

THE SQUIRREL SQUIRE

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1

FALL 2021

WELCOME WEEK 2021

LINDSEY GENATOSSIO

After fifteen long months of Zoom being the classroom, the Honors Program was finally able to welcome the Honors Class of 2025 to the Nest.

First-year Honors Program students were invited to move in on August 25th, one day before the rest of their class, to meet fellow Honors students, settle in, and enjoy their first week on campus.



Alongside the Honors Program staff, 14 Honors Mentors--sophomores, juniors, and seniors--volunteered to move in early to help with all the Welcome Week events.

Director of the Honors Program, Dr. Vanessa Diana, said, "We are so grateful to the 14 amazing Peer Mentors who volunteered to help welcome our first-year class. These student leaders represent the mission of the Honors Program--to support students on their road to success."

Later that day, Honors Program Administrative Assistant Gretchen Konrad and Professor Diana hosted a pizza party in University Hall.

Students were welcomed by President Linda Thompson; Dr. Azanda Seymour, Executive Director of the Center for Student Success and Engage-



ment; Dean Emily Todd, and Honors professors Dr. Daniel Price and Dr. Glen Brewster.

The pizza party gave first-year students the perfect opportunity to socialize with each other, as well as sit with Honors mentors to ask any questions about campus.

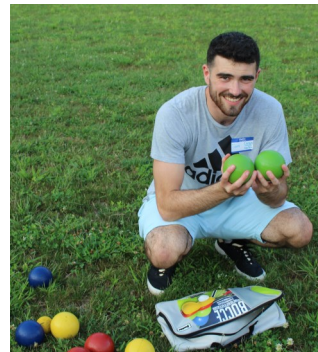


Honors mentor Kaitlyn Egan commented, "This week was especially impactful for me to watch as a sophomore, because we started college virtually...it made me so happy to see incoming students meeting each other in person."

After the pizza party, the Honors mentors brought all the students outside on the Campus Green to play a varie-

ty of lawn games, like corn hole, kick ball, basketball, and bocce.

The next morning, Honors mentors brought students from the globe to Stanley Park for an amazing brunch picnic, which consisted of more lawn games, tie dye stations, and lots of delicious food like bagels and fruit.



This year's first-year class is the biggest yet for the Honors Program, at 117 students. A class with big ambitions and goals.

All of the students had their own reasons for joining the Honors Program. Honors Program student Charis Ryan said, "The Honors Program is



a great way to meet people who are like-minded and care about school as much as me."

Making connections and getting involved on campus is important in the first semester. The new Honors Program students were excited to join clubs and intramural sports like Campus Activities Board, Circle K, and the Tell Me About Your Day club.

Another student, Elizabeth Blais-Bennett, said she joined the Honors Program because of "how the honors courses were described; they are all in small groups and I really like that."

In the end, Welcome Week was a huge success for the Honors Program. Vanessa Diana and Gretchen Konrad cannot wait to see what the future holds for this incoming class.



Lindsey Genatossio is a Class of 2023, Communication major from Millbury, MA.

HONORS PROGRAM WELCOME WEEK 2021 EVENTS



First-year Honors Program students and returning upper-class student mentors, pictured on front cover and above, break the ice during the Honors Program events held during Westfield State's "Welcome to the Nest" week for the Class of 2025. Honors Program events included a pizza party and brunch-in-the park at Stanley Park where students tie-dyed t-shirts and played lawn games while getting to know each other.

MEET THE FALL 2021 HONORS PROGRAM TEAM

LINDSEY GENATOSSIO

Dr. Vanessa Diana, Director, Honors Program

Diana has been with the Honors Program for 12 years and is also an English Professor at Westfield State. As the Director of the Honors Program, she guides students during their undergraduate careers. From onboarding first-year students and helping them choose classes for their first semester to helping juniors brainstorm ideas for their Senior Honors Project, she is involved on the front lines in every aspect of fostering student success. Her favorite part about the Honors Program is that she's able to cheer on students from the sidelines, watch students grow and develop their passions, interests, skills, and goals. Dr. Diana's advice to the Class of 2026 is to "embrace a spirit of discovery and openness as you embark on your college career."

