

Honors Program 2014-15

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Reflections on the Year

This has been an exciting year for the Honors Program with the revamping of Honors Interdisciplinary (Honors 299) into an action-oriented research class, the creation of an Honors Advisory Committee comprised of faculty members from each division, and an inaugural Honors Poster Session in winter quarter.

These new additions complement the core elements that characterize the program. Thanks to the support of faculty members across campus, students enhanced their education through the completion of over a hundred honors option projects. In Honors Colloquy, faculty, staff, and alumni inspired students by sharing information about their education and career

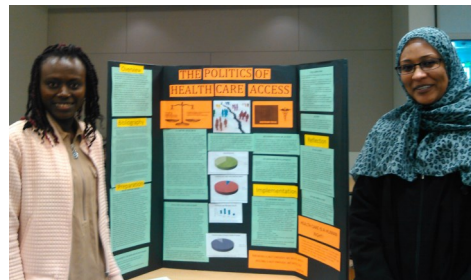
paths. Students also engaged in Honors Seminar, a personal marketing class designed to help students prepare for their next steps through coaching in college transfer, resume writing, and networking.

New Honors Interdisciplinary Class and Poster Session

The final capstone class for the honors program has transitioned from an independent study to a group-based research class inspired by the PTK national competition, Honors In Action. In this new class taught by history instructor and PTK faculty adviser, Teri Balkenende, students form groups based on mutual research interests. Their research must address a contemporary world issue. But simply conducting the research is not enough. The students must share their research at a poster session

open to the campus and also find a way to apply their research to have an impact in the community. Elizabeth Jatta and Nahid Omer teamed up to study the politics of healthcare access. In addition to sharing their

research with the campus, Elizabeth travelled to Vancouver, WA to share her findings at Voice Academy—a statewide conference of community and technical colleges—in May 2015.



Elizabeth Jatta (left) and Nahid Omer (right) at the inaugural Honors Poster Session

Meet the 2015 Honors Scholars

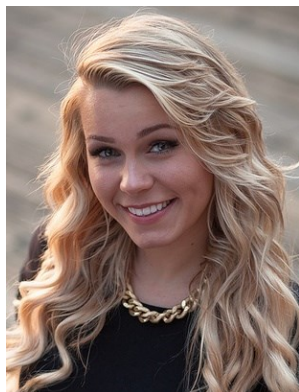
Over 150 students participated in the Honors Program this year. Out of that group, ten students challenged themselves to graduate as Honors Scholars. These remarkable students completed at least 35 credits of Honors coursework, all while maintaining a minimum 3.5 GPA. In addition, they have shown their dedication to the campus community by serving as club leaders, mentoring students in the scholarship application process, and planning events to encourage other students to become Honors Program participants. Honors Scholars earn a scholarship for their final quarter at Highline and are recognized at Commencement.

Laura Yanez



Laura Yanez served as student body president for 2014-15. Over the past six years, she has worked her way from ESL student to Honors Scholar, all while immersing herself in volunteer and leadership opportunities on campus. She was named a 2015 Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team Gold Scholar and a member of the All-Washington Academic Team. Laura has also earned scholarships from the Pride Foundation and Greater Seattle Business Association to help fund her education at UW-Tacoma where she will major in Social Welfare. Someday, Laura would like to return to Highline to serve as Vice-President for Student Services.

Olga Zhosyan



Olga Zhosyan was born in Russia and moved to the US at the age of 10. She entered Highline with the goal of focusing on classes and finishing her degree quickly, yet she immediately became immersed in the college as an Honors student, PTK participant, and member of the Honors Leadership Team. She juggled these commitments while working, pursuing nursing prerequisites, and volunteering at a hospital. Olga will transfer to the University of Washington School of Nursing in the fall.

Ya –Ching Chang



Ya-Ching Chang is an experienced business woman in her home country of Taiwan. She came to the US to pursue her degree and move a step closer to her dream of setting up a foundation to improve opportunities for young business people in Taiwan. She is graduating with an AA emphasis in Accounting and will transfer to Penn State to study economics in the fall.

