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The Honors College Staff:

Top (l-r): Dean Bette L. Bottoms, Brian Ward, Lisa Domkowski, Dr. Ekaterina Pirozhenko, Fiona O'Connor, Jerry Jimenez

Middle: Christina Ruiz, Jill Huynh

Bottom: Dean Hui-Ching Chang, Dean Sara Hall, Sarah Gardiner, Eliza Ycas, and Dean Stacie Williams

A Note From Dean Bottoms

Dear Honors College Students, Faculty, and Friends:

Join me in welcoming our largest incoming class ever! With these 336 new students, the Honors College tops 1500 for the first time. And what a frisky bunch they are, as Honors Core Professor Nancy Cirillo noted. I've enjoyed meeting many freshmen and upperclassmen during my new "dean's office hours" every Monday at 2:30 p.m. I've heard interesting stories and gotten great ideas, such as "Major Mingles," events for Honors students from similar majors to meet each other.

We also welcome new staff: Professor Sara Hall, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; Jill Huynh, Academic Advisor and Program Specialist; and our first Honors Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow, Dr. Ekaterina Pirozhenko. And congratulations to Stacie Williams on her promotion to Associate Dean. Dean Williams started in the college as an undergraduate and, lucky for us, never left. We owe many thanks to all the Honors staff members – each one is hardworking and entirely committed to student success.

We've had quite a wonderful flurry of events already this semester. Honors students have had the opportunity to hear lectures by and meet personally with former Governor Jim Edgar; University Trustee and Boeing Executive, Lawrence Oliver; University of Illinois President Michael Hogan, and other leaders. We've co-sponsored UIC Freshman Read events centered around the common book that every freshman on campus received at orientation – a book made of selections from the 5 student publications of the Honors College! And our students continue with all their amazing activities, including research. In fact, 1/3 of all Honors students are engaged in research, with all seniors busily completing their Capstone theses. Many are funded by the College, which awarded over \$40,000 in research grants last year.

Thanks to Sasi and his staff for this wonderful edition of *The Ampersand*. Enjoy it and the rest of the semester – and start thinking about the BALL: March 3!

Best wishes, Dean Bottoms



By: Anam Syed
Junior
Biochemistry
Major

Honors College Advisory Board:

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 Weili Zhang

Staff Advisor
Sarah Gardiner



Welcome Back Honors Students!

The start of a new year means the start of more exciting Honors College Advisory Board (HCAB) events! Along with the help of the Honors Ambassadors, HCAB held a New Students Picnic the week before school started. There was plenty of food and drink along with an awesome popcorn and cotton candy machine, not to mention a gorgeous sunny day. The new students had a great time mingling with their peers as well as meeting their Honors Ambassadors and the new HCAB board. They also had a chance to meet and talk to the awesome Honors College staff. Since then, HCAB has been working to bring you (the students) fun and exciting events to keep your minds at ease after a hard day of classes. These events include, but are not limited to, the annual Halloween party, a hot chocolate social later in the semester, and—of course—the famous luncheon. The Honors College just bought an ice cream machine so make sure to come to HCAB events since it will be making appearances there. How do you know when HCAB is having an event? Well, just watch your email! We will be sure to bombard you with lots of messages so you won't miss a beat. Until then, make sure to study hard and get excited for the Honors College Ball in March!

Meet Your HCAB!



A Letter from Your Editor In Chief

Hello! For those of you who don't know me, I am Sasi Madugula, the Editor-in-Chief of this publication for the past two years. *The Ampersand* has been around in some form or another since the Honors College was established in 1982. In 2006, the newsletter became a primarily student-run publication and continues to be such to this day.

Since I stepped into this position, *The Ampersand* has undergone many changes in staff, format, and layout. We have decided to standardize some articles in each issue: the Honors class article, the Capstone article, the Fellow interview article, and the Honors organization highlight. In the coming issue, we plan to include student perspectives on art and current events. The purpose of all these changes is to better uphold the mission of *The Ampersand* which is:

To highlight the achievements of Honors College students, staff, and faculty, to report on Honors College events, and to provide a forum for students and faculty to share interesting experiences and opinions, all for the purpose of fostering a sense of community among the constituents of the Honors College.

