In fall 2005 I began my tenure as Director of the Honors Program. That year we enrolled 44 freshman into the program for a total of 180 students working to achieve the status of Honors Scholar. Today we annually accept up to 100 new students, and we have approximately 300 participants in Honors. We have grown from offering 25 honors course sections a year to 50-60 per year, plus the addition of the Honors Colloquia. We have added opportunities to gain honors units for courses in the High Sierra Program. We have moved our office four times! I have had three different assistants and have been blessed to work with Rachel Hastings since 2007.

Over the past eight years I have been blessed more than I can ever describe in words by the amazing personalities and talents of the honors students, honors faculty and Honors Council members. You have inspired and challenged me. Honors is an amazing community!

In January 2013 I begin a new career path at APU as Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs. I am excited about this new opportunity to serve APU, while at the same time my heart is saddened to leave my role as Director of the Honors Program.

However, the transition will not be immediate! Over the course of the spring semester, I will continue to oversee the Honors Program. I plan to continue to work with the Honors Council to implement a thesis/capstone course, recruit students for the fall incoming freshman class, and position ourselves to launch an Honors College. A full-time Dean/Executive Director for honors will be appointed to begin in July 2013.

This is an exciting time for the Honors Program. Thank you for your investment—as a student—as a faculty member—as departmental honors advisors—as Auxilium mentors—as Honors Student Advisory Board members—as Honors Council members. Thank you for your love for learning, your passion for life, the pure joy you find in exploring the new. §
Congratulations to Honors Students Around Campus:

Halie Ferrante
for representing the College of Liberal Arts and Science as an Academic Integrity Peer Counselor

Students Who Presented at Fall Research Days:

Biology/Chemistry:
Brandon Bauer
Maria Conrad
Michael Drummond
Tayah Kline

Physics/Mathematics:
Sammy Cowell
Timothy Vosecky
Caleb Wagner
Maria Conrad

Congratulations to:

Madeline Sheets
Jessica Terry
for their work being part of a group exhibition entitled “Under Construction”

Opportunities for Honors Students

Western Regional Honors Conference:
Students interested in presenting at this conference in Flagstaff, Arizona should submit proposals by January 25th to meet the early application deadline. Late proposals will be accepted until February 6th. Proposals must be submitted to the Honors Office for approval.

Congratulations to:

Matthew Cherry
Camille Endacott
Jeffrey Holmes
Taylor Neff
Spencer Stewart
Sarah Wentworth

for presenting at the 2012 NCHC Conference in Boston, Massachusetts

APU students stuck in Las Vegas while on their way to the NCHC conference.
National Collegiate Honors Council Conference in Boston, Massachusetts

Sarah Wentworth, Jeff Holmes, Matt Cherry, Spencer Stewart, Camille Endacott, and Taylor Neff recently took a long trek from California to Massachusetts to represent APU at the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference in Boston along with Dr. Vicky Bowden, Professor Michael Bruner, Dean David Weeks and Dr. Alan Oda. This annual conference brought hundreds of faculty members and students from across the nation’s universities, allowing us to gain knowledge and experience from each other as well as discover what students across the nation were studying or researching.

While Boston was an adventure, getting there was an experience in itself! While the professors flew ahead, failed alarm clocks and long lines at security caused the gang of six to miss their morning flight out of California, but the “Honors” title in Sarah was earned as she maneuvered Ontario airport and got everyone on the next flight out of the state! We ended up detouring to Las Vegas, taking a plane that was painted like Shamu the Killer Whale, stopping in Wisconsin, before finally making it to Boston. The festivities began right away as the conference put-on an “open mic” session which allowed students to perform poetry, spoken word, and other acts. Jeff took this opportunity to debut a new act he had been working on which featured a variety of celebrity vocal impressions.

The NCHC Conference offered a variety of events including discussion panels, presentations, master classes, and poster sessions. In addition to research projects, these sessions allowed us to get a glimpse at how other honors programs operated and discover new ways to make our program thrive. One such session discussed a freshman integration program in which sophomores mentored a small group of honors students through their first year, quite similar to the Alpha program we have at APU.

