Travel has long been recognized as an essential learning tool. Travel teaches us about history. As Rene Decartes observed, “Traveling is almost like talking with men of other centuries.” Learning also exposes us to other cultures and provides unique perspectives of our world. According to historian Miriam Beard, “Travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living.”

A central goal of the Centennial Honors College is to provide opportunities for travel, whether it is a day trip to nearby historical site, visits to neighboring states, or extended visits overseas. Consider some recent travel opportunities available to honors students at Western Illinois University.

Last summer, History Professor Jennifer McNabb offered a three-week Study Abroad program at Queen’s University in Belfast, called “WIU in Belfast.” This interdisciplinary course enabled students to travel and discover the culture and history of Northern Ireland while absorbing stimulating classroom instruction.

In Fall 2012, Sociology Professor Cindy Struthers’ GH 299—Community History course enabled students to visit Nauvoo, Illinois, and learn about the rich history of the Mormon and Icarian settlements. The students further learned “oral history” techniques and then presented their findings at a local museum.

For the past several years, Communication Professor David Zanolla has offered a unique course entitled, “Communication Around the World.” The course entails a series of lectures and projects regarding communication strategies that culminates in a visit to Disney World in Orlando, Florida. While at Disney, the students meet with EPCOT executives and historians, and study the integrated communication network that enables this complex organization to function effectively.

Most recently, 15 honors students spent their spring break in Washington, DC, as part of GH 299—The Roberts Court. The students were special guests of Justice Clarence Thomas who took the time to explain the workings of the High Court, entertain questions, sign autographs, and arrange for a VIP tour of the Supreme Court Building. The tour included a visit to the Supreme Court library, the Justice’s office, and the full-length basketball court located on the top floor—literally and figuratively the “highest court in the land.” Additionally, the students were provided VIP tours of the Library of Congress and the U.S. Congress, thanks to Congressman Aaron Schock and Senator Richard Durbin.

And the 2013 Summer Abroad Program includes planned course visits to Costa Rica, China, Rome and Southeast Asia (Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand). For further information on international travel, students should contact the Office of Study Abroad (309-298-2504.) The Honors College thus strongly encourages all honors students to explore other vistas. Surely, those students who visited Northern Ireland, Nauvoo, Disney World, or the U.S. Supreme Court this past year will forever have new and enriched perspectives regarding these places, their history, people and culture.

–Rick Hardy
Golden Key Updates

On April 1st, the members of Golden International Honour Society sponsored the first GK "Power Lunch," a professional development workshop focused on career preparation and the job search. Participants had the chance to take a virtual tour of the website of the Office of Career Services with Director Marty Kral, who identified various resources available online to job-seeking students and graduates, and offered tips and information on eRecruiting and other online job posting services and sites, including LinkedIn. Director Kral then took audience questions and discussed more specific strategies for particular majors and career paths. Several attendees left with gift certificates to local restaurants as part of the door prize raffle. Make sure to join us next spring for the Second Annual GK Power Lunch!

Golden Key will have a chapter meeting on Thursday, April 18th at 7:30 in Morgan 304 to discuss remaining spring semester activities, including the chapter's Global Youth Service Day project, organized in conjunction with the Macomb Public Library's Summer Reading Program for Children. Please contact GK Service Chair John Johnson (JD-Johnson5@wiu.edu) for details if you would like to participate. You do not have to be a member of Golden Key to join in the fun!

"Who's Afraid of Interdisciplinary?"
Submitted by Dr. Richard Ness, Department of Broadcasting

The term interdisciplinary has become increasingly popular in academia in recent years, but while faculty and administrators seem to value the concept in theory, it is much more difficult to put into actual practice. In Fall 2012 the Honors component of the College of Fine Arts and Communication began offering a course that could provide a model for how interdisciplinary programs might work in academic disciplines. The COFAC GH 299 course integrates all six departments of the college (Art, the School of Music, Theater and Dance, Broadcasting, Communication, and Communication Sciences and Disorders) and enables students to work across disciplines and departments on creative projects.

