



areté 2018

The Magazine of The Honors College at the University of Houston



Michael Andrew Little
August 10, 1969–July 27, 2018

On July 27, Professor Andy Little, a cherished member of the Honors College family, passed away unexpectedly. He is survived by his son, Jacob, a political science major and an outstanding member of the Honors College. Professor Little also leaves a vast library of well-loved and well-worn books and a legacy of devoted students, colleagues, and alumni for whom he had been a friend, mentor, and adviser for many years.

A 1993 Honors College graduate with majors in political science and English, Professor Little did his graduate work in political philosophy at Fordham University in New York City. He returned to the University of Houston and has been teaching and advising in the Honors College and the Department of Political Science since 1997. A ravenous reader always ready for discussion of books and ideas, Andy cast himself in the mold of his mentor, Ross Lence, the legendary political theorist, teacher, and adviser.

Professor Little taught in the Human Situation sequence, as well as courses in ancient and medieval philosophy and American political thought. He helped lead students on trips to Turkey, Israel, and Greece and created a Shakespeare Reading Group that was working through all 37 of the Bard's plays, one each month. Andy hosted numerous book clubs and dinner parties, on campus or in his home, during which he would invoke Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes—and William Faulkner—to rapt audiences who delighted in his prismatic imagination. He saw himself as a goalie of the mind, keeping the intellectual game alive by blocking each seemingly unassailable shot.

Everyone who knew Professor Little will have a memory of a special meal he prepared, a conversation that ended in laughter, or an exciting hallway discussion of a great text. Please join us for a celebration of the life of Professor Andy Little hosted by the Honors College at noon on Saturday, February 16 at 2 p.m. in the Elizabeth D. Rockwell Pavilion.

Tributes to Professor Little

thehonorscollege.com/andylittle

“Andy Little, thank you for being a remarkable man and for allowing me the opportunity to learn from you.”

- Kyle Knight ('17)

“We would listen to him discuss each book with such passion and enthusiasm as he would recall lessons from his own mentor Dr. Ross Lence, and in those moments, it was nice to see that Andy Little, a great professor before us, was some other great professor's student, and I could see how much Andy cared for passing on his knowledge to us.”

- James (Andy) Chang ('11)

“I am going to miss my advising sessions becoming hour-long lectures and getting stopped in the hallway to listen to whatever new argument on Plato or Shakespeare he had in the works.”

- Elizabeth Knuppel
Honors College Student

“He was a brilliant man with the innate desire and ability to assist students in every way he could. The passion he showed for higher education was infectious.”

- Nora Bayly
Bauer Business College Adviser

“Professor Lence told me several times that Andy was the 'best student he had ever had,' and Ross had dozens of superb students. Andy literally transformed the lives of dozens and dozens of students. He did so because he loved books, and he read and remembered with meticulous detail what he read—and he had one of the most inquisitive minds I have ever encountered.”

- Ted Estess
Founding Dean, The Honors College

“To honor Andy is to continue the conversation, keep asking questions and push expectations, especially of myself. I am so glad I was lucky enough to be his student and friend.”

- Blair Ault ('10)

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

THE HONORS COLLEGE

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Dear Friends,

As we embark on a new year, we look back on 2017-2018, which marked some major milestones for the Honors College. We celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Human Situation course, the College's signature great books course and a rite of passage for Honors freshmen since 1977.

Though 40 years young, "Human Sit" remains a timeless tradition committed to close reading, careful writing, and critical thinking, inviting students of all majors to participate in what has been called "the great conversation." This common experience unites alumni across the years, who reminisce and (fondly) commiserate about their time in the two-semester course.

Each year we invite our alumni to resume the conversation at our annual scholarship gala, The Great Conversation, which allows guests to engage in stimulating discussion led by outstanding faculty and alumni of the University of Houston. This year we are especially delighted to invite our alumni and friends back to campus on March 30, 2019, when we will be holding the gala on campus for the first time ever, in the newly opened Fertitta Center.

In 2018, we celebrated 60 years of honors education at the University of Houston—and we've come a long way since 1958. Today, the College is nationally known as a pioneering model of undergraduate excellence, but it took many years—and the arrival of Founding Dean Ted Estess—to build the structure, resources, and leadership that has allowed the Honors College to play a significant role in moving the University forward. The Honors College continues to demonstrate the lasting value of a rigorous, broad education based on great books and real-world challenges, expanding experiential learning opportunities, rewarding academic excellence, and recruiting top-notch faculty and students from across the nation.

While this magazine usually celebrates growth and achievement, this year also brought a terrible loss. Andy Little ('93), an Honors graduate who advised and counseled thousands of students in his 21-year-career in the Honors College, passed away unexpectedly in July. We will celebrate Andy's life on February 16, 2019, during the annual Master Teacher Residency honoring the legacy of Andy's friend and mentor, Ross M. Lence. Everyone who knew Professor Little will have a memory of a special meal he prepared or an exciting yet confounding discussion about a great text. We invite you to RSVP for the celebration of life or to share your memory of Andy at the following link: thehonorscollege.com/andylittle.