Gretchen Konrad, Administrative Assistant of the Honors Program

Konrad has been part of the Honors Program for 13 years and of the Center of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (CURCA) since 2019. Her favorite part about being in the Honors Program

is witnessing students' growth as scholars and young adults during their time here at Westfield State. Konrad also loves working with her colleagues across campus that are connected to the Honors Program in myriad ways. Her advice to the class of 2026 is "embrace a spirit of curiosity and adventure, ask lots and lots of questions, practice your listening skills, take good care of yourselves, and enjoy this time in your lives."

Lindsey Genatossio, Squirrel Squire Intern

Genatossio is a junior majoring in Communication. She is *The Squirrel Squire* newsletter intern for the Fall 2021 semester. Her position consists of writing and editing multiple articles. Genatossio said, "This internship gave me an amazing opportunity to expand my writing and communication skills." She is also the Historian for Student Honors Advisory Council (SHAC). Genatossio's favorite part about being the newsletter intern is she has created best friends that she will have for the rest of her life by being involved. Her advice to the incoming class of 2026 is to "always be yourself."

Gwyneth Smith, Social Media Manager Intern

Smith is a sophomore majoring in Communication. As the Social Media Manager intern, Smith's responsibilities include managing the Honors Program Instagram and Facebook accounts. She is also the Publicist for SHAC and is involved in numerous extracurricular activities. Smith creates content and designs flyers to engage students in Honors Program social and academic events. Smith's favorite part about the position is "making each flyer; it is really fun working with different software to make the flyers visually appealing. It is also nice to have the freedom to create and design them how I want." Her advice to the Class of 2026 is to "focus on time management and balance between school, activities, work, and friends. It will be the key to success."

Thomas Mespelli, Honors Program Work Study

Mespelli is a senior majoring in Communication. He has been part of SHAC since his sophomore year, starting as the Historian and is now the President. As a Work Study student, Mespelli works closely with Konrad performing

various duties including stocking food and beverages, mail-room duties, special assignments, and other activities that make Mod Hall look as great as it does every day! Mespelli also oversees the Virtual Honors Center on PLATO, one of the school's applications. He says that "the work study position for the Honors Program has been incredibly rewarding. The hours are very flexible". His favorite part about his job is the connections that he makes with students and faculty. Mespelli advises the Class of 2026 to "take every opportunity to get involved with something bigger than yourself."

Abdullah Arshad, Honors Program Work Study

Arshad is a first-year student majoring in Computer Science. Mod Hall is his favorite place to be. In his work study position, he makes sure everything is all set for Konrad and Diana for meetings or events including stocking up snacks in the Honors Center, posting flyers, and making sure the mail is sent out to the right people. Arshad encourages students to work with the Honors Program because "you have a lot of support from Gretchen, and it has helped create a safe environment for me on campus." Arshad's favorite part about the job is that it helps him utilize his time with school assignments. His advice to the Class of 2026 is to "get involved on campus as much as possible."



The Fall 2021 Honors Program team enjoys a moment together in the sun. Thomas Mespelli, Abdullah Arshad, Gretchen Konrad, Vanessa Diana, Lindsey Genatossio, and Gwyneth Smith (l. to r.).

Lindsey Genatossio is a Class of 2023 Communication major from Millbury, MA.

NEW TO THE NEST - FIRST-YEAR PERSPECTIVES

LINDSEY GENATOSSIO



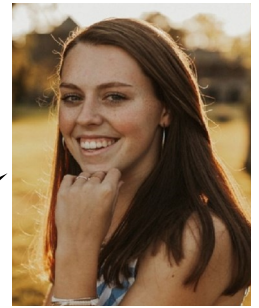
"I've been able to meet other honors students and make connections with people who I can look to when I need help in class, or just someone I can talk to!" - Christina Ferraro, Nursing



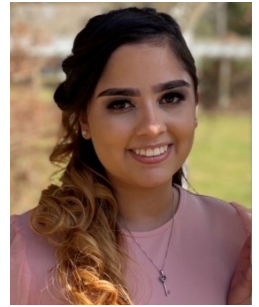
"The Honors Program has made me feel like I can really gain my footing in the first semester of college. I appreciate the people I have met through the welcome events and am lucky to have made many of them my friends." - Jamie Goodall, Psychology



