Provenance is a student produced publication of the Pierre Laclede Honors College. Its goal is to help keep alumni and friends connected with the college, current students, and each other. Our Fall 2016 writers and designers:

- Samantha Kolar, BA English, class of 2016
- Mary Hoffmann, BSBA Marketing, class of 2016
- Nicole Gevers, Civil Engineering major, class of 2019
- Ashleah White, English major, class of 2019
- Alex Yentumi, Civil Engineering major, class of 2018

Are you a student interested in contributing to Provenance on a volunteer basis or for independent study credit in spring? Are you an alum interested in being profiled in a future issue? Contact Dan Gerth for more information.

FOLLOW THE HONORS COLLEGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

The Honors College

Facebook: Pierre Laclede Honors College at UMSL
Twitter: @UMSLHonors

PLHCSA

Facebook: Pierre Laclede Honors College Student Association
Twitter: @umslplhcsa

Brain Stew

Twitter: @UMSLBrainStew
A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Dear alumni and friends,

The new school year is upon us, and it brings me great joy to welcome 163 new incoming students to the Honors College this semester and to welcome alumni, faculty, friends, returning students, and incoming students to the new issue of Provenance. Thank you for being a part of the Honors family.

First, some updates. Our new class of students is outstanding. Besides being sizable in number, they are sizable in significance. For example, they represent an average high school class rank in the 90th percentile, which is our highest average class rank ever. Our outgoing class of graduates was similarly impressive. Over the course of fall and spring, we graduated nearly as many students as we brought in, and these students are now in law school, medical school, prestigious graduate programs, and at work for local companies. We have been collecting some of their stories and would love if you would visit our webpage to check them out. And of course, our returning students are busy accomplishing great things as well. UMSL’s Student Government Association, for example, will have leadership provided by Honors students again this year: President Kathryn Loucks and Vice-President Briana Robertson. I look forward to updating you on the accomplishments of many current students in our spring issue, and I hope you enjoy reading in this issue about some of the many awards they won last year.

Along with celebrations of award winning students, spotlights on notable alumni, and an interesting glimpse into the history of our home, Provincial House, this issue of Provenance also has something particularly important to me: a retrospective on Brain Stew, our student newsletter, which completed its 25th year of publication last spring. I have been faculty advisor for the publication since fall 2006, and it has always been one of the best parts of my job. This forum for creativity and free expression is an important part of our intellectual climate, even when (or maybe especially when) it is dedicated to absurdity and good natured mayhem. The student editors help guarantee that Brain Stew represents the Honors College spirit as well as anything we do. I am very happy to invite everyone with fond memories of Brain Stew to attend the anniversary party this November. Keep reading for more details.

I hope this issue finds you well. Please consider contacting us and letting us know how you are and what you’re up to. I hope to see you at the Brain Stew anniversary party on November 12, our annual trivia night on March 4, or another time very soon.

Sincerely,

Dan Gerth
Interim Dean
Pierre Laclede Honors College
Honors students continue to be some of the most active students on campus, providing important leadership not just in classrooms but in social, service, academic, and other organizations as well. Many Honors students were recognized for their leadership and achievement in the 2015-2016 school year.

**Student Life Leadership Awards**

*Outstanding Contribution to Leadership Programming* – Briana Robertson  
*Newman Civic Fellow* – Dan Mueller  
*Best Sustained Program* – Undergraduate Research Symposium (Golden Key International Honour Society)  
*Student Leader of the Year* – Eric’el Johnson  
*Student Advocate Award* – Kaitlin Henning  
*Rising Student Leader of the Year* – Thomas Poon, PLHCSA Freshman Representative  
*Outstanding Service to the Community* – Kaitlin Henning

**Student Government Association**

*Senator of the Year* – Aaron Kravish

**New Student Program Awards**

*New Student Shining Star* – Madison Bick  
*First Year Experience Mentor of the Year* – Austin Culbertson

**Undergraduate Research Symposium**

*Life Sciences 1st place* – Gabrielle Rupp, "Reverse Genetics Reveal that Peroxisomal Fatty Acid Oxidation Enzymes Have Varying Effects on the Indole-3-Acetic Acid to Indole-3-Butyric Acid Conversion"  
*Physical Sciences 1st place* – Victoria Rogers (PLHC), Benjamin Colvin, Lisa Gouwens, "Characterization and Application of an Alzhei-mer's-Selective Antibody"  
*Social Sciences 1st Place* – Noreen Heyari, Tiffany Ramirez Wedding, Courtney Doris (PLHC), Erin Sullivan, "Ignorance is Bliss?: Lower-Gender Stigma Consciousness as a Protective Factor for Women in STEM"

