

WITH HONORS

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Keep in touch! There are many ways to keep in touch with Honors and your fellow alumni.

- Join the Honors Alumni LinkedIn Group: Iowa State University Honors Program Alumni at [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/11111111)
- Student blog and Twitter: go to honorslife.wordpress.com, or twitter.com/ISUHonors
- Share a “postcard”—a photo and email length message telling us what you’ve been up to. Students enjoy seeing these on Jischke’s electronic bulletin board.
- And don’t forget the Family Book (find more information on page 3)!

Attention alums in Chicagoland—and beyond! Last fall Honors pioneered a meetup of Honors alumni and current Honors students and staff at the National Collegiate Honors Council’s annual meeting in Denver. This year’s meeting will be held in Chicago, and everyone in, near, or popping by Chicago (and beyond) is welcome to an ISU Honors get-together. It will be Friday, November 13, 5:30-7:30 p.m. (place TBA). Come meet old friends and chat with current Honors students. The NCHC meeting is at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, so the party may be there or somewhere close by—we’ll let everyone know time and place via Facebook (and remember to “like” Iowa State Honors Program). Meanwhile, save the date!

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Honors Students Go “Global”

A medical student, a plant pathologist, a budding economist, a prize-winning teacher. What could these recent Honors alums have in common? All of them—Sagar Chawla ('12), Laura Weieneth ('13), Deepak Premkumar ('14) and Claire Wandro ('11)—are graduates of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences’ Global Resource Systems major, or Globe for short.

This interdisciplinary and international-minded field of study has been on campus only since 2009, and from the beginning attracted more majors than expected. As of this spring, the program had graduated 74 majors, 14 of whom also finished in the Honors Program. At nearly 20 percent of all Globe graduates so far, Honors alumni have had a strong showing in this new field of study.

Students who major in Globe receive a truly interdisciplinary education, developing core technical skills in a minor or second major (such as Economics or Agronomy) and choosing a region of the world in which to specialize. Language learning and an international internship are also key components of the major. Graduates are able to think in terms of complex and interlocking *systems*, whether these pertain to land and water use, agricultural systems, social or political systems, human resources, or infrastructure.

Susan Yager, Faculty Director of Honors, thinks that the multidisciplinary approach of Globe, and its emphasis on service and human development, make it particularly attractive to Honors students. Honors students are often “interested in everything,” she says, and the “millennial generation” is

notable for its interest in solving complex problems through service. Since Globe also emphasizes integrated knowledge and teamwork, the communication emphasis and sense of community developed in Honors make the Honors Program as attractive to Globe students as Global Resource Systems is to Honors students.

The relative handful of Honors/Globe graduates so far is quite over-represented among winners and finalists for prestigious awards, including numerous winners and finalists for Rhodes, Goldwater, Truman and Udall Scholarships. The current crop of Globe majors in Honors will maintain this brief but illustrious tradition: this year Hannah Darr, junior in Globe, was a finalist for the Truman Scholarship, which recognizes students with a career interest in public service, education, or advocacy. Hannah enjoys being in both Globe and Honors because “Both programs offer flexibility with courses, both require capstones, and both push students to learn outside the classroom.” Above all, she says, “both the Globe and Honors communities are filled with passionate and well-rounded students.”

Alumni Board Gears Up to Build Endowment

At its annual meeting in April, the Honors Alumni Board made further plans for an endowment that would offer permanent support for students in the Honors Program. The Honors Student Enrichment Fund is an emphasis of the Board and of the ISU Foundation

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Comedy College Hits the Spot

Gavin Jerome, a professional comedian and co-instructor of the highly popular “Comedy College” Honors Seminar, enjoys working with Honors students and especially relishes helping shy students emerge from their shells with the help of a stage, a microphone, and a stand-up routine. For many Honors students this seminar is a favorite, leading to greater ease in public speaking, more self-confidence, and greater levels of maturity and leadership.

For three semesters, Gavin, along with his able assistant Peter Orazem, University Professor of Economics and a funny man in his own right, has helped students face the challenge of performing in public in the toughest of venues. Students—often in technical fields—learn to write, edit, and deliver original material, building skills that carry over into any field that requires swift thinking and clear communication. The community that is built over the course of the semester, and the encouragement of each student’s friends and peers at the “final exam” performance in the Maintenance Shop, help students not only succeed (they must get one laugh to “pass”) but also have a great time.

