



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

HONORS PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER | FALL 2012

Welcome to our new
ELITE HONORS SCHOLARS
2012-2013

Amanda Parker, Oxford
Katie Wood, Ranburne
Katie Loper, Odenville
Trent Ford, Winfield
David Rickless, Anniston
Allison Bryan, Rainsville
Alaina Durham, Bryant
Lora Corbin, Henager





ELITE HONORS STUDENTS 2012

SENIORS



Front: Allison Clark, Courtney Newsome, Kristin Hays,
Michael Greenwood
Back: Andrew Newsome, Jansen Harmon, Ben Parr,
Josh Wise

JUNIORS

Front: Brian Hinkemeyer, Whitney Gaut, Emilee Smith,
Terry Hinkemeyer
Back: Greg Felch, Evan Mince, Cody Coots



SOPHOMORES



Front: Lea Isbell, Barbara Edwards, Emily Smith,
Lauren McClendon
Back: Daniel Jackson, Noah Trudeau, Micah Burns



Dr. Steven Whitton, Director

This past year has been one of new experiences as well as old. As I look back, it hardly seems possible that the Honors Program is beginning its 4th year. What is especially exciting is that our first group of Elite Honors Scholars will be graduating along with a number of members of our ever-increasing program. It will be my privilege to cheer on Allison Clark, Michael Greenwood, Jansen Harmon, Kristin Hays, Andrew Newsome, Courtney Crosby Newsome, Benjamin Parr, Joshua Wise, and others, all of whom were around that first year to help our program get underway.

We are now in Honors House and are lucky to have Janet Whitmore as our Program Coordinator. Our Honors Board of faculty, administrators, and staff helps keep our program lively and current. We have a number of ongoing service projects which benefit the community-at-large. The Honors Program continues to grow academically, as well: this fall there are over 500 seats filled in Honors classes across the curriculum.

Then there is the International Travel opportunity that became available to Honors students. This May Mrs. Gena Christopher and I taught English 399, a course in Chinese culture that included study and teaching at Taizhou University in China. Ten Honors students were selected from 26 applicants. Students were immersed in aspects of Chinese culture and history.

That course of study seems to reflect the basic philosophy of the JSU Honors Program. In fact, our top goal is to provide academically gifted students with an enriched educational experience in a diverse range of courses which foster independent, critical thinking and effective communication. The Honors Program helps students fulfill their potential in their chosen fields while preparing them to meet the challenges and responsibilities of becoming citizens with global perspectives. That we are sending out our Honors graduates to do just that is very gratifying indeed.



**Jansen Harmon
President
Student Honors Board**

Honors Students,

I trust that everyone had an enjoyable summer and that you are now excited about the new school year. I am both joyful and disappointed that this will be my last year as an undergraduate at JSU. Over the past three years the Honors Program has been growing both in quality and quantity. I am pleased to say that this coming year will be packed with events that everyone can celebrate and participate in.

During the Fall semester we plan to renovate the basement of the Honors House. It will be open to all Honors students during regular house hours. The basement already has plenty of furniture, a pool table, and a study area. Soon, we hope that, through our fundraisers, we can stock the new space with more entertainment! Also this November we will be having our annual Honors Bowl tournament. Get your teams ready and be on the lookout for more information coming soon!

This year promises to be one of the best that we have ever seen, so feel free to come by the Honors House or call to see how you can get involved and help our program soar to new heights!

Yours in service,

Jansen Harmon
President, Honors Student Board



**Janet Whitmore
Program Coordinator**

How exciting it was going through Freshman Orientation and meeting all the new prospective Honors Program members. Our program has grown rapidly. With over 500 seats filled in Honors classes, we are looking forward to accepting many new members.

We are very happy to welcome our new eight Elite Honors Scholars. Our current students will be mentoring the new ones and teaching them all aspects of the University as well as the program itself. Experience is always the best teacher. Our Fall term is going to be filled with many exciting things. Please check your email and JSU Honors Program Facebook page for details of upcoming events.

The students will be helping to complete the renovation of the basement of the Honors House during the Fall term which will become a place for them to meet and socialize or just come for a quiet study place. Their creativity will play a major role in accomplishing this goal.

We look forward to an exciting and productive year!





CHINA TRIP TO TAIZHOU UNIVERSITY

On May 10, 2012, I, along with nine other members of the JSU Honors Program, embarked on a journey halfway across the globe to Taizhou University in Linhai City, China, as part of English 399. Accompanied by Ms. Gena Christopher and Dr. Steven Whitton, both longtime members of the JSU English Department, we spent two weeks experiencing Chinese culture, taking classes in various Chinese arts, and even making some new friends along the way.

When I decided to enroll at JSU almost two years ago, I did so hoping that I would be presented with opportunities that I could never have anywhere else, and this course in China was a prime example of that hope becoming a reality. The JSU Honors Program's voice is getting louder and louder on campus, and, as more people become aware of the opportunities that this wonderful program offers, the program will become the centerpiece of JSU.

The course itself was nothing short of extraordinary. When I thought of China prior to this adventure, all I could focus on was what the differences might be. On this side of the trip, I am still floored by the similarities between my Chinese peers and me. Not only were my Chinese friends some of the nicest people I have ever met, but I came to find that we were more alike than I could have ever imagined. Many of the people I met are some of the most driven people I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. They know what they want to achieve in life, and they don't let anything hold them back in the pursuit of their dreams. As many differences as there are between China and the United States, the similarities are what I will carry with me forever. The Chinese love life and each other, an ideal from which I think Americans everywhere can take a lesson.

Life has its unforgettable moments, and one of those moments came for me the day we left the Taizhou University campus. It was on this day we all said our goodbyes to our Chinese friends who had welcomed us with open arms and had truly made us feel as though we were home. Coming into the trip, I expected to see the sights and experience the Chinese culture, but I never expected to actually develop lasting friendships, which is precisely what happened. The unforgettable moment that I was speaking of occurred as our bus was pulling out of Taizhou. I looked out the window to see my newfound Chinese friends waving and smiling with tears in their eyes. That moment is forever etched in my memory because it was in that moment that the enormity of what we had done dawned on me. In the span of two weeks, we had formed real relationships with these people, and, to quote a friend, had gained a family on the other side of the world.

Jansen Harmon, president of the JSU Honors Program, and one of my fellow travelers on this trip, put it best: "The world is far bigger than one's hometown, region, or even country. There is a world of people out there waiting to be befriended. Even in today's world, the Earth is full of people who are truly amazing individuals."

So whether it's in China, Jacksonville, or somewhere in between, there are opportunities out there to have an impact on people's lives. It's up to us to just answer the call.

Evan Mince
Elite Honors Scholar 2010

