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A State-Wide Honor: Allyson Joyce Named 2014 Lincoln Laureate

by Jane Binner • Junior, English

Every morning when she wakes up, 2014 Lincoln Laureate Allyson Joyce asks herself, “What would you attempt to do if you knew you couldn’t fail?” This mindset has kept her on track to do remarkable things and—in the case of receiving the Lincoln Laureate Award—achieve more than she ever dreamed. “In my wildest imagination,” Joyce recounted, “I never thought that my involvement at UIC would amount to such a great honor.”

Only one graduating senior from each four-year college and university in the state of Illinois is selected for this award annually, based on overall excellence in both academics and extracurricular activities. On November 1, Joyce was honored by Illinois Governor Pat Quinn at a ceremony at the Old State Capitol in Springfield with the Laureates from other universities. The award Joyce received includes a medallion, a certificate, and a \$1000 scholarship. As with Joyce, all of the last five Lincoln Laureate recipients from UIC have been Honors College students.

Joyce said, “It means [so much] to me that someone thinks so highly of me that they would put their reputation on the line in recommending me [for the award].” She added, “I am humbled to represent UIC.” For her application essay, Joyce struggled with limiting herself “to write only 500 words on an award that means so much to me.” Upon hearing that she was selected as this year’s Lincoln Laureate, Joyce recalled her reaction, “My heart started beating fast and my hands started shaking.”

Joyce is currently a senior in the UIC College of Nursing as well as the President of the Alternative Spring Break (ASB) program, the President of the Student Nurses’ Association, and a chair of the Student Fee

Advisory Committee. Joyce has been a committed member of both ASB and the Honors College since her freshman year.

As far back as fifth grade, Joyce knew that she wanted to become a nurse and an advocate for others. She remained focused over the years on making her dreams a reality. For example, from the time that she was in eighth grade through her high school years, Joyce spent more than 1000 hours volunteering.

Since high school, she has continued that level of commitment. Upon discovering her friend’s 12-year-old brother Spencer had contracted the rare auto-immune disorder Guillan-Barre and had become paralyzed, she made it her mission to help get him the medical care he needed. She created the Support Spencer Foundation, raising \$17,000 and initiating his transfer to the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital in Chicago where he ultimately got the necessary treatment.

In anticipation of her intention to enroll in a Nurse Practitioner program, Joyce plans to continue her work in the Rush Emergency Room for a year after graduation to meet graduate schools’ requirements of one year of clinical experience. Joyce hopes to one day become an Acute Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. With her guiding ambition and passion, we can expect great things from Allyson Joyce in the future—she is clearly a woman on a mission.



Allyson Joyce

A Note from Dean Bottoms



DEAR HONORS COMMUNITY,

As you will see from this issue of the Ampersand, it's been an eventful semester in the Honors College! Over 400 students and faculty attended the HCAB Faculty-Student Luncheon in October, taking advantage of the opportunity to meet colleagues from different disciplines across the university and build relationships over lunch. We also hosted several events central to the college's commitment to promoting tolerance and diversity, including a remarkable panel discussion with civil rights activists from the Freedom Summer of 1964 (organized by Faculty Fellow Natasha Barnes), and a screening and discussion of the 1928 silent film version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, organized by Faculty Fellow Nancy Cirillo in partnership with the Daley Library exhibit, "Visualizing Uncle Tom's Cabin."

These opportunities to engage with faculty members and leaders in the community are part of what makes the Honors College so special. Outstanding faculty mentors—such as James Pellegrino who just received the prestigious campus-wide University Scholar Award—provide extra support and guidance that helps Honors College students excel.

And our Honors College students certainly do excel, both inside and outside the classroom. Honors College students currently have an all-time high six-year graduation rate of 88%, compared to the university average of 60%. Approximately 30 students just presented their research at the Honors College Research Symposium on November 20, and Honors College students take the lead in a variety of student organizations and activities, including UIC's new women's soccer team (see page 4). Not surprisingly, they also win a variety of awards for their academic excellence and leadership. For example, Honors College Senior Allyson Joyce was just selected as the 2014-15 Lincoln Academy of Illinois Student Laureate, a statewide honor given to just one outstanding senior at each of the state institutions in Illinois (see the front page).

