



HONORABLE MENTION

Volume V, Issue II

Spring 2009

SDCCD Well Represented at the HTCC Conference

By Erinn Fraser, Mesa College Honors Student



Two Mesa students are among this group of HTCC Outstanding Achievement Scholarship winners. They are Brande Faris (back row, third from left) and Renee Schaaf (front row, second from right).

Inside this issue

| | |
|--|----------|
| <i>Reflections on Honors.....</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>City College Student in Buenos Aires.....</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Mesa Students at Stanford Symposium... </i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Miramar Student Presents at HTCC.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>UCLA Bound!.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Mesa Blood Drive.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Angles of Haiti.....</i> | <i>6</i> |

16 San Diego Community College District (SDCCED) Honors students presented at this year's Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC) Honors Student Research Conference. The conference was hosted by the University of California, Irvine on Saturday, February 28th. Presenters could either choose to do an individual, small group or large group presentation, a performance (video, art, dance, etc), a poster or participate in the Issues Forum. The Issues Forum is a debate on a topic focusing on the theme of the conference.

The theme of the conference was "Going Green While in the Red", although any topic was considered for entry. Some examples of other topics included current research on genetically modified corn production, post traumatic stress disorder, even a presentation on an emerging category of older women – cougars.

HTCC continued on page 7

Reflections on the Miramar College Honors Program

By Heather Paulson, Miramar College Honors Student

As I reflect upon the topic of Honors I am filled with a sense of accomplishment. The Honors Program has given me an opportunity to discover how truly rewarding it is to achieve academically at a higher level. For me, receiving honors is more than a seal on a degree or a designation on a university application, it is the accumulation of fulfillment from my academic efforts. Participating in the Honors Program has helped me to appreciate hard work and dedication. It is my belief that achieving honors assists in defining character.

In addition to feelings of gratitude and accomplishment, honors has unlimited rewards for any student's academic future. There is the Certificate of Global Competencies available specifically for Honors students, priority enrollment to many universities, opportunities for leadership, scholarships and so much more. I have taken honors contracts in Critical Thinking and Intermediate Composition, English Literature and Physical Anthropology. In taking these courses as honors I've developed a more rigorous understanding of the subject matter. In particular honors really allowed me to decide on English as my major. By studying these subjects on a more in depth level I could see how much I truly enjoyed them. One other rewarding aspect of taking honors is developing a one on one relationship with your professors. In doing so I've received outstanding letters of recommendation. This is a direct result of my professors knowing me personally and witnessing my hard work. I implore any of my fellow students to become involved in the honors program on their campus.

Since taking honors courses I have become active in quite a few campus clubs, one being Phi Theta Kappa (the International Honors Society of two year colleges). I am currently the treasurer in our chapter of Phi Theta Kappa. Opportunities such as these are unforgettable. An important part of the honors program is learning how to become a leader, being that leadership is crucial for a successful future. As a source of encouragement I wish to express the position in which I am coming from. I grew up in a working class family and am the first one in my family to go to college. I've had a variety of personal obstacles to overcome in the search for my place in higher education. I can say today that I have found that place here at Miramar College, in special thanks to the Honors Program and my wonderful professors. I know that my experiences from here will act as a source of strength in the years to come.



**SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DISTRICT HONORS PROGRAMS**

City College, Mira College, Miramar College

1313 Park Blvd. Suite A1M
San Diego, CA 92101
Phone: 619-388-2512

FAX: 619-388-3921
e-mail: honors@sdccol.edu



City College Honors Student Studies in Buenos Aires

By Beau Demkar, City College Honors Student

During my first week of class at City College my honors anthropology professor talked about a study abroad opportunity in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I could see the excitement that I was feeling glimmering in the eyes of some of my classmates. The mutual curiosity we explored led to many post class-room conversations held around the fantasy of living in Argentina and traveling through Latin America together.

Less than a year later the dream became reality. As I walked through customs at the airport in Buenos Aires, I realized that I was heading toward a new chapter of my life. The road to get there was full of challenges and many of the original people I had envisioned going to Argentina with me had gone different ways. However, there was still an enormous amount of support and encouragement. Once I set my mind on making this experience a part of my life, the desired outcome became more and more attainable.

The biggest setback was the financial feasibility of leaving my life and traveling thousands of miles from home for several months. The honors staff and a former honors student provided me with the information I needed to achieve my dream. I was told about and encouraged to apply for the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship. This scholarship is offered through the U.S. Department of Education particularly for students wishing to study abroad. After writing an essay and waiting three long months, I received notice that I won the scholarship and that my study abroad was paid for. Beyond my own joy, three other students from City College also won the scholarship, two of them being close friends of mine from the Honors Program. I was convinced about the importance of applying for scholarships and making your dreams come true.

