



The Honors Challenge

Research The Pursuit of Curiosity

"Research is like having a Babcock ice cream cone: messy, but extremely rewarding as well."

Rachel Wang
(B.A.'13, Linguistics
and Psychology)

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The Honors Challenge is the
alumni and friends newsletter of
the L&S Honors Program.

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From the Director Sissel Schroeder

Research and Undergrads

I write this as my research collaborators and I tie up an exciting summer of archaeological excavation. Fourteen undergraduates from three universities joined us at the Aztalan site, about 30 miles east of Madison. This important place, also a state park, dates to roughly AD 1100–1300, and the students were an integral part of our research team as we sought to better understand the internal organization and use of space by the ancient community members.

My own experiences with engaging undergraduates in research have been especially productive. The creativity, fresh perspectives, and breadth of coursework that characterize our honors students have led them to ask challenging questions and to interrogate disciplinary conventional wisdom in ways that have, in turn, caused me to ask myself, “Just how do we know that, anyway?” This has enhanced my interdisciplinary interests and pushed my research in new directions that have been fun and, at times, challenging.

Our students’ engagement with research blends experiential learning, scholarship, academic breadth, and professional development in ways that enhance their competitiveness when it comes to prestigious awards, jobs and career opportunities, as well as placement in the best graduate programs and professional schools.

One of the nationally lauded aspects of the L&S Honors Program is our support of undergraduate research, largely made possible through the generosity of donors. Through the Welton Honors Summer Sophomore Research Apprenticeship,

students gain early exposure to research design and methods, and the life of a scholar. A number of grants, including the Trewartha Undergraduate Research Fund, support independent senior thesis research. And the Bromley Travel Grant has made it possible for a number of students to present their senior thesis research at national conferences.

I hope you enjoy reading more about student research experiences in this issue of the Honors Challenge.

Stay Involved!

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or find us on Facebook:
<http://go.wisc.edu/LSHonorsFacebook>

GIVING INFORMATION

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, the L&S Honors Program is able to provide a diverse range of research grants, awards, and assistance to help our outstanding students reach their full potential. We welcome contributions in any amount.

*You can donate online at
www.honors.ls.wisc.edu/giving.*

For information on creating an endowment or other major gifts, please contact Ann Lippincott at the UW Foundation:
ann.lippincott@supportuw.org
608-263-3604

From the Dean's Desk



University Communications

As the new dean of UW–Madison's College of Letters & Science, I am delighted to introduce myself and share with you some of the many reasons I am honored and excited to serve the College.

As an economist, I have devoted my scholarly career to studying the ways in which human beings respond to the world's complexity. We are increasingly interconnected through technology and economic growth. I believe our students must graduate as engaged global citizens in order to successfully navigate through work and life.

The L&S Honors Program is critical in this effort. The Program's enriched curriculum encourages the

College's best and brightest undergraduate students to pursue research opportunities that open their eyes to innovative career paths and spark new intellectual pursuits. Many of these students seek out research questions that cut across academic disciplines, creating experiences that help them leave campus as well-rounded people who will make a good living and lead a good life.

As alumni, you have many reasons to be proud and to continue your support of the Honors Program. Perhaps the most valuable skill a liberal arts graduate can bring to our knowledge-based economy is the passion to keep learning. The Honors Program fosters curiosity and creativity in unique and innovative ways, strengthening campus and the community at large and preparing students to become active and involved members of society.

Please stay in touch with your alma mater. I welcome your feedback and appreciate all that you do for the university.

Thank you and On, Wisconsin!

John Karl Scholz,
Dean and Professor
of Economics
dean@ls.wisc.edu

The UW Forensics Team

is sponsored by the L&S Honors Program and supported in part by anonymous donors.

In 2012-13:

- ▶ The team doubled in size
- ▶ Jayme Marsh earned five tournament championships and was the State Poetry Champion
- ▶ Jason Schwartz earned three tournament championships
- ▶ The team placed first in Individual Events at the University of Utah tournament
- ▶ The entire team qualified for Nationals



THANK YOU!

