In November I participated in the 47th annual Convention of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) in Boston. Representatives from more than a hundred two- and four-year institutions, both public and private, were in attendance. It afforded me an opportunity to engage honors deans, directors, advisors, and students from across the country. And it enabled me to acquire valuable tips on recruiting, advising, retaining, and promoting honors students.

The HCNC experience also convinced me the Centennial Honors College is doing some things very well and is on the cusp on being a first-rate, national program. I believe there are three areas where the Centennial Honors College is breaking new ground among the nation’s honors colleges.

First, Western’s new Centennial Honors and Commitment Scholarships are truly innovative. By marshalling academic resources, aggressive recruiting, sound advertising, and guarantees of sustained scholarship support, Western is now able to compete for the most talented students in the nation. This year’s Centennial Scholarship class is remarkable, and next year’s class promises to be even bigger and better.

Second, Western is leading the pack in promoting civic engagement. Our Mock Presidential Election is undoubtedly the largest and most elaborate presidential simulation in the nation, engaging thousands of students from across the disciplines. Western also does a remarkable job of developing internships, participating in such programs as the Model United Nations and Model Illinois Government, and developing research posters for the annual Constitution Day observances.

Third, Western’s newly established Presidents Institute is arguably the nation’s premier student think tank. This one-of-a-kind enterprise will enable WIU students to showcase their ideas, inventions, creations, presentations, and performances through online posts, posters, videos, and journals.

Together, I believe these three signature programs make the Centennial Honors College unique among the nation’s honors programs.

However, the NCHC experience also underscored that our Centennial Honors program still has considerable room for improvement. We must continue to expand and improve our annual Undergraduate Research Day and Pre-Law Symposium. We must do a better job of recruiting outstanding students from area community colleges. Likewise, more honors students should be presenting their research at professional conferences. And, we still need to recruit and promote underrepresented honors faculty and students.

In the coming year, the Centennial Honors College will work to expand articulation agreements with area community colleges. We will seek additional funds for student presentations, and we will accelerate efforts to recruit and retain praiseworthy students from diverse backgrounds.

Dr. Hardy is offering GH 299: The Roberts Court for Spring 2013 (Mon, 12-12:50). The course will examine the history of the Supreme Court, the nature of judicial decision-making, and selected cases from recent terms. The course will include a field trip to Washington, DC during Spring Break. Students will meet with Justice Clarence Thomas and tour the Supreme Court, the White House, Congress, the Smithsonian, Library of Congress, and other historical sites. Enrollment requires a non-refundable $300 deposit (for travel and hotel). For more information, please contact Dr. Hardy at RJ-Hardy@wiu.edu or 309-298-2226.
Notes from the Associate Director

There are two events each semester I have always looked forward to with great anticipation as a faculty member: the first day of classes and Commencement. The former is a day of possibilities, a chance to meet the students with whom I will take a journey of intellectual and personal discovery during the sixteen weeks that follow; the latter is a day for celebrating possibilities realized, as the University community recognizes students who have completed the requirements necessary to earn a degree from Western Illinois University. Now that I am Associate Director of the Centennial Honors College, I am mindful of the need to add a third item to my list: Honors Convocation. Honors Convocation provides an opportunity to applaud and to reflect upon the achievements of the University’s most academically successful students, and while I have attended Honors Convocation on many occasions since my arrival at WIU eight years ago, I am delighted this year to be an active participant. My first semester in the Honors College has been a wonderful one, thanks to the professionalism and kindness of the fine Honors College staff and to the hardworking and talented students with whom I have the opportunity to interact. I look forward to celebrating the Fall 2012 Honors Convocation with them.

As I have prepared the newsletter each month this fall, there has been no shortage of good news for the Centennial Honors College, and the same holds true for this special Commencement edition of the newsletter. As Director Hardy notes, the Centennial Honors College provides a first-rate experience for WIU’s gifted students, and evidence of that abounds here. Professors Dave Rohall and Jon Day provide an update on the exciting developments of the new student think tank, the Presidents Institute, and Emily Gorlewski, Assistant Director of the Office of Study Abroad, encourages Honors students to consider the valuable opportunities of the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. We feature as Student of the Month Centennial Honors College Scholar Thomas Reeder, who speaks eloquently about the teachers and coursework that helped make his time at WIU satisfying and successful. We also highlight recent graduate Kevin Ross, whose rise to professional success since leaving WIU has been meteoric, and Professor Tom Sadler, whose infectious enthusiasm for his upcoming Honors course makes me wish I could enroll! SHA President Zac Andrew offers an overview of the group’s many fall activities, and we recognize this fall’s Honors graduates as well as the Honors Convocation marshals and Student Speaker Maya Stainback.

