



## YSU First Rhodes Scholar, Ashley Orr!



Senator Chris Widener and Ashley Orr at the Statehouse in Columbus on December 9

### The Road Taken by a YSU Student to a Rhodes by Ashley Orr

Dr. Stephen Gage, Director of Bands in the College of Creative Arts and Communication, stopped me in the Rec a few weeks ago to congratulate me for being chosen as a Rhodes Scholar. Being the wonderful man he is, he gave me a hug and told me how proud YSU is of me. He also went on to explain that he believes YSU Honors has had many other students deserving of national and international scholarships and that he thinks they just have not applied in the past. I couldn't agree more, Dr. Gage.

Each year the directors of YSU Honors make calls for YSU students interested in the national scholarship applications. There are a wide variety of national scholarships, including the Goldwater, Rhodes, Truman, and Marshall. The newly established National Scholarship Committee through the Honors College is dedicated to supporting students through the application and interview process. The applications require a lot of time, work, and reflection from the applicant.

Personally, with each scholarship I applied for I promised myself I would turn it in far before the deadline. Having worked with me for nearly four years, I am sure Dr. Amy Cossentino and Dr. Ron Shaklee both laughed after I told them this. I worked on my applications for the Rhodes scholarship and the Marshall Scholarship diligently for several months and yet somehow I

didn't submit either until the very last day the applications were due.

A mentor at the Federal Reserve Bank in Cleveland had encouraged me to apply for the scholarships, and in a meeting a few days before I left for the London School of Economics he asked, "Are you applying to win, or are you applying for the experience of applying?" I answered honestly that I was applying for the journey and the process (however, winning the Rhodes has been great)! In my applications, I wrote about my leadership in Student Government and with Honors, reflected on why I am service driven, contemplated options for future research, and dreamt of a career where my work makes great impacts on the poor across the world. This was an amazing journey. Even without winning a national scholarship, I would argue that an applicant gains from the experience. For that reason alone, I encourage other YSU Honors students to apply, to be challenged, and to grow.

Just a few nights ago I was talking to someone who didn't know me, and I was asked where I was going for graduate school. Replying "the University of Oxford" can be quite shocking socially, and personally it is still hard for me to believe as I say it. I am so incredibly honored to be YSU's first Rhodes Scholar and am excited to expand my network of academically driven peers. The Rhodes Scholarship was developed by Cecil Rhodes in 1902, and each year over 88 students

are selected internationally to complete graduate work at the University of Oxford. Thirty-two of these Rhodes Scholars are from the U.S., and all Rhodes Scholars receive funding for two to three years. I intend to complete what is equivalent of a doctorate in economics.

I am very passionate about what I intend to research at Oxford and am excited about the potential to work with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, a research group that works with the United Nations on their poverty reduction Sustainable Development goal. However, that is not what I want my peers, friends, and potential YSU Honors students to take away from my being named a Rhodes Scholar. Rather, I hope that my success motivates other students to apply for national scholarships (yes, it is worth all the extra work and time). As YSU is only the fourth public university in the state to have a student named a Rhodes Scholar, it is a definite testament to the quality of education and opportunities for students at YSU and within the Honors College. Personally, I would like to thank each and every YSU peer, alum, faculty, and staff member that has aided in my development. I am so grateful to represent you at one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the world. I am merely a product of those who surround me, and at YSU I have been surrounded by some of the very best.

## YSU

Fourth public institution in the state of Ohio to have a student receive a Rhodes Scholarship.

"I am merely a product of those who surround me, and at YSU I have been surrounded by some of the very best."

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# Scholarship & Research

## LSAT Preparation

**Preparing and taking the LSAT can be a daunting task. Camron Bagheri shares his preparation strategy.**

For anyone who doesn't know, the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is a frighteningly rigorous standardized exam required for admission to most American law schools. It consists of five timed, multiple-choice sections, each containing twenty-three to twenty-eight questions, and one timed essay. Unlike the majority of academic exams administered in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary school, the LSAT requires no outside knowledge whatsoever; rather, it prompts the test taker to logically analyze the information that is given. Despite its structural simplicity, the LSAT is notoriously difficult, primarily because many of the people that take it are ill-prepared. Below, I briefly offer some tips I learned while preparing for this test myself.

**First, realize that anyone, regardless of age, GPA, and major, can successfully take the LSAT;** all that's required is a strong will and sufficient study time. Although following a pre-law program or curriculum may help hone your critical reading and writing abilities (which will

serve you well on the LSAT and in law school), doing so is not necessary to attain your desired score.

**Second, before you take the LSAT, contact and discuss your law-plans with your Pre-Law advisor;** at YSU, that's Dr.

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Paul Sracic. Your advisor can offer valuable advice and resources that'll aid you in your law school preparation.

**Third, obtain the proper study supplies.**

In my opinion, these include strategy books and prep tests. LSAT strategy books, which can be purchased from *PowerScore*, *Kaplan*, *Manhattan LSAT*, and so on, simply teach you how to approach the different types of questions you'll see on the test. I recommend getting one book for each type of LSAT section (Logical Reasoning, Reading Comprehension, and Logic Games). Whereas strategy books teach you how to tackle the test, prep tests, unsurprisingly, allow you to practice tackling it. Official LSAT prep tests can be purchased from [www.lsac.org](http://www.lsac.org). Although it

may have been overkill, I purchased, took, and thoroughly reviewed more than thirty-five practice tests before my actual LSAT.