Warm Regards,



William Monroe,
Dean, The Honors College

Honors Events

2019



TheHonorsCollege



HonorsCollegeUH



HonorsCollegeUH



UHHonorsCollege

Thursday, October 18

Open House | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Friday, February 15

Ross M. Lence Dinner
5:45 p.m. Reception | 6:45 p.m. Dinner

Saturday, February 16

A Celebration of the Life of Andy Little | 2 p.m.

Thursday, February 21

Open House | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 2

National Merit Luncheon

Saturday, March 30

The Great Conversation at The Fertitta Center

Thursday, May 9

Graduation Banquet
The Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa
6:30 p.m. Reception | 7:30 p.m. Dinner



Help us keep in touch and improve your Honors alumni experience!

Please take a moment to fill out a short survey designed to help us create programming with you in mind.

When you complete the survey, your name will be entered into a drawing to win two free tickets to The Great Conversation. The winner will be announced on Friday, Feb. 22. This year's Great Conversation gala will be held on Saturday, March 30, on campus in the brand new Fertitta Center. For more details, visit thegreatconversationhouston.com



thehonorscollege.com/survey



OUR has Record-Breaking Year in Scholarships

By Daniel Wallace

By expanding its staff and ramping up its focus on major awards, the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR), housed in the Honors College, works tirelessly to increase the number of University of Houston students conducting research and receiving nationally competitive scholarships and fellowships such as the Fulbright, Goldwater, Marshall, Truman, Rhodes, and others. And in 2017-2018, OUR celebrated a record-breaking year. The number of students participating in undergraduate research increased by 13%, and the number of major award recipients at the University of Houston increased by an impressive 70%. This success is due in large part to the efforts of Dr. Jennifer Asmussen ('07), director of undergraduate research, and Dr. Ben Rayder, director of major awards and fellowships.

"I was initially reluctant to apply for the Urann Fellowship," writes Christopher Wong ('18), a recent graduate of the Honors College who was awarded the prestigious Urann Fellowship in 2018. "Dr. Rayder and Dr. Asmussen convinced me that I would be a strong applicant. Imagine my surprise when I was announced as an awardee! The financial award has helped cover my entire first year of medical school at Baylor College of Medicine. I am truly indebted to the Honors College for providing me outstanding academic support and co-curricular enrichment in my four years at UH."

In the last academic year, six UH students received Fulbright awards for research and teaching, the most awarded in a given year in the University's history and more than the previous five years combined. Four students received Critical Language Scholarships, setting another record. Moreover, the University of Houston is one of only two chapters of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi (PKP) in which students have received consecutive fellowships in 2017 and 2018.

Honors sophomore Saman Essa received a Critical Language Scholarship in Arabic. Essa is studying psychology and Middle Eastern studies and minoring in Medicine & Society. She has been involved in the UH Bonner Leaders Program, where she has worked on developing a program for teaching English to resettled refugees, and she has also participated in the Model Arab League, traveling to Cairo last fall for the international conference. After graduation, Essa aspires to attend graduate school for psychology and to continue working with refugees.

Sofia Ahmed ('18), who graduated in May 2018 with a bachelor's in English literature and a minor in Chinese studies, received the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Grant to Taiwan. She is interested in linguistics and language geography. In 2017, Ahmed received a Critical Language Scholarship to study in Beijing.

Megan Goh ('18), a 2018 biomedical engineering graduate, received a Fulbright Study/Research Grant to Germany, where she will be studying infantile brain disorders in animal models using photoacoustic imaging. "I'm extremely excited and very thankful for the opportunity," says Goh. "After returning from Germany, I hope to be able to continue my education by pursuing a doctorate in neuroscience."



Khalid Sheikh ('18), who graduated in May 2018 with a bachelor's in biology and minors in history and Medicine & Society, received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Grant to Latvia. He developed a passion for teaching and combatting education inequality while serving in the UH Bonner Leaders Program, through which he co-founded Lobo Prep and Improving Performance on the ACT (ImpACT), two mentoring programs for low-income high school students.

Madeline Styskal ('18), who graduated with degrees in music composition and Russian studies, was awarded a Fulbright assignment to Russia as an English Teaching Assistant for the 2018-19 academic year. Styskal's goals for this immersion experience extend beyond language proficiency to include her studies in music. In Moscow, Styskal will have access to the Prokofiev Museum and the opportunity to take lessons to refine her performance in accordance with the Russian school of piano technique. While at UH, Styskal was a National Merit Scholar and a member of the Houston Scholars program. In 2017, she received a Critical Language Scholarship to Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.

In addition to enriching and deepening student learning, undergraduate research is excellent preparation for students interested in applying to these nationally competitive awards. Through the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) and the Provost's Undergraduate Research Scholarship (PURS), students can receive funding to conduct research under the supervision of a faculty member for a full semester or during the summer. Programs like Houston Early Research Experience (HERE), Houston Scholars, and the Mellon Research Scholars Program, all offered through the Office of Undergraduate Research, provide support and advising for those exploring research for the first time.

