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The Newsletter of the Shippensburg University Honors Program
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The Long and Winding Camino

The PASSHE Summer Honors Program is a study abroad opportunity offered to Honors students from each of the fourteen state universities. Two students are selected from each university to participate in the program. Mary Grace and Josh were accepted for the 2016 program that focused on the Camino de Santiago, a medieval pilgrimage route in Spain.

By Mary Grace Keller, Honors Senior

There's a shell hanging from my rearview mirror, swaying with each turn of the steering wheel. This shell is used to traveling with me, nearly 200 miles clinging to my backpack as I hiked through Spain.

Fearless professors from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) led us from León to Santiago de Compostela in about two weeks. Our hiking schedule varied, and the landscape, people, terrain and kilometers changed constantly.

We'd start hiking as early as 6 a.m., finishing by 3 p.m. Our professors chose a place for us to meet in town each evening, usually in the shadow of an old church. Every student gave a presentation about a piece of history or a theme relating to the Camino.

As we learned about St. James, pilgrimage and Spanish culture we found ourselves to be a part of living history. It felt like every building we passed had a story to be told, and each hiker we met added to the learning experience. The hikers call themselves pilgrims, or peregrinos, and each one carried with them the shell of Santiago.

Despite the aches, pains and self-doubt, we made it to Santiago de Compostela. Once I saw the Cathedral of St. James I couldn't help but weep. After all the mountains, the blisters and the Ibuprofen, I finally reached the Camino finish line. El Camino de Santiago took a lot out of me, but it gave me more. Hiking this trail was the most difficult challenge I've ever faced, mentally or physically. I got to absorb the culture of Spain, enhance my language skills and forge lasting friendships. The professors from IUP showed me how to push farther than I ever thought I could.

Although the experience is now a memory and my friends have returned to their schools, I'll be reminded of the PASSHE Summer Honors Program when I face a struggle, when I hear Spanish and when I see my shell swinging from the rearview mirror.



Mary Grace (right) stopping to pose with a friend on the long hike

By Josh Varone, Honors Junior

312 kilometers. This number didn't mean much to me this past spring, when I first began planning for the 2016 PASSHE Summer Honors Program. At that point, it hadn't fully set in that I'd be walking that distance in just a few months. 312 kilometers, 194 miles, over just thirteen days. I can say without a doubt that it was the most amazing experience of my life. Day after day, as I walked, I realized: there was nothing else around the corner, no deadlines to meet, no exams approaching or projects coming due. For the first time in as long as I could remember, I wasn't stressed at all.

On our first day, we left together as twenty-seven, walking about twenty kilometers until we reached Villar de Mazarife. In this first town, I experienced a sense of culture shock. Everything was so different from what I knew or expected. It was an overwhelming feeling, but one that was overshadowed by anticipation and excitement for the days ahead. Everything I saw, everything I experienced, seemed so bright, so vibrant. That's not to say the program was without adversity. Some days were flat; some contained eight kilometers of continuous incline. Other days were made difficult by sheer distance (our longest and most painful, to Melide, was forty kilometers). On any given day, we would pass countless people from all over the world, each with their own stories.



Josh hikes the Camino de Santiago

This was a truly amazing experience, and I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to walk this pilgrimage with some incredible people and great new friends. And, having completed this pilgrimage, the most important lesson I learned is that we appreciate the present. We try to focus less on the future and more on what's right in front of us. Rather than thinking of the destination, we look at the journey. And we walk forward.

Reber-Offner Honors Research

By Rachel Shaffer, Honors Junior

This past summer I was fortunate enough to receive the first Reber-Offner Honors Research Endowment, an allotment generously donated to a female freshman or sophomore honors student majoring in chemistry, math, physics, or computer science. The grant supports a research project over a ten-week period during the summer. With the notorious competition that accompanies a Research Experience for Undergraduates application, this grant allows young women in science or math to gain much needed research experience to strengthen their résumé/curriculum vitae without leaving Shippensburg. This opportunity gave me the chance to learn and work under the supervision of Dr. Richardson while gaining important skills necessary for independent research: the ability to identify problems and to determine an effective way to solve them.

I started research in May and ended my grant period in mid-August. My project was essentially a continuation of previous research concerning the electrodeposition and subsequent stripping of a chosen metal on an optically-transparent electrode in order to monitor the process through a technique known as attenuated total reflectance. This research was designed to be a precursor project to the work of two senior research students currently in progress for this academic year. An essential part of scientific research is its reproducibility, making it an interesting experience to be just one project in a continuing line of questions and answers.

This experience gave me a different outlook on my major in all aspects. It's one thing to take classes or labs and to excel at them; it's a completely different experience when you are trying to generate an unknown result while finding solutions for problems along the way. Luckily for us, after certain points of receiving no results, we eventually were able to couple the electrochemical data with simultaneous spectroscopic data collection. The results can even pose new questions to be answered through subsequent research.

