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Honorable Mentions

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Spring 5-2018

### Honorable Mentions: A publication of PSU Honors College - Public Relations Committee

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# *Honorable Mentions*

## 2017-2018

Greetings!

What a wonderful year we have had in the Honors College! We welcomed another outstanding group of 30 freshmen into our fold and they have certainly hit the ground running and jumped right into the various programs and projects we have in the program. They did a great job of organizing the annual Pitt Project and this community-wide project continues to grow each year.

Involvement in the HCA by members of all classes continues to be strong, in part due to the Point System which was started last year, which rewards those students who are committed to the organization and give of their time and energy for the good of the cause. It is always great to see a room full of positive, energetic, and motivated students at our meetings and events.

In this issue of the Honorable Mentions, you will read about some of the activities and accomplishments of our group this year and we hope you enjoy being kept informed about what is going on in the PSU Honors College. We are certainly proud of our efforts and impact we have as an organization both on campus and in the community.

All my best-

Dr. Fuchs  
Director of Honors College



# *Spring*

HCA students brave the cold for Homecoming .....	1
Gretchen Reed travels to Spain.....	2
HCA completes Pitt Project .....	4
Exec. team attends NCHC Conference .....	5

# *Fall*

HCA welcomes incoming freshman class.....	6
Hitting the Dancefloor: Moments from the HCA formal .....	7
Donor of the Year recognized anonymously .....	8
Dr. Holly Cranston: Outstanding Alumni .....	9
HCA does their part for Big Event .....	10

# *HCA students brave the cold for Homecoming*

BY KYLA JANTZ

This year, midterms happened to fall on Homecoming week, making for a very stressful and busy week for most students. However, Honors College students found a reason to smile as they cheered on their peers in this year's competitions.

The events kicked off on Tuesday with the Gorilla Games Raft Races. Andrew Chesney and Neal Ukena were the brave souls who climbed into the honors college raft, despite the 48-degree temperature. While the Residence Hall Association won the event, Andrew and Neal's swimming skills won us our heat even though our raft fell through fairly quickly.

The next event of the week was the Yell Like Hell dance competition. The Honors College group decided not to compete, and Alpha Gamma Delta/Pi Kappa Alpha, Sigma Phi and Lambda Chi Alpha were crowned the winners.

Finally, the Honors College representatives for the 2017 Fall Homecoming Royalty did our organization proud. Jeffrey Yankovich and Caitlin Martin, seniors, both made it into the top 12 in the competition.

"I really loved getting to represent the Honors College Association because when you're a member, it's the first group that you become a part of as a Gorilla," Martin said of her experience. "The whole experience was really fun and exciting and I'm thankful that I had the opportunity to participate."



Jeffrey Yankovich



Caitlin Martin (left) and Victoria Ho

Yankovich agreed, saying, "This was my 3rd year making it into the Top 12, and it's been very interesting to see how Homecoming has evolved over the years. It does a pristine job of bringing the campus together for collaborative celebrations and friendly competitions. Honors College was one of the main reasons I came to Pitt State, so it was an awesome opportunity to be able to represent the organization at a university level."

Ultimately, Steven Andersen and Jessica Hennessy were crowned as this year's Homecoming Royalty. Our King and Queen made a glamorous appearance during the parade on Saturday morning.

Finally, to finish off the week, our football team brought in a win against Missouri Western, 26-10. Go Pitt! ••



## *Gretchen Reed travels to Spain*

BY EMERSON COCHRAN

La Universidad de Salamanca is located roughly 4,550 miles away from Pittsburg State University. When Honors College junior Gretchen Reed first walked into PSU's study abroad office, she had no idea that it would serve as her month long home this past summer.

Having never studied abroad, this ambitious Management/Marketing/Professional Writing major was seeking an excursion "anywhere" that she could finish her Spanish minor. Thus, she began preparations for her journey to Salamanca, Spain.

