



HONOR GRAM



La Sierra
UNIVERSITY

HONORS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER – Volume 23, Issue Winter Quarter 2016



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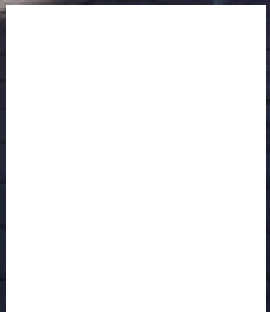
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IN THE EYES OF A *Brendon Wilson* FRESHIEV

Life changes a lot when people graduate high school and start college. I once heard someone say, “high schoolers are so excited to start college that when it finally comes they are shattered and broken by its intensity.” I took a college course the summer before my senior year of high school so I learned a lot about college before I even came to La Sierra University. However, I never thought it would be as amazing as it is.

When I started at La Sierra University this year I thought I knew what to expect, but a lot of things surprised me. For one, I didn’t expect the community here to be as fantastic as it is. When I took my summer class at a community college, it was difficult to get to know people. Here at La Sierra, it’s very easy to talk to others and make friends. School events provide opportunities to get to know more students, professors, and even God. Even though these events have opened the door to friendships, it was honors that really stood out

Being in honors has proven to be truly spectacular. It feels like the fantastic little community inside South Hall has welcomed me into it; I have to admit, it was a little scary at first. As I’m not a science major, it was intimidating to be in a class full of potential dentists, doctors, and scientists. However this feeling soon passed since I have gotten to know more of the people in honors and they are all extremely humble and nice. It’s really fun to talk to them outside and especially inside of class where we can talk about deep the philosophical topics which I love so much. In South Hall I can freely ask difficult questions and discover new topics with the help of friends and mentors.

In college, I knew I had to study way more than I did in high school as high school and college work ethics are extremely different. In high school most classes are simple and it’s relatively easy to get a good grade. Obviously some classes are more difficult than others, but there is plen-

ty of time after school to study for them. However in order to get a good grade in college one must study the material many times over. It’s not like high school where the teacher tells the class exactly what they need to know. They have to study everything that was covered in class and perhaps even what wasn’t covered. I learned that the hard way when I took my first college class in the summer.

As I am a commuter, college has been an interesting experience. Obviously there are pros and cons to commuting; I don’t get the experience of dorm life but I also don’t have the restrictions and requirements that dorming comes with. With all that, South Hall has been a real blessing for me on campus. I know that I can always go there if I need to relax, study, and/or do homework. It’s almost as if South Hall acts as a home for me on campus, and that, along with the community of La Sierra, are things that I value most.

THE HONORS HOUSE RAs



Royce Olarte

Men's RA

From: Redlands, CA

Class Standing: Senior

Major: Mathematics

Favorite thing about being a part of the Honors Community: My favorite part of the Honors Program is the community. I'm constantly surrounded by talented and motivated students and classmates, as well as faculty and staff who are extremely invested in the students' success. The academic and social community of the Honors Program are incredible and unlike any other on campus.



Syria Armenta

Women's RA

From: Lancaster, CA

Class Standing: Senior

Major: Biomedical Science and legal studies minor.

Favorite thing about being a part of the Honors Community: I am very excited to be part of the Residential team once again and hope to give back the same encouragement and assistance I was given by the previous RAs and ARAs when I was living in South Hall for the past three years. I meet my very good friends while I living in South Hall and hope current residents also find South Hall as a place to study and form life-long relationships.



Joy Scott

Assistant RA

From: Lancaster, CA

Class Standing: Junior

Major: Biomedical Sciences / Pre-med

Favorite thing about being a part of the Honors Community: My favorite part of Honors is how close the students are to each other. I also really enjoy the events that we put on. I'm on Honors Council and I work in the office, so it's really cool to see how the care and planning that goes into the events is enjoyed by the students. I'm used to family gatherings where we just eat, play games, and talk so every time we have an event it reminds me a lot of family. My other favorite part of Honors is living in South Hall, which I think is more conducive to studying than other dorms.

FEATURED STUDENT

Kevin Munoz

Kevin is a Sophomore Honors student majoring in Biomedical Sciences. Munoz recently became involved with the Atlantis Project, so we sat down with him and asked him a few questions about what the project entailed.

What is the Atlantis Project?

The Atlantis project is a program for pre-med students in the U.S. that involves shadowing doctors abroad. This program gives pre-med students the opportunity of experiencing a new culture and healthcare system in different countries like Spain, Italy, Argentina, Portugal, and many others.

How did you get involved?

I heard about the program during Winter quarter last year through advertisements on campus. I started my research about the program, learning about the different activities throughout the year. Then, I decided to sign up to be notified when the 2017 applications opened. After the process of application and an interview, I was accepted into a six week program in Spain for summer 2017.

What are you going to be doing there?

