



UNC CHARLOTTE

Honors College Communiqué

Issue 6

December 2020

An architectural and historic wonder, St. Matthias Church in Budapest, Hungary, as viewed by honors students in March, 2020

Welcome from the Executive Director

My friends and colleagues, it has been a very long year. On March 8, 2020, I returned to the US with an honors class, City As Text™: International Edition, having spent spring break visiting the cities of Budapest and Vienna, the subject of the course's semester-long inquiry. I learned so much on the trip! (You can read more about it on page 9.) The professor and students — which included Albert, Crown, and Martin Scholars and many University Honors Program (UHP) students — took me places I wouldn't typically go when traveling abroad, pushing me beyond my comfort zone of academic conferences, art museums and foodie cuisine. I ate pizza three times in ten days. I went to a clock museum and a public bath that was swimsuit optional. I took buses and walked with our group, which used Google Maps, while I typically use a small, handheld paper map. It was exactly what honors should be: exploring beyond our boundaries, learning across cultures, creating community among ourselves, opening our minds, having fun.

We knew about the virus looming, and took precautions while we were there. But we had no idea what the week of our return to the US would be like. Hungary and Austria went to Level 3 just four days after our return. Some of us self-isolated; others went to work on the front lines in hospitals. We finished the course online. I never got to place honors and scholars medallions around the necks of our graduating seniors.

The Honors College staff, faculty, and students have done a remarkable job re-imagining our fall semester and the spring semester ahead. We have some hybrid courses for the incoming honors freshmen and students required to be on campus, and plenty of online courses and experiences. The annual UHP City As Text™ went off as it always does, on a Friday, in Uptown Charlotte in October, but revamped to avoid indoor spaces and with a City As Text™ at home option. The Honors Council created COVID-19 exceptions for honors requirements, as needed. I learned Zoom and Google Meets. We introduced virtual networking events for our Black and Latinx honors students. We put out this annual *Communiqué*.
(Thanks, Molly!)

I like to think that we are doing COVID-19 the way we did Budapest and Vienna, the honors way: exploring beyond our boundaries, learning across cultures, creating community among ourselves, opening our minds, having fun. Well, maybe not as much fun. But some! Be well -- Malin

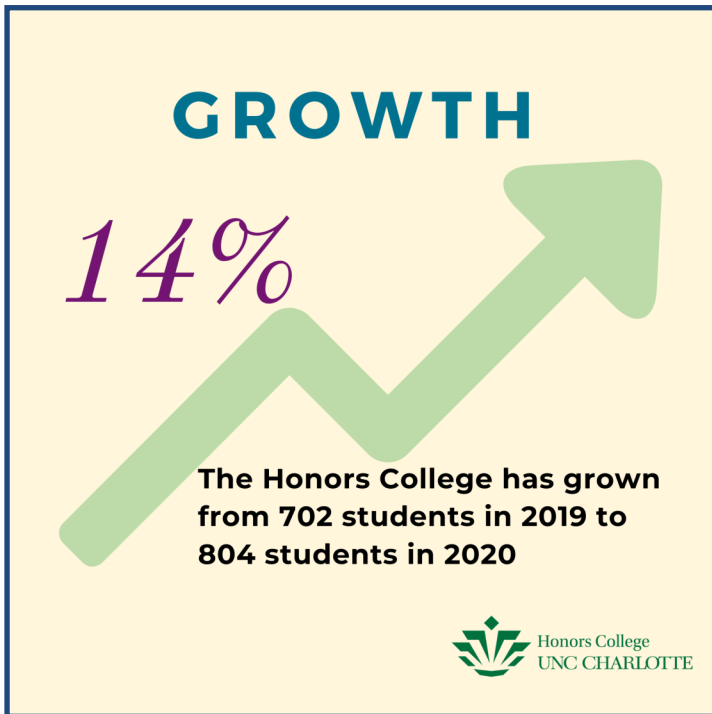


Dr. Malin Pereira

Executive Director | Professor of English



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Executive Director Malin Pereira points out honors students' achievements to our new Chancellor, Sharon L. Gaber, during her tour of Levine Hall and the Honors College this summer.

