

ASPIRATIONS

Aspirations is the newsletter of the Columbus State University Honors College, which provides updates, features, and information for alumni, faculty, students, the community. On behalf of the Honors College Staff, we hope enjoy *Aspirations* and welcome any ideas for future issues.



HONORS COLLEGE
COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Over the last six months, we have all witnessed dramatic changes in our social, professional, and academic lives, and I want to reassure you that the Honors College staff and student leaders have been working hard to adapt and find new ways to continue our mission. Last spring when we transitioned to remote learning, we also had to say goodbye to our wonderful honors advisor, Ms. Laura Pate. While we miss Ms. Pate tremendously, we are thrilled to see her enjoying her new position as the Assistant Director of Servant Leadership. Due to a system wide budget cuts, we used the funds we had remaining to appoint one of our students' favorite instructors, Dr. Ryan Lynch, as a Faculty Fellow in Residence. Dr. Lynch helps ease the advising load by working with our new freshman and supports students applying for national scholarships. We also welcomed a new Graduate Assistant, Erica Schneider, to the Honors College. Erica is doing a great job and we are happy to have her with us. Despite the challenges of the past six months, we have stayed busy and in our latest addition of Aspirations, you can see how we are finding creative ways to educate our students and serve our community. I hope you all are adjusting well to all the changes in your world.

creative to the core.



HONORS COLLEGE
COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

CREATE
YOU

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. Cindy Ticknor, Dean

Dr. Cindy Ticknor began serving as the Director in the Fall of 2009, and currently serves as the Dean of the Honors College. She is also a Professor of Mathematics Education in the department of Mathematics and Philosophy and has been a leader in Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics (STEM) Education. Since arriving at CSU in 2003, she has received over \$2.5 million in grants to support STEM initiatives and has served as the Associate Dean of the College of Science. She holds degrees from the University of Maryland, Columbus State University, and Auburn University.

Dr. Susan Tomkiewicz, Associate Dean

Dr. Susan Hatch Tomkiewicz is the Professor of Oboe at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University since 2009. She holds degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, where she graduated summa cum laude, the University of New Mexico and the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Tomkiewicz is an active proponent of new music, and she has commissioned and premiered many new solo electronic and chamber works for oboe and English horn by such composers as Brooke Joyce, Bruce Pennycook, Jeremy Baguyos, Matt McCabe, John Lato, and Nancy Galbraith. Dr. Tomkiewicz began her appointment with Honors in Fall 2012 as the Director of the RiverPark Campus and was appointed Associate Dean in 2019.



Dr. Ryan Lynch, Honors Faculty Fellow in Residence

Dr. Ryan Lynch served as the inaugural Honors Faculty Fellow from 2018-2020 before becoming the Faculty Fellow in Residence, teaching honors courses including Understanding Non-Western Cultures, Historical Problem Solving, and a course on the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. He is an Assistant Professor of History in the Department of History and Geography, and is a specialist on Islamic and Middle Eastern history. He completed his graduate degrees at the University of Oxford and the University of St Andrews. Dr. Lynch arrived to CSU in Fall 2016, having previously taught for the University of Oxford, Stetson University, and Middlebury College's Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. He is always delighted to meet with students to discuss their career goals, how to make the most of their time at CSU, and to provide guidance on applications to graduate or professional schools.

Ms. Jasmine Reid, Advisor

Ms. Jasmine Reid has worked within higher education since 2015 and has been with Columbus State since 2009. During her time at Columbus State, she has gained experience in Financial Aid and New Student Orientation and University Advancement. She graduated from Columbus State with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science in 2015 and completed the Master of Education Leadership degree in the Higher Education Track at Columbus State University in 2017.



Mrs. Kristi Rehrauer, Administrative Coordinator

Mrs. Kristi Rehrauer has worked in higher education since 2006 and has been with the Columbus State Honors College since 2019. Kristi joins us from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA. Kristi has a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky. She brings multiple years of higher education experience to the Honors College at Columbus State University.

