

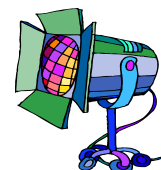


THE ATHANOR

Newsletter of the Honors Academy



CAPSTONE PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Editor's Note: This year we are proud to announce that the May 2006 class is the second largest graduating class to date, consisting of 24 Highlander Scholars from 17 different majors. This article will briefly summarize each Scholar's Capstone Project.

Nicole Bell—Music—“Implementing Classroom SOLs in the Music Classroom”—Music is a powerful tool to help students with retention of many types of subject knowledge. School music teachers use songs, movement, playing instruments, and other kinds of active engagement to support student success on SOL exams.

Christi Anna Bialas—Psychology—“The Impact of Military Retirement on Marital Relationships”—After spending at least twenty years on active duty, the transition from military to civilian life will bring a lot of unexpected changes. This project explores some of these changes.

Daniel Boothe—Music—“A Senior Percussion Recital”—This performance will feature a wide range of compositions for a variety of solo percussion instruments. Many of the programmed selections are significant staples of the percussion literature and require months of preparation and performance research to perform appropriately.

Megan Brooks—Communication Sciences & Disorders—“Children's Literature for Language-Based Disorders”—There are many children in schools who must overcome the challenges faced when having a language disorder. This work compiles existing children's literature that is helpful to those students who do not have a disorder, as well as presents a newly-written children's book that educates peers about Asperger syndrome.

Megan Burrus—Nursing—“A Child's Loss”—Dealing with loss and processing grief is difficult and confusing for everyone, especially children. The purpose of this project was to better understand the grieving process of children of all ages.

Tiffany Capehart—Communications—“Communicating the Truth: How People Talk about Their HIV/AIDS Status”—Very little research has been conducted on how people communicate about HIV/AIDS in interpersonal and familial relationships. This study seeks to understand how, when, and why people communicate about the disease. This project uses in-depth interviews and surveys to capture the stories and communicative experiences of these emotional liaisons between patients, friends, and family members who are victims of HIV/AIDS.

Nathaniel Clark—Recreation, Parks & Tourism—“Basics of Caving”—This presentation will recap a previous presentation given at the Wilderness Education Association National Conference in February 2006. The original presentation was offered as an introduction to caves and caving, and covered material such as cave formation and cave life, as well as what can be expected as a beginner caver. I will present information on this project, as well as show its significance and relevance to expanding the body of knowledge within my field of study.

Laura Deitz—Dance—“Hawaii In Motion”—After spending three weeks in Hawaii, I choreographed a 25 minute performance based on the land, water, and volcanos. Following the performance, I held a question and answer session, where I explained, in detail, the creative process and passion behind the piece.



XVI HIGHLANDER SCHOLAR SPRING BANQUET

On April 22nd, the Honors Academy held its sixteenth Annual Highlander Scholar Spring Banquet in the Muse Hall Banquet Room.



This was the second largest graduating class to date with 24 graduates from 18 different majors. There were also 101 students inducted as Highlander Scholars, the second largest group ever.

Dr. Jolanta Wawrzycka gave the welcoming speech and we then had a wonderful dinner. Dr. Joseph King, Director of the Honors Academy, gave the keynote speech praising and congratulating our graduating seniors and welcoming our new inductees.

The graduating seniors and their mentors came up to the podium while Dr. King read a prepared comment from each mentor about their student. Dr. King handed the student their Certificate of Completion and the mentors hooded their students with their gold stole.

The new members were called to the front of the room where Dr. King gave them their Certificate of Induction and each member received a great free gift and a group picture was taken.

This was a wonderful banquet and we would like to thank all the students, faculty, and administrators who participated. Congratulations to all of you!

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Nicholas Hopchak—Political Science—“Relative Distance with Remembrance: How to View Mysticism”—Previous scholarly work in the field of mysticism has reflected on and arrived at contradicting conclusions because of the differing cultural-religious milieus from which the mystical experience arises. It is the assertion of this work that the study of mysticism has been approached in a way that is contradictory to the entire experience, taking its forms in acts of oblivion forgetting reflection distance with remembrance.

Leigh Ann Hopkins—English—“Paper or Page: Producing a Newsletter”—This presentation will cover the process taken to produce newsletters. It will focus on how the production of a newsletter changes based on the media (print and electronic) used to deliver the newsletter.

Heather Hord—Communication Sciences & Disorders—“Cortical Auditory Evoked Potentials in Children with Autism”—This presentation coincides with a seed grant received by Dr. Ken Cox to study auditory processing in children with autism using auditory-evoked responses as measured on a Neuroscan Cortical Mapping Unit. Subjects for the student included three children with Asperger’s Syndrome, a type of higher functioning autism. Upon development of a protocol, testing was completed using the Neuroscan unit and two different sequences of pure auditory tones. Data was analyzed and the preliminary findings were reported.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



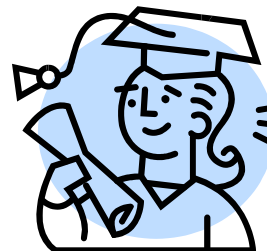
Q. What is the Undergraduate/Graduate Research Forum?