I will shadow doctors in two different hospitals in two different cities. The first three weeks, I will be staying in Ciudad Real



shadowing doctors at Hospital General Universitario de Ciudad Real. Then, I will move to Talavera to shadow doctors at Hospital General Nuestra Señora del Prado.

How do you think this will enhance your honors experience?

The honors program at La Sierra University has the goal of teaching students a wide variety of subjects. In the same way, as a pre-med student, I am always trying

to become a well-rounded person for my future career in the medical field. The Atlantis project has the potential of enhancing my honors experience because the opportunity of learning about medicine from experts in this part of the world can help me to grow with a clearer view about my future. In addition, the rich culture of Spain would help me to expand my understanding of this part of Europe as well.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Featured Alumni: Jonathan Payne

What has your career looked like since leaving La Sierra?

I graduated from La Sierra University in June of 2014. Two months later, I began the eight(ish)-year-long process of earning my

Jon is currently in an MD/Ph.D. program. He is living in Pennsylvania, doing leukemia research. We asked him a few questions about his experience at La Sierra and career since graduating.

MD/PhD degree at Loma Linda University. Most MD/PhD candidates begin with two years of medical school before taking four(ish) years for graduate school and then returning to medical school for two years of

clinical rotations. I decided I would rather start with graduate school to get a firm research foundation before moving on to my clinical training. After doing research rotations through several labs at LLU, I decided

to return to the lab of an LLU adjunct professor where I had spent several summers as an undergraduate researcher. Joining this lab necessitated moving across the country so I am currently stationed in Hershey, PA until I defend my graduate thesis and move back to Loma Linda for medical school.

What led you to pursue this career?

I've always been fascinated by the idea of not just curing people who are sick, but the possibility of making them resistant to disease. I think it would be incredible if the superhuman resistance to disease and aging that fictitious superheroes enjoy became something we could give to everyone. The biggest obstacle to turning this fantasy drug into an actual therapy is understanding and manipulating the unimaginably complex system that is the human body. That's where the scientific research comes in. Specializing in combining scientific research with clinical practice seemed like a no-brainer for someone with my particular goal and scientific aptitude.

Did you know entering college what you wanted to do?

I knew I wanted to do something related to science (the curse of having two scientist parents, I suppose), but nothing more specific than that. During my freshman year, I did exceptionally well in general chemistry but not so well in general biology. This pushed me towards the physical sciences and made me apprehensive about medi-

cal school. However, biochemistry in my junior year showed me that chemistry in the context of the human body is fascinating. In addition, my mastery of the upper division biology courses I took during my final two years made me more comfortable with the idea of medicine. I decided the best way to amalgamate my interests in research, chemistry, and the human body was through an MD/PhD dual-degree.

What led you to La Sierra?

The two big things that attracted me to La Sierra were the science departments and the Honors program. Growing up as the child of a faculty member, I had the opportunity to see the caliber of students that these programs produced and what they went on to do. One thing that my dad told me, and that five years at La Sierra convinced me of, is that La Sierra can help any student get wherever they wish to go. What La Sierra lacks in outright physical resources, it makes up for with a willingness to put the education and wellbeing of its students first. I received opportunities at La Sierra that would have been unthinkable at other institutions and if I were given the choice to go to any university and redo undergrad, I'd choose La Sierra again without hesitation.

How do you think the Honors program has impacted your life?

One of the best things I got from the Honors program is lifelong friendships. Even though we find ourselves separated by

thousands of miles, we keep in touch and visit whenever we're in the area. The second thing I got out of the Honors program was a set of incredible experiences. I was fortunate enough to spend an entire month in Istanbul, Turkey where I studied and experienced the culture with my Honors classmates. Lastly, the Honors program opened my mind to a wider variety of worldviews and forced me to reassess my own core beliefs. This resulted in me being able to compare religious, social, and political ideas from a less biased perspective—a valuable skill in the ideologically-charged present.

What is the best advice you received during your time at La Sierra?

The most valuable piece of advice I got at La Sierra detailed the importance of taking academic responsibility for the things you have control over. Whenever something doesn't work out, the natural response is to exculpate yourself. However, the more productive thing to do is take ownership of the mistakes you've made and to do your utmost to make sure the same mistake doesn't happen in the future. Don't get me wrong there are absolutely times when things are beyond your control, but I've found people are much more understanding of those times when they see you doing your best and taking responsibility for your errors. This approach certainly isn't easy—acknowledging your shortcomings is always uncomfortable—but it is ultimately rewarding.



AN ADVENTURE IN ASIA

Andrew Tolan



It was 4 AM. It was dark and already humid. Two vans of zombies pulled up to the Hotel Boss in Singapore. After just 2 hours of sleep the long day began at the ripe and early time of 6 AM. It all started as my class began to congregate in front of the School of Business to embark on the Honors Experience Trip. In a little under three weeks our class would return home closer than ever and with memories to last a lifetime.