As your semester comes to a close, I wish you much success and a restful and happy winter break.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bette L. Bottoms". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Bette L. Bottoms
Dean of the Honors College
Professor of Psychology

Upcoming Deadlines

The Office of Special Scholarship Programs is open during finals week and up through Dec. 19. Staff will be back during early January. This is a great time to research awards that are a good fit for you and start working on your applications. OSSP staff members are available to help you prepare a strong application. Contact us at ssp@uic.edu.

Honors Capstone Completion Form Deadline

December 5
www.uic.edu/honors/hars

Honors Activity Completion Form Deadline

December 12
www.uic.edu/honors/hars

DAAD University Summer Course and Intensive Language Course Grants

December 15
www.daad.org

Thermo-Scientific Pierce Scholarship Program to support future science scholars

December 29
www.pierce-antibodies.com/PierceScholarship/index.cfm

Honors College Tuition Waiver

January 1
www.uic.edu/honors/learning/scholarships.shtml

Rangel Fellowship Program

January 14
www.rangelprogram.org

DAAD Undergraduate Scholarship

January 15
www.daad.org/undergrad

Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship

January 16
<http://woodrow.org/fellowships/pickering>

Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship

January 31
<http://bit.ly/14oHhDU>

Udall Scholarship for students planning careers related to environmental issues

February 7
www.udall.gov/OurPrograms/MKUScholarship/HowToApply.aspx

Gilman Study Abroad Scholarship for Pell Grant recipients

March 3
www.iie.org/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program



The Brain in Translation

by Sarita Deshpande • Freshman, Bioengineering

For UIC senior Sagar Shah, the Capstone project is more than just an Honors College requirement; it represents years of hard work and his driving passion for psychology and neuroscience. The Capstone project serves as the culmination of Honors College students' undergraduate experiences as it provides them with the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills from the classroom to a relevant research question.

Majoring in neuroscience, Shah worked in Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Gary Raney's psycholinguistics lab to understand how different aspects of language affect our lives. In particular, he explored the lateral processing of Gujarati and English across the brain. Shah designed his study, selected participants, and completed all tests and analyses in one year. Using bilingual native Gujarati or English speakers as subjects, Shah performed behavioral tests to measure the reactions to concrete words—such as “table” and “car”—and to abstract words—such as “truth” and “justice.” He found that concrete words are processed faster than abstract words in people's native languages. For his work in psycholinguistics, Shah received an Honors College Research Grant and won first place in the Social

Sciences Division at the UIC Student Research Forum last April.

Shah's achievement is the result of the great amount of time and discipline that he devoted to his Capstone. After working in Dr. Raney's lab for three years, he developed a strong incentive to

learn more about neuroscience and its connection to linguistics. As a future medical student, Shah hopes to further investigate this topic by using different methods of measuring brain activity, such as functional MRIs.

Shah encourages all Honors College students to start working on their Capstone projects early in order to complete meaningful, innovative research. He advises taking full advantage of the various opportunities presented by the Honors College which will “ultimately create a unique and fun UIC experience.”



Sagar Shah winning first place at the 2014 UIC Student Research Forum.



Dear Freshman Friend

by Nidhi Suthar • Freshman, Biological Sciences

One of the most significant differences I've noticed between high school and college is the speed at which time flies. You probably know the line—“You'll have so much more time!”—that peers and parents chanted at you before starting class in August. Although this might have been true for you, what those people probably didn't also mention was how quickly that time would go by!

This realization struck me hardest when I saw tiny snowflakes drifting around campus as I walked to class at the end of October. Although they immediately melted, their presence was a reminder that winter is quickly approaching—and with winter comes the end of our first semester as freshmen! In the blink of an eye, it seems like we've transformed from nervous high school graduates into seasoned UIC students who have begun to understand the idiosyncrasies of college life.

During these fleeting months, you've likely had unforgettable experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. Perhaps you conquered a research paper or got the grade you wanted after hours of studying. Maybe you joined an organization that you're passionate about and met great people through it. As you brace yourself for the trials that winter brings—I rank Chicago weather and finals as equally challenging here—you can reflect on what you've accomplished so far before plunging into the last stretch of the semester.

Now that you know how quickly time can get away from you, it's a good idea to plan ahead by keeping in touch with your Honors College advisor. By staying on top of your major requirements and planning ahead for next semester, you can focus on expanding your involvement in other activities and make the most of your time at UIC!



