

WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

HONORS COLLEGE NEWS

ISSUE NO. 6—FALL 2024



Honors College hosts Research Day 2024



Honors Research Day was held Monday, December 2, showcasing the work of Honors first year students enrolled in Honors 1000 Research Seminars and Honors seniors who completed one of the eleven Honors Tracks during the fall semester.

The event included poster presentations in the University Ballrooms where over 115 first year Honors students presented the research they conducted during the fall semester. This marks the 4th year Honors has hosted this event for the successful Honors research seminars, which are designed to introduce students to seminar-style learning and provide incoming Honors students with an opportunity to experience guided research.

"This is the first time many first-year students have the opportunity to present their research in this kind of atmosphere," said Dr. Barbara Andrew, Dean of the Honors College. "It is an exciting opportunity for them to get hands-on experience and to contribute knowledge through their findings. Students deepen their understanding of their work by presenting it to others which often becomes one of their favorite first-year memories."

The research topics vary and are typically focused on a historical or current question, theme, or concept. The instructors who teach the courses mentor the students and guide them through their projects. Please see page 2 for more about the Honors 1000 seminar courses that were offered during the fall 2024 semester.

Also, as part of Honors Research Day, individual senior presentations were held during the afternoon and evening in UC 168 A/B. The 15 minute presentations gave students an opportunity to present Honors their thesis projects to the university community and highlight the work they have completed during their junior and senior years, under the direction of their Honors Track Director and other faculty members. The list of senior presenters, their topics, and the names of their thesis supervisors is on page 2.

It was wonderful to see so many students, faculty, staff, administrators, students' family members, and members of the Honors Advisory Council at this event in support of student research at William Paterson University.



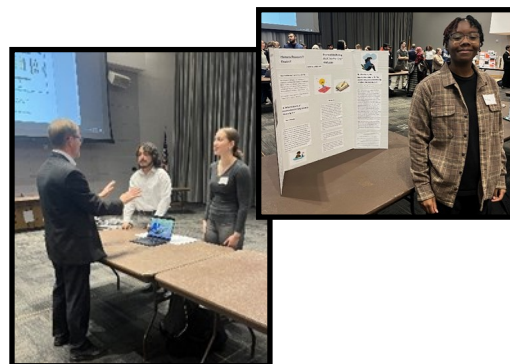
A Message from Dean Andrew



Dr. Barbara Andrew

The WP University Honors College is committed to educational excellence within and outside the classroom. In this edition of the newsletter, you will find the highlights of our December Research Day,

during which first-year students and senior students presented research and creative performances. And, you will find the highlights of our Fall civic engagement activities, especially the Honors Coat Drive, now in its 18th year. Both endeavors enrich students' academic journeys and contribute to their personal growth. Alongside delving into research topics of their own choosing, students created community goodwill and worked to make the world a better place – both through their research and through their service. Honors strives to create a culture in which students' individual work helps create a brighter future for all of us.



Save the Date!

Honors Research Week 2025

April 21–25

More details and the full schedule will be available in the spring semester.

Honors Research Day



Honors First Year Students on Research Day

Fall 2024 Honors 1000 Research Seminars

HON 1000-001—Questioning the Self Through Media

Dr. Laura Di Summa, Associate Professor,
Department of History, Philosophy, and Liberal Studies

HON 1000-0002—The Impacts of Intersectional Oppressions

Dr. Elizabeth Harkins, Associate Professor, Department of
Special Education, Professional Counseling, and Disability
Studies; Mr. Tony Joachim, Instructional Design Librarian,
David and Lorraine Cheng Library

HON 1000-0003—Justice, Equity, and Joy in Public Education

Mr. Neil Grimes, Education and Curriculum Materials
Librarian; Mr. Gary Marks, Reference and Outreach Librarian

HON 1000-04— Social Research

Dr. Jacob Felson, Associate Professor and Department Chair,
Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice

HON 1000-05—Writing for Wellness

Dr. Martha Witt, Professor, Department of Language,
Literature, Culture, and Writing

HON 1000-06—Artificial Intelligence

Dr. Peter Mandik, Professor,
Department of History, Philosophy, and Liberal Studies