The course grew out of a committee established with the intent of increasing participation in the Honors program from COFAC students by providing them with more interdisciplinary options. The artistic and rhetorical areas encompassed by the six departments in the college lend themselves particularly well to such an approach since they often incorporate elements from a number of different disciplines. Artistic pursuits do not exist in a vacuum, and in an increasingly multi-media oriented environment it is difficult to imagine a project or production that does not draw in some way on various disciplines. In my own area of film studies, for example, it is impossible to discuss cinema without addressing aspects of art and design, rhetorical criticism, music, and elements of mise-en-scene derived from theater. The committee determined that students in many departments eligible for the Honors College wanted the opportunity to pursue more creative endeavors, a particular concern in a college built on artistic and creative disciplines. In addition, some of the smaller departments in the college often only had a few Honors students, which made it difficult to organize activities and events that would allow them to experience the full potential of what a university Honors program can offer. Bringing together honors students from all six departments allows for greater opportunities for such activities and the chance for students to combine resources in their creative pursuits.

The first step in developing a more interdisciplinary approach to the Honors program has been the creation of a sophomore-level course to introduce students to all of...
the departments within the college and allow them an opportunity to begin interacting with students from other disciplines. The course is intended to provide a foundation for students to begin thinking about their senior thesis, where they have the option of working with students from other departments to create some kind of interdisciplinary production.

One of the examples employed in the COFAC GH 299 course last fall that demonstrated how all six areas of the college could be incorporated within a single production was the climactic scene in the recent Academy Award-winning film “The King’s Speech.” The film is based on a stage play (Theater) and the main character suffers from a speech disorder (Communication Sciences and Disorders), which he has to overcome in order to deliver (Communication) an important radio address (Broadcasting) on the eve of his country’s entry into war. As presented in the film, the broadcast is accompanied by the Allegretto movement of Beethoven’s 7th Symphony (Music) and also draws on aspects of visual arts in its set design and presentation of shots (Art).

Beyond providing students with ideas for how their creative projects can incorporate multiple elements, the intent of the course is to help students to realize that their own field of study is not self-contained and hermetic, and to give them a better understanding not just of their own discipline but of how it relates to others. In a time when universities continually are facing budget cuts and traditional territorial barriers between disciplines are breaking down, there will be an increasing incentive to combine resources within colleges and perhaps even across the university as a whole. The experimental efforts of the COFAC Honors Committee hopefully have laid the ground work for demonstrating the form a practical approach to academic interdisciplinary can take.

Honors Alum Profile: Alex Heuer

Alex Heuer, the featured alumni speaker at this year's Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day, is featured as this month’s Honors Alum Profile. Alex graduated from WIU with a major in History/Secondary Education and has returned to campus to offer his thoughts on the benefits of his education at Western, most recently at a workshop sponsored by the Associated Students of History in 2011.

He currently works as a Producer at St. Louis Public Radio, primarily seeking interesting topics and booking appropriate guests for "St. Louis on the Air" and "Cityscape." Alex wears many hats as a producer, conducting research, directing live on-air programming, writing web copy, editing audio, and in his words, "operating those confusing-looking audio boards."

Q: How did you get involved in the Honors College, and were you an active member of SHA or any other honors societies?

AH: I became involved in the Honors College immediately as a freshman. I was interested in it because I had taken honors courses at my high school and because there was a specific honors residence floor in Thompson Hall. I became active in SHA by initially attending meetings and later, becoming an officer in the organization. I was also a member of the History honors society, Phi Alpha Theta, and a founding member of the WIU chapter of Phi Alpha Delta, the pre-law honors society.

Q: Please share news of your recent accomplishments/achievements.

AH: I have won regional and national awards for my reporting and producing and had stories featured nationally on NPR’s two main programs, “Morning Edition” and “All Things Considered.” I recently booked, produced, and directed a town hall forum featuring the three Democratic primary candidates for mayor of St. Louis. The primary election is more significant than the general election because the Democratic candidate is the assumed victor in St. Louis. I was especially proud of this because the candidates only agreed to a couple of joint appearances.

Q: WIU Honors memories you would like to share?

AH: I have many WIU Honors memories and while specific honors classes, presentations at Undergraduate Research Day, receiving scholarships and preparing for homecoming festivities are notable, what stands out most are the people I encountered while there. The Honors College was a hidden gem when I attended WIU, but you could get as much out of the Honors College as you were willing to put in – it required initiative.

