Collaboration

Research, service and worldwide engagement shape the Honors College experience
In the pages of the 2017–2018 Minerva, you will find stories that inspire and offer hope for our future, stories that speak of the determination, dedication and creativity of our Honors College students, faculty and staff; and stories that highlight interdisciplinarity and collaboration at all levels. These last two ideas represent the theme of our magazine this year. In a time when forces of polarization and separation seem to be ascendant, many of the tales we have to tell speak of the power of diversity and communication across disciplines, national boundaries, and points of view to solve problems and help heal the world.

From the inspiring visit and lecture by Sherri Mitchell, our John M. Rezendes Visiting Scholar in Ethics last April, to the work of our students to help alleviate hunger in Maine through the Hungry 100K project, a fundamental role for Honors in the University is to help connect knowledge to action and to serve as a hub for interdisciplinary and engaged research for undergraduates. The Research Collaborative model that has emerged from UM's Honors College in the last few years is featured in these pages along with several innovative approaches to studying abroad.

We also take a moment to reflect on this, the fifteenth anniversary of the Honors College, by visiting with a number of alumni who graduated in 2003, the year the Honors Program became a College. Another milestone is the 80th anniversary of the first graduating class of Honors students, represented by the four theses from 1937 that sit on the shelves of the Class of 1955 Thesis Room in Colvin Hall. We take stock of all of this in these pages as we also celebrate the 85 graduates of the Class of 2017 whose accomplishments are summarized in this issue. As you look over the summaries at the back of the magazine, please take note of the names of the thesis advisors from across the campus whose dedicated work as mentors is essential to the success of their students’ theses experience. I thank them along with the staff, faculty and supporters of the College whose dedication and interest create the rich environment and opportunities for our students to thrive and excel — studium erudicionis ardescens.

François G. Amar
Dean
umaine.edu/honors
MINERVA

Editorial staff
François G. Amar, Abby Bellefleur, Sean Cox, Melissa Ladenheim

Layout and design
Val Ireland, Division of Marketing and Communications

Readers should send comments to: honors@maine.edu

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The Hungry 100K

Just look at what we accomplished in last week’s Hungry 100K meal pack-out on Maine Day. Every scoop of foodstuffs added up, and together we packed a record-breaking 107,562 meals that were distributed to people in need statewide. An outstanding achievement. And the message is clear: No act of engagement is too small to make a difference.”

Susan J. Hunter, President
2017 Commencement Address

Members of the UMaine and neighboring communities work together to help feed Maine residents.
A New Framework for Undergraduate Research

By François G. Amar and Melissa Ladenheim

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH has been a hallmark of the Honors program at the University of Maine since its inception. Indeed, Alice Stewart ’37, who was in the first cohort of students to graduate with Honors at UMaine, and eventually returned as professor and chair of UMaine’s history department, credited her success in graduate school in part to “the research techniques and the discipline of the Honors thesis.” Stewart was advised by E. Faye Wilson who she called “a fine teacher and well-trained medievalist.” Stewart’s work with Wilson conformed to a traditional pairing of advisor and student, or what Dr. Stephanie Welcomer calls the dyad model, which is the dominant paradigm of academic research in most fields. Most of the 1,800 or so Honors theses written at UMaine in the last 80 years have been produced under this model.

As a hub of interdisciplinary education, Honors is well-positioned to be innovative in reshaping this conventional model. We took on the question of how can the scope and parameters of complex problems — “wicked problems” to use a Maine idiom — be better understood with the contributions
of multiple disciplines? How can students be encouraged to connect their emerging expertise in their own discipline to needed knowledge from other areas? One response emerging from the Honors College in the last four years is the development of several Research Collaboratives (RCs) that involve engaging multiple students and faculty from different disciplines along with community partners and other stakeholders. Below are two examples of successful RCs that are making important contributions in knowledge and action at home and abroad.

**Sustainable Food Systems Research Collaborative**

RESPONDING TO a call for proposals to address areas of sustainability that had not been previously studied by the existing programs in the Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions, a group of Honors faculty was awarded a seed grant to create the Sustainable Food Systems Research Collaborative (SFSRC). This group realized that significant work by the partners had been undertaken separately, but that by creating the RC they could expand the scale and scope of what students could accomplish. The three students who formed the initial cohort, Audrey Cross (Ecology and Environmental Science), Ashley Thibeault (Ecology and Environmental Science), and Danielle Walczak (Journalism), came together as SFSRC fellows for three weeks in May 2014; they read journal articles, met with SFSRC faculty and heard from guest speakers to learn about broad issues in the food system while also beginning to identify a specific problem they could address more deeply from their disciplinary perspective. Ashley and Audrey began working on the local implementation of the Real Food Challenge, a national effort to increase the percentage of local, organic, and fairly traded foods used in university and college dining halls. UMaine Dining Services signed on as the “community partner” and gave access to its purchasing data for analysis that would determine a baseline percentage from which to make policy/purchasing decisions on the “demand side” that could increase the amount of “Real Food” consumed by UMaine students in future years. Ashley’s thesis, “Using the Real Food Calculator to Assess the University of Maine’s Dining Purchase within a Food System Context,” and Audrey’s, “The Real Food Challenge and Student Democratic Engagement,” both advised by economist and Honors preceptor Dr. Mark Haggerty, resulted from this research.

But what about the supply side of the local food challenge? Danielle Walczak addressed an aspect of this problem in her thesis, “Forward Not Back: Young People’s Search for Community and Farming in Maine,” in which she interviewed five young organic farmers to learn about their aspirations and challenges. Dr. Melissa Ladenheim and Dr. Jennifer Moore co-advised the thesis which was also published as a feature article in the Bangor Daily News in June 2015.

Further rounds of funding from the Mitchell Center and other partners have allowed at least five other students to participate in the SFSRC and write theses that emerged from the collaborative in areas as diverse as sociology, business, sustainable agriculture and journalism. Dr. Ladenheim is presently co-PI of a USDA grant that uses the SFSRC model to enlist and train undergraduate students to do research on sustainability practices in Maine’s honey production and maple sugar industries. Members of the SFSRC have published multiple articles, given numerous presentations at conferences and garnered significant recognition for their work. The 2016 Minerva featured Brady Davis’ work with Drs. Stephanie Welcomer and Jean MacRae on the sustainability practices of Maine’s artisanal cheesemakers.
As OTHER opportunities for students to work on interdisciplinary projects arise, we continue to find ways to adapt the RC framework. In spring 2016, a group of faculty and students began to consider a series of education and health related projects in Sierra Leone in partnership with stakeholders who had extensive experience in addressing social needs in that country. Of seven proposed projects, the group decided to start with two: first, the development of a National Examination Test-practice Tool (NETT) and second, a curriculum on attachment theory for caregivers of traumatized orphans and other children.

The NETT project involves significant work in designing and programming an online test preparation system to help students in Sierra Leone succeed in the high-stakes exams they must pass with high marks in order to progress from elementary to middle school and from high school to university. The heart of the NETT system is a test practice tool that allows students to try out sample tests either at their own pace or in a timed test version. The system will allow local teachers to review students’ progress and then to identify areas where they need to strengthen students’ knowledge.

It was clear from the outset that a diverse and dedicated team would be needed to create the NETT. Gene Herrschaft, a New Media Honors student, is the team leader for the project, which also benefits from the resources of UMaine’s ASAP media group, especially through the skills of director Mike Scott and computer science student Jacob Hall. Other Honors students on the team include Grace Pouliot, an education major who is creating a tutorial on test-taking that students can access from within the system itself. Aliya Uteuova (Journalism and Political Science), Alli DellaMattera (Sociology), Colleen Demaris (Computer Science), Grant Carrier (Business) and Ciara Larence (Mathematics and Psychology) are also contributing to the project. This work has great potential for student success in Sierra Leone, but is also changing the lives of Honors students. As Gene noted, “While working with [Servant Heart Research Collaborative], I have been constantly encouraged to grow, both as a worker and a project manager. [This has] given me an opportunity to build a platform that has a tangible, positive impact on other people’s lives.”

The second project involves the development of curriculum modules on Attachment Theory, which is concerned with the development of strong emotional bonds between children and their caregivers. In Sierra Leone, where many children have been displaced by war and their lives disrupted by famine, poverty and disease, these modules are designed to provide caregivers, both short and long term, at orphanages, schools and foster homes with supportive and culturally appropriate practices for caring for the children, ages 3 to 16.

The modules consist of workshops addressing specific issues related to a child’s attachment to a caregiver. Each training includes background information on aspects of healthy attachments and activities that support awareness and skill building.

And as is the case with NETT, the Attachment Theory project benefits from an interdisciplinary team of students and faculty bringing their knowledge and skills to bear on this issue. The team includes Grace Pouliot, Alli DellaMattera, Alex Reppond (Psychology) and Kim Crowley (English) along with Education faculty mentors Julie DellaMattera and Sid Mitchell, who also directs the Peace Studies Program at UMaine.
Challenges and Prospects

The two RCs outlined here have different themes, goals, funding streams, and deliverables. What they share is an interdisciplinary team structure that is responsive to the needs of community partners either in the local area or across the globe. Other potential collaboratives being explored revolve around topics such as aging, impacts of climate change on agriculture, genomics, and many more. The University of Maine community is adapting the RC model for a set of Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research Collaborative grant projects along the lines of those pioneered in the Honors College.

