In mid-April, ten WSU Honors students, representing every grade and numerous majors, attended the Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, to present their research and learn from fellow Honors students. The conference, held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor, was a weekend-long event. On Thursday, April 13th, we gathered in front of the Honors Center, left for the train station, and after six and a half painfully long hours - finally arrived in Baltimore. We did as much exploring of the few blocks around the hotel as our waning energies allowed, and settled in to our rooms for some much-needed sleep. Friday began with a bagel breakfast, after which we registered and ventured out to explore Baltimore through one of several walking tours organized as a component of the “City as Text” program, which aims to connect the conference theme with the host city’s history and culture. No matter where we went, be it the waterfront, the science museum, or a local eatery, the city was full of historical content and educational insights. One highlight was visiting Edgar Allen Poe’s grave with a group of Honors students from various universities. Students wrote their own stories in the style of Poe and then shared them around his grave. Poe clearly left his mark upon the city, as is evidenced in the name of Maryland’s football team, the Baltimore Ravens. Later that evening many students participated in an open mic night, including WSU English major Lyndon Seitz.

Aside from the social experiences, there were several new additions to the academic side of the conference. Chief among them were student-led interactive workshops on a variety of topics, including one led by WSU Environmental Science student Eric Frary about the proposed Russell Biomass plant and its ramifications. In addition to the workshops were poster presentations, paper discussions, and roundtable talks on a wide range of topics, from the pros and cons of math worksheets, to ancient Chinese philosophies, to equine massages. With such disparate topics as the cultural implications of Harry Potter and a philosophical approach to individual divinity, one thing was the same: the passion and academic fervor presenters and audience alike brought to each and every session. The conference was electric with the thrill of new discoveries and mutual understanding, an enlightening trip for all involved, who eagerly await next year’s Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference in Philadelphia.

Nicole is a first-year English major from Northfield, MA.

Jim is a first-year English major from Westfield, MA.
HONORS STUDENTS GO WEST

SAN FRANCISCO J-TERM: SERVICE-LEARNING EDUCATES AND ENLIGHTENS WSU STUDENTS
SANDRA KWAWU AND BRITTANY MONIZ

San Francisco J-term travelers visit Alcatraz Island.

Fourteen students kicked off 2012 with a Westfield State University short-term travel course to San Francisco, California, in January. We were fortunate to be part of this experience led by Marsha Marotta, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and Nanci Salvio, Interim Vice President of Alumni and Community Relations. The course offered an Honors component, giving several of us the opportunity to fulfill our Honors seminar requirement. From the moment we left the airport, we enjoyed opportunities to challenge our beliefs and see the world from a new perspective.

On our first day in San Francisco, we took a sight-seeing tour to get a feel for the city and to learn how to navigate it on our own. On the second day, we were challenged to explore the city as scholars. This experience changed the way we looked at San Francisco, and from then on, we became urban scholars.

As scholars, we visited Alcatraz, the Chinese Historical Society, City Hall, and numerous other sites throughout the San Francisco Bay area. We were also fortunate to have a professor from San Francisco State University lead one of our morning discussions.

Though we enjoyed exploring many of San Francisco’s offerings, the most significant experience was our work with GLIDE Memorial Church, a non-denominational church committed to community outreach, and the base of our service learning program. This work was both empowering and humbling. At GLIDE, we experienced what every human strives for – acceptance. The church motto is “full of love and free of judgment.” People from all walks of life are welcome there. As a community, they embrace one another as human beings. We spent several days at GLIDE serving food to the homeless, which allowed us to see beyond their unfortunate circumstances. Rather than regarding the people we encountered as homeless, poor, or delinquent, we saw them just as they are – as people.

Participating in this service-learning course in San Francisco, a city rich in history and diverse in culture, gave us the opportunity to broaden our perspectives and challenge stereotypes. Overall, it was a very humanizing and self-reflective experience. The course is a primary example of Westfield State students learning to appreciate diversity, nationally and locally, and collaborating with community organizations to address societal needs. We highly recommend this course to all WSU students.

