow me to explore an interest that I have in regards to nursing as an undergraduate with faculty support. I think a challenge is that with the already rigorous course schedule, it is important to balance all the necessary requirements to maintain Honors, excel in classes, and be involved in extracurricular activities.”

Nursing is the only healthcare discipline where students train for clinical careers as undergraduates, said Cram. However, she explained that through honors, students benefit from a “wealth of knowledge and experience in an area of nursing that aligns with their passion. This may lead to being positively distinguished from other candidates for a job or for a spot in a competitive graduate program,” she said. “The major challenge is time. Nursing has been documented as the most challenging undergraduate major. Students are very busy with required courses and many also work and/or have families.”

Beyond honors, both Cram and Breitbart emphasized their love of helping people that inspires them to excel in the field of nursing. Dr. Cram received her Bachelor of Science in nursing in 1973 from Coe College and her PhD from UI. Cram moved to Iowa City from Rochester, MN. in 1975 as nurse working in intensive care, burn treatment, and administration. “I have always loved helping people to have that ah-ha moment, when light bulbs come on and a difficult concept suddenly makes clear sense.”

“Helping people is the reason that I became involved in nursing in the first place,” Breitbart said. “Therefore, seeing the thanks from patients and how much they appreciate what nurses do for them is very meaningful to me.”
This fall, recent UI Honors grad Laura Wang ’16 headed off to Taiwan to teach English as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA). The Fulbright program is a competitive award opportunity for graduates to teach abroad or conduct international research. Since August 1, Wang has been teaching elementary and high school students and immersing herself in Taiwanese culture.

Q: So, how’s Taiwan?

LW: Taiwan is fantastic! I struggle to sum up everything I love about it. Kinmen, where I live, is not on the island of Taiwan but is its own island off the coast of China. After growing up in Iowa, I feel I can truly appreciate island-living. The ocean and the mountains will never stop taking my breath away. Everyday, the locals make the Fulbrighters feel at home. I could go on and on about my love for Taiwan. I am unendingly grateful to be here.

Q: What has your experience with the Fulbright program been like so far?

LW: The Fulbright Taiwan ETA program is well-established and offers substantial support to its ETAs. My transition to Kinmen went smoothly, and I know that if I ever have a problem I have almost a dozen people I can contact. The flip side to a structured program, however, is having less freedom.

Q: Since you haven’t had any formal teaching experience, what has your teaching experience been like?

LW: Admittedly, self-doubt and nerves loomed in the back of my mind during the first week, but over time, I’ve become more comfortable in front of the class. I owe much of my confidence to my students, who are welcoming and supportive. They want to get to know me and want to have fun in my class—an ideal combination for a teaching and learning environment. My students have taught me kids are kids anywhere. After all I’d heard about Taiwanese education, I came in expecting silent vocab machines. Instead, I’ve found that they’re rowdy, funny, creative, silly, and curious.

Q: What’s the biggest takeaway from your time in Taiwan so far?

LW: When I first came to Taiwan, I assumed it was an extension of China. Right away, I noticed obvious differences between the two, like their politics or the different words they use for the same thing. As I spend more time here, I see more nuances in Chinese and Taiwanese people’s ways of life. I realize now how unfair I was to judge Taiwan through China, rather than through Taiwan, and how obtuse it was for me to make more assumptions than questions.
Interview with recent graduate Laura Wang, cont.

Q: You currently co-run a newsletter called “The New Chimerican” featuring articles about the Asian American experience. Coming from the American Midwest, how did your time in Taiwan shape or inform your perspective on this?

LW: Being in Taiwan forces me to think more often and more deeply about my identity. Ironically, Taiwanese people seem to understand even less about what it means to be Asian American. Many locals I meet are confused when I introduce myself as “American” because to them, “American” means “white.” Being in Taiwan forces me to consider what “American” even means and the different ways American and Chinese culture influenced my upbringing and who I am. Many of the articles I share in “The New Chimericans” seek to debunk stereotypes about Asian Americans, from the model minority to the Tiger Mom to the “Oriental.” These stereotypes become laughable when in Taiwan because I can see the infinitudes of what an Asian can be.

