ANOTHER GREAT HONORS RETREAT IN THE BOOKS

The Honors Program hosted an experiential-learning retreat for honors students participating in two colloquia this fall! The students, their instructors (Dr. Stacia Bensyl and Dr. Dan Trifan), the honors retreat subcommittee (Dr. Shawna Harris and Mr. Jim Mulder) along with Honors Director Dr. Teddi Deka and mentoring students Ida Haefner and Alex Stearns representing the Student Honors Organization (SHO), traveled to Independence, Missouri for a weekend of bonding, team-building and investigation into the resources at the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum. The two colloquia are centered on the time when Harry S. Truman was in office as President of the United States, including the Cold War (Dr. Trifan’s 395 class) and Japanese America from Immigration to the Cold War (Dr. Bensyl’s 195 class). Activities included making tough choices while participating in the White House Decision Center about the Berlin Blockade and the use of the atomic bomb, dinner at Square Pizza in downtown Independence, and visits to the Truman Home and the puppetry museum. Freshmen Jordan Booth and Avery Davis went on the retreat with Dr. Bensyl’s class. Avery said, “My favorite part of the retreat was the White House decision center. It truly felt like we were part of a government decision.” Jordan had been to the Truman Library before. He said he was able to see a lot more this time around. In speaking on the retreat as a whole Jordan said, "The retreat was a really fun time. I got to get to know other people better, and meet people I wouldn't have otherwise.”

ALPHA CHI ON A ROLL

The officers and members of Alpha Chi have been busy getting things rolling this semester. At the end of the Spring semester, Alpha Chi applied for their second annual Star Chapter Award. Right now, the focus of our chapter is on the National Convention that will take place in Chicago next Spring. The theme for the National Convention is the nexus of the arts and sciences. We are planning to put together a collaborative research team to present and compete at the National Convention. We are also planning a community service project to go along with this theme. On November 11, Alpha Chi will hold its annual induction. We are hoping for a large induction class and a fun, productive year!

SHO KEEPS ON GROWING

The Student Honors Organization almost doubled again this year. InitiaSHOn took place at the end of September, and helped SHO gain 27 new members. This puts SHO’s membership at 54 students! SHO’s president, Ida Haefner said, “I’m excited for such a high membership. We will be able to do so much this year and hopefully get a lot accomplished.” One new thing the Honors club tried was a sort of “Recruitment Week”. SHO hosted “Game SHO Night” on the Tuesday before InitiaSHOn Week and then had a grill out at Youngdahl Conservation Area in St. Joseph on Wednesday. InitiaSHOn was Roman themed with togas worn by the returning members, sword fights, and grape catching. The first meeting included a game where each member acted like the animal they had been assigned and tried to find the other members who were the same animal, and the formation of committees to start working on activities for the year. Sophomore, Maggie Lee, when talking about the first meeting, said, “The meeting went very smoothly, and the ice breaker activity was hilarious!” The Honors club is looking into another trivia night this year and some other fun activities. It is sure to be a great year!
In his 16th year as a librarian at Missouri Western, and 15th year serving on the Honors Committee, Mr. Jim Mulder has been very active in the Honors Program since 1999. Mr. Mulder attended Northwestern College in Orange City, IA, where he received his degree in History. Then he went to the University of Iowa where he received his Master of Arts in Library Science. During his senior year of college, he was selected to participate in a program that allowed him to intern at the National Archives. Mr. Mulder has always enjoyed reading and helping people, and he knew in high school that he wanted to be a librarian. After working three summers in the college library and finishing graduate school, he returned to Northwestern College for a year as the librarian. He then worked at Peru State for 14 years before coming to Missouri Western. This semester, Mr. Mulder was vital to the planning and implementation of our annual Honors Retreat in Independence, Missouri. Alongside the Honors Students, he experienced the bus with mechanical problems, went to the Truman Decision Center, and visited the Truman Home and the ice cream Parlor where Harry S. Truman had his first job. In his spare time, Mulder enjoys reading and traveling to historical sites.

NEW FACES OF THE HONORS STAFF

The Honors Program proudly announces the addition of a new faculty member to the Honors Committee. Heather Kendall, RN, graduated from Savannah High School, and lives there now with her husband and daughter. She graduated from Missouri Western in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and graduated from University of Missouri – Kansas City (UMKC) in 2007 with a Master of Science in Nursing with an education focus. Mrs. Kendall is currently a Ph.D. candidate at UMKC and is expected to receive her degree in 2017. She is certified in critical nursing, cardiac medicine and cardiac surgery from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. Maggie Lee is our new office assistant in the Honors Office. Maggie is a sophomore from Leavenworth, KS, and is majoring in Exercise Science as well as participating in the Physical Therapy Assistant program. Maggie is involved in the physical education fraternity, Phi Epsilon Kappa, SHO (Student Honors Organization), and competes as a weightlifter for the Wesley Weightlifters.

COLLOQUIUM SPOTLIGHT

The smell of fresh cut grass, the floral aroma of colorful flowers, and the fragrance of fresh cut pine are all scents we love. However, to plants, these smells have a different meaning: a cry for help, an attractive potion to lure in pollinators, or a deadly concoction to ward off their attackers. In Dr. Barta’s HON 395 colloquium, ten students are exploring the various effects of plant volatiles, which are the gases that plants emit. The aim of this colloquium is to understand how plants communicate with other plants, animals, themselves, and the effects the volatiles have on the global climate. The class is working towards producing a literature review in groups of two; the goal is for this paper to be published in a scientific journal. The class is looking forward to the challenge and interested to learn about a new topic.

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