Brittany is a sophomore Political Science and Communication dual major from Leominster, MA.

Sandra is a junior Sociology major from Indian Orchard, MA.

Interested in contributing to the Squirrel Squire? Send your story ideas and photos to Prof. Diana at vdiana@westfield.ma.edu.
HONORS STUDENTS GO GLOBAL

RETURNING TO JORDAN
MIKE BRILL

In June 2010 I first traveled to the Middle East with Communication Professor John Paulmann and his Jordan Seminar Class. The time I spent in Jordan was as amazing as it was informative. Little did I know then, when saying goodbye to the Jordanian friends I made, that I would get the opportunity to see them in person again two years later. As life worked out, I was re-accepted to the U.S. State Department’s Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program for summer 2012. I spent last summer studying Arabic in Oman as a participant in the program and will study the language at the advanced level this year in Amman, Jordan, with some of the same classmates.

This trip will be a way of coming full circle for me. When in Jordan in 2010, I spent a week at the American Center for Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman. This very nice facility houses students, scholars, and archaeologists visiting the kingdom. ACOR also houses an expansive library that includes many first editions of renowned books pertaining to Middle Eastern studies—such as T.E. Lawrence’s Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph (immortalized further by the film Lawrence of Arabia). Along with spending a few late nights in the library, it was at ACOR that a classmate and I met the institute director for the CLS Program in Jordan, who suggested we apply for the following summer. The rest is history, and as it turned out, I will be staying at ACOR again during my time in Jordan this year.

Preparing for the next chapter in my education, I realize that being a member of the Honors Program has been a highlight of my time as a student at WSU. Moving forward, I know the learning environment at WSU that was so conducive for my studies and interest in our world will continue to be formative for me.

Mike graduated in Spring 2012 as a History and Political Science dual major from Southwick, MA.

J-TERM: NICARAGUA
MEGAN BISHOP

After traveling together to Nicaragua for the January 2012 J-term, we 29 WSU students feel like a family.

This was a service-learning trip during which we built a classroom building in one of Nicaragua’s many barrios. Because we raised over $7,000, the classroom was named in WSU’s honor as the plaque pictured here shows.

Our building experience in Nicaragua was a culture shock, but we would return in a heartbeat. “Words can’t even describe how rewarding building that classroom was. Everything was made and built manually,” explained senior Michael Mantia. “Better yet, I got to bond with the kids and families for whom we were building the school. After experiencing the construction portion of our trip I could appreciate why Nicaraguans take pride in everything they do and everything they own.”

The children attracted a lot of attention on the worksite. Every day they would visit the workers and try to entice us to play. “Seeing the children’s faces at the work site made me want to be a better person. They have very little, yet they seem so at peace with what they are and what they do have. This was an influential experience I will never forget,” said sophomore Katelyn Campetti. On our last day of building, we decided to throw a party, especially for the children.

Helping with the construction of the classroom was not the only aspect of the trip that brought us together. After days of building, we got to visit a volcano, explore a bat cave, try zip lining, and surf. We encouraged each other to try things we were initially terrified to do.

Much of the credit for the (Nicaragua, continued on page 4)
During my time in Beijing I had many experiences and impressions of life in China’s capital city. From the many people selling their diverse wares on the side of the road to the ubiquitous, distinctive Beijing dialect of Mandarin Chinese, one is struck by all that makes Beijing what it is: a model of unity in diversity.

