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Claire Jacobson, Newsletter Editor
Bailey Zaputil, Design Editor
Holly Blosser Yoder, Staff Adviser

On the Cover:
After graduation, Nate Hua visited the Isle of Skye in Scotland during his recent trip to Europe. He will travel throughout this year, visiting countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and various parts of both Europe and Asia. Read more on page 15.

Photo by Mathias Hannes
Greetings for the Summer of 2016 to our Honors program students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends.

THE SIZE OF OUR PROGRAM

This coming Fall we’ll have about 750 first-year entering honors students. That’s less than previous years’ incoming classes (which averaged 1,000), but we were expecting even less because of the raised entry requirements for the program this year. Yet, even with an incoming class of 750, we are still one of the largest honors programs among our peers. Specifically, the mean size honors program/college in major public universities (such as ours) is around 1,700 students, and we project our size, given this coming year’s entering class, will be around 3,000 students.

In addition to first-year entering students, we’ll have a substantial number of students who will join our program once they are here by achieving a university grade point average of 3.5 and above. We try to be as accessible as we can, since certain students do not find themselves until after they get to college. Toward that end (being accessible), we also let incoming students who do not meet our entry requirements petition for selective admission into the program. Bottom line: in comparison to our peers in honors education – for example, other Big Ten institutions – I believe our program is more accessible than most.

OUR COMMUNITY AT HONORS AT IOWA

Besides striving to be accessible, we also want our students to feel a sense of community as part of Honors. We start building that sense throughout the months of June and July when we hold our many orientation and registration sessions for our incoming students. What do we try to do with Honors orientation? Besides familiarizing our students with the Honors Program curriculum, our main objective is to help them realize that they are becoming part of a welcoming, caring, and supportive community. That’s more challenging than you’d expect, since the natural tendency students have in coming to a large university is to feel swallowed by the numbers – for example, the entering class at the University of Iowa this year is projected to be over 5,800 students. To counter that tendency, we try right from the time of orientation to help our students to connect – with us, with each other, with faculty, and with the community of Iowa City. In fact, that’s our program’s tagline – Make Your Connection.

THE MOST IMPORTANT CONNECTION

One other connection we try to help our students make, and this particular connection is fundamental for all the other connections I mentioned above, is the one with themselves. This objective, self-discovery, is one of the unique aspects of our program. It can take various forms, but as we see it, our goal is to empower our students and facilitate self-authorship. What’s self-authorship? It’s the internal capacity to define and act upon one’s beliefs, values, personal identity, and social relations. In other words, we want our students to develop the capability to direct and shape their beliefs, values, social relations, and, ultimately, as much as possible, their course of life. This is in opposition to the mindset of blindly fulfilling external expectations and goals, some of which may be empty and even damaging at a personal level (see W. Deresiewicz’s book, Excellent Sheep, for more on the dangers of extrinsic motivation). To see our students make that inner connection is highly gratifying: they come in as one person and leave as another – one who is much more in charge! When that happens, we feel there’s been a deep and lasting positive change.

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

Art L. Spisak
Director, UI Honors Program
Professor, Classics Department
President Elect, National Collegiate Honors Council
Well, it’s official—my four years at U Iowa are now over, and I guess that means I’m an adult (eh, more or less). My time spent in Iowa City has truly been an amazing adventure—this town introduced me to my best friends, helped me discover new interests and hobbies, and cultivated my passion for my fields of study. And now that I have graduated, I can honestly say that I’m ready for the real world. But this wasn’t always the case. As a matter of fact, I spent a good portion of my senior year wondering if I was actually prepared. So, I’d like to leave a few little tips for any undergraduates who might be stressing out.

First, take advantage of different types of classes. Although I majored in French literature and English, I took classes in astronomy, environmental sciences, and even kayaking, and it was in these classrooms where I found new topics that absolutely fascinate me. Just be careful though—these different courses were so interesting that I considered changing my major several times.

Second, learn something from every experience. Learning doesn’t necessarily have to happen in the classroom, especially when it comes to preparing for life as an adult. If you’re struggling to get along with a roommate or if someone isn’t contributing in a group project, use those experiences as a way to practice talking things out and resolving the issue. I guarantee that you will develop useful skills that will help you in your future work setting.

Third, use the Honors Program to your benefit. This program is extremely unique because it lets each student decide how they want their experience to be. So take advantage of it! Get to know all the different options you have to broaden your education—go study abroad, get involved in research, be a peer advisor, or don’t do any of those things! This program is flexible, so I encourage you to do a wee bit of research and to get as involved in Honors as you’d like!

“‘It’s going to go by fast so use this time to try new things and discover who you are and who you’re going to be.’”

And last but not least, have fun and treasure the experience. It’s going to go by fast so use this time to try new things and discover who you are and who you’re going to be. As college students, we’re in a sort of limbo—we’re no longer teenagers but we aren’t fully-fledged adults, so use this time to your advantage, learn a bunch, and make great memories!

It has been such a pleasure being a member of the newsletter, and I am truly grateful for Holly Blosser Yoder’s support and guidance over the years. I look forward to reading the newsletter staff (now under the very capable direction of Claire Jacobson) and finding out about all the amazing accomplishments coming out of Honors at Iowa.

Thanks for everything.

Emily Syzmanski

Emily Syzmanski was the student Editor for the Honors Newsletter from Fall 2015 to Spring 2016. Graduating with degrees in English and French, she will begin her post-graduate education at the University of Denver Publishing Institute this fall.

Honors Newsletter
Page 4, Summer 2016
What To Expect At Honors Primetime

Incoming freshman, have no fear
By Anya Kim

If you are an incoming first-year, you may have already signed up for one of the best opportunities in the Honors program: Primetime. Although you’ve heard about the course from the Honors Summer Ambassadors, you might still be left with some questions about what to expect on August 15th. This is completely understandable; Honors Primetime is an experience that will be different from any class you ever took in high school or will take in college.

Your class for Honors Primetime will allow you to get a sense of what to expect from Honors courses, without making you worry about competing with your peers to get those coveted A’s. By moving in early, you can begin to make friends, get to know other talented students in a relaxed environment, get a feel for what your next year will be like in your new room, and get a little more organized and prepared before your start actually taking your serious courses.

Honors students look back fondly on Primetime memories. Deepon Sarkar, a third year microbiology student, said, “It was a great opportunity to move in early, meet new people, and transition from high school to college.” Others enjoy the diversity of the courses offered, which range from trash can volcanoes to spoken word poetry. You will be amazed at what you can learn and experience in three and a half days of Honors Primetime, both inside and outside of the classroom.

