



Spring 2012

## Honors @ Georgia Southern

University Honors Program Students and Staff, Georgia Southern University

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University Honors Program Students and Staff, Georgia Southern University, "Honors @ Georgia Southern" (2012). *Honors@Georgia Southern*. 1.

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# Honors @ Georgia Southern

Spring 2012, Volume 4



# Honors in Albania

# From The Director



**Dr. Steven Engel**  
Director, University Honors Program

International experience and global perspective are critical components of a college education today. Recently, the University Honors Program sent seven students and two professors to Albania and several other locations in the Balkans. This site was chosen because it provides an excellent opportunity to examine the ways in which people address healing in post-conflict and post-communist societies. Like any post-conflict society, Albania grapples with how to approach its past. Our students explored that past with Albanian university students, NGOs and with people who experienced these troubled times.

There is a proud tradition of honors education at Georgia Southern University. For the past thirty years, hundreds of honors students have been challenged by their professors and by their talented peers as well. I am proud of this tradition of excellence. In recognition of this milestone, we will host the "Thirty Years of Honors" reunion event October 20 and 21, 2012. Details about the event are included in this issue and more details about how to register are on the honors website. I hope to see many of our students, our alumni, your families as well as our current and retired professors at this event. It promises to be a great occasion to renew old friendships and to start new ones.

As always, I hope you enjoy this issue of *Honors @ Georgia Southern*.

Sincerely yours,

Steve Engel

## Mission Statement

The University Honors Program provides a small college atmosphere in the context of a large comprehensive university. The program is designed to foster the development of a critical sense of inquiry, a spirit of creativity, a global perspective and an ethic of civic responsibility. A hallmark of the program is the emphasis on bringing ideas to life through undergraduate research, experiential learning and service-learning opportunities. The University Honors Program at Georgia Southern University rests on a foundation of the following ideals that are inspired by the institution's emphasis on engaged learning.

### Critical Sense of Inquiry

Honors students will explore a variety of approaches to research designed to foster the pursuit of knowledge. Students will develop the ability to question with a healthy skepticism toward accepted opinion. The culmination of the undergraduate experience is an independent research or creative project designed to exemplify a critical approach to inquiry.

### Civic Responsibility

Honors students will demonstrate an ethic of civic responsibility and exemplify the motto of the program, "Humility before Honor." Students will be challenged to use their abilities and talents for the advancement of humanity and the pursuit of a greater good. The primary vehicle for the expression of civic responsibility is through service both to the university and the community.

### Spirit of Creativity

Honors students will embrace the idea that creativity is a virtue that should be experienced by all students, regardless of discipline. This spirit involves a respect for different ways of knowing and an openness to intellectual discussion and challenge.

### Global Perspective

Honors students will develop a perspective which allows them to approach their chosen discipline from an international point of view. This outlook involves the critical exploration of global concerns and generation of proposed solutions to international problems. Honors education provides this worldwide perspective through academic courses, study abroad opportunities and co-curricular experiences.

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Cover Photo: Elijah Anderson emerges from a communist-era bunker in Albania.



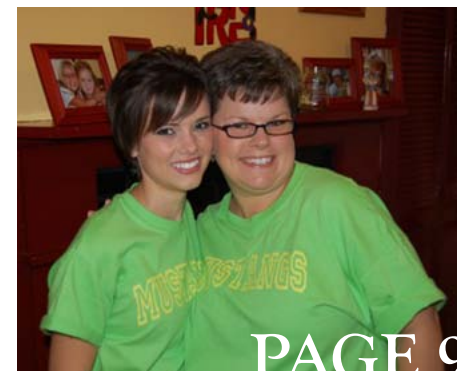
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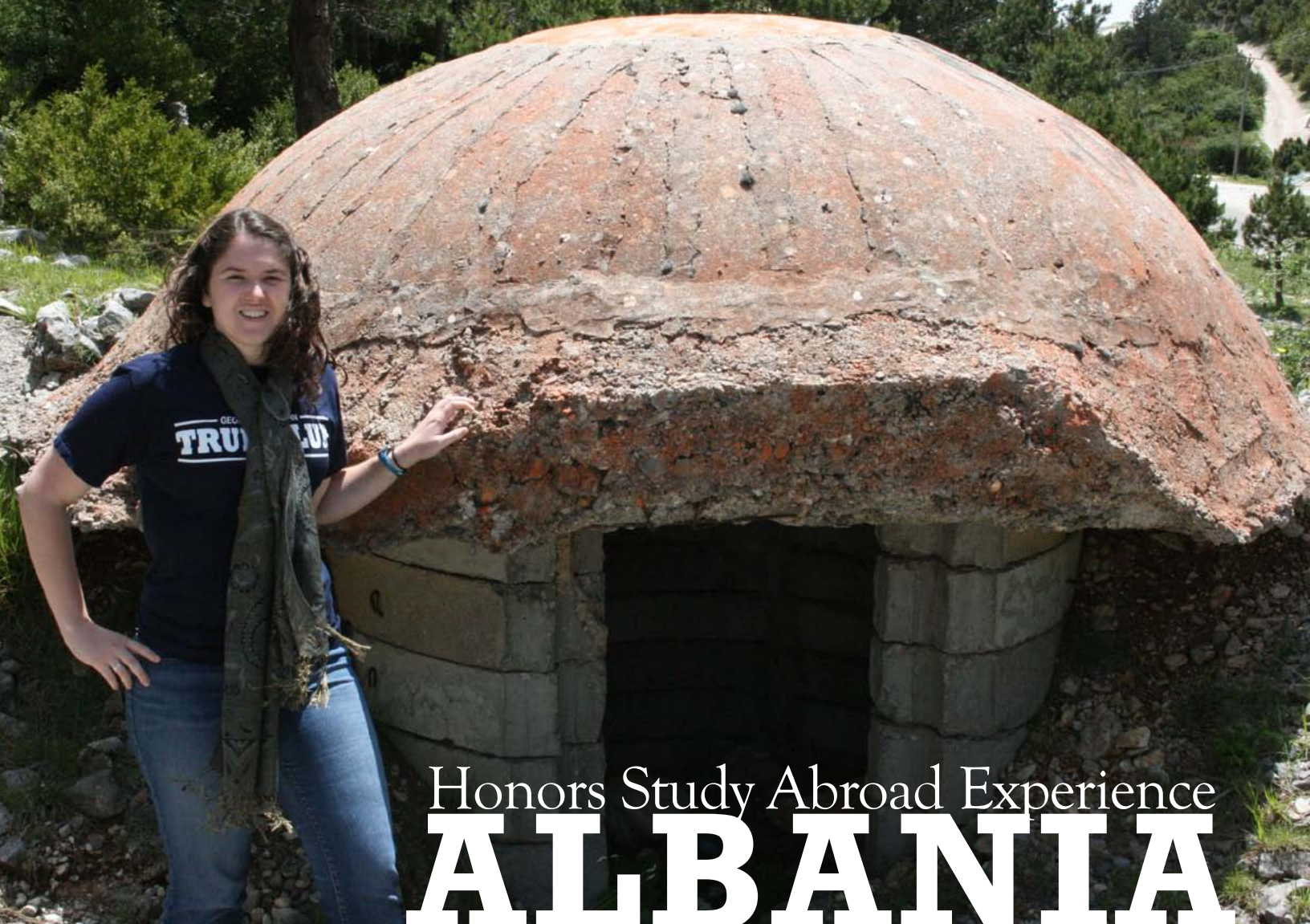
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# Honors Study Abroad Experience ALBANIA

Kelsey Keane outside one of the bunkers

Multiple study abroad programs take thousands of American college students to Europe every summer, and rarely can a trip to Europe be described as going off the beaten path. However, in a European country less traveled is exactly where seven University Honors Program students journeyed on a three-week trip based out of Albania. It is believed to be the first program of its kind in the region. Students Elijah Anderson, Ashley Boyer, Cady Ennis, Kelsey Keane, Molly Laughlin, Chelsea Medeiros, and Feagin Oliver took two courses during their travels: Politics of Ethnicity in Albania taught by Dr. Krista Wiegand and Narrative Memory in Albania taught by Dr. Lori Amy. Students were introduced to the long history of once-closed Albania and immersed themselves in Albanian culture found in four countries, including Kosovo, Montenegro, and the Greek island of Corfu.

After getting acquainted with Albania's capital city, Tirana, students traveled by bus—their home on wheels—throughout the Albanian region of the Balkans. The landscape of mountain

ranges juxtaposed against miles of scenic beaches and the blue water of the Adriatic Sea was breathtaking as they visited the cities of Butrint, Saranda, and Shkodra.

Throughout the trip, the group met other students as well as public officials, artists, architects, and people from local nongovernmental organizations. They spent some days exploring the ancient ruins of castles, prisons, and fortresses, eating traditional foods and regional specialties, and holding seminars on topics such as narrative, memory, and self-determination.

The stop in Gjirokastra, located in the southernmost region of Albania, was particularly memorable because students were able to see the intersection of politics, ideology, and urban development. Students met with the Gjirokastrer Development Project staff, a group of professionals dedicated to the historical preservation of the “city of stone.” Students were able to see the communist-era tunnels that run under the city's mountains. Exploration of these tunnels provided the entire group with tangible evidence of the mindset of

those living in communist Albania from 1976 to 1991 during the time of Dictator Enver Hoxha. Rarely seen by even Albanians themselves, the tunnels are an eerie reminder of a traumatic history much of Albania struggles to forget. In addition to the tunnel networks, the entire country is peppered with several hundred thousand communist-era bunkers which were built to provide protection in case of an invasion. “Built in a paranoid fervor these bunkers and tunnels serve as a living reminder of Albania's communist



Dr. Krista Wiegand with a Kosovar journalist

and isolationist past. I was absolutely terrified when we went underground into a tunnel, and it definitely provided me with a memory I will keep with me the rest of my life!” sophomore Elijah Anderson said.

Dr. Amy's class on narrative memory explored many of the challenges regarding how people grapple with the trauma of the communist era. In fact, it can be argued that the communist powers did not just tell people what to believe; rather, they altered their thought process used to interpret the world. The students realized the current effects and implications of this worldview as they discussed the past with Albanians during their visit.