To me, Beijing became more than just the quirky, historically significant political capital of modern-day China. It became as much of a second home to me as the Westfield State campus. Of course, the various challenges faced living in China, including culture shock and the language barrier, were much more difficult than those I experienced acclimating to dorm life at WSU. Working at overcoming these challenges was increasingly rewarding with each day there. What really made my experience in Beijing special is the many friends I made, meaning those who are American, those who are Chinese, and most importantly, the myriad of other friends I made in the cultural melting pot of a dormitory building where all of Capital Normal University’s international students reside. As luxurious as it was to be able to say anything I wanted when I was with my American friends at CNU, all of us agreed that experimenting with our Chinese and even with the other languages spoken by our friends was the best way for us to gain the greatest appreciation of each other’s cultures, including that of the Chinese.

I didn’t fully realize the profound impact that this social environment had on my study abroad experience until a visit from Dr. Elizabeth Preston, Vice President of Academic Affairs at WSU. When I told her many stories about my daily life in Beijing, she seemed surprised and impressed. As I listened to her questions and concerns about my seemingly unrealistic stories, I realized that they mirrored the concerns I had before leaving to study in China. I suddenly felt empowered realizing just how far I had come as a foreigner in Beijing. This became most apparent to me when the WSU representative and her colleagues had some difficulty understanding me, because I had begun to use some half-English half-Chinese slang that was only mutually intelligible to me and my other friends living in the foreign student dormitory.

This experience was very enlightening and gave me an appreciation for the time that I spent in Beijing, which flew by so quickly that I sometimes lost sight of how far my studies brought me. But to me, the highlight was sharing the experience with my friends at Capital Normal University, who came from every imaginable part of the world.

Without a doubt, I have to credit the majority of my daily ambition to my multicultural friends with whom I shared my daily life in the international building that we affectionately referred to as the “Tower of Babel.” Beijing truly became home for us.

Eric is a junior Business major from Chelmsford, MA.

Interested in broadening your horizons? The International Programs Office can answer your questions about Study Abroad and National Exchange Programs. For more information, visit their office in Parenzo Lobby.

Senior Charlie Crayton sums up our feelings about the trip: "Nicaragua was amazing. Not only did we provide a service that will help for years to come, but we built relationships and experienced things together that we will carry with us forever."

Megan is a junior Communication major from Westfield, MA.
Honors Courses in Review

Law and Society
Jen Shakshober

Law and Society, an upper-level Honors seminar taught by Professor Philip Ettman, emphasizes class participation, individual response papers, small group projects, and a culminating capstone project.

The course, first offered in the spring 2010 semester, was designed by Dr. Ettman after discussion with Dr. Ricki Kantrowitz, former Chairperson of the Honors Program, who had suggested an Honors class about law. Dr. Ettman designed a curriculum focusing on law as a statement of society's values, his guiding question being: to what extent does the law inform society, and to what extent does society influence law? With the inclusion of motion pictures - most notably, Twelve Angry Men, Inherit the Wind, and Judgment at Nuremberg - he could present societal values, as spotlighted by the media, in a legal context to promote student discussion. Although no works of fiction are currently on the syllabus, Professor Ettman would like to assign more excerpts from relevant novels to underpin this objective of student involvement. "It's really about gauging the class's interest to see in which direction things will go," he says. He admits that his Law and Society seminar requires more preparation and research than do most other lecture-based courses. "But Honors students like to learn," he says effusively, “I don't want the students to have the mentality that they are learning under some kind of 'absolute monarchy.'”

Professor Ettman received his undergraduate degree at the State University of New York, Buffalo and went on to pursue an MBA at the University of Connecticut before graduating from Boston University with a law degree. For ten years, he was assistant general counsel for a New York insurance firm that managed customs and international trade. In addition, he practiced law for thirty years and has a background in teaching at both the high school and community college levels. If his office - replete with humorous personal effects - is any indication, this professor makes the study of law engaging, rather than purely clinical.

One reason why people may have misconceptions of law as a dry or difficult subject is that people simply don't understand the field. Its daunting portrayal in everyday life - as the stuff of civil law - is counteracted by a host of lurid and more “interesting” crime programs on television. On these shows, cases are examined - individually, exhaustively - until detectives arrive at conclusive results. DNA tests sent to the lab come back instantaneously. And then, there’s the infamous Perry Mason effect: the jury expects a confession from the murderer on the stand, and they usually get it.