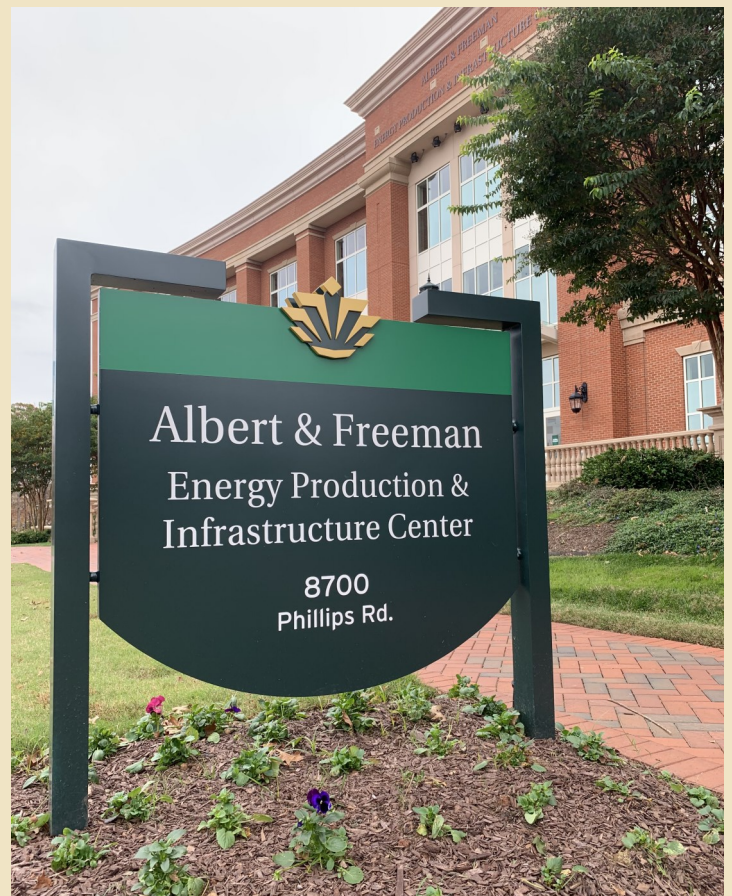


EPIC Building Named

On Wednesday, October 7, 2020, UNC Charlotte named the EPIC building the *Albert & Freeman Energy Production and Infrastructure Center* in honor of alumni Craig and Darla Albert. The Alberts have shown great leadership and support for the Honors College, the William States Lee College of Engineering, and the UNC Charlotte community as a whole. Through their generosity, the Alberts have endowed the Albert Engineering Leadership Scholars Program and the Freeman Scholarship, both administered through the Honors College.

The Albert Engineering Leadership Scholars Program supports students who have demonstrated excellence in academic achievement, leadership, and community engagement. Students receive a full-ride, four-year scholarship, as well as additional funding, academic support, and professional guidance. Albert Scholars are encouraged and given the resources to achieve their educational and professional goals.

The Freeman Scholarship provides scholarship support to first-year students in any major entering one of the multi-year honors programs in the Honors College. Recipients are eligible for a federal Pell Grant or other federal grant aid programs. The scholarship places emphasis on academic commitment.



The effects of the Alberts's generosity are manifold:

- The prestige the Albert Engineering Leadership Scholars Program brings to UNC Charlotte
- The financial assistance provided to highly deserving Freeman Scholars and their families
- The University's heightened ability to recruit high-achieving engineering students with great potential to become engineering leaders
- The impact the Albert and Freeman Scholars will have in the world and upon the communities they touch

Endowment of the Albert and Freeman Scholarships

The endowment of the Albert Engineering Leadership Scholars Program and the Freeman Scholarship has ensured that generations of students will receive the resources and support they need to excel both inside and outside the classroom.



This gift is made possible by the dedication and generosity of Craig and Darla Albert, who are committed to providing students with a great education as well as opportunities to develop into and emerge as influential community and industry leaders. Craig Albert graduated from UNC Charlotte in 1985 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and currently serves as the President and Chief Operating Officer of Bechtel Group, Inc.. Darla Albert is also a UNC Charlotte alumna, having graduated in 1983 with a degree in Business Administration.



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“Craig and Darla have this vision to provide the fundamentals to encourage students who are very self-motivated and have a deep inner drive to become who they want to be and follow the path that they’d always dreamed of.”

~Janessa Schwallie (Albert Scholar, University Honors and Engineering Honors)

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The Albert Scholars Program was established in 2014, and the Freeman Scholarship was established in 2019. Twelve current students are Albert Scholars, as well as four alumni. The Freeman Scholarship currently supports six students. Both the Albert Engineering Leadership Scholars Program and the Freeman Scholarship are having a transformational impact on the students they support. These scholars are highly motivated and exhibit intellectual curiosity, community mindedness, and a capacity for reflection, leadership, and growth. Albert Scholars are members of the University Honors Program (UHP), the largest honors program at UNC Charlotte. This interdisciplinary program helps Albert Scholars think across multiple disciplines and cultivate relationships, allowing the students to welcome and develop new ideas as leaders.

The Honors College thanks Craig and Darla Albert for supporting the next generation of leaders.



Charles B. Rangel

International Affairs Program

Betsabe Rojas • Martin Scholar • Business Honors Program

This summer, I participated in the Charles B. Rangel Summer Enrichment Program at Howard University with the U.S. Department of State. It is a six-week summer program designed to provide undergraduate students with a deeper appreciation of current international affairs trends. It also provides a greater understanding of career opportunities in international affairs. I was selected as 1 of the 15 Rangel scholars chosen from more than 1,200 applicants. I had the privilege of being the only sophomore and the first UNC Charlotte student selected as part of the 2020 cohort.

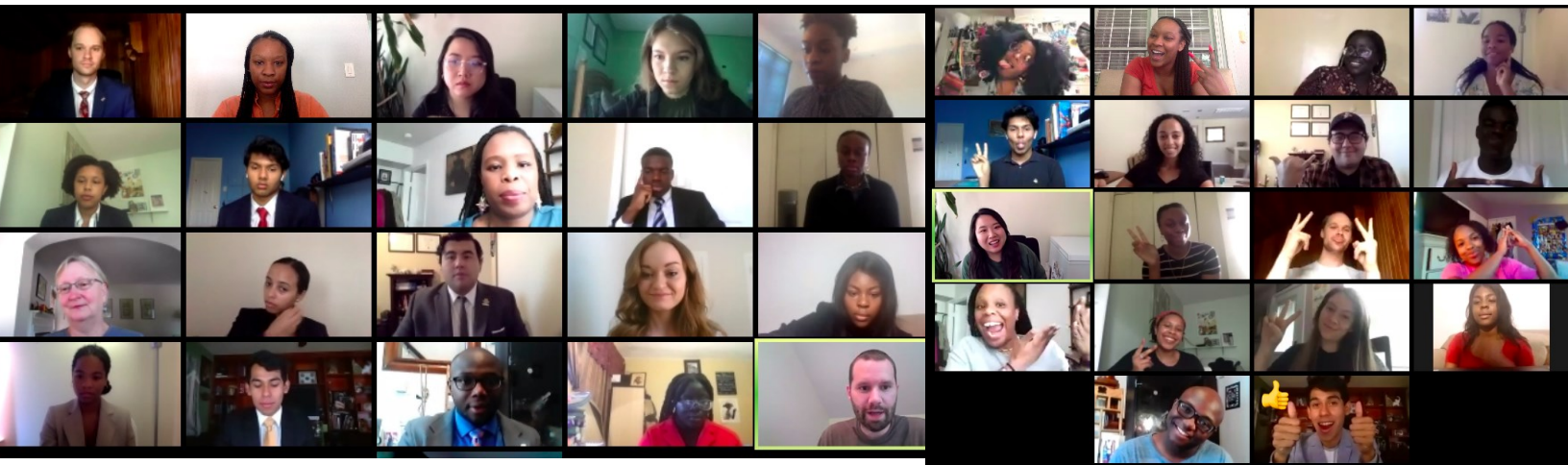
Throughout the summer, we participated in a diplomatic writing seminar with Ambassador Charles Ray, who gave us a diverse perspective on U.S. diplomacy. We all learned how to write diplomatically during this seminar and heard many of Ambassador Ray's foreign service experiences. We drafted policies, talking points, and GRE essays in preparation for our future career paths. We also took two separate courses: History of U.S. Foreign Relations and Political Economy. We researched several nations' foreign, monetary, and domestic policies. Both courses offered insight on the various layers of U.S. foreign policy, including its impact on the global community.