While much of the trip was spent in official class related activities, the group also had a few opportunities to relax, including spending a luxurious two days on the Greek island of Corfu. This time was spent debriefing from the lecture topics and swimming in the icy waters of the Adriatic. The trip to Corfu also facilitated interesting class lectures by Dr. Wiegand concerning the nature of international borders and national identity.

Several days after the stop in Corfu, the group had traveled all the way to the Northern border of Albania and crossed into neighboring Kosovo. Having only gained independence in 2008, Kosovo is one of the youngest countries in the world and in some areas still exhibits the tensions that played out so violently dur-



At the ruins of Apollonia

ing the ethnic genocide of the late 1990s.

The lasting impact of that era was especially evident in the city of Mitrovica when the students, accompanied by local Kosovar journalists, witnessed the illegal blockade of major roadways. Dr. Wiegand's class directly addressed relevant issues of nationalism and territorial boundaries as these blockades are used to separate ethnic Albanian populations from the Serbian ones that still reside in Kosovo. The case of Kosovo provides a perfect case study on nationalism and territory as it endured ethnic conflict over questions of sovereignty and self-determination. After

the NATO intervention in the 1990s, and the deployment of NATO peacekeeping forces in Kosovo, the country achieved a degree of independence, but is still only recognized by half of the world's countries.

The ethnic Albanians in Kosovo were the most compelling part of the experience as senior Ashley Boyer recounted. “The people of Kosovo are the most resilient and kind people I have ever met,” she said. “Every single person in Kosovo was affected by the Milosevic regime, yet no one remains a victim of their past. Their strength and commitment to facilitating future change are evident in all areas of their lives. The stories of the people from Kosovo will remain with me and forever have a place in my heart.”

Not only were the places the group visited extraordinary, the people who shared their time and knowledge of the region also helped to create a more memorable and meaningful experience for the Georgia Southern students. From the very first day in Tirana, the group's local Albanian contacts offered not only invaluable insight but also became fast friends of the entire group.

One of these people was an Albanian artist named Arben Theodhosi, whose father was assassinated when the communist leaders took over the government. Theodhosi was exiled for 15 years and forced to endure hardship in a work camp in the country's mountains. However, he was able to overcome the trauma



Ashley Boyer and Molly Laughlin in Tirana at the Enver Hoxha mausoleum



Dr. Lori Amy at Rozafa Castle in Shkodra, Albania

of those years by using art as a healing mechanism, and his story is only one of the powerful narratives that the students heard.

Sophomore Feagin Oliver described the Albanian people as having great resilience and strength. “You would never guess it from first impressions, but it is a culture which has seen immense suffering and hardship, and yet maintains an inspiring sense of joy, hope for the future, and love for the people in their lives,” she said.

Overall, the students agree that their experience studying abroad in Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Corfu was an opportunity that dramatically shaped their knowledge and perception of the Balkans. After arriving in the area with only an elementary understanding of the region’s history, the students left Albania feeling that they had truly connected with the many people and places they encountered during the course of the three week program.

*By Kelsey Keane and Molly Laughlin*

# Balkan Diary

*by Kelsey Keane and Molly Laughlin*



## May 17th *Dinner with Peers*

Upon arrival in Albania, we were treated to outstanding food and hospitality. Albanian architect Tomor Luzati provided an insightful tour of Tirana. In the evening, we participated in a forum organized by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), “A Cross-Cultural Dialogue between Albanian and American Students about Education, Employment, and Prospects for a Better Tomorrow.” We shared a meal with students from various universities throughout Tirana pursuing degrees ranging from economics to public health. Our discussion was facilitated by NDI representatives and covered a wide range of topics including educational opportunities, family values, and the dreams of both Albania and the United States. It was a fascinating night.

## May 19th *Created Histories—Museums in Kruja*

Accompanied by the Director of the United Nations Development Project Brain-Gain Program, Bernard Zenelli, our group visited several museums in the Kruja area. While the tours of the museums were interesting, it was particularly fascinating to learn more about the history of the museums themselves from Zenelli. Several museums were constructed during the communist era under Hoxha, and we were shocked to learn that one of the principal museums we had just visited contained essentially no original artifacts. The collection had been comprised primarily of replicated pieces that had been used by the communist party to create a common historical narrative of the country’s Illyrian heritage. The revelation facilitated much discussion about the power of narrative and helped us better understand the obstacles Albania must overcome in order to remove itself from the grips of communist thought.



## May 23rd *A World Under the Mountains—Gjirokastra*

After a brief meeting with the Gjirokastra Development Project staff, one of the leading architects took us for a once in a lifetime opportunity. Walking just a few minutes up the mountain, we soon came to an entrance into the communist era tunnels that run under the city. We bundled up to keep warm and began our walk into the dark tunnels. The tunnels lead to many different cells, each one dedicated to specific government offices and workers. It was if we had taken a step back in time and could feel the paranoia of the communist regime in the air around us. All of the offices were still fully furnished, ready to be used in the case of a foreign attack against the regime. Our time today in the tunnels was absolutely one of the most fascinating parts of this entire trip so far.



## May 27th *Kosovo*

In Kosovo we were able to witness the region’s tension firsthand in the city of Mitrovica. Accompanied by Kosovar journalists, we stopped in two locations of the city where the major roadways had been blocked by alleged Serbian gangs using piles of rubble. With foreign forces located throughout the area, we never felt threatened; however, we could sense the tensions that led to the ethnic genocides during the late 1990s and which are still very much a part of everyday life in the young country of Kosovo.

## May 20th *Visiting Ruins in Durres and Butrint*

While visiting the city of Durres, we found our way to ancient Roman ruins located in the center of the busy town centre. The ruins themselves were incredibly impressive, even more so considering that the archaeologists who discovered them have not yet unearthed the entire structure, despite working for decades on the project. The ruins at Butrint gave us a glimpse into life during the time of the Illyrians, complete with various military fortifications. The city has over 2500 years of history and once served as a trading city with its own baptistery, amphitheatre, and basilica. Although there was not a focus on conservation during the communist regime, the recent archaeological and preservation efforts in the ancient city have helped ensure its survival.

May 30th  
*Traumatic Narratives*

In the Albanian city of Shkodra, we had the opportunity to visit with members of the Association of Ex-Political Prisoners and Persecuted Families. It was an emotional visit as hundreds of pictures of those imprisoned and killed under the communist regime lined the office's walls. The men in the organization shared their personal stories of the atrocities committed in the name of communism and state control under Hoxha. We discussed how the country cannot ever truly heal if there is no one left to accept blame and apologize for the traumatization of the country's population, the destruction of its infrastructure, and the corruption of its national identity.



June 1st  
*A Day at the Dig*

Today we met with American students who are also spending their summer here in Albania. Their time has been spent primarily completing archeologi-

cal field work in the Shkodra area. Their instructor, Michael Galaty of Millsaps College, invited us for a day at the dig site and we soon found ourselves working alongside both archeology experts and students. The site was far from what any of us might have expected as we

were literally working in the middle of a local farmer's fields, but the group was hoping to discover ancient gravesites. It was a great opportunity to learn about cultural preservation efforts in Albania, along with the various techniques that archaeologists use in the field.



# Two Generations

## Families in Honors

A college homecoming is an event usually reserved for alumni, but in the case of three University Honors Program students, attending Georgia Southern as an honors student has been a sort of homecoming as well. Three University Honors Program (UHP) students—Alicia Channell, Michaela Lariscy, and Kristen Tillman—have followed in the footsteps of their mothers, all of whom were part of the Bell Honors Program (BHP) in its early years. Quite a bit has changed in honors education at Georgia Southern since their parents were students, but one constant remains: it is still a challenging atmosphere providing motivated students an intellectual home.

Honors education first began at Georgia Southern in 1982, when Dr. Hew Joiner led several faculty members in offering the first honors classes to a select group of outstanding students. The program, known as the Bell Honors Program in honor of benefactor Orell Bernard

“Red” Bell, served as a national model for honors education and provided a challenging traditional liberal arts education to Georgia Southern's best students.

The BHP would select only 18 exceptionally gifted, creative, and well-prepared students from among its pool of applicants. Outstanding test scores, exemplary high school academic records, and evidence of unusual academic potential and creativity were all requirements to be considered for the program. Classes were team-taught and emphasized discussion and independent activities. The last BHP cohort graduated in 2007.

Today's current program for honors students, the University Honors Program, started in 1998. Founded by Dr. Fred Richter, the program was designed to create honors experiences for more students while still maintaining the rigor of the selection requirements. Now the program includes over 450 students in all disciplines across the university. Continuing

to challenge and support hard-working and intellectually curious scholars, the program offers a research-focused curriculum complemented by experiential learning opportunities. All graduates of the program complete an Honors Thesis/Capstone Project, an intense research project mentored by a faculty member in their major discipline. Students emerge from the program ready for the challenge of a career, graduate school, or professional school and with both a sense of civic responsibility and a global perspective.

This year marks the thirtieth year of honors education at Georgia Southern. In honor of this anniversary, *Honors @ Georgia Southern* talks to three mothers and their daughters who have all shared in the tradition of honors education at Georgia Southern. The experience was transformative for the mothers, and their daughters continue the honors legacy.



Michaela and Kelli Lariscy

Kelli Lariscy graduated in 1991 with a degree in education and an emphasis in Spanish. Little did she suspect that 20 years later her very own daughter, Michaela, would follow in her footsteps. Michaela is currently a sophomore early childhood education major and a member of the University Honors Program. While Kelli continues to apply the lessons she learned through the Bell Honors Program, Michaela is just getting started.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Kelli was raised nearby in Savannah, Georgia. When it came to decide on college Georgia Southern was her first choice. "It was at the top of my list and really was where I wanted to go," Kelli said. "My parents thought a lot of Georgia Southern and they helped steer me to make the right decision."

During one of her campus visits, she was interviewed by the Bell Honors Program selection committee. Once accepted, she was excited for the experiences that awaited her. "I was given the opportunity to really

see how the professors interacted with their students," Kelli said. "I could tell I wouldn't be seen as just a number."

Kelli can still remember the first day she moved into her freshmen dorm. "Two girls introduced themselves and said they were in the program. They told me about a little get together we would be having the night before classes," Kelli said. "I remember it really made me feel welcome, and I knew I would have some people I would be able to connect with."