In actuality, legal issues may take weeks to resolve, and the perpetrator rarely confesses willfully. Still, Professor Ettman says, we shouldn't feel intimidated by the technicalities: “law is logical and merely requires an idea of what its purposes are.” Indeed, the execution of any law is conditional on that law’s purpose; without a reason for its existence, law doesn’t exist.

In this discursive type of classroom environment, there is always the possibility of students raising controversial issues. Yet Professor Ettman is not worried. In fact, he encourages free academic debate over legal issues, provided that students are versed in the facts of the case. “In the end,” he says, “you have a right to your own opinion.” Then, evoking Daniel Patrick Moynihan: “You don’t have a right to your own facts.”

Jen is a sophomore English and Economics dual major from West Townsend, MA.
HONORS STUDENTS OUT AND ABOUT

A TRIP TO THE PAST: HONORS STUDENTS ORGANIZE VISIT TO POMPEII
JEN BOYD AND KAROLINA BAK

Twenty-six Honors students took a trip into the past on February 4th during a visit to the Boston Science Museum to view the special exhibit about the famous city that was lost when Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 A.D. - Pompeii.

Prepared for the trip, students joined Professor Dempsey in the Honors Center for Roman Night, where they enjoyed pizza (minus the snails that would have been traditional in 79 A.D.) and watched an historical re-enactment film titled The Last Day of Pompeii. “The film told the story, but it was the exhibit that brought history to life,” noted one student.

The exhibit featured a variety of incredibly well-preserved artifacts including pottery, mosaic illustrations, eating utensils, hair accessories, jewelry, money, and even bread. Incredibly, though these artifacts were ancient, they looked as if they had been made more recently due to the preserving properties of the ash and lava.

Some of the most incredible, yet moving, parts of the exhibit were the body casts, which clearly showed visitors how unexpected and sudden the eruption was. One of the casts was of a prisoner who had been left chained at the ankles while everyone attempted to run from the erupting volcano. Another cast was of a couple, the man holding the woman in an attempt to shield her from the smoke and ashes. The casts were not solely of humans; there were also casts of animals like pigs and a dog that had been left chained to a post.

The entire exhibit created a very moving experience for museum visitors. It was so moving for one of our chaperones, Siddharth Lodaya of The Campus Center, that he visited the exhibit several more times before it closed, and suggested to students that they do the same. Thank you to Siddharth for driving us to Boston, and also for his advice and suggestions regarding areas of the exhibit that deserved special attention. We would also like to thank SHAC, Professor Diana, Gretchen Konrad, and the Honors Program for organizing this incredible trip. It was a moving experience that we will not soon forget!

Jen is a first-year English Secondary Education major from Enfield, CT.

Karolina is a first-year Criminal Justice major from Southampton, MA.

SHAC OFFICERS FALL 2012 - SPRING 2013

Co-President: Lauren Denio and Samantha Lynch
Vice President: Chelsea Baker
Secretary: Amy Elcock
Treasurer: Lyndon Seitz
Commuter Representative: Irina Znakharchuk
Publicity: Lauren Joyce
Historian: Jim Madigan
First Year Representative: Irina Znakharchuk

SHAC acts as a liaison between Honors students and administration. SHAC allows students to be heard in an open and constructive way. In addition to addressing student concerns, the council plans fun events for students throughout the year. Have ideas for programming or want to find out more about SHAC? contact Lauren (ldenio0369@westfield.ma.edu) or Samantha (slynch3536@westfield.ma.edu).

LIKE US on FACEBOOK!
Follow the WSU Honors Facebook page for updates!
I originally read *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in the 6th grade, but I gained a new understanding of the novel after studying it in Professor Filas’ Honors Introduction to American Literature course and upon visiting the Mark Twain House with Dr. Filas’ class.

