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ARETÉ



THE SPIRIT OF ENGAGED EXCELLENCE – A PUBLICATION OF THE WKU HONORS COLLEGE

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Student Newsletter
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WKU

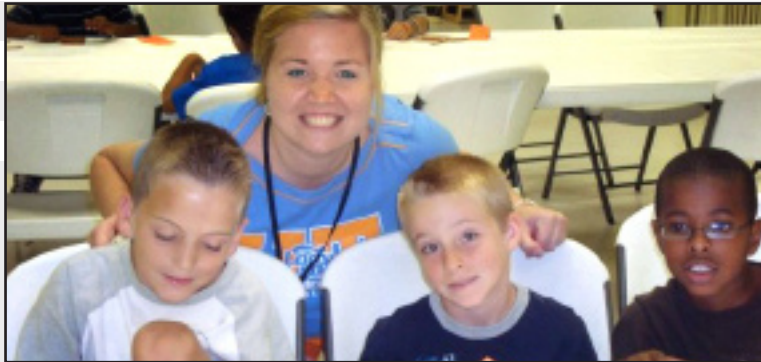
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Honors Media Writing Class Interviews World

CAMERON FRANEY

Areté staff writer

Engaged excellence: that is one of the mottos of WKU's Honors College. Being engaged means more than just learning from a textbook or listening to a professor; it means interacting with the world around you. One Honors class did just that at this year's Bowling Green International Festival.

The Honors Media Writing class, led by Professor Sarah Shipley Hiles, took the learning out of the class and into the field, interviewing people from around the globe right here in Circus Square in the heart of Bowling Green.

The 18 Honors students had been studying interviewing and writing news stories, and saw the perfect opportunity to test their skills on a rainy Saturday. The festival included international cuisine; the opportunity to meet and learn from a variety of people; and cultural demonstrations,

like karate expositions, dance numbers, and music "It was a pretty cool atmosphere," 19-year-old freshman Clay Graham said. "The stage performances were pretty interesting," Graham said the most interesting part of the festival



PHOTO BY SARA SHIPLEY HILES
Honors freshman Sam Oldenburg conducts an interview at the International Festival.

was interviewing all the participants and seeing why they do what they do.

"It was a good activity to get us out and reporting instead of sitting in the classroom," 19-year-old freshman Brie Logsdon said. She said the most beneficial thing she got out of the experience was strengthening her interviewing skills. Logsdon said it was difficult deciphering what was important, and what wasn't important and at times it was even difficult to find people willing to talk to her. Logsdon's favorite part of the festival, however, was the shopping.

The Honors Media Writing class ended up learning a lot from the experience while also enjoying the time they spent outside the classroom. The Honors College is about enhancing the student through real-life interactions, and this trip helped give the students a chance to learn more not only about the foreign cultures but also about the community of Bowling Green.

An Evening at the Opera: Honors Music Appreciation

MEGHAN KENNEDY

Areté staff writer

Let's do some mental math. College students + Fall Break + Saturday night = Opera? Shocking, I know, but that is exactly where Dr. Mary Wolinski's Honors Music Appreciation students spent their Saturday night. At the Nashville Opera's performance of Puccini's *Tosca*, with Erika Sunnegardh singing in the title role, Honors students got a real-world taste of what they've been studying these past six weeks.

Speaking through music of the 1800s (and in Italian), Puccini's tragedy taught Honors students that fear, betrayal, jealousy, and true love transcend time and language. The story centers around Floria *Tosca*, a famous singer, and her

lover, Mario Cavaradossi, as they hide a fugitive and deal with a corrupt police force, all set against the background of the Napoleonic Wars.

Complicated? Absolutely, but the Honors students were prepared. Armed with knowledge from six weeks of Honors Music Appreciation, Honors students fit right in with the seasoned opera crowd. From the regal *Tosca's* elegant theme to the police chief Scarpia's ominous one, students were able to experience the effect of musical motives to understand a storyline, which is one aspect of opera that the class has been studying. The members of the class have been studying medieval chant, a style that is briefly highlighted in *Tosca*.

Aside from being able to apply their

new music expertise, students were able actually experience an opera, many for the first time. Shouta Brown, a freshman in the Honors College, said of his *Tosca* experience, "It was better than I expected. Having an understanding of how operas work beforehand really made the experience better. I like that she [Dr. Mary Wolinski] explained exactly what was going to happen, so I wouldn't be overwhelmed getting in there." The experience could certainly have been overwhelming: sopranos, tenors, baritones, basses, an orchestra, and a lot of Italian. But thanks to the work of Dr. Wolinski, college students with a diversity of musical tastes were able to experience and appreciate a world-renowned opera.

