

University Honors Program News

September 29, 2017

Georgia Southern University

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Competition in the Community

September 29, 2017

"Ten points to Gryffindor" brings memories of Harry Potter, Hogwarts, and Voldemort. However, Community Leaders (CL) within the Honors Living Learning Community (LLC) use similar phrases as the competition heats up in Centennial Place. Each CL has a different animal mascot designated to represent their floor within the building: otters, foxes, and turtles. Members can gain points for their floor when they attend Honors events such as trivia nights, floor meetings or information sessions on Honors Research. This is one of the many activities Honors Community Leaders have crafted to create a sense of community for Honors Students.



The purpose of a Community Leader is to act as a role model for their residents as they find their way in the new academic setting of college. This community is mostly compiled of incoming freshmen, so CLs focus on creating activities that will help the students adjust to college, such as scavenger hunts to learn the layout of campus or attending group fitness classes together at the RAC. For this school year, the Honors LLC has six Community Leaders: Taylor Close (French '20), Sophie Fleri (mechanical engineering, '19), Hugo Flores (electrical engineering '20), Morgan Gallahue (biology '18), Bailey Kirk (mathematics '18) and Abby Slattery (education '18). Gallahue

and Slattery are returning to the Honors CL position for the second year.

Gallahue said, "I was a resident in the Honors LLC as a freshman, and I made some of the most important friendships and connections within the LLC. I wanted to continue being involved in the community that offered me such great experiences my freshman year."

A unique aspect about the Honors LLC is the Student Advisory Board (SAB). The SAB gives the students a platform to express their ideas for what they want to do in their community. Students have the chance to plan the events, gain leadership skills, and grow closer with their peers. This semester SAB is planning Trivia Nights, Cooking with Professors, Coffee Chat Nights, and a Christmas Party.

This is Close's first year as CL at Georgia Southern University. She enjoyed participating in the events offered to her as a freshman, and now as a CL, she is able to promote similar events that inspired her to become a part of the Honors LLC. "I love seeing my residents excited about being involved and coming together as a floor to participate in events such as trivia. It means that I have created a space where they are comfortable and at home. My favorite part about the Honors LLC is having events that encompass the entire building because it creates a great community where students can live, work and succeed," she said.

The Honors LLC is an invaluable resource for the freshmen class because they are living and working together with like-minded students whose goals are to succeed in a collegiate atmosphere. Many students are in the Honors sections of core classes, which provides them with the ability to create study groups with their neighbors living down the hall.

"My residents take initiative with their academics and use every resource that the LLC provides. Specifically, my students love the study rooms that are located on each floor. They make study groups well in advance for quizzes and exams. As CLs, we also create bulletin boards for our floor, and we try to incorporate useful tips for studying, time management, and note taking," Slattery said.

The Honors CLs take their title as a role model very seriously because they lead by example. Three are peer leaders for the Honors section of the First Year Experience course. Two are Honors ambassadors. At least four have presented posters at the Honors Research Symposium as well as presented personal projects at regional and national conferences. Their residents can look to them as examples of how to balance extracurricular activities and academics.

For Fleri, her role as CL is more than a job, but rather a way to help her residents succeed during their first year at college. "I love hearing feedback from my residents about something I helped them with. I try to make their freshmen year the best it can be. I want my experiences with the Honors Program to help inspire them to push themselves both academically and socially. As a CL, it forces you to think beyond yourself and put others first," she said.

This setting drives them to do more within the Honors LLC and with their peers. These students have more opportunities to get involved on campus, thanks to the continuous effort the CLs put towards creating and leading events for their residents.

"Living within the Honors LLC allows for students to be surrounded by compatible individuals who share similar drives and motivations, while still surrounding themselves with a diverse group of majors and backgrounds. The residents of the LLC are not only neighbors but classmates; this creates a close-knit community of students who share common experiences within the LLC, classes and the Honors Program as a whole," said Gallahue.



Kirk had worked with upper classmen in her previous CL positions, but she has thoroughly enjoyed the transition to working with primarily freshman. "One of my favorite things about moving from upper classmen to freshmen is being able to watch them grow. Freshmen are more willing to participate and ask me questions ranging from what classes to take, to where to eat in Statesboro," she said.

