Dylan McFarland chosen as student regent for the Texas State University System

When senior Sam Houston State University student Dylan McFarland accepted the position of student regent for the Texas State University System, he knew that he would need an immense amount of patience, determination, and time management skills. McFarland is the fifth SHSU student to hold the position since it was created in 2006.

“There were about 16 former and current student regents from the 10 public university systems in the state there,” McFarland said. “It was a great opportunity to meet them and see what we all have in common. TSUS Chancellor Brian McCall spoke to us, as well as the vice chancellor for the UT system. Afterwards, we were able to go to the governor’s mansion and meet Governor Greg Abbott. It was a very humbling experience.”

Throughout his time at SHSU, the criminal justice major has held a variety of positions in SGA, including criminal justice councilor, senator, chief of rules and regulations, student body treasurer. He also has served as an FLP mentor, Orange Key, and an Honor College ambassador. He has served on numerous committees, including the parking appeals committee and the Greek strategic planning committee where he served as the non-Greek member. He was elected vice president of SGA, but resigned seven days after taking office, as he could not hold both positions simultaneously.

His dedication to servant leadership earned him 2014 Sammy award for “Outstanding First-Year Student Leader” and the 2015 Sammy Award for “Outstanding Sophomore Student Leader.”

“I’ve tried to give back to SHSU as much as they have allowed me to,” McFarland said. “The next best way to give back to Sam is to give back to the university system. I would not have any of the success that I have had if I did not enjoy losing myself in the service of others. It is not my goal to be awarded for what I do; I get a lot of joy from the help I am able to give others.”

“It’s actually incredible how much the TSUS system office is able to do–effectively– with around 25 employees and less money than most other systems in the state,” he said.

After his graduation in 2017, McFarland plans to remain at SHSU for his master’s degree in homeland security studies.

“Ultimately, I would like to work as a Texas State Trooper and eventually work my way up to Texas Ranger,” he said. “The position of student regent will help me achieve that by giving me insight to the political landscape behind the scenes. Understanding the political involvement in the executive branch is highly important.”

Though his plate may be full with his many responsibilities, McFarland has used the values instilled in him by his parents, as well as his many years of experience with numerous organizations, to create balance.

“I have the time of my life when I am busy and under a lot of pressure; that’s when I do some of my best work,” he said. “Then I’m able to prioritize for maximum effectiveness, so I am able to do what is required and never let anyone down.”
The Elliott T. Bowers Honors College has a history of exceptional management since its inception in 1987. The role of Dean has played an important part of shaping the rapid, consistent success of the college, with many recognizable faces from across campus holding the office over the past 30 years.

Dr. Kimberly Bell assumed the role of Dean in 2015, bringing with her ten years of experience with the Honors program that has lead to her role today.

Dr. Bell first started working on campus in 2002 as an associate professor in the English department. Her areas of study focus on “Classical and Medieval literature and history of the English language.” It was through her passion for English that Dr. Bell eventually came to teach her first honors course, something that would have an impact on the path of her career. According to Dr. Bell, that 2005 class was enough to concretize in her a desire to work with the Honors College, and instill in her a passion for working with the students.

When she began work as a Dean, Dr. Bell had two major goals she hoped to accomplish, and both are evident in the Honors College’s daily management. The first is the Undergraduate Research Symposium hosted by the Honors College. “[I wanted] to get more honors students involved in undergraduate research by making them aware of research opportunities available to them and by creating research opportunities for them,” Dean Bell said. The second draws from her time in the classroom, interacting daily with both honors students and non-honors students. Dean Bell strives to motivate students to be the best they can be, both as individuals and representatives of the Honors College, as well as working with students to address the evolving culture of honors.

“Honors should not be an island unto itself: we need to be integrated into the rest of the undergraduate population at large. The former Dean, Dr. Young, always fondly reminded us all that we were more than just ‘herds of nerds’: I agree wholeheartedly, but I also think that it’s OK to be nerds and to advertise, and celebrate, our ‘nerdom’ with the rest of the campus.”

Since taking the position in 2015, Dr. Bell has strived to maintain the prestige of the Elliott T. Bowers Honors College as Dean, and continues to do so thanks to a clear vision and specific plans for achieving realistic goals.

SAVE THE DATE! FOR THE TENTH ANNUAL UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

APRIL 29, 2017

The Tenth Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium will take place on April 29, 2017, in the CHSS building and the LSC. This professional, interdisciplinary conference, hosted by the Honors College is open to all undergraduates and offers a unique opportunity to present completed or ongoing research to an audience made up of peers, faculty, and family.

