

# THE HONORS REPORT

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021



**Welcome back for the Spring 2021 Semester!**

**The January/February edition includes:**

SECTION	PAGE(S)
A "Fresh Start" in 2021.....	2
Honors students' favorite mask photos.....	2
Faculty Spotlight Interview: Dr. Christine Filippone.....	3
Completing Community Service in a Pandemic.....	4
Preview: Mentor/Mentee Relationship Commentary.....	4
Emily Holmberg in the Mentoring Community.....	5
Honors College Alum Dr. Jonathan Shue.....	6-7
Navigating the Thesis Process.....	8-9
Zoom Office Hours Calendar.....	9
Thesis Tip and Motivation of the Month.....	9

**Announcement:** Honors College students, be sure you are submitting your **volunteer hours to D2L!** To do this, go under "Assessment" and then "Assignments" in the University Honors College D2L. You can click "Honors College Service Documentation" and submit a photo or scan of your signed Community Service Form (located to be printed or downloaded in "Content", and then under "Community Service Requirement Information Form, and Service Opportunities"), along with photo proof of the event and your contribution, if possible. If you completed an Honors College or HCSA event, you don't need documentation, just enter the name/date/length of the event.

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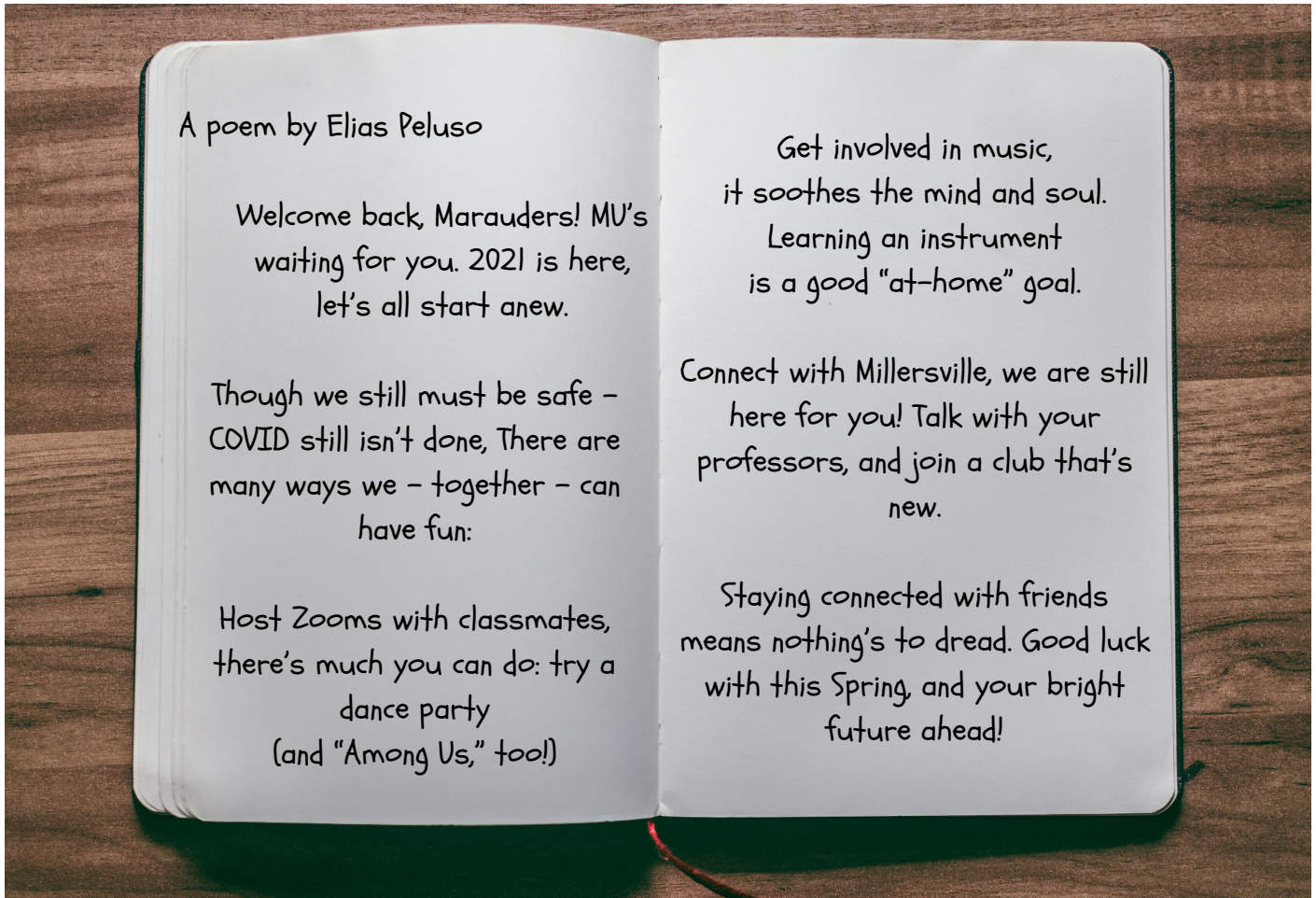
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**Millersville University**  
 HONORS COLLEGE