Q: What’s the next step for you after this?

LW: Good question! I’m still trying to figure it out. I plan on traveling around Asia before moving back to Iowa, but that’s about as concrete as my plans get.

Critical Language Scholarship
Who? Undergraduate and graduate students who are U.S. citizens and have an interest in studying one of fourteen languages designated “critical” by the U.S. Department of State.
What? An intensive language study program fully funded by the U.S. government.
When? Programs run for eight to ten weeks in the summer, with applications due in mid-November.
Where? A country where your target language is spoken. (For example: if you want to study Azerbaijani you’ll be sent to Azerbaijan, but if you want to study Arabic you may be sent to Jordan, Morocco, or Oman.)
Why? You can squeeze a year’s worth of language study in just eight weeks, gain fluency by speaking only your target language as much as possible, and learn to live in another culture.

Fulbright Grant or English Teaching Assistantship
Who? Graduates of any U.S.-based university or current graduate students in a U.S.-based university.
What? A grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to either conduct research or teach English for nine months in an approved country.
Where? Check out possible locations here.
Why? Conduct research or a creative project abroad, or gain teaching experience in a university or grade-school setting abroad.
Questions? Contact Karen Wachsmuth in the Office of International Programs!
Student Profile
Five questions with Rae Corrigan

Hometown: Indianola, Iowa
Year: Senior
Majors: Biomedical Engineering

1. How did you get involved in the Honors program, and how has this impacted your college experience?

My first experience with Honors was Primetime, and I was immediately excited to be part of a program with so many dedicated students and professors. From there, I’ve taken Honors classes, been an ICRU research fellow, and served as an honors student ambassador. I’ve met wonderful friends and mentors through Honors as well. Honors has been a positive part of my college experience for sure; so many of the Honors resources have helped me get where I am today, and I know the things I’ve learned through the people I’ve met will help me in the future as well.

2. I understand that you recently went to Dublin to present at a conference. What was your presentation about and what did you “take back” from this experience?

I did present in Dublin; my very first research conference outside of Iowa City! My presentation was on a research project I’ve been working on with Professor Stephanie Gilbertson-White of the College of Nursing and Professor Michael Schnieders of the College of Engineering. It focused on determining if inflammatory molecules called cytokines, when mutated, can cause an increased symptom burden in cancer patients. It had a couple of angles; first, the engineering side, where I made computational models of the mutant proteins to see how each mutation affected the protein’s structure. For proteins, structure determines function, so in many cases, a change in structure will lead to a change in function. The nursing side consisted of testing patient blood samples to see which mutant cytokines a patient expressed, and comparing that list of mutants to the patient’s pain score to see if there was a correlation between structural mutants and altered pain phenotype. I got to interact with a group of nursing researchers from all over the world at this conference (it was put on by the International Society of Nurses in Genetics, or ISONG), which gave me a chance to present my work from a more clinical perspective.

3. What other activities/organizations are you involved in?

Outside of Honors, I’m part of Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) as a mentor for first year ladies in STEM fields. I’m also involved with the Newman Center; last year, I served as a fellow. I am the corresponding secretary for Tau Beta Pi. Additionally, I am a volunteer for Mercy Hospital and St Mary’s church, which I love, because I get to spend time talking with the elderly; they have so many wonderful stories to tell!

4. If you could name a particularly memorable experience during your college career, what would it be?

Wow, there has been so much! If I had to pick one, I suppose I would say applying for the Goldwater fellowship. I had a tremendous amount of help from many of the Honors staff, but especially Kelly Thornburg. Applying was a four-month process unlike anything I had ever done before. I was asked questions I had never really thought about; what did I want to do with research? Why did I get started in STEM? What motivated me? I learned so much about myself in those four months, some of which was rather surprising, and it all reinforced that I want to be a research scientist so I can help develop a greater knowledge of protein-drug interactions and work towards improving healthcare. This experience was powerful because it made me think about who I was and what I wanted to become in a way that nothing else ever had.