“Honors kids are a unique bunch,” Gavin says, and adds, “Many—and this is something I hear from them, often—don’t possess many social skills or the confidence to put themselves in a social situation.” One of his students was initially so nervous he could scarcely tell the class his name. By the end of the term, though, “he was absolutely rocking the house with his standup.” Having the ability to think on one’s feet is useful practically as well as socially, however. One of the “graduates” of Comedy College reported that, prior to taking the seminar, he “went to the Career Fair and got no interviews, but after Comedy College I got five.”

Overall, Gavin enjoys the seminar because it celebrates “what makes these kids unique. Instead of feeling out of place or ‘nerdy,’ we take the idiosyncrasies and quirks they’ve been hiding and celebrate them, create jokes about them.” Nothing promotes acceptance, he says, like the affirmation of a laugh when students poke fun at their uniqueness in a safe environment. Suddenly “it is okay to be different,” Gavin says. “In fact, it is praised and a huge part of doing well at standup is a unique, comedic point of view that we encourage from day one.”

The Honors Program hopes to add Comedy College as a permanent element of the Honors Seminar offerings, making more opportunities available for Gavin to “watch the growth of people who start scared and unsure of themselves, but leave able to handle something as difficult as making a room full of strangers laugh. It is an amazing journey.”

Rockin’ and Rollin’ in Research

Michael Lyons joined the Honors staff in January as Coordinator of Undergraduate Research. If you ask how he’s doing, he’ll likely respond with a favorite expression: “we’re rockin’ and rollin’!” Michael has gotten off to a quick start, overseeing the Research in the Capitol display of Iowa State students’ research, and the Symposium on Undergraduate Research and Creative Expression. Michael will work with the First Year Mentor Research Program, but his purview encompasses the student body as a whole.



Michael Lyons

Originally from Vinton, Michael is an Iowan through and through. He holds a Ph.D. from Iowa, along with a B.A. from Simpson College and an M.A. in Biology from Drake. Michael has taught Physiology at a number of Iowa schools, including Kirkwood Community College, the University of Iowa, and Grand View. He has also spent time as a high school science teacher and coach.

Michael has been “really impressed with the students I’ve been able to interact with in Honors.” The talent these students display, he adds, is “super impressive!” He will continue to rock’n’roll promoting undergraduate research. He’ll soon be doing more rocking than rolling, however: he and his wife, Erina, are expecting their firstborn in late spring.

“Hunting” for Music

A comb can be a wind instrument—it works something like a harmonica—but does it do percussion? Wine glass rims can make musical sounds—but what about cereal boxes? Combs, glasses, boxes, even desk accessories were put to musical use in Professor Chris Hopkins’ Spring Honors Seminar, “The Hunter Games: Finding Music Where You Least Expect It.” Dr. Hopkins, Associate Professor of Music and Director of the Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities, is a composer and performer who’s interested in music from the Medieval and Renaissance eras to contemporary music and composition with computers.



Maia Clipsham

In this seminar, his students explored everyday objects as musical instruments, comparing the expressive potential of tearing paper, performing in a colored balloon ensemble, and finally participating in a “scavenger hunt” for both images and found objects that could be used to make music. The students presented and demonstrated their instruments in the Music Hall foyer as part of the Lipa Festival of Contemporary Music in March. Above, Maia Clipsham, a junior in Biological Systems Engineering and Global Resource Systems, plays her composition, “Feline Forest Dream,” with a vent cover and other materials.

Honors is a Family Affair

The Honors Program is a family affair for one loyal group of Iowa Staters, as a fourth member of the Veldboom clan—part of a third generation of Cyclones—prepares to enter Iowa State and the Honors Program. Lance Veldboom ('89, Agronomy) met his wife, Megan Raffety Veldboom ('90, Agricultural Biochemistry), while both were members of Honors. Even then they followed a tradition, as Megan's parents, Howard Raffety ('62, Ag Engineering) and Ann Rasmussen Raffety ('62, Home Economics), also met at Iowa State.

Lance has deep roots in the university, as he remained at Iowa State for his M.S. and Ph.D., both in Plant Breeding. He currently works at Monsanto in maize genetics research. Megan, along with Lance and Howard, is active in operating the family farm where the Veldbooms live—the fourth generation to do so.

“Lance and I had great experiences with the Honors Program,” says Megan. “It helped make our experiences at a large university unique” through flexible requirements, leadership opportunities, and connections to other students. Being from smaller towns, Lance and Megan enjoyed a university atmosphere combined with the small-college feel of Honors. “We love to visit Ames and ISU,” says Megan, since it “still feels like ‘going home’!”