**English Department's Undergraduate Essay Award in Writing Studies**

Hung Nguyen, "...So Kill the Lie?": A Comparative Analysis of Tayeb Salih’s *Season of Migration to the North* and Nadine Gordimer’s *Pickup*

**Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges**

Michael Mason, Kaylyn Bauer, Rachel Matthes, Cameron Roark, Kurti Surti, Katherine Bennett, Rebekah Cripe, Chandler Duchaine, Sean Fieser, Michelle Gleich, Eric’el Johnson, Lingru Kong, Jerrod Jaskot, John-Mark Scott, Paul Winter, Kourtney McKinney, Lyndsey McKinney, Lindsay Meyer

**UMSL Women’s Trailblazer Award**

Eric’el Johnson

Congratulations also go to our outstanding Honors faculty who were recognized with teaching and advising awards in 2015-2016.

**2016 Legendary Triton**

Jill Delston, assistant teaching professor-philosophy, instructor for Honors 3010: International Business Ethics and Honors 3010: Medicine, Values, and Society

**Faculty Advisor of the Year**

Ann Torrusio, assistant teaching professor, advisor for the Pierre Laclede Honors College Student Association

**Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award (UMSL)**

Geri Friedline, associate teaching professor
HONORS STUDENT RECOGNIZED WITH NEWMAN CIVIC FELLOWS AWARD

By Mary Hoffmann

Since 2012, four Honors College Students have been recognized with the Newman Civic Fellows Award. This award, which honors the late Frank Newman, recognizes students across the country who are active in their campus communities through civic engagement. These awards are presented by Campus Compact, a national coalition of 1,100 colleges and universities who commit themselves to involvement in their communities. Campus Compact provides campuses with the opportunity to help students develop partnerships within their community through volunteering.

Frank Newman founded Campus Compact in 1985 with university presidents from Brown, Georgetown, and Stanford. Newman advocated for service-learning in higher education. Each year, Newman Civic Fellows are selected from universities across the country. Presidents and chancellors of Campus Compact members are encouraged to nominate undergraduate and graduate students who are not only making significant contributions to civic partnerships in the community, but who also display leadership qualities. According to Patricia Zahn, UMSL’s Newman Civic Fellows coordinator, “priority recognition is for student leaders who go beyond direct service to seek long-term solutions for social issues, inspire and engage other, and demonstrate the motivation and potential for effective and long-term civic engagement.”

UMSL began participating in 2012, and since then, four out of the five honorees have been Honors College students. Patricia Zahn, who advises Chancellor Tom George on potential nominees, says that “the Newman Civic Fellows Award provides us with the opportunity to recognize and honor the outstanding efforts of a community engaged student.” Honors College awardees include Brandi Grieshaber (2012), Bailey Bollinger (2013), Elizabeth Fitzpatrick (2015), and Daniel Mueller (2016). Daniel Mueller, UMSL’s most recent honoree, is involved in the Pierre Laclede Honors College Student Association as the service chair where he raised donations and awareness in 2015-16 for the animal shelter Stray Rescue of St. Louis. Mueller was re-elected as service chair for PLHCSA for 2016-2017, and he is also involved in his fraternity’s service program. As a member of Sigma Pi Fraternity’s Altruistic Campaign Experience (ACE) Project, Daniel works on a service program each year that meets the needs of UMSL’s campus. Patricia Zahn says, “it is not surprising that most of our honorees to date have come from the Honors College as these students are known to strive for the best and are committed to learning and making a difference.” Daniel is no exception, using his experience as an Honors College student and leader to encourage his peers to become active in community projects.★

Follow this link for more information about the Newman Civic Fellows Award and to see profiles of UMSL honorees.
Popular for its irreverent humor, rebellious nature, and range of genres and articles, *Brain Stew* is well-known around the Honors College campus as an outlet for and endorser of student creativity and free expression. While the publication may not necessarily provide students with hard-hitting news or reliable journalism, it is an opportunity for its student editors and contributors to share opinion pieces, fiction, poetry, horoscopes, music reviews, artwork, and jokes (often directed toward faculty and administrators) on a regular basis. It is often touted as one of the students' favorite activities at the Honors College, and it attracts much attention as a humorous and Honors-specific publication. *Brain Stew* wrapped up its twenty-fifth year of publication last May and new editors Zach Lee, Meagan Burwell, and Nicole Gevers are hard at work on year twenty-six right now. An official anniversary party is scheduled for November of this year.

