Who could have predicted this moment? I thrive on student contact and have been bereft of those life-giving exchanges with our students since mid-March. I survived the transition to Zoom and Google Chat, and now we prepare for fall classes while the number of infections from COVID-19 continues to increase in our area. As I write this letter at the end of June, there is no way I can predict what may transpire between now and when this Honors Report arrives in your mailbox!

What’s life without a challenge? The virus has outsmarted us at almost every turn, and our only successful strategy appears to be playing “hide and seek” with the inert critter. … We are the ones on the run, and the molecule just keeps cornering us. We’ve met our match in the USA, and now we are preparing our best battle plans to take on the adversary in the fall. I never should have watched the movie “300,” when Leonidas of Sparta took on the powerful Persian army of Xerxes at Thermopylae, but I totally get the defiant spirit of the one whose name I remember even though the enemy trounced him!

Reminiscing on the past year, I focus on Dr. Anthony Heaven’s successes as our associate director of development; our recent hire of Dr. Ken Thomas, associate dean of the capstone experience; and Dr. Vivian Ibrahim, associate professor of history and international studies, as our interim director of the Office of National Scholarship Advisement. We have assembled an extraordinary team, and now we shift strategies to engage our students with new protocols and parameters in the fall. We are ready!

We will attempt an assortment of strategies to engage our students: face-to-face teaching with maximum social distancing; a hybrid of face-to-face with remote teaching; and exclusively remote teaching. The university in concert with the Mississippi Department of Health will ramp up testing, tracing and isolation of those infected, and we will depend upon the leadership of our honors students to set the example of the model citizen within our university community.

I’m guardedly optimistic (as was Leonidas!), but understand that we could be looking at a very long adjustment period … maybe even three years before we perfect a vaccine and generate enough vaccines for the U.S. population of more than 300 million folks.

As we all take a deep breath to contemplate the fundamental challenges of the day, I celebrate the removal of the memorial to the Lost Cause from the Lyceum Circle and the Mississippi Legislature’s recent decision to retire the state flag. We live in difficult and glorious moments.

Blessings upon you and your family in these wondrous days,
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Bruce Levingston performs during the halftime show in the Pavilion.
This year has been both truly inspiring and uniquely challenging in the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. Our first term unfolded with many beautiful and moving moments before the fierce COVID-19 affected so much of our lives.

The fall semester began with a fun concert for our incoming freshman class. I performed works representing many different nations and cultures from around the world. Following each work, these bright, inquisitive students asked thoughtful, stimulating and sometimes quite challenging questions. There is no doubt we have an engaged, highly motivated Class of 2023 that will not wait until graduation to tackle the many tough problems of today!

I was privileged to once again teach my course “Art and the Republic,” a lecture, research and discussion class that emphasizes civilized discourse coupled with in-depth analysis of complex societal events and their influence upon art throughout different centuries. The class also researches how art and its creative process, in turn, affects our society and the world.

This year, we had an especially talented group of students who brought sensitive insight to their exploration and approach to the issues of the day. They were particularly astute in observing how rapidly evolving trends and innovations in online information and communication are influencing not only politics but film, literature, music and theatre. For their final project, this dynamic group produced stirring performances and presentations of music, poetry and painting, and even a thoughtful and prescient analysis of several of today’s streaming and entertainment companies.

The Honors College also hosted a superb fall art exhibition in its spacious Great Room. Philip Jackson, an acclaimed painter and University of Mississippi professor of art, presented a show of beguiling works inspired by two summers spent painting “en plein air” in the pastoral countryside of Ireland. Jackson, a marvelous lecturer and beloved teacher, discussed the process and inspiration of his work with a rapt audience of students, faculty and alumni who attended the opening.
These biannual art exhibitions have become highly anticipated events at the college. Last year, we presented a stunning show of new works by Jackson’s former student and UM graduate Brooke Alexander; this fall, the Honors College is proud to present the work of Nakiyah Jordan, an honors student who currently studies with Mr. Jackson. I am proud to say that Ms. Jordan has also been a student in two of my classes. Her powerful work has been featured on the cover as well as inside pages of the Honors Report. She is a star at the university and has a brilliant and exciting future ahead of her.

As we entered 2020, I was thrilled to co-teach a class with Dr. John Winkle, one of the university’s most revered and distinguished professors. An award-winning teacher, he is also a noted political scientist. Our class focused on subtle and significant areas of art and law, and was aptly titled “Nuance and Ambiguity.”

Dr. Winkle and I both felt it vitally important for students to address and understand the opaque uncertainties and nuanced nature of many issues in our complicated society. We felt this course would be beneficial to help students prepare for our uncertain, quickly evolving world. We focused on painting, poetry, music and film and relevant legislative, legal and Supreme Court decisions that affect these art forms. Here, again, we emphasized civilized discourse and offered the students a safe space to express themselves freely and openly.

As the pandemic struck mid-semester, we finished out our classes online with intense discussions through Zoom. The students were wonderfully responsive and participatory in spite of the difficult circumstances. Their good humor, warm spirit and genuine drive to learn helped make this class a rich and rewarding experience.

Finally, a joyous memory from what seems like a decade ago: This past February, just weeks before the shutdown, I received an extraordinary invitation from UM Vice Chancellor for Intercollegiate Athletics Keith Carter, asking me to perform the national anthem in the Pavilion for our big rivalry game against Mississippi State. I happily accepted!

The stands were packed with alumni and fans, and our own honors students helped fill the student section to cheer our team — and possibly — their old professor. I played “The Star-Spangled Banner” before the game and then performed more music for the halftime show. Our players were on fire that night and brought us a blazing victory! The whole evening was just fantastic.

Little did I realize then that this would be one of the last times — at least for a long while — that so many of us who love this place would be together in a single venue. Much has happened since. Much loss. Much isolation. Much sadness. But other good things have happened, too. In this extraordinary period of social, health and political change, many of our students have led important efforts to bring us together, to help us unite, to help us achieve a more perfect union. I am proud of them and proud of our special Honors College family that has helped prepare them for this moment.

Though we will all have to continue distancing for a time, and things will not be exactly as they were before, I echo the words heard from across the pond: We WILL meet again.

I look forward to that day!

Bruce Levingston
Chancellor’s Honors College Artist in Residence
Holder of the Lester Glenn Fant Chair
THANK YOU

to our frontline workers and to those championing a more just and equitable world.
Carlyle Wolfe Lee makes oil paintings on panel and watercolors on paper, based on drawings from observation of plants and landscape color studies. Lee grew up in Canton, Mississippi, and earned a B.F.A. in painting from the University of Mississippi and an M.F.A. in painting and drawing from Louisiana State University. She has also studied in Cortona, Italy, and at the University of Georgia. Lee is a graduate of the McDonnell-Barksdale Honors College.

Lee has exhibited work throughout the South, including the Dixon Gallery and Gardens, David Lusk Gallery in Memphis and in Nashville, Spalding Nix Fine Art in Atlanta, Cole Pratt Gallery in New Orleans, Southside Gallery in Oxford, Mary C. O’Keefe Cultural Center, University of Charleston, Shaw Center for the Arts, Mississippi Museum of Art, Lauren Rogers Museum of Art, the University of Mississippi Museum and Arkansas Arts Center. Her work was recently selected for the Art in Embassies Program at the U.S. Embassy in Maputo, Mozambique.

Rosa Salas earned her B.F.A. with an emphasis in ceramics from the University of Mississippi in May 2020. Salas was born and raised in Maracaibo, Venezuela, “La Tierra del Sol Amado” (The Beloved Land of the Sun). Her roots and memories of growing up in a sunny, cheerful and colorful city influence her work greatly and encourage her to approach art and life energetically and playfully. A member of the Mississippi Teacher Corps Class of 2020, Salas will be teaching Spanish in Meridian for two years while pursuing her Master of Education in curriculum and instruction at the University of Mississippi.

ABOUT THE COVER:

‘Wedding Brunch,’ 2020
Three panels, each 51” x 33.5”
Gouache on paper
by Carlyle Wolfe Lee

A B.F.A. in painting candidate, Nakiyah Jordan (SMBHC 21) makes her fourth consecutive appearance in the Honors Report as a featured artist. Jordan served as the Honors College Minority Engagement Council’s president for the 2019-20 academic year and has worked as a community assistant for student housing for over two years. Last summer, she completed an internship with artist Ben Watkins in Rhode Island. Follow Jordan’s art account on Instagram: @nakiyahtianna.art.

(Photo by Rosa Salas)

(Photo by Patricia Clinton)
Kathryn and Julia James lost their father on Feb. 3, 2020. As we’ve collectively reckoned with ways the pandemic has redrawn our society, Kathryn and Julia reflect together on how one death reorients manifold lives.

KATHRYN & JULIA JAMES
(SMBHC 17, 21)

Kathryn

I have the unique privilege of doing a job that I find intellectually and emotionally fulfilling: teaching English II in Jackson Public Schools. Teachers anywhere have to simultaneously invest emotionally in their students and communities while being emotionally consistent and level. I see teaching as an anti-racist practice; for this to be true, I believe it is imperative that I am hyper-cognizant, both of my own emotional responses and of the oppressions and stressors many of my students experience.

Doing my job got a lot harder on Oct. 11, 2019. My mom said Jake, my fiancé, and I needed to come home for the weekend. I knew something was wrong; I hadn’t the imagination to consider that my dynamic, vibrant dad harbored Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. When Jake and I returned to Jackson Sunday afternoon, I repeated a lot of things on the drive: our schedule for visits home, shifts in holiday plans, when I’d tell my principal. I repeated that school would help, being with my students would help. At the beginning, it did. There was solace in my job mandating I be "on" — not allowing me to wallow — and my students are teenagers; their witticisms and observations keep life fun. I was proud that my personal life, and the upheaval rocking it, wasn’t invading my classroom.