Honors Research Day Senior Presenters

BIOLOGY TRACK

David Cundumi—*Honeybee Gut Microbiome*

Thesis Advisors: Dr. Emily Monroe and Dr. Martin Kendall

Jenna Issa—*Feeding Response of Free Flying Honeybees
to Neonicotinoids*

Thesis Advisors: Dr. Emily Monroe and Dr. David Gilley

COGNITIVE SCIENCE TRACK

Camila Vasquez—*Researching the Perseveration Skills of Language
in Bilingual College Students*

Thesis Advisors: Dr. Amy Learmonth and Dr. Michael Gordon

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROPSYCHOLOGY TRACK

Kassandra Hawkes—*Mental Health Service Utilization
and Personality*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Bruce Diamond

Katrina Spelda—*Neurofeedback as a Treatment for Learning
Disabilities*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Bruce Diamond

HUMANITIES TRACK

Joshua McCollum—*Early Childhood Teaching Philosophies*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. K. Molly O'Donnell

INDEPENDENT TRACK

Adham Mustafa—*Understanding the Gaps of Physical Activity
Barriers and Facilitators Across Diverse Populations*

Thesis Advisors: Dr. Barbara Andrew and Dr. Jason Wicke

MUSIC TRACK

George Ferguson—*Cognitive Development with Music Involvement*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Christopher Herbert

Brianna Liller—*Performance Anxiety in a Fixed Versus
Growth Mindset*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Christopher Herbert

Austin Sidito—*Fach it!: The Transition from Baritone to Tenor*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Christopher Herbert

Agustin Tecalero—*Comparative Analysis of Conductors'
Performances of Beethoven's Third Symphony*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Christopher Herbert

Eva Tobin—*Children's Musicals: From Screen, To Stage,
To Classroom*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Christopher Herbert

SOCIAL SCIENCES TRACK

Hannah Liss—*Using or Abusing: Empathy and Stigma
Towards Overdose*

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Danielle Wallace

Learning Outside the Classroom

Happiness Hike



First year Honors course professors, Dr. Molly O'Donnell and Dr. Tj Gundling, assigned students in HIST 1000 *The Well Lived Life* and ANTH 1300 *Diversity of Humankind*, to take and reflect on pictures of five things that made them happy during a class hike in the High Mountain Nature Preserve on Oct 3rd. The hike connected with lessons on spiritual well-being, mindfulness, and improving observation skills.



On 10/10, the same classes were asked to reflect on their personal observations from a visit to the Paterson Great Falls National Park.

Fall Museum Trip

Over 30 Honors College students, along with faculty members, Dr. Molly O'Donnell and Dr. Tj Gundling, spent the day in New York City at the American Museum of Natural History and the New York Historical Society on Saturday, November 16th. Students had the unique opportunity to tour the museums and discuss artifacts with experienced faculty members and other Honors students. The group also enjoyed a walk through Central Park.



Peer Leader Madison Knueppel, a junior in the Honors College, always signs up for experiences like this that are designed to broaden students' cultural and social experiences. "It opens the doors to bond with faculty members you may never see outside of the classroom," said Knueppel, who encourages all students to sign up for the museum trips that are organized and funded by the Honors College.



Being successful in Honors



Dr. Barbara Andrew moderated a "Hear From Your Peers" panel discussion that gave Honors students an opportunity to hear tips for success from Honors seniors. Panelists included (from left): Alanna Timmons, George Ferguson, Jason Peralta, and Camila Vasquez.



An Honors Track Information session was held in November for students to get information about the various Honors Tracks. Pictured top left, Track Director, Dr. Molly O'Donnell and student, Madison Knueppel, tell students about the Humanities Track, and (top right), Track Director, Dr. John Malindretos discusses the Honors Business Track.

Honors Coat Drive

The annual Honors Coat Drive is a wrap!

The 18th annual Coat Drive hosted by the Honors College and the Honors Club recently concluded. Honors collected 440 coats and hundreds of winter accessories (gloves, mittens, hats, scarves, socks,) and donated the items to The Father English Community Center in Paterson and to Paterson Cares for distribution throughout the city of Paterson. We are so pleased to be able to continue this tradition of helping local families and individuals in need!



Preparation began back in October when the Honors College and Honors Club hosted a Coat Drive Kick-Off and interactive Civic Engagement Fair that was attended by over 80 students.

