Spring 2012

The Sage Page Spring 2012

Winthrop University Honors Association

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Welcome to the Spring 2012 edition of The Sage Page. In this edition you will find interesting articles by our Honors Program students on some of our new honors courses, existing honors symposia and their reflections on their experiences last fall. I'm particularly proud of our students' willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in their service to others. As you can see in the article below, the Honors Program student organization, WUHA!, continues to participate for the second year in Rolling in Rock Hill and the Rock Hill Community Garden, and for the fourth year in a row in the annual food drive at Earth Fare. You will also see an article on one of WUHA!'s signature programs, the Bigs and Littles program where current honors students "adopt" an entering freshman to assist in the transition from high school to college. From personal experience, I've seen these friendships last throughout the student's years at Winthrop and beyond. I want to thank all of the students for contributing to this edition, and I want to remind all of our readers to please keep in touch with us about your activities so that we may include them in our next edition. Enjoy!

Kathy Lyon, Ph.D.
Honors Program Director

Service Learning Update

Jamaal Cox

Service learning is an extremely important component in earning the honors degree. Service learning provides students with ways to support the community on a local and international level, as well as a chance to broaden their horizons and grow as individuals.

Each semester WUHA! gives students opportunities to participate in service learning. This semester, WUHA! participated in Rolling in Rock Hill for the second year in a row. Rolling in Rock Hill is a project through which volunteers re-paint local homes that the homeowners are unable to paint themselves. Once again, WUHA! was able to team up with members of the Rock Hill Police Department and help repaint two homes in the community.

Another exciting service learning opportunity this semester was continued participation in the Rock Hill Community Garden. The Rock Hill Community Garden was started by the City of Rock Hill as a means to help feed the community with locally, organically grown produce. WUHA! has a garden plot in which we grow kale, turnips, onions, and lettuce. The produce grown in our plot is then donated to local soup kitchens to help fill their needs.

To further help with the needs of the soup kitchens, WUHA! also conducts an annual can drive outside of local grocery store Earth Fare. The can drive accepts monetary and non-perishable food items from the community to be given to local soup kitchens to help with the holiday rush.

These are just a few of the many service learning opportunities in which WUHA! participates, with more opportunities coming up in the Fall semester.
Student Spotlight: David Thackham

Mirielle Smith

Sophomore mass communication journalism major David Thackham is one busy honors student.

He's been the sports editor of The Johnsonian—the Winthrop University student newspaper—for a year and a half, is vice president of the Society of Professional Journalists, is the secretary of the Mass Communication Advisory Board, is the public relations manager of the DiGiorgio Student Union, and will be the new Treasurer of WUHA! beginning this Spring semester.

At The Johnsonian Thackham covers a range of sports between basketball (male and female), soccer (male and female), and lacrosse (which is coming up in Spring 2013). He hopes to pursue sports journalism as a career.

Spring Honors Courses

Samantha Baker

In the Spring semester, Winthrop is offering five new, and rather specialized, courses for honors students: It's All Greek to Me, Comic Books: Superheroes and Beyond, Theory in the Flesh, Religion and Political Theory, and Social Inequality.

It's All Greek to Me - Annie-Laurie Wheat teaches this course, specifically for students with a flair for the dramatic. The class studies a number of Greek plays for the first half of the semester, and chooses one to perform, for an audience, in the Amphitheatre, during the second half of the semester. Wheat believes that the course will be "great fun" for everyone in it.

Comic Books: Superheroes and Beyond - Offered by Drs. Brad Tripp and Nakia Pope, both long time comic book fans, this class looks at the entire artistic and literary medium of comics. Although most students know about the famous comic heroes, such as Spiderman and Superman, Tripp and Pope push the student past those into the less well-known stories. Also, they explore comic books as a way to address certain social, political, and artistic issues. And, although they will look past the popular comic collection, they still admit that Batman is pretty cool.

Theory in the Flesh - In an exploration of self vs. society, Dr. Stephanie Milling and her students discover the contradictions that rule social life. Through prose, poetry, and academic literature, the class studies how these contradictions can find compromise and how human experiences are shaped by societal norms and institutions. Studying these institutions may even change people's perspectives of the world.

Religion and Political Theory - Appropriately team-taught by Drs. Michael Lipscomb and William Kibliger, this course focuses on how the separation of church and state has evolved in America. They explore the effect of religious belief and authority on political authority, because the two are inseparable in today's political climate. A liberal democratic solution to the problem is also examined. The professors are excited to combine their disciplines in this way, and anticipate that the course will provoke timely reflection in the politically charged year of 2012.

Social Inequality - Taught by Dr. Jeannie Haubert, this class goes in-depth regarding the prevalent and persistent social inequality based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status, despite the American dedication to equality for all. The course moves past common knowledge to delve deeper and more analytically into the problem and the individual and cultural causes for it.
The following student graduated with an Honors Program Degree at the December 2011 commencement. Listed is the area of study and thesis.

Katrina Jorsch
Political Science

*Regional Neoliberalism: The New System in Latin America*

Originally from Fayetteville, N.C., Jorsch came to Winthrop after receiving an informal letter in high school. “I fell in love with the place,” says Jorsch.

