



HONORS COLLEGE . YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY . EST. DECEMBER 2014

## A NEW ERA IN HONORS



*Honors students carrying the new banner at the "Passing of the Torch Ceremony" on August 17, 2015*

### My Two Decade Journey in Honors by Amy Cossentino

When I began my career at Youngstown State University in 1990, I had no experience with students participating in the Honors Program. The establishment of the Leslie H. Cochran University Scholars Program in 1992 brought greater attention to the Honors Program. By 1995, both programs were growing, I was given an opportunity to begin a new role, serving 150 honors students. The residential component created a sense of community. Activities, common courses, and service projects developed over the years have become longstanding traditions binding together decades of both commuter and residential scholars and honors students and alumni.

The student achievements and student-centered activities are too many to share in one edition of this magazine, but highlighting some will provide a snapshot of the honors experience. Shantytown, an annual project focussing on homelessness, began in 1997 and to date has raised over \$50,000 for area agencies. Fall Festival, developed as a course assignment in the Intro to Honors Seminar a decade ago continues today as a project with the Rich Center for Autism. Penguin Pen Pals, a partnership with Harding Elementary School in Youngstown, took root in 2012 and has grown from 60 to over 200 participating children. In every year since 2000, honors students have served as the President and/or Vice-President of the YSU Student Government Association. Seven honors students have held a student trustee position on the YSU Board of Trustees. Honors students proudly represent in football, men's basketball, swimming, softball, baseball, volleyball, soccer, track, and cross country. Honors students held more than 120 leadership positions in YSU Student organizations with more than 40 being at the President or VP level last year. The programs have been recognized with the receipt of the Templeton Foundation Award, the 2009 Presidential Award for Community Service, and a \$10,000 gift from BP to support the Penguin Pen Pal Project. Honors students have received five Barry M. Goldwater Awards, three Barry M. Goldwater Honorable Mentions, two Fulbright Scholarships, top awards at Moot Court competitions, and top awards at the Consortium for Mathematics and Its Applications to name a few.

The honors experience at YSU allows students to pursue their dreams, engage in learning experiences not readily available to undergraduates at other institutions, develop soft skills to enhance their leadership, cultivate civic-mindedness and global perspectives. This fall YSU gained 175 new first-year honors students, 17 new current and transfer students, and 12 new college credit plus students compared to 96 new students TOTAL in Fall 2014! The current honors population is 465. As honors continues to grow so too will the need for participation across campus to create opportunities for learning and discovery. Now tasked with leading the enhancement of Honors at YSU, I believe we can achieve a superior honors experience through a participatory approach as we develop each of the Five Pillars - Research and Academics, Leadership, Global Citizenship, Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Engagement. The "With Honors" magazine will chronicle our student success stories and activities happening each semester, along with the amazing YSU faculty and staff supporting their endeavors Thanks to all, who have been a part of the honors journey and to those who are yet to contribute!

### MESSAGE FROM THE PROVOST

Welcome to what we anticipate will be an exciting year at YSU. Our new Honors College is off to a great start, with over 170 new Honors students joining our ranks this year. Our Honors students represent the best and the brightest from a broad geographic area, adding to the excellence that we are building at YSU. We have a wide range of activities being developed, as we seek to expand the offerings for the benefits of our students. It is my hope that our Honors students become the leading example of the type of influence that YSU can have in the community, whether through their volunteer efforts, their leadership in the classroom, their creativity, their support for international activities and global experiences, undergraduate research, or their initiatives in the development of new activities across the University. We hope to have enhancement experiences appropriate for all of our students, and I strongly urge you to take advantage of as many of these opportunities as you can.

*"Our Honors students represent the best and the brightest from a broad geographic area..."*

Martin Abraham,  
YSU Provost.



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## From the Classroom into the Field

### Internship at The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

by Jimmy Tancabel, Senior

This past summer, I completed a 14-week internship at The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company. I worked with the Simulation Technology (SimTech) department on the Manufacturing Process Modeling team. My projects focused on how tire manufacturing tolerances affect tire performance and focused on one main question:

*Beyond conicity, are other performance parameters affected by manufacturing tolerances?*

The SimTech department utilizes Finite Element Analysis (FEA) simulation software to model tires. I am currently taking the FEA course offered at YSU, so I did not have any formal training in FEA modeling. While at Goodyear, I learned proper FEA modeling technique, including meshing, troubleshooting, and post-processing.

The most important aspect of computer simulation is confirmation of the feasibility of the result. Anybody can learn to work a computer, but having the ability to interpret results is a true measure of the competency of an engineer.

The Mechanical Engineering program at YSU has shaped me to be able to apply my education to solve real-world problems. I would not have had nearly as good of an experience had it not been for the great faculty and advisors I have had at YSU.

### Electrical Engineering Intern/Co-op The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

by Kyle Spickler, Senior



My goal when starting the electrical engineering program was to work as a robotic programmer in the automation industry after graduation. As my time at YSU progressed I realized that I had a strong passion for the automotive industry as well. The combination of these two interests led me to pursue an internship at The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company in Akron, Ohio this past summer. Throughout this amazing experience I was able to contribute towards two major projects, learn valuable skills, have a ton of fun, and secure a job offer before starting my senior year.

