

## Honors College Offers Innovative Courses for Seniors

When facing competition getting hired in the job market or being accepted into a graduate program, Honors students are taking advantage of an innovative course to stand out among their peers. This senior Portfolio class, designed by Writing Director and Associate Dean Nancy Gleason, helps seniors prepare to succeed by offering individualized instruction tailored to each student's personal goals. During the course, students get feedback on strategies to create persuasive résumés and cover letters, and learn about ways to make distinctive and compelling personal statements for graduate school applications. Some students work on revising essays or fiction for writing samples or possible publication, and others design writing projects that help them research opportunities in business or academia.

While helping maximize future opportunities for Honors students, the course also offers an important occasion to reflect on their writing accomplishments during their years at UM-St. Louis. Using the students' portfolios of writing samples gathered each semester at the Honors College, seniors meet with faculty to share reflections on the achievements and remaining challenges in their writing. ♦

### Student Profile:

## Honors Students Present Research to Missouri Legislators

The first Tuesday in April is set aside for the finest examples of undergraduate research from state universities to be displayed in the rotunda of the Missouri Capitol. Selection criteria include rigorous scientific methodology and data analysis, as well as applicability of the research to state education goals. Student applicants are also selected on the basis of their ability to present complex research projects to legislators who may not have familiarity with the poster topics.

This year two Pierre Laclède Honors College students were chosen for Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol. Lana Kerker (junior anthropology major) and Chris Guilford (senior anthropology major) will be introduced, along with seven other University of Missouri-St. Louis students, to full sessions of the Missouri Senate and House of Representatives; next, meetings are scheduled with their own elected representatives, and the rest of the day will be devoted to discussing their projects with interested representatives.

Kerker's poster, entitled "Training as a Primatologist in a Field School Experience: A Study of Mantled Howler Monkeys in Nicaragua," highlights the value of international field research for undergraduates in the biological sciences. In his poster, entitled "Evaluating Ethnic Markers in Forensic Investigations," Guilford analyzes the use of skeletal markers to assign ethnicity at crime scenes or disaster sites. ♦



▲ Chris Guilford and Lana Kerker

## Internships and Service Learning

The increasing importance of service learning and internships is obvious to all in academics and those in career environments. Thus, as the students at PLHC prepare to graduate and enter a highly competitive job market, more and more take advantage of the internship option in our program. They know that having career-related work experience and valuable contacts acquired during their internship helps them enormously when the time comes to make career choices and apply for a job. Most of our students have very rewarding internship experiences. They are often treated as if they were new full-time employees and their duties rarely include making coffee or running errands. Instead, many receive work assignments with plenty of responsibility, be it designing a robot for Hallmark Cards in Kansas City or writing articles for publications at Ladue High School or the Missouri Botanical Garden. Internships are a win-win experience for employers and students alike. For some the internship is just one step in an ongoing job search, but for a surprising number it leads to lasting work relationships and even an attractive job offer.

While some of our students begin looking for an internship as early as freshman year, many juniors and seniors view their interning as a unique opportunity to explore a wide range of work environments, meet prospective colleagues and employers, and develop valuable on-the-job training. One recent graduate, a psychology major, was very uncertain about her future career. Should she go to graduate school right away or find a job first to see what kind of counseling she wanted to do? In her senior year, she interned at Life Crisis Services. After an intensive training program, she answered calls for the Crisis Hotline and reported that the experience helped her see very clearly where her talents lay. She is currently in Graduate School and will soon have her MA in Social Work.

If you work for an organization that has an internship program or might be interested in developing one, please let us know. As Alumni of the Honors College, you already appreciate the many talents of our students and are uniquely qualified to be their mentor. You know that we have highly motivated students who will take an internship opportunity seriously. They have much to learn, but they will be rewarding students and colleagues. What better way to pass on your own education, skills, and experience, than to mentor a PLHC student who is eager to learn from you? ♦

### Alumni Happenings:

## From a "Whale of a Tale" to a World Tour of Wines

The Pierre Laclède Honors College Alumni Chapter has hosted one event just recently and another event is just around the corner. On Thursday, March 9, Dr. Peter Fuss, Professor Emeritus in Philosophy, presented a lecture "Whale of a Tale," to interested members of the alumnae association, students and faculty. Peter has been a long-time instructor in the Honors College, teaching classes such as Melville, Rousseau, Hegel and Dante. He has quite a following of students who enjoy his varied approach to his topics, his thought-provoking ideas and quiet teaching style. His talk on March 9 offered just a glimpse of his enjoyable and challenging consideration of what constitutes a liberal education. Following the lecture, students and faculty attended a reception in the college's Museum Room.