We thank donors, alumni, faculty, staff, and future Badgers for your support of our students and participation in our programs:

In 2012-13

\$200,000
in gifts to the Honors Program

\$115,000
in grants to support 24 small Honors-only courses

\$105,000
in research awards to 52 Honors students

\$44,000
in grants to the Program to enhance research and the student experience in Honors

\$27,000
for two student-directed sustainable community projects

\$3,000
in conference and study abroad travel awards to six Honors students

100 Senior Honors theses completed

Where Will Your Curiosity Take You?

As a high school student, Geoffrey Ludvik (B.A.'13, Anthropology and Classical Humanities) read about the Hittites and their ancient Anatolian empire. Just a few years later, he found himself attempting to study the civilization up close — and getting tear-gassed for his trouble.

“As a student of archaeology, it is one thing to read about places in a book or hear about them in lecture,” says Ludvik, who got caught in the middle of a volatile demonstration in Istanbul, Turkey, on his way to Hattusa, the Hittite capital. “To see history with your own eyes — that is an entirely different experience altogether.”

Ludvik, who is working toward his Ph.D. in anthropology at UW–Madison, used research opportunities — including two offered through the L&S Honors Program — throughout his time as an undergraduate to immerse himself in the field.

He participated in the Welton Honors Summer Sophomore Research Apprenticeship, traveling to the ancient city of Troy with Professor of Classics William Aylward to study Bronze Age architecture and analyze ancient drilling techniques for beads. As a senior, he worked with Aylward and Professor of Anthropology J. Mark Kenoyer on a thesis examining bead production from



Geoffrey Ludvik takes a break from digging at Khirbet Summeily, a Biblical Iron Age site in Israel.



Troy and across the ancient Near East and Aegean world, and presented his findings at the second annual Honors Senior Thesis Symposium.

“Knowledge is a process, an active process that we must participate in to reap its benefits,” he says. “Only by plunging ourselves into a subject through diligent research, be it in the ancient ruins of Troy or in a chemistry lab on campus, can we really take charge of our own learning.”

Through these two programs, honors students like Ludvik dive into cutting-edge research across the liberal arts and around the world. See the map above for a sampling of the wide variety of global topics explored by honors students in 2013.

Join us for the 2014 HONORS SENIOR THESIS SYMPOSIUM

April 5, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Union South

The Honors Senior Thesis Symposium gives students the opportunity to present their research to an interdisciplinary community of faculty, staff, students, family, and friends, and a venue in which to learn more about the diverse research experiences of other students. The event is made possible by a generous donation from Todd Franks (B.S.'75, English) and the support of the Michael J. Spector Fund for Excellence in Honors.

Call the Honors Program office at 608-262-2984
or email honors@honors.ls.wisc.edu
to learn more about this free event.

A Healthy Interest in Expanding His Horizons

Lang's Welton summer research project combines science, humanities

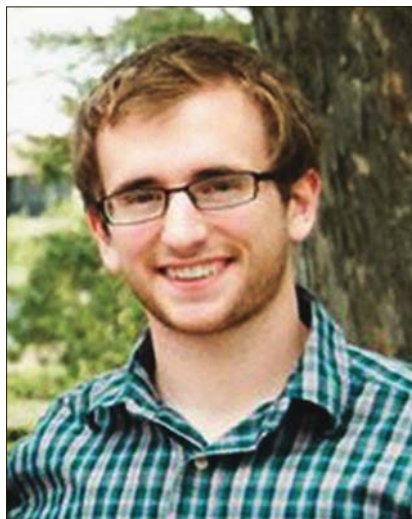
Jon Lang has never been one to limit the scope of his educational experience. Sure, science is his forte. But the UW–Madison senior, a molecular biology major who hopes to get an M.D.-Ph.D. degree and work as a physician-scientist someday, has always been keen to explore disparate disciplines. That's why, on a whim, he enrolled in Medieval Studies 446: Celtic-Scandinavian Cultural Interrelations as a sophomore.