Ms. Erica Schneider, Honors College Graduate Assistant

Erica Schneider is currently a second-year master's student pursuing an oboe performance degree at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University. Erica holds a double bachelor's degree in Music Performance and Music Education from Florida Atlantic University. Her primary teachers include Dr. Susan Tomkiewicz, Dr. Erin Gittelsohn, Sarah Bates Kennard, and Dane Philipsen. Erica has worked in several different departments of higher education since 2018. She looks forward to working with the CSU Honors College!



The Columbus State Honors College.... Before the Pandemic



Homecoming



Paint Night



Scholarship Recipients



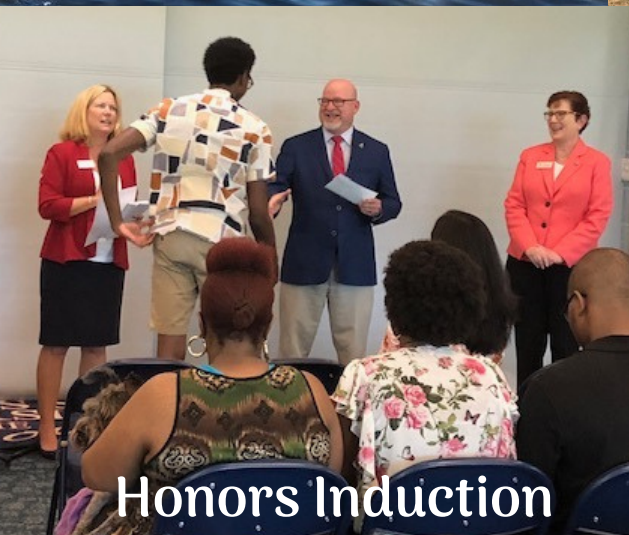
Back to School Picnic



Day of Service



Winter Fest



Honors Induction



Monthly Meetings



Black and White

After the Pandemic...Still Going Strong !

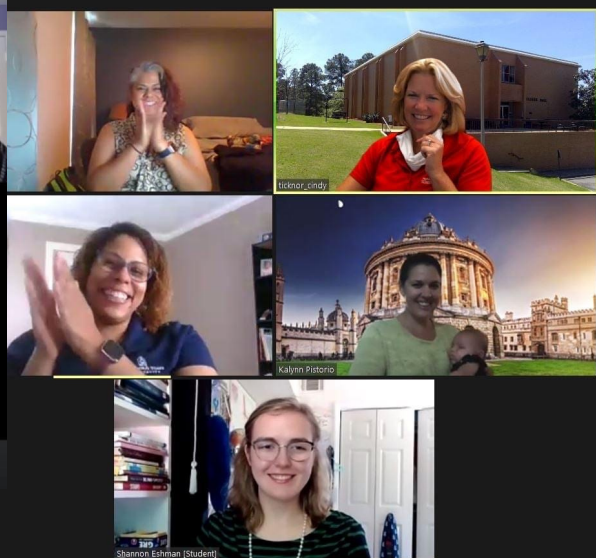


Honoris Causa Office Meeting

Popsicles in the Park



Virtual Thesis Defense



Honors Induction

Signing the Legacy Book

Virtual Thesis Defense



Meet Your 2020-2021 Honoris Causa Officers



Carlie Dollar
President



Ian Becerra
Main Campus
Vice President

Marc Pierre
RiverPark
Vice President



Andrew Holmes
Main Campus
Treasurer



Hannah Dickerson
RiverPark Treasurer

Sana Khan
Main Campus
Secretary



Rajvi Desai
RiverPark Secretary



Molly Foster
Social Media
Coordinator



Not Pictured:
Shaylyn Marshall
Social Events
Coordinator

Chelsea Nguyen
SGA Representative



Saying Good-Bye and Good Luck!



Ms. Laura Pate joined the Honors College in July 2013 as the Administrative Coordinator and became an Advisor in March of 2017. Both social events and advising appointments allowed her to connect with our students in different ways and better appreciate their brilliance. Conversations with a diverse group of students allowed her to explore different research opportunities, international travel options, graduate programs, and careers vicariously. On any given day, she might have had the chance to talk with students about their medical school applications, career options in National Parks, the unfortunate disparity of maternal mortality rates among women of different races, how literature and art inform one another, and the benefits of drama therapy. Highlights of her time in Honors include camping with Honoris Causa officers, teaching HONS 3555: Perspectives on Presidential Leadership, traveling to see the solar eclipse and to visit Washington, D.C., and seeing the Honors Program transition to the Honors College. She says that working with the staff and students of the Honors College was a joy! She will always cheer on the Honors College and hope to continue collaborating with you for a long time!

