LHC Lines - March 2014

Lee Honors College

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Greetings to all of our honors college friends and alumni! I am so honored to have been selected as the new dean of the Lee Honors College, and to have the chance to say hello with this newsletter. As many of you know, Dr. Nicholas Andreadis retired from WMU on July 1. Although “Dr. A” will be greatly missed as dean of the LHC, I’m sure many of you will not be surprised to hear that he remains an active participant in LHC activities.

We have many new staff in the honors college. Our most recent addition is Jane Baas, who is stepping into the role of associate dean. Jane comes to us from the WMU Department of Dance, and rumor has it, was once an honors college undergraduate student. We are thrilled that she is joining us! Molly Wiener and Becky De Oliveira also joined us this year. Molly is completing a master’s degree in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership Program (HESA) here at WMU, and is working closely with our academic advisor Anthony Helms. Becky is a doctoral student in the English department and has been coordinating our communication activities this year. Precious (PJ) Majors will be completing his second year as a graduate assistant in the Lee Honors College and will soon complete his master’s degree in the HESA program. We will miss you after you graduate, PJ!

We have lots of exciting new initiatives in the honors college—you can read more about many of these in this newsletter. I’d like to high-light just a few. Our themed Lyceum lectures are continuing this semester with a series titled “Living with Uncertainty.” All lectures are held at 12 pm on Wednesdays in the honors college lounge, and are free and open to the public. If you are close to campus, please join us for engaging and provocative discussions. You can find information about the current series, and watch past lectures, at www.wmich.edu/honors/lectures. Our signature summer course series, “Study in the States,” continues in summer 2014 with four planned trips: “Garbage in Gotham” (led by Dr. Sarah Hill, Anthropology & Environmental Studies), “Religion in the Midwest” (Dr. Brian Wilson, Comparative Religion), “The Texas Tour” (Dr. Derrick McIver, Management), and “Vues d’Afrique” (Dr. Vincent DesRoches, World Languages and Literature). We are planning our second annual Scholar Scamper 5K run, which will begin and end at the Lee Honors College on April 5 at 9:30 am. Sign up at http://tinyurl.com/scholar scamper2014 On April 2, 3, and 4 we will host the Thesis Celebration. If you have the opportunity, please do come and support our current honors students as they present and defend their honors research.

Thank you to all of the friends and alumni who helped to make the 2014 Medallion Scholarship competition a great success, in spite of some quite uncooperative Michigan winter weather. On January 25 and February 1, we hosted nearly 800 outstanding high school seniors, who came to campus to compete for 20 Medallion Scholarships. As you probably know, the Medallion Scholarship, worth $50,000 over 4 years, is the most prestigious merit-based scholarship awarded at WMU. The competition for these awards is fierce! You can learn more about the competition and the 2013 Medallion Scholars at: http://www.wmich.edu/medallion/

At the Medallion Competition, I was delighted to announce a new program: the WMU Global Discovery Experience. Open only to incoming freshmen, this program is a collaborative effort between the Haenicke Institute for Global Education, Admissions, and the Lee Honors College. We will be offering study abroad experiences available ONLY to incoming freshmen. This year, Dr. Vincent DesRoches is offering a course titled, “Discovering Montreal: the World Film Festival.” Up to 15 incoming freshmen will travel to Montreal with Dr. DesRoches from August 15-25, returning to WMU just in time for Fall Welcome. Please encourage any new students you might know to take advantage of this unique opportunity.

From everyone at the Lee Honors College, we wish you the best for 2014. If you are in town, feel free to stop in and say hello!
STUDY IN THE STATES

In summer 2012, the Lee Honors College launched an innovative new set of summer courses called “Study in the States.” Students enrolled in these courses complete an intensive 1-2 week travel experience with up to 9 of their peers and an expert WMU faculty member. Students are only required to pay the course tuition; the honors college has committed to paying all travel expenses (i.e., airfare, ground transportation, lodging, meals, and incidentals) for every student enrolled in every Study in the States course. These courses can also be used to satisfy general education requirements. Last summer, the honors college offered three courses:

- Garbage in Gotham, taught by Dr. Sarah Hill (Anthropology & Environmental Studies). Students traveled to New York City and the Finger Lakes region to study—what else?—trash!
- Vues d’Afrique, taught by Dr. Vincent DesRoches (World Languages and Literature). Students traveled to Montreal, Canada to attend the African Film Festival.
- The Texas Tour, taught by Dr. Derrick McIver (Management). Students traveled to Austin, Houston and San Antonio, where they studied business and culture and participated in service-learning.

