



HONORABLE MENTION

Volume III, Issue I

Fall 2006

Campus Highlights

Miramar College

Over 100 students are working on a variety of projects. Here's a sampling of the work compiled by Krista Potter, Miramar College Student.

- Physics students are doing research and writing papers on topics such as a significant woman physicist and alternative energy.
- Philosophy students are applying meta-ethical analyses to a variety of moral dilemmas.
- Differential Equations students are producing projects focusing on the use of differential equations in applied settings.
- Critical Thinking and Intermediate Composition students are analyzing media imagery and doing oral presentations examining the use of color, image, music (if present) and space.
- Business students are conducting case studies on five local, large corporations.

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UCLA Tap Day: a great way to learn about transfer

By Nathan Cleckley, Mesa College Honors Student

The Transfer Alliance Program (TAP) transfer conference is held every year around application time for transfer students to learn about UCLA and the transfer process. You don't need to be set on transferring to UCLA to attend. My classmate from Miramar, Andre DaMetz, attended the conference.

The TAP program is a transfer agreement between some community colleges and UCLA. If one is planning to transfer to UCLA, then TAP is the way to go. Without TAP, a good GPA to transfer to UCLA is around 3.8 and the acceptance rate is about 30% (about 15,000 students applied last year, about 5,000 were accepted). However with TAP, students need a 3.25 GPA and the acceptance rate is 90%. Now those are odds I like!

Our welcome featured speeches and a video. Next, UCLA students answered our questions. We got first hand accounts of their community college programs and how they first learned about UCLA and how to transfer.

Next the program moved into the workshops. I noticed throughout the day that there were two types of information available at the workshops. The first was what to do before getting into UCLA and the second was what to do after you get in. I am interested in the honors and research opportunities at UCLA, however I felt that I should concentrate on getting into the school first and then worry about what comes later.

I decided it would be best for me to attend the transfer application and selection process workshop. This was an opportunity for students to ask one of the heads of the admissions department any questions they may have.



Back row from left: Kairach Kiantra, Babel Carlota, Nathan Cleckley, Andre DaMetzVerano, James Lew, Myron Lunasin. Front row from left: Lauren Rodriguez, Tamao Imura, Christopher McKay, Patricia Porter, Andrea Moore, Ashley Day, Nasra Mimaga, Mohamed Egal.

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The beauty of the symphony expands minds

By Kirsta Burner, Miramar College Honors Student

As an Honors student at Miramar College, I am given the opportunity to attend specific performances of the San Diego Symphony throughout the school year. The symphony grants listeners the opportunity to participate in the cultivation of thoughts and ideas, brimming with culture, history and beauty, all through musical expression. I opted to attend the November 18th performance in which conductor Yoav Talmi and violinist Jeff Thayer along with the San Diego Symphony played two songs. One song was from Alexander Glazunov and Cesar Franck, along with one unique song written in reflection by the conductor. The songs that were played were each breathtaking and unique pieces.

As the musical piece by Yoav Talmi began, my mind went to another time and place. I never realized what a beautiful story a musical number could provide a listener and what a beautiful story Talmi's *Elegy for Strings, Timpani and Accordion* ("Dachau Reflections") told.

The conductor explained the history behind his number, a history that was steeped in first hand reflections at "the Dachau concentration camp... in Germany." His piece included specific instruments that were selected to provide the listener with images of the ghettos in Germany and the life of the Jews living their lives there. I was unsure of how his piece could conjure up such images in my head until I closed my eyes and listened as the music rang throughout elegant Symphony Hall.

The second piece was a violin concerto composed by Alexander Glazunov. The third piece, a symphony in D minor by Cesar Franck, was also so eloquently written I couldn't help but close my eyes and imagine living in the 19th century as these composers did. I envisioned the world as they were seeing it living in France, Germany and Belgium. What an entirely different world they must have seen than the world that I, a United States college student of the 21st century, am living in.

As a college Honors student, I am so grateful for the opportunity the San Diego Symphony has given me to experience the life and culture of other facets of the world through music. The performance I attended was certainly memorable and I hope to attend future performances of the symphony to expand my mind, my concept of the world and simply enjoy the beauty of a musical performance.



Fish bowl participants from left: Carmina Esparza, Angela Muniz, Christopher Mecham, Misty Frank, Nasra Nimaga, Lester O'Connor.

Life in a fish bowl lets faculty hear what students want

By Nasra G. Nimaga, Mesa College Honors Student

When asked if I was interested in taking part in a fish bowl I had no idea what this was. Mesa College Honors Transfer Director Dr. Alison Primoza then explained that she was organizing this activity for the Honors Faculty Retreat on October 6. The aim of the fishbowl was to help Honors faculty know more about their students' needs and wants. It was also intended to help faculty better understand how they can assist students in making the Honors experience as positive and advantageous as possible. I said yes and became part of a memorable experience.

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The fishbowl consisted of six honors students seated in a circle. Honors faculty members sat on the outside of the circle listening to the shared experiences of the students.

Primoza was the moderator. She asked questions related to the students' honors experience. The students in the circle would answer the question and share our views on the issue. It was nice because once the students in the circle had finished sharing their views, faculty were given a chance to share their insights and ask questions.