In terms of what exactly you will be doing at Honors Primetime, expect to be placed in a class based on the interest areas you chose during registration, but you won’t find out which until day one. Additionally, plan to go over a variety of interesting topics in your professor’s field of study, have meaningful discussions, hands-on projects, and potentially a small amount of homework, but don’t worry about Primetime being overly difficult. It is a class designed to give students a taste of a subject, but to pass you do not have to be an expert by the end— you are simply expected to engage and have a fun, relaxing time.

In Honors you are also required to take a similar course, called an Honors First-Year Seminar. This is another one semester hour course also taught by a faculty member, where you get the chance to explore a given topic with a little more depth, over a longer period of time.

“Honors is about building intellectual curiosity and community. These two directions come together in Honors Primetime and our First-Year seminars,” said Honors Associate Director Dr. Bob Kirby. The courses bring together students new to campus with outstanding instructors and together they delve into topics that focus more on active discussion than the conveying of specific facts. A focus for these courses is to help students realize that college can provide a new learning environment for them, where learning to think and engaging others as part of the process is an essential component of their education.

The transition from high school to college is a pivotal time in the life of an incoming first-year student. The swift tumble into newfound independence, challenging classes and novel friendships can be as frightening as it is exciting. Here at the University of Iowa, Honors Primetime is designed to make that transition as natural and as fulfilling as possible.
Fostering Self-Discovery
Meet the Honors Professional Staff Members

By Katie Kiesewetter

The University of Iowa Honors Program is run by a staff of eight unique individuals from a variety of backgrounds whose primary goal is student success. Their day-to-day tasks include meetings, committee duties, emails, phone calls, student conversations, and analyzing and recording experiences within the program. Each staff member brings a different skillset to the table to make our program exceptional, and they all have big plans for next year.

Art Spisak, Director of the Honors Program

As director of our program, Dr. Spisak is in charge of representing our program at the campus, community, and even national level. Dr. Spisak has a Ph.D. in Classics from Loyola University. When asked about this background, he says the main way he uses this specialized knowledge is in his course with the Presidential Scholars, “Self-Discovery Through Ancient Greek Myth.” This class also acts as a focus group for possible directions in the Honors Program.

The program is continuously tracking progress and exploring innovations to benefit students. “Since I came here, we have developed a new curriculum, which took effect in 2013. That was a big step. Before, we had a lot of great things going on, but it was not all pooled together and structured so that you can have a clear path as a student that’s honors-worthy and for which you could get recognition. The next step was to ask, ‘Are we getting the right students in the door so we are setting them up for success and not failure?’ The third major push was that we had self-discovery on our mission statement, so we said, ‘Let’s make it happen.’

“Self-discovery is an individualized thing, and everybody’s process is different. On the other hand, there is a common experience in self-discovery wherein self-authorship is the desired result. We hope the experiences that we offer will help our students direct their lives in a meaningful way.”

Bob Kirby, Associate Director of the Honors Program & Director of ICRU

With many similar responsibilities as our director, Dr. Kirby works broadly within the university and is involved in outreach to colleges, departments, and programs. “I’m the rule purveyor, trying to uphold both academic standards as well as basics to see what sort of program will serve the students most effectively.” On top of this, he directs the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU), which gives him a unique perspective into many of our student’s experiential learning projects.

“When I think of the different roles I’ve held, each one of those is nothing more than an example of self-discovery. Many students who come into the honors program have a lot of certainty in their ability to accomplish things, but there are some who don’t have confidence in their abilities or values. I was not very motivated in high school. I put very little effort in my education. But in college there were people who gave me recognition for doing good things. That made me think I had expectations I could meet, and I wanted to live up to the opportunities they were giving me.

“How do we make sure students gain in the broadest sense of their experiences to make them as meaningful as possible? Sometimes it’s coming together to work collaboratively...Finding people who share your interests and care about the things you care about is great. When your work is about something you care about, it’s fun. We should worry less about the end game and learn more about how you do it along the way.”

Learn more about Bob at his webpage

Learn more about Dr. Spisak at his webpage
Meet the Honors Professional Staff Members, continued

Lindsay Marshall, Associate Director of ICRU

Spending much of her time creating events and workshops to benefit the development of undergraduate researchers, Lindsay Marshall has turned what used to be a part-time assistantship into an associate position that has helped ICRU to grow over the past four years. Among other things, Lindsay works with the ICRU Fellows to help them to communicate their research in more accessible ways to general audiences.

“Research and creative work is challenging and it forces you to learn a lot about yourself and your field. It’s innovation, it’s failure, it’s success, it’s outcomes you didn’t expect to see, it’s communication... It’s a singular experience that hits on a lot of parts of self-discovery. I’ve been able to address the accessible communication aspect of research in a variety of ways: mentee training sessions, the Three Minute Research Story Competition, ICRU Research Ambassadors, the #WhatResearchLooksLike visual album, our online Did You Know? blog, and by making it mandatory for our researchers to write a general audience abstract.

“When students are forced to think about how they’re presenting their work with the words they use, the analogies they use, describing the bigger parts of why it matters, it creates an environment where someone who doesn’t know the exact jargon of a particular field can feel comfortable asking questions and inquiring about research.”

Get in touch with Lindsay at her webpage

Kelly Thornburg, Director of Scholar Development

Kelly Thornburg offers expert support to students seeking scholarship funding for current and post-graduate research and study. With undergraduate degrees in Women’s Studies and Politics and a masters in Social Work, Thornburg’s experiences with the power of personal narrative informs her work in a distinctive way.

“When I was in college, I got lucky. A handful of people in my life – financial aid counselors, faculty mentors, and an ex-boyfriend – made sure I knew about scholarships like the Carver and Truman. With their encouragement, I applied and won both and learned an enormous amount about what I believed and how I could be useful in the world.

“I’ve worked inside of a lot of different professional communities as an administrator, advocate, and educator. In each of these roles, I’ve used creative writing, self-reflection, and collaborative storytelling to help others explore and reframe personally and politically challenging ideas and experiences. Vulnerability and risk are uncomfortable for all of us – no matter what they grow from. Thankfully, this discomfort can also push us towards a new understanding of who we are and what we can do.”

