

# UMD Honors Program

## Director's Note

Howard Mooers



*Dinner out with the Professor*

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*Winterlight Banquet*

As I finish up my second year as director of the UMD Honors Programs it is time to reflect on the events of the past year and some of the changes we have incorporated. In September we welcomed 50 new freshmen into the program. We held a welcome reception during Bulldog Welcome Week where everyone could get acquainted and meet the Honors Student Association officers. To further integrate the new students into the program we organized a weekend trip to Minneapolis that emphasized cultural awareness. We took in a matinee at the Guthrie Theater, went to the Science of Museum, and ate Ethiopian food, a dinner that was appreciated more by some than others. Picky, picky. Over the course of the year we continued our dinners-out with professors and our “meet the professional” series where professionals from all walks of life chat about their careers. This year the HSA took over the process of selecting the speakers. A new addition to the honors events this year was a monthly movie night, a big hit with the students.

As always, one of the highlights of the year was the Winterlight Banquet at

the Kitchigami Club. This year our guest speaker was Representative Kerry Gauthier, of District 7B. Kerry talked about government and governing in a time of extreme political polarization. This year's spring trip took 40 students to Milwaukee. A great time was had by all – see Graeme Shields' article in this issue. This year we implemented a number of new requirements for honors students. Students are now required to complete a leadership and a community service requirement. At least once during their stay at UMD honors students must take on a leadership role. In addition, six hours of community service are required each semester. Another new initiative is an end-of-fall-semester review for freshmen; just to help them stay on track during their inaugural time at UMD.

In what may be our boldest initiative yet, the honors program hosted a visiting faculty member for Spring term. Professor George H. Shaw, Union College, Schenectady, NY, was in residence at UMD With the help of Professor Shaw two new honors courses were added to the

program. The first was a course of study on energy policy and ended with the students planning and hosting an open public forum on energy policy. See Luke Busta's article for more information on the forum. The second honors course was entitled Great Moments in the History of Life, which focused on four major events in earth history that have dramatically influenced the evolution of life. The four events were The Early Earth's Atmosphere and Environment, Emergence of Life, the Great Oxygen Catastrophe, and Extinctions. This year the Honors Program said goodbye to 13 graduating seniors. Each of them presented the results of their capstone experience. If our graduation numbers keep going up it is going to be difficult to schedule all of the capstone projects; wouldn't that be a nice problem to have.

## Fall Overnight to Minneapolis

**Jake Kolke '14**



*Lake Harriet, Minneapolis*



*Science Museum of Minnesota*

When someone first tells you about going on a trip for honors students, your first thought is a bunch of nerdy kids, packed on a bus, going to a conference about some super complex science topic to listen to a bunch of long-winded professors. At least, that's what they want you to think, because when I went on the Fall Trip with the UMD Honors Student Association it was anything but what I described above. The entire weekend was jam-packed with activities that lead to a more diverse experience than what the average person would have on a typical trip to the Twin Cities. The first of several activities we partook in was going to a show at the Guthrie. We were able to go and see the

Scottsboro Boys, a true story about nine wrongly accused black males from the anywhere from the ages of 13 to 19, whose eventual trial was a legal circus in the town of Scottsboro, Alabama. This led to years in jail before even the first one was set free. In fact three of them actually spent the rest of their lives in and out of prison. We were actually fortunate to see this show, as it is now on Broadway and is nominated for 12 Tony awards.

After the emotionally charged musical, we went and unwound at Lake Harriet for a few hours before we participated in our next adventure of the weekend: dinner at an Ethiopian restaurant. Dinner was very good, consisting of several traditional Ethiopian

dishes. The meal was a potluck affair, in which each person dipped a spongy, sourdough 'pancake' in various meats and sauces. After eating our fill and getting back to the hotel, we turned in for the night.

The following day, the main event was going to the Science Museum to see the Dead Sea Scrolls. Six of the scrolls were on display in a room with special lighting to protect them. The exhibit also featured a wealth of knowledge about how the scrolls were made, stored, and then later found. After touring the rest of the museum, we boarded the bus to go back to UMD, wrapping up the fun-filled weekend. The best part? No long-winded professors.