Student Shares Transforming AmeriCorps Experience

COURTNEY ALDRICH

Areté guest writer

As the semester moves on, slamming us with group projects, assignments, and exams at every opportunity, so many students long to return to the beautiful days of summer. I myself am one of them. However, when I think back to this past summer, it is not the sunshine that I miss, or the flip-flops, or the long days spent pool-side. Instead, it is 102 little faces in Denison, Texas.

For the past two summers, I have served with Project Transformation, an AmeriCorps-sponsored non-profit organization based in Dallas. Project Transformation is a collaborative organization that offers eleven free eight-week summer day camps for children of low-income neighborhoods in North Texas. It hosts over 100 interns from all over the country in hands-on service to children who desperately need hope, as their families struggle to meet their own basic needs.

Project Transformation seeks to provide leadership development for college-aged students and revitalize the connection between urban and rural churches and their communities. Programs are housed in the urban and rural United Methodist churches and community centers and provide activities such as one-to-one reading, recreation, and arts and crafts.

In the summer of 2008, I served as one of the eight interns who planned and implemented summer day camp programming for the children in Denison, Texas, a rural community about an hour north of Dallas. This past summer, I returned to the same

community, serving as site coordinator. In this position, I managed eight interns, oversaw the program which served 102 children, completed daily administrative paperwork, coordinated food and volunteers, served as the liaison between the church congregation and the Project Transformation main office in Dallas. On top of that, I tried to be an intimidating disciplinarian, bandaged countless boo boos, and did my best to act like I knew what in the heck I was doing!



Courtney smiles with one of the students she worked with over the summer at a day camp for children in Denison, Texas.

There were milk spills, infamous games of stop light tag, and nail-biting lice checks. There were early mornings, late nights, and countless Route 44 Diet Cokes from Sonic in-between. However, amidst all of the beautiful chaos of my summer, I was being transformed. As I tried to teach the children how to properly make a paper plate Kentucky Derby hat, I was being taught even bigger lessons that cannot be learned from a textbook or inside a classroom. I learned that I have a passion for helping rural families, a passion that is redirecting my career plans right now. I learned that children

are amazing, living simply for the day in front of them. I learned the value of being part of an intimate community, surrounded by sincere encouragement and humble service to one another. Most importantly, I learned that in the end, it is all about building relationships.

College can be such a selfish time. We are constantly focusing inward on our homework, our organizations, our world. Through my experience with Project Transformation and AmeriCorps, I was able to see a different world for a little while. In this world, it was no longer about the individual. Instead, the focus was on our community—being part of it, making it better, and in turn, being made better.

Some may read this short little reflection and think “Wow, what a cool college experience to have” or “Wow, that sounds like fun. Something she will never forget.” While all of this is true, my summer in no way is a simple scrapbook experience for me. It is more than that. It is a snapshot of what I want my life to look like—building relationships, building communities, and being blessed because of it.

For more information about Project Transformation, check out the website, www.projecttransformation.org or contact Courtney Aldrich at Courtney.aldrich182@wku.edu.

Mix 'n' Mingle: A Dance in the West

ASHLEY NORMAN

Areté staff writer

On Friday Sept. 25, the Honors College hosted its annual Mix 'n' Mingle dance event. Originally scheduled to be held at Lost River Cave, the dance was saved from flooding at the last minute by Nicole Stratten and moved to Chaney's Dairy Barn.

Honors College freshmen through seniors, as well as students from Gatton Academy, covered the dance floor until the clock hit midnight. Students could be seen showing off their dance moves to a collection of country, hip hop, and top-40 tunes, chatting with each other, or enjoying a glass of punch and slice of cake. And, thanks to the change in location, each student was given a free scoop of Chaney's ice cream.

The theme this year was country western, and many attendees adorned cowboy hats. Other dress ranged from plaid flannel and jeans to cocktail dresses or a shirt and tie. A few rebellious students wore headdresses and announced themselves to be Indians in opposition to the majority dressed



PHOTO BY SAM HESTER

Students get their hoe down on at the Honors Club's annual Mix'n'Mingle hosted at Chaney's Dairy Barn.

like cowboys and cowgirls.

In all, the event went smoothly in its new location. Students mixed, mingled, and made new friends, all while grooving and enjoying the comfortable

scenery around Chaney's Dairy Barn. Many Honors College students enjoyed the dance and look forward to attending next year.

Minton Wages War through Marshmallow Assassins

RAMONA SUDBECK

Areté staff writer

For the past month, no one in Minton Hall has been safe. Marshmallows have been flying, but no one knows when or from where they'll be coming from. It has been every student for him- or herself between the epic Minton Marshmallow assassins.

The hypothetical game was introduced to the building by the third-floor R.A. Justin Hayes as a way to build community and simply make memories. Residents were given their "assignments" at midnight on Monday Sept. 14 as along with the key component to the game:

their marshmallow.

