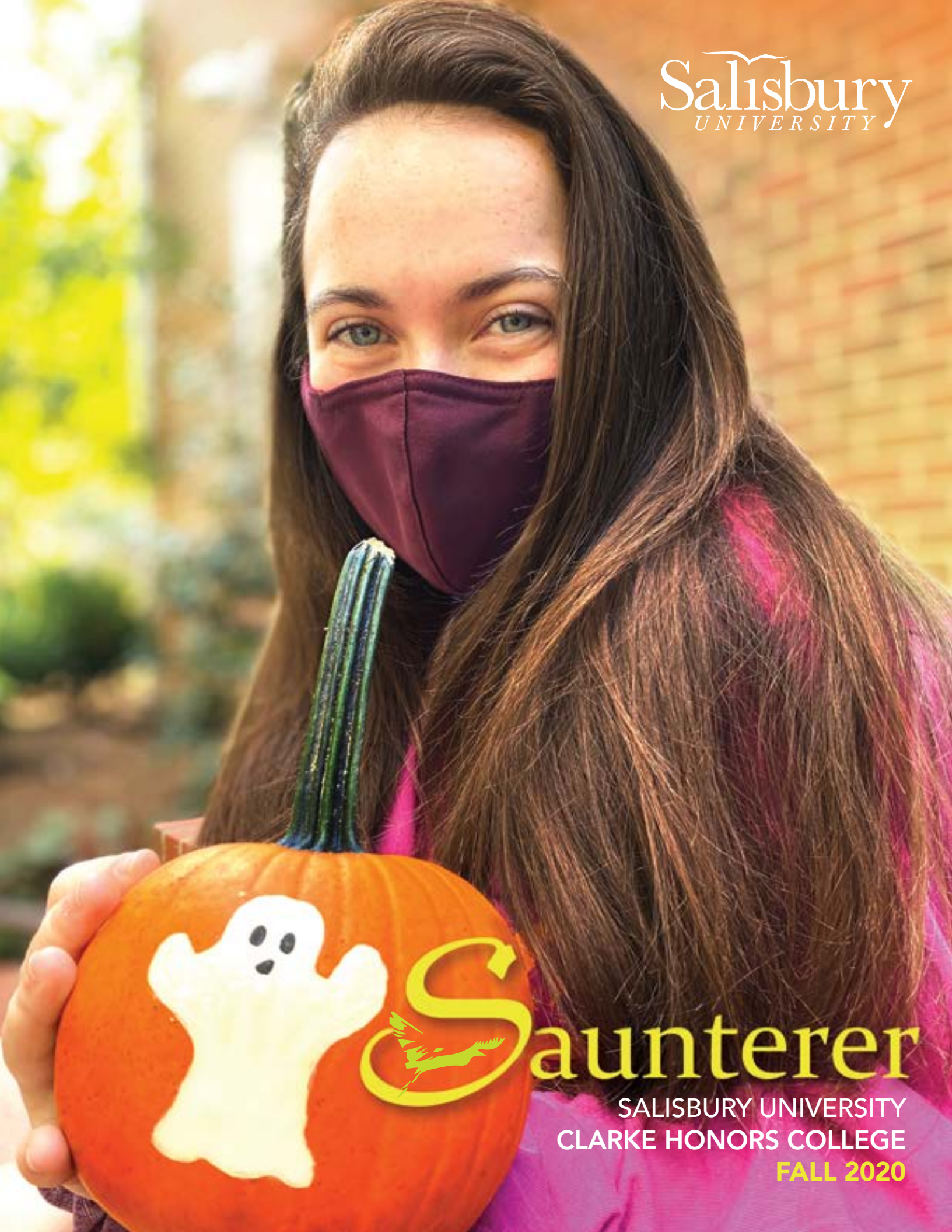


Salisbury  
UNIVERSITY



# Saunterer

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY  
CLARKE HONORS COLLEGE  
FALL 2020



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Cover photo by Abigail Slovick featuring Kaylynn Boswell



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Like  
Thoreau in  
Walden, we will  
record our sauntering  
here, remembering that  
"if one advances confidently  
in the direction of his dreams, and  
endeavors to live the life which he  
has imagined, he will meet with a  
success unexpected in common hours."



