The honors endeavor

Thinking hard about things that matter
TIME TO reflect on the value of an Honors education sometimes gets lost in the striving and hectic pace of modern life and of our goal-driven educational system. So I am glad that in this issue of Minerva, alongside pieces celebrating the achievements of our recent graduates, faculty and alumni, we have two articles that reflect on the value of an Honors curriculum and on the value of reflection itself in finding one’s way in this complex world.

First, longtime preceptor Dr. David Gross—who retires this year—shares his lecture, Thinking Hard about Things that Matter, with our readers, many of whom heard it as the introduction to the four-semester Civilizations core course sequence in recent years. I think that his message will resonate with alumni and supporters of Honors of all generations. Other retired or retiring faculty and staff who are being feted in this issue are Dr. Stephanie Gross, Professor Michael Palmer, and Deborah Small.

Second, is this year’s Distinguished Honors Graduate Lecture: Life, the Universe, and Everything: My Romp Across Disciplines in Search of Answers by Dr. Isaac Record ’03. I like to think of the Honors College as the hub of interdisciplinary work for undergraduates at UMaine—Isaac Record is a prime exemplar.

This year we welcomed Dr. Hao Hong, an expert in comparative philosophy, as the CLAS-Honors Preceptor of Philosophy. Drs. Jennie Woodard and Rachel Snell, both historians, were also joined us in full-time roles this year, bringing years of experience as teachers and scholars. Woodard’s expertise is in women’s studies and communications while Snell studies women’s history through popular culture artifacts such as cookbooks. All bring a true devotion to teaching to their work in the College.

The issue also profiles the work of several students whose research is making an impact: Skye Siladi is investigating the motivations of small and medium maple syrup producers to help identify barriers to scaling up in the industry; Connor Bouffard and Michael Jones are prototyping a prosthetic exoskeleton for the shoulder that could assist people with disabilities and seniors with lifting tasks; Laura Paye did research with NASA last summer on the atmospheric impact of N₂O production at industrial livestock facilities in California.

Please join me in celebrating our 2018 graduates and wishing them all the best as they take advantage of opportunities in the workforce, graduate and professional schools, and in service to others. I also thank you for supporting the mission of the College, whose motto, Igniting a passion for learning—Studium eruditionis ardescens, was inspired by the epigram of David Gross’ article.

François G. Amar
Dean

Connor Bouffard and Michael Jones work with a prototype exoskeleton.
It’s 2076. The University of Maine’s class of 2021 is at its 55th reunion. The majority of you have survived into your 70s and are looking forward to your 60th reunion. Along the way, you’ve experienced and contributed to the intersection of two global patterns: Population aging and climate change. One of the key ethical issues for your lifetime has been a simple question: How can I live a full, ethical and sustainable life in the 21st century?

In his lecture, delivered on Wednesday, April 4, 2018, Professor Mick Smyer considered what some call the key ethical dilemma that arises for all of us who are aging in the 21st century, climate change and its connection to some important questions:

- What is a “good life”? What is a sustainable life? Are they compatible?
- What is the “proportional responsibility” of different age groups for climate action?
- Do older age groups have a larger responsibility to take action since they have benefitted more from the actions that have produced climate change?
- What are your ethical duties to successive generations?
- What’s your excuse for avoiding the topic?

Drawing on work from psychology, ethics, and human-centered design, Professor Smyer outlined key psychological barriers to fully answering these questions and key strategies to move us from anxiety to action to habit on crafting a full, ethical and sustainable life. Smyer also led a workshop called, What’s Your Next Step on Your Climate Journey.

2018 John M. Rezendes Ethics Essay Competition

The theme of this year’s competition was, Age and Aging and sought answers to questions such as, Is the relationship between aging and technology an ethical concern? What is ageism and how does it affect our practices, institutions, and perceptions? How do increased life spans affect conceptions of work, ethics, medical care, and political engagement?

The winner, Rachel Emerich, summarized her paper “Our Ethical Responsibility for Preventing Elder Abuse and Caring for Those Afflicted,” at the Rezendes lecture and had a chance to meet with Beau Rezendes and professor Smyer. Finalists were Nico Whitlock, “Goodbye,” and Kendall Jon Butler, “The Future of Aging.”
**The Honors Endeavor**

**Thinking Hard About Things That Matter**

by David Gross

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled." — Plutarch

Liberal Education should have as its goal "to cultivate the human core, the part of a person we might call the spirit, or the soul, (...) and the million little moral judgements that emanate from that inner region." — David Brooks, New York Times

My focus today will be on the Honors Civilizations sequence as the heart of your experience of liberal education at the University of Maine. I want to think with you about that liberal education, what it is, and why it is worthwhile.

The central matter of these courses is not "information," or data. Instead you are being asked to think about things, to ask questions, again and again. Such questioning is clearly the basis for any real "critical thinking."

Let’s start with questioning the key word in the course title Civilizations. Words and their meanings—often a key place to look for understanding and begin to question. I will be foregrounding several key words during my discussion today.

If you think then about the title of the course, questions and issues arise: If "civilized" and "civilization" are seen as evaluative terms in the course title Civilizations. Words and their meanings—often a key place to look for understanding and begin to question. I will be foregrounding several key words during my discussion today.

A danger that "great books" courses like this one are self-congratulatory, in praise of OUR civilization, Western Civilization, as the real one, the one true and good one, and thus the danger of seeing ourselves as part of a
The Honors Endeavor

A former preceptor, Jim Gallagher, described the Honors journey as a historical journey, as we engage with history comes alive, blazes with meaning and light. So this Honors journey is a historical journey, as we engage with texts that have made our world what it is.

These courses are text-based—though they do include written texts. “Text”—another key word: the root word is “textile”—fabric, a weaving. Now textiles, woven fabric, were one of the very first fruits of human technological innovation—cloth rather than just animal skins—so it is not surprising that writings are figured as texts, weavings. So what is the warp and woof of our texts? Philosopher Walter Benjamin says “Counsel, woven into the fabric of real life, is wisdom.” And one text never stands alone. There is another fabric made up of the different texts as they interact—what’s the warp and woof of our texts? Philosopher Walter Benjamin says “Counsel, woven into the fabric of real life, is wisdom.”

Honors students in Colvin 100.

As I said, at the heart of liberal education are questions of meaning, and it is a fact, as Nietzsche will remind us, that all meaning is inter-textual, relational. All texts depend on their relation to one another for their meaning.

If the life of the mind is to be more than a hollow phrase, a trivial exercise, it has to mean thinking seriously about important questions. For example, when we discuss W.E.B Dubois, who in 1902 asserted that “The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line,” we must ask how prevalent is racism in American society today? Or, when reading Frankenstein, is egoistic (male) striving, ambition, an entirely good thing? Thinking about such ideas, working them through to decide where you stand on them—NOT just cataloging them, labeling them, filing them away as “facts” or information for later retrieval—is hard work, hard to keep it up, easy to let it go. Cynicism is a rational or excuse for not doing this hard work. It is very seductive, but it
The Honors Endeavor

...for your own life to have value, and for our country. Citizenship in a democracy depends completely on an informed citizenry thinking about things that really matter.

This hard thinking is precious, and crucial to keep it up—for your own life to have value, and for our country. Citizenship in a democracy depends completely on an informed citizenry thinking about things that really matter.

I will say just a few words about the goals and concerns of the four-semester Civilizations course sequence—the journey you are embarking on today.

In Honors 111, aside from your Honors Read, you will be dealing with very ancient texts, very remote from our modernity. But ancient as they are, they are clearly addressing those questions of meaning in human life and its relation with the world and the universe. It is the nature of the sacred, the divine, that comes up when we read and discuss "Genesis" and "Exodus." There as well, and even more in the ancient Greeks and Romans, we consider early questions of human identity and selfhood, which will continue to occupy us throughout the Civilizations sequence, especially as regard heroism and the hero. Their heroes and their behaviors can lead us to address the question of heroic striving that I mentioned already, its values, and its dangers—the nature of hubris.

In the last semester, we address the rise of modernity, of the world we live in. Many of the texts are dark, and often profoundly skeptical. Right at the start, Nietzsche questions the notion of truth itself, and seems to mock the very reality of the values we have been looking at in the course up to this point. But as always, questions lead on to questions. In viewing life's major questions as open, unsettled, our task in these courses and beyond of examining the meanings and values we live by seems both necessary and urgent.