My time at Goodyear was spent working for the Component Prep team under the Global Engineering division. After getting some formal training on PLC and HMI programming, I started working on my first major project at a local fabrication shop. The objective of this project was to help build and automate a machine to cut ply at varying dimensions for the plant in Chile. Ply is a thin layer of tire that is embedded with fabric (usually nylon) and helps to give the tire added strength/rigidity. Most of my work on this project was focused on creating diagnostic displays for the operators using HMI programming. This allows them to change system parameters, view faults/alarms, check device status and much more.

After completing the ply cutter I had the opportunity to work on my own individual project, the Message Marquee project. Goodyear uses industrialized message displays throughout their plants so the workers can receive useful information including emergency messages, what type of material to use next and some other important data. Utilizing my research, the company is now able to display other languages, eliminate some equipment and save roughly \$4,500 every time they use those message displays in a plant.

### Summer Research Experience Youngstown State University

by Tyler Pabst, Junior

Since January 2015 I have been active in chemistry research at YSU under the guidance of Dr. Douglas Genna. My work is concerned with carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) activation and functionalization. Reactions that consume CO<sub>2</sub> for use in chemical synthesis are sought after due to the molecule's widespread availability and low toxicity; however, these reactions are extremely challenging to develop due to the exceptional thermodynamic stability of CO<sub>2</sub>. The challenge we have undertaken is to activate CO<sub>2</sub> – that is, to increase its reactivity – and then to utilize it as a reagent in organic synthesis. Initially, our approach was to develop new CO<sub>2</sub>-consuming reactions based upon established transition-metal catalyzed carbon-carbon bond-forming reactions. More recently, our efforts have been focused on the synthesis of new transition metal complexes in which the metal preferentially binds CO<sub>2</sub> at carbon, rather than at oxygen as in most cases in which CO<sub>2</sub> binds to a metal. If we are able to create these novel M-CO<sub>2</sub> complexes, they may find application in the development of unexplored CO<sub>2</sub> functionalizations.

### Summer Research Experience Youngstown State University

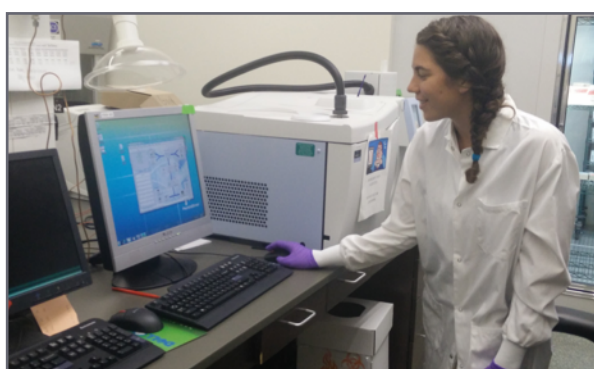
by Brock DeAngelo, Junior

This summer I continued research on a muscle study project in Dr. Butcher's lab analyzing the composition of hindlimb muscles of juvenile and adult rabbits. Thanks to collaborations with our cohorts at NEOMED I had the opportunity to use state-of-the-art equipment that can slice muscle fascicles to mere nanometers in thickness. I then took these thinly sliced tissues and ran immunohistochemical tests on them. Using certain antibodies, I was able to identify and "flag" specific types of muscle fibers. These indicators then represented a specific kind of muscle fiber; whether it be fast, slow, or a mixture of the two. This analysis allowed me to accurately count the composition of muscle fibers, or myofibrils, within each segment of muscle. This work is incredibly useful in understanding how adolescent and adult muscle architecture in humans and animals develops as we age.

### My Summer in Arizona

by Jordan Edgell, Senior

Great internships do not just fall from the sky onto lucky students. I interned at the Mesa Crime Laboratory in Mesa, Arizona during the summer semesters, and I loved every minute of it. From the day that I walked in, all of the staff was invested in giving me an enriching experience that would both improve my skills in the laboratory and office settings, as well as give my career an extra edge. I spent time in almost every



unit, observing the methods they employ to assure quality results in their findings and in what way that information is distributed to the different clients they serve.

The more notable laboratory units that I spent time with are the Toxicology Unit and the Latent Print Unit. Through the Toxicology Unit, I was able to operate state-of-the-art machines, under the guidance of analysts, to obtain my own results. While spending time in the Latent Print Unit, I learned more about the criminal justice process and how latent prints play a part in more than just the crime scene. It was an amazing learning experience, and one of the best opportunities I have participated in.

### A Journey from Service to Capstone

by Megan Evans, Junior

I suppose I always knew that I enjoyed interacting with little kids. There is so much promise - little beings of the future entirely susceptible to however you choose to mold them. I knew as soon as I heard about Pen Pals on the very first day of orientation, I wanted to be a part of it. I approached Ashley Orr that night as we headed out to campus for the Pete the Penguin Scavenger Hunt. As a result of this ambition, I was chosen for the Pen Pal committee my freshman year. This ambition has always been a part of me, and I knew when I had my first class of Linguistics and Literacy with Dr. Vigliotti, exactly what I wanted to study. I wanted to see just how much we University students did mold and mentor our little pen pals. That spring semester of my freshman year I analyzed the journals to see how the elementary students' writing improved. With this research I won Best Undergraduate Research Award of QUEST, and continued it over the summer to turn it into my Fall Senior Capstone project my Sophomore year. I was then accepted to present this research at a national conference, CCCC, in Tampa, Florida the following spring semester of 2015. That is one of the wonderful things about the YSU Honors College - the opportunities. All you have to do is grab them.



