

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
THE HONORA

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 1

FALL 2008

From the Director's Desk

Dr. Nikolova

Honors Program Helps Bring International Scholars and Artists to Campus



Dr. Ofelia Nikolova

This fall, we at the Honors Program have been very busy working with several other departments and clubs across campus and in the state to bring to VSU renowned International scholars and artists. As you all know, our Program is dedicated to interdisciplinary education and we love cooperating with other entities on campus and beyond, in

order to provide you, our students, with great experiences. Seize these unique opportunities for interdisciplinary enrichment and exposure to leading examples of international art and thought. Don't miss any of the events we have planned for you!

Quite a few of you already enjoyed French author and scholar Daniel Royot's lecture. Read about it in a separate article in this issue of the HONORA.

The Honors program, along with the Modern and Classical Languages Department and other groups on campus, is co-sponsoring the visit of Maestro Francesc de Paula Soler, a world-renowned acoustic guitar player from Spain. Maestro Soler will lecture in several classes and will perform a concert entitled "The Poet of the Guitar, A Musical Journey through the Hispanic World," scheduled for Saturday, October 18 at 7:30 p.m. in Whitehead Auditorium. Maestro Soler's visit is part of the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration organized by MCL.

On Monday, October 27, one of the best ensembles of balalayka players will visit VSU as special guests of the Honors program. Hailing from Syktyvkar, Russia, the group's visit is being arranged with the help of the USG Consortia and Bainbridge College. These Russian musicians have mesmerized audiences all over the world including France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Brazil, Tunisia, and the former Yugoslavia. They will discuss their homeland and the history of their folk instruments in a lecture in the UC Theater at 7 p.m. A concert immediately follows the lecture and is open to the public.

Recognition:

Dr. Ofelia Nikolova
Honors Program Director

Ashlie Braswell
Student Assistant,
Webmaster, Editor-in-Chief

Mrs. Jane Robinson
Program Secretary

Honors 2008-2009
Executive Officers:
President: Jay Prosser
Vice President: Ray Barrett
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From the Directors Desk: Continued

Finally, the Honors Program has partnered with the Philosophy and Religious Studies Club to sponsor a concert and several lectures on campus by Esha Bandyopadhaya, a world-renowned Indian musician. For Bandyopadhaya, music is fundamentally spiritual experience. In her words, “My pursuits in art and music have always been the magic wand through my life. The experience of listening, learning and performing music has naturally had a soothing impact and brought a special insight into my philosophy of life. The sound waves moving within the body and emanating from the mouth are the expression of the entire being. It is Sadhana or meditation itself.” Ms. Bandyopadhaya’s lecture and concert are scheduled for Tuesday, October 28 at 7:30 p.m. in Pound Hall (North Campus – the Langdale Business School).

Fall Events: Freshmen Colloquium and Convocation

Ashlie Braswell, Webmaster to the Honors Program

Two trademark events of the VSU Honors Program are the Freshmen Colloquium and the Fall Convocation. This Fall, they went off without a hitch. Detailed preparations were done by the Honors Student Association, Honors faculty and staff. The purpose of these events is to welcome the incoming students, to promote camaraderie, and set example to the VSU campus of enthusiasm for our wonderful program.

On Sunday, August 17, 2008 the Honors Program and the Honors Student Association hosted the Fourth Fall Honors Freshman Colloquium sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs. The Colloquium took place in the University Center and featured Sonia Nazario’s Pulitzer Prize winning book *Enrique’s Journey*. A record number of incoming Honors freshmen – seventy-six - showed up for the event. Dr. Ofélia Nikolova, Director of the Honors Program welcomed the new students. The Dean of Arts & Sciences, Dr. Connie Richards introduced Dr. Susan Wehling, Associate Professor of Spanish from the Department of Modern and Classical Languages as the keynote speaker for the event. Dr. Wehling delivered a stirring address entitled “Immigration and Us”. On behalf of HSA, Jay Prosser, its new President, gave away some enticing door prizes. Small breakout sessions were then formed where the students, along with two faculty leaders, discussed their thoughts on *Enrique’s Journey*. In addition to Dr. Richards, Dr. Wehling, and Dr. Nikolova, the following faculty volunteered their time as discussion leaders, Dr. Dennis Bogyo, Professor of Biology Emeritus, Dr. Byron Brown, Professor of English, Dr. Michael Davey, Associate Professor of English, Dr. Brian Ring, Associate Professor of Biology. Afterwards, the students were invited to come to a reception at the Honors house for further discussion and mingling.

The Honors Convocation brought together more than one hundred and twenty Honors students, representatives of the Honors faculty, and VSU administrators. Dr. Ofelia Nikolova, director of the Honors Program, gave some opening remarks. Dr. Louis Levy, Vice President for Academic Affairs greeted the Honors students and wished them a successful start. Dr. Connie Richards, the new Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences also addressed the students and introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. Michael Baun. His stimulating talk entitled “To Europe, from America and Back” discussed the European Union and what this cooperation of nations means for us as American citizens. A reception was held afterwards where cookies and refreshments were served.