"Honors students are able to live in a superb residence hall in their first year, all while enjoying hands-on, research-based curricula with a smaller, well-connected cohort of students willing to take on the challenge." - Daniel Currier, Accounting



"Being in the Honors Program has made me feel so much more welcome and involved on campus. I truly feel that I am part of a family here." - Alexis Pratt, Elementary Education



"Being surrounded by like-minded people has helped me stay on topic and focus even when it was difficult." - Rissa Ryan, Psychology



"It has really helped me to focus on school so I am better able to maintain my GPA and continue to be a part of this program." - Yirancis Rivera, Nursing

"The Honors Program allows me to connect with like-minded individuals in a smaller class. I definitely enjoy the shared connection, both academically and socially and try to participate in events when I can!" - Jason Brewster, Special Education



Get in touch with the Honors Program:

Email honors@westfield.ma.edu.

Follow the WSU Honors Facebook and Instagram accounts for updates on upcoming events!
Visit the Honors Program web page at <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/honors-program>



NORTHEAST REGIONAL HONORS COUNCIL CONFERENCE PHILADELPHIA-BOUND!

The Preamble to the Constitution focuses upon two fundamental concepts. The first is “We the People,” a reminder that the source of power in civil society is (or ought to be) derived from the governed. The second is “a more perfect Union,” an idea derived from the Enlightenment belief that human beings must continually strive for improvement, even though they may fall short of their aspira-

tions. **Stated another way, the People can accomplish far more in society by acting together for the common good.**

It is perhaps fitting that NRHC has returned to Philadelphia for its Annual Conference. We seek a reaffirmation of those principles as the nation attempts to rebuild disparaged and distressed institutions and relationships. Immersing our-

selves in Philadelphia’s past, present, and future beckons us to reevaluate what it means to be an American in the twenty-first century and to contemplate how our union can endure this current age of disruption.

Congratulations to the eleven students who will be presenting at the conference in April 2022. The names and presentation titles of participants are listed below.



Abdullah Arshad: “Diversity in College: Islamophobia on Campus”

Josselyn Donahue: “Disruption in the Cell Community & the Association Between TP53 Variants and Cancer”

Kaitlyn Egan: “The Future of Funding- How the COVID-19 Pandemic has Negatively Impacted Honors Program Funding”

Samantha Falcone: “Functional Morphology of the Feeding Apparatus in Chain Pickerel, *Esox niger*: Adaptations for Manipulation and Consumption of Large Live Prey”

Emily Frost: “Types, Tropes, and Tokens: Searching for Positive Feminist Examples in Mainstream Superheroine Roles”

Lindsey Genatossio: “The Squirrel Squire: Official Honors Program newsletter of Westfield State University celebrating Honors students and their experiences each semester”

Haley Kane: “Exploring Gender Differences in Service Organizations”

Carlos Lantigua Bari: “Diversity in College: Why English?”

Thomas Mespelli: “A reflection on four years of serving an Honors Program community. What are the needs of students and how can Honors Programs better meet those needs?”

Gwyneth Smith: “Honors Program Social Media Internship, a way to broaden communication to students”

Alexandra West: “The Satisfaction of Contraception in Today's Female University Students”

The Squire Squad

Student Intern - Fall 2021: Lindsey Genatossio

Student and Faculty Contributors: Madeline Borowski, Michaella Cesarini, Lindsey Genatossio, Carlie McIntyre, and Dr. Hui Michelle Zhang.

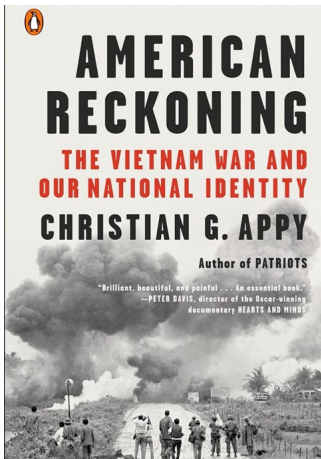
Staff Editors: Dr. Vanessa Diana, Gretchen Konrad, and Dr. Hillary Sackett-Taylor.

