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Like Thoreau in *Walden*, we will record our sauntering here, remembering that "if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours."

Cover photo: Neila Henrice during the Clarke Honors College Sicily study abroad, summer 2024



Giving Back to the Community I Grew Up In

By Sophie Detorie

Sophomore Mahrukh Rizwan (she/her) is a Salisbury native. She attended Wicomico High School and credits the involvement of the University within her high school advising center as a large factor in her decision to attend Salisbury University. Now, as a Clarke Honors College ambassador, Rizwan is able to serve her local community in the same way it served her.

Rizwan "took for granted" that Salisbury University's campus was a stone's throw down the street, though admits it was always "in the back of her mind" as an option. Distance from home plays a role in any high school senior's decision regarding where to attend college – for better or for worse – and Rizwan is of the lucky sect that has found comfort in being so close to home.

"I don't have to worry about the same things as other students," she said. Salisbury University involved itself at Wicomico High School through memorable field trips and impressive scholarship raffles.

Giving back to the local community

is a pillar of the Clarke Honors
College. As an ambassador, Rizwan
has been involved in many rewarding
experiences, such as helping out with
kids at the local community center.
This is an especially significant aspect
for Rizwan. She was once a child
at the community center receiving
tutoring and other forms of educational
guidance from former ambassadors.

"If I could go back in time," she said, "I would love to have that resource."

Claire Morin Elected as New HSA President

By Tessah Good

After tallying the votes for this year's election, junior Claire Morin (she/her) has been selected as the president of the Honors Student Association (HSA) for the 2024-2025 school year.

HSA is an organization that runs events and volunteer opportunities for Clarke Honors College (CHC) students to bond and make a difference in the community. "We've had events like a costume party, ugly sweater contest, and meet and greet," said Morin.

As president, Morin plays many roles within HSA. She oversees the club's financial status, works closely with HSA's faculty advisor, organizes meetings, notifies students of events and is the organization's main point of contact for other groups like the Center of Student Involvement and Leadership.

Morin shared that her fond memories and love for the HSA motivated her to become president and dedicate her time and energy to this organization. "It was the first place I got to call home in the honors college," Morin shared. "When I was actually researching whether or not I was going to go for the honors college, I was looking around at the opportunities that they offered. One of the things they had listed was HSA. Once I saw their volunteer work, I was immediately drawn in."

As president, Morin's goal is to spread awareness of the organization and convey to students that the executive board is here for them. Morin hopes that the HSA will have more volunteer events this year, giving honors students an opportunity to contribute to the Salisbury community and get involved in the CHC.

"I want others to be as passionate as our current executive board. The goal is to keep going and going," said Morin.



Honors 211: Introduction to the Study of Language

By Mandy Sanidad



One of the many benefits of being enrolled in the Clarke Honors College (CHC) is the unique and enriching honors courses offered. This semester, Dr. Anjali Pandey is teaching an Honors 211 section called Introduction to the Study of Language.

"The course professor, Dr. Pandey, is well-versed and passionate about teaching, which is demonstrated during her classroom lectures," said honors student Piper Hagenrater-Gooding.

Students in this class are able to learn about the different components of language, such as phonetics, syntax and language creation through interactive presentations designed to allow the students to "learn by listening." Students are also able to

"learn by doing" by playing a variety of language-based games as a class and even designing their own games.

The class assignments are primarily project-based to allow students to express themselves and their interests creatively using multimedia tools. The honors class structure gives students many opportunities to present to and engage with their peers throughout the semester.

"I fully recommend enrolling in Dr. Pandey's Introduction to the Study of Language class as the professor is knowledgeable about her content and the pace of the course is more than manageable," said Hagenrater-Gooding.

Maggie Atherton's New Ambassador Program Initiatives

By Sophia Smith

Reflecting on her humble beginnings as a new ambassador to her current role as lead ambassador, senior Maggie Atherton (she/her) shared how the Clarke Honors College's (CHC) ambassador program has evolved: "When I started out, all I did was maybe volunteer for one or two ambassador-related events." she recalled.

Over time, she has not only observed growth in opportunities for ambassadors but has actively contributed to creating more ways for them to engage with honors students and participate in community-building events. Atherton has been an ambassador for the Clarke Honors College since her sophomore year, and her decision to take on this role was influenced by the close friendships she had formed with her own ambassadors.

"Being in the honors college my freshman year helped me get acclimated to the campus. As an out-ofstate student, that was very important for me," she said.

She emphasizes how the close-knit community of the honors college supported her transition from high school. She wanted to give back to the CHC by being a mentor for incoming students, particularly those with similar backgrounds, to help them navigate their college experience.

One of Atherton's main goals after achieving the role of lead ambassador of the Bellavance track in her junior year was to improve support for students, which led her to propose creating study halls. These study halls, held biweekly, allow students to connect with ambassadors, receive help on assignments and study together. The study halls are open to everyone in the CHC, not just first-year students.

This year, as the lead ambassador of the CHC, Atherton continues to advocate for the honors college and its students. "I knew I had the time and capacity to take on this role, and there was still more I wanted to do with the program," she explained. Her passion for empowering other ambassadors played a significant part in her decision.

The CHC ambassador program introduced a few new initiatives this year, including the introduction of ambassador training. "The training was just a way for the ambassadors to meet each other and go over what we're expecting, and I think it went really well," she explained. This not only allowed ambassadors to connect with one another but also made the program feel more cohesive.

Atherton also helped introduce an ambassador handbook and contract this year, driven by her goal of giving ambassadors a more active role. She wants to move beyond the basic task of sending check-in emails to mentees and empower ambassadors to engage more meaningfully in the program. She believes that being able to say they directly helped first-year students succeed academically is invaluable.

"Before, there weren't any guidelines for what an ambassador does or how it can benefit them," she said. Now, the handbook accomplishes both so that ambassadors can understand their roles better and are encouraged to engage with faculty and fellow students. "It gave more structure to the ambassador program, which was really needed."

The ambassador program is also leading a new series called Professionalism 101, which is designed to help students build essential skills for their academic and future careers. The series will provide helpful tips and advice for honors students, who often face higher expectations from professors.

"Knowing how to write an email properly and how to properly communicate with a professor is vital, especially for honors students. So, we're just providing them with another opportunity to learn and grow," Atherton explained.