In other words, the role of *The Ampersand* is to give a sense of togetherness to the diverse body that makes up the Honors College through the sharing of information and ideas. It is important for both the writers and readers of this publication to know that this is the crucial role it plays in our community. With this in mind, please read on!

Ampersand Advisors



Jill Huynh
Honors College
Staff Advisor



Professor Mark Chiang
Faculty Advisor



Dean Sara Hall
Associate Dean for
Academic Affairs



By: Sasidhar Madugula
Junior
Bioengineering Major

GET AMPED!

Welcome to another issue of The Ampersand!

This is the first issue for this school year. We hope you enjoy it. Thanks for reading. And remember, we couldn't put all this together without all of you!

The Ampersand is open and eager to accept submissions from all Honors College students.

Interested? You know you are!

Please contact smadug2@uic.edu.





**By: Michelle
Skinner
Junior
English Major**



Recently at UIC...

Honors College Sponsored Gov. Jim Edgar Visit

September 21, 2011 - Former Governor Jim Edgar visited UIC toutting a hard message regarding the future of Illinois. "I don't see much of a light at the end of this tunnel," Edgar candidly said to his captivated audience. A large portion of the crowd was comprised of Honors College students, faculty, and staff.

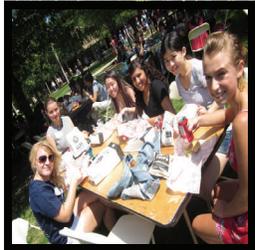
With messages like "The state is broke," and "We had a bad run of governors," Edgar drove home the idea that Illinois' future is perilous. Although the message may seem grim for the newly-minted electorate of students at UIC, Edgar advised that through program cut-backs, new state revenue, and continued discipline regarding money expenditure, the situation in Illinois can begin to be rectified. He pushed the need for a renewal of bipartisanship in Illinois as well as the need for both innovative ideas and experience to begin to pull Illinois out of its tenuous position.

Edgar heralded this message as a part of the Honors College Leadership Series, a weekly lecture program co-sponsored by the Honors College and Political Science Department and funded through the Caterpillar Foundation. The Honors College also hosted a luncheon following the lecture where twenty Honors College students were invited to speak with Edgar in a more private setting. Although Edgar's career as governor ended twelve years ago, he still knows how to work a room; during the luncheon he shook hands with and asked for the name, hometown, and major of every student present. His affable demeanor carried throughout the luncheon as students asked him questions regarding his lecture. Edgar tackled questions regarding how bipartisanship can be encouraged in Springfield, where the budget should be cut, and expanded upon his speech pushing the need for a well-informed electorate capable of placing the proper people in office to begin work on Illinois' toughest issues. Edgar good-naturedly asked some questions of the Honors College students as well, though they were not as hard-pressed to find an answer as Edgar was when considering how to remedy the difficult position of Illinois.



Freshman Picnic

Welcome to UIC!



Upcoming Events

Office Hours with Dean Bottoms

Every Monday at 2:30-3:30 P.M.
107 BH Burnham Hall

Honors College Academic Advising

Every Tuesday at 4:00-7:00 P.M.
Room B 250-A JST James Stukel Towers

UIC Premiere of the Film, "Louder Than a Bomb"

October 21, 2011 at 4:00 P.M.
250 BSB Behavioral Sciences Bldg

HCAB Halloween Party

October 27, 2011 at 4:00-6:00 P.M.
Burnham Hall

Poetry and Prose Workshop with Kevin Coval

November 4, 2011 at 4:00 P.M.
IDEA Commons classrooms LIB

Library, Richard J. Daley

Kevin Coval and Company Live

November 17, 2011 at 3:00 P.M.
IDEA Commons LIB

Library, Richard J. Daley

Honors College Faculty Meeting

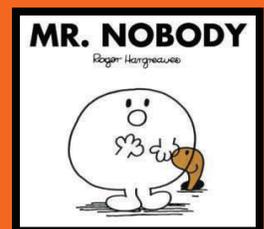
December 1, 2011 at 10:30 A.M.