Matt presented a fascinating report which showed that nearly 50% of the money we donate to support other countries simply goes to overhead in the organizations that help these struggling nations. In addition, he found that in some cases, billions of dollars were being redirected into the bank accounts of ruling dictators instead of going straight to the people. These compelling statistics begged the question of how can we find ways to support these countries that might actually be effective?

Camille and Taylor participated in the poster-session by highlighting the benefits of the Honors Colloquia. They marketed the “APU Way of Honors” extremely well; this presentation was particularly popular among faculty members. It won’t be much surprise if other schools begin to follow our lead and bring Colloquia to their schools in the near future.

Jeff previewed his most recent cinematic creation, Saint Alex, at the film master class. It was very well received, earning a wonderful compliment from the master class professor as the “best undergrad comedy” she had ever seen. Spencer brought up the modern topic of “Facebook as a Study Break,” a poster which featured his original student research. His poster sparked many an interested conversation between other faculty and students about how Facebook has affected the way we learn and socialize with one another.

Sarah discussed acculturation and the controversial issues in which one immigrating culture adapts to the mainstream culture and the effect that could have on mental health. This presentation was by far one of the most popular and yielded many deep conversations with a handful of people from across the nation.

Other notable poster-presentations included a dissection of the character Mary Poppins from the hit Disney film of the same name and an investigation on how the way seats are organized in a classroom (rows vs. clusters vs. circular) as well as the color, temperature, and lighting in a building can affect learning. One student presented on the ethics of Zombies and another chose to focus on the sexuality of unicorns.

The days were not only filled with academia though. Night activities included “dueling pianos,” an upbeat concert between two talented pianists, and a 70’s disco dance party! When not presenting, the students and faculty would explore Boston, some heading to the Freedom Trail, a historical walk between two talented pianists, and a 70’s disco dance party! While not presenting, the students and faculty would explore Boston, some heading to the Freedom Trail, a historical walk that passes by many monumental buildings, while others journeyed to Harvard and Cambridge to see the sights.

One remarkable fact to note was how not weird the other honors students were. Coming from California, there was a slight nervousness at the thought that maybe the other students at the conference would be social inept or that we would just be “too much” for them. Yet we found the honors students of the nation were much like us! Still, that didn’t stop us from “singing the songs of our people.” Each state brought with it a different outlook on education and life allowing this gathering of dedicated individuals to share their thoughts and immerse themselves in the ideas of others, hopefully bringing something home with them to better themselves as individuals and benefit the honors community as a whole.

THE HONORS REPORT WINTER 2012
What I learned at HIGH SIERRA

By Nathan Mather

Nathan is a sophomore economics major who studied in High Sierra last spring. He plans to study abroad in Costa Rica next semester.

Marching down to the lake, we huddle together in anticipation. Frigid air fills our lungs as we marvel at the stars that blanket our home. It has been another incredible day at High Sierra. We decide to wind down with some night kayaking. A numinous cloud of fog rests over the water. Where the sky ends and the lake begins, we cannot tell. Whispering folk songs and contemplation fill the thick air as we seamlessly cut through the glassy surface with our paddles.

This snapshot of my experience in the mountains encompasses the three most prominent lessons I learned there: the importance of living in the present, the beauty of raw community, and how prayer, meditation, and scholarship can lead us to God.

For someone who many consider calm and relaxed, I can get incredibly stressed out. At High Sierra, I learned why. So often I find myself unable to be present. By idealizing the past and trying to plan out the future, I forget what it means to live. We are simple beings, unable to permeate the boundaries of time and space. No experience can be retrieved from the past, nor can any plan ensure a future outcome. The only guarantee in reminiscing and planning is the loss of the present.

The simplicity gained through a life lived in the moment is wonderful. One who lives without worry has empty hands, an open mind, and a light heart. His eyes are looking up rather than looking down or looking through. This allows him to truly savor his experiences. This, I’ve learned, is how to live a patient life with no regrets.

Living in the moment allows us to say ‘yes’ to new, unexpected opportunities. Sometimes these are scary, and often out of our comfort zones. From learning to play bass guitar to mountain biking down a terrifying trail to taking part in shameless dance parties, I grew the most when I cast off the shackles of time.

Being present also allows us to pour into those around us. I have come to realize that under the right circumstance, with motivation on both sides, any two people can become friends. When we are united by shared experiences, our walls crumble. I am always pleasantly surprised when I realize what people are really like. They are never quite what I expected. Catching the glimpse of another’s soul is one of the richest things we can experience. True friendship fosters this depth.

