

# The Ampersand

UIC Honors College

January 2000

## *Important Upcoming Dates*

ASB Informational Mtg.	Jan. 27
Honors College Social	Jan. 28
Agreement Forms Due	Jan. 28
Scholarship Association Applications Deadline	Feb. 18
Summer Session Printed Timetable Available	Feb. 21

## *A Message from the Dean*

Welcome back to the campus for the last semester of this school year. I hope that you feel ready to meet the demands that will be placed upon you to succeed with excellence.

I am seeking everyone's input in the matter of what should be an appropriate demeanor in the College. Many of you have complained to me about noise and carelessness in the public areas of the College, namely the student lounge, computer lab and kitchen. Your cooperation will help to maintain our environment pleasant and functional. Let us take pride in our facilities, let us respect the rights of others to a clean and quiet atmosphere. Remember that the lounge is not for playing cards only. Those who play must respect the need of others for a small, quiet study area.

I must also remind you that all Honors College students must fulfill their honors requirements in order to stay in the College. Freshmen must take one honors course of three credit hours *each semester* of their first year, regardless of their AP credit. Upper classmen are expected to satisfy appropriate requirements. Consult with your Honors College advisors to avoid unnecessary problems. Have a successful semester.

Dean Lansiné Kaba

## **You Can Help Make a Wish Come True!**

*by Joanna Kuppy*

Perhaps you've heard of it: the charity that makes dreams come true. The Make-A-Wish Foundation's mission is to fulfill the wishes of children battling life-threatening illnesses (from ages 2 ½ through 18.) These wishes extend beyond the traditional "I'd like to meet such-and-such movie star" or "I want to go to Disney World!" According to the Foundation, wishes generally fall into one of four categories: "I Want to Be..." ; "I Want to Have..." ; "I Want to Go..." ; and "I Want to Meet..." Some recent wishes include a trip to Hawaii, being crowned "Queen for a Day," and receiving a computer.

The Foundation views itself as a part of the healing process for many children. The medical establishment provides the physical treatment, and the Foundation helps provide the "magic" to enhance the child's mental state. The result, as evidenced by the thousands and thousands of delighted children, is incredible.

When a child is deemed eligible for the wish-granting program, he or she is assigned a team of two specially trained "wish-granters." All details, financial and otherwise, are managed by the Make-A-Wish team to make the experience as enjoyable as possible for the family. Locally, the Make-A-Wish foundation is represented by the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Northern Illinois, whose offices are in downtown Chicago. Any child battling a life-threatening illness who legally resides in one of the 24 northern-most counties of Illinois and fits the medical criteria is eligible to request a wish from our local chapter.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation also eagerly accepts the help of volunteers. They work in all areas of the foundation—from wish granting to administration—and are an integral part of the success of the Foundation. Volunteers must (among other requirements) attend an orientation session, complete an interview, provide references, and pass two state background checks. If you are interested in volunteering, call (312)-943-8956.

This year, the Honors College Advisory Board is hosting its annual ball on March 4, 2000, and we are altering the event slightly. The Ball will now become a charity event, and proceeds will go to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Northern Illinois. We hope to see you at the Ball to support this remarkable organization. (*See page 7 of this issue & watch your email for more details about the Ball!*)

# ASB Wants YOU!

Alternative Spring Break (ASB) seeks students to participate in Spring Break 2000 Trips. If you are interested in activism, volunteerism, leadership, or expanding your horizons, ASB might be just the organization you need.

In our second year at UIC, we are offering 7 trips over our break from school in the spring. We will be dealing with issues ranging from Urban Poverty to Endangered Wildlife and HIV/AIDS. We will be traveling to places ranging from Boston and New Orleans to Georgia Island and Northern California.

If you think you might be interested, act now. Applications are being accepted up until Mon., Jan. 31. For more information, please attend an informational meeting, (Thursday, Jan. 27 at 6 p.m. in SRC 15 (below the Atrium near Rathskeller) or check out our website: [http://www2.uic.edu/stud\\_orgs/service/asb](http://www2.uic.edu/stud_orgs/service/asb), or contact: Tamara Rose, ASB President, 312-355-0499.



