

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY  
HONORS PROGRAM

2009-2010  
AWARD  
WINNERS

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs  
and Enrollment Management Honor  
Recipients:

**Sadia Aslam**

**Ariel Green**

**Maria Iliakova**

National Awards:

**Fulbright Grant**  
**Maria Iliakova**

**Phi Kappa Phi**  
**Fellowship**  
**Rachel Waldemer**

Regional Awards:

**Eddie Jacobson**  
**Scholarship for**  
**International Studies**  
**Kira Mayo**

**Sue Shear Institute**  
**For Women in**  
**Public Life**  
**Amy Kucharo**

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# The Honors Herald

FALL 2010

ISSUE THREE

## “Why Should I Join the Honors Program?”

As Director of the UMKC Honors Program, I often get asked this question. Most of the time I respond by discussing the curricular benefits of the Honors Program: small, rigorous seminars; close contact with faculty; opportunities to teach small discussion sections and to write a senior honors thesis; our summer study abroad program in Sweden. Recently, I was speaking with Doranne Hudson, former Hallmark senior vice-president and current UMKC Trustee and Bloch School of Business executive-in-residence. She pointed out that employers want to hire honors students as those individuals demonstrate the characteristics most often sought by companies when they hire college graduates. The UMKC Honors Program provides a unique opportunity for top students to hone all of these skills while at the same time developing their critical thinking abilities. The following list enumerates these characteristics and shows how the Honors Program allows our students to develop their skills:

√ Communication skills:

As Director of the UMKC Honors Program, I often get asked this question. Most of the time I respond by discussing the curricular benefits of the Honors Program: small, rigorous seminars; close contact with faculty; opportunities to teach small discussion sections and to write a senior honors thesis; our summer study abroad program in Sweden. Recently, I was speaking with Doranne Hudson, former Hallmark senior vice-president and current UMKC Trustee and Bloch School of Business executive-in-residence. She pointed out that employers want to hire honors students as those individuals demonstrate the characteristics most often sought by companies when they hire college graduates. The UMKC Honors Program provides a unique opportunity for top students to hone all of these skills while at the same time developing their critical thinking abilities. The following list enumerates these characteristics and shows how the Honors Program allows our students to develop their skills:

Honors students at UMKC have the rare opportunity to take an honors-only section of Fundamentals of Effective Speaking and Listening with Communications Studies professor Dr. Michael McDonald. Additionally, our students cultivate their writing skills in every honors-only seminar. Honors students have the option of writing a two-semester senior honors thesis in close consultation with a faculty member, and qualified honors students are hired by the UMKC Writing Center where they help other students perfect their writing.

√ Strong work ethic and initiative:

UMKC honors students are self-starters. Each semester, in consultation with faculty members, they design their own projects (honors contracts) for specific classes. Advanced honors students also have the opportunity to design and teach discussion sections for chemistry, biology, philosophy, Music Appreciation, and many of the languages offered at UMKC.

√ Teamwork and leadership skills:

Honors students participate in the weekly Honors Colloquium where

they have the opportunity to design and organize each semester's syllabus; they work together to edit, produce, and publicize *Lucerna*, the undergraduate honors journal; they plan numerous events and activities and even organize an annual, campus-wide prank. Many honors students also hold university leadership positions, for which their experiences in the Honors Program effectively train them.

For exceptionally bright and motivated students, the Honors Program is the most valuable way to keep them interested and engaged in their studies. It allows students to direct their own education and gives them the tools to be life-long learners and leaders. Through our community service partnership with Southwest Early College Campus and our arts activities, students also stay engaged in the Kansas City community as a whole. So, I ask those students in response, “What better way to spend your college years than in the Honors Program?”

Gayle A. Levy  
Associate Professor  
Foreign Languages  
and Literatures

## UMKC Honors Program Faculty and Staff

Dr. Gayle Levy, Honors Program Director and Associate Professor of French

Dr. John Herron, Honors Program Associate Director and Associate Professor of History

Dr. Frances Connelly, Honors Faculty Fellow and Professor of Art History

Dr. Melisa Rempfer, Honors Faculty Fellow and Assistant Professor of Psychology

Ms. Sally Mason, Honors Program Administrative Assistant

VISIT THE HONORS PROGRAM WEBSITE AT <http://cas.umkc.edu/honors>

# Honors Colloquium

The Honors Colloquium allows students the opportunity to examine current issues impacting the world today from an interdisciplinary perspective. Each semester students from the Honors Student Advisory Committee choose a topic to discuss and invite UMKC faculty and outside guests to present their research and experiences. The students also participate in related group activities throughout the semester, along with writing about or discussing the material.

HSAC decided that during the 2009-10 academic year, Colloquium would focus on food since it is such a vast and inclusive topic. Students learned about world agricultural trends, the benefits of local farming, the history of Strawberry Hill in Kansas City, the links between food and class on the Titanic, and much more. Students thoroughly discussed the

topic and even watched food-related movies such as *Babette's Feast* and *Food, Inc.* During the first semester students competed in an Honors "Iron Chef" competition in which groups vied to create the best dishes with limited time and ingredients. For second semester, students collaborated on a cookbook in which they shared their favorite recipes and often noted their memories associated with the dish ([http://cas.umkc.edu/honors/current\\_students.asp](http://cas.umkc.edu/honors/current_students.asp)).

