

Dominican University  
of California

# The Angel

(an'jel: *angele*, fr. L. *angelus*, fr. Gr. *angelos*: messenger)

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## Voices of the Angel: Honors student reflections

As a third year student at Dominican University, I am managing an absolutely hectic schedule which includes double majoring in Music and English with a Writing Emphasis, participating in the Honors program, and working with children three days a week. I am focused on two subjects I'm passionate about and my work allows me to laugh a lot, while stabilizing me at the same time.

School has still been able to expand my mind as the absorbent sponge it is meant to be. I am actually quite happy at what is supposed to be one of the most stressful times of my life—my junior year of college, when graduation is coming nearer and decisions must be made on what I will do after. I have put the Honors seminar on hold this semester because while I have finished the lower required classes, I could not fit the colloquium program into my schedule. I am, however, interested in the Honors colloquium I will start in Spring 2009, called "Radical Response: Addressing Injustice & Integrating Change," which includes one seminar taught by Jennifer Lucko on confronting educational inequality.



Crystal Smith and a San Rafael first grader.

Music has become not only a hobby and subject of study, but a possible career goal. Performing music as a vocalist has been a deeply-rooted passion of mine since I sang at my elementary school's talent show in third grade. The tape with my backup music backfired and wouldn't play, so I stayed at the microphone and finished the song I had chosen (Mariah Carey's "Hero"). I remember the entire 7<sup>th</sup> grade class stood up and cheered. At eight years old, I felt like I had conquered Mount Everest.

I recently sang the Star Spangled Banner at the VoteSmart Challenge, which

Dominican University hosted in Angelico Hall on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was the largest and, very possibly, the most important event I have ever sang for. I found it absolutely exhilarating.

I feel that my future has so many possibilities. And with the multiple programs I participate in, my future after Dominican is one I look forward to with excitement, whether it be in music, writing, or as an educator. It may very well be a fusion of all three!

The Honors program has shaped a lot of the decisions I make as a Dominican student. Although I am not an active member this

semester, being able to carry a full course load influenced my declaring a double-major last year. I felt I could handle it, and have been doing so well so far. Also, in Spring 2008 I took Julia ven der Ryn's Ethics & Service Learning class and found myself tutoring high school teens at County Community school, where the students were falling behind in their schooling. I helped some students prepare for the California High School Exit Exam and it took a lot of hard work. I felt such a contrast going to Dominican and working at a private elementary school. I would struggle getting students to pay attention to basic algebra and grammar. Knowing that I helped even just one or two teens prepare drew me further into my studies and my goals because I saw that not everyone can be where I am, receiving this education. Though it is a lot of hard work, the Honors seminars are about being hands-on—and it works because Honors students experience first-hand what they study. To give and to receive a quality education is an eye-opening experience.

-Crystal Smith

## LINES BFA students perform with the company

Recently, nine of the LINES Ballet BFA students had the opportunity to perform with the LINES professional company. The students rehearsed rigorously for the past month and a half to fill out the ensemble for an earlier, 1995 work by Alonzo King, *String Quartet*, choreographed to music a composer the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts considers "one of Poland's most renowned": Pawel Szymanski. Sophomore Rachel Elliot, talking about her experience with the group said, "It was rewarding

to work with Alonzo and the company, [and that] this opportunity has given me and excitement to give, perform, and pursue my career as an artist." The San Francisco Chronicle paid the students a high compliment, stating "a casual viewer wouldn't know them from the LINES company dancers."

This fall season featured two other works in collaboration with jazz legend and Grammy Award winner Pharoah Sanders, who played with John Coltrane in the 1960s, and has created scores for LINES Ballet since 1994.

This season has been Pharoah Sanders' seventh collaboration with Alonzo King. The program this season also featured a *Pas De Deux* (duet) created by Alonzo King for guest artist Muriel Maffre, which premiered at Venice Biennale last summer, as well as a world premiere piece featuring the company.

