More Space for Honors

Beginning in winter quarter, the Honors Program is the proud landlord of a newly created classroom on the first floor of Millet opposite the office. Two small rooms—128 and 158—were combined to make one room that will hold 20 to 25 students comfortably. It has new carpet and chairs and tables instead of desks. We will try to schedule as many Honors classes as possible in this space. We are excited about having students and faculty right next door. Communication will be much easier. The room comes equipped with bulletin boards and literature racks. We hope that having class across the hall will make it more likely that students will pop in to ask a question or have a chat about plans for graduate school. Having special space seems to help people bond and become more committed to a common goal. Thanks go to our boss and good fairy, Lillie Howard, Associate Provost, who told everyone to work this out; to Registrar Gail Fred, who swallowed hard and said ok; to Jeanne Fraker, Director of the University Division, whose Developmental Education classes had to be relocated, but who realized that Honors needs this space; to Bob Plummer and all the Physical Plant people who actually did the work, and to Vicky Davidson, who let us paint it a non-building color. It looks great. Stop by and see for yourself.
on my honor

A year-long administrative review of the University Honors Program has been completed, and the results were very gratifying, as you will see in the forthcoming special edition of Honorable Mentions. We were especially encouraged by the external reviewer’s finding that our program meets all the National Collegiate Honors Council criteria of a well-developed Honors program and by the overwhelmingly positive student, alumni and faculty responses to our surveys.

A few respondents used the term elitist to describe our program, without explanation or elaboration. If this term refers to the many privileges Honors students enjoy—small classes, excellent teachers, priority registration, and access to special advising and scholarship support—they are certainly correct. And if it is a reference to the special satisfaction of faculty who teach Honors courses, they are right on the mark. However, there are other aspects of the Honors program that they may have overlooked.

All WSU students are eligible for admission to the University Honors Program, including those who do not meet the quantitative criteria. Faculty recommendations will admit those who demonstrate a commitment to learning and a willingness to contribute to the scholarly climate of the classroom. And the Honors program accommodates three levels of participation, giving students great flexibility of choice.

Much is expected of Honors students in return for the benefits of the program. They must maintain high academic standards in all coursework. They are assigned more challenging academic work than students in other classes and are responsible for greater class participation. Honors students are asked to represent and serve the Honors program and the University in a number of ways, including campus and community service projects.

Honors faculty are carefully selected, not only for their teaching skills, but also for their willingness to assume new teaching challenges and to develop true learning communities with their students. Honors classes often function as laboratories where new teaching techniques are tested and perfected before use in other classrooms. Thus, both Honors students and faculty make important contributions to the program and ultimately to the University.

The Honors Program functions to support the open-admission policy which attracts students of diverse backgrounds and levels of preparation to WSU. It offers the option of a more demanding curriculum and valuable co-curricular experiences at relatively affordable public university costs. While giving maximum support for classroom efforts, the Honors staff works to improve and diversify the program in order to provide students with the best possible preparation for life in and beyond the university that we have to offer. Their successes, the rewards of hard work by students, faculty, and staff together, are a credit to Wright State University.

Anna

TAKE A FAST PLANE TO CHINA

Honors Director Anna Bellisari will lead a group of Wright State students to China this summer. This once in a lifetime opportunity is open to all students in good academic standing. The cost for the China trip is around $3,224. Scholarship funding is available. The Office of International Student Programs will work with students to plan financing. Academic credit is available at no additional cost. Participants will visit Beijing, Xian, Canton, and Hong Kong. Every Honors student who has ever gone on this trip has been in awe of the experience. Beg or borrow, but don’t miss this chance to explore one of the world’s oldest civilizations. Contact Rory Golden at the International Student Programs Office E190 SU for additional information.
SHA Report

The Student Honors Association is happy to announce that after its fall recruiting campaign, the club has 106 members.

SHA started a busy fall with the annual Halloween party. In November the club went to a Bombers game. Nikki Magoto, Nikki Odum, Rachal Marchal, Gina Wurst, and Amy Ballweg (pictured right) look happy to be helping at the Ronald McDonald House. Erin Rogers was also a volunteer. An End of the Quarter Party was held in the Honors Office.

SHA is looking forward to the rest of the year. Starting in January, they will be volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House once a month; sign up in the Honors Office. They’re also planning to participate in the Great Miami River clean-up and have a booth at May Daze. Check for SHA activities on the fantastic Web site created and maintained by Matt Fox: http://www.media.wright.edu/studorgs/honors/shahome.htm.

Officers are: Erin Rogers, president, Amy Ballweg, vice president, Nikki Odum, historian, Gina Wurst, secretary, Ariana Kalter, treasurer, and April Knust, Kristy Robeson, Missy Ratliff, and Deepa Krishnamurthy, Honors Committee Representatives.

