The Newest Honors Class
300 Incoming Students
Choosing a Challenge

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In the course of my interviews for this position, many asked why I wanted this job. Although the parallels with my research specialty (Russian history) make administration an interesting intellectual adventure, such activities generally are not as exciting as the archive or the classroom. Yet, my answer to the question was, and is, one connected to my interest in the past. As an historian, I found the opportunity to engage creatively with the legacy of the Honors Program—its traditions and the students that help create them—to be an exciting prospect.

In addition, I continue to be drawn to the transformative role that a Catholic and Marianist education intended to challenge high-achieving students can play in our lives and in the world around us. Indeed, on these pages you will get a good glimpse of how all of you—past and present—embrace your callings as students to explore the mystery of God’s creation in all of its manifestations. You continue to be touch-bearers of a Catholic intellectual tradition that spans two millennia. Furthermore, you have become models of “honor” with your courage, humility, thankfulness

Welcome to HONORSlink—the latest edition of news and notes from the University of Dayton Honors Program.

Over the past four years the Honors Program has made great progress in serving more of the University’s most talented students. This fall Dr. David Darrow, Associate Professor of History and former Director of International Studies, takes the helm as the Program’s fifth director. Under previous directors, Dr. Steven Dandauke and Dr. Patricia M. Hart, the Program expanded its diploma options to all students in the University Honors Program. The Berry Scholars Program is winding down, with the final class having entered in the fall of 2009. Now more than 200 students each year enter UD as equal members of the Honors Program with the opportunity to earn a University Honors Program diploma. The Honors academic staff currently includes Associate Director Dr. Andrew Murray (Mechanical Engineering), who organizes and leads the thesis process, and Dr. John McCombe (English), who serves as Associate Director for Fellowship Advising.

Current Honors Program students now can earn one of four Honors diplomas through three pathways. Last year, 87 students earned diplomas and Honors keys from the University Honors Program. While the Honors Program is proud to offer opportunities and benefits to a larger group of students, it remains committed to building and maintaining a close-knit community. This year’s incoming first-year Honors students were invited to move in a day early and participate in a welcome program where they met upper class Honors students and learned more about the Program (see adjacent article). Also, first-year Honors students participate in Learning/ living communities where they take core courses together. Our upper class Honors students are helping to plan additional Honors special events that will benefit all incoming Honors students.

Peace,
David W. Darrow, Ph.D.

On-line issues of HONORSlink can be found at: http://honors.udayton.edu

Look there for our next issue in May!

What do you get when you combine 584 family members, 244 incoming Honors students, 64 student leaders, and 1 day? And no, the answer is not a headache. On August 20, 2010, the Honors Program hosted its first ever Honors Students Welcome (HSW). Inspired by a previous Honors summer orientation program designed for a smaller group of students, the HSW was an effort to provide all incoming Honors students with the opportunity to meet with peers, Honors Program faculty and staff, and the wide array of opportunities awaiting them at the University of Dayton.

After lunch it was time for the incoming students to willingly part from their parents and meet in small groups while Dr. Darrow hosted a parent question-and-answer session. The students were placed into small groups based on the criteria of residence hall and wide array of academic majors in an attempt to provide them an opportunity to meet and speak with students who have similar interests and live nearby. Through scavenger hunts, orientation and ice-cream eating, incoming Honors students became much more comfortable with their new found home.

Sound like a productive day? It had just begun! For the next three hours students were given the opportunity to sit in on six modules covering topics such as national fellowships, student organizations, education abroad, career planning, student service, scholarship, and the benefits of being in the Honors Program. With mounds of information clouding their brains, students moved to a farewell dinner during which they had the opportunity to win what Dr. Darrow likes to call “fabulous prizes” through a raffle drawing.

If you find it exhausting simply reading about all the events of one day, it is nothing compared to the dropping eyes of the incoming Honors students. However, despite the long day, students felt that the experience was positive and beneficial. One survey comment noted that “it helped to make things less overwhelming both socially and academically.” So, the HSW was able to accomplish its main goal to acquaint new students with the Program and the benefits the Honors Program has to offer, assuring parents that their children will have every opportunity to succeed at the University of Dayton.

