



The Crozier

The Catholic University
of America
Honors Program

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Merkel Fund Awardee at Psychology Conference

On Saturday, November 23, sophomore Honors student Kateri Noble attended a psychology conference which she describes in glowing terms as “an incredible, amazing, unique experience.” With a grant from the Merkel Fund, she had the opportunity to travel to Nashville, Tennessee to present a poster at a conference for The Association for the Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies. Her poster was titled, “Pretreatment Neuroticism and Psychological Inflexibility as Predictors of Outcome following a Mindfulness Intervention for Stress.” Kateri successfully presented and fielded questions for an hour, as the youngest person at the conference; her audience was mostly graduate students, professors, or other professionals.

Being in such a mentally-stimulating environment with

so many people who shared her interests was invigorating. By listening to multiple presentations, Kateri was able to learn a great deal about very specific areas within psychology, with a level of detail that she had

not yet received in class. Kateri expressed joy at being able to witness this exchange of influential research and ideas and to listen to debates about the pros and cons of different

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L-r: Dr. Carol Glass, Kateri, and Dr. Diane Arnkoff at the conference.

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The Honors Internship Program

This semester, the University Honors Program inaugurated a new For-Credit Internship Program. Many departments within the university, such as the Politics Department, offer for-credit internships for their students. However, students in many other fields of study have not had this opportunity, and so have either taken internships with a full course load or been unable to fit an internship into their schedule.

Seeing room for development, the University Honors Program, in collaboration with Career Services, created a program that is designed to allow students to reflect deeply on the relationship between their

academic work and their possible future careers. Students work one-on-one with a faculty advisor in the Honors Program to complete assignments related to the work they are doing in their internships. After a trial run, the program has become available for the upcoming spring semester to all junior and senior Honors students in good academic standing. Several students are already nearly finished with the application process for the spring semester. The internships they are applying for range from government departments to private sector firms, both for-profit and non-profit.

Dr. Paxton, the Assistant Director of the University Honors Program, who has been working with Anthony Chia-petta of Career Services in developing this Honors internship opportunity, is excited to see its debut: “We believe very strongly that a liberal arts education prepares our students very well for the workplace. This internship program will help students make the concrete connection between the skills they are learning in their classes at CUA and the exciting career opportunities that await them after graduation.” Amanda Catanoso, who was the first to

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Honors graduates, we would love to hear from you!

Please update us on recent events or accomplishments that we could feature in upcoming newsletters. If you would like to share photos or memories from college, we would love those, too! Otherwise, we would appreciate if you could simply update your contact information with us in a short email.

Please direct email to:
cua-honorsprogram@cua.edu

Or visit us at
<http://Honors.cua.edu>



Kateri Noble (cont'd)

psychology methods. She could see the future of therapy unfolding before her, making her "so excited to be part of an organization whose goal is to help others!"

Kateri also was able to meet the masterminds behind important mindfulness-based therapies, and on the plane ride home, even got the opportunity to sit next to and talk with the author of one of her psychology textbooks! He told her to contact him if she had any ideas on how to improve the textbook.

The experience of attending her first conference has left Kateri eager to learn more and grateful for the opportunity that she has received: "I am so grateful to the Honors Program and the Psychology Department for all they have done and continue to do for me. They have helped steer me in the right direction and have opened so many doors for me, giving me the opportunity to be the best student (and person) I can be!" The Honors Program is excited to see where Kateri heads in the world of psychology in the coming years!



CUA Honors students on an excursion to see Handel's Messiah at the National Cathedral.

In Memoriam: John H. Nissen 1944-2013

John Howard Nissen, 69, educator and friend of the University Honors Program, died peacefully on Sunday, October 6, 2013, of prostate cancer. John dedicated his life to mentoring young men and women, serving as a college administrator at Dominican College, Lawrence University, Windham College, Marlboro College, the School for International Training, Bennington College, the International School of Geneva, Rhode Island College, the American University of Paris, NYU School of Dentistry, and Landmark College. In 1999,

with colleagues and friends, he initiated Service Learning in Paris, a program which immersed high school students in language, culture, and service projects. A tireless proponent of global education, he worked with the Honors Program to develop a series of one-week spring break study seminars in Paris, Rome, Berlin, and Barcelona (and later in Vienna, Venice, and Madrid). John's favorite place was Chartres Cathedral, and he often told his friends that he would meet them at the café across from the South portal on the Day of Judgment."