# What's in a Name?

**A week after the Honors College was renamed the Clarke Honors College, our dean, Dr. Andrew Martino, sent out the following memo.**

Last Tuesday, the Honors College officially, and publicly, became the Glenda Chatham and Robert G. Clarke Honors College. There is no way to overstate the importance and relevance of such a change. The naming of a college means that someone believes in the mission of that college strongly enough to endow that college with a considerable amount of money (in our case, the Clarke's have endowed the college for \$1.5 million) and place their names behind it. Leaving the importance of a monetary gift aside, I would like us to recognize what the naming of the Honors College means.

The Clarkes met as undergraduates at Salisbury State, as we were then known, and their journey has led them back to the area. I make a frequent statement at open houses that choosing a college is much more than choosing the "best buy" or "best bang for your buck" paradigm. When deciding on a college it means that you are charting out the potential path for the rest of your life, that you are deciding on what kind of life you want for yourself. That may include meeting a future spouse. I am happy that my statement is grounded in fact – and the Clarkes are just one example of the types of relationships one can make at college. The Clarkes are wonderful people who want to become involved, meeting with students and offering to share their experiences and expertise in numerous ways. I said at last week's ceremony that this was a partnership, and indeed it is.

The Clarke Honors College is entering a new phase of our existence. We are a college that continues to evolve and change, facing challenges head on and with a spirit of determination and capability. But perhaps more than that, the Clarke Honors College has embedded itself within the community in which we live, as well as the wider world. We are citizens of the world, in the sense that Oliver Goldsmith articulated, and we are also the embodiment of Kant's call to arms, *Sapere aude!*

At the beginning of this memo I asked, "What's in a name?" The quick answer is everything. We can be proud to go out into the world knowing that what we do, the mission to which we adhere, means something more than getting to a degree. As honors students, we have always striven to push the boundaries of what it means to be a student, to put our thinking at risk. As Clarke honors students, we enter the field with a renewed sense of that purpose. As Hannah Arendt has said, we are not just in the world, but we are also of the world. Let us, then, use this unique and troubled time to capitalize on what we do best: to think through the issues and complexities of modern life through an interdisciplinary lens.

# Honors Involvement in 2020 Entrepreneurship Competition

By Jada Jackson

*Jada Jackson is a sophomore nursing major in the Henson Honors Program.*



Honors students are sparking innovative change at Salisbury University, introducing business ideas that value education, accessibility and culture. Several honors students participated in the spring 2020 Entrepreneurship Competition where **Rachel Bruce**, a senior in the Clarke Honors College, won \$1,000 for her innovative TOM business idea. TOM, or "Time of the Month," exports feminine hygiene products to Bangladesh.

According to Bruce: "In Bangladesh, women don't have a lot of access to feminine products," because the subject is considered taboo. Bruce sought to lessen the negative stigma of menstruation and provide access and education about feminine hygiene products. She entered the competition as a part of her Honors capstone project; she was required to meet with her faculty mentor, Professor Bill Burke, often. Bruce shared: "It was really helpful meeting with him every single week" and attributed part of her success to Burke's business expertise.

Another Honors student, **Noah Kness**, along with his partner Griffin Spolansky, won the spring 2020 Entrepreneurship Competition with their company, Mezcla, meaning "mixture" in Spanish. Kness explained that Mezcla is a protein bar company whose mission is "celebrating diversity through food and art." He revealed that the ingredients are sourced from all over the world and the packaging features internationally inspired artwork, along with "a QR code that links you directly to a digital art room." Kness credited Honors 111, a course all honors students are required to take, for giving him the research skills he needed to help develop Mezcla.

The Clarke Honors College urges its students to go above and beyond their requirements, pushing themselves past their limits in order to embrace different cultures and take on new challenges, which is exactly what the Honors students involved in the spring 2020 Entrepreneurship Competition did.

Left: Rachel Bruce won \$1,000 for TOM business idea, which seeks to export feminine hygiene products to women in Bangladesh. Right: Noah Kness won the competition with his protein bar company Mezcla.



