



# The Aggregate

The UWM Honors College Newsletter

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Biomedical Science

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## Alternative Spring Break Travels to New Orleans

New Orleans is a city of passion, history, culture, love, and art of all kinds, but it is also a city with staggering need.

In March 2018, fifteen students and two faculty members left for the first ever Honors College Alternative Spring Break, bringing aid to New Orleans thirteen years after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city.

Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider organized the trip with volunteerism as its primary focus, but also as an attempt to show interested Honors students the varying cultures that can be found within their own country.

Professor Schneider proposed the trip in the Fall of 2017 and, by late December, fifteen students had submitted deposits.

Honors College Director Peter Sands agreed to co-lead the trip, and, with financial support from the UWM Foundation, the Spring Break endeavor was confirmed.

New Orleans appealed to Professor Schneider because it is such a vibrant city, and because the communities there still need volunteers to help make life more manageable. "In many ways," he remarks, "New Orleans can feel like a culture different than anything else in the U.S." He points out that traveling abroad isn't the only way to experience different cultures and besides, "it doesn't hurt to go somewhere warm."

And warm it was. During the first day of service, the group volunteered in near ninety-degree heat at an urban garden located in the Lower 9th Ward, one of New Orleans' worst food deserts. The goal of Miss Jeanette's teaching garden is not only to provide the surrounding neighborhood with fresh produce, but to teach the community how to create their own working urban gardens.

Between clearing brush, digging holes, and putting up fenceposts, the students got a chance to look at the neighborhood



Alternative Spring Break trip participants. Photo courtesy of HandsOn New Orleans.

around them. Many of the houses, boarded up or disappeared entirely, gave the area a depressed look.

However, as ASB participant Lena Orwig (JAMS) observed, the attitude of the remaining neighbors didn't seem to be affected. "The area is blighted," she recalls, "but that didn't stop the kids from playing in the street or people from going about their business. It truly is a resilient mindset."

The second and third days of service involved repainting a storage room destined to become the new exercise center of a New Orleans East charter school.

Professor Schneider points out that often the only options for education are charter schools sprinkled throughout the city, and, due to disparities in population, many schools do not have enough students in every grade. Because of this, educational funding is often low, and efforts like that of the service trip help students feel hopeful and cared for in their schools.

Isaac Repinski (Biomedical Engineering), another trip participant, enjoyed helping at the school immensely, saying that "the best part was seeing the final product [of the renovation], and the reactions of the people we helped." The students and faculty on the trip are proud that they could make a visible difference in these New Orleans communities.



## Alternative Spring Break (continued)



Photo courtesy of HandsOn New Orleans.



Honors students Mariah Schaller, Angeli Kramer, and Emma Cowen. Photo courtesy of Lena Orwig.

Beyond volunteering, the Honors group spent their time moving around the city, making sure to experience as much of the rich and diverse culture of New Orleans as they could.

Professor Sands recalls that the group “toured Treme and St. Louis Cemetery #2, marched in a Second Line parade, met Mardi Gras Indians celebrating St. Joseph’s night, ate beignets and gumbo and po’ boys and muffuletta,” which amounted to a “joyous and wonderful” time.

Professors Sands and Schneider express respect and admiration for the trip participants. “We set up a structure for students,” Professor Schneider says, “but the success of the trip was due to their willingness to embrace the city and its culture head on.”

He continues, “the mission and culture of the Honors College at UWM is to challenge students, to encourage them to be uncomfortable, because growth and learning comes from that place. Students embraced

their discomfort and allowed themselves to be open to the challenges of a community that didn’t resemble their own. We could not be more proud of them.”

A balanced combination of volunteerism, education, and pleasure, the Alternative Spring Break service trip was a fantastic success and an amazing learning experience for everyone involved. The Honors College intends to make Alternative Spring Break an annual event, so save the date; the 2019 trip is scheduled for March 16-22.



Photo courtesy of HandsOn New Orleans.

## Director’s Note



Dr. Peter Sands  
Honors College Director

Welcome to *The Aggregate* 1.2!

The spring 2018 issue of our newsletter highlights the service and activism of Honors students who have been volunteering, traveling, and studying in various activist contexts throughout the year.

We are proud of the work our students do, and I’m particularly glad to have been part of our first-ever Alternative Spring Break, in which Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider and I traveled to New Orleans with fifteen students.

We volunteered through a local service organization, HandsOn New Orleans, to clear and fence a community garden on a former residential lot in the Lower Ninth Ward and to clean and paint a fitness room in a charter school in New Orleans East. While there, we learned more about the city on walking tours of the Treme neighborhood and one of the famous cemeteries, by marching in a Central City Second Line pa-

rade, and through otherwise exploring New Orleans.

As with the inaugural issue, we hope that you will enjoy reading about the amazing and varied experiences Honors College students, faculty, and staff have had this year. You will see how our students engage with documentary journalism, food activism, politics, and other ways of being active and thoughtful members of the Milwaukee community.