Let me conclude by focusing on some examples of how liberal learning has been important to me personally. As a strong emphasis on science, with texts by Darwin, Galileo and others. Also we continue with newly secular discussions of how we should live, and what should be the political ways in which we arrange our lives.

In Honors 211 and 212, a major focus is on the modern world, and the growing importance of science in our education. Questions of how we should live, and what should be the political ways in which we arrange our lives.

But that enhanced perception allows you to see not only the wonders of life but also social injustice, and thus the necessity for social conscience, that, "We are all responsible, to all, for all" (Dostoevsky). The weight of this is like a crushing burden—to all, for all? But that connection with one another is also basis of the value Christians call "caritas," or love. And when unions weren’t a dirty word, "solidarity," or before it was co-opted by the so-called communism of the Soviet Union, “comrade.” So, since we are responsible, we then can’t just withdraw into contemplation of the world’s wonders. College is the place where we have a space to think about such matters. Too often the demands of life later on leave too little time or energy for living "she examined life." Here in college, at the university, and in our Honors courses is a precious time and space for it that must not be wasted or squandered. Not every class session of every course—perhaps not even every Honors preceptorial, will always address and illuminate our questions. But you have the right to expect that your education as a whole will do so, especially the courses in the Civilizations sequence.

So, then, where are we? Hopeful about the human future, deep concerns about the human present. And realizing that there are no "final answers" to our questions. Instead, doubt, uncertainty, no conclusions: Voltaire once said that as an answer all important questions, we should put the letters "NL," "Non Lapat?" "It is not clear."—as the Roman judges did for cases they found too difficult to decide. Philosopher Ernst Bloch tells us: "Seek, and Ye Shall Wonder."

The Honors journey that begins today is one that never ends.

---Adapted from David's lecture to first year students

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Honors 211 precept in progress.
FOR ALMOST twenty years, I’ve been investigating a question I first wrote down in an Honors class in 1999: How does the way we think affect what we come to know?

In pursuit of answers, I’ve studied and practiced computer engineering, philosophy of science and technology, complexity theory, service-learning, computer simulations of nuclear fission, 3D printed historical artifacts, the design of tennis balls for the blind, the regulation of search engine algorithms, techniques of the self, critical making, and learning design. My latest initiative has been to create the Collaborative Experiential Learning Laboratory (CELL), a physical space for exploring different modes of thinking and the ways they come together. It has both high tech equipment and low tech everyday stuff people need to design, create, and think with.

There have been three phases of my academic life, so far. First, starting here at UMaine, I studied to be an engineer. Second, I studied and worked as an academic philosopher, mostly at the University of Toronto (UofT). Third and presently, I most readily identify myself as an educator working at Michigan State University (MSU). At each phase, I have found that working within the boundaries that were set for me ended up obstructing my investigation.

My Romp Across Disciplines in Search of Answers

Adapted from Isaac Record’s Distinguished Honors Graduate Lecture, September 25, 2018

Dedicated to Charlie Slavin and all of his students.

Isaac Record ’03 is an assistant professor of practice in Michigan State University’s Lyman Briggs College, where he directs the Collaborative Experiential Learning Laboratory (CELL) and teaches courses in philosophy of science, science and technology studies, and critical making. Photo courtesy of Piper Cook.
Life, University, Everything

Phase 1: Becoming an engineer.

I wanted to be an architectural engineer from the time I was in middle school but by the time I applied to college, it appeared the computer would be the tool that would most dramatically affect how people lived and worked, so I decided on electrical engineering instead. I ended up here at the University of Maine in 1998. At the time I thought college was where you went to gain the knowledge and skills needed to get a good job and I had a fairly limited view of the jobs that were out there. This is instrumental thinking—college as a means to an end. It gets you to the next thing. I was pretty happy with my choice. Engineering seemed like a pretty decent way to understand the world. And then I took some Honors classes.

I started to question whether a single way of approaching the world was too limiting, and whether different approaches might lead to different and useful perspectives on the world.

At some point in my second year, sitting in an exam in an Honors class, I wrote this: "How does the way we think affect what we come to know?"

As an engineer, I learned how to analyze virtually anything as a mathematical system, imposing linear approximations to model the system’s behavior. But what if the system was nonlinear? A danger in making approximations is to mistake the model and its consequences for reality. Were there other ways of understanding those systems? Honors had taught me about mythopoem and the Presocratics, and I had also heard about complexity theory and fractals and butterfly attractors, all of which seemed strange and different from what I was learning in engineering.

It took me years to figure that you could look at a system from different perspectives and reach very different conclusions. But here it is in comic form, so you can jump straight to the end:

I used to view myself as being somewhere on that continuum in the box, maybe near physicists, since electrical engineering involved a lot of physics. Plus, that’s on the “pure” end, so it’s a flattering interpretation.

But now I have this additional perspective of the fellow at the top, using historical or philosophical or sociological methods to describe what was going on in the box. And suddenly the hierarchy seems very artificial. What does purity even mean when it comes to science? Is it a nonsensical idea? I thought about education in an instrumental way: it was a step on the way to something else. Then, my Honors thesis advisor, philosopher Jim Page, asked me, “Where are you applying to graduate school?” I had literally never once considered the possibility of grad school before that moment, but had instead been pursuing interviews in the engineering field. Now I could suddenly see that universities might be an end in themselves—places to hang out with other bright people and work on problems of a sort that didn’t fit elsewhere. I decided to listen to my inner voice, and I decided to pursue philosophy so that I could address my worries about narrow disciplinary thinking and about my own place in the world. I call this Reflection #1: Do not let your limited experience set you on too narrow a path—seek ever-broader horizons. Take the time to reflect and reconsider your assumptions about what society has been encouraging you to do.

Students working in the CELL at Lyman Briggs College Photo courtesy of Piper Cook.

Phase 2: Becoming a philosopher.

I went to graduate school at the University of Toronto in Canada, a city of several million people—more than the entire state of Maine, and way more diverse. There, I found tools to help me struggle with my question about the relationship between methodology and answers: I began to be able to catalog different methodologies in a systematic way, both in the subject of my studies (various sciences across time periods) and in the methods I was using in those studies (different philosophical or historical approaches). I have been influenced by UofT philosopher Ian Hacking, who defines a style of thinking as a coherent, mutually reinforcing set of objects, questions, theories, tools, methods, and standards. If you were to change one of these, you’d likely have to balance that change by adjusting some other elements of the style.

I studied the use of the first digital computers to perform Monte Carlo calculations to solve difficult mathematical problems relating to the atom bomb. I found the mathematicians and physicists who did this work had to make explicit arguments for the acceptance of their computer-aided results as legitimate science. These practices were negotiated and eventually accepted and knit into the styles of thinking in use in physics.

Looking back at my original question, I now had part of an answer: the way we think; at least within disciplines, often fits this scheme of styles of thinking. Moreover, I had a normative principle—a prescription for how this relationship ought to work. A properly constructed style actually tells you what kinds of questions it is set up to answer, how to get the best answer, and how good that answer is likely to be. This suggests that we should all be open to multiple styles of thinking, so we can be sure we are really getting good answers.

Around this time I began working on a highly collaborative project studying emerging technologies at the University of Toronto library school. We wanted to evaluate the usefulness of emerging technologies such as 3-D printing in the classroom. Historians, Philosophers, and Sociologists of Science would be able to talk about the historical uses and consequences of new tools and technologies. We found the mathematicians and physicists who did this work had to make explicit arguments for the acceptance of their computer-aided results as legitimate science. These practices were negotiated and eventually accepted and knit into the styles of thinking in use in physics.

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Reflection #1: Do not let your limited experience set you on too narrow a path—seek ever-broader horizons. Take the time to reflect and reconsider your assumptions about what society has been encouraging you to do.

Students working in the CELL at Lyman Briggs College Photo courtesy of Piper Cook.

Historians, Philosophers, and Sociologists of Science

Fields arranged by purity

More pure

Used with permission.
Life, University, Everything

Phase #3: Becoming an educator

At Lyman Briggs College at MSU, my job is to teach science students about the social, ethical, and political context in which their scientific work is embedded. I use a method called Critical Making, which I picked up at the library in Toronto, and have developed in my own way since then. Critical making combines elements of two familiar ideas: critical thinking and goal-oriented making. The term comes from Matt Ratto, leader of the Critical Making Lab at UofT, who developed the theory. Let me give you an example of how this can work.