# ALL IN: Studying Abroad During a Global Pandemic

By Eli Rush

*Eli Rush is a junior international studies - international political economy concentration major with a minor in East Asian studies.*

Studying abroad is a remarkable opportunity, but studying abroad in the height of a global pandemic halfway across the globe is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I traveled to South Korea on February 26; at the time, COVID-19 was just a concern for China, not the rest of the world. When I arrived at Chonnam National University, the partner university with Salisbury University, I was immediately tested by staff personnel and placed into a 14-day quarantine because of rapidly increasing cases.

I let my parents know I had arrived safely and informed them of China's situation; they told me of the U.S.' concerns with the rapidly spreading virus. Salisbury University decided to end all of their study abroad programs because of the U.S. decision to stop flights, so I had to determine if I would leave, negating all the effort it took to obtain my visa, or stay against SU's wishes.

I decided to stay in South Korea to avoid contracting COVID-19 by returning home. Out of 34 Americans studying at Chonnam National University, I was the only one who stayed. Even with the fear of being alone, I expanded my comfort zone and leaped into the great unknown.

Similar to America, classes became completely virtual with video lectures pre-recorded and assignments to complete online. I was able to work on my own time, which gave me plenty of

opportunities to explore South Korea. I met up with some of the other international students who remained at the university. They came from all parts of the world: France, Morocco, the Czech Republic, Indonesia and Malaysia, to name a few. I bonded with my Korean buddy Hunmin, a student assigned to each of us to assist us in our day-to-day needs and adjustment to South Korea. I met his family and traveled all over the South Korean peninsula with him. I was allowed to tutor English for a Korean student. Jun became a quick friend, where we discussed a variety of topics that interested both of us.

I traveled and saw bamboo forests, enjoyed a refreshing cup of green tea at the largest tea farm in South Korea, hiked one of the tallest mountains on the Korean peninsula, wore the same clothes that ancient Korean officials wore, went zip lining by the sea and so much more. The countless experiences forged fond memories of hanging with newfound friends put together through circumstances out of our control. Upon returning home, SU still accepted my class credits for the semester, even though I did not return when asked to.

When it comes to being an honors student, taking the risk of staying in South Korea was huge. I did not know how it would impact my standing at Salisbury University as I went against their wishes to return

home. I met new friends who I chat with regularly. I created memories that will remain with me for my lifetime. I learned more about culture and language than ever before.

Honors is about taking risks, whether it be a research paper or studying abroad. As honors students, an opportunity lies around every corner. Sometimes those corners can be scary and fear creeps in. It's all about taking that first step. When you take that first step, the next step follows. Soon you are walking, and then you start jogging, and finally, you are running forward towards your dreams. Risks are something everyone has to face. Honors is here to help you take those risks and build up your confidence. The Clarke Honors College gave me the tools that I needed to succeed in South Korea, and they continue to do that for students throughout campus. It all starts with that first step.



Top left: Rush at the Gyeongbokgung Palace in Seoul. Above: The last night of the Korean language course where all international students got together in person. Bottom left: Rush snaps a photo of Juknokwon, a local bamboo forest.



# Students Honored for Award-Winning Papers

By Elliana Larsen

*Elliana Larsen is a freshman with a double major in early childhood education and elementary education.*

**Students in the newly renamed Clarke Honors College have been hard at work writing distinguished research essays. Two individuals in particular have shown persistence in the face of difficult research barriers, producing works that serve to inspire future generations of honors students.**

A rising star in the Clarke Honors College, **Courtney Harris** recently received the Whall Honors Award for Writing Excellence for her essay "Can Your Patient Understand You? An Analysis of the Language Barriers in Healthcare." Harris, a sophomore nursing major, focused on how deaf, hard-of hearing and limited English proficiency patients need to be able to understand their healthcare providers in order for accurate care to be administered. She was inspired to write this paper after taking three years of American Sign Language in high school, where she fostered a love for interpreting. Harris credited Dr. Stacia Kock with "helping lead the way" for her essay, assisting with source incorporation and strengthening her writing. Harris thanked the Clarke Honors College for helping her make connections, and she added a piece of advice for those currently writing Honors 111 papers: "Don't stress yourself out about it ... focus on what you want to say ... branch out from there, and don't be afraid to go off of what you originally thought."



