

WITH HONORS

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Our first issue!

We hope you enjoy our premiere issue of *With Honors*, the Iowa State Honors Alumni Newsletter. Be sure to stay updated with current Honors events at www.honors.iastate.edu.

What's New—and Old—in Honors

In a low-slung building on Iowa State's central campus—a building with a touch of Frank Lloyd Wright about it—three classrooms are filled with students' talk, laughter, and ideas. Just down the hall, ten more students sit at keyboards, clattering away in the otherwise silent atmosphere of a computer lab. Things are even quieter in the lounge, where a handful of hardworking undergraduates are using all sorts of technology—laptops, books, even pencil and paper!—to work on courses and projects. In the kitchen, some members of the student board grab lunch while the refrigerator holds treats for a meeting to come.

That's a typical day in the Jischke Honors Building, home to more than 1,200 Honors students currently enrolled at Iowa State. And upstairs, new staff and new leadership are working to make the Honors student experience better than ever. (Meet new members of the Honors staff, p. 2.) Plans currently underway include expanding the scope and organization of the first-year Honors experience, adding new Honors seminars and mentored research experiences, as well as continuing to provide a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere for Honors students in the friendly confines of Jischke.

Whether your memories of Honors take you back to Osborn Cottage, Pearson Hall, or the Jischke Honors Building, you might be surprised at the new look of, and energy in, Honors programming. Honors

121, the seminar for first-year students, is now organized around themes that the students choose and develop through discussions, guest speakers, and campus tours and lectures. Among the themes this fall are movies, music, the outdoors, and even "Where's Waldo?" (Apparently he is all over campus.) In this new approach, Honors 121 sections continue to emphasize community, teamwork, and relationships, as well as having students learn more about ISU, diversity, and the world beyond campus.

Many other things, though, are much the same as you remember. The undergraduate assistants—or UAs—and sophomore FHP leaders are busy these days, working on the fall retreat. In late afternoons the building is buzzing with Honors seminars, including seminars on the ancient game of Go, food issues, and "Zorro" movies. Honors students are planning their courses of study and working on senior projects, which they'll showcase at a spring symposium.

We in Honors are continuing to pursue our goal of supporting high-ability students in academics, leadership, research opportunities, and social interactions. Our overall goal of Honors remains the same—to provide a small-college atmosphere within a large research university. In case you haven't seen Honors in its (relatively) new digs, come see for yourself when you next visit campus, or check us out on our website, www.honors.iastate.edu.

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Meet the New Staff in Jischke

Five staff members have joined the Honors Program in the past several months, all of whom bring energy and expertise to the project of continuing to improve the Honors experience.

Administrative Director

Just more than a year ago, Laurie Fiegel joined the Honors Program staff as administrative director. Fiegel came to ISU after several years at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, where she had worked briefly in campus residences before moving into academic affairs and Stony Brook's Honors College. Prior to her time in New York Fiegel earned her bachelor's and master's in history at Southeastern Louisiana University. She has brought her ever-growing Disney collection, her love of football, and her Louisiana accent to Iowa State.

Assistant Director, FHP

Right on Fiegel's heels, Jamie Beyer, assistant director, arrived at the Honors Building in July 2007. She oversees the Freshman Honors Program, advises the Honors Student Board, and works closely with the UAs and other staff members. Beyer is a Cyclone, having graduated from ISU with a B.A. in communication studies and a master's degree in higher education. Beyer is currently enjoying a new addition to her family—Alyse Beyer was born in August.

Program Assistant

Karen Osenbaugh began working in Jischke in May 2008 as a Program Assistant. Osenbaugh holds a B.S. from ISU in elementary education. She has spent the last 15 years developing and maintaining databases for child and health service agencies across the state of Iowa, and now is using that database expertise to assist with the Freshman Honors Mentor Program and other initiatives, as well as getting more Honors material online. Sometimes one of Osenbaugh's two Cy-

clone children stop by (she has two more who attended "lesser universities"—her term!).

Faculty Director

Susan Yager, an Associate Professor in the English Department, joined the staff as Faculty Director this past July, when Gene Takle stepped down from the position. She has taught a number of Honors seminars, including several on Harry Potter and banned and challenged books. As faculty director she's working on developing curriculum and supporting faculty who work with Honors students and programs. A medievalist with a specialty in the work of Geoffrey Chaucer, Susan has a B.A. and M.A. from Catholic University and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. She is fond of sports, but only as a spectator.

Asst. Director, Scholarship/Research

Soon afterward came the latest addition to the Honors team. Dana Schumacher is assistant director for scholarship and research, having moved over from Ross Hall after many years as adviser in the Department of Political Science and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' international studies program. Dana, who holds a B.A. and M.F.A. from the University of California—Irvine, originally came to ISU in 1976 to teach dance, an activity that she continues to pursue. She designed and has taught the Orientation to Political Science course as well as several Honors seminars. Dana, who has advised several students on Honors projects, has received several awards for advising and mentoring.

These relatively "new folks," along with veteran staffers Suzanne Wirth and Linda Young, are working together to help Honors students reach their potential in academics and leadership, learn to do research and to further their own learning, and have a great time while they do it.



From top: Laurie Fiegel, Jamie Beyer, Karen Osenbaugh, Susan Yager, and Dana Schumacher.

Liz Sightings: Asia

If it weren't for her cell phone, former Honors Director Liz Beck would be hard to find. As her friends and former students know, she is an intrepid traveler and is always on the move. Earlier this year Liz made her way to East Asia, visiting Thailand, Burma (also known as Myanmar, but Liz relates that many Burmese in the U.S. prefer the traditional name), Laos, and northern Vietnam. "No China this time," she sighs, though she did see much of China and Tibet in 2006.