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## First-Year Engineering Honors by Kerry Meyers, PhD, Assistant Professor

The students in YSU's First-Year Engineering honors courses do much more than the usual classwork – they learn about computer programming, technical communication, and solid modelling; but they also participate in class team building exercises at the Recreation Center and gain experience with 3D printing.

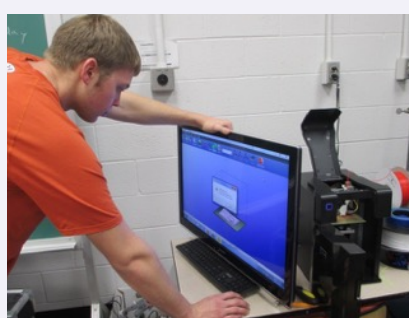
Students are able to apply the concepts learned in class to an open ended design project. Teams of 3-5 students work together to design, build, test, and demonstrate a concept for an exhibit for the OH WOW! Roger and Gloria Jones Center for Science and Technology (a children's museum located in downtown Youngstown). Each group of students is tasked to create an exhibit that will explain some kind of scientific or engineering concept to children. This allows students to impact the community through their projects. Each year numerous projects are selected for various uses at the museum or used for special events in our outreach to the community. Below is a photo of a team from last year consisting of (from left) Mark Frederickson, Carmen Marinucci, Tessa Goehring, and Daniel Price who created an electromagnet exhibit, with gloves that people can put on and pick up magnetic objects.



Each semester the Honors students participate in class team building exercises at the Andrew's Recreation Center on YSU's campus. The photo on the left is a group of students from the 2014-2015 school year playing blindfolded dodge ball. The photo on the right shows students participating in a High Ropes Course.



The class also gains exposure to additive manufacturing and 3D printing technologies. This includes a field trip to America Makes also known as the National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute. Students work in teams using a solid modeling software package to develop a team logo. The photo on the left shows the undergraduate teaching assistant, Andrew Morgan, setting up a team's logo to print. On the right is an example of a 3D printed logo created by a team in the class.



## Internship Experience in the Bahamas

by Luke Johnson, Senior

This past summer I completed an internship at PharmaChem Technologies in Freeport, Bahamas. While there, I applied chemical engineering theory to real life problems in industry at this pharmaceutical plant in my hometown. PharmaChem produces Tenofovir Disoproxil fumarate (TDF), an active pharmaceutical ingredient in HIV/AIDS treatment. While there, I was given the opportunity to help provide solutions to problems found in the plant.

One solution I provided was calculations for the surface area of a reactor in order to effectively spray clean it. Additionally, in order to effectively mark changes in the amount of solvent in storage tanks, I created a tag to mark the tank with volume readings based on the changing height of the container.

Besides existing issues in the plant, I mainly worked on the project for building a new plant. I co-created and edited the master equipment list that includes the cost of equipment like reactors, agitators, heat exchangers, and pumps. In addition to putting together documents and bid packages for vendors, I designed a chemical compatibility and resistivity chart that uses existing compatibility information as well as spacing for new chemicals specific to the new plant and mechanical O-ring seals.



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San Salvador, Bahamas December, 2014 Tropical Ecology Honors Course led by Dr. Shaklee. Photo courtesy from Jenna DeLaurentis, pictured in front. Clockwise Chris Poullas, Mallory Bower, Jenna DeLaurentis, Sarah Pigza, Jonathan Pohl and Dominic

### Penguin goes ¡Pura Vida! by Jayne Catlos, Senior

Since I began taking foreign language classes at YSU my freshman year, I had wondered if I would ever get the opportunity to study abroad. I did not want to miss out on such a unique opportunity, so last spring I put together a last ditch effort before I would graduate: 6 weeks in Costa Rica for the summer of 2015. I applied for scholarships like a mad woman and, before I knew it, I was on a plane headed 2,000+ miles away.



I could not have asked for a better experience. I went mostly to improve my fluency: so I was taking classes at the university and was living with a tica family. But in the end I got so much more out of the experience. Buildings on campus were open-air, I haggled in Spanish with locals for souvenirs, and came home to a caring host family who provided me with three square meals (usually a basis of rice and beans, but with many tropical fruits and vegetables I had never heard of before). And there is just something about the local ticos wearing jeans while walking around in a humid 80 degree June that says “you’re not in Ohio anymore”.

Going to Costa Rica also allowed me to blend my two majors of study: Spanish as well as geography. Costa Rica is going through an interesting period where they are trying to preserve their vibrant natural ecosystem while improving the conditions of their urban environments to minimize impact. There is a lot of planning that goes into that, and if I ever return, that would be worth getting involved in. But for now, I am just keeping in touch with my host family.

### Costa Rica by Abby Kovacs, Junior

Spanish is my minor, so I thought studying abroad and immersing myself in a Hispanic culture would be a great way to get some credits out of the way as well as truly develop my Spanish skills.