Atherton has seen the program grow and change, and she's been a big part of that. Looking ahead, she's hopeful that the new initiatives will continue in the future. "I really hope we're able to do the Professionalism 101 series again in the spring," she said, recognizing that effective marketing will be the key to its success.

From her time as a new ambassador to her current role at the top of the pyramid, Atherton has worked hard to make sure honors students feel supported and connected, and her leadership has set a new standard as she has provided invaluable new resources for honors students and ambassadors as a whole.



Italy's Odysseus: Stefano Parenti of EDOdyssey

By Isabella Napolitano

This past summer, I was given the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to attend a 10-day Global Seminar in Sicily alongside 21 fellow Clarke Honors College students, with our very own Dr. Andrew Martino and Dr. Sherry Maykrantz. Upon arriving at the Catania Airport, we were greeted by Stefano Parenti (he/him). Born and raised in Rome, Parenti works for EDOdyssey – the organization that made this study abroad experience possible. As a senior director, he oversees the development and management processes of all EDOdyssey programs in Italy, ensuring their success.

Parenti stayed with us at our hotel on the beautiful island of Ortygia, always offering a genuine and welcoming presence. He joined us on every adventure, whether it was attending our lectures at the Syracuse Academy, enjoying group dinners or tackling our rewarding hike up Mount Etna, the world's most active stratovolcano. It was clear that he cared for each of us and was eager for us to fully immerse ourselves in Sicily's rich culture.

"In general, study abroad students have the unique opportunity to grow personally and to develop important global competencies," Parenti said.

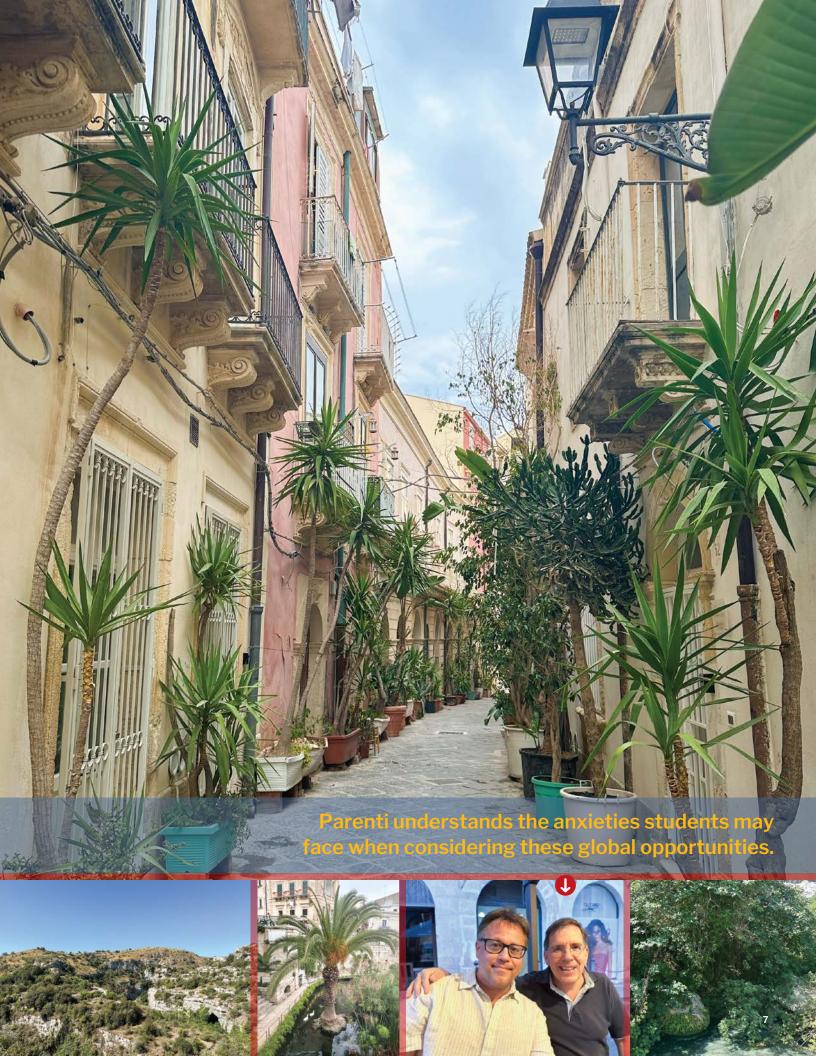
In a world built around culture, understanding and embracing these differences are essential. Instead of merely observing the daily life of Sicilians, I was actively engaging in it and even picking up Sicilian words and phrases to make the experience feel more genuine. While exploring new places was exciting, the real value came from truly understanding the people and gaining a deeper appreciation for their culture. This is exactly what Parenti wants people to take away from these study abroad programs: transferable skills and intellectual freedom.

With over 20 years of experience in developing international education programs, including the establishment of two new study abroad schools in Italy, Parenti understands the anxieties students may face when considering these global opportunities. However, he encourages any student considering studying abroad to embrace their fears with a positive mindset.

"First, dream of a life-changing opportunity, plan it in advance and jump into the world with an open mind and arms," he said.

Driven by his love for travel and the power of cultural exchange, Parenti is passionate about creating educational experiences that truly resonate with students. "I had the real pleasure to organize, in collaboration with my friend Dr. Andrew Martino, three summer faculty-led programs in a row," he said. "Looking forward to running the next edition!"







Late Night Work Leads to Late Night Reward

By Logan Lankford

A new Clarke Honors College (CHC) staple is the annual summer trip to Sicily, which is an adventure that nursing junior Neila Henrice (she/her) got to embark on as her first trip to Europe. Henrice described a beautiful city, vibrant nightlife and forward fashion: "I don't think that city ever sleeps."

The group of honors students she was traveling with seemed to have hardly slept themselves. Maximizing their time abroad, they packed the experience with both course-sponsored and personal leisure activities, one of Henrice's favorites being visiting the market.

Before departing, she described herself as being nervous to go, but once at the airport, quickly realized what a support system she had built in: "I didn't have any friends going and expected social isolation, but I never got the chance to do that ... there was always someone to talk to."

