

# NEWSLETTER

– SPRING 2022 –

# HONORS



## A MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

The values that guide the Honors Scholar Program were on full display at the Research Expo two weeks ago. Our program implements pedagogical strategies and offers extra-curricular activities that encourage intellectual risk-taking, lay the groundwork for independent research, increase awareness of how individual and local actions resonate on a global scale, and foster engaged stewardship and activism. Financial support from the FSW Foundations enables student participation in academic and professional experiences where they engage with the broader intellectual community in their field of study.



Dr. Wendy Chase - Coordinator

## LIFE CHANGER AWARDS

Every year, students in the Honors Scholar Program select a professor who has made a positive impact on their lives.

**Professor Stuart Brown** and  
**Dr. Brandi George**  
tied for this award this year.

Congratulations on a job well done!

Collectively, our students traveled 43,784 miles to present their research or attend conferences and workshops on topics ranging from wildlife veterinary medicine to brain mapping to the study of trauma and dissociation. Much of what they learned through these experiences was integrated into their capstone projects. For these projects our students conducted surveys, led focus groups, collected oral histories, carried out experiments, wrote short stories and poetry, built maquettes of green buildings, assisted with a coral restoration project in the Keys, and designed costumes based on case studies of childhood trauma. At the Research Expo, the students demonstrated mastery over their content in presentations where they were poised, articulate, and thorough in their explanations of their research questions, methodologies, and results.

It is always a pleasure to share our students' accomplishments and acknowledge those who helped them to achieve their goals, including all of the Honors faculty who taught the classes and led field trips that inspired their research. While Dr. Davis and I have the pleasure of working with these students one-on-one, we would like to give special thanks to the following faculty and administrators who either guest-lectured in our capstone class or lent their expertise to mentor certain students, and/or served as judges for the Research Expo: Dr. Rona Axelrod, Dr. Elizabeth Badillo, Professor Shimul Chowdury, Professor Jane Charles, Dr. Eileen DeLuca, Professor Jordan Donini, Dr. Brandi George, Professor Ihasha Horn, Professor Terri Housely, Dr. Brandon Jett, Dr. Brian Page, Professor Emily Porter, Professor Whitney Rhyne, Dr. Jennifer Summary, Dr. Debbie Teed and Dr. Joe Van Gaalen.

Last but not least, I want to thank all of the faculty and students who responded to the surveys we sent out regarding the creation of a food forest on the Lee campus. The students who worked on that project presented the results of those surveys along with a potential design and a cost benefit analysis to the administration. Dr. DeLuca conveyed the results of their research to the President's cabinet at their recent budget meeting and they were favorably impressed by the research. Stay tuned for details as they unfold.

## 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

It is truly an honors to work with such an incredible group of talented students, faculty and administrators who are dedicated to teaching students the skills and habits they need to execute high quality research. None of this would be possible, of course, without the support of President Allbritten, whose commitment to both faculty and undergraduate research created the academic and creative synergy that undergirds all of these endeavors. On behalf of the Honors Advisory Council, I wish all of you a restful summer break.

FACULTY FEATURE  
EMILY PORTER



**Were you always planning to be an Environmental Science Professor or how did you end up on this path?**

During graduate school, my goal was to become a lobbyist, go to Washington and persuade lawmakers to put measures in place that would offer greater protection for the environment. I fell into teaching, completely by accident. While in graduate school, the Department Chair asked me to instruct an Environmental Biology course and I agreed to accept this new challenge, even with a considerable lack of experience. I immediately fell in love with teaching and by the second week, I fell in love with my students as well.... the rest is history. Helping students become the best version of themselves, continues to be my driving force and motivation.

While teaching this first Environmental Biology course, I realized that the way to implement environmental change is from the ground up, not the top down. It is an honor to have the opportunity to help our students find their own ecological perspective on the world. I would like to think that my courses are helping, in some small way, to make the world a better place.

**If there is one thing in your area of expertise that you wish everyone understood, what would that be?**

First of all, I wish ALL of our students were required to take Environmental Science. This course provides a life-changing glimpse of what our future will look like. If everyone, not just our students, had a better understanding of Climate Change and all it's different variables, we would be more proactive on coming up with viable solutions. At the end of the day, nothing matters more than the health of our planet but until you take an Environmental Science course, that is really hard to comprehend. I try to encourage my students to pursue careers in Environmental Engineering and Environmental Law or seek public office at any level. The problems we create today, will be inherited by our students in the next 10, 20, 50 years. Preparing them for the future is probably the most important aspect of what I do at FSW.



**Describe your experiences with HSP and what it's like to work with our students.**

FSW Honor Students are amazing. It is such a pleasure to work with those who are highly motivated and eager to learn. On our Study Abroad trip to the Galapagos Islands, Dr. Roz Jester and I were able to take our research ideas to a higher level. Instead of just visiting the Galapagos Islands and looking at the natural beauty, we were able to conduct in-depth studies on Giant Tortoises, native plants and endemic marine species. Our students came away with a greater appreciation and understanding of island ecology through the research they conducted. Other honor student research includes studies on the invasive apple snail and microplastic research. Helping students challenge themselves and reach their full potential is always worth the extra effort.



