

WITH HONORS

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Honors Celebrates 40 Years of FHP with Challenge Gift, Gala

Save the date!

FHP 40th Gala, Sept. 28

Make plans now to attend the Honors FHP Gala, celebrating 40 years of the First-Year Honors Program. From its “experimental basis” in 1973, the FHP has grown in size and stature to become a signature element of the Honors experience. We’ll celebrate with dinner and music, as well as photos, memories, and lots of conversation, on Saturday, September 28. Be on the lookout for more details later this summer.

Were you an FHP Guinea Pig? If so, please contact Connie Howard ('77, Journalism) at connie_howard@yahoo.com.

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At this spring’s Advisory Board meeting, Honors staff and board members heard from faculty and students, and brainstormed ways to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the First-Year (previously Freshman) Honors Program. After the day’s program, board chair Mark Law ('81, Computer Engineering) and his wife Alison announced they had pledged a very generous gift of \$75,000 to begin an Honors Program endowment.

Board members were challenged to match this gift, and in turn would like to challenge the alumni to an equal match to these, for a \$300,000 endowment. This endowment will help support Honors student research, personal and professional development, and community life through capital improvements in the Jischke Honors Building.

A highlight of the meeting, held on Friday of VEISHEA week, was a student panel sharing thoughts about how the Honors experience helps to develop mental persistence and creative thinking, or “habits of mind.” Panel members ranged from senior English major Kelly Sebetka, who this summer is completing a record seventh study abroad experience, to Cody Hancock, first-year in Chemical Engineering, who was midway through both a first-year research experience and training to be a sophomore leader.

The students agreed that hands-on learning and working closely with faculty are central to the Honors experience. In particular, they emphasized the importance of community and building friendships among Honors students. All had participated in the First-Year Honors Program (FHP).

Among the board members attending, Carol Brumwell ('77, Math) and Gregor Dougal ('78, Physics) found the students’ stories happily familiar. Like other members of the experimental or “Guinea Pig” entering classes of 1973 and '74, Carol and Gregor were the first to experience, via FHP, the camaraderie and enriched learning environment of Honors from their first days on campus.

Despite the enormous growth of the program – from 70 in 1973 to a projected 450 in Fall 2013 – the model has remained stable, with English and an orientation seminar providing the program’s academic core. The strengths of the first-year experience have also remained the same over time: students cherish meeting and making friends with peers, going on the mid-semester retreat, finding out about opportunities to enhance their learning, and getting to know the university in-depth and first-hand.

Since those “Guinea Pig” days, the FHP at Iowa State has become a model for other colleges and universities. Honors Administrative Director Laurie Smith Law remarked, “The FHP put Iowa State on the map, as a leader in Honors nationwide. Our leadership in this area is really something to be proud of.”

To celebrate a remarkable 40 years of the FHP, the board plans to celebrate this milestone anniversary with a gala dinner in September (see details at left). All ISU alumni who were members of FHP are invited to celebrate, to tour Jischke (and reminisce about Osborn – or Pearson!), and to enjoy the beauty of campus in the early fall.

Home Again in Honors



Emily Wilcox

There's been a lot of student chatter and lots of student visitors in the Honors Program offices this year. That's because Emily Wilcox, the new assistant director of the First-Year Honors Program, has brought her own brand of energy to the office. She also regularly brings her unique cupcakes and other treats, which tend to attract students and staff alike!

Emily graduated from Iowa State in 2004 with a degree in English. Though she did not graduate in Honors, Emily was involved in the program as a First-Year Honors program student, leader, and Undergraduate Assistant. Emily received a Master's in Higher Education Administration from Iowa State in 2006, and during her graduate program did assistantships with the Office of Admissions' High Ability Recruitment Office and the Program for Women in Science and Engineering. Before her return to Iowa State, Emily worked at Kansas State University for six years as a part of the Women in Engineering and Science Program and the College of Engineering there. She also coordinated the MAPS Summer Bridge program for incoming multicultural students in agriculture, business, and engineering.

"I was interested in the FHP Assistant Director position because Honors is where my passion for student affairs began. I remember being completely passionate about Honors education when I was in my master's program – I was the only one who was completely nuts about working with our specific student population," says Emily. "Returning to ISU and working in Honors had always been a dream of mine, and I'm excited to work with such great students; I've really enjoyed my first year. Honors is a home for me, and the past year has been a great mix of old and new."