In her senior thesis, Jorsch argued that contrary to popular belief, there is not a shift to the left in Latin America in terms of neoliberalism and the institution of MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market), comparing MERCOSUR with the EU and NAFTA.

She is currently working at a doctor’s office, but after recently passing MEPS, a qualifying exam for the military, she hopes to be accepted into Officer Candidate School for the Coast Guard.

While at Winthrop Jorsch presented a paper at the North Carolina Political Science Association Conference and the Southern Regional Honors Conference. She also interned at the Latin American Coalition in Charlotte last summer and created a program called "Globalization, Immigration and Our Values."

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**ConnectED Nicaragua**

*Meagan Hogarth & Mirielle Smith*

In this academic year, WUHA! was fortunate enough to receive the option to assist with an ongoing service project on Winthrop’s campus, and beyond.

The Rocha Project is a service project that involves funding the Winthrop School in Rocha, Nicaragua. Dr. Ginger Williams began this project in May 2008, when she raised $8,000 to build a one-room schoolhouse in the town of Rocha. This school offers instruction through the sixth grade level. This is a feat in and of itself, since the majority of the population is illiterate. Most of the adults only have an education through first grade. The majority of the people this schoolhouse serves to educate are the children of poor farmers. These people do not own the land they work and usually subsist on about $2 a day. The lack of education is cyclical in perpetuating the malnourishment these people are facing. First, they are not aware of the vitamin-deficit meals they are preparing, and secondly, they are unable to provide higher nutrition meals due to the jobs they have available to them. The majority of people in the area are either malnourished or struggling with diabetes.

WUHA! hopes to partner with this project and become its main sponsor. Dr. Williams, in addition to the Winthrop School, is passionate about increasing the educational chances of the students in this area. The students who attend the Winthrop School and finish with a 6th grade education deserve the option to continue on to secondary school, a process that will help them improve both their lives and the lives of others in the community. Dr. Williams has promised the people of Rocha that she will help their children continue onto secondary education, as only 38% of Nicaraguans have this opportunity. Luckily, there is a secondary school eight miles away in Monteguas, which might seem to be a short distance to some people. However, on an unpaved road in an underdeveloped area with a rainy season, this road can be treacherous to children attempting the journey. The solution is to hire a milk truck driver to take the 30 students currently hungry for higher education to weekend school on Saturdays and Sundays. The weekend school is in place so that students can still help their families out on the farms. Dr. Williams has concluded that at $2 per day, the total cost of this endeavor will be $2800. She has committed to providing transportation for 5 years.

So why WUHA? This is a project of great importance and significance to the Honors Program, since the majority of our students have never had to wonder whether or not they will be able to continue their educations. WUHA! has been looking for a project to help other students on a global level, and Dr. Williams has provided us with the perfect opportunity. Dr. Lyon has also hinted at perhaps taking a group of honors students to Rocha for a service learning experience so that we can see what it is we are working towards.

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Congratulations to our December 2011 Graduate!

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WUHA! A Semester in Pictures
In the beginning of the semester, several of us came back to Winthrop early in order to help the new honors freshmen move into the Wofford and Richardson residence halls. This is always fun, because we can get to know the freshmen and help make their start just a little bit easier.

Shortly after school started our new protégés had the opportunity to get paired up with an upper-classman in our Bigs and Littles program. As always, upperclassmen helped the freshmen with advice and became a good resource of information about making the most of the college experience. Students found out who they were paired with by popping a balloon and following a piece of yarn through a maze. It was a lot of fun to watch as the Littles opened their gifts and started a new friendship with their Bigs. Bigs and Littles are also encouraged to attend other WUHA! events, such as our Fall Fest and Winter Party. This year we were very pleased to see lots of pairs (as well as other honors students!) attend events throughout the semester. I’m so excited to see more underclassmen get involved. WUHA! has become my family during my time here and seeing the organization grow was a great start to my last year.

**Reflection on Fall 2011**

*Melody Chapman*

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Being nerdy is fun. But could anything be more fun than hanging out with a fellow nerd and guiding him to greatness? That’s why I highly recommend the WUHA! Big/Little program.

As a WUHA! Big, I found my perfect WUHA! Little match in Hampton Ballowe. Hampton and I are political science majors, and we enjoy incessantly (perhaps, obsessively?) debating each other on campaign strategy, public policy, and international relations. Oddly enough, by all accounts, we are also the only two diehard Georgia Tech fans on Winthrop’s campus. Our Big/Little outings have ranged from watching Ramblin’-Wreck football games to serving as opposing debaters from the College Republicans and College Democrats. Yet, I have been more than just another nerdy friend.

As Hampton’s WUHA! Big, I am also a mentor. My job has been to offer Hampton peer-level advice from a fellow honors kid who has successfully adjusted to the challenges and pressures of life in college. And as a senior about to graduate, I have not shied away from giving him honest suggestions so that he does not repeat my mistakes. I am departing WUHA! this May, but I will always be Hampton’s WUHA! Big.