Moving from a lecture to a little "spirit," the alumni organization, headed by its president Daniel Hollander, is planning A World Tour of Wines on Saturday, May 6, from 5:00 to 7:00, at the Alumni House. Dan, an Honors alum, received his B.S. in M.I.S. in 2003, will receive his M.A. in M.I.S. from UM-St. Louis in May, has recently been accepted into the Ph.D. program, and always works extremely hard to bring these types of events to our Honors graduates. The events are generally open to graduates of Honors, current members of our faculty and staff, and friends of PLHC. For more information about these or future events, please contact Daniel Hollander at 314-962-3322 or email him at danielhollander@umsl.edu. ♦

### Staff Profile:

## New Faces in the Honors College

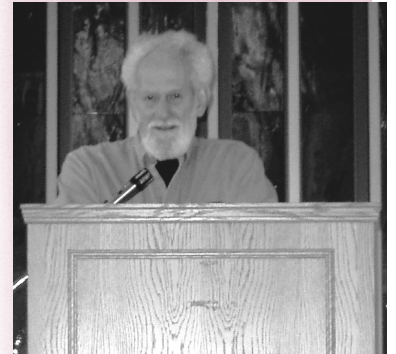
In the past several months, three new staff members have joined the Honors team—all three work in our central office and comprise our support staff, under the direction of the Associate Dean and Dean of the College.

First, we would like to introduce our Admissions Counselor, Kate Spencer. A native of St. Louis, Kate has an MFA in studio art, and replaces our past Admissions Counselor, Maureen Callahan who is currently attending a graduate program at St. Louis University. Kate's work in admissions has enhanced our current admissions efforts. She also coordinates the NSE program, National Student Exchange, and is in the process of assuming that work from our retired Associate Dean, Dennis Bohnenkamp, Senior Lecturer Emeritus, who remains a teacher in our college. Not only is Kate committed to our admissions work, she works to increase our student data in an effort to increase retention of our students in the Honors program. If you or anyone you know, would like admissions information or information regarding NSE, you may contact Kate at 314-516-7769 or spencerkw@umsl.edu.

Next, we welcome John Perez, a graduate of the University of MO-St. Louis, and resident of Bel Nor, MO. John's position, Administrative Aide, in our college, is a new position which has many aims with the focus on students. He works in several areas of the college, including student class enrollment, college schedule preparation, and most recently, a new effort of student exit interviews with each graduating senior of the college. In addition to his work with students, he supervises our student workers and assists with facilities management for the college. For questions and/or comments regarding any of those areas, please contact John at 314-516-4890 or perezj@umsl.edu.

Lastly, our newest member of the Honors College office staff is Carla Corbett who recently moved here from California. An accomplished accountant, Carla's central role as Administrative Assistant is Finance and Faculty Support. Carla works under the supervision of the Associate Dean. In that capacity, she is making many positive contributions to our financial records and practices, and she oversees the Honors College office. Her calm demeanor and competence have set the stage for a positive administrative office for the college, as she becomes acquainted with various people on campus regarding budget, finance and other areas of the university. Please feel free to contact Carla at 314-516-5243 or corbettc@umsl.edu.

We welcome Kate, John and Carla to our staff and invite you to stop by and meet all three of them. With Kate working on admissions, John spending time with student support services, and Carla coordinating the office and finances, we believe we have a very good team that can meet the needs of the college and help us grow in many positive ways. Join us in welcoming them and remember we always welcome visitors whether current, past, or future honors student. ♦



Dr. Peter Fuss

## Did You Know?

- ♦ The Pierre Laclède Honors College is a fully accredited honors program and an independent division of UM-St. Louis. It enjoys its own campus, containing complete instructional, residential, and recreational facilities.
- ♦ We have the smallest classes of the area's largest universities, with a student/faculty ratio of 12:1.
- ♦ We offer academic excellence comparable to expensive and selective private colleges.
- ♦ We have the lowest tuition of any four-year institution in St. Louis.
- ♦ Attractive residential housing on site in the Honors College Residence Hall is available to Honors College students.
- ♦ For information regarding PLHC Alumni Chapter events, go to:  
[www.umsl.edu/divisions/honors](http://www.umsl.edu/divisions/honors)



▲ New staff members:  
Kate Spencer (Admissions Counselor),  
Carla Corbett (Administrative Assistant), and  
John Perez (Administrative Aide)

## Bellerive Arrives

By Nancy Gleason

During the early weeks of each Spring semester, the Honors College prepares for the arrival of Bellerive, the creative writing and art publication of the college. This year, Bellerive: Problems with Infinity made its debut on Friday, February 17. To mark the occasion of its arrival, John Dalton, the newest member of the UM-St. Louis, English Department and MFA Program and an award-winning novelist, delivered an inspiring talk to a crowd of about 60 students, staff and faculty members from across the campus.