Kelli remembers socializing as being a regular activity for the BHP, but not just with fellow classmates. "There was always something social going on with our professors," Kelli said. "We were always happy to interact with them, and they were always there for us and were happy to listen to us if we had a problem or to offer advice."

The interactions with her professors was favorite element of being part of the BHP, and Kelli remembers one professor in particular. "One class I had was with Dr. Charlene Black,

and I just absolutely loved her," Kelli said. "I admired her and looked at her as a real role model for me." Even after Kelli graduated, she and Black stayed in contact. "She told me she would always be there for me wherever I went," Kelli said. "It just meant so much to me." Kelli stills views Black as a "hero."

Today, Kelli teaches Spanish to grades nine through twelve at South Effingham High School in Guyton, Georgia. She believes her experiences in the BHP contributed to her success in her career today. "I think the program helped a lot to develop me into who I was at the time and who I am now," Kelli said. "I hope my students feel like they can talk to me the way I felt like I could talk with my honors professors."

Kelli also was one of the first student members of Georgia Southern's chapter of Professional Association of Georgia Educators as well as a resident assistant in Winburn Hall. Kelli also met her husband, Jeff, while attending GSU. Now with Michaela studying at her parents Alma Mater, there is a family joke of GSU becoming a family tradition. "[Michaela] had her heart set on Georgia Southern so that's where our efforts went," Kelli said. "However, if she would have wanted to go somewhere else, we would have supported her too."

Michaela can remember both of her parents always telling her wonderful stories about their personal experiences with Georgia Southern. "I finally ended up coming and visiting, and honestly, it just really feels like home," Michaela said. "The atmosphere and the people are so friendly. I am just really in love with this place."

Following in the footsteps of her mother, Michaela has decided to study education. Being involved with vacation bible school at her church helped her discover her passion for teaching. "Some of the teachers saw me and told me I had a really natural gift for it," Michaela said. And after taking an alternative break trip to the Bahamas last winter, Michaela developed a new focus for helping the education

## Kelli (Morgan)Lariscy 1991, Education & Michaela Lariscy 2015, Education

systems in struggling countries.

Like Kelli, Michaela agrees the University Honors Program has provided many opportunities. In the coming months, she will be assuming several leadership positions on campus including the familiar role her mother held as resistant assistant (now known as community leader). Michaela will be a Southern Orientation, Advisement, and Registration (SOAR) leader this summer and a peer leader for a First-Year Experience class in the fall. "The Honors Program has just opened so many doors, including doors to the community as well," Michaela said. It has been through the University Honors Program that Michaela has become involved

with Keep Bulloch Beautiful and Statesboro's Averitt Center of the Arts.

Kelli has seen through her daughter how the level of involvement and requirement has changed for honors students. "There is much more required of an honors student today," Kelli said. "I think the present requirements make it necessary for student to get more involved. Honestly, I am so glad that it has progressed to the point that it has because I see the great things Michaela is involved in."

Michaela has already experienced the same positive interactions with professors her mother experienced years ago. Michaela agrees her favorite part of the program is the small class sizes that allow a one-on-

one connection with professors. "The classes are so small that you really get to know the professors and have a great connection," Michaela said. "I had Dr. [Alan] Downs for U.S. history, and he knew each and every one of us by name."

Kelli feels this connection extends to all the staff of the University Honors Program. She encouraged Michaela to use Dr. Steven Engel, the director of the program, and Dr. Francis Desiderio, the associate director of the program, as resources in a time of need. "They are really there for you. That's how I remember Dr. Joiner and my professors," Kelli said. "They want to be used as a resource to make your experience more powerful."

Now with Michaela attending Georgia Southern, Kelli has made it a priority to come and visit often. She has made an effort to volunteer a couple times a month with the university as well. "I see Michaela growing so much, and I'm so proud of the woman she is becoming," Kelli said. "I feel like I owe so much to Georgia Southern and to the honors program for everything that she seems to be getting."



1991 Bell Honors Program Graduates

# Molly (Barksdale) Channell 1988, Broadcasting & Alicia Channell 2012, Nursing

When Molly Channell's high school guidance counselor told her about the Bell Honors Program, a then-new program at Georgia Southern, she took the chance and applied. Upon visiting campus, she said she "immediately fell in love with Georgia Southern." She felt the doors were opening for her in higher education, but little did she know how many more open doors would follow as a result.

Molly entered Georgia Southern College in the fall of 1984 to study broadcasting as a member of the third class of the Bell Honors Program. When she discusses her experience now, she can still remember "a lot of very good professors" that made her time in Statesboro so meaningful. That list begins with Dr. Hew Joiner, the founding director of the Bell Honors Program. "Dr. Joiner really had a vision for what he wanted to do with the group; making it top notch," Molly said. Looking back, what still strikes her the most was "the commitment of the professors to really go out of their way to spend time with us as a group."

Molly recalled many times when professors invited students into their homes for dinner, ordering pizza at the Honors house, or meeting a group at a restaurant. "They really wanted to give us a good experience and never had a closed door policy. I never went by any a professor's office without three or four

students hanging around. That's the kind of people they were," Molly said.

She also credits her fellow scholars for the close-knit community feel of the program. She graduated with 11 other Bell Scholars in 1987, although Molly was originally one of 18.

"We went through first 2 years of core classes all together. We got to be really close. We had a little house right on Highway 301 that was the Honors House for studying and holding class sometimes," Molly said.



1988 Bell Honors Program Graduates

She has recently reconnected with some classmates thanks to social media. "Facebook has been amazing because I hadn't been in touch with them for 15 years. After graduation, we tried to hit the annual reunions, but everyone started having children. Since I joined Facebook, I have looked up those people, and I'm seeing where everyone is now."

Molly currently lives in LaGrange, Georgia with her younger children and husband, Jim, who she met while in college.

When it came time for their oldest daughter to apply to colleges, they did not push Georgia Southern overtly. "My heart was Georgia Southern, and I did want to give her the opportunity to explore that, but I really tried hard not to limit her. She applied to lots of schools and didn't want her to feel like she had to follow in mom's program."

Alicia said she originally agreed to interview for the 1906 Scholarship only to humor her mom. That was her plan right up until they toured the campus and she fell in love with the "friendly environment."

The recent nursing graduate said she knew her calling since she was three. "Anatomy classes and biology classes solidified that I wanted to be in medical field," said Alicia.

She credits her aunt who works as a nurse in Statesboro as her role model. They remain close today by attending church together on the weekends (the same church Alicia was baptized in) and are currently both working at Statesboro Gastroenterology.

Although Alicia graduated in May 2012, the family legacy continues on. "Alicia's next sibling Drew is freshman. We went through same process with him, leaving all the doors open, and GSU was the one that out shone out. The third child, Alex, begins at Georgia Southern this coming fall," said their mom, and he, too, will join the University Honors Program.

This bonding over education is nothing new for their family. Molly home-schooled all of her five children and passed on her passion for knowledge. As for the two youngest, Molly said, "Who knows where they will go? But odds are in GSU's favor."

Whenever in town for a visit, Molly said there are the usual picnics at Sweetheart circle, reminiscent walks through campus by the lakes where Molly and her husband used to meet on dates, to Paulson Stadium, and to Snooky's Restaurant before it closed this year.

"GSU football! Of course that is a highlight and a special memory I can share with Alicia and my other children when we return to Statesboro," Molly said.

Molly recited a story of the first time of the first time Alicia visited campus with the mindset of going to college. Seeing Anderson Hall, her old residence hall, as an Administrative Building came as a bit of a shock.

"We had lived in dark ages, with no air conditioning, only hall phones, and hall bathrooms. We went upstairs in what now is an office and a



Alicia and Molly Channell

woman was doing work, typing at her desk in what used to be my bedroom," Molly said, with amused laughter.

Through her daughter's experience, Molly has also seen the change and growth in the University Honors Program, and she is pleased with the improvement. She likes

how students have the opportunity to spread out core classes—including honors sections—across the four years. "I like the way that they do it now better because students can jump into major classes sooner. During my first two years I was ready to jump in to major classes," Molly said. "And the first time I heard Alicia would write a thesis, I thought, 'Wow that is huge.'"

However, some things don't change. For the Channells, that has been the relationships with professors. Alicia's favorite professor was for a subject outside of her major, because it wasn't the content but the passion of the professor that inspired her.

"American government with Dr. Sabia in the spring semester of my freshman year was great. She taught me about passion in my life,

and that I need to be passionate about everything I do. It got me more involved in the community," she said.

Alicia has also experienced the sense of a tight-knit community through her fellow 1906 Scholars just as her mom did with the BHP students.

"It has been so great for building friendships because I didn't know anyone coming into it. They were the first people I met. When we had the first meeting and stayed together in dorms, we started friendships, and I am still friends with most of them now," Alicia said.

Beyond her involvement with the UHP, Alicia has served as president of the Student Nurses Association and volunteered at a variety of places including the local Hearts and Hands Clinic. In other words, it has been challenging four years.

"I'm ready to finish schoolwork but I'm not sure if I'm ready to leave college scene, although I'm still planning to go to medical school," Alicia said just before graduation. She looks forward to returning with family to visit her two younger brothers on campus.



Kristen Tillman is another freshman who has followed her mother's footsteps to Georgia Southern and an honors experience. In fact, both of her parents earned degrees from Georgia Southern, and her mom was also part of the Bell Honors Program.

"Both my parents went to GSU. That was incentive to look here. I looked at other schools, but I felt most at home here and, just like the saying goes, I liked the small-feel," Kristen said. "I didn't want to go just because my parents did. I wanted to make it my decision."

Her mother, Brenda Tillman, shares this opinion. It is just one of many things the two have in common. Brenda was a member of the second class of BHP scholars from 1983 to 1987. The women have bonded over their similar campus involvement, including Alpha Delta Pi sorority and the Wesley Foundation. However, it's important to note distinctions between mother and daughter also.

"Kristen is really independent and she has always been. I knew none of her decisions would be because of

## Brenda (Robarts) Tillman 1987, Finance & Kristen Tillman 2015, Education

what her parents did," said Brenda.

A basic distinction between the two is their areas of study. Brenda majored in finance with an emphasis in banking and said she "stuck out like a sore thumb" in the program as she was actually the first business major to graduate from it. She went on to work for many years at Wachovia before devoting all her time to her family. Her daughter Kristen is now exploring a passion for educating children and spends her summer vacations as a camp counselor.