I was also able to meet and speak with members of Congress, representatives from the intelligence community, U.S. diplomats, and many more policymakers. I received advice from Rangel and Pickering fellows on their experience in the foreign service and graduate school. Although the program was virtual, my fellow scholars and I created a strong bond through our virtual study and game nights. I was grateful I could learn not only from our speakers but also from other scholars who were ready to give me advice on internship and scholarship opportunities.



"In May, I did not visualize myself pursuing a career in international affairs. Now, a few months later, I intern for a commercial diplomacy firm and have been accepted as a foreign service intern in Washington D.C. for the summer of 2021, as well as at a U.S. embassy abroad for the summer of 2022. I will apply to both the Rangel and Pickering Fellowships next year as I pursue a career to become a U.S. diplomat."

~ Betsabe Rojas



John M. Belk Impact Fellowship

Phoebe Pruneda

Martin Scholar • University Honors Program

Out of the 250 applicants, 13 other fellows and I were selected for the inaugural cohort of the John M. Belk Impact Fellowship. This fellowship is partnered with the John M. Belk Endowment, the Hunt Institute, and several other North Carolina organizations. It focuses on providing a hands-on experience for students who are interested in education, philanthropy and training to become social impact leaders.

I was hand-picked by The John M. Belk Endowment (JMBE) to serve as their impact fellow. Working with them has been such an honor, and I've loved every minute of it. I've spent quality time learning more about John M. Belk, as well as the Endowment, their wonderful staff, and the mission of our partner organizations.

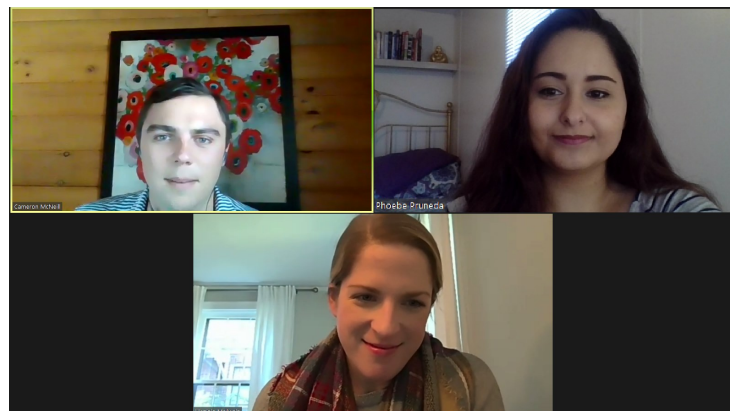
Currently, I am analyzing the Endowment's social media and comparing it against both our "competitor" and partner organizations. I'm in the process of putting together a social media report to present to the staff at the JMBE, and then creating a social media plan to then implement. In the near future, I will be working on helping to create and redo the JMBE website, as well as sitting in on some philanthropic meetings and trying my hand with grant writing procedures.



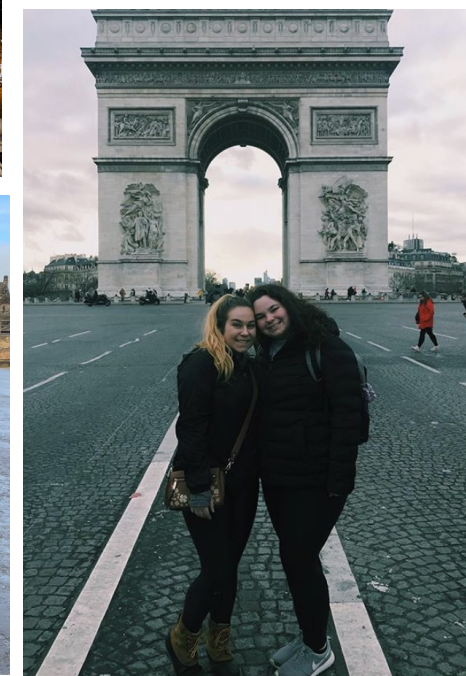
When I am not working with social media, I am researching different organizations and their representatives to create briefs. These briefs give the JMBE staff a quick, concise snapshot of who they'll be meeting with, their organization's goals, and what commonalities they may share. I am not a North Carolina native, so getting to research these organizations has been enriching to learn more about the state and our educational pursuits.

In the short time I've been with the JMBE, I've learned so much, met amazing people, and have been exposed to so many great opportunities. When discussing my future career goals with M.C. Belk Pilon, the President and Board Chair of the Endowment, she took note of what I was saying. Within a week, she had me scheduled to meet someone within the field I want to pursue post-graduation. When I expressed to the team I wanted to learn about philanthropy and non-profit work, the team wanted to get me involved in reviewing some of their grant processes, as well as talking with a team member who has worked both sides of the field. When I said I wanted to personally learn more about stocks and bonds, the financial team said they'd host "Finance 101" classes for me.