Little: Before becoming a WUHA! Little, I was very excited about having a Big. Granted, I knew it wasn’t a sure thing whether I’d even like my Big very much or hang out with him a lot. So after finding out my big was Tim Kroboth, I was extremely happy.

We hung out a good bit of the time. We met together a lot in the cafeteria and DiGS and just talked about things that interested us like sports and politics. I realized after a few weeks that I had met a lot of new people through my friendship with Tim. Hanging out with Tim and my new friends allowed me to meet even more people. Also, I have always seen Tim as a good friend, one who will always be there for me.

I’m glad I did the Big/Little program because if I hadn’t, I might not have met Tim, nor would I have the friends I have now.

-Tim Kroboth

Hampton Ballowe

Shakespeare the Psychologist

Ashley Bateman

Shakespeare the Psychologist was a one credit hour symposium offered during the Fall 2011 semester. The class was taught by associate professor of psychology Dr. Darren Ritzer.

Over the course of the semester the class combined the use of literary sources and psychology-based analysis in order to discuss how William Shakespeare’s writing made, and continues to make, audiences and actors feel. We also interpreted characters’ actions and formed opinions about the subject and time periods Shakespeare chose.

Four of Shakespeare’s most celebrated tragedies were studied over the course of the semester: “King Lear,” “Macbeth,” “Othello,” and “Hamlet.” The plays were first studied separately and then comparatively.

Dr. Ritzer chose these tragedies both because of their historical and literary significance and because they were available in a collection with modern day interpretations of rhetoric used in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which are valuable in any contemporary study of Shakespeare.

The course was made interesting through the various interpretations throughout – for example, interpreting King Lear’s relationship with his daughters from the perspective of Freud or discussing how Lady Macbeth could have been unhappy due to the loss of a child. The class was an interesting and contemporary look at Shakespeare’s work.
But it’s certainly not all class. I spent a weekend visiting a friend in Paris, which had its ups and downs. Ups included things like the beauty of Notre Dame, crepes, the Champs-Élysées Christmas market, and the Eifel Tower at night. Downs included getting hideously lost after a long day of travel. Luckily “Where is ___?” is one of my few French phrases!

After the semester ends I’ll be spending a week in Krakow, Poland. Then I’ll spend Christmas with some family friends in Northern Ireland and a few days in Edinburgh, Scotland, before finally heading back to the good old USA.

Above: Miri at the Giant’s Causeway in Antrim, Northern Ireland

Céad Míle Fáilte – A Thousand Million Welcomes from Ireland

I definitely feel welcomed by Ireland – it’s a friendly, beautiful country. The Irish love a good chat almost as much as they love a scone and a cup of tea (and they really love those), and they’re always eager to talk to Americans about where we’re from, why we came, how we’re liking Ireland, and maybe we know their cousin who lives in New York.

The windswept Aran Islands of the west and the hexagonal rock columns of the Giant’s Causeway in the north are naturally breathtaking. The murals and peace walls of Belfast are a testament to continued ethnic struggles and how much work has been put into getting past them. Blarney Castle in the south holds all the history and touristy charm one would expect of an internationally-known piece of Irish history.

But my favorite is Dublin’s fair city – an old city with a young population, free museums, a lot of accents, and a penchant for a good time. Classes here meet once a week, leaving plenty of time in which to explore the city and the rest of the island, not to mention trips to the rest of Europe via the extremely budget-friendly Ryanair.

My classes here are an experience: very little work is due through the course of the semester—it’s mainly reading and in depth discussion with a Continuing Assessment (an essay) and an exam. Americans have two essays or a longer one, since we’ll be back at Winthrop before exam time. Though this may sound lax, my professors and classmates are making sure I learn plenty, and I’m planning to submit one of those essays to the Southern Regional Honors Council Conference and Big South Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Before I can get too Ireland-sick, some of the friends I have made over here will be in the States for the summer on work visas, which is good because I know when December comes I won’t be ready to say goodbye.

I may miss home, my family, and my friends (and mac and cheese), but I will definitely miss this soggy island when I leave.

Above: Miri in front of the Kylemore Abbey in Galway

Left: The River Liffey at night
What Honors Continues to Do for Me:

A lot has happened since I graduated in May 2010! I'm currently a 2L (a second year student) at Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville, Florida. I'm doing some pro bono work at the Office of the Public Defender for the Fourth Judicial Circuit in their Juvenile Division. I've been able to work on some really interesting cases. In fact, a Motion to Dismiss I wrote in September was recently granted by the judge! I'm also on Florida Coastal's Moot Court Honor Board, which is currently ranked 7th in the nation. I was a teaching assistant for Criminal Law last semester and this semester I am a teaching assistant for Civil Procedure. Being part of the Honors Program at Winthrop definitely prepared me for law school. During my first year, I found that the experience from writing my honors thesis made legal writing and researching so much easier. In fact, I was a research assistant for a professor over the summer researching the same topic as my honors thesis! Even though I'm having a great time down south for graduate school, I miss Winthrop and WUHA! a lot! I wear my WUHA! t-shirts during exam weeks (In law school, we have a reading week and then two weeks of exams!), and I carry my WU thermos filled with coffee a lot!

-Rachel Heidenberg

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