As always, don’t hesitate to stop by Honors House for a tour of our building, or to meet with advisors and faculty members. We look forward to hearing your thoughts about *The Aggregate*, or just hearing from you!



## Honors College Protests PenzeyMoog Editing Lecture over Missing Space



Kira Church  
Conservation and  
Environmental Science

To many readers, headlines like the one above and sites such as *The Onion* and *The A.V. Club* are mainly for entertainment, but to Deputy Managing Editor and UWM Honors College alum Caitlin PenzeyMoog ('11 JAMS), editing articles for these sites is serious business.

The Honors College, in conjunction with UWM's JAMS Department, hosted Caitlin in March of 2018. Her lecture, "Turdmonger is a closed compound: Editing in pop culture and satire," describes her career as an editor at *The Onion*, *The A.V. Club*, and ClickHole.

These sites approach journalism in creative and unconventional ways. *The Onion*, for example, is satirical journalism, which requires careful editing. "There is a difference between comedy and satire," she said, "Comedy makes you laugh, satire makes you go, what I heard some of you just do now, 'ughh.'"

*The Onion's* goal is to present political and social commentary, while being sensitive to the issues it covers. "If *The Onion* is making a joke at the expense of women or another marginalized group, we have failed," Caitlin shared.

Caitlin reports that editing for ClickHole and *The A.V. Club* is more relaxed because they deal with subject matter differently than *The Onion*. Additionally, *The Onion* takes its lead from newspapers like *The New York Times*, where ClickHole and *The A.V. Club* do not. However, attention to detail remains a key component of her job.



Caitlin PenzeyMoog. Photo courtesy of Lena Orwig.



Caitlin PenzeyMoog (center) and Professors David Southward and Alan Singer. Photo courtesy of Lena Orwig.

ClickHole was created by a group of staff from *The Onion* to "make fun of and emulate BuzzFeed and Now This styles of video," said Caitlin. It follows internet-speak instead of a more formal language system. However, the copy editors must decide how far this freedom can go before the article could be perceived as poorly written.

Style consistency is key to maintaining professionalism within an article as well as within the site. Caitlin discussed a dilemma in which she needed to decide whether the word "Porg" from the *Star Wars* franchise should be capitalized.

After much thoughtful investigation, it was her job to inform the writing staff of her decision and to ensure consistency across the sites. In fact, there is now an official *The A.V. Club's Star Wars* style guide created and maintained by Caitlin.

During her time at UWM, Caitlin studied journalism and media and was the president of the UWM Journalism Club. As a member of the Honors College, the writing-intensive curriculum helped prepare her for her career as a copy editor. She cites Honors College Faculty Members, Alan Singer and David Southward as particularly impactful.

Even though they are considered trivial by some, these sites can have an important cultural impact. To achieve the desired effect, the editing must be perfect; for that, we can thank Honors College alum Caitlin PenzeyMoog.



## Foreign Correspondence



Zakary Sharp  
Computer Science

Following an eleven-hour flight, I arrived at the Stockholm airport, parched. While waiting for my bags, I found an information desk, made sure they spoke English, and asked for a bubbler. From their confused looks, I realized my error.

“Sorry,” I said, “water fountain?”

“Uhhh, we have a sink.”

After that first day at the airport, I have found many eateries with water tanks and disposable cups, and even some water fountains built for filling bottles, but still none designed to reach my mouth.

I continue to adapt to my new environment while studying abroad this semester at Mälardalens Högskola in Västerås, Sweden, an hour by train from Stockholm.

Since arriving, I have begun to notice cultural similarities. For instance, McDonald’s and Subway sit on opposite corners in the city center. The climate is similar too, a shocking fact to some Swedes, who imagine only Arizona’s weather when they think of the United States.

The small differences, however, add up to a larger sense of displacement. Some of them are welcome. Laundry in student housing (and in most apartments) is free; people sign up for a time and leave the laundry room when their time is up.

The queues are also run differently; rarely is there a line when waiting for assistance. Instead, in banks, schools, and federal buildings, waiting for service is coordinated with numbered tickets and displays of which number in the queue is up next.

Acclimating to these small changes has been harder for me because the national language isn’t English, and I didn’t study Swedish before I arrived.

A combination of daily Duolingo and in-the-moment Google Translate helps me shop for groceries and navigate, but it is hard to follow conversation with only half-a-semester of Swedish grammar.

I am fortunate that so many Swedes know enough English to carry on conversations. Still, I need to improve on not tuning out entirely, so I can respond when someone switches to English to involve me.

Lately, I have had some great opportunities to work on that skill. I asked around to find a theater group at my host university, and volunteered to help with the technical aspects of the show.

This has provided me with opportunities to get to know more people from Sweden as well. They have invited me into their world, with evenings in the sauna or watching Melodifestivalen, the Swedish singing competition that decides the country’s Eurovision competitor.

Theater has been a great way to pick up on Swedish phrases and mannerisms, too. Body language is exaggerated on stage, so I can recognize the intent behind the words much easier within the context of the show.