"There's always so much more out there," Lang says. "It was really hard for me to try to narrow down my interests. It's like the more classes I take, the more interesting everything seems and the more I realize there's so much out there for me to learn about."

The class with Professor of Scandinavian Studies Thomas DuBois certainly sparked Lang's interest — and led to a joint interdisciplinary research paper that will soon be published in the *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine*.

Lang enjoyed both the subject matter of the course — he was particularly fond of the Viking and Celtic sagas the class read — and DuBois' passionate and accessible teaching style. So when he read about the Welton Honors Summer Sophomore Research Apprenticeship offered through the College of Letters & Science Honors Program, he had an idea. He was already working in a chemistry lab — and had worked in a botany lab during his first year — so he figured he could use the Welton to dig into a fresh topic in the humanities with a professor he admired.

"A lot of research internships are for science — chemistry or biology or whatever — but this was one that



Jon Lang

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Jon Lang

allowed you to do it (all across) the liberal arts," Lang says.

DuBois knew of Lang's science background, and proposed an idea that was not at all what Lang had envisioned when he first read about the Welton: the two would examine early 20th-century folk-healing of the Sami, the indigenous peoples of Scandinavia who live north of the Arctic Circle.

To do so, Lang and DuBois, an expert on the Sami, analyzed two books by Johan Turi, a Sami hunter, reindeer herder, and healer who

lived from 1854 to 1936. Turi's "An Account of the Sami" (1910) was the first secular book published in the Sami language, and DuBois translated it to English for Nordic Studies Press in 2011. Lang and DuBois sifted through Turi's words — "Lappish Texts" (1918–19) was his other book — to categorize the different healing techniques employed, their effectiveness, the types of maladies treated, the use of magic and the influence of other cultures.

The trick, Lang says, was pinpointing some of the animals, plants, compounds, substances, and even medical conditions that Turi described. For example, Turi wrote of using "stinking assa" to treat "dog sickness." Based on Turi's description of the symptoms, Lang concluded that "dog sickness" likely meant a parasitic affliction in a dog, while "stinking assa" referred to the dried extract from the root of *Ferula assafoetida*. Modern science has verified the use of the plant for this purpose.

"This project was great, because it's humanities on one side and it's also science because you're trying to determine if there could be any potential efficacy to these treatments," Lang says.

According to Lang and DuBois' final analysis, "a number of (Turi's) methods were confirmed by later medical and pharmaceutical research."

The duo's research also showed that Turi utilized zootherapeutic methods (the use of substances derived from animals) more than any other technique, employed various incantations and charms into a number of his remedies, and, while he didn't necessarily recognize



Wikipedia

A Sami family in Norway around 1900

it, displayed influences from other cultures.

In addition to the paper, Lang — with financial support from the Honors Program — attended the International Symposium on Medicinal Plants and Natural Products in June in Montreal, where he connected with a researcher who studies the use of plants for medicinal purposes among the Inuits of Northern Quebec. Lang says the project has inspired interests in the history of medicine, pharmacology and drug discovery.

“I really went into it with an open mind, just to see what would happen,” he says. “I’m really glad that I have done it, because western medicine has only been around for 200-some years. People have always been getting sick and there have been different ways of treating those illnesses. So it was just interesting to learn about a different system of medicine.”



Together, We Make a Difference

Your gift, big or small, makes all the difference in ensuring that a world-class intellectual environment and a campus life that’s the envy of the Big Ten will be available to a new generation of Badgers.

We hope you will Share the Wonderful in 2013 and help us nurture the kind of life-changing experiences that foster creativity, scholarly excellence, and leadership among L&S Honors students.