**Fourth, set aside enough study time.**

During my preparation (which took place in the summer), I spent about one month reading through the strategy guides (approximately three to four hours per weekday), and then I spent the next three months taking and reviewing practice tests (approximately six hours per weekday). In fact, during my four months of preparation, I treated LSAT study like a part-time job, and I absolutely recommend that you do as well.

**Fifth and finally, be confident in yourself.**

Although you should never become cocky or arrogant, several months of intense studying, test-taking, and progress-tracking will expose you to almost every dirty trick the LSAT can muster, and so you should feel confident in your ability to succeed. To this end, know that preparing in this way does work. I scored in the seventy-seventh percentile on my very first practice test, but I scored in the ninety-seventh percentile on my actual test. With proper preparation, you'll succeed as well!

## Airplanes and Additive Manufacturing

by Libby Urig

Since May 2015, I have worked as an undergraduate research assistant for Dr. Brett Conner of the Industrial Engineering Department. With his tutelage, I conduct research under an Air Force Research Laboratory grant to implement additive manufacturing into the Air Force maintenance and sustainment supply chain. The long-term goal of this project is to provide inexpensive and efficient methods to replace hard-to-find parts on legacy planes within the fleet. This work is done in collaboration with the 910th Airlift Wing in Vienna, Ohio and America Makes in downtown Youngstown. Simply put, I get to

play with a wide variety of 3D printers and 3D scanners on a daily basis. My time with the Honors College prepared me well for these tasks. Academically, I am putting to use my skills outside of the classroom. Much of my work has little to no supervision or guidance. Without the proper initiative and knowledge, most tasks would go undone. I am currently working on an individual research project, analyzing the relationship between fuse-deposition modeled (FDM) materials and cost. As the sole researcher, many of my methods are self-created and need to be defensible. From an

interdisciplinary perspective, the Launch Lab at YSU where I work is a collaboration zone between the STEM college and Creative Arts and Communication college. By bringing these two differing communities together, innovative ways to use additive manufacturing have emerged.

Going forward, I plan to continue my work with Dr. Conner. There is still a lot to be done before an Air Force plane with additively manufactured parts takes flight, but it is exciting to know the work I am doing at YSU will help make it happen.



From L to R: Elizabeth Urig, Alec Marsili, Ashley Martof. Phillip Singerman, Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services of NIST is sitting.

# Internship after First Year Leads to a Childhood Dream

by Kayla Theisler

Walking into the STEM Internship and Co-Op Expo in October 2014, I felt oddly content. I didn't mind the small talk in which company representatives engaged me, nor even them saying "see me in a year or two" when I handed them my resume. I was a first-year engineering student looking for an internship, and in most people's eyes I would appear out of place. I didn't feel that way, however, and I owe that to my drive. My motivation to succeed has been largely brought about by the Honors College.

These past two years I have been motivated more than ever to succeed due to not only the rigorous course work that the college provides, but also to aspects that may not be normally considered. Through the college I have refined my leadership skills, something that has definitely stood out to companies. The representative from VMH International in St. Louis, Missouri, talked to me about my experience in the Honors College and my leadership roles there before talking about anything engineering related. To him, it was shocking to see someone so involved within their university and someone that takes harder classes for fun, all while enjoying their college years. He hired me for the summer of 2015. I was turned down numerous times that day, but because of my motivation to succeed, I was one of only a few freshmen engineers to land an internship that summer.

The Honors College has also helped me gain a sense of independence. All of the semesters I have been at YSU, I have lived in Cafaro House, the Honors residence hall. Living there taught me how to function better on my own. I was able to learn to balance my time in order to incorporate homework, my work schedule, and the dreadful task of laundry. Four days after moving out of Cafaro at the end of the spring 2015 semester, I moved to St. Louis. Thanks to the independence gained in Cafaro, I was not afraid to live in a city; I welcomed the idea of a new environment and was comfortable with being on my own. Now I am in my own apartment in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as I have been accepted for the co-op of my dreams with Harley-Davidson. I undoubtedly owe a large portion of my success to the Honors College and all of the life lessons it has taught me.

## Making a Difference Outside of the Classroom

by Allison Guerrieri

YSU Center for Dialysis

For the past year I have been involved in two research projects alongside Dr. Jane Wetzel of the Physical Therapy Department and Dr. Erdal Sarac of the Center for Dialysis. My main focus is to determine the efficiency of oral Vitamin D on an end-stage renal disease population. This project is in the final stages and will be presented at various conferences once final results are confirmed. The second study examines Acthar Gel, a pharmaceutical used in an end-stage renal disease population, to determine its effects on the renal system and physical performance. This study required me to figure out how the pharmaceutical affects the body. I have analyzed the data and will continue to do so as the study progresses.

Most students do not get the opportunity to work with faculty outside of their department, let alone work with physicians outside of YSU. This opportunity has enabled me to take the knowledge I have gained in the classroom and apply it to clinical situations. This opportunity comes once in a lifetime for some people, and I have learned so much in the process that I will be able to use in all of my future endeavors.



Kayla Theisler at Harley-Davidson in Wisconsin.

