

# THE HONORS HERALD

News from UMKC's Honors College

Fall 2015 - Issue Eight



## FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN

In July 2015, the Honors College was formally established as a new academic unit at UMKC. Formerly known as the Honors Program, the Honors College will retain all of the best features of that program while adding new educational opportunities for outstanding students. Entering students in fall 2015 belong to the inaugural class of Honors College students at UMKC. Students who were enrolled in the Honors Program automatically became part of the new Honors College.

It is a pleasure to serve as Founding Dean of the UMKC Honors College. I arrived at UMKC in March 2015, having previously been in charge of the Davidson Honors College at the University of Montana. I am eager to move forward in creating a world-class honors college at UMKC.

What is an honors college? I am frequently asked this question by prospective students, and the answer is not hard to remember: An honors college is an academic enrichment program for exceptionally talented students. Consistent with the UMKC Strategic Plan, student success is at the center of the Honors College. We aim to recruit the most talented students and challenge them to succeed in a rigorous honors curriculum.

The UMKC Honors College will benefit the entire campus. It serves as a magnet program for the best and brightest students, attracting a diverse group of highly motivated students to enroll in all of UMKC's colleges and schools. These students bring their curiosity, imagination and perseverance to all of their academic endeavors, thereby imbuing our classrooms with their vigorous spirit of inquiry and thirst for knowledge.

An honors college is more than just an academic curriculum. The UMKC Honors College aims to engage all of its students in activities beyond the classroom that develop their talents for leadership and service. Through study abroad, service learning, internships and undergraduate research, our students engage in real-world decision-making that builds character, develops intercultural awareness and directly benefits our campus and community.

Our immediate goals for the Honors College are to grow the program and increase enrollment. Two hundred students are currently enrolled in the Honors College. Over the next five years, we aim to increase enrollment to 600 students, expand the honors curriculum, increase the number of honors faculty members and build an office suite in Cherry Hall. The administrative and faculty offices for the Honors College will move to the fourth floor of Cherry Hall in summer 2016.

The Honors College is off to a great start! I look forward to working with UMKC faculty, staff and students to build one of America's best honors colleges. [ *Written by James McKusick* ]



## HONORS COLLEGE EVENTS

### HONORS COLLEGE BANQUET

Spring Semester

A celebration of the graduating class and all the flourishing members of the Honors College.

### WELCOME B.B.Q.

Fall Semester

Enjoy local barbecue and honor the incoming and returning student body.

### HONORS COLLEGE INDUCTION

Fall Semester

A half-day introduction to the privileges and responsibilities of membership in the Honors College.



## HONORS SPOTLIGHT

### HONORS COLLEGE STUDENTS



**LeAnna Cates:** B.S. in Biology with Mathematics and Public Health minors - third year at UMKC and in the Honors College. LeAnna is pursuing an M.D. or M.P.H. with an emphasis in Bioinformatics to enter the field of biotechnology and clinical medical research. During the summer of 2015, she is in the Summer Scholars Program as an intern at the Stowers Institute for Medical Research. LeAnna is excited to work with “highly motivated people every day. The Stowers Institute recognizes undergraduate potential, and they harvest it.” Additionally, “The incredible aspect of this internship is that the Institute treats you like an actual researcher. Scholars work full-time with a stipend and earn their own independent research project.” The establishment of multiple honors courses in her curriculum encouraged LeAnna to adhere to her studies and achieve excellence in her field. LeAnna is the Residential Life Academic Assistant and an R.A. in Oak Street Residence Hall for the 2015-2016 academic year. [ *Written by Jesse Bihlmeyer* ]

**John Kaleeka:** B.A. in Chemistry and Psychology with Spanish minor - graduated with Honors in Spring 2015. John pursued his interests in the Honors College since his freshman year, participating in the Kauffman School partnership. Presently, John is the first UMKC honors student to serve as an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) in South Korea in association with the Fulbright Scholarship. He is working as an elementary school English teacher while adjusting to a different way of life. He credits the wealth of opportunities he has encountered to the Honors College. “The Honors College was incredibly integral in introducing me to Fulbright as I first heard about the program in my Honors Arts & Sciences class freshman year.” The faculty and extracurricular opportunities allowed for him to develop his pedagogical skills and make valuable connections that directly influenced his scholarly achievements. In the near future, John aspires to forge a career in pediatrics, focusing his efforts on marginalized communities in the United States. [ *Written by Jesse Bihlmeyer* ]