During this event, students learned about the purpose of civic engagement, participated in an exercise on their cosmic personal journey, signed up for fall civic engagement opportunities, and learned about opportunities to be leaders on campus. Thanks to Provost Powers for speaking at this event.

With funding from the Student Government Association, students attending the Kick-Off and Civic Engagement Fair assembled 120 packages of children's hat and glove sets for the children at Children's Day Preschool and Family Center in Passaic.

The Honors Coat Drive is successful due to the support of the entire University Community. For example, President Helldobler gave donations; Susan Astarita and the staff of the Registrar's Office collected coats in

their office and donated them; and individuals like Gamin Bartle, Chief Information Officer, and Associate Provost Jonathan Lincoln stopped by the office with their donations. We also heard from friends of Honors like Cathy Bertani, who retired several years ago, but continues as an adjunct professor at William Paterson, and former Honors student Ashley Pettet who serves on the Honors Advisory Council and her mom, Denise, also a WP alum. Even our Honors graduate assistant, Kourtney Scipio, got involved!

We are also so appreciative for the support of the College of Science and Health for the use of their van to deliver the items, and to the Cotsakos College of Business Dean's Office at 1800 Valley Road and the Center for Degree Completion and Adult Learning at 1600 Valley Road for hosting collection boxes at their locations.

The Honors College and Honors Club would like to thank all the students who helped in some way, including the Honors office assistants, and all the students who helped process and load the donations, and helped deliver them to Father English.

Last but not least, several Honors students volunteered to host their own mini-coat drives out in their communities and donate the items they collected to the Honors Coat Drive. The students were recognized at the Honors Winter Reception on Tuesday, 12/10. Please see the next page for more information about the students who went above and beyond to help make the coat drive a success.



Student-led Mini Coat Drives



Reggie Aziz with Honors Graduate Assistant Kourtney Scipio (left) and Madison Kneuppel (right)

Reggie Aziz, a first-year student in the Honors College and a student worker at the Educational Opportunity Fund office, hosted her own Mini Coat Drive this semester. Reggie stated that she was inspired to do this project because she “had never run her own event, and really wanted to put herself out there as a freshman.”

Reggie placed a collection box in the EOF office, and advertised to professors and classmates. Reggie reflects on why she believes the

Coat Drive is important. “This event matters so much because the Honors College has many members helping and we have the ability to make a difference and bring in many donations. Even just one item will help someone stay warm.”



Sereniti Catoe (left) with Honors Graduate Assistant Kourtney Scipio

Sophomore **Sereniti Catoe** hosted a mini coat drive at her home in Haledon, and collected through friends, church members, and her women’s group, “Fruitfully Feminine.” According to Sereniti, “This wonderful service project appealed to me because when I look around at my own life and people close to me, I recognize the immense supply we have; not just clothing-wise, but the supply of comfort and love.”

For her collection, Sereniti placed boxes at her job and outside of her church and had very positive results. “This project was deeply motivated by my ambition to make sure that in a cold, bitter season, warmth and kindness could embrace our community,” she said.



Jordan David

Jordan David, an Honors junior, hosted a very successful coat drive at her place of employment, Holsten’s Brookdale Confectionary in Bloomfield. “My community showed incredible generosity, and I learned that people are often eager to help when given the opportunity,” she said. “Many customers expressed their gratitude for the

project and shared kind words about the effort, with some even starting conversations about my personal goals and aspirations. It was surprising and heartwarming to see how an act of service could bring people together in such a meaningful way.”

For David, this coat drive was more than just a community service project; it was an opportunity to connect with others, address a pressing social issue, and witness the power of collective action.



Natalie Donda

Senior **Natalie Donda** hosted her own Mini Coat Drive for the second year! Donda said that through this experience, she learned that she does enjoy helping others and gained confidence by conducting the project on her own. The positive response she received helped her realize that people care and want to help.”

I realized that a small project like this can help many people and make a positive impact,” she said. Donda reflected on why the Mini Coat Drive is so important. “I think the next step is to keep doing what we are doing, while also raising awareness about poverty and homelessness in the community we are helping. Awareness could help inspire more people to get involved and even start their own mini-coat drives.”