We found out two days before Christmas that chemo accomplished nothing and that my daddy was moving to hospice. When we returned to school, I felt myself responding differently. When my students would interrupt planning without knocking, open the door without asking — things that teenagers just do, things I knew were not intended to be disrespectful or disruptive — I felt myself becoming frustrated, off keel. All the time. Knowing my frustration was unfounded and undeserved, I was yet more frustrated that my life was manifesting, in very unfair ways, in the lives of my students.
So I did one of the only things I felt comfortable doing. I talked to my students about it. After announcements, each block, I sat on a desk and said we needed to talk about something important to me. “Some of you may have heard, but my dad is sick. Like, really sick. And I know — I know — I’ve been less patient with you. And I’m sorry. It’s not fair; it’s not your fault. Being me is harder right now, and it’s going to be for a while, so all I can do is ask that you’re patient as I try to be better. I promise that I know when I’m not who I want to be, and I’m upset about it, too. I just hope you’ll give me a little grace while I try to figure this out.”

My students’ responses — “It’s OK, my mom was mean for a while after her brother died. She got better again. You will, too.” … “We’ll pray for him!” … “Ms. James, we all know. It’s OK.” — offered me so much more than empathy. In hearing and validating my apology/confession/request for an eternal second chance, my students gave me permission to be a person, not just a teacher. They helped me embrace and adjust to the reality that my dad’s illness, and passing, would affect each of their lives because it fundamentally altered mine.

I had always used restorative conversations, de-escalation and emotionally intelligent talk in my classroom, but now I was modeling these things internally, instead of just structuring them for students. When I returned from bereavement leave, they had sweet notes and
cards tucked in around my room, including a reminder that “It’s OK to get upset. We know it’s not with us.”

Julia

My daddy always called me his moon child. I think it was meant to be both a statement about my personality and my literal affinity for the glowing orb in the sky (an affinity certainly derived from his own). Regardless, it’s become a title I wear with delight. He always said it with a little twinge of pride in his voice, and I like to believe it was because he was recognizing himself in me.

We were always the most similar members of my household; Momma and Kathryn are more type A, more gifted in the department of planning and directing. Daddy and I both loved a good daydream and had a more bohemian fashion sense. I didn’t realize how lucky I was to have such a balanced house until pancreatic cancer had the audacity to knock us off our feet.

My dad’s illness made nearly every aspect of life harder. Classes that used to fascinate me lost their interest, my work as a research
assistant became nearly impossible, and even spending time with my friends left me feeling a little guilty. No matter what I was doing, I couldn’t shake the feeling that I was supposed to be home instead. While my time at home certainly looked different from before (due to both the beast of chemotherapy and the degeneration of his organs), it was still filled with Joel’s trademark joie de vivre.

The fact that I was spending 10 hours on the road every weekend was certainly exhausting, but that exhaustion couldn’t penetrate the deep sense of purpose I felt in making sure that my priorities were correctly ordered. Despite my newfound inability to pay attention in class or stay awake long enough to complete all of my assignments, the time I spent with my dad was luminescent.

When he died in early February, people incessantly checked on me and asked how I was doing (love and care I am deeply grateful for, please make no mistake). The best response I had was simply that I felt “off-balance.” I could tangibly feel that, as the French would say, he was literally missing from me. I ended up going back to class just three days after he died, in part because I needed to get out of the house that made his absence so tangible.

When I went back home with my sister for spring break, I discovered just how uncomfortable our new family dynamic was. Despite the deep, caring love that my mother and my sister have for me, I couldn’t help but feel that I was outnumbered. Their similarities made the ways in which I was different even more apparent. In the absence of a compatriot, I couldn’t help but feel that my way of existing and engaging was inadequate.

While this was merely an inkling at first, it became very obvious as the coronavirus extended my time at home from days to months. I had anticipated missing my daddy’s silly jokes, excellent snuggles and superb cooking. But I wasn’t prepared for the way that his absence would change my relationship with my mother and sister, leaving me to fill roles he used to play. But as my time at home has continued, I’ve also discovered just how valued my differences are. When Momma and Kathryn inevitably butt heads, I am there to help make peace. I am there to make cocktails. And perhaps most importantly, I am there to put on music and remind everyone to dance.

Kathryn and Julia

We always knew that our daddy was older than our friends’ parents, but in some ways, we were grateful for it. If he got married in his early 20s instead of at 39, he wouldn’t have done so many of the things that made him so distinctly Joel: an NCAA gymnastics coach, an ER nurse, a scuba diving instructor in the Yucatán, a foster parent to owls and a racer of Porsches, to name a few. (But if he were here, he would make sure to tell you that his children are his greatest accomplishments.) Knowing our father was a little bit older, we knew we would therefore lose him a little bit sooner, but we never imagined this: junior year of college, one month before a wedding. There are so many milestones left to reach that we expected to have him there for, cheering and proclaiming his pride. But if we had to choose, we would always pick this daddy and this life, time and time again. ■ HR
2019-20 HIGHLIGHTS

Honors student volunteers and William Teer, SMBHC recruitment and admissions coordinator, pose in front of the SMBHC before dining with new honors freshmen during Honors Welcome Week. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

Honors Welcome Week culminated in an honors alumni panel. Jake McGraw (SMBHC 11), Shad White (SMBHC 08), John Yi (SMBHC 16), Blair McElroy (SMBHC 02, JD 06) and Bracey Harris (SMBHC 14) fielded questions from DSG and discussed their honors experience and its impact on their professional lives. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

SMBHC recruitment and admissions coordinator William Teer was joined by Joh’nis Randall (SMBHC 23) and Shaddia Lee (SMBHC 23) during Jackson Week 2019 at their alma mater, Murrah High School. (Photo courtesy William Teer)
Seventeen SMBHC Class of 2023 students were awarded a total of $130,750 from four of the university’s most distinguished scholarship programs. DSG welcomed the 2019 cohort of freshman scholars, including (front row, from left) Tristan Tran, Jilkiah Bryant, Anastasia Jones-Burdick, Gracie Bush, Vivienne McCracken, Ethan Lambert and Addison Pratt and (back row) Julianna French, Maren McSparin, Eva Kiparizoska, Peter Nguyen and Luke Davis. Not pictured: Hannah Harris, Deshauna Lee Vaughn, Molly Medling, Indu Nandula and Kaylee Sims. (Photo by Thomas Graning)

The SMBHC welcomed Pulitzer Prize-winning author and presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin for the Honors Fall Convocation. After her talk at the Ford Center, Kearns Goodwin autographed her book for honors students. (Photo by Thomas Graning)

The Honors Senate and Honors College Minority Engagement Council co-hosted an Ice Cream Social in the SMBHC kitchen. (Photo courtesy Honors Senate)
A creative nonfiction workshop is not always a comfortable place to be. For the unfamiliar, those of us who take these workshops mostly end up mining our personal histories, excavating our hidden vulnerabilities for the sake of narrative. We then bring our narrative self to class and pass out copies like you might pass out cupcakes on your birthday in elementary school. Here, a piece on the slow death of my dreams and American exceptionalism, dressed up with buttercream frosting. Fellow students and the professor chew it over, and we hear their critiques. At the University of Mississippi in particular, it’s possible this event will be led by one of your most important literary heroes.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Professor Appreciation stories often lend insight into what a student’s experience has been in a class with a particular professor. This story is no different. Kiese Laymon’s ability to connect with students is a testament to his skill as a professor. However, Laymon is not “only” a professor; he is a critically acclaimed author whose voice has been especially profound amid ongoing protests and conversations centered around racism, a social activist whose pen commands progressive action, and an example of how anger and tenderness keep hope alive.
Kiese Laymon is a Black, Southern writer from Jackson, Mississippi. In his observant, often hilarious work, Laymon does battle with the personal and the political: race and family, body and shame, poverty and place. His savage humor and clear-eyed perceptiveness have earned him comparisons to Ta-Nehisi Coates, Alice Walker and Mark Twain. He is the author of the award-winning memoir *Heavy*, the groundbreaking essay collection *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*, and the genre-defying novel *Long Division*. A graduate of Oberlin College, he holds an M.F.A. in creative writing from Indiana University. He is a professor of English and creative writing at the University of Mississippi and is the inaugural holder of the Hubert H. McAlexander Chair of English. He is also at work on a novel, *And So On*. For more information, visit lyceumagency.com/speakers/kiese-laymon.

That’s how I did it, anyway.

Kiese Laymon is known for being one of the most innovative and audacious literary voices of our generation, in case anyone somehow missed that. I know I feel lucky to say that our paths crossed at all, that I got to read and reread his sentences, and that I’ve had the opportunity to listen to him read those same sentences in person, with the rhythm that he intended.

A creative nonfiction workshop is sometimes an uncomfortable place to be, yet in Kiese’s advanced creative nonfiction workshop, rarely did anyone skip class. He assigns reading that makes his students consider who and what

Rigorous is the word Kiese has used most frequently throughout the three writing workshop classes I’ve taken with him. Please be rigorous with our revisions, our reading of each other’s drafts, our feedback in class. For Kiese, rigor is synonymous with joy. Joy in understanding how art is created and consumed. Kiese’s joyful rigor inspires me to be daring in my writing, play around, take my time and honor my creative process because my story is worth it. All of our stories are worth it. The other day in our fiction workshop, Kiese said, ‘Fam, y’all don’t even understand how excited I get about stories.’ His eyes were wide and his hands rubbing together. ‘We are literally creating worlds that didn’t exist before — that’s amazing.’”