Hear more from Alex on Tuesday, April 16, 2013 at 6:00 to begin Undergraduate Research Day's formal programming.
Honors Student of the Month: Zac Andrew

Senior Zachary Ryan Andrew is majoring in Biological Sciences with an Option in Medical Sciences and minors in Chemistry and Neuroscience. He recalls becoming involved with the Honors College as the result of a search of the WIU website for leadership opportunities. Those leadership opportunities have led Zac to an impressive engagement in both the Honors College and the wider University community. Zac currently serves as President of the Student Honors Association and the Biological Honors Society, Tri Beta, Vice President of Blue Key Honor Society and Golden Key International Honour Society, as Treasurer of Mortar Board, and as Student Representative of Phi Beta Delta International Honor Society. He is also an Honors Ambassador, an Honors Mentor, and an FYE Peer Mentor in the Department of Biological Sciences. He has leadership positions in the Pre-Professional Health Club and the Presidents Institute Think Tank. Further, Zac serves as a Student Orientation Staff Leader and a Certified Peer Health Educator with Beu Health Center.

When asked about Honors College memories, Zac writes of a recent exceptional course experience: "My trip to DC with Dr. Hardy’s GH299 Robert’s Court class is something I will never forget. We were able to meet Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Our group was able to take a tour of the Supreme Court Building and see things that many Americans never get to see, such as the basketball court on the top floor and the Supreme Court Library. We also were able to view the Speaker’s balcony that overlooks the national mall from the Capitol Building. This view overlooked the area where the President is inaugurated. Not only did I see many amazing things and meet some amazing United States leaders, I also learned a lot about my fellow honors students with such diverse backgrounds." He also recognizes Dr. Scott Holt as a mentor.

Included in many recent accomplishments and achievements, Zac highlights his work organizing the SHA Better World Books project and the SHA Blood Drive, his receipt of the 2012 General Assembly Scholarship through Illinois Representative Mike Jacobs and the September 2012 Student Services Act of Kindness Award, and his nomination as the 2012 Department of Biological Sciences Lincoln Laureate.

Zac has ambitious career goals in the medical field and is working to prepare himself for future academic work. He has presented his research at the Tri Beta Convention, Biology Research Day at WIU, Undergraduate Research Day, and the Honors Council of the Illinois Region conference. Zac reports, "I have just saved up enough money to apply to Osteopathic Medical School and hope to be accepted for the Fall 2013 semester. Once obtaining my Doctor of Osteopathic medical degree I hope to pursue a residency in Anesthesiology followed by a fellowship in Pain Management, ultimately opening my own clinic for pain management."

Congratulations, Zac!

Honors Faculty Profile: Stacey Macchi

This month’s Honors Faculty Profile features Professor Stacey Macchi from the Department of Communication. Professor Macchi has been teaching at Western for nine years, following an M.A. in Communication and a B.A. in Communication (Honors) and Political Science, both earned from WIU. Her area of expertise is rhetoric, but her current research has taken her to conferences to present on such topics as teaching online in public speaking courses, building community in classrooms, and alumni involvement in departmental activities.

Her teaching and service activities are impressive in their variety. She regularly teaches several face-to-face and online undergraduate courses, including Introduction to Communication, Public Speaking, Interviewing, Argumentation and Debate, Great Speeches, and the COFAC GH299. She serves as advisor to two student organizations: the Continued on next page...
Communication Student Society (CSS) and Pi Kappa Phi fraternity. She notes, "The students in CSS recently held a Pie Your Professor fundraiser in the department and it was quite successful. We had 12 faculty volunteer to be "pied" if their jars contained the most money at the end of the collection period. Thankfully, I was not 'pied' but three of my colleagues were. That was a very fun event." Of her work with Pi Kappa Phi, she says, "I am a new advisor, and so far, the gentlemen of this fraternity have been very welcoming. Their national philanthropy is Push America, which helps to serve individuals with disabilities."

In writing about her relationship with the Honors College, Professor Macchi states, "I have had a long history with the Honors College, starting back to my time as a student at Western Illinois University. I completed Honors in Communication as an undergraduate and cannot express my gratitude for the benefits I gained by being part of this community. Not only do I still believe in the mission of the Honors College, but also I try to be supportive of the students and their endeavors. One example of my dedication to the Honors College is my work with the Honors Convocation Speaker each semester. I mean, let's face it - the students in the Honors College are amazing, and I am the lucky one to get to work with them every semester." She teaches COMM 241 (Public Speaking) Honors each spring and praises her current students as a "fun, energetic group." This fall, Professor Macchi will be teaching an Honors section of Introduction to Communication, which she cites as a favorite course, in part because of a "murder mystery event" she hosts for students that allows them to see course concepts come to life. She offers, "I have been reading several new murder mystery scripts and, without giving anything away, think I've found the winner! More to come this fall...." She will also be co-teaching the relatively new COFAC GH 299 course and notes that she anticipates a rewarding experience for students and instructors.