I stayed with a host family, and they were absolutely wonderful. My host mom was one of the best cooks I have ever encountered, and she made sure I really got to experience “tico” cuisine. My host brothers were like actual brothers, saving me from mice and cockroaches and making fun of me when I couldn’t remember a word in Spanish. And my host dad was always asking me for help with his English class because apparently, Ohioans have the best accent to learn pronunciations.

I got to enjoy the experience of living in Heredia, which is a very urban area only a 20-minute bus ride away from the capital of San Jose. I studied at the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica. I took three classes: Spanish Composition, Dances of Latin America, and Latin American Cuisine. My composition class was interesting because my professor didn’t speak any English. That experience really helped me to develop my Spanish speaking and understanding skills.

In my dance class, we learned how to merengue, bachata, cumbia, and salsa. On several occasions, we would go out dancing and “practice” with locals. I guess you could say I got a lot of “field” experience.

My cooking class was my favorite, though. On Tuesdays and Thursdays we would go to our professor’s house and make dinner together. She actually spoke English, however; she would not allow us to speak any English ever. It was still a blast, though. We would listen to Marc Anthony and sing as we cooked. And then at the end of the class, she gave each of us a booklet with all the recipes we had made.

I think the most shaping part of the entire experience was having the opportunity to travel every weekend. I went bungee jumping in Monte Verde, danced in the rain at the beach in Manuel Antonio, enjoyed the night life in San Jose, and got to experience hot springs and a volcano in La Fortuna. Struggling with my Spanish at marketplaces and restaurants and taxis and bars and pretty much everywhere we went outside of class was really where I got better at understanding Spanish. I even learned some slang along the way. Actually, when I was at the airport on my way home, and the lady checking my luggage asked if I spoke English or Spanish, I was able to say “los dos” which means “both.” It was such a



satisfying feeling, because I never would have said that the day I arrived.

I met so many amazing people from Costa Rica and the United States during my trip, and I still keep in contact with several of them. It was an absolutely wonderful experience, and I hope I have the opportunity to return and visit someday.

To learn more about my trip, please visit my video at <https://youtu.be/K6otf9Nypxs>

### Crash Course in Cultural Competence, Chilean-edition by Georgia Kasamias, Junior

Last Spring, I lived and studied in Valparaíso, Chile for the duration of five months, inevitably experiencing a crash course in cultural competence. Before the trip, I



had considered myself “cultured,” from both an academic and personal level. My family strongly identifies itself with the Greek culture, while I myself have studied Spanish and World Literature. Nevertheless, breathing in a new culture “from scratch” taught me the nuances of the complex concept that is culture. I would like to share the experiences I learned abroad with the YSU community and encourage discussions on international relations and perceptions, especially regarding South America. This discussion is highly valuable, seeing as the Latino population in the United States is the fastest growing minority, far exceeding even African Americans.



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*Angkor Wat, Cambodia July 2014*



*Denali Alaska, 2015*

## **Traveling the World and it Began in Honors by Jason Heyman, Alumnus**

“Jason, we had a last-minute cancellation, would you like to go to the Bahamas next week?” asked Dr. Shaklee. I replied with the only possible response to such a question - “What do I pack?” While December may not have been the ideal time to find quality snorkeling gear in Ohio, a short five days later, I not only acquired the first stamp in my passport, but a newly discovered passion for travel.

Fast-forward in my life six years, three Bahamas trips, twenty-four months of backpacking around the world, and thirty-two countries-explored later, and travel has not become just a part of my life, but really the reason that I live. I’ve climbed several volcanos. I’ve spent countless nights in jungles and on beaches. I’ve successfully avoided landmines and deadly snakes. I’ve stayed in remote villages that have never seen a white person before. I’ve eaten more creatures than I’d care to admit. I can say “cheers” in more than 40 languages. I now have friends from nearly every country in the world. I could write a novel on the experiences that I’ve had. But, in the end, I still have 160 countries to go.

I will be presenting at a fireside chat this semester to share my experiences with others. By attending YSU, you’ve already made the smart decision to take on minimal debt, which can afford you a wealth of flexibility. Let me share with you how easy it can be to see the world. My goal is not to say “Look what I’ve done,” rather, “Look what you can do.” Travel can be surprisingly cheap, and the return on the experiences is nothing short of invaluable.

## **Discovering Yourself through Exploring the World**

### **Chase the Hudson to the Liffey: A semester in Ireland by Natalie Kelly, Senior**

This past Spring semester, I was an intern with The Physio Company within the IFSC in Dublin, Ireland. The Physio Company is one of the top physical therapy companies in all of Ireland. My duties consisted of greeting the patients as they walked in, having the patients fill out paperwork if necessary, scheduling patients for their next appointment, and billing patients at the end of their session. Each day, I was also able to sit in on all of the patient sessions (with patient approval) and shadow the physical therapists in the clinic. I was able to gain insight on how another country becomes certified, the treatments they use, and the protocols for common injuries. All of which will help me become a better physical therapist. I lived in an apartment in the city of Dublin, right across from St. Patrick’s Cathedral, and just up the road from Christ Church Cathedral. The location of my apartment added so much to my experience because I could easily walk to many of Dublin’s attraction, and therefore see so much of Dublin! Living in the city also helped me to understand the Irish idioms, such as “cheers” instead of “thank you,” and “slanचा” replacing the American “cheers” when toasting. Besides exploring the city of Dublin, I had the chance to travel throughout the country to see the Cliffs of Moher and the Blarney Stone. My time in Ireland was an amazing experience that I am so grateful I had the opportunity to live. Living abroad while interning with physical therapists not only gave me the chance to learn more about physical therapy than I could ever dream of, but to also travel and explore places I have only seen in photographs.