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The University Honors Program is foremost a program centered on academic excellence. A passion for learning and a lifelong curiosity is something all former Honors students share. Some Honors graduates have decided to share this passion by continuing down the path of academia. In this Honors Alumni spotlight we highlight five Program graduates who continued their formal educations and are now educating the next generation of thinkers and innovators.

Joe Acquisto, Class of 1997
Dr. Joseph Acquisto thinks he is probably best remembered by his peers for his crazy credit load. He graduated with a double degree in Music Performance and French. Dr. Alan Kimbrough of Music Performance: “With the combination of learning from a bona fide Dubliner and being physically entrenched in the multifaceted sense of place. After feeling what Joyce did with Dublin, I was encouraged to try to find that location. “This conundrum is faced by the creative thesis. I was living on the outskirts of a burn lab at Penn State, which tests fuels, then ran a business on University of the State of New York, which tests fuels, then designs engines to run those fuels. “All of this was enabled by the University of Dayton and it started from a very young age. I was very happy there and I credit a lot of this to the University of Dayton; said Boehm. His advice to current Honors students is to focus on a thesis.

Andre Boehm, Class of 1986
Dr. Andre Boehm began his life at the University of Dayton much earlier than most. His parents were living in graduate housing when he was born and his father later became a UD professor. His childhood memories of playing with the frogs his dad was using for Biomedical Engineering research.

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It would seem that Bioczekowycz has solved O’Connor’s problem of finding the intersection of place and time and now stands at her own crossroads, trying to make a small mark on eternity with her current writing project. And while all of us who desire to write must find that place ourselves, it certainly helps to have the support that like given that by the University Honors Program as we make that journey.

Article written by Isaac Blett

Sonia Bilcoczewycz

Wise Blood,” says Bilcoczewycz. Rather than a convenient, cure-all remedy for life’s trials, genuine belief is portrayed as a fierce struggle, like any medical disorder; faith is life-altering and severe. While doubt is sometimes dismissed as a weakness of faith, O’Connor asserts that disbelief can, in itself, serve as a source of redemptive suffering. “With the literary motifs of disease and suffering, I will examine the paradoxical impulses of belief and disbelief in my creative thesis. This work will attempt an honest depiction of modernity and its refusal to approach belief or disbelief with any sense of gravity.”

Biloczewycz also feels that working on this project has allowed her to explore her own artistic direction as a writer. The opportunity presented in the Honors thesis has pushed her to work on this project, something she says she may not have done on her own.

In addition to her thesis work, Bilcoczewycz is applying for a Fulbright Fellowship to teach English in Armenia. Armenian Orthodox culture is very unique, and it has produced some great writers. It is also a former Soviet state, like Ukraine, and that resonates with my background.”

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Brian May: I was promoted this summer to associate professor.

Amy Batchman: I was married in 2004 and my wife and I have two children (Grace) who was born in 2006. My daughter (Eliana Jou-jou Iris, born March 27, 2008) on October 13, 2010. We have finally been able to return to school this fall full-time. I'm now in the middle of my second set of Boards and will graduate again from UD in 2012.

Katie Sunday: I got married to Alex McIlvaine on December 19, 2009, in San Antonio, Texas. He is a native of Fort Collins, Colorado, and we met at UD in 2005. I am currently on the faculty of the University of Kansas in Lawrence in the School of Social Welfare.

Jeff Shafer: I received my Masters degree from the University of Kentucky in 1999. While I was there, I met my future wife, and I was married in February of 2000. I bought both of us a 2-year-old and kept her parents entertained with her "tickle me stink bomb" at Christmas.

David Focht: Temperatures in December averaged +1.0° above normal for the state of Ohio. We had a dry Christmas, with no snow or ice. We had a wet Christmas, with no snow or ice. We had a snowy Christmas, with no snow or ice.

Karin Sepp: I got married on July 21, 2007 (2007). I am currently in my eighth year of teaching at the law firm of Baker & McKenzie in Chicago. I am a junior partner and a member of the firm's Business Litigation Department. I work on a variety of business and financial matters for our clients and in the Los Angeles office.