The idea is that once given an assignment, a photograph of another resident, students have to in some way touch that person with their marshmallow to gain a "kill" (except in "safe zones" such as stairwells and class buildings). Upon doing this, they are then handed the assignment of their previous target, continuing on until there is a single winner remaining.

And that supreme assassin came in the form of freshman dietetics major Hannah Yount. With ten kills, it was not an easy victory. Commenting on the mallow battles, Yount said the game really did change her lifestyle. "I'm still

paranoid. Whenever I walk in the hall I look around, and I always use the stairs."

And everyone else is just as relieved: the building of Minton is safe from assassins and marshmallows resume their intended place in the universe. Not in the palm of a nervous assassin, but between graham crackers and chocolate.

"I'm still paranoid. Whenever I walk in the hall I look around, and I always use the stairs."

-Hannah Yount

Minton Residents Take the Mic Karaoke Night creates fun community spirit

ASHTON SKATES

Areté staff writer

With cookies and drinks arranged and the karaoke machine hooked up, the only thing left to do was wait.

"This is going to be a total disaster," I said to Minton Hall Council President Cassie Ernstes.

"I know," she responded ominously.

Fortunately, we were wrong. On Monday, Sept. 28, Minton Hall Council hosted a karaoke night in the Minton lobby. The event turned out to be a great success thanks to the participation of many good-humored residents. Renditions of everything from Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun"

to Michael Jackson's "Bad" to ABBA's "Dancing Queen" were performed for a very forgiving audience.

Suzanne Spalding, Kentucky Junior Miss first place winner, performed "Cowboy's Sweetheart" and showed everyone the reason she won her title. Even Minton's staff joined in as RA Justin Hayes joined his floor in a crowd-pleasing round of "In the Jungle." *Areté* staff writers Ramona Sudbeck and Cameron Franey quickly called dibs on

performing the Aretha Franklin classic "Respect."

All in all, the event was a great way for Minton residents to let go of their inhibitions in a familiar setting. Hall Council President Cassie Ernstes said she was "pleasantly surprised at how many people participated." Be sure to stay updated on the activities going on in your residence halls so you don't miss out on a chance to bond with fellow students. You might even discover some hidden talents!

The event was a great way for Minton residents to let go of their inhibitions in a familiar setting.



PHOTO BY MEGAN HESSON

Honors freshmen Reed Gonzalez, Danny Zorici, and Jon Marques belt out a tune in Minton Hall's lobby.

True Dodgeballers

KATIE KNECHT

Areté Editor

In the words of Patches O'Houlihan, "If you're going to become true dodgeballers, then you've got to learn the five D's of dodgeball: dodge, duck, dip, dive, and dodge!"

While this fictional character from the popular movie *Dodgeball* may not be the perfect role model, Honors students are attempting to become true "dodgeballers" at WKU.

WKU's dodgeball team is a part of the National Collegiate Dodgeball Association and was ranked seventh in the nation last year. The team practices on Sunday nights and plays seven or eight games throughout the year, leading up to Dodgeball Nationals,

a tournament that took place in Grand Rapids, Mich. in 2009. WKU made it through to the second round in 2009 and hopes to surpass that accomplishment at Nationals next year at Bowling Green University in Ohio.

***"But it turned out to be pretty legit and I have a lot of fun doing it."
-Josh Wiseman***

Elizabethtown Honors sophomore Josh Wiseman played the recreational sport in elementary school P.E. classes, but never took it seriously. "I thought it would just be for fun," he said. "But it turned out to be pretty legit and I have a lot of fun doing it."

Honors College roommates Jake Ryle and Tyler Jury are also on the team.

Jury, an Elizabethtown sophomore, said he heard about the program during Master Plan of his freshman year. "They told me about the club and it sounded like a cool opportunity," he said. "Being an ex-



PHOTO BY BRIAN CAMPBELL
Felix Perrone shows his jumping skills during a dodgeball match in October.

baseball player, I thought I might have a heads-up on some other people."

Jury holds the position of Risk Management Officer on the team, while Wiseman serves as the Secretary.

The WKU dodgeball team brought home its first victory on Sunday, Oct. 18 in Preston Health and Fitness Center. The team played its state rival, the University of Kentucky. Among chants of "T-O-P-S, TOPS, TOPS, TOPS!" and "Let's go Western!" the group rallied to make its record 1-0.

Jury is glad to be able to participate in a college-level sport, even if it is not mainstream like basketball or football.

"It's not a huge commitment and it's a great opportunity to be involved in a sport."



PHOTO BY BRIAN CAMPBELL
Tyler Jury (center) prepares to make a throw during WKU's dodgeball game against UK held in Preston Fitness Center.