In Hanoi, Liz saw "John McCain's cell, and his flight suit," which are on display. She also saw "a monument at the spot McCain's plane went down" when he was

taken prisoner. A memorable sight in Thailand was Hellfire Pass, location of the prisoner-built railroad bridge immortalized in the book and film, *The Bridge Over the River Quai*. "It was amazing," Liz says. "What those men did and how they could have survived—just amazing."

We hope to bring you more "Liz Sightings" as it seems nothing will deter her from her travels.

"My top three 'wish list' locations are Tunisia, Israel, and Iceland," she says. "And Antarctica—but who could I get to go with me?"



Above: Liz Beck becomes friends with an elephant on one of her recent adventures to East Asia.

Honors Student Is Rhodes Finalist

Senior Miko Wilford has been interested in psychology and public policy for a long time.

"At the age of two," she says, "I was shipped halfway across the world—from Seoul, South Korea to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I don't remember anything about the trip or any event prior to it, and this triggered my interest in memory research."

Curious not only about the mind and memory but also in how public policy is formed, Wilford is working toward a primary degree in psychology, a second degree in political science, and a minor in research statistics, aiming for a career in researching psychology and law. This term, she has taken a further step toward that goal by being named a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship.



Wilford has been a member of the Honors Program since her freshman year and was a co-leader for one of the Freshman Honors seminars her sophomore year. Her Honors thesis—partially funded by both the University Honors Grant and the Stewart Grant—concerns college students' awareness of binge drinking and its consequences. She is also working on two independent research projects, one on how the brain recognizes faces, and another examining possible distortions that can occur in memory.

The Rhodes Scholarship requires a sport or physical activity from its applicants. Wilford is a runner, as well as a musician and a Community Adviser in Martin Hall. She says she'd love to run along the fabled lanes of Oxford as a student of Balliol College. But wherever she goes next, Wilford is bent on bridging the gap between research and application.

"Research loses its impact without knowledge of its political implications," she says. "By understanding law through psychology and policy perspectives, I hope to learn more about how these fields can help one another."

Left: Miko Wilford, a senior studying psychology, political science, and research statistics, has been named a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship.

How Can I Help?

As an alum of the ISU Honors Program, you can play a critically important role in the success of today's Honors undergraduates. You have experience, knowledge, social networks, and an understanding of how college students' plans can lead to professional success. All of these are significant elements in the success of Honors and its students today and tomorrow.

One quick and easy way to connect with students and share your wisdom is a planned student-alumnus connection called eBuddies. eBuddies can be matched according to professional, geographical, or personal interests. For example, a sophomore may be interested in a Chicago-based internship. An Honors alum who has lived or worked in the area can consult with her on housing, transportation, entertainment, or the cost of living. An alumnus in agribusiness can offer working-world advice on finding an edge in the corporate environment. And Honors alums who have done service work could be the perfect match for a current Honors student who is considering the Peace Corps.

If you are interested in pioneering the eBuddies program among Honors students and alumni, contact Laurie Fiegel, lfiegel@iastate.edu.

Alumni Establish, Join Honors Advisory Board

Mark Law ('81, computer engineering), professor and chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Florida, co-chairs the new Honors Alumni Advisory Board along with his wife, Alison ('81, industrial administration), a community organizer who works on children's education and recreation issues. This board, which plans to meet annually, will help the Honors Program staff in planning and directing programs for current undergraduates as well as connect current Honors students with Honors alumni in different fields.

Mark has taken on this new task in recognition of the benefits he received as an Honors student. In his view, "The Honors Program was a wonderful experience, allowing opportunities and guidance that would not otherwise have been available." Mark hopes that this board will help alumni to "enrich the lives of current and future Honors students."

Among the ideas Mark has for the ISU Honors Program are a speaker's program in which Honors students can meet one-on-one with prominent speakers in

the Jischke Building; a network through which Honors graduates serve as mentors, providing internships and practical experience for current students; and increased support for "travel, equipment, independent studies," and other costs related to undergraduate research projects. (See p. 3 for one possible way of helping make an Honors mentorship program a reality.)

Mark and Alison provided an endowment to bring "greater opportunities to Honors students at ISU," and this alumni newsletter is a product of that generous gift. Mark hopes that *With Honors* will keep alumni aware of the vision for the Honors Program to become the Honors College at Iowa State.

Other members of the Honors Advisory Board include Liz Beck ('74, history), retired Honors Program Coordinator and indefatigable champion of Honors; Michael Coon ('86, agriculture education and international agriculture), chief operating officer of Iowa Thin Films, one of Iowa's most innovative small companies; and Megan Parker ('00, journalism & mass communication),

who recently stepped down from ISU's Destination Iowa State program. In addition, Brent Carlson ('83, computer engineering), senior VP of technology for SOA Software of Rochester, MN; Bev Madden ('60, MS '70, home economics education), retired ISU placement officer; and Gregor Dougal ('79, electrical engineering; '79, physics), senior principal engineer at Honeywell, have also joined the board.

Family info goes online

The Honors Family Book is going online. This annual compilation of news, notes, life events and accomplishments of Honors alumni is available via password to all alumni donors. If you are not currently a donor, a printed version of the Honors Family Book will be available for \$5.

To post items for the Honors Family Book, simply go to the Honors website (www.honors.iastate.edu) and look under Alumni in the left column. If you have questions, contact Linda Young, lindakay@iastate.edu.

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Iowa State University Honors Program

2130 Jischke Honors Building
Ames, IA 50011