Being a part of the JMBE team has been such an honor. While I dearly value the things I am learning, I appreciate the JMBE team so much more. When this program began, they took every opportunity to make me feel welcome and involved. They even assisted me through a personal issue when my dad got sick. They've been so supportive of my needs, my dreams, and my future career goals. I'm so excited to see where the next 8 months will lead me, both with their support, and with my professional development.



Study Abroad Adventures



City as Text™: International Edition

Budapest, Hungary & Vienna, Austria
February 29 - March 7, 2020

Each year, first-year University Honors Program students embark on a City as Text™ experience in their honors Colloquium class. This event encourages students to engage with their environment and actively learn through observational research. This year, City as Text™: International Edition provided all students in the Honors College an opportunity to embrace an international landscape as their classroom.



City as Text™: International Edition was taught as an honors seminar topic course by Honors Faculty member Abigail Moore. Students first researched and prepared during class before travelling to Budapest, Hungary, during spring break. They were challenged to critically engage with the landscape, through experience and observation, using an interdisciplinary lens. Students were also able to construct their own cross-cultural conception of the history, socialization, and culture of Budapest, Hungary, and Vienna, Austria. This site-specific approach moves learning outside of the classroom and places students within international contexts in order to broaden perspectives and understanding.

Students were urged to push beyond their comfort zone and learn from each other. The group stayed in hostels while abroad, providing a close proximity conducive to community building.

While in Budapest, the group explored the Hungarian Parliament, Buda Castle, along with several historically and culturally rich sites such as Heroes' Square, St. Stephen's Basilica, and the Great Market Hall. They relaxed in the public Hungarian Baths and enjoyed a Danube River cruise. After taking a train to Vienna, the group visited Belvedere Castle and the Wein Clock Museum. Students were encouraged to explore and perform observational research throughout their time abroad to expand their perspectives and engage in critical discourse surrounding the cities.



Honors Accolades

Alex Gomes

Flavius/Lucius/Trebonius in *The Corona Caesar*

Martin Scholar • Arts + Architecture Honors Program

“My experience with The Corona Caesar production was challenging but so rewarding. With the pandemic and rising cases happening, UNC Charlotte’s Theatre department decided to turn this production into a podcast series. This was my first time doing any real voice work, but guidance from director Andrew Hartley, voice coach Chris Berry, and dramaturg Megan St. Amand helped me develop the identity and ‘voices’ of the three characters I played. While I ultimately aspire to work within arts administration, it felt good to express myself as a creative, and I’ll take with me valuable knowledge and wisdom. Tune in! “



Annie Burchill

Charlotte Racial Justice Consortium Fellows Programs

Martin Scholar • Religious Studies Honors

“The Charlotte Racial Justice Consortium (CRJC) Fellows Program includes a handful of students from five different universities in the Charlotte area: Johnson C. Smith, Queens, CPCC, Johnson and Wales, and UNC Charlotte. Our primary goal is to examine the history of racial harm in Charlotte and create a more open and honest conversation about race through personal reflection, group healing, and academic research into our own institutions. It’s an incredible opportunity that I am totally thrilled to be part of; the other fellows are some amazing people! I can’t wait to continue working with them this semester and next so we can hopefully make a positive impact on Charlotte’s social justice initiatives.”



Adonis Abdullah & Samra Kanwal
Charlotte Inno’s 25 Under 25 List

Charlotte Inno’s “25 Under 25 List” highlights the best and brightest young tech leaders and notable entrepreneurs.

Abdullah, a Crown and Belk Scholar in UHP and the Business Honors Program (BHP), founded Hot Route Analytics, a sports analytics firm focused on university athletics.

Kanwal, a Levine Scholar also in BHP, founded Volunto, a startup that digitally connects nonprofits in need with qualified volunteers.



Chloe Nicola | Millennium Fellowship Campus Co-Director
Crown Scholar • University Honors Program

The Millennium Fellowship encourages students to pursue a project to tackle one or more of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). This year, out of 15,000 applicants, 1,000 students at 80 campuses across the world were accepted into the fellowship. UNC Charlotte applied with a cohort of 16 students, and all were accepted! Chloe is a campus co-director along with Brooke Ramos. Her cohort decided to pursue 4 separate projects, all aimed towards different DSGs. The project she is involved with is called "Cloud of Witnesses" and addresses SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing and SDG 4 Quality Education. Her teammates and she have developed a podcast and website to share factual information, as well as opinion based discussions on many topics related to health. One of the podcasts featured Dr. Erica Lennon of CAPS (Counseling & Psychological Services) to discuss students' mental health, while another discussed academic strategies for an online semester with UNC Charlotte students. Other projects address hunger in the Charlotte area, climate action, and girls' empowerment. Follow us: @unccmillenniumfellows @cloudofwitnessesclt



Departmental Honors

Honors in Communication Studies



Meghan Hendry, the most recent graduate with Honors in Communication Studies, defended her thesis over Zoom in April 2020.

Honors in Communication Studies has seen continuous growth and currently supports its largest cohort to date. The growth of this honors program is a testament to the hard work of so many faculty who supported the honors students in their pursuit of academic excellence. In the coming year, our honors students will embark on exploring a wide range of topics of interest: the effect of American capitalism on the black community; the impact of rhetoric and persuasion on American gun control debate; accelerating trends of remote work and the changing meaning of work; American media/political polarization; Western imperialism and saviorism; and identity politics during the Obama administration. Dr. Min Jiang is the interim director this year while Dr. Ashli Stokes is on her sabbatical and Fulbright Fellowship.