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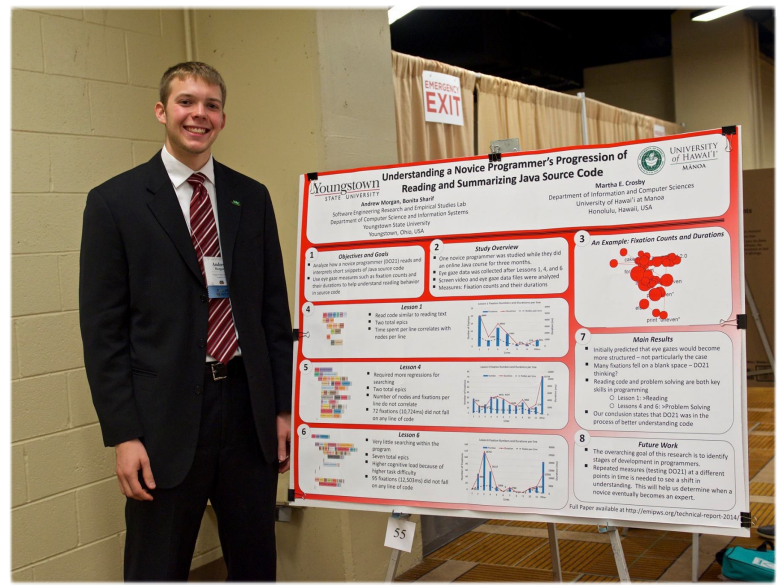
**“This opportunity comes once in a lifetime...”**

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# National Collegiate Honors Council Conference 2015 Chicago, IL

Photo Gallery by Jenna DeLaurentis

Fifteen Honors students traveled to Chicago, Illinois, to present research, share ideas, and gain insight. The YSU Honors College supports student development and encourages participation at the NCHC Conferences. Fifteen students will travel to Seattle, Washington in October 2016 to deliver presentations.



Andrew Morgan at the Poster Presentation Session.



Rayann Atway, Natalie Halavick, Sara O'Kane at the Idea Exchange.



Allan Metz at the Idea Exchange.



Kayla Zitello and Libby Urig at the Idea Exchange.



Megan Evans Student Interdisciplinary Research Paper Session.



Jenna DeLaurentis exploring the City of Chicago



Group photo at the Bean in Chicago, Illinois.

# Experience of a Lifetime

by Michael Barkett

It's not every day that student musicians get invited to play at Carnegie Hall. The Youngstown State University Wind Ensemble received that very invitation and performed on November 27, 2015. This was part of a program put together to feature collegiate ensembles. The YSU Honors College was represented well in the Wind Ensemble by many students. All of the students had a great experience and were each affected in a different way. Jonathan Pohl, a Clinical Laboratory Science major said, "Performing on stage at Carnegie Hall is a priceless memory that I will carry with me long after I've graduated from YSU."

Along with the great experience came opportunities for personal and musical growth throughout the semester. We learned that we had to be responsible for ourselves in order to be successful as a group. Everyone's part was hard, and without personal ownership and pride, the experience would have been much different.

Every great experience starts somewhere, and that somewhere for us was the YSU administration and the faculty of the College of Creative Arts and Communication and the Dana School of Music. Madeline Grimes, an Arts Administration major said, "We are so grateful to YSU and to our faculty and administration for providing us with such a life-changing experience that will be shared with fellow musicians and students forever."

Other YSU Honors students in the Fall 2015 YSU Wind Ensemble included Thomas Urich, Sebastian Calvin, and Dominic DeLaurentis.



Carnegie Hall

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## Summer Medical and Dental Education Program

by Brienne Seekford

The Fall semester of my sophomore year, I found myself in a difficult situation. Like many other undergraduate students with the goal of applying to medical school, I wanted to do something to help me stand out from the rest of the pack. However, as a Biology major, internships and summer opportunities involving medicine seemed to be few and far between. After a lot of stressing and even more procrastinating, I followed the advice of my mother and began doing some online digging for "summer internships for pre-medical students." I stumbled upon a program called the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP). I constructed my application and sent it in as quickly as I could. Much to my amazement, on February 15 I received the news – I had actually gotten into the SMDEP site at Case Western Reserve University!

SMDEP, sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has twelve sites across the country at some of the nation's top medical and dental schools, including Case, Yale, Columbia, and UCLA. The program stands out from others of its kind for several reasons. First, it is for college undergraduates completing their freshman or sophomore year, that belong to minority groups in the medical profession or that have shown an interest in the medical field. Those are the only requirements of the program, so a strong application is a must. Some juniors tend to get into the program, and not all SMDEP scholars belong to ethnic minority groups. Second, it is a six-week, intensive preparatory experience for a future career both in medical school and as a physician. More than that, it is *free*. In fact, SMDEP Scholars actually receive a \$600 stipend, qualifying SMDEP as an internship. Students can even apply for travel aid, so that their expenses for getting to and from their SMDEP site are completely paid for.

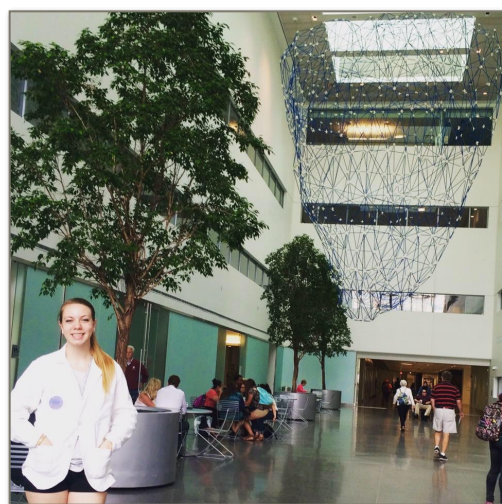
My six weeks at SMDEP at Case began in early June. Each Scholar was required to take three different courses (one math, one chemistry, and one biology) as well as a writing class, where time was spent working on personal statements. I took Biostatistics, Physics, and Organic Chemistry three days a week. The rest of my time was filled up with presentations and panels made up of various experts from different fields on new emerging medical concepts, the importance of high ethical standards, how to become a better learner, and a variety of other interesting and important topics. We received thorough training in HIPPA, CPR, and OR protocol. We were given the opportunity to go on clinicals throughout our six weeks, and I was able to personally spend time in both the Neuro ICU and Labor and Delivery at University Hospital in Cleveland, which is located right on Case's campus. Scholars were given "all access passes" when it came to shadowing doctors and completing clinicals, which meant we even got to spend some time in scrubs, the operating room, and our very own white coats that were presented to us at a special White Coat Ceremony. Some other special events were also sprinkled into the month, like a meeting with the Dean of Admissions of the Medical School, and a Medical School Fair, which had over 30 schools in attendance looking to draft from the SMDEP Scholars.