*Brain Stew* was founded by student editors Thompson Knox and Dennis Hall in the fall semester of 1991. The Honors College was, of course, much smaller in its formative years, and less than 50 students were enrolled at the time Knox and Hall arrived. According to the founding editors, the Honors atmosphere as students know it today had not yet been established; they describe it as “a super-elite, ivy-league type thing. And we didn’t get the memo.” Knox and Hall noticed that there was “this fantastic opportunity to see all sorts of different nerds and introverts and really smart, if normal, people all mixed into this stew of the Honors College. You can’t be ivy-league serious with these people. We can get [together with] all these other weird people and help them not feel weird.” They made it their goal to establish a conversational, inclusive, and comfortable atmosphere. “We wanted the Honors College to be
Fred Fausz, the first ever dean of the Honors College, agrees: "Knowing Thompson and Dennis, I’m sure they thought it was a stuffy place. And they were the type of guys who could offer an immediate antidote."

Knox and Hall, who describe themselves as "restless creative types (who have now sold their souls to corporate America)," started working on Brain Stew in Knox's basement, sometimes staying up until the early hours of the morning to finish putting each biweekly issue together, using new technologies like a photo scanner and Photoshop. Other students and faculty began to take an interest, and soon Brain Stew gained a following and a culture: "We started involving others, asking is this funny, is this not funny; Brain Stew groupies wanted to stay at my house to hang out and watch us make Brain Stew and contribute," Knox recalls. Hall and Knox were able to convince Dean Fausz to buy a Macintosh for the office because "eventually, my parents said no more to seven people staying over at their house until 3 a.m." This following would later grow to become the Honors tradition. Knox says that "things didn’t have to be one or the other; you could have learning where, in the classroom, things are really serious but entertaining, but out of the classroom, everybody [was] hanging out and friendly and comfortable. Once you got people comfortable, there was a lot more interaction." Brain Stew started a conversation among students and faculty, a dynamic that is crucial to the success of the seminar-style classes and the camaraderie of the students outside of the classroom. Dean Fausz says, "I’ve always liked mixing the social with the intellectual. In an environment like that, what keeps the students interested and motivated and coming back? Probably the social. [Brain Stew aided in] a sense of camaraderie and common purpose."

The content that Knox and Hall featured in the publication is similar to what students would be familiar with today: hand-drawn covers (often mocking faculty members, particularly Dean Fausz), word searches, unrestricted opinion pieces, and inside jokes between the editors and other students. The original logo came from a box of scalloped potatoes (the first thing they scanned on their new scanner), over which a photo of a brain was Photoshopped. (This logo would be briefly replaced by a mascot named Brain Stewart, a dapper rabbit dressed in a monocle and top hat, in 2008, only to be abandoned shortly after.) Knox and Hall chose the name of the newsletter based on a home remedy for hangovers; a Greek international student that was enrolled at the same time as Knox and Hall described a traditional soup made from sheep’s brains that would supposedly prevent some of the ill consequences of drinking. They decided that this would be a good name for the eclectic and witty nature of the pieces, though they thought “it should be thicker—you should be able to eat it with a fork.” This became the tagline of the first issue. Former dean Bob Bliss calls it “a brilliant name.”

Though Knox and Hall deny that Brain Stew is or has ever been subversive per se, their intention was to create something that was anti-establishment: “It was the accidental
‘subversive’ kingdom of the blind,” as Hall describes it. Though the publication was 100% student-run in the beginning, it did receive immediate approval from faculty member Dennis Bohnenkamp, who would later become associate dean, as well as from Dean Fausz. Bohnenkamp was “a bit of a miscreant himself,” according to Knox and Hall; they frequently referred to him in the publication as “The Lord of Misrule,” attributing irreverent and ominous quotes to the then-professor. Both Fausz and Bohnenkamp immediately recognized the potential of the publication and its possible role in cultivating an atmosphere of creativity and freedom, though this often tread dangerous ground. Knox and Hall recall being reprimanded for publishing a recipe for Molotov cocktails (in Spanish) from The Anarchist Cookbook, which was one of several controversial incidents that occurred during Brain Stew’s 25 years. In the early 2000s, a Missouri politician adamantly requested that the publication be shut down. According to Dean Bliss, who has much experience with issues of the free press and responsible publishing, the quality of this kind of publication should be maintained at a high level, but a “university should be a place where there is a maximum amount of freedom” for student creativity, and “that’s what it contributes most to the Honors College: a place of free expression.” More than two decades later and Brain Stew still retains its rebellious and uncensored spirit.

