
HSA HAPPENINGS

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Leadership. Service. Academia.



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HSA Happenings is...

A student-produced monthly newsletter created and distributed by the Honors Student Association. Its purpose is to supplement the West Chester University community's knowledge of the Honors Student Association's activities and endeavors.

Table of Contents

Page 3	A Significant Experience By: Catherine Brittain
Page 4	Robin Bidwell Visits HON 352 By: Sarah Supplee
Page 5	Alumni Spotlight By: Mike Moriarty
Page 7	HSA Sports By: Savannah Lear
Page 8	Travelling Across Generations By: Beccah Porter
Page 9	October in a Gance By: Jennifer Knerr
Page 10	October Community Service Calendar By: Rebeccah Porter
Page 11	Class of 2020 at Launch Pad

A Significant Experience

Catherine Brittain

Sophomore

As a current sophomore in the honors college, I am one of the few lucky individuals who joined honors after their first semester freshman year, and I'm here to report on how great of an experience I've had. Honors has helped me create wonderful relationships, enhanced my learning, and given me so many unique opportunities. I'm so lucky to be a part of this group, and I hope the rest of the honors community understands my gratefulness.

I will never forget my very first honors class when Professor Wooten paired up all the students in our class and told us to introduce ourselves. I was paired with Dunya Markovich, and she quickly became my first friend in honors. She's the type of person who is always smiling and she brightens up my day every time I see her. However, Dunya isn't the only friend I've made through honors. Over the past year, I have gotten to know the people in my graduating class, as well as the one below me, and not to mention my fellow bridge students. I truly enjoy the community I've become a part of through honors, it makes West Chester feel more like home.

Aside from the lovely people I've met, I've felt very passionate about my learning. The courses in honors are designed to develop leaders who will serve their community and they test students in a way that inspires growth while challenging beliefs. Honors courses require students to complete service learning projects, which has pushed me to join a volunteer group called Rammies. Rammies is

an on-campus club that encourages athletic involvement in special needs children. Working with Rammies has helped me develop a higher level of patient, and shown me how significant acts of service can be.

In addition to my new found love for learning, honors has opened the door to so many unique experiences for me. Last semester, honors allowed me to take part in the annual Frederick Douglass debate, where Dunya and I competed with students from other schools about healthcare reform. Not only did we learn a lot about healthcare systems, but we got to experience what it's like to be on a debate team. It was also through honors that I was able to join a group of women in starting a chapter of the national organization, Her Campus, at West Chester. Through Her Campus, I have been able to write about topics that interest me and publish them to share with others. Also, one of the greatest opportunities honors gives its students is the opportunity to travel to South Africa and immersively explore how leadership and community. Ultimately, the honors college introduces students to meaningful opportunities, which can be rare to find otherwise.

It's because of these reasons and many more, that I am so thankful to be a part of West Chester's honors college. Joining honors has helped me grow as a student and a person, and I believe it has formulated a path of success which I will continue to follow in my career. Honors has made my college experience so much richer and I'm not even halfway done, I can't wait to see where honors takes me in the future. ♦

Robin Bidwell Visits HON 352

Sarah Supplee

First-Year

On September 19th, 2019, the HON 352 class had the privilege of learning more about the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) from guest speaker Robin Bidwell. Not only is Bidwell a nurse and HIV/AIDS educator, but also the mother of an Honors College alumni. Bidwell began her presentation by sharing her lineage fun fact, and continued with an interactive activity. She passed out numerous posters to students in the class, each listing a different stage of sexual intercourse. The students then proceeded to the front of the classroom and attempted to line up in chronological order from checking the expiration date of a condom to throwing it out after use. After a few tries and plenty of laughs from the class, the students accurately placed the steps and returned to their seats.

Robin Bidwell continued her presentation by defining the HIV/AIDS transmission process and stages of infection. HIV can be transmitted through contaminated blood, sexual intercourse, breast milk, or perinatal transmission. Once infected with HIV, the virus takes the form of an acute infection similar to the flu before developing into the clinical latency stage. The last stage is AIDS in which one's CD4 cell count falls below 200 cells/mm³. While HIV/AIDS is a terminal condition, Bidwell described how with proper resources the disease can be treated to elongate the life of the victim.

After describing the basics of HIV/AIDS, Robin Bidwell transitioned her presentation to describing how the disease impacts South Africa, an issue very important to the Honors College. Students in the Honors College first learn about HIV/AIDS in South Africa during the Summer Symposium, and continue by taking HON 352. HON 352 dives deeper into the HIV/AIDS epidemic, requiring the students to read countless books and articles on the subject. Honors students then have the option to take an additional course based on South Africa and travel there over the summer. With so many opportunities to learn about HIV/AIDS and even an organization called Aid to South Africa to get involved in, the students of HON 352 found Bidwell's presentation to be highly relatable.

