Honors students create cross-institutional relationships, support systems for younger students through mentorship

BY JULIA VORSTEVELD

Honors students are involved in variety of pre-college mentor programs and many students find their experiences have a common thread: acting as a support system for younger students and preparing older students for life after high school.

Jessica Taghvaiee ('19) and her sister Tiffany Taghvaiee ('21) founded the peer-to-peer mentorship program The Generation Project at their alma mater, Taylorsville High School.

The program trains high schoolers to mentor students about to enter middle school and to help them think about their futures.

“I think a lot of people succeed but forget where they come from,” said Jessica Taghvaiee, a political science and Spanish-Latin American studies double major. “I think it’s really important to remember where you come from and give back to that community.”

The Generation Project provides just one opportunity for Honors students to improve college access and promote academic excellence. College students involved in the Dumke Center for Civic Engagement’s Walkways to Westminster program mentor students in grades 6-12 at a variety of South Salt Lake schools.

“In school, they don’t talk about college,” said Sanskriti Timeena ('21), a Walkways mentor at Utah International Charter School. “We create that environment where we can talk about school. Our main goal is to get most kids into college.”

Dodge Hovermale ('22), another student involved in Walkways who mentors at Cottonwood High School, said “having people around that show [high schoolers] they can do the same things is really important, as

continued on page 11
Honors alum advocates for students, encourages action through poetry

BY PEDRO RICO

Willy Palomo, 2015 Honors College alum and Coordinator for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion at Southern Utah University, promotes inclusion through slam poetry by demanding space to be heard.

Palomo said he is working on multiple literary projects and is especially grateful to be a part of the website “La Piscucha Magazine.”

The publication features literary works from El Salvador and writers who have emerged from the diaspora, which happened from the 1970s to 1990s because of the country’s civil war. Palomo’s family fled to the United States as refugees of the Salvadoran Civil War during the ’80s, he said.

“I want these poems to move you to act in some way,” Palomo said. “I think the only ethical ways you can engage with the stories from the Salvadoran diaspora is acknowledging that we need to mobilize, such as protecting undocumented immigrants, changing policy to be more humane, and giving asylum seekers a chance.”

He said he intends to make Salvadoran literary works accessible in both Spanish and English, and the website is expected to launch in late March.

Palomo said he uses poetry to contextualize the experiences of the women in his family. Specifically, he chronicles the life of his mother, Maria Elba Palomo, in his new biomythography titled *Wake the Others*, which will be published in March 2020.

“The book is very anatomical […] you’ll find poems gravitating around different body parts that access memories that encapsulate the suffering my mother endured throughout the war,” Palomo said. “I hope that in creating this book, immigrant families will find healing in seeing themselves reflected in my mother’s stories.”

He said his mother is also a crucial figure in his life when it came to understanding his Latinidad (Latin-American identity).

At Westminster College, Palomo said his Latinidad helped him find connections that supported his education.

“I most likely would not have made it to grad school the year I did if I had not had Eileen Chanza Torres,” Palomo said. “Eileen mentored me [and] validated my work, which for me was huge.”

Chanza Torres said Palomo is “a beautiful poet and one of our superstars,” and said she is excited that he will be teaching a May Term class on slam poetry.

Palomo said his general advice to help students to engage in their work is to connect with peers who share their stories.

“If you’re [LatinX], join a LatinX club or even check out the Diversity and Inclusion Center and become familiar with the resources,” Palomo said. “The ones that thrive the most are the folks using higher education to give back to their communities.”
Faculty, students discuss their experiences with diversity conversations in the classroom

BY ERIC MELLMER

Challenging dominant views and elevating the voices of underrepresented groups are some of the key goals of the Honors College, according to Dean Richard Badenhausen.

Honors classes work towards these goals by training students how to productively engage in conversations across difference as well as exposing students to diverse reading lists. Some students and professors said Honors would also benefit from more representation of people of color.

“I feel like our Honors classes are laboratories for democracy, where we say, how are we doing, let’s evaluate ourselves. ‘Does our conversation feel equitable, does it feel participatory, does it feel ‘top-down?’” said Julie Stewart, assistant director of teaching, learning, and assessment for the Honors College. “Ideally, we want it to be ‘bottom-up.’”

Badenhausen said he continually trains students how to have productive conversations to ensure the educational environment is supportive.