It’s All In A Day’s Work

Listen to Kurt Vonnegut talking in a round about way about the computerization of everything in an interview in 1995 in Inc. Technology.

I work at home, and if I wanted to, I could have a computer right by my bed, and I’d never have to leave it. But I use a typewriter, and afterward I mark up the pages with a pencil. Then I call up this woman named Carol out in Woodstock and say, “Are you still doing typing?” Sure she is, and her husband is trying to track bluebirds out there and not having much luck, and so we chitchat back and forth, and I say, “Okay, I’ll send you the pages.” Then I go down the steps and my wife calls, “Where are you going?” “Well,” I say, “I’m going to buy an envelope.” And she says, “You’re not a poor man. Why don’t you buy a thousand envelopes? They’ll deliver them, and you can put them in the closet.” And I say, “Hush.” So I go to this newsstand across the street where they sell magazines and lottery tickets and stationery. I have to get in line because there are people buying candy and all that sort of thing, and I talk to them. The woman behind the counter has a jewel between her eyes, and when it’s my turn, I ask her if there have been any big winners lately. I get my envelope and seal it up and go to the postal convenience center down the block at the corner of Forty-seventh Street and Second Avenue, where I’m secretly in love with the woman behind the counter. I keep absolutely poker-faced; I never let her know how I feel about her. One time I had my pocket picked in there and got to meet a cop and tell him about it. Anyway, I address the envelope to Carol in Woodstock. I stamp the envelope and mail it in a mailbox in front of the post office, and I go home. And I’ve had a hell of a good time. I tell you, we are here on Earth to fart around, and don’t let anybody tell you any different.
Bill Giffen (HFE 93) has completed a Master’s in Industrial Engineering at Purdue. He is now working on a PhD with a Graduate Teaching Assistantship. His father donated his collection of modern classics to the Honors Program. They are available for borrowing in the lounge area.

Ross Martin (PLS 87) earned his MD years ago, but that was not enough to allow him to rest on his laurels. In his spare time he writes screenplays and music. His Faultline is making the rounds of the Hollywood studios, including Steven Spielberg’s group, Dreamworks.

Jeff Warman (COM 96) participated in the International Radio and Television Society Fellowship Program in New York City for ten weeks last summer. He was one of only 20 chosen nationwide to participate in this all expenses paid program. His internship at the Arts and Entertainment Network produced a credit for him on the A&E Biography episode on Barry Goldwater which aired locally August 10. He had a job offer from CBS to serve as a broadcast associate for Biography.

Sally Struthers (ART HST 81) and Ned Young are the proud parents of Anthony Christopher Struthers-Young, born on November 5, 1996. He weighed in at 7 lbs 6 oz and was 20 1/4 inches long. Sally and Ned are combining parenthood with department chairing responsibilities at Sinclair—Sally in Fine Arts and Ned in Business Management. They think they may be the first husband/wife chairs in Sinclair history.

Gail J. Brown (PHY 77) was named an Outstanding Engineers and Scientists Award Recipient in 1996 in the category of Research. Dr. Brown, who is with the Air Force Laboratory at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, also won the Cleary Scientific Achievement Award as the Outstanding Research Scientist in 1994. This year she is chairing the Society for Optical Engineering conference on Photodetectors: Materials and Devices. Wow!

Rodney Carlson married Lisa Bruce last summer with Randy acting as best man, of course. All three are settled in Cleveland (in separate apartments) where Rodney and Randy are going to podiatric school. Lisa and Rodney met at the day care center where they both worked because they love kids so much. Wedding guests included, among others, Honors alums Thom Brex, Rob Johnson, Teresa Bornhorst, Jim Stouffer, Jason Crabtree, and Joe Piamthipmanus.

Jim North (BIO 82) practically saved his mother’s life by sending a neighbor to check when he couldn’t get her on the phone. He stopped by when he was in town for her surgery. He looks great and has produced some equally terrific looking children. He stays busy with his medical practice and his usual extracurricular activities. He is the Speaker of the House for the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians and the Chief of Family Practice and Internal Medicine at Children’s Hospital in Toledo.
Honorable Mentions

Chad Smith, Maple Hall CA and junior history major, was the highest scoring individual in the WSU College Bowl Tournament. His teammates were Honors alum Michelle Ringer, Dave Crowell, and Chris Davis. They will compete in the regional at Bowling Green in February.

Mary Ranee Chattoraj (BIO 87) married fellow physician Marc Leder in April of 1995. Ranee finished her medical studies at WSU in 1992 then went on to a residency in pediatrics in Columbus. She was awarded a fellowship in developmental and behavioral pediatrics at Boston Children’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School in Boston. Dr. Leder specializes in pediatric emergency medicine at Boston Children’s Hospital.