If the university is to become increasingly relevant to our societal needs and if an important goal of a college education is to train students to translate knowledge to action, then the research collaborative model is a significant way to help realize these goals for undergraduates, especially Honors students.

Lessons from Ancient Texts

Naomi Jacobs

Over the years, I have enjoyed teaching an occasional Honors tutorial, serving on Honors thesis committees, and providing guest lectures for HON 211-212 on Frankenstein and Brave New World. But I only recently joined the faculty for HON 111-112. When returning to full-time teaching after several years in administration, I quickly volunteered to help fulfill the English Department’s traditional contribution of faculty time to the Honors College. The ancient world has always fascinated me. The “Gods and Goddesses” entry in our Golden Book Encyclopedia was a childhood favorite. As a first-year student at a liberal arts college, I took a required Western Civilizations sequence where experiences including a performance of Euripides’ Bacchae, a lecture on daily life in ancient Egypt, and small-group discussions of books such as History Begins at Sumer and The History of West Africa all opened my mind and piqued my imagination.

Teaching in Honors lets me revisit that interdisciplinary experience, exploring the complexities of human history and culture through powerful texts that don’t fit my usual courses in 19th and 20th century literature. To approach these works as a non-specialist, and in the company of a small group of talented students, is a great pleasure. I particularly enjoy the range of perspectives the students bring, the way our discussions become more candid and open as we get to know each other, and the opportunity to delve into big questions of values, ethics, and cultural difference. The ancient texts can seem alien at times, but we also see ourselves in them, and we can better understand who we are, by knowing something about who we were, and thus, who we might be.

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Naomi Jacobs
ONE PARTICULAR study abroad opportunity for Honors students grew out of a chance meeting in 2013 between Amar and Gregory Clancy, a Bangor native who is the master (the equivalent of a dean in a U.S. university) of Tembusu College, which is part of the National University of Singapore (NUS).

They recognized the similarities of their two institutions and “the possibilities to create meaningful collaborations between them.”

“One of the reasons that Singapore is such a good partner for UMaine is that it is so different: ethnically diverse, tropical, an island city-state that is fully urban, Singapore

Honors Connects with Tembusu College in Singapore

INTERNATIONAL STUDY has never been more important for the University of Maine’s Honors College students. Some have never been outside the United States or even on a plane, and “exposure to other cultures and ways of thinking are essential for our students to become global citizens and to be able to thrive in the global community,” says François G. Amar, Dean of the Honors College. While the University and the Honors College are involved in many international exchange programs, the focus in this issue of Minerva is on two particular programs: one a direct bilateral exchange between the Honors College and a similar institution in Singapore and the other, an emerging partnership through the existing University Study Abroad Consortium (USAC).

Honors Study Abroad

By Rhiannon Hutchinson

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Honors Connects with Tembusu College in Singapore

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“One of the reasons that Singapore is such a good partner for UMaine is that it is so different: ethnically diverse, tropical, an island city-state that is fully urban, Singapore

A small river winds through the town of Malacca in Malaysia, a UNESCO World Heritage site known for its historic European architecture.

Photo courtesy of James Robie
could hardly be more different from Maine. Contrasting cases are a good way to teach,” Amar says. “You get to see similar problems dealt with differently as the context requires, and you learn new philosophical ideas and ways to live, which makes you more adaptive and flexible.”

Amar and Clancey collaborated to develop an international study program that has allowed nine UMaine students to attend summer classes at Tembusu and two Tembusu Faculty Fellows to teach and do research at UMaine. In spring of 2017, UMaine Honors preceptor, Mark Haggerty spent a sabbatical semester at Tembusu where he taught a class on food systems and did research in this area as well.

“I want to better familiarize Maine students with this part of the world, and help them cultivate a sense of global citizenship,” says Clancey, whose father and brother are UMaine alumni. “Asia is no longer an exotic ‘Far East,’ but an essential node in a global economy and culture. To be well-educated means to travel. I notice there are an increasing number of Asian students in Maine, but the traffic can’t be all one way.”

This is not a classic student exchange program, notes Clancey. “It’s informal and many-sided,” he says, “quiet and organic, which I think makes it deeper. There is no special dedicated fund for this on either side. We just decided to do it.”

By having this relationship, “we’re building a real family,” Amar says. “When students arrive, we want them to be received like they belong, and we’ve set the program up to be similar to what students already know, which helps them have a good experience.”

According to Grace Pouliot, a junior Honors student majoring in elementary education, that approach works. Pouliot spent a month in Singapore this past summer taking a class called Animals in the City. Her initial motivation was largely one of convenience: she wanted to study abroad, but the only way she could work that into her schedule was through a summer class.

When she arrived, Grace discovered that even simple, everyday habits and patterns were disrupted. And that’s where the relationship between the two schools paid off.

“Local students were really wonderful with teaching me practical things, like how to stand on an elevator or order food,” she says, noting that it wasn’t long before she felt comfortable. “I was amazed at my progress from American tourist to becoming part of the Singapore community.”

As the Honors College prepares to select a new cohort of students to study at Tembusu this summer, the two institutions are also beginning the process of formalizing the connections already established with a memorandum of understanding that will allow the collaboration to grow and deepen over time.
An increasingly globalized world

WHEN JAMES ROBE ’17 landed in Singapore in the summer of 2015, he could not imagine a place more different than the one he had just left. As he explains, “I was born and raised in Maine, a state full of bitter winters and vast open space. Singapore was on the complete opposite side of the world, and was tropical in climate and completely urbanized.”

The opportunity to take a class in Tembusu College brought James to Singapore. The course, Asia Now! The Archaeology of the Future City, explored “tensions between development and preservation of heritage,” mirroring the contrasts he was already observing. There were other differences, too. He would be studying with students he had never met from places he had never been.

But these differences didn’t stop James from experiencing the city and places beyond with his new group of international peers. Together they sat on the bridge at the Marina Bay Sands and watched the sunset over the city, explored lush jungles where small monkeys would come a little too close, and expanded their palates with local cuisine.

It was through these shared cultural experiences that James came to feel a sense of community in a place that initially felt so overwhelming. In his words, “My trip to Singapore was ultimately a reminder of how in an increasingly globalized world, human connection can be easily forged. Despite our vastly different lives, I found surprising connections between all of us, including the universal nature of humor, our love of common media, and our desire to explore.”

James Robe graduated from the University of Maine with a B.A. in Mass Communication and Minors in Graphic Design and New Media. He currently works for the U.S. Green Building Council of Massachusetts as the Outreach and Communication Manager.

UMaine Honors Abroad in San Sebastián, Spain and Santiago, Chile

By Rob Glover and Jordan LaBouff

“Dime con quién andas, y te diré quién eres.”

LITERALLY, THIS Spanish proverb means something like: “tell me who you hang out with, and I’ll tell you who you are.” More broadly, it means that our identity is shaped by the relationships we forge.

This could also be the mantra of a group of UMaine Honors students who had the transformative opportunity to study with Honors faculty in San Sebastián, Spain and Santiago, Chile over the past two years.

The project is a collaboration with the University Study Abroad Consortium (USAC), an organization that facilitates faculty and student exchange in nearly 30 global destinations. CLAS-Honors Preceptor and social psychologist Jordan LaBouff worked with USAC and UMaine’s Office of International Programs to develop UMaine Honors Abroad where students can travel with a preceptor for a semester — taking honors courses in the very cultural sites across Europe and South America that they’re studying.

In the Spring of 2016, the first five UMaine Honors students joined Dr. LaBouff in San Sebastián, Spain. As a European Capital of Culture for 2016, students had the opportunity to experience art, dance, food, and music from around the globe. Courtney Jarson, a participating student, observed, “Immersing myself in cultural differences helped me realize that ‘normal’ isn’t universal...studying Honors texts abroad helped me see my own culture and prejudices from an outside standpoint.”

There in the Basque Country of northern Spain, students were able to study historical and cultural developments through a new lens. In the heart of the indigenous Basque culture that has persisted across more than 7,000 years of change in the Iberian Peninsula, students had the chance to investigate the complex interactions between language, culture, government, and environment both in the classroom and in experiences across the region.

As volunteers in local schools and community projects in the Basque Country of northern Spain, students had the chance to practice the cultural skills they were learning in the classroom and develop lifelong relationships. As Courtney further said, “San Sebastián will always be my home away from home.”

In Chile in the Spring 2017 semester, five UMaine Honors students joined CLAS-Honors in the Andes and the Atacama Desert. The students, under the guidance of Honors faculty member and researcher in cultural studies Jordan LaBouff, had the opportunity to explore the diverse cultures and landscapes of Chile, from the bustling cities to the remote countryside.

In the Spring 2018 semester, UMaine Honors students will have the opportunity to study in Argentina, further expanding their cultural horizons. This program continues to be a testament to the power of cultural exchange and the importance of connecting with people from different backgrounds.