Going with the cohort of honors students didn't give her the opportunity to be shy. Everyone was super welcoming and always ready to do something interesting. Henrice added that going without anyone she was close to actually enhanced the experience: "I think if I went with friends, it would limit what I learned because I wouldn't have explored or socialized as much."

As exciting as her adventure to Sicily was, she had quite the experience before ever getting on the plane, as Henrice was the recipient of the nationally competitive Gilman International Scholarship. As a student worker in Salisbury's Nationally Competitive Fellowships Office (SNCFO), she was very familiar with fellowships, but never imagined herself getting one.

She described an intense application process full of late nights spent working on her application. Accompanied by lots of support from the CHC, SNCFO and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), Henrice got a helpful nudge toward finishing and submitting the lengthy application.

"They believed in me so much. I didn't want to disappoint them," she said.

The Gilman is a competitive award with an intense application, and the Sicilian experience was well deserved after its lengthy process. Henrice encourages anyone else to jump at opportunities like these, which she'll be doing more of as well. She adds that the application process is very rewarding.

"After you get it done you realize, dang, I really did that," Henrice said.



By Daniel McMillan

Each of the four Clarke Honors College (CHC) programs, Bellavance, Henson, Business, and the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS), is directed by a dedicated honors faculty member. Program directors are responsible for helping plan honors courses and the requirements for their honors track. They work with the dean, other faculty and students, including the honors ambassadors, to ensure that the students in their programs can meet the requirements of both the honors college and their majors. We at the Saunterer decided to ask the CHC program directors some questions to learn more about them and the new and exciting ideas they are implementing.



Dr. Michael Koval Honors Business Program Director



Dr. Jenifer Hart College of Health and Human Services Honors Program Director



Dr. Emin Lelić Thomas E. Bellavance Honors Program Director



Dr. Joshua Sokoloski Richard A. Henson Honors Program Director



What degrees have you earned over your academic career?

- Dr. Koval: I earned my undergraduate degree in chemical engineering at Pennsylvania State University. From there, I went directly into the workforce as an engineer in the paper industry. The company I worked for then provided the funds to pay for my master's in business administration. This earned me a higher place within the corporation, which gave me experience with the legal world. When the opportunity presented itself, I then pursued and earned a Juris Doctorate.
- Dr. Hart: I received my B.S. in nursing, which I used to immediately begin my career as a nurse. I returned to school for my master's in clinical nursing education, which allowed me to work as a nursing instructor at Wor-Wic Community College. After about three years in that career, I went to SU to earn a degree as a family nurse practitioner with the Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.).
- Dr. Lelić: My undergraduate degree was in history from Carleton College. Immediately after earning my B.A., I pursued a master's degree in history at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies of the University of Chicago. My Ph.D. in history would also be earned at the University of Chicago in the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Department.
- Dr. Sokoloski: The University of Pittsburgh provided my undergraduate education in chemistry. I then moved to Pennsylvania State University where I earned my Ph.D. in chemistry.



How did you come to your position at SU?

- ▶ Dr. Koval: I was working in private law practice when my triplet children were born, and it was decided that I would be the one to stay home and watch over them. When they became old enough that I could reenter the labor market, I saw an opportunity for an adjunct professor position here at SU, and I have been working here since 2006.
- Dr. Hart: After earning my D.N.P., I was attracted to a professor position at SU due to the wider range of degree levels I would be able to teach. I had previously only been able to teach associate degree-level students at Wor-Wic.
- Dr. Lelić: I decided to pursue a position as a professor at SU almost immediately after earning my doctorate.
- Dr. Sokoloski: I arrived at SU in 2017 after completing post-doc work at Washington University in St. Louis, where I performed research based on the fluorescence of molecules. Ever since coming here, I have been focusing more on teaching.



When and how were you first approached to become a program director for the CHC?

- Dr. Koval: I was approached to become the director of the CHC business honors program five years ago. At that time, the business honors program was relatively new.
- Dr. Hart: When the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) at SU was formed in 2018, I became a part of the curriculum committee. Before our founding dean left SU, she had tasked our committee with formulating an honors program for our school. My position as a program director grew out of that.

Honors Program Directors Q

- Dr. Lelić: Before becoming a program director, I had the opportunity to teach honors classes and interact with honors students taking my non-honors classes. The honors college seemed like an intellectually rich environment, which caught my interest. A few semesters ago, I also had the opportunity to fill in for the previous director of the Bellavance program while they were on leave for a semester. This gave me enough experience with the position that when it became available, I knew I would apply for it. This is my first semester as a program director.
- Dr. Sokoloski: I am in my first semester as a program director. I was an honors student in college myself, so I am very excited about the role. I took over from Dr. Jenifer Nyland, who originated the Henson honors program.

What has been going on in your program since you have taken charge?

- Dr. Koval: We have been making an effort to improve the flexibility of the business honors program. It had previously been a problem that business honors students, who were usually in Bellavance at that time, would be swamped with extra work from having to complete both a business and a liberal arts curriculum. I have worked with the dean and the rest of the honors college to create ways for our students to fulfill their honors and business requirements at the same time. This includes ideas such as offering honors credit for the internships all business students are required to do and offering more honors classes that fulfill business requirements. We have also been working on other offerings and ideas for our business honors students. We have an alumni network that connects business honors students with alumni in the field they are looking to work in. We have also started a video library of the Honors 312 course's creative projects. I have our students record videos describing their creative projects that are posted to the library. We are looking for students who might be interested in acting as videographers because the student I used to rely on for filming has graduated.
- Dr. Hart: Recently, we have been working to increase the number of students in honors from other health fields. Our program has been mostly nursing students up to this point. We have also been doing the usual necessary work to ensure our students meet all the qualifications to graduate as both health sciences majors and honors students. Before the creation of our program, health science students in the honors college would traditionally follow the Henson honors track, which was difficult to fulfill the requirements of alongside their major. The newest development in our program is that we have been

- approved to develop our own capstone project. Starting in the spring semester of 2026, CHHS honors students will be able to choose between doing the traditional honors thesis or an interprofessional collaboration for experiential learning. CHHS students pursuing this capstone will be asked, during their field experiences, to evaluate the interprofessional team and build an interprofessional collaboration portfolio.
- Dr. Lelić: I aim to create an intellectually vibrant environment in the honors Bellavance program. My program is the oldest of the four honors tracks, so I already have a good base to work from. I am mostly looking to continue a good legacy and to find anywhere I can work to improve the program. I am planning to meet with incoming and more senior students to discuss research. I am also working closely with my honors ambassadors to ensure a high-quality program.
- ▶ Dr. Sokoloski: We have a very large incoming class in the Henson honors program this year. I love to see the growth in participation. We also have close to 30 students engaged in undergraduate research. I have also been working with my honors ambassadors to plan outreach activities. This fall semester, we put special effort into some spooky and science-themed events in October.