Read more about Kelly at her webpage
Meet the Honors Professional Staff Members, continued

Andy Willard, Experiential Learning Director

“When I meet with students as they plan to earn experiential honors credit, our discussion tends to focus on three things: what kind of independent project would interest them, how would they conduct the project, and why do they want to do it. In particular, whether studying abroad or interning, it is important that students develop projects they care about because it becomes difficult to work on and complete a project that has become tedious or boring.

“To make the connection explicit between internships and study abroad and self-discovery, there is going to be a new procedure this year for earning honors credit that requires student to reflect on their study abroad or intern experience. In this regard, students will complete pre-experience and post-experience questionnaires as well as a narrative summary of the study abroad or internship experience. Moreover, in addition to completing these assignments, students can still develop and conduct independent projects if they so choose and earn additional honors credit.”

Visit Andy at his webpage

Fostering interest in hands-on education, Andy Willard helps honors students incorporate various experiential projects into their University Honors curriculum to aid in the application of what they learn in the classroom to the outside world.

“In college I very much wanted to do projects out of class. I had one anthropology professor who said something like ‘Mr. Willard, you really don’t know where you belong—you’re not sure whether you should be in the library or in the streets.’ And I told him, ‘I want to be in both.’

Holly Blosser Yoder, Advising Director

Giver of honors-related advice, Holly Blosser Yoder is the person to see for any question related to honors coursework or the first steps of exploring academic possibilities and opportunities in a particular field.

“My role has always been primarily focused on self-discovery because I help students to fulfill the honors curriculum, which is all about self-discovery. Honors coursework, and even more specifically, honors experiential learning helps students take control of that narrative of who they are and who they want to be. For example, if you want to be fluent in another language or you want to be competent in another culture, study abroad. Through University Honors, we reward you for exploring who you are.”

Another of Yoder’s advising roles involves the historic Phi Eta Sigma honor society. “I am the advisor for PES, a freshman honors society. Students are invited to join based on their first semester grades. I’d like to see more students join, and have it become a pathway for students to get more deeply involved with the Honors community.

“New this fall, we are adding an Honors Peer Advising staff. Every new honors student will meet each semester with an honors peer advisor to talk about curricular requirements, to select classes that make sense with their goals, and to talk about options for experiential learning. Their main goal is to aid students in choosing classes to complete the required 12 s.h of Honors coursework. This will help students to be more intentional about their honors education, to ensure that every honors student has the best possible chance to complete the honors curriculum.”

Contact Holly at her webpage
Meet the Honors Professional Staff Members, continued

Emily Johnson, Assessment Director

The newest professional staff member, Emily Johnson’s biggest role as assessment director is evaluating how well the Honors program is fulfilling its mission as well as making sure students are doing what they need to do in order to complete the program.

She is still gathering other projects as needed, including becoming the staff advisor for the Presidential Scholars Program and assisting with next year’s Presidential selection process. “This is a group of extremely talented students with leadership skills that are already pretty well-developed. I’m still trying to see how best to approach that role using the expertise I have.

“You have to see a whole cycle in a job to have a really firm grasp on what you can or can’t change. But I have always approached every project with the idea that something can change. I have worked with students in the past, but this is a different population than what I’m used to. I’m really looking forward to finding the best ways that I can help students in the Honors program.”

With so many possibilities of expanding her role with her many skillsets, including her skills as a trained yoga instructor, Emily’s passions for student development make her the perfect addition to our professional staff.

Jessica Waldschmidt, Program Coordinator & Communications Specialist

Jessica Waldschmidt does it all. She oversees program support, directs outreach and communications, supervises a student staff, and manages program initiatives and operations. Adding Communications Specialist to her repertoire just this year, Jessica’s position continues to grow and change as she looks toward the future of our program.

“The title change is a result of how my job has evolved, not as a newly added responsibility. After I transitioned from the reception desk into an office, I hired a student support staff which freed up my time to work on other things. I’m always thinking about what our students want to know, and my job involves working with the other staff to facilitate program initiatives and then getting the word out.

“Before fall starts, we’ll have a new electronic thesis repository. This new database will help showcase honors theses and projects to a worldwide audience. Our students are doing really cool things, and all I want to do is tell people about it! We do what we do for the students, so I want to make sure that we’re making Honors a valuable experience.”

Contact Emily at her webpage

Learn more about Jessica here
Guiding Us Through
The Honors Advising Team

By Rachel Zuckerman

My experience with Honors advising began by accident. I was strolling past the office of Andy Willard, Honors Experiential Learning Director, when I noticed he was holding office hours. After spending my entire freshman year as an Open Major and disliking my summer internship, I was in the thick of a collegiate midlife crisis, so I decided to stop in to office hours and seek advice.

Andy and I quickly dove into a discussion about my goals and dreams. We looked at how far along I was with the Honors curriculum and discussed what I could learn about myself and my strengths through my internship in public relations, even though I knew I wouldn’t follow that career path. For over an hour, we brainstormed together about how I could make the most out of undergraduate research, valuable courses, and Iowa City volunteer opportunities during my college years. I left his office that afternoon feeling inspired. Other Honors students report having experiences similar to mine.

“In many hour-long conversations, Kelly Thornburg, Honors’ Director of Scholar Development, has helped me rethink how I can engage with the University’s myriad of opportunities to serve my aspirations best,” said UI junior Jacob Simpson. “Kelly also exposed me to the world of national fellowships, like the Truman Scholarship, and she continues to encourage me to strive for those things that require significant effort but are just within my reach.”

In addition to Andy Willard and Kelly Thornburg, Holly Blosser Yoder and Emily Johnson advise students on registering for honors classes and satisfying honors coursework requirements, and Lindsay Marshall and Bob Kirby assist students in getting involved with undergraduate research.

Regardless of what a student is looking to do within the Honors Program, there is always an advisor to help them make the most out of their journey. A first point of contact for incoming first years will be the Honors Peer Advising Staff, six upperclassmen whose primary goal will be to guide students through the honors curricular requirements and helping them make connections.

UI junior Lance Heady has received substantial personal and professional guidance from Lindsay Marshall, Associate Director for the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates.

“Lindsay has provided me with amazing guidance throughout my academic career,” said Heady. “She has helped me with fellowship applications, critiqued my resume, and helped [Alora Kraus] and me start a research blog. She often takes hours out of her day to meet with me and has helped me prosper as a student and a scholar. Not only is Lindsay an amazing advisor, but she has also become a great friend.”
Student Profile
Six questions with Fidel Estrada

Hometown: Sioux City, Iowa
Year: Sophomore
Majors: International Studies, Geography

1. What factored into your choice of major?

I chose International Studies because I am interested in international affairs and I like to learn about other cultures, and Geography because I am interested in how people interact with the environment and how to help solve social and environmental problems.