The symposium is a major highlight of the University’s initiative to foster student excellence in research. Students present their work in either oral-media sessions or in a research poster session, and each student receives constructive feedback from a faculty moderator. The Undergraduate Research Symposium also offers scholarship opportunities to presenters.

Paige Odegard, who won Honorable Mention for her research poster in 2015, was able to attend the prestigious Naylor writing studies workshop. At this workshop, Paige extended the research that she presented at the URS in order to investigate the ways that writing is taught across the curriculum. The URS remains an exciting venture for all students and offers myriad opportunities for career advancement.

DEAN BELL ANNOUNCEMENT

ETHAN HORN

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Every semester the Honors College offers a Cultural Outing, which is designed to expose students to certain finer aspects of life they would otherwise not be exposed to on campus. In the past, we have gone to musicals in downtown Houston, paired with fine dining; Astros games, local play houses, and much more. In the fall semester of 2016, we chose to go to the Texas Renaissance Festival.

The Renaissance Festival is a big complex of shops and stages in Todd Mission, Texas designed to mimic the feel of the medieval era. There are all sorts of fantastic food (German, Greek, French, French-Cajun, and typical fair food), shows (blacksmithing, mud throwing, traditional dances, jousting and sword fighting), as well as many different types of gift shops (ranging from food/adult beverage specialists, to period clothing, and weaponry) and rides to explore. It was great fun. Everyone had a blast, and left with smiles on their faces.

We’re excited for the spring 2017 Cultural Outing!

**STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:**

**Naomi Broussard**

Psychology major and Special Education minor Naomi Broussard became involved in ASL research two years ago, when she became interested in how deafness alters one’s life and completed her first honors contract with ASL professor Joseph Holmberg. With a desire to understand more of what her deaf friends were going through, she conducted a social experiment, plugging her ears for an entire week. Broussard met with Dr. Allred, an audiologist in Huntsville, in order to learn more about how people's ears work and was fitted with her own custom-made earplugs. While not simulating total deafness, she experienced being hard of hearing.

“People had to repeat and raise their voices to get my attention. I even had trouble controlling the volume of my voice, since I could not gauge how loud or soft I was speaking. I also gained firsthand experience in hearing related communication problems and embarrassment around others. Communication and social relationships were hard to maintain during the experiment, giving me a better understanding of how deaf people might feel and making me more mindful of my deaf friends,” Broussard said.

Unable to attend the URS, she recruited an audience and hosted her own event at which to present. Broussard’s research helped expand understanding in both her disciplines, as there are many theories in psychology about language development and theory of mind, and in Special Education, where deafness is likely to come up. “I hope that having the experience of being hard of hearing for a week will help me to see deaf individuals in a new light and allow me to be more empathetic towards them,” Broussard said.

**CULTURAL OUTING TO THE TEXAS RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL**

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We’re excited for the spring 2017 Cultural Outing!
Annual Honors Welcome Retreat Fall 2016

The Honors College continued the tradition of hosting the annual Honors Welcome Retreat for new Honors students at the Bearkat Camp in Riverside for the third time. Over 100 faculty, student Ambassadors, and new members of the Honors College spent the weekend at SHSU’s University Camp which provided a chance for new students to get better acquainted with one another as well as the Honors College faculty and staff. The retreat includes various ice breaker games as well as line-dancing, zip-lining, kayaking, and the option to participate in the camp’s low ropes course. Information sessions held throughout the retreat are intended to help new students better understand Honors requirements as well as learn about the opportunities available to them as Honors students.

Jonathan Woody, Honors College sophomore and transfer from Lone Star College, described his weekend at the Honors Welcome Retreat as a "fantastic experience and an excellent opportunity to meet your peers and the Honors Ambassadors in a relaxed setting, making it easy to form long lasting friendships."

The Fall 2017 Welcome Retreat is scheduled for September 8-9, 2017 at SHSU University camp in Riverside, Texas. All new Honors College students are encouraged to register online.

Seminar Abroad: London and Paris

Fifteen Honors students travelled to London and Paris in May 2016, taking part in a unique opportunity to explore two of Europe’s oldest and most vibrant cities by critically examining the cities’ deep and varied histories through their individual cityscapes.

Students visited ancient, medieval, and modern sites, explored castles and other ruins, walked through museums, rode various forms of modern transportation, and enjoyed local cuisine and nightlife.

During their time in London and Paris, students visited sites both historical and fictional: Buckingham Palace, Versailles Palace, Cambridge University, the Eiffel tower; Platform 9 ¾ was a hugely popular destination as were 221 B Baker St. and Abbey Road.

