

The Honor Roll

A Quarterly Newsletter for Honors
Students, Alumni, Parents and Friends

Summer 2010: Issue 4

New Faces in the Pennoni Honors College



This edition of *The Honor Roll* focuses on the Pennoni Honors College staff as we welcome several new faces and have reassigned a few seasoned staff members.



Although not new to Drexel or the Honors College, Shannon Gary, Ed.D., does have a new title: Associate Dean of the Pennoni Honors College and Director of the Honors Program. Shannon recently completed his doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education and now assumes leadership responsibility for the Honors Program. We're all very proud of Shannon and know that he will bring a host of new ideas to the Honors Program. (See our interview with Shannon in this issue.)

Assisting Shannon is Elaine O'Loughlin, who has transferred within the

PHC receives new gift of \$1 million dollars from Chuck and Annette Pennoni, former Interim President and First Lady of Drexel University!

In gratitude for C.R. (Chuck) Pennoni's pro bono service to the University as Interim President over the past one-and-a-half years, Drexel's Board of Directors recently awarded \$1 million to be gifted to any Drexel unit of his and his wife's choosing. Mr. and Mrs. Pennoni chose to designate the gift to the Pennoni Honors College! We are truly grateful for the Pennoni family's continuing involvement with the Honors College and their generous support, which will enable the PHC to implement new programming to enhance the educational experience of our undergraduates. Look for further information about these new initiatives in future editions of *The Honor Roll*.

An Interview with Shannon Gary, Ed.D. Associate Dean, Pennoni Honors College

Tell us a little about yourself.

I am a native of Philadelphia. After graduating from Central High School of Philadelphia, I matriculated to Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA. I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in



PHC from her previous position as Assistant Dean for Special Projects to her new role as Assistant Dean of the College and Associate Director of the Honors Program. Elaine recently completed her M.Ed. in Adult and Organizational Development from Temple University and brings renewed energy to her new position.



Serving as liaison for the Honors Program and the Office of Residential Living is Carly Day, who has been hired in the newly created position of Honors Program Coordinator. Carly recently earned her M.A. in Counseling in Higher Education from the University of Delaware. Carly will be splitting her time between the PHC main office and a newly established office located on the first floor of the Honors Program Living Learning Community in Millennium Hall.



Also new to the PHC is Jaya Mohan, Assistant Director of the recently established Office of Undergraduate Research. Jaya holds a B.A. in English and an M.A. in Communication from Villanova University. Jaya participated in research as an undergraduate and is looking forward to helping Drexel students have the same invaluable academic experience.



Also new to Drexel is Cindy Schaarschmidt, who has been hired in the newly created position of Fellowship Coordinator. Cindy will be working with Dr. Rona Buchalter to further increase the number of successful fellowship applications from Drexel students.



Drexel Introduces Custom Designed Major Program

Economics and Psychology. My first job after completing my baccalaureate degree was with the Human Resources Department of The Vanguard Group, a financial services company. I was employed with Vanguard for approximately five years before deciding to attend graduate school for Higher Education Management (HEM) at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education (PennGSE). After graduating with my M.S.Ed. in HEM, I accepted a position at Lafayette College. At the same time, I began course work toward my Educational Doctorate in HEM, also at PennGSE. Prior to my current position at Drexel, I worked for the Temple University Honors Program.

I am actively involved in a number of professional organizations, including the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE); the National Association of Academic Advisors (NACADA); the American Educational Research Association (AERA). I also serve as a mentor with Philadelphia Futures.

In my free time, I enjoy socializing with friends and watching movies (spy thrillers are my favorite).

Can you give us an idea of your vision for the Honors Program and some of the new ideas and programming you'll be implementing this year?

The Honors Program has accomplished a lot under the leadership of Dr. Mark Greenberg, University Provost, and Dr. Dave Jones, Dean of the Pennoni Honors College. I hope to continue their legacy of achievement. In addition to increasing the variety and quality of Honors courses, I plan to focus on strengthening the Honors Program's community of scholars' relationship with each other and the institution. With the resurgence of the Honors Student Advisory Committee (HSAC), we hope to create a program where students have a critical role in the direction of the program. Working primarily with the Honors Program Coordinator, we look forward to expanding the influence and relationship Honors students have with the Program and University. In addition, we plan to create opportunities for Honors students to form stronger relationships with Program staff, University faculty, and Program partners. Ultimately, I see these improvements as critical steps to creating a program that will continually develop and challenge our students to reach their highest potential.

Why should students participate in the Honors Program?

The Honors Program is an excellent opportunity to

Beginning in Fall 2011, a very limited number of entering freshmen Drexel honors students will have a new opportunity: to major in the Custom Designed Major Program. Developed by Dean Dave Jones and a committee of interested Drexel faculty members and approved by the Faculty Senate, the Custom Designed Major Program will give highly motivated students the opportunity to craft an interdisciplinary educational program unique to their interests and talents. All Custom Designed Major Program students will be advised by Dr. Scott Knowles, Director of the Great Works Symposium.

Great Works Symposium in Shanghai



Professor Scott Knowles (center) and Drexel honor students arrive in Shanghai for Expo 2010

Each year, the Pennoni Honors College sponsors travel-integrated "courses of opportunity" for honors students as part of our commitment to enhance and deepen their undergraduate education. This summer, the Great Works Symposium offered a course on the history of the World's Fairs. A selected group of Honors students in the course, led by Dr. Scott Knowles, then attended the Shanghai World Expo 2010. Dr. Knowles and the students spent ten days in Shanghai and World Expo 2010, which is based on the theme of "Better City, Better Life." Through their travel and study, the students examined the unfolding construction, promotions, political contexts, and actual experience of the fair, in part through an innovative partnership with Jiao Tong University in Shanghai.

augment the student experience here at Drexel. Being a part of the Honors Program affords students the opportunity to take full advantage of Drexel and what the institution has to offer. Students who participate will be challenged academically and will find themselves part of a community that nurtures its members. Essentially, we aspire to create the most fruitful experience while maintaining the integrity of the Honors Program.

What message(s) do you have for current Drexel undergraduates?

Many Drexel students focus on the potential careers they plan to pursue after they receive their undergraduate degree. While this is important—and, of course, a major reason students earn a Bachelor's degree—I would implore our students to enjoy this time in their lives. Take advantage of the opportunity to take classes simply because you are interested, explore Philadelphia and the surrounding areas—the Cultural Passport is a great tool for this, and get involved so that you are an active participant in the community. Lastly, take this time to examine who you are as a person and embrace it as you transition into adulthood.

Next Steps...

The Pennoni Honors College is dedicated to the development of Drexel's best and brightest students. Your contribution of \$20 or more will help us defray the increasing costs of quality programming and fund the participation of students to cultural events and travel-integrated courses. We encourage you to visit our website (www.drexel.edu/honors) to get more information about our programs. And always feel free to call the Pennoni Honors College at 215-895-1267 with questions.

To support the important work of the Pennoni Honors College, please send donations to—Pennoni Honors College, c/o John Keleher, Ed.D., Assistant Vice President, Office of Institutional Advancement, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the Pennoni Honors College.

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