The Veldbooms have lots of opportunities to make the trek to Ames this year, as the newest generation of this Grinnell, Iowa family is making its mark. Elizabeth Veldboom, pictured at left, graduated this spring in Mathematics with a certificate in secondary education, and will begin a teaching job this fall. Elizabeth, like her mom, was a leader in the First-Year Honors Program. Younger sister Emmaleah arrives at ISU and in Honors in August. The newest Veldboom in the Honors Program plans to major in Elementary Education, emphasizing Math and Reading. Welcome to the tradition, Emmaleah!



Elizabeth Veldboom

Alumni Board Builds Endowment

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Board members and staff: (front row) Laurie Smith Law, Gregor Dougal, Susan Yager; (back row) Cecilia Carey, Chris Deal, Carol Brumwell, Mark Law; photo by Alison Law

this year, offering alumni a way to help students with their efforts in research, professional development, completing their final Honors Projects, and more.

Each member of the board, following the lead of Board chair Mark Law ('81, Computer Engineering) and his wife, Alison ('81, Business Administration), has made an investment in the future of Honors through a gift to the endowment. Board members agree that the Honors Program made possible both lasting friendships and career success, and wish to secure the opportunities provided by Honors to current and future students. A mailing to support the endowment will be sent this spring. You can also support the endowment by contributing online at www.foundation.iastate.edu/honors.

In the morning, Board members viewed research posters created by several seniors and a few underclassmen as well. Later on, they met with a number of current students on their experiences in First-Year Honors and Honors classes, and saw preliminary results of Honors Project research by Nick Dimenstein, a senior in Biology, on why students remain, or do not finish, in Honors.

Board chair Law, a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Florida, recently became director of the Honors Program there. He mentioned some interesting differences between the programs, including the fact that there is no first-year research program at Florida comparable to Iowa State's First-Year Mentor Research Program.

In addition to discussing the endowment fund, Board members moved toward formalizing the organization's structure through standing committees and practical bylaws, and discussed expanding Board membership to include representation from all decades and all undergraduate colleges. If you would be interested in serving on the Board, contact Honors Administrative Director Laurie Smith Law at lfiegel@iastate.edu.

Don't Forget the Family Book!

Please keep in touch with us via the Honors Family Book. This annual compilation of news, notes, life events and accomplishments of Honors alumni is now online and available via password to all donors. To post items, please return the enclosed sheet or go to the Honors webpage (www.honors.iastate.edu) and look in the left column under Alumni. If you have questions about the Honors Family Book, please contact Diane Maxwell at dmaxwell@iastate.edu.

News and Notes about Honors

❁ Scientist sightings

Sean Murphy, ('99, Microbiology) was on campus last summer, speaking on “Fingerprinting Complex T Cell Responses to Combat Malaria Infection.” Sean is now an Assistant Professor of Laboratory Medicine at the University of Washington. Goran Micevic ('10, Biochemistry) and Dayna Peterson ('11, Biochemistry) were among familiar faces back on campus at in April as speakers at the Stupka Symposium on Undergraduate Research. Goren is currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Experimental Pathology at Yale, focusing on melanoma research; Dayna is in the Biochemistry Ph.D. program at Arizona State.

❁ Delicious news

Celia Bravard, a senior in Food Science and Human Nutrition, headed a student team that placed second nationally in place in a food product competition hosted by Disney Consumer Products and the Institute of Food Technologists Student Association. Using the Disney film “Planes” as inspiration, the team developed “Flight Bites,” a healthy, kid-sized snack made with dried apples, oats, and quinoa and filled with an apple-date jam. Celia continued developing this product for her Honors Project. This highly competitive event attracts many food companies recruiting top graduates, but Celia already had a connection: She’s moving to Omaha to work as a Product Development Associate Scientist at ConAgra Foods.

❁ Harry Potter lives on

Some alumni may remember Susan Yager’s seminars on the Harry Potter books—she’s lost track of how many there have been. After musing for years, Susan gathered her thoughts about Honors and Harry and published an article, “Something he could do without being taught: Honors, Play and Harry Potter,” for the journal *Honors in Practice*, published by the National Collegiate Honors Council.

❁ Students co-lead Honors Seminars

Speaking of Honors Seminars, current students are becoming more involved in leading them. Last year, two students proposed a seminar on the card game Magic: The Gathering, which turned into a class on the connection between learning and play, co-led by students and faculty. A current-events “Socrates Café” seminar was offered this spring, and a leadership seminar and a reprise of the “Magic” seminar are scheduled for the fall, all led jointly by professional staff and students. These super-peer leaders are Al Lucero (senior, Math) and Jered Stratton (junior, Genetics), Anndrea Joiner (senior, Architecture), and Melissa Moy (sophomore, Biology).

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Iowa State University Honors Program
2130 Jischke Honors Building
Ames, IA 50011