**Interested in being an intern
for *The Squirrel Squire*?
Contact the Honors Program
Director at
honors@westfield.ma.edu.**

HONORS COURSES IN REVIEW

THE U.S.-VIETNAM WAR ERA: MEDIA, MEMORY, LEGACY AN UPPER-LEVEL INTERDISCIPLINARY HONORS SEMINAR

LINDSEY GENATOSSIO



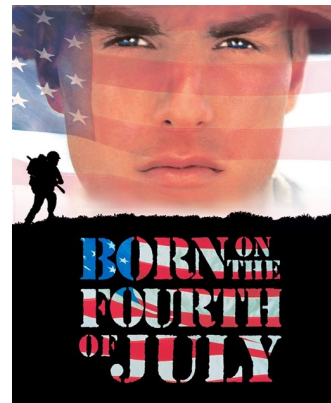
As a Communication major with a concentration in journalism, I was curious about the upper-level interdisciplinary Honors seminar “The U.S.-Vietnam War Era: Media, Memory, Legacy” taught by Communication professor, Thomas Gardner. In high school, I never learned much about the Vietnam War. Professor Gardner changed that for me. In addition to his entertaining and engaging teaching style, Professor Gardner invited many guest speakers to share their perspectives

about the Vietnam War. We met Bruce Watson, author of *Freedom Summer*; Tom Weiner, author of *Called to Serve*; Peter Snode, playwright of *The Draft*; Marilyn Webb and Heather Booth, both part of the anti-war feminist movement; Christian Appy, author of *American Reckoning*; and Patricia Hynes, author of *The Legacy of Agent Orange* about chemical warfare used in Vietnam and its long-term effects.

We read many eye-opening books about the Vietnam War including *American Reckoning* by Christian Appy, in which he challenges American Exceptionalism, or the claim that America has the righteous way of life. The novel *The Things They Carried* displayed hardships of military service during the Vietnam War. *The Sorrow of War* by Bao Ninh taught us about the lingering effects of the war in Vietnam years later.

We also watched a range of films that helped me to better understand the different points

of view on the Vietnam War. Through documentary films, I learned about the beginning of the war, U.S. college students’ anti-war activism, and the women’s rights movement during the war. My favorite dramatic film was “Born on the 4th of July,” starring Tom Cruise as Ron Kovic. The film compellingly conveyed the experiences of marines during and after the Vietnam War, especially in scenes when Ron Kovic was experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which was not really talked about during that time



period. This film inspired me to do my final project presentation on PTSD as if I were teaching about it to people in the United States during the Vietnam War when veterans came home.

If you have a chance to take “The U.S. - Vietnam War Era” upper-level interdisciplinary Honors seminar, you will learn to see multiple perspectives of history, to never look at anything one-sided, to consider the effects of our actions, and to question the media. Professor Gardner encouraged all of us to discuss our thoughts about these books, movies, and speakers. The small class size gave us the opportunity to really listen to each other and to develop our own opinions about an interesting variety of topics stemming from the Vietnam War.

Lindsey Genatossio is a Class of 2023 Communication major from Millbury MA.

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

HUI MICHELLE ZHANG, PH.D.

Dr. Janet Gebelt and I designed a research project for our students across the two Honors sections of our Introduction to Psychology classes. Students were encouraged to think critically about conventional wisdoms (e.g., money cannot buy happiness or playing violent video games will make children more aggres-

sive). To test their hypothesis about a conventional wisdom, students designed their own research studies. They also had the opportunities to review a peer’s paper from the other class.

Dr. Zhang is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Westfield State.



At a pizza party held in the Honors Center, students from Dr. Gebelt’s and Dr. Zhang’s classes shared their research topics, designs, and peer-reviewing experiences. It was wonderful that students connected and shared their creative ideas with one another!