2. Could you tell me about the most interesting course you’ve taken here at the UI?

I took Intro to Geographic Visualization last semester. It’s about cartography and how to make maps that are more interpretive and insightful, as well as interactive ways to present them. The professor was clear and relatable in his teaching, and helped us better understand the material and technical details. For our final class project my group explored the relationships between drought, migration, and violence in the context of Syria and its Civil War.

3. I’ve heard you won the Cultural Vistas Fellowship. What does that entail?

The initial process was to send in an application, resume, letters of recommendation, and a personal statement. After a round of interviews about my specific motivations and goals, I was selected as a fellow and I will be spending this summer in Berlin interning at a professional company or organization.

4. I’ve also heard that recently you founded a Dreamers chapter at the UI. What is that? How can and why should incoming students get involved?

Dream Iowa is a political advocacy group that advocates for the betterment of the lives of undocumented immigrants here in Iowa. We aim to do this by visiting with legislators and educating the community about issues that affect them. For example, we want to push for tuition equity for immigrant students who don’t always have an equal chance to prosper in Iowa. Students can get involved by joining the Facebook group “Interest in DREAM Iowa: UI chapter,” and staying tuned for updates about meetings.

5. When and why did you join the Honors Program? How has Honors helped you succeed?

I joined the Honors Program during my second semester, because I wanted to be able to graduate with honors and push myself personally and academically. Honors has allowed me take my knowledge and apply it to something hands-on, and make connections with faculty through Honors contract courses. For my Foundations of GIS class, I created maps of the geographical distribution of bird and tree species in the Iowa City area for my professor. I wouldn’t have had this experience without Honors, and I am thankful for how it pushes students to do more.

6. What’s one thing you know now that you wish you’d known as an incoming student?

I wish I would have known what major I wanted to study, so I could have been better prepared to take on my studies. I would just say that Honors and non-Honors students alike should take advantage of the possibility of research, as it enables new experiences and relationships to form.
Student Profile
Six questions with Eileen Campbell

Hometown: Wayne, Illinois
Year: Sophomore
Majors: Theatre Arts, Spanish

1. What factored into your choice of major?
I’ve loved theatre from a very early age. It was one of those passions that sort of knocks you over the head. After seeing a couple of community shows when I was around nine, I thought, “Yep, that’s it. That’s what I’m supposed to do.” I’ve also always been fascinated by language. I took Spanish all throughout middle and high school. Studying language helps me understand English in a more technical sense and appreciate the intricacy of speech.

2. Could you tell me about the most interesting course you’ve taken here at the UI?
The Undergraduate Playwrights Workshop was a class of only about ten students, and we met once a week to talk about each other’s work. It taught me how to work with a deadline, finish a story arc, and push myself until I had something worth writing. It’s so wonderful to be able to share your work in an environment that promotes appreciation and criticism in tandem.

3. I’ve heard you’re an Honors Fellow. What does that entail?
I became a Fellow by submitting an application that included a personal essay and some records, then having an interview for the position. Next year, the Fellows will participate in a weekly seminar where we get to know each other and ourselves through writing and self-exploration.

4. Could you tell me about some memorable experiences you’ve had in the Theatre Arts department or writing at Iowa?
As a playwright, I got to work with actors, directors, stage managers, and designers during the Iowa Ten Minute Play Festival. That was the first time I’ve seen my own work produced on a relatively large scale, and it was so humbling to have all of these people willing to put time and effort into something I wrote. When that happens, it’s like everyone is getting together and agreeing that I have a story worth telling.

5. When and why did you join the Honors Program? How has Honors helped you succeed?
I joined the Honors Program because it seemed like a good way to keep myself focused and push myself to get as much out of my education as possible. I’ve been a part of it ever since I accepted admission to Iowa, which was great because it meant I could live in the Honors dorm this past year. It’s nice to be able to work with people who have similar goals and work ethics. We push each other and help each other, and that feels like what scholarship is supposed to be.

6. What’s one thing you know now that you wish you’d known as an incoming student?
I wish I’d known that first semester is essentially an adjustment period. I didn’t find many friends or get comfortable in the theatre department until second semester, and it worried me for a while. But I learned that a lot of people have the same experience. Comfort takes a bit of searching and hits-and-misses. I still don’t think I’ve completely found it, but I’m okay with that now. I hope any incoming students will stick it out, because time definitely fixes everything.

Eileen Campbell is a sophomore Theater Arts and Spanish major. Photo provided by Eileen Campbell.

“We push each other and help each other, and that feels like what scholarship is supposed to be.”

By Sophie Katz
Supervisor of the Year

Honors’ Jessica Waldschmidt receives UI STEP award

By Katie Kiesewetter

Among the many opportunities offered by the University of Iowa Honors program, student employment is an experience in which Honors students are encouraged to expand upon what they learn in the classroom and apply it in ways that support the program. This spring, the Honors Student Administrative Assistants nominated their supervisor, Honors Program Coordinator & Communications Specialist Jessica Waldschmidt, for the campus-wide award for Student Supervisor of the Year at the University of Iowa.

This award, offered by UI STEP (Student to Employed Professional) and Student Employment was new to our campus this year, making Jessica the very first winner. There were eighty-seven total nominations for sixty-one supervisors on campus. Out of the twenty-four finalists, Jessica was voted number one.

“I am part of a group of student administrative assistants that work directly under Jessica Waldschmidt, who is perhaps one of the biggest role models in my adult life... She coordinates a cohesive, tight-knit group of student employees that are excited about their jobs and adore the heck out of their supervisor. She actually cares about her students in a way that makes it apparent that she genuinely cares and has a strong interest in our success.”

—Marina Gibbs

Katie Kiesewetter (KK): Marina is right– student success is truly what you strive for, but with such a large student staff, you really could use the admins as copy machines and secretaries to help get your work done faster. How did you know, right away, you didn’t want that?

Jessica Waldschmidt (JW): I started doing the admin’s job when I first came to Honors and I knew there was potential for a lot more. When I transitioned from that role and became a student supervisor, I knew I didn’t want their job to be a typical office job. My background has taught me what it means to be a good supervisor – I’ve held a job since I was 13. Given that we are Honors, I am always looking to add value to an experience.

