In a changing world, higher education must be responsive and nimble in terms of how we prepare our students to succeed. It is no longer enough for graduates to simply have a degree and a reasonable grade point average at the end of their university experience—now they need a repertoire of high-impact experiences like internships, study abroad, research engagement, leadership roles, and service work.

80% of 400 employers surveyed say that it would be very (36%) or fairly (44%) useful to be able to see an electronic portfolio of student work that summarizes & demonstrates a candidate’s accomplishments in key skill & knowledge areas

~Hart Research Associates on behalf of the Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2015

In many instances, those experiences might be of greater significance to a student’s future than the subject she or he majored in.

However, simply having had those experiences also isn’t enough. The Honors Program wants to ensure that our students are also able to articulate and demonstrate the learning and personal development that occurred through those experiences as well as in the classroom. To that end, this coming fall the Honors Program will be the first area on campus to pilot a full roll-out of a new tool that will allow our students to construct an electronic portfolio where they will house and reflect upon samples of their Honors work.

Every Honors course will require the submission of an artifact of learning into the eportfolio, and when students complete any of a variety of Honors experiences—study abroad, internships, etc.—their Honors credit will be tied to the submission of a reflection on how that experience improved their skills, developed their thinking, and expanded their worldview. When they are ready, students will be able to export their eportfolio into a polished website that can be utilized in internship and job searches, graduate school applications, and scholarship and award competitions.

Honors is dedicated to the long-term success of our students. This new initiative will help us create that success by ensuring that every Honors student compiles a record of their accomplishments so they can both reflect upon and ultimately show off their growth and their potential.
Building Cultural Competency

by Winnie Wilson ‘17

Through my internship with OhioGuidestone, one of the major projects that I have enjoyed working on most has been establishing a Cultural Competency Measure. This measure examines cross-cultural differences in an environment and the cooperation of people to accomplish goals. OhioGuidestone has services established in various counties and provides behavioral health treatment services, skill-building programs, and prevention opportunities for children and families. I was hired during my freshman spring semester and began working in the summer as a Quality Improvement Assistant. This is even a job that I could continue after I graduate.

I am currently a sophomore Psychology major and Neuroscience minor and after graduation I plan on going to graduate school to attain a Ph.D in Clinical Psychology. I wanted an insight into what working in these types of environments would feel like, which made me begin seeking opportunities in the local area. At OhioGuidestone, I also facilitate the longitudinal data collection process, which involves recording and conducting telephone surveys from recently discharged clients. The organization has been warm, caring, and always hosts various gatherings, such as cultural potlucks and Christmas parties to create a sense of community between employees.

Presenting at the MEHA Conference

The weekend conference included both a poster competition and oral presentations, which covered multiple disciplines. First-year Honors student, Hope Fierro stated, “It was great to be able to share my project with other people who had the same interest, but also with people who wanted to learn more. It was very rewarding for me to be able to share knowledge and show people the work we put forth.”

These conferences not only allow students to engage in research, but also provided students the opportunity to discover the local community through excursions. Honors Program Coordinator Katie Adkins stated, “From getting out of a conference setting and exploring downtown Kent to laughing on the ride back to campus, MEHA is a wonderful opportunity for our students to experience a professional conference, enhance their presentation skills, and learn from and meet Honors students from other institutions throughout the region.” Next year, the conference will be hosted at Indiana University East.

Are your soap dispensers breeding bacteria? How did Black Mountain College change the landscape of music and art? This April, eight Honors students had the opportunity to present their research on these subjects and more to the Mid-East Honors Association Annual Conference at Kent State University.
Every year, Honors offers a special opportunity for seniors to come together to discuss a book with President Helmer, his wife, and the Honors Program staff over dinner at the president’s house. This year students read *The Promise of a Pencil* by Adam Braun, which is an autobiographical story of Adam’s experience with Semester at Sea and how it leads him to leave his comfortable job with a financial firm in New York to start a non-profit. This organization is called Pencils of Promise and is an international non-profit that seeks to build schools in areas of need, train teachers, and fund scholarships. Adam’s story not only expresses the vital need for education, but also highlights the importance that an international experience plays in the development of students today.

The ability to express a sense of professionalism in today’s job market is essential to building a lifelong career. This spring, students of the Honors Program were offered the opportunity to further cultivate their professional skills with the Leadership and Career Development (LCD) workshop. Students were able to take part in mock interviews, have their resume and LinkedIn profiles reviewed, and learn how to properly present an elevator speech. The LCD workshop brought in professionals from Sherwin Williams, WAUSAU Financial Services, OE Connection, Westfield Insurance, Kent State University, and BW’s Career Services who helped assess student performance in these program categories.