Honors College Ball

March 3, 2012
Congress Hotel

Over the summer, the Honors College hosted a picnic to welcome freshmen to both UIC and the Honors College. As a part of their orientation experience, freshmen were able to interact with each other and current members of the Honors College in a casual environment. As the pictures show, it was a lot of fun! Plus, there was plenty of great food.

Don't be a



Come to events!
Meet people and
become involved
in Honors
College Life :)



The Office of Special Scholarship Programs assists students applying for scholarships through its nationally competitive scholarship advising. Many individual faculty and staff as well as advising units contribute to our students' successes including the Honors College, Study Abroad Office, the Office of International Affairs and the Graduate College. UIC students routinely win nationally competitive awards that support their undergraduate studies, post graduate training and studies and study abroad experiences.



Scholarship Updates

Award	Student	Major/ College
Carle Hospital Found. Scholarship DAAD-RISE (Muenster, Germany) Fulbright ETA (Jordan)	Jacqueline Cook Daniel Wang (HC) (G) Sarah Isel (HC)	Nursing/ NURS Biology/LAS Political Science & Economics/LAS
Fulbright ETA (Korea) Fulbright Fellowship (Canada) Fulbright Fellowship (Thailand) **Fulbright Fellowship (Tonga) Fulbright Fellowship (UK) *Gilman Scholarship (Argentina) *Gilman Scholarship (Australia) *Gilman Scholarship (Brazil) *Gilman Scholarship (China)	Kevin Conley (HC) Julianne Faust (HC) Anothai Kaewkaen(HC) Ada Moadshiri (HC) Jessica Galea (HC) Sara Agate Laura Montoya Raquel Hernandez Luis Gonzalez	Kinesiology/ AHS Psychology/LAS English/LAS Public Health/ SPH Anthropology/ LAS Political Science/LAS Neuroscience/ LAS Sociology/ LAS Criminology, Law, & Justice/ LAS
*Gilman Scholarship (Dom. Rep.) *Gilman Scholarship (Dom. Rep.) *Gilman Scholarship (Dom. Rep.) *Gilman Scholarship (Hong Kong) ***Gilman Scholarship (France) ***Gilman Scholarship (France) *Gilman Scholarship (France)	Iliana Figueroa Nakendra Jackson Ryshona Odeneal Paulina Makuch Erin Anderson Lourdes Gonzalez Jonathan Neal	Sociology/LAS Communications/LAS Biology/LAS Studio Arts/ AA French / LAS Mathematics & French/ LAS Philosophy & Political Science/ LAS
*Gilman Scholarship (Italy) *Gilman Scholarship (Italy) *Gilman Scholarship (Italy) *Gilman Scholarship (Japan) *Gilman Scholarship (Japan)	Rossie Rangel (HC) Melissa Valdez Vanessa Valdez Carlos Sorta David Sorto	Teaching of History/ LAS Undeclared/ LAS Undeclared/ LAS Civil Engineering / ENG Elect Eng & Asian Studies / ENG , LAS
*Gilman Scholarship (Namibia) *Gilman Scholarship (Peru) *Gilman Scholarship (Senegal) ***Gilman Scholarship (Taiwan) *Gilman Scholarship (Taiwan) *Gilman Scholarship (Thailand) Goldwater Scholarship Goldwater Honorable Mention McKelvie Scholarship	Karina Sanchez Navya Samson Sarai Redmond Derek Bell Annie Lin Dylon Busser (HC) Alan Tang (HC) (G) Joshua Jones (HC) Caitlin McDonald (HC)	Economics/ LAS Sociology/ LAS Undeclared / LAS Political Science / LAS Psychology/ LAS Biochemistry/ LAS Biochemistry & Math/ LAS Mathematics/ LAS Political Science & English / LAS
NIH Fogarty Clinical Research Program PUHS Excel Cirilo McSween Scholarship PUSH Excel Ora Lee Sanders Scholarship Schweitzer Fellowship Udall Scholarship	Daniel Yang (HC) (G) Garrett Wilson Andrea Watson Anand Sandesara(HCG) Paul Roots (HC)	Medicine / MED Finance/ CBA English / LAS Medicine / MED Civil Engineering/ ENG