Below, Honors students Kaleb Robinson, Amy Lyons, Jordan HUDSOCH, and Aspen Kraushaar admiring artwork at Ascensor Reina Victoria in Valparaiso, Chile.

Photo courtesy of Rob Glover
Preceptor and political scientist Rob Glover to hone their Spanish language skills, while taking his courses on student activism and globalization. This was in addition to their honors course (albeit typically held in a bustling Santiago cafe rather than a classroom). Honors student Kaleb Robinson had the following to say about his time in Chile: “[b]eing in Chile with Honors allowed me to experience the challenge of being immersed in a new world, where I could live and exist around new cultures and ideas at the same time as exploring them through Honors as well.”

Chile’s culture is marked by its military dictatorship from 1973–1990. The students learned about the resilience and strength of the Chilean people in fighting to restore democracy and human rights. The period has left the country with a robust, confrontational civil society that paired well with learning about social movements and student activism.

The unusual Chilean geography also meant that our students were able to experience just about every climate imaginable: the driest desert in the world in Atacama; the coastal destinations of Viña del Mar and Valparaíso; and the jagged, windswept mountains of the southern Patagonia.

Reflecting on her experience in Chile, Honors student Amy Lyons said, “[as] honors students, we are encouraged to transcend boundaries; studying abroad, especially in a nontraditional location like Chile, where one will experience valuable forms of cultural disorientation, helped me achieve just that.”

This opportunity is just one of the growing international partnerships for UMaine Honors students. In coming years, students will have the opportunity to travel to new locations around the world with new faculty mentors — allowing them to take intellectual risks, to develop relationships, and to craft experiences across the globe that put their honors studies into practice.

**The Ultimate goal should not necessarily be a good death — but a good life until the end,** said Leigh Boyle, Executive Director and Founder of The Lipstick Project, a women-run volunteer organization in Vancouver, B.C., providing free professional spa services to terminally ill patients.

Preceptor Mimi Killinger and four Orono High School girls were awed by Leigh’s keynote address on The Lipstick Project at a 2016 gender conference. Leigh described the Project’s origins in an obstetric fistula hospital in Northern Ethiopia where Leigh gave therapeutic manicures to isolated women deprived of human touch. Honors students Samantha Saucier and Maddy Jackson collaborated with Mimi and the girls to bring Leigh to Orono.

Samantha is a double major in Sociology and Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies, while Maddy is an English major involved in the UMaine McGillicuddy Humanities Center. The Lipstick Project resonated with their academic interests in gender, humanity and care, and they each earned a Dick Hill Undergraduate Research Award through the Honors College to support their Lipstick Project efforts.

Samantha and Maddy created posters, mailings, press releases and a Facebook presence, spreading the word about Leigh’s visit among university constituencies, regional high schools, palliative caregivers and local spa providers. They furthermore connected with ten co-sponsors across campus, including Honors, bringing Leigh to Orono April 25-26.

Leigh spoke with high schoolers over pizza, had breakfast with Honors students, gave a Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies luncheon talk, as well as an evening address. She taught her Maine audiences about human life measured in quality not quantity of days, in dignity and beauty, in community and care.

Samantha, Maddy and Mimi presented on Leigh’s visit at the 2017 National Collegiate Honors Council Conference and are co-authoring an article about Leigh and humanist, collaborative ways to address community needs.

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Left: Honors student Kaleb Robinson looking out over Valle de la Luna in San Pedro de Atacama, Chile.

Photo courtesy of Amy Lyons

Right: Moai statues at Rano Raraku on Isla Pascua (Easter Island), Chile.

Photo courtesy of Rob Glover

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Left: Orono High School seniors Karoline Bass, Meg Pandiscio, Elise Kenney, and Lindsay Wells advertise Boyle’s visit to the high school, an event they helped plan.

Photo courtesy of Mimi Killinger.

Right: An Ethiopian woman showing off her manicure.

Photo courtesy of Leigh Boyle

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Bridging Disciplines

Interconnections in Science and Art

By Cleo Barker

BRIDGING DISCIPLINES is the core of an Honors education. Our students and faculty represent many disciplines, and all strive to foster an expansive appreciation of the ways different fields intersect and connect as they grapple with the important questions posed by the curriculum. And it’s not all academic. Students bring their many interests to the table, enlivening discussions and contributing to a robust diversity of ideas and perspectives on thinking and problem solving.

The journey of the student featured in this story, Isaiah Mansour, exemplifies this bridging of disciplines both in his academic work and in his personal life. If asked, we might conventionally say he is a scientist since Mansour is a marine biology and aquaculture major. But that tells only part of his story and would do him a great disservice. He is also an artist and performer; a composer and musician. And who he is as scientist is very much informed by his sense of self as an artist. The reverse also holds true. Isaiah easily holds what may be seen as competing identities, and he enjoys challenging the presuppositions that come with identifying oneself exclusively as one thing or the other. As Isaiah reflects, “We need both (science and art). They function by the same principles.”

Science and art are not opposing forces. They have the potential to harmonize and foster the development of new perspectives and approaches to understanding life.

Finding Purpose

ISAIAH FINDS purpose both in the lab and in music. He has been playing the upright bass since elementary school, and became hooked on scientific research in high school.

Mansour attended Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture Science and Technology Education Center, a magnet high school in Connecticut. There, he did his first research project that focused on pre-screening criteria for helping to determine which horseshoe crabs were most likely to survive blood drawing and successfully return to the wild. He presented this research at the Future Farmers of America (FFA) National Agriscience Fair in Louisville, Kentucky during his freshman year at UMaine.

Mansour, who has a dual concentration in marine biology and aquaculture and a minor in fisheries studies, works on campus in aquaculture and marine sciences laboratories, collaborating with his thesis advisor Ian Bricknell, a professor of aquaculture.

As a sophomore, Mansour received a grant from UMaine’s Center for Undergraduate Research to investigate the possibility of using a component from the blood of the abalone (a type of marine snail) in vaccines. Currently, there is only one organism being used for this purpose — the giant keyhole limpet, which is endangered in the wild. This research is an attempt to produce the same compound in a more sustainable way.

Mansour has received grants from NASA and other organizations to continue the research.

The summer of 2017, Mansour conducted research at the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory as part of his Honors thesis. He had taken short courses there through Honors, including HON 350: Molecular Mechanisms of Human Disease. And in summer 2016, he did research with C. elegans nematodes through the National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program.

“I fell in love with the place immediately,” Mansour says.

In spring 2017, he and a friend collaborated to develop Bridging Disciplines, a course for students of different majors to tackle biological problems. UMaine and College of the Atlantic students were the first to
enroll. The course is being offered again in Spring 2018.

“Nature does not differentiate biology, from chemistry, from physics. Science does not exist in silos. Researchers often become so entrenched in their fields that we forget the intrinsic interconnectedness of all natural laws and phenomena,” Mansour says. “Biologists of various sub-genres speak entirely different jargon from each other, so how are we supposed to communicate, let alone collaborate, with chemists and engineers?”

“We’ve become overspecialized. We’ve lost track of the greater community. Problems need a multidisciplinary approach but that’s not happening yet, not on campus or in the world.”

Mansour also co-founded the on-campus group URSA Minor, the UMaine Research Student Association for Undergraduates. The group’s mission is to match students interested in research with labs actively seeking student participants.

Mansour says that the Honors College has “enabled and empowered me in more ways than I can count. It got me into laboratories on MDI. It’s shaped a huge part of my past, present and future.”

Mansour is also passionate about music. While he has performed in various orchestras, jazz and rock bands, most recently he has turned to solo performances with poetry.

During his freshman year, he saw a poster for an upcoming campus poetry slam. He wrote pieces of poetry and combined them with original music to win the competition.

“It was the first I’d ever done. I was shocked when I made it to the second round, then the third round, and eventually won. I thought, maybe this is something I can be good at, something that can be part of my life.”

Since then he has performed in many venues, such as the Nobel Poetry Festival, Bangor “Poets Speak,” Onono Flow and the UMaine radio station WMEB. Mansour has also performed for the 2014 TedX UMaine talk series and at the 2015 National Collegiate Honors Council Conference in Chicago.

Mansour thinks there is a “vacuum in modern poetry for the beauty of life, happiness, contentment” — themes he wants to focus on and contribute to the community. “We are over-saturated with poetry about existential dread, anxiety, and other absolutely legitimate and important, though negative, topics,” he says. “Many people need to express their feelings, and many others find solidarity with the experiences of others, so this poetry is essential for people going through tough times. But there is plenty of it, to the point that sadness has become the sad and popular genre. I would like to see more uplifting poetry balance the emotional spectrum.”

Mansour believes that science and art operate by very similar fundamental laws and relationships. “We need both (science and art),” he says. “They function by the same principles. Both investigate truth in their own way, and present it from their own perspective.”

“For example, broad ideas such as ‘balance’ and ‘rhythm’ are relevant in both art and science. Cells express levels of chemical balance and rhythm of productivity that parallel the aesthetic application of these principles in art.”

