Meet the 2012-13 Leadership in Honors Scholars

The CCAC Honors Program is pleased to announce the winners of four full-tuition Leadership in Honors Scholarships for the 2012-2013 academic year. The winners are Phyllis Anderson, Tina Beaver, Molly McGinnis, and Robin Monroe. All four winners will work to promote the Honors Program, build an Honors community on their campus, and serve as team captain for service learning projects.

Phyllis Anderson attends Boyce Campus and will graduate from CCAC in May 2013 with an Associate’s degree in Business. She plans to transfer to the University of Pennsylvania and pursue a career as a director of sales and marketing.

Tina Beaver attends South Campus where she will graduate from the Nursing program in 2014. Her career goal is to work as a labor and delivery nurse.

Robin Monroe attends Allegheny Campus and will graduate with an Associate’s degree in Liberal Arts & Sciences in 2013. She plans to continue her education and major in Professional Writing and/or Corporate Communications and work in media communications for a non-profit organization, and teach writing and communication at the community college level.

Molly McGinnis attends North Campus as an Accounting major. She will graduate in May 2013 and transfer to the University of Pittsburgh Bachelor’s degree in Accounting and become a certified public accountant.

Tina, Phyllis, Molly, and Robin began their leadership adventure by exploring their team-building, problem-solving, and leadership skills with a day of rock climbing and a 40’ ropes course at Nemacolin Woodlands Resort. The Leadership Scholars were joined by Honors NRHC presenter Suzanne South, spring 2012 Honors Scholar Jamie Fair, and Honors Campus Coordinators Dan Lowe and Srujana Kanjula. The ropes course proved to be a challenge, but the students pushed themselves out of their comfort zone while supporting each other through the various obstacles, including a 250’ zipline.

Leadership in Honors Scholarships are competitive full-tuition scholarships awarded to returning CCAC Honors students who have been actively engaged in the CCAC Honors Program. The Leadership Scholars will assume leadership roles on their campuses and participate in the Honors Leadership course, which helps to develop the students’ leadership and interpersonal skills through the study of leadership theory, literature and historical documents and film as a means of analyzing leadership principles in action.

Applications for the 2013-14 Leadership in Honors Scholarship will be mailed to each student’s home in January. The deadline to enter is February 13, 2013.

Director’s Notes

The Fall semester continues to be a busy time for CCAC Honors students. Students have participated in a rock-climbing adventure through Titan Traverse at McConnell’s Mill State Park, where most students made it to the top of natural rock walls after arduous climbs, and those who didn’t helped others achieve. This was a terrific opportunity for students to get to know and support each other. Another group of students attended a Drue Heinz lecture by Jeffrey Toobin, who spoke about the history of the Supreme Court. Students at Allegheny Campus joined forces with PTK to go on a “Just Ducky” tour of Pittsburgh, supported by Allegheny Campus Student Life.

Honors students are once again serving the community by competing with Honors students at Point Park University and Robert Morris University, selling pink feet to raise money for the Susan G. Komen Foundation. On campus activities ran for a single week, October 10th through the 17th, but students raised money independently as well, particularly through the leadership of our Honors Scholars. Last year CCAC raised $2636 for the Komen Foundation, and we’re working on our tallies for this year. We hope to bring the Pink Feet trophy to CCAC once again and make a difference in finding a cure for breast cancer.

Honors students look forward to attending a lecture by Ellen Goodman the evening before Election Day; Ms. Goodman is an internationally known author and former columnist for the Boston Globe. On Sunday, November 18th, students will attend the critically acclaimed play “War Horse” at the Benedum.

We’re enjoying another successful and engaging semester in Honors at CCAC.

Daniel Lowe
The hole in the mirror where the you doesn't reflect could be touched, but it shouldn't be—consider the law of effect:
self-perception can be vicious,
and like a tooth that your tongue worries,
the digging and the clawing will only end when you infect.

And yes, it IS infection when you're addicted to yourself.
Sink that tooth up to the gum in a Jungian confection.
Resurrect each and every thought that has ever breached your mind and settled,
stink-bug-like, on the windows.
This is the nature of introspection.

Think of your mind like a collection,
and when you're deep in recollection,
you sort and dust off records,
and survey the points of intersection where you met and loved and lost and gleaned
all of the lessons your life has taught you,
all the things you bought and sold—the parts of you that you fought and molded into the you that you see now in the mirror with that hollow, and ask:

Did you follow every drummer drum-drum drumming,
in the summers hot and thick,
did you spend your time crumbling, or becoming?