A recent graduate of the Clarke Honors College with a dual major in social work and political science, **Eleanor Brown** received the John and Mary-Claire Roth Honors Thesis Prize for her thesis "Double Jeopardy: Employment Discrimination Experienced by Returning Citizens." A true passion project, Brown researched the presence of returning citizen employment discrimination on the Eastern Shore and what employment support these individuals need. Brown began this research process in October 2016, when her faculty mentor, Dr. Jennifer Jewell, asked, "Do you want to come to prison with me?" Leading educational book discussions once a week at Eastern Correctional Institution, Brown underwent "one of the highest risk research projects the university has taken on." Brown credited Jewell for being a "key component" to her motivation and persistence. Being in the Clarke Honors College, which Brown cited as being "a home away from home," inspired her to begin her research early in her college career.

For those who are currently writing their Honors theses, Brown said to "stay determined, do something that matters to you, be creative and take full advantage of the Honors College opportunities."



Top: Courtney Harris received the Whall Award for her essay "Can Your Patient Understand You? An Analysis of the Language Barriers in Healthcare."

Above: John and Mary-Claire Roth Honors Thesis Prize winner Eleanor Brown with her mentor Dr. Jennifer Jewell.

# Celebrating Two Years of Henson Honors

By Carly Nascimbeni

*Carly Nascimbeni is a sophomore philosophy major with a minor in law, justice and advocacy.*

The Henson Honors Program came to life two years ago after Dr. James Joseph Buss, former dean of the Honors College, recognized the Honors College's need for more programs and offerings that could be curated for STEM students. Buss approached the Henson Curriculum Committee and tasked them with the job of creating a core of requirements that were intended for STEM students.

This core program was designed to meet both the requirements for students' majors and the requirements for the Honors College. Dr. Jennifer Nyland, the program director of the Henson Honors Program, said: "We were intentional on how we designed this program so we can encourage, retain and support any honors student from any major in this program."

Through smaller class sizes and intentional lab integration, the Henson Honors Program is able to offer enhanced student-faculty interaction. Thus, creating an environment to develop relationships with professors who work in the student's potential field. This creates research opportunities both directly and through networking. Additionally, the enhanced interaction leads to more collaborative learning and more discussion. Being a part of an honors network of students also leads to being challenged by your peers, who are continually raising the level of conversation.

Senior Anna Brennan was the first student to join the Henson Honors program. When asked what she would tell a student who is considering applying for the Henson Honors program, Anna said, "I encourage my fellow STEM students to consider this program because the purpose of studying science is to apply it to real-world problems that we see in our daily lives. With this program, that kind of thinking is encouraged and facilitated already, so you get accustomed to this kind of critical thinking early on in your scientific career."

The integration of this program into the Clarke Honors College has been very successful. Nyland noted that the Henson Honors program's biggest success was "expanding the number of faculty who are involved in honors because it means that many more students can be touched by the program." The current goal for the Henson Honors program is to identify courses and faculty who can further expand the program to make it easier for students to reach their core requirements.

**Dr. Jennifer Nyland serves as the program director for the Henson Honors Program.**

**A Henson Honors Program student processing a sample from the Nanticoke River.**





# The Journey to True Listening

By Allison Guy

Allison Guy is a senior English major with a writing and rhetoric track and a minor in music.

Movies are an entertaining part of our everyday lives. However, they can also be objects of study. Students who took Dr. Elsie Walker’s honors film class in spring 2020, titled *Listening Differently: Cinema, Selfhood and Society*, examined how sound is used in film.

The implications of listening to film extend beyond just the realm of understanding media. “While I focus on listening to cinema with a heightened level of awareness ... my ultimate goal extends even beyond the cinematic realm in the hope that by listening better to all these forms of sonic information, my students will leave the classroom better equipped for listening to everything at a heightened level,” Walker said.

Midway through the semester, Walker and her students had to adapt to virtual instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Salisbury University’s library helped with this online transition by securing the rights to stream the films that students needed to view.