The first place on our agenda: Singapore. Singapore is a city-state founded in 1965, with very little territory, but with the third highest GDP per capita in the world. For us Singapore was like that melody that begins and ends a song; we started our trip there and we ended it there. In Singapore we learned about history and culture in 200-year old shophouses, strolled through manmade cloud forests, ate delicious and diverse food in the shadow of steel and glass skyscrapers, were amazed by the second largest aquari-





only got better. We visited Kuching, the city of cats, learned about the realm of the “White Rajas,” and journeyed into the jungles of Borneo to walk among Orangutans. Then we got really adventurous and stayed in a traditional Iban longhouse deep in the interior of Sarawak. After the longhouse, we came back to civilization and learned about the colonial times in the historically rich city of Melaka as well as on the resort island of Penang. Our adventure winded down as we returned to Singapore for one last night before saying our farewell to Southeast Asia and hello to In-n-Out Burger (no really, we went straight there after we arrived in L.A.). Oh, I almost forgot to mention that we flew through a typhoon on our way to Singapore. Thankfully, the return flight was nice and uneventful and we returned home to our families, full of memoraires of a truly amazing experience.

um tank in the world, and soared into the night sky in the Singapore Flyer.

Now, before I continue with the places we visited, let me just mention the food. The food was delicious, diverse, and an entire meal only cost around \$1 USD! Okay, now back to the itinerary. After a brief time in Singapore, we loaded onto a bus, our hearts heavy, to journey to Malaysia. Honestly, we weren't too excited, especially after what the previous year had said about Malaysia (I think our class is just more adventur-

ous than them). Our first stop, Johor Baharu, was a big step down from Singapore, but it really wasn't that bad, actually I think having lower expectations was nice because we were pleasantly surprised.

After Johor Baharu, our trip



Sophomores, look forward to this summer, you are truly in for a treat.



FALL QUARTER EVENTS

Float Into Fall

Thursday, October 6th
11:00 am

South Hall Front Poarch

Our second annual Float Into Fall event occurred at the beginning of the quarter on the South Hall front poarch. We served root beer and ice cream to the campus, and welcomed all our Freshmen. The Freshmen had their pictures taken, and they were paired up with their mentors, who would help them when needed throughout the year.



Quesadilla Night

Tuesday, November 8th
7:00 pm

South Hall Game Room

What better way to watch the election than to have a quesadilla night? My favorite part about this event was that although we were stressed with the election, we had comfort food prepared for us by Royce. Every time I felt stressed with the election, I made a warm quesadilla to lighten up the mood.



Thanksgiving Dinner

Thursday, November 17th
6:00 pm
South Hall Lobby

After the stressful midterms week, the Honors Student Council was gracious enough to kick off the break by providing a night filled with thanksgiving cheer! The highlight of the night was that the upperclassmen were able to bond with the freshmen over the dinner table about conversations that weren't over school!

Pizza Vespers

Friday, October 21st
5:00 - 8:00 pm
Motschiedler-Brand Residence

This years Fall quarter Pizza Vespers took place at the Motschiedler's residence! So many honors students were there sharing stories, laughs, and most importantly bond with honors alumni that continue to impact their communities till this day.



The Lunch Bunch

Monday, November 7th
7:00 pm
South Hall

10 honors Pre-med students had the opportunity to meet with a second year resident at Loma Linda along with Dr. Motshiedler, who is on the recommendation committee. It was an hour dedicated to questions and advice on where to go from here. We had a great time enjoying food and learning about where our futures could take us.



Christmas Party

Thursday, December 1st
7:30 pm

South Hall Lobby

The Christmas Party was a great time spent celebrating the time of the year with our Honor's family. What better way to finish the quarter? Although everyone fought to the end, the Freshman class took the cake on the gingerbread house competition!



HONORGRAM EDITORS

Chloe Maksoudian
Javia Headley

CONTRIBUTORS

Syria Armenta
Cheyenne Feig
Ronja Ali
Sandra Fermin (Photography)
Joy Scott (Photography)
Natan Vigna (Photography)
Javia Headley (Layout Design)

Interested in the Honorgram? If you enjoy writing, taking pictures, or drawing, become a part of the Honors Newsletter! We love to showcase talent, and your artistic contributions to this publication will give your résumé a boost. Contact the Honors office in South Hall for more information.

The Honors Program began at La Sierra University in 1971. It strives to give special attention to undergraduates of outstanding intellectual and creative ability and aims to charge the imagination in an environment where student initiative is the guiding force. Students are given the opportunity to recognize their potential through encouragement, discussion and interaction. The overall objectives of the program are focused on the La Sierra University mission: "to Seek Truth, to Know God and Ourselves, to Serve Others."

The Honorgram is a newsletter designed to inform and update Honors faculty and students as well as those who are interested in the La Sierra University Honors Program. If you have any questions or comments concerning the newsletter or ideas that you would like to contribute, please contact us: honors@lasierra.edu

La Sierra University Honors Program
4500 Riverwalk Parkway
Riverside CA 92505

www.lasierra.edu/honors
951.785.2301