

VOL. XXXV

NO. 7

THE HONORS REPORT

APRIL 2021



Enjoy the Spring weather, and keep a positive outlook!

The April edition includes:

SECTION	PAGE(S)
Upcoming Events.....	2
Zoom Office Hours Calendar.....	2
Honors Lab Science Options.....	3
Honors Spirit Week Highlights.....	3
Meet Our Peer Mentors for the 2021-22 School Year.....	4
Congratulations! Graduating Senior Spotlights.....	5-6
Interview with Dr. Luek.....	7-8
Honors Students Receive APSCUF Scholarships.....	8
What are honors students looking forward to this summer?.....	9-10
Thesis Tip and Motivation of the Month.....	10
Honors Students Coping During Quarantine.....	10

Attention:

The Honors Report is looking for student writers for upcoming issues! If you would like to help us cover Honors College events, interview honors faculty, and have a student writer position to add to your resume, we would love to have you join as a student writer.

If you have an interest or questions, please email our head editor, Natalie Flory at ngflory@millersville.edu.

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Dr. Elizabeth Thyrum
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Natalie Flory
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Student Writers

Leah Freeman, Natalie Flory,
Elias Peluso, Elizabeth Duchesneau
Michael Skros, and Owen Wallace



Millersville University
HONORS COLLEGE

IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS

April 8 at 7 pm Alumni Meet & Greet on Zoom - Seven alumni have volunteered to come and speak to Honors College students. Attend, and you will be entered for a prize drawing.

April 14 at 7 pm Virtual Registration Ice Cream Social on Zoom – Login with your ice cream to get your registration questions answered. TAPs will be available.

April 21 at 6 am Honors Priority Registration – Mark your calendars! This is a date change due to the network outage. Remember to meet with your advisor. Reach out to Dr. Thyrum, Beth, Michael, and Alanna, if you need assistance! You need your new TAP number to register.

April 25 at 1 pm Honors College Recognition Ceremony - Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman, the Associate Provost, will be our featured speaker. This ceremony will celebrate achievements of our program over the past year and, most importantly, recognize our December 2020 and May 2021 graduates as they share their accomplishments and future plans. Let's all come out and support our Honors College graduates!

ZOOM OFFICE HOURS CALENDAR

Monday:

Beth: 9-11am
Michael: 11-12am
Dr. Thyrum: 1-2pm

Tuesday:

Beth: 9-11am
Michael: 12-1pm
Dr. Thyrum: 12:15-1:15 pm
Alanna: 3-4pm

Thursday:

Beth: 9-11am
Dr. Thyrum: 12:15-1:15 pm
Alanna: 3-4pm

Wednesday:

Beth: 9-11am
Dr. Thyrum: 1-2pm
Michael: 2-3pm

Friday:

Beth: 9-11am
Dr. Thyrum: 1-2pm
Alanna: 4-5pm

ZOOM MEETING ROOMS:

[Dr. Thyrum's Personal Room:](#)
(meeting ID 294 629 5508)

[Beth's Personal Room:](#)
(meeting ID 591 208 1934)

[Alanna's Personal Room:](#)
(meeting ID 770 891 1082)

[Michael's Personal Room:](#)
(meeting ID 472 049 3672)

HONORS LAB SCIENCE OPTIONS

By Michael Skros

The Honors College requires that all students complete an honors lab science course before graduating. This course also meets Millersville's lab science general education (G2) requirement. Multiple courses can fulfill this requirement. However, to make a science course "honors," students must register for the one-credit seminar associated with the course. For example, when registering for General Biology, the student must register for BIOL 100 lecture, a lab section, and the seminar (BIOL108H). The seminar often involves class discussions, supplemental readings, and other enrichment work. The 1 credit honors seminar may be taken at the same time as the science lecture/lab course OR during a later semester. In addition, Honors Physical Geology (ESCI 221H) also fulfills the honors lab science course requirement without an additional 1 credit seminar. Honors Biology, Geology, and Physics are being offered in Fall 2021! Check out your options and direct questions to Dr. Thyrum as needed.

