From the Director:

Welcome to the first edition of the newsletter for the Honors Program at Lone Star College-Kingwood. As Director, I have always wanted to publish a newsletter that highlights the three most important groups in our honors community—our students, our alumni, and our faculty. Unfortunately, I had other obligations that competed for my time and the idea of a newsletter sat on a shelf of good intentions in my office for the past three years. That is unfortunate, because we have had many wonderful students come through the program during that time who I failed to recognize. This newsletter is an attempt to correct that failure.

As you read the stories of our students in the pages that follow, you will notice that all of them found our Honors Program as they were looking for ways to get more out of their education. And as they began to ask more from our faculty, the faculty began to ask more of the students participating in our program. This sharing of the educational experience and the cooperative learning environment of our classes continues to define our honors program today.

Each edition of our newsletter will focus on several of our current students. In this issue, Caitlin Lowe, Musbah Sheikh, and Sam Griffin share their stories with us. The newsletter will also allow us to hear from students in their own, unedited words. This month we learn about the choices Keelie Barrow made that led her to Kingwood. Our graduates are an equally important part of the honors community at Kingwood, and each issue of our newsletter will provide an update from at least one of our graduates. We also have a group of talented faculty that teach in our honors program and we will provide space for them as well. In this issue we talk to Dr. John Barr and find out what Dr. Jim Skelton is doing in his Composition and Rhetoric section next fall.

I hope that this newsletter was worth the three-year wait.

David Putz, PhD
Director, Honors Program
ike many students, Caitlin Lowe has taken both Honors and non-honors classes at LSC-Kingwood; however, she says she “learned beyond what is required by the course guidelines in the Honors class.” She was recruited by the president of the Honors Student Organization (HSO) after she listened to him talk passionately about the Honors courses he had taken. Caitlin’s first honors course was with Dr. Putz and says she often finds herself referencing materials from that course. She is now taking American history with Dr. Barr and Literature of the Holocaust with Dr. Samuelson.

Caitlin is also a Supplemental Instructor at the college and plans on continuing her education in the Honors College at the University of Houston and pursue a degree in graphic design.

Musbah Sheikh joined the Honors Program in Fall 2009 because she wanted to challenge herself academically. Because the small class size of honors sections facilitates interaction with fellow students, Musbah says she was able to learn and discuss course content in greater depth. She is amazed at the amount of knowledge and information she gained by taking honors courses. Musbah also had opportunities to have close interaction with instructors and says her involvement in the Honors Program has been “an amazing academic experience.”

When Musbah isn’t in class, she is serving as the Secretary for the Honors Student Organization. In addition, she serves as the President for the Alpha Lambda Xi chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and has participated in the college’s student leadership training program. Musbah will be graduating in May as an Honors Scholar with Distinction and hopes to pursue a degree in Dental Hygiene.
Keelie Barrow  
In Her Own Words

I started back to school after a 24 year break in the spring of 2009. That first semester I was trying to acclimate to being back in the role of a student again. Towards the end of the semester I received an invitation to join the honors program. I was surprised and pleased to find that I had been referred by my English 1301 instructor, Professor Dethloff. Reading about the program, I was inspired to join because it offered classes where the other students would be as motivated as I was to be successful. I joined the program in the fall of 2009, and I have taken 6 different honors classes since that time. I have received far more from the courses than I ever thought possible. Subjects that have always bored me have been presented in ways that kept my interest, and I have learned to appreciate critical thinking skills. I know that my participation in the honors program has opened opportunities for me that I would never have had without it.

My last two years have been a time of discovery for me. I have cycled through multiple degree plans as I have tried to determine what I really wanted to do with my life. Finally, I found a career in which I think I will achieve success. My current goal is to complete my Bachelor’s degree in communications studies. I will probably decide to pursue a Master’s degree in leadership studies. My goal is to become a consultant that teaches teamwork skills to organizations. I have also considered the possibility of teaching personal relations or business communication classes on a collegiate level.

I am facing a few challenges in selecting the university that I will attend. Because I have a family, I am mainly pursuing choices within a few hours of Kingwood. It has been difficult to choose a school because each one has distinct advantages and disadvantages for me. School size, degree programs, the availability of honors classes, and the distance from home are just a few of the things I must take into consideration. Ultimately, I am waiting to see which schools offer me scholarships before making a final decision.