Honors in English

Honors in English, like other honors programs, offers its members the opportunity to conclude their degree with advanced coursework and the completion of a capstone project or thesis. These students must then present their research or attempt to publish. Three of these outstanding students (pictured at right), Katie Baker, Sarah Whichello, and Kylee Kinnaird, presented on a panel about gothic literature and film at the North Carolina Honors Association annual conference at NC State. These students won third place for their session presentation titled “The Gothic: Reframing Fear as an Inquiry into Social Narratives.”



Students who graduate with Honors in English earn this medallion, pictured above, to wear proudly at graduation.

Business Honors Program

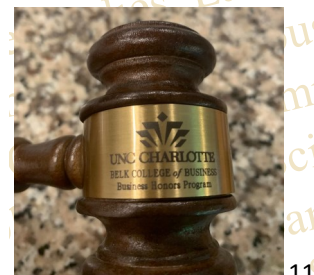
Over 150 students belong to the Business Honors Program (BHP). These students are dedicated to the core values of the program: academic merit, integrity, respect, service above self, and honor. BHP members are committed to the highest principles of professionalism and excellent ethical standards.

Students in BHP continue to excel and exceed expectations and are recognized for this through student shout-outs and awards such as the President’s Gavel, Mentor of the Year, and the Jack Hogue award for representing the spirit of BHP.

Through professional meetings, service, community building, and events like mock interviews and professional workshops, BHP students are prepared to be the next generation of business leaders.



BHP distributed “Senior Boxes” to graduating seniors in Spring 2020. As the pandemic prevented the program from celebrating together, the seniors were congratulated virtually and commemorated with “bling”.





University Honors Program

Danika Ng

Class of Fall 2020 • Biology • University Honors & Biology Honors

What started off as a long distance dream towards becoming a physician, gradually became a reality when I joined the UHP family at UNC Charlotte, creating lifelong friendships and molding me into a leader that I never expected I could be. UHP exceeded my expectations by challenging my privilege as a cis, non-Black womxn, educating me on social justice issues, and demonstrated the need for more community service with the underserved community. UHP exposed me to community partners, like Crisis Assistance Ministry, the Jeff Gordon Children’s Hospital, and Care Ring Low Cost Clinic.

Through UHP, I gained confidence within myself to pursue larger opportunities. Within a year of joining, I became the president of Delta Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc. Pi chapter; I received my certification as a nurse aide; I became one of 20 students accepted into Honors in Biological Sciences, where I was fortunate enough to conduct my very own research in the lab.



My research focuses on the regenerative qualities of sea anemones, *Nematostella vectensis*, because even when these animals are bisected or amputated, they are capable of fully regenerating. Over the course of my time within the program, I conducted experiments to determine if ethanol, streptomycin (an ototoxic antibiotic), or ultraviolet radiation improved or worsened the rate of regeneration.

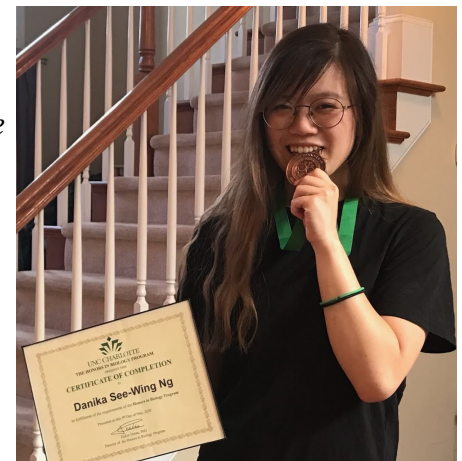
This research is important because the hairs of *Nematostella* are similar to that of human hairs inside the ear and, if the results prove successful, further research could be translated into possible treatment to reverse deafness in humans with hearing loss.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, I felt helpless by being at home, not being able to serve my community, so I decided to utilize my certification as a nurse aid and harness my passion to serve. My educational and honors experiences have empowered me to take action and helped me recognize the difference I can make in my community and the world.

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Before I even knew it, UHP saw something in me that I was not able to see at the time; they saw potential. I sincerely thank the University Honors Program because it was a necessary part of my journey towards medical school, honing my weaknesses into strengths. It also educated me on the importance of using my privilege to speak out and uplift the voices of those who may not be able to speak for themselves.

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Arts + Architecture Honors Program

Dante Gil Rivas

Class of Spring 2021

Architecture • Martin Scholar

Arts + Architecture Honors



I am a Martin Scholar, a research assistant for the Integrated Design Research Lab (IDRL) at the School of Architecture (SoA), and the President for the United States Green Building Council, UNC Charlotte Chapter (USGBC).

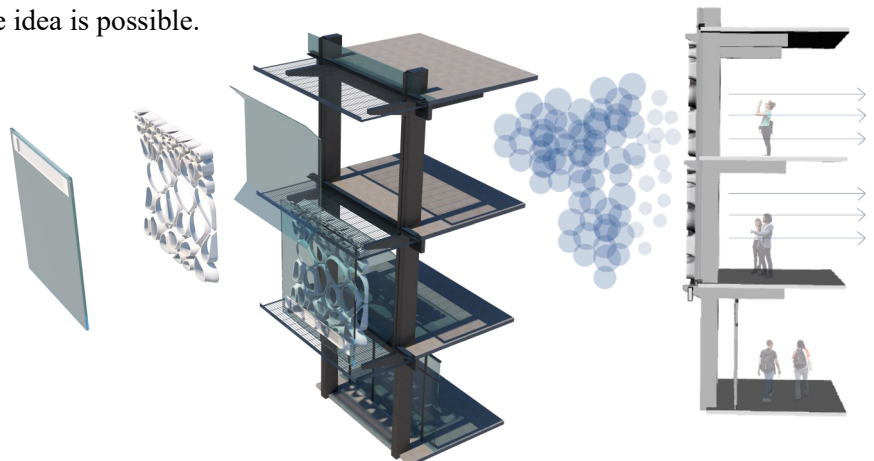
I have been a part of USGBC for three years. I went from being the graphic designer/event coordinator to Vice President to now the organization's president. I find ways to engage students with sustainability ideas ranging from community service to having architects give green-certified projects tours.