In this way, students learned not only about the historical, political, and environmental implications of food, but also its personal associations.



Honors Colloquium Class



Honors students participating in the "Iron Chef" competition, fall 2009

The topic for fall 2010 is "Sports: It's Not Just a Game." Guests will include an historian, an architect, the vice president of the KC Wizards, a philosopher, and a physicist. Students will create a blog in order to report on the speakers and will participate in a campus-wide capture-the-flag game. It should be a gold-medal winning semester!

One of the benefits of Colloquium is that it allows students to interact with other honors students that they may never meet otherwise. This sense of community is an important part of the honors experience, further enhancing learning. This blending of interests provides students with multiple, unique perspectives on the topic under discussion. Finally, Colloquium satisfies the students' hunger for a richer educational experience.

Nick Cale  
Psychology Major  
Class of 2011

## Oak Street Residence Hall: Honors Living/Learning Community

About twenty-five honors students made up this year's Honors Living/Learning Community in Oak Street Residence Hall. They were a great group of students, and I am excited that many of them will be returning to the community next year. Throughout the year there were upwards of thirty programs that the students participated in. Some of the highlights included a tour and lunch at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art with art history professor Dr. Frances Connelly, Yoga Night, a movie night (*The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, facilitated by Dr. Larson Powell of the Department of Foreign

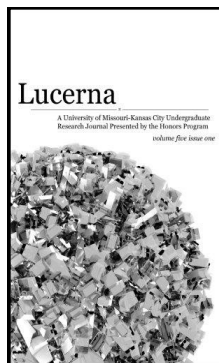
Languages and Literatures), the faculty/student dinner each semester, and even a huge game of four square. Through all of the fun activities and educational programs, a community was built.

Even though the activities we organize are open to all honors students, those students who live in the Honors Living/Learning Community enjoy many opportunities that their fellow residents don't necessarily receive. They have two live-in Residential Life staff members, a Resident Assistant, and me, their Academic Assistant. They get to live in a small community sheltered from the noise of hundreds of young adults living alone for the first time, but still close

enough that they are never isolated from the activities that take place. Residing in the Honors L/LC is so important for honors students because of the unique activities and the opportunity to become a part of a larger community of honors students. Students living in the community during the 2010-2011 academic year are in for a treat. Along with some old favorites such as the Nelson-Atkins trips and monthly study break nights, next year's residents can expect to see many new and exciting activities. I won't spoil the surprise by giving away everything that is in store, but rest assured it will be awesome.

Jennifer Kaminsky, A.A.  
Criminal Justice & Criminology  
& Political Science Double Major  
Class of 2011

# LUCERNA 2010



*Lucerna*, a peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal, is UMKC's only undergraduate journal, publishing articles by students in the social sciences, sciences, and humanities. Established in 2005 by the Honors Program, *Lucerna's* purpose is to cultivate and showcase scholarship from the entire UMKC undergraduate community. Any UMKC student may submit a research paper written anytime during the student's undergraduate career.

Papers are accepted during the spring semester, and a volunteer-based staff from the Honors Program evaluates each article. Submissions are made anonymous and are evaluated by at least three readers. *Lucerna* is distributed campus-wide during the fall semester.

The title *Lucerna* is derived from the Latin word for lamp. As the metaphor suggests, *Lucerna* is an outlet for the knowledge and ideas found in UMKC's diverse student population.

*Lucerna* celebrates UMKC students.

The following Honors Program students served on the Editorial Board for the 2010 *Lucerna*:

Editor: Thomas Nienaber

Managing Editors: Michele Smith & Heather Inness

Graphic Design Editor: Corey Light

Treasurer: Sara Tucker

Executive Secretary: James Comminellis

Public Relations Coordinator: Paige Lockhart

Full issues of *Lucerna* are available at <http://cas.umkc.edu/honors> or through the Honors Program office, Haag 204.



Dr. Levy and students at the 2009 *Lucerna* Launch

## Honors Program/SWECC Partnership: Another Successful Year



Southwest Early College Campus

The 2010-11 academic year will mark the third year of the UMKC Honors Program-Southwest Early College Campus partnership. SWECC, an early college-readiness model, mathematics and science focused school for students in grades 7-12, operates within the KCMO school district and is open to any student willing to commit to high academic expectations. In 2009-2010, ten student workers were assigned to SWECC through the Honors Program: seven work-study students, one student funded through the Honors Program, and two volunteers. All but two of the students are members of the program. Students assisted SWECC

teachers and students by tutoring, mentoring, grading papers, filing, helping with after-school activities, and attending field trips. In addition, UMKC students organized and led four clubs: science, band, theater, and art. The students worked directly with SWECC students to mentor and develop their interests in a specific area.