“As far as my lectures and discussions went, I did everything live, so the only work that students were completing independently was the film screenings. And I gave the students guidelines to keep next to them during those screenings so they would feel anchored in some material rather than feeling suddenly cut adrift by the experience of viewing the movies and listening to them, I should stress, on their own,” Walker commented.

While *Listening Differently: Cinema, Selfhood and Society* was the first honors class Walker taught, in addition to teaching a variety of film classes, she is currently working on her third book, titled *Life 24x a Second*.

“It’s about how cinema can feed our lives [and] can uplift us but also energize us – be a dynamic, vital force in our lives at a time when we need that,” Walker explained.

Senior Jacob Beaver found that *Listening Differently: Cinema, Selfhood and Society* was a class that altered his view of movies. “It was very eye-opening – or actually, it was very ear-opening. It changed the way that I viewed films I already knew ... and now, whenever I see a new film ... there is a heavier emphasis on me listening to the film than there was before,” Beaver explained.

Sophomore Hannah Prugh had a similar experience in the class. She too described the experience as “eye-opening” and commented that: “It didn’t just relate to listening in film. It was also just in life and just anything you hear ... I learned a lot about how every sound you hear in film has a purpose, has a meaning to it.”

Ultimately, whether you’re interested in film or other areas of study, Prugh felt the Clarke Honors College offers a little something for each of its students: “You’ll definitely find a class or two or more that you’re going to really enjoy and be happy that you got to take.”

Dr. Elsie Walker (above) recently taught an honors film class titled *Listening Differently: Cinema, Selfhood and Society*.

Pictured here are two of Walker’s published works on film soundtracks.





# Clarke Honors College Seniors Win Goldwater Scholarships

By Thomas Long and Brigid O'Connor

*Thomas Long is a history major in the Pre-Law Program and is minoring in philosophy. Brigid O'Connor is a political science and conflict analysis and dispute resolutions double major with an East Asian studies minor.*

Clarke Honors College seniors **Jessica Pierce** and **Anna Brennan** won nationally competitive Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships. The Goldwater Scholarship was established by Congress in 1986 to award funding for undergraduate degrees to those pursuing careers in STEM. Pierce and Brennan are the first Salisbury University students to win this prestigious award.

The Goldwater is awarded based on research experience, of which Pierce has had her fair share. "In spring 2019, I began working with Dr. Jessica Clark studying the integrity of the optic nerve in hyperglycemic zebrafish," Pierce explained. "In the lab, I induce hyperglycemia in adult zebrafish using a nitroreductase model. This research will improve our understanding of nonarteritic ischemic optic neuropathy, which may lead to the development of more effective treatments." Her honors thesis is based on this research. The honors thesis opportunity allows application of classroom material through primary research experience. The Goldwater is the perfect way to help Pierce further pursue her thesis work. The Goldwater also provides

her with a community of researchers for consultation on postgraduate Ph.D. plans.

For Brennan, this means conducting research in neuropharmacology. Before being awarded the Goldwater Scholarship, Brennan had "been participating in research with Dr. Scott Mazzetti in the Laboratory for Human Performance since freshman year, working on several projects, the biggest being [her] current Honors thesis project." Through the award, Brennan plans to "study how enzymes and receptors interact with antidepressant medications to see if there is a way to reduce the side effects of these medications." She aims to go to graduate school to further her research experience.

When asked if she had any advice for honors students looking to apply for fellowships, Brennan explained: "I didn't let the fact that it was marketed as one of the most prestigious undergraduate scholarships in the sciences prevent me from going for it. Taking advantage of an opportunity like a fellowship may not always lead to money or winning the fellowship, but it is still a learning opportunity that can lead to learning more about yourself and what you want to accomplish in the future." It is an opportunity for Honors students to showcase their rigor and passion for these fields, providing a key research experience that students can apply to future endeavors.

Jessica Pierce (left) and Anna Brennan are both recipients of the Goldwater Scholarship.