"The undergraduate research experience allows students to generate a well-rounded application for research-focused graduate programs and job opportunities in any field," says Asmussen. "Many students who have previously participated in HERE, SURF, or PURS have applied for and received a competitive research opportunity at other universities, research institutions, and government organizations. And participating in an external, competitive research opportunity is a way in which students can diversify and expand their undergraduate research portfolios."

Recently, students conducting research in the STEM fields have applied the research skills they acquired at UH in research labs at



other institutions across the U.S. and abroad. Last year, Honors STEM students successfully applied for several nationally competitive research awards, including two recipients of the DAAD RISE, three recipients of a Baylor College of Medicine SMART Program award, two recipients of the Hollings Scholarship, three recipients of NIST SURF awards, and one recipient of the Ford Fellowship. In addition, five students received Albert Schweitzer Junior Fellowships to conduct projects addressing health needs in the Houston community.

"It has been a privilege to work with UH students on applications for these awards," says Rayder. "Seeing how hard our students work inspires me to enhance the quality of my advising. Honors students are great fits for many award opportunities, and the success of our students this year affirms the value of an Honors education."

Both Asmussen and Rayder hope to see more students seizing these opportunities. Students interested in research or major awards can take advantage of information sessions, workshops, and advising provided by the Office of Undergraduate Research. To get involved with research, contact Dr. Asmussen. For help with major award applications, contact Dr. Rayder.

UH Engineering Students Conduct Research in Germany

By Mallory Chesser

For many new college students, the concept of research is not on their radar. Or if it is, it's something reserved for graduate students and mad scientists. The Office of Undergraduate Research, housed in the Honors College, is seeking to change all this by exposing students of every major to the wealth of undergraduate research opportunities available, at home and overseas. And thanks to the German Academic Exchange Service's Research Internships in Science and Engineering program—more commonly known as DAAD RISE—two University of Houston engineering undergraduates conducted research in Germany this summer.

Taylor Hedtke is a junior chemical engineering student and is in the Honors College. Previously, she conducted research at Colorado School of Mines on the removal of water contaminants using ceramic membranes and activated carbon. Hedtke is currently conducting research at UH to determine the effects on microbial growth of antiscalant additives in water filtration..



This summer she was at the University of Kaiserslautern conducting research on molecular modeling and simulations. Hedtke is also involved in STEM outreach activities through the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and is a teaching assistant for freshmen honors engineering courses.

“The DAAD RISE scholarship is an incredible opportunity to broaden the scope of my research while gaining insight into the international research community,” says Hedtke. “My work in Germany delved into theoretical aspects that bridge the gap between my courses and my previous research that emphasized hands-on work with physical systems. The theory of interactions on the molecular level is foundational to my project and has major implications for my undergraduate major, chemical engineering, and my intended graduate studies in environmental engineering.”

Reed Masek is a sophomore physics major and Honors College student. He currently performs research at UH as a member of NASA's High Altitude Student Payload (HASP) program to study cosmic rays and their influence on stratospheric extremophiles. In early March, he received an internship from the DAAD RISE program, through which he spent the summer in Germany working with a doctoral student to create a hybrid DAQ for a hybrid scintillation and radio detector.



The DAAD RISE program offers summer research opportunities at German universities in the fields of natural science, engineering, and life sciences for students enrolled full-time in a STEM major. The ideal candidate has performed well in the classroom, has conducted research previously, and wants to gain more research experience in an international setting. Internship recipients also receive stipends from the DAAD to assist with living expenses while abroad.

Although last year was the first year that the University has actively encouraged students to apply for DAAD RISE, the University's robust and varied science programs make UH students excellent candidates for such research internships, which for Hedtke and Masek are a continuation of the work they have started at UH as undergraduate students.

While looking forward to the opportunity to continue his work on radiation sensors, Masek is especially excited to travel: “To this day, I have never left the United States. I hoped that applying to an internship abroad would allow me to kill two birds with one stone—to begin my travels around the world and to supplement my college career,” he said.

Honors Students Receive Hollings Environmental Science Scholarships

By Mallory Chesser

During his 36 years in office, Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina was an advocate for ocean policy and conservation. The Hollings Scholarship, instituted upon his retirement in 2005, pays tribute to his legacy by supporting undergraduate education in the environmental sciences through scholarships and internships with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In March 2018, for the first time, the University of Houston learned that not one, but two of its students have received a Hollings Scholarship, offering up to \$9,500 in tuition for their junior and senior year as well as a 10-week, paid internship at a NOAA facility during the summer.

Rachel Sanchez-Ruffra is a third-year biology major in the Honors College. In the summer of 2017, she participated in GalapaGO, a month-long, research-based study abroad experience in the Galápagos Islands, where she developed experience and an appreciation for ecological field research. Sanchez-Ruffra hopes to pursue a graduate degree and a career conducting research in environmental protection and preservation.

True Furhh is a junior, Tier One Scholar and Honors College student pursuing degrees in environmental sciences and civil engineering. He is active in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM) Student Leadership, serves as a UH Advancement Ambassador, is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, and spends weekends as a coordinator in UH CARES initiative.