The comedy of the show is often easiest to understand. Slapstick humor is the most obvious, but character archetypes are discernible too. An unexpected over-reaction still draws a laugh and an annoyed look to the audience after a character exits the stage conveys the same thing.

This semester abroad has brought challenges, not the least of which is finding water to drink. I take every challenge as an opportunity to grow, and I will return to Milwaukee with a wider view of the world.



Photo courtesy of Zakary Sharp.



Photo courtesy of Zakary Sharp



Photo courtesy of Zakary Sharp.



Samantha Brusky  
Architecture

## Starting Out: Ruben Rios Herrera

When you think of astrophysicists, you might think of NASA scientists in lab coats, maybe speaking in jargon. However, astrophysics major Ruben (Ben) Rios Herrera is much more down to earth.

Immediately apparent is Ben's tremendous humility and his personable demeanor. And, far from the lab coat cliché, he also plays bass in the heavy metal band, Fimbulvitr. Dynamic people like Ben enter the Honors College each year and make it a rich social and educational environment.

Ben's first impression of being invited to join the Honors College was that he was "quite frankly shocked and honored." Like many newcomers, he was (and still is) excited by the "unique benefits of small class sizes," as well as the "opportunity for some healthy scholarly debate."

Ben's experience of the Honors College surpassed his expectations. As a first-year student, he noticed how his Honors courses were much more "focused on developing the individual on a personal level."

When Ben describes his Honors classes, his words explode with passion and excitement. His first Honors class was Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider's "Contemporary Prophecies." He remembers how exciting it was to be "not only allowed, but also expected, to voice [his] opinions." Ben explains that it was a beautifully balanced, hands-on experience that honed the skills he will need "both academically and professionally."



Photo courtesy of Diana Navarro.

After his first day in an Honors course, Ben "knew he had made the right choice," and that he was well on his way to achieving his goal: to "grow both as an individual and a scholar." His excitement and curiosity encompass the spirit that the Honors College strives to instill in all of its students.

For instance, Ben tells me eagerly all about the "discussion topics regarding implications of evolution on social structure" in Professor Benjamin Campbell's, "The Evolution of Human Nature." By his enthusiasm, I assumed he was enrolled in the course, but he says that he "really hopes to take that class in the future."

When I ask him if he has anything else he wants to share about the Honors College, he tells me earnestly: "Anyone on the fence about whether or not to join the Honors College should do so without hesitation. It is equal parts challenging and rewarding."

## Honors College Writing Awards 2017-18

### Ruback Prize for Distinguished Writing

Samantha Brusky -- "Terrified of Transitions"

### First Place, 200-level

Josy Raheem -- "Between the Cracks: Race, Mourning, and Value in *The Leftovers*"

### Second Place, 200-level

Allison Pahios -- "The Power of an Interview: Looking into Gun Control"

### Runner-Up, 200-level

Salvator P. Gauthier -- "The Life of a Woman: An Analysis of *Snow White*"

Ellen Olszewski -- "Fabricating Happiness"





Rachel Radomski  
English

## #BlackLivesMatter in Dr. Pate's Honors Courses

In his TEDxUWMilwaukee talk, Dr. David Pate, UWM Professor of Social Work, explores the intricacies and consequences of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. While the complete lecture can be found on YouTube, the interactive understanding achieved in his Honors courses is unique to the classroom.

In “#BlackLivesMatter: an Analysis and Critique of the Movement,” Professor Pate and his students define relevant aspects of #BlackLivesMatter such as incarceration, housing, LGBTQIA+, and stratification economics.

At the end of the semester, he asks his students to create an art project as an expression of their class experience. Their projects cover civil matters, from policing of unarmed black men to misconceptions of the movement. The course encourages students not only to synthesize their knowledge, but also to present it in a way that makes it accessible to the public.

His Honors course, “I Am A Man: Construction of Masculinity for Black Males,” examines the effects of societal perspectives on black males and attempts to better understand the role of toxic masculinity.

For that course, Professor Pate is researching black male employment and mental health maintenance, exploring employment challenges that black males face, as well as what preparation strategies actually work.

Professor Pate speaks highly of the Honors College. He believes in the success of the open discussion format, claiming that it has forced him to work for and learn from his students at a greater capacity than in other classes. Regarding students, he ap-

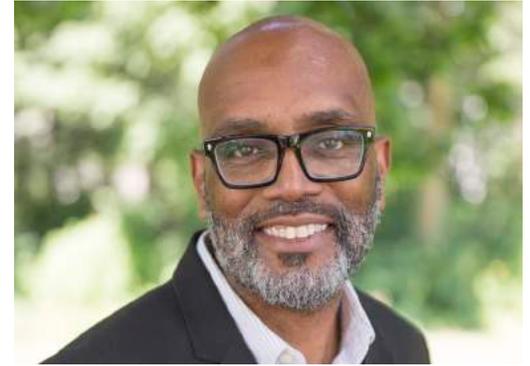


Photo courtesy of Helen Bader School of Social Welfare.

plauds the College's ability to teach important analytical skills.