*Rope Bridge in Carrick-a-Rede, Ireland.*



*Natalie promoting the Physio Company to ICON employees.*



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## Leading through Serving

### YSU Penguins' Campaign for Clean Water

by Georgia Kasamias, Junior

In the U.S., free, clean water flows, whether it be in the form of tap water from McDonalds or public water fountains. Unfortunately, this is not a universal reality, as millions die each year from lack of water or from water-related diseases. In Uganda in particular, about 50% of the population lacks access to clean water. The Ugandan Water Project (UWP) is a NY-based, non-profit organization that seeks to alleviate this crisis, providing rainwater collection tanks to Ugandan communities.

YSU's involvement began two years ago; since then, we have raised over \$7,200 via 5k races. We have funded a tank in the Jinja District of Uganda, which provides clean water to over 1,000 human beings and substantially lowers the rates of malaria, thereby expanding the possibility of education for children and entrepreneurial endeavors for women.

In regards to the Penguin community, past events have helped create a global citizen mindset, one of the pillars of the YSU Honors College. Just as importantly, the UWP has brought together YSU students, local businesses, and the greater community under a common, humanist goal—to serve those who are lacking a basic, human right: water.

To support our cause, please consider attending our UWP Benefit Dinner this spring.



Ashley Orr, Senior President, YSU Student Government Association

My leadership journey began long before I realized it. As honors students, many of us are told we are leaders as we develop before college. Then at some point this external observation becomes a characteristic we pursue and embrace.

Personally I find it difficult to write about my leadership, not for lack of leadership experience but for my belief that I am not a leader because of my title as SGA President, but rather because of others' trust and propensity to work with me to tackle new initiatives. Leadership for me is action and some of my proudest moments are those not defined by myself, but by my actions or the actions of those who I am working with.

As a freshman, volunteering to be a Penguin Pen Pals leader was a pivotal moment. This project allowed me to become engaged with YSU, my peers, and with the Youngstown Community. As a sophomore, listening to a student's concerns led to the installation of water bottle refill stations across campus. Now less than two years later, YSU recycling has noted decreases in plastic water bottle waste on campus, community organizations have awarded thousands of dollars in grant funds to YSU for the project, and a student recently messaged me to say, "Thank you." As a junior, driven by my desire to impact a larger group I went out of my comfort zone and ran for SGA President with Jacob Schriener-Briggs as my running mate. Working in that position with Jacob and all of SGA's representatives, I am getting to spend my senior year giving back to the campus and community that has helped to shape me into the person and leader I am today.

We are all leaders at times. I hope my experiences motivate my fellow honors students to step up when needed, listen to others' ideas and concerns, fight for creative solutions, and realize that leadership is a wonderful way to give back.



Scott Miller and Natalie Kelly participate in First Ugandan 5K Water Project.



Children from Ugandan village in front of the tank built in 2014.

Student Government Association President and/or VP has been a member of the Honors Program since 2000.



Comparison of drinking water before and after the tank

### Honors, Leadership, and Greek Life by Brandon O'Neill, President, Sigma Tau Gamma

For many honors students the idea of joining a fraternity or sorority sounds downright crazy; surely fraternities are no different from how they were portrayed in Animal House. Likewise, Sororities are nothing more than the college version of Mean Girls. But what if I told you that these conceptions are nothing more than unfounded stereotypes? Would you be surprised to learn that since 2003 all but two SGA Presidents at YSU have been a member of a fraternity or sorority? If I've learned one thing as a member of YSU's Honors Program, it's that there are many lessons that can't be learned in the classroom. The most notable of these lessons pertains to leadership. Leadership isn't a skill taught in math class. While there may be books written on the subject, the only way to truly develop into a great leader is to go out and lead. No other organization develops leaders as quickly and efficiently as Greek Life. What makes YSU's Greek system rewarding is that members are given the unique opportunity to interact with and lead their peers. Moreover, if you do happen to fail, Greek Life provides an amazing network of brothers and sisters to fall back on who are more than willing to pick you up and challenge you to improve. The leadership skills developed through membership in a Fraternity or Sorority are invaluable, look great on a resume, and help make each member the best version of themselves. When it comes to Greek Life, it's clear that you can't judge a book by its cover.

