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GRADUATING WITH HONORS

Spring has once again arrived on campus, and with it all the academic chaos that marks the end of a scholastic year. The library is busier than it has been in months, and students are rushing to complete projects and papers that were, naturally, saved for the last week. For some, though, this time of year brings an added challenge: the thesis. Completing a thesis is hard work for any student, and integrating four years worth of learning into one coherent project is a monumental task. In order to complete their Honors Program requirements and graduate as Honors Program Scholars, seven of the students completing



Jenna Fussell and Ofek Bar-Ilan hard at work in the end-of-semester crunch.

theses this semester have chosen to take on the challenge of completing an honors thesis, which adds both a level of difficulty and a

level of pride to the task.

Jenna Fussell, a Biology major with a Chemistry minor, first became interested in her field when she was a

sophomore in high school. The crime scene setups and labs her teacher assigned to the class spurred an interest which has now become a potential career: forensics and criminology. Her thesis, *Suicide in Marin County: A Forensic and Statistical Analysis*, explores Marin County's unusually high suicide rate and the connection of this occurrence to the location of the Golden Gate Bridge. After graduation, Jenna's plans are to attend graduate school in order to eventually work with the FBI. For her, working on an honors thesis meant centering the research on something by which she

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HONORS SCHOLARS EXPLORE CHINA

Most students see finals week as the end of a long semester and the beginning of a great vacation. For a group of about fifty people, the end of finals is the beginning of an adventure.

Jayati Ghosh, Arthur Scott and Jenny Li are leading a group to China on a tour exploring its past, present, and future. Students will visit urban as well as rural sites in order to get an appreciation for Chinese

culture and history. Students will also examine how the country has changed as it has been integrated into the global economy.

Freshman **Courtney Madsen**, one of the students preparing to travel, is very eager to experience a culture that is different from her own. Even though she has traveled to many parts of the globe, she says that the China trip is "a great opportunity to go somewhere I wouldn't ordi-

narily go."

Colleen Shorey, a junior studying political science, is hoping not only to study and compare the judicial systems of China with that of the U.S., but also to experience Chinese customs through the trip. **Marie Jarvis**, who is studying Chinese and Buddhist art, is looking forward to the trip for the educational experience it will offer and as a way to enjoy a vacation with her son, who will also be attending.

The group heading to China is a very diverse one, and each person has his or her own specific reason for going. However, they are all eager to experience the sights and sounds of an Eastern culture that plays such a vital role in the world. Yet even with all this education, they can't forget one very important thing: souvenirs!

-Kira Maffett

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"[The Honors Program] opened my mind and my world in unexpected and fruitful ways."

was enthralled. She says this provided the drive necessary to "go the extra mile." It seemed a natural step, after having completed so many honors classes, to take on this final project in order to graduate as an Honors Scholar. Jenna lauds the classes she has taken in the Honors Program for having surrounded her with the most driven of Dominican's students, and for giving her access to some of the more dedicated teachers she has had. With the education she has received and the support the school has given her, Jenna feels confident that she is well-prepared for whatever life may bring to her. In her own words, "Bring on the next chapter of my life!"

Pauline Reif is a Humanities major with an emphasis in Religion as well as a Gender Studies minor. Her thesis, entitled *Mary Magdalene: Woman of Consequence*, contends with the significance of the Biblical figure of Mary Magdalene,

and is formatted as an eclectic conglomerate of critical analysis and creative writing. This is particularly pertinent to her experience as both a hospital chaplain and her personal admiration of this biblical figure. In the thesis, Pauline argues in favor of Magdalene's significance within the New Testament as well as how this facet of her image has been diluted by what she refers to as "patriarchal paradigm."

Pauline's future goals are to expand upon her creative work by writing poetry featuring Magdalene as a central figure. She hopes that this will serve to strengthen her spiritual relationship with Magdalene, whom she credits for her inspiration. Reflecting upon her experience in the Honors Program, Pauline fondly remembers the challenges she faced as a Pathways student and how the program enriched her area of study and, as she put it, "opened my mind and my world in unexpected and fruitful ways."