Jayla James (right) with Honors Graduate Assistant Kourtney Scipio

Jayla James, a sophomore, credited her inspiration to run her own coat drive to her concern about societal issues, and also due to her own self awareness. “I am fortunate enough to have a winter coat and the means to purchase one if needed,” said James, who admits that privileges like these are ones we often take for granted. “Due to financial circumstances, many people have to choose

between basic necessities, such as food, medical care, and clothing. Participating in the coat drive pushed me to think about those living in poverty, and all of the systemic practices contributing to this prevalent societal issue.” James also mentioned the generosity of her church community, and how she found that many people were interested in donating and making a difference.



Angela Marcucilli

Angela Marcucilli, a junior, reflected on what running her coat drive and participating in civic engagement has taught her.

“I have learned how much gratitude, leadership skills, and empathy can be gained from acts of service and connecting with my community,” said Marcucilli. “As a nursing student, civic engagement opportunities like the coat

drive have been essential in shaping me to be an empathetic and culturally sensitive caretaker in the future.”

Angie hopes to inspire people. “Together as a community we can organize additional events to support fulfilling other critical needs of underserved communities. Additionally, and just as importantly, we should continue to educate others on the importance of civic engagement and inspire them to make an impact in their community.”

Civic Engagement

Slices of Service



During the fall 2024 semester, Honors College students made over 400 sandwiches that were distributed to local people in need! "Slices of Service" was held once a month in the Honors Office. Students volunteered to make peanut and butter jelly sandwiches, and then packaged them, along with handwritten notes of encouragement. Honors partnered with the local non-profit organization, "Paterson Cares," to distribute the sandwiches to unhoused individuals.



Saturday Service

Saturday Service continued throughout the fall semester at the Father English Food Pantry in Paterson. Students go to Father English on Saturday mornings, where they help package bags of food and stock shelves. We were excited that Provost Josh Powers joined us again this semester to work alongside the Honors students.



Honors at University Events

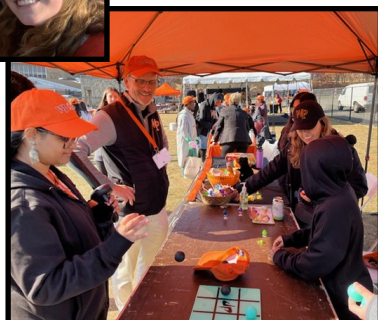
Communiversity Day



The Honors College hosted a tent at the University's "Communiversity Day" in September featuring a tailgate for the first football game of the season.

Individuals who visited the Honors tent had the opportunity to make small, self-care packages for OASIS, an organization that serves women and children in Paterson who are experiencing poverty. Pio stopped by to take a photo with Honors Peer leaders, Sarah Weissberg and Madison Knueppel.

WP Homecoming 2024



The University Homecoming was held Saturday, November 9th. Honors College Peer Leaders Rory Stansfield, Sarah Weissberg, Camila Vasquez, and Angela Marcucilli assisted at the Family Fun Carnival with Dean Barbara Andrew, Associate Director Jan Pinkston, and Humanities Honors Track Director Dr. Molly O'Donnell! The Honors College provided drinks, snacks, prizes, and games. It was great seeing so many students, faculty, staff, and alums!

Fall Open House



Dr. Andrew, along with Peer Leaders, Madison Knueppel, Sarah Weissberg, and Camila Vasquez, represented the Honors College at one of the University's Open House events this fall. The group was excited to meet prospective students and their families, and help them learn about all that the University has to offer.

Honors College Advisory Council News

This fall, the Honors College Advisory Council gained a new member, Julie Minicozzi. We are so pleased to welcome Julie, who is an associate at Lowenstein Sandler and an Honors alum. She joins the other members of the council: Sandy DeYoung, former William Paterson University Provost and Dean of the College of Science and Health; John De Luca, Senior Vice-President for Research, Kessler Foundation; Ashley Pettet, Singer, Recording and



Dr. James Van Wyck with Honors students, Owen Walter, Jason Peralta, Madison Knueppel, and Honors Graduate Assistant, Kourtney Scipio.

Performing Artist; Kleo Phili, LIC. R.E Salesperson, Brown Harris Stevens Residential Sales; and James Van Wyck, Assistant Dean for Professional Development, Princeton University Graduate School.

In September, Honors Advisory Council member, Dr. James Van Wyck, met with several students in the Honors Office and

discussed the advantages of being in the Honors College, future goals, and the importance of networking during college.