I studied abroad in Tokyo, Japan, last summer on a faculty-led program. As part of the program I designed a project on either side of Omotesando, located in Shibuya and Minato area, to address one or several contemporary urban and societal challenges Japan faces. The challenges included housing, waste, work-life balance, and more. While in Japan, I did personally travel to Seoul, South Korea. After traveling to two different countries and seeing the different cultures, I fell in love with seeing the world. I have applied for another faculty-led program abroad to Rome, Italy, for an entire semester.

Being part of the Arts + Architecture Program (AAHP) has allowed me to connect with my classmates in the College of Arts + Architecture (CoAA). AAHP offers courses that regardless of which artistic background you are from— whether art, dance, music, theatre, or architecture— all our creative minds can collaborate in an academic setting. The honors program offers unique classes, like *Churches and Temples as Neuro-Performance Spaces*. In this class we learned how the brain reacts in religious spaces. Another class was *Migrations Across the Mediterranean Sea and Beyond*, where we learned about the dangerous voyage immigrants in Northern Africa faced to get to Italy. AAHP broadens your knowledge holistically beyond your major.

As a research assistant for the IDRL, I am working on a project that has received a \$50k grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) I-Corps program. The program was taught by the Upstate New York team at Cornell University. Part of the program was to see if the research had commercial viability.

While in AAHP, I am working on my honors thesis which is to use carbon dioxide (CO₂) as a renewable energy source using facades. If facades could act like plants and absorb CO₂ while producing energy, it is a win-win situation. Easier said than done, but I hope to learn through my thesis if the idea is possible.



The Air Depolluting Facade has been developed at the Integrated Design Research Lab in the School of Architecture sponsored by the National Science Foundation; the researchers include Chengde Wu, Dante Gil Rivas, Ketki Bapat, and lab director Kyoung Hee Kim.



Business Honors Program

Adonis Abdullah

Class of Spring 2021 • Economics & Business Analytics
University and Business Honors • Crown and Belk Scholar

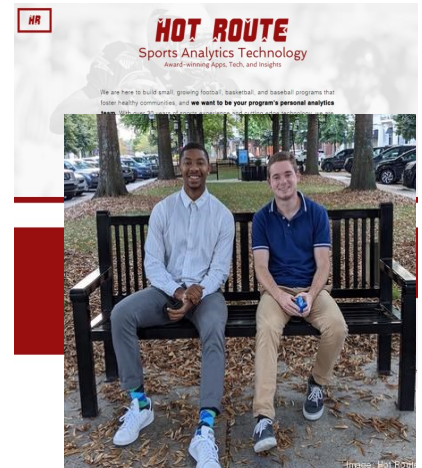
I am in my senior year at UNC Charlotte, and I have had the privilege of spending all four years as both a Belk Scholar and Crown Scholar. Similarly, I have been a member of the Business Honors Program (BHP) in addition to pursuing University Honors. I am double majoring in Economics and Business Analytics, and I am also entering the M.S. in Data Science and Business Analytics program at UNC Charlotte.

Originally, my home was Mooresville, NC, and it has been a fun process transitioning to my true home in Charlotte. My years at UNC Charlotte have taught me who I want to be as a person; I've learned that my purpose is to simply make people smile. I believe I can accomplish this through entrepreneurship and eventually economic development in developing nations. I am happy that my journey has begun at Niner Nation, and I'm excited to see where else this journey goes.

During the past two summers, I had the opportunity to intern on Wall Street with the bank, RBC Capital Markets. My first summer was as a Technology Summer Analyst where I got to live in New York City, the greatest city in the world. It was a surreal experience where I got to experience true independence, friendship, and exploration. The second summer I was a Quantitative Trading and Research analyst where I (virtually) had hands-on experience with the stock market and being able to live the true Wall Street experience. As I reflect, I truly do not think I would have had this opportunity if it weren't for BHP. Their dedication to professional development via their professional meetings, mock interviews, site visits, and many more experiences ultimately gave me the tools I need to get my foot in the door.

Similarly, BHP has helped teach me the skills I have needed to launch my start-up company, Hot Route Analytics. It is a sports analytics company that seeks to unite college communities through power data and competition. Although the company is new, I have high hopes for it as we have already been able to partner with multiple universities and gain regional acclaim. The most fun component of Hot Route so far has been my ability to collaborate with my BHP peers on this project. There are many great minds who all bring different perspectives, and having a group of highly intelligent and motivated peers to lean on has been such a luxury. Again, I must admit that I do not think my start-up would have expanded beyond an idea if it weren't for my peers who have helped, challenged, and encouraged me.

BHP playing such an instrumental role in my life should not be a surprise to me. I joined BHP because I wanted to be surrounded by highly motivated students who would push me to be the best version of myself. This program has, what I believe are, the best business students in the city of Charlotte, and it has been a true privilege to be a part of that for four years.



“ Looking back on my college years there are many memories I will not forget anytime soon from BHP: getting to debate in class with Sam, being introduced to a chief executive of Truist Bank, riding up to Black Mountain for our retreat, and seeing Dr. Amato's big, bright Chuck Taylors. This program has been one of the highlights of my four years, and I look forward to seeing how the program makes an impact on students beyond me. ”

Alumni Spotlight

Amy Hernandez '19

University Honors Program English Honors



My interest in Korea started during my high school years, but my move to Korea was not an easy decision. In the beginning, it was merely a dream and pleasant thought. However, as I continued to learn about their culture and language, my passion for Korea only increased. As with many college students, my end-goal changed several times throughout my time at UNC Charlotte. Thankfully, my chosen majors gave me the time and space to choose something I would enjoy. I value my emotional well-being above all, and so this factor played a significant role in my decision. Some of the things that most attracted my attention to Korea are their collectivistic social structure and language. After studying, traveling to England, and continuously learning about Korea for almost seven years, I was inevitably on my way.