Built in 1925 and home to one of the largest collections in the country, the Cleveland Public Library continues to serve as a vibrant community resource, reminding us of the numerous opportunities that Cleveland offers for personal enrichment and civic engagement. As part of the 2015 Spring Symposium Series, the Honors Program explored the Cleveland Public Library located in downtown Cleveland. The tour highlighted the library’s historical architecture and artwork, the TechCentral and MakerSpace Labs, the special collections, and the digital wing. The new Tech Central and MakerSpace lab offers students the opportunity to engrave different types of materials, print 3D objects, record music, and much more! As part of their digital expansion, patrons can now check out and download books online for various devices.

The Honors Symposium Series is a once-per-semester program that provides an opportunity for students, families, and alumni to engage together in intellectually stimulating experiences.

Career Services explains how to write a cover letter

Students cut out a vinyl Yellow Jacket at the library

Senior Honors students posing with book

Senior Dinner with President Helmer

Exploring the Cleveland Public Library

Develop Professionalism with Honors
Becoming Well-rounded in the Musical Arts

Honors Program students Ian Huettel and Alyssa Thompson are currently participating in an emerging program at BW that seeks to merge piano performance and music theatre experiences together to better prepare conservatory students for a career after graduation. The Music Direction program is led by the Music Theatre's Music Director David Pepin who has worked on Broadway for plays such as Rent and Wicked. The program is focused less on specialization and more on becoming a well-rounded musical artisan, capable of meeting not only current demands in the field, but being adaptable to meet future demands as well.

Ian is currently a sophomore focusing primarily on the pit side of performances, with interest in both performing and programming keyboards. Knowing how to program keyboards is essential as pits tend to vary in size and may need to replace certain instruments with a keyboard rendition. Ian and David traveled to New York to visit Broadway not only for performances, but to continue building a professional network as well. Ian states, “We have one foot in the collegiate world and one foot in the professional world…we’re constantly in the spotlight in our careers.”

Alyssa is also a sophomore and hopes to enter the world of musical arts education. Alyssa focuses on developing leadership skills within the music industry and being able to create a safe place for creativity and openness, while at the same time meeting the needs of the changing field. Alyssa states, “Honors has pushed me to work at a higher level of thinking and to take the more challenging classes that force me to grow as a musician and an individual.”

Ian and Alyssa have both helped to stage several productions both at BW and in the Cleveland area, such as A Chorus Line, which has provided them with practical, real-world experience. As technology continues to grow and its role in performances increases, conservatory students must gain a foundational understanding of its uses. It is through BW’s small class sizes that they have been able to work closely with staff and faculty members to develop their career, which will lead to them serving as both a resource and a leader to others within the performing arts.
Honors Student Senior Spotlights

A aron Hawke is a Chemistry major and Biology minor who will be participating in the Up with People program after graduation. Through this program, Aaron will be traveling to Colorado, Mexico, and Europe to engage in community service projects specific to the location’s needs. While on the road, he will also be applying to medical school programs to start the following year. During his undergraduate career, Aaron has also completed a chemistry internship with PPG Industries and volunteers at Southwest General Hospital in the Emergency Room. Aaron attributes his academic success to the research pillar of the Honors Program, which has encouraged him to pursue opportunities such as writing a senior thesis on inorganic compounds and working closely with faculty on additional class projects. Aaron stated, “I don’t just want to be in lab, I want to give back to the community through service in the form of providing health care.”

C ourtney Fraley graduated early in December 2014 with a major in public relations and began working immediately after graduation as the Latin American Marketing and Sales Coordinator at MTD Products. Throughout her undergraduate career she was president of Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority, participated in community service, and lived abroad in Spain where she was an English Teaching Assistant and blogger for International Studies Abroad. Courtney thanks the Honors Program for helping to fund her trip to Spain and for the numerous excursions to learn about the culture of downtown Cleveland. She states, “You should take advantage of every chance, experience or opportunity you get; the Honors Program provides plenty of those chances, experiences and opportunities, so go for it!”