Give your gift today at www.honors.ls.wisc.edu/giving or contact Ann Lippincott at the UW Foundation: 608-263-3604 or ann.lippincott@supportuw.org.

SHARE THE WONDERFUL
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Congratulations to Dean's Prize Winners

The Dean's Prizes are awarded to the most outstanding undergraduate scholars in the College of Letters & Science based on recommendations from faculty and community leaders. Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.90; be a comprehensive honors candidate; have completed a thesis or other major research project; and have made significant contributions to the university or broader community. This year's winners were:



Jonathan Schellenberg
B.A.'13, Chemistry, Economics and Math; Saint Paul, Minn.

Jonathan has designed statistical analyses examining weight control behaviors of children and undertook a comparative study of the value of private and public undergraduate education. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the recipient of many awards, and an accomplished violist. Jonathan is pursuing a Ph.D. in Economics at the University of California, Berkeley.



Badger Herald

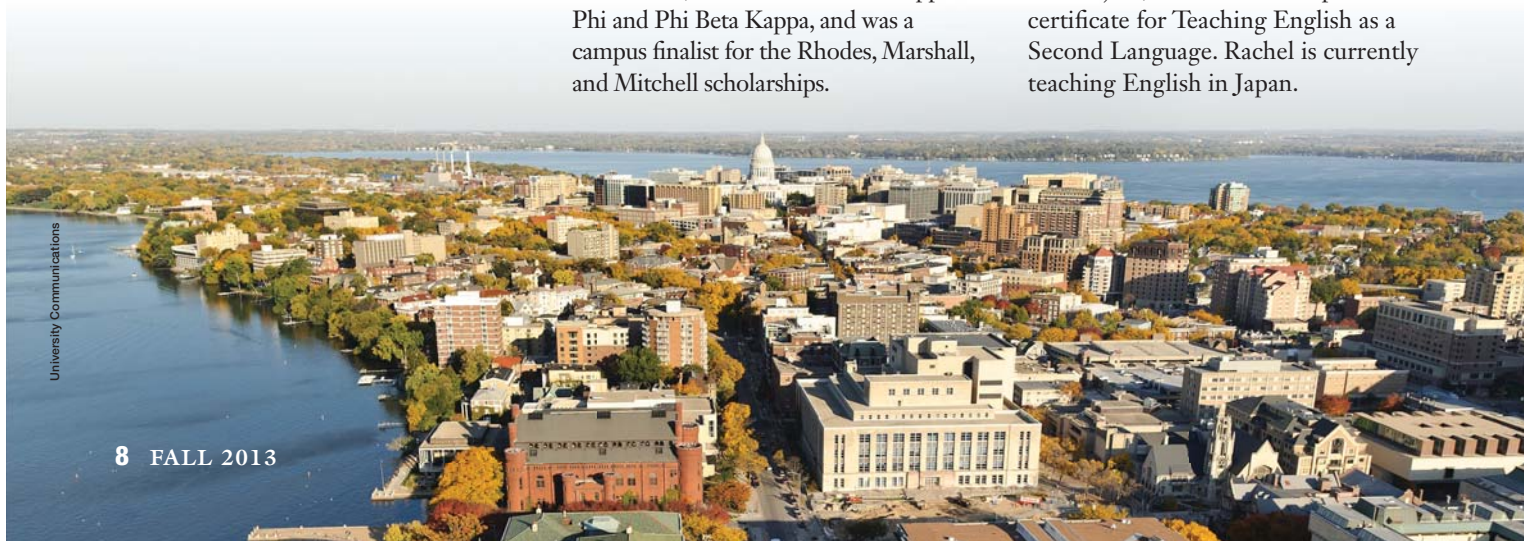
Elise Swanson
B.A.'13, English and Political Science; Menomonie, Wis.