## Summer Session Information Available

Planning on going to summer school this year? If you, you should check out the Summer Session web site at: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/summer> The web site has all pertinent information about the 2000 Summer Session. Registration begins April 3rd; summer classes start on May 30th. You may also contact the Summer Session office at (312) 996-9099, or via email at: [summer@uic.edu](mailto:summer@uic.edu)

# Get Ready for Homecoming Week Fun!

Feb. 11 - 19

by Cherie Siu

Is school already getting you down? Do you groan at the thought of all those midterms in the weeks ahead? Just when you thought that only work was looming in the horizon, let me tell you about the week in mid-February designed to lift your mood and promote school spirit: Homecoming Week 2000! "We have a homecoming?" you bewilderedly ask. "But we don't even have a football team!" Quite right, but UIC's own Homecoming celebrates school spirit on campus and also our many alumni. Let's take a whirlwind tour on what the Student Alumni League, the Alumni Association, and other campus departments have planned for a week of fun, laughs, and enjoyment.

Homecoming is better than ever this year with the arrival of not just one day for celebrating, but a whole week. UIC kicks off the week of festivities with the Student Organization Window Painting Contest on Friday, February 11. That's right, grab your student organization, sign up, and paint the windows of the CCC cafeteria to show your school spirit!! Try for the \$75 first place cash prize, the \$50 second place prize, or the \$25 third place prize; sign up between January 24 and February 9 online (web site URL is listed below). On Wednesday, February 16, stop by the CCC Concourse for some popcorn and hot chocolate. Stay for our featured speaker, Rae Lewis Thornton. She dynamically challenges and educates her audience to take control of their own futures and health while drawing on her own experiences of living with AIDS. It will be one inspiring speech!

Thursday, February 17, is a day to give back to the community by participating in the Blood Drive in the basement of University Hall from 10 AM to 2 PM. Sign up for your time slot Wednesday in the CCC Concourse from 10 AM to Noon. Afterwards, join in the fun for a free show of Comedy Sportz, an improv group, in the InnerCircle that night at 7:30 PM. Come for food and laughs!

Finally, our week culminates with the event we've all been waiting for: the Homecoming 2000 Dinner and Dance: "Ballroom Blitz". Set in the historic Palmer House Hilton, this dance is one that you will not want to miss. Dinner begins at 7 PM and dancing is from 9:30 PM until 1 AM. This is your chance to learn the intricacies of several ballroom dances such as mambo and tango as an instructor will be presenting them to the attendees. Don't miss your opportunity to cast your vote for this year's Homecoming king and queen, as well as for the winners of the window painting contest. Tickets are only \$40 for students for both the dinner and dance and \$9 solely for the dance. What are you waiting for? Grab a date and make it a night out on the town! And if that wasn't enough, make sure you make it to the UIC Pavilion at 3 PM the next day to cheer the UIC Flames to victory against cross-town rival Loyola. Grab a picture with Sparky while you're at it to top off this week of fun.

Be sure to join us for this week of excitement! For more information, check out the Homecoming website at <http://sal.uic.edu/homecoming> or contact the Homecoming Chair, Jaclyn Sea, at [jsea1@uic.edu](mailto:jsea1@uic.edu) or at (312) 413-0419.

## Share YOUR Honors Experience

by Shrujal Baxi

Choosing a college can be an exciting, yet overwhelming, decision to make for anyone at any age. This year, a group of Honors College students are trying to make the decision a little bit easier for seniors in high school who have been accepted to UIC. The Honors Experience is a unique opportunity for both honors students and potential freshmen to get to know UIC.

Any senior admitted to the Honors College has the option of coming and spending a day at UIC with Honors Experience hosts. Honors College volunteers will take students to classes, honors seminars, club meetings, and even host people overnight in order to give these students a real feel for what UIC life is about.

A typical experience for a visiting senior might be a meeting in the morning with a volunteer, followed by a campus tour with another volunteer. Then the student gets to choose the classes they would like to attend that day with Honors Experience volunteers. Somewhere in the middle, the student will have lunch, on us, and the evening will involve experiencing dorm or apartment life, depending on what the student wants.

The neat thing about this program is that the student comes in contact with 5 to 6 volunteers and their friends instead of being attached to only one person and hearing only their perspectives on life at UIC. Ultimately, the decision whether or not to attend UIC has to be theirs, so it is good to give them different views on life at UIC. This is an amazing way to give back just a little, especially if you do not want to commit a lot of time.

