

# HONORS COLLEGE

Oakland University

## ECHO COGNITIO

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1 FALL 2011

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Winter Break	February 19-26
HC Assembly	March 28 (4:30 pm)
Research & Scholarship Day	April 10 (10:00-4:00)
Classes End	April 17
Final Exams	April 19-25
HC Graduate Reception	April 21 (MBH)
Commencement	April 28

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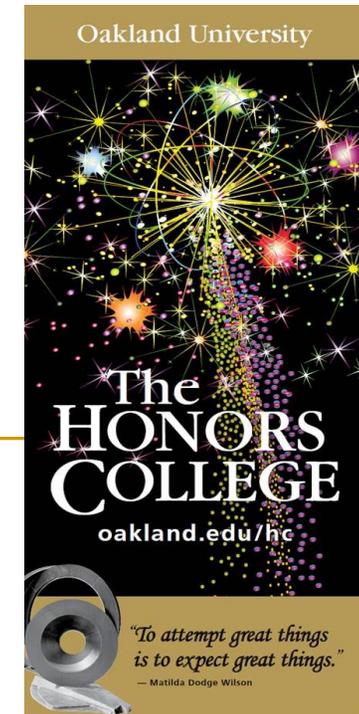
### DIRECTOR'S ADDRESS

Seven short months ago, when I came for interview here at Oakland, Provost Moudgil declared that The Honors College was the "jewel in the crown" of Oakland University. I suspected this was no small statement. President Russi commented that The Honors College was something on which the university could build. He also mentioned he was a pretty competitive mountain bike enthusiast. I sensed there was a direct link between these two things!

So, here we stand. Hi! I'm the new Director of The Honors College. I arrive from Wales, UK, where I was Deputy Head/Dean and Director of Research, with other previous academic roles in Texas, Alabama, Georgia, England and Australia. I grew up in Australia. My doctorates are from the University of East Anglia (UK) and the University of Technology, Sydney. I feel I am now home, wonderfully welcomed these past months by Dawn and Karen here in The Honors College, and by Oakland University faculty, students and staff.

Make no mistake, where we stand at the moment is right at the brink of possibility. The past Directors and Interim Directors, the staff and the students, have delivered The Honors College to this point in very good shape. It's full of evidence of student excellence. Consider, for example, two of the winners of this year's Keeper of the Dream Award are Honors College students. Look around the university student societies and activities – the leaders will inevitably be students of The Honors College. The record of achievement in The Honors College is nothing short of remarkable.

Courses in The Honors College are already lively, already inventive. I could point to anything in the current curriculum – as an example, you can imagine Karen Sheridan's current theater course "The Greeks – Live!" (Live and lively, it is!) or the forthcoming course "Free Expression & the First Amendment", from Sue Evans and Holly Gilbert, or Holly Greiner-Hallman's "Ecology of



Urban Landscapes". Yes, there sure is stuff. And these past five months, we've been doing other things too: a video link to Korea, working between students here and there, and one to Oxford University, to talk to the Head of Humanities there. Visits by experts on Arthur Miller, Comparative Evolutionary Psychology; and soon: the history of TB care in Detroit in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, NASA discoveries and more. And there's been the usual Research and Scholarship days, fabulous support from OU faculty for the HC100 colloquium course, a brilliant Halloween party.

But, you know, here's the thing: if something is this good it simply can't stay this hidden from the world. We need to tell more people about The Honors College at

### ATTENTION ALUMNI AND FRIENDS of THE HC

Check out our new **FACEBOOK** and **LINKEDIN** pages



Honors College Alumni & Friends-Oakland University



Honors College

Questions or comments, please email us at [hc@oakland.edu](mailto:hc@oakland.edu) or call 248-370-4450

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#)

## DIRECTOR'S ADDRESS (Cont.)

Oakland, and we need to map out a future that builds on its clear and spectacular strengths. So this is what we're going to do.

We're going to build The Honors College, from this current ground-base, to make it one of the Top Ten Honors Colleges in the United States. Top Ten: it's no easy task, but we have the strength to do it. We'll need alumni, faculty and student help to do this – it's a team effort. Already we've created new HC publicity materials, and we'll release those this month (February 2012). We've met with every one of the Deans at Oakland, with Provost and with others. The support is wonderfully there for this jewel, and there's a mountain-biking competitiveness about it too! The success of The Honors College will contribute to the success of Oakland University over all. What supports the HC supports every student and every OU College.

We're launching a \$10 million campaign to aim to contribute to a new home – a new world-class knowledge habitat, which we plan will not only contain cutting edge teaching,

collaboration and faculty-student exchange spaces, a 'Global Imaginarium', a video linked "Window to the World", and 24/7 innovation space, but also fabulous new student accommodation. We want to raise \$10 million to contribute to this development.