# A "FRESH START" IN 2021



## HONORS STUDENTS' FAVORITE MASK PHOTOS



Elias Peluso, Sophomore, Class of Spring 2023, Bachelor of Science in Robotics and Control Systems Technology

**"...me and my two friends in a winter photoshoot in Bethlehem."**- Alanna Bezas, sophomore, Class of 2023, Environmental Hazards & Emergency Management



**"...a picture with one of the students I tutor on Christmas Eve, whose family gifted me with a COMFY, oversized blanket hoody."**- Bronte Spidalieri, sophomore, Class of 2023, Psychology major

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: DR. CHRISTINE FILIPPONE

*Interview conducted by Madeline Engleman*

**Dr. Christine Filippone, as you will be teaching Honors History of Photography once again in Fall 2021, the Honors College wants to thank you for all your dedication to the college and its students!**



**What is your position(s) at Millersville University?**

"Associate Professor of Art History."

**When did you begin working at Millersville University?**

"Fall 2009."

**Where did you get your degrees and education from?** "I received my Ph.D. in Art History from Rutgers University, and my M.A. in Art History from Penn State, and B.S. in Art Education from Penn State."

**When did you realize you wanted to work in the department you currently work in?** "I realized I wanted to research and teach art history shortly after graduating from college with a bachelor's degree in art education. After student teaching, I realized I wasn't suited to being an art teacher. I took a 6-credit independent art history course in Asian art and absolutely loved it."

**What do you enjoy about being an Honors College professor?** "I have always been committed to the Honors College and its students' pursuit of excellence. I began teaching for the Honors College shortly after my arrival at MU and became a member of the University Honors College Committee from 2011-2014. Honors students are so committed to learning and so deeply engaged with the material; it is a pleasure to work closely with them and foster their interests. I have also enjoyed working closely with students developing honors theses who have created some of the most thoughtful, intellectually incisive, and creative projects. One student wrote and published a book situating his work in the context of 20th-century art including Dada and Pop Art. Another student, after spending a semester abroad in Florence (where I also teach), is creating a comic book on the lives and work of the key artists of the Italian Renaissance. How cool is that? I enjoy helping to further students' interests and expertise in material that is foundational to their practice and about which I am passionate."

**What are your teaching methods during this Fall semester, with the changes due to COVID?** "The pandemic didn't change my teaching methods drastically. I met students online at least once/week and I posted recorded lectures. In the fall I had at least ten honors students in my History of Photography (Art 201H) course, which dealt more than ever before with relationships between race and the photographic image. These students were very engaged with the material and gave excellent presentation that sparked deep discussion about important contemporary issues. They more than met the challenge."

**Is there anything else you would like to add about the topic or say to the Honors Students?** "I encourage you to maintain your commitment to the Honors College and to your honors courses. So many opportunities will arise from it that you cannot even imagine right now."