— Jacqueline Knirnschild (SMBHC 20)

‘Keep Living, Sister – Grandmaw Katherine.’
Oil on canvas, 24" x 24,” 2020 by Nakiyah Jordan
they’re writing for. And maybe most of all, in Kiese’s class, it was easier to believe that our own stories could be shaped into something meaningful if we could bring ourselves to write them and then rewrite them until we had considered each possible nuance, until each sentence was excellent.

Initially, I went to Kiese’s office hours hoping that he would connect me with someone — anyone — he knew in the publishing industry so that I could network myself into an internship. I had seen this portrayed many times in films, so I figured it was the right thing to do.

In his office, though, Kiese and I spoke mostly about writing, not editorial internships. We talked about what I’d submitted to class, though at some point, on a tangent, I began telling him about an essay I’d written the year before. As I spoke, I wondered if Kiese was just humoring me, until he said, “Okay, but now you have to send it to me, though.”

When I finally got around to asking him if he knew any people in the publishing industry who offered internships (only after the conversation detoured into where to find the best vegetarian food in town), it should be no surprise that Kiese managed to be both accommodating

— B. Brian Foster, Ph.D. (SMBHC 11)
Assistant Professor of Sociology and Southern Studies, University of Mississippi

Kiese models the kind of love that, I think, can help us help this violent world be a little better, or at least a little more honest about itself. His love is public (a comment during a talk, a social media post) and private (a comment, a text message). It is intentional. It is sincere. It is sometimes scathing. Depending on who it’s directed at, it’s what he and others would call “stank.” It manifests as philanthropy, advocacy, humor, critique, validation, and a gift with words that for most of us can only be aspirational. I’ve heard colleagues say how he’s changed their lives and the work that they do. Heard the same from students. Heard the same from folks I barely know. And, I can say the same myself. Since I first read his work (as a third-year graduate student) to now (my fourth year at the university), he’s helped me believe in what’s possible if I/we love honestly and practice gratitude, and just practice, and revise.”
"Home." Oil on canvas, 24" x 24," 2020
by Nakiyah Jordan
and reassuring. Yes, he could link me up with someone he knew at a publishing house, though it was a little late in the year to be looking for a summer position.

I left Bondurant Hall that first day I met with Kiese, laughing to myself as I walked, occasionally skipping. I felt a little bit validated, because even the expert here agreed that the literary industry is a tricky one to enter, let alone survive. A little bit ecstatic, because a real author had spoken to me like maybe I was a competent thinker and reader. The only way I can explain it is that I believed the desire to be a writer was the worst idea I’ve ever had. Yet, every time I talked with Kiese, even years later, I would leave with this tiny inkling of, hey, maybe I can do this.

One afternoon in late spring, Kiese asked me about my internship prospects during one of the many times I monopolized his office hours. By this time, I knew that the possibility of getting an internship that summer was zero. To be honest with myself, I was relieved. I was getting closer to being able to speak about my future — and myself — a little more honestly.

“You know, I don’t know if I want to be an editor anymore. I kind of think I’m a writer.”

I’d arrived at this conclusion for many reasons: because I didn’t actually know the first thing about publishing or the business of selling books — I just thought I might since I knew a few things about reading stories and writing sentences. Because when I said I wanted to work in publishing, what I really meant was that I was too scared to just be a writer. And really, I couldn’t imagine trying to do anything else, not now that I’d had conversations with Kiese Laymon, who talked to me like the prospect of me becoming a “real writer” was not only possible but probable, if only I kept writing and revising, until I was sharp enough to meet my own story, whatever it would be.

“Taking Professor Laymon’s Advanced Creative Writing Workshop several years ago greatly impacted my writing and continues to impact me as an individual. Leading his class discussions with kindness and humility, Professor Laymon pushes his students to tell their stories with the self-awareness that only deepens a draft’s authenticity, and he makes space for each voice to contribute meaningfully to discussions. UM and the Oxford-Lafayette community are beyond fortunate to have Professor Laymon as a member.” — Libby Tyson (SMBHC 17)

“Kiese is one of those teachers who embodies what education is supposed to be. He asks for you to give your best, to be honest, and then to edit and rewrite, and then to edit and rewrite. He challenged me, but he also encouraged me and made his classroom a place that felt safe to open up in. He lives it too; he doesn’t flinch at confronting injustice in our nation, state and community, but he also doesn’t hide his own self-reckonings. His teaching and writing challenge me to be good for my state, and his example is what underlines it. He’s a powerful voice and a good person. I’m grateful to have learned from him.” — Michael Holman (SMBHC 17)

“Kiese Laymon sees black youth and creatives in ways that we don’t see ourselves. He looks beyond what Mississippi sees in us, and sees what only we, as black youth, know Mississippi can be. And not the version of Mississippi that is surface level and portrayed by history or William Faulkner. He knows the nitty-gritty, deep parts of Mississippi that only we can appreciate and reimagine. He looks at us as powerful, creative and free. Despite the forces that try to not make us free. It’s hard to write words that describe a man who is the master of words. But his words have shaped me and so many others in ways that are indescribable. When he spoke at Honors Convocation, I looked around the room and saw that everyone who looked like me felt what I was feeling: seen. By amplifying our work, amplifying us, he recognizes the backbone of society and forces everyone to reckon with the truth. To pay tribute to Laymon is to do the work in our communities. To tell our stories. To reimagine our society. And heal our land.” — Leah Davis (SMBHC 20)
Computer science major Rohan Agrawal (SMBHC 21) traveled to Rome, Italy, as one of only three U.S. students to cover the 46th Committee on World Food Security at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. There, he interviewed the first lady of Colombia, María Juliana Ruiz, and heard a presentation by economist Jeffrey Sachs. Agrawal engaged in discussions about combating climate change and hunger with diplomats and leaders from around the world. (Photo courtesy Rohan Agrawal)

SMBHC 2017 graduates James-Roland Markos and Blake Sowers visited with aspiring medical students at DSG’s home.

Kennedy Dickson (SMBHC 19) was named a 2019 National Collegiate Honors Council Portz Scholar. Nationwide, only three students were selected to present their honors theses at the NCHC’s annual conference. Dickson presented “Cannabinoid Conundrum: A Study of Anti-Epileptic Efficacy and Drug Policy” in New Orleans and received a $350 award. She has worked as a forensic scientist intern for the Orange County Crime Laboratory in Southern California and has spent several months researching cannabinoids with professor Kristie Willett, who also advised her honors thesis. Dickson plans to pursue a law degree to study intellectual property, patent law and bioethics. (Photo courtesy Kennedy Dickson)

The Honors Senate partnered with RebelTHON to host Trivia Night in the SMBHC Great Room. All proceeds benefited the Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children. (Photos by Trip Johnson)
STAMPS SCHOLARS

FINDING THEIR WHY

ASHLEEN WILLIAMS
SENIOR BARKSDALE FELLOW

The Stamps Scholarship is the most prestigious scholarship offered by the University of Mississippi and made possible by the Stamps Family Charitable Foundation, covering cost of attendance and offering a generous academic enrichment fund. Scholars are selected on the basis of academic merit, strong leadership potential and exceptional character. Perhaps most importantly, they are asked to dream big and to find their why. This requires them to consider what big questions and issues motivate them, and to ponder what it means to live as citizen scholars.

This year, even in the midst of a rapidly changing situation, scholars have demonstrated commitment to their communities, research interests and civic engagement. Some returned home early from study abroad in places such as China, Colombia, Ecuador and Russia. Others have had to press pause on internships and research opportunities, and some have gathered virtually to ask “Where do we go from here?”

Here, four Stamps scholars share how they’ve used their enrichment funds, how the global pandemic has affected their plans, and what being a Stamps scholar means to them.

Valerie Quach (SMBHC 22)
Hometown: Austin, Texas
Major: Pharmaceutical Sciences

To date, I have used my Stamps enrichment funds for our Class of 2022 cohort bonding trip to Aspen, Colorado, and for a Stamps-sponsored trip to the White House and Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

On our cohort bonding trip, we spent a couple of days skiing, cross-country skiing, ice skating, and exploring the town of Aspen and Snowmass Village.

On the Washington, D.C., trip, I met up with around 30 other Stamps scholars from different partner schools to attend a briefing by staff from the White House Office of Management and Budget and a special tour of the Supreme Court building. This was a great opportunity to meet some new Stamps friends and explore the different museums and buildings in D.C.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, my research trip to Costa Rica with other members of (UM assistant professor of biology) Erik Hom’s lab and my summer research program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center were canceled. The research projects that we were preparing for in Costa Rica are on hold until we are able to reschedule another trip there. We were planning to...
perform experiments with Azteca ants from the cecropia tree, which can only be found there. (The ants and trees are prevalent in the Sloth Institute in Costa Rica, and we obtained our algal samples from the sloths that live there.)

Meanwhile, I am considering adding some elements of bioinformatics to my research project that will soon turn into my thesis. I am studying the secondary metabolites and other volatile organic compounds of the sloth algal groups in order to discover any beneficial compounds (anti-malarial, anti-cancerous, etc.) that may one day be incorporated into a drug with collaboration from the UM Natural Products Research Center.

Since the sloth genome is relatively unstudied, I believe that a comparative analysis between the species found in three-fingered and two-fingered sloths may be an interesting addition to the metabolites project. For now, I hope to get involved in contact tracing or volunteer in some other way to help fight the spread.

I believe that being a Stamps scholar means pursuing your passion and using it to make an impact on the world.