Grüße von Marburg!

W. Jake Newsome, ACES "Foreign Correspondent"

Greetings from Marburg to my fellow Autonomous Coalition of Exceptional Scholars! For those who may not know me, I served as HSA Vice-President last year, 2007-2008. However, I am not at VSU this year; instead, I am participating in a year-long ISEP exchange program to Marburg, Germany. So, I suppose I will be acting as HSA's "Foreign Correspondent" for the next year.

The city of Marburg is a very historic one, located about an hour's train ride north of Frankfurt, in the German state of Hesse. The university that I'm attending, Philipps-Universität Marburg, was founded in 1527 and is the oldest Protestant university in the world. Philipps-Universität is world renowned for its medical and science programs (the first ever Nobel Prize for Medicine was awarded to one of its professors), but it also boasts a very strong Humanities department. Its two most famous students (to Americans, anyway) were the Brothers Grimm.

I will begin studying history in mid-October when the semester begins. Until then, I will be brushing up on my German by taking language classes every day, because all of my classes will be taught in German!

The city itself is very beautiful, but its dominant focal point is the large castle perched on top of the hill. What an amazing sight! About 50,000 people live at the heart of Marburg, and the university has about 20,000 students; so you can see that Marburg, like Valdosta, is definitely a university city!

I have heard from several people that the ACES are off to a good start there in Valdosta. I wish the officers the best of luck, and all of you much luck throughout the semester.

Until next time,
Tschüss!

The Honors Program Welcomes a New Graduate Assistant: Tobi Lovelace

Ashlie Braswell, Webmaster to the Honors Program

The Honors Program is proud to welcome our new Graduate assistant, Tobi Lovelace. Tobi finds her home in Fayetteville, GA. She graduated from the University of Georgia in Athen in 2008 with a degree in Family and Consumer Sciences with a major in Child and Family development. She came straight from getting her undergraduate degree into Graduate school here at VSU. When asked about the Honors program she said, "I think the Honors program is a great place for an intimate learning environment and helps the students feel more of a connection with other students and their professors."



The Honors Program Welcomes a New Student Assistant: Jessica Tucker

Ashlie Braswell, Webmaster to the Honors Program



The Honors Program has recently had a wonderful addition to the family. We are proud to say that we have a new student assistant through the work-study program, Jessica Tucker. A native of Moultrie, Georgia, Jessica is a junior seeking a B.A in music. She is very active in the marching band here at Valdosta State University. Jessica has been playing the clarinet for nine years and is currently one of the first clarinets in the marching band.

Working at the Honors House is her first experience in the work-study program. She says that the Honors House is "a great place to work. We have a lot of fun while getting things done."

Spotlight On...

Welcome Our New Honors Professors!



Dr. Napoleon Bamfo, a native of Ghana, has been teaching at VSU since 1993. He received his PhD in Political Science at the University of Georgia in 1992. Dr. Bamfo is currently involved in several research projects including one on the recent elections in Zimbabwe. When asked about his experience with the Honors students he says, “Teaching Honors students has been a pleasure. Students are attentive, involved and committed. I notice less class absences on average than in regular classes. Class discussion is more in-depth. Students express themselves with less inhibition. The class is small and there is a greater intimacy. [...]”



Dr. Rick Carpenter was born in a rural town west of Charlotte, North Carolina. He holds a MA in English Literature and a Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition. Dr. Carpenter has taught all levels of students, from seventh graders to college. His teaching and research interests include popular culture, electronic literacy, and genre theory. Dr. Carpenter has an article coming out soon in the journal *Computers and Composition* that explores connections between genre theory and literacy practices in electronic environments. When asked about teaching Honors classes he said, “This semester is my first time teaching Honors classes here at VSU, and I am thoroughly enjoying the experience! My students are simply awesome, reflecting, I believe, the quality of both our Honors Program and the students here at VSU in general. What I especially appreciate about my Honors students is their willingness—indeed, eagerness—to explore new intellectual terrain. [...] They are more intrigued rather than nervous when I start class by discussing semiotics instead of, say, the five-paragraph theme.” Dr. Carpenter would “absolutely” teach more Honors courses if offered the opportunity.



Dr. Brian Ring received his BS in biology and Ph.D. in molecular genetics from Florida State University. He has worked in several postdoctoral positions before joining the VSU faculty in 2006. Currently, his research focuses on genetic mechanisms that control the unique reproductive biology of the world’s only hermaphroditic vertebrate, the mangrove Killifish. Says Dr. Ring about his BIOL 1951H Honors Cellular Processes class “I really enjoy every bit of it, from our group discussion style lecture to the laboratory. It is a refreshing experience to teach non-majors in an enriched environment of philosophical thought and perspective on the subject matter of the basic unit of life, the cell. The Honors students in my course have reminded me that there are many questions to be answered about life at the cellular level and quite frankly inspire me to learn more about the field.” Dr. Ring finds that “Honors classes are different in that the typical structure of lecture, exam, and grade, are more enjoyable when the professor and students work together to learn the material and inquire beyond the typical fact-based structure of learning to expand their knowledge together.” Dr. Ring enjoys his BIOL 1951H and would like to start a BIOL 2010H for majors in Biology at some point.