Now that the work is done, I have research that will be presented at several conferences. I had been recently notified that I am a recipient of an I.M. Kolthoff Award, an allotment given by the Analytical Division of the American Chemical Society (ACS) to present research at the Spring ACS meeting in San Francisco. Without this initial research experience and the help of this Honors Program grant, I wouldn't have this opportunity. I encourage anyone who fits the criteria to apply for the grant next spring, especially if you see research as a potential career option after receiving your undergraduate degree.

My Summer at Fort Knox

By Patrick Hiller, Honors Sophomore

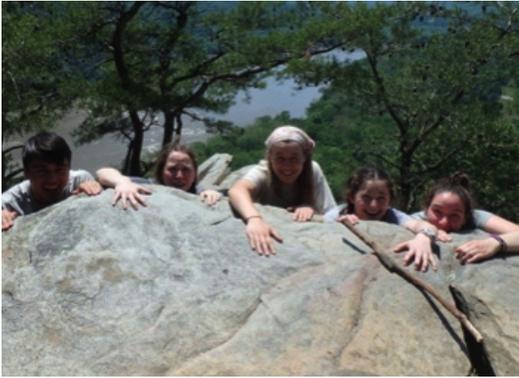


Patrick (second from left) stands with fellow cadets in Fort Knox

I am an Army ROTC Cadet at Shippensburg University, and this July, I flew to Fort Knox, Kentucky for Cadet Initial Entry Training (CIET), the cadet equivalent to Basic Training. I spent thirty-one days training in Army doctrine, customs, courtesies, tactics, and leadership. During the month, I learned a lot about the Army. I was motivated by Drill Sergeants and learned to march. I was tested in land navigation skills, both during the day and at night. I experienced the CS tear gas chambers that simulate a chemical attack. I also trained in shooting and conducting the Army's military tactics at the squad and platoon levels, and I was elevated as a Squad Leader for part of my time there. We spent nights at three different locations, including barracks, tent cities, and in the field, along with rain and Kentucky heat. Overall, had a positive experience, made friends and connections that will last, developed my skills and leadership abilities, and learned more about myself and what I can do.

A Hike Through Harpers Ferry

By Arlee Simendinger, Honors Sophomore



Arlee climbs with friends in Harpers Ferry

I participated in the Harpers Ferry Partners in the Parks program, an outdoor learning experience hosted by the National Collegiate Honors Council. During the program I hiked roughly 16 miles of the Appalachian Trail. Not only did we hike, but we also analyzed significant modern-day issues concerning the National Scenic trail. This experience exposed me to different perspectives from around the country. Since each fellow student had their own perspectives from different parts of the country, it truly brought the experience to life. All of my peers had such an appreciation for nature and the desire to learn and challenge themselves. Additionally, Partners in the Parks revealed a genuine experience of backpacking/hiking for multiple days in the wilderness. Life without showers and toilets made me thoroughly appreciate those two fine inventions. Focusing on the trip

itself, we began our hiking portion Sunday. I had my backpack loaded with clothes, sleeping bag, food, tent, water, and other items to ensure my survival. Unfortunately, rain was a factor my fellow campers and I were not too prepared for. Once we reached our camping grounds on Sunday night and put up our tent on the wet ground, puddles formed in our tent. However, this ultimately better prepared us for the remaining nights of our hike.

Partners in the Park also exposed me to the future of the National Parks in America. It is uncertain with the ever limited government funding, yet through a variety of seminars and discussions, we discovered that preserving and promoting nature are two constructive ways to make the next hundred years a positive century. “Leave No Trace” practices outline proper ways for campers to hike without negatively impacting nature. Additionally, promoting National Parks as a place for every American citizen is a key aspect. National Parks are welcoming to all races, ages, and genders to ensure their relevance to America’s diverse society. What I found most surprisingly is that the future of National Parks is in the hands of my generation, so by enforcing these criteria, we can ultimately keep national parks preserved and enhanced.

Finishing the three-day hike of the Appalachian Trail was more than rewarding. My group stopped at Weverton Cliffs before descending out of the trails and back into society. The beautiful view of the Potomac River from the encasing rocks allowed me to see the striking similarities between life and nature. One will experience twists and turns in life, have ups and downs, but just like the Appalachian Trail, it keeps going. So don’t lose sight of your true path even if you have to go out of your comfort zone because the final destination makes all of the bugs and rain worth it.

A Greek Getaway

By Jake Gillespie, Honors Junior

On September 28, Honors students walked through the doors of Harley Hall into what they thought was the Honors Seminar Room. Instead, they found themselves enjoying the sunset in the Greek village of Oia. Audrey McGarrell and Zak Dakes held a Cultural Coffee Break to discuss their experiences studying abroad in Greece and Spain over the summer. They were also kind enough to supply traditional Greek food, including tzatziki sauce with pita, feta cheese, olives, and olive oil. While no coffee was on hand, Zak and Audrey brought carbonated water, which is a Greek favorite. The food was a big hit, and crossed the culture boundary with ease. I wish I could say the same for the carbonated water, which didn’t go over as well. Despite the seltzer situation, everyone enjoyed Zak and Audrey’s discussion, and were thankful for the hour-long getaway to the coast of Greece.