Faculty and Staff News



Dr. Barbara Andrew, Dean of the Honors College, has been named Academic Affairs Fellow for Student Success. In addition to her duties as Honors Dean, she will be providing focused leadership for student success projects in the Academic Affairs Division, such as assisting with retention and persistence initiatives in collaboration with others on the 1000 level course initiative, Faculty as Mentor program, and Navigate usage, including its analytics.



Dr. Elizabeth Harkins, was named Honors Fellow for the 2024-2025 Academic Year. Dr. Harkins is an Associate Professor in the Department of Special Education, Professional Counseling, and Disability Studies, and also serves as the program director of the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Advanced Master's program. Welcome, Dr. Harkins!



Jan Pinkston, Honors College Associate Director, was awarded the 2024 Pioneer Award from William Paterson University for Community Leadership and her devotion to Civic Engagement inside and outside of WP. Jan's dedicated to the Honors College and helping people in need encouraged Honors students to achieve over 3,000 service hours during the 2023-2024 academic year.

In Memoriam

Professor of Biology, Dr. Joseph Spagna, died June 17, 2024. Dr. Spagna had served as the Director of the Honors Biology Track since 2015, mentoring students and guiding them through complicated research projects. The students' success is a testament to his skilled stewardship of their projects.



Dr. Joseph Spagna

In addition to his service as Track Director, Dr. Spagna was very involved with Honors over the years, helping to plan trips to museums in New York City and Philadelphia, and assisting with the annual Honors Coat Drive. In addition to being deeply knowledgeable about science, he had great ideas about field trips and topics like decolonization, art and society, and the way that science is impacted by political trends, among other things. He also proudly wore his ugly holiday sweater each December at Honors events.

Dr. Spagna was recently honored posthumously with a Pioneer Recognition Award from William Paterson University. This award recognizes his exceptional contributions to the WP community, particularly in the Faculty as Mentor award category.



WP Honors College wins national award

The Honors College received First-Place in the 2024 Faculty/Administrator/Student Electronic Newsletter Category from the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC). This national award was presented in November at the NCHC Conference in Kansas City to Dean Barbara Andrew and Jan Pinkston, who both worked on the Newsletter, along with former Honors student, Helen Yousaf, '24. Pictured are (from left): Eddie Weller, President of the National Collegiate Honors Council; Jan Pinkston, Dr. Barbara Andrew, and Kathryn MacDonald, Chair of the NCHC Publications Board. (Photo by Chandler Michael Culotta)

Honors Track Director News

This fall, we welcomed new Honors Track Directors, Dr. Christopher Herbert (Music Track) and Dr. Emily Monroe (Biology Track). We also thank Dr. Michael Gordon for serving as the interim Track Director of the Cognitive Science Track while Dr. Amy Learmonth is away on sabbatical during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Winter Reception



Honors Faculty and Staff with the students who were recognized for conducting their own mini-coat drives. (Photo by Claire Johnson)



A large crowd attended the Honors Winter Reception on Tuesday, 12/10 in the ballrooms. During the event, students were recognized for their service to the annual Honors Coat Drive and sophomores and other students received Honors lapel pins. (Photo by Claire Johnson)



Students who received Honors lapel pins with Dean Andrew and Jan Pinkston. (Photo by Claire Johnson)

— HONORS COLLEGE TRACK DIRECTORS —

Dr. Barbara Andrew
Independent

Dr. Bruce Diamond
Clinical Psychology
and Neuropsychology

Dr. Christopher Herbert
Music

Dr. Michael Gordon
(Interim) Cognitive Science

Dr. John Malindretos
Business

Dr. Emily Monroe
Biology

Dr. Jill Nocella
Nursing

Dr. K. Molly O'Donnell
Humanities

Dr. Marianne Sullivan
Global Public Health

Dr. Danielle Wallace
Social Sciences

Dr. Martha Witt
Performing and Literary Arts

WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE

Barbara Andrew
Dean

Elizabeth Harkins
Honors College Fellow

Jan Pinkston
Associate Director

Kourtney Scipio
Graduate Assistant

Helenah Comia and Madison Kneuppel
Office Interns

**Madison Kneuppel, Angie Marcucilli, Jason Peralta,
Rory Stansfield, Camila Vasquez, Owen Walter,
and Sarah Weissberg**
Honors Peer Leaders

Hannah Comia and Ashanti Jones
Honors Academic Support Coaches