More Scholarship Awards

Lauren Dickens * Phi Theta Kappa * Nedda Djauid, Phi Theta Kappa * Maral Mjukian, Phi Theta Kappa * Gennaro Paoella, Phi Theta Kappa ***

Juan Acosta, Transfer Merit * Krystyna Bobak, Transfer Merit * Nadezhda Fogarty, Transfer Merit * Jennifer Frisbie, Transfer Merit * Erin Glogovsky, Transfer Merit * Myriam Gomez, Transfer Merit * Daniel Hanks, Transfer Merit * Megan Hyatt, Transfer Merit * Luke Miller, Transfer Merit * Luis Negron, Transfer Merit * Alexandra Ovington, Transfer Merit * Mena Poonaki, Transfer Merit * Carla Pulido, Transfer Merit * Trina Salmon, Transfer Merit * Elizabeth Skender, Transfer Merit * Lizeth Testa, Transfer Merit * Xiuyan Zhang, Transfer Merit

Tutoring Services

Qualified Honors College students are available to help you in almost every subject. The tutoring schedule lists both the classes and the times tutors are available to offer assistance for those classes.

The schedule is available at: <http://www.uic.edu/honors/learning/documents/TutoringScheduleFall2011.htm>.

You do not need an appointment to see a tutor; the service is free and available to *every* UIC student.

The Honors College Tutoring Program takes place Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The tutoring center is located on the second floor of Burnham Hall in Room 220 BH.

FYI: There is no tutoring during finals week, so our students may concentrate on their exams.

For questions on the program, contact the Honors College tutoring coordinator, Sarah Gardiner at sarahg1@uic.edu.

Additionally, you are encouraged to visit other departments' tutoring resources (listed on the left).

(*) Indicates in collaboration with the Study Abroad Office(**) Indicates in collaboration with the Graduate College

(***) Indicates in collaboration with Office of Int'l. Affairs

(HC) Indicates current/former member of Honors College

(G) Indicates current/former member of GPPA (ETA) Indicates an English Teaching Assistantship grant

Please note: not all students who have won awards listed above accept them.

Campus Tutoring Support Services

Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)

Academic Support and Advising Program (A.S.A.P)

African American Academic Network (AAAN) Learning Resource Center

Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Tutoring

Mathematical Sciences Learning Center Peer Tutoring Program

Native American Support Program (NASP)

Science Learning Center

Student Computer Aided Instruction Lab (SCAILAB)

Writing Center





Dr. Cheryl Nakata

Voted 2011-
2012 Honors
College Fellow
of the Year!!

**Get to know
your Faculty &
Staff!!**



By: Wenji Guo
Sophomore
Biology
Major

Meet a Faculty Fellow!

Get to know Dr. Cheryl Nakata

“It was probably the best thing I ever did,” commented Dr. Cheryl Nakata, Professor of Managerial Studies and 2011 Honors College Fellow of the Year. She was referring to her decision to leave a comfortable job in the States to embark on a two-year stay in China as a Senior Consultant and Director of Marketing Research in a joint venture company. As an American of Japanese ancestry working in a busy Chinese city, and in light of the deep historic conflict between Japan and China, Nakata emerged from the experience with no shortage of new insights: “It definitely made me realize the impact of historic events and their vestiges today.” Not long into our conversation, it became clear that Professor Nakata is not what most of us think of as a typical businesswoman. She fosters a marked penchant for cultural studies and lists “anthropological and sociological theories and methods” among her research interests. So how did her interest in the “human side of business” develop? Professor Nakata attributes part of the cause to her upbringing: “I grew up and lived in Hawaii where it was the norm to have so many cultures. It wasn’t until I moved to the mainland United States that I became aware of and wondered why there was so much conflict and racial tension.”