KK: You and two of the admins, Anna and Marina, presented at Upper Midwest Regional Honors Conference to showcase how a student staff can support an academic program. What does a staff of undergraduates bring to a program like Honors at Iowa?

JW: Perspective. They are the student and I am not – my job is to serve our students. When I’m able to ask the admins, “What if we did this?” Or, “Can you read this thing that I wrote and tell me if it makes sense?” That’s a huge help. It’s really great to have honors students from different backgrounds and in different majors bring their own ideas, perspectives, and opinions to the conversation.

KK: Speaking of diverse programs and backgrounds, one unique aspect of your particular supervisor style is the individual focus areas you created for each admin. This individuality is one of the aspects the admins adore most about their jobs.

“Jessica has encouraged me to use what I am learning in my current courses. She and I are going to work on using the skills I learn in Optimization and Simulation Modeling to create the most optimal work and assignment schedule for future admins based on their availability.”

—Kelcie Eisbrenner

KK: How did giving the admins their own focuses help encourage program support? What challenges did you face when creating focus areas?

JW: I wanted to find a way to spread the impact. Having the admin staff is like having another full time employee. They are a resource
for us in many ways. It wasn’t intentional, but I think the focus areas all feed into each other. The biggest challenge is that with their increased responsibilities, the workload is huge. The admins all have enthusiasm for the different things they do, but they are only part-time and have a hundred other things on their to-do list. There is a lot to be done and never enough time.

“Jessica has walked me through exactly how to handle situations... She has taught me that everyone is in a different place in their life.... Jessica has reaffirmed why I want to teach: to help people learn, even if it is learning something I find simple.” –Anna Haller

KK: What is your biggest challenge in supervising such a varied group of students? How do you make sure things run smoothly and everyone is happy and productive while also informing your own work?

JW: It’s challenging to keep track of everything. I’m always checking in with everyone and I make sure to ask, “Do you have any questions? Can I help you with anything?” Being approachable is crucial. Asking questions in a way that helps me to figure out their learning style and building an individual relationship with each person is extremely important to me.

Our conversations, whether they be individual or in a staff meeting, it’s like our own little support group. It’s really fun for me to see these students come in a little nervous and watch their confidence grow as they learn the job. I do whatever I can to foster that confidence... This may be a job that, coming in, you think will be a mundane office job, but I really hold a higher expectation for my staff, and I think the admins appreciate that. We both get a lot out of this experience.

KK: Last year, we were able to see big changes in the Honors Program thanks to you and the admin staff: the Note to Self blog, the developments of an Honors handbook, and a more definitive explanation of experiential learning credits. Even behind the scenes, a more streamlined approach to form processing has been developed. What do you have in store for next year?

JW: Next year is going to look a little different because we have a new process for peer advising, and the admins are going to be supporting that. We’ve also rolled out a brand new website that has updated information about everything Honors at Iowa. Seeing how people respond to that information, knowing if the language is clear and students do what they’re supposed to do – it’s going to be an assessment project of sorts that will tell us if we need to work on things more.

Some of my new folks coming in really love to write and take photos. I’m thinking about how I can utilize that interest as far as our social media pages are concerned. Then, looking around elsewhere to see what improvements we can make to the structure of the program and the resources we provide to make sure we are serving our students. We’ll see how it goes!
Graduates, what’s next for you?

New Adventures for Honors at Iowa Scholars

By Eilidh Spery

Graduation marks the end of an era, and some students find it difficult to think beyond that final walk across the stage. But for others the end of college marks the beginning of new adventures and endeavors. The 2016 Honors at Iowa Scholars who graduated this past May from the University of Iowa exemplify this; their plans for the upcoming year range from graduate school and jobs to trips around the world and time abroad. These students are the Honors Program’s highest awardees, chosen for their achievement and community involvement—and they have big dreams for their futures.

STAYING IN IOWA

Some graduates are continuing their studies at the University of Iowa. Colton Jensen, Iowa’s 2015 Homecoming King, majored in Chemistry and will attend Carver College of Medicine at the University of Iowa, working towards his M.D. Marilyn Keane will also study at Carver, pursuing a master’s degree in the Physician Assistant Program. While she’s in Iowa she hopes to continue her involvement in the Pre-PA Club, a group which inspired her career choice.

Ryan Kunkle plans to stay in Iowa and take a gap year in order to clarify his future plans. He graduated with Honors in History, and minors in both Latin and Philosophy, and is interested in both law and classical languages.

VENTURING ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Many of the graduates hope to continue their studies, working toward Ph.D.s, M.D.s and other graduate degrees at various universities. Kathryn Langenfeld plans to earn her Ph.D. in environmental engineering from the University of Michigan, and later wants to pursue a future in academia. She also wants to continue to run more marathons, an interest she cultivated at Iowa.

Ian Nessler also plans to attend the University of Michigan, for his Ph.D. in chemical engineering; in the future, he hopes to work at a pharmaceutical company in the field of drug discovery. He has already begun studying antibody drug conjugates, which have the potential to be used as cancer therapy, and both he and Kunkle recognize undergraduate research as having been vital to their success at Iowa.

Emily Szymanski, who majored in English and French literature, is also going out of state to continue her education. This summer she is attending the Denver Publishing Institute at the University of Denver to earn a certificate in publishing. She hopes to eventually work in the Chicago metropolitan area as an editor.

“REAL JOBS”

Several Honors at Iowa Scholars are starting new jobs this year. James Ottavi has already begun working as a business analyst at HealthCheck360 in Dubuque, after majoring in Economics. He enjoys his work, stating, “It’s challenging, interesting, and meaningful to me, and something that pushes me to keep learning and honing my skills.” Maddie Bro is also following her passions through her career choice: she is currently working at Frank N. Magid Associates as Project Manager. Bro, who earned B.A.s in Journalism and Mass Communication, and Gender, Women’s and Sexuality Studies, appreciates the diversification of skills that her current position is allowing her to develop, referring to it as a “rich business ‘education’.”

SEEING THE WORLD

Some graduates have plans abroad in the immediate future. Laura Wang is planning to live in Kinmen County, Taiwan, for the next year, teaching English as part of her Fulbright Grant and starting a book club. She majored in both English/Creative Writing and Chinese, and knows that her time in Taiwan will impact her worldview and help her decide on a future career. Jeffrey Ding, who earned a B.B.A in Economics, a B.S. in Political Science, and a B.A. in Chinese, will be working towards an M.Phil in International Relations as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, and plans to continue pursuing international relations in the future.

