

# THE HONORA

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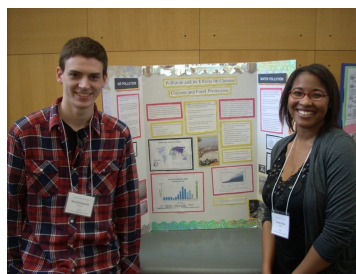
SPRING 2011

## Honors Students Excel at GCHC!



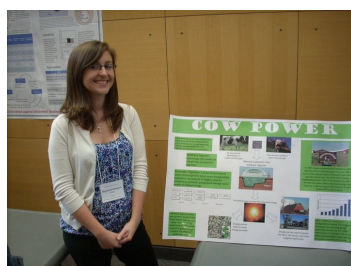
Gabriella Granda presents her paper

This special section was organized and moderated by Dr. Matthew Richard; his students shared their documentary videos about social issues in Valdosta. Our own Jennifer Stakich was elected Member-at-Large of GCHC!



David DeMerritt and Tanner Blue

A record-setting 20 students from VSU participated in the 2011 Georgia Collegiate Honors Conference held at Clayton State University on February 25-26. Clayton State did a wonderful job of hosting and providing entertainment for all their guests: Honors students were able to tour the National Archives and see an interesting civil rights photograph exhibit. At the conference itself, VSU had by far the largest group of student presenters! Our students presented a wide variety of research, from flooding in Pakistan to Lancelot's crisis of identity. Many of our presentations sparked questions and discussions from the crowd. Our Honors group also participated in a unique section: "Causes: VSU's Public Anthropology Project."



Stephanie Byington with her poster



Cassie Taylor with her poster

Congratulations to all who participated and represented VSU's Honors Program at the conference!

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### VSU HONORS PROGRAM

- Dr. Ofelia Nikolova  
Honors Program Director
  
- Mrs. Jane Robinson  
Honors Program Secretary
  
- Amanda Semetko  
Graduate Assistant
  
- Jennifer Stakich  
Student Assistant
  
- Dorrian Baber  
Student Office Assistant

- Student Presenters:
- Amy Dandron
  - Ashley Dailey
  - Carmen Campbell
  - Cassie Taylor
  - Chelsie Norton
  - Chris Nish
  - Danielle Jordan
  - Danielle Haugabrook
  - David DeMeritt
  - Erica Garcia
  - Gabriella Granda
  - Helen Burkett
  - Hope Harrison
  - Jennifer Stakich
  - Kate Fix
  - Katie Wagnon
  - Kevin Foster
  - Nicholas Rouse
  - Stephanie Byington
  - Tanner Blue

## Honors Recognition Ceremony—Wrapping Up Another Year!

Faculty, staff, and students celebrated the end of another year at the Honors Recognition Ceremony on April 18, 2011. President Schloss and Dr. Phil Gunter, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, started the evening on a high note by relating some of the new, exciting changes coming to VSU and detailing the university's successes so far. Dr. Connie Richards, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, presented the Bailey Scholarships to our recipients this year in the absence of Dr. and Mrs. Bailey.

Dr. Nikolova recognized other

outstanding Honors students such as the Bartram Award winner and special presenters before awarding certificates to all of our GCHC and SRHC participants. Those completing the Honors Program requirements also received their certificates and the prerequisite photo op. Our Honors graduates, however, were by far the largest group on stage that night; the Honors Program has graduated a record of 45 students this academic year!

Special presentations for the faculty and staff were also awarded before Dr. Nikolova revealed the identity of this year's Exemplary Honors Faculty of the Year. Dr. Christine James of the

Philosophy Department won the coveted prize for this year, and we congratulate her and all our other recipients on a fantastic year in Honors!



See also:

*Bartram & Bailey, Page 3*  
*SRHC and NCUR, Page 3*  
*List of Graduates, Page 4*

## A Look at HONORS ALUMNI

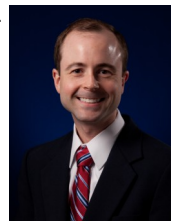
**Lauren Braun** works as an International Student Advisor at the Center for International Programs here at VSU. She "assists international students with their needs . . . while they reside on campus and in the USA." She hopes to transition into the Study Abroad section of the CIP in the future. Lauren received her undergraduate history degree in 2003; she served as HSA President in 2000 and 2001! After graduation from VSU, she obtained a Masters degree from Duke University in 2007.

When asked about her favorite part of Honors, Lauren said, "Aside from the social aspect, the classes offered by Honors were beneficial. I enjoyed seminar style coursework (excellent preparation for graduate level coursework!) and the chance to interact closely with faculty." Life at college is not without regrets, and Lauren named just one: "If there was any-

thing I wish I could have taken advantage of, as an undergraduate, it was the study abroad program. I traveled abroad for the first time as a graduate student."