The reception marked the sale of the publication which is available for \$6 or two copies for \$10, and is available in the office of Nancy Gleason, Associate Dean and Director of Writing of the College and in the University Bookstore.

The publication is produced by students in an Honors seminar which is held each fall semester. In the class taught by Nancy Gleason, students select poems, short stories, essays and art from submissions collected from the entire campus each year from February through May. The submission collection for next year's issue is taking place at this time.

This year's issue is highlighted by many fine works from student and faculty members, including one poem from the Dean of the Honors College, Bob Bliss, entitled "Correspondence." A staff of nineteen students, led by four excellent editors, Shannon Pendleton, Missy Yearian, Nathan Hanton and Jason Bechtoldt, worked tirelessly making difficult choices, editing and proofing each work which included conferences with each contributor, completing the digital layout, and meeting all of the publisher's deadlines. In a spirit of enthusiasm and cooperation, the class produced a beautiful book with a striking, yet subtle cover. Join us in celebrating this issue of Bellerive: Problems with Infinity. For more information about this literary publication and its availability, the Bellerive class or submission information, please contact Nancy Gleason at 516.6629 or by email at nancygleason@umsln.edu. ♦



The Newsletter of **Pierre Laclède Honors College**  
at the University of Missouri-St. Louis

# Provenance

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at the University of Missouri-St. Louis

# Provenance

*Provenance: from the French "provenant": the place of origin, a verification of origin*

## Welcome from the Dean

Having just accepted an invitation to the 30th anniversary of my English college (where I was principal for 15 years, disturbing thought), I am inclined to speculate on where Pierre Laclède Honors College should be headed. PLHHC will be 30 in 2019, which seems a long time away to this dean, so let's look at the college reaching its 21st birthday, in 2010-2011.

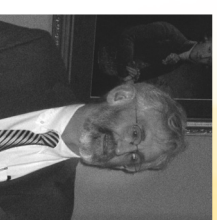
In enrollment terms, PLHHC should have reached its UMSt Action Plan target of 650 by August 2008. It should rest content with that and work from a strong enrollment base to improve its academic program. It should already have moved, gracefully and thoughtfully, from the "growth is good" obsessions of late years to asking "what good can come from all this growth?"

A high, stable enrollment will lead us to emphasize student quality over student numbers. This does not mean that past generations of students lacked quality, for plainly they did not. Indeed, we won't be focused on entrance qualifications, but increasingly on how well we use scholarships to ensure that students who do enroll have every chance and every good reason to excel. We need scholarships large enough to buy students' time so that they can afford to turn away from working long hours for minimal wages and towards their academic studies, and towards greater engagement in student life and interaction with their St. Louis world as intelligent scholar-citizens. Thus we also need post-entry scholarships to motivate students to go on developing, to take on the challenges of undergraduate research, exchange study, public service internships, even special certificate study beyond the minimal baccalaureate requirements.

Growth in student numbers will lead to large concentrations of honors students majoring in certain areas or even in individual disciplines. This challenges us to develop structural linkages between our core general education program and "main campus" majors, so that students can explore purposefully the manifold relationships between a "liberal education" and their specialized intellectual or career interests. A fruitful response will be to create general education pathways to help students both deepen and contextualize their interests. Working with main campus units to create truly interdisciplinary degrees would be another natural outgrowth of these enrollment concentrations, and would further help PLHHC to recruit excellent students to the university.

Not least, we will also think of liberal education core programs, for instance in the "great books" of western and non-western culture, where we have developed an instructional expertise in freshman year seminars. By extending this core concept through the honors program, we could create a distinctive, indeed a classic, liberal arts sequence suitable for almost every major and, not entirely incidentally, realizing the dreams of some of the founders, way back in 1989.

Now there would be something to celebrate in 2010, something beyond survival and approaching qualities of real maturity—something that many graduates, many instructors, and even one or two former deans might well fly back for. ♦



**Dean's Notes**  
By Robert Bliss, Dean

**Pierre Laclède**

**Honors College,**

**guiding students**

**since 1989.**