Perhaps the largest and most important part of the month, though, was the Public Health Project. All of the Scholars were split amongst 13 different groups. Each group was charged with the task of choosing a current Public Health problem and then coming up with a solution, all expressed through a 25-page paper. The group was then required to present their project in 20 minutes. All the presentations were judged side by side the last day of SMDEP. My group chose the problem of poor patient compliance and our solution included conducting a clinical trial. I have to brag a bit here, because after I was chosen as the leader of my group by my peers, and after spending all six weeks researching and writing, my group came in **FIRST PLACE** out of all the other presentations and papers!

Although we had a weekend getaway to Cedar Point and other fun group activities like ice skating, most of the time was spent working. Days were long, starting at 8 a.m. and sometimes not finishing until 9 or 10 at night. After returning to the dorms, there were always study groups completing homework from our classes. When we weren't sleeping, eating, or in class, we were studying and if nothing else, just talking to each other about our goals for the future and brainstorming on the best possible ways to achieve them.

My time at SMDEP was definitely a whirlwind, but it impacted me tremendously as a prospective medical student and physician. I have made important connections with medical schools across the country, and I have made great friends as well. Being at SMDEP at Case, with people who understood my struggles and what I am hoping to achieve, allowed me to be completely immersed in learning, in conquering my fears and achieving my goals, and overall just becoming a better person. SMDEP made such a profound impact on me that I honestly don't know where I would be today without having spent those 6 short, but incredibly challenging weeks in Cleveland. My love for SMDEP and what it has given me is what inspired me to stay active with the program, and I now serve as the SMDEP Ambassador for YSU.

To any pre-medical student who is looking for a great way to spend their summer, send in your application to the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program. I can honestly say this is a once in a life time opportunity and you shouldn't miss out!



Brienne Seekford at the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program at Case Western Reserve University

# Global Citizenship

## Prague

by Megan Factor and Joseph Scott

The City of a Thousand Spires is a moniker that is no exaggeration. Modern-day Prague is built on and around the foundation of a city that is thousands of years old, and with little damage done to it in World War II, most of its historical buildings still stand. After the 30 hour, 5,638 mile journey that ended when we touched down at the Vaclav Havel airport, our group of eight, along with Dr. Jeremy Schwartz, was completely exhausted and jet-lagged, yet at the same time excited to start our adventure with eyes wide open.

We were taken to Hotel Angelo in the Andel district of Prague. This residential neighborhood played host to us for the week and was filled with shops, restaurants, and a bustling business sector that kept us busy in our free time. The first full day was set aside for our immersion into the Czech culture. We learned everything from simple phrases that would help us navigate the city to the history of the rise and fall of Communism within the country. After our “classroom” time for the day, we were sent out into the city to complete a scavenger hunt that

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**“No matter how many guide books you read or subway maps you memorize, nothing can compare to exploring the intricacies and hidden treasures of a city first-hand.”**

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forced us to employ our new knowledge. Our other days were filled with planned activities, courtesy of International Studies Program (ISP), that highlighted the business model and activities of Prague and the Czech Republic. We visited almost every type of business and organization that could be found in the country, from non-profit startups and advertising agencies to manufacturing facilities like hand-blown glass and the enormous Skoda car production plant. While on these visits, it was very easy to see the similarities to how business is done in the U.S.

During our eight days in Prague, we were guided by the amazing workers at ISP. They provided such a warm, welcoming environment throughout the duration of our stay and went above and beyond what was required of them to make sure we had a great experience. They taught us the “do’s and don’ts” of navigating the city and even took us to a Czech hockey game against Finland. Each and every one of them was truly a friend to us by the end of the trip. While we were on friendly terms, ISP did not hesitate to put us to work! We were broken up into groups based on our majors and assigned a different department within the company to assist. Some students created the beginnings of a new marketing campaign while others planned the expansion of ISP into the business sector. We then had

lunch with the whole staff, which was made up of workers from more than ten countries, as they explained what brought them to ISP and Prague.

The most important thing that I took away from this incredible experience is that we are all fundamentally the same. Despite our differences in culture, tradition, and way of life, we each have the same hopes, dreams, and fears for ourselves and the next generation. Being open minded and seeing the world with both eyes open not only makes you a better student, but a better person. Traveling abroad emphasizes the importance of empathy and understanding, as well as appreciating the differences that make us unique. It also teaches us that no matter how many guide books you read or subway maps you memorize, nothing can compare to exploring the intricacies and hidden treasures of a city first-hand. I learned that your best experiences are not always the loud and exciting scenes that come to mind when thinking about a famous city, but instead memories made in the quiet, serene moments where time seems to stop and you lose yourself entirely to the beauty and history of your surroundings.