As an Honors College guest instructor, Professor Pate finds that the collaborative environment encourages authentic situational awareness and understanding. The positive experience of teaching in the Honors College has helped professionally reinvigorate Professor Pate.

On the presence of the #BlackLivesMatter movement in Milwaukee, Professor Pate believes the deaths of unarmed black men in the city have brought together people who are conscious of these issues.

However, the concerns remain unresolved and the city still experiences extreme inequities. Because not enough people and money are dedicated to the movement, Professor Pate says, it is hard to see healing.

The struggles that continue to plague Milwaukee, and U.S. culture in general, underscore the value of the course in the Honors College curriculum. Professor Pate hopes to offer another Honors course soon to further explore the movement and inspire conversation around inequality.



Honors College students Courtney Prince and Quincy Drane presenting at the #BlackLivesMatter Exhibit. Photo courtesy of the Honors College.



Photo courtesy of the Honors College.



Kira Church  
Conservation and Envi-

## Student Activists Form The Flood

Recent political turmoil has sparked feelings of powerlessness around the country. In its wake, many college students want to know what they can do to make their voices heard. Honors College students listened and The Flood was born.

Honors College faculty member Jacqueline Stuhmiller encouraged the two founders of The Flood, Emily Ortega (Biological Sciences) and John McCune (Marketing), to lead other students in action.

What began as a letter writing campaign quickly morphed into a student-run organization, John explains, that took its name from the 2016 Leonardo DiCaprio-produced documentary, *Before the Flood*.

The Flood is a collection of students who meet in the Honors House to discuss current events. At the end of each meeting, the members call local and national lawmakers in an attempt to sway their representatives to support or denounce specific legislation.



Photo courtesy of Lena Orwig.

Additionally, the students have taken trips to Standing Rock, South Dakota and to Flint, Michigan to engage in direct action. Emily says the club is a way “to give students an avenue to be politically active, particularly about things that they are passionate about.”

The Flood doesn’t require any previous experience in politics. In fact, they encourage people who are not already involved in political action to attend a meeting.

For more information, visit [floodit.org](http://floodit.org).

## Students Present at 2nd Monsters Conference

What defines monstrosity? The Honors College Monsters Conference aims to answer just that.

On October 27, 2018, the second annual Monsters Conference was held in the Honors College, with sessions featuring students who presented their undergraduate research on all things monstrous.

The conference is organized by Honors College faculty member Jacqueline Stuhmiller and UWM Professor of Foreign Languages and Literature, Dr. Meghan Murphy-Lee.

Nearly sixty students and faculty heard Honors College students Bailey Flannery (English), Mara Lapp (International Studies), Jessica Nitz (Psychology), and Elizabeth Stolow (Marketing) present their research.

Flannery read her essay, “The Monstrous Mouths of Women,” while Lapp presented “God: The Monster of *Mother!*” Nitz presented “From *Sesame Street* to Sex

and Violence: Children and their Monsters,” and Stolow read her paper, “The Psychological Monstrosity of *Mother!*”

At the time of the conference, all presenters from the Honors College were enrolled in Professor Stuhmiller’s course “Monsters and the Monstrous.” Bailey described the experience as “one of the best moments of [her] college education thus far.”

Next year’s conference is scheduled to take place again in late October.



Kimberly Mayer  
Biology



Lizzy Stolow. Photo courtesy of Kimberly Mayer.



Honors Students Jessie Nitz, Lizzy Stolow, Mara Lapp, and Bailey Flannery. Photo courtesy of Kimberly Mayer.



Quincy Drane  
Architecture

## Moving Forward: Dana Shannon

If you have had the pleasure of meeting Dana Shannon ('17), then you know how driven she is. You also know that she is a friendly person who can brighten your day just by being in her presence. Her hard work and dedication is all done with a “Shannon smile.”

Dana graduated from UWM and the Honors College with a BS in Biochemistry, a minor in Spanish, and with the intention of going to graduate school to study Optometry.

During Dana’s second year at UWM, she realized she wanted to become an optometrist. She fell in love with how passionate many optometrists are about their careers and how the practice ranged from prescribing glasses to managing eye-sight-threatening diseases and conditions, such as glaucoma.

While at UWM, Dana acquired significant experience in the field of eye care: she volunteered as a vision screener for Prevent Blindness Wisconsin, she was an optometric technician for a private practice, and she was an ophthalmic technician for Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Dana had an amazing final year at UWM: she became the president of the Pre-Optometry Club and studied abroad in Spain during her last semester.

In addition to earning her bachelor’s degree, minor, and being a part of the Honors College, Dana played for UWM’s Division I Women’s Tennis team and served on the Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

Currently, Dana is finishing her first-year at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry. This past February, the university held its White Coat Ceremony where Dana proudly received the White Coat that symbolizes her transition from classroom to clinic.

Dana continues her involvement outside the classroom by being an active member of her school’s chapters of the National Optometric Student Association (NOSA) and Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH), conducting Optics research, and playing intramural volleyball and tennis.



Dana Shannon at the White Coat Ceremony. Photo courtesy of Cici Shannon.