I am currently living in Bupyeong, Incheon, one of Korea's major cities. Incheon is home to Korea's international airport. Less than an hour away from Seoul, Incheon is a great location if you want access to transportation systems across the country. In addition to this, using the subway and bus systems is simple and straightforward, making it easy to travel, even as a foreigner. I chose Incheon because it is a large city, but not as populated as Seoul. I wanted to visit Seoul, but also place some distance between myself and the capital. There are more accommodations made for foreigners in Seoul because of its popularity with tourists, and I wanted a slightly more challenging environment. Every day is an adventure because of the numerous cute coffee shops and unique small businesses. Since my first day in the country, Koreans have been nothing but kind and patient. I may be oceans away from home, but my positive daily interactions help me cope with the cultural shock and occasional homesickness.

In Korea, I teach English as a second language in a private school or a hagwon (학원).

My students vary in age from first graders to middle schoolers. So far, I have taught both online and in-class. COVID-19 has altered all of our lives, and education in Korea has been no exception. However, after taking numerous precautions, schools have continued to ensure Korean children do not fall behind. There is a high value for education in South Korea, meaning that students spend a significant amount of time at school and self-studying starting from elementary school. I am proud of my students and my position as a teacher. The thought of my positive impact on their futures is satisfying. I am awed by their passion and dedication, even in these uncertain times. Their curiosity towards me as a foreigner never fails to bring a smile to my face. Sometimes the language barrier creates the funniest moments, helping increase our attachment.



“

My honors experience at UNC Charlotte was essential for my journey to Korea. The time spent with the program equipped me with knowledge, valuable character traits such as perseverance and empathy, and a community. The University Honors Program encouraged my interest to live abroad through exposure to a variety of environments and social issues. An honors student must seek to broaden their perspectives, something the City as Text™ event and study abroad courses critically emphasized. I had the opportunity to meet wonderful friends and professors who supported me throughout my college years, as well as through the long process of applying to work in South Korea. The honors experience is truly invaluable, giving its students an empathetic and tolerant perspective.

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Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Lydia Light

Director of Honors in Anthropology

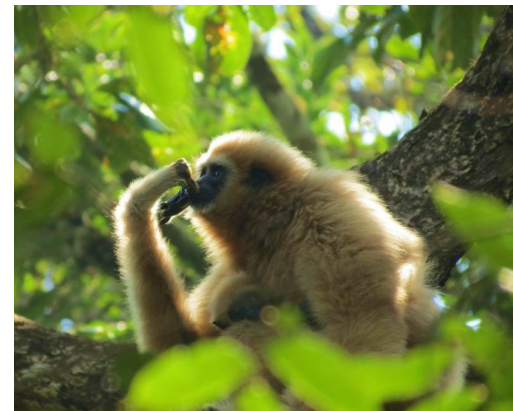


Educational Background

I went to the University of Miami for my undergraduate degree, but at the time, I expected I would pursue a career in film and television. My first major was Motion Pictures and my second major was Anthropology, leading to a Bachelor's of Science in Communications. After graduating, I spent six years working in Hollywood as an assistant editor for reality-based television programming, working on shows such as *Deadliest Catch* and *Biker Build-Off*. It was fun, but I knew I needed something more satisfying. I had spent my last semester in my undergraduate program serving as a teaching assistant for my biological anthropology professor and I loved it! So, I decided to pursue a PhD in anthropology from the University of Texas at San Antonio and study wild primates. I combined my love of primatology with my previous experience as a youth exchange student in Thailand and I conducted my dissertation project on wild white-handed gibbons living in a poor-quality habitat in western Thailand. After I completed my dissertation, I continued to return to this field site and plan to do so for the duration of my research career.

What is your favorite part about directing Honors in Anthropology?

I truly enjoy guiding students through the process of developing a project and conducting the research. It is a gift to be able to work with our most dedicated students. My faculty colleagues are not as directly involved in the program as a whole, so it is also a privilege to have the opportunity to work with them when they serve as an honors student's committee chair. We have a small faculty, so this helps me develop stronger relationships with my colleagues while celebrating the successes of our students. One of the ways in which the Anthropology Honors program has developed since I took over as Director in 2017 is that we now support students who are focused on a more applied version of anthropology. For these "applied track" students, their capstone projects typically involve working with an outside organization to help address a problem using anthropological knowledge and techniques.

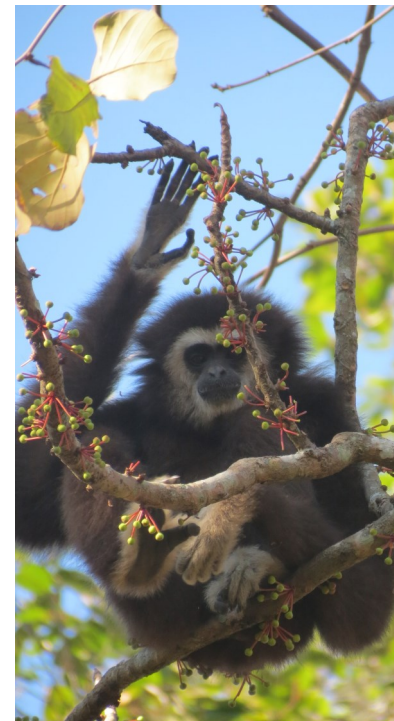


What has your research experience been like?