The BFA students were very honored to perform with artists of such a high caliber. The experience gave the students an idea of what it is like to work with a professional company such

as LINES, which works, breathes, and thrives as a community based on the contribution of an artistic genius. The experience was truly inspirational.

-Elisabeth Schiffbauer

## Scholars in the 'Real' World: Where are they now?

**Bridget Gengler**, graduate of Dominican University in Spring 2008, is enjoying using her Biology degree as a part of the Dominican University Master of Science program through the Buck Institute, where she said she has the opportunity to "do real research on a daily basis." Students work both at Dominican and at the Buck Institute. This is the first year the program has been available at Dominican, and it is expected to expand in the coming years. In the program, Bridget loves that instead of traditional classwork, she will earn most units "working at Buck in the lab of my choice, and working on a project to help strengthen my skills as a researcher." Bridget is already anticipating the thesis she will be required to complete and defend for her graduate

degree, and is glad that she had the practice of the Honors thesis she completed, stating that "it was difficult to manage my thesis with all of my other classes, but it was a good experience and worth the effort."

Since graduating from Dominican University, also in the class of 2008, **Martha Stoddard** has been taking a break from "formal education... learning a great deal of practical knowledge and rapidly gaining experience as a cardiac RN" in the Telemetry Unit at St. Anthony Central Hospital in Denver, CO. This hospital is dedicated to serving all people and Martha is very proud to work with different patients in dire need of care that may not have been able to receive it elsewhere due to lack of funds. One story Martha recounted was that of a homeless man who was "receiving radiation therapy for cancer and an undocumented immigrant who had

open heart surgery."

In addition, the care offered at St. Anthony Central Hospital is no cut-rate alternative. Martha states that the hospital is "ranked in the top 100 hospitals in cardiovascular care." Through this experience, Martha is able to learn about heart surgery, medications, and laboratory tests from the experts while working closely with patients and their families.

The Honors program has proven once again to be practical in the "real world." Martha says that she was prepared for her fast-paced work by "rigor of the Honors program," and that by participating in one summer Honors Trip abroad she possesses more empathy and "insight into what our non-English-speaking patients must feel like when they cannot understand the people around

them," because of her struggles to communicate in China.

Martha's next goal is to earn her Masters in Nursing in order to become a Nurse Practitioner, and her long-term goals are "to become an expert cardiac nurse, work in the Emergency Room... and then work in an impoverished or war-torn area of the world as part of a Catholic charity organization." In the meantime, she has registered with the United States government's disaster organization so that she may serve in case of "another natural or human-generated disaster takes place and nurses are needed."

-Dana Rae Gross



## Honors Thesis: Fall Defense

**December 2, 2008** marks the date of the Fall Honors Thesis Defense in the Creekside Room. The following students will be presenting their completed theses this semester. Presentations are open for attendance by faculty and friends:

### Amanda Vuylsteke

1:00 to 1:45 pm

*The Marked Pariah: Self and Community in Toni Morrison's novels Sula, Beloved, and Song of Solomon*

Reader 1: Dr. Joan Baranow

Reader 2: Prof. Penny Jackson

### Asta Haman Dicko

3:15 to 4:00 pm

*Phase angle is a Better Indicator of Catheter to Tissue Contact than the Use of an Electrogram Reading During Catheter Ablation*

Reader 1: Dr. Thomas Everette

Reader 2: Dr. Kenneth Frost

### Melanie Weinstein

1:45 to 2:30 pm

*Russia: A Potential Site for FDI Inflows*

Reader 1: Dr. Arnon Hadar

Reader 2: Dr. Admassu Bezabeh

### Angela Giertych

4:00 to 4:45 pm

*Neuroendocrine differentiation of mouse embryonic stem cells in vitro*

Reader 1: Dr. Mohammed el Majdoubi

Reader 2: Dr. Diara Spain

### Rizza Alcaria

2:30 to 3:15 pm

*Determining optimal catheter electrode contact: Phase angle shift versus catheter sensed electrogram*