Reflecting on her time in the Honors College, Dana enjoyed the theater trips, pizza socials, and get-togethers in the Honors College library. She appreciates the many opportunities the College provided students to relax from their busy schedules, strengthen their connections with acquaintances, and meet other Honors College students.

Beyond the events, Dana valued the knowledgeable professors, their passion for teaching, and their eagerness to help students learn.

One of her favorite experiences was in UWM Professor of Theater Eunice Gabor’s “The Art of Acting.” She recalls, “I was constantly pushed outside my comfort zone. The course was a remarkable experience filled with laughter, screaming, and lip-syncing, as I grew in my understanding of acting.”

Dana attributes her many successes to being a student in the Honors College. The experience allowed her to face her weaknesses and it gave her courage to outwardly express her opinions – something her other courses did not provide as often.

Dana specifically recognizes the Honors College advisors as being vital to her success and a great help in achieving all she hoped to while in college. Both Shannon Byrne Irwin and Aaron Dierks were influential in helping her find her path toward graduation, she says, often reminding her to take a deep breath and relax when life gets hectic.



## Open Mic Night Benefits New Orleans Trip



Kimberly Mayer  
Biology

On February 13, 2018 students and faculty celebrated Mardi Gras with an Open Mic Night. Organized by Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider, the event raised funds for the Honors College service trip to New Orleans.

Isaac Repinski (Biomedical Engineering), Honors College student and participant on the service trip, served as the evening's emcee, introducing a variety of acts from both students and faculty to nearly seventy-five attendees. The performances included poetry readings, short stories, and various musical acts.

Honors College faculty member Lydia Equitz performed several songs and encouraged the crowd to join with her in singing "The Water is Wide," as a musical round. Honors College student Kellyn Lock (English) performed selections from her own short stories. And, in a showcase of their band, Dogbad, Isaac, along with fellow Honors College students Ethan Suhr



Professors Alan Singer and Benjamin Schneider. Photo courtesy of Kimberly Mayer.

(Film) and AJ Beal (Music Education), performed a variety of musical arrangements and improvisations.

The evening concluded with Honors College faculty member Alan Singer and Professor Schneider singing and playing folk songs "The Ballad of Jesse James" and "Atomic Power."

The Open Mic Night was an evening of fun and entertainment and the great turnout ensured a meaningful contribution toward the Honors College service trip.



Professor David Southward. Photo courtesy of Kimberly Mayer.

## LLC Athletes Go for the Gold



Madeline Ninmann  
Architecture

Honors Living Learning Community RA's Ben Bodus (CES/Biology) and Bri Sayeg (Art Education) hosted the 2018 version of the Honors College Olympics.

On the night of the activity, four teams gathered in the Honors House to participate in the Olympics-style competition.

The opening event was to wrap one teammate head-to-toe in two rolls of toilet paper. Once that task was completed, teammates added paper coal eyes and a carrot nose to transform their partner into a snowperson.



The snowperson challenge. Photo courtesy of Lizzy Stolow.

Following that, teams competed to blow a bubble with frozen chewing gum, "luge race" each other across the room while passing a marble along a moving track, untie the knot in a frozen T-shirt, and knock down a pyramid of cups with a sock ball.

Finally, an epic pie-eating challenge finished off the competition as one representative from each team battled fork-to-fork for the sweet glory of winning it all.

This year's winning team, Nut Job 2, won bragging rights as champions of the Honors College Winter Olympics of 2018.



Luge racing. Photo courtesy of Lizzy Stolow.



Rachel Radomski  
English

## Looking Back: Spencer Chumbley

Spencer Chumbley ('09) graduated from UWM and the Honors College as an Economics major with a Certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies. He now works as a journalist and documentary filmmaker for VICE, Al Jazeera, and *The New York Times*.

Although he found himself struggling to stay committed to college, Spencer's experience in the Honors College gave him the tools and courage to continue his education beyond UWM.

Mentored by Honors College faculty member Alan Singer, Spencer found a new perspective on the world around him, and learned writing strategies that he uses today while directing documentaries.

After graduating, Spencer interned for the United Nations Development Program. In 2010, he enrolled at the University of London to study international development. Then, in 2012, he took an internship with global news broadcaster Al Jazeera English.

Regarding his career at this early stage, he says, "I was interested in the world and maybe carrying a camera was the best way to interact with it."

Spencer has spent the past two years in conflict zones such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, and Ukraine as a cinematographer for VICE on HBO. Through his extensive travels, he has realized how media can empower struggling communities both in the U.S. and abroad.

He hopes to provide the subjects of his work with an effective platform for their stories to be heard.

Personally, he believes that working overseas in difficult environments has given him a broader perspective. Spencer says he



Spencer Chumbley on location. Photo courtesy of Spencer Chumbley.

has met "the kindest and most hospitable people in the worst circumstances" and that it is "heartwarming to see the resilience of the human spirit."

Although his job can be physically and emotionally exhausting, Spencer is passionate about the work he does.