L.I.F.E. MOVIE NIGHT

Leaders Initiating Fascinating Explorations, or L.I.F.E., recently held a social for honors and non-honors students. The goal was to build community, not only within the Honors Program but also between the club and the rest of the student body. The success of the social could be seen—over

twenty students were in attendance, both from the program and from the general population. Rumor has it that the pizza was the main draw, although this has not been substantiated.

The event was planned by L.I.F.E. leaders **Monika Foster** and **Rosemary Hobbs**, both of

Katy Spada, a double major in eBusiness and Music, has focused her Honors thesis on the Music major, selecting to demonstrate her skills as an accomplished pianist by playing Robert Schumann's "Forest Scenes." Seeking to enhance her thesis, she has chosen to have a professional ballerina, a personal friend, to accompany her piano playing with a performance. She hopes that the addition of the ballet performance will work to augment the story that "Forest Scenes" seeks to tell as well as to make the performance "more interesting and memorable."

Katy has plans to join the Peace Corp after graduation, and then to enroll in graduate music courses, striving to obtain a PhD. Katy appreciates how her time in the Honors Program has endowed her with "the ability to search out knowledge and utilize [her] resources efficiently." She also credits Sister Patricia Dougherty as an inspiration who truly made her undergraduate experience memorable.

Politics major **Rolando Crisostomo's** senior thesis, *China's Economic and Mili-*

tary Threat to the United States, is a match for the career route he plans to take, as he "really want[s] to work for the Foreign Affairs Department...eventually becoming a diplomat or an ambassador involved in global affairs." In his thesis, he describes the historical relationship between the United States and Canada after World War II, particularly in light of their increasing economic and military prowess. He then proceeds to critically evaluate the evidence of China's strength and argues that China is indeed an economic menace and possibly a military danger. He also sets forth possible policy options that the United States may pursue to address the perils stemming from China's growth. After graduation, Rolando will take time off for "valuable work experience" before pursuing graduate studies. Rolando appreciates the opportunity that the Honors Program has given him to "develop and enhance [his] critical thinking and writing skills." As a piece of advice

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HONORS SHIRTS FOR SALE



Shirts are now for sale in Dr. Ghosh's office (Bertrand 25C) for only \$8!

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Every semester, the student group Community Connections spends an afternoon at Lourdes Infirmary with the retired Dominican Sisters who are celebrating birthdays. This semester, the celebration centered not only on birthdays, but also on ringing in the new season and the joy of Easter. Coordinator **Diana Hallare** believes that having aspects such as the word of the day, in this case Blossom, and a theme, Spring, helped “to connect that community at

that moment.”

Through poetry, the sharing of stories, song, and gifts, the members of Community Connections form a lasting bond between the Sisters at Lourdes and the Dominican student body. Diana states that friendship is the deeper goal of Community Connections rather than just community service.

For more information on Community Connections, contact Diana Hallare at: Diana.hallare@students.dominican.edu.



Members of Community Connections socialize with sisters from Lourdes infirmary.

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Rolando, suggests that those continuing Honor Program students “participate in all the social gatherings and [not] stress out too much” in their studies.

Ofek Bar-Ilan is quite familiar with the work it takes to complete a task on a tight deadline. In place of four years of high school, Ofek received her diploma in two and a half. Her work at Dominican has been no less admirable, having completed her degree in Molecular Cell Biology and a minor in Chemistry in a mere three years. Her love for Biology can be seen not only in her dedication to classroom and lab work, but also in her thesis. The title, *Joy of Sci-*

entific Research: A Journey through Yeast, fMRI, and Transgenic Rats, is demonstrative of her undergraduate research experience. The work is a compilation of research and projects completed during her time at Dominican, as well as a reflection on the ways in which her projects have influenced her future goals. Ofek plans to attend graduate school at University of Wisconsin Madison, with a focus in either biomedical or pharmaceutical sciences. She wants to eventually be in a position where she can “use biology to research, explore, and investigate phenomena that will eventually impact and advance society.” The challenge of an honors

thesis, for Ofek, was time. Because of her work on campus, both as a Resident Advisor and a member of ASDU, finding the hours to do the extra work and meet the earlier deadlines was difficult at times. Now that graduation is merely weeks away, Ofek feels mixed sentiments: “I will definitely miss this place, but it's time to move on to a place with a bigger male population!”