Anyone who is not already a volunteer and wants to help out can e-mail **Shrujal Baxi** at [sbaxi1@uic.edu](mailto:sbaxi1@uic.edu) for more information. Be nice to those intimidated, shy high school students you see in the Honors College the next couple of months, they might be classmates next year!

## Honors College Sponsors UIC's First Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium

by Sagun Desai & Manu Goyal

Blue and white flags hanging from street side lampposts proudly proclaim UIC's honorable missions to the nonchalant passerby. As undergraduate students, most of us can relate to two of the three missions: teaching and public service. The third, however, can be intimidating to the typical student. In fact, the common perception is that research is exclusively the domain of professors and starving graduate students. Most undergraduate students may only catch a glimpse of professional research when some professor decides to extend beyond his or her call of duty. But some undergraduates take advantage of UIC's Research I status and engage in professional research, allowing them to pursue an education beyond the classroom.

The newly appointed LAS Associate Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, English Professor Gerald Graff, agrees that undergraduate research is an invaluable aspect of a student's educational experience. Many members of the faculty share this belief. Thus, when a group of students from the Undergraduate Student Government approached the president of Sigma Xi (the Scientific Research Society) and the faculty of the Honors College with the idea of having an annual symposium for undergraduate researchers, it was received with overwhelming enthusiasm.

With little time wasted, a committee was formed to spearhead the first annual UIC Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS). Like Ferdinand Magellan's travel to the Cape of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, the USR 2000 Steering Committee has already begun its voyage that will culminate on Friday, April 7th in CCC's Cardinal Room (formerly known as the Cornucopia Room). From 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., the interdisciplinary conference will allow undergraduate students involved in various research projects to submit an abstract and present their work through poster and/or oral presentations.

Everyone attending USR 2000 will get to enjoy the formalities of this monumental event. A distinguished and celebrated researcher will be invited to address the importance of undergraduate research in a keynote speech. Participants will be eligible for cash awards from the fifteen hundred dollars donated by the Honors College. Food and refreshments will be served as students and teachers from UIC and surrounding high schools peruse the various poster presentations. The Steering Committee hopes to make this an enriching and intellectual experience for all involved.

A call for abstracts will be announced very soon. The Committee would like to make it clear that this conference is directed towards all disciplines, including the arts and humanities. For more information and/or to submit an abstract, watch for the launch of the USR 2000 web page (currently in progress) as a link on the Honors College web page at: <http://www.hc.uic.edu> If you would like to take part in planning this history-making event, contact either **Manu Goyal** at [mgoyal1@uic.edu](mailto:mgoyal1@uic.edu) or **Matt Wettergreen** at [mwette1@uic.edu](mailto:mwette1@uic.edu)

# It's Scholarship Season!

Start asking for those recommendation letters! UIC's Scholarship Association has announced its Scholarships for 2000. For a complete listing, go to the Scholarship Association web site at: <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/scholar> (there is also a direct link on the Honors College web page: <http://www.hc.uic.edu>) A limited number of printed copies of scholarship information is available in the Honors College lobby. Listed below are the various types of awards students may apply for:

## ASSOCIATION AWARDS

These awards are funded by the general membership of the Scholarship Association through fundraising activities and generous donations. They are intended to assist outstanding students, especially those who have also made contributions to the UIC community.

## ENDOWED AWARDS

The majority of these awards have been endowed by friends, relatives, and colleagues of the individuals for whom each is named. These named individuals have given leadership to the University of Illinois at Chicago in a wide variety of areas, and the scholarships have been created to honor their significant contributions to this university.

## SPECIAL AWARDS

These are one-time awards for 2000 only. They are made possible through contributions by friends, faculty, staff, and students.

## COLLEGE, SCHOOL, AND DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

These awards have been made possible through contributions of faculty, staff, students, and friends to furnish financial assistance to one or more students in a given department.

These individual funds are maintained and invested by the UIC Scholarship Association. The income from each fund is returned annually to the given department, **which determines its own method of selection of the student recipient and the time and place of making the award.**

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## Lessons in Life

*by Anisha Shetty*

This was it...the moment I had been waiting for. As I walked down the brightly colored hallway, each side filled with a comforting montage of students' pieces of artwork and literature, there was suddenly an uneasy feeling in my stomach, the feeling of tiny butterflies flying around in my body. What was I getting so nervous about, though? Why was I suddenly feeling so uneasy? Then it hit me...what if I couldn't get through to the students? What if I didn't know how to act around them and treated them differently than anyone else? What if I couldn't form relationships with any of my children and became just another college student volunteering at the school? I stood outside of my classroom for a moment and took a long, deep breath, soaking everything in. What I didn't realize as I walked into that classroom that early Monday morning was that this was going to be the start of the most amazing week of my life, and that the students I would be working with were going to influence me in a way that could be done by no other.