Being a Bell Scholar helped Brenda form her great relationships to other students. She said that cohorts of

BHP students took their core class together. "It was just the 18 of us, all taught with two professors for every class for the first two years. That was the key to getting comfortable on campus."

"It was really great to become part of a smaller group, so campus didn't seem so big. That's probably funny to students now," Brenda said, comparing the total enrollment during her college years of about 7,000 to the current total which recently surpassed 20,000.

Equally memorable were the very personal relationships Brenda felt with professors and Director Dr. Hew Joiner. Students also attended an annu-

al cookout held by the Bell family, the program's benefactors and namesake.

"Hands down, my favorite class the whole time was philosophy with Mr. Brasons. He challenged me to think far outside of any box I had thought of before," she said. "And Dr. Joiner was not only one of our professors but a mentor to all of us, and I remember getting a hand written note from him every quarter when I made Dean's List, just thanking me for my hard work."

Such relationships are not just a thing of the past for the Tillmans. Brenda was able to catch up with many old friends during the Honors Homecoming celebration last fall.

"I felt very lucky to hook back up with Dr. Joiner and Dr. Richter, and I think it meant a lot to Kristen that 25 years later there were still great professors to reconnect with," Brenda said. Kristen described this as watching her mom interact with her "little family."

"It was fun to see mom get excited about it again. I'm looking forward to do those things too," Kristen said.

Although Kristen has been a student for only a year, she is experiencing the beginning of such connections for herself. Her favorite class thorough the Honors Program was her First-Year Seminar. She said she has enjoyed the small size of only about 15 students, a size which "is supposed to be the incentive and what the Honors Program is all about."

Taught Dr. Padmini Shankar, the course introduced incoming students to college research with a themed seminar about the chemistry of food, nutrition, and healthy eating.

"We went to a food lab one day, and we each picked a different country and each made a different meal for a party," Kristen said.

New this year was the course's connection to a spring semester Global Citizens course which allowed the 15 students to stay together.

Outside of the classroom, events like Homecoming and football games are a favorite memory

for the Tillman women. However, Brenda remembers having a very different experience as a student.

"We got there at the beginning of the football program, so we were there for part of all the excitement with Erk Russell and the first two National Championships during my junior and senior years," Brenda said. "My freshman year, the team played at Statesboro High School because we didn't have a stadium yet. My first date with my husband, Keith, was homecoming freshman year. The stadium was built during my sophomore year, and we were there for all the games. All of that is really important to all of us, and has been really exciting to watch the team come back again."

Kristen enjoys hearing how things have changed while traditions have remained at her school. "My parents

are very happy with how much Georgia Southern has grown and how campus has expanded. They are happy there are still traditions with the football games, like the yellow school buses," she said.

When Brenda speaks about her college years and specifically as a BHP scholar, it is with true appreciation. "I know without a shadow of a doubt that the experiences with the Honors Program helped prepare me for life after college," Brenda said.

Meanwhile, Kristen said she is looking forward to the opportunities available to her, such as completing a capstone project. She especially hopes to go on an alternative break trip or study abroad - something neither of her parents did - and leave some footprints of her own.

*By Colleen McNally and Natalie Demarko*



1987 Bell Honors Program Graduates



Kristen and Brenda Tillman

## Stephen Crooke Selected for National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

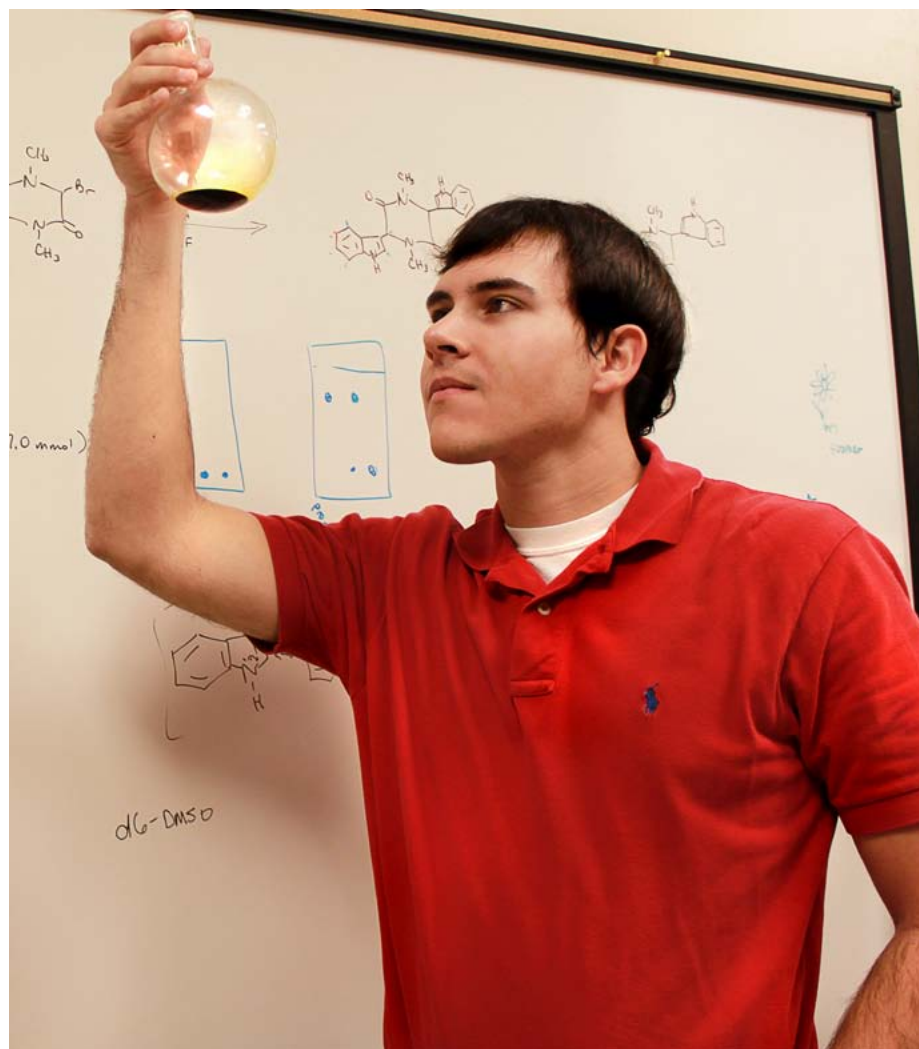
Recently graduated Chemistry major Stephen Crooke has won the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship to support his pursuit of a Ph.D. in Biochemistry at the Georgia Institute of Technology. With this fellowship, Crooke will receive significant monetary support to fund three full years of study and research. This prestigious award is given in recognition of his outstanding academic and research accomplishments as an undergraduate at Georgia Southern University.

This is not the first time Crooke's work has been nationally recognized. Last year, he received an Honorable Mention from the Barry M. Goldwater Foundation. He also has co-authored an article on his work published in the peer-reviewed journal *Molbank*. While at Georgia Southern, Crooke, who was a Paulson Scholar in addition to being an honors student, focused his research on developing a more efficient and cost effective way of creating certain chemical compounds in synthetic sponges that have the same properties as sea sponges. His research will be used in the fight against cancer.

"Over the past four years, I was able to synthetically develop five separate compounds. Our group is in the process of screening these compounds for antibacterial activity, and in the near future, we will be sending them to the National Cancer Institute for screening against cancer cells," Crooke said.

"Research of this nature is critical to the medical community due to the need for an effective treatment for cancer, and it also has important implications in the field of synthetic chemistry because of the new methodology introduced for the potential development of other therapeutic compounds."

Crooke worked closely with both Dr. Christine Whitlock and Dr. Michele McGibony. During the course of his research, Crooke spent a significant amount of time creating biologically-active compounds in Dr. Whitlock's lab and testing the compounds in the lab with Dr. McGibony.



Stephen Crooke in the Chemistry Laboratory

Dr. McGibony encourages her students to participate in research experiences as undergraduates and said of her work with Crooke: "I was fortunate that Stephen chose me and my collaborator Dr. Christine Whitlock as his research mentors. Stephen is one of the most hardworking students I have ever met in my fourteen years of higher education."

"Often scientific experiments do not work out properly the first time you set them up. Stephen will keep making alterations to the experiment until he gets a result; he is interested in understanding everything he can about chemistry and biochemistry," Dr. McGibony said.

In addition to the work

with his mentors, Crooke said that his participation in the Honors program was a major influence on his undergraduate career at Georgia Southern.

"The Honors Program's encouragement of undergraduate research led me to become involved with my research early in my academic career, and I am thankful for that. Collaboration with my professors and the Honors Program allowed me to accomplish much during my time at Georgia Southern, primarily culminating in this award. I cannot thank the Honors Program and my advisers enough for all of the mentoring and guidance that they have provided me over the years."

By Kelsey Keane

## Jennifer Keyser Studies in University of Kassel



Jennifer Keyser in Germany

Attending college for many students requires a move away from home. For four years, the campus becomes their new, if temporary, home. However there are some students who change locations again, and take the initiative to spend one of those years abroad. Modern languages major Jennifer Keyser is just such a student. She is spending her senior year away from Statesboro and in Germany, studying at the University of Kassel in Germany with support from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) scholarship.

The DAAD scholarship, also known as the German Academic Exchange Service, is a nationally competitive scholarship in the United States that is awarded to undergraduate students who wish to study in Germany. Additionally, Keyser has been honored as being the first Georgia Southern exchange student at the University of Kassel under a new agreement between the two universities.

Keyser first became interested in studying modern languages when she was

in high school. After reading an inspiring article about the disappearance of foreign language education in her Latin class, Keyser recognized her passion. "This article is what really inspired me to study modern foreign languages," Keyser said. "I believe it is important for people to learn other languages and about other cultures. We are an increasingly globalizing world and it is important to recognize that and respect it."

Keyser has been a member of the University Honors Program all four years of her college career. She agrees the program helped her develop as a student as well as achieve the DAAD scholarship. "I believe that having more challenging classes and opportunities has helped to fuel my thirst for knowledge," Keyser said. "Also, the Honors program helped me realize my goal of studying for a year in Germany."