He acknowledges that he has experienced more than some people will in a lifetime, and that the problem-solving required for documenting such complicated stories presents a welcome challenge.

As an undergraduate, Spencer was often frustrated with the relevancy of class content to his future career. However, he says, the Honors College taught him that skills for synthesizing information are just as important as real-life experience.

He encourages students to enjoy education for what it is, not for where it fits in to their careers. He says the Honors College experience made him more well-rounded. His education here gave him the "taste of a small liberal arts college" within a larger system.

For a summary of Spencer's work, visit: [www.spencerchumbley.com](http://www.spencerchumbley.com).



## Honors College Players Present: *ART*



Lena Orwig  
JAMS

The Honors College Players put on their second production at the end of the 2017 Fall semester. There were two performances of Yasmina Reza's *Art*, and audiences filled the performance space on both nights. As anticipated, it was a successful follow-up to their inaugural production the previous Spring.

Each semester, Honors College faculty member Jacqueline Stuhmiller works with a student director to select the play. The student then receives Honors credit during the semester of the performance.

Honors College student Karol Nowak (Film), directed the Reza's play, exploring the strength of long-time friendships when tested by questionable decisions. The cast included Honors College students Lily Pickart (Theater), Zak Sharp (Computer Science), and Markia Silverman-Rodriguez (English).

The play looks at how we define art and often distort those definitions. Further, it



Lily Pickart (left) and Zak Sharp. Photo courtesy of Lena Orwig.

investigates how far we are willing to stretch our unconditional love and acceptance in friendships when they hit rocky patches.

The club continues to serve as a way for students to meet outside of class, while also exploring their passions for theatre and art.

A Spring 2018 production of Neil LaBute's *Reasons to Be Pretty* continues the challenging material performed by the club. Directed by Honors student Greg Rowan (Film), we look forward to the Honors College Players' thoughtful and stimulating choices.

## Faculty Stages *God of Carnage*



Haley Kress  
Biomedical Sciences

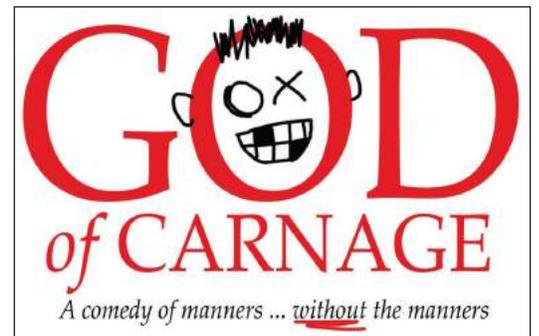
During Fall 2017, the members of the Honors College faculty performed *God of Carnage* (2006), the second of two works by playwright Yasmina Reza that were part of the semester's dramatic offerings.

Honors College faculty members Lindsay Daigle, Daniel Haumschild, Alan Singer, David Southward, and Jacqueline Stuhmiller performed the play as a dramatic reading, with minimal props, to a crowd of nearly one hundred.

"David [Southward] and I discussed performing the play and, when I read it, I immediately liked it," Professor Stuhmiller shares, "I felt that I could both be the character and make fun of her."

For the reading, Professor Stuhmiller played a passionate mother seeking justice for her injured child, and Professor Haumschild assumed the role of an overwhelmed, but well-meaning husband and father.

Professors Daigle and Southward served as foils to the first couple, portraying their characters as a more intense, "proper"



*God of Carnage* playbill logo.

set of parents, while Professor Singer provided stage-direction narration.

Seeing Honors College faculty engaging their dramatic sides outside of the classroom made the read-through exciting and inspiring.

The paired productions of Reza's plays reveal a diversity of talent in the students and faculty, as *God of Carnage* put on display the Honors College's continuing commitment to critical thinking and creative expression.



Kira Church  
Conservation and  
Environmental Science

## Honors College Course Sides with the Seeds

During an average day, how often do you think about seeds? If you are like most people in the United States, the answer is “rarely.”

However, for Dr. Tracey Heatherington, UWM Professor of Anthropology, seeds are very important. Due to seed patents, loss of local knowledge bases, and climate change, seed diversity is in great danger.

Professor Heatherington’s Honors course, “The Social Life of Seeds,” explores the relationship between seeds and humans and how it has changed through the green revolution and the development of the global free market. Furthermore, the course seeks to discover the impacts of these changes on global cultures.

In class, Professor Heatherington challenges her students to save seeds from an heirloom tomato and to grow them into a

tomato plant. This activity teaches the long-lost skill of seed saving and demonstrates the power of seeds as a shared resource.

The students plant their seeds at UWM’s Hoop House, a compost site on campus run through the Office of Sustainability. They use the soil there as a non-synthetic, nutrient rich, and locally produced fertilizer to start the seeds and encourage growth.

This activity and the course work that accompanies it challenges the students to explore the complexities of large-scale, global, industrialized agriculture. Professor Heatherington encourages students to observe how the relationship between seeds and societies has changed and what that means for food security in the future.

At present, the students’ tomatoes continue to grow along with their understanding of the value of conservation.