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Megan Factor

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Megan Factor, Joseph Scott, Nick Chretien, Vladimir Rejlek, Digital Director for Wunderman & YSU Faculty Member Jeremy Schwartz

The week before Christmas I did something I had never done before. I got on a plane and flew across the Atlantic Ocean to Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, with a group of seven incredible students and one amazing professor. Completely out of character for me, true, but when you sign up for an international studies class through the Williamson College of Business Administration, you sign up for an adventure. The trip to Prague consisted of multiple business tours, as well as ample time for our group to explore the city and learn about its storied history and extraordinary culture.

Our group toured a wide variety of businesses stationed in Prague, ranging from a successful marketing firm named Wunderman to the Bohemian glass factory stationed outside the city. We even stopped by a small café with a staff consisting completely of workers with hearing impairments. There we learned to order coffee and tea in sign language before touring the massive Skoda car manufacturing plant outside Prague.

Our learning wasn’t confined to business management, though. Our fantastic hosts from the International Studies Program taught us about the country’s history with communism and the history of Prague itself. We became experts on using the city’s public transportation system by the end of the week. We also learned to cook our own Czech dinner consisting of fish head soup (tasted a whole lot better than it sounds), fried carp, potato salad, and apple strudel. Above all else, we learned about the culture of the city. Everywhere you went, everyone was relaxed. We were never rushed to do anything the entire trip. But more importantly, in addition to the formal learning, the trip also taught me to be more confident and to try new things, which I feel are two lessons everyone should learn. An international studies class is a great way to do so.

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Joseph Scott

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View from the top of the Astronomical Clock overlooking Old Town Square, Prague



## Brother and Sister Entrepreneurs

by Levi and Emily Smith

Cozé Coffee Bar came from an opportunity and a love for coffee and community. As a brother and sister team (both of us are also Honors students at YSU), our first five months of business have been amazing, bringing so many of the world's coffee flavors closer to home! The goal from the beginning was to provide amazing high quality coffees from all over the world using unique specialty coffee brewing styles and spreading the specialty coffee culture to the community around us.

At Cozé, the specialty drinks are all the product of experimentation among staff and friends. We name drinks after the people who create them as part of our mission to include the community and share our love of coffee with everyone. The world of specialty coffee looks at single origin coffees like fine wines, each being unique. We want to share these amazing intricacies with everyone. We have had a lot of fun working on our home-made, all-natural flavor line, and we continue to add new coffee and tea flavors every season. Each fruit flavor is made of real fruit, and all flavors are made without the use of chemicals or additives.

Cozé has become a place to not only get a great high quality cup of coffee, but also a place to create, have fun, and experience coffee in a fresh new way. Our close relationship with White House Fruit Farm has been wonderful, and where better to be than right next to the blueberry donuts? We look forward to another year of great coffee and wonderful friends. At Cozé we'll have the coffee hot, freshly ground, and waiting for every new friend that comes to the counter. Come join our community with a splash of coffee, and see what we're all about. We're open on the weekends throughout the year, and many to come!

Balancing a brand new growing business and college may seem crazy, because it is. It's definitely proven to be a challenge, but that makes it even more exciting to us. We have a deep love for coffee, and find a lot of happiness in sharing coffee culture with those around us. Success means putting a smile on a customer's face, or showing them a technique or product that totally changes their coffee experience. We're looking forward to the production of our farm fresh smoothie line, our new blended frozen drinks, and all the fun exciting projects to come as Cozé grows and we become closer to the community around us.

# Interdisciplinary Perspectives

## Multiple Exposures Art Gallery by Claudia Gage

For as long as I can remember, I've loved taking photographs. When I started college, I chose Photography as my minor so I could study it more formally. Recently, I've had several opportunities to apply my knowledge. I've taken headshots and portraits for friends and acquaintances and documented important activities for the student organizations with which I am involved.



Over the summer, I was pleased to discover that a photograph of mine had been selected as part of the PHOTO '15 contest at Multiple Exposures Gallery in Alexandria, Virginia, a national competition hosted in the Torpedo Factory Art Gallery in November and December. The photo that was chosen was part of a project I had completed in an independent study project done with Professor Joy Christiansen Erb during the 2015 summer semester. The project is titled "Roots and Branches" and is a tribute to my family history. Using Photoshop, I have edited myself into the background of old family photos as an observer of the past. The

**Claudia Gage's  
"Roots and Branches"  
photograph**

## Up North: Exploring Business and Arts in a Michigan Summer

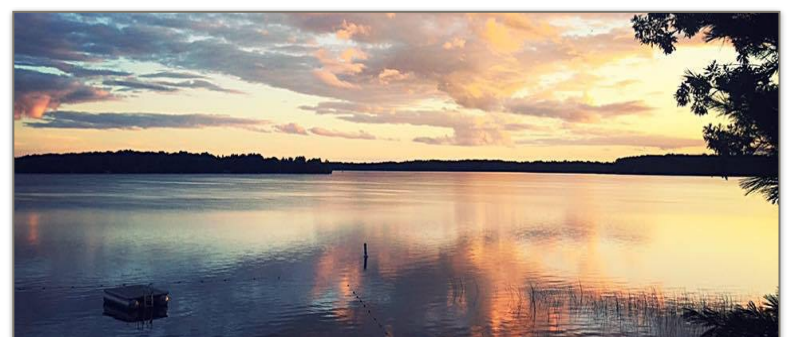
By Madeline Grimes

Driving through the thick, foggy woods, the only car on the highway for miles, my family finally reached our destination after a lengthy trip. For my first internship, I had been hired to work in Student Affairs with Interlochen Center for the Arts in northern Michigan, a place I had never been with a story I didn't know. Both an academy and a summer camp, Interlochen is renowned worldwide for its excellence in education and output, as well as its history for being the nation's first independent boarding school in the arts. Like beginning college, everything was once again new and exciting. I felt an exhilarating mix of anticipation, vulnerability, and awe.