While Kirk has been able to watch her residents grow, Gallahue has seen herself grow as a CL. "This experience has helped me develop as a person and as a leader. Through this role, I have become more educated about social issues, more confident in my abilities as leader and have developed my interpersonal skills through interactions with my residents and coworkers. I have become a better person, and I hope that I can help better my residents through my position as a CL," she said.

The CLs' dedication to their job helps the students prosper. The Honors LLC has become a tight-knit family where students have gained lifelong friendships, irreplaceable connections with professors, and a greater appreciation for learning. The opportunity to be an Honors CL is an incredible experience that pushes these students to be their best selves not only for themselves but for their residents. This leadership experience helps one gain relationships with students, staff, supervisors, and professors because one must work with all of these different types of people in order to create an exceptional environment for a successful Living Learning Community.

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Honors Art Receives a Standing Ovation

September 29, 2017



At the Dick Blick Gallery, Savannah residents browse art at their own pace, taking in every detail, feeling, and color. For the month of September, Blick Gallery hosted art from the recipients of Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art Scholarship at Georgia Southern University. The artists submitted personal projects that they created while on scholarship to form this year's collection titled *Ovation*.

Two Georgia Southern University Honors Students, Elise Rustine (graphic design '18) and Marian Trainor (2D and 3D studio art '19) received this scholarship. They had the opportunity to present their pieces of art at a public gallery. This professional setting outside of the university gave the students experience beyond what the classroom setting can provide. A career within the field of art requires relentless drive and belief in oneself. The *Ovation* Exhibition provided a setting for both students to create personal projects outside of the typical course assignments. They were able to challenge themselves to push the limit while making creative works of art.

The exhibition had art from an assortment of different forms such as animation, ceramics, drawing, graphic design, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture and metal work. Rustine and Trainor's projects centered on photography and visual arts in terms of sculptures.

Rustine's photography piece was titled "Windows into Glory." She made a collage of photographs illustrating the beauty of the sky from different locations and times throughout the United States. She created a geometric and abstract pattern to form her overarching image of the sky.

"I believe that the sun and sky are examples of faithfulness represented through nature, so my goal was to portray my faith in my artwork and photography," Rustine said.

Trainor's aesthetic focuses on the wastefulness of man. She only works with used, second-hand or found objects because she does not want to support the over production of material goods. "A prehistoric mantra that ensured the survival of a species and was highly influential to the development of many ancient cultures was 'waste no part of the animal.' As a society, we no longer focus on efficiency. Instead, we excel at making waste," she said.

For the *Ovation* Exhibition, she submitted an arrangement of "artifacts" from her independent show that she is in the process of developing. Dr. Julie McGuire, Professor of Art at Georgia Southern University, described the premise of Trainor's independent show. "Currently, her focus is a large scale installation that delves into the life of a scorned and vengeful scientist-turned-drifter obsessed with the lives of invisible creatures. The installation is structured resembling an anthropological museum, focusing on the display of artifacts, writings, and samples that this self-created man collected over his life."

Trainor also submitted pieces of sculptural costume jewelry. Her range in pieces showcases her strength to create diverse and new art. "I am a multimedia artist, so much of my work is made from a variety of mediums. This allows me to always be pushing myself to think of new innovations to evoke emotions through my art," said Trainor.

The public setting, at the Blick Gallery, gave their work new exposure beyond their peers and professors. "I feel honored to participate in this event because it is not every day that your work is exhibited in a gallery in Savannah, Georgia. Blick Gallery allows for a diverse group of people to look at my art. I hope the viewers find it rewarding as well as thought provoking. I want my art to leave the world more beautiful than when I left it," Rustine said.

Professional experiences, such as the *Ovation* Exhibition, are invaluable for a college student. Rustine and Trainor challenged themselves to push beyond what is expected of them. They trusted in themselves to create works of art that were true to them.

Trainor said, "Do not discourage yourself and be as passionate as possible. Passion is something you cannot fabricate because you must light your own fire by creating works authentic to who you are as an artist."

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