Who are you now, you in the mirror, and what is hidden by the hole?
And what parts and pieces of your soul are yet to be discovered?

Sarah Lane is a sophomore at CCAC's Allegheny campus. Currently majoring in Social Sciences and Psychology, Sarah intends to pursue a career in research and higher education.
Meet Professor Kalina White

How will the Honors section of Introduction to Nutrition differ from the regular section?

We will look at the reasons why poor nutritional health is rampant in the United States. We will learn that health is not just a private decision but how it’s affected by public and economic policies. We will look at alternatives to the traditional agricultural field-to-plate chain. Finally, we’ll learn specific techniques for making healthier choices.

What drew you to pursue your terminal degree in your field of expertise?

Bacteria underpin every ecosystem and have relevance to human history, health, and policies. From microbiology, it’s easy to branch into all the other biological subfields.

What do you love most about teaching at CCAC?

The diversity of the students! Everyone brings their unique experience and voice to the discussion. We have the opportunity to learn so much about different people and different ways of life, ultimately becoming kinder and more compassionate while becoming more educated citizens.

What are some of your favorite things to do when you’re not teaching?

Lately, I’ve been busy raising a baby. Once she’s a little older, we’ll get back to travelling to see as many different ecosystems and cultures as possible. I also garden, make stuff, take pictures, and cook. I love to hike and spend too much time reading about new things.

Honors Introduction to Nutrition

BIO-117H+SC31H

Traditionally, BIO 117 introduces students to the principles of nutrition, stressing their scientific foundation and allowing students to develop an analysis of their own diets and set goals for improvement. Honors students will move beyond the basics to explore holistic issues related to the question of why it is so difficult to make healthy food choices. Methods for improving personal nutrition will be examined. The tensions between individual and community needs, related social and economic factors, and personal versus government decisions will be explored. Field trips to local sites are planned – trips to a farm and a grocery store are potential field trips. Students can also look forward to reading and discussing popular books such as Michael Pollan’s In Defense of Food: an Eater’s Manifesto.

A 3-credit hybrid course. Meets Sat. 2/9, 3/16, 4/20, 5/11; 9:30 a.m.-4:10 p.m. at South Campus. Blackboard coursework begins January 28.

Meet Professor John Blondo

How will the Honors section of Psychology of Adjustment differ from the regular section?

The major difference will be the “in person” meetings. I have taught Psych of Adjustment as an online course for a number of years but not as an “in person” class. This class will contain both elements.

What drew you to pursue your terminal degree in your field of expertise?

When I started college I was majoring in Education with a concentration in the Social Sciences since this is what I liked in High School. When I took my first class in Psychology I was hooked and changed my major.

What do you love most about teaching at CCAC?

I really love the academic freedom afforded the faculty which allows us to pursue our interests without much outside control. I also greatly enjoy the interaction with students and my fellow faculty members.

What are some of your favorite things to do when you’re not teaching?

Mostly family stuff; I love having my family come to visit and especially enjoy hanging out with the grandchildren and cooking for them.

Honors Psychology of Adjustment

PSY 203H+SC31H

(Prerequisite PSY 101)

A course that looks at what it takes to become a well-adjusted human being. The course examines development of the self, cultural values and individual adjustment, the role of relationships in adjustment as well as other topics. Outside speakers and/or a field trip may be added.

A 3-credit hybrid course. Prerequisite PSY 101. Meets Sat. 2/9, 3/16, 4/20, 5/11; 9:30 a.m.-4:10 p.m. at South Campus. Blackboard coursework begins January 28.
If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive), who would you choose and why?

If I could choose to have dinner with anyone, I would choose two people for a compound reason. The first person would be my great, great grandfather, who I was told was a full blood Cherokee Indian. I would choose him because through the generations, my family has not passed down the knowledge of me being of Cherokee descent, and I truly believe in the philosophy quoted by James Baldwin: 

"Know from whence you came. If you know from whence you came, there are absolutely no limitations to where you can go."

The second person would be the current leader of the United States, President Barack Obama. He would be my other choice, because he has personally endured an overwhelming amount of rejection, criticism, stereotyping, personal accomplishment, and career success in his journey through life. With me being a young African American male in today’s society, success can be a difficult goal to obtain. The knowledge of these two men combined would be a powerful tool in my personal development as a man, as a professional, as a role model, and as a leader. To have such an opportunity would be a blessing like no other.