During the following week, I experienced challenging tasks in the workplace; met friendly local families, welcoming Interlochen graduates, and summer employee veterans; and witnessed the unimaginable talents of my peers every single day. I explored the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, performed a trio, spent hours practicing piano in tiny log cabins, enjoyed pizza and a film festival in Traverse City, and played the organ for the first time. I spent nights sitting around bonfires at the beach, conducted informational interviews with administrative officials (one of the most valuable ways to learn), took flute lessons from professors across the country, and attended amazing productions, all of which were opportunities I wouldn't have had if not for the

illustrious environment in which I was so fortunate to be immersed.

Although difficult at times, being truly away from home was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Interlochen provided me with insight, energy, immense natural beauty, confidence in my career path, and, most importantly, friendships and professional relationships that are unique and genuine by nature of shared experience. People are places, places are times, and what we make of these times are traces we leave of the memories we share with others for years to come.



Green Lake, Interlochen, Michigan

# Maddie Grimes

Putting the Y in  
Youngstown State  
University  
at  
Interlochan, Michigan,  
Summer 2015





# Volunteerism

## Abandoned Angels by KayLyn Garrett

A Life-Changing Experience Serving Others on the Other Side of the Country

Los Angeles is often thought of as glamorous. The City of Angels is home to celebrities, high class shopping, and amazing sites, but also to gang violence, human trafficking rings, and pervasive homelessness. Tommy and Matthew Barnett, a father-son duo, observed these problems in the inner city of LA and worked to fix them by creating the Los Angeles Dream Center. A Christian-based organization located in North Hollywood, the Dream Center serves the people of LA through mobile hunger relief, medical programs, residential rehabilitation programs, transitional housing opportunities, job and life skills training, and so much more.

Upon learning about the Dream Center, a few Mahoning Valley citizens including myself decided to assist in its efforts. I went to LA thinking I would change lives. Instead, the people of LA ended up changing mine. Seeing such societal issues up close and on such a massive scale totally transformed my perspectives. My heart was changed on skid row. During one particular moment, I was picking up trash in an area soiled by garbage and feces. After only a few hours, I became depressed, overtaken by the mess of these streets, the crime, and the abandonment. In this weak moment, a homeless man approached and asked if he could pray for me. I agreed, and together, in the middle of one of the most dangerous streets in the country, he prayed in thanks for my service in LA and even for Youngstown. I realized something crucial in that moment—this man was homeless, not hopeless. He had restored my faith and my vision.

At times, people of the Mahoning Valley seem hopeless. They seem to believe that there is no future for Youngstown. Serving at the Los Angeles Dream Center allowed me to witness the problems that Youngstown faces fit to a much larger scale. Los Angeles is where many people go to chase their dreams and become successful, and

maybe the difference between LA and the Valley is one of hope. The children, the ex-gang members, and the homeless in LA have faith that their situations can change, and through the Dream Center they do. The Mahoning Valley Dream Center opened in Warren, Ohio, at the end of 2015. Our service and experiences in LA helped shape the smaller but still impactful center of dreams that will aid the Mahoning Valley and get its citizens dreaming again. As Tommy Barnett once said, “Find a need and fill it, find a hurt and heal it.”

**“I realized something crucial in that moment—this man was homeless, not hopeless.”**



## Inner City Gardens



From left to right: Ben Dalrymple, Paxton Rembis, Zach Chuey, Tom Thompson, Dylan Anders

A group of honors students, Tom Thompson, Zach Chuey, Paxton Rembis, Jenna Roesch, and Ben Dalrymple, completed volunteer hours at the Youngstown Inner City Gardens. While there, we were asked to help prepare the gardens for the planting season by spreading organic compost that had been previously donated. As volunteers, we were able to spend time talking to the founder and operator of the gardens, Mason Carratt. With his help, we gained insight into the issues that plague the Mahoning Valley. We learned that the Youngstown area is considered a food desert. This means that a resident must take two city buses to get to the nearest grocery store. Not only did we learn about the food shortage issues, but we were inspired by Mr. Carratt's selflessness and ability to lend a hand to anyone in need in the Valley. This experience was incredible in that it showed Mr. Carratt's passion for his work and allowed us to feed off his love for the service he provides.

## Fall Festival by Allan Metz



The Paula & Anthony Rich Center for the Study and Treatment of Autism in Fedor Hall.

The annual Fall Festival with the Rich Center for Autism allows students in YSU's Honors College to participate in various activities along with the students at the Rich Center for Autism. These activities include coloring pumpkins, reading spooky stories, and wrapping the students up as toilet paper mummies. This event, made possible by donations from Detwiler Farms, allowed the students of the Rich Center to practice social skills with new people, while at the same time allowing YSU students to give back to the community in a meaningful way.



# Penguin Pen Pals

by Rayann Atway & Sara O’Kane

The Pen Pal Project began in the Fall of 2012. The project went from 40 children participating at Harding Elementary to close to 200 in the Fall of 2015. The project is mutually beneficial and one the staff and students of the Honors College hopes to expand in the coming year.

