

# HONORS NEWS AND NOTES

FALL 2015

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## HONORS RETREAT

The Honors Program hosted an epic retreat for the members of two of the honors colloquia this fall. The retreat included freshmen from the HON195 colloquium, "Gender, Race, Class and the Media," and sophomores–seniors from the HON395 colloquium, "Epic Hero." Honors Faculty and student mentors accompanied the students. The weekend began with pizza at the Pizza Shoppe in St. Joseph, then back to the university for honors program information and bonding activities. The following day was filled with sword fighting lessons with Bob Charron.

Mr. Charron is an Ancient European Martial Arts instructor from the St. Martins Academy. Krystal Hicok, a senior, reviewed the experience, "As my peers and I went through exercise after exercise of sword techniques we were learning, the idea of us all being epic heroes was easier to imagine." The third and final day was spent at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival. Students explored the festival and enjoyed exhibits and shows. Krystal Hicok reported, "The Kansas City Renaissance Festival is a roaring good time for anyone with an adventurous spirit and a keen sense of humor." Overall, the 2015 Honors Program Retreat was a great success and a good time was had by all!



## IMPORTANT DATES:

- Dec. 12: Last day of classes
- Dec. 12 – 18: Final Exams
- Dec. 19: Commencement
- Jan. 19: Spring Semester Begins

## COLLOQUIUM SPOTLIGHT



A unique colloquium, entitled "Older Adulthood Can Be Golden," was offered this semester by Dr. Melinda Kovacs and Stephanie Stewart R.N., professors of Political Science and Nursing, respectively. This colloquium aimed to convince students that aging can be a rewarding and exciting process. Dr. Kovacs and Prof. Stewart approached teaching the colloquium with a hands-on approach; students were required to attend applied learning experiences and listen to a variety of presentations in class. Prof. Stewart believes that Dr. Bill Thomas, author of *Second Wind*, describes aging best by stating, "American culture is wrong; there is actually life beyond adulthood. There is the opportunity to live and grow and become elders. The aging that we experience holds in it very important learning and lessons. There is no pill that does that." This colloquium intrigued junior nursing student Brooke Bernhardt. Brooke says, "Being in this colloquium has already opened my eyes and helped me get past stereotypes of the aging adult. It has allowed me to see elders for their value and the vast wisdom they have to share with each and every one of us." Hopefully students enrolled in this course will alter their personal perceptions about aging as well as their views on older adults.

**NEW FACES IN THE HONORS PROGRAM**



The Honors Program welcomed one new faculty member to the Honors Committee this semester! Dr. Dan Stasko, affectionately known as “Dr. Dan,” graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Chemistry from Kent State University in Kent, OH. He finished his Ph. D. in Inorganic Chemistry from the University of Wyoming in Laramie, WY. He has a small family consisting of two active boys, 6 & 8, and a lovely wife who spends her days chasing the two active boys. Dr. Dan enjoys wood working, building small gadgets, and playing geeky board games. Shelby Hicks is our new office assistant in the Honors Office. Shelby is a junior from Macon,



MO, and is majoring in Psychology with a minor in Childhood Studies. Shelby is involved in the psychology honors association (Psi Chi), SHO (Student Honors Organization), Alpha Chi, and Christian Campus Fellowship.

**STUDENT VOICE: WRITTEN BY KELLY COCHRAN**

“I remember waiting around to get my student ID at Griffon Edge and hearing Dr. Dekka promote the honors program to the incoming freshmen. I had showed initial interest in the program before knowing much about it, and as a senior looking back, it’s fun to think about how every tagline Dr. Dekka used to promote the program has proven to be completely true. The Missouri Western State Honors Program has provided me with an opportunity to get more out of my education. I’m the kind of academic who needs to be challenged in the classroom. I enjoy discussions regarding theories, philosophies, and events that truly matter. I am not attending college to squeak by with easy A’s; I want to earn them. A college education should be a student’s journey through which he or she discovers who one is, what one stands for, and how one is going to live with purpose. I honestly feel like the Honors Program helped me answer these questions and added to my education and life in these ways. Reflecting on my time at Missouri Western State University and as part of the Honors Program, I can see how this program led me to countless successes and will continue to take me where I want to go in life. This program benefitted me both personally and professionally, and I strongly suggest it to any student wanting more out of their education. Dr. Dekka and the administration are not throwing around baseless clichés; the Honors Program truly changed my life. It can do the same for you.”

**BIG WELCOME TO A BIG FRESHMAN CLASS**

The Missouri Western Honors Program introduced major changes to the Golden Griffon Scholarship this semester. Students who are awarded the top academic scholarship are allotted \$5,000/year for tuition, plus housing (in Vaselakos Hall). However, students are not required to live on campus, a requirement of the scholarship in years past. Additionally, the Honors Program saw a massive increase in incoming freshman this semester. Each fall the Honors Program welcomes about 75 freshman, specifically 73 students in 2014. However, this fall 90 freshman joined the honors program. That’s an amazing 20% increase! Laine Mills, a Biology major, says, “The honors program has really helped me find where I belong at Missouri Western.” The Honors Program is happy to welcome the big freshman class of 2019 and looks forward to seeing what these students accomplish across their four years at Missouri Western!

**SHO**

SHO initiated 16 students this semester. InitiaSHOn consisted of one week of recruiting events with activities including a pool party, a kickball game, and a board game night. The ceremonies associated with initiation lasted a week. SHO hosted a Halloween blood drive and helped in RHA’s Haunted Hall. It is looking to be a great semester!

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