Sure it was fun being the professor’s co-pilot and DJ in the passenger seat on the way to Hartford, but the adventure truly began when we arrived on the property of Samuel Clemens. Our guide made clear that we were not to refer to the author as Mark Twain that day, since he did not go by his pen name in his house. It was confusing at first when the tour guide kept calling him Sam, but I got used to it quickly and even began to like it better that way. Who knew that the author of a popular book about a kid and a slave going down the river without a cent in their pockets lived in a mansion?

The wealthy Clemens was father of three girls and spent a good amount of his money on entertaining. The tour guide told us that Clemens hosted dinner parties six out of seven nights a week. Clemens enjoyed these parties greatly and strove to be the center of attention by telling story after story. We learned that his stories were so riveting that sometimes the butler would get distracted while listening to them and dinner would be burned.

Another example of Clemens’ storytelling talent was revealed when we visited his library, where we learned that his daughters would give him ideas and he would have to come up with a story about them on the spot. These stories had to be different each time, or else Clemens would have to start all over.

The most powerful part of the trip was when we got to see where Clemens actually wrote his novels. His desk in the billiard room was large and full of papers with the kind of grand chair you would expect in a mansion. However, Clemens did not write there. Instead, he wrote at a relatively small desk, seated in an unimportant chair facing a corner, suggesting an image of the author in serious concentration.

The trip to Samuel Clemens’ house and the Honors course Introduction to American Literature gave me a new perspective on the author and on his novel *Huckleberry Finn*. While my middle school class did discuss the themes of slavery and racism in the novel, coming back to the novel in a college classroom allowed us to explore in depth the critical questions *Huck Finn* scholars debate to this day, from whether Twain’s language and portrayal of black characters is racist to whether Twain intended a homosexual theme in his portrayal of the friendship between Huck and Jim. These questions impassioned me to write my midterm paper on his novel. The discussions in the Honors class were in-depth and intriguing and gave me a new appreciation for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
INSIDE THE HONORS CENTER

From top left: Study session in the Honors Center; End-of-Semester Chinese Dinner - a favorite event; Prof. Von Renesse and class enjoy Pizza/Presentation Night; E. Frary, Prof. Brewster, and K. Anderstrom; Roman Night with Prof. Dempsey; More happy diners at Chinese Dinner Night; G. Konrad and R. Meersman; Voter Education Night led by Prof. Smailes.

The Honors Center is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Additional computers and quiet study room available. Great snacks, board games, and much more. Stop by and check it out - you'll love it!
The third grade class of Deborah L. Chouinard from Juniper Park Elementary School in Westfield joined the third grade class of her daughter, Andrea L. Enright, from Sullivan School in Holyoke for a visit to the Honors Center in late April to indulge in an afternoon of poetry and pizza. Both classes were studying two-voice poems, in which one person writes a line and the other responds alternately. For the workshop, students paired up with their pen pals from the other school to write and perform a poem. Students from the WSU Honors Program, as well as students from the WSU Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society, volunteered to help the third graders develop their poetic voices. The Honors Program provided pizza and encouragement. William Brewster, son of Director of the Honors Program, Professor Glen Brewster, is a student in Mrs. Chouinard’s class and helped organize the event. Asked about his experience in the Honors Center, young Mr. Brewster said, “the poetry was almost as good as the pizza.”

From top left: WSU students work with pairs of 3rd graders composing two-voice poems; Mrs. Chouinard and a young poet; Busy writers share ideas; Honors Program Director Glen Brewster serves pizza; 3rd graders gather for workshop; Event organizer, Will Brewster (l) and his partner read their poem; 3rd graders share their funny poem.
Honors Students at Conferences

UMASS CONFERENCE A RECORD SUCCESS

LYNDON SEITZ

On April 27th, 2012 a record number (98) of Westfield State students presented at the 18th annual Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference. The day-long event gathered students from public colleges and universities from across Massachusetts to present their research and creative work, many of them for the first time.