“If you’re not trained in difficult conversations, [...] the voices from dominant populations will dominate,” Badenhausen said. “In our training [of students], one of the things we’re trying to do is listen and build off other people’s points of views. And that training is meant to clear space for different perspectives and voices.”

Honors student Naomi Shapiro (’19) said she appreciates how Honors fosters a civil learning environment.

“Honors seminars offer a place where people can make mistakes and they can be corrected respectfully,” Shapiro said.

Associate Professor of Public Health Han Kim said Honors’ emphasis on both critical perspectives and in-class discussion encourages students to focus on issues and not resort to personal attacks.

“I think everything about the actual pedagogy [...] based on complex readings that have multiple interpretations [...] prepares students to have a much more nuanced discussion about [diversity],” said Kim, who co-teaches the Science, Power, and Diversity Honors seminar.

Some students said they also want to see underrepresented voices within the classroom elevated.

Anisa Dahir (’21) and Asma Dahir (’21), twin sisters who joined Honors through lateral entry, said, although the reading lists are diverse, Honors would benefit from minorities leading conversations about their experiences.

“[When we discussed] African American history, [we as people of color] weren’t given the platform to openly share our thoughts and experiences in the class as much as our white counterparts have,” Anisa Dahir said.

Anisa Dahir suggested elevating and supporting the voices of students with personal experiences in Honors. This is especially important since it can be challenging to express these perspectives when those in the dominant group try to speak for minorities, said Asma Dahir.

“[It’s] very difficult to articulate something and make [white people] understand the severity of it, when they don’t understand what it means to be a black woman or a Muslim woman or a refugee woman,” Asma Dahir said.

Having a diversity council led by people of color is another way to increase representation in Honors, Asma and Anisa Dahir said.

Kim said while some students may feel uncomfortable in these difficult conversations, these topics need to be discussed.

“We’re gonna have to go into areas where you’re going to be uncomfortable discussing this,” Kim said. “[However,] these issues have to be out in the forefront if we’re ever going to address them and solve them.” HM.
Participation in different campus opportunities allows Honors students to find, foster community

BY SABI LOWDER

Charlotte Mulliniks’ (’21) life is hectic. As a transfer student to Westminster College and single mom with three kids, her time and energy are spent juggling many responsibilities.

She said despite being a non-traditional student with a busy schedule, she has had the opportunity to make connections with both professors and other students through her involvement in the Honors College, Legacy STEPS (a program through the Student Diversity and Inclusion Center focused on college access for transfer students), and the McNair Scholars Program.

Her communities’ support and understanding has helped her feel at home on campus, she said.

“I’m a little older and I have a family and stuff,” Mulliniks said. “My situation isn’t always the same as everyone else I’m going to school with, and so sometimes it’s a little harder to fit in because of that. Being in an [Honors] class of transfer students and in [a Legacy cohort of] people who have kids and are non-traditional, it just helps, I think, create more of that sense of community.”

Additionally, the overlap between her communities eased her transition to Westminster, she said. For example, Honors professor Lesa Ellis is Mulliniks’ major advisor, Legacy STEPS mentor, and research methods instructor for the McNair Program.

Mulliniks said working together in a variety of situations created a strong relationship between them.

Another Honors student involved in Legacy and McNair is Marley Dominguez (’21). She is also one of the political engagement coordinators at the Dumke Center for Civic Engagement, an Honors peer mentor, and a recipient of Westminster’s 2019 Unsung Hero award. She said the overlap of her communities has helped in pursuing her goals.

She came to Westminster as a Legacy scholar, a program she said has helped her feel comfortable on campus and when she started in Honors.

“It’s been really important for me to be involved in a lot of different things. It’s been amazing to see how they all can cross over and help in different ways.”

Marley Dominguez

She said the support she received from Honors and Legacy is what led her to applying for the McNair Scholars Program, and her coursework has helped solidify the writing and critical thinking skills that she uses in her research.

The crossover that Dominguez and Mulliniks said they have encountered is intentional, according to Julie Stewart, assistant director of teaching, learning, and assessment for the Honors College and director of Westminster’s customized major program.

Stewart said she often acts as a liaison between Honors and other organizations like Salt Lake Community College, local high schools, and Westminster’s Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

“We’ve had a lot of synergistic conversations with other stakeholders on campus,” Stewart said. “When it works, it is really a beautiful thing.”