Learning a new language, exploring a new landscape, experiencing the life of a foreign family, making friends in a foreign city, taking classes with foreign instructors, learning the history of a foreign country and being immersed in a new culture were adventures that carved new corners into my character. I now appreciate certain things that we have as Americans and certain behaviors that we practice more than I ever have. On the same token, I now understand some things that we do as Americans that have unseen consequences and other behaviors that I think are destructive and against our own well being.

The experience changed my life and I think played an important role in getting accepted into the university of my dreams for the next academic year. I encourage Honors students to take full advantage of all the people and opportunities the program offers. I also want to encourage students to believe in their abilities and shoot for the stars. Apply to the university of your dreams, apply for scholarships and pull yourself out of the comfort zone into a mysterious world of possibilities.



Seven Mesa Honors Students Participate in Stanford Symposium

By Brande Faris, Mesa College Honors Student



Four of the Stanford Conference attendees from left: Brande Faris, Isaac Alcantar, Olga Budu and Charrah Hardamon.

On Friday April 17, seven Mesa College Honors students traveled to Stanford University for the second annual Bay Honors Consortium Honors Research Symposium.

It was the first time visiting Stanford University for all of the students, four of whom have aspirations of one day attending the prestigious university, myself included.

Two students were selected to present their research at this conference, Erinn Fraser and myself.

Both of us had presented at the HTCC conference at the University of California, Irvine and were delighted to have been selected for the Stanford conference as well. We are both licensed massage therapists who are passionate about our work as Honors students. We were excited to have the experience of presenting our research in front of other Honors students, as well as the staff and faculty who support us. We are especially lucky to have an incredible staff supporting us and the Mesa Honors program, in particular, Dr. Alison Primoza and Tracy Walker as our advisors. They work tirelessly to encourage, support and empower us as we strive to become better students.

Amongst our group were several who had never presented their research at an Honors conference. However, they will be applying to do so in the future!

The Honors Club worked as a team to get funding for travel to the Stanford, conference. We presented a united front to the Mesa College Associated Student Government and are grateful that they sponsored us.

As a way to thank them and give back to the students, we will be partnering with Psi Beta (the national honors society for Psychology) and presenting a mini-conference event to introduce other students to the Honors Program and the basics of conducting and presenting research. This will benefit students who may feel uncertain about participating in these types of events. It is my hope that we will have many more students join the Honors Program and apply to present research next year after this event!

A special thanks goes out to Josh Ray, our Honors Club President, who went above and beyond to make this happen for us, even though he was personally unable to attend the event.

The Stanford experience was amazing and we look forward to presenting research at conferences next year. We are already planning our projects!

Miramar student presents paper at HTCC conference

Miramar Honors student Gina Tang presented at the Undergraduate Research Conference at the University of California, Irvine!

Gina's presentation was on "soular power." Here's an excerpt, "The benefits of *going soular* are limitless. It has the ability to reduce harmful emissions that threaten our planet. It has the power to heal addictions, erase fears, and ease transitions. The clock of life is always ticking. Address the presence of this powerful resource now."

Pictured is a beaming Gina in front of the Social Science Tower at UC Irvine.



Mesa Honors Club Blood Drive Collects 63 Units of Blood

By Joshua Ray, Mesa College Honors Student



Mesa Honors Club President Joshua Ray gives the gift of life.

On March 10th, The Mesa College Honors Club, in collaboration with the San Diego Blood Bank, held a blood drive in which they doubled their anticipated goal. In an impressive display of humanitarian spirit, students at Mesa College donated 63 units of blood in just one day.

Students from the Honors Club were given support by Phi Theta Kappa, an International Honor Society in preparing for the event. The blood drive was the most successful in the history of the Mesa campus, proving that in a down economy, there are avenues for philanthropy that don't require a checkbook.

Two Miramar College Honors Students are UCLA Bound!



Miramar Honors student Luis Lopez is transferring to UCLA.

Sami Haddad (right) and Luis Lopez (left) arrived to their Honors English class decked out in the garb of their soon to be university.

The two Miramar Honors students had just received word that they were accepted to UCLA via the Honors TAP agreement. They came to class proudly wearing UCLA T-shirts.

Haddad and Lopez are two more examples of why the Honors Program is so important!



Sami Haddad used the Honors TAP agreement to transfer to UCLA.