From Teammates to Family

by Sanjana Anil • Junior, Biological Sciences and Communication



Ana Hernandez

In its inaugural year, the UIC Women's Soccer team has been fortunate enough to snag six Honors College students: Ana Hernandez, Annie DiCanio, Jenny Novak, Mackenzie Fuller, Paige Proctor, and Haley Kittle. All six women were recruited individually and came to UIC without knowing each other—but as team members united by a passion for soccer, these women have grown from strangers into a new close-knit family.

Starting off the season as a team of new recruits, the players were initially unaware of each other's personalities and playing styles. However, the team was able to bond quickly and learn how to build off their collective strengths and weaknesses. In fact, one strength was their place in the Honors College. Using this connection helped the players to become friendly with each other, which made the transition into collegiate athletics—as well as college life in general—much more comfortable.

These players enjoy attending Honors College events together and even plan their schedules so that they can take the same Honors Core classes. Academics is certainly a priority for the organization as a whole; it is a team goal to maintain a combined GPA of at least 3.2.

The hard work and dedication that these players put into their schoolwork is also reflected in their athleticism. The women note, “though we are a goofy and fun team, we are all serious about the game, because the game is life. And who wouldn't be serious about life?” They are constantly trying to stay fit and improve their playing, even during the off-season. Their love for soccer extends beyond their own turf as well; the team regularly volunteers for American Scores, an organization that referees youth soccer games.

Overall, these athletes credit two sources for their success: their coach and their fans. They really enjoy



From left: Paige Proctor, Ana Hernandez, Haley Kittle, Annie DiCanio, Mackenzie Fuller, Jennifer Novak (Photo credit: Steve Woltmann)

working with their coach, Brian Rigby—and it seems like he appreciates his “champs” just as much as they appreciate him, even if that love is in competition with his whistle! The girls all commented, “We love our coach. He is our motivation, our inspiration, and most of all he is our family and best friend.” This beloved mentor serves as both a great leader and a good friend for his team.

The Honors College students of the UIC Women’s Soccer team can’t imagine what their lives would be like without the sport they love so much and the people it brings into their lives. Their hope for next year is to make it into the playoffs and, ultimately, the Horizon League conference. Wherever their journey takes them, the Honors College will continue to be their fans and supporters!

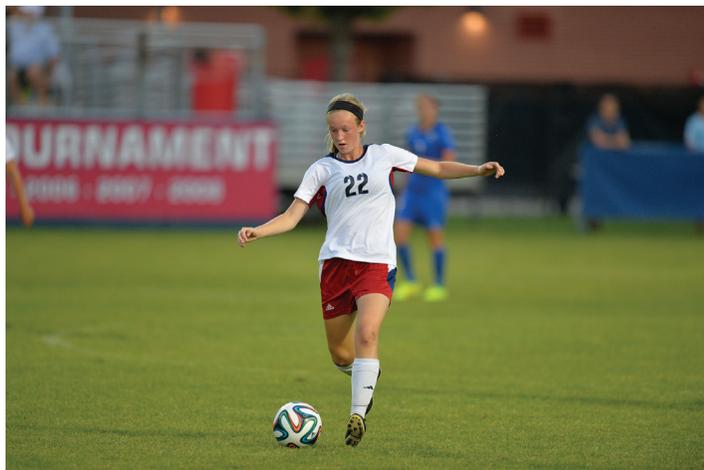
Photo credit for action shots: Siobhan Midgley



Paige Proctor



Haley Kittle



Mackenzie Fuller



Annie DiCanio



Musical Culture and Identity: An Honors Core Course

by **Michelle Farler** • *Freshman, Kinesiology*

If you find yourself walking through the halls of BSB on a Tuesday or Thursday morning, please do not be alarmed by sounds of clapping, buzzing, or robust gurgling—it’s just a typical day in “HON 127: Music, Social Practice, and the Construction of Meaning and Identity.” Taught by Musicology Professor John Behling, the class allows students to encounter a unique perspective on music. Rather than focusing on structure and notes, important though they are, HON 127 delves into the intricacies of global music—specifically, how it is constructed and interpreted.

Professor Behling provides lenses for studying global music through his background as a performer and music ethnographer. As a student in the class, I have learned to adopt insider and outsider listening perspectives and am now better able to understand music and to appreciate the important role it plays in the daily lives of people around the world. Not only does this class engage with UIC’s mission of diversity, but it also offers a great way to get involved with the local Chicago music scene. For the final course project, students are asked to explore Chicago and profile a local musician. I am currently evaluating the indie rock band



Professor Behling lectures on the Nigerian Juju style of music

Friday Pilot’s Club—an up-and-coming group of Columbia College students. They recently released their first extended play for sale, and I am using the ethnographic techniques taught by Professor Behling to investigate the impact this release is having on them as musicians.