A colleague of mine teaches physics, mostly to biology students, who often don’t think they’re any good at physics. To encourage them to try, and to understand the importance of physics to practicing biologists and medical professionals, she was introducing a new challenge: build working medical instruments, such as a spirometer, which measures lung capacity. Instruments apply physics concepts and so make great learning tools. I wanted to add biology/medicine content to my class in the philosophy of technology so we decided to collaborate to see how the ethics and the science would interact.

Before long, we found out that the spirometer has a sordy history as shown in the image above.

The arrow is pointing to the “race” button. Brown University professor, Lundy Braun, explains [Braun, 2017] that plemonologists once believed different racial groups had different average lung capacities. This idea was actually used in a 1999 court case to argue that the black plaintiffs in a big asbestos lawsuit should be subject to different standards than other plaintiffs. This horrifying episode of legal maneuvering shocked our students, and we asked both the physicists and the philosophers to think hard about the spirometer the physics class was developing, to think about their “preferred narratives” about low cost and easy access, and to imagine possible counter-narratives, where someone else would misuse the device, as we had now seen in real life.

Here’s one reaction: “Right from the get go my mind was racing with ideas for ‘missing’ the physics students’ invention.” This student was really engaged! Another reaction: “I was always under the impression that scientists invent with no bounds and the responsibility falls to [those who] use the technology.” That is, scientists have no ethical limits—it’s up to society to decide whether to use the tools or not.

Studies back this up: engineering students also assign ethical responsibility to the users of their creations and not to themselves. This in itself might not be a problem, except that users of technology typically do assign ethical responsibility to engineers and scientists! We want these medical devices to be safe! But now we’re in a bind where no one is taking responsibility because they think the other party has the lion’s share. This student has realized that, as a future scientist, they actually do have responsibilities.

We then asked students to try building a low-fidelity prototype of some device in the world of their imagined counter-narratives. In response, a student said, “In class we would discuss uses of objects or concepts that seemed distant. In this project we were given the opportunity to create problems and solutions with a piece of technology that was right in front of us.” Critical making was really engaging students as a teaching technique. And anecdotally, students were actually learning, often at a deeper level, when they had limits—it’s up to society to decide whether to use the results or not.

As you can imagine, to do critical making right requires supplies and equipment and planning. And so I decided we needed a space to support this kind of work. From the start, I wanted to be radically inclusive and reflective in the design of the space. I wanted its own design to reflect the values of Critical Making. After consulting with faculty to gain support for the needed space, I invited 60 students in my technology and culture class to design the space, choose the equipment, and create the policies. They interviewed stakeholders, visited learning spaces, and read studies on learning and space design to back up their observations and interpretations.

The students came up with the Collaborative Experiential Learning Laboratory, or CELL. It has a 3D printer, a sewing machine, a virtual reality rig, and board games. This is worth special mention, because I would definitely not have thought of this myself. Games can be great teaching tools all by themselves, but students pointed out to me that
part of the mission of the CELL was to build a culture of collaboration, and games can contribute to this – especially cooperative games like Pandemic. Games would also help make the CELL a place where students would want to hang out, and therefore a place where people were more likely to mingle and have the opportunity to collaborate in other ways.

Here are some of the first students using the space. They are using at least four machines at once, and I’m pretty sure they broke one, but I’m also pretty sure they learned something.

And that’s the key to this place. I think it shows great promise for attacking the big problems we face as a society, because it can bring together students with diverse interests to work on a common problem. Some of the wicked problems we face today seem to be really fundamental challenges to our way of life. They deserve space for consideration.

I’m not just an engineer, or philosopher, or educator. I don’t have to define myself that way. Moreover, it’s not just me doing the work. This work is intrinsically collaborative, needing multiple kinds of expertise. I have come to accept that, indeed, the way we think does affect what we come to know. Which is why the CELL accommodates thinkers with many styles all working to learn and know together. Which brings me to

**Reflection #3:** Do not let yourself constrain you. Don’t think of yourself in just one way, and don’t take on the world alone. The rest of us are here to help. Bring us along!

**References**

- Randall Munroe, https://xkcd.com/435/

The Honors College at the University of Maine 2018–19 Distinguished Honors Graduate Lecture

**Isaac Record**

**Life, the University and Everything: My Romp Across Disciplines in Pursuit of Answers**

Tuesday, Sept. 25, 2018 • 3:30 p.m. • Hauck Auditorium

Isaac Record ’03 is an assistant professor of practice in Michigan State University’s Lyman Briggs College, where he directs the Collaborative Experiential Learning Laboratory (CELL) and teaches courses in philosophy of science, science and technology studies, and critical making. His research seeks to situate our epistemic and ethical circumstances within a network of values, capabilities, and material and social technologies. Record’s O’Maine Honors class of 2003 was the first to graduate after the Honors Program transitioned to an Honors College. He earned dual bachelor’s degrees in electrical engineering and computer engineering. Record holds a Ph.D. and a master’s degree from the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology at the University of Toronto.
Each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done,” said Rachel Connor, quoting her colleague and teacher, Bryan Stevenson. Stevenson is the author of the 2018 Honors Read, *Just Mercy*, a book about injustice, race, poverty, and their influence on the American judicial system. Stevenson is an attorney and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative— an organization that fights for the rights of condemned persons on death row. Through his book *Just Mercy*, Stevenson tells the stories of some of his clients as they face systematic injustice within the court system. Readers learn of the deep prejudices that pervade a system that prides itself on blind justice.

The Honors Read text is provided each summer to the entering class of Honors students and is meant to serve as an introduction to the Honors endeavor at the University of Maine. Chosen by students from the junior and senior class, the Honors Read is generally an important, modern work of fiction or non-fiction that raises provocative ideas, generates discussion, and can connect to the texts and themes of the Honors core sequence.

*Just Mercy* allows students to have the conversation about States rights, to critique the system, to work and hope towards a more perfect system. Rachel Connor—an embodiment of that very work and hope—came to speak towards her own experience as a capital defense lawyer for the state of Louisiana.

Connor was at UMaine to speak as part of a panel discussing *Just Mercy* with first year Honors students in HON 111. She related her own experiences as a capital defense lawyer for the state of Louisiana where she frequently encounters an unjust legal system. Connor pointed out that as soon as we kill or commit a crime we are stripped of our humanity. The world, the jury, everyone overlooks the kind of person we might have been, what might have led to the crime: race, poverty, upbringing, mental health. When a criminal faces the jury, we only think of the crime. In *Just Mercy*, Stevenson talks about the labels we assign to people who have committed a crime, labels that stay with them for their whole life: criminal, murderer, thief, drug-dealer. He then challenges the reader to ponder this claim: “each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done.”

Connor and Stevenson each work to give their clients a fair trial. Their clients have faced some sort of systematic injustice through the court system. Examples include: children that are tried as adults, individuals who receive life in prison for a minor drug charge, and clients who are sentenced to death without a fair trial or a representative jury. Their work is to show mercy to their fellow human beings. Throughout the honors endeavor, students are faced with the question of what does it mean to be human? *Just Mercy* and Connor’s lecture continue this conversation. Students are challenged to consider racial injustice within the criminal justice system and how society contributes to this.