Senior, Audrey McGarrell (left) tells a group of students about her experiences abroad

NYC

By Jordan Back, Honors Sophomore

The Shippensburg University Honors Program always looks to provide its students with academically enriching opportunities while always looking for opportunities to modify and expand into uncharted territory. This mission is echoed in one of the Honors Program’s annual events: The New York City field trip. For the past three years, the Honors Program has provided students with the culturally enriching opportunity to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art to explore the depths of history in accordance with their World History course; however, this year the program expanded the trip to coordinate with The Leadership, History, and Social Change seminar and granted students the opportunity to visit the Tenement Museum as well.

The exciting addition proved to be a powerful experience. Students roamed the Lower East Side of Manhattan and explored the impact of our nations past on the iconic New York Neighborhood. Honors sophomore Shannon Long stated, “I had never been exposed to the topic of gentrification before, but it was powerful to learn about it while seeing the effects of it in person.” Both groups of students also engaged in the immersive cultural jewel case that is New York City. Whether this included eating in Chinatown or exploring the bustling Chelsea Market, students encountered and gained knowledge from stepping outside of their typical environment. Both groups boarded the bus home with a wealth of knowledge and experiences that the trip aimed provide, and there was no shortage of discussion of the day’s events on the way home. Once again, the Honors Program successfully provided its students with an opportunity to learn and bond over an unmatched experience.



Honors freshmen with Professor Christine Senecal (center front) stop for in NYC, waving German flags

Pumpkin Carving- 2016



Republican Party, Democratic Party, Pizza Party!

By Zak Dakes. Honors Senior



On Thursday, September 21st, Dr. Dagnes of the Political Science Department hosted an Honors Pizza with a Prof event focused on the election. The event was very open and informative. Everyone discussed their own involvement in politics and how closely they follow politics. Dr. Dagnes discussed the importance of casting your vote. She also discussed what she believed each candidate would do, if chosen, when taking office. We examined the supporter base for each political party. The type of people who supported certain candidates was discussed and the reasons for why they supported that specific candidate was also explored. Protest third party votes were also examined. The truth behind what would actually happen if people voted third party was revealed. Dr. Dagnes' discussion was a great political summary for anyone who had the slightest interest in the election. Hearing an insightful viewpoint from a professor who lives and breathes politics was extremely valuable prior to this year's election.

Research Grant Winners

Congratulations to the thirteen Honors Program students who were awarded University Undergraduate Research Grants for 2016-2017!

Macklin Hawkins
Olivia Turner
Kaitlyn Frey
Colby Ott

Daniel Rosen
Sarah Flick
Lane Yutzy
Alyson Poorbaugh
Enoch Shissler

Tristan Phillips
Bethany Fink
Jeremiah Steigleman
Josue Murillo

We look forward to seeing the results of your research at the Honors Symposium and the Minds at Work Conference in April!

Final Thoughts From The Editors

Dear Reader,

As I sit here in the corner cubicle editing the newsletter, I sometimes find my mind wandering. Today, I've been thinking about my job. For a few hours every week I get the opportunity to read about and arrange all the awesome stuff my peers are doing both in and out of the classroom. That's not to say the job of co-editor isn't taxing or stressful... it can be. But the only reason it becomes stressful is that I've found my fellow honors students do too many wonderful and amazing things. At least, too many to squeeze easily into eight pages. I've asked them to stop winning awards and being recognized at national conferences, but nobody listens to me. So I suppose I'll have to deal with a little stress. Despite my graying hair, I hope you enjoy this edition of *.hnrs*.

Jake Gillespie

There are these two people I know who work in the back corner of the honors office. You might not see them when you first walk in, but if you hear 80's classic rock music playing and/or smell a Chicken Dippity buffalo chicken wrap, chances are they are there. They are documenting all the wonderful things that the honors students can accomplish in just one semester. They are combing through pictures of the most photogenic young people you will ever have the pleasure of knowing. They are designing a newsletter that they hope current, past, and maybe even future Honors students can all appreciate. These two are Jake and myself and we truly hope that we have created something you all can be proud of.

Mackenzie Brouse

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The cover photo of this edition of *.hnrs* was taken by Honors Program junior, Jake Gillespie

November-December 2016

Calendar of Events

November 30: Information session for students who plan to apply for the PASSHE Summer Honors Program. Email Cindy Poe at cmpoe@ship.edu to let her know when you are available to meet between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

December 3: Service Opportunity: Stop Hunger Now Meal Packing. 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the Messiah United Methodist Church. Contact Josh Varone at jv8864@ship.edu for more information.



December 1: Annual Holiday Cookie Decorating Party
7:00 p.m., Harley Hall MPR

December 9: Deadline for graduating seniors to submit an electronic copy of their Honors capstone project (PowerPoint presentation from the Honors Symposium and research paper or other written documentation required by faculty advisor) to Cindy Poe at cmpoe@ship.edu.