The conference is a great source of pride for WSU and the Honors Program in particular. Professor Diana, one of the many Westfield faculty sponsors, says, "I am extremely proud of our students, who represented Westfield State well in their professionalism, preparedness, and deep engagement in learning. Students from across the disciplines, many of them only in their first year of college, presented their work with confidence and poise. They are impressive academic ambassadors for our institution."

The conference topics were broad and impressive, including subjects ranging from anthropology to women’s studies. Titles of WSU’s students’ presentations included “A Throwaway Society: Going Green is Easier Than You Think,” “The Polish Joke: Masking (In) Equality in America,” and “Occupy Washington: How Deregulation, Corruption, and Financial Greed Allowed Wall Street to Occupy the United States Government.”

Many of the WSU presenters were Honors Program members. To help students prepare for the conference, the Honors Program sponsored two presentation workshops where students learned how to speak effectively and with confidence and to successfully present their work.

Kate Anderstrom, whose presentation was titled “Raising Student Awareness of Violence Against Women on University Campus: Examining the Effectiveness of The Vagina Monologues,” says about the conference, “It was very fun and interesting to see all of the different presentations, especially all of the Westfield students.”

Jennifer Shakshober, who presented on alternative sexuality in Shakespeare's sonnets addressed to a young man and in The Lais of Marie de France, says, “attending the conference is an important way to supplement my coursework, and I hope practicing oral presentations will help me to get better at public speaking in general.”

I was fortunate to present some of my own poetry; it was as enjoyable to attend this year as it was last year. I encourage anyone interested in the idea of presenting at the conference to go for it, and anyone not interested to reconsider. I certainly intend to present again next year.

Lyndon is a sophomore English major from Webster, MA.
HONORS STUDENTS AT CONFERENCES

From top left: Prof. Nielsen with UMass conferees; K. Nielsen presents at NRHC in Baltimore; R. Donoghue’s poster presentations at NRHC; C. O’Brien and J. Madigan present at UMass; Prof. Diana with Honors presenters at UMass; Some of the 98 WSU conferees and Prof. Brewster and Prof. Diana at UMass. Read your Honors email for conference opportunities!
Senior Honors Projects

Passionate Pursuit: The Senior Honors Project
Jeanette Fleck

An honors student who wants to graduate as a Commonwealth Honors Scholar, the highest distinction awarded by the state of Massachusetts, must complete a two-semester Senior Honors Project (SHP). But what is an SHP, exactly, and what do students who have completed the SHP have to say about their experiences? I spoke with seven Commonwealth Honors Scholars from the class of 2011 and the class of 2012 to find out.

The SHP is a six-credit independent research or creative project on a topic the student chooses. WSU students have written on a wide range of topics, as this year’s group demonstrates, with projects ranging from a chapbook of poetry, to a study of U.S. foreign policy during the Iran-Iraq war, to reducing hemolysin production in staphylococcus aureus by blocking quorum sensing with hamamelitannin. Typically research papers are at least 25 pages long, and creative projects include a narrative reflection section about the creative process. Students work with a committee, comprised of an advisor and two readers, as well as a Library Liaison and a consultant from the Reading and Writing Center.

Students agreed that spending so long on a single interesting topic gave them deeper knowledge than a standard class could have. The SHP also gives Honors students experience in research and looks very good on a résumé. One senior explained that during a graduate school interview, “most of the conversation surrounded my SHP, and it even landed me a graduate assistantship,” which came with a full scholarship. An alumna from the class of 2011 added, “this project was not only a wonderful part of my college experience, but also an important part of my job hunt! One of the people who interviewed me for a math middle school position asked several questions about my SHP. He said the fact that I had completed this project had jumped out at him when he reviewed my résumé.”