Miramar Honors Student Awarded Soroptimist's Top Scholarship

Miramar College student Sandra Coronilla was selected as the San Diego Chapter of Soroptimist International's First Place Scholarship Award recipient for 2009. She received the club's highest scholarship award of \$2500.

During the April 21 dinner meeting, chapter President Barabara Rolando and Scholarship Selection Chairperson Cynthia Schroeder described the attributes that garnered Coronilla the top scholarship award. A single mother of 3 children, two of whom have special needs, Coronilla balances taking care of her children with attending college. Coronilla is a full-time student, an Honors student and is also a reporter and editor for *The Sage*.

The purpose of the scholarship is to assist young women who have overcome great odds to continue their education. While being introduced, Schroeder said of Coronilla that she embodied what the scholarship program is about.

Additionally, Coronilla also received a \$500 scholarship from the Miramar College Foundation at Scholar Fest.



The San Diego Chapter of Soroptimist International Scholarship Chairperson Cynthia Schroeder (left) and President Barbara Ronaldo (right) present Miramar Honors student Sandy Coronilla (center) with her scholarship.

Fundraiser for Angels for Haiti raises \$2400

By Winter Hannon, Mesa College Honors Student

On April 22, Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society and Mesa College hosted a silent auction fundraiser to benefit Angels for Haiti. Angels for Haiti is an organization that provides art and music education to impoverished children in Haiti.

All of the artwork presented for auction are the original creation of the children who benefit from this art education program. The program was founded by Dr. Jean Murat Carolle, who gave a lecture on her efforts in Haiti at the event. This was a special event that included music, art and traditional Haitian food.

The Honors Club helped fundraise and organize the event in conjunction with many other clubs. The event was successful in doubling the profits of last year's event and raised a total of \$2400. As a result, this year's proceeds will go to pay the salaries of the instructors at the school.



Jay Aquino (left) and Winter Hannon sell art created by Haitian children. The person purchasing the art is Art Department chair, Georgia Laris.

This money will go a long way towards providing art education in Haiti. In Haiti, approximately \$100 can pay for one child to attend school for a whole year.

Congratulations to all who helped with the event. Thank-you to all the members of the Mesa College community who were in attendance and helped enrich this project for us all. It truly brought together the students and the community through compassion.

Honors Student Milestones

City College:

City College Honors student Barbara Yoes received the Charles W. Patrick Scholarship at the City College awards ceremony at the Prado in Balboa Park. The Charles W. Patrick Scholarship is based on merit in community service, grades and financial need.

Adriana Campos writes that this is her first semester back after a long hiatus and her first semester in the Honors Program. "I'm happy to say that the transition has been easier than I thought! I'm also excited that I will be published in the Chicano Studies newsletter for the month of May. The title of my article is *The Seeds of Change*."

Mesa College:

Jessica Wells attended the Western Psychological Conference in Portland, Oregon. She writes that she loved it and feels at home in an environment of people with psych interests. She writes, "I really want you to know how much I value the opportunities and support you have provided through the Honors Club. Walking me through the presentation process for UCI and the visit to Stanford gave me the crazy idea that I could submit an International call for abstracts for undergrads." Wells' abstract was accepted and she attended the conference in May.

Doris Sayyadeth is excited to announce that she just received word that she got an internship with the New Americans Museum.

HTCC continued from page 1



Mesa College Honors student Franz Criego presents at the HTCC conference.

All had to be based on a honors research project and each presenter worked with a faculty mentor to support their presentation. Thank you to the Mesa, City and Miramar faculty who helped our students do such a great job at the conference!

Over 400 students attended the conference. It was a lot of hard work putting together a speech from my research paper in addition to my full class load, going to the practice sessions, coordinating with my faculty advisor for the past three months and then taking the day off work to go to the conference. But it was also a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

To be in the audience as one of the presenters was an honor. We are repeatedly encouraged to use this what we've learned from experience when writing college essays and job applications as a way to set ourselves apart from the average student. This is one of the main benefits of being a Mesa, Miramar

or City Honors student and active member of the Honors Club. We are exposed to opportunities that we never would have known about but will greatly increase our chances of being accepted to the university of our choice.

Isaac Alcantar, Daniel Bezason, Franz Criego, Sasha Davila, Herbert De Guzman, Brande Faris, Erin Fraser, Jennifer Gomez, Melissa Hopkins, Angel Hu, Stuart Iler, Hafsa Mohamed, Gina Tang, Anh Tran, Chris Ward, Jessica Lee Wells from Mesa, City and Miramar Honors Programs presented their research at the conference.

Congratulations to Brande Faris and Renee Schaff for winning the HTCC Outstanding Achievement Award and to Brande for also winning the UCI Grant!