FALL 2025

HensonNews

Produced by Salisbury University's Henson School of Science and Technology

Henson Humanities & STEM SPOTLIGHTS

In this issue of *Henson News*, meet students who have combined their passion for creative and liberal arts with a pursuit of STEM majors and minors.

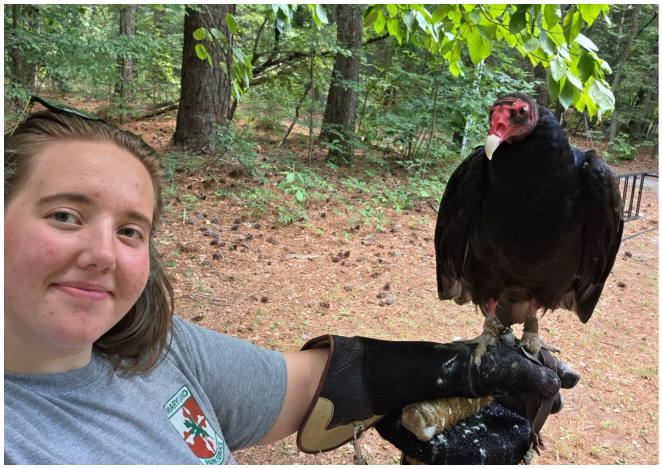
From the Henson Dean's Office

Many people do not realize the natural intersection of science and art, where the methodical pursuit of knowledge meets imaginative expression. The core link is the shared need for curiosity, observation, and creative problem-solving. Famous examples include Leonardo da Vinci, who used detailed anatomical drawings and engineering sketches for both his artistic masterpieces and scientific understanding, and Albert Einstein, who was an accomplished violinist who credited music with helping him solve scientific problems. Many students and faculty in the Richard A. Henson School of Science and Technology blend these twin interests for visualization and expression. By encouraging students to use their artistic skills, we foster the imaginative and lateral thinking necessary for both groundbreaking discoveries in science and innovative creation in art. I hope you enjoy reading about Haley, Jenna, and Abigail as much as I did. The faculty and staff of the Henson School have the privilege of working with thousands of students just like them, helping them craft their passions into lifetimes of learning. Thank you so much for your support that makes all that work possible.

– Dr. Michael Scott, Dean

The Importance of Art: From A Scientist's Perspective

Haley King
Biology – Environmental Biology Concentration Major
English – Creative Writing Concentration Major



Naturalist Haley King at Pocomoke River State Park with ambassador raptor Cypress the turkey vulture!

I am currently in my fourth year at Salisbury University, and when I started here, I knew science is where I belonged due to an internship at a zoo my senior year of high school where I found my passion for working with animals.

My second year at SU, I decided to take a creative writing class (ENGL 351) thinking it would count toward my General Education requirements (it did not, so let this be a lesson to read more carefully, but sometimes mistakes are supposed to happen). This is where I met a professor that helped me foster my newfound love for poetry: Dr. John Nieves. He quickly became a huge mentor for me, helped me better my writing, and showed me what direction I could take this interest. I decided to take a poetry workshop the following semester and quickly added the minor. Here I am two years later as a double major.

I think there is a common misconception that if you have a "science brain" the arts are out of your scope. But that couldn't be more wrong. I have a job with the Maryland Park Service as a naturalist, working with ambassador animals and doing programs to teach people about wildlife. I am also a published writer and have had pieces in multiple international literary magazines, including The Inflectionist, The Shore, Poetry South, and others. I am also a poetry editor on a literary magazine started by my fellow students and friends that I met through creative writing courses.

I enjoy picking apart both sides of myself, but one cannot exist without the other. I incorporate my love of science in my writing and understand the art that is inherently encased in the field of science. But there is also a science to writing and being able to dissect the craft of pieces. While at SU, being involved in both areas has broadened the people I surround myself with. I'm stretching the circles I get to learn from and teach, and cultivated friendships that have given me a community that is so important as a writer and a scientist. I don't think art or science are mutually exclusive or that one is more important than the other, rather, both interests have shaped the way that I understand parts of my academic career and also the way I experience the rest of the world.