High Sierra was the purest form of the Church that I have ever been a part of. Living with others to further the kingdom of God leads to the greatest earthly satisfaction. Breaking bread together, living together, laughing together, struggling together, and growing together, my paradigm of interpersonal relationships shifted dramatically. I can no longer settle for surface-level conversations. When we are too close to be fake, the rawness of humans, in its beautiful ugliness, gives us an overwhelming love for one another.

Yet readiness and friendships could only take me so far. The context of the entire semester was founded on God’s work in my life. Because I was at High Sierra in the spring, I metaphorically compared my spiritual life to the nature around me. In the beginning of the semester, as fresh snow fell outside my window and I stared at the cedar walls, I listened to the soothing melodies of Bon Iver, journaling about existential questions, selfish ambitions, and any random tangent that came to mind. As temperatures rose, I found myself laying mesmerized on Star Rock, comfortable with the mysteries and feeling overwhelming love from God.

I realized that I experience God the most tangibly through nature. God often responds to my prayers through his creation, and I feel a satisfying comfort in the wilderness. Nature, in its unabashed beauty, serves as a catalyst for thought, prayer, and patience. When I was able to sit and consider my existence, my shortcomings became painfully obvious. Thankfully, this honesty led to God’s healing in many areas of my life. Answered prayers are easier to identify when we are in tune with our struggles and joys.

God was not only evident in the world around me, but in the philosophical quandaries that so often haunted my mind. From Hume to Nietzsche, I was forced to consider the world from the perspectives of brilliant, stubborn atheists. Though this process was jarring at times, I came away from my existence, my shortcomings became painfully obvious. Thankfully, this honesty led to God’s healing in many areas of my life. Answered prayers are easier to identify when we are in tune with our struggles and joys.

All of these lessons and experiences contribute to why I consider High Sierra the best four months of my life so far. The things I learned were not inspirational quotes or five-step plans, easily gained and more easily forgotten. The knowledge I gained was like a wave crashing on a rocky cliff, slowly eroding and shaping the jagged surface. Though I have trouble applying all that I took away from High Sierra to main campus life, I find solace in how I have been changed. I know that High Sierra was not the pinnacle of my adventures. It was the mountain from which I caught my first glimpse of a world of possibilities. §
Study ABROAD
Spring 2013

Where in the world are APU Honors students?

South Africa
Natalie Black
Gary Conachan
Samuel Cowell

Oxford
Justin Hyer
Danielle Patterson
Tyler Shattuck
Andrew Soria
Abigail Wheeler

Costa Rica
Gabriel Lee
Nathan Mather
O’Neil Van Horn

Costa Rica
Gabriel Lee
Nathan Mather
O’Neil Van Horn

New Zealand
Madeline Sheets

High Sierra
Jadon Clifton
Natalie Ewing
Danielle Graves
Sarah Hyde
Ysabel Johnston
Matthew Morrison
Christian Murakami
Kristi Shevkun
Timothy Vosecky

China (Nursing)
Emily Emminizer
Kayley Tai
Clara Wong

Are YOU interested in studying abroad?

Did you know that Honors Students can receive up to 9 Honors units while studying in Oxford, and up to 8 Honors units while studying in High Sierra?

Contact the Center for Global Learning and Engagement for more information about APU’s study abroad opportunities.

(626) 857-2440
studyabroad@apu.edu

DATES TO REMEMBER....

Common Day of Learning: March 6, 2013
Fall 2013 Registration Begins: March 11, 2013
Preview with Parham & Eaton: March 15, 2013, Wynn Amphitheater, 7:00pm
Alpha Chi Conference: April 4-6, 2013
Western Regional Honors Conference: April 11-13, 2013
Pizza with the President: TBA
Honors Scholar Reception: May 2, 2013, Wilden Atrium, 5:00-7:00pm
An Interview with Jamee Bollinger and Max Walden