As an Honors graduate, Lauren wanted to pass on a piece of advice to current students: "My best advice for current students is...working closely with your faculty. They are resources that can put you in touch with others in the fields you're interested in studying."

**Dr. Michael Black** is currently employed as a Data Information Analyst in the Department of Strategic Research and Analysis. Although his background is in accounting and finance, he works on a variety of projects in VSU's Strategic Research and Analysis Office which include examining student and faculty data, accreditation requirements, and revenue forecasting. He



graduated with a Finance degree in 2000; he served as HSA President in 1998-1999. During graduate school, he served as the Honors Program intern and editor of *The Honora*.

In April 2011, he accompanied a group of honors students to the Southern Regional Honors Council conference. Dr. Black labeled the trip as an insight into the current Honors Program: "Having been a presenter over a decade years ago, it was an interesting experience participating as a faculty advisor. The VSU Honors Program students did a fantastic job presenting their original research and representing VSU. I am pleased to know that the Honors Program is establishing an alumni chapter which can help build a professional network for current students."

Dr. Black is the author of three published books and is currently working on two more. He credits his former honors faculty members and Honors Director, Brian Adler, for encouraging him to reach to the next level.

## Students Participate in Regional and National Conferences

The Honors Program sent 9 students to this year's Southern Regional Honors Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. Accompanied by Honors alum and former HSA President Dr. Michael Black, the students embarked on a twelve-hour drive to the conference. While over 470 students participated, VSU's presentations were some of the most detailed research projects. Our students represented a diverse range of topics, such as speech therapy transcription, experimental physics, and federal spending trends. While at the conference, students were able to attend a student social as well as

view the William J. Clinton Presidential Library. Next year, the Southern Regional Honors Conference will be held in Tampa, Florida—a much more desirable location for our students!

At the same time as SRHC, Jay Prosser presented his research project at the National Council for Undergraduate Research in Ithaca, New York!



Our SRHC team of presenters strike a pose

## Bartram Award & Bailey Scholarship Winners!

The highly prestigious William Bartram Award for Intellectual Exploration was awarded this year to Katie Wagon, a political science junior. Her winning project, "Predictors of Federal Spending," was presented at both GCHC and SRHC. Congratulations, Katie!

Four students received the Hugh C. Bailey Family Scholarship this year: Kimberly Edwards, Kiana Lively,

Chelsie Norton, and Jennifer Stakich were our lucky winners. Kimberly is a sophomore pre-med biology major, while Kiana is a first

-year business student. Chelsie is studying middle grades educa-

tion, and Jennifer's major is English. These four students represent an interesting cross-section of majors and talents, all while showing dedication and service to the Honors Program. Congratulations to all our recipients!



## The Freshman Voice

As we conclude this academic year, our Honors freshmen reflected on their first year in the Program and explained how Honors has impacted their college experience:

"The Honors Program was a great way to get acquainted with college. I loved the small class sizes which allowed me to get to know my classmates and teachers better than I would have in a normal course. Being a part of Honors is one of the

best decisions anyone could make; it really furthers and strengthens your education. The community service was fun as well... did I mention I got to pet a tiger?"

—Danielle Jordan, Political Science major

"The Honors Program makes it so easy to really experience college. It's great being able to discuss your ideas and get to know your profes-

sors and classmates. It has given me a better ability to learn."

—Gabriella Granda, Psychology pre-med major

"As a freshman, I really didn't know many people on campus, and it was a great way to get involved and make new friends. The classes are thought-provoking, the students are enthusiastic, and the professors are always encouraging."

—Ashley Dailey, English major

## Honors Students Study Abroad This Summer

Summer's almost here, and for many Honors students that means an opportunity to study abroad! Here's just a taste of what our Honors students will be doing this summer:

**Amy Dandron (senior)** and **Stephanie Byington (sophomore)** will be traveling to Cadiz, Spain for four weeks of study at La Universidad de Cadiz. Amy, a Spanish Education major, and Stephanie, a French and Spanish Education double-major, will be spending their time in a Spanish immersion program alongside students from other parts of Europe. Amy will be "studying advanced Spanish literature and will be taking Curriculum and Methods of Foreign Languages" while Stephanie will be learning more Spanish and fulfilling her lower-level requirements.

**JerKendra Holloway (Sophomore)** will spend July in

Germany. The business management major will be studying the German language and international management.

**Sydney Haire (Sophomore)** will be studying political science in the Czech Republic.

**Helen Burkett (senior)** will pass May and June in Germany. The mass media/broadcast journalism major will be creating a documentary of her trip for an independent study project.