Anyone interested in applying for fellowships should contact the Salisbury Nationally Competitive Fellowships Office at 410-548-4095 or email Dr. Kristen Walton at [kpwalton@salisbury.edu](mailto:kpwalton@salisbury.edu).

# Building Community Connections Through Internships

By Corinne Sherry

*Corinne Sherry is a senior double major in finance and information systems with a minor in accounting.*



This past summer, I worked with Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development where I was able to implement the financial skills and knowledge I have gained in the classroom. I am currently a senior at SU double majoring in finance and information systems with a minor in accounting. I am also part of the Honors Student Ambassador Program serving as a peer mentor to new honors students.

I worked with the Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development to develop allocation methods for the CARES Act funding granted by the Maryland state government for COVID-19 relief. Our goal was to efficiently and effectively award grants to small businesses in the Wicomico area that were financially impacted by the pandemic. Specifically, I worked with a team to analyze data from tri state regions with similar county demographics to Wicomico County, including population, major industries and average income. We then researched how much these counties were given for aid and how they chose to allocate their funds. Our data showed that funding primarily went to health care and social assistance followed by education and then retail trade. We then analyzed the integral characteristics of Wicomico County to decide on how the funding would best be allocated to serve the community's needs. Our research and suggestions were presented to Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development, where our thoughts and ideas were taken into consideration when deciding which grant applicants should receive funding. This role demanded a lot of research, a skill I will easily be able to apply to future job opportunities. This experience helped me gain a lot of experience in handling and successfully overcoming real-world ubiquitous problems.

The Clarke Honors College has prepared me for a role like this not only because of the academic course work and commitment required to be in the Honors College, but also because of the importance of community that the Honors College stresses. I was supposed to complete an internship over the summer in New York City that was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In need of an internship, I reached out to professors at SU. They were able to connect other students and me with Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development. The company was in need of immediate and accurate research this past summer to allocate the CARES Act funding before the mid-July deadline. I was able to provide the help that they needed, while also helping all the local businesses of Salisbury that college students love.

There exists a continuous symbiotic relationship between honors students and the Salisbury community that I will always love about my college experience.

**Corinne Sherry completed an internship with Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development.**

# A Conversation with Anna Marie Roos: *The Saunterer*

By Kyla Taylor

Kyla Taylor is a junior majoring in English - writing and rhetoric track and minoring in marketing management



*Every great thing comes from humble beginnings, and The Saunterer is no exception.*

From a hopeful endeavor in spring 1997, to a national award-winning student-run magazine, *The Saunterer* has truly blossomed. This did not go unnoticed by Anna Marie Roos, who played a critical role in creating the publication in 1997 as the assistant director of the Honors College at the time. She also taught our hallmark Critical Thinking and Writing class – now known as Honors 111 – as well as Scientific Knowledge and a pilot version of a Philosophy of Science course. Roos now teaches at the University of Lincoln in the U.K., but she recently noticed an online version of the magazine and was surprised to see how it had grown over the last 23 years. We were able to sit down for a virtual interview, and she told me about how the magazine began.

In late 1996, Roos had just begun her stint at SU. She pointed out to the honors program founder and director at the time, Dr. Tony Whall, that there wasn't an honors newsletter and that creating one would give the then Bellavance Honors Program some exposure and show the alumni how honors was flourishing. He liked the idea, so Roos and a handful of students made it happen.

Roos explained that the name of the new magazine was inspired by Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, one of Whall's favorite books. The writers of the inaugural issue used this as a mission statement: "Like Thoreau, we will record our sauntering here, revealing how each of us pursues *'his own way*, and not his father's or his mother's or his neighbor's instead."

When asked about her thoughts on how the publication has grown, Roos said: "I think I always hoped, when I started it, to gradually pass it off to the students ... I think it's their publication."

This is reflective of the now Clarke Honors College's goal: to help students make their own path from humble, hopeful beginnings, to bright, bold futures. And thanks to the humble beginnings of *The Saunterer*, we now have 23 years of "saunterings" and paths on which to look back.

Anna Marie Roos was the assistant director of the Honors College when *The Saunterer* was first published.

Above right: Senior writer Kyla Taylor interviewing Roos over Zoom.

