

THE VIEW FROM HERE by Dr. Monica Halka

We are students of words: we are shut up in schools, and colleges, and recitation-rooms, for ten or fifteen years, and come out at last with a bag of wind, a memory of words, and do not know a thing...

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

...and have not created a thing, and have not left anything useful in our wake. Wouldn't it be nice if, instead, education meant experience and contribution, discourse and action? If the words (and numbers) learned could be put to an important use during the college years? If, upon graduation, a student could point to a tangible result (outside of the "knowledge" gained, as displayed on a diploma) and say, "There, that is what I have helped to accomplish—that is what I bequeath to incoming freshmen, for them to continue," what then?

The Honors Program is beginning to explore this idea of sustainable education—or a legacy of learning—in a few of our classes. Dr. Greg Nobles' special topic course "Semester in the City" has for the past three years involved students, in collaboration with the English Avenue neighborhood society, with problems and solutions for this struggling area of the city not a stone's throw from campus. In one of our English 1102 sections, Dr. Hugh Crawford's students built a Mad Houser hut and created a multimedia presentation calling attention to the plight of the homeless in Atlanta.



In a happy continuation of this trend, next fall semester Dr. Cara Gormally will lead the laboratory section for the Honors Program section of Biology 1511 in a new direction. She has designed a service-learning, project-based lab course that aims to assist in understanding Atlanta's environmental problems and needs. But will students enjoy it? Words from one student's reflection paper in her class say it all: "Unlike sitting in a room for hours at a time calculating results that are not really useful for anything but achieving a lab grade, service learning makes students more aware of how their results can be used toward achieving something—in this case, awareness about a particular topic at Piedmont Park. I genuinely enjoy service learning and wish it was more widely used in other courses outside of this one."

We share that wish, and so we will forge ahead—one class at a time—to build a legacy worthy of our students.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS by Hal Zhao

So what are you doing the week before finals? Partying? Early celebration of the coming of summer? Or will you just be pulling all-nighters, one after another, because you are stressing out about finals? Whichever may be the case, you should definitely consider one special event that is happening on campus on Thursday, April 28th from 4:30 – 6 pm at the ES&T Atrium. The annual Honors Program Expo will take place on that day, and it is an excellent opportunity to mingle and chat with other Honors Program students to see what types of accomplishments they have achieved and what types of activities they have done throughout the year. Please mark your calendars now for this excellent opportunity!

Last year I visited the Expo as an incoming freshman and talked to several upperclass HP students. By surfing through the many panels, I was astounded at the amount of research many of these students had already done as undergraduates. In addition, I also found an opportunity to learn more about the Honors Program

from hearing Dr. Nobles's keynote speech and meeting Nicole Leonard for the first time. (She probably does not recall.) I felt that visiting the Expo as an incoming freshmen gave me a great deal of insight about the program before I even belonged to Tech. So if you happen to know any students from around Atlanta who have already been invited to the HP, please also invite them to visit the Expo.

All in all, the annual Honors Program Expo really gives students in the program a chance to connect back with each other after another year of hard work at Tech. It is also a great network-building process as you stay connected with your fellow HP peers throughout the years to see what they accomplish; and they, in turn, see how you develop your own character throughout the years at Tech. So don't let this awesome opportunity slip your mind. If none of what I just said happens to motivate you, "There will also be excellent food provided!" said Dr. Halka, knowing that usually peaks your interest.

HONORS PROGRAM STARS IN *The Vagina Monologues*

by Emily Flood and Caitlin Curtsinger

The word "vagina" is always thought of in a critical manner. It is a secretive word, not uttered often in public. It is reserved for the recesses of doctors' offices and school health classes, and even in those realms it can cause individuals to squirm due to its uncomfortable nature. Vaginas are private, and many feel they should remain that way. But this is far from the case for the women in *The Vagina Monologues*, which played in March for one night only at Georgia Tech.



Megan McCarty

The myriad ladies in the cast, young and old, blow away any of the misconceptions about the vagina and show how much more it is than a part of the female anatomy.

The vagina is a symbol of emotion, of beauty, and of empowerment. Whether it is angry, sweet, ravaged or moaning, the vagina is far from a quiet creature. Each woman shares her own vagina's story, and how their lives have changed because of these events.

The play leads women to appreciate their own womanhood through its tales, and after viewing it, we walked



Priya Nakra



The cast of *The Vagina Monologues* included 8 Honors Program members.

away from the Ferst Center feeling the strongest we have ever felt. While the demureness of women has been a staple throughout cultural history, it is the women who step out of the comfort zone and away from the idea of "proper" who make waves in the world and change the cultural landscape. This play is made up of those women, several of whom are strong members of the Honors Program. They made us laugh, they made us cry, and they made us love ourselves more—especially the parts we used to try not to think about. Men and women alike benefit from seeing this play, each learning new things about women and just how strong they can be and become.