Students asked Connor lots of questions regarding how she got into her line of work, and if she knew this is what she wanted to do from the start. Connor mentioned how she felt unqualified and lost in law school when she started. Connor, however, spoke towards the power of showing up. She admitted that for some of her clients she was the only hope. The only person listening to them, talking to them, being present and working for them. Connor and Stevenson’s line of work is hard, emotionally draining, but extremely important. She motivated the students by telling them that “you might not always be the best person to be here—but sometimes you’re the one who is there.” When asked how she does her job given the heavy emotional burdens, she responded, “If we don’t expect more from each other, hope better for one another, and recover from the hurt we experience we are surely doomed.” She explained that no one is begging for her job and that if she does not take her clients’ cases they would have few other options. At the end of her talk, she stepped away from the podium looked down at her own body, then up towards the students and softly said, “We beat the drum for justice—if it is here.”
1. She is the calm and soothing voice of the Honors College.
2. Her patience endures even when others’ has long run out.
3. She always brought her deep appreciation for nature—and especially animals—to Colvin Hall.
4. She is utterly unflappable.
5. She shows every day what it means to live with love in your heart.
6. Her kindness has no limits.
7. Her patience endures even when others’ has long run out.
8. She is a loving wife who consistently took walks with Mr. Small.
9. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
10. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
11. Her devotion to her beloved bunny Beanie Bop.
12. The Honors College is tremendously lucky to have Deb.
13. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
14. But what I’ll miss most about Deb is her loyalty.
15. Deb has many families: her own, her Honors family, her Associate family. Deb is unwavering in her support of each.
16. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
17. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
18. Deb has many families: her own, her Honors family, her Associate family. Deb is unwavering in her support of each.
19. Her kindness has no limits.
20. She listens without judgment, and is humble in her observations.
21. She always greeted me and made me feel like Maine was my home.
22. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
23. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
24. The joy Deb brought all Honors students when she would hide the fairy around Colvin Hall until it mysteriously became trapped on the 4th floor.
25. She is kind, supportive, hard-working, dependable and Fun!
26. I wish her well and I’m honored to have had the opportunity to work with her on a daily basis.
27. I thoroughly enjoyed working with Deb at the Honors College.
28. She has a great sense of humor; she is incredibly considerate to other people and she’ll always put others first.
29. Her modesty, which vastly misrepresents her intelligence, dedication and kindness.
30. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
31. She knows when you need a hug.
32. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
33. Her laudable patience with my copier ineptitude!
34. Her impact will be missed but not forgotten.
35. She always greeted me and made me feel like Maine was my home.
36. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
37. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
38. She always greeted me and made me feel like Maine was my home.
39. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
40. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
41. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
42. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
43. She always tried very hard not to complain, so you know when she did it was bad.
44. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
45. She always greeted me and made me feel like Maine was my home.
46. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
47. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
48. Deborah knew all of the MaineStreet secrets.
49. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
50. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
51. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
52. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
53. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
54. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
55. She is one of those quiet professionals so lacking in the world.
56. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
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105. She is a selfless, thoughtful, and kind team member.
I will miss Deborah's visits with Barbara when she returns. They fir
will miss her candy bowl and her photos of birds, of
will miss driving into work and seeing Deborah's black Versa
I met Deborah during my first week of college in 1998. I feel
Deb is fun at a party. Trust me. That's all I can say about that.
Deb's love of animals (especially bunnies) means that you can
— Mimi Killinger, Preceptor
— Mark Brewer, Preceptor
— Sean Cox, Associate '16 & '17
— Sadie, Honorary Honors Canine
— Emily Cain, Associate '02
— Sadie, Honorary Honors Canine
Deb will be deeply missed as she exemplifies the role of moral
70. Her gentle guidance has solved innumerable problems, and
71. As a dedicated administrator and level-headed problem-solver, she
kept our feet on the ground, and made running the college look effortless (though we all know it wasn't!!)
72. Deb accomplished more with a kind word and a moment to
listen to personal or professional problems than can reasonably be expressed.
— Susan Cox, Associate '16 & '17
86. I will miss her knowing smile and unwavering support.
87. Deborah is the heart and soul of the Honors College, and it will not be the same without her.
88. Random discussions about Marie Kondo and "sparking joy"
89. Sharing chocolate from her desk
90. Her smile even when things are hectic and all over the place
91. I will miss her steadfast commitment to doing what is right for students, faculty, and others.
92. I will miss her thoughtfulness and her wisdom.
93. Her kindness, helpfulness, efficiency, laugh, her appreciation of Huskies and small children her fairness her sense of humor, her
94. For letting us back into our offices when our keys go wandering
95. No one could have been more helpful the year I was interim dean! — before or since for that matter.
96. And always cheerful, friendly, ready to share a laugh.
97. So friendly and supportive, empathetic, during our family's crisis.
— David Gross, Preceptor
98. To me, Deborah is an enduring example of a down home, Down东, down-to-earth, Franco-American woman for all
seasons. She's a walking art work, except when she's sitting behind her desk, or putting the magic touch on the copy machine that won't work for me, or unlocking the door that I haven't brought my key for
deborah is into solving problems, into being a resource, into
trusting everyone and everything with respect and compassion, into being an inspiration and bringing light into our otherwise cloudy lives.
— RW Estela, Preceptor
100. Her laughter, and cool calm energy in that office, no matter the
tomatoes otherwise going through
— Cristina Martelli, Preceptor
101. The center of the Honors College is, without doubt, Deborah Small. An incredible resource for students, faculty, and staff, I have been very fortunate to work with Deb in all of those roles and can attest her dedication, knowledge, and resourcefulness are at the heart of what Honors does best: supporting students to grow and thrive at the University of Maine. Enjoy your retirement, Deb!
— Rachel Smill, Preceptor
102. Deb, you always sort me or my students in times of chaos... even in the summer when you aren't supposed to be working. We'll be spinning without you!
— Sally Medley, Preceptor
103. Deb, you always sort me or my students in times of chaos...
— Michael Grillo, Preceptor
104. More than anything else about Deborah, I'm always amazed
at her noble calm, no matter the instability of the situation. While others could break out in volatile moments, whether minor simmers or grand éclats, Deborah always held the situation together for the rest of us, making sure that we all had the materials to do what we were there for.
105. By keeping everything on track Deborah has helped bring the
Honors College through its decades of growth and continuing
maturating. Thank you so much, Deborah! We'll all miss you!
— Jordan LaBouff, Preceptor
106. Deb Small with granddaughter Meledore.
Examining an honors education

Hao Hong

“An unexamined life is not worth living,” said Socrates. As a philosopher newly hired by the Honors College, I feel the need to “examine” Honors education, the endeavor to which I am ready to devote myself. I thus ask myself, what defines the Honors education? What distinctive role do Honors courses play in a college education? These questions are harder to answer than many might think. One might say that Honors provides a liberal arts education, but this answer is not satisfying. The subjects that are traditionally thought to belong to “liberal arts” are taught by many other academic units across the university, so the liberal arts education is not sufficient to define and identify the education provided by Honors.

TO ME, what defines Honors is the liberal arts environment: discussion-based classrooms, small class sizes, writing-intensive courses, and community-engaged experience. This kind of environment is crucial to the cultivation of a good person and a good citizen. Facing the moral, social, and political issues in today’s society, we are always encouraged to share our thoughts with others and listen to other people’s voices, and we are constantly reminded of the importance of having civil and constructive conversations on the basis of mutual respect. However, having constructive conversations is not something that we learn from books nor something that we can do well merely by emphasizing its importance. Rather, it is a skill, a skill that has to be grasped through repeated practices. I believe that the liberal arts environment in Honors is the best “practice field” for having constructive conversations on important issues in our society. My ideal classroom in Honors is inclusive, where students share their thoughts and perspectives without feeling being judged; it is respectful, where people’s lived experience and opinions are recognized and valued; it is critical, where students are not afraid of disagreeing with, challenging, and pushing each other for the purpose of finding the best answers to important questions. Meanwhile, my ideal classroom is tolerant. We learn things that we do not know, and we practice skills that we do not grasp perfectly. Mistakes are not only inevitable in this learning process, but also create opportunities for us to improve. Tolerance gives us the courage to expose our potential mistakes and learn from them.

My first semester as a member of Honors is beyond my expectation. My students showed a great understanding of and commitment to the mission of Honors. Moreover, they created an excellent teaching (and learning) environment for me: my experience was respected, my thoughts were valued, my ideas were sometimes challenged, and my mistakes (hopefully there were not many) were tolerated. I felt so comfortable and fulfilled teaching in Honors.

Hao Hong
Stephanie Gross has also taught in the Civilizations sequence for a number of years, bringing her love of literature and teaching to inspire students in the first year of the sequence. Her scholarly interest is in late nineteenth and early twentieth century writers, especially women writers like Willa Cather and Sarah Orne Jewett. Taylor Houdlette writes, “Stephanie Gross is the type of professor who fosters important connections with her students and quickly becomes a mentor to them, as she was with me. Her compassionate nature and spirited way of teaching earned respect in class. She embodies everything great that the Honors College represents, especially reaching out and leaving a positive impact on the lives of the students she taught. I know that I’ll always be grateful for the positive impact that she left on mine.”