I recommend the class to anyone who has even the slightest interest in music. Exploring the why and how of global music not only helps us understand other cultures, but it also helps us discover our own tendencies and beliefs reflected in music, which we may not have been aware of before. By understanding a concept as simple as how to contextually listen to music, we can begin to create a bridge of cross-cultural understanding in our lives. While the robust sounds of Tuvan throat music aren’t my first choice, I can now appreciate the skill required to produce it and the importance placed on it by its native culture.



Paving a Path for Success: Workshops for the Real World

by **Rafid Rahman** • *Sophomore, Biological Sciences*

Centralizing career development and internship information into one space within the Honors College, Stephanie O’Leary—Honors Academic Advisor and Program Specialist—has created a workshop series geared towards all majors in order to prepare students for the real world and for the next steps in their lives beyond UIC. Featuring advice for students on any career or graduate school track, O’Leary created the Fall Professional Development Workshop Series—a series of eight workshops that provide input from various experts to help students make connections with professors, advisors, professionals, and other key people at UIC.

The hope is that students will be able to network and get advice from people who are already successful and are willing to offer their help and support. A few examples of previous workshops include: Career Preparation Workshop for Juniors, Observe a Mock Medical School Interview, and Internship Essentials for Career Development.

After hosting the inaugural session on September 2nd, 2014, O’Leary has run a workshop in 121 Burnham Hall

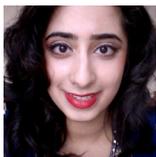


Speakers at an internship workshop

every other week throughout the fall semester. All students are welcome but these events are targeted toward juniors since they are starting to plan for their professional lives. O’Leary recalled that “even Honors College alumni have come back to experience some workshops because of the practicality and worth that they offer.”

O’Leary knows that navigating the professional world as a student is time-consuming. It can also seem completely daunting because of the information overload from various sources, including information which may not always be accurate. However, her goal for the workshops is to consolidate the expert advice of professionals to aid and guide the hardworking and motivated students of UIC.

O’Leary plans to continue this series every fall. She is always open to ideas from students to continue to strengthen the workshops, and invites students and student organizations to cosponsor future workshops. She can be reached at soleary@uic.edu or 312-413-2260 if you have any themes or topics that you would like to see included. More specific information about upcoming workshops can be found in the Honors College announcements and on flyers around campus. O’Leary hopes to see you there!



A Danish Experience

by **Aesha Talia** • *Sophomore, Chemical Engineering*

“Leave a little room to live!” Ariunaa Bayanjargal—a senior pre-med biological sciences major—declared this mantra as she recounted her study abroad adventures in Denmark last year. Through the Danish Institute for Study Abroad, this Honors student traveled to Denmark and explored the medical field’s broad expanses—interacting with physicians from numerous specialties, investigating medical practices and policies, and taking a variety of classes to explore the nuances of medicine.

Originally from Mongolia, Bayanjargal knew she wanted to study abroad in college. Luckily, she discovered the UIC Study Abroad Office and discovered the Medical Practice and Policy program after a few visits. The program’s 180 courses, including Immunology and Biology of Marine Mammals, piqued her interest. The fact that she would be able to spend an entire semester in Europe and fulfill her biology major requirements also appealed to Bayanjargal and served as a crucial factor in her decision to go to Denmark.

Bayanjargal stayed in Denmark’s capital, Copenhagen, with a host family. Alongside 900 other students, Bayanjargal was able to explore her interest in medicine through the Medical Practice and Policy program’s many activities. Students engaged in courses such as Human Health and Disease and journeyed across Europe to further learn about the multifaceted nature of medicine. Bayanjargal’s excursions around the country allowed her to hear firsthand about Denmark’s health care system from a family practitioner



Ariunaa Bayanjargal in Denmark

and provided her and her classmates with the opportunity to learn about how vascular surgeries are done. Her class also visited Sweden and Estonia. In Sweden, she witnessed an ACL surgery and visited the Karolinska Institute, home of the committee for the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. These study tours capture a fraction of the many visits that Bayanjargal and her classmates made. Upon the culmination of these trips, Bayanjargal gained new perspectives regarding healthcare and healthcare practices in Northern Europe, as compared to those in the US and Mongolia.