The first step is choosing a topic, which one interviewee named as the most intimidating part of the entire process. Most of the students said they did not know exactly what they would do at first, and some chose their Project Advisors before deciding on their topics. Eventually, though, they all found a topic interesting enough that they would want to spend over a year working on it. One student summed it up: “Honestly, if you pick a topic you are truly passionate about, nothing within the project should be intimidating.”

Still some Honors students may be intimidated by the prospect of meeting deadlines and reading widely in their fields. No one minced words; a SHP is a lot of work. However, everyone agreed the work was enjoyable and rewarding. Another alumna from the class of 2011 explained, “my SHP helped me develop time management, organizational, and communication skills important in any field and also taught me research and writing strategies that I use in my current profession. Working closely with faculty who valued my ideas and presenting my SHP also helped me build self-confidence, a vital component in any successful career.”

And there was much to enjoy. The best part for many was the opportunity to work with their chosen advisors. For one researcher, a highlight was getting to look through recently-released primary sources. More than one student enthusiastically noted that they had “accomplished something major.”

As for what they wish they had been told, the response was unanimous: choose the topic early; be sure it’s what you really want to do, and start working immediately. Whether pursuing a research or creative project, you will accomplish more if you start sooner. And most importantly, as stated by one but implied by all, “your project needs to be something you want to spend time with,” so find a passionate pursuit!

Jeanette is a first-year Psychology and English dual major from Westfield, MA.

Interested in learning more about Senior Honors Projects? Contact Dr. Brewster, Honors Director, or Dr. Diana, Assistant Honors Director, or stop by the Honors Center for more information.
SPRING 2012 SENIOR HONORS PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Alexandra Haggerty
Kathleen Jwanowski
Lauren Burch
Gary Savoie
Amber Pascoe
Michael Brill
Katelyn Anderstrom
Brooke Carney
Rachel Lareau
HONORS STUDENTS WHO SHINE

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Ryan Meersman, a dual secondary education and history major who graduated as a University Honors Scholar, was honored by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education among the “29 Who Shine” awards. These awards honor 29 outstanding public college and university graduates, one from each community college, state university and UMass campus in the commonwealth, for their academic achievement and community service. Meersman has served as the student representative to the Westfield State University Board of Trustees, student representative to the Westfield State Strategic Planning Committee, member of the Student Government Association, and a member of the Student Advisory Council to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. He was also one of the 2011 President’s Award for Excellence in Leadership recipients.

Class of 2012 Co-Salutatorians Samantha Hague (l) and Michael Brill (r) are congratulated by President Dobelle at WSU’s 173rd Commencement on Sunday, May 19, 2012. Samantha and Mike also graduated as Commonwealth Honors Scholars.

Honors Graduates attending Graduate School - Fall 2012:

Mary Cafferty: University of Texas at Austin - MFA in Creative Writing, Fiction. Mary received a 3-semester teaching assistantship and a James Michener Fellowship for her fourth semester. She was also awarded a $5,000 Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Fellowship towards her graduate work at the University of Texas.

Brooke Carney: Bridgewater State University - M. Ed. in School Counseling 5-12 program. Brooke has a grad assistantship at the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center.

Jackie Desmarais: Boston University - one year Master's Program in English.

Cori Glennie: Tufts University - MS in Math Education in the MSTE (Math, Science, Technology and Engineering) Education Program. Cori received a research assistantship position at The Poincaré Institute for Mathematics Education at Tufts.

Alexandra Haggerty: UMass Medical, Worcester, graduate school of nursing. This is a 3-year program, one year for RN licensure and 2 years for masters in nursing. Alexandra plans to graduate as a nurse practitioner in adult/gerontology primary care.


Tony Iozzo: Syracuse University College of Law, graduating in 2015.

Other Honors Students:

Lauren Denio: sophomore Elementary Education and Liberal Arts major was awarded $500 from the Northeast Regional Honors Council towards the cost of attending Partners-in-the-Park, an outdoor experiential learning program, to be held in the Grand Canyon in June 2012.