Lone Star College-Kingwood provided Sam Griffin with the foundation he needed to prepare to go to nursing school. Sam chose to take Honors classes because he wanted to challenge himself and get the best possible education. The small classes helped him develop a more personal relationship with students and professors and were something he believed he would not be able to find at a large university. The professors, Sam says, “truly care about having a close connection with their students and helping them reach their fullest potential.”

Sam will be graduating in May with the highest level of honors recognition and plans on transferring to The University of Texas School of Nursing in Houston to obtain a Bachelors Degree in Nursing. He would then like to work in a critical care unit for a few years, possibly in the military, before going back to receive his Masters Degree in Nursing Anesthesia. He chose the medical field because he wants to be the person that helps relieve others from pain when they really need it. Sam says that “helping to save someone’s life is the most rewarding feeling that I can imagine.

In addition to academics, Sam also found that there are also fun events that are exclusive to honors students as well, such as trips to museums in Houston, club meetings, and even trips to different countries.
Dr. John Barr joined the Honors faculty at LSC-Kingwood in the spring 2009 where he was quick to challenge students in his American History II honors section. He finds his honors courses particularly pleasurable because the discussion format of the class allows for more conversation among the students and faculty than is usual in a regular course. He enjoys working with students and attempting to motivate them to be curious about the world in which they live. Dr. Barr enjoys teaching History because knowledge of the past and its complexity and variety enriches us as human beings and is essential for citizenship in a democratic society.

Dr. Barr is again teaching American history for the Honors program this semester where the emphasis is on the political novel. His students will be reading books as varied as Bram Stoker’s Dracula, John Steinbeck’s The Grapes of Wrath, and Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World.

The Honors Program also wants to recognize Dr. Barr as the newest PhD on the Honors faculty. Dr. Barr’s dissertation has also been accepted for publication by Harvard University Press. Congratulations Dr. Barr!

What We Teach

Dr. Jim Skelton teaches the Honors Section of English 1301: Composition and Rhetoric during fall semesters. Before joining the faculty at LSC Kingwood, Dr. Skelton was a full-time freelancer and brings his passion for writing to the classroom. In addition to teaching students how to write college essays, Dr. Skelton passes along some of his professional writing “secrets” such as “Writing in your Sleep” and “Using Blogs, Twitter, and Other Media to make a Name as a Writer.”

English 1301, like all of the Honors courses we offer, is one of the classes all LSC-Kingwood students need in order to graduate and is fully transferable to universities in the state.
Casey Stapleton Timme ('10) served as the President of the Honors Student Organization during the 2009-2010 school year. Leading the organization, Casey says, was a wonderful and rewarding experience. She and her leadership team were responsible for building the foundation for the HSO and bringing together HSO members at events, elections, and meetings. The HSO would not have the visible presence it does at the college today if it were not for the hard work of Casey.

Casey “was scared to death” when she registered for her first Honors course, an American government course taught by Dr. Paul Blakelock. After one lecture, though, she says she was hooked! She attributes much of her drive and independence to the amazing friends she made through the HSO and Honors Program.

After graduation, Casey was accepted to the University of Houston where she is pursuing a degree in public relations with a minor in business. She hopes to one day become a pharmaceutical sales representative or do PR for a company such as Fox or Starbucks. You don’t have to travel to UH to find Casey, though. She works in the college’s admission office and lives in the Kingwood area with her husband, Cameron, and their 7 month old daughter.