Kevin Oriani Travels the World

Last year I had the opportunity to spend two semesters abroad with two very different programs, one in Rome, Italy and one in Freiburg, Germany. In the fall semester I studied with the CUA flagship program in Rome. The building in which I lived and took classes was only a fifteen minute walk from the Vatican, meaning that I had frequent opportunities to visit and attend Mass at St. Peter's. I also had the opportunity to see Pope Benedict at the canonization of St. Kateri Tekakwitha.

As a Classics major, one of the main reasons to study abroad was to improve my language skills. One of Rome's major draws for me was its status as the home of the Latin language. Site visits to churches and ruins gave me plenty of opportunities to practice reading Roman and ecclesiastical inscriptions, and I improved my ability to read Latin literature with a professor from the local Sapienza University. I also learned a bit of Italian, though I have to admit I relied heavily on my knowledge of Latin! My studies of Greek language and culture were also enhanced by my time abroad, as I spent a weekend in Athens exploring the monuments and museums.

One of the great advantages of the CUA program was the many excursions around Italy which were organized (and subsidized!) by the program, including trips to Venice, the Bay of Naples, Florence, Assisi, and the hill towns near Rome. I also had the chance to travel to Paris, Nantes, and Athens with other CUA students. Since most of us lived in the same building and went on these trips as a group, we were able to build a great sense of community, and I never felt completely separated from CUA. This sense of connection reached its peak when President and Mrs. Gar-

vey came to visit and took the students and faculty on the program out to dinner at an upscale restaurant.

Compared to the constant crowds and bustle in Rome, my spring semester with the IES program in Freiburg, Germany was quiet and isolated. A small city, Freiburg is located just a few miles from Germany's borders with France and Switzerland, on the edge of the Black Forest. As opposed to the mainly Renaissance art and architecture in Rome, Freiburg retains a definitively medieval character, complete with its own Gothic cathedral.

Again, one of the main factors that drew me to this program was the ability to further my language studies, both of German and the classical languages. The IES program was immersive: all classes were taught in German and housing was shared with German students. I also opted to take three classes at the local Albert-Ludwigs Universität, including seminars on Latin and Greek literature. For these classes I had to complete some of the hardest assignments I have had in the course of my undergraduate career, including giving presentations and writing a term paper on works in Latin and Greek – in German. Consequently, my skills in all three languages dramatically improved over the course of the semester. Despite my schoolwork, I still had time to travel while in Germany, including for a weekend back in Rome – and a chance to see the newly elected Pope Francis.

Overall, I met my aims in studying abroad: I learned a lot, but I also had a good time and formed friendships that I believe will prove to be enduring. The practical experience I gained through living and studying in two foreign countries has complemented my studies here in Washington well and I will not soon forget the many adventures I had along the way.



Alumna Spotlight: Eleanor Brasfield, B.A. 2012

The following letter was sent by Eleanor Brasfield, 8 August 2013

Dear University Honors Program,

We'll call this take 2. I tried to write about 2 weeks ago, but I gave up when three different pens died in the process. I had written 15 other letters that day, so I think the pens were in a state of rebellion..... Ah, on to... Peace Corps! Specifically, service in Zambia, which is my current home.

Let me begin with two warning labels – none of what I'm saying are official Peace Corps things, but rather my own opinions. Second, I am very excitable. Sorry if that's not your style....

Zambia is a land-locked country in south-central Africa, once known as Northern Rhodesia (named after the infamous Cecil Rhodes). It won its independence from the British Empire in 1964, October 24. The population is a bit over 13 million, the land mass just a little larger than Texas. Neighbors include the DRC, Malawi, Tanzania, Mozam-



bique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, and Angola. The capital is Lusaka. Zambia has 10 provinces, 73 tribal groups, and one official language, English, though each of those 73 tribes has its own actively spoken language and there is a sort of secondary (local) official language in each of the 10 provinces.

I live in Eastern Province. My tribe is Tumbuka, and theirs is the language I am (slowly, painfully) learning. I've been living in Zambia just shy of 6 months now. The first three months were

bucketloads of training about Zambian culture, language, HIV/AIDS, basic first aid, and technical skills, which in the Linking Income, Food, and Environment program included agroforestry, conservation farming, improved gardening methods, nutrition, beekeeping, and soil & water conservation. Very earth-loving stuff, much of it very new to me, and fascinating.

I have been living in my village, Uwenkhu, for about three months now. This first three months is called

“Community Entry” by Peace Corps, and it is all about familiarizing oneself with this new homeland environment. I have pinpointed several projects that I want to pursue with my community: a girls' empowerment club at a local school, building up a library there that was begun by a previous volunteer, connecting my village with an NGO that promotes tree-planting, and working with the Zambian National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) as they try to improve access to marketing information for small farmers. I would also like to facilitate the creation of study circles focused on various topics in which small groups of 5-15 people come together regularly to discuss best methods and new ideas – a focused round table where members are treated as equals and feel free to share what they know and ask questions.