It's still early days, but if we can contribute to such a development we will indeed place The Honors College at Oakland University in the position of competing to be one of the Top Ten Honors Colleges in the USA. That's the aim. You will be pleased to hear that this aim has got off to a very good start. In December 2011 we received word that the first of the new Honorary Esteemed Fellows of The Honors College had accepted her Honorary Esteemed Fellow role.

The inaugural Honorary Esteemed Fellow of The Honors College is Jody Williams, the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (1997) and one of the driving forces behind the Nobel Women's Initiative. You can read about Jody's Nobel laureate activities almost anywhere on the web.

Nobel Prize winner Jody

Williams is not only a fabulous role model for our students, but wonderfully genuine and down to earth. Jody's appointment was followed in January 2012 by the support of a second Honorary Esteemed Fellow: Sir Andrew Motion, the former Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom (1999-2009). Professor Motion, who was knighted for his services to literature, has worked with children and students across all levels of education to support creativity and creative ambition. He too is a wonderful role model.

We're not stopping there. As we move into 2012 we seek to build on success and to create here at Oakland our Top Ten Honors College. This is the least we can do, given the strengths of the past and the potential for the future, and we look forward to welcoming your involvement, to collaborating with our Oakland colleagues, and to achieving everything we believe we can achieve.

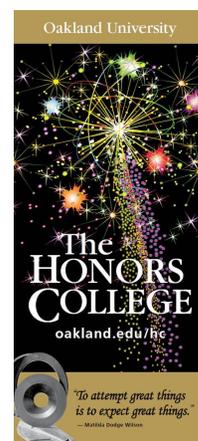
Graeme Harper  
Director

## WHAT'S NEW IN THE HC?

Did you notice our new logo on the front page?

We are keeping the "Echo" but expanding our focus as we aim to "shoot for the stars" and "attempt great things."

- When you next come to campus, look for 4 of these new banners on the light poles surrounding the HC.
- Keep an eye our website, it will be undergoing an update and transformation in the next few months
- Come into our office and peruse our new student/faculty showcase where we will be highlighting student and awards and achievements
- Stop by and pick up some of our new "Join the Top 10" HC pencils



# STUDY ABROAD

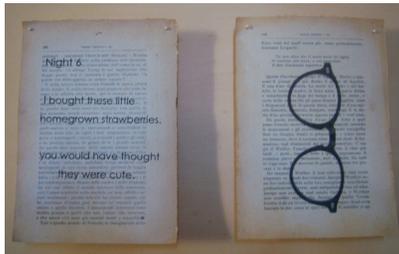
## MACERTO, ITALY

BY: Fara DiNoto

Summer 2011, I studied studio art abroad in Macerata, Italy. Living in Italy opened my eyes to how other parts of the world work. I experienced another country not as a tourist, but as a resident. During our program we attended the Biennale, an international art exhibition, in Venice. The 2011 winner was a film by



At the Harvest Festival



Art piece  
"Critical Essays Revisited"

Christian Marclay entitled *The Clock*. It is a 24-hour montage consisting of film and television clips in which time is depicted and is edited in a way where the film acts as a functioning timepiece, where the time shown in the film matches the time in reality.



Sicilian Castle

In Macerata I spent a lot of time in the studio. The combination of guidance and freedom led me to create one of my best art pieces, which is currently on display in the PSU gallery in Portland, Oregon.

After the culmination of my program I went to Rome and then to Sicily. Sicily had the best food. This was one of the best experiences of my life and I highly recommend that everyone studies abroad.



Best pistachio cookie ever!

## SUMMER STUDY ABROAD: SEGOVIA, SPAIN

BY Gurbaksh Shergil

When I first arrived in Segovia, my only thought was: "I have been waiting so long for this day!" To say that doing a study abroad was an amazing experience is an understatement. It was an experience of a lifetime. Nothing could ever replace the education I received and



Gurbaksh (middle) and friends. Rachel Butler (second from left)



Park in Spain

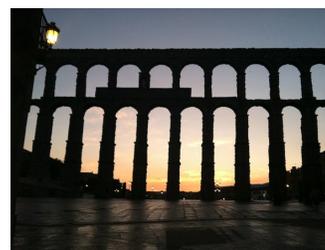
the friendships I made on my trip. Not only was I able to finally practice my Spanish with native speakers, but I was also able to immerse myself in the culture and I learned body language, different colloquial terms, and meanings of words in the cultural contexts. I was so excited that

Segovia offered the home stay option because I knew it that living with a family of native Spanish speakers would present a new challenge every day. This challenge allowed me to perfect my Spanish speaking, understanding, writing and reading skills.