I received a Fulbright U.S. Student Researcher award for my dissertation work and this truly opened so many doors for me. Not only did this award allow me to start my dissertation research and lead to receiving a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, it also connected me with a huge network of like-minded scholars and educators. My research field site is at the Khao Nang Rum Wildlife Research Center in the Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary in Uthai Thani province in western Thailand. It is a remote site, with only seasonally-reliable solar power and bucket-over-the-head showers. I speak Thai and I am not sure I would have been able to conduct research here without that skill.

How have you managed work-life balance and staying connected as we've transitioned online?

Hahaha. First, I'll start by changing that to "work-life management" or even "work-life juggling." It is impossible to find a balance right now. I have two grade-school kids who learn remotely, so in the mornings, I help the first-grader manage her Zoom meetings and Canvas lessons while trying to keep the seventh-grader focused on his daily schedule. Then around noon, I switch into "professor mode" and my husband takes over with the kid-management. On most nights, I work up until we all go to sleep, and we are all night-owls, so that is usually very late! The kids and the dogs are constantly passing through my recorded lectures and Zoom meetings and I have made the decision to not apologize for this or try to dismiss it, because this is the reality we are all in right now. It is tiring and challenging, but I try to find the positives in the situation. I have also had an opportunity to spend a lot of time with my family and my many animals, something I have always felt I wasn't doing enough during the "Before Times." And strangely, now that video calls are normalized, I feel that I am having more meaningful meetings with students. I have put most of my research activities on hold, but in the meantime, I have more than enough work to keep me busy here at home.





Honors Faculty Reappointed!

College	Name	Title	Department
COAA	Robert Campbell	Associate Professor	Art & Art History
CLAS	Jacqueline Chattopadhyay	Associate Professor	Political Science & Public Administration
CLAS	Gang Chen	Associate Professor	Geography & Earth Sciences
CLAS	Sandra Clinton	Research Asst. Professor	Geography & Earth Sciences
CLAS	Daniela Dal Pra	Teaching Professor	Languages & Culture Studies
COAA	Jane Dalton	Associate Professor	Art & Art History
CLAS	Casey Davenport	Assistant Professor	Geography & Earth Sciences
CLAS	Eric Delmelle	Associate Professor	Geography & Earth Sciences
BCOB	Karen Ford-Eickhoff	Clinical Professor	Management
COAA	Heather Freeman	Professor	Art & Art History
CLAS	Laurie Garo	Senior Lecturer	Geography & Earth Sciences
COAA	Maja Godlewska	Associate Professor	Art & Art History
COAA	Aspen Hochhalter	Associate Professor	Art & Art History
COAA	Lisa Homann	Associate Professor	Art & Art History
CHHS	Joseph Marino	Associate Professor	Kinesiology
CLAS	Kirk Melnikoff	Professor	English
CLAS	Heather Perry	Associate Professor	History
CLAS	Celia Sinclair	Senior Lecturer	Religious Studies
COAA	Erik Waterkotte	Associate Professor	Art & Art History



Honors Council

The Honors Council is an elected committee of Honors Faculty that serves as the advisory body to the Executive Director of the Honors College and reports to the Faculty Executive Committee. The Council also serves to review and evaluate the honors curriculum, program proposals and revisions, and the Executive Director of the Honors College. The Honors Council continues to meet virtually this year, and has taken extra care to keep faculty, staff, and students safe and prepared for the unique challenges presented by online education and the corresponding accommodations.

Honors Council Members 2020 -2021

College of Arts + Architecture: Robert Campbell Alternate: Mark Pizzato
 College of Business: Karen Ford-Eickhoff Alternate: Carol Stivender
 College of Computing and Informatics: Jessica Schlueter..... Alternate: KR Subramanian
 College of Education: Cindy Gilson Alternate: Amy Good
 College of Engineering: Ron Smelser..... Alternate: Vacant
 College of Health and Human Services: Joseph Marino..... Alternate: Juliana Marino
 College of Liberal Arts & Sciences: Eddy Souffrant..... Alternate: Didier Dréau
 College of Liberal Arts & Sciences: Jose Batista Alternate: Sara Levens
 At-Large: Amanda Pipkin Alternate: Greg Mixon
 At-Large, University Honors Program: Abigail Moore Alternate: Jeannette Bennett
 Honors student representative: Courtney Pratt, Albert Scholar & University Honors Program
 Ex-officio non-voting members: Malin Pereira, Executive Director; Mindy Adnot, Assoc. Director



Faculty Fellows



Jeffrey Leak, Ph.D.

Dr. Leak has served the Honors College as the Martin Scholars Program Faculty Fellow since 2017, after joining the University in 1998. Dr. Leak is Director of American Studies and Professor of English and African American literature. He is also Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) to the NCAA .

Reuben Howden, Ph.D.

Dr. Howden has on the faculty since 2008 and currently serves as the Faculty Fellow for the Crown and Albert Scholars Programs in the Honors College. Dr. Howden is Professor of Kinesiology and Director of the Laboratory of Systems Physiology.



Christopher Cameron, Ph.D.

Dr. Cameron is the Faculty Fellow overseeing course proposals and faculty development for the Honors College. He is Professor of History and formerly directed History Honors. He was named a 2020 Fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies, one of 81 selected from nearly 1,200 applicants.

Student Interns



Bryson White

Class of 2022

Major:
Computer Science

Fun Fact: I enjoy playing video games, watching basketball, and spending time with my family in my free time.

Information Technology Intern

Website management and edits
Social media

Molly Unrath

Class of 2021

Majors:
Marketing Analytics
& English

Honors:
Business, English, and
University Honors

Fun Fact: This is my
cat, Pocky!



Marketing & Outreach Intern

Honors College Communique Editor-in-Chief
Weekly emails and student communication

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