To visit famous landmarks such as the Tower of London and the Louvre Museum which have excited the imagination in myriad ways, to see those places where history was made, to tour museums where masterpieces of art are housed reflect what the Honors College seeks: to heighten and broaden knowledge and to create more well-rounded individuals.
This fall three of the Honors College Ambassadors, Kristyn Couvillion, Everett Moore, and Shealynn Vogan, had the opportunity to attend the National Collegiate Honors Conference held in Seattle, Washington. The conference offers a variety of topics ranging from how to administer an honors program to scientific research. Some of their favorite topics from the conference included honors students and mental health as well as systemic change within community service opportunities. Everett Moore was interviewed on his experience from the trip and noted, "My trip to the National Collegiate Honors Council marked my second time EVER being on an airplane (yes, I’m somewhat of a country bumpkin). As I, along with my friends and fellow SHSU Honors College students Shealynn Vogan and Kristyn Couvillion, left from Bush Intercontinental Airport the morning of October 12, 2016, I didn’t really know what to expect from the conference. I knew honors programs from all across the nation would be there; I knew that there would be presentations and networking, but I had no idea where I would fit in with it. I was just a kid from Huntsville, TX who had only barely left the state. How would I fit?

Perfect was the immediate response as we landed in Seattle to sunshine and beautiful scenery. Arriving at the beautiful Sheraton Seattle Hotel in downtown in short order, I got my first taste of a conference that would be engaging and unique throughout my three-day stay," continued Moore.

"The sheer number of presentations was mind-boggling, and the subject matter was as diverse as the student body of our very own Honors College. I attended sessions that covered mental health among honors students (with a hefty recommendation for a therapy dog!), positive outlooks on attitude and class (the FISH philosophy), and how to transform community service from a 10-hour obligation to a systemic tradition that students are proud to be a part of. There was a graduate school/job fair throughout the weekend where honors students could get a wealth of information on great opportunities. There were even several software demos that had motivated business leaders creating platforms for bettering honors colleges.

Outside of the conference proceedings, the city of Seattle was amazing, though the locals don’t seem to react to rain the same way we do in Texas. The Chihuly Glass and Garden Museum was an incredibly beautiful place filled with art the likes of which I’ve never had a chance to enjoy. Downtown Seattle was bursting with color and activity, Pike Place Market was exciting and fun just to walk around in, and the first Starbucks store was a stop that my companions couldn’t leave Seattle without making. There were eventful ferry rides across the Puget Sound, crazy runs to catch said ferry rides, and more than a few interesting taxi drivers," added Moore.

"All in all, my experience at NCHC 2016 was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that a first generation college student like myself would never have reached without the Elliott T. Bowers Honors College. I hope that one day, I will be able to pay this miraculous blessing forward and send future students on the trip of a lifetime at no cost to them," concluded Moore.
This past summer, Honors Ambassador Joshua McGinty had the opportunity to study abroad with the College of Business Administration for 30 days in Beijing. McGinty blogged his experience which was also featured on Today@Sam:

"Prior to this trip, I had never left Huntsville for more than two weeks, let alone the country. I was nervous but full of excitement leading up to the trip.

We were able to take classes (thankfully in English) with Chinese students at the host university. Some of our class days consisted of field trips—whether to companies native to the area or to cultural and tourist sites. On Wednesday of our second week there, I was able to walk on the Great Wall of China. It was breathtaking to see such an historic piece of architecture standing today. To be able to walk along the Wall for some time was marvelous. The ride to the Great Wall took us about an hour by bus but the views were incredible. Along the way, I heard one of our Chinese hosts telling another student that she had never visited the Great Wall of China. I was shocked! How could someone live so close to an amazing wonder like this and have never even attempted to see it? It just didn’t make sense.

On the way home, I pondered on this while heading back to our hotel. I’ve lived in Huntsville my entire life and there are sights, such as the Sam Houston Statue, that I take for granted. Sure, it’s not the Great Wall of China, but it gave me some perspective. I had become so acclimated to my surroundings that the exciting wonders around me became everyday displays. While in college and beyond, be sure to ‘stop and smell the roses.’ There is so much beauty around us and you don’t want to miss a second of it. Also, take advantage of all that this University offers you, whether studying abroad in a foreign country, interning in your hometown or something possibly even greater! Enjoy your college experience and remember to ‘Eat ‘em up Kats!’" -Joshua McGinty

Honors Ambassador President Everett Moore was nominated to be a participant at a small group colloquium that invited bright students from across the university to discuss the topic of economic freedom. The event was sponsored by the Institute for Humane Studies, a prestigious organization that works closely with George Mason University to promote intellectual freedom and discussion. Moore was one of several undergraduates taking part along with graduate students from different colleges and was interviewed regarding his attendance:

"For this particular colloquium, we were tasked with reading the works of Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Friedrich Hayek and John Maynard Keynes, then discussing the merits of their work and how we saw them continuing in the future. Though my discipline is psychology, I still found the conversation to be engaging and contentious, though in a positive way.