Finally, I also have the honor this month of introducing the Centennial Honors College Awards of Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring. These new awards will be given annually to recognize individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the education of Honors students and to the vitality of the Centennial Honors College. Students, I would like to extend a special invitation to you to consider nominating individuals who have played a vital role as teachers and mentors in your success. No one benefits more from excellent teaching and dedicated mentoring than you do, so I urge you to consider nominating someone who has helped you achieve your academic and professional goals; the deadline for nominations is March 1, 2013 (completed application packets are due March 15, 2013). The University Honors Council then will select a winner in each category for acknowledgment at Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day in April.

Happy Honors Convocation, happy Commencement, and happy holidays!

The Centennial Honors College would like to recognize and express appreciation for the service of this year’s student marshals at Honors Convocation. The students who accepted the prestigious honor of serving as marshals this fall are Josh Davis, Lindsey Posmanick, Liz Etta, Alycia Thurston, Rodolfo Perez, and Samantha Goetz.
Congratulations to Fall 2012 Honors Scholars

Austin Anderson  Agricultural Science  Thomas Reeder  Music Education
Amy Bell  Music Education  Maureen Robinson  Accountancy
Lindsay Bockoven  Psychology  Lindsey Roe  Anthropology
Atif Bukhari  LEJA  Trent Ross  LEJA
Courtney Cluney  Biology  Jasmine Scott  Music Business
Bradley Fenton  LEJA & Philosophy  Lauren Simmons  Music Education
Shelby Hawkins  LEJA  Steven Solomon  Music Education
Breanne Helmers  Psychology  Assanatou Sow  Journalism & French
Amy Huelsmann  Meteorology  Maya Stainback  Political Science & African American Studies
Joseph Illichman  Mathematics  Alyse Thompson  Journalism & Spanish
Erika Lawson  Mathematics  Sherry Tietjen  Special Education
Chelsey Moore  RPTA & Spanish  Caitlin Wood  Computer Science
Mary Pearl  LEJA  Gregory Wooley  English & Graphic Communication
Brittany Pieper  Agricultural Business  Katelyn Wurth  Accountancy & Finance

Honors Convocation speaker: Maya Stainback

Ms. Stainback enrolled at Western Illinois University in fall 2009 after graduating from the Proviso Math and Science Academy in Forest Park, Illinois. At Western, she has compiled an exemplary academic record. She was the recipient of the Illinois General Assembly Scholarship and the Roland P. Burke Scholarship in Political Science, and was on the Dean’s List every semester. Ms. Stainback has been inducted into the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, and Golden Key Honorary Society. Additionally, Ms. Stainback has devoted countless hours to campus and civic activities. She has delivered research papers at professional conferences, served as an intern in the Illinois General Assembly, worked as a residence hall advisor, and served as a tour guide for Western Illinois University.

Maya Stainback is graduating with a dual major in Political Science and African American Studies. Ms. Stainback has the rare distinction of being named Department Scholar for two departments—African American Studies and Political Science. When Ms. Stainback speaks at Convocation, her address is entitled “The Western Evolution.”

Honors Alum Profile: Kevin Ross

This month’s featured Honors alumnus is Kevin Ross. Kevin majored in Business Management at Western with a Pre-Law Minor and graduated as the College of Business and Technology College Scholar last fall with a 4.0 GPA.

Q: How did you get involved in the Honors College?
KR: The reason I became a member of the Honors College is because I was pursuing a career in law. Having a Pre-Law minor was a step in the right direction for my chosen path; the honors college is what offered this minor.

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Honors Student Profile: Tom Reeder

The subject of this month’s student profile is Fall 2012 Centennial Honors College Scholar Tom Reeder. Tom is a senior Music Education major, graduating summa cum laude with University Honors. Tom’s impressive accomplishments are many and varied. To satisfy the requirements for University Honors, Tom completed a five-chapter, 127-page Honors Thesis titled "What was that you tried to say?: Navigating the Complexities of the Commercial Electronic Music Industry." He presented research involved with his project at Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day last spring, as a podium presentation called "Sell Out! With Me Tonight!: Audience-Artist Relations in the Commercial Electronic Music Industry." Tom is a member of Phi Eta Sigma and Phi Kappa Phi honor societies and served as the president of the Beta Omicron chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon, a professional music fraternity. He recently completed his student teaching assignment and is living in the Chicago suburbs, where he notes, "I am an active member of the Chicago music scene. I play saxophone with ska/jazz fusion group Mr. F (which I am a founding member of) and ska/punk group Bumsy and the Moochers. I am also currently putting together a new band called The Nomads which will feature my own compositions, and consists of many Western alumni I met in the music program who are now working in the Chicago area."