In addition to Brain Stew, Knox and Hall developed many other student-run and community-oriented Honors events and traditions. According to them, the Pierre Laclede Honors College Student Association was active, but the events that it organized were not seen as particularly social by the other students. Knox and Hall established a Haunting of Tilles Park event; Happy Tapes, which were mixtapes that compiled happy songs that weren’t about love and relationships for distribution to (single) students; and Casino Night, which still occurs as an annual PLHCSA event. Knox and Hall claim that their immediate goal upon arrival to the Honors College was to “actively get people out of their shells. And we [were] just crazy enough to get everybody to participate.” These kinds of programs and events were very innovative for the newly-established Honors College. Dean Fausz says “the first year, we won organization of the year award, and we didn’t look back for four more years.” He thinks these kinds of student-organized social and community events are important because “students are doing their own activities, their own curriculum, their own traditions.”

Hall and Knox were not happy to leave the Honors College in the spring of 1995 and 1996, respectively; Knox explained that “my biggest regret was that once I left, I wasn’t involved anymore,” but the founding editors left Brain Stew in the hands of a group of incoming freshmen, who Knox and Hall say loved the culture surrounding Brain Stew and planned to carry it forward. Knox didn’t feel “fully baked” after four years in the Honors College, so he stayed behind after Dennis left and “kept on accumulating minors.” Based on his work in Brain Stew he “sold out” to The Current and helped them win multiple state journalism awards, finally graduating after, according to him, the chancellor “finally couldn’t stomach his offensive political cartoons any longer.” He used his
Honors College network to find a web creation job at a local ISP, “despite having never built anything on the web before.” After working for multiple companies around St. Louis, he eventually landed at a local digital agency, SteadyRain, where he still works today. He currently lives in south county says “greetings” when he answers his iPhone and spends way too much time searching for “the finest velvet paintings ever painted.”

Hall has since received his MBA from Thunderbird Graduate School of International Management and, “after a series of amazing coincidences and peripatetic wanderings,” was hired at Deloitte Consulting, where he focuses on public sector, international development clients like USAID, the World Bank, and “other agencies of our global Overlords.” He lives near Washington, D.C., with his wife and daughter while he “continues to work out what he really wants to be when he grows up.”

Decades later, both of the founding editors remember their time with Brain Stew and the Honors College very fondly: “There was no end to the hijinx we got into.”

Brain Stew has survived for over 25 years since it was first established by Knox and Hall, and it has since become an Honors institution. For many years the editors were elected members of the PLHCSA executive board, and officially advised by Dennis Bohnenkamp. After Bohnenkamp passed away in May 2006, Dan Gerth, faculty member and later interim dean, became both PLHCSA and Brain Stew’s advisor. At the time that Gerth became the faculty advisor, he says that Brain Stew was not in the best state: “Dennis [Bohnenkamp] had just passed away, and I didn’t really know what I was doing.” Gerth says he was not aware of the history of Brain Stew at the time he was appointed, and he did not understand how to help the editors. Shortly after he began his work as faculty advisor, the publication was only coming out once or twice per semester. “Ryan Gamel [editor] and I basically began a massive publicity blitz that really got the word out, and at the first ‘relaunch’ meeting we had a lot of interested people.”

More specifically, in late 2007 and early 2008, Gerth and Gamel began holding recruitment meetings, sending out invitations to submit, and generally cultivating enough interest to put together a number of “comeback” issues in the spring of 2008. By the start of the next year, there was “enough content coming in for seven issue per semester and things have kept progressing since then – the last issue of spring 2016 was over thirty pages long!”