Professor Macchi enjoys a variety of interests. When not reading books and professional journals for her research, she tries to make time for leisure reading and identifies To Kill a Mockingbird as an all-time favorite book. She also claims subscriptions to numerous food and craft magazines, declaring, "I am an educator by day and a baker by night!" She also refers to a New Year's resolution to watch AFI's 100 Greatest Movies of All Time (find the list online at http://www.afi.com/100years/movies.aspx) Professor Macchi follows the Cubs and keeps tabs on them through BleacherNation.com. Her use of social media and technology includes a recent investigation of apps for recording speeches in hopes of finding recommendations for students to help them make improvements in public speaking.

Joshua Wood: Fulbright Grant Winner

Honors student Josh Wood of the Department of Economics has been awarded a Fulbright Teaching Assistant grant to South Korea for 2013-2014. Josh offered his thoughts on this exciting announcement.

Q: Please talk about Western's Ambassadors for Study Abroad and your role in that program.

JW: Western's Ambassadors for Study Abroad (WASA) is a student organization on campus that is committed to promoting study abroad opportunities at WIU and providing a support network for students studying and preparing to study overseas. I am now Vice President of WASA. We offer presentations to classrooms in which our student representatives speak about the variety of programs available to students, discuss financial aid options and the affordability of our programs, and address concerns that students may raise. The officers of WASA have worked to build a body of representatives capable and prepared to support students around campus in their efforts to study overseas and seek out expansion of the organization's role on campus by hosting blood drives and a proposed student panel discussion sometime in the near future. WASA is open to all students regardless of their prior experience overseas or lack thereof. We encourage all students to join our community to share personal experiences abroad, learn more about the travel options WIU offers, and provide a strong support network for WIU as it carries out its mission of globalization.

Q: How did you find out about the Fulbright, and why did you become interested in applying?

JW: Dr. Hardy and History professor Dr. Kretchik recommended that I consider the Fulbright, particularly as an avenue for entry into a competitive graduate program in diplomacy and a potential career with the U.S. State Department. I chose to pursue the Fulbright scholarship because of its potential to engage in a rich, immersive cultural experience and to apply my skills to help build the community to which I am assigned. As a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant, I will get to teach a variety of topics to Korean high school students that pertain to my own interest, from American history to film and music, while helping them improve their English-speaking skills as well. Upon completion of this program, I intend to apply for a full research grant to conduct econometric research in South Korea, which will hopefully provide a framework for future dissertational research either in economics or international relations. I trust that this will be a very rewarding experience, and from it I hope to learn more about Korean language and culture, build an international network of colleagues, and develop a well-founded basis for achieving my research.
Continued… Joshua Wood: Fulbright Grant Winner

Q: What did you find to be the most challenging and the most rewarding part of the application process?
JW: Completing a statement of purpose was easily the most demanding step of the process. It was a daunting task to write a statement that would distinguish my application from the competition. I think my essay was as much a personal meditation as it was an exposition of my personality and goals to the committee that reviewed my application. Fortunately, I was given feedback on my application from Provost Hawkinson and several faculty members in drafting my statement, and with their support I was able to illustrate succinct justification for my candidacy. Several of the faculty and staff members on the review panel were people I had known or taken classes with in the past, and it was also a great chance to meet and interact with other faculty members I hadn’t known previously. It was incredible to have a group of high-achieving intellectuals come together with the common interest of helping me to attain my goal. Upon receiving the award, the members of the committee and the Economics Department all offered me their warm blessing and congratulations. This is a wonderful display of the student-faculty camaraderie that I love about Western.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish with your Fulbright? Can you outline your plans for the position?
JW: My primary function as a Fulbright ETA will be to teach Korean high school students casual and academic English by way of classroom lessons and personal conversation. By helping these students to communicate with a larger community across the globe, I hope to help them to share their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the world. I imagine it will take some time to earn the trust and respect of my students as a foreigner, but my experience living in East Asia has shown consistently that even those social circles open up warmly when you demonstrate an earnest appreciation for their culture and community. The nature of my role will likely be contingent on the type of area in which I’m placed in Korea, but I hope to cultivate that trust by getting involved with school and community initiatives such as taekwondo, music, and drama. If so permitted by the school community, I would also like to aid in the development of course curricula, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. Over the course of this program, I hope to improve my skills as a teacher and mentor and learn how to interact in a foreign community. As I become more familiar with the language and culture, I hope to find insight for a Fulbright-funded research project in the field of development economics.