Mary Shannon Brady

Education Major

Honors Council will recognize the students who participate fully in the Honors Program during the 2012-13 school year by awarding them with an Honors Program Hoodie.

You can score your Honors Hat Trick by:

1. **Earning at least one Honors credit,** (by successfully completing an Honors course or contract)
2. **Attending at least one Honors activity,** and
3. **Participating in an Honors service project**
   (Pink Feet, The Big Read, or Honor the Earth)

Hoodies will be awarded at the Honors Forum on April 26, 2013. All criteria must be met within the fall 2012 and spring 2013 semesters.
Looking for a quiet place on campus to study?

Each of the four main campuses has a room set aside specifically for Honors Students!

Equipped with computers, these Honors Resource Rooms are a great place to study, work on projects, and socialize with other Honors students.

**Honors Resource Rooms**

**Allegheny Campus: Room L213**

(in the library)

Students must check in at the Circulation Desk and the library staff will open the room.

**Boyce Campus: Room N406**

Students must ask the reading tech to open the door.

**North Campus: Room 2019**

Students can ask the secretary (Chris Dagg) whose office is located on the second floor to open the room.

**South Campus: Room 8409**

(Honors Program Office)

The space is available from 9am-2pm, Monday—Friday.

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**Rebecca Stevens**

*Physical Therapy Assistant and Massage Therapy*

**Christina Desalvo**

*Business Major*

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**Educational Goals:**

I plan on graduating from the Allied Health Physical Therapy Assistant program in May 2014 with an Associate’s Degree and take the licensure exam in the summer of 2014. I also plan on receiving my Massage Certificate and licensure in May 2015. Because I feel that higher education is more than a means to a job or career, I want to use the time I spend at CCAC to challenge myself through classes, service projects, and the Honors Program.

**Career Goals:**

At this time, I am still exploring the various areas in which a Physical Therapy Assistant can work. Ultimately, I hope to work in a facility where I can use my PTA knowledge as well as my massage skills.

**Special Interests/Hobbies:**

Over the past decade, I have spent time working as an AEA Stage Manager. Even though I am working towards a new career, I love working in and around theaters. I am a producer for The Summer Company, a Pittsburgh based theater group, and plan on continuing working with them as long as possible. I am also a self-proclaimed homegrown science nerd ~ I can’t get enough of Michio Kaku’s physics books!

**About My Fall 2012 Honor Contract:**

My Honors contract is focused around the kinesiology topic for Introduction to Physical Therapy with Norman Johnson. I plan on creating a blackboard website which focuses on terminology, movements, and manual tests commonly found in physical therapy. Aside from written descriptions, I plan on creating photography, video, and audio components to supplement the information.

**What is your favorite book/author?**

Usually, my favorite book and author tends to be what I am currently reading! At the moment, I am reading *Anarchy Evolution* by Greg Graffin and Steve Olson. However, a long favorite author is Lewis Carroll. My father and I used to read Alice in Wonderland together when I was a child, so there will always be a special place in my heart for Carroll’s works.

**If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive), who would you choose and why?**

There are so many! In the end, I would love to dine with Leonardo di Vinci: a man who showed us that science, spirituality, and art can be, and are, completely intertwined. I very much believe that the best way to fully live life is to engage science, spirituality, and art. To meet a man who not only believed it but lived it, that would be exciting and inspiring.

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**Educational Goals:**

Thus far, I am on the right path with regards to my educational goals. I am currently in my fifth semester of school at CCAC and I have proudly maintained a 4.0 GPA average while writing interesting and fun Honors projects and learning the fundamentals of everything from Educational Psychology to Calculus. All and all, I wish to receive my Associate’s Degree in general Business at CCAC, and then to transfer to a four year university and broaden my scope of business knowledge at the university of my choosing.

**Career Goals:**

My career goals are to receive my Masters in Business, perhaps with a concentration in Marketing and to develop my own Art side project of painting murals.

**Special Interests/Hobbies:**

My most cherished interests include studying and analyzing all aspects of rock n’ roll music, collecting autographs from my rock idols, writing in any sense of the word, fashion, individualism, being a free spirit, and vegetarianism. My hobbies include: dancing, reading, writing, and drawing, specifically colorful rock logos and portraits of my favorite rock musicians.