Director of the University Honors Program Dr. Steven Engel was responsible for putting Keyser into contact with Dr. Michael Dellwing, a former exchange student at Georgia Southern

and also a DAAD scholarship recipient. Dellwing, now a sociology professor, was responsible for initiating the new partnership between Georgia Southern and the University of Kassel. While Keyser has been studying in Germany, Georgia Southern has been hosting three sociology students from the University of Kassel. This new program joins an already robust list of study abroad opportunities offered to Georgia Southern students.

Keyser received support from the University Honors Program in her application process. Both Dr. Engel and Associate Director Dr. Francis Desiderio played important roles in assisting Keyser. "It was Dr. Engel who informed me of the exchange program, and Dr. Desiderio's assistance with my essays gave me more confidence in my chances to win," Keyser said. "They helped me a lot through the process of applying, and I owe a great deal of thanks to the Honors Program."

As a part of the DAAD scholarship, Keyser receives a monthly stipend, a study subsidy, and subsidy towards travel expenses- all of which have helped make her experience even more memorable. "I have been able to travel all over Germany to cities like Frankfurt, Berlin, Eisenach, Göttingen and many others," Keyser said. "I have enjoyed the German architecture, food, and culture as a whole."

Keyser will spend a total of ten months studying in Germany. So far, she has vastly improved her German language skills and had the opportunity to meet all types of people. "My favorite experience so far was being able to go to Munich for the last day of Oktoberfest," Keyser said. "It was a great opportunity to witness a big part of German culture."

After graduation, Keyser plans to find work that will put her international business skills to use. "My experience in Germany will hopefully help me get a job in corporate communications because I will have a very good working knowledge of the German language and will be able to communicate effectively between German and English speakers," Keyser said. "I also may go to graduate school where I would study linguistics or get my master's degree in German."

By Natalie Demarko

## Tiffany Simmons Spends a Year in Japan

Sophomore honors student Tiffany Simmons spent the 2011-2012 school year in an immersion study abroad exchange program in Nagoya, Japan. With the help of several prestigious awards, the talented art major was able to fulfill her longtime dream of visiting the country that lies almost 10,000 miles away from the campus of Georgia Southern. Through this once in a lifetime experience, Simmons explored the Japanese culture firsthand while studying at the Nagoya University of Foreign Studies.

Simmons is pursuing a double major in studio art and art history as well as a minor in Japanese, and while in Japan she worked on her Japanese minor as well as studied classical Japanese art forms. One of her favorite classical artists is Japanese ink artist Seeshu but her interests range wide across various media.

Having only been a student at Georgia Southern for a year before setting off on her exciting journey, Simmons believes that her participation in the University Honors Program played a significant role both in her time in Statesboro and in making her time in Japan possible. Simmons was awarded a scholarship by the University Honors Program through funds set aside each year to help make honors students' dreams of studying abroad reality.

"As a sophomore, I've only had one year at Georgia Southern with the Honors program; however, it has already become a vital part of my education," Simmons said. "With a smaller class sizes, the Honors courses have allowed me to become familiar with the faculty and receive any additional academic and individual help that I needed. Besides from contributing a scholarship to aid me financially, the Honors Program supported me in other ways as well, particularly Dr. Steven Engel and Dr. Francis Desiderio, who took the time to meet with me and help me apply for other various scholarships. The Honors program definitely made my first year transition an easier process and helped to provide me with the tools to study abroad."

Simmons not only received funding from the University Honors Program but was also honored in receiving

prestigious and generous support from the Fund for Education Abroad, the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, as well as the Freeman Award for Study in Asia. The grand sum of these three awards will cover the expenses of the trip.

The Fund for Education Abroad (FEA) is an organization dedicated to helping motivated students such as



Tiffany Simmons with some friends in Japan

Simmons reach their study abroad goals by alleviating some of the financial burden. Because of her rigorous and engaging proposal for study in Japan, the FEA chose to award Simmons with one of only ten maximum available scholarships and named her an FEA scholar.

Of Tiffany the FEA said, "Tiffany has worked hard to earn this award. She has passion for study abroad, and it's clear that this opportunity will have a significant impact on her future academic and career goals. We also expect it will have an impact on those around Tiffany as she carries out the self-designed projects for giving back to her home and host community."

Simmons was also recognized through the Benjamin A. Gilman

International Scholarship, an award intended to broaden the student population that studies abroad by supporting undergraduates who might not otherwise participate due to financial constraints. The program aims to encourage students to choose non-traditional study abroad destinations, especially those outside of Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Simmons was recognized by the Freeman Award for Study in Asia as a student who shared the organization's goal of developing "a greater appreciation of Asian cultures, histories, and economies in the United States and a better understanding of the American people and of American institutions and purposes by the peoples of East Asia." As part of the program, Simmons will complete a service project to promote these ideals to her school and community.

Before beginning the incredible experience Simmons said of the study abroad program, "This time abroad is designed to deepen my knowledge of the Japanese language and culture while preparing me for my future academic and professional goals."

"Travelling to Japan has been an amazing gift," she said. "From day one, there has been a milliard of cultural differences. Even my taxi ride from the airport was an ordeal. With lace on the seat backs, magazines and even fake flowers in the surprisingly clean cab, I realized then that I was in a completely new world; there are so many major and minor differences, such as the language, the fashion, or even simply remembering to ride on the left side of the road."

Through her blog Simmons shares of her daily adventures—finding local restaurants, conversing with native speakers, experiencing local holidays, studying for classes, coping with culture shock, and visiting significant historical sites among many other adventures.

By Kelsey Keane

## Jessica Cain Studies Abroad in Finland



Jessica Cain take away in Finland

Recently graduated Biology major and 1906 Scholar Jessica Cain spent the fall 2011 semester studying abroad at Joensuu University, The University of Eastern Finland. Cain's time abroad was funded in part through scholarships. After receiving a study abroad scholarship from the University Honors Program, Cain also earned a nationally competitive Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship.

While in Finland, Cain's academic curriculum focused on the University's Forestry Program so that she could diversify her knowledge of the many aspects of environmental resource management. Forestry is one of Finland's largest industries, and Cain's time there provided her with

the incredible opportunity to both observe and study the Fins' sustainable utilization and conservation of natural resources.

Every day in Finland was an adventure as she knew very little of the language. She laughs that buying groceries was especially challenging as she oftentimes had to rely on the help of locals to find the items on her translated shopping list. During the week Cain also biked four miles to school from her traditional student apartment, regardless of how much snow had fallen. These adventures all took place on the backdrop of scenery Cain says can only be compared with that of the Grimm Brother's fairytales.

Throughout her time as a student at Georgia Southern, Cain has been

actively involved in the University Honors Program, participating as an Honors Community Scholar for several years running. She said the program was one of the best parts of her college experience, and also said that the program's atmosphere of inquiry and global curiosity paired with the personal faculty investment in each student helped her develop an interest for studying abroad and provided the tools necessary to compete for nationally competitive scholarships such as the Gilman Scholarship.

"One of the most important ways that the UHP has prepared me for the Gilman Scholarship is the value that the faculty connected with the Honors Program place on study abroad," Cain said. "Since freshman year I have been encouraged by professors such as Dr. Engel and Dr. Sabia to engage in a study abroad program. Without hearing how they considered it an important part of a college education, I do not think I would have made the effort to go abroad. The assistance I received from Dr. Desiderio in putting together a well thought out and well executed application was invaluable as well."

The experience showed Cain new ways of thinking about conservation which she will use as she pairs her passion for service with her academic interests. Next year, Cain will start a graduate program at the Nicholas School at Duke University to pursue a degree in environmental management.

By Kelsey Keane

## Writing Recognition For Kayla and Chad



Honors alumna Kayla Whaley and honors student Chad Sanderson were recently recognized for their work in creative writing through the Roy F. Powell Award for Creative Writers, exhibiting their



many talents in and out of the classroom. Kayla Whaley's creative nonfiction piece, "More Than Green," gained the first place prize in its category. Along with a \$100 cash prize, her touching take on unrequited

love is featured in the most recent issue of *Miscellany*, Georgia Southern's literary magazine. Kayla graduated from Georgia Southern last year with a bachelor's in Political Science and is currently pursuing a Master's in Public Administration.

Chad Sanderson is a senior Writing and Linguistics major; his poignant piece, entitled "Cold River," netted him the runner-up position in the contest's creative fiction category. The story was featured in *Pegasus* – Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College's literary magazine – during spring 2012.

By Taylor Tyson

## Honors Community Scholars: Boys and Girls Club College Promotion Program



Feagin Oliver and Ashley Boyer with the students of the Boys and Girls Club

Members of the Honors Community Scholars (HCS) developed a second year of their college promotion and preparation program in a joint project with the Boys and Girls Club of Statesboro and Bulloch County. HCS participants Rachel Rozier, Ashley Boyer, Christina Belge, and Feagin Oliver met at Eidson House (home of the UHP) with a group of middle and high school students once a week and provided them with activities to build skills such as test-taking, resume-building, and decision-making all in an effort to aid these students in creating opportunities for higher education and, eventually, prosperous, fulfilling careers.

Honors Community Scholars is a yearlong experience where honors students who want to learn more about community building organizations and university-community partnerships take on more intensive service projects in Statesboro and Bulloch County. They work as teams with specific organizations, and they meet as a group several times a month to discuss their projects and various topics related to service-learning, community partnerships, and community building.

The Boys and Girls Club College Promotion Program began the year with ice-breaker games and personality quizzes to help the students get to know each other and a sense of what they wanted out of the program. This led to the introduction of

career aptitude tests, helping the students realize the broad spectrum of professions available and to better reveal their own potential as fruitful, productive adults.

The mentors were able to bring in guest speakers and visit various offices on campus. One place they visited was the Career Advisement Center, where the students were able to think about potential careers and the college majors that might get them to their goal. The whole experience was designed to encourage the students to think more deeply about their skills, talents, and interests, and what they might want to do with them.

"I really enjoyed you all," Statesboro High School tenth-grader Breanna Stidem said. "When you come here, you learn about college and you're actually on a campus."

During the spring semester, the focus of the meetings was directed toward test-taking skills, and the group completed practice tests to help prepare them for important, upcoming standardized tests such as the SAT and the graduation test. In the last few meetings, mentors walked students through the resume-building process, aiding them in outlining their career objectives, previous work and volunteer experience, involvement in extracurricular activities and clubs, and personal work skills.

