

August 2016
Editor, Margaret Owens



GCHC Winning Streak Continued ...

For 33 years, the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council's annual conference has been a definitive display of academic excellency in the South. Since hosting the conference on campus four years ago, the UNG Honors Program has placed a paper in top competition. Catrina May continued the streak at this year's conference at Augusta University with her paper on Gaussian Integers.



(Above, Catrina May, right, receiving her award at the GCHC conference on February 27, 2016)

(Below, Jennifer Hightower, a Fulbright and Truman finalist, pictured in Morocco)



(Above, Matthew Preston, top left, with President Bonita Jacobs and his fellow scholarship recipients)

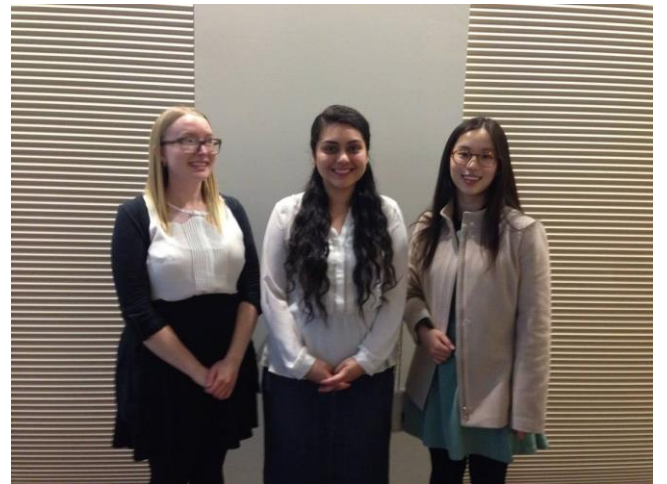
Nationally-Competitive Scholarships

Honors Program students achieved national recognition for their dedication to academics this past year. Matthew Preston, who received a Gilman scholarship for his study abroad experience in Germany in the summer of 2016, is one such student. The Gilman scholarship is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and is available for eligible undergraduate students to fund study abroad. Jennifer Hightower, a senior Psychology major in the Program, was a Fulbright finalist as well as a Truman finalist. Miss Hightower's status as a semifinalist for these prestigious awards indicates the Program's ability to produce gifted, intelligent, and driven students who have the potential to accomplish great things both at UNG and on a national and global stage. The UNG Honors Program prides itself on producing exemplary students who represent high academic and civic standards, and this is nowhere more apparent than in the number of Honors students who receive nationally-competitive scholarships. It is the goal of the program to produce many more such students in the coming years.

UNG Students Participate in Honors Salons

In spring 2016, the Honors Program held two Salon events, hosting campus and community friends to share and celebrate Honors student research. The Gainesville campus Salon took place on February 11th at the Robinson Ballroom, and featured presentations by Brittany Barron, Angelica Gonzalez and Ye Hyeon “Amy” Shim (*pictured right, respectively*). Guests included UNG faculty, presenters’ family members, and community supporters such as Kay Blackstock, Executive Director of the Georgia Mountain Foodbank (*guests pictured lower-right, around the table*).

Oconee campus Honors students held their Salon February 18th, and featured presentations by Jenna Davidson, Charles Hall, Caitlin O’Donnell, Shana Stone, and Holly Williams (*below, left to right respectively*).



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New Dean of Honors

Dr. Tanya Bennett, who served the past year in an Interim position, stepped up in July 2016 to become the official Dean of the Honors Program. It was no surprise, as she was heavily involved in the program last year and was instrumental in its success. She aims to continue to shape the future of our Program with her visions of promoting high academic standards with a commitment to civic duty.





Honors Students in Chile

During the month of July, a group of nine students, including Jenna Davidson (*above, second from right*) and Sarah Hosey (*second from left*), accompanied UNG professor, Dr. Christian Harris, on a study abroad in Chile, South America. On the trip, the group traveled to La Serena, Valparaiso, Coquimbo, Elqui Valley, and Santiago. Jenna Davidson reflected positively on the experience: "Chile is a beautiful country with an amazing history and culture. The scenery is definitely something that will stick with us." Sarah Hosey also commented that "the ability to see the beach and the remarkable Andes Mountains simultaneously made every day magical." This trip offered significant insights about the Chilean class system and how daily activities in Chile differ generally from those of the United States. During the trip, students from North Georgia University were able to interact with students from La Serena University. The Chilean students shared with their American counterparts what it was like to attend university in La Serena. Additionally, all of the students were able to attend a public speech made by Sebastian Piñera, former president of Chile, about the current presidential election. Jenna said her favorite part of the trip was walking around the different cities and experiencing their beauty first-hand. She was grateful for the opportunity not only to see the Andes, but to snow board in these mountains with one of her fellow classmates. The students enjoyed meeting new people and talking to locals about their experiences. Appreciative of the chance to have participated in this study abroad, Jenna and Sarah expressed that travel is always an opportunity worth taking.