In college, she started her academic career earning an English Literature degree. When the more “pragmatic” issue of earning a living kicked in, she decided to take a few business courses, after which she realized the potential for the application of psychology, writing, and creative energy to the field. A prime example of the relevance of Professor Nakata’s interest in the social sciences to business is the concept of “soft power.” In contrast to hard power, which includes economic coercion and aggressiveness, Professor Nakata explained that soft power has to do with cultural understanding and “can be even more potent.” Drawing on her international experiences, Nakata lists China as a major proponent of soft power strategy. “They export their culture and educate others about their values and heritage by sending out lots of ambassadors,” thereby fostering goodwill.

Her current research further exhibits the interdisciplinary nature of business. It focuses on innovation in the medical and pharmaceutical industry, among other areas. By understanding the psychology behind health literacy and medication adherence, Nakata’s goal is to bring new solutions to these problems by developing better marketing and packaging approaches. She also does research on “base of the pyramid” innovation, or new solutions based on business processes for global poverty. After many years of working either for big corporations or as a proprietor, Professor Nakata’s motivation for entering academia is no mystery. She loves teaching and working with students: “The students here are engaged in what they do. They often bring a lot of real world experience and a willingness to learn.” First and foremost, she advises students to “Dream big. Find your passion and pursue it. It may require some digging, but deep down, I believe that people know what it is that they really love and that there’s a way to both bring your interests together and pay the bills.”



Society of Future Physicians

A Honors College Sponsored Organization

The Society of Future Physicians (SFP) has always been a premier Honors College organization, creating a community for those with the goal of becoming a physician to help them on their paths. In addition, SFP also provides opportunities for its members to participate in activities that help them achieve all that is expected of them. In the past few years, SFP members have had opportunities to volunteer, view surgeries, and shadow pediatricians. With most volunteering opportunities revolving around the realm of healthcare, these events offer a great way for members to get involved in the field. They will be learning more not only about the actual workings of healthcare settings firsthand, but also about the activism and widespread involvement that being a physician really means. In previous years, many would fulfill their volunteering requirement with only a brief, one-time event. However, SFP has decided to shift the target of volunteering this year for its members. Now, one of SFP's goals is to encourage as many members as possible to participate in long-term volunteering. Not only does a long-term volunteering commitment look better on applications, but it also enables students to truly become involved in a movement or organization. Long-term volunteering will count for more than one member requirement. However, since many members are not able to make such a time commitment, the option of one-time volunteering is still available. Apart from this, members also have the opportunity to learn from physicians around the country during the lecture series presented throughout the semester. This year's theme is "The Physician at home and beyond," and focuses on the need for physicians to not only serve their respective communities, but people around the world. With lectures lined up involving surgeons who provide free medical attention and surgery to the innocent involved in war conflicts, to those who are responsible for providing trauma aid to multiple counties of rural areas, this year's theme is sure to prove informative and emotionally stimulating. The goal of this theme is to show how being a physician not only means having a duty to serve one's community, but also a responsibility to help create a world with better healthcare. There are millions around the globe who are affected by negative conditions who could be cured or prevented with proper medical attention. The objective of the theme and the lecture topics is for students to understand the relationship between the condition of the global and community healthcare infrastructure and how future physicians can help make a change for the better. These events are open to all, so even if you're not an official member of the Society of Future Physicians, be sure to stop on by for some great lectures!

All HC Sponsored Student Organizations

*Honors College Advisory Board * Honors Ambassadors * Society of Future Physicians *Alternative Spring Break * Honors College String Ensemble * Green Youth Movement * Feel Good * New Life Volunteering Society * Donate by Design * Project ESTEEM * Unifying Diversity * UIC Mock Trial Team * Chicago Circle Undergraduate Philosophy Discussion Group * Undergraduate Research Symposium * Red Shoes Review * The Asterisk * Journal for Pre-Health Affiliated Students* UIC One World * The Ampersand*



By: Akshay Patel
Junior
Physics Major

STUDENTS SAY:



Aalok Patel,
Junior,
Biochem
Major

SFP is an excellent organization to meet fellow premed students as well as learn about the state of healthcare in America and the world



Saif Ali,
Junior,
Bio & Psych
Major

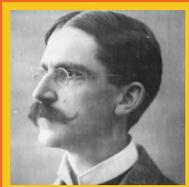
The Asterisk has grown to be a center for the members of the Honors College to share ideas, spread laughter, and find the lighter side in life. I am enthralled to be a part of this community!