On the other hand Nate Hua, who earned his B.A. in Chemistry and minored in Theatre Arts and English, is traveling around the globe for a year. He hopes to visit multiple countries, aiming to “learn about myself and the world in new ways,” and is interested in studying and pursuing a career in environmental conservation. Hua’s time at Iowa taught him, among other things, the importance of “an open and active mind.”

These Honors at Iowa Scholars demonstrate that the University of Iowa has provided them with the skills and abilities, work ethic, and confidence to pursue their passions and to prove that graduation is not the end after all, but rather the beginning of new adventures.
Celebrating Exceptional Faculty
Recognizing Dr. Rachel Williams and Dr. Andrew High

By Emily Szymanski

Each year Honors at Iowa recognizes two UI faculty members for the effort and attention they give to their students. At the 2016 Commendation Ceremony, Dr. Rachel Williams from the Departments of Gender, Women’s & Sexuality Studies (GWSS), Art, and Art History received the Outstanding Teaching Award, and Dr. Andrew High from the Department of Communication Studies received the Outstanding Mentor Award.

But what is it that makes Dr. Williams and Dr. High stand out? “As a professor in the classroom, Rachel exudes enthusiasm for the subject at hand and is thus an inspiration to students from all backgrounds,” rising senior Katie Kiesewetter said. “From introductory level GWSS courses to harder, more specific topics, Rachel treats every bit of history, problem, and theory as though it is the most important topic on earth that day.”

This type of keen interest in her field and in her career has motivated her students to get more involved in the issues.

“Her passion is contagious,” Kiesewetter said. “I never left class without the burning urge to do something or help someone. That is a special talent to have.”

Dr. Williams also tries to inspire students in her classroom who might not necessarily be in her field of study. Since Dr. Williams teaches some courses that can count toward general education requirements, Kiesewetter notes how Dr. Williams makes her classes applicable and interesting to all students: “We were always encouraged to share our own stories and apply theories to what goes on in our own lives. This helped students who may not have been GWSS majors or minors feel a closer connection and be included.”

While Dr. Williams was commended for her ability to inspire and encourage learning within the classroom, Dr. High earned the Outstanding Mentor Award for his dedication to student learning and exploration outside the classroom. When conducting her honors thesis—a project that can be a large, daunting task for many—Lauren Peters benefited from Dr. High’s guidance. In her nomination of Dr. High, Peters stated, “His commitment to help me succeed and consistent willingness to assist my learning [...] have made my Honors Thesis an enjoyable and collaborative project.

“Before I wrote each section of my thesis, he always explained the logic behind each component so that I understood the importance of that particular section.” She continued, “[After writing] he provided me with invaluable feedback, which made for a better thesis and also strengthened my own academic writing.”

When working on these larger projects, students can become overwhelmed and lose sight of the overall goal, but Dr. High was diligent in keeping Peters on track. “Dr. High met with me on a weekly basis to see how my thesis was progressing and to give me time to ask any questions I might have had,” Peters wrote.

Not only was Dr. High valuable in helping Peters with her capstone project, but he also guided Peters through big decisions. Peters further wrote, “[Dr. High] played a crucial role in helping me decide which graduate schools to apply to and he wrote me several recommendation letters for those grad schools. He also read through my drafts of personal statements and writing samples while providing constructive feedback.”

“Her passion is contagious. I never left class without the burning urge to do something or help someone. That is a special talent to have.”

-Katie Kiesewetter

So thank you, Dr. Williams and Dr. High, for your dedication to your students.
Meet the RAs
Insights and inspiration from three Resident Assistants

What made you decide to apply to be an RA?
NS: [When I first lived in the dorms] there was one night when someone was being loud late at night and used a derogatory term and my RA immediately stood up for what was right and set the tone that that kind of language wasn’t accepted on our floor. That inspired me to apply so that I too could set an example for my residents like my RA did for me.

LH: My RA was a really great person and resource during my freshman year. He really cared for our floor and made a huge impact on my life and we are still friends now. That experience made me want to have that type of impact on students.

GG: I decided to apply to be an RA because my freshman year I was involved with my hall association and I wanted to maintain a strong involvement in the residence hall community.

What are some things you are excited for or enjoy about being an RA?
NS: I’m super excited to actually get into the dorms and really get to know my residents; I’m excited to see all of their outlooks on life, and I’m excited to see them grow as people too. Coming to a big university like Iowa, it can be easy to get isolated or feel alone even in a room crowded with people. It’ll be good for them to know that there will always be someone in their corner cheering them on. A room to myself won’t be that bad either.

LH: I really enjoy making a connection with all of my residents and getting to know them all on a personal basis. As an RA you can serve in many roles for students from advisor and friend to the floor parent and you can really make an impact on students lives.

GG: I really like getting to know all the different residents. One of the great things about the Honors House community in Daum is that it’s not major specific, so on a floor you can have a wide array of majors and I enjoy learning about what people do in their various majors.

What are you nervous about or dislike about being an RA?
NS: I’d say I’m most nervous about move-in week. This is a crucial part to kind of lay down the “ground-rules” and set expectations, while also getting to know them and making sure that they know I’m here for them—so I guess balancing the friend/authoritative role.

LH: Arts and crafts are my downfall, so making door decs is a dreaded task. So much gluing and trying to make each look like the previous. I get anxious just thinking about doing more of them. Although it can be soothing at times, I am terrible at being creative and crafty.

GG: It is challenging at times to balance all of the things you have to do. Being an RA, it seems like all of the work comes in spurts. I feel like I don’t have much to do for a week or so then all at once everything gets really busy and it is somewhat stressful.

What do you hope to get out of being an RA?
NS: Personally, a new perspective. Everybody has a different story, a different background, and a different way they look at things, and I hope after this year that I can come out of it a better person with even more respect for others and where they’ve come from.

What are some of the challenges/benefits of being an RA?
LH: The benefits of the RA role far outweigh the challenges. You are able to meet so many students and to make a lasting connection with each of them. Throughout the year you see how each student grows and progresses into their sophomore year.

GG: It gets kind of hectic at times, but the job is also very rewarding. One of the best benefits I feel I have gotten personally is I have learned that even when I am super busy, I know I can handle it and I have experience balancing a long list of tasks.
Insights and Inspiration from three Resident Assistants, continued

Do you have any favorite memories from your experiences you would like to share?