Tom’s reflections on his Honors College experiences indicate his high quality engagement as an Honors student as well as his appreciation of the WIU faculty. Tom says, “I got involved in the Honors College as a freshman because I wanted to challenge myself academically and to explore topics beyond the typical Gen Ed classes and the core classes of my major.” When asked about particular Honors College memories, he

Continued on next page...
Honors Faculty Profile: Tom Sadler

Professor Tom Sadler from the Department of Economics and Decision Sciences is the subject of this month’s Honors Faculty Profile. This year marks Dr. Sadler’s eighth at Western, following his completion of a Ph.D. in Environmental Economics at the University of Tennessee. His areas of expertise are environmental economics, energy economics, and sustainable food networks, and he regularly teaches courses in those areas as well as Macroeconomics and Global Economic Environment.


In his faculty profile questionnaire, Dr. Sadler writes enthusiastically about his relationship with the Honors College and about his Honors course, Economics of Sustainable Food, offered in Spring 2013 (TR 11:00-12:15). He says, “I love to teach this class! We spend the entire semester discussing the problems of industrial agriculture and why local food networks provide viable alternatives. We read fascinating books such as The Omnivore’s Dilemma and The Town that Food Saved. Students write essays, present their ideas, and address the following questions: What are the characteristics of a sustainable food network? What are the characteristics of the local food network in West-Central Illinois? Guest speakers provide alternative perspectives and help us establish a positive community of learning. In teaching this class, I’ve found the discussions, student presentations, guest lecturers and DVDs fascinating. I’m looking forward to teaching this class in the spring semester already!” He notes, “I was thrilled with the idea of developing a course that I always wanted to teach, based on the ideas presented in the book The Omnivore’s Dilemma. The field of economics lends itself well to the study of food networks and industrial agriculture.”
**Honors College Awards of Excellence**

The Honors College is proud to announce a new initiative to recognize outstanding faculty and staff: the Centennial Honors College Awards of Excellence. These awards have been established to recognize excellence in two categories, Teaching and Mentoring, and will be granted annually to a winner in each category on the basis of achievements in and contributions to the Centennial Honors College and its students over the course of the three most recent years, including summers. The Honors College encourages nominations from students, faculty, and staff to identify individuals whose service to the Honors College and its students are worthy of recognition. Nomination forms are due to the Honors College by March 1st; the deadline for supporting materials from the nominee is March 15th. Applications will be evaluated by an Awards Subcommittee of the University Honors Council, and winners will be recognized publicly at Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day in April. For detailed criteria, a copy of the nomination form, and additional information, please see http://www.wiu.edu/centennial_honors_college/forms.php, or contact Associate Director Jennifer McNabb at JLMcnabb@wiu.edu.

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**First Meeting of The Presidents Institute**

Submitted by Professors Dave Rohall and Jon Day

The Presidents Institute had its first meeting in the Fall of 2012 with about 100 of its members including directors, associated directors, senior fellows, research fellows, and research associates representing 13 centers ranging from the Center for the Study of Science to the Center for the Study of Fine Arts and Communication. The Interim Director of the Honors College, Rick Hardy, opened the meeting by providing a vision for the Institute as a place for generating great ideas. President Thomas also spoke at the event, remarking on this unique opportunity for Western students, since this is one of the nation's only student think tanks. After some additional comments from Jon Day, Publisher of The Presidents Press (the publishing house of The Presidents Institute), directors were then instructed to meet with their fellows to discuss ideas for the Institute.

The goal of The Presidents Institute is to provide students a forum to publish their thoughts and opinions about current issues under the guidance of faculty members who either serve as directors or associate directors of the centers. The Presidents Institute’s website is located at: http://presidentsinstitute.org if you would like more information about the Institute. Applications for positions at the Institute will be accepted in mid spring 2013.

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You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. You are the guy who'll decide where to go.

- Dr. Seuss
Our first endeavor was to reestablish a few activities from the previous year. We implemented the Student Honors Association’s participation in the Adopt a Street Program through the City of Macomb. This is a service project SHA carried out once a month. We were assigned a very large stretch of North Lafayette Street from West University Drive all the way to West Calhoun Street, about a mile of Macomb’s busiest stretch of highway. SHA was up to the challenge and successfully kept the highway clean month after month.