**About My Fall 2012 Honor Contract:**

For my Honors contract for Fall 2012, I am doing two separate projects, one for my Music class with Herbert Jones and one for my Creative Writing class with Jessica Heathcote. My Music class project will be a critical analysis of the portrayal of God and Satan in rock music. Always being a woman of faith that holds the power of music very close to her heart, I’ve found the Biblical aspect of rock music to be very fascinating and quite an interesting topic.

My Creative Writing Honors project is a historical fictional story, similar to that of an Edgar Allan Poe story.

**What is your favorite book/author?**

In a traditional sense, my favorite authors are Edgar Allan Poe and Ambrose Bierce, but, as I do read quite often, I primarily read works of nonfiction, such as autobiographies of people that I admire, or studies of religion, science, or mythology.

**If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive), who would you choose and why?**

This is a very difficult question to answer! If I could have dinner with anyone, it would either be Ray Davies of The Kinks, John Lennon, George Harrison, Mick Jagger, or Eric Clapton. I would choose any one of these revered rock musicians so that I could understand even more about their lyrical talents and their own lives. Ray Davies could teach me about his on-going struggle for individualism and his life of vegetarianism; George Harrison could serenade me with stories of discovering his own spirituality; John Lennon would have me laughing all night with his crude sense of humor and teach me the basics of the peace movement of the 60’s; Mick Jagger would enlighten me with wild stories of his past and how he wanted to become an Economist; and Eric Clapton would spiritually play the guitar during the whole dinner, helping me further place my faith in the Lord.

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I’d like to share with you some of my experiences since leaving CCAC and the ways that participating in the Honors program here prepared me to succeed at the University of Pittsburgh and beyond.

Reflecting on my experience with the CCAC Honors program, I realize that I was training myself to go above and beyond requirements. Most of my honors work was in the form of the contracts; signing on with a faculty member to complete and present an independent research project in addition to the regular assignments for a course. In all I completed about eight contracts, four related to my history concentration and four related to anthropology and archaeology. I researched everything from the French Revolution to baseball stadiums, with most of my papers being about 20 pages long. What I didn’t realize, is that a normal undergraduate thesis, written over the course of a year, is only 30-60 pages long. When I decided to pursue honors in history at Pitt, I felt more than prepared. Research is an essential component to any academic career, and completing Honors contracts here at CCAC jump started me on the process.

Another necessary skill for a student, undergrad or grad level, is relating to professors. The Honors contract process requires that you meet with and consult a faculty member on your research. At first I felt very uncomfortable asking my teachers to sign up to be my supervisors, but eventually it became a routine. When I got to Pitt, I was comfortable enough talking with faculty to ask about their research interests, and learn who would be willing to basically be a mentor for me over the past three years. Now that I’m applying to graduate programs, I realize that this was absolutely indispensable. I need three letters of recommendation for every school I apply to, and teachers won’t write them unless they really know who you are.

I also remember worrying about presenting my research projects. One of my favorite memories from the Honors program here at CCAC was participating in the Northeast Regional Honors Conference in 2007. I was nervous, but I applied to present my paper on women in the French Revolution. The whole process seemed so foreign: writing an abstract, sending my paper to a committee of people I’d never met. I was so excited when my paper was accepted. I remember traveling with Julia and two other students to New Jersey and arriving to see students from four year schools presenting on our panels. We were worried, but after watching them we realized that the quality of our work was not different. All three of the students CCAC sent to the conference got great peer reviews and I learned that conferences are really pretty fun.

After reflecting on these aspects of my experience with the Honors program, I can see that working on the contracts—what seemed at the time to be just a bit of extra work—taught me what it means to be an advanced student at any school and any level. Over the last three years, I’ve had some incredible opportunities. In 2010 I spent the summer in Menorca, Spain, at an archaeological field school. In 2011 I took a short course in Istanbul, Turkey, before spending the remainder of the summer as a Steele intern at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. I’ve presented at several conferences, and am working on extra projects this semester with the goal of publication.

I trace the skills that enabled me to succeed in these pursuits to my experiences with the Honors contracts. Being a member of the Honors Program is about developing into a capable student and professional. The Contracts taught me how to do intensive research, how to relate to professors and utilize their experience, and to have the confidence to present my work anywhere. But more than that I learned to take initiative in my education, and observed the benefits of putting in extra time and work. These are skills that have brought and will continue to bring me success, from CCAC to the world.