LH: My favorite times as an RA were spending time with my floor. From the late night study sessions to the game nights it was all a blast. My favorite part, though, was coming back to Petersen for the night from campus and having residents in the lounge to hang out with before having to start studying for the night.

GG: I would have to say my favorite memories were when my coworker Bikere Ikoba would pull pranks on me throughout the year. Whether she was jumping out and scaring me in the Daum Basement or leaving raisins outside my door, it was always entertaining. (For context, I really hate raisins and it was a running joke on the Daum staff last year about me and the raisins).

What are some of the most important lessons you have learned from being an RA?

LH: The impact one person can have on another. Often in our society many people are focused on themselves instead of caring how they can help others. I have learned that something as simple as a smile and being willing to listen to someone can have a huge impact on that person.

GG: I have learned mostly from being an RA that your college experience goes far beyond the classroom. It is really all about the connections you make with people and the things you do outside of class that leave the greatest impact. I learned that from the Daum residents last year. They were all very involved in every aspect of campus life and it made an impact on me.

What advice would you give to students thinking about applying to be an RA?

NS: I have two pieces of advice for people thinking about applying: 1) Go for it! Even if you don’t get a position, the application process is a great learning experience and you’ll be a better person for trying. 2) Be yourself! The staff will know if you are trying to “say what you think they want to hear.” Each person brings something unique to the table and you have to be confident in yourself and your talents, whatever they may be!

LH: Make sure you are really interested in the job and not just the money that comes with it. Talk to your own RA and see what the job is really like and if you think you could be good in that role. I personally feel a lot of students who apply for the job, including me when I applied, don’t know enough about the job to ensure it is something that will fit them well.

GG: I would tell them that if it is something they think they are interested in, go for it! Personally, it’s been a good experience for me and it’s a great way to have a job during school that isn’t like lots of other on campus jobs.

Interested in being an RA?

Here are just a few of the requirements:

- Must be current University of Iowa full-time student.
- Must have one year of on-campus living experience at time of employment.
- Must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 each semester during the term of employment.
- For each semester of employment, RAs must achieve a minimum of 2.0 semester GPA.
- RAs must pass 70% of all credits attempted each semester.
- Must be in good conduct standing with the University.
- Excellent verbal and written communication and organization skills.
- Ability to effectively work with a diverse population and adjust to challenging situations.
- Reasonable experience in using computers; including Word, Excel, and e-mail.
- Ability to show responsibility for own time-management.

To learn more of the requirements, visit the University Housing & Dining website at http://cougar.its.uiowa.edu/uira

Best of luck!
Get to know Pat Rolston
Alum, Parent, Board Member

Two years ago, Pat Rolston returned to the University of Iowa for the third time: first he was a student, then a parent, and finally an alumni board member at the Honors Program.

A 1978 Iowa grad, Rolston took a wandering path through his years as an undergraduate. “I always tell people I crammed four years into six,” he said. “I really came in with little or no idea of what career path to take other than I loved to read, and I loved to learn. I took a lot of diverse courses and had majors from psychology to speech and hearing science and ending up with a BBA.”

He still might have finished on time, if not for a slight detour after his sophomore year. “A friend of mine, Ross Rowley, invited me to go overseas and visit his brother in Berlin, and I ended up taking a year off from school.” He traveled around Europe that year, visiting “almost every country in Europe. That was really, for me, the most formative time in my education. I was challenged to see things through a different lens, different culture, different history, in a way that stayed with me for life. I will always be indebted to Ross for his invitation that ended up having such a profound positive impact on me.”

“My parents thought I’d never finish college. But I ended up coming back and finishing, to the surprise of the family. I had a really fantastic time within those years at Iowa, finding a uniquely diverse set of courses and things that I ultimately had to cobble together and get a business degree.” Rolston went on to become a global account manager for Entegris, traveling all over the world and drawing on the love of travel he established during his time off from Iowa. He now is self-employed as a managing partner of Federal Group, LLC.

As a student himself, Rolston wasn’t really involved in Honors. “It wasn’t the same in those days. When I came to the University, it wasn’t anywhere near promoted or branded like it is today,” he said. However, in 2010, he began to get a sense of the Honors Program through the experience of his son, Nick Rolston, a Class of 2014 Presidential Scholar.

Of Nick’s experience Rolston said, “He found himself in an absolutely fabulous situation facilitated by Honors. It enriched him in so many ways, and he was so enthused about how Honors presented him with opportunities to explore at the next level.” During his time at Iowa, Nick conducted research in nanotechnology, and among other awards won a Goldwater Scholarship. He is now a graduate student at Stanford University in the Applied Physics Ph.D. program.

Of Nick’s experience Rolston said, “He found himself in an absolutely fabulous situation facilitated by Honors. It enriched him in so many ways, and he was so enthused about how Honors presented him with opportunities to explore at the next level.” During his time at Iowa, Nick conducted research in nanotechnology, and among other awards won a Goldwater Scholarship. He is now a graduate student at Stanford University in the Applied Physics Ph.D. program.

But it isn’t the “on-paper” accomplishments that either Rolston saw as most important. “There’s a great desire in Honors to enable self-discovery. And self-discovery has everything to do with what I believe college should be about,” Rolston said. “Today there’s more pressure for kids to achieve on paper chasing imagined requirements for entrance boards, and I think that’s the wrong thing to aspire to. Honors teaches you it’s not about keeping score, it’s about finding your passion and what will make you a more
fulfilled person. And in my role as an advisory member on this board, I’m extraordinarily excited to see that vision continue to be accomplished.”

It was through Nick that Rolston first got involved with the Honors Program and eventually the advisory board. “I saw firsthand how Honors can affect such a positive trajectory for a young person attending Iowa. I met Dr. Art Spisak through Nick, as well as Dr. Bob Kirby, Kelly Thornburg, and Holly Yoder. I got to know them in that context, and it was just something that impressed me immensely.”

Two years ago, Rolston was invited to sit on the fledgling Honors Advisory Board. “Dr. Spisak was kind enough to encourage me to be part of his Honors Advisory Board, and it gave me a chance to give back as best as I could in an advisory capacity on the board, which is just a huge honor to be part of.”