Keyonna Whye, an eight-grader



Ashley Boyer and one of the students



Students from the Boys and Girls Club



Feagin Oliver with students from the Boys and Girls Club

at Langston Chapel Middle School and student in the program, said, "Well, I have learned that college has very interesting aspects, and there are a variety of things you can pick to do."

"I really learned that you reflect a message by the way you dress and carry yourself. You don't want to give the wrong message," Stidem said.

While the objective of the program was to lead and teach young adults skills which will direct them toward successful and fulfilling educations and careers, it is certain that the interaction with the students also had a positive and lasting effect on their mentors.

"What you do now is important; it determines your future. It's really important what you give to certain situations," Stidem said.

*By E. Feagin Oliver*

## Leigh Sundem Scores Among the Best on the MCAT



Leigh Sundem in the Chemistry Laboratory

University Honors Program student Leigh Sundem recently earned the outstanding score of a thirty-nine on the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). The average score of each MCAT administration is twenty-four, and Sundem's results place her in the 99.1- 99.4 percentile range of all who participated in the testing sessions of August 2011.

As a non-traditional student, Sundem returned to school to pursue her undergraduate degree in Chemistry several years after graduating high school. She believes that coming to Georgia Southern University with such a different perspective than the traditional student has made her especially grateful for every opportunity she has received and motivated to do her very best.

Since beginning at GSU, Sundem has become highly involved academically, completing significant lab research, teaching as a Chemistry supplemental instructor, and shadowing five different professionals in the medical field. She has also volunteered her time to such organizations as the Hearts and Hands Clinic and Georgia Southern University's Center for Addiction Recovery. Sundem

participated in extensive academic lab research with Dr. Mohammed Shaikh of the Chemistry Department as they work to synthesize compounds they hope could one day be used as therapeutics for various types of cancers and Alzheimer's disease.

"Leigh has strong convictions and an outstanding work ethic. I came to understand that, unlike countless other students, she did not consider her scientific course work just a stepping stone to her degree but an opportunity to explore a field she genuinely found interesting. I had the pleasure to meet a person who displayed such an interest for high-level work and an ability to grasp the intricacies of chemical concepts. She has a friendly personality and a positive attitude, which has certainly contributed to her being an excellent student," Dr. Shaikh said.

Sundem entered the University Honors Program as a sophomore student at Georgia Southern. She believes that her initial goal of gaining entrance to UHP motivated her to excel during her first year and that the program itself continues to encourage her academic growth. "It became very important to me that I get into the University Honors Program, stay

in, and excel. The Program encourages me to do my best, providing me with resources and outlets that make me want to do my best academically and personally," she said.

Sundem said, "Georgia Southern is where I belong. Our chemistry program is top-notch. I think I have gotten the best education possible. Each professor has helped me gain a deeper understanding of subject materials and of the hard sciences, which enabled me to be successful in the critical thinking necessary to succeed on the MCAT."

After receiving her Chemistry degree from Georgia Southern, Sundem plans to attend medical school and to then practice primary care in a rural setting. She also dreams of serving with Doctors Without Borders in Africa. "Wherever I am most needed, that's where I'll go."

Through her accomplishments, Sundem has earned other significant recognition, being a Watson-Brown Scholar and a recipient of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health Service Award, as well as being named as an Outstanding Student in Organic Chemistry in 2011. This fall she will enter the University of Rochester's School of Medicine & Dentistry.

*By Kelsey Keane*

## Honors Conference Participation

### Georgia Collegiate Honors Council

In February, five honors students, Paola Robelo, Kelsey Keane, Jordan Logue, Michelle Saucier, and Krystina Johnson, traveled with Program directors Dr. Steven Engel and Dr. Francis Desiderio to North Georgia College & State University in Dahlonega for the 2012 Georgia Collegiate Honors Council's annual meeting. The two day event brought together honors programs and colleges from across the state to meet, present student research, and discuss approaches in honors education.

The first day's events included panning for gold in the Dahlonega gold mines and hiking in the Blue Ridge Mountains, followed by dinner and a friendly game of intercollegiate trivia. The rest of the weekend was a little more formal, with research presentations ranging from alternative fuels to world hunger to modern music.

On the final day of the conference, Sophomore English major Kelsey Keane was elected Student Vice President of the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council, Dr. Engel was elected Faculty Vice President, and Sophomore Biology major Jordan Logue brought home first place in the poster presentations competition for his work in fiddler crab mating behavior. The Honors Event Planning Committee of the Georgia Southern Honors Program has already begun planning the 2013 annual meeting which will take place on the Georgia Southern Campus in February 2013.

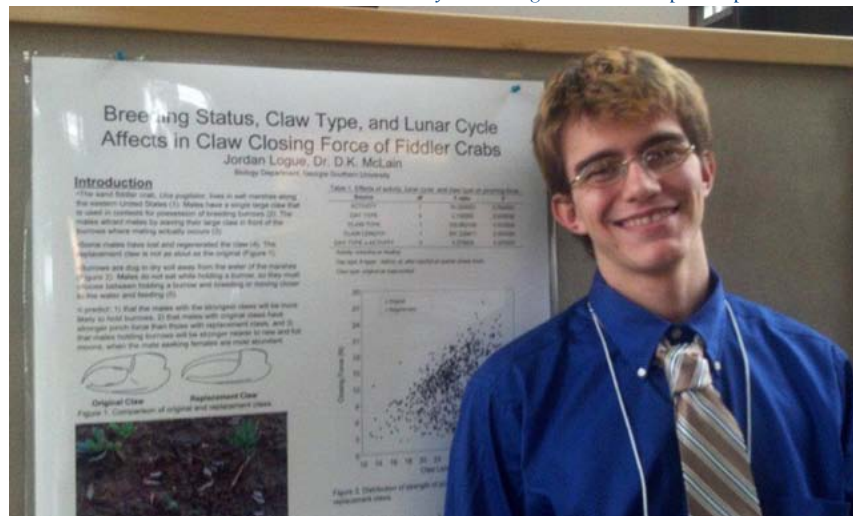
### Southern Regional Honors Council

This year's Southern Regional Honors Conference was held in Tampa, Florida, and Georgia Southern honors student Jordan Logue travelled with the honors program of Armstrong Atlantic State University to Tampa to present his work on fiddler crab mating behavior. The three day conference showcased the research done by the honors programs and colleges from all across the Southeast. The conference hosted hundreds of presentations on topics varying from cancer research and massage therapy techniques to designing roller coasters and American foreign policy.

Students were given the chance to interact with peers from other schools at student dances and dinners, as well as enjoy the city of Tampa and explore historic Ybor City. Logue encourages all University Honors Program students to consider participating in next year's conference, which will take place in Louisville. "This was quite an experience, and it was a lot of fun. I met so many people and learned so much in just a few days. These are the people that are going to change how the world works in our lifetime, and it was an honor to be there with them," Logue said.

By Jordan Logue and Kelsey Keane

Jordan Logue at GCHC poster presentations



### National Collegiate Honors Council



Pannel discussion at NCHC



Anni Raino, Meg Roberts, and Cate Faulkner at NCHC

The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) met last fall in Phoenix, and honors students Cate Faulkner, Anni Raino, and Meg Roberts attended and made presentations. Cate presented her thesis research during the poster session, and she joined Anni and Meg and Dr. Desiderio on a panel to discuss Honors Community Scholars. Dr. Engel also presented on the University Honors Program with particular focus on our requirements and the Departmental Honors courses. Writing and Linguistics Interim Chair Dr. Phyllis Dallas accompanied the group.

The students had an opportunity to explore Phoenix through the "City as Text" program and met honors students from across the country. Cate had a good number of visitors to her poster and received very useful feedback. The Honors Community Scholars panel session was well attended. Dr. Desiderio and the students talked about the programming and projects of the experience, part of which was funded by an NCHC Portz Grant. Dr. Engel engaged conference attendees in a discussion about the UHP's approach to supporting students in their Thesis/Capstone Projects and received some very positive feedback.

The 2012 conference is scheduled for November in Boston, Massachusetts.

## 2011-2012 Senior Thesis and Capstones

This year 72 students completed the requirements of the University Honors Program. The most demanding element of those requirements is the Honors Thesis/Capstone Project. Each of this past year's graduates is listed along with the title of the thesis and faculty mentor.

#### Lacy Bell

##### Justice Studies

Fighting for Faith in the Land of the Free: Discrimination Against Religious Minorities in the United States Judicial System

Dr. Brett Curry

#### Brandon Benton

##### Physics

Prototyping Method for Bragg-Type Atom Interferometers

Dr. Mark Edwards

#### Jonathon Bowyer

##### Computer Science

Game On: Designing and Building a 2D Game Engine

Dr. James Bradford

#### Ashley Boyer

##### Political Science

Israel, Palestine, and the Demise of the...One-Two- Maybe Three-State Solution?