Both art and science reflect the ways in which people understand the world and their place in it. “It is therefore intuitive for art and science to be two sides of the same coin, yet we’ve separated them in modern formal education. Thankfully the Honors College is actively working to imbue a sense of necessity for both of these perspectives in its students,” Mansour says.

After graduation, Mansour plans to take a year to do scientific research before applying to graduate school.
Aliya Uteuova
Political Science, Journalism ‘18

A
LIIYA UTEUOVA is a fourth-year Honors student from Astana, Kazakhstan, studying political science and journalism. She is very involved in campus life as the Arts and Culture editor for The Maine Campus — where she is also a frequent contributor, an instructor for an intermediate Russian language class, and is a lead Resident Assistant. She is a member of the Dance and Ballet clubs; Culturefest, the International Dance Festival where she choreographs and performs, is past-president of the UMaine International Student Association, is a graduate of the Maine National Education for Women in Leadership program, and volunteers with Strong Mind-Strong Body, Inc. Aliya is equally engaged off campus. She is an intern with the Maine Attorney General’s office and previously interned with the Senate Democratic Office at the Maine State House. She was a 2017 UMaine student delegate to the Conference on U.S. Affairs and a frequent participant in Alternative Breaks, an experience she references in her poem “Sage” for which she won the 2018 Dorothy Clarke Wilson Peace Writing Prize. Committed to making positive changes in the lives of others is deeply important to Aliya. She responded to the global refugee crisis by twice undertaking a project to collect clothing and personal items for Syrian refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, each time collecting more than a truckload of desperately needed items. “I couldn’t help but think that a clothes drive shouldn’t have happened in the first place… nature didn’t cause chaos in Syria, people did. And it is people who can peacefully resolve this conflict for the sake of the country’s and the world’s future.”

“Declining,Journalistic Freedom in Turkey under the Erdogan Regime” is the title of Aliya’s Honors thesis. Her long-term goal is to become an immigration lawyer but after graduation, Aliya will pursue a masters’ degree in public policy or international relations.

“Sage” By Aliya Uteuova

I want to show you the land, Where people are free, like sky, growing in the steppe.

I want to show you the place, Where land does not exhaust you And color does not define you.

I want to show you the life, Where peace is returned And decency — returned.

A world where hope is regained in yourself, in humanity This is, after all “The land of liberty and justice — for all,” they say “You have a Belmar road,” I say, Where a wall separates The rich and the poor of St. Louis.

To the right there is a row for dog accessories Attached to an architecturally pleasing coffee shop With people inside, Snapshattering their faces away Through the safe window — the wall is unvisited The wall behind which there are municipal buildings And a gas station is the closest place to buy food — Fried chicken. A Whole Foods. However, is right across the wall With cameras outside it, pointing toward the wall. A 14-year-old Lily, Saved up all her allowance Earned her spot, every story she got for Christmas. The future are a hot shot, but that’s okay, she’ll put on her quietly blankets to attract the attention From the fact that the shirt belonged in someone else before her.

Lily took out a book from the library, Anna Karenina She stepped onto the cafe, ordered her chocolate, And as she waited for this over-priced cup of Nestle 

Lily got her hot chocolate, tank the window seat, opened her book. And then, through the window, she saw the wall, behind which was her home. Her mother would be at five, she had to return soon. And wars came only enough: Sometimes I wish I never left my home A war, where I am just another pittance and people don’t ask me which nation I belong to.

Where are you from? Ranger, Maine — in jail. Of course they don’t believe me, I look too different, sound too different, act too different.

So you want to stay in the U.S. after you graduate? I don’t know, maybe. Why did you come here then? Oh, here it goes. Did you come here to a student visa?

No, I don’t want to stay here. Because I am too afraid to live in a country where psychopaths can carry guns. I am too afraid to live in a country where it takes a school shooting to discuss gun laws. I will not raise my children, In the land that does not teach them about the place their mother comes from.

The only thing I am guilty of is wanting to learn. Eager in sense, in report, in a place where freedom of speech, and press is ingrained in the Constitution. What a privilege it is, to speak your mind, loud and clear, and not be afraid to be jailed anymore A privilege missed.

You know what, I am not smiling, wedding, and forgiving this ignorance anymore. He is a college student. He has access to knowledge. He should know where Kazakhstan is located on the map. Breathe. Just breathe. Just wait until you get to your dorm. And call your parents. No, you can’t wake them up, silly, wait for five more hours. By the time you get to bed It will be morning there, and you’ll update them about everything you learned today.

About the Immigration of Japanese-Americans to WWII About Brown v. Board of Education About a Gandhil scholar you interviewed Who met Nelson Mandela (how awesome!) And screamed that peace is worth fighting for.

My parents listen. Eagerly, holding on to every word. Adding their commentary in my essays. My worries are inconceivable in theirs. Yet they still, somehow, find the best in everything, in everyone. “We love you, you make us proud, everyday. Just keep going.”

And suddenly. Everything becomes clearer. As if the glass in my glass has been wiped clean. And there’s no blurriness, no scratches anymore. I want to show you the land, Where you can feel the warmth of morning And color does not define you. Return soon, opened her book, And reassured you that peace is worth fighting for. Who met Nelson Mandela (how awesome!) And screamed that peace is worth fighting for.

My worries are inconceivable in theirs. Yet they still, somehow, find the best in everything, in everyone. “We love you, you make us proud, everyday. Just keep going.”

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MENTORSHIP IS at the heart of the Honors endeavor. Over its long history at the University of Maine, first as a program with only a handful of students, and since becoming a College 15 years ago now with almost a thousand students, the Honors College strives to be student-centered.

Melissa Ladenheim holding HON 111 class outside on Charlie’s Terrace.
Jennifer Page, Matthew Skaves, Calleen Gamache, and Isaac Record, four Honors alumni from the College’s first graduating class (’03), were asked to reflect on their time in Honors in commemoration of our 15th anniversary. Each of them points to a faculty member who guided them through their Honors journey, and whose influence contributed to their present success.

JENNIFER PAGE knew she wanted to be a science educator from the time she was in middle school. She moved to Maine when she was young, went through the Bangor school system, and now resides in Rockland, ME where she is close to her job as Director of Education for the Hurricane Island Institute.

Page received her B.S. in Marine Science with a concentration in Marine Biology. She went on to earn a Ph.D. in Biology from Georgia Institute of Technology in 2009, and shortly thereafter began work as a Science Teacher at Bangor High School where she helped start the STEM Academy in 2010.

Page credits her Honors thesis experience for her decision to pursue a Ph.D. In her words, completing a thesis gave her a “taste of academia,” as Honors courses offered her the chance to engage with and come to appreciate the “power of interdisciplinary thinking and learning.”

Page’s Honors thesis was advised by Dr. Sara Lindsay, Associate Professor of Marine Sciences. The two first met when Page completed an internship in Lindsay’s lab the summer before her senior year of high school. They continued to collaborate when Page conducted undergraduate research with Lindsay, and they worked together again during Page’s postdoc.

As a thesis advisor, Lindsay demonstrated for Page how to mentor student research projects. She gave Page the autonomy, tools, space, and confidence to conduct meaningful research and learn through her mistakes. Page is now a mentor for students who come through Hurricane Island, and pulls inspiration from Lindsay’s “dedication to students on a personal and professional level.”

Lindsay is in turn inspired by Page, and says, “I’ve thoroughly enjoyed seeing Jenn mature into a colleague who is just as excited about biology and committed to learning as she was when she was an undergraduate in the Honors College.”

Building collaborative relationships with her colleagues remains important to Page in her current position as Director of Education, where she believes in “lead[ing] so people are inspired to follow.” She claims to have taken this motivation from the Honors faculty she engaged with and intends to cultivate and maintain this culture at Hurricane Island.

With the leadership skills she gained under Lindsay’s guidance, and the dedication to collaboration she inherited from the Honors College, Page is well-positioned to continue mentoring and encouraging students to pursue their passion for science.

MATTHEW SKAVES is known to some as the “Bloomberg guru,” for his expert ability to teach students about the massive data service. A Lecturer in Accounting and Finance in the Maine Business School at the University of Maine, Skaves grew up in Orono and now resides in Vassie. As an undergraduate, he earned a B.A. in English with a minor in Business, and went on to earn an M.B.A. in Finance in 2005.

Following graduate school, Skaves became Portfolio Manager at Deighan Wealth Advisors and was later promoted to Chief Investment Office. He found his way back to the University of Maine in 2015 when he received a full-time teaching appointment in the Maine Business School.

Looking back, Skaves acknowledges the important role Honors played in the development of his critical thinking skills, which he applied when earning his M.B.A. and continues to use in his professional life. He notes, “thinking critically is something every financial professional needs to be able to do.”

As an undergraduate, Skaves was drawn to the Honors College for its small class sizes, thoughtfull discussions, and the relationships he was able to forge with members of the faculty. He remembers Dr. Amar (then a chemistry professor and preceptor in the Honors College) inviting his class to his house for brunch one morning for “a change of scenery.” This is just one example of the personal nature of the Honors community that enables students and faculty to build meaningful connections.