Another very important activity that was recycled from last year was Paris Hamm’s campus clean up initiative formally called the “Get Your Butts Off Our Lawn” campaign. The goal of this campaign was to raise awareness about the ongoing cigarette butt littering problem here on campus. Our emphasis was to pick a high traffic area of campus, the area behind the library down to Morgan Hall, and to clean all the cigarette butts from the ground. Our hope is to expand this campaign in the coming semesters to include multiple organizations in an effort to rid as much of the campus of cigarette litter as possible. Prevention is also a very big part of this campaign. Aside from cleaning the litter we had hoped to spread the idea of using the cigarette snuff boxes around campus and perhaps raising funds for the installation of several more snuff boxes. This semester SHA collaborated with WAVE in an effort to better publicize our campaign.

Many members of the Student Honors Association also took part in this semester’s Homecoming events. We did our best to construct a boat from various pieces of cardboard for this year’s Boat Regatta. Shortly after the Boat Regatta, we headed over to the library to participate in Dec the Campus. In this event we were assigned a window near the Centennial Honors College to express our “Rocky Pride” with window paint. The members of SHA had a great time and cannot wait to participate again next year.

This October SHA sent 3 delegates to the 2012 Fall Leadership Conference hosted by WIU’s Office of Student Activities. During the conference we were able to sit in on many, very interesting lecturers. We learned a lot about such topics as Civil Leadership, Networking and Healthy Relationships. The evening was wrapped up by a great keynote presentation by Joshua Fredenburg. To conclude this semester’s events we collaborated with the Blue Key Honor Society in serving the Macomb community at the Soup and More Dinner. Here we helped prepare and serve food to the less fortunate families here in the Macomb community.

This week we look forward to our End of the Semester book drive with Better World Books. We collect books on campus and donate them to Better World Books, which then donates $1.25 per book to the American Foundation for Family Literacy. Please be on the lookout for more information on next semester’s activities and meeting times. SHA hopes to act as a great networking resource for the students of the Centennial Honors College. Be a smarty and join the party!

May good luck be your friend in whatever you do and may trouble be always a stranger to you.

—Irish Blessing
Emily Gorlewski, Assistant Director, Office of Study Abroad and Fulbright Program Advisor

I would like to thank Dr. McNabb for the opportunity to write a few words about Fulbright in this month's issue of "With Honors." The Fulbright U.S. Student Program is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and provides prestigious awards to graduate students and recent graduates for study, research, or teaching English abroad. Fulbright encourages applications in all disciplines, including fine and performing arts. The financial benefits of these awards may include tuition, travel to and from the host country, living stipend, health insurance, dependent benefits, language instruction, and other benefits depending on the host country. Besides the financial benefits, a Fulbright can afford you an opportunity to pursue your research and/or study interests, develop intercultural competence (a skill that is becoming more and more important in every profession and field of study), and serve as a cultural ambassador of the United States and Western Illinois University.

While students from many highly-ranked colleges and universities such as Ivy League and flagship research institutions compete for these awards, WIU Centennial Honors College students can be serious contenders. First, many of you have undergraduate research experience from participating in Undergraduate Research Day and other research initiatives. This can help your application if the project you develop includes doing research. Second, the requirements for entering and remaining in the Honors College mean that you have demonstrated academic excellence in your undergraduate career, which is something that is highly valued in these applications. Third, you may have won other awards or scholarships, again a plus on the application. Fourth, you may have considerable leadership experience in academic or student organizations, church groups, or volunteer organizations. And finally, geographic and institutional diversity are factors considered in these applications, so being from WIU is an advantage there.

The application process for a Fulbright is more involved and takes more time than many students realize. The requirements are deceptively simple: biographical information, transcripts, language evaluation if applicable, recommendation letters, and two short essays. However, these materials need to be carefully crafted and can (and usually should) take months to complete! The project description must be far more developed than the two pages permit, so rewriting, revising, and condensing your proposal are very important in this process. The recommendation letters have to be glowing and very specific to your project and grant, not just, "______ will be an asset to any organization." For research and/or study grants, you also must secure an affiliation with a host institution or organization in your host country, and this can take some time as well, due to time zones, different academic calendars, and other factors. The competition opens May 1, 2013, and the on-campus deadline is mid-September, so WIU students should start work on the application during Spring semester and continue throughout the summer. Then the funding is awarded the following August or September, so this would be 2014. If you are currently a junior, now is the time to start thinking about a Fulbright. Seniors, you may still apply as alumni or grad students if you graduate before the mid-September deadline.

I would like to see at least five WIU students apply for Fulbright grants in 2013. If this sounds like a challenge you would like to take on, please come to our next Fulbright Info Meeting:

Fulbright Info Meeting
Centennial Honors College, Malpass Library
Wednesday, February 13
3:30 p.m.
For additional information, email EJ-Gorlewski@wiu.edu, call 309-298-2504, or visit the Center for International Studies in Memorial Hall 344.