A. This forum, which occurs in April, provides a unique environment for the identification and celebration of exemplary undergraduate and graduate student achievement. Graduating Highlander Scholars are required to present their Capstone Projects in the form of oral papers, displays, performances, demonstrations, or discussions. This is an excellent opportunity to present your original work and a great addition to your resume!

Q. What is the Highlander Scholar Spring Banquet?

A. The Spring Banquet (which was held on Saturday, April 22nd this year) is a time for all Highlander Scholars to gather together to honor our graduating seniors and celebrate our new members. Each senior will be presented to the assembly by their chosen professor. Each new member will be inducted and given a certificate recognizing them as a Highlander Scholar. They will also receive a gift from the Honors Academy as well as a great meal! There is no charge to participants for the Banquet.

This is a very prestigious event. It is fun, free, and the food is great!



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Kevin Lillard—Psychology—“The Emotional Stroop Effect: Is Perceived Threat Necessary”—In an emotional Stroop effect, emotional words increase latencies in naming word colors. Several experiments examined whether distracting words that were not threatening could evoke this effect, and whether subjects with high test anxiety would have a larger response-time delay to test-related words.

Steven Mignogna—Marketing—“Alcova Mortgage”—This project described the mortgage industry, the view of mortgage brokers from a customer’s point of view, and the view of lenders from a broker’s point of view. I will present various surveys I conducted and analyze their significance in this ever-changing field.

W. Aaron Moore—English—“Milton and the visual Imagination”—This project will defend Milton’s visual imagination through my personal oral recitation of his poetry and through various artwork depicting scenes from *Paradise Lost*. Following certain recitations, I will discuss the specific qualities of each passage.

Jamie Nolan—Communications—“An Examination of Public Relations Practice in Southeast Asia”—This project discusses issues involved with both the major-socio-economic influences and the subtle cultural nuances in southeast Asian business practices in a growing environment of globalization.

Elisabeth Pallante—Foreign Languages—“East Axis Meets Sunny Spain: One Student’s Semester of Study in Spain”—This presentation will provide the audience with a summary of my experiences during a semester of study in Spain while working as a market researcher on East Asian minorities in Madrid.

Sarah Ragsdale—Foreign Languages—“Spanish Language Education: Building a Bridge of Communication in Area Hospitals”—In a world of increased globalization, the importance of learning a second language is essential for successful communication. This project will create an awareness of the need for Spanish language communication in local hospitals and provides an opportunity for healthcare workers to learn Spanish basics on which to build a deeper understanding of the language.

Amy Ratliff—Chemistry—“The Effectiveness of Metal Removal by Common Biomaterials”—In this project, my current research is focused on the removal of metals from solutions that simulate those from industrial wastewaters and contaminated environmental sites. The results of each experiment were presented and conclusions regarding the possibility of using readily available biomaterials were discussed.

L. Lee Reynolds—Computer Science and Technology—“Gumstix Devices as Network Security Sensors”—In this project I used a Gumstix device, which is small yet powerful, to sniff for data in network traffic and to identify commands to and from a wireless sensor, leaving the wired network free of excess traffic.

Robert Stallings—Computer Science and Technology—“Grid Computing Network”—Grid Networking is a new and exciting field with Distributed Computing. This project will go over the basic concepts of a grid computing environment and the work currently being conducted in the Next Generation Security: Assessing Vulnerability of Grid Computing Networks project.

Nicole Szell—Biology—“The Benefits of Education-Based Medicine in the Gynecologic Field”—In this project I will be presenting my thesis on the benefits of education-based medicine in the gynecologic field based on internships, interviews, and research.

Nathan Tatman—Physics—“Wind Tunnel Design and Operation”—This presentation will focus primarily on the design and operation of low speed wind tunnels. I will also be presenting data obtained from experimental research in the form of velocity profiles for the wind tunnel I constructed and preliminary analysis of turbulent flow over irregularly porous materials.

Emily Wise—Art—“RU Aware of Art”—Have you ever noticed the artwork around the campus? By creating “RU Aware of Art”, more students will have the opportunity to learn about the history and dedication that goes into creating these pieces of art through access on the web and a self-guided tourbook which I created with color photos.

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Ashley Zahorian—Media Studies—"Media Bias in Reporting Research: News Coverage of Abstinence Studies"—Manipulation and misrepresentation of scholarly research for use in media is a serious issue. Two major and conflicting studies were conducted based off the Add Heath data. This presentation will focus on how these two studies were covered by the media and applied to a related lawsuit concerning government funding of an abstinence program.

Editor's Note: We are very proud of all of you. These projects are truly impressive. We wish you the best of everything whether you are continuing on to graduate school or entering the job market. We sincerely hope you will keep in touch with us. Good luck

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