HONORS COURSES IN REVIEW

HORACE MANN AND 19TH-CENTURY REFORM: “A UNIVERSAL REVOLUTION IN HUMAN AFFAIRS”

AN UPPER-LEVEL INTERDISCIPLINARY HONORS SEMINAR

MADELINE BOROWSKI

If you asked the average student at Westfield State the question “Who is Horace Mann?” you would likely get the answer: “Oh, he’s the guy that created Westfield State.”

Although that answer is technically correct, the “Horace Mann and 19th-Century Reform” upper-level interdisciplinary Honors seminar provided me with a more complex understanding of how Horace Mann impacted reform movements of his time and the great level of care he had for the public’s well-being.

In the Fall 2021 semester, my peers and I covered a variety of topics through readings provided by our professor, Dr. Glen Brewster. Our enriching class discussions allowed us to dive deeply into areas of interest and importance throughout these influential works. Professor Brewster facilitated discussion among students from a variety of majors including Biology, Education, Economics, and Psychology.



Guest lecturer Dr. Robert Brown (front l.) and Dr. Glen Brewster (front r.) and students in the upper-level interdisciplinary Honors seminar “Horace Mann and 19th-Century Reform” gather for a photo after the lecture.

As a group, we investigated Horace Mann’s life outside of his great endeavors: his childhood, his personal life, and his own experiences with education. Professor Brewster humanized Mann and reminded the class that he began where many of us are now - as a young person with ideas about how to change the world.

Classes covered the history of public schools within the United States and the beginning stages of educational reform. We learned about Mann’s journey to becoming the first Secretary of the Massachusetts

Board of Education in 1837. Many of our readings were Mann’s own Annual Reports which discussed Massachusetts public schools and areas for improvement.

Additionally, Professor Brewster provided us with many works from Mann’s contemporaries such as Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Frederick Douglass. This allowed for a broader look at the Age of Reform and the context within which these prominent figures were operating. These revolutionaries engaged in

reformist ideals such as self-improvement and social justice, and in paving a way for future generations, much like Horace Mann did.

In the last part of the semester, we pivoted towards the history of Normal schools and their impact on teacher training. Professor Brewster provided chapters from former Westfield State professor Dr. Robert Brown’s 1988 book, *The Rise and Fall of the People’s Colleges*. We were fortunate to have Professor Brown guest lecture about the second generation of the Westfield State Normal School and the role John Dickinson played as president (1856-1877).

If you have the chance to take this class, I urge you to do so with an open-mind. You will have an opportunity to look at Horace Mann’s work and to gain a new perspective on Westfield State University.

Madeline Borowski is a Class of 2023 English major from Enfield, CT.

WORLD OF MUSIC

CARLIE MCINTYRE

The Honors section of World Music with Dr. Rachel Gibson was an incredibly engaging experience for me. I have been involved with music all my life, but when I got to college, music went on the back burner. Taking Honors World Music allowed me to keep my love for music alive while fulfilling various requirements.

One opportunity we had in this course was hands-on learning about the music of various cultures. I loved the small-class environment because it gave us the opportunity to discuss various cultures and I was then able to immerse myself in the music of their

native lands.

We began each unit by learning a musical tradition of a region. For example, in European music, we learned various folk dances throughout the unit. At the end of the unit, we took the entire day to perform the dances we learned. I enjoyed this way of learning

because I got to experience many instruments that I would otherwise not have gotten to learn about. We played xylophones and ukuleles as well!

The ukuleles were a new addition this year. I was able to

(World of Music, continued on p. 8)

GO GLOBAL

STUDYING ABROAD DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

MICHAELLA CESARINI



Michaella and friends outside the Hungarian Parliament in Budapest.

During spring of 2021, I was lucky to study abroad. I spent four months studying in Prague at Charles University. It is an experience I will never forget.

Since I was seven years old, and visited my aunt in Ireland, I knew that I wanted to travel. When applying to colleges, being able to study abroad was a top priority. As an education major, I came to Westfield State ready to rearrange my entire schedule to make study abroad happen for me. Despite the uncertainties of travel due to COVID-19, I did not give up. After months of emailing embassies and senators, endless paperwork, I was on my way to study abroad.

Upon arriving in Prague, I

quarantined for a week before I was able to explore the city.