Skaves built such a relationship with Dr. Robert Strong (now Professor Emeritus of Finance) when they crossed paths during his time as an undergraduate. According to Skaves, Dr. Strong inspired him to pursue his career in finance, and he tries to model his mentor’s “positive, forthright attitude and his ability to explain complex ideas in simple terms” in his own classroom.

Dr. Strong fondly recalls Skaves well, asserting that he “thrives in the field of finance.” Dr. Strong supported Skaves both in and outside the classroom, ensuring he was aware of opportunities and encouraging him to succeed. The two continue to work together and are currently serving on the John Bapt Memorial High School investment committee.

Skaves’ time in Honors, as well as his working relationship with Dr. Strong, helped reinforce his success as both a business professional and an educator, living up to his role as the Bloomberg guru.
CAILEEN GAMACHE hoped that one day she would be the next Jane Goodall, and then she took AP Chemistry in high school. When that didn’t go as she imagined, she said goodbye to Jane and looked further afield to political science and eventually to law. Gamache now serves as Senior Counsel at Norton Rose Fullbright LLP, where she focuses on the development and financing of renewable energy projects. She splits her time between her job in Washington, D.C. and her home in Falls Church, VA.

Gamache grew up in California and North Berwick, ME. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree, she received her J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law in 2008. Gamache serves as Administrative Editor of the Energy Law Journal and was recently elected as an Officer of the International Energy Bar Association. According to Gamache, her path to law school was influenced by the culture of the Honors classroom. It was an environment in which she was encouraged to “question and understand the perspective of sources of information, a skill that was cultivated further in law school, and is a key component of the success of my practice today.”

Gamache speaks fondly about the mentorship of former dean Charlie Slavin, who also served on her Honors thesis committee. She recalls receiving her stein from him at the Honors Celebration as a highlight of her Honors experience. Gamache remembers Charlie as “an amazing professor, mentor, and human being... [he] challenged, guided, and cheered me on to perform my best.”

In her current position, Gamache is inspired by Donna Attanasio, Senior Advisor for Energy Law Programs at George Washington University School of Law, who mentored her as a junior associate at White & Case LLP. Gamache says that Attanasio is “an excellent female mentor” who took the time to “teach, cultivate, and expose [her] to important skills and experiences” in the field. She now has one of Attanasio’s former students as a junior associate, and enjoys the opportunity to pay forward the knowledge and skills that “made [her] a better lawyer.”

Maybe being Jane Goodall wasn’t in the cards, but with the influence of the connections she built as an Honors student and in her professional life, Gamache has established a fulfilling career where she is an example for others.

ISAAC RECORD spends a lot of time thinking about how to live in our technological world. As an Assistant Professor of Practice in science and technology studies at Michigan State University’s Lyman Briggs College, this is an appropriate endeavor. From Windsor, ME, Record completed a double degree at UMaine, earning a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and a B.S. in Computer Engineering. He received an M.A. and a Ph.D. in History and Philosophy of Science and Technology from the University of Toronto in 2012 with a small break between when he worked as an Honors Associate.

Becoming a philosophy professor was an unexpected choice for Record, but one for which his Honors journey had prepared him. He notes, “My experience in Honors gave me the confidence that I could master a new way of investigating the world.”

With this confidence, Record was able to transfer his skills from the sciences to the humanities, and now enjoys being able to combine these two interests in his classroom, where he supplements his philosophy lessons with hands-on technological experiences.

Thinking about other ways in which Honors influenced his life, Record remarks, “I’m a philosopher instead of an engineer, and much happier because of it. I’ve traveled much more than I might otherwise have done. I gained many friends and mentors.”

While a student in the Honors College, Record developed a close working relationship with Dr. Francois Amar, who served as his preceptor during the Civilizations sequence and later as a member of his thesis committee. According to Record, Dr. Amar was patient and thorough with this feedback on assignments, and he tries to give his own students “the same level of attention.”

For his part, Amar remembers Record as a kind of “Renaissance man” with the strong technical skills of an engineer and the thoughtful demeanor of a deep thinker, capable of producing brilliant and original work. Amar says, “When I learned of Isaac’s position at Michigan State, I thought how appropriate for him and was, I admit, a little bit envious of the opportunities for interdisciplinary work that it affords.”

By absorbing the various influences of engineering, philosophy, Honors, and his mentors, Record is able to help his own students learn and grow in similar ways.

Page, Skaves, Gamache, and Record all speak to the value of good mentorship and the benefits of connecting with faculty members in the Honors College who invested in their intellectual and personal development as students and scholars. Each of them took inspiration from their Honors journey in achieving their personal and professional goals.

Thus, the experiences of these alumni from the College’s first graduating class represent one of the core tenets of the Honors community: to foster learning that is student-centered. From the program’s conception in 1935 to its transition to a college in 2003, the Honors College remains dedicated to helping our students realize their full potential, and we will continue to uphold our commitment to our students in the years to come. ■
Sara Morris
2017–18 Distinguished Honors Graduate lecture

HONORS AND BUSINESS alumna, Sara Morris ’86 returned to campus on Sept. 26, 2017 to deliver the 2017–18 Distinguished Honors Graduate Lecture, Accounting for Happiness: The Rewards of Unlikely Career Choices and the Lasting Value of Kindness. The event was supported by TIAA and co-sponsored by the Maine Business School. She engaged her audience with a mixture of reminiscence about her time at UMaine and in Honors and her advice on how to approach each job that one holds. She advised students to place value on the supportiveness of a work environment and less on a discipline-driven career path. Her own degree in accounting helped her land her first job but also opened doors to management positions where the focus is less on technical expertise and more on leading teams of people to excel in their tasks. She currently serves as Managing Director of Stone Coast Fund Services in Portland, a leading hedge fund service company. Morris also met with groups of business and Honors students on a more informal basis to discuss her career path and challenges she has faced.

Sherri Mitchell
John M. Rezendes Visiting Scholar in Ethics

SHERRI MITCHELL, noted activist and lawyer specializing in issues of Native American land rights and cultural preservation, delivered the John M. Rezendes Ethics Lecture, “The Heart of Spirit-Based Change” on April 19, 2017. Mitchell graduated with a bachelor’s degree from the University of Maine before obtaining her JD at the University of Arizona. A member of the Penobscot Nation, Mitchell spoke about transformational change as a process that starts with self-knowledge, with who we are and the narratives we construct about ourselves, our origins, and our history. Her talk provided a brief history of the legal precedents used to justify the dispossession of the native peoples in the Americas, dating back to the papal bulls of the 1400s. Mitchell made a convincing argument that this violence has become reflexive in our culture and that our polarized and judgmental public discourse is a symptom of the overall violence humans have visited on the earth. But she also considered those who have reconnected their hearts with their minds and seek to live with empathy and in harmony with the earth. Mitchell met with students in an informal setting and shared her inspiring mix of legal experience and cultural perspective on issues of concern to all Americans.
THROUGH THE continued generosity of the Bill and Betsy Pullen Leitch ’55 Fund, the Honors College was able to take 29 Honors students to Washington, D.C. where they met with members of Maine’s Congressional delegation. Students also toured the Capitol, the National Gallery, Library of Congress, where they viewed a mosaic of Minerva, our magazine’s namesake, and visited the monuments and other historic sites.

“Some of my favorite moments on this trip were when I walked through the monuments at dusk, explored the city, and met with Senators Susan Collins and Angus King. I learned so much from each of these moments and am very fortunate to have been able to experience them.”

Maria Maffucci ’18

“I learned a great deal about the city and our nation’s history, but more importantly found myself challenged by new viewpoints and ideas that I would not have faced had I stayed home. Being able to explore this city was incredibly enjoyable and thought-provoking.”

Daniel Perkins ’19

Top: Honors students and staff meet with Senator Susan Collins in her Washington, D.C. office. Bottom: Honors students visited many significant historical sites, including the Arlington National Cemetery and Lincoln Memorial (left).
CUGR Research Awards

SUMMER 2017 FELLOWSHIPS
Ashley Soucy ’18 (Biochemistry)
Caroline Spangenberg ’18 (Zoology)

2017–18 ACADEMIC YEAR FELLOWSHIPS
Cole Butler ‘20 (Civil Engineering)
Spencer DeBrook ‘18 (Zoology)
Amy de Silva ’18 (Communication Sciences and Disorders)
Cara Doiron ’18 (Finance)
Mitchell Harling ’20 (Bioengineering)
Calla Williams ’18 (Psychology)

INBRE Research Awards

The 2017–18 IDEA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) research fellowships are supported by a grant from the NIH and are awarded for projects in biomedical research.