# COMPLETING COMMUNITY SERVICE IN A PANDEMIC

By Michael Skros

Completing community service can be challenging in a pandemic. When community service opportunities are available through the Honors College, they will be emailed out and posted on D2L.

- **We have already scheduled a Mask Making Event in Franklin House on Tuesday, February 2nd at 1 PM**, thanks to second-year student, Katie Pheysey. Check your MU email for details about this event! Masks will be donated to Water Street Rescue Mission.
- **More opportunities will be communicated via email as well.** The Honors College also occasionally needs students to assist in showing a prospective student around campus or presenting at open house presentations.
- **If you are searching for community service to complete on your own, many local food pantries and other nonprofits may need assistance. You can also search for community service opportunities that are relevant to your major.** For example, education majors can participate in tutoring programs and emergency management majors can volunteer with the American Red Cross. This type of major-related volunteer opportunity can fulfill the Honors College requirement *and* be used on a resume!
- **Virtual community service opportunities also exist and can fulfill honors college requirements: websites such as DoSomething.org & Volunteermatch.org have numerous online service opportunities to benefit various causes.** If you have questions about whether a project counts as community service, you can reach out to Beth or Dr. Thyrum for clarification.

Remember, in order to count as an “event”, the service must be at least one hour in length. If the service lasts for more than two hours, then it may count as two events.

## PREVIEW: MENTOR/MENTEE RELATIONSHIP COMMENTARY



By Alyssa Liester

As a Millersville student from 2008-2012, I had heard the faint stirrings about mentorship and how positive that experience could be for students. However, it was not until my senior year when I met Mr. Paul Beideman (MU '71), that I was able to fully grasp that truth. Paul and I were connected by Dr. Dennis Downey, the then director of the Honors College, via email as part of an initiative to bring prominent leaders within the community in to talk with students about life after college. I found a lot of wisdom in Paul. He provided me assistance and critique on my resume as I worked to prepare it for job applications post-graduation. His support was of consistent help to me during that time...

**Check out the entire article in the Spring 2021 Issue of MU's [University Research Newsletter!](#)**

I have been very fortunate to have mentors throughout my career, but Paul's influence has remained one of the most influential. I would encourage all students to find someone like him. A mentor could be someone who supports your particular field of study, or who supports your career-building as a whole. It could even simply be someone with more life experience than you, who can be a guide during times of struggle and times of celebration.

# EMILY HOLMBERG IN THE MENTORING COMMUNITY



By Natalie Flory

Emily Holmberg currently serves as the coordinator for the Early Childhood Mentoring Community, including Early Childhood and Early Childhood and Special Education dual majors. Holmberg believes that the mentoring communities offer benefits for underclassmen coming into the Honors College.

“For one, they introduce underclassmen to upperclassmen, who can help them navigate their first year of college. Mentors can also help freshmen feel welcome and instantly at home when they come to Millersville,” said Holmberg.

The new mentoring program allows students to be welcomed into a mentoring environment of other students studying the same field; creating a welcoming and positive environment for new students. Holmberg also shared that her community stayed connected by meeting up at the Starbucks in McNairy Library and having periodic Zoom meetings to reflect on their experiences and offer advice about their shared major.

“Some mentors who are sophomores were able to ask upperclassmen about how they approached the thesis project during one of our Zoom calls,” said Holmberg.

The communities serve as mutually beneficial, with mentees getting aid in their experiences and mentors gaining leadership experience and a chance to stay connected within the Honors College. There is even beneficial connections for other upperclassmen to gain insight into the Honors program in their given majors.

Overall, the program is beneficial for both under and upperclassman as they continue their studies in the field together.

**“The best part of the community aspect of the mentoring program is that it expands the support network for mentors and mentees alike. Through the larger community, mentors and mentees have someone to turn to if they have ever have questions or would like advice. Since we are all here striving to achieve the same end goal, the community provides us with a space to learn from others’ experiences, celebrate our accomplishments, and empathize with one another in our shared frustration with online learning.”** - Emily Holmberg



Check out the student thesis interview on **Emily Holmberg** in the last issue of the [Honors Report](#) from December 2020!