Outside your job as a program director, what else have you got going on at SU?

- ▶ Dr. Koval: I am the legal studies person in the Department of Accounting and Legal Studies here at SU. I teach Legal Environment of Business and business law classes.
- Dr. Hart: We in the SU nursing program have recently implemented a fast-track program for nursing where students will work all four semesters of the year, spring, summer, fall and winter, to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in one year.
- Dr. Lelić: I am performing research and currently writing a book on history. The title is Ottoman Physiognomy: A Window into the Soul of an Empire.
- ▶ Dr. Sokoloski: I teach standard courses in general and biological chemistry, and I teach honors students in general chemistry and the Science of Science Fiction. I also teach a first-year seminar on my favorite molecule, RNA. Finally, I am always engaged in research, and I have a continual focus on student-centric research.



ABC, Let's Build a Community: The Youth Tutoring Program

By Claire Morin

The Clarke Honors College (CHC) has always promoted volunteer and service to its students. This semester, accounting and political science major Riley Bruce (he/him) went above and beyond through the creation of the Youth Tutoring Program (YTP).

The YTP's origins can be traced back to fall 2023 when Bruce originally pitched the idea of starting a free youth soccer league for kids in the Salisbury community. His inspiration for the league stemmed from his days as a soccer coach in his hometown. However, there were some troubles with legal fees and insurance, so he had to think of another way to connect with the community and pivoted to providing an additional resource for local students: tutoring.

Bruce's first attempt to bring the program to life happened in spring 2024 where volunteers would go to the Salisbury Community House to tutor for an hour on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. This semester, he got additional help from Declan Adams and Madi Smith to be supervisors and extended the program to four days a week. Bruce explained: "We have also switched to a new format where we have a supervisor for Monday/Wednesdays and a supervisor for Tuesdays/Thursdays to create more consistency in the faces that you see on certain days."

The desire for consistency is important to Bruce because he wants to give CHC students the opportunity to connect with the community that they are surrounded with. He said, "The main benefit of tutoring is really building those connections with your community, really tying yourself to the city of Salisbury as a whole. Understanding that while you are here you make an impact, and you want to make sure that impact is a positive one."

Bruce has no plans on letting the tutoring program die after this semester. He expressed; "Our ultimate goal is to make sure we become a permanent organization that really exists beyond my time here. I really want to build something that lasts." The expansion of adding supervisors gives Bruce hope that the resources provided by the YTP will be passed down for semesters to come and brings positive impacts to both the community and Salisbury University.

For the future direction of the YTP, Bruce hopes to continue expansion through adding another location. He has set his sights on Truitt Community Center and aims to deepen SU's connection to its surrounding community and provide more students with access to resources such as tutoring. Bruce said, "The more we can help, the more we can create a positive impact, the better off the whole community will be because every little bit counts."

Over his time spent at the community center, Bruce has found a new gratitude and appreciation toward parents and teachers. He realizes how hard it can be to teach and build on those fundamental skills once one has them. He expressed, "Recognizing that growth we had as people as we develop is tremendous and being able to be a part of that for someone else is truly an amazing experience."

Bruce has already begun to see changes in the Salisbury community. He notes that students are coming in more consistently because of the relationships that they are building with the CHC tutors and are motivated to learn. The students enjoy their time at the community center as well as bringing their own curiosity to their tutors to learn more about what interests them.

Bruce believes that the CHC has sharpened his skills of effective communication and building connections. He thanks Professor Lauren Hill for working with him closely and "being one of the key foundational figures" for the YTP and the CHC students for spending time volunteering as tutors. Bruce encourages any CHC student who is interested in beginning their own programs in the Salisbury community to go out, use their connections, be prepared to adapt and create it.

Rising with the Tides: Allie Rudasill's Internship with the Annapolis Maritime Museum

By Kaley Hardman & Claire Morin

One surefire way to kickstart your career endeavors is with a relevant internship. For honors student Allie Rudasill (she/her), this meant muddying her boots at the Annapolis Maritime Museum (AMM). The AMM has a museum about the Chesapeake Bay and an Education Center where an annual summer camp was hosted. Over the summer, Rudasill had the opportunity to be a college intern at the Educational Center. Each week, she was immersed in a new experience

with different activities and a brand-new set of kids ranging from ages 4 to 13.

Rudasill would lead campers through multiple activities and teach them the wonders of nature at the Chesapeake Bay. Activities included fishing, hiking, seining, kayaking and riding the skipjack Wilma Lee. The fun continued inside the museum as well. The AMM had dedicated rooms for indoor enrichment like arts and crafts and storytelling. Rudasill expressed; "Genuinely, there was so much fun stuff for us to do there like the camp activities, games, going fishing and going to the beach. No two days were the same."

Rudasill's inspiration for joining the

AMM team began as an elementary schooler.

She grew up in the local area, allowing her the opportunity to visit the museum on a field trip. She revealed, "I remember learning about the place where I live and the Chesapeake Bay. I really enjoyed that trip and would like to give that same kind of enjoyment and eagerness to learn to other kids."

As an environmental studies major, the AMM provided opportunities for environmental enrichment and gave Rudasill a unique opportunity to develop valuable skills for her future career. "They gave me a great base to go off ... I feel like I could now specialize in a specific field of environmental education ... I am confident that I can take the skills that I have and build on them."

She has already seen the fruits of her labor. She was given the opportunity to speak at an environmental studies colloquium about student internships. "When I was

approached about that," Rudasill stated. "I was happy about it. I did a lot of public speaking to big groups of kids at the internship, and I feel that I would not have been able to speak if not for that experience."