Eventually, students became interested enough in Brain Stew to become full-time editors without being elected by PLHCSA; this marked the shift from a PLHCSA-run publication to one run by
student volunteers, which promised more committed student editors. During the 2008-09 school year, the editor position became a credited, independent study opportunity. "Philosophically, this enterprise is definitely a college-level intellectual learning experience, deserving of the recognition that comes with course credits," Gerth says. "The workload is intense—students have to deal with hundreds of pages per year, plus they create an enormous amount of content. I think it’s really fun, and I think that it’s a substantial time and work commitment.”

As Brain Stew and the Honors College evolved to be much larger and more “establishment” over the years, it has nevertheless upheld the same irreverent, underground, and even wacky standards that were set forth by Knox and Hall. Most successive editors and contributors have noted that they became interested in contributing to the publication at first sight; Katryn Dierksen, editor from fall 2014 to spring 2016, agrees: “I immediately knew that Brain Stew was something I wanted to be involved in—I had always wanted to be a part of a student publication in high school but my school didn’t have a student newspaper, and they certainly didn’t have anything like Brain Stew.” Similarly, editor Ben Luczak (spring 2013-spring 2016) says that after opening the first issue he came across, “the pages revealed snarky editorials, reviews of strange music, and potshots taken at teachers and faculty alike. I was hooked.” Courtney Hayes, editor from spring 2012 to spring 2014, added that “my experience on Brain Stew was one of my fondest memories of college.”

Most Brain Stew editors agree that the publication’s greatest contribution to the Honors College and Honors students alike is its function as an open forum of self-expression, and several editors have used it to elaborate on Knox and Hall’s vision of helping students who might not feel like they meet “normal” expectations to “feel less weird.” Former editor Hayes commented that “for a while I had a section devoted to funny stories of my experiences having Asperger’s. It got a great response and was also really cathartic for me.” She added that “I can’t think of another public forum other than a blog, which would have maybe one reader (my mom), where I could have done my ‘Aspie Moments’ pieces” as well as some of the other “ridiculous” pieces that she and other editors regularly contributed. Former editor Dierksen has published pieces that elaborate on her self-identification as gay and gender-queer, which belong to the type of articles that cultivate a diverse and inclusive atmosphere in Brain Stew and on the Honors campus as a whole. Students have regularly contributed pieces on getting through their parents’ divorce, living with anxiety and depression, and a multitude of other difficulties. While Brain Stew certainly has a lighter side, it is also a venue for embracing individuality and validating “alternative” experiences (with, of course, a humorous edge).

In addition to the pieces that take a platform, Brain Stew is also known for its “comparisons of the professors to Harry Potter characters or pop stars, or fake inside scoop accounts of campus events that usually end in professors causing a ruckus … and pretending that the professors are drunks, erotic fan fiction authors, and fight club members” (Dierksen); “obscure music reviews, … haiku music reviews, and microfiction music reviews, which were barrels of fun” (Luczak); and “fantastical or ridiculous insults and over-the-top stories all in good fun” (Hayes). The deans of the
Honors College have been greatly involved in the publication; after Dean Fausz aided in its establishment from 1991 to 1996, Dean Bliss regularly contributed “Dean’s Diatribes,” with topics ranging from why students should walk instead of taking the shuttle to the pleasures of his favorite comic strips—anything “light, transient, and funny.” Readers should expect to see anything they could imagine and more in print. Above all, Brain Stew promises eccentric humor and elaborate jokes about professors, editors, and students alike.

Most editors agree that Brain Stew contributes “irreverence, free speech, and humor” (Luczak), as well as “swearing and narcissism” (Dierksen), to Honors students. But it may be the contributors who are impacted the most by publishing their submissions; Dierksen commented that “even if no one reads Brain Stew (and I’m sure people do), I am still proud to have contributed to it ... because it has honed my ability to write and draw with an audience in mind. Being responsible for the covers has made me an exponentially better artist and generally more creative thinker, and I can take that with me anywhere in life.” Hayes describes it as “a really terrific outlet for students,” and this could not be more true.

