

NEWSLETTER

– FALL 2021 –

HONORS



Grab a snack and a cup of coffee because we have a lot of news to share this semester!

A MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

If culture is a story we tell ourselves about ourselves, then one of the most important stories an honors program needs to tell is the story of its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The mere fact that students are enticed to apply to the program by the promise of receiving enriched learning opportunities and financial support indicates that honors is a space of privilege. In 2015, the Honors Advisory Council took two important steps to assure that our honors culture and programming were shaped



Dr. Wendy Chase - Coordinator
Honors Scholar Program

Race/Ethnicity

Asian:	4.3%
Black/African-American:	15.7%
Hispanic:	27.1%
Unknown:	10.0%
White:	42.9%

Gender 77% female 23% male

Financial Aid

38% **Dual-enrolled** students who receive free tuition and books

14% **cannot fill out a FAFSA** due to residential status

Of the students who are eligible for financial aid, 47% receive **Pell Grants**

by honest reflection on, and concrete responses to this privileged status. First, we adopted a holistic approach to identifying and admitting students to the program. We de-center a student's GPA in the admission process out of an awareness that grades and test scores are determined by more than a student's intellectual ability or work habits. Educators and parents have long recognized that resource-rich schools and families that provide high impact learning experiences give those students an advantage over others who have not had the same level of support and preparation for college. We strive to address this inequity by focusing on the applicant's essays and letters of recommendation during the admission process. We consider the qualities of motivation, curiosity, and creativity to be the defining attributes

of an honors student and we appreciate professors who help us identify these students. We recognize that we have more work to do, particularly on Charlotte and Hendry/Glades, and we are open to all suggestions to improve our recruitment process.

The second step we took to address the privileged status of honors education was to rewrite our mission and values statements to emphasize social responsibility, cultural empathy, and civic engagement. Beginning at the honors orientation, we stress our belief that honors students who have the benefit of a richer educational experience also have the responsibility to use their education in service to the public good. To this end, we invite all students to take honors classes as affiliates, host co-curricular events that are open to the entire student body, and we support students who want to start initiatives that will benefit the wider FSW community. Examples of recent student initiatives that originated in honors are the foundation of the Active Minds club and the Mental Health Matters programming that club members help to plan, and the establishment of an annual Take Back the Night event to advocate for the end of all forms of sexual violence.

In addition to mentoring students through the research process, honors faculty play a crucial role in defining a culture of inclusion and social responsibility by designing

HONORS ADVISORY COUNCIL

-THANK YOU-

Dr. Rona Axelrod

Dr. Bruno Baltodano

Prof. Shimul Chowdury

Dr. Jacquelyn Davis

Dr. Eileen DeLuca

Dr. Mark Herman

Prof. Terri Housely

Prof. Ihasha Horn

Prof. Emily Porter

Prof. Whitney Rhyne

meaningful co-curricular experiences. This semester, HSP sponsored an event organized by Dr. Brandi George for the Research Expo. Dr. George invited two internationally acclaimed poets, Aimee Nezhukumatathil and Ross Gay, to read their work in a live Zoom webinar. Listening to student comments and questions after their reading spoke to the transformative power events such as these have on our learning community. Similarly, Professor Ihasha Horn and Professor Emily Porter led the largest field trip in HSP history when they took more than thirty students to Cayo Costa with Captiva Cruises' Environmental

Education Outreach Project. The majority of students who participated in this experience were not members of the honors program. Students learned about the cultural and natural history of Pine Island Sound and our Back Bay Estuary on the boat trip to Cayo Costa State Park where they participated in an in-depth exploration of barrier island ecology. Engaging with faculty in informal settings that promote curiosity and refine understanding of our local ecosystem solidifies a sense of community that extends beyond the borders of our campuses. These co-curricular activities create a sense of egalitarianism within the student body and foster the mastery of soft skills such as effective communication, empathy, and adaptability. In these ways, honors functions as a site of resistance to a purely utilitarian education.

Building and maintaining an inclusive and inspiring honors community takes constant effort and I would like to thank the members of the Honors Advisory Council and all of our honors faculty for their tireless dedication to our students. Special thanks go to Dr. Jacquelyn Davis who is building an impressive program on the Collier campus. On behalf of the entire honors community at FSW, I wish all of you a happy and relaxing holiday.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- FALL 2021 -

Word from the Coordinator.....	1
Collier Corner.....	4
Honors in Action.....	5
Student Spotlight: Shirin Bos	6
Meet & Greet: Lee.....	7
Student Spotlight: Emmericka Jean.....	8
Miami Honors Trip.....	9
Student Spotlight: Victoria Hemmingway.....	10
Captiva Cruises.....	12
Faculty Feature: Dana Roes.....	13
Meet our Ambassadors.....	16
Want to learn more?.....	17



COLLIER CORNER

BY DR. JACQUELYN DAVIS

'Tis the season to be thankful, grateful, and merry! With the support of 'Team Collier,' the Honors Scholar Program is excited to share new developments and accomplishments achieved during the Fall 2021 academic semester.