# HONORS COLLEGE ALUM DR. JONATHAN SHUE

**“The education I received at Millersville was truly top-notch. The research experience is great at Millersville, the faculty mentorship is phenomenal and the quality of the education...prepared me well for my dental admissions test (DAT) which played an integral part in my admission into dental school.” -Dr. Jonathan Shue**

*By Leah Freeman*

Dr. Jonathan Shue attended Millersville University from Fall 2010, discovering and applying to the Honors College a little after he became a part of the MU student body, to Spring 2013, where he graduated with a BSE in Chemistry with the aspiration to go into dentistry.

Shue not only felt that he was positively supported by his education at MU, but he was also greatly aided by a faculty member who, even now, he is appreciative of, and believes was a big part of him reaching his current success in his career in dentistry.

**“I came into Millersville with a bunch of ideas, and Dr. Rajaseelan turned those ideas into a plan. I can’t speak enough about the tremendous person he is and about the significant impact that he had on my career trajectory.” -Dr. Jonathan Shue**

Dr. Edward Rajaseelan is a Chemistry professor who was MU’s Educator of the Year in 2013.

## **On Taking Advantage of Opportunities as a Student**

Further, Dr. Shue, as a student, has worked hard in progressing his own career. During his second year, he had reached out to local orthodontists for potential opportunities for shadowing as an intern, and while many were supportive, they were also

hesitant to take on somebody with no previous dental training. Through his persistence, however, Dr. Shue got a response of agreement from Long Orthodontics Associates (LOA), where he met doctors who were not only willing to take him on as an intern but who gave him the opportunity to participate in research with them and to get involved with orthodontic literature.

“Those doctors - that entire office - were very supportive, cordial, and totally behind me in my goal to become a dentist,” said Dr. Shue.

After graduating, Dr. Shue attended The University of Pennsylvania in the School of Dental Medicine, and in order to finance his education he took advantage of the

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**DR. JONATHAN SHUE**  
**DENTIST**



## HONORS COLLEGE ALUM DR. JONATHAN SHUE CONT.



Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP), which applies for physicians, dentists, lawyers, chaplains and etc who are admitted into professional school. Through this program, he had agreed to complete a year of service with the United States Military for every year they covered the costs of his schooling. He is currently three years into his five-year commitment with the United States Air Force as a general dentist.

As he would be automatically brought into the Air Force as an officer, he was required to go through a five-week program, Commissioned Officer Training (COT), after he graduated dental school, to learn of the fundamentals of being a Military Officer.

"It's a fantastic opportunity, professionally speaking," said Dr. Shue. "It's not for everyone and committing multiple years of your career is not a decision to take lightly, but it's certainly an option that I would encourage others to consider."

After completing COT, the Air Force had sent him to Northern California to participate in an Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD). He had the opportunity here to train under specialists and was taught to perform specialty work at a high-level quality, without having ever received those specialty degrees, for his assistance to the Air Force.

"It was an excellent opportunity to learn practical skills from some amazing clinicians that will serve me well in my profession," said Dr. Shue.

Dr. Shue is now stationed in Santa Maria, California, where he works in Vandenberg Air Force Base—where rockets are launched. Although he is primarily a dentist, he gets to witness the fascinating launches up-close and personal.

He is appreciative of his time at Millersville University, and he greatly appreciates the individuals he had met and the interactions he had experienced. He is also grateful for the advantages graduating with the Honors College had provided him.

"I'm certainly very appreciative of the people I met and the courses I had to take along the way," said Dr. Shue. "I don't know that left to my own devices, I would have signed up for the broad range of courses that the Honors College required, but in hindsight, the broad background proved to be enriching and rewarding."

Dr. Shue was one of the recipients of MU's 2020 Young Alumni Achievement Award.