Stephanie and David will be dearly missed as a new generation of Honors students starts their Honors endeavor next year. We wish them well in the next phase of their journey.

Michael Palmer retired in 2017 after a 34 year career of teaching in political science and in Honors at UMaine. A political philosopher, Michael taught two generations of Maine students about major thinkers in the history of political thought. He taught chiefly in the first year Civilizations sequence for Honors and contributed lectures on Plato’s Republic, Machiavelli’s The Prince, and Francis Bacon’s New Atlantis and The Great Instauration. But Michael also taught half-a-dozen Honors tutorials, the last in 2012, entitled, The Political Thought of Shakespeare. As a scholar, Michael Palmer’s distinguished contributions include three books, over a dozen referenced articles and books, and, most relevant to Honors, his advising of five Honors thesis students. One of those, Dr. William Parsons, Associate Professor of Political Science at Carroll College in Montana, writes, “… Professor Palmer’s classes constituted the core of my undergraduate education; what I learned from him in Political Science and Honors courses led me to the life I live today. Through his learning, generosity, and sheer intelligence, he reoriented my intellectual compass, presenting a way of life as possible that (as he often told us) humans beings had pursued for millennia, but that I didn’t know even existed. . . . All of his students profited from his relentless skepticism of the world, and the incisive criticism of our unexamined convictions that arose in nearly every single class. . . . Michael’s provocative and compelling defense of a truly liberal education is precisely what modern universities need. . .”

The Honors College is pleased to recognize Michael’s many contributions to the intellectual life of our students and to wish him a happy retirement.
In the fall of 2018, the Honors College asked students to write a brief statement on what it means to be a part of the UMaine Honors Community. The students were asked to focus not only on academics, but also on their extracurricular experiences. We received dozens of responses and reading through them all further cemented the goals and aspirations of the College to make a welcoming and nurturing environment for all of our students.

“The Honors College here at the University of Maine doesn’t fail to impress. The depth of discussion, perspective-altering curriculum, and personable faculty foster an incredibly valuable environment to “think hard about things that matter.”

—Chase Flaherty ’20

“Being in honors housing my first year connected me with other students... and gave me access to new ideas, writing styles, and ways of thinking. We often all sat out in the common room together, reading the books and discussing what we were learning in class.”

—Megan Howell ’20

“Being a part of the UMaine Honors College means belonging to a community of motivated learners.”

—Kyle Wood ’21

“Being a member of the University of Maine Honors College means making a difference. The Honors Civilization sequence is preparing me to engage in meaningful, sometimes difficult discussions that are necessary to change the world for the better.”

—Dominique DiSpirito ’21
Laura Paye ’19 Marine Science

In the summer of 2018, I participated in the NASA Student Airborne Research Program. My research focused on nitrous oxide concentrations in the atmosphere above the San Joaquin Valley (SJV), one of the densest areas of agriculture in the country. A greenhouse gas, Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) is an agricultural byproduct that is also extremely harmful to the ozone layer. Data collection involved flying on the NASA DC-8 plane measuring air quality over California. Using the data gathered over the SJV, I found correlations between livestock facilities and enhanced regions of N₂O, with significant amounts present in areas with more dairy farms and feedlots.

This research project challenged me in new ways and diversified my undergraduate experience. At the start of this internship, we were told that we would be randomly assigned to one of four research groups. As a marine science major, I hoped it would be the oceanography research group, but I ended up in atmospheric chemistry. Although I had taken general chemistry courses, I knew very little about active chemistry in the atmosphere. To work with the large amounts of data that my research group collected on the flights, I also had to learn a new programming language, MATLAB, and do so in six-weeks! This internship exposed me to new research methods, new analytical tools, and the opportunity to present my findings in front of high profile scientists. I learned more than I could have ever imagined during my time with NASA, and I now know that I want to be a part of this exciting, important research on greenhouse gases in the future.

We asked some of our current Honors thesis students to tell us about their research experiences. Represented here are students from the Colleges of Engineering; Natural Science; Forestry, and Agriculture; and Liberal Arts and Sciences. Their research spans regions, disciplines, and topics, from building low-cost prosthetic arms to studying greenhouse gases above industrial dairy farms in central California, to refining the social value of maple sugaring in our own backyards. In or out of the classroom, locally and globally, Honors students continue to think hard about things that matter.
Michael Jones ‘19 and Connor Bouffard ‘19 Mechanical Engineering

Research on assistive technology to help people with disabling medical conditions is an ever-expanding field. Senior mechanical engineering and Honors students Michael Jones and Connor Bouffard are working with Professor Babak Hejrati to design a lightweight robotic exoskeleton arm that assists with shoulder and elbow movement. Robotic exoskeletons sense motion and then use a motor to facilitate movement.

For Bouffard, this research is personal: A close family friend was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease, which slowly deteriorates motor function. He took up boxing to preserve mind-muscle connection—hitting moving targets reinforces muscle coordination and slows the disease’s effects. But what if there was a way he could train his muscle coordination while doing everyday tasks? An upper-extremity assistive robotic exoskeleton is a device intended for just this application. The idea is to create a lightweight, wearable backpack that affords the physically inhibited the ability to train their muscles while performing daily tasks.

For their Honors thesis—a joint project—Jones and Bouffard are designing an exoskeleton for the shoulder that can be 3D printed, is lightweight, and comfortable to wear. Their aim is to create a working prototype.

This is not a simple task as the shoulder is a very complicated joint because it can move in any direction. As such, a robotic exoskeleton needs to be complex enough to allow the shoulder to move naturally without impeding its motion. Ergonomics, weight, and torque assistance are factors that must be considered. Fine tuning the exoskeleton to optimize these parameters is a highly iterative process and will hopefully lead to a design that will make living with a disease like Parkinson’s less challenging.
EACH YEAR thanks to the generous support of Bill Leitch, the Honors College takes students to the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference hosted in various cities across the US. “Just Honors” was the theme of the 2017 conference held in Atlanta, Georgia, and students presented their research on a range of topics from invasive green crabs to the creation and use of scientific illustrations as teaching tools, and from intersectionality to community-engaged projects at home and abroad. Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative and author of Just Mercy, the 2018/2019 Honors Read selection, was an inspirational plenary speaker. Students also got the chance to explore the host city’s museums, historic sites, libraries, and local landmarks. In Atlanta, these included the legendary Ebenezer Baptist Church where Martin Luther King, Jr. preached and the Center for Civil and Human Rights.

Q: What was your most enjoyable valuable experience while on the trip?

“Generally being immersed in the national community of Honors was very cool—the event seemed to be a gathering for the exchange of ideas to benefit us all. I met a black Honors student at the Civil Rights Museum. He recognized me because of my ID badge and we were talking about one of the more immersive exhibits (the lunch counter). I found it terrifying but he found it comforting to know what his ancestors went through for him. That will stay with me. It’s curious how we can both feel a camaraderie under the identity of Honors and both be at this event for the same purpose, but still be so different.”
— Chantal Bussiere ’19

Q: What opportunities did you take advantage of while in the city?

“The Civil Rights History Museum was truly eye-opening. Reading about the atrocities of the Jim Crow era is one thing, but the civil rights history museum crafts a truly compelling narrative, which goes much further than any written piece could ever go.”
— Honors Student

Q: What was your most enjoyable valuable experience while on the trip?

“Being able to present research at an academic conference such as NCHC was truly invaluable. I plan on going to graduate school after undergrad, and this experience not only gave me an opportunity to engage in an event that usually is inaccessible until later in academia, it also allowed me to develop skills like networking, critically assessing other’s research and presentations, learning through others, and opening my eyes to the much broader world of Honors.”
— Honors Student

Q: Please describe what you found valuable in presenting your work at a national conference.