The class that I worked with was at the Crotched Mountain Foundation in Greenfield, New Hampshire, along with a wonderful group at UIC, Alternative Spring Break. This particular class was made up of very low functioning six 16-21 year olds. Each of these students were confined to a wheelchair, and none of them were able to speak. Their handicaps didn't disable their personalities at all, though, as each one showed more strength, love, and motivation than some of the strongest, most "functioning" people in the world. In one short week, people I worked with impacted me in so many ways, teaching me lessons in "life" that are going to stay with me forever.

Through their actions and the ways they went about their daily life, the students at the disability school taught me three main things: 1) How important a smile is, as it is the universal symbol of love; 2) How music is the tie that binds us all together; and 3) How everyone should always work their hardest in striving for their goals as nothing is impossible, only possible.

Even through the toughest, most frustrating parts of the day, when it was hard to understand what a student was thinking or needing, it was the smile on their face that made everything a whole lot better. The strength and determination every one of the students had was incredible. Not once did they look at their handicap as a barrier, just an ordinary obstacle that could always be overcome. The way they worked so hard to accomplish their goals, whether it was wheeling themselves just a couple of feet or throwing a basketball into a hoop, they never gave up or dwelled on what they couldn't do. They always looked ahead, stayed positive, and were the best that they could be, values that we should all utilize in life.

The students I worked with were the most wonderful, amazing people I had ever met. In one week, they had taught me so many things that I wanted to share with my family and friends as soon as I got home. I definitely can't wait to go on another Alternative Spring Break trip again this year and form friendships and gain memories that I know will stay with me a lifetime.

For more information about ASB, visit their web site at: [http://www2.uic.edu/stud\\_orgs/service/asb/](http://www2.uic.edu/stud_orgs/service/asb/)

# Gun Control

by Anchal Sud

Gun control is one of the most controversial issues of the 20th century, but has divided American society since its early times. Violence by firearms continues to take more lives each year in America, yet American citizens and the government cannot agree on legislation to control such injustice. While proponents of gun control state that reducing the number of guns would save lives, opponents argue that laws limiting gun ownership would deter law abiding citizens from protecting their homes, hunting, target shooting, and collecting.

The federal government and all U.S. states have some gun control laws, but many gun control activists are actively urging stronger laws that would severely limit gun use and ownership. Current legislation eliminates unreliable or mentally incompetent people from owning any guns and prohibits citizens from possessing high-risk guns. In 1993, Congress passed the Brady Bill, which stipulates a five-day waiting period for individuals purchasing handguns and established a federal firearm license fee and annual license renewal fee. Many people feel that these laws are too austere, while others support increased government legislation.

More than 35,000 people are killed each year by guns, the highest death rate among any industrialized nation. Firearms are much more deadly than other weapons. For example, attacks involving a gun are five times more likely to result in a death than similar attacks made with a knife. In 1992 guns were the weapons used in approximately two-thirds of the murders in the United States. About one-fifth of Americans own between 192 and 230 million guns. Approximately half of all U.S. families own at least one gun.

There has been a recent disturbing increase of violence resulting from children using firearms, as the recent Columbine and Jonesboro, Arkansas shootings show. The easy accessibility of guns to minors has led them to experiment with dangerous weapons without knowing the true consequences that guns can cause. As more weapons are issued each year, there is more chance that minors and irresponsible adults will abuse the weapons. The tragedies that firearms cause are ones of great sorrow and remorse. Guns bring a false sense of security into homes and result in needless violence. Owning a gun often makes a person more likely to shoot a family member than a criminal.

Most Americans, according to a recent survey, think that the average citizen should have the right to own a handgun, but they also want the government to regulate gun ownership. Opponents of gun control laws, including organizations such as the National Rifle Association, object to the passage of laws that restrict responsible citizens from owning guns and cite the Second Amendment to the Constitution to justify their position. The amendment reads, "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." They feel that the amendment should be interpreted to guarantee citizens free access to firearms. However, the courts have never struck down a gun control law because of this provision, in part because they have interpreted the Second Amendment as applying only to militia weapons; nonetheless, the Second Amendment has been an important part of the debate on gun control.