SPIRIT WEEK HIGHLIGHTS

Check out some of the amazing spirit week submissions! Congratulations to Becca Gordon as the winner of the Amazon gift card and to Sarah Barnum, Riley Boike, Leah Freeman, Emily Holmberg, Elias Peluso, Bronte Spidaliere, and Morgan Towle for submitting photos every day to earn some MU swag.



By Elizabeth Duchesneau

Welcome back, Alanna Bezas



Alanna Bezas is a sophomore, majoring in Emergency Management, from Bethlehem, PA. Alanna comments, "My weeks have been pretty busy – filled with classwork, tutoring, working, and my internship with the Bethlehem Health Bureau, where I work at the COVID-19 vaccination clinics. Some other things I sprinkle into my week are spending a lot of time outside, working out in my basement, and spending time with my dog, Taz (who we adopted at the start of quarantine). I am also a photographer on the side and have been able to get a couple of family and senior portraits in, which has been fun."

With nicer weather approaching, Alanna is looking forward to taking day trips on the weekend and stepping away from her laptop. Bethlehem being close to NYC, Philly, the beach, and hiking trails allows for possibilities in trips she is planning! Alanna is looking forward to finalizing her thesis proposal, getting a summer job within her field, finding an apartment, and learning new songs on the ukulele. Depending on COVID, Alanna may be found at Yellowstone and Grand Teton this summer. She is looking forward to seeing everyone on campus soon. Alanna sends honors students her best wishes: "Good luck finishing up the rest of your semester, and, as always, stop by my office hours to chat."

We are excited to be having Alanna back as a Peer Mentor next year for the 2021-22 school year!

Introducing Jessica Hetrick



Additionally, the Honors College is excited to welcome Jessica Hetrick as the new Peer Mentor! Jessica is a geology major planning to graduate in 2023, and then continue to graduate school to obtain a Master of Science in Environmental Policy and Management. She is passionate about reducing her carbon footprint and taking care of her succulents. Jessica also loves Bob's Burgers and squishmallows.

Jessica's favorite part of Millersville is the people: "Friends and professors make coursework interesting and supply a fantastic support system. A huge shoutout to dining hall personnel and the health services workers who keep us safe and comfortable!" she said.

She also likes to spend time with Miller and S'Ville at the pond but notes that her kindness towards them is quite one-sided.

She wants Honors College to know, "I'm very excited to work with Dr. Thyrum, Beth, and Alanna to create an environment that establishes a feeling of community and is welcoming to current and incoming students."

We are excited to have Jessica as our second Peer Mentor for the 2021-22 school year!

CONGRATULATIONS! GRADUATING SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

Features Collected by Elias Peluso, Owen Wallace, and Natalie Flory



Alyssa Ames

Alyssa Ames is a math education major with a minor in psychology. For her thesis, Ames investigated classroom practices of math teachers about how they intrinsically and extrinsically motivate their students. Ames worked with Dr. Cynthia Taylor on her thesis. She has been an active student on campus; throughout college. She has been involved in Math Educators at Millersville University (MEMU), Math Club, Peer Mentor in the Mathematics Department, Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) Member, and the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi Member. Ames has also completed many service events through the Honors College.

Ames comments, "Contingent upon graduation, I have accepted a contracted position at Solanco High School where I will be teaching mathematics! After establishing my classroom, I would like to pursue a master's degree in an education-related program." We are confident Alyssa will become a successful Algebra teacher. Best wishes, Alyssa!

Teonta Aviles is a double major graduating with a BSE in Art Education and a BFA in Fine Art with a concentration in painting. Aviles worked with Ms. Dorothy Frey on the thesis project. Aviles comments on her thesis, "The "En" Project is a body of art formed by research and empirical data, particularly through observations made by the artists. The title comes from my interest in societal gender binary expectations. This includes gender roles, gender normality, and lack of gender fluidity found in society. Information obtained from media, literature, arts, and interviews has become the narrative behind several pieces of the provided body of artwork. The main objective for creating this project is deemed essential to combat the hurdle of gender concepts our society is facing."