Furhh participated in a UH study abroad to Iceland and completed a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) last summer, two experiences that heightened his interest in research into environmental issues. Through the NOAA Hollings Scholarship, Furhh hopes to study coastal resiliency and how environmental stewardship can mitigate the effects of disasters.

Applicants to the Hollings Scholarship must be sophomores at the time of application and should have an interest in pursuing a career related to public service or oceanic and atmospheric research.

By offering hands-on experience in environmental science, research, technology, policy, education, and management,

internships with the NOAA have a proven track record of launching successful careers in environmental science. NOAA reports that 75% of Hollings recipients go on to graduate school, and more than 7% have since received National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships.

Pictured below are Rachel Sanchez-Ruffra and True Furhh attending the 2018 NOAA Undergraduate Scholars Orientation in Silver Spring, Maryland. Photo credit: NSM.





Egypt

By Kathryn Lenihan

When I first started my college career, in no way was I expecting to get so interested in Model Arab League (MAL), and much less take that interest all the way to Cairo. The chance opportunity for me to get involved in MAL led me to an unforgettable trip.

The trip started arduously, with three flights to wind up (exhausted, hungry, and a little delirious) in Cairo. Battling jet lag and exhaustion, our first couple of days were jam-packed with visits to Coptic Cairo, the Pyramid of Giza, the Al Azhar mosque, and more. From riding a camel to learning basic Arabic phrases and eating traditional Egyptian koshari, the trip was full of firsts for everyone.

Even though we tried to see as much of Cairo as possible, our team was there to compete. Over several days of council, our

Honors College team proved our diplomatic skills and debate abilities, going head to head with students from Cairo. Outside of competition, we quickly got to know the other delegates. Comparing our university experiences turned to playing Just Dance during our breaks, which turned into us actually going dancing on a boat in the Nile with the Egyptian students!

The trip was an adventure in every sense of the word, from exploring culture of Cairo to winning awards. My favorite part of our trip was certainly our Thanksgiving dinner together. Personally, it was the first family holiday I had ever missed, and it was hard not being home. Luckily, we got to have our own Thanksgiving dinner, MAL-style. Going around the table saying our greatest challenge and takeaway from the trip may have been cheesy, but I'm happy to say I found a new family during my trip to Cairo.

Europe

By Nour Haikal

This was the first time I was going to plan and execute a trip without the help and comfort of my parents, so I was super nervous. I didn't know what to expect, or what was going to happen, but I did know that this would be a life-changing experience—and that is exactly what it was.

Europe is just beautiful—full of greenery, historic attractions, and stunning architecture—I was amazed at every street I crossed. When we arrived at our first stop in Amsterdam, everything felt like an unimaginable dream—from the canals to the parks. With every city we visited, my eyes grew wider and wider in awe.

Paris and Venice had to be my favorite. They were just so different from the Houston roads I was so used to driving on every day. Paris was so chic and fabulous, almost exactly what I imagined it to be, but even better. Venice had the most incredible sceneries. I remember rocking back and forth in a gondola, sailing through historic Venice, and thinking “How blessed am I to be here? If only I can show this to everyone back home.”

Every second of my trip felt like a fleeting moment that I was attempting to recapture with my camera. I cherished every moment, and thanked everyone constantly. I can't say it enough and I don't ever think it will ever be enough, but thank you. Thank you to everyone who made this possible.



By Liam Gallagher

Planet Earth always jumps out to me when surfing through Netflix. Sir David Attenborough's voice taking me on a voyage through exotic treasures of the world is a nice way to unwind after class. I didn't expect to wake up and surf in one of those paradises every day for a month. While we didn't have Sir Attenborough's voice retelling our events, we did get to hear of old adventures by Dr. Frankino and our trip will live on through him. Each morning brought new experiences and challenges as we rotated through different research projects. Our classrooms became untamed woods, breathtaking hikes, and a brilliantly clear ocean. Seeing sea turtles, playful sea lions, and prehistoric birds became as ordinary as the squirrels on campus. While the islands were extraordinary, the people I shared the trip with made this experience life-changing. Without my incredible classmates, faculty, host family, and locals, this trip wouldn't have been as memorable. I never felt worried despite being in the middle of an ocean, with my teachers, on a small island, in someone else's house, and in a country with a different language. The only time I felt homesick was when I missed dinner with my host family, and when my host mom gave me one last hug at the airport. Ending everyday sharing 50 cent empanadas on the beach watching the sunset on the Pacific Ocean is one of many memories that I will cherish for life.