Matthew Travers (SMBHC 21)
Hometown: St. Louis, Missouri
Majors: Chinese, International Studies
Minor: Swahili

I was in Nanjing, China, at the time of the initial COVID-19 outbreak. The outbreak coincided with the end of the Chinese academic semester, and I traveled to East Africa during winter break. Not long after I arrived in Tanzania, I evacuated to the United States.

The previous months have taught me to be adaptable. Looking forward, I hope to understand the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Chinese interests in East Africa, and conversely, the perception of China throughout the world. At the same time, I am aware that the lives of Chinese people have been irreversibly affected by the coronavirus and its representation throughout international media. I hope that sharing my experience can help fight the racism and xenophobia targeted at China due to the coronavirus outbreak.

I have used my enrichment funds to travel to Ecuador, China and Greece. I traveled to Ecuador with the other Stamps scholars in my cohort during the summer before the start of freshman year. I traveled to Harbin and studied Chinese language and culture at the Harbin Institute of Technology. And, I traveled to Athens to volunteer at the Khora Community Centre Free Shop, which offers free clothing and a shopping experience to refugees seeking asylum in Greece. There, I learned about volunteerism and the role of an individual in international development.

The decision to travel and volunteer in Athens — in addition to countless other decisions throughout the previous years — was affected greatly by my experience in Honors 101 with Ms. Williams. I hope to use the remainder of my enrichment funds to return to Tanzania, where I can visit my host family and learn more about Swahili language and culture.

In my experience, the Stamps Scholarship has been the unbiased encouragement to dream and the unconditional support to follow that dream. It means that I have a special privilege at the University of Mississippi to create the experience I want. At the same time, I am surrounded and constantly inspired by the other Stamps scholars. I have only been able to travel and see the world with the support of the university, and for that, I am so grateful.
Sydney Wheeler (SMBHC 23)

Hometown: Bowling Green, Kentucky
Majors: Biology, Economics

I’ve always thought of the Stamps Scholarship as an investment in me and my goals. Being a Stamps scholar means that I’m supported by a campus full of faculty who believe in my vision for myself and are willing to help me shape that vision into tangible experience.

From Dr. Jennifer Parsons (SMBHC associate dean and assistant instructional professor) in my Honors 101 & 102 classes to Dr. Nicole Ashpole (assistant professor in the UM Department of BioMolecular Sciences) in the research lab I work in, my first year at UM has been full of people who encourage and challenge me. One of the most meaningful aspects of Stamps to me is the individualism and independence the program encourages. There’s no pressure to fit into a mold of a “Stamps scholar” because there is intentionally no mold; we’re all different, diverse in our backgrounds, passions and pursuits, but united by our vision and drive.

In the short term, the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented me from heading to Omaha to study neuroscience at the University of Nebraska’s Medical Center in its M.D./Ph.D. Summer Research Program, though I’m fortunate that I’ll be able to complete the program remotely.

The pandemic has also confined me to the family farm I call home, but all the time spent at home has reminded me of the joy I find in nature and inspired several ideas for the future use of my enrichment fund. I’ve flirted with the idea of hiking Machu Picchu in Peru or Half Dome in Yosemite.

In addition to possible adventures, I’m hoping to use some of my enrichment funds to foster my academic pursuits in neuroscience via conference travel or summer lab placements. Thus far, I’ve only used my enrichment fund for my cohort’s bonding trip to Chicago last summer, which was an incredible opportunity to get to meet my cohort and some of my closest friends.

Tyler Yarbrough (SMBHC 21)

Hometown: Clarksdale, Mississippi
Major: Public Policy Leadership

Being a Stamps scholar in these unnerving times of COVID-19 has challenged me to dive deeper into my interests and purpose while also inspiring and championing causes that help in reimagining the world we live in today. As a scholar, I am connected to hundreds of past and current students and professionals who are also challenged with solving some of society’s toughest problems across multiple fields and disciplines. Because of Stamps, I know how powerful I am and that my voice matters!

I have used my enrichment funds for traveling assistance to teach eighth-grade history through a social justice
lens in Rhode Island and to immerse myself in other cultures in Ecuador and South Africa. Whether it was in the urban townships of South Africa, the small villages of Ecuador, or even from my hometown of Clarksdale, the value and power of community has stood with me. And amid COVID-19, we all sense the need for stronger, more vibrant communities.

That’s why I want to use my interest in rural/urban development to build and influence how communities are designed. Communities should have amble parks, green spaces, recreational facilities, and beyond that — they should have the right to be self-sustainable in areas of energy and business. I am honored to be among the Stamps family of scholars and proudly accept my duty to champion solutions to issues that have an impact on vulnerable communities and the masses.

In academic year 2020-21, we will welcome 20 new Stamps scholars to the SMBHC, and I’m confident that their peers will help push them to find their why and to ask tough questions. One of the best parts of working with our Stamps scholars is the chance to engage in intense, and often difficult, debates in the office or classroom. Our scholars have a range of interests and motivations, and are actively engaged on campus and throughout the Oxford-Lafayette community.

'Cashew Set.' Red earthenware, cone 04
hand built by Rosa Salas
The complex history of Southern universities has a lasting impact on how university communities engage with African American alumni. Here at the University of Mississippi, we are not exempt from that history.

Though their experiences are not homogenous, based on conversations with some 1962-1987 African American alumni, our steering committee (composed of campus partners) decided to create an event that would engage our alumni and provide an educational and relationship-building opportunity for our university community.

Out of innovative, collaborative leadership, Building Bridges was born. The event will focus on Recognizing, Reckoning, Reconciling and Realizing. The goal is to recognize the alumni who graduated from 1962 to 1987, as well as their stories, their experiences and the impact of their time here.

Next, our community must reckon with how African American students were treated as a result of the racial climate on campus. This reckoning involves acknowledging their experiences, which were sometimes traumatic, and grappling with the role institutional actors played in these events.

Finally, we seek to reconcile and realize where our institution is in terms of inclusivity, and what the future has the potential to be. We will connect alumni to the current student experience, while exploring a collaborative vision for this 21st-century institution. It is our privilege and responsibility to be leaders in wrestling with our history and creating a space of healing for our people.

Building Bridges was postponed due to COVID-19, but the anticipation has not been extinguished. We have continued the conversation and look forward to welcoming our alumni to campus in 2021. This effort is being led by an insightful and dedicated committee, and we want to thank a few of our key leaders who will be transitioning to new opportunities.

Our co-student committee leaders, Leah Davis and Emma Rice, graduated from UM as SMBHC scholars in May 2020. Their dedication and service will live on in the spirit of the event. One of our committee members, Dr. Katrina Caldwell, provided unwavering support, needed insight and resounding conviction. Though she has transitioned to another institution, her presence will be felt as we continue this good work.
Recognizing Our Past,
Reckoning in the Present,
Realizing Our Future.

BUILDING BRIDGES
RECONCILING 25 YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ALUMNI 1962–1987

Coming Soon
Date/Time/Location TBD
Sitting between computers that were just a little too shiny in the corner of a classroom at Parchman Penitentiary, Courtney Franklin and I talked for nearly 40 minutes about his past, my classes, our career ambitions (and what motivated them), social media’s impact on society, and his experiences with education amid incarceration.

He was very interested in the growing mental health problems in the United States and expressed wanting to become a counselor after his release. As we spoke, I could hear the emotion in his voice and that hint of genuine excitement that reveals an underlying passion. He sounded hungry for real interpersonal engagement, for someone with whom he could share a free-flowing conversation.

In summer and fall 2019, Courtney was a student in the Prison-to-College Pipeline Program, which offers credit-bearing, college-level courses at prisons in Mississippi, often focusing on issues of social justice. But just as critically, the PTCPP strives to provide incarcerated students with opportunities like those I shared with Courtney, as a way to affirm his and his fellow students’ desires for self-expression and educational community.

I was first introduced to the PTCPP in the spring of my freshman year at the University of Mississippi. While the program did not previously have an intern position, Dr. Patrick Elliot Alexander, the program’s co-founder and co-director as well as UM associate professor of English and African American studies, worked with me to create the position around my strengths and interests.

Every week for a summer and a half, I traveled with him and his teaching assistant through the Mississippi Delta to the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. We would set up class in the educational wing of Unit 25, one of the few coveted buildings with air conditioning at the prison. (I still admire the candor of some students who were willing to admit that they signed up for the class purely to escape the heat.)

About 20 men gathered each week to discuss the writing and lives of civil rights heroes such as Ida B. Wells, Richard Wright and Fannie Lou Hamer, as well as more contemporary leaders of critical discourse on race and social justice, such as Ralph Eubanks, Jesmyn Ward and Kiese Laymon. Our students were astute and sharp, but also realistic. They could see the parallels between the texts we studied and their own lives; several students
told me that these courses “exposed things that had been hidden in [their] school years.”

When I returned home each week, I felt a mixture of anger, sadness and powerlessness. Witnessing the conditions that students like Courtney lived in, hearing about their experiences, and talking to them about their plans for the future, I felt so disheartened by my inability to improve their immediate circumstances.
I did all of the things I knew how to do: I built a website for the program to help it grow; I talked to my friends and family about the racist disparities in the criminal justice system and the clear line from slavery to mass incarceration; I interviewed our students and wrote an article about their educational experiences for the Clarion-Ledger; I continue to support policy reforms that will decrease barriers to reentry. But still, I knew that the men who were right in front of me each week at Parchman were unlikely to feel the direct benefit of these actions. I knew they deserved more.

The longer I worked with the program, my sense of frustration with the oppression of our students did not abate, but I came to see the impact of the relationships we developed with the students. Several students shared with me how much it meant to them to be treated as fully human, including one who described the intellectual exercise of PTCPP classes as “the fastest hours I get in prison.”