Each of these will be offered again in summer 2014, along with:

- Religion in the Midwest, taught by Dr. Brian C. Wilson (Comparative Religion). Students will study the unique religious history of the Midwest, visiting eleven different sites in four states.

NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM

Carla Koretsky, WMU professor of geosciences, became dean on July 1, 2013. Koretsky had served as associate dean of the honors college since 2012, and replaced Nicholas Andreadis, who retired at the end of the 2012/13 academic year.

Dr. Koretsky is an expert in the fields of aqueous geochemistry and biogeochemistry. In 2003, she was awarded a prestigious NSF CAREER grant, given to promising young scientists. She also received the WMU Emerging Scholar Award in 2007, as well as a College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Achievement in Teaching Award in 2013, and the WMU Excellence in Diversity Rising Star award in 2013. Dr. Koretsky has published more than 75 abstracts, journal articles and book chapters, and has received more than $1 million in funding from federal agencies to support her work.

Jane Baas, chair and professor of dance, began her role as associate dean at the honors college on January 1, 2014. Baas has been a member of WMU’s dance department since 1981. She was appointed chair in 2012, after serving in that position from 1996 to 2001. In addition, Baas has done three stints as interim or replacement chair at WMU. She also served as coordinator of academic advising for the College of Fine Arts from 1986 to 1990.
Obituary
John E. Martell, Jr.

Dr. John E. Martell, Jr., retired assistant dean of the Lee Honors College at Western Michigan University, died at home in Kalamazoo Nov. 12. He was 71.

Martell is best remembered for his dedication to students in the honors college, particularly his many years of advising and mentoring them as well as helping them to apply for America’s most prestigious and competitive national scholarships.

As late as June 2009, Martell was still serving on a temporary basis as an advisor for the college and shepherding students through the difficult process of competing for those and other major awards.

Due in large part to his concerted efforts during the past decade, WMU students have had unprecedented success vying for such premier awards as the Morris K. Udall, Barry M. Goldwater, and Gates Cambridge scholarships.

Martell retired in 2005 after 21 years of continuous full-time service to the University, but he was first professionally affiliated with WMU in 1970 as a part-time humanities instructor for what was then the College of General Studies. After taking time out to professionally write and sculpt, he was rehired at the University as a part-time instructor in 1984, and joined the professional staff full time later that year. In 1988 Martell was named to the newly created position of assistant to the dean of the Lee Honors College; and in 2000, was named assistant dean of the college. He first became associated with the LHC in the early 1980s, when he taught general studies courses. In his roles with the honors college, he coordinated cluster courses, taught courses on Russian culture, and was involved with the Latin American studies seminar.

Martell earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from WMU in 1965 and 1966, respectively. He earned a doctoral degree from the University of Michigan in 1981.

The Lee Honors College conducted an on-campus memorial service for Martell on Friday, January 17, 2014.

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INTRODUCING DEIRDRE COURTNEY

Current senior Deirdre Courtney is from Detroit, Michigan and is pursuing a double major in Environmental Studies and General University Studies with a minor in Anthropology. During summer 2013, Deirdre had the opportunity to work as a research assistant with biological sciences professor David Karowe. Together, they investigated the relationship between carnivorous pitcher plants and prey or non-prey communities, with results that they plan to publish. Deirdre intends to continue her research during summer 2014 as she completes her honors thesis. After graduation, Deirdre hopes to work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in an enforcement capacity. She has won a number of scholarships for academic excellence and is on the dean’s list.

Her activities also extend beyond the classroom and include volunteer work—with the organization Volunteer Kalamazoo, the Clements for Congress campaign, and as a parent volunteer and football mom. She took a trip to Rome in 2010 where she enjoyed the culture, language, and food, and has also travelled on vacation to Puerto Rico. Her personal philosophy is summed up in the words of Gandhi: “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” Deirdre has a strong interest in the impact of human activities on the natural environment. The best book she’s read recently is *Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet* by Bill McKibben. She enjoyed the film *Into Thin Air*, noting that it helps to provide “understanding about different styles of leadership and how leaders handle conflict.”

CATCHING UP WITH JOHN BURSCH

John J. Bursch (1994) was Michigan Solicitor General from 2011-2013. During his tenure, he supervised the state’s appellate litigation with a special emphasis on Michigan and U.S. Supreme Court disputes. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Bursch argued in more than 6% of all the cases the U.S. Supreme Court heard during his tenure as Solicitor General. Bursch returned to private practice at Warner, Norcross & Judd in December 2013.