Not only did Spain allow me to improve my Spanish, I learned so much about the history and went on excursions virtually every



Alcazar Castle



Aqueduct, Segovia

weekend. We went to see castles, cathedrals, mountains and many more exciting sites and we learned the history, and sometimes were told myths and stories, behind all of them. I hope to return soon and visit my Spanish family and continue to practice and use Spanish!

# HONORS COLLEGE CLASSES

## “A BIG THANK YOU”

to our Fall 2011 faculty  
and their departments.

**Chris Apap:** *Saints, Sinners, Sorceresses & Slaves: Imaging the 17th Century in a Time of Crisis*

**Claude Baillargeon:** *Nuclear Representations: from the Trinity Test to the Chernobyl Meltdown*

**Geoff Brieger:** *War and Peace*

**Alan Epstein:** *The Chinese Century: Contours of China's Emerging Global Influence*

**Larry Lilliston:** *Psychology of Religion*

**Linda McCloskey:** *The Writer in Nature: To Wander and Wonder*

**Pamela Mitzelfeld:** *Introduction to the Thesis*

**Doris Plantus:** *The Photographic Text: Reading & Writing the Photographic Image*

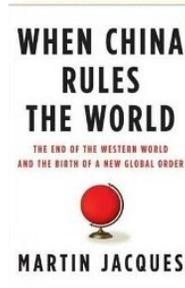
**Linda Schweitzer:** *Sustainability Science*

**Terry Towner:** *Politics and the Internet*

**Steve Wright:** *Fermat's Last Theorem*

## HC 205- THE CHINESE CENTURY

By Professor Alan Epstein



Regarded as epochal, China's explosive economic development since 1979 is also hailed as paralleling Western modernization. Students in HC 205, "The Chinese Century," intellectually sketched emerging nodes of a distinctive Chinese modernity and its potential global implications.

Students first groped for the future by selectively scanning China's dynastic and early modern past, prospecting for defining features. A working model of China was assembled whose components enabled comparisons with prevailing Western forms. It also afforded avenues for imagining how an ascendant China might pressure for acceptance of its core institutions, practices and values; sparking resistance in the process.

By scrutinizing seminal attributes like family-centricism, civilizational-

state, unity imperative, regard for difference, and tributary patterns of international relations, students located the novelty of Chinese modernity and the challenges and opportunities it presents for the rest of the world.

HC 205 students traversed uncharted terrain with laudable enthusiasm and daring. They became practiced at wrestling with the meaning of China's celebrated rise. Consult them. Each has developed views worthy of consideration.

## HC 201- THE PHOTOGRAPHIC TEXT

By Professor Doris Plantus

I enjoy every class I teach, to be sure. But I was delighted to be surrounded by a group of bright and mature students, whose eagerness for something new was apparent, even as they weren't totally convinced we could pull this off. After all, I was assuring them that they will be composing a story that they will tell in a 3-5 shot photo sequence. The challenge was learning first to read a text in a photograph, and we did this by studying and analyzing many different photos. We also consulted some theoretical approaches to pictures that narrate a story by virtue of the subject, lighting, camera angle, tone, and the most critical element: context. Not only did my students reveal creativity, insight, and talent, they discovered that photographs are more than capturing a moment in time. If it

is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, it is equally true that a word is worth a thousand pictures.

### Piano and Necklace

By Heather Delly  
(HC 201 student)



“When one considers the elements that make up humanity, the few key variables involved are love and commitment. With these fundamentals, it is best to understand how they are interlinked. How does one benefit the other? How do they coexist to produce a formula suitable for sustaining productive lifestyles? And finally, what is the secret between them? Within this series of shots, these questions will become closer to finding their answers.”

## MICHIGAN HONORS CONFERENCE

By: Emily Tissot

When Dawn asked me if I was willing to go on a retreat with a group of OU Honors College kids, I was beyond skeptical. I didn't know these people and I had very little interest in making new friends. Little did I know that the weekend that we were about to experience together would be unforgettable and I will carry it with me for forever.



Dawn and Emily

We left early in the morning to head to



Hassan Imran preparing the campfire

Roscommon Michigan. Don't actually ask me where we went or how far we had to travel. All I know is that as the resident Senior in the car I claimed the front seat and Dawn and I giggled and laughed as she drove for the next four hours. I can honestly say that the time I spent traveling with the other four people in our car, was one of the best parts of the weekend.