The honors college aided
Rudasill greatly throughout her
internship. She said: "Having to
give a lot of oral presentations
in honors courses has improved
my public speaking all around ... A
lot of the volunteer opportunities
that the honors college has provided
allowed me to work with children and
made me more confident"

After her experience, Rudasill encourages all honors students to pursue an internship: "Do it. It is great. It is a good opportunity for people. If you have the time and the resources, definitely find something in your field." The CHC gives honors students a chance to explore their own interests and grow their confidence as future leaders.



Opportunities Surround Us

Every opportunity we are given can lead to unexpected outcomes and personal growth. Anuj Ghumatkar (he/him) learned this firsthand throughout his experience with JPMorgan. He competed in JPMorgan's finance case study competition, which he learned about by being involved in SU's campus community. What he initially believed was just a chance to showcase his skills became a pipeline to a highly coveted internship at one of the world's strongest financial institutions, JPMorgan Chase & Co (JPMorgan).

Ghumatkar worked within the risk management department, specifically focusing on the complexities of financial risk. "My role involved assessing various risks that JPMorgan encounters, such as liquidity risks associated with client transactions." Ghumatkar stated.

He reviewed and assessed data from spreadsheets related to client transactions, which allowed him to gain valuable insight into company operations. A significant part of his role involved distilling complex information from conducted market research into concise PowerPoint presentations for managing directors. The internship also allowed him multiple networking opportunities with other interns and company members. This collaboration enhanced an understanding of team dynamics and effective communication in a professional setting.

This internship proved to be a significant opportunity for skill enhancement. "I improved my Excel and PowerPoint skills significantly, but the biggest growth was in communication," Ghumatkar noted.

He had to work with many new people at once, which was a new experience for him. This allowed Ghumatkar to make immense development in his professional communication skills, and he said, "it was cool being able to talk to everyone."

The program inspired networking for the interns with not just company analysts but even their department heads and vice presidents, which allowed for the application and practice of professional communication skills.

The classes Ghumatkar participated in at Salisbury University helped prepare him for his internship, but he highlighted how his honors classes were especially beneficial: "The work we do in the Clarke Honors College, such as the academic research and being able to learn terminology," were skills that prepared Ghumatkar for his work



at JPMorgan. He mentioned that the classwork and extracurriculars at SU provided him with the tools he needed to succeed in a fast-paced workplace.

His advice for other students currently navigating the internship application process is concise: "Stay involved" as you are applying for internships and remember that "you're competing with many applicants." Ghumatkar recommends applying for every opportunity as you never know what the outcome may be. He emphasizes that everyone should maintain an active presence in both academic and extracurricular realms because you never know what opportunities each experience may bring.

By Beitris Boyreau-Millar



Emma Barthlemess: A Journey Through Research

By Beitris Boyreau-Millar

Salisbury University has numerous opportunities for students to get involved on campus from the very beginning. Although new to the community, Clarke Honors College member and transfer student Emma Barthelmess (she/her), psychology major with a minor in cognitive science, took full advantage of what SU has available. She got engaged in two research labs and dove deep into the intersection of sports, cognition and cultural awareness, all while honing skills that will aid her future career.

Barthelmess' involvement in research began when an interest was sparked by her professors. "I learned about my opportunities through Dr. Echo Leaver and Dr. Yuki Okubo," she recalled. After a meeting with Dr. Leaver early in the spring semester, she was drawn to her work on cognition and club sports.

Barthelmess seized the chance to join research projects over the summer, allowing her to immerse herself in the lab environment before the academic year began. "It helped me adjust to the lab's workings and the research process," she noted.

Her first project was a neuroscience lab where the team focused on how repetitive injuries and their relationship with Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) affect recreational athletes. The team spent the summer preparing for trials to be run during the fall 2024 semester. Barthelmess helped determine what statistical significance would mean in the study, which is how ideas are proven or disproven. This will be used when testing for the study begins.

Barthelmess additionally participated in a research study with Dr. Okubo about racism and coping. The team analyzed literature and conducted Zoom sessions to explore the complexities of cultural awareness, ethnicity and race. She reflected that studying significant texts highlighted the importance of different cultural aspects, and this understanding will be very important in her future career.

These research experiences further developed Barthelmess' research skills in multiple areas and additionally increased her confidence in her presentation skills. She was initially nervous about public speaking, but presenting her findings at different events on campus helped and "deepened [her] understanding and reinforced the importance of effective communication in research." Barthelmess stated that her experience this past summer will greatly benefit her as she finishes her academic career and later enters the professional world.

For others considering participating in research opportunities, Barthelmess advised: "Immerse yourself in research. It's a fantastic way to learn about your interests and the field, even if it means discovering what you don't want to pursue."

Barthelmess noted that the Clarke Honors College has great resources available to students to encourage and support research projects, making it a great opportunity for students to utilize. She encourages everyone to embrace the challenges of research and take full advantage of available opportunities.



RESEARCH

Marching Toward a Cure: Andersen Herman's Research on Malaria

By Robert Senesi

In the hectic first days of the semester, Andersen Herman (he/him) was in Guerrieri Academic Commons presenting his research at the Summer Student Research Showcase. Herman, a senior majoring in chemistry and minoring in biology, spent his summer experimenting on RNA strands with his mentor, Dr. Joshua Sokoloski. Their goal was to cause and observe changes to the RNA structure of *Plasmodium falciparum*, a parasite responsible for the deadly disease malaria.

Today, billions of people are at risk of developing malaria. The World Health Organization claims that just in 2022 almost 250 million people were infected and over 600 thousand were killed. As climate change advances in coming years, warmer temperatures and higher rainfall will likely increase the number exposed to malaria, according to the United Nations.

RNA is a major component of all living cells. It is responsible for making proteins, the building blocks of the cell, regulating the cell's functions and playing a key role in replicating DNA. Herman's research focused on altering conditions around the *Plasmodium falciparum*'s RNA, such as heat, salt concentration and acidity. Too much or too little of each of these can cause the RNA to denature, weakening or killing the cell.