The Honors Advisory Board, made up of a number of Iowa alumni and professionals, at this point has a twofold goal: development (read: fundraising), and to provide resources, such as a mentoring program, for Honors students. “One of the best things we think we can do is offer our help and advice vis-à-vis a strong mentoring program,” Rolston said. “The goal is to facilitate a meaningful engagement with our students, to help the student, practically speaking, on whatever level the student wants to be helped. That could be anywhere from career networking and advice to help navigating graduate school selection from recent alums such as my son and his friends. As we evolve there will be more potential initiatives to enhance the quality of the Honors student experience at Iowa.”

Honors is kicking off this new alumni mentoring program in fall of 2016. “Our objective is to have alums and anyone with special skills who are interested, including all the board members, serve in that capacity.”

What does that look like? “There’ll be an à la carte checklist, on a mentor database. The mentors will check off a box for what their availability would be, what their profiles are, the level they can engage – they’ll be able to Skype, email, telephone, visit– and the students will be able to pick and choose.”

As for what types of professionals there are, “You have the liberal arts, medicine, science, government, engineering, architecture, business, graduate education, and entrepreneurship, all represented.” Any and all alumni will be welcome to participate; the goal is to have a deep bench of potential mentors for any Honors student who is interested in the program.

“There is an incredible energy amongst the people on [the advisory board]; there is a great love of what Iowa Honors and The University of Iowa does,” Rolston said. “It’s doing nothing but growing, in its influence, in its offerings.”

And in the end, it all comes back to that all-important discovery of self, which Rolston believes is central to the college experience. “The vision has self-discovery writ large in the context of what is to be accomplished. The self-discovery initiative within Iowa Honors is without question one of the most powerful methods we have for our young students to find their true passion here and help them ultimately realize their full potential.”

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 like Pat!
If you find yourself at the Iowa State Fair in August, you’ll be able to check out the University of Iowa’s Mobile Museum—and inside it, an exhibit by the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates, or ICRU.

For the past two years the ICRU digital exhibit has been featured in the Mobile Museum, which travels by Greyhound-sized bus to schools and communities around the state from April through October. Museum coordinator J.C. Gillett recently reported that “the Mobile Museum has been incredibly busy.” As of July 5th, the Mobile Museum had welcomed 10,413 visitors, visited 31 counties, visited 31 towns, hosted 48 events, traveled 4,366 miles and spent 208.5 hours open to the public.

Showcasing thirty-six examples of undergraduate research projects from nanostructures and neurobiology to music and postcolonial literature, ICRU’s exhibit gives former and future Hawkeyes a taste of the ideas and opportunities undergraduates are exploring in a variety of fields. “The actual exhibit is displayed on a large touch screen monitor in the museum, so the slideshow includes a photo and a brief, general audience description of the research and creative work each student is doing,” said ICRU Associate Director Lindsay Marshall.

“For many Iowans, the work done at universities can seem inaccessible, confusing, and often not relevant to everyday life. What we hope to show through this digital exhibit is that the research and creative work happening at the UI is not only accessible, but exciting, impactful, and important.”
Journey to Scotland
One Fulbright Summer Institutes Student’s Story

By Anya Kim

As I type this, I am currently sitting 30,000 feet above the North Sea, snacking on airplane peanuts, and trying to figure out exactly how I was lucky enough to get to spend part of my summer in the country of my dreams. I am on my way to Scotland to participate in the Fulbright Scotland Summer Institutes, a program that lets US students study in Glasgow and Dundee and immerse themselves in Scottish culture, history, technology, and research. The entire five-week program, from plane tickets to meals, is paid for by the Fulbright Commission.

This whole adventure started one year ago, when I stumbled on the Fulbright US-UK Summer Institutes after browsing around the Fulbright Commission’s main page. At first it just seemed like some far off dream– the institutes only accept six to ten people per program, and I almost didn’t apply because it seemed too unrealistic. However, one day I was procrastinating on studying for a Genetics test, and noticed the application link that I had saved on my browser. I decided to give it a go, if only to practice my essay writing. I got my application in a couple of minutes before the deadline, and that was the last I expected to hear of the Fulbright Summer Institutes.

However, a couple of months later (and a couple of weeks after I had given up hope of hearing back from them) I received an email from the program coordinator: I had gotten an interview. The next week was filled with Google searches for interview tips, and meetings with Kelly Thornburg and Bob Kirby in the Blank Honors Center where they tried to teach me how to answer a question with less than my usual fourteen ‘ums’ per sentence.

The interview itself lasted only fifteen minutes. Although the questions were a little difficult, the hardest part was deciphering the lovely but heavy Scottish accents of the interviewers.

Two weeks later, I found out I had gotten a spot in the Scotland Institute. After spending about an hour emailing all of my relatives and recommenders and listening to “Don’t Stop Me Now” by Queen on repeat, I sent in my official acceptance letter. Now, three months later, I am setting off on one of the best adventures of my life.

Over the next five weeks I will be taking classes, listening to distinguished lecturers, and exploring Scotland with nine other US students from almost every discipline. We will get to explore and meet with researchers in Dundee’s famous Drug Discovery lab, talk with Parliament members, go to the Glamis Castle archives, and generally try to learn as much about Scotland as one can in five weeks.

The Fulbright Summer Institutes are a great opportunity, but currently we haven’t had many students at the University of Iowa apply for them. If you are a freshman or sophomore interested in participating in one of these and you want some advice, feel free to contact me at anya-kim@uiowa.edu or Kelly Thornburg, our Director of Scholar Development.

Students can earn Honors Experiential Learning credit for study abroad experiences and internships. For more information, contact Andy Willard at andrew-willard@uiowa.edu
Meet the Writers
Honors Students at Your Service

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

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

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.

Anya Kim
Anya Kim is a third year studying Neurobiology and Spanish with a Certificate in Clinical and Translational Science. She loves conducting research, playing Ultimate Frisbee, cooking, traveling, and her dog. She is currently applying for MD/PhD programs to become a medical scientist with a focus on neuroscience.

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.

Emily Szymanski
Emily Szymanski just graduated in May with degrees in English and French and will be attending the Denver Publishing Institute in July. She plans to become an editor, adopt two dogs, and inherit a castle in France.

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.

Rachel Zuckerman
Rachel Zuckerman is a rising senior studying political science and journalism with a certificate in cultural competence. She is pursuing Honors in political science in addition to University Honors, and is conducting research related to University of Iowa parental leave. During the summer of 2016, Rachel worked as an Honors Orientation Ambassador, and she currently serves as the UI Student Body President.
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