Each year, The Saunterer showcases a faculty member of the Honors College. This year, Dr. Mike Koval is featured for his outstanding teaching.



## Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Mike Koval

By Kenna Krueger

*Kenna Krueger is a freshman in the Bellavance Honors Program with a dual major in early childhood education and elementary education.*



This year brought many changes to Salisbury University, and one of those changes included a new director of the Business Honors Program, Dr. Mike Koval. Part of what makes Koval a great director is his ability to advise his students on a plethora of careers. Before coming to SU as an adjunct professor in 2006, Koval worked as a chemical engineer, product manager, lawyer and stay-at-home dad. As such, he has a few words of wisdom in regard to careers: "The career plan I recommend is to be flexible, try to stay true to yourself and keep your eyes open to new opportunities, because you never know where you will end up."

Koval began teaching honors courses three years ago and quickly realized he enjoyed working with the honors students. When the opening came for a new business program director, he jumped on it. When asked how honors students stand out, Koval noted that they "prepare diligently for class, they submit work they are proud of, they work well together, and they are quick to connect what they learn in class to their outside lives."

On top of being a professor and Business Honors Program director, Koval is involved with research focused on "developing new techniques and activities to bring law to life in the classroom." His research on how to make the classroom more engaging makes his approach to teaching unique. By identifying and researching ideas to make the first day of class more intriguing, Koval motivates his students in a positive way. His teaching philosophy along with his ongoing research prove he is more than qualified for the position of director.

When asked what an advantage to the Business Honors Program would be, Koval responded by saying "the students are and will be looked at as leaders of our school." With their leadership, students are able to achieve great things within the Business Honors Program, which aims to provide students with networking and mentorship, enhanced entrepreneurship opportunities, global programs, and community, according to the Clarke Honors College brochure.

While Koval isn't currently teaching any honors courses, he will be teaching Legal Environment in Business in the spring. This course will focus on basic business law principles and how they apply to the current COVID-19 crisis, ensuring Business Honors Program students are able to adapt to any business environment, including a global pandemic.



Dr. Mike Koval with his honors business students (pictured pre-COVID-19).

# A New Chapter: Honors College Renamed Clarke Honors College

By Allison Hankey and Casia Veeck

Allison Hankey is a sophomore nursing major. Casia Veeck is a sophomore nursing major with a minor in Spanish.



Left: Robert Clarke and Glenda Chatham with SU President Charles Wight.

Right: Honors students excitedly gather around the newly named Clarke Honors College sign.

Initiating Salisbury University's Honors College name change was a huge step forward for the Honors College community and students. Now known as the Glenda Chatham and Robert G. Clarke Honors College, there are many new opportunities for students due to the large donation from the Clarkes. The naming ceremony took place outside on the Honors House lawn where a small group of students, faculty and guests were able to properly social distance. Senior Jack Lenox stated that it was nice "to see everybody respecting social distancing rules, wearing masks and aware and conscious."

The Clarkes are generous, welcoming individuals. They greeted the students and faculty at the event with respect and radiated positivity upon meeting them. Lenox stated: "It really showed that they were not only just invested in the school or invested in the Honors College; they were invested in the people. ... I would describe them as kind individuals."

All who attended were quite eager to learn the Honors College's new name, too. As junior Kyla Taylor stated: "There was a lot of anticipation and a lot of excitement. The entire group of people there was kind of buzzing." Both Taylor and Lenox spoke at the event and served as the crucial liaison between the Clarkes and the students. This event highlighted the ever-changing role of the Honors College, continuously adapting and changing to fit the needs of its students.

Overall, each student and faculty member was positively affected by this event.

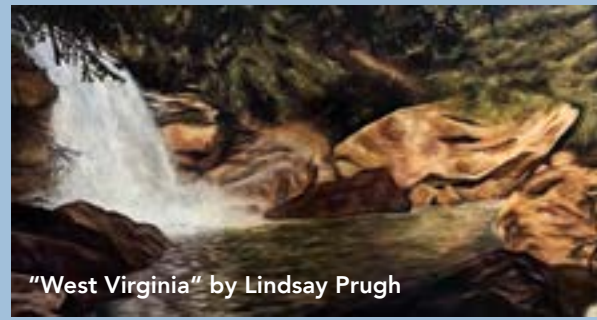
According to senior Emily Ball: "The new name ... represents a dedication to learning. I feel so blessed to know that there are generous people out there who know the value of education and feel compelled to donate."