As the debate of gun control continues, the American people must not forget what is at stake. We are known throughout the world as great problem solvers and compromisers. We must not let the issue of gun control divide us as a nation, but focus on answering the question of how we can decrease the violence that guns cause. If we do not take dramatic action, the decline of this great nation is surely inevitable. We are sending a wrong message to the younger generation: that guns should be treated as property for individual use. Guns, however, are the responsibility of the community, in which all members are affected by gun violence.



# It's a Small World After All

by Deepak Mitra



The rate at which both information and people move around the world has been steadily increasing, year after year. As we keep immigrating to new places, the ethnic divisions that used to divide people start to blur. Organizations such

as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the United Nations ensure that we are tied together politically as well. But it is our merging economies that hold our world together the most tightly. As NAFTA and similar agreements knock down barriers to free trade, we become less a set of disjointed countries and more a single planet. It's inevitable.

Yet despite these developments, Americans in general remain woefully ignorant of what is taking place outside our borders. Among the industrialized nations, the United States consistently scores lowest on geography tests. Not only do we not know what is happening elsewhere in the world, often we are not even aware of the existence or location of those events.

Yes, it's true that the United States is the world's only superpower today. And its citizens enjoy probably the highest standard of living on the planet. Yet this has not always been the case, and may not last either. Britain, Rome, Russia – all of these have possessed empires in the past, yet today they have less influence than the U.S. does. In general, we enjoy technological superiority and financial security. In this increasingly connected world, what happens thousands of kilometers away has very real effects in our corner too. War in the Middle East, the advent of the European Union, economic collapse in Southeast Asia – all of these have had profound effects on our lives. Yet I wonder how many of you can even name the countries of Southeast Asia?

Every year, world affairs will become increasingly tied to domestic affairs. Read or watch international news. If it deals with unfamiliar places, find them on a globe or atlas. Or find them online (the United Nations' web site, <http://www.un.org>, contains an excellent cartographic section).

There is no excuse for ignorance. Without understanding the rest of the world, we will not be able to maintain everything for which we have worked so far. This small world is truly getting smaller all the time.

# The Art of Driving

by Rajeev Garg

Many of us take for granted one of the greatest adventures in our life: driving. This art is not only just a way to travel from point A to point B, but an entire philosophy that begins in the concept studios where a car is first designed. Different engineering teams with focuses on safety, performance, and ergonomics sit in a room and construct the cockpit that will seat the heart and mind of their vehicle. It is here that a friendly battle begins between the teams, with each one trying to establish dominance conceptually into the final design. The end result is a harmonious environment, form following function, containing a balance of security, control, and comfort for the driver.

This, however, is only half of the story. As with any piece of art, it is not only the role of the artist to add his/her conceptual ideas, but also the role of the viewer to experience the piece of work in its entirety so as to experience its aesthetic qualities. This same viewer response is also intrinsic to the art of driving. Sitting in the driver's seat of our car, we enter a new realm that is separate from the chaos of the world. It is here that we become the masters of our domain, controlling the dimensions of both space and time.

In order to do this, we must become connected with the

car's cockpit, not only physically, but also mentally, becoming one with all of its components. As our head and torso are cradled and strapped into the driver's seat, the vehicle becomes enlivened with our very soul. No longer do we just have arms and hands, but directional mechanisms to guide us in the proper direction. Our legs, which we once used from walking, become part of the machine's movement controls. And our eyes, which only saw in front of us, become the visual sensors for the car's outside world.

It is only through this union that we are able to take control of the car in its entirety. We must be able to sense everything that the car senses and use this information to gauge our limitations. By understanding our car, we can not only take advantage of its potential, but also enjoy this potential for the longest time. Even more importantly than all of this, however, is that it is only through the union with our car that we can be able to experience the true art of driving.



DREAM A LITTLE DREAM  
HONORS COLLEGE  
CHARITY BALL



***March 4, 2000***

*at the*

***W Hotel***

*(formerly the Midland Hotel, site of previous Honors College Balls)*

***All proceeds will be donated to the Make-a-Wish foundation.***

*Tickets are \$30 per person*

*For more information, contact:*

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