Honors Students Present Research to Missouri Legislators

The first Tuesday in April is set aside for the finest examples of undergraduate research to be presented 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. Students applicants are also selected on the basis of their ability to present complex research projects to legislators who may not have familiarity with the past topics.

This year’s two Pierre Laclede Honors College representatives were chosen for Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol. Lana Kerker (junior anthropology major) and Chris Galliford (junior anthropology major) will be introduced, along with other University of Missouri-St. Louis students, to full sessions of the Missouri Senate and House of Representatives. Next week classes 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 recent international field research for undergraduates in the biological sciences. In her poster, entitled “Evaluating Ethic Murmurs in Forensic Investigations,” Galliford analyzes the use of skeletal markers to assign ethnicity at crime scenes or disaster sites.

Honors Students Present Research to a World Tour of Wines on Saturday, May 6, from 1:00 to 7:00, at the Alumni House. Dan, an Honors alum, received his B.S. in M.B. in 2003; will receive his M.A. in M.B. from St. Louis. His major curriculum 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 future events, please contact Daniel Hollander at 314-562-3322 or email him at danhollander@umsl.edu.

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 Spence. 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 NSSE program, National Student Exchange, and is in the process of assuming that work from our retired Associate Dean, Danny Ohnsman, who retired from the college in June. In addition to her work with students, she supervises our student workers and assists with facilities management for the college. For questions and/or comments regarding any of these 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 in 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 record-keeping practices, and she oversees the Honors College office. For questions and/or comments regarding any of these areas, please contact Carla at 314-516-3160 or scorr@umsl.edu.

We welcome Kate, John and Carla to our staff and invite you to stop by and meet them at the Alumni Banquet on Saturday, May 6, from 5:00 to 7:00, at the Alumni House. Dan, an Honors alum, received his B.S. in M.B. in 2003, will receive his M.A. in M.B. from St. Louis. His major curriculum 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 future events, please contact Daniel Hollander at 314-562-3322 or email him at danhollander@umsl.edu.

The Pierre Laclede Honors College Alumni Chapter has hosted one event just recently and plans an event in just around the corner. On Thursday, March 9, Dr. Peter Paus, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, presented a lecture entitled “A Whale of a Tale,” an interesting discussion of the allure of the marine life, its history and current status. As always, it has been a pleasure to see our students and alumni in attendance. We are looking forward to the next event.

New staff members: Kate Spence (Admissions Counselor), Carla Corbett (Administrative Assistant), and John Perez (administrative staff).
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 Laclede Honors College is today. It is not without its challenges as a faculty of 28 members, with 650 students, and despite a UMSL Action Plan target for 650 students by August 2008, we work from a strong enrollment base to improve our baccalaureate offerings to include 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 plan ahead to handle these concentrations, and would further help PLHC to recruit excellent students to the university.

Not least, we will also think of liberal education core programs, for instance the "great books" of western and non-western culture, where we have developed an instructional expertise in the history of the "great books." 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.