Galápagos



Haiti

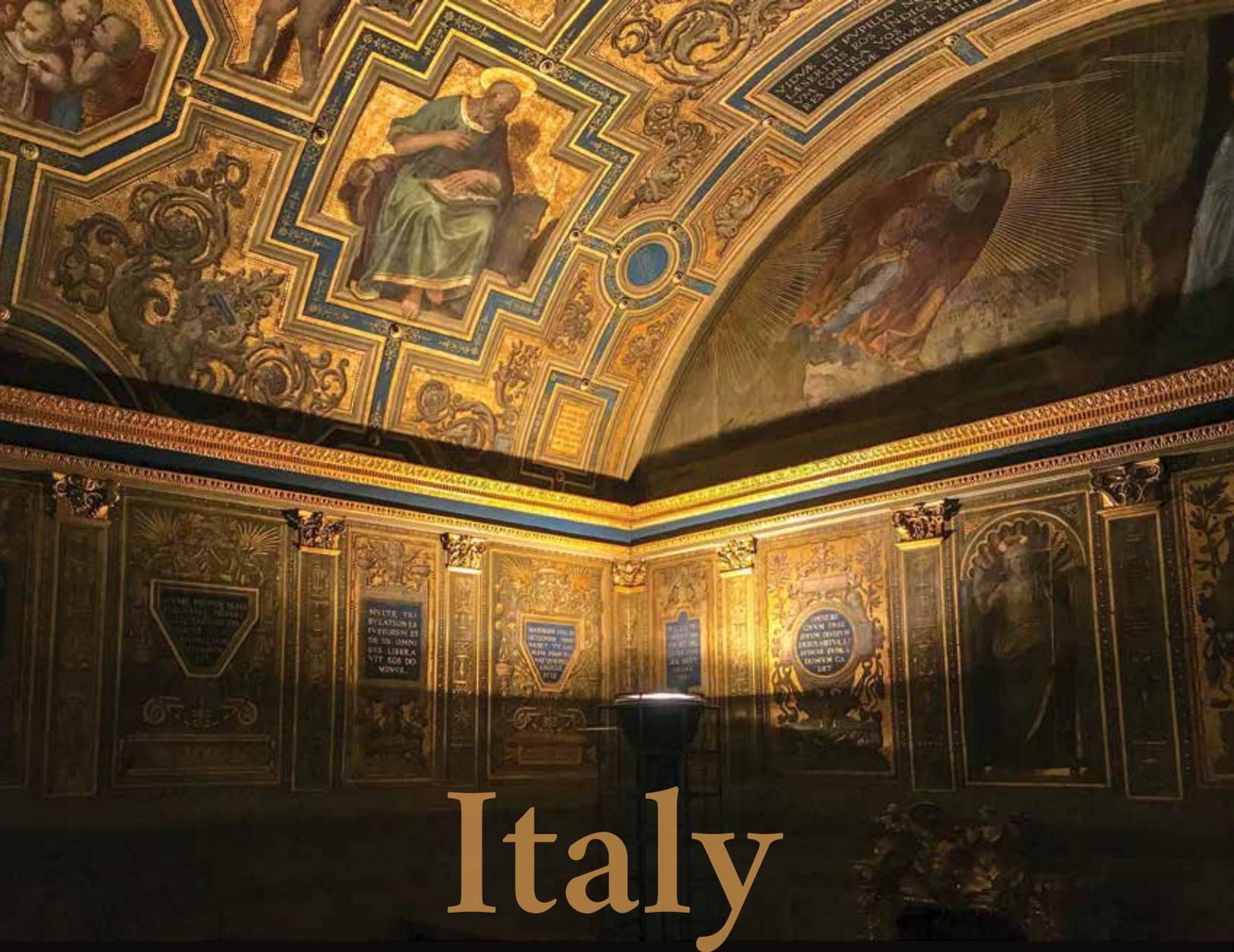
By Jemima Brittlebank

Growing up in the Bahamas, I knew firsthand what it was like to live in an area where healthcare wasn't accessible. In my town, we had one little clinic, but we had to get on a boat or plane to receive medical care from a doctor.

When I heard about this trip, I knew I had to go. It was so meaningful to me to know that I could go there and lend a hand, even for a week. While we were there, we performed mostly basic physical examinations, but the best part was getting to know the people. As a student, I learned that being a healthcare provider is a lot more than diagnosing and having a medical conversation—I'm there to serve patients and take care of them holistically.

Being a part of this trip taught me that, as healthcare providers, we won't always be able to solve every problem, but the most important thing we can do is be a human and connect to others.





Italy

By Trinity Rinear

My recent opportunity to study abroad in Italy with Honors College faculty and students can best be illustrated by a description of our final night in Rome, sitting in front of the Pantheon under the stars, discussing all of the wonders we had seen and knowledge we had gained on our short trip. Together, we reflected on our ventures through the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, impeccable museums, the Duomo in Florence, and countless other unforgettable experiences. Concurrently, we continued conversations that had threaded our trip: those about where we come from, our studies, how we view the world, and where we see ourselves going. On this final night, willing the hours until our flight out of town to slow down, I was astounded at just how much I had learned from my experiences with some of the oldest historic sites, artifacts, and art, as well as the new insights and perspectives I had gained from my fellow students and faculty - now my friends. This intimate ten-day study abroad trip reinvigorated my pursuit of lifelong learning, and it has inspired me to strive to learn from the experiences and the thoughts of the people who sit around me every day.