Throughout college, Aviles has been involved in MU Cheerleading, Black Student Union, Orientation, including Orientation Planning Committee, and the National Minority Teacher Association. Aviles's art has also been featured at the Ware Center, the Winter Center, Swift Gallery, and at the Millersville Juried Students Exhibition. After graduation Aviles plans to teach secondary students art out of state. In the future, Aviles hopes to get a master's degree. Best wishes in your future, Teonta!



Teonta Aviles



Ginger Bradbury

Virginia (Ginger) Bradbury is a dual major in Special Education and Elementary Education. For her thesis, titled "Grief in the Classroom," Bradbury used a qualitative interview with MU faculty members who were involved in preparing teacher candidates. After completing her interviews, she created a website based on the findings. Her thesis was completed alongside her thesis advisor, Dr. Charlton Wolfgang.

Bradbury states, "The biggest blessings at Millersville are the professors. I have had professors who are excellent educators, but also exceptional humans. I am so thankful for the opportunities I have had at Millersville and the Honors College." Also pictured is Ginger's trip to Costa Rica with Dr. Janet Josephson where she worked at Kidtopia English Immersion camp. Currently, she plans to continue her search for a full-time elementary teaching position. Good luck and best wishes, Ginger!

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Jacob Dickens

Jacob Dickens is graduating with a double major in English and a Multiple Disciplinary Study in Film Studies. Dickens's thesis was titled, "An Investigation of Pre-Code Best Actress Nominated Roles and Award Narratives, 1927-1932." Dr. Jill Craven worked with Dickens on this thesis project. Throughout college Dickens has been a part of Citamard Players, University Theatre, Film Club, WIXQ, The Snapper.

"I think my involvement in these clubs and the work I put into them being on some of their boards helped me establish both real-world skills for management, but also let me connect and have fun with other MU students who shared similar interests with me," Dickens comments.

While unsure of what's next, we are sure Jacob will successfully take on whatever the future holds!

Kate Graham is a Dual Elementary and Special Education major. For her thesis, Graham wrote a historical fiction novel for middle-grade readers about American slavery and the Underground Railroad, titled *Carry Me to Freedom*, with the help of thesis advisor Dr. Nakeiha Primus. Throughout her college years, Graham has been in the Millersville Marching Band and an active member of the Honors College.

She comments, "[The] Honors College was an enriching experience that gave me a community within the MU community. I cherish the classes and time I spent in the clubs and programs at MU."

In the future, Graham hopes to publish her thesis project manuscript and get a job near her hometown as an elementary school teacher. We wish Kate the best of luck!



Kate Graham

Emily Holmberg is an Early Childhood Education major with minors in integrative STEM Education Methods and Mathematics. Holmberg's thesis project was titled, "The Influence of Education on Children's Gender Stereotypes and Occupational Interests in STEM Fields" and was completed with the help of thesis advisor Dr. Jennifer Burke. Holmberg has also been active on campus and with the Honors College. She has participated in the following: Early Childhood Organization, Kappa Delta Pi International Honors Society in Education, Mathematics Educators at Millersville University, Student Pennsylvania State Education Association, Honors College Student Association, Honors College Mentoring Program, and Relay for Life. She also had the opportunity to assist with several open houses and admitted student days as a student panelist within the EMEE Department.

"[In the future,] I plan to teach in an elementary school, and I would love to find a teaching position in the Lancaster area!" Holmberg states.

Best wishes to Emily in her endeavors! The Honors College would like to thank Emily for all of her contributions and efforts as a mentor in our new Mentoring Communities program.



Emily Holmberg

INTERVIEW WITH DR. LUEK

Interview Conducted by Leah Freeman

The retired professor of Psychology has truly left her mark on the Honors College, as she was among the founders of the program in the late 70s. The program was launched in 1980, so the Honors College has been around for 41 years. Much of its progress over the past 4 decades can be linked to Dr. Luek's time and investment. In the late 70s, she also helped launch the university's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi (a national honor society), and in the 80s, she established the university's chapter of Psi Chi (a psychology honor society). Her name may ring a bell, as Luek Hall is named after her. She has helped fund its major renovations, as well as scholarships for honors students and psychology majors. Dr. Luek's footprint will always be left on the University, and her presence will resonate with honors students for generations to come. We thank her for all she has done!