In addition, Bayanjargal’s courses—specifically “The Complexity of Cancer”—were integral to her study abroad experience. The two oncologists that led the class captured her attention by their differing perspectives on cancer. One specialized in end of life palliative care and presented the clinical aspects of patient care, while the other—who is pursuing her PhD—emphasized the art of learning. They sparked an interest in her to explore cancer’s scope in medicine.

Her experience in Denmark has certainly refined her career plans. Although Bayanjargal knew that she wanted to pursue an MD/PhD and had worked on retinal cell research in a UIC lab for the past few years, she wasn’t quite sure what she wanted to do beyond that. Exposure to cancer’s complexity in her class, however, blossomed into a desire to pursue cancer research.

Living in Denmark provided her with the opportunity to discover what she wanted to do. Bayanjargal stated, “[Study abroad] has been an excellent way to learn about what I really like.” She strongly recommends study abroad for anyone who is interested, as it provides a great opportunity to live a little and learn more about themselves.

Parent Corner

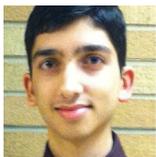
The UIC Honors College is comprised of an incredible community of deans, advisors, and scholars. We feel very fortunate that Michelle has been given the opportunity to learn and grow in such a caring, supportive environment throughout her college career. She constantly talks about her favorite Honors College professor, Dr. Nancy Cirillo, and her Honors College advisor, Sara Mehta, who has been of great help to her the past three years. Michelle was able to start interning at the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health working with reproductive justice and sexual health issues in Chicago, and last summer, the Honors College granted Michelle a scholarship which allowed her to study public health in Gaborone, Botswana. The Honors College has connected Michelle with unique opportunities that she would not have been able to experience elsewhere.

Michael & Katherine Vu

Parents of Junior Michelle Vu, Biological Sciences



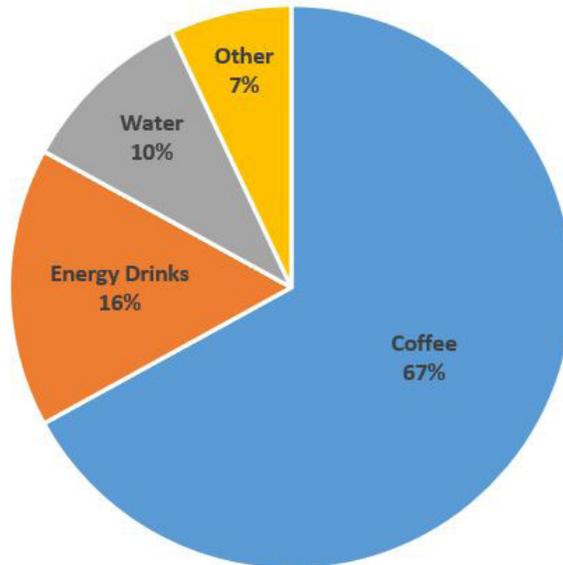
Michelle Vu and her parents Michael and Katherine Vu



Lounge Talk: What's Your Favorite Beverage While Studying?

by Gaurav Agnihotri • Freshman, Biochemistry

Midterms and quizzes never seem to end; in addition to stacked books, disheveled notes, and scattered pencils, there are almost always snacks and beverages accompanying our studying. After all, what fun is studying if there's nothing to munch on or drink? I paid a visit to the Honors College Lounge as well as to the study lounges in the Honors Tower of JST and asked 75 students which beverage they prefer to drink while studying. Understandably, the majority of students said coffee was their number one go-to study drink. Following (not so) closely behind were energy drinks—with Red Bull being the most popular. On the healthier side, water was the third most popular beverage. An almost negligible group of students preferred juice, soda, or tea during study sessions. Happy studying and stay hydrated!



Honors College Advisory Board Update

With the end of 2014 quickly approaching, the Honors College Advisory Board is working hard to finish the semester off strong. In addition to a very successful student and faculty luncheon, HCAB orchestrated a donut sale fundraiser that raised over \$600 for both Honors College activities and charity. Although the annual Honors College Ball seems pretty far away, HCAB has begun ball planning and donations have already started coming in. With dedication and a little luck, HCAB is striving to beat the record they set last year by raising over \$11,000 to give back to the Honors College community in the form of scholarships!

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Mission Statement

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 and celebrating diversity among the constituents of the Honors College.



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