All students and faculty are incredibly appreciative of the contributions from the Clarkes. Professor Lauren Hill stated that "the Clarkes' gift to us is monumental. We've tried to build our program with successful students and to create research that's meaningful, and so what the Clarkes have given us is the opportunity to share that and to make sure our students have the resources to be successful."

There is no doubt that the new Clarke Honors College name will promote positivity, generosity and dedication to education.



"The Coming Storm" by Ian Leverage



"West Virginia" by Lindsay Prugh

# CREATIVE WORKS

*by Honors Students*

Honors students are known for their ability to think outside the box. They excel in a variety of fields, and often, their thinking results in the unexpected. This semester, the Clarke Honors College put out a call to all of its students for creative pieces. In response, we received the following works.

## The Piano

By Jada Jackson

I sit down on the rusty bench. This piano has been in my family for generations. We live, we play, we die. And don't get me wrong, we play pretty well. But we believe it's what keeps us alive- the playing. Mother has died and now it's my turn. "You must play," they say. It is my duty to play this piano. But I look out of the window, and I see another way. Children playing outside, stomping in puddles, *smiling*. I don't even know how to smile anymore. The dread of the duty that is now upon me has been haunting me since before I can remember. I know the playing is an honor, but I wish it didn't have to be like this. If only we could go back to the way it used to be. We used to be normal, like everyone else. Then my great-grandmother bought this piano, played it all the time. We told her to rest, but she said no, playing is what was keeping her alive. We listened and couldn't stop, still can't. We teach our children that this is the only way, and so it is. But every generation has a choice. I have a choice. When the Player dies, we are free. The daughter is supposed to begin playing, and once she starts, she can never stop. But by never starting to play, I am free. By never listening, they are free. My family gathers around, wanting to listen. Wanting me to play. I reach out my hands to that accursed piano and begin to play. Maybe one day, someone will have the courage to walk away from the piano, to be free. But as for me, I am doomed to the fate I have made for myself.

## A Mother's Cry

By Jirah Ross

*This poem explores what it means to be a mother, through the eyes of Harriet Greene Ross, otherwise known as Harriet Tubman. It explores multiple events that she and her daughter Araminta Ross experienced and how that affected Tubman. It should also be noted that Harriet Greene Ross is the author's fifth great aunt on her step-father's side.*

"All my life I had to fight"  
Is what you say my chile  
But in ma day fighting would have been lite  
I was to' down until broke down  
Picked cotton by the pound  
Babies snatched as I cried in misery  
On that cold hard ground

I was sold to a husband and Mrs. Mary  
Masta' said he never again sell me  
At 45 he set me and my children free  
I should have known  
That it would be at a price too high for  
little ole me

Everybody thought it easy being a comfort girl  
But chile little do dey' know it was not a  
fun swirl  
Day in and day out I lay there, usually  
emotionless  
Wishing that man was motionless  
I still wish that bastard and his family death  
The hardest was watching you whipped Just  
because that damn baby whimped Had to see  
them scars for the rest of your life At six,  
you learned the negro story of strife Your  
teen skull broken  
Our hurt and pain went unspoken

This is what it meant to be a mother To watch  
our children suffer  
To be angry and bitter  
And those were just some of life's heavy  
hitters



"Layers" by Lindsay Prugh

# Honors Student Ambassadors

Honors Student Ambassadors are exemplary students in the Clarke Honors College who are available to answer questions that you may have about the College and their experiences at Salisbury University. In addition to their wide-ranging majors, most ambassadors have additional areas of academic expertise and are involved in a variety of extracurricular activities. In each issue of *The Saunterer*, we introduce a few of our 31 ambassadors. To find out more, you can visit the Clarke Honors College website [www.salisbury.edu/honors](http://www.salisbury.edu/honors), which includes full profiles for each of the ambassadors.

## Kaylynn Boswell

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