In designing the PTCPP, its founders were very intentional to create classroom routines and rituals that specifically affirm and humanize our students, from shaking each person’s hand as they walk into the room to leading them in the chant: “I’m a student! I’m a teacher! I’m a scholar! I am capable!”

One student would frequently share with us the essays and poems that he wrote outside of class, saying that he aspired to study creative writing after his release. But he also told me that he knew his dreams of second chances “were not reality.”

PTCPP students are well aware of the systemic obstacles they face in limited job opportunities, voting restrictions and probation fines. But through interviewing them, I came to understand that those realities didn’t negate the positive elements of this moment. Through the process of this work, I realized the most important thing that I could give my fellow UM students at Parchman was not my talent but my undivided attention.

In so many ways, I am currently unable to make the changes that I believe are necessary to end the oppression and dehumanization that PTCPP students experience. But I can pay attention to it. I can use my platform as a journalist to amplify their voices, and ultimately, I can treat my fellow UM students at Parchman with the dignity and integrity they deserve.
Jess Cooley is the 2020 Barksdale Award winner! He has won $5,000 to travel the Chiquitanía in Bolivia on motorcycle. The Chiquitanía is an arid forest in eastern Bolivia that serves as the country’s natural barrier against global warming and recently suffered devastating fires, as did the Brazilian Amazon and the Australian bushlands. From August to October 2019, 6 million acres of the land burned in the Chiquitanía due to a dry season followed by farmers clearing unprecedented amounts of land for agrobusiness expansion. Two million animals, including 35 endangered species, and 40,000 trees perished in the flames. Cooley will photograph the devastation, conduct interviews and surveys, and write out field notes on what he experiences. He will graduate in May 2022 with two degrees: a B.A. in international studies and a Bachelor of Accountancy. Due to COVID-19, Cooley, who hails from Laurel, Mississippi, was unable to travel over the summer but plans to fulfill his Barksdale Award dream once travel restrictions ease and it is safe to do so. (Photo courtesy Jess Cooley)

Twenty-seven Freshman Ventures teams presented videos of their trips and addressed this year’s question: What unites us? Two teams won trips to New York City and tickets to a show for answering the question compellingly. Pictured are winners Joh’nis Randall (left), Shaddia Lee, Alexz Carpenter, Bria Moore and Jessica Wilson, who traveled to Washington, D.C.; DSG; and winners Eboni Eddins, Kelly Li, Taylor Lampkin and Kamery Earl, who traveled to New Orleans. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)
"Wedding Flowers – Yellow Green." Diptych, each panel 51” x 33.5”
Gouache on paper, 2020, by Carlyle Wolfe Lee
The Honors Senate hosted the annual **Honors College Formal (HoCoFo)** at The Lyric on the Square, where over 900 students danced the night away. This year’s event was modeled after Harry Potter’s Yule Ball, and fun activities transpired leading up to the big evening, including a banner contest among the four SMBHC classes.

(Photos collage, right, by Jennifer Parsons; banner photos by William Teer)
Several months into the job as interim director of ONSA, I’ve worked out that most people who walk through my door fit into two main types. The first is adamant about the path they’ve mapped out. They’re likely to “absolutely die” if they’re not the recipient of a major award (followed by a graduate degree from a prestigious Ivy League school and, of course, the CEO of a startup — all by the age of 35!).

If you took these students, turned them on their head and squinted, you’d have the second type. Often utterly panic-stricken at the prospect of graduating, they plonk themselves into a chair and lament, “What am I doing with my life? Am I even good enough to be here?!”

What have I learned from all this? Transformative experiences like national scholarships are only possible if you embrace the opportunities in front of you and question yourself. Naturally, confidence and strong, well-conceived plans help, but you have to be prepared to make those incremental changes as you read, learn and think your way into becoming a citizen scholar. Perhaps this doesn’t sound so profound, and it isn’t. Try putting it into practice, however, and you’ll quickly realize it’s hard work.

In the spirit of constant growth and embracing opportunities, we celebrate national scholarship winners from the past year. Kudos!

**2019 Rhodes Scholar**

An English education major from Tunica, Arielle Hudson became the University of Mississippi’s 27th Rhodes Scholar. Hudson will attend the University of Oxford in fall 2020 to pursue a dual M.A. degree in comparative social policy and education before taking up her Mississippi Excellence in Teaching Program scholarship and teaching in the Mississippi Delta.

**2020 Goldwater Scholars**

In April, two SMBHC juniors won the Goldwater. This is one of the oldest and most prestigious national scholarships in the natural sciences, engineering and mathematics in the United States. It identifies and supports the next generation of research leaders in these fields.

**Jax Dallas**, a native of Caledonia, Mississippi, has been fascinated with NASA since childhood. Last year, he completed an REU (Research Experiences for Undergraduates) at the University of Southern California where he got to see the Mars 2020 rover. He aims to pursue a Ph.D. and work for NASA’s Jet Propulsion Lab.

**William Meador** is from Carbondale, Illinois, and pursuing a B.S. in chemistry. Meador recently had a first author article published in the *Journal of Organic Chemistry* and as an individual of many talents also produced the artwork for the journal issue cover! Meador plans to pursue a Ph.D. in chemistry.
The Truman Scholarship awards the most exceptional students based on their records of leadership, public service and academic achievement. This year, the Truman Foundation received 773 applications from 316 colleges and universities, and **Joshua Mannery** (SMBHC 21) was a finalist!

Traditionally, Mannery would have been grilled in an in-person interview in Nashville; however, due to the COVID-19 crisis, he braved a virtual one instead. He passionately believes in the power of youth development and is founder of Anybody Can Be President, a nonprofit designed to identify absent resources for elementary, middle and high school students throughout the state of Mississippi. Mannery is also serving as UM Associated Student Body president for the 2020-21 academic year.

**Gabe Menchaca** is a senior in international studies and Flagship Chinese, as well as an Army ROTC cadet. This coming year, he will use his Boren to study Chinese and complete his capstone at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, California.

**Caleb Ray** is a senior majoring in international studies and Flagship Arabic. Ray is interested in Islamic radicalization and unemployment in the Middle East. He will use his Boren to complete his fifth-year capstone in Meknes, Morocco, as part of the Flagship Arabic program.

**William “Wills” Hay** was awarded a Fulbright to be an English teaching assistant, or ETA, in Moldova. Hay is a public policy leadership major with minors in Russian and intelligence and security studies.
In addition, we celebrated two Fulbright semifinalists, **Ysabella “Bella” St. Amant** (Spain, ETA) and **Savannah Day** (Israel, ETA). St. Amant has been admitted to the Spanish Ministry of Education program and will teach English. Day has been accepted into the Peace Corps in Morocco.

**2020 Emerson National Hunger Fellow**

Curtis Hill, a senior from Lexington, Mississippi, has been named an Emerson National Hunger Fellow. The Emerson Fellowship is a leadership development opportunity for young professionals eager to gain skills and experience in anti-hunger, anti-poverty and social justice work. Hill is an English major.

Vivian Ibrahim is a historian of the Modern Middle East and joined the University of Mississippi in 2011. She specializes in the history and politics of Egypt in the 19th and 20th centuries. A Croft associate professor of history and international studies, Ibrahim began serving as ONSA interim director in January 2020. Among her many accolades, Ibrahim was most recently awarded the College of Liberal Arts’ Howell Family Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award for 2019-20. To learn more about national scholarships, check out the updated website onsa.olemiss.edu or book an appointment with Professor Ibrahim.
Lauren Burns
in Meknes, Morocco

“One of my fondest memories of Morocco was in my second week. Mashrou’ Leila, one of my favorite Arab bands, was performing in the capital, Rabat, and I was determined to go. The journey began with navigating my way to and throughout the capital for the first time. The Moroccan dialect, Darija, is unlike any other dialect of Arabic, and by that point, I had studied it for an entire five days! I could get around OK, speaking Levantine/Shami Arabic, but it definitely evoked some laughs and strange looks.

“As the concert started, tons of people rushed from the stadium seats to crowd the front stage — and I was, of course, among them. By the end, I was in the second row, singing along to my favorite Lebanese songs with a bunch of Moroccans and a handful of Americans. The encore is a moment I’ll never forget — they shut the stage lights, performed my favorite song and asked everyone to shine a light from their phone. It was very emotional. After the concert, my friends and I walked through the old medina, slept for a few hours, and got on the 6 a.m. train to make it to our 9 a.m. class that next morning.”
Claire Sullivan
in Tanzania

“I’m very grateful to have had the opportunity to study abroad in Tanzania. My program provided exceptional cultural engagement experiences through host families, classes and multiple field excursions. As I take my first steps entering the career field of international diplomacy, my experience in Tanzania has given me the opportunity to reflect on my own personal space within the field, and what it means to be a white American potentially working in a place such as East Africa.

“I particularly enjoyed the field excursions, which included staying in a Maasai village, watching court proceedings at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and visiting the city of Tanga, the birthplace of Swahili.

“During my study abroad, I also had the opportunity to work with a local NGO that focused on improving human rights for small-scale miners in Tanzania. Having written several papers on this topic, it was interesting for me to see the impact of the industry in person.

“For summer 2020, I will be interning with the Department of State’s Bureau for African Affairs in the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. I aim to use my Swahili language skills and learn more about the Department of State’s work in the region while interning. I hope to return to East Africa soon and continue to improve my Swahili.”