My classes were all online, so I was concerned about how I would meet people and make new friends. I quickly learned that many international students were in the same boat. I met some amazing people through my education classes at Charles University and they were also eager to meet people and learn about different places and cultures. One of the girls that I met, Miška, is Slovak and speaks Czech. She had been in Prague since September and showed me around the city when I first got there. I literally would have been lost without her.

COVID-19 restrictions were still strict when I first arrived in February 2021, but eventually things started to improve, and I was able to see and do more. My first two months were spent exploring Prague. The architecture constantly amazed me. From Charles Bridge to Troja Palace, everything was breathtaking. Later in the semester, I took an unforgettable trip to Budapest, the capitol of Hungary, with

my friends Bahar, Camille, and Rachele. From almost setting a restaurant on fire, to making Tik Toks in front of the Parliament building, we made so many memories. A few weeks later, Rachele and I traveled to Vienna, Austria and visited some incredible castles and museums.

Exploring the Czech Republic was unlike anything I had done before. The public transportation system there is very efficient and affordable, allowing me to visit many different Czech towns and cities. One city, Český Krumlov, I can only describe as something out of a fairytale. The winding streets and colorful buildings remind me so much of a princess' hometown in a fairytale picture book.

While there certainly were ups and downs, including having to move across the city to a different dorm three weeks in, I can confidently say that studying abroad was the best four months of my life. I met so many lifelong friends while studying in Prague and I experienced so much more than I could have ever imagined. I'm



A view of the city of Český Krumlov.

so thankful that I was able to do something like this and I cannot wait for my next adventure.

Michaella Cesarini is a Class of 2023, Elementary Education and Liberal Arts major from Middleborough, MA.

Interested in studying abroad or in another state?

The International Programs Office can answer your questions about Study Abroad, Exchange Programs, Short-Term Study Abroad Programs, and National Exchange Programs.

For more information, visit the International Programs Office in Scanlon Hall 201 Or visit their website at <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/offices/international-programs-office>.

(World of Music, continued from p. 7)

complete my final project by learning a Hawaiian native song on the ukulele! We were mostly graded on our participation in the class activities and discussions. This made the class stress-free and offered me a much-needed escape from many of my other stress-

inducing classes. I highly encourage others to take this Honors course with Professor Gibson to learn more about our world through the exploration of the arts.

Carlie McIntyre is a Class of 2024 Elementary Education major from North Branford, CT.



Students enjoy a drumming session in Professor Gibson's World Music class.

STUDENT HONORS ADVISORY COUNCIL

WHAT WE DID THIS SEMESTER

LINDSEY GENATOSSIO

SHAC is back! After having a long, hard year over Zoom, the Student Honors Advisory Council (SHAC) is back to in-person meetings and events. The Executive Board was ready to hit-the-ground running this semester.

Our first event was a Movie Night with S'mores in Mod Hall. The movie was a classic, *Grown Ups*, accompanied by some stress-reduction coloring. This event was a great way for the first-year and returning students to socialize with each.

For the next event, SHAC got their hiking boots on and conquered the Pitcher Brook Trail at Noble View in Russell, MA. The hike offered beautiful scenery: trees, bridges, and a peaceful waterfall. It was a fun way to exercise and relieve stress.

SHAC then hosted the annual *Coffee with the President* event. SHAC invited Westfield State

president Dr. Linda Thompson to join Honors students for coffee, conversation, and Mrs. Murphy's donuts. Fall 2021 was President Thompson's first semester on campus, so this event was a wonderful way to introduce her to the Honors Program.

As October came around, SHAC kept the tradition of the Annual Pumpkin Carving Contest, always one of SHAC's biggest events of the year. The event was held outdoors on a beautiful sunny fall afternoon. Contest winners were Josselyn Donahue, Jake Damelio, Emma Thomas, and Alyssa Hale.

October is also pre-registration advising time for Honors Program students, so SHAC members hosted group advising sessions to introduce first-year students to the advising process and help them choose their spring classes.

Our second Movie Night was around Halloween, so of

course the E-Board had to choose the perfect scary movie, which was *Coraline*. Students enjoyed pizza, more coloring projects, and each other's company.