Gainesville Revamps Honors Student Governance Structure

The Gainesville Honors Program has proposed and voted into existence a new and improved system of governance for Honors students on that campus. The new system has eliminated the traditional President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary roles and created in their place officer titles that include Communication Officers, Service/Social Officers and Conference Officers. These positions will be better able to directly address the needs of the Honors Program. In Gainesville This system of governance will also implement the service of a standing officer in each category along with an incoming officer. Both will serve in their positions simultaneously for the academic year in order for the standing officer to train the assistant., or incoming officer. This format should facilitate a more seamless transition from year to year, and will also distribute the work load more evenly among the officers.

The Gainesville Honors Program officers elected for 2016-17 are Tara Heimberger, Communications Officer; Savannah Lupes, Assistant Communications Officer; Emile Phommavongsy and Vanessa Valencia, Service/Social Officers; Abigail English and Megan Gee, Assistant Service/Social Officers; Castiel Dixon, Conference Officer; and Lina Morgan, Assistant Conference Officer.

Tara Heimberger, Emile Phommavongsy, Vanessa Valencia, and Castiel Dixon all served as Honors officers this past year and agreed to return to help facilitate the new system. Their decision illustrates the spirit of service at the core of the Honors Program.



Above, left to right: Savannah Lupes, Tara Heimberger, Castiel Dixon, and Lina Morgan

UNG Honors Students Present at Annual Conferences

In spring 2016, UNG was well-represented at conferences by Honors students. In February, 18 Honors Program students, from Dahlonga, Gainesville, and Oconee campuses, presented their research at the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council Conference: Lindsey Smith, Caroline Brown, Cynthia Bell Hulse, Erin Hagebusch, Abbey Grey, Charles Hall, Ye Hyeon “Amy” Shim, Jennifer Hightower, Catrina May, Castiel Dixon, Hannah Jackson, Sawyer Henderson, Matthew Preston, Chloe Lovelady, Erin Higdon, Timothy McDaniel, Margaux Usry, and Rachel Perez. At the Southern Regional Honors Council Conference in Orlando, UNG was represented by Catrina May, Sawyer Henderson, Jane Clifford, Abbey Grey, Noah McDaniel, Abby McMillan, Meredith Russell, and Margaux Usry.

The April UNG Annual Research Conference also featured research by many Honors Program students, including Holly Mize, Abigail English, Meteja Landgraf, Savannah Lupes, Brittany Barron, Alexis Ingram, Castiel Dixon, Kameron Clark, Tara Heimberger, Kim Griffin, Mark Molinaro, Grace Cooper, Nataly Morales Villa, Mahnoor Kamran, Jennifer Hightower, Rachel Glazer, Jane Clifford, Rachel Perez, Margaux Usry, Alyssa Thompson, Katie McCullough, Ashlyn Coffey, Joshua Shirley, Emily Shepard, Olivia Ferrara, Matthew Johnston, Caroline Brown, Jenna Davidson, Jennifer Dickerson, Ellen Tomlin, Cindy Bell Hulse, Erin Hagebusch, Lucy Estock, Matt Caudell, and Meredith Russell.

Honors Highlight: Sawyer Henderson

If it has something to do with the Honors Program, Sawyer Henderson has probably done it. A senior double majoring in psychology and English education, he has served as an Honors officer, presented at GCHC and SRHC, won several awards, mentored and tutored other Honors students, studied abroad, and planned out an Honors Thesis (his working title is *Reading the Rainbow: Availability and Content of YA Queer Lit in Georgia Secondary Schools*). This fall represents his second semester taking 21 credit hours, fitting another classic Honors profile. In his ‘spare time,’ Sawyer founded the Online Student Ambassadors program, and he has worked part or full time at Best Buy since 2012. He has been employed by the UNG Library Technology Center since last spring and is your go-to person for interlibrary loan and database questions.