SUMMER 2017 FELLOWSHIPS
Laura Paye ’19 (Marine Sciences; Ecology and Environmental Sciences)
Callie Greco ’17 (Biology)

2017–18 HONORS THESIS FELLOWSHIPS
Taaniel Kiidli ’18 (Biochemistry)
Ashley Soucy ’18 (Biochemistry)
Jackson Foley ’18 (Biochemistry)
Audrey Hoyle ’18 (Microbiology)

2017–18 JUNIOR YEAR FELLOWSHIPS
Laura Paye ’19 (Marine Sciences; Ecology and Environmental Sciences)
Benjamin Toro ‘19 (Biochemistry)
Sarah Smith ‘19 (Microbiology; Biochemistry)

2017–18 ACADEMIC YEAR FELLOWSHIPS
Callie Greco ’17 (Biology)

SPRING 2017
Caroline Curtis ’17 (Biology)
Gerard Valliere ’17 (Zoology)
Ashley Cooper ’18 (Parks, Recreation and Tourism)
Christopher Gilbert ’18 (Wildlife Ecology)

FALL 2017
Molly Westbrook ’18 (Marine Sciences)
Sam Saucier ’18 (Sociology; Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies)
Callie Greco ’17 (Biology)
Gene Herrschaft ’18 (New Media)
Johanna Lunn ’18 (Anthropology)
Cara Doiron ’18 (Finance)
Steven Longfellow ’18 (Engineering)
Jasmine Waite ’19 (Biochemistry)

CAROLYN E. REED PRE-MEDICAL THESIS FELLOWSHIP
Isaiah Mansour ’18 (Marine Sciences)

RENDE A. JONES ’65 AND PATRICIA K. JONES ’65 HONORS THESIS FELLOWSHIP
Aliya Uteuova ’18 (Political Science; Journalism)

Special Recognition

The Honors College would like to recognize the following Honors students for their outstanding achievements during the 2016–17 academic year.

2017 VALEDICTORIAN
Allyson Eskin ’17 (Economics; Political Science; Psychology)

OUTSTANDING STUDENT, COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES, FORESTRY, AND AGRICULTURE
Afton E. Hupper ’17 (Ecology and Environmental Sciences)

OUTSTANDING STUDENT, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
Adeline Mae Hogan Schneider ’17 (Philosophy; Human Dimensions of Climate Change)

OUTSTANDING STUDENT, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Maude S. Meeker ’17 (Elementary Education)

OUTSTANDING STUDENT, MAINE BUSINESS SCHOOL
Hoang Anh “Christine” Thi Le ’17 (Accounting)

THE JOHN M. REZENDES ANNUAL ETHICS ESSAY COMPETITION, FIRST PLACE
"No ‘No Que Es Humano Es Ilegal: The Ethical Implications of the Deportation of Undocumented Immigrants”

2017 EDITIO PATCH AWARD
Hallie Marshall ’17 (Wildlife, Fisheries, and Conservation Biology)

Distinguished Award Nominees:
Sienna Kuun ’17 (Chemical Engineering)
Valerie Watson ’18 (Ecology and Environmental Sciences)

SERVICE AWARD
Brady Davis ’17 (Business Management)
Abby Bellefleur ’17 (Communication)

STEINMETZ BOOK AWARD
Julia Casey ’20 (Political Science)
Lydia Elwell ’20 (History; Secondary Education)
Isaac Vaccaro ’20 (Mathematics; Music)
Katherine Larochelle ’20 (Molecular and Cellular Biology; Biochemistry)
Aniela Spalla ’20 (Microbiology)

Faculty

AWARDED TENURE IN 2017
Sarah Harlan-Haughney (CLAS-Honors Preceptor of English)
Jordan Lalouff (CLAS-Honors Preceptor of Psychology)
Robert Glover (CLAS-Honors Preceptor of Political Science)

ALL MAINE WOMEN HONORARY FACULTY MEMBER
Mimi Killinger (Rezendes Preceptor for the Arts, Honors)

STEVE GOULD AWARD (2017)
Melissa Ladenheim (Associate Dean, Honors)

PHI KAPPA PHI
Melissa Ladenheim (Associate Dean, Honors)

Scholarships and Fellowships

ROBERT B. THOMSON MEMORIAL THESIS FELLOWSHIP
Jeny Damsky ’18 (Studio Art)
Jared Dumas ’18 (Political Science)

ASPIRATIONS SCHOLARSHIP
Kaleb Robinson ’19 (Business Management)

STANHOPE STUDY ABROAD FELLOWSHIP
Brayley Benson ’19 (International Affairs)

BILL AND BETSY PULLEN LEITCH ‘55 FUND
Maria Beaulieu ’17 (Economics; Political Science)

STEINMETZ BOOK AWARD
Abby Bellefleur ’17 (Communication)

SERVICE AWARD
Dr. John Mitchell Nickerson ’59 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
Asher Sizeler-Fletcher ’19 (Political Science)

REZENDES GLOBAL SERVICES SCHOLARSHIP
Taaniel Kiidli ’18 (Biochemistry)

DR. JOHN MITCHELL NICKERSON ‘59 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
Jeffrey A. Burke ’19 (Political Science)
Thilee Yost ’19 (Philosophy)
Events

SPRING 2017 MAINE MASONIC CELEBRATION OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Sierra Kuan, A Study of Undergraduate Perception and Behavior Toward On-Campus Composting

Gene Herrschaft, Servant Heart Collaborative: Educational Projects in Sierra Leone

Julia Mackin-McLaughlin, Art & Science: A Case Study of Their Interconnectedness in the Marine Natural Sciences

Aeleah Granger, Affective Responses and Individual Differences in Threat Based Prejudice Toward Muslims and Arab-Americans

Elizabeth Proctor, The Arts, Sciences, and Honors

2017 National Collegiate Honors Council Conference — Atlanta, GA

PRESENTATIONS:
Justice Served: Honors and Activism
Melissa Ladenheim, Christopher Gilbert, James S. Brown

From Pedagogue to Pupil: How University of Maine Honors Students Help Their Classmates Succeed
Jennie Woodard, Abby Bellefleur

The Lipstick Project: Connecting Honors, the Humanities & Community
Mimi Killinger, Samantha Sautier, Maddy Jackson

Knowledge to Action: Tackling Challenges in Sierra Leone Through an Honors Research Collaborative
Melissa Ladenheim, François G. Amar, Gene Herrschaft, Grace Pouliot

Classroom Research Experiences: A Gateway to Advanced Research Experiences Earlier in the Undergraduate Career
Katherine Larachelle, Rachel Brooks

Critical Views on the Western World and the Urgency of Social Justice and Human Rights Foci in the Honors Curriculum
Stefano Tijerina, James S. Brown, Jacob Spaulding

Deep Immersion: Reflections from Abroad
Mark Haggerty, Grace Pouliot, François G. Amar

Student Orientation and Reorientation Throughout the Honors Curriculum
François G. Amar, Sean Cox, Jean Loden, Kristine Miller, and Belle Zembrodt

POSTERS:
Scientific Illustration: An Interdisciplinary Aid to Student and Artist Learning
Chantal Bussiere

Comparing Meta-Population Dynamics of Spruce Grouse 25 Years Later at Their Southern Range Margin
Christopher Gilbert

Impact of the Acanthocephalan Parasite Profilicollis Botulus on Extrapol Levels in the Invasive Green Crab, Carcinus Maenas: A Potential Biological Control Organism
Caroline Spangenberg

Beyond the Single Issue Problem: Bringing Intersectionality Into the Honors Classroom
Jennie Woodard, Keely Gongea, Erin Butts

From Undergraduate Classroom Research Experiences to Independent Research Projects: Exploring the Biology of Cluster E Mycobacteriophage
Katherine Larachelle, Rachel Brooks

Utilizing Virtual Reality to Broaden Worldviews Through Meaningful Interaction
Gene Herrschaft

Honors College Scholar-Athletes 2016–17

Nicole Arnold
Kaitlyn Ball
Alexandria Bromley
Justin Courtney
Sean Driscoll
Nigel Dunn
Olivia Fandel
Faythe Goins
Sydney Green
Patrick Groening
Lucia Guarnieri
Cassidy Hill
Dylan Jorge
John Kay
Beatrice Lapraigue
Daniel Lesko
Lauren Niblegale
Mariana Pominova
Mikaela Sansoucie
Sierra Semmel
Amanda Shuman
Hannah Smith
Hannah Stell
Tiffany Tanner
Brittany Yarchia
Sierra Yost

2017–18 HONORS ASSOCIATES

T he word “associate” is the noun that best describes the dynamic between Honors Associates Sean Cox ’15, a “band geek” with aspirations to teach environmental history, and Abby Bellefleur ’17, a service-oriented advocate who is motivated to pursue a career in health communication. They use their collective experiences to provide support and counsel to Honors students, as well as assist with faculty operations.

Cox graduated with a degree in history, with minors in anthropology and music. After working on Cadillac Mountain with the Friends of Acadia for a summer, temporarily teaching K–8 music classes, and spending a winter with the admissions department, he found his way back to Honors in 2016. In his second year working for the Honors College, Cox coordinates the second-year honors Civilization sequence. After his time as an Associate, Cox hopes to enroll in a masters program for American environmental history.

Bellefleur graduated with a degree in communication and a minor in psychology in 2017. As a recent graduate of Honors, she enjoys the opportunity to help teach and coordinate courses, and share her perspective with current students. Bellefleur is also using this time to gain professional experience and to continue to learn as part of the Honors community. After she completes her term as an Associate, Bellefleur plans on working to help address health concerns among marginalized groups.