**Ida Ayalew:** B.A. in Black Studies and Philosophy - senior at UMKC and second year in the Honors College. Ida is on her way to being a graduate student in a dual degree J.D./Ph.D. program. She intends to apply her comprehensive academic experience in Ethiopia. Ida is the Student Government Association (SGA) President for the 2015-2016 academic year. She attributes her success in the SGA election to the Honors College, with support from students and faculty. During the summer of 2015, Ida is serving as the student intern in the Congressional Office of Emanuel Cleaver, II of Missouri’s fifth district. This internship has been established in partnership with the Truman Library. Ida is gaining public relations experience by doing research, creating write-ups and various forms of social media for the people of the University of Missouri System. With the help of the Honors College campus partner, the Director of International Academic Programs, Dr. Linna Place, opportunities like this were brought to Ida’s attention. Dr. Place “has been a huge supporter in my life since freshmen year. When I told her about all my plans and dreams, she always tried to find a way to help me achieve my desires.” Ida encourages campus cooperation to be an effective leader and contribute to monumental accomplishments.

[ *Written by Jesse Bihlmeyer* ]



### HONORS COLLEGE FACULTY

**Dr. Gayle Levy**  
Director



**Dr. John Herron**  
Associate Director



**Dr. Henrietta Rix Wood**  
Assistant Teaching Professor



**Dr. Laurie Ellinghausen**  
Faculty Fellow



**Dr. Melisa Rempfer**  
Faculty Fellow





## HONORS AMBASSADORS

Promote, Connect, Support – The Honors Ambassador Program is a new initiative for the Honors College being led by Academic Advisor Breana Boger. The program provides current Honors College students the opportunity to develop leadership skills through recruiting, advising and mentoring honors students. The Honors Ambassadors are actively involved and committed Honors College students who work closely with our faculty and staff to promote the Honors College to prospective and current students as well as the University community. The Ambassadors also serve as peer advisors and mentors to current honors students by being accessible during scheduled office hours in various locations on campus to answer questions and support their fellow peers academically, professionally, personally, and socially. Visit the website, [honors.umkc.edu](http://honors.umkc.edu), to learn where you can connect with an Honors Ambassador on campus!

[ *Written by Breana Boger* ]



The UMKC Honors College provided funding support for 15 students to study abroad during the 2015-2016 academic year. This incredible opportunity was facilitated with the UMKC General Study Abroad Scholarship. The Honors College partnership, International Academic Program (IAP), offered this high-impact experience to the Honors College for the first time this year. With programs in Scotland, Morocco, China, and more, this scholarship leads to UMKC's Honors College being represented globally on

## STUDY ABROAD



a whole new level. Andrea Herron, in Cork, Ireland explained, "The scholarship I received is the only thing that made this trip abroad affordable. Without it, I would not have been able to go." Chloe David, in Lyon, France, expressed, "Being awarded this scholarship allowed me to feel that my school supported my endeavors to study abroad." Adventures abroad are now more accessible than ever for students through UMKC's Honors College.

[ *Written by Jesse Bihlmeyer* ]

## COMMUNITY PARTNER

### Ewing Marion Kauffman School

**Derek Luke:** B.A. in Chemistry – third year at UMKC and in the Honors College. Derek's humanitarian determination is the catalysis to being a future high school teacher. His passion for bettering the lives of young people has guided him to volunteer with UMKC's Honors College community partner, the Kauffman School. "Working at the Kauffman School has influenced me the way working with children always does. They have an innocence about them that most people lose as adults, and are so full of life and energy. No matter where it is, I always love working with kids and getting to learn from them." Derek agrees that this opportunity has been as much as an insight for him as it has been for the students at Kauffman. In spring 2015, Derek contributed to the school's Running Club by providing encouragement on staying active and living a healthy lifestyle.