Having a small campus form close relationships between these stakeholders, Stewart said.

Also, being around other students who participate in multiple programs helps to build community, even when everyone’s responsibilities are different, Mulliniks said.

“I think a lot of Honors students [...] are pretty ambitious and they have lots of stuff going on and they’re also busy,” Mulliniks said. “I think everybody kind of has that sense of what it’s like to try to juggle school and all of the extra stuff that you want to do and accomplish.”
Honors College administrators conducted a survey to understand student identities, perceptions, and experiences in the Honors College in spring 2018. This climate survey focused on student access, affordability, curricular diversity, community, co-curricular involvement, and civic engagement.

Julie Stewart, assistant director of teaching, learning, and assessment for the Honors College, spearheaded the climate survey around these themes.

“When you have a new cohort of people with different experiences, it forces us to reexamine the way we do things,” Stewart said.

She said the results of the survey offers “incredible opportunities to rethink how [Honors does] things.”

Based on the survey data, Dean of the Honors College Richard Badenhausen formulated a Diversity Strategic Plan with a variety of stakeholders, including members of the Honors Council, Dan Cairo, the director of the Student Diversity and Inclusion Center, and Marco Barker, former associate vice president for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The main goals of the plan are recruiting diverse incoming cohorts, institutionalizing partnerships with other campus organizations, and improving opportunities for students to engage in conversations about diversity.

“The challenge is to get everyone on board,” Stewart said. “I think we’re moving in the right direction. That intentionality is there.”

This push toward diversity emphasizes supporting students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students.

Badenhausen said the Honors College will accomplish its diversity goals by evaluating students more holistically during the admissions process, recruiting traditionally underrepresented college students, paying attention to the financial needs of current and future students, and diversifying Honors courses.
Holistic Admissions Process

By holistically evaluating students during the admissions process, Badenhausen said Honors intends to assemble a cohort of driven students with diverse backgrounds and experiences, particularly first-generation students and students of color.

As a result of the bias of standardized tests, the Honors College has deemphasized test scores during the admissions process and focused on a more holistic evaluation of a student’s readiness to succeed in the Honors learning model, Badenhausen said. Additionally, this year the Honors College has eliminated entirely a specific ACT score for students to apply for the Honors Academic Excellence Scholarship, whereas in previous years students had to have a 30 or higher on the test.

Both Badenhausen and Stewart mentioned that standardized testing is directly linked to socioeconomic status and parents’ previous education rather than intelligence or academic ability. For instance, the students who tend to score well on standardized tests are more likely to have access to prep courses and study materials, as well as have the ability to retake the tests.

Moving away from standardized test scores allows Honors to prioritize students’ backgrounds and experiences during the admission process.

Additionally, the Honors College added its lateral-entry program during the 2015-2016 academic year to diversify the Honors community. This program serves transfer students and those who didn’t enter Honors as a first-year student at Westminster.

Badenhausen said in fall 2018, Welcome to Thinking III, the introductory lateral-entry course, consisted of over 50 percent students of color, which is significantly higher than the campus average.

These changes were made in an effort to make the Honors College more accessible, especially to those who historically have not had access to higher education, Badenhausen said.

Making Honors Student Organizations Diversity Focused

Student organizations like Honorable Mention and Student Honors Council (SHC) are also responding to the Diversity Strategic Plan.

According to Calen Smith, the managing editor of Honorable Mention, the publication is making diversity and inclusion an active part of its platform. Even though the theme of Honorable Mention changes every semester, Smith said he believes “diversity should be ingrained in the structure and writings of the issues, regardless of the subject.”

SHC, the elected group of Honors students who represent their peers on an administrative level, is also working to create a more diverse and inclusive Honors community, said Smith. Current SHC members will work with the newly elected members to create a constitution with concrete goals that will meet the needs of the students and the Diversity Strategic Plan.

Honors Faculty Involved in Diversity-Based Programs on Campus

Honors College faculty members are working with other organizations on campus to solidify intra-institutional partnerships.

The Legacy Program helps to support underrepresented students in their transition to college. Last academic year, 35 percent of the entering Legacy scholars class were Honors students and currently a quarter of all Legacy students are in
Honors, which is double the representation of Honors students on campus. The Program Director Dan Cairo will continue to strengthen this relationship by teaching the Honors seminar Global Welfare and Justice next spring.