The students of “The Social Life of Seeds” at the UWM Hoop House. Photo courtesy of Professor Tracy Heatherington.

## 2017-18 Honors College Graduates



\* Honors With Distinction

Amber Linda Rose Allen\*  
Meghann Elizabeth Amee  
Janelle Ellesse Tupas Barcellano  
Nathon Troy Breu  
Ian Cessna  
Gabriella Maria Cisneros \*  
Zoe Colip \*  
Jennifer Connolly  
Dakota Crowell  
Maddy Day  
Nicole Lydia Sunny Dolezal  
Quincy L. Drane  
William G. Edmundson \*  
Phillip Fossell  
Vladislav Friedman \*  
Carter Ginter  
Rebecca Marie Greskoviak  
Jessye Jin Joo Hale \*  
Dayton R. Hamann  
Haley Ann Hardwick  
Teagen Marie Harr \*  
Michael Hayden II  
Melissa L. Hillmer \*  
Reed Hinckley-Barnes  
Patrick Jensen  
Erich Matthew Jones

Molly Kiefer \*  
Elias King \*  
Grace Kisch  
Chelsey Knuth  
Cameron R. Kursel \*  
Emily Susan LaLuzerne  
Kayla Marie Loos  
Amanda Marie MacDonald  
Kaitlin Mader  
Connor Main  
Micaela Martin  
Jenelle Lynn Myers  
Nathan Neerhof \*  
Madeline Jane Ninmann  
Kacee Ochalek  
Rachel Olson  
Grace O’Neill  
Bridget Susan Owen  
Nisrit Pandey  
Kelsey A. Parks  
Reilly Lynne Peterman  
Erin Lindsay Peterson  
Austin Posthuma  
Courtney Danielle Prince  
Nicholas Reetz  
Timothy Edward Rooney

Chyaine Mae Rosenthal  
Dayna M. Samuels  
Erik Nelson Sands  
Caroline Elizabeth Schlosser  
Jared Schmitz  
Susan Marie Scolaro  
Savannah Leigh Shuster  
Ursula Opelia Sicking  
Juan Alaix Sjoberg  
Jenna Sobczak  
Kaitlin Stecklein  
Brennen Steines  
Abby Taylor  
Vivien TenHaken  
Madeline Paige Tetzke \*  
Christine Marie Thompson  
Kali Nicole Timm  
Grace Rosemary Tomasi  
Nicolas C. Umsb  
Hunter Vannieuwenhoven  
Madeline Vogt  
Baylee M. Votava  
Mackenzie Marie Wade \*  
David Widener  
David Caleb Wolfe



## Course Highlights



Jack Austin  
Theater

### “Shockumentary: Truth and Activism in the Exposé”

Each semester, the Honors College offers 200-level seminars designed to engage students as writers and thinkers. One popular course is Honors College faculty member David Southward’s “Shockumentary: Truth and Activism in the Exposé.”

The genesis of the course came from Professor Southward’s reaction to the most recent presidential election. “After the election I felt helpless, and felt like I had to do something in my teaching,” he tells me; “I had been watching a lot of documentaries at the time and was discouraged with the way our mainstream press was approaching the news. I felt so informed by the documentaries and, I thought, ‘Wow, students should be watching these too.’”

The class studies documentaries on many subjects: gun control, sexual assault,

and the sustainability of food and energy markets among them.

Studying documentaries as unvarnished collections of truth is naive and Professor Southward uses their inherent biases as a lesson in vetting information. “We have a fact-checking assignment where students choose a few things presented as facts in a film and do research and discuss sources,” he says.

“I wasn’t political at all when I came to college,” Professor Southward shares, “because I didn’t know anything. After this class, students who have never been political are at least aware of these issues.”

Professor Southward hopes to teach this course for many years, changing out films here and there, while maintaining the important core of investigative research.



Samantha Brusky  
Architecture

### “The Evolution of Human Nature”

In most educational settings, jokes and hot button topics are typically avoided. However, Dr. Ben Campbell, UWM Professor of Anthropology, shows no such restraint in his course, “The Evolution of Human Nature.”

Sitting in on one of the class meetings is like watching a presidential debate. When I ask Honors College student Rachel Radomski (English) about the class atmosphere, she laughs, explaining: “There is never a dull moment in class, discussions are always lively and intense because everyone there wants to be there; I think that shows.”

As a visitor to class, I find myself completely engaged in the complexities of evolution and impressed by the quality of factual knowledge each student shares in discussion.

Professor Campbell structures his class to encourage freedom of discovery by allowing students to find articles to share that

relate to their assigned readings.

I ask Rachel if she feels the class is daunting because the topic of evolution is not simple or straightforward. She immediately replies: “I was afraid, to be honest, of going into a natural science course, but Professor Campbell always makes sure to break things down when we don’t understand them.”

Professor Campbell jokes and students laugh during class, but the energized environment never strays too far from the fascinating topic of evolving human nature.



Photo courtesy of Lena Orwig.



Madeline Ninmann  
Architecture



Photo courtesy of Lena Orwig.