On a final note, I wish we could encourage every eligible FSW student to join our Honors Scholar Program. Through enhanced learning, professional development, research, scholarship, and study abroad opportunities, we can help them forge a path of success, which is something they can draw from and utilize for the rest of their lives. That is the power of our Honors Scholar Program. Let's help students utilize this amazing resource.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### HIEU NGUYEN

#### 1. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am a dual-enrolled senior at FSW Collegiate Highschool. After graduating, I will be attending Stanford University. I was born and raised in California for over ten years. I have always been interested in learning about the human mind. It's fascinating that we can discover thousands of stars millions of miles away in the galaxy but have yet to discover how our minds function in the first place. Outside of academics, I find myself involved in my high school key club, mentoring group, playing basketball, reading, watching movies, or playing the piano.

#### 2. What opportunities offered by the Honors Scholar Program were the most impactful for you?

I remember entering FSW as a high school student wanting to conduct research, enjoy my hobbies, and meet supportive professors willing to bring my ambitions to fruition. The Honors Scholar Program offered me just that opportunity. During the Honors Capstone class, I had the chance to combine my love for neuroscience and piano while playing music for residents with dementia at a local retirement community. Each session was incredibly uplifting to see the residents and caregivers enjoy the music and cheer when it was over. Their donations and heartfelt letters were inspirational, and the Honors Program helped share this experience.



#### 3. What advice do you have for incoming FSW students?

Most students that come to FSW only stay for two years. However, never underestimate the amount of experience, connections, and relationships with peers and professors you will form in just these years. Because class sizes are typically smaller, it's so much easier to build a long-lasting relationship with teachers who will help you get into the schools and careers you aim for.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### CORALIE LAMOUR

#### 1. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

My name is Coralie Lamour, and I'm an international student from Haiti. I grew up in Haiti, where I graduated high school with a concentration in sciences. There, I also participated in many extra-curricular activities such as volleyball, dance, and boxing and worked hard to be an active member of the community by volunteering in literacy centers.

I am currently studying at FSW to get my AA and AS in architectural design and construction technologies. I am an honors student and vice-president of the black student association. In addition, I work on campus in a student leader position as a peer mentor. I will be graduating by the end of spring 2022.

My plan is to transfer to Florida International University, where I will be pursuing my bachelor's and Masters in architecture.

#### 2. What opportunities offered by the Honors Scholar Program were the most impactful for you?

The honors scholar program made my post-secondary education possible by providing me with financial and emotional support. As my family was facing financial hardships in Haiti, Honors funding alleviated some of that stress by financing my projects and providing me with tuition support throughout my whole time in the program. Furthermore, I was provided with a space where I could freely express and discover myself—a space where I was inspired and encouraged to pursue my passions.



#### 3. What advice do you have for incoming FSW students?

My advice to incoming FSW students would be to try it all. Get involved as much as you can, even in subjects that you're doubtful about. I would have never thought that my political science class would be the most inspiring. And I would've never thought that I would get such a great support system from working on campus and joining the Honor's Scholar Program.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### KELLY O'HANLON

#### 1. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I'm a non-traditional student returning to college 27 years after barely graduating high school.

Unfortunately, being a good student or showing an interest in your own education was considered a weakness and a waste of time where I grew up. I only had one close friend that attended college, and higher education was only for families who had money. At least that was my perception of how to get by in the world back then. Eventually, I did find my way to a 9-month business school certification program in Minnesota which prepared me for a very unexpected 20-year career and business partnership. Despite the variety of opportunities for growth that my business provided to me I always maintained a curiosity about having access to intellectual environments and wondered what it would be like to choose a field of study and earn a degree or two.



I often, half-jokingly, told myself that I would attend college when my kids went away to college and that is part of what led me to transitioning out of my business partnership and enrolling at FSW. As for plans after I graduate from FSW, I do know that I want to continue my education, but I am still undecided about what to study. I am drawn to a variety of fields that include humanities, social sciences, legal institutions and democratic systems but I am still exploring degrees and schools to apply to.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### KELLY O'HANLON

#### (CONT'D)

#### **2. What opportunities offered by the Honors Scholar Program were the most impactful for you?**

Participating in the Research Expo and the Southern Regional Honors Council Conference go hand-in-hand for me as the most impactful opportunities of the Honors Scholar Program, and I struggled to say yes to both. First, I struggled with deciding what I would want to research because I was excited about my first research project experience, and I have so many areas of interest that I would want to explore. Next, I had to push myself to consider presenting at a conference. Prior to enrolling at FSW, I produced and managed industry specific conferences for over a decade so I know how rewarding conferences can be, but I was very comfortable being the one behind the scenes.