**Praysha Malone (junior)** will be living in Karlsruhe, Germany from July 4 to August 4. As an international business/business management double major, she'll be studying business management marketing and the German language and culture.

**Cassie Taylor (junior)** will not be heading out of the country this summer, but she'll be taking a tour of

the western United States. Cassie, a geoenvironmental sciences major, will cover 6,600 miles to visit various geological features such as the Rio Grande gorge, Grand Canyon, and Yellowstone National Park during Maymester.

**Danielle Jordan (freshman)** will be spending her summer in London, England! She will be studying theatre appreciation and "Civil Rights, Pop Culture, and Memory: America and Britain in the 1960s" from June 23 to July 28.

## Honors Graduates 45 Students!

This year, the Honors Program is proud to announce its largest graduating class! 36 Honors students will graduate in just a few short weeks, setting a record in the Honors Program of 45 total graduates this academic year. We hope that each successive class will continue to set Program records. Congratulations to all our graduates!

### Fall 2010 Graduates:

Lorraine Anderson  
Ashlie Braswell  
Angela Collie  
Erika Faulkner  
Valencia Gunn  
Taneshala Hall  
Michael Holman  
Sarah Richardson

### Spring 2011 Graduates:

Kojo Agyabeng-Dadzie  
Jessica Anderson  
Mollie Beach  
Craig Black  
Tessica Burley  
Jordan Croft  
James Daniell  
Katlyn Fix  
Carly Floyd  
Brandi Foster  
Cascillas Guy  
Lauren Hallford  
Hope Harrison  
Timothy Hilgert  
Lani Hollingsworth  
Adrenis Hooks  
Aracia Lewis  
Timothy Malone  
Heather Mashburn  
Angelica Moore

Tyler Moore  
Alice Muncy  
Daniel Nde  
Christopher Nish  
Meredith Nuckols  
Doel Parrilla  
Charda Pearson  
Christopher Perry  
Cynthia Salami  
Matthew Schmidt  
Shelley Smith  
Jaimie Squardo  
Amanda Staten  
Jason Stewart  
Courtney Terrell  
Meagan Wood

Summer 2011 Graduate:  
Michael Collins



## HSA Corner

Benefits of joining HSA include numerous opportunities to be involved in community service and social events. For more information look for VSU's Honor Student Association on Facebook and check out their website.

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/group.php?gid=2200950440>

### 2011-2012 HSA Officers

President: Jennifer Stakich  
 Vice President: Chelsie Norton  
 Secretary: Shakeria Bonaparte  
 Treasurer: Adam Uelmen  
 Community Service Coordinator: Amy Dandron  
 Freshman Board Advisor: Kiana Lively  
 Undergraduate Research Coordinator: Erica Garcia  
 Public Relations Officer: Jessica Bartek



## HSA BBQ and Elections

HSA celebrated the end of this year with the annual BBQ night on April 13. Esteemed grillmaster Matt Schmidt cooked up a tasty meal with food provided by Reade Hall. The night was full of fun and laughter as Honors students gathered to celebrate their accomplishments and have a night of pure relaxation before the start of finals. After the food was cleared away, HSA mem-

bers took the podium for the election portion of the night. Unfortunately, HSA is losing seniors Matt Schmidt, Chris Nish, Kate Fix, and Courtney Terrell in May; however, new and returning students stepped up to fill their places. Congratulations to the new Executive Board (listed above) along with our Class Representatives: Kimberly Edwards (Sr), Shannon Clark (Sr), Audrey

Dowis (Sr), Stephanie Byington (Jr), David Jenkins (Jr), Denisha Dukes (Jr), Katie Tucker (Soph), Zadie James (Soph), Janie Haskins (Soph), and Sarah McGrew (Soph). Congratulations to all!

## HSA Leadership Passes the Torch

There's no question that Matthew Schmidt and Christopher Nish have done great things for the Honors Student Association here at VSU. Matt and Chris spearheaded the efforts to rewrite the HSA Constitution, they made community service a priority, they stressed attending conferences, and they had loads of fun doing it all. As these two seniors prepare to graduate in May, they have handed their leadership responsibilities to two other highly

qualified HSA members: Jennifer Stakich and Chelsie Norton. Jennifer served this past year as Treasurer while Chelsie acted as Secretary; both have previous campus leadership experience and a commitment to improving HSA as much as possible. While Matt and Chris will be missed in the coming year, their legacy will not be forgotten anytime soon, thanks to their tireless dedication to Honors.



L to R: Chris Nish, Jennifer Stakich, Matt Schmidt, and Chelsie Norton