Bursch has been ranked one of Michigan’s top 100 lawyers, and has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*. He is a Fellow of The Litigation Counsel of America, has received three Distinguished Brief Awards for his advocacy before the Michigan Supreme Court, and served on the American Bar Association committee that reviewed Elena Kagan’s writings before her Senate confirmation as a United States Supreme Court Justice.

In 2011, Bursch became the inaugural recipient of The Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College Alumni Achievement Award at Western Michigan University. In 2012 and 2013, the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) awarded Bursch and colleagues the Supreme Court Best Brief Award. A graduate of Grand Ledge High School (1990), Western Michigan University’s Lee Honors College (1994, mathematics and music), and the University of Minnesota Law School, Bursch has served in a variety of leadership positions. He is a Life Member of the Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference, and a Fellow of the Michigan State Bar Association.
ATYP ANNOUNCES NATIONAL MERIT SEMI-FINALISTS
The Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP) at the Lee Honors College is a regionally-based cooperative program for advanced and accelerated middle school and early high school students. Students from across Southwest Michigan come to Western Michigan University to receive instruction in English, math, or computer science; students receive high school credit for these classes, regardless of when they were taken.

ATYP staff continue to be amazed by the accomplishments of its students and alumni. This fall, the program takes great pride in reporting that of the 26 local students who are National Merit Semi-finalists, 17 were ATYP students at some point in their academic career.

These students include: ANDREW SHAFER (Edwardsburg); ANGUS GIBBS, LAURA MARSH, EMILY SULK, TYLER VANDERMOOLEN (Gull Lake); HARRISON GOSCENSKY (Hackett Catholic Central); NATHAN K. GIBES (Augusta—Homeschooled); ELLA FREUDENBURG (Kalamazoo—Home-schooled); ALEXANDRA PEIRCE, GENEVIEVE SERTIC, KATHERINE WU (Portage Central); ABHAY GOEL, MADELEINE MCKENZIE, MARIA STULL (Portage Northern); SUMITA STRANDER, JOHN WENTWORTH (Lakeview); and KATRINA PETERSON (Marshall).

THESIS CELEBRATION
In fall 2012, we launched “Thesis Celebration Days.” Near the end of each fall and spring semester, we set aside 2-3 days during which we encourage honors students who are completing their thesis research to present and defend their work in the honors college classrooms. Information about each thesis (student, thesis chair, thesis title) is publicized in advance via our weekly student newsletter and on our website. WMU staff, faculty and honors alumni are invited to serve as thesis presentation judges. Each semester, several students are chosen to receive a “best thesis presentation” award. Here are the theses presented during the December 2013 Thesis Celebration (award winners are noted with a ***):


JOSHUA KAYLOR, Social Studies Education: Ancient Egypt and the Middle East Unit, Grade Six

MAHA ALFAIDI, Biomedical Sciences: Effects of a Specific Acetylcholine Receptor Agonist in a Rat Glaucoma Model ***

AMANDA KLAGE, Human Resource Management: “Ovar”come the Silence for Ovarian Cancer Awareness

BRITTNIE COLE, Special Education & Literacy Studies: Effective Teaching Practices to Strengthen Outcomes for Students with Emotional Behavior Disorders

REBECCA MONTERUSSO, Biomedical Sciences: When All Seems Lost: a Discussion on the Implications of Using Medicine for Scientific Advances

JOHN DUVON, History: Vive le Proletariat: The 1968 Revolt of French Workers and Students

JORDAN ROSSIO, English: God Only Knows: Family in the Films of Paul Thomas Anderson

KEVIN HEINZE, Biomedical Sciences: Mechanisms of Neuroprotection Against Retinal Ganglion Cell Loss Using an In Vivo Glaucoma Model ***

PAIGE VAN DE WINKLE, English: Identity and Gender Constructs in “Nightwood” and “Written on the Body” ***

Jared Maddon, English (Secondary Education): Biracial Identity in Texts Read by Secondary Education Students

Bronco Buddies
The Lee Honors College takes pride in the various community projects its students undertake. One example is the “Bronco Buddies” pen pal program, in which Lee Honors College students partner with Chicago-area elementary school children to provide mentoring and information about college. Buddies exchange emails and participate in Skype sessions with the class throughout the school year. The year culminates with a much-anticipated visit to Chicago. It’s hard to tell who has more fun—our honors students or the 3rd graders!