We miss working with Ms. Pate and seeing her smiling face in Illges Hall, but we know she is enjoying her new role as the Assistant Director of The Servant Leadership Program here at Columbus State University. Best wishes and good luck with your new endeavor!

Faculty Spotlight – Dr. Lydia Ray



Dr. Lydia Ray is an Associate Professor at the TSYS School of Computer Science. She joined CSU in 2006 after obtaining a Ph.D. degree in Computer Science from Louisiana State University. She has a Master's degree in Statistics from Indian Statistical Institute.

Dr. Ray's main research area previously was networking, cybersecurity and CS education. After the Russian interference in the 2016 US election, she became interested in the social and political aspects of cybersecurity, primarily in the context of the emergence of social media. During the 2020 US election cycle, Dr. Ray is working on an interdisciplinary research project with Dr. Liu from Communications and Dr. Studstill from Social Sciences. The project aims to have a deeper understanding of the impact of social media

polarization on civic engagement of CSU students in the context of the 2020 election. Based on their findings, the research team plans to create a perspective course on how to effectively deal with the negative factors of social media such as divisive speech, hate speech, misinformation and polarization. The graduate class Dr. Ray is teaching this Fall, "Human Aspects of Cybersecurity", is also focusing on similar issues. Typically, this class focuses on ethical, moral and legal issues in the context of cyberspace and deals with unresolved open questions. This Fall, the students in the class are conducting research on US election security and are having debates and discussions on free speech and social media polarization, among other related issues.

Another current research area of Dr. Ray is the use of artificial intelligence in detecting spear phishing attacks, fake news and conspiracy theories. Misinformation and conspiracy theories are appearing like weeds in social media and are spreading to millions of people before any kind of human intervention. While it is humanly impossible to effectively deal with misinformation and conspiracy theories due to the huge volume of data and the speed of Internet transmission, artificial intelligence algorithms can offer very effective solutions. Dr. Ray together with Dr. Hodhod from Computer Science and Dr. Liu from Communications, along with three Computer Science graduate students are exploring the ways artificial intelligence can be used both for offense and defense in cyberspace, in creating and detecting targeted attacks, misinformation campaigns and conspiracy theories.

Dr. Ray is indebted to The Honors College for the opportunity of teaching computer science topics in great conversations classes. These classes provided her the leeway to explore certain areas of computer science beyond the purely technical and theoretical domain and review applications and impacts of technology in other disciplines and various areas of life.

This Fall, she is co-teaching a great conversations course on "Artificial Intelligence: Science and Science Fiction", with Dr. Patrick Jackson from English. This class is having fascinating discussions on the depiction of artificial intelligence in English literature and the reality of evolution, applications, impacts and controversies of artificial intelligence. This class has given Dr. Ray the opportunity of viewing the impacts of scientific inventions from social and psychological perspectives through the eyes of non-CS major students.

In Spring of 2020, Dr. Ray co-taught a unique great conversations course, "9/11: A Digital Analysis" with Dr. Ryan Lynch from History. This course involved analysis of digitally stored historical documents related to 9/11 using natural language processing techniques in Python. Natural language processing, a specific branch of artificial intelligence, helps process and analyze huge volumes of digital information within a very short time. Python provides excellent libraries and techniques for natural language processing. This course inspired the instructors to work together and create a digital humanities minor with Python track that would train students of humanities with this new and important programming and natural language processing skills. For the Python track of digital humanities minor, Dr. Ray created a new 3000 level computer science course titled "Natural Language Processing and Text Mining".

Student Spotlight – Shannon Eshman



Honors College Senior, Shannon Eshman, had double success this year with her App idea invention AbleFi. Shannon presented her idea for the Able-Fi App at the Columbus State University GA Inventures Competition in January and won first place. Then, in May she competed again in the Turner Business School Business Plan Competition and tied for First Place there as well!