Meet & Greet

Collier's Honors Scholar Program (CHSP) hosted its first Meet and Greet on September 30, 2021. Students, parents, and interested guests met with current Honors students, Honors Ambassadors, Honors Faculty, and other CHSP partners while enjoying delightful refreshments. A heartfelt "thank-you" to everyone for making the event a success: Dr. Van Gaalen from FSW Institutional Research, Mike Messina from the Center for International Education, Nathan Lewis from Academic Support, Whitney Rhyne from Institutional Effectiveness, Academic Advisor Andy Hahn, Academic Advisor Dr. George Harvey, and representatives of Phi Theta Kappa. Additionally, we appreciate the support of our outstanding Honors Faculty, Professor Emily Porter and Professor Randy Moffet! Your presence and attention helped guests feel extra special!

A very special "thank you" to Campus Director Gail Murphy and our very own HSP Coordinator, Dr. Wendy Chase, for their leadership and support. Honorable mentions go to Jim Stewart, Perry West, Barbara Hendrix, Bonnie LaFemina, and our extraordinary Honors Ambassador/Assistant Nicole Bernstein for helping with the organization and coordination of details.

Honors Scholar Center

During the Meet and Greet, guests toured the new Honors Center located in Building J-Room #114.



Honors Scholar students can now enjoy this small but convenient area of three private rooms, computers, tables, chairs, and a whiteboard. Students can host meetings, study, or relax. The Honors Center is open Monday thru Friday, 9 am-5 pm. Special thanks to Gail Murphy, Bonnie LaFemina, Barbara Hendrix, Jim Stewart, and Perry West for turning this vision into a reality!

Collier County Public School Event

In conjunction with the Center for International Education, the Honors Scholar Program presented to Collier County Guidance Counselors during their monthly professional development meeting. Over 55 guests received information on the Honors Scholar Program's benefits and study abroad opportunities. Special thanks to Gail Murphy for hosting the event and including HSP!

As the Fall academic semester and "2021" come to an end, the Collier Honors Scholar Program wishes everyone a safe and healthy holiday season!



BEACH
CLEAN-UP



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HONORS IN ACTION

We kicked off the semester by participating in International Coastal Clean-Up Day on Lover's Key. We had more outdoor adventures touring ECHO and learning about food forests and touring the FGCU food forest as well.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

SHIRIN BOS

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am an international student from Germany and the Netherlands. I started at FSW the summer of 2019 and joined HSP that fall. I have also worked as a photo lab assistant, and the student assistant to Dr. Teed and the Honors Scholar Program. I have also been a Peer Mentor and an Honors Ambassador so my life at FSW has been very full. I am a photographer who plans to make my passion my job and I will be transferring to FGCU in January to enter the next phase of my educational journey.

2. What have been your most memorable (and meaningful) experiences in the Honors Scholar Program?

Where would I even start? From my research trip to Tijuana and San Diego up until my photo exhibit on December 3rd, to all of the friendships I have made in the process, the entire experience has been just amazing and inspirational. I grew as a person and as an artist while in the program. I also took as many honors classes as possible because I preferred the hands-on structure of the classes. I was able to form much more personal relationships with both the professors and students and I didn't have to do any busy work!



3. What advice would you give to in-coming students at FSW?

My advice to new students is to take every opportunity and don't be afraid to have crazy ideas. College is not just about sitting in a classroom doing assignments. That is important but college has so much more to offer! Join clubs or create your own. Work on campus. Talk to your professors—you never know how much they can help you. Most of all, apply to the Honors Scholar Program! It does not stand for all the cliches and biases that people associate with honors, it stands for passion and personal achievement. I would not have done everything I did at FSW without the support of this program.



MEET & GREET LEE CAMPUS

On September 2nd we had our Lee Campus Meet & Greet! Both Professors and Scholars joined and had a great bonding time with one another.

We created a Scavenger Hunt with Trivia Questions around the Campus, as well as, who can make the best team photo and team name!

