

Fall 2017

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Honors College Journal



Calendar

AUGUST

31st Summer
Scholars

SEPTEMBER

E-Council
every

MONDAYS

5-6th Bagel
Brunch

7th Mentor
Meeting

12th Soph-Jr
Meeting

14th Senior
Meeting

19th Intern Class

21st Contract
Workshop

OCTOBER

4th Fresh-Soph
Seminar

10th Jr./Sr.
Seminar

18th Intern
Class Meeting

31st Halloween
Event

NOVEMBER

2nd Mentor
Meeting

7th Fresh-Soph
Seminar

8th Mentor
Meeting

14th Intern Class

16th Jr./Sr.
Seminar

DECEMBER

6th Intern Class

7th Holiday
Party

Honors College Connects with OW Alumni

During the Spring 2017 semester, Honors College students, with the expert help of Ms. Penny Chin, Director of the Office of Alumni Affairs, invited SUNY Old Westbury alumni to the Honors College's second *Annual Alumni Roundtable Discussion*. Sixteen alumni, professionals in fields as diverse as education, medicine, law, finance, fashion, law enforcement, and psychology, talked with Honors College students over dinner in the New Academic Building's largest conference room. Ms. Penny Chin reached out to alumni who responded wonderfully: OW Alumni were caring and generous with their time and their advice regarding career and life strategies. Honors College students reported that they "greatly benefitted" from learning about how alumni had dealt with challenges in their careers and in their personal lives. Students were also very pleased that in one evening they had gained career mentors and had created a network with potential employers. Our alumni, it appears, love SUNY Old Westbury and how it prepared them for successful careers. Many of them spoke about their need "to give back" to the College at events like the Roundtable. They seemed as excited and happy to be back at OW as the students were to be meeting them. We look forward to welcoming OW alumni once again in the Spring 2018 semester.

Old Westbury Alumni posing for photo inside the New Academic Building





Niko Nantsis, President of The Environmental Society

New! The Honors College Environmental Society

Niko Nantsis

This year, the Honors College has a new venture: the Environmental Society. Niko Nantsis, an Honors College rising sophomore, is its founder. The Society invited two speakers to present at the College. The first was a ZOOM interview with Ben Novak, a paleo-geneticist from California who is working for the nonprofit organization, *Revive and Restore*, to bring back the extinct Passenger Pigeon through genetic editing of its closet living relative the Band-Tailed Pigeon. Ben Novak talked about the science of De-extinction and the process of bringing back the Passenger Pigeon. Honors College students asked Novak insightful questions after his presentation that they clearly enjoyed. The other speaker was Linda McGuigan, an Undergraduate from the SUNY School of Environmental Science and Forestry. She discussed the restoration of the American Chestnut tree on the east coast of North America. SUNY ESF has created a 100% American Chestnut tree that is resistant to Chestnut blight using genetic engineering. The Environmental Society is also working with the **Honors College Social Entrepreneurial Incubator** to harvest organic honey from two hives that the Honors College maintains in an East New York organic garden. The Society is also working in the OW organic garden and in the College's greenhouse learning how to engage in sustainable, earth-friendly organic gardening. Come work in the garden and enjoy the harvest this fall !

Class of 2017

The Class of 2017 was the largest graduating class that the Honors College has ever had. Forty-seven students graduated. A number of our graduates have already acquired positions in law firms, hospitals, accounting, finance and marketing firms, as well as in primary and secondary education. We are proud of their success at Old Westbury and look forward to hearing from them.

Class of 2021

In Fall 2017, we welcome thirty-five freshmen who will constitute the Honors College graduating class of 2021. This class comes to SUNY Old Westbury having earned the most distinguished academic credentials of any previous Honors College entering freshman class. We will welcome them to the College and celebrate their admission to the Honors College at the Honors College's Annual Summer Scholar Lecture on August 31st.



Honors College students Niko Nantsis, Nafeesa Alam, and Kaili Chen

Nafeesa Alam (center) a recent graduate of OW and its Honors College stopped by to visit with current Honors College students Niko Nantsis and Kaili Chen. Nafeesa is studying to become a Physician Assistant. Niko is a Secondary Education History major whose career goal is to teach history to high school students, and Kaili is a chemistry major who is thinking of attending law school to become a criminal attorney.

Looking Ahead

Many of last year's start-up clubs are up, running, and getting ready for the fall semester. Our **Social Media Project** has adopted *Healthy Living* as its theme. We ask students to contribute health tips or research and report briefly on healthy physical, mental and emotional practices. Some contributions come from family traditions and make the site a repository of how different cultures promote good health. Our aim this year is to update the site regularly. The site gives Honors College students the opportunity to get published online and contribute to the general welfare of all. The Social Media Project always welcomes new members. The first meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 27.