This has been a very general overview of what I am doing here (or hope to do, anyway!). I encourage anyone with questions to write me....

Peace and butterflies,

Eleanor

Honors Internship Program (cont'd)

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take an internship for Honors credit this past fall semester, is a perfect example of a student who is using her degree in a field that may not seem obvious at first. A highly-motivated French major who studied abroad in Nantes her sophomore year and had held three prior internships, Amanda was a natural candidate for the program. She interned this fall with the Bureau of Industry and Security in the Department of Commerce, and found it to be an incredible opportunity to apply the skills she has learned in class while

also trying something new: “The Honors Internship Program has allowed me to explore opportunities that I otherwise would not have had the chance to complete while at Catholic. I have been able to experience an academic and professional world outside the confines of my major, while applying my skill set in an interesting way.”

As Amanda attests, the experience of an internship is extremely valuable. Not only do internships potentially open the doors to future careers, but they also give a new meaning to the classroom

experience. When students are able to concretely and successfully apply their reading, writing, and analytical skills, they often gain a new motivation for completing their papers and problem sets in their classes. Thus the goals of the Honors Internship Program are both to prepare students for the future and to reinforce what they are presently learning.

Internships that count for Honors elective credit can be paid or unpaid and require a minimum of 140 hours of work. Each student regularly submits written work

reflecting on the internship and writes a substantial paper at the end of the semester. These assignments are submitted to a faculty adviser, who meets with the student regularly throughout the semester to track his or her progress and submits both midterm and final evaluations to the Honors Program.

Alumni, if you are interested in having some of our Honors students intern with your company or organization, please contact us! You could help to broaden the horizon for some of our motivated and determined students.



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Honors Program

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Letter from the Director



I write to you as we are wrapping up another busy fall semester in the University Honors Program. In August, we welcomed 85 honors first-year students to CUA, the majority of whom are living in our Honors Residential Community in McDonald and Walton Halls. These students bring many talents and interests to the UHP, and we will be keeping you abreast of their adventures and achievements in future installments of this newsletter.

Over the summer, the staff of the Honors Program expanded to include an Assistant Director, Dr. Jennifer Paxton. Dr. Paxton is an accomplished medieval historian and a successful teacher, and she has taken on primary responsibility for several aspects of the program, including advising, social events, the Honors Residential Community, and our new internship program. We are absolutely delighted to welcome her to the team, joining Administrative Assistant Jillian Olson, Graduate Fellow Katie Purple, Grants and Fellowships Coordinator Julie Yarwood, and myself!

We have many exciting projects on the horizon, including a fascinating spring honors course taught by CUA President Garvey on "The Virtues," a spring break study seminar in Madrid in Spring 2014 (with Dr. Daniel García-Donoso), and a special program for Honors Students at the CUA campus in Rome in Fall 2014.

Some of the students travelling to Madrid and Rome will be receiving support from the Ingrid Merkel Fund. This endowment, established in honor of the program's founding director, provides academic travel funding to honors students on the basis of merit. As we approach the end of the year, please consider supporting our students by making a gift at <http://giving.cuatoday.com>. (Please designate the "Ingrid Merkel Fund.")

We are also looking for alumni in the Washington DC area who be willing to mentor honors students interested in various professions, including but not limited to: law, medicine, political advocacy, public affairs, museum curatorship, and education. Please let us know if you would be willing to donate your time. We are interested in any internships that might be suitable for our students, as well.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Peter Shoemaker, Director

As we come to the end of the semester, we celebrate the generosity that makes this program possible. Please consider making a donation to one of the University Honors Program funds.

The Suziedelis Fund provides compensation for faculty invited to prepare new courses for the Honors Program, or, in the absence of such a program, any innovative course for undergraduates.

The Dr. Ingrid Merkel Endowed Honors Program Fund is used to provide financial support to the University Honors Program. Distributions for the fund may be used for costs of participation by Program students in international educational programs, study abroad programs for academic credit, or other educational or enrichment travel conducted in conjunction with the Program; travel and other costs of participation by Program students in scholarly, academic, or professional conferences; costs of participation by Program students in research projects costs of faculty development in furtherance of the academic mission of the Program; and other aspects of the Program at the Fund Manager's discretion.

Visit <http://honors.cua.edu/alumni/index.cfm>