The Teams were:

- *Alabaster Kazam* with Professor Jill Hummel
- *Pink Panthers* with Professor Terry Housley
- *Orange is the New Black* with Professor Bruno Baltodano
- *Triple G (Great Green Grizzlies)* with Professor Emily Porter

A special thank you to Dr. Wendy Chase, Whitney Ryne and Shirin Bos for organizing this event!



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

EMMERICKA JEAN

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am an international student from Haiti, and I started studying at FSW in Fall 2019. My favorite pastime is writing poetry while outdoors; I also love reading and cooking. I am currently completing my AA in general studies this December, and I'm looking to earn my Bachelors of Social Work at FGCU.

2. What have been your most memorable (and meaningful) experiences in the Honors Scholar Program?

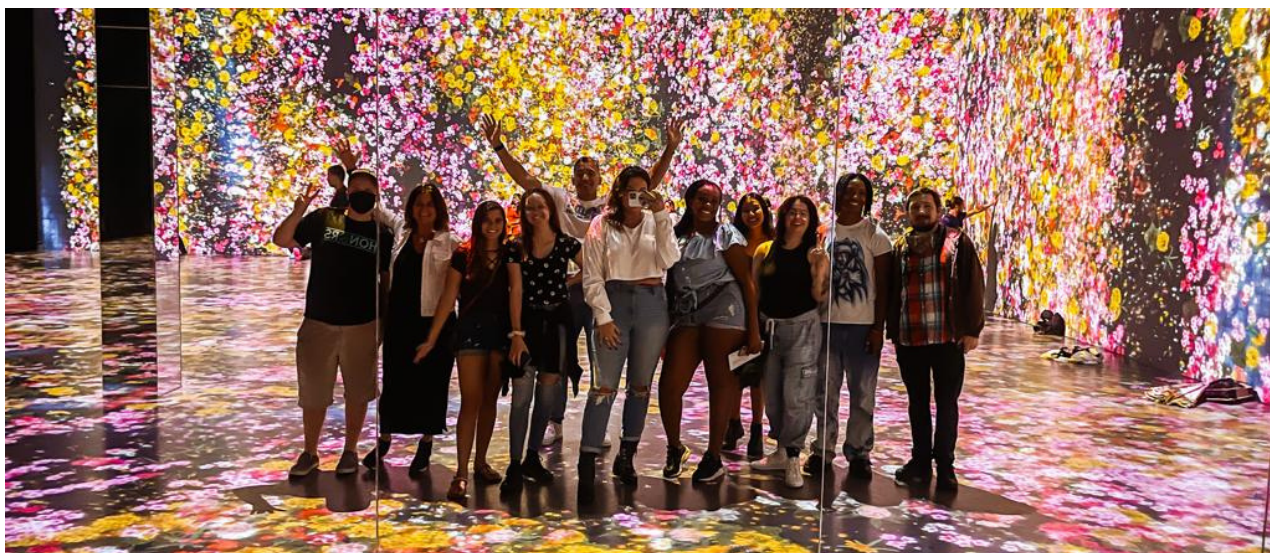
My most memorable experiences in The Honors Scholar Program have been taking my first Honors seminar and completing my capstone project.

I got to cultivate a greater love for nature, and I got to meet students and professors that would be an important part of my time at FSW. Those very ideas I picked up through the seminar powered through my collection of poetry. I will never forget the kind of "anything is possible spirit" that is fostered in the program; it has empowered me to continue pursuing my goals even when they seem insurmountable.



3. What advice would you give to in-coming students at FSW?

My best advice to freshmen students is to have grit and to never hold back. College is a challenge, but it stretches you and causes you to grow for that very reason. I'd advise them to embrace each difficulty while keeping their goals at the forefront of their minds, seizing each opportunity as they come. It is by facing the workload that they begin to discover their capabilities.



SUPERBLUE
&
WINWOOD WALLS

10/22-10/23
HONORS TRIP





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT VICTORIA HEMMINGWAY

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself and your plans for the future.