Q: When did you begin working at Millersville University, and when did you retire?

A: "I began working at Millersville State College in August of 1972, and I retired from Millersville University in August of 2012—exactly 40 years later."

Q: From where did you earn your degrees and complete your education?

A: "All three of my degrees, B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. are from the University of Delaware."

Q: When did you realize you wanted to work in the department/field you worked in?

A: "I decided I wanted to teach at the college level the spring semester of my junior year [of college] (1967)." In-person at the Franklin house where we met, Luek elaborated more—"I was inspired by the professors in the University of Delaware, and I said, [to myself] 'this is what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.'"

Q: Do you have any recommendations to Honors Students on the current situation with COVID, and coping with it through the college and academic experience?

A: "Do your best in the online courses and get the vaccine as soon as you can. Most importantly, keep a positive attitude toward taking courses online."

Q: What is your most memorable moment in working in the Honors College?

A: "I think maybe establishing it—a group of us went down to the University of Delaware to look at their program, which they didn't have when I went through. I was inspired by that, and then I really enjoyed teaching the honors courses with the students and interacting with them."

Q: Do you have any advice for students working on their thesis or creative project?

A: "I would say start early, get an adviser with whom you really resonate with, stick to it, and do it."

Q: What is a particular moment that stands out to you from your time working at MU?

A: "When I got Educator of the Year, I was the first in 2011. I was nominated by a student who was in the Honors College, so I applied and got it."

Article continued onto next page

DR. LUEK CONT.

Q: Is there anything you would like to say to the honors students?

A: "The course sequence that you take in the Honors College really prepares you for doing virtually anything. Stay in the Honors College and enjoy its benefits. The Honors College experience gives you the edge when applying for jobs and getting into graduate school."

Dr. Thyrum comments about Dr. Luek: "Many people wrote letters on her behalf [for educator of the year], and Dr. Luek has many students/fans/mentees. She has affected a lot of people... in Millersville. I have always strived to be in the Luek fashion of being a professor, and have never gotten there, and never will. It has always been in my mind as I developed as a professor, 'what would Dr. Luek do?'"

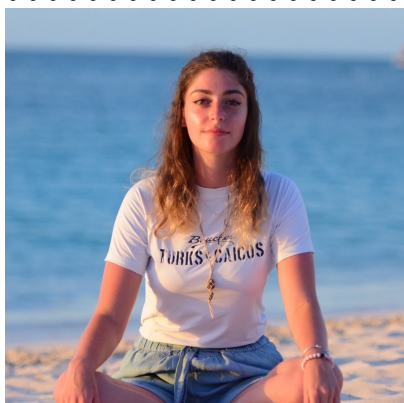
HONORS STUDENTS RECEIVE APSCUF SCHOLARSHIPS

By Natalie Flory **Congratulations to Kassandra Castaldi, Emily Dalessandro, and Leah Freeman for receiving APSCUF scholarships!**



Kassandra Castaldi received the Dr. William Smith Scholarship. Castaldi is a chemistry major with a mathematics minor. She is currently conducting research with Dr. Rajaseelan to create new green chemistry catalysts for the transfer of hydrogenation reactions. Castaldi is a part of the Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity, a member of the American Sign Language Learners Club, and is involved with the Student Chapter of American Chemical Society (serving as the Fundraiser Chair).

Emily Dalessandro received the APSCURF Scholarship. Dalessandro is a biology major and has received the Honors College Academic Excellence award. In addition, she serves as a biology academic mentor and a zoology lab assistant. She does one-on-one mentoring for numerous courses within the Biology department. With Dr. Jonathan Stoltzfus, Dalessandro researches the parasitic nematode, *Strongyloides stercoralis*, looking at the differential gene expression between the males and females using transcriptomics. Also, Dalessandro mentors through the Biology Mentorship Program, where she fosters a community for underrepresented students in science.