HR
Perryville, Missouri, native Londyn Lorenz (SMBHC 22) advanced to the semifinals on “Jeopardy! College Championship,” fulfilling a lifelong dream of competing on the show and winning $14,000. She especially enjoyed hearing Alex Trebek read off lyrics from the “Drake” category. Lorenz is majoring in Arabic and international studies, and the UM community had fun cheering her on. (Photo courtesy Londyn Lorenz)

In April alone, almost 300 seniors defended their honors theses over Zoom due to the ramifications of COVID-19. Caroline Nall stands with her laptop after her successful virtual defense. (Photo courtesy Caroline Nall)

Seven SMBHC seniors were inducted into the 2020 UM Hall of Fame: (left to right, top) Leah Davis, Genevieve Verville, Trip Johnson; (left to right, bottom) Navodit Paudel, Benjamin Payne, Annabella Sills and Scout Treadwell. (Photos courtesy of pictured students)
Though only an undergraduate with one semester of physical chemistry under my belt, I made an appointment with a recently hired assistant professor, whom I hoped would help me fulfill a requirement of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College and take the first step toward writing and defending an honors thesis.

Stepping into Dr. Nathan Hammer’s lab was exciting even for someone not well acquainted with his field. The lasers, dry ice and racks of electronics hearken back to a 1985 movie — and one of my favorites — called “Real Genius,” the definitive depiction of physical chemistry in a film. I’d later learn that “Real Genius” was one of Dr. Hammer’s favorite movies too.

In our first meeting to discuss my honors thesis, I learned that Dr. Hammer did have an undergraduate project in mind. His Ph.D. mentor had given him an instrument known as a Raman spectrometer. A Raman spectrometer is a tabletop device, occupying roughly the area of half a pingpong table, that contains rotating reflective elements for measuring
scattered light at different wavelengths. A laser shines through a chemical, and the pattern of this measured light gives some idea as to the molecular structure and energy of the chemicals. The project was to restore this device to working order.

What would follow over the next several months was not unlike the “Real Genius” montage of Val Kilmer’s Chris Knight building a powerful laser as his senior research project. During that time, Dr. Hammer taught me about stepper motors and photomultiplier tubes. We soldered our own cables from diagrams in faded, decades-old manuals. In the end, the spectrometer came to life again. With Dr. Hammer’s help, I had not only an honors thesis but several peer-reviewed publications as a result.

I worked in Dr. Hammer’s lab until I started medical school. While Dr. Hammer was an excellent adviser on those matters for my honors thesis, he also provided more general mentorship, which serves me to this day.

Dr. Hammer is my adviser, and I went to him about advice on studying abroad. He told me with my major, it is nearly impossible. Instead of ending the meeting right then and there, he came up with a solution for me that no one else would do. He is one of the few professors that I have had that I feel has actually gotten to know me and wants me to be successful. He goes out of his way to help a student succeed whether it is an extension on a due date, studying for a test, recommendation letters or just life questions in general. He shows that being a professor is not just about research or furthering their career but making sure students have the right tools to start theirs.”

— Sarah Peterson (SMBHC 21)

“Dr. Hammer was a huge help to me during my undergraduate career. When I joined his lab, he made me feel welcomed and included right away. From conducting research, to writing my honors thesis, to applying for the Goldwater scholarship and eventually graduate school at Princeton, I found that Dr. Hammer was always there to provide helpful advice or an encouraging word. I’m so grateful to have had such a supportive mentor and advocate during my time at UM.”

— Anna Hailey Rubinstein, M.D. (SMBHC 11)
Although Dr. Hammer is a tough professor, his constant ambition for perfection in his students, through challenging them to improve their level of work and by encouraging them as qualified students, is what sets him apart.”
— Dawson Buettner (SMBHC 19)

“I am so thankful that Dr. Nathan Hammer took a chance on me three-and-a-half years ago by allowing me to join his research group. I do not believe that I would be where I am today if it was not for his unwavering encouragement, support and opportunities for growth that he has provided me. He pushed me to achieve my full potential by helping me realize what I am capable of, even when I was unsure of myself. I am grateful for his trust and support throughout my college career.

“Thanks to his guidance and his ability to motivate me to be my best self, I am able to continue pursuing my research interests for the next two years at the National Institutes of Health. Moreover, his passion and care that he has for his students’ success is truly unparalleled. He is incredibly effective at enabling students to achieve their full potential and helping people realize their goals. One of my favorite memories comes from finals week when he brought cinnamon rolls for the entire class. Although the final was challenging, it is evident that he truly cares about the well-being of his students.”
— Genevieve A. Verville (SMBHC 20)

I still organize my computer in the manner he suggested to me, which makes every piece of work I produce readily available. I was able to reference my thesis and defense for this very article. I frequently give PowerPoint presentations and continue to hold myself to his standards, avoiding the “canned” themes and using only high-resolution images.

I still publish research articles, and I still use skills fostered in his lab, whether that is in my gathering of references or in my preparation of figures, tables and graphs that don’t just provide data but look good in addition.

I continue to keep everything I did in that lab on my CV. It must be quite confusing to my potential employers these days, but I am much too proud of that work to remove it. Somewhat surprisingly, in my current field of cardiac electrophysiology, I do still happen to use some of the electronics concepts I learned in Dr. Hammer’s lab. I did not know at the time that my career would involve matters of high and low pass filters, shielding, electromagnetic interference, or direct and alternating current, but I received a practical education in these matters from Dr. Hammer.

Occasionally, I look through Dr. Hammer’s website and marvel at the number of students who have come through his lab in the 10 years plus since my time there. The University of Mississippi and the SMBHC are incredibly lucky to have him mentoring their students, regardless of their future field and its relationship to an experimental physical chemistry lab. I certainly count myself lucky to have been in that group. ■ HR
Ken Thomas is the SMBHC’s new associate dean for capstone, coordinating and directing the capstone experience for third- and fourth-year Honors College students as they prepare for the honors thesis or practicum. He advises students, works with department chairs and deans to create appropriate methodological courses, and coordinates expectations and best practices with thesis/practicum advisers. Thomas graduated with a Ph.D. in civil engineering from the University of South Florida, concentrating in environmental and water resource sustainability. As a native of Trinidad and Tobago, he received his Bachelor of Science in chemical and process engineering and his master’s degree in environmental engineering from the University of West Indies. He possesses vast experience in honors education having taught, advised, researched and published in the fields of engineering and honors education since 2010, and recently, having served as the associate director at Auburn University’s Honors College. Thomas joined the SMBHC staff in May, and we welcome him! (Photo courtesy Ken Thomas)

Due to COVID-19, the Honors Commissioning ceremony has been postponed, so graduates’ medallions, stoles and certificates were mailed to members of the SMBHC Class of 2020. Once “safer at home” restrictions eased, some seniors posed with their medallions outside the SMBHC. Pictured are SMBHC scholars and roommates Jamie Sproles (left), Frances Gatlin, Bridget Betts and Savannah Day. (Photo courtesy Savannah Day)

Ashleen Williams, UM history Ph.D. student and Senior Barksdale Fellow, won the 2020 Tennin-Alexander Prize for best graduate paper. As noted on the university’s Arch Dalrymple III Department of History website, Williams’ paper: “‘Oh Men of Justice! 20th Century Political Petitions in Bahrain and a Negotiated Nation,’ which was written under the direction of professor Vivian Ibrahim, examines the crucial role of colonial petitioning in 20th-century Bahrain. Uncovering newly discovered Arabic and English archival material, Williams incisively argues that indigenous communities used a global language of rights and justice to advocate for local reforms.” (Photo by Anthony Heaven)
Honors College
MINORITY ENGAGEMENT
COUNCIL UPDATE

NAKIYAH JORDAN (SMBHC 21)

For many of my friends, this organization is a dream come true. My freshman year was woven and sewn by one question, “Where are my black and brown peers in honors?” In only the second year of this council’s life, we’ve been able to answer that question and bring folks together.

Our mission also continues to challenge us to foster open dialogue on issues of race. This school term, our open dialogue culminated in

Members of HoCoMEC. (Photo by Christian Johnson)
two statements condemning racist acts against Black and Asian Americans. Unfortunately, these statements marked the beginning and end of our school year. It may be sad and frustrating to write and read these statements, but it is our pledge to uplift the voices of folks who are often unheard or washed out in ivory spaces. We promote educational dialogue but will always condemn racist actions and language that contradict our campus’s goal of being a diverse and inclusive place. Both statements can be found on our Instagram page: @umhoco_mec.

We began the year with a series of sessions for Honors Welcome Week, during which former HoCoMEC president and chief of staff Swetha Manivannan showed great leadership. It was amazing to see many fresh faces eager for discussion! During this time, our upperclassmen and sophomores got to have real conversations about life on campus and experiences of being people of color within the Honors College. These sometimes light and often heavy conversations occurred while we prepared food, painted and even participated in a few thrilling speed dating rounds.

Other notable meetings of the year were our Spectrum activity, led by Megan Bradley and Carson Schmitz; a discussion with the Honors College academic counselor Rachel Coleman; our collaborations with Rebels Against Sexual Assault for “Let’s Taco ’Bout Consent”; and the annual Ice Cream Social with the Honors Senate.

2020-21 HoCoMEC Executive Board

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In October, two of our members, Kayci Kimmons and Joshua Mannery, along with two staff members, Coleman and Senior Barksdale Fellow Ashleen Williams, traveled to Fullerton, California, to attend and present at the National Society for Minorities in Honors conference.

"During the conference, I was able to network with other honors scholars and faculty who shared similar experiences with imposter syndrome as well as experience California for the first time," Kimmons said. "This enriching atmosphere among other minority students gave me a sense of comfort and reassured me that I wasn’t alone in the struggle of being a minority student in the Honors College."

This is the second time the SMBHC has been represented at this conference, and we plan on attending and presenting at the virtual conference this fall.