We arrived at The Ralph A. MacMullen Center at Higgins Lake, a beautiful arrangement of cabins tucked into a forest that seemed to shut out all outside influences. My Verizon

phone had little to no service, which I had no qualms with, and the idea of homework seemed obsolete. The organizers' encouragement for the weekend was to rest and be restful and I made that my personal goal. Throughout the weekend we attended seminars about learning stress management and also met other honors students from different universities.

Between the late night hike, intriguing conversation with students and faculty and great times of self reflection (which I spent in my bed napping) the weekend was a great success. We all left invigorated and enthused to return to Oakland and share the knowledge we had gained. Again, it was an unforgettable event.



Students: Marissa Matthews, Melissa Willman, Melina Lescoe, Dawn Deitsch (Administrative Secretary), Lindsey Hampton, Jonathan Huynh, Hassan Imran and Emily Tissot

## MEDICAL BRIGADES

By: Laura Collier  
President and Founder of Medical Brigades

This past December, thirty-four Oakland University students, including myself, traveled to Honduras. The trip was launched by a student organization called Medical Brigades. Medical Brigades is a subchapter of Global Brigades, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Global Brigades is the world's largest student-led sustainable development and global health organization.



Laura with a local orphan, Angelica

For the duration of a week, we stayed in rural Honduras; we provided free medical and dental care with the company of two Honduran physicians and two Honduran dentists in the community of Hoya Grande, a community located on top of a mountain. Along with medical care, we provided preventive health seminars to adults and children. Our mobile medical and dental unit provided free healthcare to 600 patients, including 56

gynecology exams. During our last day, we helped build a water system for the community of El Canton. We assisted with digging trenches for PVC pipes, as well as, gluing pipes together; this process helped bring running water to various houses in the community.

It was an incredible, life-changing experience! We were so inspired after the trip; we decided to launch more Global Brigades' chapters, including Architecture Brigades and Public Health Brigades. We've already started planning next year's trip.



# HC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (HCSA)

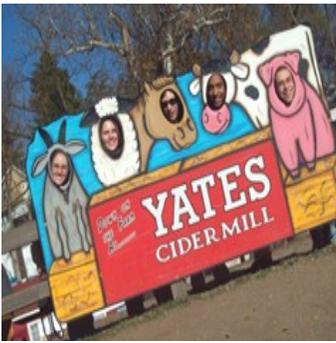
The Honors College Student Association has had many fun activities this past semester. We started the semester off at the New Student Convocation where we made a poster and



Michael Lohrer, Ryan Gentry, Ashely Cerku, Victoria Alcorn, Dave Fogel, D.J. Bond

brochures to pass out to incoming freshmen. Then we organized a dinner after the HC Assembly in September, in which we had

subs and chips for everyone who attended. We also spent a day during the semester at Yates Cider Mill where we walked along the Clinton River and of course had some cider and donuts!



In October, the HCSA hosted our annual Halloween Party in the Honors College. We had a hot

dog machine, a popcorn maker, cider, candy, contests and pumpkin carving. We also played some games as a group, including the carpet race, the mummy wrap and bobbing for apples.

Finally in November we had our annual pie sale where we sold whole pies, slices of pies and baked goods. HCSA has currently started planning upcoming events for the winter semester, as well as order T-shirts for our members. If you would like to become a volunteer at any of our future events or sales, please see Dawn in the Honors College! Thank you and see you in the winter semester!



Michael Lohrer, Shaina Kalasho and Fara DiNoto



Stephen Powell, Brice Gasche and audience



Unknown Apple Bobber

## Creative Writing Seminar

By Morgan Laidlaw



When Dr. Graeme Harper asked us if we were interested in a creative writing symposium with his colleagues and students all across the globe, we expected we would talk about our personal writing and creative processes, and our experiences with creative writing. When we arrived, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed at 5 A.M-- even before Dawn and Karen-- we chatted about school and our ever imposing Thesis projects before gathering in Dr. Harper's office around his laptop. When Dr. Harper started asking us discussion questions about our experience in the creative writing *classroom* we were mildly nonplussed. What

followed was a conversation about creative writing in terms of the academic, digital/media, and foreign language spheres. Though not what we expected, the conversation we had with the various groups was incredibly productive and enlightening, and I came away with notes on looking at writing from a new perspective and ideas for new creative pieces.



[\\*\\*To make a donation to future of The Honors College click here](#)

## THANK YOU.. to our Alumni Volunteers !



Jessica Bommarito



Aaron Burns



Hebert Cabral



Sheila Brooks



Sue Evans



Julie Granthen



Peter Halabu



Steven Parker



Chris Rohlman



Lauren Sanchez-Murphy



Lauren Schoenstein



Mary Wermuth

## Bloomfield Hills librarian wins over tony town

By Laura Berman

The Detroit News 12/29/11

This is a story about a mild-mannered librarian who fought a battle for the common good — and mobilized one of the state's wealthiest communities to listen first to its heart, then to its wallet.