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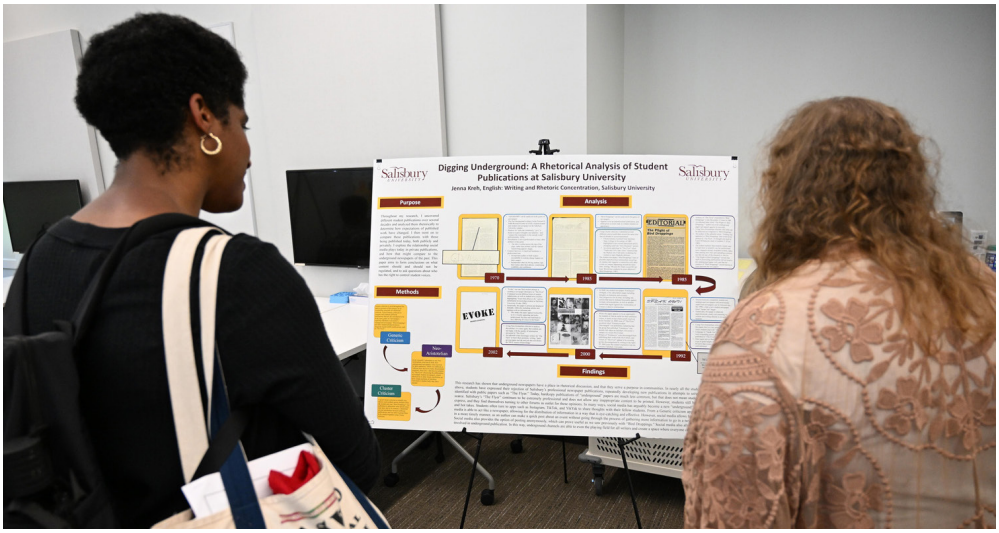
Thinking Outside the Box with STEM Minors

Jenna Kreh
English Major • Mathematics Minor, Physics Minor, & Communication Minor



Guests view Jenna Kreh's research on student publications at SU.

Because I took several AP classes in high school, I had extra room in my schedule at Salisbury University to explore interests outside of my English major. I chose communication to directly compliment my English major, in which I am constantly using written communication, but I wanted to step outside my comfort zone as well and explore other possible interests of mine, which led me to physics and math.

Taking physics and math courses at Salisbury has allowed me to expand my problem-solving skills and learn to think outside of the box. These courses have helped me grow my confidence in my ability to master new skills, and I have carried that confidence into other areas of my life.

Last semester, I presented at my first research conference for a paper I wrote for my English major, and I felt confident approaching this new environment and experience because of my time in STEM. Similarly, I have found that my knowledge of writing and communicating has helped me be able to thoroughly explain my thought processes in my physics and math classes, especially in my current discrete math class, where we are writing proofs.

I have found that science and the arts work much more closely together than many people think. I am extremely grateful for my experiences in both fields, and I believe that taking courses across multiple disciplines is a great way to push your boundaries as a student and discover new skills and interests!

Finding the Balance Between Data and Dance

Abigail Fagbohunka
Data Science Major • Dance Minor

As a junior, my time at SU has been all about finding balance – between logic and creativity, structure and expression. I spend a lot of time working with data and code, which can be challenging but also really satisfying when things finally click. When I'm dancing, it's a completely different kind of focus – one that allows me to let go, connect with others, and express myself freely.

Being part of the SU Dance Company has truly shaped my college experience. It's where I found my community – people who push me to grow, support me, and remind me why I love what I do. Through dance, I've gained so much confidence, not just on stage but in every part of my life. It's helped me feel more comfortable in my own skin and more willing to take up space, whether I'm performing or presenting a project in class.

What I love about SU is that it gives me space to explore different sides of myself. Data science challenges me to think critically and stay curious, while dance lets me move, feel, and create. Together, they've made my college experience richer and more meaningful than I ever expected.