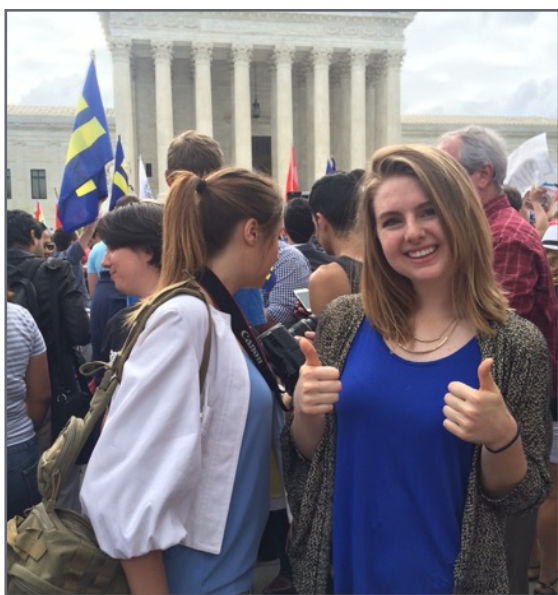


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## FROM "THE VALLEY" TO "THE HILL" IN WASHINGTON D.C.

by Greta Frost, Junior

This summer, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to intern in Congressman Tim Ryan's office in Washington D.C. I lived and worked in Washington and got a taste of what it is like to work in the Legislative branch. The experiences I had were unique to the ever-changing city that I fell in love with. I got to see President Barack Obama and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi at the infamous Congressional Baseball Game, and I had a photo-op on the Speaker's balcony of the U.S. Capitol. I gave tours of the Capitol Building to the Congressman's constituents, stood on the House floor, and learned how to navigate the underground tunnels between the House office buildings. Occasionally, I would grab lunch at the library of Congress while I was on break from emailing other



offices about co-sponsoring bills. I would watch CSPAN and MSNBC religiously and had copies of *The Hill* and *The Economist* stacking up on my desk as I tried to become self-educated on pressing issues like the Patriot Act and the TPP trade deal. In addition to my duties as an intern, I learned a lot about the Congressman's interest in bringing mindfulness into Congress and schools around the nation. I had the chance to learn about meditation, participate in meditation sessions in the House buildings, and read Congressman Ryan's book about mindfulness. Perhaps one of my most memorable moments was sprinting to the Supreme Court building to witness the historic gay marriage ruling days after having listened to a lecture featuring Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, one of my idols and role models. I was exposed to many different viewpoints and opinions through the friends I made, and that was a learning experience in itself. This experience opened my eyes to all of the varying careers in D.C. and on the Hill, and I am very thankful for the people I got to know and the things I got to experience.

## PRINCESSES

by Alana Lesnansky, Senior; Claudia Gage, Senior; and Catena Core, Junior

Temenos Productions, based in Warren, OH, is a children's live entertainment company, specializing in princesses, faeries, and superheroes. Three members of the Honor's College (Catena Core, Claudia Gage, and Alana Lesnansky) are employed at Temenos. Much of the work is geared towards private birthday parties, but the company also



frequently does public appearances such as parades and library visits, which the girls agree is often more rewarding as children from families who may never have the funds to host a private party get to experience the magic. "I love seeing a child's face light up when they see their favorite princess," says Lesnansky. Gage agrees that dressing up as a princess is incredible but also adds, "some of my personal favorite moments have come from seeing children feel empowered by meeting their favorite superheroes." "I've always loved stories of princesses and superheroes, and grew up wanting to be just like them," Core says, "And now I get to be the magic for another little girl." All in all, the girls agree that bringing joy to children and adults feels less like work and more like childhood dreams come true.



## FROM THE LAB TO THE DANCE FLOOR...

by Alana Lesnansky, Senior

Throughout my time here at YSU, as a biology major with a double minor in chemistry and dance, I have been fortunate enough to be involved in many varied experiences. Due to an honors contract my freshman year, my General Biology teacher (Dr. Asch) knew who I was, and so when the time came to look for a place to work on my lab skills, I was able to join his lab for a "Problems in Molecular Biology" course. This helped solidify my love for molecular biology, and has shaped my decision to look into graduate programs in that field specifically. The Honor's Program here at YSU has also allowed me to work on my leadership skills. My best friend/roommate and I, with the help of Amy Cossentino, were able to start the YSU Honors Talent Show, and we are very happy to say we have found a talented and motivated group of students to continue running it after we graduate. The Honors Program has also instilled in me a sense of adventure and independence. Last summer, I was fortunate enough to be hired as a trombone player/back-up vocalist for Hershey Park's "Pattie and the Peppermints." I learned so much, not only about trombone and performing, but about life in general. Those are lessons I will always carry with me. This year, I was looking for an opportunity to continue performing dance and tried out for YSU's Majorettes. This has been and continues to be an amazing experience. During all of these experiences, I have been supported by the YSU Honors Program and my "Scholar Family." Researching in a lab, performing at Hershey Park, and being a YSU Majorette have shaped who I am today, and I know that the Honors Program is a common thread that runs through it all.



## YSU Honors College Student Academic Journal

The Honors College is creating their own Academic Journal to archive all of our students' wonderful academic accomplishments. Honors students can submit their Honors Theses and Capstones, as well as their own academic research or creative writings. The journal will be multidisciplinary and all forms of academic prowess are welcome. We are currently looking for students who are passionate and interested in such an endeavor, and would be willing to serve on a team to make the YSU Honors College Student Academic Journal a reality. Please contact Megan Evans at [mmevans@student.ysu.edu](mailto:mmevans@student.ysu.edu) if you are interested in being a part of this team!