Asked to summarize in a few words what role the Honors Program has had for him, Sawyer responded with an essay (another Honors hallmark, especially for the English majors), which included this: “The Honors Program has been the connecting thread for every activity that I have been a part of during my time at UNG. Each Honors class helped me connect to my fellow peers where we not only learned to challenge each other in our ideas and work, but also to grow together in our respective disciplines.”

Among his impressive array of involvements, he has performed in plays both on campus and at the Holly Theater, served as a CURCA ambassador, and been a member of Sigma Tau Delta, Psi Chi, and the Interfaith Alliance. Upon graduating, Sawyer will pursue a career as a high school English teacher.



(Joanna Toso, Julia Regeski, and Sawyer, far right)

ALUMNI NEWS

Class of 2016

Since graduating in May, **Jeannie Bradley** has gotten married, started full time at Rushton, and begun studying for the CPA exam.

Jennifer Hightower started her work in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at Georgia State this semester, and will hold an assistantship in the Center for Evaluation and Research Services.

Abby McMillan is living in Alpharetta and working as a software developer for GM, where she started in July.

Sarah Beth Orr was accepted to Mercer University's M.S. in Biomedical Sciences, a two year, thesis-based program.

Megan Pepples just started teaching 4th grade at Medlock Bridge Elementary School in Johns Creek.

Heather Perona is "still a scribe," but is full time now instead of part time. She's in the process of applying to PA school and will be taking a CNA class next month.

Kaylee Todd has moved to Gainesville, to attend the University of Florida to pursue her PhD in chemical education; she is also a teaching assistant at UF.

Joanna Toso is starting a Marketing and Publicity internship at Peachtree Publishers in Atlanta. She is "still writing assiduously in my spare time attempting to finish my novel or draft an award-winning television show, whichever comes first."

Class of 2015

Ben Darnell just started his second year in the clinical Ph.D. program at Northern Illinois University. This year he will be taking therapy and assessment clients as part of the child team in the Psych Services Center on campus. For his master's thesis, he plans to tackle the topic of using memory erasure to treat post-traumatic stress symptoms.

Rebecca DeCarlo is in medical school at the Medical College of Georgia - Augusta campus. She is "loving it so far even with the constant studying."

Jacob Dietrich has been living in Muscat, Oman on a Fulbright research grant since January; he had already been there since graduation on a Boren Scholarship. Jacob was offered a position in the Omani government as a policy adviser, so he will be staying in Oman until at least February 2017. He hopes to start graduate school Fall of 2017.

Sarah Heape works in the Horticulture Department of UGA as the Program Assistant for the Master Gardener Program in Griffin. She got married to Josh Sawyer in June and has been "enjoying the married life! We are working on remodeling our home and hope to have it complete in the next couple of months!"

Kyle Hriczo is still working at the same place, but they changed their name to AEON Global Health.

Jordan Miller is getting married on October 22nd, and is still

"doing fine in 279" at West Hall Middle School, where she is now Gifted Endorsed and in charge of school yearbook.

Amy Rogers is at the Univ. of South Carolina pursuing a MA in English & American literature. She plans to pass the Jeopardy test in January and become a contestant. If she makes it on the show, and all the questions are about Harry Potter, she promises to win.

Sydney Roth is working full-time as a night-shift, postpartum nurse at Northside Hospital Forsyth and "loving it! The women I work with have become like family to me." She is also settling into her new position as an Army nurse for the Georgia National Guard.

Nora Sutton recently began the second year of her Master's program at West Virginia University. She is studying Public History and working as a Graduate Assistant/Records Management Technician at the Monongalia County Courthouse.

Caitlin (Ritchey) Tripp got married on June 11, in addition to moving to Atlanta and beginning a new job at North Atlanta High School teaching World History, Current Issues, and Sub-Saharan Studies.

Jennifer Ward is starting the second year of her master's at UGA's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, and says "I'm still studying those coyotes!" She is part of the Tristate coyote project that has GPS-collared coyotes in GA, AL, and SC to examine their space and resource use.

Lacie Warren is still working with the UNG Center for Global Engagement as the International Projects Coordinator. She advises on international internships and military academy exchanges and coordinates the Federal Service Language Academy. Lacie just started the MBA program at UNG.

Rachel Yarger is currently working at Home Depot corporate headquarters.

Class of 2014

Marcela Cotes is starting the MSc program in Human Resource Management at Manchester Metropolitan University this fall (still living in the UK). She plans to graduate next September.

Katherine Jones living in Sandy Springs and working at MarketSource as a Systems Administrator

Brooke Mazur is currently stationed in the Infantry Brigade Combat Team Airborne in Fort Richardson, Alaska where she serves as a Platoon Leader in the Army's only Arctic Airborne Brigade Engineer Battalion.