In an effort to build community among our members, we love embracing holidays in an inclusive manner within our organization. For the fall semester, our council held a few recreational events for its members, including Pumpkin Painting, DiversiTREE, and Cooking with MEC. In the spring, we held a Valentine’s fundraiser that allowed members and friends to buy Meme-O-Grams and spread some joy! The cards were crafted by Mona Heng and consisted of witty messages and inside SMBHC jokes from notable staff members as well as "the cast of ‘Harry Potter’" as a nod to the 2019 Honors College Formal theme.

For Black History Month, we hosted an exciting trivia night of “Kahoot!” devoted to highlighting the history of Black Americans on campus and all around the country. To close out the month, we partnered with the Black Student Union to take a party of 12 to the Civil Rights Museum and Mississippi History Museum in Jackson. Our chauffeur was William Teer, SMBHC HoCoMEC and Black Student Union members, along with SMBHC coordinator of recruitment and admissions William Teer, visit the Civil Rights Museum and Mississippi History Museum in Jackson. (Photo courtesy Nakiyah Jordan)
It was a day full of emotion. There were teary eyes as we faced hard truth laid before us; however, there were just as many smiles from leaning on each other and connecting over shared experiences. We had no idea that we were closing out our final “normal” month of the school year.

To describe the end of this school year as “odd,” “inconvenient” or “particularly challenging” would be an understatement. That set of vocabulary does not accurately convey the painful and frightening realities of the members of this organization and the folks around the globe who look like us. I charge our organization to help in the ways we are able with the addition of our community service chairs and committee. It is my hope that we will utilize this group to help where others won’t and to make plenty of noise and elevate plenty of voices.

As we all know, COVID-19 has enormously changed all of our lives. Black and brown folks are the demographic most affected by this virus. As a body of socially conscious and politically active students, we want to always show our support for those who may be forgotten during crises. This year included some of the most extreme highs and lows. Finding love, understanding and hope is always a challenge in a world that systematically chooses against you every day. Add global pandemic to that kitchen fire, and suddenly we’re faced with a wildfire of overwhelming pain. There must be room for relief and love somewhere. This organization was meant to be water in “normal” times — normal and already painful times. I’ve been honored to serve as HoCoMEC president this past year. In a time when all of us are hurting to some extent, we must look for the ways to love and support one another. They are there, and it is possible.
1990 — **Tina Penick Brock** (BA 90, BS 90, MS 92), director of pharmacy education at Monash University, a public research university based in Melbourne, Australia, has received the prestigious Phi Lambda Sigma Procter & Gamble National Leadership Award, recognizing her outstanding contribution to pharmacy education. She was nominated by her peers and awarded for her exceptional leadership qualities in support of the pharmacy profession. Brock specializes in designing curricula and strengthening global health systems.

2006 — **Kyle Tadlock** graduated from The Ohio State University with a Ph.D. in ancient history in May 2018 and became associate professor of history at Trinity Baptist College in Jacksonville, Florida, in August 2019. Tadlock and his wife also welcomed their third child and first daughter in March 2019.

2008 — **Alexandra Rodriguez Mossing** has been named a finalist for the New Orleans Excellence in Teaching Award in recognition for her work teaching middle school social studies. The New Orleans Public Schools system created the award to honor outstanding teachers throughout New Orleans’ charter school-based system.

2010 — After graduating from the University of Georgia with a Ph.D. in May 2019, **Christy Nielson** (SMBHC 10, MAccy 11) started work as an assistant professor of accountancy at UM this year. She considers it a joy and privilege to return to her alma mater.

2011 — **Emilie Dayan Hill** and her husband welcomed their daughter, Claire Emmanuelle Hill, on Jan. 8, and are smitten! Emilie would like to give a special shoutout to her dear friend Scarlett Andrews Martin (SMBHC 11), who has been working tirelessly with the Indianapolis Mayor’s Office to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and to connect small businesses to critical resources.

2013 — **Hardy DeLaughter** was appointed career law clerk to Nicholas W. Whittenburg, judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee.
Jess Waltman (JD 16) is an attorney with the law firm of Davis & Crump P.C., in Gulfport. He is licensed to practice law in Alabama, Arizona, Louisiana and Mississippi. Waltman serves on the board of directors for the Young Lawyers Division of the Mississippi Bar and on the board of directors for the Ole Miss Alumni Association.

2014 — Hunter Nicholson graduated with a Master of Divinity from Reformed Theological Seminary in May. He is now enrolled at the University of Edinburgh, where he will pursue a Ph.D. in systematic theology.

2015 — Meredith Oliver (BS 15, PharmD 18) recently completed her PGY2 infectious diseases pharmacy residency at the University of Utah and has accepted a position at the University of Minnesota Masonic Children’s Hospital as a pediatric infectious diseases pharmacist. She will be working to improve antimicrobial management for children.

Lauren Rackley has written over half of her dissertation and is expected to graduate with a Ph.D. in English and minor in women’s, gender and sexuality studies from Louisiana State University in May 2021. Rackley’s dissertation outlines the rhetorical characteristics of white feminist discourses, and she argues that their circulation in digital cultures undermines opportunities for radical feminist change. On a less academic note, Rackley and her partner, Nick, have moved into a house that they have been renovating for the past year.

In May, Lindsay Wells Wencel graduated with an M.D. from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso and will be continuing her education with an emergency medicine residency at Orlando Health in Orlando, Florida.

2016 — Kelsey Pettus Berry graduated from medical school at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and has matched into a pediatric residency at the University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Earlier this year, Sara Kiparizoska Goodman married Chase Goodman (UM 15) and graduated with a medical degree from the University of Mississippi Medical Center. A few days before the wedding, Sara learned she had matched to start an internal medicine residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C.

In December 2019, Christine Marie Sim graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette with a master’s in business administration.
Bryce Warden was named senior postsecondary policy analyst at the Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE).

2017 — Rachel E. Anderson earned a master’s degree in international and intercultural communication and graduate certificate in public diplomacy from the University of Denver. She has embarked on an exciting professional career, advancing international digital rights and media development efforts.

Alicia Dixon, who graduated with majors in classics and philosophy, recently graduated from Georgetown Law with special recognition for pro bono service. She has been conditionally offered a position with the D.C. Office of Administrative Hearings, pending a waiver on the COVID-19 hiring freeze in D.C.

Amy Hall graduated from the University of Texas School of Law and was inducted into the Chancellors Class, the most prestigious academic honor at Texas Law, being tied for the fourth-highest GPA. Hall is headed back to Mississippi to clerk for Judge Leslie H. Southwick on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and then will join the firm Susman Godfrey in Houston, Texas, in fall 2021. The firm specializes in high-stakes commercial litigation, specifically trial work.

South in May, Victoria Miller graduated with a Doctor of Pharmacy from the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy.

Yujing Zhang Steenwyk married Timothy Steenwyk (UM 18) on Leap Day this year at Paris-Yates Chapel, with several HoCo staff and alumni in attendance! Two weeks later, Yujing received good news of matching with a two-year pharmacy residency in health-system pharmacy administration and leadership at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, N.C. As part of her residency, Yujing will be continuing her pharmacy education with a fully funded M.S. in pharmaceutical sciences from the University of North Carolina Eshelman School of Pharmacy. She is honored to have been elected by her classmates to the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy Hall of Fame, and she graduated with her Doctor of Pharmacy this past May. The Steenwyks are excited about their next chapter together in Greensboro.
Since graduating with majors in English and classics, Libby Tyson has completed an AmeriCorps year with City Year in Washington, D.C., and in December 2019, she obtained a Master of Arts in museum studies from the University of San Francisco. Tyson is now pursuing a doctorate in history at American University.

Since graduating UM, Hayden Malone has been working in a St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital lab researching gene expression by chromatin remodeling complexes in the context of pediatric cancer. This fall, Hayden will continue this research while working toward a Ph.D. from the St. Jude Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

After completing her master’s degree in communication sciences and disorders this past May, Emma Kate Thome (left) is pursuing her Ph.D. in communication sciences and disorders at the University of Georgia. She credits the Honors College for helping her discover her love of research. Thome also wants to give a special shoutout to Susan Loveall-Hague (middle), former assistant professor at UM and now at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, who served as thesis adviser for Thome’s honors and graduate theses. Thome writes, “Dr. Loveall-Hague has gone above and beyond to help me set my goals and plan towards my future, and she has been a constant source of light and optimism during these uncertain times.”

In May, Elizabeth Quirk graduated from the University of Georgia with a master’s degree in foods and nutrition with honors. She will continue working in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at a hospital in Atlanta until summer 2021, when she plans to enter a physician assistant program. She hopes everyone is keeping safe from COVID-19 and protecting themselves like her dog!

Katherine Sistrunk is serving as president of the Student Nurses Association at Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing. She also represents the JHUSON as a Fuld Fellow, and is working with Johns Hopkins Hospital administration and clinical leaders from the Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality on a quality improvement project. In addition, she is doing research on the health and well-being of military spouses with Catherine Ling, family nurse practitioner, at the JHUSON.

2018 — Seth Dickinson is serving as president of the Student Bar Association at the University of Mississippi School of Law and received the 2020 Mississippi Bar Foundation Award and the Richard Courtney Elder Law Award.

Since graduating UM, Hayden Malone has been working in a St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital lab researching gene expression by chromatin remodeling complexes in the context of pediatric cancer. This fall, Hayden will continue this research while working toward a Ph.D. from the St. Jude Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

2019 — John Chappell has begun his law degree as a global law scholar at Georgetown University as he pursues a joint Master of Science in foreign service and juris doctorate. He recently completed a fellowship at Foreign Policy for America and will soon start another fellowship at National Security Action. Both are foreign policy advocacy organizations in Washington, D.C.
**2020 — Taran Carrasco** is attending the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, where she is pursuing her dream of becoming a pediatrician.