Honors Program student Michelle Campbell serves as coordinator for the partnership (see the interview with Michelle in this issue), and in a recent survey she conducted with SWECC teachers, she found that teachers welcomed the services provided by the students and would recommend the program to

their colleagues. SWECC students have also voiced their support for the program, expressing their enthusiasm for the various clubs offered by Honors Program students. The partnership provides a rich opportunity for mutual growth and new experiences for both UMKC and SWECC students. During the upcoming year, we hope to expand the number of volunteers from the Honors Program working at SWECC.

### 2010-11 HONORS PROGRAM STATS AT A GLANCE

Honors Program Students — 111

Arts & Sciences: 58

Biological Sciences: 12

Business/Accounting: 8

Computing/Engineering: 2

Conservatory/Dance: 4

Education: 8

Medicine: 6

Nursing: 3

Pharmacy: 10

The average GPA for honors students for 2009-2010 was 3.71, and the average ACT score for all Honors Program students is 30.

## Interview with A Current Student

### MICHELLE CAMPBELL IS A UMKC STUDENT ENROLLED IN THE PHARMACY PROGRAM

Summer 2010, Michelle completed an internship at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in the Department of Pharmacy. The majority of her internship was spent learning about a variety of health system practice settings with an emphasis on clinical skills and technical efficiency.

**Why did you decide to come to UMKC?** I decided to come to UMKC because it allowed me the opportunity to transition from undergraduate studies to professional studies without switching universities. I also liked the small campus feel with a large, urban setting.

**What is your career goal?** I plan to graduate with my Doctorate of Pharmacy from UMKC's School of Pharmacy in May 2012. After graduation, I plan to complete a two-year pharmacy residency. I then see myself working in a large, teaching hospital as a Pharmacy Specialist while simultaneously adjunct teaching at a local school of pharmacy.

**Why did you join the Honors Program?** Because the Honors Program offers vast opportunities to get involved. At the time I was especially interested in summer study abroad in Sweden, a program in which UMKC faculty and students spend several weeks in Sweden. I was also very interested in the Senior Honors Thesis. I saw the Honors Program as my niche since many of the other students in the program seemed very driven and academically oriented as well.

**What have been some of the highlights of the program for you? And please address your experience with Southwest Early College Campus (SWECC) and the role you have played.** Some program highlights were my time in the Living/Learning Community (L/LC), the small honors-only classes, and my liaison position with the Honors Program-SWECC Partnership, working closely with Honors Program students assigned to SWECC and SWECC faculty and administrators. More specifically, I enjoyed my role in the partnership because of the opportunities I had to continually develop my leadership communication skills. Working one-on-one with SWECC students during after-school clubs also allowed me to improve my mentoring and teaching skills. Other ways I have stayed active in the Honors Program include leading Science Club and College Prep Club for SWECC, reviewing students' papers submitted for publication in *Lucerna*, and participation in numerous Honors discussion sections.

**What advice do you have for first-year students who may be considering applying to the UMKC Honors Program?** From the moment I joined the Honors Program, I have been inundated with opportunities to get involved and try new things. I do not regret a single moment in the Honors Program. There are so many outlets; there is something for everyone, and if you don't find what you're looking for, you have the freedom and encouragement to start something new. If you think the program will be a good fit for you, just go for it and apply. Always give everything you do your best and you will be surprised where it will take you!

## The Path from Honors to a Fulbright A Message from Dr. Linna Place

### DR. LINNA PLACE IS DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS FOR UMKC

Honors students have unique opportunities, starting in the fall of freshman year, to excel and to plan for the future. That future may well include the application for a nationally prestigious fellowship that can fund education, research, and travel. These fellowships are merit-based and are highly competitive — and UMKC students are among the recipients! In recent years, UMKC students have received Fulbright, Udall, Javits, Truman and Phi Kappa Phi awards. Some, like the Goldwater and Udall fellowships, are offered as early as sophomore year, while others, such as the Fulbright and Javits, are intended for students who plan graduate study.

The process of applying is not for the faint of heart, but you wouldn't be an honors student if you backed away from challenges. Applications generally take many months of preparation with multiple re-writes, requests for full letters of recommendation from faculty and others who know you well, and of course, a very strong GPA. But there is so much more to you, the person, than good grades, and most fellowships insist on personal statements that give a vibrant picture in words of the individual: your passions, your role as a leader, your commitment to larger causes.

Help and support for your applications is readily available, beginning with the A&S H100 Honors section (Methodologies in the Liberal Arts and Sciences) where we use a text based on the fellowship process and prepare mock applications for presentation to the group. I have worked with applicants to the major fellowships for more than 10 years now and can assure you that it is truly a community process. Dedicated members of the faculty across campus devote hours of time to helping students in many ways: provide advice on research statements, write letters of recommendation, and sit on review committees.

Is it worth the effort? Yes! We don't use the words "win" or "lose" when referring to the results of fellowship applications. Whether or not you receive the award, the process of preparing the application is life transforming — an unparalleled opportunity to reflect on your talents, your goals, and the part you will play in the world. Be sure to look at the International Academic Programs website at <http://www.umkc.edu/international>, and start thinking about the right fellowship for you!