SHAC worked with the Student Government Association to give back this holiday season by taking up a collection of canned goods to donate to Common Goods and the Westfield Food Pantry.

Kahoot Night, everyone's favorite game, brought students together in the Honors Center to have fun and compete for Owl Bucks. Out of 5 games, SHAC Vice President Caitlyn Pellerin won 3 games, Will Smith won 1 game, and Jason Brewster won another. Each winner received \$10 in Owl Bucks.

With finals around the corner, SHAC wanted to help everyone get into the holiday spirit. For our final event, we held a gingerbread house and

cookie making event. Students and staff expressed their creativity using lots of candies and frosting! Cocoa, cookies, and cupcakes were served and we toasted Dr. Vanessa Diana, outgoing Director of the Honors Program, for her hard work and dedication to the Honors Program. Best wishes for a wonderful sabbatical in Spring 2022. We will miss you!

Fall 2021 was my first semester on the SHAC E-board serving as Historian. It was the best thing I did for myself. I am surrounded by the most amazing and supportive faculty and students. Being part of the events was lots of fun and a great way to stay involved with the Honors Program. I can't wait for what's to come in the Spring semester.

Lindsey Genatossio is a Class of 2023 Communication major from Millbury, MA.



Honors Program students and staff gathered for food, fun, and fellowship at the many events hosted by SHAC during the fall semester. One of the highlights of the semester was *Coffee with the President*. Dr. Linda Thompson visited the Honors Center and learned more about our program. Everyone agreed it was wonderful to be back in person again!

AWARD-WINNING HONORS STUDENTS

PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

Seven Westfield State Honors Program students were among this year's recipients of the President's Award for Excellence in Leadership. These students have represented the University mission with positivity through their achievements in the areas of academics, co-curricular involvement, civic engagement/community service, and leadership. Congratulations to the President's Award for Excellence in Leadership recipients!



Josselyn Donahue '22 is a Biology major and a Commonwealth Honors Scholar. Donahue saves lives on campus as part of the First Responders Club. She serves as Publicist of Class Council, Co-president of the Biology Club with Samantha Falcone, and Treasurer for the TriBeta Biology Honors Society. She is one of the voices for the College of Mathematics and Sciences as a student representative. Donahue is also part of the National Society of Leadership and Success. Throughout Donahue's journey at Westfield State, she has volunteered at HOOT Day and for Common Goods.



Rawan Ebrahim '23 is a dual major in Nursing and Spanish and member of the Honors Program. Ebrahim is extremely involved on campus as a Tour Guide and a member of the Urban Education Program Ambassadors. Ebrahim is the secretary for the Nursing Club and Vice President of the Muslim Student Organization. She has volunteered at many different events as part of the Islamic Society of Western, MA including Sunday school, after school programs, and summer school programs.



Samantha Falcone '22 is a Biology major and a Commonwealth Honors Scholar. Falcone is member of the Relay for Life project. Over her four years, she has helped oth-

er students succeed by working in the Banacos Center as a note taker and tutor. Falcone is also a WSU Student Ambassador, member of the TriBeta Biology Honors Society, and co-president of the Biology Club with Josselyn Donahue. She presented at the CURCA Celebration about her research as a Summer Student Research Fellow and is a Westfield State student Leadership trainer. Falcone is part of the Perch Program as a peer mentor. She has assisted with Wednesdays at Westfield information sessions for prospective students and volunteered at STEM week with Franklin Avenue Elementary school students.



Lyric Lamagdelaine '22 is a dual major in Criminal Justice and Political Science and a Commonwealth Honors Scholar. She is a member of the Student Government Association and Vice President of Academic Life. Lamagdelaine dances for the WSU Dance Company and is part of the Women's Varsity Swimming and Diving Team. She serves on the University Curriculum Committee. She is president of Pi Sigma Alpha Honors society

and WSU Student Ambassadors. Lamagdelaine has volunteered at many different events for SAIL, the Campus Activities Board, Homecoming, Fresh Check Day, and HOOT Day. As a sophomore, she was part of Lambda Sigma Honors Society and took part in many service events like making holiday gifts for Veterans.