5. As a senior with a lot of experience under your belt, what piece of advice would you give to incoming and current students?

I would say don’t be afraid to keep searching until you find what fits you. Whether that’s a major, a research position, or a community of students, finding somewhere you can be “you” is incredibly important. We each have something unique to contribute to the university community, and that contribution is best made by our most authentic selves. I’ve found my fit as a biomedical engineer, in Honors, at Newman, and in my other activities as well; each one has helped me get a better sense of myself as a person as well as where and how I can contribute.
Student Profile
Five questions with Andrey Sazonov

By Onae Parker

1. How did you get involved in the Honors program, and how has this impacted your college experience?

My first experience with Honors Program was in 2014 when I was making arrangements for an honors internship at the congressional office of Dave Loebsack. The program staff was incredibly helpful in making this experience possible and I decided to look into other opportunities that the U of I honors program offers. As a result, during the summer of 2015 I served as an Honors Student Ambassador. This was indeed a great experience since it allowed me to introduce first-year students to Honors at Iowa, advise academic-interest groups of new students, and lead sessions that provided students with the information about the Honors community and curriculum.

2. You recently did an internship with William Pomeranz at the Wilson Center. What did you do during this internship, and what have you “taken back” from this experience?

This past summer I served as a Staff Assistant at the Kennan Institute – a division of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Internship at the Kennan Institute proved to be one of the most rewarding professional and academic experiences in my college career. I was able to work side by side with some of the most prominent Russia experts and was provided with numerous opportunities to engage in research, write briefings for senior staff members, and assist with administrative tasks. In addition, one of the greatest aspects of this internship was an opportunity to experience a working culture of a think tank while witnessing its day-to-day operations and activities. Overall, this experience reinforced my desire to work for a think tank in the future and allowed me to develop expertise in areas that I always wanted to explore further.

3. You have also been participating in research recently. Please tell us about this experience.

Currently I’m serving as an ICRU research fellow for Professor Brian Lai and Professor Nickolas Martini. We are currently working on a paper that discusses public opinion in Russia and analyzes how Russian population perceives the foreign policy agenda of their nation. In addition, we also look at what Russians think about the United States and the role it plays in the international arena. So far it proved to be quite a remarkable experience. We were able to discover some very interesting trends in Russian public opinion, and this November we are going to a conference in St. Louis to present our findings.

4. I also understand that you are originally from Russia. Has this background played a role in your journey through college, and how?

My background certainly plays a huge role in my college career. First of all, it allowed me to incorporate a distinct perspective into classroom discussions. Secondly, it enabled me to establish a very diverse circle of friends who greatly helped me with numerous matters along the way. Finally, it exposed me to a great array of opportunities and allowed me to contribute to various research projects.

5. As a seasoned senior, what piece of advice would you give to incoming and current students?

Never limit yourself and never think that you are not good enough for a specific scholarship, internship, or other competitive opportunity. If you are able and willing to invest time and effort into development of a strong application and essays for a specific opportunity – do it. Honors Program has truly incredible staff who are ready to help you with every step of the process whether it is a competitive scholarship, fellowship, or an internship. Finally, don’t be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and explore topics, ideas, and experiences that you are not familiar with. This will allow you to challenge your views and develop a distinct outlook that will help you in the future.

Andrey Sazonov

“Don’t be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and explore topics, ideas, and experiences that you are not familiar with.”
Do you have any memories of our founder Professor Rhodes Dunlap to share? Send them our way! Your stories may be featured in the Honors Newsletter when we celebrate the 60th anniversary of Honors at Iowa! Contact Holly Blosser Yoder at holly-yoder@uiowa.edu.

“"I had never even heard of the Marshall," said Marshall Scholar Dick Tyner of the award that paved the way for his studies in the United Kingdom. "Rhodes Dunlap literally handed me the application when I walked by his office one day, and said 'Here, I thought you might like this'.”