Historically, Honors students also make up a significant portion of McNair scholars. While 12 percent of Westminster undergraduates are in Honors, nearly 40 percent of McNair scholars are Honors students.

The McNair Scholars Program focuses on increasing the amount of students from underrepresented groups in graduate studies with a particularly focus on students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students. Another goal of the program is to diversifying the professoriate.

Like Cairo, Director of the McNair Program Jo Hinsdale also works with students inside and outside of the classroom. Hinsdale currently co-teaches the Science, Power, and Diversity honors seminar.

Additionally, a number of Honors faculty serve as McNair summer research advisors and professors in the McNair program. For example, Chris LeCluyse, professor of English, teaches the McNair Writing for Professional Research course, and Lesa Ellis, professor of neuroscience, teaches the McNair Research Methods course.

“I feel like students that are fully engaged and invested in their learning, look for as many opportunities to be invested in it,” LeCluyse said. “I think it’s not surprising that there is such an overlap between Honors and McNair. It speaks to the role of Honors to empower and include underrepresented students.”

While Honors faculty have been involved with McNair prior to the diversity strategic plan, this connection furthers the goal of institutionalizing partnerships with other campus organizations and offices.

**Honors Curriculum**

One of the goals of the Diversity Strategic plan is to make Honors courses more diverse. This includes offering classes that highlight different perspectives and including reading material from diverse authors.

The climate survey results highlighted the need for readings focused on themes like ability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Specifically, 82 percent of students surveyed said there was a significant gap in their readings around ability, 70 percent felt there was inadequate coverage of sexual orientation, and 43 percent felt there was an absence of readings on socioeconomic status, Julie Stewart said.

As a result of these findings, Stewart said that the Honors College is committed to thinking about diverse content as well as voices that represent those point of views. For example, it is not sufficient to just read about sexual orientation from the perspective of a heterosexual author—authors with other identities need to be included, too.

Stewart said the Honors College has changed significantly in the last decade and has created more classes, like alum Nicole Bedera’s Sociology of Sexual Violence course, which is cross-listed with Honors.

Additionally, there are significantly more women and a few more people of color at Westminster now than ten years ago, which allows Honors to diversify its faculty, Stewart said.

**Looking to the Future**

The climate survey pinpointed the needs of current students and the Diversity Strategic Plan generated action steps to meet those needs now and in the future.

The Diversity Strategic Plan aims to recruit diverse incoming cohorts, institutionalize partnerships with other campus organizations, and improve opportunities for students to engage in conversations about diversity in academic settings. This emphasis on diversity focuses on students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students.

To promote diversity and accomplish its goals, the Honors College will more holistically evaluate students during the admissions process, recruit traditionally underrepresented college students, pay attention to the financial needs of current and future students, and diversify Honors courses.

“We have the opportunity to come together and make hard decisions that will benefit generations to come,” Stewart said. “That means bringing more voices into the conversation.”

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**Percentage of Honors students in diversity-based programs**

- **Percent of Student Body**: 12% Non-Honors, 88% Honors
- **Percent of Westminster McNair Scholars**: 40% Non-Honors, 60% Honors
- **Percent of Legacy Scholars**: 25% Non-Honors, 75% Honors
Honors alum Nicole Bedera (’14) created the cross-listed Honors course Sociology of Sexual Violence based on her own research on campus sexual violence. Bedera began her research on the topic as an undergraduate in Honors and is currently an adjunct professor of sociology at Westminster.

“My first project was actually my Honors grant,” Bedera said. “I got the summer Honors grant in 2013 [and] I did a project about sexual assault prevention tips on college campuses.”

Sexual violence in particular removes women’s voices on campus, Bedera said. Making sure colleges address sexual violence, and violence in general, is important for empowering students in the classroom. This is especially relevant for individuals from marginalized groups, as they tend to experience more violence in their lives, Bedera said.

“Understanding the way that a traumatic past intersects with what happens in the classroom is huge to moving any diversity initiative forward,” Bedera said.

After graduating from Westminster, Bedera went to the University of Maryland for graduate school and is now completing her PhD at the University of Michigan.

During her time at the University of Maryland, Bedera said she had many conversations that would not have happened at Westminster because of the institutions’ different levels of diversity.