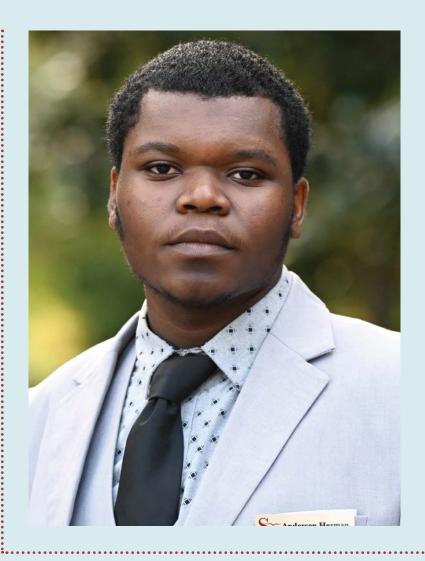
Herman's research is a part of the wide field of RNA therapeutics. RNA therapeutics are a relatively new, but promising, form of medication that has already been used throughout the world. Most notably, Pfizer's and Moderna's COVID-19 vaccines were RNA therapeutics.

Additionally, immunotherapy, another RNA therapeutic, has seen increasing use in recent years to treat certain forms of cancers, saving the lives of countless people in otherwise hopeless situations.

Herman hopes his research will contribute to an effective treatment of malaria. "We try to use a different mechanism in the parasite," Herman commented. "We are trying to use the RNA structure as a new therapeutic to cure the disease."

There are several drugs that prevent and treat the disease, many of them antibiotics. However, the *Plasmodium* parasite has already developed resistances to some. Eventually, our current antibiotics will likely have little or no effect against *Plasmodium falciparum*. Herman also believes that introducing new, effective medications can lower the cost of treatments and increase accessibility for poverty-stricken, underdeveloped populations, the demographic most at risk to malaria.

When he was young, Herman himself suffered from



malaria. He was moved by the doctors who cared for him and treated his illness, and he was inspired to do the same for other people. In the future, Herman plans to dig deeper into his research. He recently has applied to the Fulbright scholarship, wanting to extend his research into nanotechnologies and eventually write a thesis about his findings. In his spare time, he is studying for MCAT, the medical school placement exam. Herman aims to eventually work at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and have a career studying infectious diseases.

Herman encourages all students to believe in themselves and to try as hard as they can. "Whatever you're doing, do it 100%. Never go half-way," he said. In addition, he supports students applying to Salisbury University's Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (OURCA), where he received support for his research. "OURCA was very instrumental for my research. I was not going to pay for it. I was super, super thankful for their support. It costs money to do science," Herman said.



A Summer on the River: Jasmine Bowie's Undergraduate Research

By Sammie Somers

With two majors, three executive club board positions and Clarke Honors College (CHC) courses, Jasmine Bowie (they/them) has quite the resume. This summer, they continued working hard by conducting undergraduate research over the summer.

Bowie is a junior at Salisbury University majoring in biology and environmental studies. After discovering a love for it from a high school teacher, Bowie chose to study biology because they enjoyed learning new things about the world. They added environmental studies because of its focus on societal influences on environmental issues.

"I think it's important to understand the social context of the research that you're doing," Bowie stated.

After choosing their majors, the decision to join the honors college was an easy one. Bowie desired to talk with peers and have a deeper discussion about the world, and they knew the CHC was just the right place. Their choice led them to working with Dr. Jennifer Nyland of the Biological Sciences Department, and in summer 2024, they decided to begin a summer research project together. The initial focus of their research was on par- or poly-fluoroalkyl (PFAS), typically known as "forever chemicals," in the environment and their impact on surrounding ecosystems.

Bowie stated: "It's kind of a budding field of research. We know that the contamination of the substances in the environment is bad, but we don't know completely how bad yet."

Over the summer, Bowie, Dr. Nyland and Dr. Christina Bradley went out to collect water and soil samples to test for PFAS. However, the initial plan fell through. The samples failed to process at University of Maryland Eastern Shore due to current limitations on testing for PFAS. They also had been unable to outsource the samples to other locations due to time restrictions. Bowie soon realized they had to change the

course of their project. They decided to switch their topic to the impact of urban runoff, testing for heavy metals in rivers like the Wicomico.

Despite the hardships it brought, Bowie felt positively impacted by this research change. "Because absolutely nothing went right, I learned a lot of perseverance," Bowie expressed. "Even if things go horribly wrong, you can make the most of it and use your experiences to fuel new projects."

The research definitely had its highs and lows. Bowie remembered not so fondly the time they were stabbed in the hand by a catfish barb while reaching for a Gatorade on a particularly hot day. Nevertheless, being on the boat with Dr. Bradley and Dr. Nyland was an experience they would never replace.

For honors students looking to get into research, Bowie had some advice to give. "Email [the professors]. Look at their office hours outside their door or in their syllabi and say 'Hi! I'm interested in research." They also suggested looking on SU's website for past research that professors have done. If you ever need assistance with research opportunities, the CHC is here to lend a helping hand.



Email [the professors].
Look at their office
hours outside their door
or in their syllabi and
say 'Hi! I'm interested in
research."

— Jasmine Bowie

RESEARCH

Reel-life Science: Maia Burger's Zebrafish Research

By Mandy Sanidad

One of the requirements for the Clarke Honors College (CHC) is to complete either a thesis or a creative project. Maia Burger (she/her), a biomedical major with a chemistry minor, took her creative project, a research proposal, and put it into action. Burger applied to the Guerrieri Undergraduate Research Summer Program and got a grant to conduct her research.

Burger's project stemmed from a previous graduate student's research, who was examining zebrafish embryos at 23 days old. The zebrafish would eject cellular debris from their spine while they were alive under anesthetic, but they would die shortly after. Burger wanted to look at the signal that caused the death process to begin. Her project differed from the graduate student's though, as she examined zebrafish at three days old.

"I would image them for 18 hours and watch them progress through their dying process. All 122 of them died in the same five ways," said Burger.

Burger determined that there were five phases to the zebrafish's degeneration of the boundary between the central nervous system and the periphery nervous system. Burger's motivation for conducting this research stemmed from the neurological components and what their applications could be.