## PAYO: Poverty Awareness in Youngstown

PAYO: Poverty Awareness in Youngstown is a service project still in its beginning stages. It was started last semester in Spring 2015. This is our first full year as a service project, and we are hoping to make an even larger and more successful event. PAYO stands for helping to empower the children and students in our community who live in impoverished conditions. Over 98% of the students who attend the Youngstown City Schools are considered economically disadvantaged. The Honors College and SGA have partnered in creating this service project to demonstrate to the students attending Youngstown schools that we are on their side, and they can be and do anything they want in their future. We are holding an Academic Year of Awareness as well as an Academic Year of Caring. We will have themes each month that will correlate with a monthly collection as well as a YSU event for all students to participate in to become more aware and learn how they can help. All of these events will lead up to our big give-away event on April 15 at Harding Elementary. We will be holding a carnival in to help create a community event where the students and their families can come and collect the donations they need most.

For the Fall Semester, this is what you can look forward to:

In September we will hold a food collection drive. We are partnering with every Honors College member through an event that will be held within the Honors College, Scholar Wars. Get your cans ready to donate so your class can come out on top! We will also be holding an Elm Street Clean-Up on September 28 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM.

October will feature a book drive. We will reserve a spot in the library for students to record their voices reading the books they donate. We will put all of these recordings on thumb drives and give them to the libraries in a local elementary school to enhance students' literacy skills.

November/December, will sponsor a hygiene collection. We will also participate with Student Activities to create a Tunnel of Oppression with a focus on poverty in the area.

We hope you are all as excited as we are to help those in need living in our community.



*Global Day of Service volunteers working at Fellows Riverside Gardens.*

## GLOBAL DAY OF SERVICE

We would like to thank everyone who came out August 29 for our YSU Honors Global Day of Service. The YSU Honors Global Day of Service is a day where all Honors students are required to donate their time to the community. This is an event that happens at the beginning of the Fall Semester every year in order to have a positive start to the academic year, as well as help introduce the Freshman students into the Honors Program and show them what it means to be an Honors student at YSU and a dedicated community member. We had well over 300 Honors students who gave their time on August 29 to 18 different locations in the community. Students were participating in various events as helping to build a house, bagging cereals for feeding the community, gardening, helping to build a handicap accessible garden, cleaning up litter on campus, walking and grooming dogs, and overall helping to better the YSU and Youngstown community. It is a wonderful tradition of the Honors Programs that represents its commitment to YSU and the community. Thank you so much for such a successful event!



*Nicholas Tancabel, freshman, volunteers for Global Day.*

## Success After 6

Success After 6 is an early childhood initiative bringing together school and community resources to provide an intentional focus on academics, health and social services, as well as social and emotional development. This initiative will provide tutoring, supplemental programming, and after-school support through the YMCA of Youngstown and The Hawn Foundation. You can tutor K-3 Monday through Friday for an hour shift of either 9AM-10AM, 10AM - 11AM, 3:30PM - 4:30PM or 4:30-5:30PM. The YSU Honors College is getting involved in order to help promote education among Youngstown's youth.



*Volunteers at Second Harvest Foodbank for the Global Day of Service.*





# Summer Honors Institute

SEPTEMBER 15, 2015

HONORS COLLEGE . YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY . EST. DECEMBER 2014



*Crime Scene is always a favorite at the Summer Honors Institute!*

## Summer Honors Institute Eye Opener

by Lexi Rager, Freshman

The summer before my senior year, I was not even remotely considering YSU. “You’re a smart kid,” my teachers said. “Look at Ohio State. Look at Case Western. Go Ivy League. You can do so much better than Youngstown State.”

At my school, that was the typical attitude; YSU was considered the “fallback” school: the school you went to if you didn’t care about your grades in high school or weren’t motivated enough to apply anywhere else. So when my guidance counselor gave me the application to stay residentially at YSU’s Summer Honors Institute, I didn’t take it seriously. I just thought it would be a fun week away.

In that week, I realized just how wrong everyone had been.

For me, it was the people at Summer Honors Institute that set YSU high above any university I had visited. At any other college visit, I felt like just a face in the crowd, being herded from place to place hearing generic speeches not tailored to anyone in particular, and after those visits, no one ever reached out to me personally. Those schools couldn’t care less if I ever came back; I was replaceable. But when I first stepped into Cafaro, I was greeted by a sea of warm, approachable people, including both faculty members and student leaders, who wanted to genuinely get to know me. They customized every piece of advice specifically to me based on my major, my interests, and my concerns, and that made me feel like a valuable person who deserved individual attention. Their friendliness never wavered once in that week, towards me or anyone else, and I’ve come to realize since that their kindness would not have faded if I was there for months or years because it was never a ploy or recruitment tactic. The people in the Honors College are just nice people.

The same was true of the other students staying at SHI residentially; within six days, we not only knew the basics about each other (like majors and hometowns) but one another’s hopes and dreams. We had the comfortability level of old friends, our own inside jokes, and a cluster of happy faces that we could rely on to save us seats at lunch every day. In six days, the twelve of us became a small family, and I remember thinking that if I could have such a sense of community in that short amount of time, the number of connections I could make in four years would be more than I ever hoped for.