Share your Rhodes Dunlap Stories with us today!
Honors says farewell
ICRU Associate Director leaves for global adventure

After several years of incredible work with the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates, Lindsay Marshall, ICRU’s former Associate Director, is saying goodbye and moving on to a new, global adventure. She leaves behind an outstanding legacy of program work, including the various workshops and strategies she designed to aid in targeted outreach and effective communication of undergraduate research projects. With about four years of thoughtful ideas put to practice, the ICRU program is thriving.

For the duration of Marshall’s time working in the Blank Honors Center, ICRU has grown to represent a variety of fields. In a recent conversation, Marshall reflected on the program’s evolution. “[When I started,] there were three ICRU Fellows who were in the humanities and now there are thirty... a large growth due to specific outreach we have done,” Marshall stated, adding, “It’s not just a science campus.” With assistance from the ICRU Research Ambassadors, Marshall also started the Three Minute Research Story Competition, the ICRU Fellow Mentee Training Sessions, and the Did You Know? undergraduate research blog. These platforms allow students from all disciplines to share what they have been doing as well as gain valuable skills in research communication.

Just before her departure, Marshall reminisced about how wonderful it was to work with Bob Kirby, the Director of ICRU, because he encouraged her see her visions out: “Bob’s great and he really lets me run with my ideas. I’m really lucky to have a supervisor who lets me try things. A lot of the time the feedback I got included reminders to ‘be mindful of your time--don’t bite off more than you can chew.’ And that happens when I try to do things, but that’s my own growth as a worker to realize how much I can actually handle.”

Marshall believes she gained valuable skills in her time at Iowa that will help her wherever her journey takes her. “I’ve learned what I’m excited about and the kind of work that I’m good at. I’ve learned about the work I’m not good at. I’ve learned my own limits to what I can take on and realistically get done. I’ve learned to advocate for myself and things that I’d like to happen. I’ve learned that when I really like to do something, I figure out what I’d like to differently next time and make those changes. I’m okay if something doesn’t work out now. That goes along with what research really is. You fail over and over, and you learn.”

Lance Heady, an ICRU Research Ambassador, captured Marshall’s persona with this statement of appreciation: “Lindsay was and is a great asset for ICRU and Honors, and is greatly missed as she is off exploring the world. She has always been very easy to connect with—from research struggles to a mutual love of Adele. The way she cared about every student she worked with has been unmatched in my academic career.”

While ICRU is continuing to move forward and achieve great things, students and colleagues are grateful for the contributions Lindsay Marshall has made to the University and its programs. As of October 24, Marshall is globetrotting for a year—beginning in Tokyo, Japan—to enjoy an adventurous extended honeymoon with her partner.
Tell Us Your Good News!
A celebration of achievements and opportunities

We want to celebrate your achievements and share information about the opportunities you are taking advantage of. To help us do that we are asking you to tell us your good news! Fill out our form at here, and we may feature you on our website, social media, and in printed publications. Questions can be directed to Honors Program Coordinator Jessica-Waldschmidt@uiowa.edu.

Courtney Bright
Courtney Bright, a senior studying Communication Studies and English, accepted a full time-position upon her graduation this December! Courtney completed an internship at Motorist Insurance Group this past summer and will be joining them in their Associate and Community Engagement department focusing on philanthropy. Courtney says, “I have worked for the University of Iowa Honors Program for 2+ years now, and I can thank my experience with the Honors Program for a lot of the professional skills I utilized this summer!”

Lance Heady
Honors Program / Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates student Lance Heady was selected to give an oral presentation at the World Congress on Undergraduate Research at Qatar University located in Doha, Qatar. Lance will have the opportunity to discuss his research while creating new networks at a global level. Way to go, Lance!