ThaDah Hser

ThaDah Hser was born and raised in a refugee camp in Thailand. She is ethnically Burmese (Karen), though she has never had the opportunity to visit her home country of Burma/Myanmar. While pursuing her AA emphasis in Human Services, ThaDah served as a TRiO Student Ambassador, a mentor in the Burmese community, and member of the Honors Leadership Team; in these roles, she became known for her positive attitude and passion for helping others. ThaDah recently earned a Leadership 1000 Scholarship (\$5,000/year for up to four years). She will transfer to the University of Washington to study social work. One of her long-term goals is to earn an MSW (Master of social welfare) and to travel to Burma as a volunteer.



Brendan Newell

Brendan Newell will graduate from Highline with an AA emphasis in English. During his time at Highline, Brendan has served as a Writing Center Tutor, Honors Teaching Assistant, and member of the QSA. He intends to transfer to Western Washington University where he will double major in English and Queer Studies. He can see himself working in many different environments but he ultimately wants to help make queer people more visible. He will seek to incorporate queer people into genres of fiction where they are underrepresented and also to advocate for the inclusion of the works of queer people in history courses so that a more developed history can be understood.



Rebecca Ring

Rebecca Ring has overcome several obstacles, including homelessness, to pursue her education. Rebecca has thrived at Highline as a scholar, PTK participant, and President of the Environmental Club. She will graduate this spring with an AA emphasis in political science. She is a recipient of Highline's Academic Achievement Award and represents Highline on the All-Washington Academic Team. Rebecca will continue her education at UW-Tacoma where she will work towards her goals to improve food access and alleviate poverty in the United States, with a long-term goal of seeing food access recognized by the US government as a basic human right.



Amanda Aldrich



Amanda Aldrich is graduating with her Associate of Arts with an Emphasis in American Sign Language. She intends to transfer to the University of Washington Tacoma where she received a \$5,000 yearly merit-based scholarship. Her long-term goal is to start a therapy ranch built specifically with wounded veterans and first responders in mind.

Michelle Jensen



Michelle Jensen, born and raised in Des Moines, Washington, has greatly enjoyed her time at Highline. She is earning her AA with an Emphasis in Mathematics, and planning to transfer to Western Washington University next fall with the intention of completing her Bachelors in Math and earning a Master's Degree in Education. Her post-education plans involve becoming a high school math teacher that will inspire interest and a love of math in all her students. She has received a Presidential Scholarship, a 'Math Scholars' Scholarship, and a Leadership Scholarship, all from Western.

Moeka Tamura



Moeka Tamura travelled from Japan to the US to pursue an AA emphasis in Biology. During her time at Highline, Moeka has contributed to the campus as the Founder and President of the Future Healthcare Leaders Club and a member of the Honors Leadership Team. She is the recipient of several awards, including the HC Foundation Scholarship (merit based), ISP Academic Scholarship, ISP Leadership Scholarship, and CLS Student of the Month Scholarship. She will transfer to UW-Seattle or the University of British Columbia to pursue her dream of becoming a medical researcher in the field of regenerative medicine. She aims to help people in the world by discovering a new technology to move IPSCs (Induced Pluripotent Stem Cells) towards their practical use.

Khue Tran

Khue Tran is an International Student from Vietnam and a member of the International Leadership Student Council. She will graduate with an AA emphasis in Art, after which, she intends to transfer to Art Center College of Design in California or to the University of Washington. Her dream is to be a cartoonist or background scene designer.



Opportunities for involvement in the Honors Program.

- ◆ **Alumni**—mentor a current student (share information about the college you attended and/or your work experience) or share your story with a larger audience as a guest speaker for Honors Colloquy
- ◆ **Current Students**—inspired by the stories of this year's Honors Scholars? Email Jacque Clinton to discuss how you can graduate as an Honors Scholar
- ◆ **Faculty and Staff**—consider speaking during Honors Colloquy, referring students to the program, or sponsoring an Honors Option in one of your classes



Honors Leadership Team member ThaDah Hser representing the program at a resource fair

More information about the Honors Program can be found at honors.highline.edu or contact Jacque Clinton (Honors Program Manager) at jclinton@highline.edu.