## Upcoming Honors Courses

This coming academic year there will be a number of honors courses offered. Robyn Roslak is offering her popular honors seminar Paris in the Age of Impressionism. The

course is currently full and therefore unavailable to additional students, but watch for it in future semesters. Spring term we have Denny Falk's Global Issues scheduled. This course too has

received great reviews from students so be on the lookout during spring registration. There will likely be an advanced writing course offered in the spring also. Incoming freshmen are

required to take a two-credit honors seminar that will be offered as an evening course both fall and spring semesters. Look for an announcement about this course in the next week or two.

## Senior Capstones

This spring we say farewell and thank you to the following students for all the wonderful contributions they have made to the Honors Program. We will miss you! Names and capstone projects are listed:

Jerica Burchard

*Heart Disease and Defects: What can we learn from zebrafish?*

Brock Burgau

*30,000 Miles, 6 Months, 5 Countries: One Semester Abroad*

Luke Busta

*An electrical pulse to an ice sensor is like music to your ears*

Annie Haglund

*The Fluency Spectrum*

Victor de Meireles

*What is A Sustainable Energy Policy for Minnesota?*

Brenna Oelfke

*Loss of Inflectional Endings in Old English*

Kelsey O'Hern

*The response of skin to incident polarized light*

Greg Reynolds

*Elucidating Copper Enzyme Mechanisms through Protein Engineering*

Stacey Schmiesing

*The Handicapped Accessibility of French Museums Today*

Jessalyn Toldo

*Ploidy: Plants' Adaptive Arsenal against Climate Change*

Allison Winkler

*Building a German Lending Library*

Sarah Wotzka

*The Role of Literature in the Argentine Dirty War Paddles*

## Who Runs the Honors Program?

UMD Honors consists of Howard Mooers, Director, and Jessica Saxton, Program Coordinator. The Honors Program reports to Academic Vice-Chancellor Vince Magnuson and also to a steering committee. Steering Committee members are: Professor

Sanjay Goel (LSBE/Management Studies), Professor Jen Jones (CLA/Anthropology), Professor Alexandra Luong (CEHSP/Psychology), Professor Tim Colburn (SCSE/Computer Science), Professor Ann Bergeron (SFA/Theatre), Chris

Haidos (UMD Admissions Office), Jessica Saxton (Honors Program Coordinator), and Vice-Chancellor Vince Magnuson (UMD

Administration, Chemistry).



HONORS  
PROGRAM

## Old Milwaukee

Graeme Shields '14

At the beginning of April, the UMD Honors Program decided to take an enriching and enjoyable trip to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The bus ride, which took more than a few hours, was a long one but worth the wait. Our first and only full day in Wisconsin's largest city began with a trip to the zoo! There were all sorts of active primates, penguins, and big cats to see. We ran through as many exhibits as we could, the girls running exceptionally fast through the reptile house.

That afternoon we had the opportunity to walk around Milwaukee and find our own lunch. As we walked from the hotel and down the street, over the river, and around the corner we came across The Safehouse. This unique restaurant is dedicated to secrecy and spy-savvy conduct, so there is no sign outside. Instead, to enter the bar and grill during daytime hours, there is a secret switch to pull that reveals a hidden passage behind a bookcase! This leads directly to the tabling area, and is how we entered ourselves. The

atmosphere and menus are filled with puns and spy humor, accompanying delicious food with excellent service.

The last part of our day was spent eating at a Pakistani restaurant, Amnol, that was recommended by a fellow honors student. Our meal, which seemed to be never-ending, began with flat crunchy bread called Pappar. Also included in the appetizer were triangles of rice and meat wrapped in dough called Samosa. These were shortly followed by thicker and softer bread, Naan, with some rice dishes mixed with chicken and mutton. Other dishes included Handi, Makhni, Korma, and the Reshmi Kebab, which was my personal favorite. Finally, our gratuitous amounts of food ended with a dessert called Jamun, which tasted like a doughnut hole soaked in syrup.

That night, we treated ourselves to a break at the hotel to watch our own hockey team win the national title! What a day.