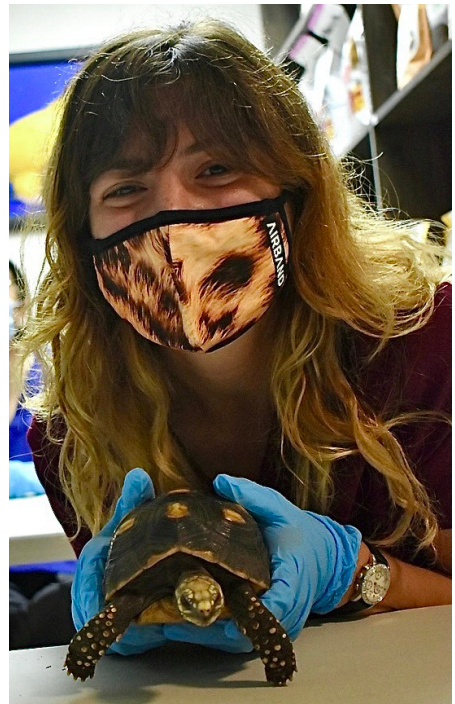
My name is Victoria Hemmingway. I'm a simple girl born and raised in Naples, Florida and I have always had a love for the natural world. I've been a veterinary technician for three and a half years now and I currently work at an exotic clinic as a surgical technician. Some of my hobbies include paddle boarding, boating, surfing, hiking, camping, admiring the moon, playing video games, and cosplaying. I have many rescued animals that I love dearly... three dogs, two cats, plenty of fish, three turtles, and a hedgehog! I am planning to earn a bachelor's degree in environmental science, and I am still deciding on if I want to continue on to become a veterinarian or a biologist. Either way - I am striving to do conservation work, as it is my passion.



2. How have your experiences in the Honors Program shaped your time at FSW and prepared you for the future?

The Honors Program has made my time at FSW absolutely wonderful. There is so much support from the peers in the program as well as the professors associated. The program allowed me the opportunity to take interdisciplinary classes and discussion-based classes that combine various subjects and apply them to the careers I want to pursue. My Capstone project to graduate with honors has allowed me to dive into the world of fieldwork. I am studying pathogens in wild populations of Florida Box Turtles under Professor Donini, which has proven to be a truly wonderful, eye-opening experience. The program has also allowed me to forge new connections within the wildlife field, giving me the

opportunity to volunteer for The Conservancy as a Critter Courier as well as volunteering with an individual rehabber who specializes in squirrels. These volunteer positions played a consequential role in earning me a full scholarship to the Florida Wildlife Rehabilitators Association Symposium of 2022, in which there will be multiple classes, labs, and workshops on wildlife medicine. The Honors Scholar program also funded the tuition I needed so I could attend a wildlife veterinary medicine internship in Panama this past summer, which was an incredible hands-on experience that played a significant role in preparing me for my future career path as well as a great addition to my resume. I cannot thank this program enough as it has truly changed my life for the better and opened up so many paths for me.



3. What advice would you offer to all students at FSW? To students in the Honors Program?

I would advise students at FSW to never limit themselves, to always try their hardest and to never be afraid of trying something new. You never know what activity or class will help you find your true path. I encourage all students to really take advantage of being here at FSW. There are so many opportunities if only you seek them out – everyone here truly cares for the students and have your back.



CAPTIVA CRUISES



FACULTY FEATURE

DANA ROES

If everyone could understand only one thing about your discipline, what would you like that to be?

That artists are problem-solvers. We are not just interested in decoration. Artists are thinkers and philosophers and that is what pushes us to make the next piece of art. We observe the culture around us and these observations can manifest as social commentary, but it is usually about an individual pursuit of truth or documentation and reflection on a truth that an artist witnesses around them. It is easy to dismiss artists as airy-fairy, overly-sensitive types who can't succeed in other disciplines. Or, we have the stereotype of the wild, egocentric "mad genius" as artist, but I think artists are complex problem-solvers and documentarians. That said, in the same way that there are an infinite number of ways to be an individual in the world, there are an infinite number of ways to be an artist--but I think the most successful artists are constantly exploring and thinking through art.



Describe your experiences teaching in the HSP.

The class that I teach in The Honors Scholar Program is a conceptual art class that I designed when I was teaching graduate students at SCAD, and it was called Media Explorations. It was so well-received and generated such interesting work that we decided it should also be offered to seniors in the BFA program. At the time, I was teaching in the painting department. Installation art and performance art were just starting to be included in academic settings, but no one was teaching conceptual art and it was a major blind spot in their curriculum. The work that came out of this class tended to significantly alter the way students perceived themselves as artists and opened up new channels in their art-making process. Even those students who returned to the medium they habitually worked in seemed to approach their work differently, and it cracked them open.