AbleFi is an app that is designed to help children and adults with intellectual disabilities learn functional, everyday living skills. For her senior thesis in the Honors College, Shannon has been studying the efficacy of Literacy-Based Behavioral Interventions. This inspired her to use this knowledge to create an app that would help people with disabilities.

Shannon said "Being able to present the business plan for Able-Fi was not only fun, but it also helped me conceptualize the steps that I need to take to get the app on the market. Dr. Ticknor has been so supportive throughout this whole process. I am so grateful to her for allowing me to pitch to her at least a hundred times in preparation for the competition! I am so grateful for everything that the Honors College has done to help me focus my passion on something that will truly impact others!"

Alumni Updates

Maryah Thompson

After graduating in May 2018, Maryah moved to the D.C. area at the end of July for an internship on Capitol Hill. She was inspired to pursue this internship because of a field trip that she went on with the Honors College right before she graduated. That visit allowed her to see individuals that look like her in senior roles on the Hill. She started off as an Intern in the office of Congressman Hank Johnson (GA 04) and then became employed with Congresswoman Gwen Moore's (WI 04) office six weeks later. She began as her Staff Assistant and Personal Assistant and then became her Legislative Correspondent after five months. She was also preparing to present research at a conference with Dr. Ticknor and two other professors during her first few months of interning and employment regarding research that she assisted with during her undergrad. Right now, she is preparing to apply to Masters of Social Work Programs for Fall 2021. Maryah has already achieved so much and we can't wait to see what the future holds for her!

Abby Gibbons

Since graduating Columbus State University in May 2018, Abby has continued her studies in early modern European history. Both the thesis she wrote as an Honors College student and the tutorials she took while studying abroad in Oxford showed her how much she enjoyed researching premodern history. She first attended the University of Alabama, where she earned her M.A. in Spring 2020. During her first year, she was a Graduate Council Fellow and participated in the graduate conference on Power and Struggle. In the summer following her first year, she attended a competitive program at the Folger Shakespeare Institute and Library, where she worked directly with early modern primary sources. In October 2019, she presented her research at the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference, one of the largest national conferences in early modern studies, and in November 2019, she was awarded the Max Kele Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Research from the European Section of the Southern Historical Association. Abby is now a Ph.D. Student at the University of Arizona in the Division of Late Medieval and Reformation Studies, studying under Drs. Ute Lotz Heumann and Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer.

You're Invited!

Please Join The Honors College and
The Center for Servant Leadership
to Celebrate

HOMECOMING 2020

Thursday, October 22, 2020

6:00 pm EST

Virtual Happy Hour

Zoom Link Included Below



HONORS COLLEGE
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COLUMBUS STATE
UNIVERSITY
WILLIAM B. TURNER CENTER
FOR SERVANT LEADERSHIP

We would love to hear from you!
Please send us your life and
career updates so we can show
everyone how proud we are of
our alumni.
Email us at:
honors@columbusstate.edu

Outstanding Teaching in The Honors College

Dr. Ryan Lynch



The Honors College students nominated Dr. Ryan Lynch for Outstanding Teaching in the Honors College for 2019-2020. Students said he took the time to help them truly understand how our current situation affected each major in the class. One student said "He taught and listened based off of every student's needs. By him being there and being one with his students brought me tears of joy."



Honors College Mentoring Award

Ms. Laura Pate

The Honors College would like to recognize Ms. Laura Pate with the Honors College Mentoring Award. During her time in the Honors College, Ms. Pate has made an impact on countless students. One student said, "Laura is fantastic. She's always in your corner, trying to help, give support, and point you in the right direction."



Honors College Vision

The Honors College will make Columbus State University a first choice institution for students who strive to succeed by championing innovative instruction, undergraduate research, and interdisciplinary studies.

Honors College Mission

Our dual mission provides an innovatively delivered curriculum for high achieving students and advances the intellectual growth and recognition of the university. Our college challenges a diverse community of students to individualize their academic experiences, while serving as an institutional champion for undergraduate research, interdisciplinary studies, and creative instruction.



Do you have a student or faculty member you would like to spotlight? Or just have a suggestion for an upcoming edition of *Aspirations*?

Please send us an email at
honors@columbusstate.edu
We would love your suggestions!



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