



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

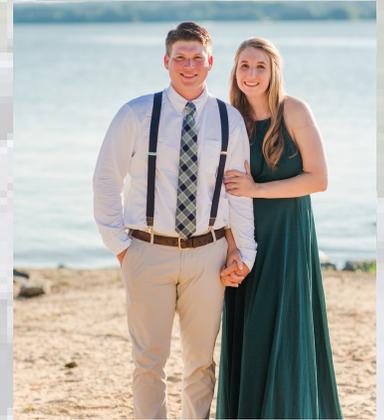
HONORS PROGRAM

Spring February 2021 Newsletter

**Congrats to Our
2020 Fall Grads!**



Mariana Alvarez



Caleb Chambers



Abigail McDow



Tristin Gilmore



Matthew Seth Rhoades



Carmen Saunders



Nick Williss



Paul Zachos

[*Watch the Online Ceremony by Clicking Here*](#)



Honors Program





Dr. Rachel Park is an assistant professor of piano in the David L. Walter Department of Music. She received her Doctoral of Musical Arts in Church Music and Piano Performance degree from the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary where she also earned her Master of Music degree. She graduated from the Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul, South Korea, with her Bachelor of Music degree. Dr. Park is a well-accomplished performer playing at multiple venues including Carnegie Hall, Isaac Stern Auditorium in New York, the Embassy of Korea in Washington D.C., and the Crystal Cathedral in California.



It is my privilege to serve the Honors Program as a board member. It makes me so thrilled when I hear the stories of lives, dreams, and goals of each student of the Honors Program. Just by listening to their stories, my heart is filled with hope and energy. It is also my great joy to see the students in class and across the JSU campus.

The year I joined the Honors Program, the Covid-19 pandemic arose; I only had the opportunity to meet our students virtually. However, I am looking forward to getting involved more actively in the program to interact with our students.



Honors Board Spotlight

I believe I can contribute to the members of the JSU Honors Program with my unique qualifications, Asian cultural heritage, and music. In the future, I would love to offer a Korean language & cultural class to assist students to broaden their perspective beyond the states. In Fall 2021, I will offer a group piano class for Honors Program students to share the joy and the gift of music which will enhance our lives abundantly.

The common character of the Asian culture and music is welcoming and embracing. That matches with my personality as well. I would love to support any service projects or events of the Honors Program with the contents of Korean culture and my piano performance to make the time more memorable and meaningful.

I hope the Covid-19 pandemic goes away soon in our lives so that the JSU students in the Honors Program can enjoy energetic and dynamic college lives with the Program. Thank you!



**Sincerely,
Rachel Park**



Honors Board Spotlight

My name is
Janet Whitmore.



It has been my privilege to serve as the Honors Program Coordinator since 2010. I have served on the Honors Board, Student Symposium Committee, a member of several personnel search committees on campus, and I am currently serving on the Inauguration Committee for President Don Killingsworth. I have also taken student representatives to, and participated in, five Southern Regional Honors Conferences.

It is hard to believe I have been a part of eight groups of Honors graduates. I have enjoyed seeing them set and reach goals while growing in their academic careers. It is exciting to see them graduate and go on to become doctors, lawyers, teachers, financial advisors, nurses, respiratory therapists, engineers, and accountants just to name a few of the positions held by our Honors graduates. Being an Honors advisor has taught me that even the highest achieving Honors students occasionally have questions and need reassurance. As a parent myself, I find joy in helping them when turmoil and stress arise.

The Honors Program at JSU has been a huge part of my life, and I treasure the friendships and relationships I have because of this opportunity. We have fought together through a tornado and a pandemic and still remain strong!

On a personal note, my greatest joy is my family. My husband, Joe, is the President at Snead State Community College and together we share a love for helping students. Higher Ed is a family thing for sure. We also share a love for Disney and enjoy spending time with our amazing kids and grandkids.



Study Abroad and Study Away

Ireland Study Abroad Moved to 2022

The JSU Honors Program is heading to Ireland in May 2022! Our original departure date in 2021 has been moved due to COVID travel restrictions, but we expect to be ready for next year. We will travel to cities with rich histories such as Dublin, Galway, Killarney, and Cork. Students will have the pleasure of viewing historic landmarks including Grafton Street, St. Patrick's Cathedral, the Book of Kells, the Cliffs of Moher, and so much more. Visit modern cities and roaming hillsides of the country. In the 3-hour UH 399 Study Abroad course, students will explore history, literature, and public policy topics related to their major.



If you are a current Honors student and interested in joining us in Ireland, contact us through email, phone, or come by the Honors room. We will be having a virtual interest meeting on February 22, 2021 at 4:30pm. Contact us to attend.

Heading to Washington DC in 2022

Visit our Nation's capital during the most wonderful time of year with the JSU Honors Program. Points of interest include the White House, U.S. Capitol, Lincoln Memorial, Ford's Theatre, Smithsonian Museums, Library of Congress, Kennedy Center, National Cathedral, and policy think tanks. Students will enroll in the 1-hour UH 398 Honors Study Away course in Fall 2022.

More information coming soon!