## Familiar Faces

### Dr. Jill Budny

Meet Jill Budny, one of the Honors College's newest members. Jill's position sees her splitting time as the Assistant Director of the Honors College and as an Instructor.

A political theorist by training, Jill enjoys teaching courses about "power, justice, and governance." She taught her first Honors 200 in Spring 2017, entitled "Citizen, Stranger, Statesman, Tyrant," a Greek political philosophy course.

"I love teaching political philosophy because I've found that most students are interested in exploring ideas in productive ways, finding common ground, and building collaborative relationships in order to bring positive change," she says.

Jill received her undergraduate education in English and Philosophy from Marquette University. She then achieved a Master's Degree in Political Science from

Fordham University in New York, and later her PhD in Political Philosophy at Notre Dame University.

Milwaukee born and raised, Jill feels fortunate to be part of UWM because it is an integral part of the community she knows and loves.

When she is not in the Honors College, Jill spends time with her family sledding, skiing, or swimming in the summer. She and her husband are self-proclaimed foodies, who enjoy trying new restaurants and occasionally practicing the fox trot to brush up on their ballroom dancing skills.

Look for Jill's upcoming course, "Judging Politics: U.S. Constitutional Law and Moot Court," in which students will play the roles of attorneys and justices in a semester-long moot court exercise. Welcome, Jill, to the Honors College.

### Laura Blaska



Photo courtesy of the Honors College.

As both Associate Director and Enrollment Coordinator for the Honors College, Laura Blaska can really do it all. She feels that the Honors College is a fantastic fit for her, the "hidden gem" at UWM that everyone should know about.

Laura became the Associate Director after Robin Ruback's retirement in the Spring of 2017.

"Robin was an incredible mentor, boss, and friend," she says, "I hope to be able to live up to her legacy."

Laura's previous academic experience includes Admissions Counselor for the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, and later, high school counselor for Stevens Point High School.

Her first position in the Honors College was half advising and half recruitment, the perfect hybrid of her interests and skills.

Laura is dedicated to helping students realize their potential. Part of her job is to attend college fairs and high schools, in

Wisconsin and neighboring states, to promote the importance of higher education and to inform people of what UWM's Honors College has to offer.

Through this work, Laura demonstrates her care for students, even before they decide to join the Honors College.

Laura loves being the Associate Director, because she feels it is a great opportunity for her to help students, which is what she loved so much about advising.

In her current position, Laura essentially maintains the inner workings of the Honors College, doing behind the scenes work, such as holding senior exit interviews and planning the annual commencement ceremony.

Though she is a Wisconsin native, Laura hates the cold, and enjoys traveling someplace warm once or twice a year. Fortunately for us, her love for the Honors College and its students always bring her back to UWM.

**The Aggregate:**

Jack Austin  
Samantha Brusky  
Kira Church  
Quincy Drane  
Haley Kress  
Kimberly Mayer  
Madeline Ninmann  
Lena Orwig  
Rachel Radomski  
Zakary Sharp

## The Aggregate's Voice

The Honors College has an outstanding tradition of teaching and encouraging students to be active in their political environments. Many Honors courses and activities address the idea of activism itself, while others delve into more specific areas. This issue of *The Aggregate* celebrates the Honors College's social conscience and community engagement.

We look at Professor Southward's course, "Shockumentary: Truth and Activism in the Expose," which introduces students to contemporary cultural issues through documentaries and discussion.

Two other articles highlight specific looks at contemporary issues: Professor Heatherington's "The Social Life of Seeds" addresses food security and global agriculture and Professor Pate's #BlackLivesMatters courses investigate the movement and its social ramifications.

We examine student-led, Honors College-sponsored activities that take place outside the classroom by visiting The Flood, a group actively engaged in current affairs.

Activism continues beyond college for Honors students as well. This issue's "Looking Back" features Spencer Chum-

bley, an example of an Honors College graduate who now works as a journalist and documentary filmmaker.

Finally, we are proud of our peers who participated in the self-funded Honors College service trip to New Orleans. The lead feature of this issue describes an alternative to Spring Break that tapped into the social consciousness and the enthusiasm of many of the Honors College's young activists.

Through coursework, careers, and community service, the Honors College impact reaches across many borders. We are honored to focus this issue on these important and diverse components of our education.

*The Aggregate*



Front: Haley Kress, Samantha Brusky, Rachel Radomski. Back: Kira Church, Kimberly Mayer, Quincy Drane, Maddie Ninmann, Lena Orwig. Photo courtesy of Ben Schneider. (Not pictured: Jack Austin and Zakary Sharp)

## Honors College Calendar

**2018**

May 12	Spring Honors Graduation
May 20	Spring UWM Graduation
August 31	Convocation
September 4	First Day of Classes
December 17	Fall UWM Graduation

**2019**

January 22	First Day of Classes
March 5	Mardi Gras Open Mic Night
March 16-22	Alternative Spring Break to New Orleans
May 11	Spring Honors Graduation
May 19	Spring UWM Graduation
Summer	Honors College Study Abroad to England