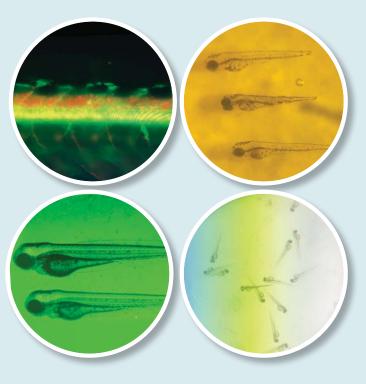
"I liked it because it was kind of related to multiple sclerosis [a central nervous system disorder]," she commented. "It's the same way that once things get shot out of your spine like that it can't come back in. I've done previous research with dementia and Alzheimer's, so I like neurological diseases. They're pretty cool to me."

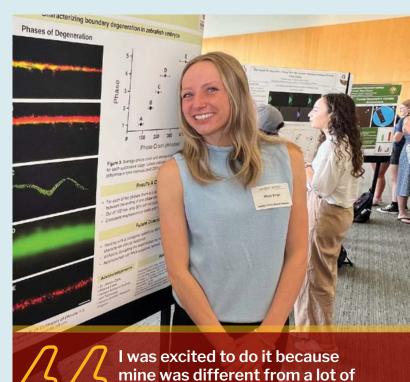
She worked with Dr. Jessica Clark as a faculty mentor, but she primarily worked independently. "We would meet every two weeks, but she would just let me figure things out. If there was something going wrong, she wouldn't tell me," Burger said.

Burger presented her research early this semester along with other students that participated in the Guerrieri Undergraduate Research Summer Program. It was her first time presenting research in the form of a poster, and she noted gaining the experience of breaking down and articulating science terminology.

"I was excited to do it because mine was different from a lot of people's," she said. "It was mostly pictures I was looking at – my data was pictures – and when it would start and end. It was cool to present numbers that way instead of just in a graph."

Maia's final thoughts were positive: "I was so happy with it and it was fun to call something my own. It was really rewarding in the end."





of just in a graph."

people's," she said. "It was mostly pictures I was looking at – my data was pictures – and when it would start and end. It was cool to present numbers that way instead

Alumnus Spotlight Lauren DeLong in Al



By Mallory Bell "Careers you are going to have in 10 years, probably don't even exist right now," Clarke Honors College alumna Lauren DeLong (she/her) shared what was said to her years ago at Salisbury University. These words of encouragement ring true today as DeLong works toward her PhD in neurosymbolic AI at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

After graduating from SU in 2019 with a degree in biology, chemistry and math, DeLong was only beginning her journey in the biomedical field. She received a Fulbright research grant to go to Germany, where she worked in biomedical artificial intelligence. Despite her original intentions of being a wet-lab biologist, her insightful experience in Germany led her to find a love for programming and AI.

"I liked AI so much that I made my decision to just do a master's degree in bio and cheminformatics in Germany," she said. Now, she has nine months left in her Ph.D., where she uses and improves AI for biomedical applications.

Her transition from undergrad to postgrad was challenging but embedded her with essential skills and principles for her Ph.D.

She explained a valuable skill needed to enter the world of biomedical and research-based practices: creativity. "Creativity is one of the most important factors in being successful because it helps you combine ideas and find overlap and think of new ideas beyond what everyone else is doing," DeLong explained. "You can see what research is popular but take note of that and come up with new adjacent ideas."

When asked about mentors during her time at Salisbury, she had many professors for whom she was thankful – she noted Drs. Les Erickson, Patti Erickson, Kristen Walton and Jennifer Nyland for their support, advice and guidance. Her favorite memories at Salisbury consisted of the end-of-semester celebrations thrown by Dr. Les and Patty Erikson, honors craft nights organized by Lauren Hill, and studying late with her roommate Mollie Jewell.

In regard to DeLong's future plans, she hopes to take her skills to a biotech company, where she can efficiently incorporate her knowledge from all of her degrees into one profession. In the final stages of her Ph.D., DeLong plans on further enhancing her Al research at the Alan Turing Institute, where she will collaborate with world-leading researchers and engage in interdisciplinary discussions.

She leaves Salisbury students with this:
Don't be afraid to come from a nontraditional group or explore interdisciplinary fields. When entering the lab, she felt challenged by the male-dominated field, but she ultimately learned the importance of bringing diversity and her own individuality into Al's graphically developing nature. With diverse backgrounds comes interdisciplinary thinking, yielding fruitful collaboration and new perspectives.
Entering a field as a minority might be daunting, but it's exactly what Al or any research-based practice needs.

Lighting the Way to Reproductive Equity: **FLARE**

By Logan Lankford

One of Salisbury's new favorite organizations, Freedom Learning and Advocacy for Reproductive Equity – more commonly known as FLARE – is near and dear to the Clarke Honors College's (heart. The overturning of Roe v. Wade lit a fire underneath some of our students who have now partnered with Planned Parenthood to create a Generation Action chapter right here on campus. The executive board includes President Maggie Atherton (she/her), Vice President CJ Atherton (she/her), Treasurer Lian Peach (she/her), Event Coordinator Justice Jenson (she/her) and SGA Representative Hannah Brooks (she/her), all members of the CHC who have pioneered this initiative.

FLARE's mission is to fill educational gaps concerning reproductive health, improve students' access to reproductive health resources on campus, advocate for students' reproductive rights and uphold the values of Planned Parenthood. Recently, they've embarked on some new projects that are significantly benefitting the lives of menstruators across campus. With the support of the President's Office, FLARE has partnered with Aunt Flow to bring free, high-quality, organic, biodegradable and comfortable menstrual products to campus. The 32 stainless steel dispensers newly installed across campus in both women's and all-gendered bathrooms are a direct result of Maggie, CJ, Lian, Justice and Hannah's efforts to get this pilot program up and running.

FLARE and their volunteers refill these dispensers themselves, working outside class hours to keep this resource stocked on campus for students. They said to students, "the most important thing for menstruators on campus is to have access to the products they need ... safe, healthy products," and hope to one day bring these dispensers to every bathroom on campus. Professor Lauren Hill, the assistant dean of the Clarke Honors College, has been an avid supporter of FLARE, working as their faculty advisor on campus and now offering a new volunteer opportunity for other honors students to help with the dispenser restocking.

FLARE's mission to break the stigma surrounding period poverty and bring free resources to menstruators on campus is an incredible initiative and one that has garnered some attention both on and off campus. Early in fall 2024, FLARE had the opportunity to partner with U by Kotex and the Alliance for Period Supplies, allowing them to spend their day giving out entire boxes of free menstrual products to SU students. Not only that, representatives from Condē Nast and Teen Vogue came out to help hand out supplies and collect student testimonials to be featured in a video on their social media platforms.