Dr. Krista Wiegand

#### Megan Brock

##### Psychology

Relationships among Attachment to Parents, Romantic Partners, Friends, and Risky Behaviors

Dr. Janice Kennedy

#### Jessica Cain

##### Biology

Effects of Alginate Addition on Smooth Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) Transplant Success and Macroinvertebrate Colonization

Dr. Risa Cohen

#### Delacy Carpenter

##### Psychology

Investigating the Relationship between Facebook and Life Satisfaction of College Students

Dr. Jeff Klibert

#### Alicia Channell

##### Nursing

Perspectives of Pregnant Women in Southeast Georgia on Prenatal Genetic Testing

Dr. Rose Mary Gee

#### Drew Cheshire

##### Multimedia Communications

The Kiwanis Ogeechee Fair: 50 years of Fun, Family, and Funnelcakes

Tyson Davis

#### Rebecca Conner

##### Education

Preconceptions of Pre-Service Teachers about Library Media Specialists

Dr. Michelle Reidel

#### Nicole Cooper

##### Fashion Merchandising and Apparel Design

An Analysis of Ella Moss's Promotional Strategies Using Fashion Theory

Dr. Amy Scarborough

#### Kelly Corallo

##### English

The Sublimity of Religion and Hibernian Possibilities: Implications of the Religious and Natural Sublime for Sydney Owenson's Ireland

Dr. Hemchand Gossai

#### Kathryn Crenshaw

##### Early Childhood Education

How Pre-Service Teacher Morale is Affected By Our Test-Driven Educational Culture

Dr. Meca Williams-Johnson and Dr. Michelle Reidel

#### Stephen Croke

##### Chemistry

Progress toward the Synthesis of Dragmacidin Derivatives for Cancer Treatments

Dr. Christine Whitlock and Dr. Michele McGibony

#### Kelsey Decker

##### Journalism

Who Needs to Know? An Examination of College-Level Investigative Journalism across Georgia

Dr. Steve Stepanek

#### Emily Detmer

##### Anthropology and Spanish

Potential Explanations for the Absence of Archaic Artifacts at Magnolia Springs

Dr. Heidi Altman

#### Kristina Deveaux

##### Chemistry

Approaches toward a Furanylidene System Using a Commercially Available Beta-Keto Phosphonate

Dr. Karelle Aiken

#### Cassandra Dierolf

##### International Studies

Demon or Savior: Oda Nobunaga in the Historical Memory of Japan

Dr. Darin Van Tassel

#### Danielle Duncan

##### Chemistry

Analytical Examination of the Crystal Structure of Indole-6-Carboxylic Acid Using Computational Chemistry

Dr. Allison Amonette

#### Collin Enfinger

##### Biology

Effects of Position and Track Length on Spontaneous Alternation Behavior in *Armadillidium* Woodlice in Mazes

Dr. Alan Harvey

#### Cate Faulkner

##### International Studies and Spanish

As American as Apple Pie, Baseball...and Xenophobia: How did a Nation of Immigrants Become so Anti-Immigrant?

Dr. Darin Van Tassel

#### Christine Foxwell

##### Psychology

The Detection of Unseen Staring with Changes in the Sympathetic Nervous System

Dr. Amy Hackney and Dr. Janice Steirn

#### Renee Fritz

##### Biology

Low Salinity Affects Larval Development and Juvenile Production in the Sea Urchin *Lytechinus variegatus*

Dr. Sophie George

#### Ashley Fullerton

##### Chemistry

An Analysis of Eel Aquaporins and Osmoregulation

Dr. Chris Cutler

#### Jacqueline Gardner

##### Chemistry

Analytical Examination of the Crystal Structure of Amino-benzoic acid benzyl ester

Dr. Allison Amonette

## Christian Gibson

**Psychology**  
The Effects of Stereotypes and Self-Affirmation on Hiring Decisions  
Dr. Amy Hackney

## Tristen Gonshorowski

**English**  
Not Like Your Christianity: Pagan Echoes in Irish Literature  
Dr. Hemchand Gossai

## Sarah Gross

**Sociology**  
We Fear: Immediate Newspaper Coverage of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster  
Dr. Nancy Malcom

## Annemarie Hall

**International Studies**  
Curing Monolingualism: Rethinking Foreign Language Education in a Multilingual World  
Dr. Darin Van Tassell and Dr. Nancy Shumaker

## Kadisa Johnson

**Information Technology**  
A Failed Attempt to Redesign: A Look at How Bureaucracy and Evolving Technology Altered the Direction of an Overly Optimistic Project  
Dr. Christopher A. Kadlec

## Amy Jones

**Sport Management**  
A Demographic Study of Georgia Southern University Football Tickets  
Dr. Sam Todd

## Jessica Joyner

**Psychology and Justice Studies**  
The Impact of Individuality and Immorality on the Criminal Justice System  
Dr. Catherine Marcum and Dr. Amy Hackney

## Derek Kauhane

**Finance**  
Hedging Allocated Portfolios Against Volatility in a Recovering Economy  
Dr. Karen L. Hamilton

## Eric Kobylanski

**Political Science**  
The Effects of Regulation on the Chinese and American Automotive Intellectual Property Market  
Dr. Barry Balleck

## Francine Koenig

**English**  
The Veiled Power and the Seductive Siren: Bannerman, Dacre, and the Female Gothic  
Dr. Hemchand Gossai and Dr. Douglass Thomson

## Kathryn Lanier

**Chemistry**  
Synthesis of Novel Iron-Chelating Agents  
Dr. Christine Whitlock

## Merrie Lumpkin

**Communication Arts**  
The Roles of International Media and Domestic Media During the 2011 Political Crisis in Egypt  
Dr. Abby Brooks and Dr. Reed Smith

## Halie Martin

**Chemistry**  
Synthesis of Novel Iron-Chelating Agents for the Treatment of Hemochromatosis  
Dr. Christine R. Whitlock

## Megan McCarthy

**Nutrition and Food Science**  
Nutrition Fact Label Usage Among Underclassmen College Students  
Dr. Joelle Romanchik-Cerpovicz

## Mary Katherine Mills

**Biology**  
The Temporal and Spatial Fate, Survivability, and Excretion of GFP- expressing *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* After Ingestion by the Common House Fly, *Musca domestica*  
Dr. Dana Nayduch

## Katherine Mincey

**Biology**  
Elemental and Physical Defenses of Nickel Hyperaccumulators and Their Affects on Herbivory  
Dr. William Irby

## Alexandra Mitchell

**Biology**  
*In Vitro* Excystment of the Metacercariae of *Gynaecotyla Adunca* (Trematoda: Microphalidae) from the Fiddler Crab, *UCA Pugnax*, and the Experimental Test of Predictions of Self-Fertilization  
Dr. Oscar J. Pung

## Megan Morris

**English**  
Going the Extra Six Feet: Disposing of the Dead in Faulkner and O'Connor  
Dr. Hemchand Gossai

## James Moss

**Regional Economic Development**  
Do the Benefits of High Speed Rail Outweigh the Costs? An In-Depth Analysis on the Estimates of Cost and Ridership for Two Select High Speed Rail Projects in the United States  
Dr. Stephen Rutner

## Ivana Okor

**Psychology and Chemistry**  
The Effects of Priming Approach and Avoidance Goals on Relationship Expectations and Memories  
Dr. Amy Hackney

## Katherine Olive

**Management/Human Resources**  
Behind the Scenes: What goes on at the Georgia Southern University Department of Human Resources?  
Dr. Robert Hoell

## Michael Palmese

**Music Composition**  
The Troubled Reception of "The Death of Klinghoffer"  
Dr. Gregory Harwood

## Nicole Penn

**Political Science**  
Public Perception of Attorneys  
Dr. Richard Pacelle

## Samuel Police

**Psychology**  
Orienting in Virtual Space: Examining Saliency of Auditory Landmarks to Visual Landmarks Using Dwell Time Task  
Dr. Kent D. Bodily

## Megan Prescott

**Biology**  
The Distribution of the Anophles quadrimaculatus Species Complex in Georgia  
Dr. William Irby

## Ashlin Reid

**Chemistry**  
Statesboro Lead Hazard Reduction and Evaluation Study  
Dr. Simone Charles and Dr. John DiCesare

## Jennifer Riggs

**Accounting**  
Interns and Fraud: The Influence of Psychological and Generational Traits  
Dr. Britton McKay

## Mary Roberts

**Psychology**  
The Effects of Defendant Race, Skin Tone, and Socioeconomic Status on Juror Decision Making  
Dr. Amy Hackney

## Gustavo Rodriguez

**Political Science**  
Explaining Lack of Global Action in Terms of Humanitarian Crises  
Dr. Barry Balleck and Dr. Krista Wiegand

## Rachel Rozier

**Political Science**  
One Nation Under God? The Role of Religion in American Politics  
Dr. Brett Curry

## Samuel Russell

**Philosophy and Theatre**  
Making Use of Reason: Kant's Moral Theory and the Foundation of Reason  
Dr. Hemchand Gossai

## Kelsey Ryan

**Chemistry**  
The Enzymatic Production of Molecular Hydrogen  
Dr. Dontarie Stallings

## Gabrielle Shaffer

**Writing and Linguistics**  
Technical Communication: Education vs. Workplace  
Dr. Timothy Giles

Tabitha Williford and Katherine Mincey with Dr. Engel



## Phillip Stevens

**Physics**  
Exploring a 500 Kpc HI Plume in the Virgo cluster  
Dr. James Higdon

## Leigh Sundem

**Chemistry**  
Nucleophilic Trifluoromethylation of Activated Carbonyl Compounds  
Dr. Mohammed Abid Shaikh

## Zaynab Taei

**Anthropology**  
These are Hearing People Words: A Qualitative Analysis of Homophonic Substitution, Abbreviation, and Slang in Deaf Texting  
Dr. Heidi Altman

## Jordan Tompkins

**Anthropology**  
Alleviating Teen Pregnancy in Tattnall County, Georgia: Proposed Methods from an Anthropological Perspective  
Dr. Heidi Altman

## Veronika Urbina

**International Studies and Spanish**  
Countdown to Implosion: The Chaotic and (Unintended?) Effects of Neo-Liberalism and Law Number 7 in Puerto Rico  
Dr. Darin Van Tassell

## Blake Wiggins

**Chemistry**  
Variation in Lachrymatory Factor and Certain Other Compounds between Layers in Yellow Onion  
Dr. Brian Koehler, Dr. Shannon Davis, and Dr. Norman Schmidt

## Felicia Williams

**Biology**  
Host-louse Specificity—The Odd Case of *Neotrichodectes mephitidis* Parasitizing Skunks and Island Foxes  
Dr. Lance Durden and Dr. Lorenza Beati

## Jennifer Williams

**Anthropology**  
Is Gay Blood Bad Blood?: An Analysis of Discrimination Against Homosexual Males  
Dr. Heidi Altman

## David Williamson

**Political Science**  
The Impact of Public Opinion on Supreme Court Decision-Making  
Dr. Richard Pacelle

## Tabitha Williford

**Biology and Mathematics**  
The Effects of Fire and Dormancy on Population Dynamics of Endangered *Trillium persistens*  
Dr. Lissa Legee