Bidwell ended her presentation by detailing South Africa's efforts towards stopping the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The medication Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) was approved for distribution, specifically among sex workers. Taken daily, PrEP can help prevent the chance of contracting HIV among those in high risk situations. South Africa also strives to promote HIV/AIDS education and increase resources for those living with the disease. The goal is to have 90% of people know their HIV status, 90% of people who are HIV positive to be accessing treatment, and 90% of people who are receiving treatment will have suppressed viral loads.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the students from HON 352 presented Robin Bidwell with a small gift to show their appreciation. Bidwell's presentation of HIV/AIDS proved not only education, but also highly relatable and inspiring. ♦

Alumni Spotlight

Mike Moriarty

Honors College Class of 2017



Photo Credit: Mike Moriarty

Mike Moriarty graduated from the West Chester University Honors College in 2017 with a degree in Communication Studies. He is currently in Oslo, Norway for a three-month internship with the Nobel Peace Institute. In an interview with Kristen Loughlin, the Alumni Coordinator for HSA, Mike shared some of his recent accomplishments, his college experience, and advice for current Honors students.

What have you been up to since graduating WCU?

I had been at WCU for six straight years...four years as an undergrad and two years in the Master's program. I was a Communication Studies major and was the first to receive the

minor in Civic and Professional Leadership. Once I graduated from the undergraduate program in 2017, I rolled immediately into my graduate work, again studying Communications, and completed that program this past May of 2019. What have I been up to? Relaxing (as much as possible). I think it was important for me to take the summer off to reset my mind. Truthfully, after all of the coursework, exams, papers, co-curricular events, etcetera, I needed a breather. So, I spent the summer traveling with family and loved ones; to Ocean City, NJ. Gettysburg, PA. Outer Banks, NC. Sarasota, FL. I think the vacations were well deserved.

What were you involved with at WCU?

Hahaha...I think it's safe to say I had a full plate while at West Chester - but I wouldn't have had it any other way. In no particular order, I was a member of the Incomparable Golden Rams Marching Band (having served as Drum Major my junior and senior year), was a brother of Phi Sigma Pi (the campus's National Gender Inclusive Honor Fraternity) where I served as President for two years. I was a member of the 6th Man Basketball Band, a brother of The Friars' Society, member of Lambda Pi Eta, Omicron Delta Kappa, HSA, and served as a chair to the Honors Council as an Honors Seminar Student Representative for a few years. I had also been a part of two delegations to South Africa, and a part of one delegation to Norway. All of which combined made my college experience worthwhile.

What part of your college experience had the biggest impact on where you are now?

I think the easy answer is to say all of my experiences at WCU landed me in the position I am now. Honestly though, you underestimate

how fortunate you are to have an Honors community in an environment as wonderful as WCU. I've come to accept many of Dr. Dean's wise words as important concepts to carry throughout life. Such as "be flexible" or "the answer is always NO unless you ask." Which is probably why I am in the position I am in now as I type this.

Honors is special -- it allows its students to accomplish anything they set their mind to. If you begin to accept this as truth...you begin to unlock unimaginable possibilities for yourself. I am currently in Oslo, Norway for a three-month internship with the Nobel Peace Institute (the fun people that pick Nobel Peace laureates like Barack Obama, Malala, or Martin Luther King). So, the biggest impact of my college career would have to be Honors and all of the incredible work Honors students do. It truly speaks volumes when you graduate from a program which emphasizes leadership, service, academia, community and encourages an interdisciplinary mindset. Honors is a space to collaborate, a space where you can push each other to become better versions of yourself. The program has made me incredibly marketable post-graduation.

What advice do you have for current Honors students?

I'll keep it relatively simple...

- Never be afraid to take risks.
- Never be afraid to ask for help.
- Build a network of people that will support you and ALWAYS be open to including others.
- Be open to new experiences.
- Take time for self-care.

Thanks, Mike! Connections between alumni and current students are so valuable. On October 20th from 12:30-3 PM, the annual Alumni Fall Fest will be held in Everhart Park for alumni and current students to continue forging those connections. There will be free food, lawn games, music, and fun! All HSA members are encouraged to attend and network with alumni at this festive autumn event! ♦



Photo Credit: Mike Moriarty

HSA Sports

Savannah Lear

First-Year

As the semester is kicking into gear, you might need an escape from all the homework and tests. For the athletes out there, HSA has the perfect solution. Intramural sports. Each semester, HSA enters in a team for a few of the intramural sports that go on around campus. Some of those sports include basketball, volleyball, soccer and many more. At this point in time, HSA has teams for soccer and basketball already together. The captains of the soccer team are Anna Dyska and Ryan Smith. For basketball, the captain is Zach Davis. Volleyball will also be starting in October with Savannah Lear as captain. Please contact her if you are at all interested as no one signed up yet and registration starts October 7th.