## The Pen Pal Project - A partnership between Youngstown State University and Harding Elementary School

Many YSU Honors students are involved with Penguin Pen Pals, a program that connects them to students at Harding Elementary School. The correspondence between YSU Honors students and Harding students not only presents a service opportunity, but also enables the Honors students to communicate, learn from, and inspire their younger counterparts. There are approximately 200 Honors students involved in the program, but it is continuously growing and expanding. Students write bi-weekly to each other and get the opportunity to meet with their pen pal twice, once at a Halloween party at Harding and again on YSU’s campus during the program’s closing ceremony.

Being a pen pal is a great opportunity to serve as a mentor in an elementary student’s life. The younger pen pals often refer to YSU students as their best friends and frequently confide in them. Rachel Mientkiewicz, who has participated in the program for two years, says “For me, it’s very special to be able to talk with these kids. We’re not just another school assignment for them. We’re friends and mentors, and they look up to us. We encourage these kids to succeed in life and to get them excited about education and achieving

more so that they can do the same in the future.”

We have participated in the program for two years and have loved it. Last year was our first year corresponding and both of us really appreciated what the program had to offer. We decided to get more involved by helping Honors student Megan Evans, who was in charge of the program at the time. This year, we have taken responsibility for running the program, and that role has significantly grown our leadership skills. In addition, both of us have had the privilege of working with the same pen pal for both years. It is an amazing experience to pick up where we left off with our pen pals.

Overall, Penguin Pen Pals is a great opportunity not only to gain service hours, but to form lasting bonds with younger students, to learn about them, and to learn about ourselves through them.



## Penguin Pen Pal Program

currently serving 200 children from Harding Elementary School in Youngstown, OH

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# Leadership & Engagement

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## Scholar Wars: Enhancing Community through the Spirit of Competition

by Andrew Morgan and Tyler Pabst

Scholar Wars is a longtime tradition within the University Scholars Program and now an event to engage all Honors College participants. Each year the “War” adds new challenges to test the will, mind, and endurance of students. Competition is fierce with the prize of a year or more of bragging rights having the class name etched onto a wooden plaque.

For one week in September, the Honors students of Youngstown State University partake in a series of mental and physical events to foster community and contribute to greater causes. Though the participants are united by their scholastic achievement and community service, they are divided by seniority; each class competes for the title of Scholar Wars champions.

Every fall, a committee decides upon the events for the week ahead. Some, like Volleyball, Tug-of-War, the Scavenger Hunt, and Penny Wars, have been held since the inception of Scholar Wars. Others are voted in and out year-to-year according to the participants’ preferences. Classes are awarded points according to their standing in each event, eventually determining the victor.

The most important event of Scholar Wars is Penny Wars, a competition in which each class attempts to raise the most money to benefit the Rich Center for Autism. Throughout the past few years, the Youngstown State Honors College has donated more than \$3,000 to the organization, which serves as a school and research center providing for those with Autism spectrum disorders. Not only do we serve others, we serve our program by building bonds and coming together as a community.

Strategically holding this event towards the beginning of each academic year is a great way for freshman to feel welcomed into the next four years of their academic career. While Scholar Wars is constructed around the ideas of friendly competition, philanthropy, and bragging rights, the relationships facilitated within a week of “war” are ones that may last a lifetime.



Natalie Kelly in the Tug-of-War competition.

## Talent Show: Our Last Performance

by Alana Lesnansky & Kayla Zitello



Michael Barkett and Sarah Pigza perform at the 2014 Talent Show.

In our Introduction to Honors course, Dr. Amy Cossentino approached us with a new idea for a service project. That idea was an Honors College talent show. We understood it would be a large undertaking but were excited to give it a try. We got to work right away. The first task was choosing a date, which has proven to pose its own difficulties each year. In fact, last year we scheduled it the same day as the Skeggs Lecture, and had to restructure the whole show at the very last minute. After confirming a date, we needed to solicit acts to perform. Many people were eager to share their talents with the Honors community. Next was advertising.

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“..we want to ensure the Talent Show will continue long after we graduate.”

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This is probably the area that is the hardest for any project. As the years went on, we continued to brainstorm new ideas. At first we utilized social media and flyers around the Honors dorms, but then we got more ambitious and sent letters and tickets to the Deans and the President, Jim Tressel. We also tried enlisting the Honors Trustees to sell tickets. The hard work paid off. More and more people came to the show every year. Last (but certainly not least) is the execution of the actual show. Even this has been refined over the years. Last year we implemented a sound check the day of the show, which really extends the day but makes for a much more smoothly-ran event.

One of the biggest challenges we have had as leaders of this

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“For the past four years, we have been a team.”

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event is passing it off to a new generation. While it is difficult to pass on a project we care about, we also want to ensure the Honors Talent Show will continue long after we graduate. Luckily, we found several younger students just as passionate as we are. It is really interesting watching them take a similar journey to our own, learning how to manage all of the acts and the paperwork behind the scenes.

Overall, we have definitely grown as leaders. It really is crazy to think



Alana Lesnansky performs a dance routine.

back on the first Talent Show and all the mishaps that we have since learned how to manage. Now we are helping a new generation of leaders learn to manage those same obstacles and to grow and to make the Talent Show their own. For the past four years, we have been a team, and we look forward to coming back many years from now and watching the Talent Show that we helped to start.