The Associates have a unique position of understanding the Honors College from the student perspective and the staff perspective. This means they are able to fulfill an important role as liaisons between the students and the faculty, and are consequently better able to serve the Honors community as a whole.

Abby Bellefleur and Sean Cox
2017 Honors Index
85 graduates from the 2017 Honors class at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduates who studied abroad</th>
<th>Graduates who were officers in a student organization</th>
<th>Graduates who attended an Honors trip</th>
<th>Graduates who were student-athletes</th>
<th>Graduates who completed a tutorial alternative</th>
<th>Graduates from the 2017 Honors class at a glance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>85 graduates from the 2017 Honors class at a glance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.75 Average GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Graduates who worked while in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Graduates who studied abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Graduates who graduated from UMaine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Graduates from the College of Education and Human Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Graduates from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Graduates from the College of Engineering</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Graduates from the Maine Business School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Natalie Altwater
Chemical Engineering
Perry, Maine
Homeschooled
THESIS: The Design and Fabrication of an Atomic Layer Deposition Reactor for Coating Powders
ADVISOR: William DeSisto

Joshua Andle
Biochemistry
Falmouth, Maine
Falmouth High School
THESIS: Investigating the Potential of MicroRNAs as Regulators of the Ca2+ System
ADVISOR: Dorothy Cronin

Kathryn Assalone
Zoology
Hampden, Maine
Hampden Academy
THESIS: The Importance of Social Science in Biomedical Education
ADVISOR: Kristy Townsend

THESIS DESCRIPTION: The goal of the research was to explore the effects of social science courses taken in a doctor’s undergraduate education have on self-reported patient interactions. After doctors were interviewed, it was determined that a new course should be required for premedical students. This course would teach the important skills that doctors stated were key for quality patient interactions.

Hannah Babcock
Music Education
Washington, Maine
Medomak Valley High School
THESIS: Autism: A Song of Understanding
ADVISOR: Beth Wiemers

Dominic Barra
Animal and Veterinary Sciences
Wells, Maine
Wells High School
THESIS: Success of Artificial Insemination in Two Breeds of Maine Sheep Is Not Hindered by Breed Differences
ADVISOR: James Whaler

THESIS DESCRIPTION: My project is the pilot study evaluating the effectiveness of artificial insemination in Maine sheep. We did this to improve genetic diversity throughout Maine and improve the health of Maine sheep. This was done by adopting a method similar to the one used in Iceland. We determined that this method is a viable option for commercial adoption in the U.S.

Bianca Beland
Forestry; Wildlife Ecology
Barkhamsted, Connecticut
Northwestern Regional High School
THESIS: Ash Decline: An Opportunity for Young Forest Wildlife
ADVISOR: Amber Roth

THESIS DESCRIPTION: This case study examines a timber salvage operation on public water supply watershed land to remove dying white ash (Fraxinus americana) trees while meeting Connecticut and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service goals for creating habitat for the New England cottontail (Sylvilagus transitionalis) and other wildlife.
Attitudes Toward Mental Health

Communication, and College Students’ Religious Reminders on Prosociality

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Communication, and College Students’ Religious Reminders on Prosociality
**ADVISOR:** Caroline Nollet

**THESIS DESCRIPTION:** An exploration of how the psychological burden of "economic stress" can impact a person's political decision-making processes.

---

**Sarah Ford**

**Nursing**

London, London, New Hampshire

**London High School**

**THESIS:** Sexual Trafficking: Developing a Teaching Strategy for Emergency Department Registered Nurses

**ADVISOR:** Deborah Saber

**THESIS DESCRIPTION:** This thesis was a pilot study that examined knowledge of emergency department registered nurses in regards to sexual trafficking. A pre-test was given to assess baseline knowledge. Then, a short educational intervention was implemented. The participants were then asked to complete a post test to evaluate if knowledge was gained.

---

**Chase Gagne**

**Wildlife Ecology**

Goffstown, New Hampshire

**Goffstown High School**

**THESIS:** Their Kinetic Typographical Representation Personally Collected Musical Memories and Reimagines Them into the Mind of the Interview Participant and Chosen Specifically to Allow Viewers to Step Through Kinetic Typography, Projected in an Informed Environment.

**ADVISOR:** Kathryn Gilbert

**THESIS DESCRIPTION:** It brings me back: A look at music, memories and the effect they can have on perceptions and decision-making processes.

---

**Natalie Goding**

**Political Science; Spanish**

Lisbon, Maine

**Spaulding High School**

**THESIS:** Living Scenarios for incoming undergraduate students that were placed into doubles or triples for their first semester of their freshman year.

---

**Benton Heithoff**

**Biomechanics**

Olden, New York

**Voorhees High School**

**THESIS:** Stabilization of Taper-Cone Nanoparticles for Homologous Integration into Cellulose Nano Fibers

**ADVISOR:** Michael Mazure

**THESIS DESCRIPTION:** To use cellulose nano fibers in medical implants the bulk material needs to be modified to be examined through noninvasive means, primarily X-ray and MRI imaging. To achieve this property nano sized nanofibers can be added to cellulose. Current methods for integrating the particles have proved inconsistent; this project explores different methods to increase homologous integration.

---

**Sarah Holbrook**

**Biology**

Fairfield, Maine

**Fairfield High School**

**THESIS:** Microglial Activation Immediately After Ethanol Withdrawal in Female C3H Mice

**ADVISOR:** Alan Rosenwasser

**THESIS DESCRIPTION:** I studied how the innate immune system reacts to alcohol abuse. I did this by studying microglia, the resident immune system cell of the brain, in the medial prefrontal cortex of ethanol-exposed mice.

---

**Alex Grissinger**

**Animal and Veterinary Sciences**

Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

**Mount St. Joseph Academy**

**THESIS:** Antioxidants in Atlantic Salmon on a Diurnal Basis

**ADVISOR:** Timothy Bowden

**THESIS DESCRIPTION:** Every four hours over 52 hours, three Atlantic Salmon were euthanized and a sample of their liver was obtained. For each sample, the level of superoxide dismutase, catalase, and glutathione peroxidase was determined. These values were graphed to try to determine if these antioxidant levels follow a daily rhythm.

---

**Alison Hupper**

**Ecology and Environmental Sciences**

St. George, Maine

**Oceanide High School**

**THESIS:** The Role of Cooperation and Prosocial Behavior in Food Buying Clubs: An Exploratory Study

**ADVISOR:** Timothy Waring

**THESIS DESCRIPTION:** Food buying clubs use their collective purchasing power to obtain items at prices lower than offered by retailers. As cooperatively structured groups, I hypothesized that club members would be more cooperative than the general public. I measured cooperation with two economic games, and found that members were nearly twice as cooperative in the games as others outside of the study population.
Microenvironments within the catalyst pores are capable of carrying out the hydrogenation reaction without the need of excess acid. The catalyst with a polymer that created acidic microenvironments within the catalyst pores capable of carrying out the hydrogenation reaction without the need of excess acid. My research focuses mainly on identifying mycobacteriophage that can infect fish and synthesizing a reusable catalyst.

The purpose of this study is to examine providers’ preconception counseling practices among women of childbearing age who are prescribed opioids. The long-term goal of this research is to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies among women who are prescribed opioid analogs.

I evaluated if ruffed grouse exhibit similar relationships between insulating feather characteristics and color phase that have been shown for tauny owls. I evaluated characteristics of feather barb density and proportion of plumeaceous material among color phases. Color phase was not a competitive predictor of these insulating factors, suggesting that my results are inconsistent with findings for other species.

The impact of foreign occupation theory. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level. The data accumulated and regional level.

The thesis describes an investigation into whether the direction of a question can influence the ability of the students to construct correct reasoning chains.

The aim of this study was to examine the effects of foreign aid on terrorism in the Philippines. The thesis describes an investigation into whether the direction of a question can influence the ability of the students to construct correct reasoning chains.

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The thesis describes an investigation into whether the direction of a question can influence the ability of the students to construct correct reasoning chains.
Hoang Anh ‘Christine’ Le

Accounting
Hanoi, Vietnam
Thorton Academy
THERESIS: A Creative Thesis: The Me You Don’t Know
ADVISOR: Katie Lattari
THERESIS DESCRIPTION: The fictional character Anna Smith loves her high profile husband very much and she doesn’t realize that she has been living herself gradually to a dysfunctional marriage. At the height of her marital turmoil, another tragedy strikes – Anna is seriously injured and wakes to realize that she has been losing herself gradually to a dysfunctional marriage. At the height of her marital turmoil, another tragedy strikes – Anna is seriously injured and wakes to realize that she has been losing herself.
Graduates

Katherine Miller
Marine Sciences
Bedford, Massachusetts
Acton-Boxborough Regional High School
THESIS: Ecosystem Metabolism Modeling of Estuaries in Maine: Using Dissolved Oxygen as a Tool for Aquaculture Site Assessment
ADVISOR: David Hansl
THESIS DESCRIPTION: This study aimed to create an easy-to-use, inexpensive model that oyster farmers can use to monitor the changes to biological activity, in terms of net ecosystem metabolism, occurring in the estuary in which they grow their oysters.