“When I moved to the University of Maryland, which is the most racially representative public university in the country, it was unbelievable how different it felt,” Bedera said. “The students’ perspectives were just hugely different; they’ve had different life experiences.”

Diversity in higher education is important, and there are different ways for institutions to increase it, Bedera said.

“The first is that we’re getting unique perspectives brought to the table,” Bedera said. “The other is to make sure that the practices we’re doing in our organizations and colleges are not presenting barriers to getting those voices at the table.”

Bedera said a goal for Westminster should be “recruiting and supporting students who are diverse in nature.”

In her own work, Bedera said she aims to elevate the voices of trauma survivors, who often don’t have a voice or feel supported on college campuses.

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Pedro Rico (’21), a sophomore custom educational policy major whose pronouns are they/them/theirs, said they were inspired to promote educational equity after their own negative experiences and what they saw happening on a national level.

Between graduating from high school and starting college, they worked on and sold their ceramic sculptures and acrylic paintings.

“College was always in the back of my head, but was always more of a dream,” Rico said.

Rico eventually faced an ultimatum between moving to Mexico with their partner or pursuing their education.

“I didn’t choose love because I was thinking more based on my economic instability,” Rico said. “It was very difficult. At that point, I was invested in going to school.”

They first earned their associate’s degree in political science from Salt Lake Community College. After joining the Westminster College community, Rico became a lateral entry Honors student and the Student Diversity and Inclusion Center’s Heritage Series coordinator.

Rico said they aim to create a more inclusive educational system that will address their own negative experiences and benefit others.

“I think that [the exclusivity of higher education] has horrific effects on communities,” Rico said. “Specifically communities that don’t have or didn’t have the privilege of having parents who went through college or this process of the commodification of education.”

Fostering inclusion, they said, provides more equal opportunity for individuals of all backgrounds to be heard and to have meaningful involvement within higher education. They said they hope to lead by example for others.

“If people can visibly see me, I think people can have the confidence to be more vocal and speak their truths.”

Despite challenges they’ve faced, Rico said they maintain a hopeful outlook for the future.

“There’s no way of reverting back the process,” Rico said. “But we can try and come up with solutions that aren’t so exploitive and dehumanizing.”
Higher education must lead the way to a socially just future: one that emphasizes diversity, equity, and inclusion, one that is inclusive towards historically oppressed populations that to this day are not given the opportunities that others have simply due to their identities. We’ve made strides by diversifying our student populations, our faculties, and our curriculums. We’ve created social, economic, and academic programs to support students from historically oppressed populations. But this isn’t enough. They are simply a veneer; all of these efforts are simply cosmetic changes on a deeply embedded structure and framework of racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, classism – the -isms that we are attempting to eradicate.

If we are going to get to the root causes of these -isms, we need to question the very foundations of the academy and be willing to confront the very paradigms we take for granted in higher education. We need to question how we measure student “success,” if traditional grading privileges certain populations over others, whether standardized exams and GPAs are a just method for admissions, whether our liberal arts curriculum truly is inclusive, or whether our discussion-based seminar model excludes students from oppressed populations.

This will be a monumental challenge, given the deeply seated traditions of Western higher education, and how we in academia often cling to them without truly understanding their purpose. However, this is what has to be done in order to lead the way to a socially just future. It will require innovation, courage, and deep introspection. Change must come at the foundations, otherwise, we are simply putting “lipstick on a pig.”

You look around the classroom and realize you’re the only person like you in the room. This is an experience that I and many other marginalized students can relate to when it comes to academia. As a first-generation, minority, and low-income student myself, I have often wondered where my place is within academia and whether this is a place I want to be.

When contemplating change within academia, we must recognize that many students like myself constantly battle with the imposter phenomenon because academia was not built for people like us. The word “academia” comes from the word “academy,” originating from the Greek word “akadēmeia.” Like the word, much of what we consider “academia” today stems from its Greek roots. The Greek philosopher Plato is often praised for establishing the first higher learning institution in the Western world, his school of philosophy, “The Academy.” Yet, what is rarely recognized is how Plato’s “Academy” was intended for the intellectual growth of young, white, wealthy, literate, and able-bodied men.