Elise has researched the experiences of first-generation college students with the Writing Center programs, and her senior thesis research focused on the construction of identity in refugee camps. Elise has been a house fellow, an intern with state Sen. Lena Taylor, active in Bradley Learning Community, a Schools of Hope tutor, and a Writing Fellow. Elise, who is currently working for Teach for America in Arkansas, is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Beta Kappa, and was a campus finalist for the Rhodes, Marshall, and Mitchell scholarships.



Rachel Wang
B.A.'13, Linguistics and Psychology; Madison, Wis.

Rachel has conducted research on word-order usage in the Menominee language, and her senior thesis research investigated how native speakers expand their language rules to include new grammatical structures. Rachel has worked in the Infant Learning Lab, the Language and Cognitive Neuroscience Lab, and the Greater University Tutoring Service. In addition to her two majors, Rachel also completed the certificate for Teaching English as a Second Language. Rachel is currently teaching English in Japan.



Discover. Dream. Do.

Thanks to the sustaining generosity of an anonymous donor, we are able to offer students the annual opportunity to compete for the Leadership Trust Award by designing projects that will improve UW–Madison, the community and/or the student body. As students prepare their proposals, they identify needs in the community and discover their own leadership skills. They dream big, and rework their proposals to get them to manageable and sustainable scales. Students who receive an award further develop their leadership and mentoring skills while they implement their plan. For the 2013–14 academic year, the Faculty Honors Committee awarded AnaElise Beckman an in-state tuition scholarship and a supply budget of \$3,000.

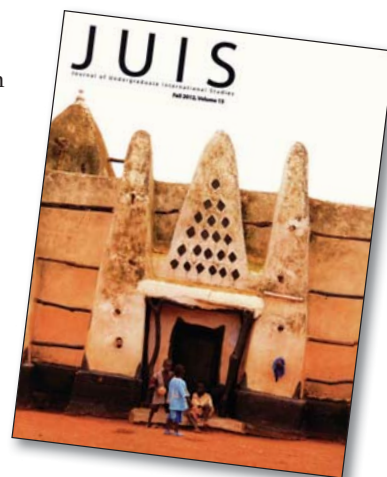
Beckman plans to create an after-school program in collaboration with the Lussier Community Education Center in Madison that will allow students at Jefferson Middle School to create their own sustainable project. During the “Discover and Develop” phase, students will be guided through a variety of group activities to help them identify who they are as individuals, leaders, and teammates, and to build their skills and confidence to work together as a team. During the “Dream” phase, students will identify a sustainable project that is important to them and their surrounding community, such as a mural, a community garden to encourage healthy eating and living, or an after-school tutoring program. In the third phase of the project, students will “Do” — they will implement and execute their project in their neighborhood.



University Communications

Gifts Sustain Student Publication

The *Journal of Undergraduate International Studies (JUIS)* celebrated 10 years at UW–Madison in spring 2013. David Coddon (B.A.'04, International Relations and Political Science) founded *JUIS* in 2003 with a Leadership Trust Award. Since then — thanks to the generous support of the Coddon Family Foundation — *JUIS* has grown into a highly competitive, nationally distributed journal that seeks to publish the best undergraduate work across the country related to international topics. *JUIS* has expanded distribution, improved its design, and attracts some of the best undergraduate research and writing from across the United States.



What's New with You?

Jane C. Hood (B.A.'65, History) completed her Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Michigan in 1980 and retired in 2011 from the University of New Mexico, where she was a faculty member for 26 years. She writes about qualitative methods and the school-to-prison pipeline.

Alysse Suzanne Rasmussen (B.A.'78, Linguistics and Spanish Language and Literature) received her Ph.D. in 2012 from Union Institute and University, Cincinnati, Ohio, in interdisciplinary studies with a specialization in applied linguistics. She is currently teaching American Sign Language and teacher education courses at Valencia College in Orlando, Fla.