It is a story about the art of citizenship, something **Larry Neal**, 46, practiced and perfected over three years of organizing, studying, collecting data, reaching out to the community, and overcoming his own shyness and humility.

He persisted — as heroes are supposed to do — because he believed in a basic American idea that everyone should have access to a public library, including the affluent residents of Bloomfield Hills, where he lives.

.....Neal's local, passionate, organized campaign on behalf of a public good has been recognized formally and informally. Democracy? "It works," he says.

[Click here to read the entire article.](#)

## “UPDATES” FROM OUR GRADS



**Jason Graves ('08)** was accepted, this spring, as a postulant into the Cappucian ministry. He is currently studying and working in Milwaukee, WI.

**Aaron Burns ('09)** and **Lauren Sanchez-Murphy ('07)** are the newest members of the Honors College Alumni Advisory Council.

**Aaron** graduated in May with his MBA from OU. He is currently working full time on his second full length film, *Beyond the Mask*.



**Lauren** received her JD from Loyola University. Currently, she is the Assistant General Counsel and Compliance Manager at CrossFire Group, LLC. She specializes in business law, contracts and human resources.

**Dan Doyen ('07)** . was awarded a full ride scholarship from the Japanese government and is currently working on his MA at Nagoya University.



“Calling all HC Alums”...send us your updates...for our next newsletter

[Click on conn@oakland.edu](mailto:conn@oakland.edu)

# HC "IN THE NEWS"

## Students Win Keeper of the Dream Scholarships

By Sarah Hunton January 2012

The KOD award is granted each year to students "who have contributed to interracial understanding and good will," according to the Center for Multicultural Initiatives. This year's recipients were international relations major **Benjamin Eveslage**, biology major **Subha Hanif** and graduate counseling student Tara Michener.



**BEN EVESLAGE**  
OUSC President Ben Eveslage promotes understanding across the globe.



**SUBHA HANIF**  
Subha believes it is meaningless for you to pursue anything other than your passion. This belief has fueled Hanif to get where she is today.

## Student Harbors Ambition for Internationalism

By Alana Hartley Oct. 2011

Junior Steve Wynn is making a difference, both at home at Oakland University and abroad in Germany.



Wynne, an English secondary education and German K-12 education double major, works in Career Services as a peer mentor. One of his duties is to advertise the assistance offered by Career Services through blogs and an information table in the Oakland Center.

"Steve makes a good peer mentor because he has a lot of enthusiasm for learning and sharing what he learns with others," Kathy Livelsberger, the assistant director of Career Services, said. [To read the rest of the article..](#)

## Model U.N. Claims 2nd Place

By Kay Nguyen Nov. 2011

Oakland University's Model United Nations team of 15 students took home a second-place finish and six individual awards at the Lake Erie International Model United Nations College Conference.



Michelle Lopez

In its fourth year of existence, the team has finished in the top two for the past three years at the conference.

Rose Luttenberger, **Alex Green**, Darias Thompson, Mike Gazdik, **Michelle Lopez** and **Samantha Hyrns** each garnered either individual awards or gavels, which are honorable mention awards given to top delegates at a conference. [To find out more...](#)

## Student Builds Connections

By Jordan Gonzalez Nov. 2011

Student organizations can enhance the college experience. Whether they are religion or academic based, they give students a chance to be with individuals who have similar interests.



Rachel Deratany (far right)

Rachel Deratany didn't have that organization when she came to OU. She made new friends and did well academically, but she didn't have an organization where she could connect with like-minded students. "As a freshman at OU, not having a religious organization was difficult," Deratany said.

She didn't give up, however. For Deratany, there was only one option: start an Orthodox organization at OU. [To learn more...](#)

## Oakland Students Forge Global Connections

Dec. 8, 2011

Honors College students at Oakland University were awake extra early recently, working live across the world with students and faculty in Seoul, Korea, and Adelaide, Australia.



Beginning at 6 a.m. at Oakland, the virtual workshop event was lead by Dr. Graeme Harper, director of the Honors College. Through this connection, OU students were able to explore writing, researching and learning in a global environment, while forging new connections with students and faculty at the Sogang University in Korea and Flinders University in Australia.

"Video link technology can spectacularly bring the world together," Dr. Harper said. "But just as importantly, we can conduct real-time global research. [To read the rest of the article...](#)