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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "University Honors Program News" (2019). *Honors College News Blog*. 68. <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/honors-news/68>

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Honors in Action: Research at Camp

April 1, 2019



Figure 1 Honors Students at camp. L-R: Mariah Arnett, Delaney Grim, Seth Davis, Niesha Bell, Sarah Martinez, and Christina Sartain.

In what has become a spring break tradition, [Camp Blue Skies](#) comes to [Camp Twin Lakes](#) in Rutledge, Georgia—a camp especially designed to support campers who face medical, adaptive, and other life challenges. Dr. Jerri Kropp and Dr. Brent Wolfe led a group of 16 students to volunteer as cabin counselors and activity leaders for participants in Camp Blue Skies, a camp for adults with developmental disabilities. Our students go through some intensive pre-camp training, including training on-site a couple weeks before camp.

This year's group featured a mix of new volunteers and seasoned returners, including Delaney Grimm (recreation '20), who used this year's camp to conduct research for her honors thesis. Her thesis will be the third honors thesis connected to research about the camp. Her project utilized PhotoVoice to give campers the opportunity to voice their opinion on what they have learned at camp, which Delaney will analyze in order to assess, she said, "what domains of recreational therapy (physical, emotional, spiritual, social, cognitive, and leisure) are being achieved by Camp Blue Skies and how they can improve activities in the future."

use Camp Blue Skies as the focus for my thesis project has helped expand my experience with the population, create meaningful interactions, and advocate for an amazing population that usually gets underestimated," Grimm said. "There is truly no place like camp."

PhotoVoice is a method that gives the participants a voice in deciding what issues are important in the study and puts cameras in their hands so they can identify those issues visually as well as through focus groups. "Being able to

Honors Research: Trawling the Stories of Georgia's Fishers

April 1, 2019



2 Julia Thomas in the archives.

While eating your shrimp basket with fries, do you ever stop and wonder how that seafood arrived on your plate? Perhaps it was caught locally. Or maybe it was imported from another part of the world. Or even raised in a fish farm. Julia Thomas (anthropology '19) has spent the past three semesters researching and interviewing fishers, particularly shrimpers and crabbers, in southeast Georgia who supply seafood across American and Asian markets. Her research focuses on the fishers' relationship to larger commercialized fishing corporations.

"Stricter government regulations, increasing fuel and operation costs, and competition from imported seafood are negatively affecting coastal

Georgia's commercial fishing industry. Fishers' local ecological knowledge is extensive and gives them unique perspectives into the problems the industry is facing," she said. "Their perspectives differ from those of biologists or policymakers, making them useful for implementing good management practices that not only consider the scientific knowledge of a fishery, but the human aspect as well. My thesis discusses the findings from mixed-methods research conducted with Georgia fishermen about the problems they face and their unique insights into potential solutions."

Thomas recently had the opportunity to present her honors thesis at the 79th Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Portland, Oregon. She worked under the mentorship of Dr. Jennifer Sweeney Tookes whose oral history research team she joined last March.

“I was one of twelve undergraduate and graduate anthropology students selected to be a part of Dr. Tookes’ research team. We conducted oral history interviews with the fishing community,” she said. “As the number of commercial fishers in Georgia declines, there is a lot of cultural knowledge and history that could be lost. While on the trip Dr. Tookes mentioned the opportunity to continue doing research with this community as part of an honors thesis, and I took her up on that.”

The oral histories conducted on that research trip were recorded and will be uploaded to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) *Voices from the Fisheries* database which is available to the public.

As her mentor, Dr. Tookes aided in developing the topic, reading drafts, making edits, and providing support in Thomas’s endeavors. Dr. Tookes praised her student and recognized her strive and commitment. “Julia Thomas has completed intensive, independent anthropological research that rivals the work of many graduate students. She has completed an ambitious project, and it has been a pleasure to serve as her undergraduate honors thesis advisor,” she said.

The conference gave Thomas the opportunity to share her finding with scholars in her field. While Thomas has presented posters at conferences before, Portland was her first experience with an oral presentation.

“I had only done poster presentations, so this was a whole new experience. It was fun to attend a conference more related to my major and thesis. Dr. Tookes introduced me to a few of her colleagues who attended the session I presented in. It was nice to meet people whose research relates to my thesis and know so much more about fisheries than me. There were also a few people in the audience whose works I cited in my thesis. I was able to put a face to the name and meet people whose research I have read and used in my work,” Thomas said.

During Thomas’ four years at Georgia Southern University, she has been an active member of the anthropology community on campus. She is a member of the Anthropological Society and Vice President of Lambda Alpha, a national anthropology honors society.

“In Lambda Alpha, the officers and I lead and organize meetings and host events like our Anthropology Spring Film Series. Most recently we showed *Secrets of the Dead: Herculeum Uncovered*, and 82 people attended. We are also currently planning an end-of-year departmental event in collaboration with the Anthropological Society,” she said.