When I came to FSW, I was able to get this course through curriculum committee my second semester and it was successful. But it wasn't until I started teaching it in honors, and team-teaching it with Dr. Chase, that it hit a new level. And the reason for that is because Dr. Chase would trace the history of conceptual art and introduce

students to a wide range of artists, movements, and practices that provided a meaningful context for the students and they started to understand what they were building on, as artists, in their own work. They understood a different way of thinking and it gave them the confidence to explore these processes themselves. The Honors Scholar Program also validated this form of art and provided students with money for materials to create significant works. The focus on community-involvement and collaboration in honors also helped the assignments evolve. The work that came out of that class was always provocative but the validation and support from HSP helped students believe that the work they were doing was important and should be seen by the wider community, not just the other students in the class. And over the past few years, the final collaborative project produced in that class has not only been displayed in the local community and caught the attention of the press, but in some cases, our students have been invited to perform it or display it outside of SWFL. One of the most rewarding parts of watching this class evolve over the past 20 years is noting that it started as a specialized class for grad students and now, in its most successful iteration, it is a class taught to a mixture of committed art students and many students from a wide range of disciplines who have never taken an art class before. It is ultimately a class that teaches creative thinking and problem-solving, and that is the goal of all good art classes.

What would you say are the qualities of an outstanding art professor?

A good art professor's primary goal is to help each student find and cultivate their voice. And to do that, the professor has to keep pushing the student and asking questions to get them to dig deeper instead of accepting their first idea or settling for a superficial exploration of a concept. Before they even begin making art, I ask students to do a lot of journaling in response to a prompt and this often leads to a more rigorous examination of their personal experiences, or inspires them to do research on topics that interest them. Usually, students bring in pages and pages of ideas and I go over all of them. Often, students are initially drawn to an idea that they think is neat but it doesn't require much risk. But I will notice which ideas really seem to resonate with each student, and these ideas generally expose their unique worldview and require more risk than the idea that they initially want to pursue. And yet, you also don't want to push a student to do something prematurely if they aren't ready to go there yet; and I've been faced with that a few times when the topic might be too big or too painful and they just aren't ready to explore it yet. But that is what is wonderful about being an artist because they have an entire lifetime to explore different topics and events in their own lives and in the world at large.

An effective art professor has to have the ability to lead a substantial and meaningful critique. I think that how critiques are managed, and what happens during critique is what determines the success of the class—and usually bonds a class. It is through the process of talking about someone else's artwork that students begin to reflect on their own. It is much easier to talk about other people's work; when you're discussing someone else's work you are thinking about the decisions that they made and how you might have handled those decisions differently. During that process, the whole class needs to be generous and kind to one another, but at the same time, it isn't meaningful if everyone simply says, "Oh, I like it!" or "This is great!". It is up to the professor to guide the discussion and ask deeper questions, like "What led you to make this decision?" and "Do you feel this is working for you or could it have worked better if you had done something else." You guide the critique to analyze what you think the student was seeking and then they can decide whether or not the piece was successful. I can engage the entire class by asking them to take their hand and cover a certain portion of the canvas and tell me if it's working better; or take this one black smudge out with your thumb and tell me what you think. And usually they will go, "Wow! I never thought of that!" And it is only once they learn to look at work differently

that they understand that the process of critique is not threatening; it isn't about right or wrong, it is a tool and one of the most effective tools we can use to learn from one another to improve each other's work.

What is really great about critique is that by the end of the class, when students hang up their work, everyone knows whose it is. You can already recognize each individual style, or their way of seeing, or the way they make a mark, and you can see their growth. And it's great to hear a student compliment another student and say, "You've grown so much." They always recognize that in each other and it shows you how closely they pay attention to one another—that it really is a community effort.



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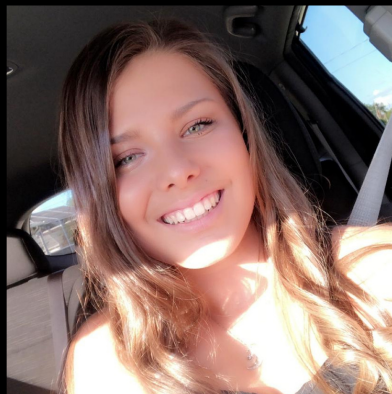
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HONORS



WANT TO LEARN MORE?



Are you or someone you know interested in the Honor Scholars Program?

If you are motivated, hardworking, creative, innovative, forward thinking, or ready to achieve your dreams then the Honor Scholars Program might be right for you! We strive to cultivate your academic excellence, leadership skills, and commitment to being socially responsible. Honors is a great way to build your academic resume, meet like-minded people, and develop your very own research!

Email **Dr. Wendy Chase** or **Courtney Daniels** about all that the program has to offer!

Contact Us

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Check out our website



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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

FROM THE HONORS
SCHOLAR PROGRAM

