



EKU Honors Annual Report 2018-2019

EKU

A Tradition of National Leadership in Honors Education

Three Honors Students Win Prestigious Benjamin Gilman International Scholarships

Three honors students were among the Spring 2019 recipients of the nationally competitive Benjamin Gilman International Scholarship, which provides funding for students to study or intern abroad. All used their funding to travel abroad during the summer of 2019. Andrea Patino, a Spanish teaching major from Frankfort, spent the summer studying in Mexico. Jared Christian, a biomedical sciences and globalization and international affairs double major from Versailles, chose a study abroad program in South Africa that blended both of his majors. Peyton Brock, a biomedical sciences major from Middlesboro, completed a summer internship in rural medical care and public health in northern Thailand. ■



Andrea Patino



Jared Christian



Peyton Brock

Cover photo: Students with maroon EKU Honors graduation cap worn at Spring 2019 Commencement.



Nicholas Koenig

2019 Barry Goldwater Scholar

Sophomore biology major Nicholas Koenig became the fourth Colonel ever and the first in eight years to win the prestigious Barry Goldwater Scholarship, which fosters and encourages outstanding students to pursue careers in mathematics, the natural sciences, and engineering. Nicholas has engaged in extensive work with the rare running buffalo clover populations at EKU's Taylor Fork Nature Preserve and the nearby Bluegrass Army Depot, as well as digitizing and sequencing the extensive materials in EKU's Genomic Lab and Herbarium. He presented the results of his work on carbon sequestration technologies at the annual meeting of the Southern Regional Honors Council in Memphis, TN. Outside of the laboratory, Nicholas is a leader on campus, holding roles as a student senator for the Student Government Association, top player on EKU's Quick Recall Team, and member of the Green Crew. He plans to pursue a Ph.D. and career in botanical research. ■

Honors Student Athletes Earn National Recognition

EKU Honors is home to a growing tradition of high-level academic achievement among student athletes enrolled in the program. Three honors athletes garnered especially noteworthy recognition in 2018-2019. Senior volleyball player Chloe Rojas was named one of six Ohio Valley Conference Scholar-Athletes of the Year and an Academic All-American. Senior football placekicker Samuel Hayworth was recognized by the NCAA Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) as an FCS Academic All-Star, the FCS equivalent of an Academic All-American. Junior soccer player Larissa Heslop was named the Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar of the Year for Division I women's soccer, an award given annually by the magazine *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*. ■



Chloe Rojas



Samuel Hayworth



Larissa Heslop

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2018 Annual Meeting of the NCHC

Twenty-four students from the ECU Honors Program presented research and creative work at the 53rd annual meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) in Boston, Massachusetts November 7-10, 2018. As usual, ECU's delegation of student presenters was among the largest of any honors program or college in the nation at this prestigious event.

The conference highlighted student and faculty research presentations from across the nation and provided training and development for honors administrators. The conference theme, "Learning to Transgress," explored innovation and boundary crossing in honors teaching and learning. This year's conference included over 2,000 students, faculty, staff, and administrators hailing from all 50 states, as well as the Netherlands and Russia. The national submission process for presentations is highly selective, with hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and administrators submitting proposals each year.

In addition to a poster presentation based upon her research, junior Peyton Brock was also one of eight students invited to participate in the annual "Student Fishbowl" focus group event, one of NCHC's oldest traditions. Of her second NCHC trip, Peyton said, "NCHC has been a valuable experience in my scholarly development and has led me to personal discoveries I didn't think possible. Presenting in a national arena has helped me find my voice, enhanced my ability to communicate, and increased my confidence tremendously." ■

By the Numbers

478

FALL 2018
TOTAL NUMBER
OF STUDENTS

92%

AVERAGE FIRST-YEAR
RETENTION IN
HONORS, 2013-2019

1000+

STUDENT
PRESENTERS AT
NCHC SINCE 1990

98 TOTAL 2018-2019 HONORS
SCHOLAR GRADUATES

131% INCREASE IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND
HISPANIC STUDENTS OVER LAST 5 YEARS

~70% HONORS SCHOLAR GRADUATES EARNING ADVANCED
DEGREES WITHIN 10 YEARS OF GRADUATION



Educating Creative Leaders for Kentucky and the World



Comedy as an Artistic Approach

Innovative interdisciplinary coursework continues to be the core of the ECU Honors experience. One example of our hands-on, experiential learning is "Comedy as an Artistic Approach," a course taught in Spring 2019 by Professors Gaby Bedetti and Matthew Johnson. Students engaged in intensive study of the history and development of different genres of comedy, then applied their lessons and creative talents by developing their own comedy show filled with skits and stand-up routines.