Jamee Bollinger

Major: Accounting
Hometown: Turlock, CA
What has been your favorite part of your Honors involvement this semester? (Could be class, Honors colloquia, alpha group, etc.)
My favorite part of my Honors involvement this semester was my Alpha group because I feel that some of my closest friends here are my friends from my alpha group. Go Alpha 98!
What has been your favorite Honors course so far and why?
My favorite Honors course so far has been CLFM with Professor Bruner because I feel as though my thoughts and faith have matured dramatically during this semester.
What are you looking forward to in regards to the Honors program?
In regards to the Honors program, I am looking forward to taking more Honors courses, attending more Honors Colloquia events, and making more friends in the process.
What has most surprised you about your APU experience?
What has surprised me the most about my APU experience is how close the APU community is (faculty, students, etc.). Coming from a secular high school, I constantly had the phrase “You become a number in college” shoved down my throat, so I was not expecting my professors to learn my name quickly and even approach me outside of class to ask me how my semester has been going.

Max Walden

Major: Physics
Hometown: Kansas City, Kansas
Class: Freshman
What has been your favorite Honors class?
Public Communication Honors with Dr. Marcia Berry. It’s a great way to start Tuesdays and Thursdays, with vibrant discussion and meaningful thought.
What has been your favorite part of the Honors experience?
I appreciate the different level of conversation that happens with Honors students. The subjects we discuss are more intentional.
What has been your favorite part of APU?
I love feeling like I’m on vacation when I’m at school. The weather is great, and there’s always something to get plugged into when I’m in the mood for some genuine mirth.
What Honors class are you taking next semester?
Exodus Deuteronomy Honors with Yarchin.
Would you like to study abroad?
Yes, my heart is torn between High Sierra and South Africa.
What advice would you give to an incoming Honors student?
If you want to get the most out of your general education classes- I mean, really learn it, not just get through it- get your butt in the Honors Program.
What do you do outside of class?
I like immersing myself in philosophical thought, riding my bike around the city of Azusa, and creeping on people from my giant panoramic window in my dorm room at Smith Hall. I also like ultimate frisbee and soccer. I also uphold the laws and policies of APU- you could call me the hall monitor.
What are you involved in at APU?
Ambassador, Student Government Association (House of Reps) Intramural flag football.
What are you looking forward to?
I’ve been encouraged to seize the day while I’m here. I’m excited to go out from this place and do just that. I’m pumped to see how I can use my major in missions. I’m excited to represent the cougars every step of the way. Go cougs! §
**Courtney Webb**  
Senior  
Business Major  
La Verne, CA

*Favorite Honors class:* Dr. Berry’s Public Communication class  
*Studied Abroad:* Oxford  
*Conferences:* Presented at AX Conference in Baltimore  
*Extracurriculars:* Student Government Association, Living Area Council, Admissions Intern, Missions Trips, D Group leader, Study Abroad Office  
*Future plans:* I feel called to England and would love to go to graduate school to get my MBA there. I’m happy to do anything that involves people.

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**David Poulin**  
Junior  
Biology Major  
Chandler, Arizona

*Favorite Honors class:* Luke/Acts Honors with Hauge. I’ve found that it builds on Exo/Deut and the foundation that we laid in the class, so it’s been this on-going discussion.  
*Research/scholarship:* I do research with Dr. Herod in the Biology Department.  
*Honors colloquia event:* Preview with Parham when we watched Inception.  
*Extracurriculars:* Student Ministry Coordinator next semester for the Retirement Center Ministry  
*Future Plans:* It’s the doctor route for me.

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**Mitchell Friesen**  
Sophomore  
Business Admin. Major  
Ahwahnee, CA

*Favorite Honors class:* Introduction to Art Honors with Tom Dunn.  
*Favorite Honors Colloquia event:* The fall musical, Merrily We Roll Along.  
*Favorite part of APU:* I’ve loved realizing the opportunities that being here provides. I’ve been learning to see how else I can take advantage of this experience.  
*Extracurriculars:* Intramural soccer and volleyball, Foothill church home group and a men’s leadership group, learning to play guitar, leading a Bible study.