Teen Vogue coming to campus was a wonderful opportunity for both FLARE and the University, showcasing what they hope to accomplish here and adding to their quickly growing legacy of service. From partnering with well-known companies to get eyes on the issues they're advocating for to supplying free menstrual products to students, the work that FLARE has done for Salisbury University's campus is meaningful and making an impact on the lives of our students. This is an organization that gets things done and genuinely cares about the rights and health of the student body, truly embodying the core values of the CHC.

Overcoming Challenges On and Off the Field

By Julia Reburn

Kasey Wilson (she/her), a Clarke Honors College sophomore, is all about facing challenges head on. Not only is Wilson a dedicated Clarke Honors College ambassador and an active member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, but she's also a force on the soccer field as well.

Wilson hails from Parkside High School, right down the road from Salisbury University. Not only was Salisbury's competitive athletic environment a factor in her decision, but having her family close by was a key factor in her decision as well

At Salisbury, Wilson joined her twin brother; she also followed in her grandfather's footsteps: "My grandfather, Don Cathcart, coached track here," said Wilson. Cathcart also served as SU's provost and chair of mathematics and computer science before he retired in 2008.

One of the most defining moments of Wilson's career landed in a game against Randolph Macon her freshman season. Wilson opened up about tearing her ACL, a careeraltering injury. But Wilson didn't let that stop her.

"Playing soccer is kind of my favorite thing to do ever. I go to practice so I can play more," said Wilson.

For some people, tearing their ACL ends their career. Wilson chose to move forward, and it's been only up from there.

"It taught me a lot about perseverance," she said. Wilson was in Honors 111 at the time – one of the most challenging classes for freshman students: "It was hard to keep up with classes, schoolwork and recovery."

Wilson was on a strict regime of seeing her physical therapist, athletic trainer and honors professor to keep up with her now even more hectic schedule. Wilson emphasized how she found support in leaning on her professors: "I would talk to Dr. [Viktoria] Basham about my recovery ... she was very understanding."

Wilson wanted to emphasize the importance of leaning on your friends when you face challenges: "I met my best friend here. We met through soccer, but we do everything together."

She also spoke about her love of bingo night and honors college "Me Time" nights. Wilson spoke highly about rock painting nights as well. For Wilson, the support around her was what helped her get to where she is today.

An important takeaway for Wilson was that "your professors are people too." They're not just there to teach, they also can provide valuable support when students need it. Wilson spoke of how intimidating the Clarke Honors College can be to freshmen, but "if you work hard, it's not unachievable."



I met my best friend here. We met through soccer, but we do everything together."

CREATIVEWORKS By Honors Students

Honors students are known for their ability to think outside the box. They excel in a variety of fields, and often, their thinking results in the unexpected. This semester, the Clarke Honors College, put out a call to all of its students for creative pieces. In response, we received the following works.

AMANDA DENSMORE



CLAIRE MORIN





ALLIE RUDASILL













MAGGIE PATTERSON

after walking

I stare at the filthy frat shoes in my childhood home with stains

not even time can undo. They live next to the box stuffed with temporary

highs and lows. These objects exchanged for a piece of paper dignity.

The cardstock framed and reduced to a word, maybe two, in a resume: *Please*

hire. But that dream job wasn't even open. So, I end up back

In her memory,

we should have soup for breakfast. I think she always loved the warmth

of the morning. - She was never a breakfast food person - he tells me. (I couldn't have known

her so intimately). But both of us should have gone to bed, the night before, kissed her good-

night, told her *I love you* (I don't know if I had). Even so, we couldn't have changed

the chill of the morning after or have seen her

have soup for breakfast again.

You have five boxes.

The first is a resting place. Padded comfort added for a night's relief. Soft sides muffling your cries. Until the box becomes only a shape of the past. The second,

a home. For childhood, for adulthood, for your child's childhood. The temporary place until you can't stay any longer.

The third, cardboard: a storage item of sorts. Stuffed with possessions. Memories are things left behind. Your box reused from box to box.

The fourth, a holder. For a glinting gem and hope. But you will live more than one life trying to find a box that holds enough. The last

is a resting place. Padded comfort added for someone else's relief. Soft sides muffling their cries. Until the box becomes only a shape.

The Quiet of a Summer Morning

There's noise to be found in silence. There's a father's pleas,

a brother's laugh, a daughter's cry. There's the strike of the sky

saving it's saturation for a sweaty day in June. There's thoughts,

doubts, tears. There's reassurance our savior sought her

out for her cooking skills. "She's up there making blueberry muffins for *Him now*."

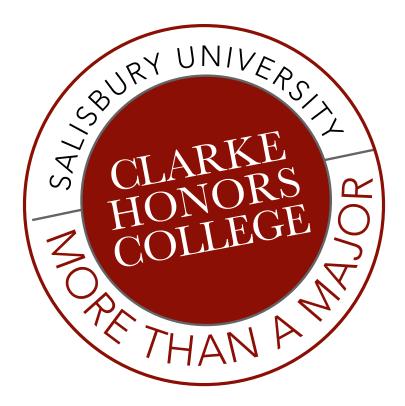
cope.

your brain is leaking what little memories remain inside, your stories

slosh and slip into a dripping mush down your spine

trying to be reabsorbed by the body and merge with your mind again, you

can't control it, they say you can only –



The Clarke Honors College offers an enriched educational experience for students from all majors at SU. The College fosters collaboration between students and faculty to support undergraduate research, promotes interdisciplinary work and encourages innovation on the SU campus. Honors courses and extracurricular activities are intended to deepen a student's educational experience and develop the next generation of leaders, scientists, educators and more.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

We need your help to aid highly motivated students in attending professional conferences, purchase supplies to support undergraduate research (computers, lab equipment, etc.), fund experiential learning activities and more. Your gift will go toward enhancing the educational experience for some of SU's most motivated students.

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SU has a strong institutional commitment to diversity and nondiscrimination in all programs, events, and services. To that end, the University prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status or othe legally protected characteristics. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Office of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator, Holloway Hall 100, 410-543-6426.