Sydney Hofferber
Sydney Hofferber, received the Howard M. Laster Award for Interdisciplinary Studies! We applaud the connections you are making between art, communications, science, and health promotion in your ongoing collaboration with Dr. Lucas Carr in the UI Department of Health and Human Physiology. We hope that this support will allow you to continue your exploration of the potential which lies at the intersection of these vital disciplines. The award was created to honor the legacy of Howard M. Laster, PhD, who served the University of Iowa as the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences from 1977 to 1984. Dean Laster was known for his ability to work well with scholars inside and outside of his home department of Physics & Astronomy.

Emanuella Israel
University of Iowa alum and former honors student Emanuella Israel, a Spring 2016 graduate with a major in Art History, had her co-authored article published! You can read “Fifty Shades: Ambivalence about birth control in an erotic bestseller and its cultural implications”, which was co-authored by Honors Faculty and Steering Committee member Waltraud Maierhofer, in Culture, Health & Sexuality: An International Journal for Research, Intervention and Care. Fun Fact: This article began as an Honors Seminar project in the Fall of 2013!

Claire Jacobson
Honors student Claire Jacobson translated an Arabic short fiction piece by Mortada Gzar, who read it at Shambaugh House in September. (Gzar is an Iraqi novelist, filmmaker, visual artist, and 2016 International Writing Program resident.) Claire is a French and Arabic major with minors in Translation for Global Literacy and Writing.

Erin Maier
Erin Maier, a senior studying Astronomy and Physics, had her co-authored research project published! Read “Turbulence and Star Formation in a Sample of Spiral Galaxies”.

Nate Weger
Honors student Nate Weger received the ASCO 2016 Engineering Scholarship! He won a $5,000 scholarship and a $1,000 grant for his department from ASCO Emerson, a fluid control and pneumatic product manufacturer.
Meet the Writers
Honors Students at Your Service

Alex Chasteen
Alex Chasteen is a first-year studying English, Creative Writing, and French. She serves as Editor in Chief of Ink Lit Mag and writes for Note to Self, the UI Honors blog. She loves bad movies, makes bad jokes, and needs to stop buying so many yellow jackets.

Claire Jacobson
Claire Jacobson is a junior majoring in French & Arabic with a minor in translation. She is a Writing Fellow, and also works for the International Writing Program. She hopes to eventually pursue a career in translation and interpreting, and maybe add a fourth language to the mix.

Alex LeMoine
Alex LeMoine is a junior majoring in English and Journalism & Mass Communication. She works with the Honors program as an Outreach Ambassador and also as a Writing Fellow on campus. She loves getting the opportunity to write for the Honors Newsletter and connect even further with the Honors community here at Iowa. Go Hawks!

Onae Parker
I am a sophomore from Adair, Iowa, double majoring in Linguistics and Japanese Language and Literature. In addition to being crazy about cats, coffee, and classical music, I am also a Trekkie blithely celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Star Trek.

Chelsea Schula
Chelsea Schula is a sophomore majoring in Journalism and International Studies with a minor in Theatre. She loves musicals, superheroes, coffee and sarcasm.

Katie Kiesewetter
Katie Kiesewetter is a junior from Farmington, Illinois, studying English, Studio Art (Graphic Design), and Gender, Women’s, and Sexuality Studies. Aside from her work for the newsletter, Katie co-manages the Honors Note to Self blog, works as the Outreach & Design Lead of the Honors Student Admins, and is the Arts & Humanities Honors Ambassador.

Elidih Spery
Elidih Spery is a sophomore from Colorado and is majoring in English. Besides searching for the best cup of chai, she spends her time lost in fictional worlds, playing guitar and traveling.

Bailey Zaputil
Bailey Zaputil is a junior studying English and Informatics, with a certificate in Entrepreneurial Management. She enjoys drinking coffee, hanging with friends, working out, and reading books.
The financial support we receive from our alums and friends is given back directly to our students in the form of scholarships, professional development opportunities, and stipends for students to study abroad. Your gift directly affects the lives and careers of Honors students.

To make a donation:
Visit www.givetoiowa.org/2016hp
Email us at honors-program@uiowa.edu
Call us at 319-335-1681