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**Paige Ludwig**  
Junior  
Nursing Major  
Goroka, Paupa New Guinea

*Extracurriculars:* International Chapel leader/Oahna Group Leader (Bible study group), Learning enrichment center, Home group at Baseline Group, UCLA Student Nurse (CAN)  
*Studied Abroad:* Middle East for 2 months (teaching English) w/Muslim college student,  
*Favorite honors class:* Luke/Acts with Hauge  
*“Pearl of wisdom” to other honors students:* “Enjoy it because it’s easy to get caught up in our to do lists, but be sure to make time for the people around you, because those are the things you will remember.”
I would love to say that I had a deep calling that led me to apply to the Fulbright program. In reality, I went to the information meeting out of obligation and with the hopes that my name would finally be taken off the mailing list that put all those Fulbright emails in my inbox. But before I knew it, I was writing application essays and felt sincerely and seriously drawn to Fulbright and to my project.

I would love to say I had a deep calling that led me to apply to the Fulbright program.

Less than a year after I reluctantly went to that information meeting, I landed in Ponta Delgada, on the island of São Miguel, in the archipelago of the Açores, an autonomous region of Portugal (I give you those details because most people have never heard of this place). I will be here for 8 months carrying out my research project, which looks at the legacy of the American dream and emigration here in the Azores. There is something called the Azorean Diaspora, and it expresses just how this community has been affected by emigration, especially by those seeking the American dream. There are large Azorean immigrant communities in the United States (my home town is one of them), but that also means there are many separated families and homes left empty here. I am not here to look at data and emigration numbers—Google can do that for you. I am here looking at what the American dream means to people here who have families in the States.

I have learned a lot about my topic, and have found wonderful resources and more information than I expected. But I have found so much more! No, I’m not talking about the countless fresh and local varieties of cheese, or the perfectly pressed espresso that the Portuguese seem to have an endless thirst for. What I mean is that I have found a community, language, and a people that I love. I wish words could capture the image of what I see when I look through the window of my favorite downtown coffee shop: an old woman dressed in black, the color she will wear every day for the rest of her life in honor of her departed husband; the young teenagers who proudly throw a word of English into their conversation to elevate their “coolness” among their peers; the old man with the flat cap hat; the housewife carrying fresh groceries from the daily outdoor market; the undercover police officer who is no longer undercover because everyone knows him in a small place like this; the father and son carrying fishing gear walking across the street to the ocean. It is a perfect snapshot of the Azores, with the new and the old somehow meshing together on the cobblestone streets.

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I am still amazed that I can be a part of this community. I take every opportunity for small talk, to learn from people and tell them a bit about my studies and my country. In the end, I think that is what Fulbright is about. Yes, I love my project, and I get excited about finding the right piece of information. But I get just as excited when I can finally pronounce the name of that strange dessert I like, when a coffee shop owner knows me well enough to make my drink before I ask, or when the street cleaner recognizes me as the American who always greets him.

During my time at APU, in Oxford, and now with Fulbright, I have learned an important lesson: you grow the most when you realize how small you are, when you understand that there is a whole world of places and ideas outside of you and what you know, when you become a foreigner in a place or in a concept and you have to work to understand it. Not only do you learn how big the world is, but you start to realize how vastly creative and great God is.

As I unwillingly sat in that Fulbright information meeting, I never imagined I would say this: Fulbright has been one of the best and most important experiences of my life, I have loved every minute of it, and I cannot think of another experience that could combine scholarship, adventure, travel, and personal growth the way Fulbright does. Next time you get one of those Fulbright emails, consider reluctantly going to the meeting. I can’t make any promises, but you might just end up in some obscure place on the other side of the world having the adventure of a lifetime.
When you were in college, was there anyone who had a particularly significant impact on you?
Dr. Larry Harper was one of my professors at UC Davis and I still talk to him today. In fact, he taught some of the classes I teach, so I definitely got advice from him about that. Also, Dr. Widaman was my dissertation advisor at UC Riverside, and he is now head of UC Davis psychology department.

What has your experience teaching at APU been like?
I am very fortunate to be here, especially the fact that I’m in California. It is very rare for people in my business to be able to stay local. Also, there are few schools where I can do what I do in psychology but also point people to God’s truth. Psychology is my tool, but God’s truth is my source.

From your experience working with Honors students, do you have any advice for them?
I have a few things I would tell Honors students:
- I would say that your discipline is your tool, but remember where your source of truth is.
- I would also say that your best act of stewardship is to graduate, get out of school as soon as you can.
- Whatever you decide to do after you graduate, whether it is grad school or a career, find a church as soon as you can, because then this becomes your house of worship. You’ll spend a lot of your time in your department at school or work, and you don’t want it to become your idol. Here’s an anecdote to illustrate this point: I had a friend at UC Riverside, and one time I saw her during the week and asked if she was going to church. She said that Sunday morning was her best time to study, so she couldn’t go. It doesn’t take much for your field of study or work to consume all your time.
- School is great, but your real education starts after you graduate. We equip you but college is not your endpoint.