As for the future of Brain Stew, it is expected to remain an important and quite essential institution of the Honors College. Not only does it benefit students on an individual and community basis, but it also documents the very particular and formative experience of the Honors College as a whole. Nicole Gevers, one of the current editors, says that “since Brain Stew has no guidelines for submissions, it is a candid look at what the Honors College and its students are really like, which I think is really fun.” Similarly, Dierksen explains that “we provide a chronicle of what is happening in our time—a narrative for the Honors College Spirit.” Because of Brain Stew’s unique ability to capture the genuine, student-oriented Honors experience, it serves as an important fixture for posterity and maintaining the Honors tradition. Gevers, who started on the publication in the fall of 2016, explains that she and fellow editors Zach Lee and Meagan Burwell “are extremely excited to [start] our roles as editors and already have a lot of ideas for things we want to feature in future issues of Brain Stew. We want to focus on getting more people interested in Brain Stew and making the publication something everyone wants to be a part of.” Perhaps Dean Bliss sums it up best: “Long live Brain Stew.”

Share your Brain Stew memories! Please consider sending in your thoughts about Brain Stew and stories from your time as an editor, writer, artist, or reader to Dan Gerth. We would love to share these with others at the anniversary party (see page 17) or in a future issue of Provenance.
Holly Pope and J.B. Carroll
By Mary Hoffmann

Many incoming freshmen walk into their first day of orientation teeming with excitement or nervousness about their first college experience. While this was true for both Holly Pope and J.B. Carroll, both Honors College alumni, their freshmen orientation experience at the Honors College helped shape their life today. Holly recalls looking for a familiar face in the crowd of freshmen and seeing J.B., a peer from her high school. While they only knew each other’s names during their high school days, this day at orientation was different. After connecting in a small group setting, Holly and J.B. developed a friendship that a year and a half later blossomed into a relationship. They celebrated their first wedding anniversary in May of 2016, and Holly and J.B. credit the Honors College for helping them find each other.

Both 2008 graduates of UMSL, Holly earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biochemistry and Biotechnology, while J.B. earned a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry. Like many Honors students, J.B. chose the Honors College because he felt welcomed by the quirky community. J.B. recalls his interview with the former dean, Bob Bliss, as one of the reasons why he decided to join the college. Holly, on the other hand, was lured in by the attractive scholarship offers.

After looking back at their experiences in the Honors College, both Holly and J.B. have fond memories of their classes and professors. They both enrolled in a class in which the curriculum was devoted to learning about Forest Park. The class, which met at Forest Park every week, covered a variety of topics including how to manage the logistics of the park in conjunction with its ecology. Both science majors, this class especially tied into their interests.

Their four years at UMSL helped shape their future post-graduation endeavors, including their Ph.D. pursuits. Holly, who earned her Ph.D. from Saint Louis University in Pharmacological and Physiological Science, studied axon degeneration in zebrafish. J.B. on the other hand pursued a Ph.D. in Chemistry from UMSL and studied organosilicon compounds that fluoresce in solution.

Holly, who currently works for the Saint Louis Science Center as a senior educator, uses her degrees to teach underserved teens in the integrative medicine component of the Youth Exploring Science Program, or YES Program. The intensive program meets on Saturdays during the school year and for seven weeks during the summer. Its curriculum helps students learn science content while developing skills, such as public speaking, writing, and problem solving. The YES program also helps the teens become college and career ready. While there are no ‘typical’ days for Holly, she spends her time developing curriculums, testing out new projects, and facilitating science activities at area schools. Holly says that one of the most important aspects of her job is networking. This involves finding STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) professionals to speak with the teens and planning field trips for the teens to have authentic science experiences, such as when her teens attended a week-long lab workshop at Bio Research and Development Growth Park at the Danforth Plant Science Center. Career panels of professionals in the science community help students understand what the job market is like and aid their planning for their own future endeavors. She is able to both teach and mentor the teens and has developed lasting relationships. Her goal in this program is to help students develop the skills they need to succeed in higher education and in their future careers.

J.B. also maintains a non-routine work schedule. As an analytical chemist for Boeing, he provides problem solving support for research and development departments. His non-routine analysis uses analytical techniques to find answers for product issues. For example, if a customer finds that an adhesion on paint is failing, it is his job to find out why. J.B. says that the most rewarding aspect of his job is the freedom to interact directly with the customers. He cites his experience in the Honors College as a key reason he is able to communicate with the customers effectively by discussing his results in a manner that is complete and understandable.