“The most valuable thing was getting to meet people from various backgrounds and concentrations... Conference attendees were interested in sharing knowledge and experience, and hearing about other people’s research.”
— Gene Herrschaft ’18

“I always find presenting to be valuable. It’s enhancing the craft of public outreach, education, and communication”
— Christopher Gilbert ’18
Honors awards

CUGR Research Awards

SUMMER 2018 FELLOWSHIPS
Makenzie Baber '21 (Business Management)
Emma Garner ’19 (Biology)
Joshua Hamilton ’21 (Biomedical Engineering)
Tal Kleinhauske ’19 (Wildlife Ecology)
Emily Miller ’19 (Marine Sciences)
Joshua Passarelli ’21 (Biology)
Guyweth Roberts ’20 (Mathematics)
Hadley White ’19 (Secondary Education)
Brynn Yarbrough ’21 (Marine Sciences)

2018–19 ACADEMIC YEAR FELLOWSHIPS
Michael Buyaskas ’19 (Wildlife Ecology)
Ian Donnelly ’19 (Computer Science)
Sadie Libby ’21 (Psychology)
Michaela Murray ’19 (Ecology & Environmental Science)
Emma Newcomb ’21 (Marine Science)
David Rondeau ’19 (Biology)
Tiffany Tanner ’19 (History; International Affairs)
Thilee Yost ’19 (Political Science)

INBRE Research Awards
The 2018-19 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 2018 FELLOWSHIPS
Ben Tero ’19 (Biochemistry)
Alan Baez ’20 (Biochemistry)

2018-19 HONORS THESIS FELLOWSHIPS
Ben Tero ’19 (Biochemistry)
Jasmine Waite ’19 (Biochemistry)
Rachel Brooks ’19 (Biology)
Emily Robinson ’19 (Biochemistry)
Sean Driscoll ’19 (Zoology)
Mohammad Hashmi ’19 (Microbiology; Molecular & Cellular Biology)

2018-19 JUNIOR YEAR FELLOWSHIPS
Alan Baez ’20 (Biochemistry)
Grace Smith ’20 (Molecular & Cellular Biology)
Emma Freeman ’20 (Microbiology)
Katherine Larochelle ’20 (Biochemistry; Molecular & Cellular Biology)

Charlie Slavin
Research Fund Awards

SPRING 2018
Marissa Zink ’18 (Child Development and Family Relations)
Allysa Uteuova ’18 (Political Science; Journalism)
Cleo Barker ’18 (International Affairs)
Austin Steward ’19 (Biomedical Engineering)
Isaiah Mansour ’18 (Marine Science)

FALL 2018
Michaela Murray ’19 (Ecology & Environmental Sciences)
Michael Buyaskas ’19 (Wildlife Ecology)
Kiley Davan ’19 (Wildlife Ecology)
Laura Paye ’19 (Ecology & Environmental Science; Marine Science)
Connor Bouffard ’19 (Mechanical Engineering)
Michael Jones ’19 (Mechanical Engineering)

CAROLYN E. REED PRE-MEDICAL THESIS FELLOWSHIP
Jasmine Waite ’19 (Biochemistry)

RENDELE A. JONES ’65 AND PATRICIA K. JONES ’65 HONORS THESIS FELLOWSHIP
Nicole McGrath ’19 (Biology)

THOMAS E. LYNCH ’38 THESIS SCHOLARSHIP
Stanley Small ’19 (Computer Science)
Emma Gagne ’19 (Biology)
Alexander Reppond ’19 (Psychology)

BARBARA A. OUELLETTE HONORS THESIS FELLOWSHIP
Sadie Novak ’19 (Chemistry)

Special recognition
The Honors College would like to recognize the following Honors students for their outstanding achievements during the 2017–18 academic year.

OUTSTANDING GRADUATING STUDENT, COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES, FORESTRY, AND AGRICULTURE
Callie Greco ’18 (Biology)

OUTSTANDING GRADUATING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
Allya Uteuova ’18 (Political Science; Journalism)

OUTSTANDING STUDENT, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Rachel Stritzel ’18 (Child Development and Family Relations)

OUTSTANDING GRADUATING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, MAINE BUSINESS SCHOOL
Marie-France Georges ’18 (Marketing; Finance)

VISITING SCHOLAR AT THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
Mimi Killinger (Rezendes Preceptor for the Arts, Honors)

BERNARD LOWN ’42 HUMANITARIAN AWARD
Allan ’73 & Patricia Morell ’73 (Seward Heart)

THE JOHN M. REZENDES ANNUAL ETHICS ESSAY COMPETITION, ON AGE AND AGING
1st Place: Rachel Emerich ’19 (Nursing)
Our Ethical Responsibility for Preventing Elder Abuse and Caring for those Affected

Finalists: Nico Whittle: “Goodbye”
Kendall Butler ’19 (Physics): “The Future of Aging”

2018–19 MCGILLICUDDY HUMANITIES CENTER FINALISTS
Sophia Palangas ’20 (Communication Sciences & Disorders)

ROBERT B. THOMPSON MEMORIAL THESIS FELLOWSHIP
Lindsay Taylor ’18 (Art History)

BILLY AND BETSY PULLEN LEITCH ’55 FUND
Samuel Bover ’18 (Physics)

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Bill and Betsy Pullen Leitch ’55 Fund

Robert B. Thompson Memorial Thesis Fellowship

Lindsay Taylor ’18 (Art History)

Doug Newton ’19 (Political Science)

Aspirations Scholarship

Niklas Kase ’21 (Biochemistry)

Stanhope Study Abroad Fellowship

Sophia Palangas ’20 (Communication Sciences & Disorders)

Bill and Betsy Pulen Leitch ’55 Fund

Samuel Bover ’18 (Physics)

Sophia Palangas ’20 (Communication Sciences & Disorders)

Michaela Murray ’19 (Ecology & Environmental Sciences; Economics)

Melissa Garand ’19 (International Affairs)

Liam Reading ’20 (Studio Art)

Jessica Orient ‘18 (Civil Engineering)

Catherine Kasparek ’21 (Mechanical Engineering)

National Collegiate Honors Council Newsletter Contest, First Place

Minerva, University of Maine Honors College

Scholarships and Fellowships

Robert B. Thompson Memorial Thesis Fellowship

Lindsay Taylor ’18 (Art History)

Doug Newton ’19 (Political Science)

Aspirations Scholarship

Niklas Kase ’21 (Biochemistry)

STANHOPE STUDY ABROAD FELLOWSHIP
Sophia Palangas ’20 (Communication Sciences & Disorders)

Bill and Betsy Pulen Leitch ’55 Fund

Samuel Bover ’18 (Physics)

Sophia Palangas ’20 (Communication Sciences & Disorders)

Michaela Murray ’19 (Ecology & Environmental Sciences; Economics)

Melissa Garand ’19 (International Affairs)

Liam Reading ’20 (Studio Art)

Jessica Orient ‘18 (Civil Engineering)

Catherine Kasparek ’21 (Mechanical Engineering)

National Collegiate Honors Council Newsletter Contest, First Place

Minerva, University of Maine Honors College

Scholarships and Fellowships
2018 National Collegiate Honors Council Conference — Boston, MA

PRESENTATIONS:
Dialogues and Dribbles: An Eloquent Discussion for a More Civilized Age
Jack Brown, Thiele Yost, Mark Haggerty
Scaling Research Opportunities at Large Research Universities: Possibilities and Pitfalls
François Amar, Sally Dixon Molloy
Risky Business: Poetry as a Transgressive Act
Kathleen Ellis, Kim Crowley, Anefra Gould, William Sames
Learning to Transgress: Grappling with Resistance to Marginalized Voices
Melissa Laderman, Benjamin Tero, Hailey Bryant, Jennie Weedon

POSTERS:
Science by the Seashore: A Nontraditional Learning Experience at MDI Biological Laboratory
Grace Smith, Arielle Spalla, Sally Dixon Molloy
Science of Breast Cancer Detection
Dexter Canning
Farm to Institution Solutions Through Knowledge-to-Action Education
Julia Miguére, Kai Overturf
Dishing out History: Recipes as a Pedagogical Tool in the Classroom
Rachel Snell, Maenziie Iaber

Honors College Scholar-Athletes

Hannah Belleville
Tuuli Overturf
Alexandra Bromley
Andrew Piese
Julia Casey
Mariya Pominova
Sean Driscoll
Maiakela Sansoucie
Faythe Goins
Shanna Scribner
Mariya Pominova
Heather Sterchele

2018–19 HONORS ASSOCIATES
What an efficient duo, Eric LeVasseur, and Emily Craig. From the get-go they jumped in ready to tackle the 2018–2019 school year!