Although historically marginalized groups are currently creating a new generation of professors and scholars within academia, many of the structures which have traditionally restricted such access of diverse peoples or ideas are still in place. To truly make academia a diverse space, we must challenge its infrastructure, questioning what purpose promoting the “tradition” of grades, research, conferences, dissertations, or even who “professional” attire really serves.

To use a metaphor, even if more people are allowed to enter the “house of academia,” this doesn’t mean much has changed if the new residents can’t remodel it to fit their needs and make it feel more like “home.” I believe academia can have a bright future if we not only continue to welcome diverse people and ideas within academic spaces, but also allow those same people to reconstruct academia. HMK.

“...must challenge its infrastructure, questioning what purpose promoting the ‘tradition’ of grades, research, conferences, dissertations, or even who ‘professional’ attire really serves.”

In your opinion/experience, what are the challenges and opportunities around enacting change in academia?

Jessica Taghvaeiee

Student perspective

“...must challenge its infrastructure, questioning what purpose promoting the ‘tradition’ of grades, research, conferences, dissertations, or even who ‘professional’ attire really serves.”

Han Kim

Professor perspective

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Let’s Get Your Perspective

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Ben Rackham ('09) has been selected for a prestigious 51 Pegasus b Fellowship at MIT (one of six in the country), where he will continue his study of exoplanets now that he has completed his PhD in Astrophysics at the University of Arizona.

Ali Monjar ('10) was hired to manage the Idaho chapter of the Urban Land Institute.

John Cook ('10) was promoted to associate general counsel at Zayo Group, a global network solutions provider.

Camber Jones née Stoddard ('11) joined the law firm Spencer Fane in Springfield, Missouri last summer as an associate in the firm’s Financial Services practice group.

Cooper Henderson ('11) was featured as one of the five “Real Human” interview subjects in a marketing piece for Dartmouth College’s Tuck School of Business, where he is working on his MBA.

Tracy Hansford ('11) was honored by Governor Herbert last year with the Governor’s Award for Excellence for Leadership for her work with the Utah Division of Arts & Museums Change Leader professional development program.

Abby Speicher ('12) was named as one of Forbes Magazine’s 30 Under 30 in the enterprise technology category for her co-founding of DARTdrones.

Jillian Edmonds ('12) started this past fall as a Women’s and Reproductive Rights attorney with the ACLU of Illinois in Chicago.

Chris Cunningham ('15) is a legislative assistant in the Washington, D.C. office of Congressman Ben McAdams (D-UT).

Emma DeLoughery ('16) had her most recent essay, “Medical moulages of farm accidents,” published in Internal Medicine Journal, while continuing her medical school studies at the Mayo Clinic.

Hannah Williams ('16) was awarded a one-year marketing fellowship at the New York Community Trust while working on her master’s in nonprofit management at Columbia University.

Alli Carson ('17) started the PhD program in mathematics at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Ashleigh Albrechtsen ('17) is finishing up her second year in Annecy, France as an English language instructor with the Teaching Assistant Program in France.

Jeremy Dormitzer ('17) has started a job as a software engineer at Lola.com.

Jared Rich ('18) works online as a teacher for DaDa, a Chinese company based in Shanghai that offers English lessons to children in China, while also studying Chinese at Weber State University.

Olivia Wathne ('18) is finishing her first year of law school at the University of San Francisco.

Jessica Taghvaiee ('19) is serving as the SLC International Rescue Committee’s first advocacy intern. She presented her McNair summer research “UnDACAmented & Unafraid: How United We Dream Uses Twitter to Discuss #DACA” at the Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research. She will also present her paper “The Non-Citizen Nightmare: An Analysis of Racist U.S. Immigration Policies” at the 2019 Western Social Science Association Conference.

Sarah Turner ('19) presented the results of her honors summer research project at the American Association for Applied Linguistic (AAAL) annual conference in Atlanta with Education professor Annelise Cannon and faculty from other universities.

Carolyn Janecek ('19) received an honorable mention recognition in the 2019 Academy of American Poets Student Prize poetry competition and won F(r)iction magazine’s winter poetry contest. Carolyn will also be attending Colorado State University’s M.F.A. program in creative writing this fall.

Ambur Staab ('19) has been accepted to the University of Utah School of Medicine.

Annette Donald ('19) and Eric Mellmer ('19) are the assistant directors of Westminster’s Writing Center.

Cole Polychronis ('19) will begin the scientific computing PhD program at the University of Utah in the fall.