Leah Freeman received the Dr. Steve Centola Scholarship. Freeman is an English major with ESL/Linguistics and psychology minors. She has previously served as the Honors Report Editor and continues to write articles for the report. Freeman was also the editor of the University Research Newsletter. She currently serves as an intern editor and Project Manager for Authors for the Made in Millersville Journal's upcoming edition. During the winter, Freeman volunteers at her local church's food kitchen. For her Business Writing class, Freeman wrote an extensive paper about the importance of volunteerism for civic engagement and change.

WHAT ARE HONORS STUDENTS LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS SUMMER?

Leah Freeman asked honors students: "What are you most looking forward to doing in the upcoming summer?"



"Since many are not certain how this summer will look, I'm looking forward to seeing what the future will hold. My family is hoping to do some travelling across states (socially distanced, of course) and go to the beach. Most importantly, though, I'm hoping everyone who needs it will get vaccinated." -**Elias Peluso, BS in Applied Engineering Department: Robotics and Control Systems Technology, expected graduation May 2023**



"I am most looking forward to participating in an internship starting early May after finals. I will be doing an internship with Community Services Group in their Family Based Program. I will be working with clients and their families while providing counseling services and resources. I am very excited to get some experience within the psychology field!"

-**Kasidy Bidelspacher, Psychology, expected graduation May 2022**



"I am most looking forward to going on a Marauders Abroad trip (COVID allowing) with faculty and other students. I will be traveling to Greece, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Morocco, and France. I could not be more excited! If the program does not happen this summer, then I will just have more time to plan and look forward to this awesome opportunity!"

-**Morgan Towle, Speech & Communications, expected graduation 2023**



"I'm most excited about exploring the world of geology by hiking and finding new parks to visit."

-**Jessica Hetrick, Geology, expected graduation 2023**



"I am most looking forward to my first courses at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station this summer, and hopefully, the end of this pandemic." -**Joseph Gaglio, Biology with a Concentration in Animal Behavior, expected graduation 2023**

LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS SUMMER CONT.



"I am super excited to go on vacation with my boyfriend, Andrew, and his family this summer. We are staying in this beachy condo in Topsail Beach, North Carolina." **-Maddie Engleman, Major in English with a Concentration in Writing Studies, expected graduation May 2023**



"I'm most looking forward to going to the beach this summer and for the warmer weather!" **-Holly King, Marine Biology Major expected graduation May 2023**



"I am looking forward to the warm weather! I am tired of the cold!" **-Riley Boike, Government and Political Affairs (International Studies) and History Double Major, expected graduation May 2022**

THESIS TIP AND MOTIVATION OF THE MONTH

"My tip for students is to find a good thesis advisor. Starting a thesis can be very overwhelming in the beginning, and having someone with experience to help set goals makes it much less intimidating."

- Jeremiah Shillingburg, Technology Education with Concentration in Engineering Design, Thesis in Progress, expected graduation May 2022

COPING DURING QUARANTINE

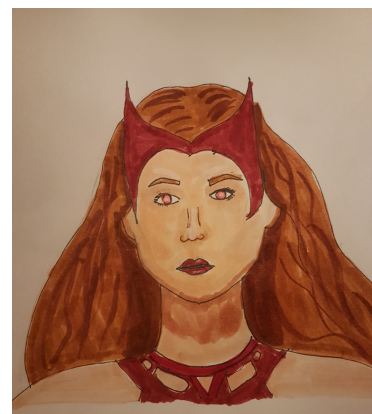
Honors students are getting creative to cope during the pandemic!



Elizabeth Duchesneau, English Education, expected graduation 2022, created this cute and colorful painting recently.



Natalie Flory, English Education, expected graduation May 2023 has been crocheting hats, ear warmers, and scarves!



Alyssa Munro, Meteorology, expected graduation 2023 drew this amazing picture of Wanda from Marvel!