Honors Thesis Research and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR)

The honors thesis seminar remains a generator of many of the top undergraduate research achievements at ECU and for many students serves as a springboard into graduate study or professional work. In 2018-2019, 93 students completed and presented their honors thesis. Five of these were selected for presentation at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), held in April at Kennesaw State University. Students presenting at NCUR were juniors Makenzie Davis, Davida Gilliam, and Selsey Stribling and seniors Thomas Hudson and Catherine Wood.

Transformational Leadership Serving the Campus, Community, and World

Sidewalk U. in Nogales, Arizona & Mexico

EKU Honors' distinctive Sidewalk U. program returned to the border communities of Nogales, Arizona, and Nogales, Sonora (Mexico), for the second straight year in January 2019. Sixteen honors students and three faculty traveled across the border to spend two days working with the staff, children, and families of the HEPAC children's center and migrant shelter on the Mexican side. Explorations in Nogales, Sonora, allowed the students unique first-hand insight into some of the most controversial issues of the day, including immigration, deportation, the border fence, and the impact and legacy of NAFTA. The staff from HEPAC provided students access to a shelter that assists recent deportees from the United States, a maquiladora factory of the sort that is common in the Mexican borderlands, and a session in which they were allowed to meet and talk with Mexican college students at Nogales Technical University.

On the U.S. side, students had the opportunity to speak with local law enforcement officials in Nogales, Arizona, about their experiences working in a border community. They also visited the historic San Xavier del Bac mission on the Tohono O'odham Reservation near Tucson and learned about the impact of border issues on the large Native American population of the region.

Alumni donations to the Bonnie Gray Society help subsidize this learning adventure each year and keep it affordable for honors students.





Trailblazer Grants and Study Abroad

Trailblazer Grants are designed to assist honors students in their second or third year with the cost of education abroad or education away programs. A total of 17 grants made it possible for honors students to live and study in locations across the world during the spring and summer of 2019. Trailblazer Grant recipients traveled to six different countries, attended NCHC "Partners in the Parks" programs in national parks, and completed a Washington Center internship in DC.



Partners in the Parks

Five ECU Honors students attended the National Collegiate Honors Council's (NCHC) Partners in the Parks educational adventure programs in Summer 2018: Calvin Andries (Volcanoes National Park); Peyton Brock (Glacier National Park); Naomi Cheek (Bryce Canyon National Park); Cheyenne Gibson (Olympic National Park); and Emily Rose (Olympic National Park). Each received a Trailblazer Grant to cover the cost of registration for the program. Three (Andries, Brock, and Cheek) also received \$700 stipends from the Southern Regional Honors Council (SRHC) to help fund their trips. In return, all made presentations about their experiences at the 2019 SRHC annual meeting in Memphis, Tennessee.

**#EKUHONORS
STUDY ABROAD:**

48

STUDENTS STUDIED
ABROAD SUMMER
2018-SPRING 2019

15

DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES
VISITED

A Culture of Service

EKU Honors remains deeply committed to developing leaders who serve not only the EKU campus, but their local and global communities as well. The student leaders of the Honors Student Advisory Committee (HSAC) coordinate highway cleanups, outreach to local nursing homes, volunteer experiences at the Madison County Humane Society, and fundraisers for our partners at the HEPAC Children's Home and Migrant Shelter in Nogales, Mexico — the community partners with whom we have worked on our Sidewalk U. educational travel programs in recent years. We also look to incorporate service learning into our honors coursework wherever possible. This year our Chestnuts and Change in Appalachia honors science seminar worked with the American Chestnut Foundation to help develop new ideas and approaches for community education and scientifically informed publicity for their important efforts to restore American Chestnut tree populations across Appalachia and beyond.



Building Opportunity

Give to ECU Honors

You can directly support ECU Honors students by giving to the Bonnie Gray Society Endowment. Established by alumni at the time of founding director Dr. Bonnie Gray's retirement in 2008, this endowment provides a permanent source of financial assistance for students who attend the innovative Sidewalk U. study away programs each year. Sidewalk U. takes students on learning adventures to locales across America and even into Canada and Mexico. Lives are changed and horizons broadened by these cultural odysseys, and the Bonnie Gray Society Endowment helps make them possible each year.

- ▶ Visit www.alumni.eku.edu to give to the **Bonnie Gray Society Endowment**.
- ▶ Click "**Make a Gift**," choose to "**view all giving opportunities**," and search for "**honors**" to easily find the endowment.



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EKU HONORS PROGRAM

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