Looking back on their experience in the Honors College, both Holly and J.B. felt as though their education prepared them for their current careers by emphasizing the importance of relationships. Networking has enabled Holly and J.B. to develop contacts with former professors and peers. Holly has utilized these relationships to coordinate a writing workshop for the seniors in the YES Program with the help of one of the Honors College professors. She says, “Staying in touch with former professors and alumni from a variety of major fields has helped me in my career by getting me in contact with potential volunteers, interns, and guest speakers that help programs at the Science Center.” Networking, or “getting to know people,” as J.B. calls it, gives an opportunity to meet the right people who can help you in a variety of ways. Whether these relationships help with a job or help raise money, they are an essential part of the couple’s success.

As current and former leaders of the Honors College Alumni Association, Holly and J.B. also focus their time on the importance of staying involved. As part of the Alumni Association, J.B. says he is still constantly learning new things. Most importantly, it has helped him develop greater leadership
skills and has placed a greater importance on keeping in touch with old friends or professors. As current and former chairs of the Honors College Trivia Night, Holly and J.B. spend their time organizing the annual event, as well as delegating responsibilities to other volunteers. J.B. says, “Half the battle is just showing up and finding dependable people.” Dependability, he says, gives him the opportunity to keep in touch with friends and is simply an outcome of showing up.

Reflecting on these experiences with the Honors College, Holly and J.B. offered some advice to current students and recent graduates. Holly said that one of the most important things a student can do is volunteer: “Volunteering guarantees you a position because organizations have a hard time saying no to people who are willing to work. Not only does it help you build a resume, it also helps you meet other people and build skills in your field of interest.” Holly, who started as a volunteer at the Science Center, said that volunteering allowed her to gain experience and eventually led to her job. J.B. offers that students should take time to develop relationships with their professors early. These relationships, he says, can lead to jobs or simply help keep you connected after you become an alumnus. Utilizing the small liberal arts style education at the Honors College can be advantageous as it helps keep you connected with a community of people, he goes on to say. Both Holly and J.B. also believe that students and recent graduates should not be afraid to ask for help. They both agree that if you are willing to ask, you would be surprised at the response you get for people to help.

The knowledge and relationships Holly and J.B. developed during their time at the Honors College has helped them keep actively engaged as alumni, and even lead to Holly becoming an Adjunct Professor at the Honors College this fall semester. It seems as though relationships, from the start of their college experience until now, have allowed the couple to seek continued success in their fields. From simply seeking a familiar face in a crowd of strangers at freshmen orientation to maintaining contacts and volunteers for alumni events, developing lasting relationships is an integral part of Holly Pope and J.B. Carroll’s lives. ■
Many people walk through the Provincial House doors in awe. The architecture recalls that of princesses or wizards. The chapel, a grand attraction for guests, warrants stories. Some tales, often told during PLHCSA’s Haunted Honors College, speak of ghosts, tormenting students living in the Villa and Villa North residence halls. While these fanciful stories may not be true, Provincial House does have a long and rich history as the former home for the Daughters of Charity.

In the late 1980s, brick homes lined down Natural Bridge Road. One belonged to the Vincentian priests collectively known as The Congregation of the Mission. For mass, the priests would turn the corner of East Drive, go down the street, and celebrate the Eucharist at the Provincial House chapel for the Daughters of Charity.

The Daughters of Charity are a Catholic community with roots in France. There are three typical vows of sisterhood—poverty, chastity, obedience—and the Daughters adopt them all annually. Significantly, they take a fourth vow: service to the poor. Their community was founded specifically to help people in suffering or poverty. In 1633, St. Vincent de Paul, a priest, and St. Louise de Marillac, a widow, united women and formed the first group of Daughters of Charity.

Come 1910, the St. Louis Province of the Daughters was founded, and Marillac Provincial House was under construction. Its groundbreaking was on September 27, 1914, and its dedication occurred exactly two years later. Accompanying the House was a college for sisters, including those of different orders. Especially from the 1940s to the 1960s, women, typically after high school, would stay at the House and go to school at what are now the College of Education facilities on South Campus. Many students studied nursing, social services, and general religious education.

The Daughters of Charity also founded the DePaul Hospital (now the DePaul Health Center in Bridgeton, MO). It was “the first Catholic healthcare institution in the country, the first hospital west of the Mississippi, and the first hospital run by women,” according to their Foundation website. Decades later, changes in the healthcare industry later led to the Daughters selling the hospital.