Serena Chambers, Biomedical Sciences: Rapid Test for Determining the Presence of Oleic Acid ***

Lauren Ross, Interdisciplinary Health Services: A Holistic Approach to Therapy and Management of Lower Back Pain

Elyse Malneff, Global & International Studies: Cattle Smuggling from India to Bangladesh

Cassandra Stagner, Film, Video, & Media Studies: The Heart of the Lower Story: Thesis Exhibition

News
**First Annual Scholar Scamper**

The first Annual Scholar Scamper—to raise money for scholarships for students to defray the costs of Study Abroad and Study in the States experiences—took place on the campus of Western Michigan University on Thursday April 4, 2013. The event included both a traditional competitive 5K Fun Run/Walk and a 1K for children and families. Both events were well-attended. Dustin Pitchell (19) took first place for men with a finishing time of 20:02. Lynn Seman (19) took first place for women with a finishing time of 20:24. Awards were also given for teams and in age categories.

The second Annual Scholar Scamper will take place on Saturday, April 5, 2014. This event is open to everyone, including WMU faculty, staff, and students, community members, and the general public. The LHC welcomes participants of all ages and physical abilities. [http://tinyurl.com/scholarscamper2014](http://tinyurl.com/scholarscamper2014)

**COMMON READ**

Carol Rifka Brunt, author of the acclaimed novel *Tell the Wolves I'm Home*, made a public appearance at the LHC in October 2013. The novel was selected as the Common Read for the 2013-14 academic year and generated lively discussion at an evening event for incoming freshmen during Fall Welcome. The novel deals with issues surrounding HIV/AIDS in the 1980s. Brunt signed copies of her books and chatted with students and others in the Honors College lounge.

**CHICAGO BUS TRIP**

On Saturday, November 23, 2013, a group of 56 WMU students visited the Windy City of Chicago, Illinois. They visited the Shedd Aquarium and saw the jellyfish exhibit, the high energy dolphin and Beluga whale show, and the 4-D Sea Monsters movie theater experience. They also enjoyed some holiday shopping at the Water Tower Place Mall. Despite the very cold weather, everyone was in good spirits at the end of the day, and enjoyed a Potbelly Sandwich Shop dinner on the way back home. The LHC is planning another cultural experience in March 2014—in Ann Arbor, Michigan.
Scholar Scamper 2014
Join the Lee Honors College for the Second Annual Scholar Scamper 5K Run/Walk on Saturday, April 5. Proceeds from the Scholar Scamper will be used to provide scholarships for honors students at Western Michigan University to defray the costs of Study Abroad and Study in the States. Kids are also welcome to participate in a 1K fun run immediately preceding the 5K event. Sign up at: https://www.signmeup.com/site/online-event-registration/98061

Contributions of time and funds from our friends and alumni make it possible for us to support and expand new opportunities for our talented honors students. If you would like to provide financial support, here are some of our top priorities:

- **Student Travel Scholarships**: We would like to create a new endowment ($10K or more) to support students who travel to national or international venues to present their scholarly and creative work. Funds to support individual students are also welcome. Depending on the location of the conference, it can cost students from $500 to $2500 for travel, registration and lodging.

- **Study in the States**: We would like to create a new endowment ($10K or more) to support our Study in the States program. Funds to defray the costs for individual students are also welcome. The per student cost is approximately $1000-2000 for each trip.

- **Vans**: We would like to acquire one 12-passenger van and one minivan. These will be used for Study in the States, as well as to support student travel to conferences, internship programs and volunteer opportunities.

We also welcome contributions for honors student study abroad, the Laureate, and Medallion Scholarships. To make a contribution, visit mywmu.com and make sure to designate your gift to the Lee Honors College. We also welcome in-kind contributions. If you can help our students by providing mentoring, internship & employment opportunities or by volunteering (e.g. at the Medallion Competition, the Scholar Scamper 5K, or the Thesis Celebration) please let us know!
“Our ancient experience confirms at every point that everything is linked together, everything is inseparable.”—Dalai Lama XIV

KEEP IN TOUCH
We would love to know where you are and what you have been doing since graduation. Please take a moment to fill out the following information and return it to us by mail—or complete a short survey online at https://cms.wmich.edu/honors/alumni/update/

Name
Address
City State Zip code
Email Telephone

Recent accomplishments/professional activities/personal milestones

Are you willing to be contacted via email by current honors students who are interested in your career path? Yes/No

If yes, what topics/areas are you comfortable discussing?