A manda Van Gilder is graduating with majors in International Studies and Spanish and minors in Latin American Studies and Political Science. She spent a semester abroad in Spain her junior year where she helped develop a database to assist Spanish students with English language translation. Amanda also spent last summer in Peru interning at a non-profit that worked to develop human rights for indigenous populations. Upon graduation she will be pursuing a Master of Arts degree that focuses on economics and strategic studies at John Hopkins University. Amanda states, “Not only has Honors helped to fund my trips abroad, but they have provided a supportive community and classes that take a big picture and minor detail approach to learning.”
Over last Christmas break, I was able to spend three weeks in Uganda with my grandparents and the St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund (SNUCF). After thirty hours of traveling, I arrived in the Ugandan airport in Entebbe, right on the coast of Lake Victoria. I met with Winnie, Becky and Beatrice, who are graduates of SNUCF. Beatrice is an old friend of my grandparents and is an HIV+ woman, an advocate for HIV testing, and a community leader in her neighborhood. She arranged for a day that I could come to her home and interview the women near her to better understand what they currently knew about public health. I would then hold a workshop that addressed the health issues that were brought to light. As a young pre-professional public health worker I was living out one of my dreams: to work with women and children in developing nations.

Many of these women gave birth to over five children, breastfed each child for 18-24 months, and then raised them on dollars a day. They have suffered illness, pain, surgery, poverty, unfaithful husbands, and still they smile and carry on, bravely navigating things like teen motherhood, husbands who don’t want to use birth control, school fees for multiple children and more. Some women abandon their children and SNUCF takes in many children who have become “virtual orphans” in this way. We held the workshop in a local school building, which was also used as a church on Sundays. The presenters, Fiona, Margaret and Rosemary, are also grads of SNUCF and have degrees as Clinical Officers and Rosemary is a nutritionist. They spoke on topics such as menstruation, birth control, prevention of AIDS transmission and women’s nutrition.

During my interviews, I noticed there was a common theme of women learning about health only after they experience something traumatic. I learned that Ugandan women used to be educated by their aunts and grandmothers on these topics but the recent decades have seen a surge of migration out of the villages to the city. When AIDS wiped out a generation of parents, girls grew up without mothers. Now when they raise their daughters, conversations about maturing, pregnancy and sex are not discussed in-depth. I encouraged the women at the workshop to go home and teach their daughters the information they had learned that day so more women would be educated and prepared to take care of themselves.

This trip would not have been possible without support from the Honors Program at BW, the guidance of my advisor Dr. Emilia Lombardi in the Public Health Dept., the financial and spiritual support of my family at St. Nicholas, and the many friends, teachers and family who also sustained my endeavors with their encouragement for my project.

There was a common theme of women learning about health only after they experience something traumatic.

~Sarah Cunningham

During my interviews, I noticed there was a common theme of women learning about health only after they experience something traumatic. I learned that Ugandan women used to be educated by their aunts and grandmothers on these topics but the recent decades have seen a surge of migration out of the villages to the city. When AIDS wiped out a generation of parents, girls grew up without mothers. Now when they raise their daughters, conversations about maturing, pregnancy and sex are not discussed in-depth. I encouraged the women at the workshop to go home and teach their daughters the information they had learned that day so more women would be educated and prepared to take care of themselves.

This trip would not have been possible without support from the Honors Program at BW, the guidance of my advisor Dr. Emilia Lombardi in the Public Health Dept., the financial and spiritual support of my family at St. Nicholas, and the many friends, teachers and family who also sustained my endeavors with their encouragement for my project.
Support the Honors Program

The Baldwin Wallace Honors Program seeks to educate the whole student through providing educational experiences that allow a student to be engaged with interdisciplinary approaches and hands-on application. With direct access to the Cleveland community and now abroad in Guatemala, opportunities for student success are endless. The Honors Program offers financial support to all of our students for high-impact experiences such as study abroad, alternative break service trips, travel to conferences for presenting research, and for the purchase of research supplies.

With generous investments from donors like you, the Honors Program can further expand its effort to create lasting partnerships both near and far for our students to gain practical, real-world experiences and forge new relationships with the community and its members. If you are interested in supporting the Honors Program and its mission, please contact us by email at honors@bw.edu or call us at 440-826-2242.

The Honors Program Mission

The Baldwin Wallace Honors Program embraces a philosophy of education grounded in the ideas of American philosopher John Dewey. Dewey envisioned education not as a preparation for some future activity or profession but as the very height of living an engaged and social life. Education at its best is interdisciplinary and experiential and aims to create relevant and transformational experiences that challenge worldviews and encourage intellectual exploration.

Following Dewey, the Honors Program strives for a learning environment both inside and outside the classroom that engages the whole student, seeks to connect theoretical ideas to real-world applications, fosters independent thinking, and brings students together into a community of scholars. We achieve these aims through the pillars of student-directed research, service, and leadership development.

Research
Service
Leadership

Honors Program
Baldwin Wallace University
275 Eastland Road
Berea, OH 44017

Follow us: @BWHonors

honors@bw.edu | (440) 826-2242 | bw.edu/academics/honors