Debra Cozzoli, a Psychology major with an emphasis in Biopsychology, has composed her thesis, *How Seasons Affect Mood: the Prevalence of Seasonal Depression Among College Students*, from two sets of surveys of both Dominican and at Nebraska Wesleyan. Using “twenty-five literature reviews of research on depression” as a basis, her thesis focuses on how rainy weather may affect the experience of seasonal depression among the tested group. To do this, she solicited responses from one sur-

vey conducted in pleasant, sunny weather and another survey conducted at the height of the rainy season from students at both Universities. Debra feels a particular connection with her topic as she herself has “been a sufferer of seasonal depression.” Debra’s future plans involve her obtaining a PhD in Neuroscience, and she has already been accepted into a graduate program at the University of California Santa Barbara. She certainly feels that composing an Honor Thesis has been a challenging experience that serves as “good training for writing [her graduate school] dissertation in

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A college degree is not a sign that one is a finished product but an indication a person is prepared for life.

-Reverend Edward A. Malloy

Writers always welcome!

Contact Dr. Jayati Ghosh if you are interested in joining *The Angel* staff.

SR. PAT MOVES ON FROM HONORS PROGRAM

In the past six years, Sr. Patricia Dougherty has helped many seniors complete their time in the Honors Program through the successful completion of an honors thesis. Now, she is finishing up her own time with honors students.

In 2000, Sr. Pat took over for Lee Ann Bartolini, the previous pro-

gram director. Since then she has “tried to encourage [students] to pursue their dreams in education and helped them when I could.” She admires the fact that the program brought her into contact with faculty from various departments through their work with students who were completing honors contracts. For Sr.

Pat, the joy of working with honors students is in their unique way of thinking and the challenges that this brings. She finds them “invigorating” to work with, and enjoys seeing the level of success which they are capable of attaining.

The honors program wishes to express its thanks to Sr. Pat for all she has done, and wished her

well in everything she experiences after her time as Honors Director.

-Rosemary Hobbs



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the future.” Debra appreciates how her participation in the Honors Program enabled her to meet colleagues with whom she otherwise would not have interacted. She also recalls fondly the “truly amazing” faculty that enabled her “education to flourish through their guidance and support.”

Also completing an honors thesis is Sr. John Mary Vianney Kokusiima, who completed a Biology degree with a thesis entitled *Algal Epifauna as Environmental Bioindicators in Coral Reef*.

Two honors students completed their theses last spring and will be graduating this month. Congratulations to Anne Halley and Amanda LeDoux on the successful

completion of their degrees.

The future for graduating seniors is, in many ways, uncertain. Life could bring to them any number of things, and plans can change greatly with time. However, one thing is certain. For these students, nearly anything is possible. Their dedication and drive, along with the passion they bring to all that they work on, will carry them far in life, and we wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

-Richard Maher and
Rosemary Hobbs

Dear Readers,

As I move on from both *The Angel* and from Dominican University of California, I can see more clearly than ever what this position has taught me. The first lesson is that no newsletter is worth the paper it is printed on if the writers are not of the highest caliber. Thankfully, it has never crossed my mind that the people I have worked with were anything less.

However, the second and more important lesson is that this newsletter is about you. The honors students are the reason why it exists, and we writers must continue following you. It is because of the incredible things you do— birthday parties through Community Connections, intellectually fascinating honors theses, and so forth— that we have reason to write. While there are students in the Honors Program who continue to push this university to new heights, both academically and socially, we will have reason to keep printing, and for this I thank you profusely.

I leave this publication in the most capable hands imaginable— not because of the people I have worked with, though they could not have been more ideal, but because the future of *The Angel* is in the hands of the students, and they have yet to let us down.

~Rosemary Hobbs~

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The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds, unlike our bodies, can continue growing as long as we live.

-Mortimer J. Adler