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Michaela Michniello awarded a PhD for research

Michaela Michniello, an Honors senior writing a thesis, was awarded a Fight for Sight Summer Student Fellowship Grant. Her ongoing research project is an analysis, a birth defect of the eye, will continue throughout this semester she is supported by her faculty advisor, Dr. Alt Singh. Michniello plans to continue her dissertation during the Honors Symposium May 2011.

ROTC CEREMONY ANNOUNCED
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ZACHARY SADLER NAMED AS NOMINEE FOR ARMY ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICAN

Zachary Sader is the nominee for the 2011-2012 Army Academic All-American Program. Sader is an Honors student majoring in international studies and Spanish double-major. Sader was named second-team academic All-American after winning the A-10 individual academic title and achieving an outstanding GPA.

2010 PALERMO FOUNDERS FUND RECIPIENT IS ABAGAIL LAWSON

Abigail Lawson, President’s Class of 2011, was the 2010 Palermo Founders Fund recipient. Lawson describes her vision of the thesis project, “My thesis directly concerns the concept of sovereignty. It is the question of the ‘just act’ meaning in a ‘just context’—how is it related to the concept of peace?”

Notes and news from the University of Dayton Honors Program
HONORS STUDENTS ARE NEWEST CHAMINADE SCHOLARS
Six of the Chaminade Scholars recently announced are Honors students from the Class of 2013. Congratulations to Emily Hascher, Nicholas Fahrig, Colleen Federici, Kara Kindel, Sarah Kociuba and Emily Motz!

MEGHANN WYGONIK RECEIVES “SMART” MONEY
The U.S. Department of Defense awarded junior civil engineering major and Honors student Meghann Wygonik a SMART scholarship—Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation—that will provide funding for full tuition, a $1,000 book allowance, other education-related fees, paid summer internships, health insurance and a job after graduation. Wygonik, who graduated from Kiski Area High School near Pittsburgh, said she is excited to return home for her internship and post-graduation employment with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District.

NATIONAL GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO JULIA FAETH
Julia Faeth, a senior Honors student majoring in chemical engineering, has been awarded a 2010-2011 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship. Faeth is currently conducting research under Dr. Sukhjinder Sidhu with the Sustainable Environmental Technologies Group at UDRI.

In addition, Faeth was recently awarded an American Institute of Chemical Engineers National Scholarship based on academic performance and involvement in chapter activities.

DAN PRINDLE SELECTED TO NATIONAL GOOD WORKS TEAM
University of Dayton senior offensive tackle and Berry Scholar Dan Prindle has been selected to the 2010 Allstate AFCA Good Works Team. Allstate Insurance Company and the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) annually select the team, which is one of the most prestigious off-the-field honors in college football. Prindle is the first UD player ever selected to the Good Works team.

NICHOLAS PESOLA WINS UD’S RILEY AWARD
Nicholas Pesola, a senior Honors student and psychology and Spanish double major, was the winner of the 2010 Riley Award. This University of Dayton award recognizes a junior student who has exercised sustained leadership through involvement with student initiatives, exemplifying the educational and service values of the University. Nick is an active member of the UD and City of Dayton communities. He also devotes attention to service trips and immersion experiences that benefit the residents of other states and countries.

JOHN MCGINNIS AWARDED NATIONAL CLINTON SCHOLARSHIP
John McGinnis, junior international studies and Spanish major, was recently awarded a William Jefferson Clinton Scholarship to study at the American University in Dubai for the Spring 2011 semester. This scholarship entitles John to a 100% waiver in tuition and housing during his stay, allowing McGinnis to continue his studies in the Arabic culture and language.

January
21 Honors Art Exhibit Open House
31 Honors Students Symposium: Senior Registration Due
31 Hull Applications Due

February
11 An Honors Evening at the Dayton Philharmonic

March
11 Honors Students Symposium
11 Honors Students Reception

April
1 Juniors: Thesis Proposal and Grant Request Documents Due
8 Seniors: Theses Due
13 Joseph W. Stander Symposium

May
7 Honors Graduation Brunch
8 Graduation