[ *Written by Jesse Bihlmeyer* ]



KAUFFMAN SCHOOL 8TH GRADE  
GRADUATION: JUNE 4TH, 2015

## STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

### Honors Student Advisory Council (HSAC)

The primary organization for the Honors College student body, HSAC plans events for students: from Colloquium (an interdisciplinary course required for all honors students) and Halloween at the Kauffman School, to fun outings and the end of the year banquet. For more information, contact the current Co-Presidents: Maria Gentry ([mg3w3@mail.umkc.edu](mailto:mg3w3@mail.umkc.edu)) and Mackenzie Brazier ([mbm9c@mail.umkc.edu](mailto:mbm9c@mail.umkc.edu)).

### *Lucerna*

Honors College students review and edit papers and publish this premiere undergraduate research journal. With a publication every spring semester, the team typically has monthly meetings, tabling events, as well as occasional conversational gatherings. For more information, contact the current Editor-in-Chief: Morgan McCarter ([mdmhh7@mail.umkc.edu](mailto:mdmhh7@mail.umkc.edu)).

# HONORS COLLEGE PRIDE

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

### Vice Chancellor's Honor Recipients

Alexandria Cockrell  
Bradley Hook  
John Kaleekal

### UMKC General Study Abroad Scholarship

Dara Alvarado  
Juan Bettancourt-Garcia  
Abigail Brown  
Chloe David  
Andrea Herron  
Taylor Johnson  
Madison Lackey  
Katrina Lacombe  
Ayesha Mahomed  
Dana McLain  
Kyla McNorton  
Bridget McSorley  
Joanna Muenks  
Jacob Newstrom  
Bailey Schumm

### Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

Juan Bettancourt-Garcia

### Fulbright Scholarship

John Kaleekal

### Sherman & Irene Dreiseszun Scholarship

Bailey Schumm

### UMKC Trustees' Scholars

Kylie Boccock  
Brandon Byers  
Douglas Croy  
Carolyn Pjecha  
Sarah Shin  
Allison Spunaugle

### Thomas D. Barr Scholarship

Katrina Lacombe  
Dana McLain

## SWAGGER



**Jesse Bihlmeyer:** B.A. in Philosophy and B.A. in Psychology - third year at UMKC and first year in the Honors College. Of the many affiliations, organizations, and ideas I am able to symbolize, I rep UMKC's Honors College with t-shirts, hats, a backpack, and more swag. This swagger is a constant reminder of the pride I have with the Honors College. When I reflect on all the faculty support, the multitude of opportunities,

and the fundamental principle of the Honors College, I am appreciating positive personal, social and academic experiences. By wearing this swag, I am representing the Honors College; I am promoting the full satisfaction I feel by being a member of the Honors College. Public boast of this swag empowers that I am an ambassador of the College. I have responsibility to uphold the standards that

UMKC and the Honors College promote. But more, I am exhibiting a statement to the community at large about what it means to be a student of UMKC's Honors College. It means that I not only care about being a member, but I am actively giving my commitment to being an Honors College student. When people take notice of my swag and ask me about the Honors College, I am able to express my extensive success with the sustenance of this University's Honors College

experience. I wear my swag and I am proud of my University, of the Honors College, and of myself for having the qualities, the dexterity, and the brilliance to be an Honors College student. There is undeniable endorsement of the Honors College through my swag. I encourage all my peers to rep UMKC's Honors College with me.

[Written by Jesse Bihlmeyer]

## HONORS COLLEGE STUDENTS

- ⇒ Bloch School of Management 23
- ⇒ College of Arts & Sciences 74
- ⇒ Conservatory of Music and Dance 6
- ⇒ School of Biological Sciences 45
- ⇒ School of Computing & Engineering 13
- ⇒ School of Education 9
- ⇒ School of Medicine 6
- ⇒ School of Nursing and Health Studies 10
- ⇒ School of Pharmacy 8
- ⇒ University College 1

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