Max White ('20) won $500 for his business idea at Westminster’s latest Opportunity Quest.

Tage Gould ('19), Emma Thompson ('20), Ryeleigh McCready ('21), and Hannah Orr ('21) were involved in Westminster’s production of Lucas Hnath’s The Christians, directed by honors faculty member Michael Vought.

Kenzie Campbell ('20) was chosen as the Truman Scholar for the state of Idaho.

Maggie Regier ('20), Kenzie Campbell ('20), Kate Pasco ('20), Rebecca Blanton ('21), and Brendan Sudberry ('22) were elected to serve on the ASW Student Board as student body president, vice president, chief justice, speaker of the senate, and clubs president respectively for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Marley Dominguez ('21) was awarded the Westminster’s 2019 Unsung Hero Award and participated in the Global Ties Conferences in Washington, D.C. and the Public Policy and Leadership Conference at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Abbie Hagen ('22) recently finished working on Salt Lake Acting Company’s The Cake as assistant costume designer through the University Professional Theatre Program.

Char Crear ('22) was awarded Mx. Congeniality in the 2019 Mx. Westminster pageant.

Did you do something notable? We want to know! Email your news and notes to Richard Badenhausen at rbadenhausen@westminstercollege.edu.

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**HONORS WRITING AWARDS: WINNING ENTRIES**

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**Best Overall**

Stephanie Held

Is Phlogiston Science?
Honors Philanthropy Update

BY HONORS COLLEGE DEAN RICHARD BADENHAUSEN

The Honors College continues to benefit from the generosity of students, faculty, staff, alums, and friends who all believe strongly in the Honors mission and are passionate about supporting the $13 million Honors College campaign.

Westminster alum and former chair of the board of trustees Ginger Giovale made an extraordinary pledge of $2 million to the Honors campaign in support of the underlying operations. This incredible gift brings Ginger full circle in support of Honors, for she gave seed money in 1986 to help Michael Popich found the program.

We also kicked off the global learning endowment at a lunch on February 15, where former recipients of Adamson International Study Grants—Nicole Bedera (’14), Mary Lewis (’20), and Emma Thompson (’20)—spoke eloquently about the power of MTSE international experiences to their own development as learners. Current Westminster Board of Trustee and Vice-Chair Preston Chiaro co-hosted the event and generously started the endowment with a $25,000 gift of his own.

Finally, during Westminster’s annual Giving Day this past March, the Honors community really stepped up to the plate, winning two of the four giving windows by having the most number of donors of any of the five academic schools. At the end of the event, Honors College donors raised the most money and had more than 70% of the number of overall donors of the next closest school, Arts & Sciences. Thanks for your support and for helping establish such a strong culture of philanthropy in the Honors College!

Continued from page 1

The various steps of the college application process, such as the FAFSA and standardized tests, can be intimidating for students, especially if they are the first in their family to apply to college.

“We’re there to guide them through that process,” said Hovermale, a first-year English major.

Timseena said that many students she works with speak English as their second language, are first-generation college students, and come from low-income families. She emphasizes the importance of getting to know mentees personally.

“What I’ve learned about mentoring, about diversity, is that if you don’t understand something, or someone isn’t from the same culture, then I think sometimes it’s best to listen and give space for minorities to speak, as a way to understand,” said Timseena, a sophomore computer science and math double major.

Timseena said that “an open mind and a kind heart” are essential to listening and fostering a genuine relationship between mentors and mentees.

“Assumptions sometimes stop a relationship or a connection from growing,” Timseena said.

Additionally, when creating The Generation Project, the Taghvaeie sisters said they found a lot of underrepresented or marginalized students were not getting access to the same resources as their peers. Despite this unfortunate reality, Jessica Taghvaeie said she doesn’t let that reality stop her; instead, it motivates her.

“Being part of this program, you realize what a difference one person can make,” Jessica Taghvaeie said.
Note from the Editors

This is the first edition of *Honorable Mention* with the theme of diversity. This issue is part of a plan within Honors to elevate a wider range of voices and experiences. The Honors College has recently implemented the Diversity Strategic Plan and is challenging barriers to inclusion with the goal of further creating a welcoming environment. This issue seeks to support that goal. With the growing discussion of representation in Honors, we, as editors, hope to authentically represent the breadth of experiences within our community. *HML.*