Joe Ou,
Senior,
Biology
Major

Ambassadors is a win-win situation: you make close friends, while providing freshmen with a great source for all their questions and concerns.





John Dewey



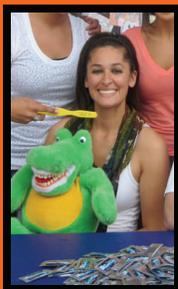
By: Maria Quadri
Freshman
Biology
Major

**Explore vast
 ranges on
 topics**



**By: Swathi
 Madugula**
Sophomore
Biochemistry
Major

Kayleigh Tovar



Learn about a Different Honors Class

Honors 123

Who is John Dewey? What does understanding the individual and society really mean? How awesome is Dr. Weldon's laugh? All of these questions can be answered by taking the Honors 123 course instructed by Dr. Ward Weldon. To be honest, my initial reaction to being enrolled in this class was not a positive as it could have been. I was afraid this course might be boring, with long lectures about some philosopher I did not care too much about. I soon came to realize that this was not the case. After just six weeks of the course, I had gained more knowledge than I did my entire last semester of high school. I want to emphasize that I have learned a lot! Dr. Weldon's execution of the class is interestingly different from any other I have taken before. There is an appropriate balance between lecture, discussion, and activity. I personally enjoy "activity Fridays" where we engage in an educational exercise designed to teach us about characteristics of the individual and society. I also appreciate Dr. Weldon's encouragement of student questions and discussions. There is no doubt that this class would be less fascinating without our wonderful professor. A classmate of mine, Charlotte Norman, feels the same way and has said, "The class is pretty insightful [in] not only the topics we discuss but also how the class is structured...It's neither boring nor constricted, [and] the class wouldn't be the same without the same professor!" Honors 123 is surprisingly interesting, and learning about John Dewey has allowed me to gain a different perspective on our educational system. Our small class size is an additional aspect that I am grateful for, and it serves as a nice break from sitting in large lecture halls with hundreds of students. In addition to being surprised by the variation in class sizes Honors 123 stands for, the amount of diversity on the campus is also surprising. Being at UIC has made me feel as if I am part of a big family. The Honors College has especially contributed to this sense of comfort. The classes and opportunities made exclusively available to the Honors students make me feel as though I am part of an exclusive, supportive community. My experience so far has been amazing and I am excited to see what the rest of the year brings.

Browse Capstone Projects

Honors Capstone by Kayleigh Tovar

It's that time of the year when all Honors College seniors have one thing in mind (besides graduation, of course!), and that is their Capstone projects. Kayleigh Tovar, a senior graduating with a BA in Chemistry this spring, is one such example. I talked to Kayleigh and found out a bit about her Capstone project.

What are you doing for your Capstone project?

I am identifying a protein in the human brain that interacts with a specific region of alpha II-spectrin, which is a protein that helps maintain the structure and shape of cells. My research will help us to better understand the process of cell death and how to prevent brain damage after an injury.

How many hours do you put in at the lab each week?

I usually am in the lab for a minimum of fourteen hours each week, but it really depends on what my experiments require.

What has been your impression of the Capstone so far?

I have really been enjoying it so far. My project has required me to put into practice everything that I have been learning in class, which has been really interesting and fun. However, it has been frustrating as well. Sometimes procedures that are out of my control, such as DNA sequencing, have taken long periods of time and this has caused me to have to modify my plans to incorporate the time lost.

When will you be presenting your work?

I'll be presenting in the spring at the College of Dentistry Undergraduate Research Forum.