# Weekend Waddle Columbiana Corn Maze

Honors Trustees planned the first Weekend Waddle this past fall. In an effort to engage our first-year students in areas outside of campus, Weekend Waddles were born.

The first Weekend Waddle was held at the Columbiana Corn Maze in October and planned by our first-year Honors Trustees. Nearly forty students were in attendance. Our initial thought was that students from Columbiana would be the ones most likely to partake in the activity. However, we found that students drove close to an hour to be a part of the experience.



# Weekend Waddle Boxes for the Troops

by Angela Mossor

In November of last year approximately twenty-five Honors students gathered to pack boxes for men and women stationed in the Middle East. Everyone brought in different non-perishable food items, games, and toiletries to send our troops. The outcome was fantastic! I had not planned on sending eight boxes overseas, but thanks to the many contributions, that's exactly what happened! The feeling was incredible and unlike any other that I have experienced in my short time within the honors college. I do come from a military family, so I know what it feels like to have your loved one away for the holidays. I also know how much the men and women overseas appreciate what is sent to them. The boxes were sent to people from the Pittsburgh Air Force base with whom my father works. They were people from our area. It felt good to give back to our community, even if in a small way. After, I received the message from my dad that said the boxes had arrived and that the men and women said to thank us, that we were "the best." I felt a sense of pride for my fellow honors students. I loved the event and I hope that this is something we can continue doing in the years to come.

## Weekend Waddles

Creating opportunities to develop friendships and connections to YSU in the community.

# First Honors College Retreat Held over MLK Day Weekend

by Amy Cossentino

At the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference this fall a few of our students attended a session about retreats in honors. Their enthusiasm was evident the moment they stepped foot out of the session. I remember thinking that we only had a couple of months to make this happen, but the energy of the students, along with the support of many staff across campus, would ultimately result in the success.

One hundred forty-three students, 396 slices of pizza, 243 cups of popcorn, 14 dozen bananas, 67 orange cuties, and 20 gallons of coffee helped keep the active students happy. Engaging in service projects, dance, volleyball, basketball, computer gaming, intellectual discussions, or climbing the wall at the Rec, watching the football playoffs or swimming till midnight, the students bonded at the overnight event without a script. I realized that our efforts to provide the space, FOOD, and opportunity, students find ways to enjoy the experience and make it their own. As I was loading my car the next morning, weary-eyed and in disbelief of the fantastic turnout, I was encountered by a first-year student. He said, "I've been at YSU for a semester and a week so far. I've never felt more a part of YSU as I do right now." I smiled the whole way home.



# Expanding Honors to Include the Past, Present, and Future

Fok Hall, on the Mahoning Valley Historical Registry, will soon become home to the YSU Honors College. Since learning of the upcoming vacancy, visualizing how the building could provide the Honors College with the space to teach, discover, create, and dream was easy. The architecture with attention to details and creative design, seems the perfect fit for a vibrant honors community to dream big and have goals become reality. Fok Hall will serve as the place to bridge our past to our present, while prepare us for the future.

In addition to the move to Fok Hall, a new honors residential community is taking place starting Fall 2016 in the Courtyard Apartments. The building is currently half full with Honors students and we anticipate filling the remaining with a new first-year residential community drawn from our five local counties. Cafaro House will continue to serve as the Honors Residence Hall with a graduate assistant overseeing operations from Honors Cafaro North, while a graduate assistant will oversee programming and activities with Honors Courtyards.



From Bottom to top: Cassandra Shaffer, Claudia Gage, Lissa Winston explore Fok Hall.



**Fok Hall  
Honors  
College**

Youngstown State  
University  
2016



Honors student Kirstie Feorene taking a first look at the new Honors space.



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# Leadership & Engagement

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## Quiz Bowl Returns to YSU

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by Greg Bossick, YSU Alumnus

In spring students from universities across the Midwest and Pennsylvania came to Youngstown State to take part in the Great Lakes Sectional Quizbowl Championship. Quizbowl – otherwise known locally as Academic Challenge, Prep Bowl, or Scholastic Bowl – is a competition that asks teams of four to answer questions covering the entire range of human endeavor. It is played by students across a broad age spectrum (from 5<sup>th</sup> grade to graduate school) throughout Ohio and the entire United States. The Sectional tournament on campus used questions provided by National Academic Quiz Tournaments (NAQT). The NAQT is also the sanctioning body for the Intercollegiate Championship Tournament. The Sectional held at YSU, along with 14 other tournaments held on the same day around the United States and Canada, acted as a qualifier for the Intercollegiate Championship.

If you knew what Quizbowl was prior to reading this article, you probably competed in high school. If you

played locally, then you know Greg Bossick. Greg is the tournament director for the event. Locally, he served as the commissioner of the Mahoning Quizbowl League for 10 of the last 12 years. While a University Scholar, he was introduced to the local game by serving as an assistant coach, then later on as head coach, at Lowellville High School. Currently he trains current YSU students – including alumni of the Mahoning League in Honors, such as Austintown Fitch’s Zack While, Boardman’s Michael Palagano, and Lowellville’s Travis Beatty – to work as readers and scorekeepers during the all-day Saturday event.

Additionally, the Mahoning League end-of-season tournament returned to campus for the first time since 2005 on March 19. Students from 23 local high schools played for Varsity and JV championships and received awards for their season completed in February. The Honors College provided support for this event, and many of the same students who helped in February assisted again.



Teams waiting before start of Quizbowl.



Greg Bossick “The Judge”



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