Reader 1: Dr. Thomas Everette

Reader 2: Dr. Mietek Kolipinski

### Peter Hoang

4:45 to 5:30 pm

*Developing a cancer therapy technique by screening for signal transducer and activator of transcription 3 (STAT3) protein with specific inhibitors using ALPHAScreen*

Reader 1: Dr. Mohammed el Majdoubi

Reader 2: Dr. Maggie Louie



## NCHC 2008: San Antonio

One of the benefits of a Dominican education is the opportunity to start research as an undergraduate. As a Biology major I heard about at least one opportunity to present research, namely the National Conference for Undergraduate Research (NCUR). However, at the beginning of the second semester of my freshman year, attending a conference seemed like a distant goal. Challenging my notion that only upperclassmen submit research to conferences, Honors Program director Dr. Jayati Ghosh and my research advisor Dr. Warren Hoeffler encouraged me, Tracy Krinard, and Shahdad Saeedi to submit an abstract for acceptance to the 2008 annual National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) conference. On April 21, we discovered that our abstract on reducing serum dependence in cultured human skin cells had been accepted to the

Poster Session of the conference—news I met with both anxiety and excitement. From October 22 to October 25, eight Honors students, including myself, flew to San Antonio, Texas to present our undergraduate research projects.

Following our arrival, sophomores Mark Lieuw, Teddy Morrow, Tracy, Shahdad and I, as well as juniors Maggie DePond, James Kay and Julie Muskat were free to explore the city. Our hotel in downtown San Antonio was within easy walking distance of the Alamo as well as the Bexár Courthouse and San Fernando Cathedral. Monuments at the Alamo were reminiscent of monuments in Washington D.C., with their grand scale and marble finery. Later that evening, we were drawn back to the conference and the entertainment of a local cultural dance group in the main auditorium after a plenary speaker.

On October 24, most of the students presented their research in either an oral forum or in poster sessions. Tracy, Shahdad, Mark, and I presented scientific research at the poster sessions and Teddy and James gave an oral presentation on stem cells. There was an especially gratifying moment when a professor from South Carolina recognized Dominican University's logo on our poster and commented on how we have an excellent up-and-coming research program, which he had heard of when our university hosted NCUR in 2007. Maggie presented her paper on the service learning component of the Honors ethics class—about her experiences at County Community School—during the Honors symposium. On the final day of the conference, Julie presented her paper about Russian literature, specifically regarding themes in *The Brothers Karamazov* and *The Master*

and *Margarita*.

“The experience was amazing,” Maggie DePond said. “I never expected so many students from so many different backgrounds to be in one place at one time. It is one of those conferences where you, as an undergraduate, can make contacts and further your research interests.”

As my first conference experience, I have to say that NCHC was satisfying. It combined the perfect amount of both work and free time to explore a city that most of us had never been to before. The opportunity to travel to another state and share my experiences with my national peers was an experience I am not likely to forget.

- Tasha Kahn

At right: Dominican students and Honors Director at NCHC 2008 poster session. From left to right: Maggie DePond, Tasha Kahn, Tracy Krinard, Shahdad Saeedi, Dr. Jayati Ghosh, Mark Lieuw, Teddy Morrow, James Kay, and Julie Muskat.

Photo courtesy of Teddy Morrow.



## BERLIN & PRAGUE

SPRING 2009 ( March 5-15)

Reichstag, Prague Castle, Brandenburg Gate, the Jewish War Memorial, the remnants of the Berlin Wall...and much more!



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### By the way...

If you are interested in joining the Angel staff, please contact Dr. Jayati Ghosh. Writers are always welcome!

"A great work of art is made out of a combination of obedience and liberty."

- Nadia Boulanger

"It isn't where you came from, it's where you're going that counts."

- Ella Fitzgerald