Charlie Rowland (PLS 92) graduated from Ohio Northern where he made Order of the Barristers and was an Associate Justice in the Moot Court Program. He passed the Bar on the first try and is working for Cox and Keller in Xenia doing general legal work. He will marry Tracy Young in Schenectady, NY August 2.

Sharon Gwyn Short (ENG 82) published a third book in the Patricia Delaney mystery series, The Death We Share, with Fawcett Books. The first novel in the series, Angel’s Bidding, was published in Great Britain by Women’s Press Ltd.

Alonzo Patterson (BME 85) is Associate Director of Minority Student Affairs in the Wright State University School of Medicine. He maintains his pediatric practice and stays busy with his two daughters, Akilah and Ayanna.

Nikki Gayden, new office worker in the Honors Program, won 4th place in the national ACT-SO competition in Nashville. She has been active in NAACP youth programs for five years. She read her prize-winning poem at President Flack’s Martin Luther King luncheon January 17.

Honors student Angela Slaughter and three other Biomedical Engineering majors (Jeanne Uy, Joe Katuin, Donna Therrien) had their project, Prosthetic Robotic Hand with Electric Motors and Force Position Sensors, selected to receive a Whitaker Senior Bioengineering Design Award for 1995. Judges based their decisions on originality, bioengineering significance, thoroughness of design analysis and performance evaluation.

Robert Brandt was featured in two lengthy Dayton Daily News articles last year for his work with AIDS patients. Brandt was one of the program’s earliest graduates, earning Honors in Biology in 1975. His senior Honors thesis was published in the Journal of Medical Entomology. He was a member of the 1976 charter class of the Wright State University School of Medicine. Since his graduation he has practiced locally and over the years specialized more and more in the treatment of AIDS. He works hard at keeping his emotional and spiritual equilibrium in a practice where death comes too soon to too many. Recent advances in AIDS treatment surely make his work a little easier. He treats friends and relatives of us all, and if you listen carefully enough, you’ll hear his name repeated with awe and reverence. “He’s the best,” is what they say.

Eric Pooler was elected Student Government Representative from the University Division. He is also a member of Wright Engineering Council and the Student Honors Association.

Jay Horton (SE 94) completed his MS in exercise physiology at Colorado State University in 1996. He’ll be spending the next three months biking in New Zealand. Next year he plans to undertake PhD studies. Here he is on top of Mt. Princeton in Colorado where he’s hiked almost all of the "university peaks."
Shrimp Gumbo

According to John Martin Taylor, author of The New Southern Cook, gumbo is the quintessential American food. “It has been likened to jazz,” he says, “with its multicultural history and improvisational nature, but its roots run even deeper than those of that distinctly American music.”

Of the hundreds of recipes floating about, this is the one Taylor selected for his book. It takes a total of three hours from mixing the roux to serving eight, but most of it is light duty.

For The Stock
3 pounds shrimp
1 large carrot
1 large onion, quartered
2 celery ribs
a handful of fresh herbs such as parsley, oregano, thyme, and savory
1 bay leaf
1 gallon water

For The Gumbo
1/4 cup dark roux
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
1 pound okra trimmed and cut into 1/2 inch pieces
6 vine-ripened tomatoes peeled and chopped or 28 oz can of tomatoes peeled with their juice
2 fresh jalapeno or other hot chilies
3 cups cooked long-grain white rice

Peel the shrimp, dropping the shells into an enamelled or stainless steel stockpot. Cover the shrimp and refrigerate. Add the rest of the stock ingredients to the pot and cook at a low boil until the onion is transparent, the carrots soft, and the stock is pleasantly infused with a shrimp flavor—about an hour. The liquid will be reduced to about 3 quarts. Strain out and discard the solids, reserving the stock.

If you do not have roux on hand, make it while the stock is cooking. Melt 1/2 cup butter and stir in 1/3 cup flour. Cook over low heat until it takes on a rich brown color. Can also be cooked in a 350° oven on a baking sheet, stirring every 15 minutes for about an hour.

To make the gumbo, heat the roux in a large stockpot over medium heat. Add the onion, celery, bell pepper and cook until the onion is becoming transparent, stirring constantly, about 10 minutes. Add the okra and cook, stirring often, until all the ropiness is gone, about 20 minutes. Add the tomatoes and simmer 10 minutes. Add the chilies and reserved stock and simmer for about an hour.

Five minutes before serving, add the reserved shrimp to the gumbo. Serve in large bowls over fluffy white rice and follow with a fresh green salad. Wash it all down with cold beer, well chilled Marsanne Blanc, or Mountain Dew, if you must. The whole process goes better if you listen to Buckwheat Zydeco, particularly when making the roux.

Here is part of Taylor’s history of gumbo.