More Honors Alums Find Careers on Campus

Last time, *With Honors* profiled some ISU faculty who had been undergraduates in the Honors Program; many others also call campus home. Like so many Honors alums, the on-campus alumni remember relationships and the sense of community that characterize the Honors Program – the FHP retreat, Honors 121, and working with professors.

One alumna who "stayed home" is Lisa Nunamaker Orgler ('92, Landscape Architecture), a Lecturer in Horticulture and former assistant director of planning and programs at Reiman Gardens. In addition to her work on campus, she runs a design business and "Lunch Box Project," a blog that explores cooking, food, and garden design (see www.lisaorglerdesign.com). Lisa sees strong connections between her Honors education and her work as a landscape architect and educator. "I learned how important it was to feel part of a community," she says. Honors also taught Lisa about teamwork and open-mindedness. "The Honors Program always approached education in an innovative way and this has continued to stick with me," she says.

Anne Oldham ('95, Dietetics), an academic adviser in Food Science and Human Nutrition, works closely with students who pursue food science, nutrition, and dietetics careers. Additionally, she serves as director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics, the state's only accredited dietetics undergraduate program, and coordinates a learning community for first-year students interested in food and nutrition careers. Anne remembers spending many hours in the food science labs in MacKay and interacting with faculty mentors while working on her Honors project. She also recalls the value of learning about new topics through the Honors seminars and getting to know others who were interested in new challenges and learning opportunities. Anne currently works with Iowa State faculty/staff under a federal grant which will prepare multicultural students for careers in the global food system. She looks forward to advising new students in the program and coordinating educational experiences.

Kristin Doerder ('04, Accounting) is a Program Coordinator in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Kristin works with students and faculty in areas ranging from computer support to student conference travel to study abroad. (Working in Catt Hall (Old Botany), she can boast of the shortest trip to Jischke of any member of the Honors Alumni Board.) Participation in Honors "really helped prepare me for my career," she says, especially since Honors allowed her "to learn with a great group of peers and explore opportunities outside my major." Having been surrounded by successful students is "highly advantageous" in her job, which requires accuracy, attention to detail, and interaction with hundreds of faculty, staff, and students across campus. Kristin's favorite part of Honors was the opportunity for one-on-one interaction with ISU faculty. She especially appreciated the opportunity to work with her Honors adviser, Gregory Welk, Professor of Kinesiology. "He really gave me a greater understanding of and appreciation for the research being conducted on campus."

Honors Alumni Do Grape Things

New graduate Kirsten Johanson probably won't develop a career on her Honors project, a business plan for an Iowa winery. The triple major in Business Management, Agricultural Business, and Economics will enroll in the University of Minnesota's law school this fall. She'd have lots of company, though, if she decided to pursue oenology, or the study of wine and wine-making. Several Honors alumni do just that – even in conjunction with a legal career.

Among the most prominent of Honors winemakers is Trent Preszler ('98, Interdisciplinary Studies), Chief Executive Officer of Bedell Cellars on Long Island. Trent joined Bedell after doing a master's thesis at Cornell on the marketing of New York wines, but his journey began on a cattle ranch in South Dakota, where he attended a one-room schoolhouse for part of his education. Honors was a key step on his path because it "didn't set limits or boundaries – it only encouraged exploration and empowerment. In a way Honors set off a whole series of reactions that led to where I am today." Among the things Trent values about his Honors education is the sense that "anything is possible. I arrived at ISU not knowing anything at all but I remember being completely enamored with the range of courses I could choose from and the intimate Honors peer network. For the first time in my life I met people who I believed I had something in common with and it gave me confidence to pursue my dreams."

Last year Trent shared the dream of working at Bedell with another Honors alumnus, Nate Looker ('12, Global Resource Systems and Agronomy), who made a temporary foray into viticulture before heading to Bozeman, MT for graduate study in ecology. Nate worked there in 2012 as a harvest intern, doing everything from grape picking to bottling. Interested in how winemakers relate to both the physical environment and the traditions of winemaking, Nate created maps and an interactive tour of Bedell's vineyards (see www.bedellcellars.com/vineyards.php).

Nate values the research that he did in Honors which directly relates to his new area of study, forest ecohydrology in Montana, but he has many interests and skills that were honed by his Honors experiences. "More than once, I've found myself referring to the Honors seminar on the intersection of music and architecture," he says. "The most persistent reminders of Honors happen in conversations outside my field."