**"I highly encourage every student to take advantage of the opportunity and interact with [MU's] wonderful faculty... [and] implore everyone to take advantage of [a student/faculty mentor relationship]. Do not expect it to come passively to you. Dedicate yourself to a cause, relentlessly work at your goals, and don't get discouraged when you encounter adversity."**

-Dr. Jonathan Shue

# NAVIGATING THE THESIS PROCESS

**“While starting a thesis may seem overwhelming, it is best to complete the process one step at a time. During my sophomore and junior year, I would jot down notes on my phone anytime I had a potential thesis idea. Since I will be graduating in fall 2021, I decided I should find a thesis advisor during fall 2020 in order to officially start the process. I chose a professor who I felt had similar interests as me and had been a helpful advisor...My advisor not only helped narrow down my topic and submit my paper, but she has also helped me think of potential committee members. I would definitely recommend using fellow students, advisors, and Dr. Thyrum as resources throughout the process!”**-Michael Skros, Senior, Environmental Hazards & Emergency Management & Geography



*By Madeline Engleman*

As an Honors College student, we all be completing a thesis. This can be a daunting and even scary task. However, you don't have to do it alone. The most important person by your side is your thesis advisor, along with your thesis committee. When searching for your advisor and committee, there are some key attributes you want to look for.

- **Your thesis advisor should have knowledge, passion, and connection to the topic or idea you have regarding your thesis/creative project.** Finding a professor who will really be able to expand your ideas and help you explore deeper into your topic is essential. Generally, the professor you choose to become your advisor will be someone you have had for class, know well, and have a good relationship with. The committee for your thesis is also really important, they are the faculty that not only help with the process, but will be the people who attend your thesis defense. They need to be other professors who have connection to your idea, as well as other varying perspectives (to have a more well-rounded committee).
- **Make sure you reach out to professors early on in the process, even if you don't have a topic nailed down yet.** Network with different professors you connect with to find a good fit. The thesis/creative project is important aspect of the Honors College, so it is okay to be unsure about who you want as your thesis advisor, or as part of your committee. At the end of the day, it has to fit your vision for your work. My best advice is to go straight into the deciding process with confidence and professionalism - you can't go wrong.
- **Further, using resources from the Honors College such as Dr. Thyrum, or even upperclassmen who have been through/are going through the process, is really helpful.** Think of it like this: your advisor is like your wingman, so you want them to know you, have your best interests in mind, and give you helpful advice.



**“Working on your thesis for the Honors College is one of the most rewarding experiences. It seems intimidating as it approaches, but creating something you are proud of and breaking down walls in your field is such a great confidence builder. Even more than that, an undergraduate thesis assists in building a strong resume for future endeavors.”** -Phoebe Tanis, Junior, Secondary English Education

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# NAVIGATING THE THESIS PROCESS CONT.

**“Finding a thesis advisor is about finding balance. Students want to work with faculty who can teach them the skills of researching and writing, balanced with someone who will provide mentorship and support. The thesis is a brand-new genre that very few students write, so the mentorship and support will be really meaningful when comments and updates are necessary. Writing a thesis takes time. Find a thesis advisor early, build rapport! This helps you learn from the research, writing, and revision processes!”**

-Dr. Amber Nicole Pfannenstiel, PhD, Assistant Professor of Digital Media, English



## 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)

## THESIS TIP AND MOTIVATION OF THE MONTH!

**Lindsey Diamond, Business Management major, '21, Honors College, Thesis in Progress:**

“My advice is to pick a topic you are interested in exploring. Your thesis is a significant research paper, and you get out of it what you put into it. With this, writing your paper will feel more enjoyable and less like work. Also, it is a good idea to fill out the thesis class registration form prior to the semester you intend to start your work, and not at the last second, because it goes through so many different people at MU before it is approved and added to your schedule. I learned this the hard way. Finally, my last advice would be to pick a supportive and attentive faculty member who you trust to be your advisor. This will reduce a lot of the unnecessary stress some students writing their thesis go through. But, overall, have a good time with it and try your best!”