Hey, Alumni! Consider joining our LinkedIn page and connect with others by clicking the logo.



Honors Program

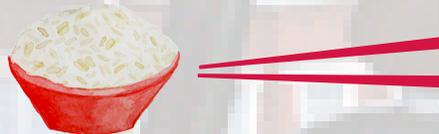


Alumni Spotlight

After graduating from Jacksonville State University in 2017 with a bachelor's in music education, I began working full time as the assistant band director at Minor Middle School in Adamsville, Alabama. During my two years with Minor, I was able to start a percussion ensemble that performed at the Alabama Day of Percussion, organize various programs and performances for the school, take charge of certain recruiting and fundraising efforts for our 230 band students, and earn superior ratings at Music Performance Assessment both years. I enjoyed being able to serve the students in the Minor community.



After gaining an interest in education policy during my time at JSU, I wanted a broader understanding of education and other public interests in America. I began reading, visiting with professors, and even speaking at state and national conferences on the topic of diversity in schools and what we can do to meet the needs of all of our students. I was fortunate to accept a position in 2019 as the assistant band director at Pinson Valley High School. High school is a little different, but I've been able to reach even more students by starting a middle and high school percussion ensemble, organizing performances and events, planning and executing a field trip to the Percussive Arts Society International Convention and the Bands of America Grand National Championships in Indiana, and perhaps the most rewarding, hosting a weekly drum circle for students with special needs that performed at the Alabama Music Educators Association Conference in Montgomery. Though I aim to eventually pursue these issues at a higher level (I'm currently working on a masters in Public Administration at UAB), I want to first continue in my career as a band director because I have seen countless times how music gives so many of our students a path to happiness and success, compassion and empathy for others, as well as a lifelong love and appreciation for the arts.



My favorite memory with the JSU Honors Program was of course our trip to China in 2014. I honestly still can't believe I got to go! That was my first time on an airplane, and it was definitely one to remember. The jetlag, countless travel hours, and calls from family members at weird hours of the night were all worth it in order to experience a culture so different from my own. I enjoyed taking the different classes- music, art/calligraphy, Chinese language, and the general novelty of being somewhere new. My favorite experiences almost always involved food. The president's dinner (so much wine), fancy Pizza Hut, a two-story KFC, the incredible street food, and even just breakfast and lunch each day were always worth looking forward to. I don't think I've ever eaten that much rice in my life, and my chopsticks skills were refined due to the lack of forks. The scenery was beautiful, especially on the wall at Linhai, in its temples, and in the surrounding mountains. I'm amazed at the incredible bond we made with our student guides in such a short amount of time. I learned that in so many ways, they were just like us- they like naps, food, hanging out with friends, and some were even English majors because they didn't like math (I can totally relate). I'm so grateful to the JSU Honors Program for what may be one of the most defining moments of my life, as it took me completely out of my comfort zone in every way possible, and I'm certainly a better person because of it. **I encourage anyone that has the opportunity to join the Honors Program. You never know how it could change your life.**

- Latrice Green

P.S. The medal they give you for graduation is pretty cool too!



Honors Program



I am Rachel Wallace and I graduated from Jacksonville State University in December 2019. My time flew by at JSU, but it is something that I will never forget and will always cherish. Since graduation, I have been working for Congressman Mike Rogers in his U.S. House office in Anniston as a Constituent Services Representative. In this capacity, I am able to serve as a liaison between constituents and various federal agencies, such as the Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service, and National Visa Center. I have also been furthering my education at Liberty University where I am pursuing a graduate degree in Public Policy: Campaigns and Elections. I could have never imagined having an opportunity to serve the community that I am from, but it is all a result of the avenues that were offered to me as I attended JSU in pursuit of my Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in English.



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Alumni Spotlight

It is very challenging to try and decide my favorite memory from the JSU Honors Program, but there is one that sticks out amongst them all. In December 2017, I had the privilege to travel to Washington D.C. with other students in the Program and JSU Honors Director, Dr. Lori Owens. This was the first trip of this kind for me in more ways than one because I had never flown on an airplane, much less thought I would be able to see the White House in-person. From the moment we got there, it felt like a dream from the Christmas decorations being on display at every corner to the small remnants of snow left on the streets. I was in complete awe, to say the least. On our next to last day, we were scheduled to tour the White House and then received a personal tour of the U.S. Capitol by Congressman Rogers's staff. I cannot possibly attempt to describe what it was like to be inside the White House during the Christmas season, because it was far more beautiful and historic than I could ever imagine. Upon entering the U.S. Capitol, we made our way to Congressman Rogers's Office, and we were greeted with his gracious staff awaiting our arrival. Throughout our tour and interactions with him and his staff, Congressman Rogers made a lasting impact on my life, because he showed value, compassion, humility, and a servant's heart toward Alabama and the rest of the Nation. I am forever grateful for the Honors Program at JSU because it challenged and encouraged me to be an intellectual and productive citizen in society.

I wish each of you the very best at JSU, and I encourage you to enjoy all the opportunities that the Honors Program has to offer.



Go Gamecocks!

Rachel Wallace, 2019 JSU Alumna

HAVE A GREAT DAY!



Honors Program