You can find Honors viticulturalists in the midwest as well as on the East Coast. Seth Miller ('01, Finance and Management) is part of Iowa's fast-growing wine industry. Intrigued by the business since the days of family vacations in California, Seth became even more interested when studying abroad, tasting wines along the way. Seth and his father – also a world traveler, as well as a farmer in southeast Iowa – planted a few acres, then a few more, of grape vines on the family farm. Their business, Cedar Valley Winery in Batavia, IA, has been producing 2500 gallons annually since 2009 (see www.cedarvalleywine.com).

Seth sees his time in Honors as preparing him for a varied career by fostering "an ability to network and seek out resources" to expand his learning. He recalls meeting "the best and brightest students and teachers," including one-on-one interactions with other Honors students in his small section and working with August Ralston, former professor of Finance and Management, on his Honors project. Now working in two fields, Seth finds it "a challenge to balance the demands of the practice of law and winemaking, but I find both activities to be extremely enjoyable and rewarding."

Chuck Kroemer ('88, Computer Science/Math) of Marion, IA, has spent more than 20 years in the field of computer software, but he is also an inventor and entrepreneur – and a connoisseur of wines. He prefers to enjoy wine from a real wineglass rather than a picnic cup, which prompted him to invent the Vinaport™. One end of this glass-holder attaches to lawn furniture or deck chairs, and a circular indentation at the other end allows wine drinkers to set their glasses securely upright. Chuck has filed a patent on his invention, which he hopes to market nationally (see www.vinaport.com).

Where has Honors taken you? Tell us in the Family Book

Please keep in touch with us via the Honors Family Book. This annual compilation of news, notes, life events and accomplishments of Honors alumni is now available online to all at www.honors.iastate.edu/alumni/alumniNewsletter.php. To post information look in the left column under Alumni. If you have questions please contact Linda Young at lindakay@iastate.edu.



All Smiles

Sarah Fischer ('02, Political Science and English), left, and Jessica Wonderlich ('04, Nutritional Science) relaxed this spring at the 88th running of the Virginia Gold Cup, a traditional steeplechase race in Fauquier County, Virginia. Sarah and Jessica have been the driving force behind much of the recent activity of the ISU Alumni Association's DC chapter. The pair even hosted a "VEISHEA East" picnic on VEISHEA Saturday, April 20. Sarah and Jessica currently live in Washington, DC and Bethesda, MD, respectively.

News from Jischke

- **FHP Increases as Honors Grows Along with ISU** The Jischke Honors Building will be full again this fall as enrollment in the First-Year Honors Program is likely to match an all-time high. As of early June, the number of projected FHP participants nearly equaled the mark of 450 set in 2011. The university at large is also growing, with enrollment of new undergraduates estimated to be at just over 8000, including transfers. The total on-campus population is expected to pass last year's record of just over 31,000.
- **Engineering Adopts New Honors System** Honors alumni in the College of Engineering may remember the "point system" in which they had to earn a minimum of 10 points in their program of study. Now a simpler system is expected to increase the number of students completing Honors work in Engineering. For each of three areas, academic depth, academic breadth, and community and personal development, students choose one "intense" expression or activity, or two "moderate" ones. A minor or second major in a non-engineering field, for example, would be an intense expression of academic breadth; a moderate expression could be an Honors project in a topic unrelated to engineering or basic science. In addition, students take an Honors seminar each year.
- **All of a Twitter** Honors has ventured into the world of Twitter. Already on Facebook (as "Iowa State Honors Program") and with a student blog at <http://honorslife.wordpress.com>, we now can report on Honors life in 140-character tweets. Honors graduate assistant Meghan Blancas is our guide to the "Twitterverse." You can "follow" Honors on Twitter.com by searching for "Iowa State Honors" or @ISUHonors.
- **Formal Convocation Ends Seniors' Year** Martha Pope, former Assistant Events Coordinator for the World Food Prize Foundation, was the keynote speaker at the Honors Senior Convocation on May 2, immediately following the Spring Honors Poster Session in the Memorial Union. A 2003 Honors graduate in Political Science and International Studies, Martha was a Peace Corps Volunteer after graduation and is now Operations Manager for Iowa Resource for International Service (IRIS). Haley Streff ('13, Biology) was emcee for the ceremony.



Haley Streff

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