Israel & Greece

By Christian Dunn

As I was wrapping up my junior year at the University of Houston, I began asking friends, family, and alumni what they wish they had done before graduating. The answer that came up most often was “I wish I had studied abroad.” Recognizing that I may never have this level of collegiate freedom again, I started looking for opportunities to take my studies international.

At the end of my spring semester I traveled with Dean Monroe and Dr. Jessie Rainbow to Greece and Israel for two weeks. Having explored some ancient texts from Plato and the book of Job and Mark from the Bible throughout the semester, it was almost surreal to be standing in their country of origin.

For the first few days we traveled through Athens and visited sites like Poseidon’s temple and the Parthenon. Considered the birthplace of democracy, the ancient ruins among the modern city were a sight to see. Equally as interesting was watching how a country who had

recently experienced a severe economic crisis was attempting to recover. Graffiti lined the walls of the cities as a result of the high youth unemployment.

From there we traveled to the birthplace of the three Abrahamic religions, Israel. Our tour guide, one of the founding faculty of the Honors College, Dr. Steve Langfur, led us from Nazareth to Capernaum, visiting sites dating back over 2,500 years. The history combined with the significant relocation of the American Embassy to Jerusalem made it extremely memorable.

Overall, the trip was life-changing. I met a ton of great people; I traveled outside of North America for the first time; and I feel like my worldview was broadened as I realized there’s a lot going on outside my bubble. If you haven’t had the opportunity to study abroad, I highly recommend it. Thank you to Dean Monroe and the Honors College for a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



The Importance of Experience and Personal Development

Honors College alumnus John King ('92) grew up in Kansas City, Kansas before finding his new home in Houston, where he attended the University of Houston on a National Merit Scholarship and was a member of the Honors College. Since graduating summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in accounting in 1992, King has maintained close ties with UH, serving as president of the Honors College Advisory Board, vice president of the Bauer College of Business Foundation Board, a member of the Bauer College Board, and a member of the University's Board of Visitors.

King holds the position of Assurance Managing Partner for the Southwest Region at Ernst & Young, a leading multinational professional services firm. He has primarily focused on working with Fortune 500 companies across a range of industries, with an emphasis in the energy sector. Additionally, King and his wife Julie are active in charitable, philanthropic, and educational activities throughout the city of Houston.

Given his credentials, King was a clear choice for keynote speaker at the 2018 Fall Convocation, which took place on August 30 and drew nearly 800 guests. "The college experience is not merely about getting a degree and then a job," said King. "College is about your development as a person. It is about improving your skills, broadening your experiences, and expanding your field of vision. College is about discovering how great you can be."

In King's view, successful people are themselves interesting and interested in others. He went on to say that students should learn



about things which seemingly have no application to a course of study, challenging themselves to become well-rounded and to display a natural curiosity about the world.

"Personal success is much broader than just what you accomplish in the classroom," he emphasized. "Develop a broader view of the world. Find opportunities to travel. Work, live, and learn overseas. Learn how other societies work and how other people live."

Although King has warm memories of his time in the Honors College, his experience was not without its share of difficulties—namely, the Human Situation course, in which he struggled with the heavy reading load and wrote a first paper that his tough-love professor called "astonishingly bad." Having considered himself to be a good writer in high school, King was initially shaken. But ultimately, he chose to embrace the "productive discomfort," which he believes is essential to growth and progress. While he never became what he considers to be a brilliant writer, he learned how to adapt, to adjust, to improve.

"We learn infinitely more when we struggle and fall short than we do when we sail through life effortlessly," said King. "For you to succeed, you will need to fail."

King appreciates the opportunity to stay closely connected with the UH community, especially as it continues to grow. Surveying this progress, he is filled with pride and optimism, "for what we are, for what [our students] will become, and for what is possible for all of us together."

Honors Engineering Alumnus Finds Herself in a Balancing Act at Yale



From her first year at UH, when she was named an Outstanding First-Year Honors Student, to being named Outstanding Mechanical Engineering Student in the College of Engineering three years in a row, to choosing whether to accept a Ford or a GEM Fellowship as she headed to Yale for graduate school, Serrae Reed ('18) made the most of her undergraduate experience. She was a member of the UH Bonner Leaders Program in the Honors College; the National Society of Black Engineers; the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering; the Houston Scholars Program at UH; and the Honors Engineering Program. She also studied abroad with the Honors College in Russia, worked

with engineering professors Venkat Selvamanickam and Pavel Dutta for three years, and completed a summer research program at Arizona State University. And now, Reed is blazing a new trail at Yale University, where she is pursuing a doctorate in mechanical engineering and materials science.

“As I have made the transition from UH to Yale,” says Reed, “I’ve become increasingly more grateful and aware of the different ways my education at UH has shaped me into the researcher, student, and person that I am now.”

While good study habits and research experience were certainly a part of the skill set Reed developed as an undergraduate, she believes her time in the Honors College influenced her in less tangible, though equally important, ways. By attending numerous networking events, research symposia, and recruitment events, she developed interpersonal skills and the ability to present her ideas with confidence. The diverse Houston community prepared her to collaborate with individuals of all backgrounds. And her service with the Bonner Leaders taught her to be aware of the socioeconomic challenges of the community beyond the University’s walls.