Tom Rausch (B.A.'04, History and Political Science) and **Ingrid Stokstad Rausch** (B.A.'05, International Studies and Political Science) recently relocated to the San Francisco area after four years in Nairobi, Kenya. Tom is product manager for Labor

Link, a platform that directly engages workers, artisans and farmers around the world to help multinational brands increase transparency across global supply chains. Ingrid is on the leadership team of Mission Asset Fund, a San Francisco-based startup that helps financially excluded communities become visible, active, and successful participants in the financial mainstream.

Kirt Robbins (B.S.'06, Applied Mathematics, Engineering and Physics) participated in the Technical Development Program at Liberty Mutual and is currently working with Liberty Mutual as a senior software developer.

Alexander D. Hoppe (B.A.'13, Sociology) is a graduate student in the sociology department at the University of Pennsylvania, where he is pursuing his interest in theory that was fostered by an Honors course with Assistant Professor of Sociology Cameron Macdonald.

Featured Alum



Ben Meyer (B.S.'10, History and Political Science) is living his dream as a news and sports reporter, producer, and anchor with WJFW Newswatch 12, the NBC affiliate in Rhinelander, Wis. To learn more about what's new with Ben, visit our website <http://go.wisc.edu/HonorsAlum>.



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Encouraging Curiosity in the Classroom and Beyond

The Distinguished Honors Faculty Award recognizes and honors faculty members who have made outstanding contributions to the L&S Honors Program and the experiences of undergraduate students. This year, 18 faculty members were nominated, an indication of just how gifted the professors teaching honors students are as teachers and mentors. Three faculty members received the award this year.



Susan Bernstein

Professor of English, Gender and Women's Studies, and Jewish Studies: nominated by Lauren Miller and Gemma Wilson

"Professor Bernstein ushers freshman students into their first semester of college with wisdom and kindness, turning a classically frustrating time into a growth experience. Not only does Professor Bernstein treat

her students with respect, but she also gives them room to fall before teaching them to fly." — Wilson



Christopher Wells

Assistant Professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication: nominated by Abigail Becker, Julia Jacobson, Jordan Eisenpress, and Scott Memmel

"I loved his class, and I think it was my experience in that class with him that motivated me to become a journalism major. He was an incredible professor because he challenged and asked

a lot of his students, which is exactly what honors professors should be doing." — Jacobson



Janet Hyde

Professor of Psychology and Gender and Women's Studies: nominated by Samantha Anderson (B.S.'13, Psychology)

"Dr. Hyde is truly dedicated to being a supportive mentor to students pursuing honors theses in psychology. She is a spokesperson for what I believe to be one of the major purposes of the Honors Program at UW-

Madison: to prepare students to excel after college. She allows her honors students the independence they need to begin to outline their own journeys, and she provides a model for efficiency, success, and expertise in the world of psychological research." — Anderson

Staff Milestones

Welcome to our new associate director! In July, **Matt Kohlstedt** joined the Honors team as associate director of administrative services. Matt has a B.S. in Radio, Television, and Film from Northwestern University, an M.A. in American Studies from The George Washington University, and is completing his Ph.D. from The George Washington University.

Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler received the Inaugural Early Career Excellence in Undergraduate Advising Award. Way to go, Jennifer!

Pursuing Your Intellectual Curiosity

The Welton Honors Summer Sophomore Research Apprenticeship

Twenty-six undergraduates participated in the 21st year of the Welton Honors Summer Sophomore Research Apprenticeship program and workshops, thanks to the generous support of the Welton Family Foundation, the Brittingham Fund, and the Kemper Knapp Bequest. Their research experiences this summer spanned the physical and natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.



Wisconsin Institute for Discovery

Welton apprentices AnaElise Beckman (center) and Alexandra Cohn (right) were also Frontier Fellows at the Wisconsin Institute for Discovery where, along with Michael Zaikan (left), they collaborated with Professor David Baum on the Biobulb Project. The team is engineering a “living light bulb” with a chamber that houses light-producing bioluminescent and photosynthetic microbes in a closed ecosystem.

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