Nina Schreiner graduated from CCAC with 21 credits in Honors and an Associate’s degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences. In 2012, she graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with degrees in Anthropology and History.
The Typical Honors Student

By Dr. Steve Wells, South Campus Honors Program Faculty
Honors Forum Presentation, April 27, 2012

“The Typical Honors Student”: You can probably see from the title of my remarks where we’re headed here, but come along for the ride even if you’ve figured out the destination. I do want to assure you that my comments about some propensities of honors students I intend as a little bit of teasing among friends. I thought I’d make that clear as I’ve noticed that sometimes, very rarely of course, honors students can take themselves a bit seriously.

So, how do I identify honors students in my classes? They do tend to exhibit some readily identifiable characteristics. As I look out at a fresh group of students on the first day of a class, some students tend to stand out—they are prepared. As astounding as it may be to all of you, some students do appear on the first day of class without notebook or pen, without having contacted the professor for an advance copy of the course outline, without having purchased the textbook and previewed the first chapter. Those students sitting in the first or second row, ready to write down everything that transpires, those I suspect of being honors students.

Honors students also tend to be vocal, comfortable with sharing their thoughts from the very first day. The questions they ask tend to follow similar patterns. Rarely do they ask straight-up content questions. They’ve read and understood the text, so I hear few questions of fact. Sometimes the questions sound more like middle-school math word problems: “If there are 568 points for the semester, as indicated on page 5 of the course outline, and I have 511 points at the end of the semester, how much extra credit will I have to do to make up for the two tenths of a point I’d need to earn the A?” Much more frequent and more satisfying, however, are the thoughtful, sometimes subtle questions addressing relationships between our class and either another class or the student’s prior reading and study. The first honors project I directed arose from a discussion of the connections between advances in mathematics and the early American literature of exploration and settlement. One element of the project was a presentation of the student’s research results. As a part of this presentation, the student had the class arrange desks to replicate one of Columbus’s ships of discovery. He then described the process of 15th century, open-ocean navigation while the class practiced it using instruments he’d made from twine and cardboard. This exercise of imagination gave us an indication of how very primitive navigation was and allowed the students and me to experience in some very small way the fear and wonder that fills the accounts of the new world set down by those early explorers.

The presentation was spectacular, and it showed me that honors students don’t tend to do things halfway. Because of this, they tend to be busy people. The lengths to which they’ll go to overextend themselves never cease to amaze me. I bet at least three quarters of you have thought within the last three minutes of some obligation you need to address as soon as you leave here today. It occurs to me that some of you might in fact be doing work as you sit here! But it’s this very activity beyond the classroom that impresses me the most. Between student government, clubs and activities, family, and work, I’m astounded that there remains time for academics. But honors students always find time. I’ve heard, “Well yes, I’m involved in student government, theater, art, and I’m carrying eighteen credits, but if you need someone else to sign up for your class, I’m sure they’d let me take three more credits.” That willingness to explore, to push against perceived limitations, seems characteristic of many students in the Honors program. Although I began my formal association with Honors in 2008 when I first directed an Honors contract, a more informal relationship with them about a year earlier shaped my first impressions. I was lucky enough to attend one of the Drue Heinz lectures with a group of honors students when they went to see Chimamanda Adichie. Since then, I’ve done my best to be a regular at these outings, and we’ve shared some memorable evenings in the Carnegie Music Hall, seeing inspiring speakers including former US poet laureate Billy Collins, former secretary of state Madeline Albright, and Supreme Court justice Stephen Breyer, among many others. Honors students are always willing to do more.

These characteristics so typical of the honors student’s approach to life—enthusiasm for learning, willingness to make connections, a spirit of exploration, and the desire to do it all—were on display in the honors section of American literature I was lucky enough to teach last semester. Also evident, however, was the striking diversity of experiences, talents, and interests represented within that group. I couldn’t help but be amazed by the various paths the students in that class had walked to get to this point in their academic journeys and I was equally impressed by the different visions they had for their futures. Although they share the traits of any outstanding student, the students in the CCAC honors program are anything but typical. The program director, the campus coordinators, faculty, and staff provide organization and structure for the program, but it’s the intelligence, dedication, and, above all, the individual spirit of each student that make it the special experience it is for all involved. You make the program the success that it is, and I thank you for being anything but “typical.”

Dr. Steven Wells is a veteran of the U. S. Air Force and has earned an A.S. Degree from Community College of Allegheny County, a B.A. with a dual major in English and history, an M.A. in English, and a Ph.D. in literature from Duquesne University. He has been teaching at CCAC since 2001, and was chosen by his peers to win the NISOD Teaching Excellence Award in 2009.