I think that is what struck me about the Institute for Humane Studies’ event; while there was likely not an opinion in that room that was 100% alike, the conversation was never aggressive or dismissive.

The other 14 students and I would disagree, we would debate, we would point out contradictions, we would launch our own discussions from the foundations our peers presented.

However, it was never malicious or hurtful. We were students in an intellectual environment having a high-level discussion, something that surprised me given today’s social climate. Despite the variety of opinions and viewpoints, investments of time and effort, we all managed to take part in a conversation the way that our forefathers must have dreamed of when they first drafted the constitution.

The Honors College is an organization that leads to opportunities like this one, opportunities that offer personal growth and revelation just as much as it offers monetary incentive and networking. I am glad that I was able to attend the Institute for Humane Studies’ colloquium, and I hope that I will be invited to more of their events in the future." -Everett Moore
**RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT:**

**RAYNIE LEARD**

Not only did sophomore psychology major Raynie Leard learn a lot about geckos when completing her honors contract, she and Dr. Juan Daza believe they have discovered a new species. Leard presented their research findings at the annual TriBeta biological society’s conference- the only freshman at the time attending the event.

"It was really educational to present the content of our research at the conference because most audience members knew little about herpetology to begin with. I loved sharing what I know with those who truly wanted to learn something new," Leard noted.

Using CT scans of two *Sphaerodactylus dommeli* specimens found in amber and estimated to be as old as 20 million years, Leard and Dr. Daza made comparisons to 20 specimens-ranging in size from juvenile to adult-of extant gecko species *Sphaerodactylus townsendi*. The two amber specimens were not proportionate in growth like the extant geckos were. Though they did have some characteristics that labeled them as indeed geckos, they were concluded to not be a juvenile and adult of the same species, but a separate species altogether.

Leard said, "It was extremely interesting to learn about these geckos and deal with specimens as old as they are, but it was even more exciting to be included in the research of discovering a species-especially for it being in a field of science I am interested in but not pursuing. Having had this experience I am eager to share not only our findings, but the fact that I had this chance for research in general."

Leard had many opportunities presented to her with regards to completing the research, including attending the TriBeta conference, an invitation to the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists conference in New Orleans, and the inclusion of the paper in a scientific journal.

**FACULTY NOTES**


Dr. Patrick Lewis solicited a paper titled "A Reevaluation of Fossil Musk rats (Rodentia: Arvicolinea) Based on Molar Morphology: Pattern, Rate, and Taxonomy". Journal: *Quaternary International*.

Dr. Tracy Bilsing presented a paper at the American Studies Association of Texas titled “Mors ab Alto: The Dangerous Power of Women’s Images in WWII Nose Art.” She spoke about the depiction of women’s images on military airplanes which became popular during World War II when soldier-artists were informally commissioned to paint pictures on planes in order to personalize the machines for the crews who flew in them. Often appropriating the images from famous pin up art, nose art is a complex cultural icon which has its roots in ancient history and which appropriates sexuality as a specific form of female power during a predominantly masculine event.

**ALUMNI NOTES**

Elizabeth Braun is pursuing her Doctor of Philosophy in Chemistry at University of Texas at Dallas. A former Honors College Ambassador, Elizabeth received the Eric Moore Chemistry Graduate Scholarship at UTD. She is married to SHSU alum, David Braun.

Kristin Edwards, 2008, is Public Relations Marketing Specialist at the City of Deer Park, Texas. Previously she was Deputy City Secretary for the City of Huntsville, Texas and a Reporter for the Huntsville Item newspaper. Kristin earned her Master’s in Public Administration at SHSU.

Morgan Foulkes attended the University of Rochester and earned his Masters of Science in Finance at the William E. Simon Graduate School of Business Administration. Currently he is a financial analyst at AON Hewitt in Chicago, Illinois.