There, she studied the Spanish language for two hours a day in addition to studying her Spanish for Business elective. But her learning experience did not end there. Wanting to be immersed in the language and culture of Spain, Gretchen opted for living with a host mother over staying with other English-speaking students in the dorms. Together they'd watch current events on the news (in Spanish, of course) and would talk over dinner. She mentioned fondly that she and Abuela had casual conversations for about an hour and a half every day.

That is, every day except for weekends. Accompanied by another Pitt State student, Gretchen visited various cities across Spain including Seville, Valencia, Madrid, Barcelona, and Segovia. On these outings, they strived to "stay off the beaten path," avoiding the typical tourist traps. Gretchen says that the lack of structure made the trip her own.

When asked, she couldn't choose a single favorite part of her trip, although she was enamored with the beautiful horizon that can be seen from Montjuïc, a large hill near the Barcelona harbor. Arriving at the top just as the sun was setting, Gretchen "saw the city of Barcelona on one side and the ocean on the other..."



Her advice to anyone considering study abroad?

“Just do it; don’t think about it.”

She says that this first trip abroad was “a cultural awakening experience.” What she gained from this experience was confidence, not only in her Spanish speaking skills (which she has already put to use in the shoe store she works in) but also in herself. Traveling across Spain, speaking a second language proved to herself that she could handle that level of independence.

Despite this newfound independence, Gretchen also says that studying abroad in Spain “connects you forever with a completely different country across the ocean.” She will tell you vehemently that she “wants to go back so bad” and she vows to go again someday. It’s exciting to think that the study abroad office here at PSU was the beginning of her connection to Spain and her affinity for travel. ••



ABOVE: The Cathedral in Salamanca. PREVIOUS PAGE: Montjuïc, the famous hill near the Barcelona harbor



## *HCA completes Pitt Project*

BY GRETCHEN REED

On Saturday, October 21, Honors College Association students as well as a variety of students from other campus organizations participated in the annual Pitt Project. The Pitt Project is a community beautification event that is organized by the Honors College Association freshman class each year.

The purpose of this event is help community members in Pittsburg with yardwork, housework, and other difficult jobs that require extra help.

Honors College sophomore in Elementary Education, Lindsey Brothers, describes the Pitt Project as “a fun-filled day of community service sponsored by HCA; we go out into the community and do yard work and other such things for people who need our help.”

This year, by putting forth great effort and effectively advertising the Pitt Project, the HCA freshman class was able to recruit 70 Pittsburg State student volunteers and utilize those student volunteers to service 15 homes of Pittsburg residents. Many of the clients that Pitt Project participants serviced this year were unable to perform these housework tasks alone and without the help of the students, so these residents greatly appreciated the help that HCA had to offer.

The Pitt Project not only benefited the Pittsburg community members, but also the plethora of student volunteers who donated their time and efforts to participating in this event. For them, the Pitt Project is a fantastic way to spend more time with their peers and cultivate stronger relationships with one another through positive community service experiences.

“[The Pitt Project] is a way of spending time with friends while doing something good,” explains Olivia Houston, Honors College sophomore in Psychology. “We are really making the community great.”

The Pitt Project is expected to return next year, and it will be organized again by the new freshman class. ••



# *Exec. team attends NCHC Conference*

BY KORI QUALLS

During November, the Honors College executive team members had the opportunity to attend the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Conference.

The National Collegiate Honors Council hosts a conference once a year that lets different honors colleges from around the country meet together to discover new ways to better the individual honors programs from the various colleges in attendance.

This year, treasurer Quinnlyn Walcott; secretary Shelby Thompson; and class representatives Wyatt Osterhage, Carly Stroup, and Camille Holman were able to attend alongside our director Dr. Craig Fuchs.

During the conference, they were able to attend different sessions and they had lots of time to discuss ways they could apply what they were learning.

When asked about what they'd learned, you could tell how useful this conference can be and the quality of students we have leading our group just by their answers. They each took away something different that can be used innovating our program.

There were mentioned possible ways to improve our peer mentor system and the overnight event, adding more distinction to our point system, or just creating a better system for accountability.