I didn't want to miss the opportunity to attend the SRHC Conference, and with great support I was able to overcome the strange feeling of being on the schedule instead of creating the schedule. Both experiences have promoted my academic curiosity and belief in myself to seek out opportunities beyond the classroom.



#### **3. What advice do you have for incoming FSW students?**

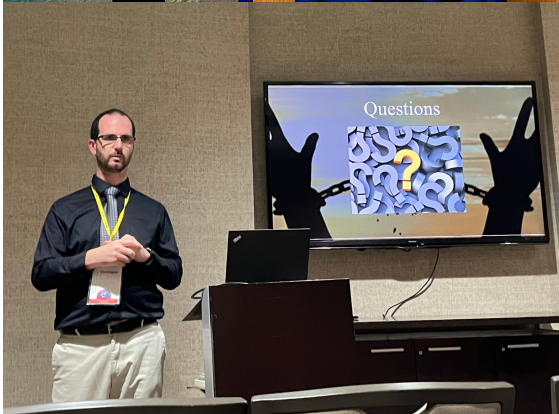
Think of your professors as an invested partner in your future success and to be engaged as much as you can in the classroom.

Consider vulnerability as a strength and ask questions in class that might help further your understanding about the material being taught. These are two bits of advice I have told myself since enrolling at FSW that has worked well for me so far. Other than that, keep making goals and use any setbacks as a learning opportunity to launch you even further ahead than originally planned.



## HONORS IN ACTION

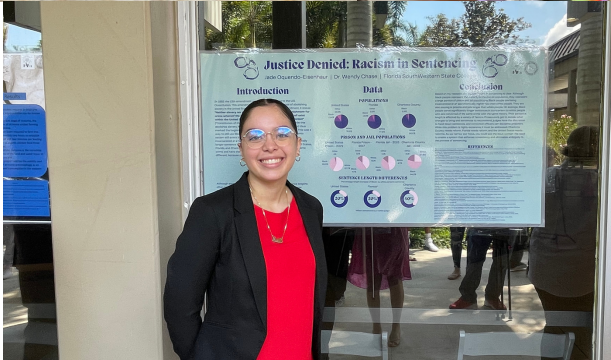
Students attended and presented their work at conferences throughout the country.







# SPRING RESEARCH EXPO 2022







## FIELD TRIPS AND TRAVEL







# CONGRATULATIONS CAPSTONE WINNERS

## Natural Sciences:

1st place: Victoria Hemingway: ***Blood Parameters in a Wild Population of Florida Box Turtles in a Coastal Ecosystem***

2nd place: Erik Courtney: ***Preserving and Restoring the Florida Barrier Reef***

3rd place: Alexis Isherwood: ***Endangered Manatees in SWFL: Impact of Civilian Destruction and Harassment***

## Fine Arts and Humanities

1st place: Layla Jones: ***Seen Not Heard: Exploring Child Abuse and Trauma in the Family Court System through Costume Design***

2nd place: Anthony Myles: ***The Blood-Dimmed Tide: A New Philosophy of Zombie Horror***

3rd place: Arline Martinez: ***Lavender Embers***

## Social Sciences

1st place: Hieu Nguyen: ***The Impact of Musical Therapeutic Intervention on Dementia Patients and Caregivers***

2nd place: Royasha Paudel: ***The Economics of Happiness: A Multigenerational Study of Women***

3rd place: Mia Aragon: ***'Dis for Hispanics: Destigmatizing Anxiety in Teens Workshop***

## Socio-Political Issues

1st place: The Food Foresters: Kat Alcarraz, Kendra MacGeorge, Tyler Navarrete, Izabella Smolnicka Dos-Santos and Timothy Testa: ***Let it Grow: The Fundamentals, Finances, and Fascination of Starting a Food Forest on FSW's Lee Campus***

2nd place: Kelly O'Hanlon: ***Barriers to Higher Education for Florida Citizens with a Criminal Record***

3rd place: Chris Wooldridge: ***Post-Incarceration: Society's Role in Reintegrating Young Offenders Who Are Now Adults***



## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

- Dakota Wayne Nivens
- Mia Anabella Aragon
- Tyler Caine Navarrete
- Jade Oquendo-Eisenhaur
- Lucas Molina-Varela
- Camille Irizarry
- Christopher Wooldridge
- Katherine Alcarraz
- Victoria Hemingway
- Arline Martinez
- Hieu Nguyen
- Christina Lopez
- Shirleena Cunningham
- Kendra MacGeorge
- Royasha Paudel
- Alexis Isherwood
- Layla Jones
- Izabella Smolnicka-Dos Santos
- Coralie Lamour



# 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!

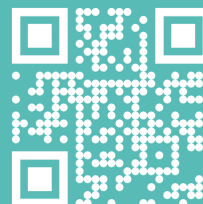
### *Contact Us*

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Check out our website



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