A New Face Behind the Camera

LIZ BEILMAN

Areté staff writer

He traveled to several countries in Africa for a total stay of 12 weeks to take photographs, living in nothing but a mud house with a tin roof, meeting many residents. He won Missouri High School Journalist of the Year, was published in *Shutterbug* photography magazine, and won countless other national and regional awards.

This is the already very accomplished life of Tyler Cacek.

He is only 18 years old. Cacek, a WKU freshman from Columbia, Mo., has been photographing since he was 14 years old. With his first camera, a standard point-and-shoot, Cacek mainly captured the beauties of nature.

However, his subjects and outlook on

life changed after his first trip to Africa during the summer of 2007, which was hosted by his high school.

Instead of snapping shots of nature, he took photographs of people.

"The heart of soul of the people over there is really inspiring," said Cacek, who traveled back to Africa for nine weeks during the summer of 2009.

Cacek, who was originally intrigued by the notion of going to Africa for the scenery, returned to Africa for the people. He has visited Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Apart from helping him improve as a photographer and "channel some sort of vision" for his pictures, Cacek said his trips have made him a completely

***"There's something inside of everyone that's worthy of being photographed."
-Tyler Cacek***

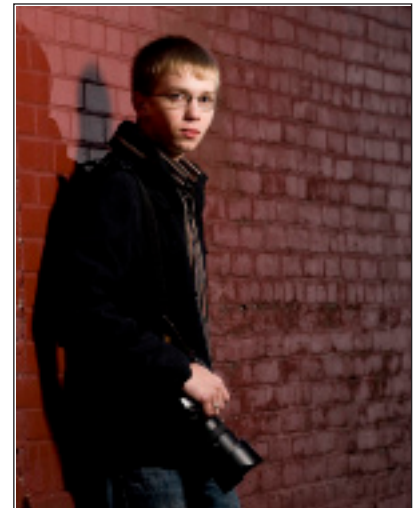


PHOTO SUBMITTED
Honors Student Tyler Cacek with his camera.

different person.

"Everything about me has changed as a result of going," Cacek said.

Although now back in the United States, Cacek, who is self-taught, has not stopped photographing people.

"There's something inside of everyone that's worthy of being photographed," said Cacek, who explains it's the job of the photographer to find that spark of life and document it.

Cacek plans to travel back to the Democratic Republic of the Congo this spring, and is currently taking French 101 and 102 as bi-term courses in preparation for the trip, where he will study in the mainly French-speaking university there.

While it may seem Cacek would be most proud of his many awards, he views his pictures as biggest accomplishments because of the impact they could have on the world.

"That's what I want my pictures to do—affect change in someone's life."



PHOTO BY TYLER CACEK

A New Face in the Honors College

BETHANY RIGGS

Areté staff writer

The Honors College has a new face floating amongst its staff this year. Some of you have probably seen or even met her, especially those who attended the Honors Freshman Orientation Retrea (H4).

Her name is Nicole Stratten, and she is our new Coordinator of Special Programs. Nicole moved here from Miami just a few weeks before school started, after spending four years at a similar job at Florida International University. Nicole loves working here at WKU thus far, especially because of the rare opportunities we have like our many possibilities to study abroad.

Nicole thinks studying abroad is a spectacular opportunity and took advantage of it while she was in college, traveling abroad and studying in Spain through FIU. But this is not the only thing she likes about WKU. "Everyone is just so friendly," she added. Being surrounded by such affable and welcoming people has definitely aided her adaptation to a new city, a new state, and new faces.

But Nicole is not new to moving and being around people she doesn't know. She was born in New Jersey, and at the age of 12, she moved to South Africa, where she lived for over three years. She then moved to yet another

continent, attending high school in Uruguay, where she lived until she was twenty years old.

At this time, Nicole came back to the States, where she enrolled at Florida International University. This is where she completed her Bachelor's degree in Art History, as well as a Master's in Liberal Studies, which is similar to Interdisciplinary Studies here at WKU. She was an active participant in Honors at FIU, which sparked her interest in a career with the Honors College. One of her professors recommended working here, and Nicole realized the latest job opening was definitely something for her.

The job entails numerous things, and Nicole is in charge of just about every event and program that our Honors College takes on. For instance, she is the advisor for three student organizations: the Honors Club, the WKU chapter of the Golden Key International Society, and Phi Eta Sigma. She also does recruitment for study-abroad trips to Harlaxton and Semester at Sea, and will be the head planner of H4 next year. Nicole is certainly busy but is enjoying her job and



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY NICOLE STRATTEN

Kentucky so far.

I asked what she was having the most trouble coping with while being new to this state, and her reply was "It is so cold." Being so used to South Africa, South America, and Miami has definitely taken a toll on her, considering she believed that July and August were cold in Kentucky. The temperature is a challenge that will take some time for her to adjust to, but other than that, she is ready for anything. So stop by the Honors College, welcome her, and get to know our new Coordinator of Special Programs.

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