Our students also came back with some ideas on things we could add. One idea was creating Honors Ambassadors, or at least finding a new way to reach a wider variety of interested students. Another idea was an Honors College version of Rumble in the Jungle. With a little more work and information looked into, we hope to find ways to get some of these ideas on their way to implementation.

Not only did members learn about what they could change, they also got a bit of an outside look at how our program thrives on its differences. One of these differences can be explained by our Secretary Shelby Thompson.

She said, "Some of the benefits I took away from the conference are the opportunities we are afforded as a result of the uniqueness of our size. We are better able to build a sense of belonging within our organization because it's so small and selective. My inner introvert really loves that there's only 130ish of us compared to the hundreds involved in other Honors Colleges."

Class rep Carly Stroup had a very similar take on our program and the conference itself. "For me, the best part about attending the NCHC Conference was that I got to see just how unique our program here at PSU is. There aren't many other institutions that invest so much into such a small organization, and I am extremely blessed to be a part of it!"

We feel very lucky to have had the opportunity to send some of our members to this event.

Wyatt Osterhage said about the event, "NCHC was an amazing experience. We learned new ways to better the Honors College experience, and we each had multiple takeaways that, when implemented, will make the Honors College even better than it is now."

Those of us in the Honors College are ready to take these new ideas and implement them for our future members. We can't wait to see what will come from this amazing group and any groups that get the chance to attend the conference in the future. ••



# *HCA welcomes incoming freshman class*

BY KORI QUALLS

As the school year comes to an end, most high school seniors across the nation are preparing to embark on a new exciting and possibly daunting phase of their lives. Over 1,000 of these students will go through that phase at Pitt State University, and 30 of those students have found themselves lucky enough to embark on their journey within the Honors College.

Through tireless nights of writing essays, perfecting applications, and doing their very best not to say something stupid during interviews, they have come out on top.

Their exemplary leadership skills, academic achievements, and desire to give back to the community assures us that this is going to be a wonderful addition to the association. We are proud to announce the 30 new students who will be joining our ranks in the Fall of 2018:

Margaret Auten - Marketing/Finance  
Lauren Bryan - Marketing  
Attlyn Butler - Nursing  
Hannah Carr - Nursing  
Sarah Case - Medical Engineering Technology  
Emma Couch - Pharmaceutical Chemistry  
Allen Davis - Polymer Chemistry  
Samuel Eddington - Biology (Pre-Medicine)  
Katie Felkins - Biology (Pre-Occupational Therapy)  
Trevor Graham - Pre-Medicine  
Allison Gregg - Biochemistry  
Grace Haworth - Biology  
Karissa Howey - Biology (Pre-Medicine)  
Lauren Hucke - Elementary Education  
Carsyn Hughes - Nursing

Kathleen Krull - Nursing  
Travis Linn - Political Science (Pre-Law)  
Kinsey Morey - Chemistry (Pre-Medicine)  
Elizabeth Myers - Biology  
Ahdaya Myers - Business  
Andrew Nelson - Finance  
Brooks Neria - Biology  
Kamree Pace - Biology (Pre-Veterinary)  
Zoey Rankin - Nursing  
Kimberly Saer - Undeclared  
Madison Schenker - Biology (Pre-Medicine)  
Jayden Tennis - Nursing  
Amanda Trout - English (Creative Writing)  
Hope White - Nursing  
Victoria Wright - Communications

Regarding earning a place as part of this year's incoming class, Travis Linn said, "I am thrilled to be a part of the Pittsburg State University Honors Program. The opportunity to push myself and be a part of a community of intelligent and driven leaders is priceless. I am very thankful and excited for this next chapter in my life, but I am also anxious. Knowing that I will be a part of such an incredible network of capable individuals calms that anxiety."

We can't wait to see this fantastic group of kids grow and thrive throughout their time in the Honors College.

Congratulations to the Honors College Association's Class of 2022! ••

# *Hitting the Dancefloor*

MOMENTS FROM THE HCA FORMAL



# *Donor of the Year recognized anonymously*

BY DR. CRAIG FUCHS

The awarding of the Donor of the Year Award was a little unusual this year, as the individual requested to stay anonymous. The person has a long track record of giving to the Honors College so we decided to recognize them anonymously.