**Andrew Groneck** graduated with a degree in biochemistry and is pursuing his medical degree at the University of Missouri Medical School.

**Hannah Hoang** graduated in May with majors in biology and public policy leadership. Her honors thesis on Mississippi rural health care is pending publication, and she has been at work on another research publication over the summer. She will be pursuing a medical degree at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

**Seema Murugan** (middle) is excited to pursue her medical degree at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

**Elizabeth Statham** is pursuing her medical degree at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine.

**Sloan Weeden** is attending the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry.

’Sake Set.’ Red earthenware, cone 04, hand built by Rosa Salas
‘October.’ 78.5” x 45.75,” oil on panel, 2019 by Carlyle Wolfe Lee
This past fall, we launched our SMBHC Leadership Council. The council is a platform for alumni, parents and friends to engage with leadership, provide feedback on development operations and advocate for increased philanthropic support of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Now at 22 members, we have a variety of voices who help us take our development approach to the next level. Here are comments from members who would like to share their experiences with you:

“As the Honors College has grown significantly since I began there as a student 14 years ago, I am excited that in recent years, it has begun engaging alumni in more ways, including in fundraising to help address the financial reality of its success in serving so many more students. “Participating in the Leadership Council has felt like being in an Honors 101 classroom again — feeling challenged (we can always count on DSG) to think about a host of big issues facing the SMBHC community and the world, free to think big and propose new ideas, and, perhaps most poignantly, a lasting sense of being impressed and inspired by the other people around the table.

The current council chose for our contributions to fund experiential learning opportunities to ensure the Honors College can continue to provide the enriching opportunities it did for many of us when we were students at the (then much smaller) SMBHC.

Whether serving as a student mentor, donating during Giving Day or joining the Leadership Council, I hope you will join me in supporting the SMBHC in the way that is most appropriate for you. One difference now from my Honors 101 experience is that the people around the table represent a much bigger Honors College community: faculty and staff, current students, students’ parents, and alumni from multiple eras of the SMBHC and the university’s honors program. To each of you, thanks for your leadership, for your contributions to sustaining the SMBHC’s programs and legacy, and for allowing me to join you at the table 14 years ago and again today.”

— Kent Ford (SMBHC 10)

“We credit the Honors College with Martha’s connection and achievements during the last two years at UM. After meeting with Dr. Anthony Heaven and seeing his vision, we were honored to join the SMBHC Leadership Council. It was clear after our first meeting that the voices and enthusiasm of the other members of the council would ensure the continued success of the Honors College and the opportunities it affords its students.”

— Mary and Edward Brinson (SMBHC parents)
The Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College Leadership Council holds its inaugural meeting on Sept. 13. The council met with the SMBHC dean and staff and interacted with current honors students. (Photo by Kevin Bain)

Thank You

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Eli Lilly & Co. Foundation
ExxonMobil Foundation
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Lester G. Fant III Charitable Trust
Monsanto
The Lester & Susan Fant Charitable Fund
Ms. Kaylen Rene Addison

Mrs. Susanna Allen & Mr. William A. Allen
Mrs. Doreen H. Anding
Mr. Al Annexstad & Mrs. Cathy Annexstad
Mr. Andrus G. Ashoo & Mrs. Christina W. Ashoo
Mr. James L. Barksdale and Mrs. Donna Barksdale
Mr. Bradford P. Barry & Mrs. Alison W. Barry
Dear SMBHC Alumni and Friends,

This year’s theme, “What unites us?” has been echoing in my mind. During a time of unparalleled stress, anxiety and uncertainty, I can confidently say that what unites us is the hope for a better tomorrow.

The 2019-20 academic year has been an exciting ride for the development operation. I had the opportunity to meet amazing alums who conveyed the influence and impact of the SMBHC on the university, state, region and nation. The SMBHC equipped them to be thoughtful leaders and innovative thinkers in an ever-evolving society. The diligent work of our scholars, experiences of our alumni, reputation of the SMBHC and contributions of our team have served as a rallying call for our community to support the Honors College.

We are grateful that you responded to the call! In light of your investments of time, talent and treasure, a question has been posed, “How is the SMBHC continuing to push for innovation in thought, community action and thoughtful leadership?” Our community is concerned about how we will continue to create hope for a better tomorrow. The faculty and staff are committed to maximizing your investment. We will continue to push our scholars to challenge the status quo, to step out of their intellectual and social comfort zones, and to serve their communities.

Lastly, though COVID-19 has presented some challenges, it has also given us a glimpse into our young scholars’ future as thought leaders. Our scholars are engaging about the implications of the illness on a variety of sectors as well as its impact on under-resourced communities within our country. They have challenged themselves to stay connected to each other, continue their intellectual pursuits, and to return with even more questions and vigor to find solutions. These young leaders are not stagnant and neither is the Honors College.

With our acceptances up from last year, we are looking forward to welcoming a bright group into the fold. The students will need your support as they endeavor to pay for their education, seek out mentorship and embark upon experiential learning. This is why we are extremely grateful for your investment as we create hope for a brighter future here in Mississippi, the region and beyond.

Anthony Heaven, Ph.D.
Associate Director of Development
Mr. Joseph Mac Weld Bell
Drs. Louis W. and Damea B. Benton
Mrs. Elizabeth Vowell Blades
Mrs. Mary Mullen Brinson & Mr. Edward Bailey Brinson
Dr. Raymond Franklin Burk Jr.
Ms. Chelsea Kate Caveny
Mrs. Mary Cline & Mr. Michael Cline
Ms. Martina Cotelo
Dr. Rachel A. Cramer
Dr. James M. Cross & Mrs. Jennifer Cross
Mr. Brian J. Delburn
Mr. Patrick Hunter Dogan
Ms. Anna Elizabeth Donnell
Mr. Granison E. Eader
Ms. Alyssa Marguerite Eilers
Mrs. Susan B. Fant
Mrs. Janet G. Farrington & Mr. S. Lawrence Farrington
Mr. Kent Douglas Ford
Mr. William N. Fry IV & Mrs. Lee Anne Fry
Mr. James Robert Futral Jr.
Mrs. Suzanne Gardiner & Jason Gardiner
L.B. Gatewood and Eileen Gatewood
Dr. Stephen Edward Gent
Mr. Karl David Gottschalk
Ms. Claire Elizabeth Graves

Members of the SMBHC Leadership Council gather for a full day of collaborative goal setting and engaging sessions with SMBHC staff, faculty and students on Feb. 28. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)
Mr. Barrett E. Green and Mrs. Janice Green
Mr. Dan Groneck & Mrs. Kimberly Groneck
Erin Doctor Guyton, Esq.
Dr. John R. Guyton & Ms. Susan S. Guyton
Dr. Patrice Jones Harmon and
Mr. Mark E. Harmon
Rev. Harriet Bryan and Mr. Jerry D. Harris
Mrs. Dena Lester Harrison
Dr. Anthony Heaven
Mrs. Janelle H. Hederman
Mr. Daniel J. Hedglin and
Mrs. Susan L. Hedglin
Mr. William T. Hewitt & Mrs. Nancy M. Hewitt
Mrs. Mary L. Hollingsworth &
Mr. J.G. Hollingsworth
Mr. William Lee Ingram
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Mrs. Deanna N. Kieffer
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HONORS FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

Through the generosity of several benefactors, particularly the Barksdale family; Lynda Mead Shea and her husband, Dr. John Shea; and the Dorothy Lowe Cole Endowment begun by Christy Cole, the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College proudly awarded $55,000 in fellowships to the 19 students listed below.

The number of awards was curtailed by funding freezes in spring and summer 2020 due to the coronavirus. During the 2019-20 school year, we also awarded over $11,000 to 18 students who presented posters or papers at conferences across the country. Among the meetings were the American Chemical Society conference in Boston, the annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society in Richmond, Virginia, and the Cultural Studies Association conference in New Orleans. Another 41 students received over $25,000 in research funds to aid their thesis research. Supporting the endeavors of citizen scholars is one of the pillars of the Honors College.

FALL 2019

- Mary Lennis Barlow, international studies, Chinese, study abroad through CET Beijing in Beijing
- Blake Cleary, management, study abroad at Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador
- Katherine Dames, international studies, study abroad at Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Italy
- Asia Harden, integrated marketing communications, study abroad through CEA in Granada, Spain
- Isabelle Hudson, international studies, Spanish, study abroad at Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador
- Katelyn Hutson, international studies, French, study abroad in Aix-en-Provence, France
- Greta Koshenina, classics, study abroad at the Umbra Institute in Perugia, Italy
- Ella Lawson, Arabic, international studies, classics, study abroad through CET: Jordan in Amman, Jordan
- Robynn Patterson, marketing, study abroad in Sydney, Australia
- Melissa Sanguinetti, international studies, Spanish, study abroad at Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso, Chile
- Ryoma Thomas, mechanical engineering, study abroad at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan

SPRING 2020

- Charlotte Armistead, international studies, Arabic, study abroad in Amman, Jordan
- Ainsley Ash, public policy leadership, study abroad through SIT South Africa
- Susanna Cassisa, international studies, German, study abroad in Jena, Germany
- Lilian Gordon, biology, study abroad at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
- Alana Mitias, international studies, Arabic, study abroad in Amman, Jordan
- Olivia Myers, international studies, study abroad in Moscow
- Sarah Peterson, chemistry, study abroad in Klagenfurt, Austria
- Jeanne Torp, international studies, French, study abroad through IES in Paris
‘Sushi Set.’ Red earthenware, cone 04, hand built by Rosa Salas

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