Where You Can Find Our Recent Graduates

Adlith Castillo ('10) University of Houston Honors
Nikki Eason ('10) East Texas Baptist
Guy Hawkins ('10) UT Austin
Kyle Hyland ('09) Texas A&M
Misty Kaiser ('09) University of Houston
Desiree Lipscomb ('10) UT Arlington
Teri McGee ('10) University of Houston
Jana McKelroy ('09) University of Houston Honors
Casey Timme ('10) University of Houston
Jonathan Wendt ('10) Stephen F. Austin Honors

For Information about the Honors Alumni Association, please contact Jana McKelroy at jana.mckelroy@lonestar.edu
A Word on the Honors Student Organization
From Rick Westover, HSO President

This year the HSO has been very active! Last semester included learning and service opportunities with some chances for relaxing fun as well. On the learning side, we had two very successful Book Bytes meetings. The first was over *The Double Helix* and was facilitated by Honors biology Professor Betsy Morgan. The second was over *A Line in the Sand* and it was facilitated by Dr. John Barr. The book discussion was complimented with a trip to San Antonio where we visited the Alamo, went on a Ghost Tour, and visited Mission Concepcion. It was a very informative and thrilling trip! We also made sure to visit UTSA and discuss their Honors Program while we were there. We were even able to get SFA’s Honors Director come and talk to our students about his program. On the service side, we have been working hard on the “Lowlands Project” with the college’s sustainability coordinator to improve the Evans Gully area on campus.

This semester we are continuing the Book Bytes program with *The McDonaldization of Society* with Professor Tony Foster and *Overthrow* with Dr. Jay Theis. We will be participating in the Relay for Life on March 25-26, and we are working on planning a river canoe/cleanup for the San Jacinto River in early April. Overall, it is a packed semester of fun, learning, and service!

Photos on this page: Keelie Barrow and Rick Westover (top right), Shelley Peterson and Angela Shively (middle right), Rick Westover (bottom right), Jim Bowie and Roamie (above, center); students at Rothko Chapel
The LSC Kingwood Honors Program is once again providing students with the opportunity to enrich their academic experience by offering activities that supplement classroom learning. During the fall semester, the Honors Program visited the Menil Museum and the neighboring Rothko Chapel and Cy Twombly gallery in Houston. The Menil houses one of the country’s largest private art collections and includes works by Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, Max Ernst, and Jasper Johns. Some artists, such as Cy Twombly, challenged students understanding of art, but they all agreed the most memorable piece in the museum was “the hairy cheese.”

For the first time the five Lone Star College Honors Programs hosted a transfer workshop for students. Held at LSC-North Harris, the workshop opened with a welcome from Dr. Donetta Goodall, Vice Chancellor for Student Success at LSC. Dr. Paullett Golden, LSC-Montgomery English Professor, gave the keynote address. Sessions at the workshop included locating and securing scholarship funds and assistance in writing strong statements of purpose and putting together application packets for competitive transfer institutions. Representatives from several universities including Sam Houston, UT Austin, UTSA, and Texas State were at the workshop to recruit our top students. Former students Guy Hawkins (’10), Kyle Hyland (’09) and Jana McKelroy (’09) participated on a student transfer panel to answer questions regarding the transition from life at LSC to life at university. Thanks to all the students, past and present, from LSC Kingwood who made the workshop a success.

Photos on this page: Honors Program students at the Menil Museum (top right), Honors Student Organization at the San Jacinto Monument (center left), Guy Hawkins (’10) (bottom right).
Scholarship Winners Announced!
Honors Program student Amos Zimmermann was awarded a prestigious silver Coca-Cola scholarship at the Phi Theta Kappa state convention in Austin in March. As the college's nominees for the All Texas Academic Team, both Amos and Keelie Barrow are eligible for academic scholarships up to $20,000 to attend the University of Texas at Arlington.

Jamie Good, a second semester Honors Program student, was recognized as a finalist for a scholarship through the LSC Foundation student essay contest. Congratulations Jamie! Thanks for representing the Honors Program!

Upcoming Events
- March 25-26: Relay for Life
- April 2: HSO San Jacinto River Cleanup
- April 7: Conversations with…a Socialist
- April 12: Honors Information Session
- April 16: Book Bytes
- April 17: Theatre Night
- April 19: HSO Officers/Honors Faculty Lunch
- May 1: HSO Bowling Party
- May 5: Conversations with…a Liberal
- May 14: Graduation Reception

Model UN Delegation
The entire Model UN delegation from LSC Kingwood will consist of students from the Honors Program! Brandon Swaringim, Angela Shively, Keelie Barrow, and Amos Zimmermann will spend a week at the United Nations building in New York with students from around the world. They will join other students from across LSC to represent Nicaragua at the conference.