Working for the Daughters of Charity, Belinda Davis came from the DePaul Health Center to the Marillac Provincial House in 1989. She was the director of communications for the former west...
Davis reflects on her time at Marillac with fondness. Overall, she loved that the sisters lived in a community outside of the many ministries in which they served throughout the region. Daughters often came together to pray for intercession to the Blessed Mother in the grotto. Mass was a daily celebration. On warmer days, Daughters would sometimes walk to the Incarnate Word sisters’ convent further west to go swimming. Nothing warmed Davis’s heart more, however, than the annual Christmas Eve mass. “But the singing! You know you’ll never forget the singing...” she reflects. Davis describes, “[T]here was the choir up above, and everybody in the chapel was singing—all of the sisters and all of the visitors.” The choir was on the upper tier of the chapel caroling harmoniously. Friends and family gathered around on the main level. Each Christmas mass was a “tranquil, celebratory, wonderful night.”

In 1993, Davis moved to the upstairs of what was then known as the “shared services building.” She worked there for about a year. This shift in scenery led Davis to discover far more about the sisters than she had learned while working at DePaul. With them, she explored her creativity and dabbled in fundraising. When the senior sisters visited, they told inspiring tales of their ministries around the world, such as close California and far Bolivia. “For me,” Davis explains, “that was always really good because you could hear...all the examples of things that they did.” Bold sisters worked as nurses in both world wars. One particular sister, Sister Philomena Feltz, had been missioned to Austin, Texas many years previously. There, the sisters had founded and operated Seton Hospital, which eventually grew to be a full health center. Sister Philomena’s kind heart never allowed her to turn away a hungry person. Sister was known for the “food line” she initiated at the Daughters’ house back door. The Daughters of Charity made such a huge impact on the community that, in Austin today, there is a street named Philomena Street.
Stories like this one helped fight the stigma of women’s abilities, something Davis still admires. “[Y]ou just really couldn’t believe that they [the Sisters] could handle or they could take on all that they did,” she says with awe. The impact of connection struck her.

In 1999, most of the site was sold to UMSL; the sisters began a four-year move-out period. Four local provinces of Daughters of Charity combined in 2011 and became The Province of St. Louise. It operates near a new provincial house in an office building in the Central West End constructed from the sale. Davis is now the Director of Communications of The Province.

Though the Daughters of Charity have relocated, their influence remains. The retired sisters’ wing was officially known as the Villa St. Louise but plainly referred to as “the Villa.” On the opposite side of the House is a small wing called “LeGras.” LeGras is the married name of Louise de Marillac. Because Provincial House did not open until 1916, the province was run from the fourth floor of St. Vincent Hospital for the first few years. The building still stands and is located on what is now St. Vincent County Park. The spires of St. Vincent Hospital are now used as low income housing and can be seen from Marillac Cemetery. Many pieces of stained glass were taken to the Daughters’ new location, but some, like the St. Vincent and the Beggar scene, remain for all to see. From time to time, one might even spot a Daughter of Charity; they like to sneak into the chapel and relive the days of yore.

All photo credits belong to the Daughters of Charity, Province of St. Louise.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Join us for the 7th annual Honors College Alumni Trivia Night on March 4th!

We will be raffling off a handmade quilt made out of t-shirts from throughout the college’s history.

Tickets are on-sale now, contact Dan Gerth for more information!
Brain Stew’s 25th Anniversary Party

Join us as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Brain Stew!

Saturday, November 12th beginning at 6:30 PM at Ferguson Brewing Company

Founding editors Thompson Knox and Dennis Hall will be in attendance, along with many other editors and writers from the entire history of Brain Stew. All those who edited, submitted to, or enjoyed reading Brain Stew are welcome to attend!

Complimentary food as well as a cash bar will be provided.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Dan Gerth at gerthd@umsl.edu
Funding for higher education gets tougher every year. We are proud to say that we are always increasing efficiency, using funds wisely, and offering students an educational experience that gets better every year. And your help is integral to our success! Please consider giving to the College. Large, small, or in-between, all gifts are received with tremendous gratitude. What are some of the things that gifts help fund? The list is long, but highlights from the past year include everything from scholarships to conference funding to classroom renovations.

In over 25 years, PLHC has grown to 600 students who major in every UMSL program and enrich the campus with their diversity. They also end up in countless fields after graduation, from the board room to the classroom to the operating room, and everywhere in between. Educating high-achieving students in small, discussion-based, writing-intensive classes is important for the future leadership of the St. Louis workforce and economy. Your gift not only supports our program, it supports the future of our entire region. Thank you for considering us.

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