Meelani Negrito, 2013, a former Honors College Ambassador, received her PhD in Chemistry at Texas A&M University and works as an Analytical Laboratory Technician for the R&D Department of the Dow Chemical Company.
Fall 2016 Graduates

College of Business Administration
Evan Arambula       Margaret Mitsche
Shealynn Vogan*

College of Criminal Justice
Channing Carpenter     Johnathan Jackson
Kayla Saunders

College of Fine Arts and Mass Communication
Asia Williams

College of Health Sciences
Nicolas Castro Pinzon     Ashley Graham

College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Savanah Burns*          Robert Davidson
Rachael Falgout*        Addie Goodson
Victor Johnston          Ashley Kendall

College of Science and Engineering Technology
Merary Bautista-Ordonez*   Geneva Clark
Willis Foley              Michelle Harris*
Andrew Johnson*          Cullen Lyles
Amanda Means              Sarai Mesa*
Christa Roensch           Rebecca Wood

College of Education
Jessica Curda             Kayla Johnson
Kaleigh Wood

* Denotes Highest Honors
William Bailey, Sam Houston State University Junior Honors College student and Lone Star transfer, was accepted to a very selective program: the Graduate School Experience Workshop at the University of Minnesota. The topic is “German Studies in the 21st Century: History, Text, Image” and is financially sponsored by the German Academic Exchange Service and exposes students to graduate studies in German. Bailey will attend graduate seminars, talk to potential advisers, and might be recruited on the spot for their masters program.
Save The Date!

Honors College Calendar of Events

Spring 2017

January 18
Wednesday
8:00 AM
Wake up with Honors, Honors Lounge

January 24
Tuesday
3:30 PM
Honors College Assembly, Olson Auditorium

January 25
Wednesday
4:00 PM
ProfSPEAK! Hannah Gerber, Evans 105

February 3
Friday
5:00 PM
Deadline: Course Contract, Thesis Proposal, Community Service, and Honors Spring/Summer Graduation Declaration Forms

February 7
Tuesday
3:30 PM
URS Informational Meeting, LSC 308

February 8
Wednesday
3:00 PM
URS Informational Meeting, LSC 308

February 8
Wednesday
4:00 PM
ProfSPEAK! Victoria Lantz, Evans 105

February 13
Monday
4:00 PM
Pizza with a Prof, Honors Lounge

February 23
Thursday
1:00 PM
Reception for Outstanding Students, Peabody Library

March 6
Monday
8:00 PM
Honors College Advising Opens

March 8
Wednesday
4:00 PM
ProfSPEAK! Ervin Malakaj, Evans 105

March 9
Thursday
1:00
Ambassador Meet and Greet, Austin Hall

March 13-17
Mon-Fri

March 15
Wednesday
5:00 PM
Spring Break

March 15
Wednesday
5:00 PM
Ambassador Application Deadline, AB4 201

March 24
Friday
8:00 AM
Honors Advance Registration

March 31
Friday
6:00 PM
High School Honors Dinner, LSC Ballroom

April 3
Monday
4:00 PM
Pizza with a Prof, Honors Lounge

April 5
Wednesday
4:00 PM
Thesis Informational Meeting, Honors Lounge

April 6
Thursday
1:00 PM
Thesis Informational Meeting, Honors Lounge

April 8
Saturday
11:00 AM
Honors College Open House Saturday @ SAM, Olson Auditorium

April 23
Sunday
TBA
HSAC Cultural Outing, Cirque du Soleil

April
Tuesday
6:00 PM
Honors Dinner with President, Walker Education Center

April 29
Saturday
8:00 AM
Undergraduate Research Symposium, LSC Ballroom and CHSS

May 1
Monday
3:00 PM
Ice Cream Social, Olson Auditorium

May 1
Monday
4:00 PM
HSAC Meeting & Elections, Olson Auditorium

May 5
Friday
5:00 PM
Deadline: Thesis with signed Thesis Approval Forms, AB4 201

May 8-11
Mon-Fri

May 11
Thursday
11:00 AM
EXAM Week

May 12-13
Fri-Sat
9:30 /2:30

May 15
Monday
5:00 PM
Deadline: Honors Thesis Final Approval Forms, Contract Completion Forms, AB4 201

Fall 2016
The Texas State University System
Board of Regents 2016

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Rossanna Salazar, Vice Chairman, Austin
Charles Amato, San Antonio
Veronica Muzquiz Edwards, San Antonio
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Education
Theatre
Mathematics
Newton Gresham Library
Political Science
Business
Criminal Justice
Criminal Justice
Consumer Sciences
Biology
Management

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Kristyn Couvillion
Addie Goodson
Rachael Hunnicutt
Amie Kas
Logan Kennemer
Raynie Leard
Beverly Liu
Stephanie Luk Bounsawat
Kayla McCarns
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Joshua McGinty
Denisa Micliuc
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Contributing Writers
Ethan Horn
Raynie Leard
Joshua McGinty
Everett Moore