The recipient was in the very first Honors College class under the Director at that time, Dr. Bob Hilt, or Dr. Bob as they called him.

When asked to reflect on their time in the Honors College, they responded, “I was part of the inaugural HC class and knew I was spoiled by Dr. Bob. Not only was I on a full ride scholarship, but I also had excellent teachers in the HC classes, we went on the occasional field trip, and we had an annual spaghetti dinner. All of those extras were covered by the HC, as I recall. The HC was someone’s pet project, and I was a willing beneficiary.”

When asked why they choose to donate they replied, “I continue to donate to the Honors College because I want other students to have similar opportunities. It’s a bit like both paying it forward and paying it backward. I would be honored to be recognized anonymously as a donor to the Honors College.

We thank them for their generous support of the Honors College. ••



# *HCA does their part for Big Event*

BY GRETCHEN REED

On Saturday, April 14, a group of Honors College students teamed up alongside hundreds of other Pittsburg State University students to participate in the annual Big Event.

The Big Event is a service project organized by the Student Government Association for which PSU students volunteer to improve the Pittsburg community by performing various tasks at the homes of community residents. The benefactors of this service project are often unable to perform necessary work around their own homes, so student participation is entirely helpful and impactful.

Each year, Honors College students group together for the Big Event, and their involvement in this event serves as the semester community service project for many HCA students.

“This year was particularly cold,” reported Camille Wallace, Honors College junior in Therapeutic Recreation, “but it was still rewarding, and the hot chocolate that our resident brought us was definitely a plus.”

Despite such cold weather and the orders from homeowners to “please stay warm,” Honors College students labored away raking leaves, cleaning gutters, painting houses, and performing a variety of other tasks for residents around Pittsburg.

Overall, the Big Event was a worthwhile commitment for all the HCA students who participated because it allowed the students to give back to their loving community, it fostered friendships and closeness, and it brought the campus and community together in such an important way. ••

# *Alumni of the Year: Dr. Holly Cranston*

BY ANDREA CHESTNUT

The Pittsburg State Honors College Association again awarded the honor of Alumni of the Year during the 2018 Honors College Banquet.

Each year, the award is given to an exemplary alum of the Honors College as a recognition of their success and acknowledgment of the important role they serve as a model for honors students to emulate.

This year the award was presented to Dr. Holly Cranston. Dr. Cranston graduated PSU in 1998 with honors with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a minor in Chemistry. She went on to attend the University of Kansas College of Medicine, did her residency at the University of Kansas Hospital, and was board certified in Hospice and Palliative care in 2012.



Dr. Holly Cranston

Dr. Cranston and her husband now run a private medical practice in Pittsburg which has continued to grow. She also received the Kenneth K. Bateman Award for Outstanding Alumni from Pittsburg State University in 2016.

Dr. Cranston stated one of the biggest impacts the Honors College had on her was, “the support I got from the director of the honors college, and encouragement to keep following my dreams.”

Additionally, she enjoyed the atmosphere of community at Pitt State and especially experienced it in the honors college, stating, “I made a lot of great friends in the honors college, many I still have today.”

As an active member of the community, Dr. Cranston recalls the benefits of being active within campus, which she says, “helped [her] to have a wider exposure to other students...” and allowed her to see the difference she could make for others.

During her address at the Honors College banquet, Dr. Cranston gave several pieces of advice. She urged both graduating and current students to never give up and not allow other people to define who they are. She reminded them to enjoy all stages of life and that moments do not come back. Dr. Cranston encouraged graduates to return to the places which helped them develop into who they are and give back to their community. Finally, she dared everyone to be determined to make their dreams come true.

As final advice to members of the Honors College, Dr. Cranston said, “The struggles are worth it. Keep studying hard, keep your focus on the end goal...but don’t forget to take a breath and enjoy the here and now.”

Thank you, Dr. Holly Cranston, for your continued support of the Honors College Association and congratulations! ••