Lindsay McNulty '22 is an Environmental Science major and a University Honors Scholar. McNulty is part of the Campus Activities Board as a membership director and the Vice President of Publicity for the Student Government Association. McNulty was part of the Courtney Hall Council. The environment has always been a priority for McNulty. She is the Vice President of the Environment Planning Club and has volunteered at the Westfield River Clean up. She has been part of HOOT Day and Fresh Check Day.



AWARD-WINNING HONORS STUDENTS

PRESIDENT’S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP



Thomas Mespelli '22 is a Communication major and a University Honors Scholar. Throughout his four years at Westfield State, he has been deeply involved with the Honors Program. Mespelli has been part of the Student Honors Advisory Council for three years starting as Historian,

then Publicist, and now President. He has also been on the Honors Advisory Committee representing the students. Mespelli has participated in the Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference and has represented students at meetings of the Commonwealth Honors Program. He was a Leadership Mentor and a Teaching Assistant. Mespelli has volunteered as the Assistant Football Coach for Abby Kelly Public School and has spearheaded or assisted with organizing innumerable Honors Program events such as Welcome Weekend for incoming first-year students. He also has volunteered for Accepted Students Day.



Hannah Swanick '22 is a Nursing major and a University Honors Scholar. She has volunteered as a First Responder and is part of the Nursing Club as a peer mentor. Swanick serves on the Student Government Association and received the Executive Award representative to

Senate. She is also Secretary of the Student Affairs Committee. She serves on the UEAAC Committee and has been the Class of 2022 Historian. Swanick helped administer the COVID-19 vaccine to the community through the Behavioral Health Network. She also has helped administer the flu shot at the North Hampton Senior Center.



This year’s recipients, including the seven Honors Student recipients, of the President’s Award for Excellence in Leadership pose for a photo with Westfield State president Dr. Linda Thompson at the award dinner celebrating their accomplishments. Families and Champions were invited to join for the dinner and ceremony. We are very proud of these young leaders!

COMMONWEALTH HONORS SCHOLARS

FALL 2021 SENIOR HONORS PROJECT PRESENTATIONS



Eve Boyd



Christopher DiCarlo



Rachel Finney



Emily Frost



Cassidy Irzyk



Cameron Kelleher



Brandon Sullivan



Lyric Lamagdelaine

The designation of Commonwealth Honors Scholar is awarded to students who complete a minimum of four Honors courses (at least one upper-level Honors seminar) with a B or higher, maintain an overall GPA of 3.30 or higher, and complete a six-credit, individually designed Senior Honors Project (SHP). Listed below are recipients, their major(s), their SHP titles, and their Project Advisors.

ogy and Health Sciences, *Assessing Behavioral and Neurological Differences in Drosophila melanogaster with Huntington's Disease on Ketogenic Diets*, Dr. Robin White.



Cassidy Irzyk: English, *Outgrowing the Clothes We Used to Steal from Each Other: Experiences with Sisterhood in Conversation with Little Women*, Dr. Elizabeth Starr.



Lyric Lamagdelaine: Criminal Justice and Political Science, *Application of Travis Hirschi's Social Bond Theory to Youth Crime and Deviance*, Dr. Byung Jun Cho.



Rachel Finney: English, *Frayed Ends: The Women of Camelot*, Dr. Sabine Klein.

Eve Boyd: Elementary Education and Liberal Studies, *Implementing Climate Change Topics in 3rd Grade Science Classrooms*, Dr. Tarin Weiss.



Emily Frost: History and Political Science, *Types, Tropes, and Tokens: Searching for Positive Feminist Examples in Mainstream Superheroine Roles*, Dr. Brooke Orr and Dr. Erica Kelliher.



Cameron Kelleher: Psychology, *Future Proofing a Workforce: The Importance of Selection and Training for Creative Problem Solving in Remote Employees*, Dr. Kimberly Sherman.



Brandon Sullivan: Biology and Health Sciences, *Quantification of Cytokine Release of Hyperglycemic NLRP12 Wild Type and Deficient Mice*, Dr. Kimberly Berman.



Christopher DiCarlo: Biol-