Shannon Keen, director of the UH Bonner Leaders Program, calls Reed “a leader of leaders.” According to Keen, the opportunity to develop a service program to mentor and tutor 7th graders of a nearby middle school “became the challenge that defined [Reed’s] undergraduate career.” Over the course of two years, Reed acquired real-world skills in managing large teams, developing a curriculum, working with teachers and administrators, and developing a training program so that her legacy lives on.

Reed took these skills and the habit of service to New Haven, a community with a history of educational, medical, and nutritional challenges that Yale has long sought to address. “I will definitely be participating in tutoring-mentoring programs while I am here,” says Reed.

For now, though, Reed is settling into life as a doctoral student: “It’s not easy, but I’ve been happy to find that I am able to succeed in classes and conduct research at the graduate level. It’s a balancing act, but I’m learning new things every day.”

Welcome New Faculty



Paul Stapleton

Paul Stapleton teaches the Human Situation course and classes related to the minor in Creative Work. He has been an instructor at universities in Illinois and North Carolina, including University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), where he received several teaching awards. He also spent three years teaching college literature in North Carolina prisons, and for more than a decade worked as a high school Latin teacher. He holds a bachelor's degree in theology and classical studies from Boston College, and a master's degree in classics from Fordham University. Stapleton also received a master's in English and creative writing from North Carolina State University and a doctorate in comparative literature from UNC-Chapel Hill. His published scholarship addresses topics variously related to the intersection between religion and literature, as well as to classical receptions, and his short stories include a Pushcart Prize in fiction for "The Fall of Punicea."



Marina Trninic

Marina Trninic received her master's and doctoral degrees in English from Texas A&M University for her work on antebellum American literature, including questions of race and politics in literary representation. She specializes in nineteenth-century American literature and is interested in its relationship to identity, belonging, and violence. Her interests also include early American literature, American modernism, modern rhetorical theory, and writing and literature pedagogy. Trninic has taught courses in American literature and the humanities as well as composition and technical writing. She has held several positions in academic publishing, including acquisitions and editing, and she currently teaches Human Situation and other courses in the Honors College. Her most recent published article is "Edgar Allan Poe's Tarred and Feathered Bodies: Imagining Race, Questioning Bondage, and Marking Humanity" in the *South Central Review*.



Max Rayneard

Max Rayneard completed his bachelor's degree in English and philosophy and his master's degree in English literature at Rhodes University in South Africa. He worked as a lecturer at Nelson Mandela University and the University of Port Elizabeth in South Africa. Rayneard continued on the path of academia at the University of Oregon, where he earned a doctorate degree in comparative literature, having completed his dissertation titled "Performing Literariness: Literature in the Event in South Africa and the United States." In 2014, Rayneard co-created The Telling Project, a national performing arts non-profit organization, which works on deepening our understanding of the military and veteran's experience. Rayneard is a recipient of a number of awards and grants, including the Pulsar award for "Best Original Script" and a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant. Rayneard joined the Honors College in Fall 2018, teaching the Human Situation course.



Laura Bland

Laura Bland teaches the Human Situation course as well as courses for the Medicine & Society and Phronésis minors. She has written on the history of Early Modern science, religion, and magic, and has taught courses on monsters in scientific thought, food history, the history of astronomy and physics, ancient science, and the Scientific Revolution. Before joining the Honors faculty in 2017, she taught Great Books at the University of Notre Dame, where she received her doctorate in the History and Philosophy of Science program. She graduated from Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin.



Michael Barnes

Michael Barnes ('95) has returned to UH where he earned his bachelor's degree in classical studies and English. Prior to his start in the Honors College, Barnes was part of University of Missouri's Department of Classical Studies where he received a master's in classical studies as well as a doctorate in classical languages and literature. Barnes areas of interests are Greek and Roman epic poetry, Hellenistic literature and culture, and reception studies. In 2010, Barnes was awarded the William T. Kemper Fellowship for Excellence in Teaching. His teaching experiences include multiple graduate and undergraduate courses in Greek and Latin. Barnes has also taught undergraduate culture courses in classical humanities, and is teaching the Human Situation course for the Honors College.



Tamar Abramov

Tamar Abramov will join the Honors faculty in the spring 2019 semester, teaching the Human Situation course. She has been an assistant professor of Comparative Literature at Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey; a collegiate professor in the Society of Fellows at the University of Chicago; a college fellow at Harvard in the Literature Concentration; and a visiting assistant professor at Deep Springs College, California and in the University of Minnesota's German Department. Abramov's primary focus is late 18th and 19th century German, French, and English narrative prose. The main vehicles in her interdisciplinary research include her expertise in political theory, cultural criticism, film theories, and visual studies.

Faculty Achievements



Classical Studies and Human Situation Professor **Richard Armstrong** received a career teaching award in 2017, and in 2018 he published a book chapter in *Virgil and His Translators* (Oxford University Press, September 2018).



