



**Wood Honors College**



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The Newsletter of The Wood Honors College  
at Shippensburg University

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# From The Editors

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A new year, a new newsletter layout...but in the middle of a semester? A fresh start—our take on Spring Cleaning. Coming into the second semester, Luke and I decided that we were *bored* with the way things used to be (Hi, John, Jake and Mackenzie), so we decided to start from scratch. This issue is very much our thoughts and ideas coming to life but with the same kinds of stories that illuminate the Honors experience. We hope you like it—we sure do.

K.

L ife moves so fast, and it never ceases to amaze me how much things can change in a short amount of time. But change is good, right? I think it is. Change definitely freaks me out. It freaks a lot of people out. But change is just a part of being human. Here at *.hms*, we've decided to embrace change, to try something new, to experiment a little bit. Is the new really any better than the old? I don't know. It's just different. And that has to be worth something.

L.



Luke Smith (second row, far left) poses in the Capitol building with Governor Tom Wolf (center) and the other PASSHE students in The Harrisburg Internship Semester (THIS) program.

## Internship, Intervention, and Existentialism

By Luke Smith, Honors Senior

**O**n my first day at the office, Secretary Jen Smith gave me a tour of the fifth floor of One Penn Center, where I would be working for the duration of the semester. I was surprised that a cabinet secretary would be the one to show an intern around the office, but that really confirmed my decision to work at the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP). It is a small department, which my interviewers emphasized would allow me to interact directly with the executive staff. Formerly a bureau within the PA Department of Health, DDAP is staffed by about seventy employees, all of whom are based on one floor of a former hospital that the state bought and re-serviced as an office building. For scale, the PA Department of Human Services (DHS) has around ten thousand employees located in offices all over the state.

I was selected as Shippensburg's representative to The Harrisburg Internship Semester (THIS) for fall 2018. THIS is a special PASSHE program that allows one or two students from each of the state universities to intern with the state government in any of thirty or so departments or offices.

I spent two weeks at a time with different divisions within the department. With the Division of Prevention, Treatment, and Intervention (PTI), I sat in on meetings where funding initiatives were being considered for different counties, and I also updated contact information to different treatment facilities around the state. I affectionately believe a more accurate title for PTI would be the Division of Lengthy Spreadsheets! When I worked with the Division of Licensing, I went out on the road with our licensing professionals when they were inspecting addiction treatment facilities. I also got clearance to look over files from the Methadone Death and Incident Report (MDAIR), which I organized based on the location of death of the individual (in a treatment facility, a hospital, or elsewhere).

By the end of the semester, I expressed interest in staying with the department. I was fortunate to get a second internship at DDAP right after the semester ended. I worked there until the beginning of the spring semester. Over winter break, I was on a special committee that reviewed funding requests for a case management program and wrote recommendations to the Governor's Policy Office on increasing workforce participation among members of the recovery community. Governor Wolf will be reviewing whatever recommendations the Policy Office felt were the best ideas on the list.

I never would have guessed that I would be working in the realm of addiction treatment, but I went in there and I learned the material and now I have my career sights set on that field. Perhaps the most important lesson I can relay to other Honors students is that you will not always know what you want to do until you do something, and do not think you cannot learn how to do it. Critical thinking was arguably my *only* real qualification for my job at DDAP. I had to think through the tasks I was given, but I figured it out, and sometimes just being willing to figure out what you need to do is the best job qualification you can have.



TJ Dooley stands ready to give out free meals as a part of the Food Recovery program.

## Feeding Bellies and Hearts

By TJ Dooley, Honors Junior

It was just another Friday. I was standing behind a long table lined with food for the people of Shippensburg. I looked out over the sea of individuals eating and saw the same faces I saw last week and the week before. Some of the people struggle with addiction, some live with mental or physical disabilities, some can't make ends meet, and some simply yearn for a sense of connection. They can't all be categorized into one group, since they all come from different walks of life, but a sole similarity brings them all together: food.

One volunteer, Tony, walked up on the opposite side of the table, yanking me out of my daydream. He was holding the hand of a boy that could've been no more than four years old. Tony showed him the massive amounts of food he could pick from. The boy gawked at the spaghetti, bread, fruit, juice pouches, and, of course, the birthday cake. He ended up with a plate made for a king, and with it, a smile from ear to ear. Tony took him back to his seat, made sure he was settled, and continued to walk around the room and talk to other patrons.

This brief interaction—it lasted no longer than a minute—brought back an old realization of mine. I have never worried about where I will eat next, nor have I ever lit up at the sight of a mediocre meal. I could tell that the young boy probably feels these emotions every day. This epiphany reinforced why I do what I do.

With the help of many other hard-working individuals, I was able to expand the Food Recovery program at the university, taking overproduced food at the dining hall and delivering it to one of six free meal services in town. Looking back at the start of my journey, I remember how cool it was saving perfectly good food from getting thrown out. Now, after completing over one hundred deliveries, the fact that food isn't being wasted is still amazing, but the reality of feeding hungry people evokes a whole different feeling. Knowing that I'm able to give some people who are food insecure a little bit more security makes the work worthwhile.