What is your advice to other Honors College students about the Capstone?

My main advice would be to start early. I started last summer and it has really helped me. Starting early can help you become better acquainted with your lab (if you are just starting there), and can help you plan better.

A Summer Adventure

Hawaiian Memories

Quick! When you hear the word “paradise,” what comes to mind? The smell of tropical flowers? The sound of the surf crashing on a white sand beach? Perhaps nothing more than a vague idea, a sense of a warmer climate? For those people lucky enough to have experienced their own personal “paradise,” the mere mention of the word can bring back vivid memories and a longing to return. I have my own paradise, and it is Hawaii.

This past summer, my family and I returned to those beautiful islands for two weeks, divided between three nights on Oahu and the remainder of our trip on the Big Island of Hawaii. I could fill this entire issue with a detailed chronicle of all that we saw. But I don’t think the other writers would appreciate that, nor would the editors allow it. I do guarantee, however, that if you ask me about my Hawaiian travels (including from years past), I’ll entertain you with an account of the stories that didn’t make it in to this retrospective travel log. Until then, I’ll narrate two highlights of the trip: one while on Oahu and the other on the Big Island. During our short stay on Oahu, my family and I resolved to put as much time into exploring the island as possible. During one of our expeditions in the metropolitan area of Honolulu, we visited Iolani Palace. Built by King Kalakaua in 1882, it served as home of the Hawaiian monarchy until its overthrow by American business forces in 1893 (an intriguing piece of history as it is neglected). The Palace, while small by the standards of other monarchies of the world, is a unique fusion of Hawaiian and European culture. Elaborate columns surround verandas outside the Palace. Inside, the grand staircase is made of Koa, a beautiful Hawaiian wood. Portraits of the Hawaiian monarchy, in a style reminiscent of European lineages, decorate the interiors of the Grand Hall. The rooms of the Palace have been meticulously restored to their original appearances when King Kalakaua entertained European dignitaries. And when I write “restored,” I mean it; furniture that was sold by the pseudo-American provisional government has been tracked down and brought back to the Palace. The Throne Room, long empty of its sovereign, still carries an air of majesty, with its dark red and golden furnishings. There is a somber feeling on the tour of one of the upstairs rooms, where the overthrown Queen Lili’uokalani was imprisoned under house-arrest by the order of the provisional government. As the only official residence of a monarchy on American soil, Iolani Palace is a beautiful artifact of Hawaiian culture and a powerfully historic landmark.

I shift now from the refined, to the raw. While home to dense forests, hidden waterfalls, isolated valleys, and even snow at its highest peaks, the most iconic image of the Big Island is its most powerful: the volcano. Still volcanically active, the island refuses to let visitors and residents alike forget this fact. Acres of the island have been transformed by lava flows into what can only be described as an alien landscape. The cooled lava forms wide expanses of dark rock, in some spots smooth and river-like, in others, buckled and jutting up into the air. The best way to experience the scope of these volcanic surroundings is by visiting Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Visitors (this one included) can journey through a hollow lava tube, witness the mighty expanse of a volcanic caldera, and walk along lonely expanses of lava that hug the shoreline. The edges of the lava coast plummet into the ocean directly below. Diving into the ocean from the side of one of these black cliffs is the Holei sea arch. The result of the endless surf pounding mercilessly against the rough lava, the arch sweeps dramatically from the island into the turbulent surf. Standing against the waves, the arch is showered with the sprays of salt water launching up from the Pacific. Looking out onto the endless horizon of water, the realization sinks in that none of this shoreline existed too long ago. The entire landscape, both the fertile and barren, was created by the volcanic energy of the islands. I could continue with other stories, but I’ll end instead with a reflection on Hawaii. It’s easy to become lost in all that the islands offer—an exotic, yet welcoming culture and heritage, and landscapes that can inspire listless daydreams or communicate the sublime. That is just one of the reasons why, for me, Hawaii has become more than a location on a map; it’s become a state of mind.



By: Bryan Killian
Junior
Biology Major