Dr. Donna Sewell received her undergraduate and master's degrees from Valdosta State College and a PhD from Florida State University. When asked about her experience teaching Honors classes she says, "I enjoy teaching Honors students. They are a good group of very bright and engaging students. I can expect more of them. [...]" Dr. Sewell has a preference for teaching the ENGL 1101H over her current ENGL 1102H, but says many Honors students bypass it because of AP credit.



Dr. Dennis Bogyo, Professor of Biology Emeritus, has recently entered what he likes to call a "transition period." The word "retirement" does not suit him at all. Although he is officially retired, he is still teaching several honors courses. Dr. Bogyo, born in Hungary, received his B.S in Chemistry from Earlham College. Later, he went on to get his Ph.D in Pharmacology from Suny at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He has done many research projects in various aspects of science. Two of the many subjects this brilliant mind has done research is cancer and bioethics. Before his retiring in 2008, Dr. Bogyo was an active member of the faculty for twenty-five years, twenty of which he taught honors classes along with regular biology classes. He enjoys the small class sizes and the flexibility that honors classes offer. This period in his life he says, "feels normal. I am looking forward to continuing teaching. I am a big believer in the humanities and a liberal arts education. The Honors program allows me to pursue these beliefs." The Honors program strongly hopes that Dr. Bogyo's new office in the Honors House stays occupied for a long time to come.

Valdosta State Hosts a French Scholar: Daniel Royot

Ashlie Braswell, Webmaster to the Honors Program



Thursday, October 2, 2008 the Magnolia Room of the University Center at Valdosta State University was full of eager students and VSU faculty to listen to a thought-provoking, and entertaining speech entitled "Bald Eagle and Rooster: The Paradox of Americanization and Anti-Americanism in France." This speech was given by Dr. Daniel Royot, Professor Emeritus of American Literature and Civilization from Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris. As told by the title, the speech explored the relations between France and the United States throughout the past three centuries. After the speech, pictures from French school books on United States History were shown to give the audience a different perspective of our country. The floor was then opened to questions for Dr. Royot. Refreshments were provided at the conclusion of the talk. The next day, Friday October 3, 2008, a luncheon was held in honor of Dr. Royot and his wife. This luncheon provided a more intimate environment for the participating 15 Honors students to get to know the Royot family and ask more questions. The participants also were able to enjoy delicious food and dessert provided by VSU catering. These events were sponsored by the Honors Program and the English Department of Valdosta State University. We would like to thank Drs. Mark Smith, David Buehrer, and Michael Davey from the Department of English for their help with the Royot visit.

The Honors Program Holds an Open House

Ashlie Braswell, Webmaster to the Honors Program



On Tuesday September 30, 2008 the Honors Program held an Open House. Many excellent students came to see how the Honors Program would enhance their academic career at Valdosta State University. Many members of the program came to help answer any questions that were brought by the inquisitive

minds of the prospective Honors students. The Honors Program would like to thank all of the curious students that came out to see what this program has to offer. Approximately fifty prospective Honors Students showed up out of whom twenty applied and were accepted into the program. Also, the program would like to give a big thank you to the current members that came to help out. And yet again, thank you Ms. Robinson for shopping for supplies, setting up the refreshment table. Many special thanks go to Jay Prosser, the president of the Honors Student Association and Doel Parrilla who gave the orientation sessions!

An Update from the HSA

Jay Prosser, President of the HSA, and Ashlie Braswell, Webmaster to the Honors Program

The Honors Student Association (HSA) was represented at the 17th annual "The Happening", which took place Thursday August 28, 2008 on the VSU campus. Many other organizations from the university and businesses in the surrounding area participated in the event. The purpose of "The Happening" is to connect the students of Valdosta State University to the community of Valdosta, GA and to the on-campus organizations. One other big event going on for the HSA this year is the Haunted House Project that is coming to fruition under the direction of Michael Holman. This will be taking place the week of Halloween at the Honors House. Come and see the HSA turn the Honors House into something truly spooky. Keep an eye out for advertisements and announcements on the Honors website. The HSA is also getting involved in tutoring with S.L Mason and the V.E.C.A program in Valdosta City Schools. Finally, the Georgia Collegiate Honors Conference (GCHC) is rapidly approaching. All Honors students are strongly encouraged to submit papers and/or posters. This year we are the proud hosts of the conference. Let us show off our brain power to the entire state of Georgia.



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***Honors Program -
Dedication To Distinction***

Announcements

Come see the HSA turn the Honors House into a Haunted House!

Don't Forget to Register - Check Your

E-Mail for Class Seats Available!

Come By and Take a Look at the Honors House Seasonal Decorations!

Come to our distinguished lecture series!