Thomas also volunteers in the archeology lab, in the Carroll Building, for several hours a week. She works with graduate students and staff, helping in organizational projects. “Last semester, I helped organize and rehabilitate a collection we got from the Armstrong Campus. It was from the 1980s and 1990s, and we went through approximately 80 or so boxes of archaeological material, creating inventory forms for each box and re-bagging artifacts when we need to. We also worked on some of the zooarchaeological comparative collection, mainly by cleaning and rinsing off specimens when they were ready. This semester, we have re-boxed and stored another collection from Armstrong and are currently in the process of cleaning, sorting, and bagging artifacts donated to us from a collector,” she said.

“After conducting research, I am most passionate about the fishers. Before doing this research, I knew next to nothing about commercial fishing and the industry in Georgia. Now, I have so much admiration and respect for the fishers and other people in the industry. It is such dangerous, risky, difficult work, but they love it anyway. Hearing how much they enjoy fishing and listening to their stories is so inspirational and they are such an incredible group of people,” Thomas said.

Mary Kate Moore...Than Meets the Eye

April 1, 2019



3 Mary Kate Moore (r) and her mentor, Dr. Joshua Williams

Soon-to-graduate Honors student Mary Kate Moore (experimental psychology '19) will be able to add one more entry to her curriculum vita this June: a publication as lead author of the article, "George Berkeley Through History: Multimodal Perception from the 1700s to Present." The article is coming out in the [North American Journal of Psychology](#).

What began as a two-page topical paper for her History and Systems of Psychology class in 2017 turned into a 17-page publication on multimodal perception, or the idea that all our senses – visual, auditory, sensory and more – work together to create one's perception of reality. The original assignment was to select a figure in history – in Moore's case, George Berkeley – and connect their ideas to modern research.

In respect to multimodal perception, Berkeley championed the idea that there is a correlation between sight, touch, and previous experiences, and humans interpret the world through the integration of these inputs. Moore focused her paper on the points in history where Berkeley's idea was used – knowingly or not – and showcased how his idea has persisted through time and has even been supported using today's available technology.

The journey from two-page paper to full-blown publication was, naturally, a laborious one. "Difficult would probably be the best word I could use to describe it," Moore said.

After writing the paper for her class, Moore was fascinated by "the fact that [one] could see [Berkeley's ideas] in all these different perspectives" and wanted to explore it further. Her professor for the class, Dr. Joshua Williams, had included a clause in his syllabus that indicated he would support students looking to publish papers written in class. Moore reports that it was a "mutual idea to go to publication" and that "discussion about her interest [in writing the article] made [Dr. Williams] excited."

Once Moore began writing the article, she ran into quite a few obstacles, including writer's block and how to best organize the article.

"I first attempted to look at theoretical perspectives in chronological order instead of organizing the article by person," she shared. "That didn't work, so I tried looking at it topically, as in a section on audio, then visual, then touch, etc. What ended up working was looking at the historical figures that relate to Berkeley's ideas. Whole textbooks have been written on multimodal perception alone, so this article is just a highly representative distillation of all that it could have been, emphasizing connections back to Berkeley's ideas."

Dr. Williams and fellow psychology professor Dr. Nancy McCarley mentored Moore throughout the writing process. Williams helped Moore by focusing the content of the article and providing feedback, while McCarley aided Moore in ensuring the writing flowed and, according to Moore, helped her to write in a way that was "accessible to any person who decided they wanted to read it."

"She really didn't need us that much," Dr. Williams shared. "Mary Kate is extremely driven, and she's very dedicated to projects she gets involved in." Williams described Moore as diligent and said she is "one of the most reliable undergraduate research students I've ever worked with, paired with a good attitude."

In addition to Moore's work ethic, Williams also attributed some of her success to her involvement with the Student Scholars Symposium. "She's an accomplished speaker," he shared. "Higher-up presentations at field-specific conferences are now old hat." Moore has presented her work on this subject at a previous Student Scholars Symposium and the Southeastern Psychological Association conference last year in fulfillment of her Honors project graduation requirement.

While being the lead author on a publication while an undergraduate student certainly sets Moore apart from her peers, the process of researching and writing the article had a big impact on Moore. “The most challenging part was reading philosophical texts such as the *Critique of Pure Reason* by Kant. I have lots of respect for philosophers after that.”

Williams expanded on the article’s impact: “For Mary Kate, the article allowed her to explore her interest in neuroscience as it relates to development, and knowing the history and ideas behind development is going to play a big part for her as she goes to graduate school. For the discipline, the article is significant as many people are still exploring old ideas, and it’s amazing to think that many past figures in history hit the nail on the head before having any of the fancy technologies of today.”

In the future, Moore would like to focus on research into multimodal perception with an applied perspective as opposed to theoretical. “Multimodal perception is my baby,” she explained. “I think it’s fascinating.” She already has ideas in mind for possible experiments but confided that she may have to wait until she’s earned her Ph.D. before delving even further into the subject.