All of these sports are a great way for you to get out and have some fun with your friends. Even if you're not the most athletic person, it'd still be a blast to drop your schoolwork for a little bit and enjoy something new around campus. It is low level commitment so it doesn't take too much time away from your studies. Even if none of these sports interest you right now, the spring semester will bring a new set. With any intramural sports related questions through HSA, contact Juah-Palleh Toe. Come play or support your peers while they play! ♦

Be sure to follow HSA on
Social Media!

Instagram: [hsawcu](#)

Twitter: [@HSAWCU](#)

Facebook: West Chester
University Honors Student
Association



Travelling Across Generations

Becca Porter

First-Year

Some may say only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile. Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand all that the Honors Student Association (HSA) has to offer in terms of service to enrich your life and the lives of others. Amongst the various opportunities, lies a hidden gem that has formed in order to spread happiness and lend your company to individuals in need. Travelling Across Generations, otherwise known as T.A.G., is a club led by Emily Matthews, class of 2020.

Every Monday and Friday at 3:30 a group of students travel across generations from West Chester University to the Barclays Friends Center to spend some time with the elderly living there. Activities can range from uno and dominoes to wii bowling. They even have two bunnies you can take around to the patients for their enjoyment. T.A.G. is an opportunity to get off campus and make someone's day. It is unbelievable how one smile can impact so many people; how just listening to a story or cracking a joke can transcend generations.

I've had the opportunity to be able to volunteer with TAG on a couple of occasions. The first time I volunteered we walked around with the bunnies and talked to the residents. Marshmallow, a beautiful white bunny, was the bunny I got to hold. The resident's faces lit up when we came around and it was wonderful to be able to provide that joy for them. Most of the time company is taken for granted and we

don't realize the people that we get coffee with or go out to lunch with are making time out of their day to spend time with you. It felt refreshing to spend time with people who genuinely enjoy our company. I strongly suggest volunteering with T.A.G. if your in need of volunteer hours or if you just want to take a breather and hang out with elderly people. ♦

Send us your best Halloween costumes!

Send us your best Halloween costumes for a chance to be featured in the November edition of HSA Happenings!

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Photo Credit Pexels.com

October in a Glance by Your Social Coordinator!

Jennifer Knerr
Junior

Dorm Decorating Contest

First-year students competed in HSA's Annual Dorm Decoration Contest in Allegheny Hall on September 17, 2019! Categories included Coziest Dorm, Most WCU Spirit, Most Organized, and so many others! Next, the Halloween Decoration Contest!



Photo Credit: Jennifer Knerr



Photo Credit: Jennifer Knerr

Canvas Painting Night

HSA's first ever Canvas Painting Fun-raiser on September 24, 2019 was a huge success! Thanks to everyone who came, painted, de-stressed, and left with a new, unique decoration for their wall! Love, K & J



Photo Credit: Jennifer Knerr



Photo Credit: Jennifer Kner

October Community Service Calendar

2019 OCTOBER

CALENDAR YEAR

CALENDAR MONTH

MONDAY

FIRST DAY OF WEEK

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30 TAG 3:30-5:15pm	01	02 Adopt-a-Block 1-2pm Volunteer Fair 11am-2pm	03	04 TAG 3:30-5:15	05 Brandywine Red Clay Work Day 8:30am-12:30pm	06
07 TAG 3:30-5:15pm	08	09 Adopt-a-Block 1-2pm	10	11 TAG 3:30-5:15 Safe Harbor Bake Sale 11:00pm-2:00am	12 One Team Goal Photography & Canning 4:00pm	13
14 TAG 3:30-5:15pm	15	16 Adopt-a-Block 1-2pm	17	18 TAG 3:30-5:15 One Team Goal Photography & Canning 5:30pm	19 One Team Goal Photography & Canning 3:30pm	20
21 TAG 3:30-5:15pm	22	23 Adopt-a-Block 1-2pm	24	25 TAG 3:30-5:15	26	27
28 TAG 3:30-5:15pm Chester County Community Foundation's Annual Meeting 3:00-8:00pm	29	30 Adopt-a-Block 1-2pm	31	01 TAG 3:30-5:15 One Team Goal Photography & Canning, Time: TBD	02	03
04 TAG 3:30-5:15pm	05	06 Adopt-a-Block 1-2pm	07	08 TAG 3:30-5:15 One Team Goal Photography & Canning, Time: TBD	09 One Team Goal Photography & Canning 12:00pm	10

Made by: Rebecca Porter

West Chester University's Honors Class of 2020 heads to Launchpad



Photo Credit: Kevin Dean

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