Alumnae - send us updates! We are always eager to share your good news. Send updates and contact information to Gretchen at gkonrad@westfield.ma.edu.
CONGRATULATIONS, 2012 GRADUATES!

Gretchen Konrad and Rachel Lareau.

Dr. Diana and Michael Brill.

Daniel Walsh.

Brooke Carney, Dr. Kantrowitz, and Kate Anderstrom.

Christina Tomasetti.

Brian Cipoletta.

Alexandra Haggerty.

Kathleen Jwanowski.

Cori Glennie.
The designation of Commonwealth Honors Scholar is awarded to students who complete a minimum of four Honors courses (at least one upper-level Honors seminar) with a B or higher, maintain an overall GPA of 3.30 or higher, and complete a six-credit, individually designed Senior Honors Project. Listed below are recipients, their major(s), their SHP titles, and their Project Advisors.

Katelyn Anderstrom: Ethnic and Gender Studies and Psychology, Student Awareness of Violence against Women on a University Campus: Examining the Effectiveness of The Vagina Monologues, Dr. Rebecca Burwell.

Michael Brill: History and Political Science, “Too bad they both can’t lose”: Realism, U.S. Foreign Policy, and the Iran-Iraq War, Dr. Mark Abate.

Lauren Burch: English, Graphic Jane Austen, Dr. Elizabeth Starr.

Mary Cafferty: Communication and English, Facebook and the Four Theoretical Elements of Experience and Communication: The Symbolic Construction of a Semiotic Environment, Dr. Madeline Cahill.

Brooke Carney: Psychology, Bullying, Self-Worth Contingencies, and the Development of Self-Esteem during Adolescence, Dr. Rebecca Burwell.


Corinne Glennie: General Science and Mathematics, Education Solutions in Lawrence, MA, Dr. David Raker.

Alexandra Haggerty: Movement Science, The Effects of Whole-Body Vibration Training on Functional Mobility, Dr. Christopher Proulx.

Samantha Hague: Psychology, Emerging Adult Identity, Dr. Janet Gebelt.

Kathleen Jwanowski: Criminal Justice and Biology, Reducing Hemolysin Production in Staphylococcus Aureus by Blocking Quorum Sensing with Hamamelitannin, Dr. Suzanne Walsh.

Rachel Lareau: English, Half and Half and Wild, Dr. Leah Nielsen.

Amber Pascoe: Art, Teaching Culturally and Ethnically Responsive Art, Dr. Christina Swaidan.

Gary Savoie: Computer Science, The Future of the Internet: Understanding the World’s Transition from IPv4 to IPv6, Dr. Larry Griffith.

The designation of University Honors Scholar is awarded to students who complete a minimum of six Honors courses (at least one upper-level Honors seminar) with a B or higher and maintain an overall GPA of 3.30 or higher. Listed below are recipients and their majors:

David Andre: Criminal Justice.

Ross Beck: Athletic Training.

Brian Cipoletta: Psychology.

Kristen Coughlan: Early Childhood Education and Liberal Studies.

Sara Covalli: Elementary Education and Mathematics.

Chelsea Decoteau: Business Management.

Anthony Iozzo: Criminal Justice and Economics.

Brian Lanciault: Political Science.

Nicole McLaine: Psychology.

Ryan Meersman: History.

Erin Moran: Communication.

Danielle Morin: Business Management.

Kelley O’Connor: Elementary Education and Liberal Studies.

Christina Tomasetti: Special Education and Liberal Studies.

Daniel Walsh: English and Spanish.

Stephen Walsh: Mathematics.

Stephen Wippert: Biology.

Honors scholars receive their awards at the Academic Excellence Awards Ceremony. L to R: Dr. Diana, Dr. Brewster, Erin Moran, Brian Lanciault, Tony Iozzo, Sara Covalli, Kristen Coughlan, Brian Cipoletta, Ross Beck, Daniel Walsh, Stephen Walsh, and President Dobelle.