After two years at Reinhardt University as a Residence Life Coordinator, **Jared Patterson** has taken the Coordinator for First Year Transitions here at North Georgia.

ALUMNI NEWS CONTINUED...

Class of 2013

Taylor Turner is starting her fourth year of teaching – but after three years of teaching middle school, she’s teaching 5th grade science and social studies at Statham Elementary, which is also where she went to school.

Class of 2012

Hillary Doyle is closing in on her PhD at Georgia State (neuroscience). Her dissertation is on morphine analgesia, looking at sex differences in morphine and its metabolites and how morphine interacts with the immune system. Hillary says she will take a few months off after graduation, move to NY, and get a job in writing, publishing or consulting.

Mike Galanis is a Woodruff scholar in the MBA program at Emory University; **Heather (Moody) Galanis** was promoted to Sr. Program Manager of S Phase a few months ago.

Faith Green just moved to Dawsonville and is attending her second year at Piedmont International University working on a Bachelor's on Sign Language Interpreting.

Whit Hays is enrolled at the University of South Carolina's School of Law in a dual degree program working towards a JD and Masters of Social Work.

Brittini (Ragland) Kelley got married over the summer, and has since started the PhD program in Microbiology at the University of Tennessee.

Kaitlyn Klucznik has moved to Roswell and is working in Midtown Atlanta for AT&T. She is also currently studying for the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification exam.

Lindsay (Chitwood) Martin graduated from Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, TN in May and is now practicing optometry at Family Eye Care of Toccoa.

Kristin (Young) Rosevear is still living outside Montreal with her husband and their 18 month old son, and is about to begin her 6th year teaching. She'll be in a primarily francophone community in an English immersion school.

Class of 2011

Chelsea Gibson just completed a second summer at Indiana University's Summer Language Workshop (intensive language program, for Russian) which was “happily funded by a Title XIII grant.” She hopes to defend her dissertation next summer.

Class of 2009

Whitney Holcombe is “doing the same thing in the same place!” She has been the pharmacy manager at the CVS in Ellijay since 2014, and just finished her first year as a homeowner!

Nate Shapiro is his surgical rotation at MCG and reports that “all-night trauma call has been the best part of my rotation. I've been on this rotation for 7 weeks and doing all sorts of things from sewing wounds shut, to liposuction, to picking glass out of an arm, to cutting out a tumor. It's been a fun ride so far.”

Class of 2008

Dena (Brown) Bosten has changed jobs and is now the Controller for Truett McConnell University in Cleveland, where she is also teaching courses.

Sara (Clark) Brusco moved from Ft Myers to Ft Lauderdale and started a new job with a new anesthesia group. She and her husband went on a cruise of the Mediterranean from Barcelona to Rome last fall and “it was amazing!”

Pamela (Somerville) Layman is living in Greenville, SC, with her husband. She works as a physical therapist with the Greenville Health System and specializes in the treatment of lymphedema.

Amanda (Springfield) Love is still at Northside Hospital working as a quality improvement nurse in women's health. She has “two sweet boys” and lives in Ball Ground.

Class of 2007

Amy (Boudreau) Burger is starting an MA program in English (rhetoric & composition) at the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, and is working at Dalton State College and “loves it!”

Annie (Sanders) Mendenhall is now Director of Composition at Armstrong State University.

Class of 2006

Ashley (Pearce) Smith is still living in Cedar Crossing, Georgia, and she works at Appling County High School as a chemistry teacher! “My dream job!,” says Ashley.

Class of 2005

After deciding to make a career change, **Ginger (Grantham) Collins** started a Master of Library and Information Studies at The University of Alabama. It's an online program, so she is able to maintain her residence in Atlanta.

Cindy (Wood) Jockers is expecting a baby boy in December. She works as an LMT (licensed massage therapist) in Chattanooga, where she volunteers with conservation and birding activities. She invites fellow alumni to enjoy the great trails on the Cumberland.

Class of 2003

If there are any alums in the Kennesaw Area who are interested in gym rock wall climbing, **Lori (Digby) Partin** would love to start a climbing club! She's a member of Stone Summit. Contact her at lorid-partin@yahoo.com if you're interested.

Class of 2002

Natalie (Baker) Lindell is living in Oxford, AL where she practices outpatient Adult internal medicine and Pediatrics. She has a three year old daughter and just delivered twin boys