Normally when you go away for a week, you come back feeling thrilled about the experience, but over time, that feeling becomes less prominent and drifts away from your mind. I can’t say that’s true about SHI, because no one would let me forget what I found there. My student leaders kept in touch with me my whole senior year, not because they had to, but because they actually wanted to be a friend and help in any way they could, even if I decided not to attend YSU. I text them for advice about everything from financial aid to scheduling classes to leadership societies on campus, and I always got that same warm response I got on the first day of SHI. I still keep in contact with the majority of my residential peers as well, and I see three of them regularly on campus as fellow members of YSU’s Class of 2019. I can still count on them to save me a seat at lunch.

YSU’s Summer Honors Institute taught me that it isn’t about where you go to school or what reputation your school has so much as what you do with your education and what friendships you make along the way. You can go to the most prestigious school on the globe, but if you don’t form any bonds, you’ll have a miserable four years. Today, as a freshman in the Honors College, I can say without a doubt that I picked YSU over seven other schools (including Ohio State and Case Western) because of one specific reason: I left Summer Honors Institute feeling like the honors students were my family and that YSU was my home.



*SHI participants meet Pete the Penguin at their Friday Celebration.*



*Lexi Rager shares dinner with a couple of her SHI Residential friends.*



*SHI students enjoy the Social Media elements of the Institute!*



# Events and Groups

SEPTEMBER 15, 2015

HONORS COLLEGE . YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY . EST. DECEMBER 2014

## Calendar of Events

- 9.18.15**  
FALL BALL 8PM STADIUM CLUB (V)  
Semi Formal Dance to benefit Relay for Life
- 9.19.15**  
SCHOLAR WARS TAILGATE (C)
- 9.20.15**  
SILLY SCIENCE SUNDAY(V)
- 9.25-29.15**  
SCHOLAR WARS (C)
- 9.24.15**  
WEAN FOUNDATION (V)  
Leadership Summit
- 9.30.15**  
HONORABLE MENTION - 7:00 PM (L)  
Cafaro House, MPR  
Adventures in Tico Time:  
How Costa Rica has stuck with me. Jayne Catlos  
Japan on a Budget, Miranda Parke
- 10.3.15**  
NUN RUN 5K(V)
- 10.3.15**  
HONORABLE MENTION - 7 PM  
CAFARO HOUSE, MPR
- 10.12.15**  
HONORS COLLEGE OPEN HOUSE (V)
- 10.17.15**  
SHI FALL IMMERSION/HONORS COLLEGE  
TAILGATE  
HOMECOMING PARADE S)
- 10.21.15**  
FIRESIDE CHAT YOU AND THE LAW (L)  
Josh Hiznay, Esq.  
Cafaro House, MPR 6:00 pm
- 10.25.15**  
PEACE RACE (V)
- 10.30.15**  
FALL FESTIVAL (V) - Rich Center for Autism
- 11.11-15.15**  
NCHC CONFERENCE (A)
- 11.18.15**  
FIRESIDE CHAT - TRAVELING THE GLOBE (L)  
Jason Heyman  
Cafaro House, MPR 6:00
- 1.15.16**  
PEN PAL MEET/GREET (V)
- 2.24.16**  
HONORS COLLEGE TALENT SHOW (M)  
6:00 PM
- 4.15.16**  
PAYO (V)
- DATE: TBA  
UGANDA WATER PROJECT (V)
- 4.8.16**  
RELAY FOR LIFE (V)
- 4.29.16**  
HONORS COLLEGE RECOGNITION  
CEREMONY

- Key:**  
(V) - Volunteer  
(L) - Lecture Co-curricular  
(A) - Art Co-Curricular  
(M) - Music Co-Curricular  
(T) - Theater Co-Curricular  
(S) - Sport Co-Curricular

## National Scholarship Committee Formed

Since the late 90s Youngstown State University students have received National or International Scholarships (Goldwater, Fulbright) to support their graduate school or study abroad experiences. In an effort to increase awareness among students and engage the campus community in the process, a committee was formed this semester representing faculty from each college. Please check the Honors website for details about upcoming scholarship deadlines for the Goldwater, Truman, Marshall, and others. Angela Messenger and the staff of the Writing Center are holding workshops for students to assist with their writing skills on **September 17 at 2:00 PM and September 18 at 8:30 AM** and faculty to provide a do's and don'ts workshop for writing letters of recommendation on **September 24 at 2:00 PM and September 25 at 8:30 AM. All workshops will be held in Kilcawley Center.**

## Honors Trustees Student Organization

The Honors Trustees is a student organization composed of representatives from each Honors College class. They are a dedicated group of students who meet weekly to identify, plan, and lead activities and service projects of interest to honors students.

This fall the Honors Trustees will kick off September with their annual Scholar Wars events. Scholar Wars is a series of competitive events that challenge them in multiple ways.

October will begin a series of Fireside Chats and Honorable Mentions with invited speakers ranging in topic.

A new addition to the offering this year will be the Weekend Waddle geared toward establishing connections with our commuter population. Check out our Facebook page or Twitter feed for updates on the schedule for the Weekend Waddles.



Contact the Honors College at:  
330.941.2772 [honors@ysu.edu](mailto:honors@ysu.edu)



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