Political Science and Phronesis faculty member **Jeremy Bailey** completed an edited volume of documents, *The American Presidency*, to be released before the end of the year (Ashbrook Press, 2018).



Political Science Professor **Michelle Belco** received a Matthew B. and Tamara Steele Faculty Award in October 2017.



Creative writing and Human Situation Professor **Hayan Charara** published poems in *Poetry*, *West Branch*, *Prairie Schooner*, and elsewhere.



Biology Professor **Ann Cheek** received an award from Phi Beta Delta for her “New and Innovative Program Abroad,” the GalapaGo! study and research abroad course, which is a collaboration with several UH faculty. She also received a UH Teaching Excellence Award and a Wong Faculty Engagement Award.



Creative Work and Human Situation Professor **Robert Cremins** received a Wong Faculty Engagement Award in October 2018, published an essay, “Ishiguro’s Orphans,” in the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and published a short story, “Merrion Graffiti,” in *Story/Houston* magazine.



Political Science and Phronesis Professor **Dustin Gish** received a Wong Faculty Engagement Award in 2017 and published *Thomas Jefferson and the Science of Republican Government* (Cambridge University Press, April 2017).



History professor **Doug Erwing** received a Wong Faculty Engagement Award in October 2018.



History Professor **Irene Guenther** won numerous awards for teaching and service in 2017 and 2018, including the Lerner Family Faculty Fellowship, the UH Provost’s Teaching Excellence Award, the SGB Teaching Distinction Award, the Ross M. Lence Teaching Award, and the Wong Teaching Engagement Award. Her new book, *Postcards from the Trenches*, was just released (Bloomsbury Publishing, November 2018).



Irene Guenther and Debbie Harwell assembled a museum exhibit of their students' creative works, called Great Migrations Past and Present, illustrating stories of the Great Migration and immigration to Houston. The exhibit was on view at The Heritage Society, Houston.



Biology professor **Marc Hanke** received a Vince and Louise Foster Faculty Award for excellence in teaching, mentorship, and service, as well as an award from Phi Beta Delta for his "New and Innovative Program Abroad," the GalapaGo! study and research abroad course, a collaboration with several UH faculty.



History Professor **Debbie Harwell** edited two issues of Houston History: "Agency: The Quest for Civil Rights" and "Wrecks and Redemption: Houston's Built Environment," which included articles by several Honors students.



Creative Writing and Human Situation Professor **Brandon Lamson** published two poems in the fall 2018 issue of *Prairie Schooner*.



English Professor **David Mikics** published a column in *Salmagundi* as well as essays in *Tablet* magazine.



Philosophy and Human Situation Professor **Iain Morrison** published an article in the *European Journal of Philosophy*, received the Ted L. Estess Faculty Award for excellence in teaching and service in spring 2018, and received a Wong Faculty Engagement Award in fall 2018.



Medicine and Society professor **Woods Nash** published an article in *Literature and Medicine*; the article was also picked up by *The Atlantic* magazine.



Major awards director **Ben Rayder** received a Wong Faculty Engagement Award in October 2018.



Philosophy professor **Tamler Sommers** published his new book, *Why Honor Matters* (Basic Books, May 2018).

Honors in Action



Photos: (1-8) The 27th Great Conversation was attended by donors and friends of the College, as well as the Honors Advisory Board members, faculty, and students who created the centerpieces; (9-10) The Phi Beta Kappa Induction Ceremony included the induction of the Honors College Founding Dean Ted Estess and 59 students; (11) 2018 SURF student Jaime Badillo spent the summer developing a mechanical setup to replicate hinge joint movement, which validated the algorithm typically used to fit patients with a lower-limb exoskeleton; (12) A seminar group at the Common Ground Teachers Institute wait their turn in costumes to

present to the other participants; (13) Club Theater is an organization of students who love the craft of acting and producing original work, but who are not theater majors; (14) Colleen A. Sheehan, professor of politics and director of the Matthew J. Ryan Center for the Study of Free Institutions and the Public Good at Villanova University, spoke at the Ross M. Lence Master Teacher Dinner; (15) Outstanding 2018 graduating seniors receive recognition at the spring Graduation Banquet; (16-17) Provost Paula Myrick Short speaks at the Undergraduate Scholars and Major Awards Recognition Dinner.



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Go Coogs!



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4333 University Dr, Room 212
Houston, TX 77204-2001

The Honors College has been rated among the top 10 in the nation by *Public University Press*.



Honors in Action



Photos: (18-19) The Honors College hosted the annual Fall Convocation featuring UH President Renu Khator and recognition of faculty and students award recipients; (20) NBC News' Snapchat show "Stay Tuned" visited UH to kick off its midterm college tour by taping a conversation between students and Texas' 2nd Congressional

District candidate Dan Crenshaw; (21) At the Honors college homecoming tailgate, Dean Monroe compares the winning ticket for a door prize won by Catalina Pinto, a member of the Honors student organization, the Bleacher Creatures.