## Mandy Wommack

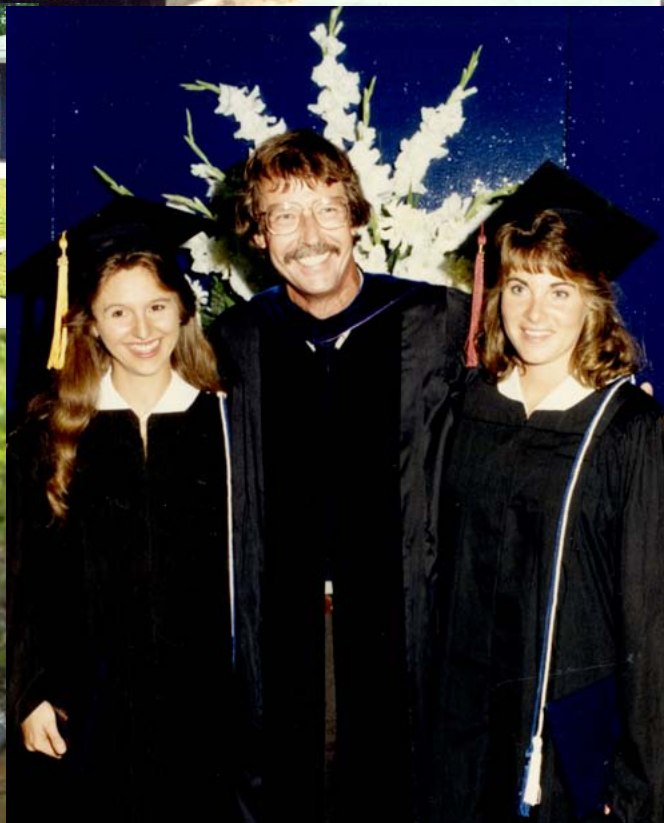
**Biology**  
Wolbachia in the Invasive Species, *Latrodectus geometricus*  
Dr. Scott Harrison

## James Zimmer-Dauphinee

**Anthropology**  
An Examination of the Feasibility of Resistivity Mapping as a Remote Sensing Technique at Camp Lawton  
Dr. Heidi Altman

Blake Wiggins, Katherine Olive, and Derek Kauhane





# Celebrating 30 Years of Honors

Georgia Southern University is happy to celebrate the 30th anniversary of honors education at Georgia Southern. From the nationally innovative Bell Honors Program (1982-2007) to the current rigors of the University Honors Program (1998-present), Georgia Southern has for thirty years provided a welcoming home to motivated and high-performing students.

To celebrate this anniversary, the University Honors Program is planning the "30 Years of Honors" event to be held Saturday, October 20 and Sunday, October 21, 2012 on the campus of Georgia Southern University. This event will celebrate the achievements of our alumni and allow them to connect with our current students. Furthermore, current and retired faculty will be invited. This event is open to the families of all Bell Honors and University Honors alumni. The following page provides some of the details for the event. For more, see [www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors/30years](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors/30years).



# Thirty Years of Honors Event Details

## Saturday, October 20, 2012

### 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

- Check-in:  
Nessmith-Lane Conference Center

### 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

- Dinner: Nessmith-Lane Ballroom  
Entertainment by Dr. Michael Braz  
\$35 per person/Business Attire
- Future Honors Scholars program (ages 4-14)  
in Nessmith-Lane Conference Center  
\$10

### 8:30 pm - Late

- "Honors After Hours" Holiday Inn Statesboro  
Cash Bar

## Sunday, October 21, 2012

### 11:00 am - 12:30 pm

- Brunch at Eidson House  
\$15 per person

### 12:00 noon

- Dedication of "new" Bell Honors Oak

Lodging: Holiday Inn Statesboro  
\$79 plus taxes  
reserve by September 20 to guarantee rates



# Honors Annual Report

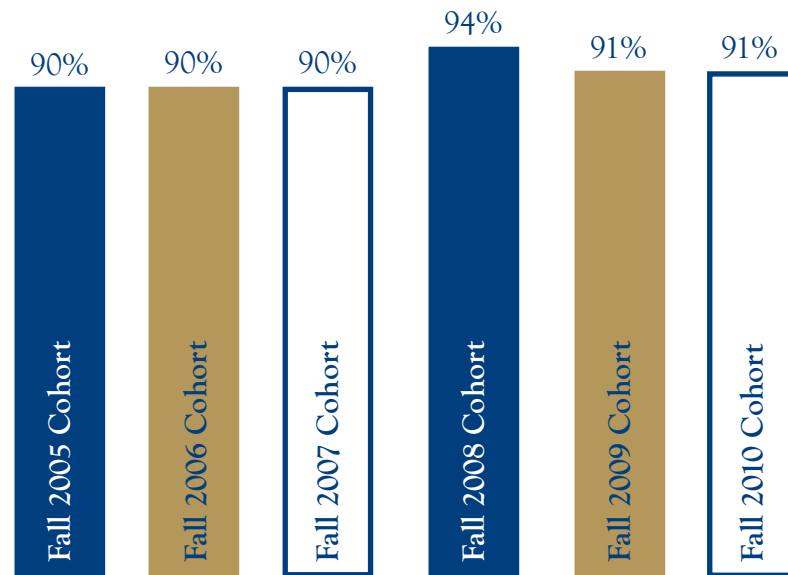
For more details and link to registration go to:  
[www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors/30years](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors/30years)



## Honors 2011-2012 Data

- 456** Honors Students (37 % Men, 63% Women, 80% Caucasian, 20% Non-white)
- 399** Georgia Residents (88%)
- 19** States Represented
- 17** Countries Represented
- 91%** Freshman Retention Rate
- 99** Honors Courses Offered
- 6725** Hours of Service and Leadership
- 152** Faculty Teaching Honors Courses or Mentoring Honors Students

## Honors Freshman Retention Rates



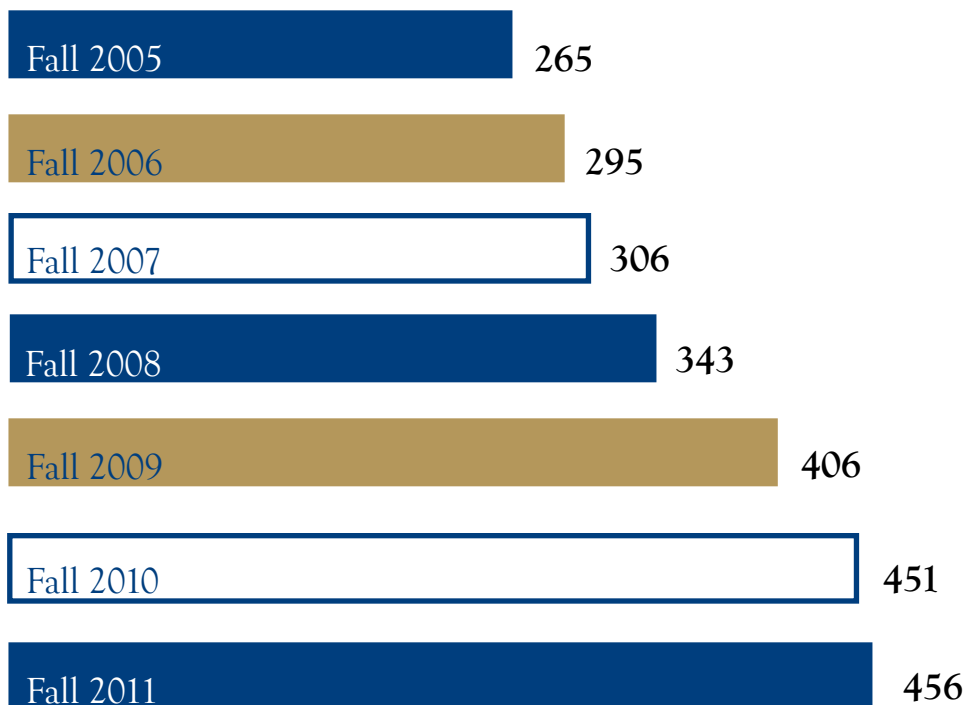
## Honors Students by Academic College

Science and Technology	155
Liberal Arts and Social Sciences	148
Health and Human Sciences	59
Business Administration	47
Education	19
Information Technology	17
International Studies	22
Undeclared	15

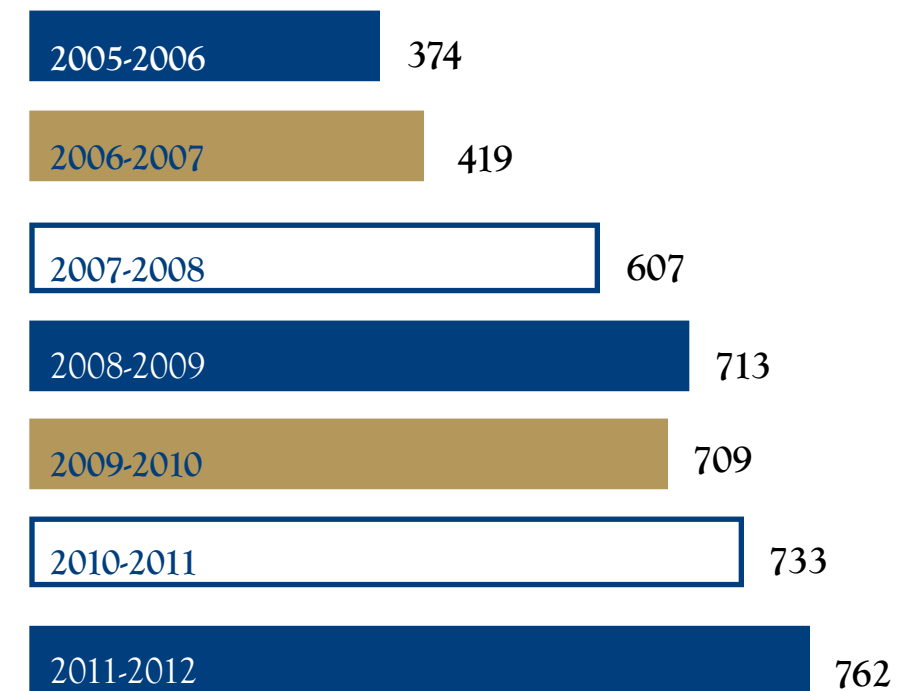
## 2012 Incoming Freshman Class Projections

- 147** New Freshmen
- 138** Georgia Residents (94%)
- 6** States Represented
- 1266** Average SAT
- 28.3** Average ACT
- 3.76** Average GPA (unweighted)

## Number of Honors Students



## Program Applicants





Thirty Years of Honors  
Saturday, October 20, 2012

[www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors/30years](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors/30years)



**GEORGIA  
SOUTHERN  
UNIVERSITY**

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[www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/honors)

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