Another ongoing Honors College enterprise is **the Social Entrepreneurship Incubator**. An "entrepreneurial incubator" is where a nascent ideas for a business is nurtured. It is "social entrepreneurship" because we create businesses that are beneficial to the earth and us. This year's project is to gather and sell the organic honey produced by two beehives that the Honors College maintains in a New York City Green Space Garden in East New York. The goal of the Incubator is for students to get real-world experience creating a business. Students discover a product or service that they determine is marketable, create a business plan, explore funding sources and the actually enter the marketplace. Learning about beekeeping is a by-product of this endeavor! The first meeting of the Social Entrepreneurship Incubator will take place on Tuesday, September 26.

The **Mock Trial Team** was created and began preparing for competition last spring. Evan Rufrano, a rising Honors College junior, is founder and President of the Mock Trial Team. We were very fortunate to have attorneys Christine Quigley and Claude LaRoche donate their time and expertise to guide the Team. Members experienced what it is like to be a trial attorney. The attorneys invited students to observe them in court and offered to help them find internships in law firms! Interested in joining the Mock Trial Team? The Team is open for all OW students. Join us on Wednesday, September 13 for our first meeting.

Honors
College
Mock Trial
Team



A Locus for Law School Information

The Honors College hosted its first-ever **Law of subSchool Information Fair** last fall. Evan Rufrano, Director of Law School Events, invited more than twenty-five law schools to come to OW. Evan had noticed he could not receive via email and the telephone. His solution to this problem was to invite the law schools to visit OW hosted by the Honors College. Law schools from around the country provided admissions information, scholarship opportunities, and even offered application fee waivers for their respective campuses. The Honors College Law School Fair Series is like no other: our fair allows students to communicate with admissions staff in a small setting, creating a memorable, personal, and engaging experience. Look for information about this year's Law School Fair.

Fall 2017 E-Council

When the E-council was established in 2009, it consisted of a small number of students with limited influence. However, through the work of the students and great initiative, it has grown to a large number of active and influential members who truly facilitate and initiate programs including apple-picking, paint night, spring fling, dance workshop, a trip to MOMA, and our cultural pride workshop. Led by President, Sydney Coscia and Vice President Niko Nantsis we look forward to creative and collaborative decision-making that will make the Honors College interesting and fun. If interested in bringing creativity to the Honors College, please join us on Monday September 11th in NAB 1119 for our very first meeting of the semester.



"The Bird in Silence" by Niko Nantsis (color pencil)

Honors College Travels

Sarah Ashour

One month before spring break, Brianna Levy and I decided to plan a trip to Japan. It was a hard decision since it was in the middle of the semester, but it ended up being a life-changing experience. During our trip, we went to 8 cities including Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Yokohama, Kawagoe, Nikko, Hakone, and Nara. Throughout our trip, we learned many facts about Japanese culture. The Japanese people were the most respectful individuals I have come across in my travel experiences, which includes my trips to other countries. At first, I had thought that bowing was only done in movies, but everywhere we went, we were greeted with a bow and we also bowed back to show our respect saying a polite thank you "Arigatou" or "gozaimasu" and excuse me "Sumimasen."

My favorite part of the trip was the cuisine! There were no words to describe how amazing Japanese food is. From the enticing street food to the fresh sushi in restaurants, food was definitely my top 10 experience while in Japan. The meal portions are smaller and healthier in Japan so it is easy to feel less guilty when eating in Japan! There was never a dull moment because our surroundings included scenic nature, majestic shrines, or the latest fashions right in the streets before us. We have grown tremendously from traveling abroad and we definitely plan to do it again! We also would highly recommend any student to take time out of their busy school schedule and create an opportunity where you can witness and become part of another culture. Fortunately, our school has a study abroad program. Every year students are able to study and live in countries such as China, India, Italy, Spain, France, and England.

Honors College Students Present at Research Conference

Five Honors College students, Iffera Zahid, Anum Mahmood, Zarrin Mahmud, Ramish Nasir and Philip Rossillo, had their proposals accepted and then presented their research at the Northeastern Honors Council Conference (NRHC) in Pittsburgh, Pa. from April 6-9, 2017. The conference theme this year was "Bridging the Divide." Their research spanned many fields of academic research:

Iffera Zahid and Anum Mahmood, Biological Sciences majors, presented their joint research on "Contemplating Islamophobia: Bridging the Divide between the Muslim and Western Worlds."

Zarrin Mahmud presented on "Bridging the Divide between Races and Ethnicities: Intermarriage and Healthy Variation in the Human Gene Pool." Zarrin is a student in Old Westbury's Pre-Med 3+4 NYCOM program.

Ramish Nasir, a Biological Sciences major, presented research entitled "Chromodomain Helicase DNA Binding Protein 5, CHD5: A Closer Look."

Philip Rossillo, a Politics, Economics, and Law student, defined in his research "The Mandela Contract."

Let's join in congratulating these students for being selected to present at the NRHC conference and for doing so with an impressive professionalism.