Kelsey Moon
Marine Science
Simsbury, Connecticut
Simsbury High School
THESIS: The Effects of Dioxin Exposure on the Hepatic Development of Larval Shortnose Sturgeon (Acipenser brevirostrum)
ADVISOR: Heather Hamilton
THESIS DESCRIPTION: Investigated the effects of the persistent organic pollutant dioxin on the development of the liver in larval shortnose sturgeon. Using histological analysis, I determined the area and number of liver vacuoles in differing concentrations of dioxin.

Karissa Panizzo
Animal and Veterinary Sciences
Litchfield, Maine
Oak Hill High School
THESIS: Mind the Gap: Effects of Habitat and Climate on Northern Water Snake (Nerodia sipedon sipedon) Distribution in Maine
ADVISOR: Malcolm Hunter
THESIS DESCRIPTION: Northern water snakes have a disjunct range in Maine, between Stinson and Casco. I looked at if habitat and/or climate could help explain this gap.

Kathleen O’Toole
Communication
Kennebunk, Maine
Kennebunk High School
THESIS: Then and Now: A History and Analysis of the University of Maine System Sexual Assault Manditory Reporting Policy
ADVISOR: Claire Sullivan
THESIS DESCRIPTION: This thesis is intended to connect the reader with the successes, motivations, and revisions of the history of the University of Maine sexual assault reporting policy. Its relationship to updated federal laws and bills, and how, moving forward, we can continue to generate improvements to remove barriers and increase access to resources for sexual assault victims.

Elizabeth G. Proctor
Anthropology
Newbury, Massachusetts
Triton Regional School
THESIS: The Legendary King: How the Figure of King Arthur Shaped a National Identity and the Field of Archaeology in Britain
ADVISOR: Sarah Hanafin Haughey
THESIS DESCRIPTION: My thesis looked at the development of the legend of King Arthur and how, or if, that has affected the practice of archaeology in the UK. Using Tintagel Castle in Cornwall as a case study, I looked at the impacts of nationalism and tourism on shaping Arthurian legend and the impacts of the legend on the archaeology of Arthurian sites.

James Robe
Mass Communication
Waterville, Maine
Oak Hill Senior High School
THESIS: Fostering Scientific Discourse Through the Development of an Online Journal
ADVISOR: Bridie McGinley
THESIS DESCRIPTION: This project was a multi-case participatory and explanatory study. The participatory case involves the production of Spiro, The Maine Journal of Conservation and Sustainability. This case aims to illuminate some of the opportunities and challenges that occur in a community of website producers. The second case is exploratory and involves analysis of mobile-based scientific communities to identify design strategies.
THESIS DESCRIPTION: Noise levels were measured at UMaine Pep Band performances at hockey and basketball games. Pep Band members also completed a survey about perceptions of hearing health and noise exposure. Noise levels were shown to be at harmful levels during performances. Survey results showed that Pep Band members underestimate their noise exposure and do not wear appropriate hearing protection.

Angela Silke

Biology

Dixmont, Maine

Northland Regional High School

THESIS: Effect of Entepatic Hydrolysis on Allergenic Capacity of Shrimp Tropomyosin

ADVISOR: Balavanarao Nagap

THESIS DESCRIPTION: Shrimp were murdered in full enzymes to cut the allergenic protein tropomyosin to make it nonimmunoreactive when tested.

Robert Soohey

Microbiology

Whitefield, Maine

Erskine Academy

THESIS: Role of G-protein Regulation of Formes During Gradient Tracking in Saccharomyces cerevisiae

ADVISOR: Joshua Kelley

THESIS DESCRIPTION: We hypothesize that the hyperactive mutant Ga is able to direct more Bni1 (yeast formin) to a larger area of the plasma membrane. If this were to happen, we predict the cell would then be able to polymerize actin cables to a broader area, resulting in less focused polarized growth and the observed gradient-tracking defects.

Stephan Tabachnick

Physics

Portland, Maine

Cheverus High School

THESIS: An Analysis of Inservice Physical Science Teachers’ Understanding of Accelerated Motion

ADVISOR: Michael Wittmann

THESIS DESCRIPTION: I observed middle school physical science teachers solving kinematics problems and looked at their use of a persistent and incomplete model for accelerated motion.
Teach Equine Anatomy and Biomechanics

Since anatomy is similar of the horse leg. This knowledge can be used this process, people can learn the anatomy of the horse leg. Using two models of the distal horse leg. Using this knowledge, we can analyze the anatomy of the horse leg. This knowledge can be used to predict injuries. Since anatomy is similar across species, the biomechanics learned here can be applied to many animals, including humans.

Zandalee Toothaker
Animal and Veterinary Sciences
Orono, Maine
Kubasaki High School
THESIS: Developing Learning Modules to Teach Equine Anatomy and Biomechanics
ADVISOR: Robert Causey
THESIS DESCRIPTION: We created, streamlined, and tested a process to make two models of the distal horse leg. Using this process, people can learn the anatomy of the horse leg. This knowledge can be used to predict injuries. Since anatomy is similar across species, the biomechanics learned here can be applied to many animals, including humans.

Jayni Thibault
Political Science
Lewiston, Maine
Lisbon High School
THESIS: Analyzing Government Resident Communication Methods in the City of Bangor
ADVISOR: Robert Glover
THESIS DESCRIPTION: The objective of this study is to analyze the communication preferences of Bangor residents, with a particular focus on two of Bangor’s largest demographics, renters and residents, aged 60 or older.

Mackenzie Tefft
Psychology
Samp, Maine
George Stevens Academy
THESIS: Dyadic Friendship Interactions and Emotional Adjustments in Adolescents
ADVISOR: Rebecca Schwartz-Mette
THESIS DESCRIPTION: The current study examined associations of non-verbal interpersonal engagement in the context of adolescents’ same-sex friendships with self-reported friendship quality and depressive symptoms.

McKenzie Thompson
Marine Sciences
Durham, New Hampshire
Duxbury High School
THESIS: Implications of Body Size and Habitat Distribution of Loxojcara for Predation on Benthic adults in the Gulf of Maine
ADVISOR: Robert S. Sternick
THESIS DESCRIPTION: I used the Damariscotta River in Walpole, Maine as a thermal gradient to study the effects of temperature on green crab distribution, abundance, and size. In addition, I researched green crab predation on blue mussels to determine if green crabs are the cause of declining mussel populations.

Dylan Trueblood
Marine Sciences
Durham, New Hampshire
Oyster River High School
THESIS: A Summary of Landings, Legislative Actions, and Possible Climate-Induced Distribution Shifts in New England Fisheries
ADVISORS: Gayle Zydlewski, Richard Langton
THESIS DESCRIPTION: New England waters have been experiencing an increase in temperature over the past decade or so, and this warming may be causing economically important fishery species to move their distribution ranges north. This thesis focused on determining whether trends in landings data (how many fish are caught and where) could be related to climate change.

Cody Watson
Political Science
Beaver Cove, Maine
Greenville High School
THESIS: An Analysis of Russian Energy Exports and Their Effects on the Russian Domestic Economy
ADVISOR: James Warhola
THESIS DESCRIPTION: This thesis delves into the different economic, environmental, and diplomatic factors which influence Russia’s decision-making regarding its current energy policy. This research seeks to answer the question of which strategy Russia will pursue in order to regain its place as a world super power.

T HE UNIVERSITY of Maine’s valedictorian for the class of 2017 is Allyson L. Eslin, an Honors student with triple majors in economics, political science and psychology. Allyson’s numerous academic honors include the John M. Nickerson Scholarship and the Margaret Chase Smith Public Affairs Scholarship. She was a Madigan Congressional intern in the Washington, D.C. office of Sen. Angus King in spring 2016, and served as editor-in-chief of The Maine Campus and chair of the Political Activism Committee of Student Government. Allyson also participated in the Maine NEW Leadership and Elected Her programs, and is a member of All Maine Women.

Allyson was an undergraduate research assistant in the departments of anthropology and economics and she conducted research in each of her majors, including projects focused on sustainability and the environment. Her research poster, “The Impact of Economic and Psychological Metrics on Political Decision-Making” was awarded a third-place prize at the 2016 UMaine Student Research Symposium. Her honors thesis is “The Economic and Psychological Metrics of Political Decision-Making.” She was advised by Dr. Caroline Noblet.

In her senior year, Ms. Eslin began coursework for a dual master’s degree in global policy and economics at UMaine. When she completes her graduate work in 2019, she plans to attend law school with the goal of joining the FBI as an analyst or translator. Her career plans also include serving as a state or federal legislator.
Support and Thank You

OUR GENEROUS donors are essential in helping us enrich the educational opportunities available to our students. Donors’ gifts make possible study abroad opportunities, research funding, thesis fellowships, guest lectures, community-engagement and conference travel. We truly appreciate all our supporters, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge the following donors to the Honors College from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017:

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Ms. Laura R. Barra
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Thomas Bickford
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Darsh Lerner
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