Eric LeVasseur graduated with a degree in biology with a pre-medical concentration and a minor in chemistry in 2018. LeVasseur also spent his time as the staff advisor for Operation Hearts, an organization dedicated to medically based volunteer work throughout the state of Maine and beyond. LeVasseur hopes to spend the next year as a medical scribe, before applying to med school in 2020. As an associate he enjoys advising students and teaching the honors tutorial alternative class as well as the intro to thesis writing. “The full Honors experience is one that only a few of the graduates at UMaine can say they’ve been a part of, and even fewer can say that they’ve had the chance to experience it from the teaching/advising side. I’m incredibly grateful for this past year of working with the faculty, staff, and students of the Honors College. All the projects that the Honors students take on every single year are incredible and it’s great to watch and cheer on every student as they complete their thesis process, tutorial alternatives, or Civilizations sequence.”

Emily Craig graduated with a degree in marine science with a minor in chemistry in 2018. Craig is also using this time to work on a grant to do toxicology research in Sri Lanka, bridging the gap between environmental and human health. She is then applying to graduate school for a masters in marine toxicology. As an associate she enjoys co-teaching courses, and helping students finish their theses. “It’s amazing to see all the work that faculty and staff put into the honors curriculum. It has been a huge learning experience from fiddling with Adobe Indesign to lesson planning, to quelling the fears and anxieties of honors students. The honors students never fail to impress me with their creativity, passions, and drive. They have been truly reinvigorating! The skills that I have learned over the past year are ones that I will carry with me for the rest of my life and I am extremely grateful for all the things the Honors College has done for me.”

MARK R. HASKELL AND KATHERINE Z. HASKELL SCHOLARSHIP
Sophie Cohen ’20 (Political Science)

PROFESSOR MELVIN GERSHMAN SCHOLARSHIP
Lucy Guarnieri ’19 (Biology)

MAINE STATE SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP
Ana Eliza Souza Cunha ’19 (Biology)

MAINE CAMPUS COMPACT HEART AND SOUL AWARD
Samantha Saucier ’18 (Sociology; Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies)

Events

SPRING 2018 MAINE MASONIC CELEBRATION OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Samuel Borer ’18 (Physics) The Cross Section
Measurement of Change Current Quasi-Neutral Nyerons in ArgoNeUT
Thaalfakar Alsaady ’18 (Chemical Engineering)
Use of Renewable Cellulose Nanofibrils and Water-Barrier Layers in the Production of Snack Packaging
Michaela Murray ’19 (Ecology and Environmental Science) Farm to Institution

2018 MAINE SUSTAINABILITY AND WATER CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS:
Michaela Murray ’19 (Ecology and Environmental Science) Uncovering the Current National Perceptions of Aquaculture Practices. First Place, Undergraduate poster
Matthew Ahearn ’19 (Finance) and Mariza Budri ’19 (Management) Knowledge-to-Action Solutions by Linking Maine Institutions with Local Farms
Michaela Murray ’19 (Ecology and Environmental Science) and Hannah Herrick (Biology) Applying Engaged Research Methods to Expand Knowledge of Maine’s Changing Foodscape
Austin Steward ’19 (Biomedical Engineering) Anemic Remediation in Maine Drinking Water

2018–17 AWARD PARTICIPANTS:

HONORS ASSOCIATE MENTORSHIP

Heather Sterchele

Artistic
Social
Supportive
Orchestrating
Collaborative
Interesting
Advocate
Tenacious
Energetic
Helpful
Organized
Nicer
Orderly
Radiant
Sophisticated

Insights
### Graduates from the 2018 Honors class at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average GPA</td>
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<td>Graduates who worked while in school</td>
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<td>Graduates who were officers in a student organization</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates who attended an Honors trip</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduates induced into Phi Kappa Phi</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduates who completed a tutorial alternative</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduates from Maine</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates who studied abroad</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates from out of state</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates who plan to attend graduate school</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates who were members of a Greek organization</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates who participated in theater, dance, or music</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates with a double degree</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates who were student-athletes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates from the College of Education and Human Development</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates from the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry and Agriculture</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates from the College of Engineering</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates from the Maine Business School</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Honors graduates

- **Thomas Alsaady**
  - Chemical Engineering
  - Portland, Maine
  - Owling High School
  - **THESIS**: Use of Renewable Cellulose Nanofibrils and Water Barrier Layers in the Production of Snack Packaging
  - Advisor: Douglas W. Brounfield
  - Thesis Description: The problem with the current packaging material used for potato chips are that non-renewable petroleum is used in its production, which cannot be recycled in a cost-effective way, and takes hundreds of years to decompose naturally. The novel solution that was investigated looks at using recyclable and renewable layers of cellulose nanofibrils and water-barrier layers coated on paper as a water-barrier layer.

- **Alex Audet**
  - Earth Sciences
  - Pittsfield, Maine
  - Maine Central Institute
  - **THESIS**: Recovering Legacy Geological Data into a Geospatial Database Product: An Example from Baja California Norte, Mexico
  - Advisors: Scott Johnson; Christopher Gerbi
  - Description: This project develops a workflow for the extraction of digital, unregistered vector format legacy geological map data using a case study in the Baja California Norte, Mexico. The methods include a complete, developed arcgis script workflow, and implementation of FME Workbench software to extract and organize the spatial data.

- **Cleo Baker**
  - International Affairs; Journalism
  - Portland, Maine
  - Deering High School
  - **THESIS**: Barriers to Employment and Overcoming Economic Integration for Foreign-Born Workers in Maine
  - Advisor: Robert Glover
  - Thesis Description: This thesis investigates the different barriers to employment for foreign-born workers in Maine, and provides recommendations for addressing these obstacles. Maine’s unique demographic situation provides greater incentive for reducing or eliminating obstacles that hinder immigrants seeking employment in skilled positions who can provide needed labor to combat an employment crisis.

- **Abigail Bennett**
  - Financial Economics
  - Oxford, Maine
  - Hebron Academy
  - **THESIS**: The Impact of Active and Passive Ownership on Total Shareholder Return and Environmental, Social, and Governance Performance of Companies
  - Advisor: Todd Gabe
  - Thesis Description: The purpose of my study was to test the impact of passive and active controlling ownership on total shareholder return (TSR) and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) score of firms. I found no evidence to suggest that passive controlling ownership causes companies to have lower TSR and ESG score than actively controlled firms.
Graduates

2019

During a veterinary appointment. when completed by pet owners, would help to design a series of questionnaires that, and management of dogs and cats in order current literature on stress measurement. 

Thesis Description: This project reviews the addition of a calorimetric time projection chamber (LArTPC) through a production cross section in a liquid argon first measurement of CCQE neutral hyperon. 

Thesis Description: This thesis outlines the first measurement of CCQE neutral hyperon production cross-section in a liquid argon time projection chamber (LArTPC) through a topological study, and presents the ongoing progress of the addition of a calorimetric study.

Thesis Description: The project focuses on the development of a series of questionnaires to aid in the assessment of stress levels in dogs and cats. The questionnaires include questions related to factors such as noise, overcrowding, and exercise availability, and are designed to help pet owners better understand the stress levels of their pets. 

Thesis Description: This thesis assesses the effectiveness of alternative anti-ciliate treatments on the growth and reproduction of ciliates in culture. The study tested chemicals that kill ciliates as well as Artemisia as an alternative anti-ciliate treatment.

Visit: A Systematic Review

THESIS: 

Ursuline High School
Animal and Veterinary Sciences

Animal and Veterinary Sciences

Samuel Borger
Physics
St. Paul, Minnesota
Saint Paul Conservatory

THESIS: 

Antinucleoside-Induced Charge Current Quasi-Elatic Neutral Hyperon Cross-Section on Argon in ArgonNet
Advisor: Saima Farooq

Thesis Description: This thesis outlines the first measurement of CCQE neutral hyperon production cross-section in a liquid argon time projection chamber (LArTPC) through a topological study, and presents the ongoing progress of the addition of a calorimetric study.