On the last day, we paid a visit to the Milwaukee Public

Museum, so we could get a last glimpse of where we had spent our weekend. "Old Milwaukee" was an exhibit "neighborhood" that we could venture into bordered by the buildings and architecture of the time. During the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was called the "Cream City" because of the cream colored brick that covered the streets. Walking around the exhibit definitely justified the city's nickname as the brick-lined roads led us to numerous model ethnic houses that accurately portrayed the varied clans and families that lived in the "Cream City." Amongst these were Swedish, Scottish, and Danish houses accompanied by at least 5 other ancestries. The museum was by no means limited to Milwaukee-related history. Other great exhibits that we explored involved dinosaurs, continental displays of Africa and Australia, and underwater life. After an eventful weekend, we crawled back on the bus for a long drive home to Duluth. Visiting

Milwaukee was quite the experience for me. It was filled with exotic and local foods to try, new sites to see, and a city's worth of history to learn. I can't wait to go back!



*Milwaukee Art Museum*



*Amnol Pakistani Restaurant*



*The Bronze Fonz*

## Honors Student Association

**Annie Haglund '11**  
**HSA President**

The Honors Student Association (HSA) is meant to serve as every student's voice within the Honors Program. Additionally, it's a place for us to get to know each other outside the classroom, and work together as we grow in our understanding and involvement both within UMD and the Duluth Community. We even try to have some fun along the way. This year we emphasized a greater amount of student involvement within HSA by continuing the establishment of four distinct committees. Each committee was comprised of one chairperson and an additional one to four members. These students were challenged to plan and carry out at least one event per semester for the students of the entire honors program. Their efforts focused on

Community Service, Membership Enrichment, Fundraising and Public Relations. Some of their accomplishments this year included volunteering at Aftenro Nursing Home, dining at local restaurants with select UMD Professors, Smoothie Sales, and creating a Facebook page for communication amongst all members. In addition to these activities, group members stayed busy with other events, both traditional and new within the Honors Program. We attended lectures and presentations by professionals from the Duluth community, viewed and discussed thought-provoking films, sponsored an event for the campus Dance Marathon, rang bells for the Salvation Army, recruited volunteers for a Memorial Blood Drive, and spent a delightful

weekend in Milwaukee. This year was full of fresh ideas and enthusiasm for the students within HSA. As my own time here at UMD and within the Honors Programs draws to a close, I am thankful for the experiences the program has provided me. I am also proud of my fellow members, and am excited for what they will accomplish in years to come.

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[www.d.umn.edu/honors](http://www.d.umn.edu/honors)

The Honors office and student lounge will close for  
the summer from  
June 10 to August 15

Fall office and lounge hours will be:  
Monday – Thursday  
8am to 1pm

*See you in the fall!*



*The Safe House, Milwaukee*

## Honors Program Energy Policy Forum

Luke Busta '11

The Kirby Student Center's Griggs Center saw an exciting event on April 28<sup>th</sup>: a student organized and student run public forum event to raise awareness and local involvement in energy policy. Facing the Challenge: A Global Energy Action Forum saw between 25 and 50 attendants throughout the day, which consisted of John Jimison as the keynote speaker, panel discussions on Biofuels, Peak Oil, Nuclear Energy, and Renewable Energy in the Midwest. The event culminated in the evening with a friendly climate change debate between Chris Walcek of the University of New York at Albany, and Tom Johnson of UMD.

This event was the product of a special topics honors course on global energy policy (HON3095) taught by George Shaw, a visiting professor from Union College in New York state. This course required students not

only to become familiar with current issues in energy policy discussions through literature exploration, but also take on leadership roles to organize the forum event. Each student was assigned one of the components of the event; a panel discussion, the lunch discussion, or the evening debate. This entailed making phone calls to individuals in specific fields to participate and mediating that part of the event.

Not only were students responsible for maintaining correspondence with the individuals involved in their portion of the event, but also for promoting the event across campus, sending invitations to business owners in the community, and enlisting the help of other UMD affiliates for assistance. Mindy Granley, Sustainability Coordinator for UMD was of great help in promoting the forum, as well as Bill Mittlefehldt of Clean Energy Resource

Teams (CERTs). The organizers would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success, including Jessica Saxton, Howard Mooers, George

Shaw, the Honors Advisory Board, and all who attended on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