My team and I are currently in the works of making our own weekly free meal handout next semester using the overproduced food from the dining hall and the manpower of student volunteers. We plan to create another space for the people of Shippensburg to come together, share ideas, and bond over the common interest—the common need—of food.

Hopefully, we can keep a large smile on the face of that boy and everyone like him.

# //Poetry Corner//

By Andrea Kling, Honors Sophomore

redwoods

The thing we have to remind ourselves  
is that all beautiful things come with time.  
The Alps, sprawling across Europe,  
did not swell 14,000 feet out of the crust  
in the span of sunrise to sunset.  
Mammoth Cave was not carved out of this Earth  
by the gods in just one sitting,  
the Grand Canyon boasts a mile-deep gorge  
where millions of years ago a plateau once stood.  
If redwoods do not grow instantly,  
then why do we still expect ourselves to do the same?  
Human experience is not instant  
and yet we try to rush it,  
make it happen right here right now  
because that is how we want Life:  
delivered to us instead of discovered by us.

I shouldn't be afraid if it takes a long time to grow,  
it just means I will be all the taller  
and all the more magnificent for it;  
even redwoods begin as saplings.





April

When the earth comes back to life,  
the sun will peek out from behind bud-red trees,  
tell me  
*this is your chance to start again;*  
if the squirrels could talk, they'd say  
*keep on fighting,*  
*better days are coming;*  
the song of swallows outside my window  
is a hymn on repeat:  
*there is always time*  
*to keep on trying;*  
the wind whispers  
*you were made from this earth—*  
*listen to how it sings for you.*





Rachel Smith (right) celebrates the graduation of her Honors Mentor, Megan Lawrence (left), in 2018.

## The Great Give and Take of Mentorship

By Rachel Smith, Honors Senior

Being involved in the Wood Honors College has afforded me innumerable opportunities. I've done fascinating research and traveled far from home. However, when I look back on what really stands out, I am drawn to the incredible people I have met. The mentorship program that exists in the Honors College connects students across classes and allows them to learn from one another. If it were not for the mentor I had, as well as the students I have mentored, I would not be the person I am today.

In the spring of 2015, I thought I knew exactly what the next four years would look like. I was admitted into the then-Honors Program at Shippensburg University, and I couldn't wait to pursue my degree in English Education. I had nothing but confidence, and I felt so ready for this next chapter. I quickly discovered just how overwhelming college can be. I was out of my element, floundering to find my footing in a foreign environment. Fortunately, just as I reached the point of peak frustration, I realized I already had a great resource in my life.

My Honors mentor, Megan Lawrence, was a constant as I began my Ship career. I met her at an Open House, stayed with her during an overnight campus visit, and saw her serve as a leader at my Honors Orientation. By my second semester of college, she was my coworker in the Honors Office and quickly became the mentor I didn't know I needed. Her endless encouragement, patience, and inspiration got me through my first few semesters, which were some of the toughest times of my undergrad career.

When I had the chance to serve as a peer mentor for incoming Honors students, I knew I had to take advantage of the opportunity. I wanted to help in the same way Megan helped me and assist students through their transition to college. Over the last two years, I have mentored six first-year students studying English Education or similar majors. I worked with them most closely during their first semester but stayed in contact throughout their first year to assist in any way I could. I learned so much from these awesome people, who are bound to impact this university and the world in some extraordinary ways.

Now that these students are sophomores and juniors, I view them less as mentees and more as friends. I am glad to have played a role—even a minor one—in their acclimation to the university. I know they are thriving due to their own hard work and enthusiasm. I still stay in touch and even step into my old mentorship position from time to time. Whenever course scheduling rolls around, it's guaranteed that I'll have a conversation with at least one mentee, answering their questions and offering advice as they select classes for the next semester. I enjoy watching where their college experience takes them. It's amazing to see them get involved with clubs, pursue interesting majors (or double majors, or sometimes triple majors (!)), and develop into leaders.

As I prepare to graduate in May, I look back fondly on my experiences with mentorship. Having a mentor can make a huge difference in the life of a student, and being a mentor is both beneficial and rewarding. I am so glad the peer mentor program is built into the Shippensburg Honors experience, and I know it will advantage students for years to come.



# Feet, Do Fail Me Now

By Luke Hershey, Honors Sophomore

**D**uring my latest late-night “stare at the ceiling and contemplate the secrets of the universe” session, I was thinking a lot about failure—how it sticks with us, breaks us down to build us back up again. I don’t really want to tell you this story. In fact, I’ve spent a massive amount of time trying to bury it deep within the folds of my memory. But that’s kept me from learning from it. If we (I) refuse to learn from our (my) failures, then we’ll (I’ll) eventually fall victim to the elusive demon of stagnancy. Although “Demon of Stagnancy” is for sure going to be the name of my new heavy metal band, I certainly don’t want to make it my life motto. So here goes nothing.