Are you involved in any outside study or research?
- We just published a book about Asian American health, which I helped to edit. I also present for different psychology associations and honors conferences, such as NCHC. My specific areas of research are parent-child relationships and Asian and other American minority populations. I am currently doing research on the Asian-American church and their readiness in caring for elders.
- Sarah Wentworth, a current honors student, Priscilla Diaz, and I have been working on researching Latina adolescence and suicide prevention.
- I have also volunteered with CRASH Japan, and have been privileged to work with post-tsunami relief work. I have been to Japan a couple of times, doing both psychology-related work and hands-on relief there.

What is your favorite aspect of this job?
I have the privilege of working with students both through teaching and mentoring their research. They are the next generation to bring truth to the culture.
Our Honors Program Faculty are not only amazing teachers, but are exemplary scholars in their respective fields. Take a look at all the academic work they have been doing outside of APU!

PUBLICATIONS

A chapter written by Dr. Paul Kaak, Department of Leadership and College Student Development, was published in a book.


Description of the Book:
Pieces of Heaven: Recognizing the Presence of God (Beacon Hill Press, 2012) seeks to heighten the reader’s awareness of those times when the veil between us and eternity—between us and the Holy Spirit—seems thin and permeable and we sense the Spirit in a close and supernatural way. Although most Christians never intend to push God’s presence out of their lives, they often end up ignoring him anyway. In an increasingly secularized and frenzied culture, it’s easy to leave God out of conversations, thoughts and actions—at work, at school, in social settings, and unfortunately sometimes even at church. But our lives can be transformed when we learn to see God in our work, our play, our service to others, in music, in relationships, in nature, and even in suffering.

This book is accompanied by an online study guide for those who wish to use it in small groups.

Endorsements:
“This is a book for anyone who has ever asked, ‘God, are you there?’ Joseph Bentz helps us turn the question around so that the question becomes a declaration: ‘God, you are everywhere!’”
--Dean Nelson, professor, Point Loma Nazarene University, author of God Hides in Plain Sight: How to See the Sacred in a Chaotic World

“Joseph Bentz has a gift for seeing the Holy Spirit in ordinary places. Let this book open your eyes to the God who is at work all around you.”
--Lawrence W. Wilson, author of When Life Doesn’t Turn Out the Way You Expect and Why Me? Straight Talk about Suffering

“Joseph Bentz is right...sometimes it’s hard to recognize the presence of God. In his insightful book, Joseph Bentz peels back the mystery surrounding why we overlook God s presence in our life, and more importantly, how we can recognize it. This book is a must for everyone who s ever longed to experience more of God.”
--Donna Jones, author of Seek: A Woman’s Guide to Meeting God

PRESENTATIONS


Imagining America is a consortium of universities and organizations dedicated to advancing the public and civic purposes of humanities, arts and design.

A presentation prepared by Kenneth Otto, University Libraries, was given at an international conference.


A paper written by Dr. Robert Duke, Department of Biblical Studies, and two recent graduates, Biblical Studies Honors Scholars Andrew Wall (’12) and Lance Baker (’12), was presented at a national meeting.
THE HONORS PROGRAM OFFICE

Our office is located on East Campus, in Building 22, facing the Community Lawn.

Office hours: 8:30 to 4:30pm, Mon-Fri
Phone: 626-857-2408
Fax: 626-815-3895
Email: APUHonors@apu.edu

Top Row: Dr. Vicky Bowden, Rachel Hastings, Haley Oram (student worker).
Bottom Row: Matthew Morrison, Camille Endacott, & Joshua Roquemore (student workers)

THE HONORS PROGRAM OFFICE

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The Honors Student Advisory Board is always here to hear your comments, critiques, and questions!
Feel free to contact one of your representatives at any time using the above email addresses.

Special thanks to Camille Endacott and Haley Oram and the Honors Student Advisory Board 2012-13 for the creation and editing of this newsletter!