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Visit: A Systematic Review

THESIS: 

Ursuline High School
Animal and Veterinary Sciences

Animal and Veterinary Sciences

Naedia Clarke
Animal and Veterinary Sciences
Randolph, Massachusetts
Utah High School

THESIS: 

Designing a Stress-free Veterinary Visit: A Systematic Review
Advisor: Clare Thomas

Thesis Description: This project reviews the current literature on stress measurement and management of dogs and cats in order to design a series of questionnaires that, when completed by pet owners, would help veterinary staff to reduce the stress involved during a veterinary appointment.

Visit: A Systematic Review

THESIS: 

St. Paul, Minnesota
Saint Paul Conservatory

THESIS: Antinucleoside-Induced Charge Current Quasi-Elatic Neutral Hyperon Cross-Section on Argon in ArgonNet
Advisor: Saima Farooq

Thesis Description: This thesis outlines the first measurement of CCQE neutral hyperon production cross-section in a liquid argon time projection chamber (LArTPC) through a topological study, and presents the ongoing progress of the addition of a calorimetric study.
The Effects of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid on Abundance and Nymphal Infection Prevalence of Black-Legged Ticks in Maine

Adviser: Allison Gardner

Thesis Description: My study examined how loss of eastern hemlock trees due to the invasive woolly adelgid impacted tick populations and the number of ticks that were carriers of Lyme disease in Maine. Abundance and infection prevalence of ticks were then compared between the treatment types.

Tipulina Gigantea and Fragmented Habitat: Impact on Nymphal Black-Legged Ticks

Advisor: Karyn Sporer

Thesis Description: My study focused on Populations found at the species southern range margin in Maine, USA. This thesis also examines the financial services in Haiti, specifically, the financial services offered to the population, or lack thereof, and their impact on the country's economic growth during a seventeen year period (2000-2016). The thesis also examines the financial services in Haiti, specifically, the financial services offered to the population, or lack thereof, and their impact on the country's economic growth during a seventeen year period (2000-2016).

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From Grey City to Metropolitan Capital: Basque Cultural Revival and Urban Integration

Advisor: Kristy Townsend

Thesis Description: This study sought to characterize the urban integration process of the Basque people of Bilbao, Spain. It aimed to confirm that expert entrepreneurs use effectual logic framework as opposed to the causal, or predictive, logic utilized by novices. We found that while the majority of the results were similar, there were notable differences among specific metrics, but not overall constructs.
Gene Herrschaft

New Media
Portland, Maine
Portland High School

THESIS: Facilitating Meaningful Interpersonal Connections Through a Virtual Space

Advisors: Aaron Brotherton; Nicholas Guidice

Thesis Description: I created a networked multi-user virtual reality application in which users collaborate to solve a series of puzzles before getting the opportunity to speak with one another.

Maryam Kashkooli

Economics; Mathematics
Glenside, Maine
John Bapst Memorial High School

THESIS: Forecasting Labor Force Participation at the Regional Level in the U.S.: The Case of Maine

Advisors: Andrew Cowley

Thesis Description: This project attempts to investigate the future of labor force participation in Maine using an econometric forecasting approach. I adapt existing econometric models and make use of time series data from sociodemographic factors such as age and net migration in order to determine how Maine’s changing demographic structure is affecting its labor force now and into the future.

Brian LeVasseur

Biology
Medway, Maine
Schofields High School

THESIS: The Affective Disturbance of Ethanol Withdrawal on C57BL/6J and C57BL/6NJ Mice

Advisors: Reuben Dending; Sarah Harlan-Haughey

Thesis Description: This study aimed to look at behavioral effects induced by ethanol withdrawal in the areas of depression-like and anxiety-like behavior and compare it between the two strains of mice. Results showed that genes that affect ethanol withdrawal are not the same as genes that affect ethanol preference.

Kasey Johnston

Chemical Engineering
Lockport, New York
Lockport High School

THESIS: The Producers, Characterization, and Upgrading of Biochar into Activated Carbon

Advisors: Clayton Wheeler

Thesis Description: I created a networked multi-user virtual reality application in which users collaborate to solve a series of puzzles before getting the opportunity to speak with one another.

Maryam Kashkooli

Economics; Mathematics
Glenside, Maine
John Bapst Memorial High School

THESIS: Forecasting Labor Force Participation at the Regional Level in the U.S.: The Case of Maine

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Teensun Kiëdli

Biochemistry; Microbiology
South Portland, Maine

THESIS: Determining the Role of SalY in Streptococcus Pyogenes Immune Evasion Using Fluorescence Microscopy

Advisors: Melody Neely

Thesis Description: Fluorescently-tagged immune cells in zebrafish larvae were used to investigate immune cell recruitment in real time. Our results indicated an increase in the number of macrophages to the site of infection. A decrease in bacterial recovery when infected with SalY mutants suggested that the SalY protein plays a role in the organism’s ability to evade the host immune response.

Sarah Lewis

English
Liberty, Maine
Cumberland Hills Regional High School

THESIS: Literature as a Tool for Promoting Social Change

Advisors: Robert Franzosa

Thesis Description: Obstacles to the full and equal participation of women in mathematics are examined through a feminist biography of a professor of mathematics, which details her personal experiences as well as her topological work in knot theory and its applications in site-specific recombination in DNA.
THESIS: A Portrait of Alden Longfellow
Advisor: Melissa Ladehen
Thesis Description: A Portrait of Alden Longfellow is about the life of the late Alden Adams Longfellow told from the perspective of his grandson using oral interviews with Alden Longfellow’s wife and seven children, along with the author’s own experiences. In taking on this project, the author explores the question of what is gained and what is lost when a family member writes about another family member.

THESIS: Human Dimensions of Climate Change
Advisor: Ian Bricknell
Thesis Description: This thesis focused on consumer incentives for participating in reuse markets in the state of Maine. My research sought to grasp the “pull” factors that continue to bring Mainers back to the state’s second hand markets. Within the broader framework of anthropogenic climate change, this research endeavors to capture a fuller conceptualization of what it means to be a sustainable consumer.

THESIS: Red Abalone Hemocyanin as an Immunology, Critical for Medications and Crenulata) is an industry standard in production from the Giant Keyhole Limpet (Megathura crenulata) is an industry standard in production from the Giant Keyhole Limpet (Megathura crenulata)
Advisor: Melissa Ladenheim
Advisor: Melissa Ladenheim
Advisor: Melissa Ladenheim
THESIS: Hussellian: A Portrait of Alden Longfellow
Advisor: Melissa Ladenheim
Advisor: Melissa Ladenheim
Advisor: Melissa Ladenheim
THESIS: Predicting Benthic Light Fields in the Damariscotta River Estuary With Implications for Microphytobenthos
Advisor: Damien Brady
Advisor: Damien Brady
Advisor: Damien Brady
THESIS: Haemonchus Contortus: A Pathogenic Nematode That Causes Sheep Devastating Parasite to Sheep Industries
Advisor: James Weber
Advisor: James Weber
Advisor: James Weber
THESIS: The Efficiency of Melatonin in Inhibiting Haemonchus Contortus Development
Advisor: James Weber
Advisor: James Weber
Advisor: James Weber
THESIS: From Unrest to Occupation: An Analysis of V-Notching in the Maine Lobster Fishery
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
THESIS: From Unrest to Occupation
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
THESIS: Intra-Annual Fjord Circulation: Seasonal Variation in Fjord Physics and Biology and the Impacts of a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood
Advisor: Brigitte O’Neil
Advisor: Brigitte O’Neil
Advisor: Brigitte O’Neil
THESIS: From Unrest to Occupation
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
Advisor: Teresa Johnson
THESIS: Developing honey bee colony health using radio frequency and radar techniques.
Advisor: Nuri Emanetoglu
Advisor: Nuri Emanetoglu
Advisor: Nuri Emanetoglu
THESIS: Pertaining to the U.S. presidential election mechanism and if they believe it’s an efficient system and if they believe the electoral college system is fair. In the fall of 2017 the Las D’Or Trail was constructed and consists of a trail along a berm and forest, and culminates in an observation deck of the lake. The goal of Trail of the D’Or was to provide an updated examination of the electoral college system and if they believe it’s an efficient system and if they believe the electoral college system is fair. The system and if they believe it’s an efficient system and if they believe the electoral college system is fair.

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Amy T. Wells
David Wight & Sherrie Wight
Daniel B. Williams
David C. Wollstadt
Julie A. Zink
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