I enjoyed the fishbowl because it was another opportunity to learn. I thought it was nice to have an honest and open dialogue in a relaxed and non-threatening environment. I especially liked the fact that I got to ask the faculty a couple of my own questions. All in all, it was an enjoyable and educational experience.

They didn't just come for the food

By Rachel Brewer, City College Honors Student

After a summer spent sending off invitations to honors-eligible students, the City College Honors program hosted a well-attended orientation luncheon. Upward of 35 students turned out to gather information about how the honors program could enrich their City College experience. Transfer preparation was emphasized as well as the special amenities available to honors students. These special services include a designated honors counselor, symphony tickets and book award scholarships. The luncheon was also an opportunity for students to meet some of the honors professors.

District Honors Transfer Coordinator Dr. Alison Primoza spoke at length about TAP and the Honors Transfer Council of California's annual research conference held at the University of California, Irvine this spring. She encouraged new honors students to begin thinking about participating in the conference by developing their class work into a focused research presentation.

City College Transfer Director Marilyn Harvey informed students about what the Transfer Center has to offer. Among other things, Harvey mentioned the availability of staff to assist students in finding answers to the task of choosing and applying to universities.

We were pleased to host featured speaker, Yolanda Escamilla, Undergraduate Advisor for the Ethnic Studies department at UCSD. Escamilla spoke to students about the value of enrolling in a broad-based undergraduate degree in order to prepare for a Master's degree. She also discussed TAG and how it can benefit honors students.

Mesa Honors Club movie night features the film *Invisible Children*

By Alexander H. Banach, Mesa College Honors Student



On November 9th, the Honor's Club Movie Night presented *Invisible Children*. At the conclusion of the film, Sarah from Invisible Children Inc. was present to speak about the movie, the crisis and what is being done to help those in need.

Invisible Children was filmed in 2003 by three students from San Diego - Bobby Bailey, Laren Poole and Jason Russell. The story is about an on-going humanitarian crisis in Uganda in which thousands of homeless, orphan children are abducted nightly and forced to fight for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) as soldiers or used as sex slaves. The homeless orphan children group together at night in large numbers to protect themselves from being abducted. Most of the orphans have lost their parents to the growing AIDS epidemic in Africa. It is unclear how many children are currently affected. Some sources claim the estimate

is as high as tens of thousands of children seeking shelter every night and between 20,000 to 66,000 children abducted since 1986.

The LRA is a rebel group operating in Northern Uganda and is believed to be the group abducting children in the night. The LRA was formed in 1986 by Joseph Kony, who proclaims himself as a spiritual incarnate of Alice Lakwena of the Holy Spirit Movement. The LRA says they will overthrow Museveni's government to install a democratic government based on the Ten Commandments. They received support from Sudan in the form of arms and shelter throughout the 1990's, during which they seemingly stopped attacking government targets and began attacking civilian villages. It was around the mid '90's when children began being abducted regularly on a larger scale. Abductions increased again in late 2002 in response to Museveni's "Operation Iron Fist." The LRA has since had no clear political agenda but continues to harass civilians in an attempt to strike fear.

The Ugandan military has admitted to recruiting children who have escaped from the LRA, making this situation ever more complex. Uganda's Major Bantariza has been quoted as saying, "Between two evils, you choose the lesser - they have no alternative employment, where can they go?" The Ugandan military says they have recruited around 800 former LRA fighters.

Invisible Children, Inc. is attempting to change the situation in Uganda by organizing donations for programs to provide healthcare, safety, employment and education. They are also trying to help by promoting awareness. For more information or to help, go to invisiblechildren.com. The Honors Club is planning to screen the film again this spring and invite all campus clubs as well as friends and family to attend.

Thanks from a Mesa Honors student

By Pierre Valdez, Mesa College Honors Student



I just came from a research conference in Tampa, Florida. I presented the research I was able to do with Dr. Russell from UCSD on the Characteristics of Rabbit Muscle PFK-1 with LDH.

It was a great opportunity to interact with other students from all over the nation. I was also able to network with graduate students, mentors and advisors from many institutions. I became a member of a number of societies that will help me throughout my academic career. There were many summer internships programs and scholarships available for undergraduate students.

One of the most important things that this conference allowed me to do was introduce myself to directors from many programs. Thanks to this, I was able to convince them that I am a good candidate to enter their research programs and even their institutions; some for undergrad or graduate studies in the future.

I want to thank everyone at Mesa College for allowing me to be in your Honors program. I would not have made it this far without all of you. Thanks to you, I got these great opportunities and offers. After this conference, my list of mentors increased significantly.

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There were also sessions about college honors, research opportunities, transfer adjustment and financial aid workshops.

I heard great things about these from other Mesa honors students. One honors student, Kayla Moor, attended the financial aid workshop. She told me that the workshop was helpful and it showed how to take advantage of all the help that is out there. The most important thing I got from Kayla was that in order to get scholarships one must have a true "go-getter" attitude, which seems to be a continuing theme at UCLA.

The second sessions were geared toward students' majors.

After the sessions were done for the day, our group met up along with former Mesa students now attending UCLA. They were Mario Callejas, Arta Razavi and Tara Griep. After being scared by acceptance percentages and how to sell yourself in a personal statement, getting to know these former Mesa students was a relief. The most encouraging part of the day was talking to them and listening to their advice.



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