Some people say that New Orleans okra gumbo developed among the great port city’s wealthy merchants and planters who entertained with their slave cooks at the hearths. Based on a French roux (a cooked paste of flour and fat) a Spanish-Caribbean sofrito (onions, peppers, garlic, tomatoes, and seasonings), and the African vegetable (okra is called “gumbo” in several West African languages), it is one of the great dishes of the world—truly Creole, or born in the New World to a mixed heritage.

Filé gumbo, on the other hand, is said to have evolved at the hands of backwoods Cajuns (descendants of a group of exiled Acadians who settled in Louisiana in the eighteenth century), who had been shown by the Choctaw Indians how to thicken soups and stews with filé, or powdered sassafras leaves. Eighteenth-century naturalists often noted Native Americans’ use of powdered roots and leaves as thickening agents, but only in Louisiana, with its great culinary traditions, has this bit of Native American fare survived.
How Much Inequality Can a Democracy Take?

The year 1968 was among the worst years this century for the United States—assassinations, riots, campus uprisings and the infamous Democratic National Convention in Chicago. But an event that attracted little or no attention at the time may ultimately prove to have the most lasting and destabilizing effects of all. Suddenly that year, like a surge in a long immobile glacier, economic inequality started to rise. Among men working full time—the group most sharply affected—inequalities in earnings between the top 20 percent of wage earners and the bottom 20 percent doubled in the next two and a half decades. By 1973, the median wage for all men working full time began to fall. Over the next 20 years, men’s earnings fell 11 percent, from $34,048 to $30,407, even though the earnings of the top 20 percent grew steadily and the real per-capita gross domestic product (G.D.P.) rose 29 percent.

Within the family, American women came to the rescue of American men. Mostly by working many more hours per year, women kept median household incomes slowly rising until 1989. In 1989, however, median real wages for women working full time year-round also began to fall. Preliminary data for 1994 and early 1995 indicate that these wage declines are accelerating. As a result, since 1989 median household incomes have fallen more than 7 percent after correcting for inflation and family size, to $31,241 in 1993, from $33,585. Already working full time, women had no more extra hours of work effort to contribute to the family’s income.

The same sharp rise in inequality has occurred in the distribution of wealth. The share of total net worth of the top 1/2 of 1 percent of the population rose from 26 to 31 percent in just six years, between 1983 and 1989. By the early 1990’s the share of wealth (more than 40 percent) held by the top 1 percent of the population was essentially double what it had been in the mid-1970’s and back to where it was in the late 1920’s, before the introduction of progressive taxation.

These are uncharted waters for American democracy. Since accurate data have been kept, beginning in 1929, America has never experienced falling real wages for a majority of its work force while its per-capita G.D.P. was rising. In effect, we are conducting an enormous social and political experiment—something like putting a pressure cooker on the stove over a full flame and waiting to see how long it takes to explode.

From Why Their World Might Crumble by Lester Thurow in the November 19, 1995, Special Issue of The New York Times Magazine on The Rich. Lester Thurow is Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

$3000 (not renewable) to a junior or senior in a health science major who plans to graduate with University Honors

$1500 (not renewable) awarded to two sophomores or juniors who are making progress toward graduation with Honors

$2500 per year for a maximum of three years to be awarded to four first or second year Honors students who intend to graduate with University Honors

Applications are available in the Honors Office, 179 Millett Hall and are due by February 28.
December Honors Program Graduates

December Honors Program graduates were recognized at a precommencement luncheon in the Student Union on December 4. Graduates were invited to attend along with their Honors project advisors. Each graduate was presented with a certificate and the gold Honors cord to be worn at commencement.

University Honors Scholar
Loretta L. Fox, Environmental Science

Departmental Honors Scholars—Nursing
Karen S. Anderson
Charlene M. David
Wanda J. Franklin
Jill R. Jobe
Robin C. Kenney
Carol A. Laage
Josie M. McCrea
Jerri L. Mooney
Naida A. O'Bryant
Deborah K. Stormer
Martha J. Zinger

Departmental Honors Scholar—BME/HFE
Kenneth W. Maynard

General Studies Honors Scholars
Vanessa M. Farrell
  Sec. English Education
Jeffrey S. Klaben, MIS
Charlotte A. Ludolph
Elementary Education
Donald E. Shepherd, MIS
Jennifer K. Wells, English
Brian M. Werst, EE

Special Alumni Edition

We were thrilled by the high rate of response to surveys mailed to Honors Alumni as part of the assessment process. Many were good enough to share personal and career information. And we don’t want to waste any of it. Look for a special edition of Honorable Mentions that will feature both the personal data as well as more information about the assessment results. The expected publication date is early in March. The special edition will be mailed only to Honors Alumni, Honors Faculty, and selected staff.

Thanks to all who made this not only possible but also positively necessary.