My metaphorical American citizenship was revoked on Veterans Day 2014. I was a sophomore in high school. I drank too much caffeine. I sported a Justin Bieber-type hairdo. And I thought I was the new Frank flippin’ Sinatra—I’m not, *trust me*. I remember it like I dreamed it last night. The creaky wooden stage. The tuxedo. The flag the size of an adult male sperm whale hanging from the rafters. The sweat. The embarrassment.

I stared out across the auditorium, which was full of veterans—some of them fought in Iraq, some in Vietnam, some even in World War II—and they stared right back at me. I casually gripped the mic stand like I was singing in some New Orleans jazz bar and busted into a rollicking a capella version of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Of course, I didn’t practice beforehand because, come on, *what goofball doesn’t know the words to the National Anthem?* Welp, I discovered the answer to that question the hard way.

Christina Aguilera. Michael Bolton. Steven Tyler. Jesse McCartney. Cyndi Lauper. James Taylor. And YOURS TRULY. *These* are the goofballs who don’t know the words to the National Anthem.

I didn’t just flub the words. I got as far as “perilous fight,” and then I stopped completely. For a split second, my mind wandered into thoughts of the impending luncheon—the *whole thing* went off the rails! I managed to mutter a sheepish “sorry” before letting an uncomfortable fifteen seconds of silence settle over the room. I might as well have been struck down by a Higher Power and damned to that bout of quiet for eternity. I made eye contact with one of the WWII vets in a wheelchair near the front row—I later found out the guy had been awarded a Purple Heart after getting shot in the thigh while storming the beaches of Normandy—and I swear he was a heartbeat away from demanding that my deportation papers be signed then and there.<sup>1</sup> I think he would’ve escorted me to the Canadian border himself. Luckily, the principal snatched the mic from me and led a sing-along of the remainder of the tune. I slogged back to my chair, sunk into the cushion, and concluded that my life was over.

It took me years to realize it—but I was wrong. I know now that failure is *necessary* and *unavoidable*. If I hadn’t messed up that day, my ego would’ve inflated to Kanyeian proportions, and I probably would’ve forgotten those gosh darn ramparts on a much larger stage. I learned the importance of preparation \*facepalm\*—I also learned to embrace my failures. I know this is an impossible task for most Honors students, but I encourage you to flip the script on your failure and welcome it. Stop being afraid of it. Learn something from it. Flee from the Demon of Stagnancy! I promise you’ll be better because of it. The *world* will be better if we were all a bit more willing to fail.

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<sup>1</sup>I recognize that it’s at least slightly distasteful to joke about deportation right now given the fact that there are hundreds of *good* people being tossed out of our country every week. I think Donald Trump and his immigration policies are whack, and I believe wholeheartedly that America should *never, ever* turn away someone seeking asylum. Enough said.

# April 2019

01	Application deadline for Honors capstone project grants for projects to be completed in Summer or Fall 2019  Deadline for Honors seniors graduating in December 2019 to submit the Honors Capstone Project Proposal form	11	<b>Major Scholarships Workshop: Fulbright Scholarships and Grants with Dr. Jon Skaff, Fulbright Program Advisor</b> 3:30-4:30 p.m., DHC 208  <b>Honors Read: <i>Bachelor Girl</i> with Dr. Kim van Alkemade (C/O)</b> 3:30-4:30 p.m., Honors Seminar Room, Harley Hall
04	<b>Trivia Night (C/O)</b> 6:30-8:00 p.m., Harley Hall MPR  <b>Reach Out Fundraiser: Book Sale</b> Daily Times in Honors Weekly Update, McLean Hall	13	<b>Annual Easter Egg Hunt (C/O)</b> 1:00-2:30 p.m., Student Rec Pavilion
06	<b>Ship Trip (S)</b> 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Shippen Hall	15	Application deadline for Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Fellowships  Application deadline for the Outstanding Honors Capstone Project Award  Application deadline for the Honors Study Abroad Scholarship for students who plan to study abroad in Summer or Fall 2019
07	<b>Reach Out Fundraiser: MOD Pizza (S)</b> 10:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Chambersburg MOD Pizza	23	<b>Honors Symposium</b> 2:00-6:00 p.m., Honors Seminar Room, Harley Hall
08	<b>Cards for Humanity (S)</b> 6:00-9:00 p.m., Harley Hall MPR	24	<b>Honors Symposium</b> 2:00-6:00 p.m., Honors Seminar Room, Harley Hall
09	<b>Cultural Coffee Break: Curacao with Paige Steffy (C/O)</b> 3:30-4:15 p.m., Honors Seminar Room, Harley Hall	25	<b>Reach Out Fundraiser: Danceathon (C/O)</b> 7:00-8:30 p.m., Henderson Gym
10	<b>Honors Student Leaders Meeting</b> 12:00-12:50 p.m., Honors Seminar Room, Harley Hall  <b>Pizza with a Prof with Dr. Anne Papalia, Assistant Professor of Special Education (C/O)</b> 5:00-5:45 p.m., Honors Seminar Room, Harley Hall	27	<b>Honors Day of Service (S)</b> 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., locations available in Honors Weekly Update

“Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.”  
- Vincent van Gogh