Amanda Drescher

Congratulations!

Victor Lesniewski (right) was commended by both houses of the Georgia General Assembly and named University System of Georgia Outstanding Scholar on the occasion of Academic Recognition Day, 2011.



Honors Program student winners in the Inventure Prize competition included Shawna Hagen (not shown)-a member of the team taking second prize for their Magnetic Assisted Intubation Device-and Chris Giardina (left), whose team took the People's Choice prize for creating an innovative instrument designed to improve cataract surgery.

FEATURED STUDENT: JOHN WATSON

by Blake Carson

During this time of the year, our fellow Yellow Jackets receive a diploma in May. With graduation comes the reflection of accomplishments and how we left our stamp on our school. This May, the first Layout Editor for the HyPe will be turning his tassels and receiving his diploma—and the HyPe is here to profile his achievements throughout his time at Tech.

This year John will be awarded with a Bachelor of Science in Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies—a new program that started in August 2010. He's also being awarded with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering: Both degrees hold the International Plan designation as well.

Throughout his years at Tech, Watson has graced the Office of International Education (OIE) with freelance graphic design work, also assisting with some of OIE's programs (he worked as a teaching assistant for 3 summers in Spain alongside Dr. Angela Labarca). Aside from providing so much work for the OIE both in Atlanta and abroad, he was also selected by the Consulate of Spain in Miami as an ambassador to Georgia Tech. He was one of the top 10



student ambassadors in the nation for 2009-10 and was invited to represent Georgia Tech at a national conference.

All these achievements, accomplishments, and appointments have “shaped [his] life and helped [him] become a successful student and young professional.”

“The Honors Program Student Challenge Fund opened the door for me to attend an audio conference on Broadway in 2007. Beyond simply attending the conference, the experience taught me the importance of networking at a national level and that sometimes, as a student, you have to get out there and ask,” Watson said.

John will be returning to Georgia Tech in August to begin his Masters in Electrical Engineering whilst working with ECE's Professional Communication Program helping undergraduate students communicate in multiple forms. For long term goals, Watson wishes to “work in a managerial position for a multinational company to implement technological solutions in a culturally-sensitive way in the Spanish-speaking world.”

FEELINGS FROM FIELD by Perry Shuman



For the Honor Program's newest crop of freshmen, the last eight months have been an explosion of new options, experiences and sensations. Every one of them had arrived here by a different path, and their time here has been no less diverse. In just a few months, a new batch of freshmen will be making the plunge, and the veterans will be coming back to brave another year. What better way to mark this changing of the guard than to make a record

of this year's biggest successes, coolest experiences and best advice. The question to be answered, “What do you feel was the best thing you did at Georgia Tech this year?”

At the core of many of the responses was a recommendation to get out and get to know new people. One respondent elaborated that the central experience of his semesters here was the chance to manage his own affairs, cook for himself,

and work with new people. Another discussed the enjoyment she's received from meeting with some of her future professors through her time in Honors Program special topics classes. A lot of people mentioned getting to know professors outside of class as something that they found both fun and valuable, a sentiment I heartily second.

Other, more specific memories included getting out in the ice and snow earlier the semester and becoming involved with organizations like DramaTech and WREK Radio, both of which came highly recommended for both new freshmen and returning students. Concerts, both at the Ferst Center and Under The Couch, brought back good memories for some students, while others preferred the hot topic dinner that Housing puts on regularly with professors.

As someone who has participated in a number of these opportunities, I can heartily recommend nearly all of these from first-hand experience. Georgia Tech offers a panoply of options: people to meet, events to attend, clubs to join—and while no one can do everything, it's always good to get recommendations. Hopefully this will inspire some experimentation this fall; get out and try something new!

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

by Dr. Greg Nobles

“Play the Ball; Don’t Let the Ball Play You.”

For four years, my high school baseball coaches tried, with varying degrees of encouragement and frustration, to drill that line into my second-baseman’s brain. I knew that it had something to do with positioning myself in front of a bouncing baseball, gathering it into my glove, and then dispatching it a short distance across the infield toward first base. Still, the language puzzled me. I got the “play the ball” part well enough, but I was always a little put off by the notion that somehow the ball could play me, as if it were an animate object with its own sense of agency, perhaps even the intent to make life difficult for me. The whole issue soon became moot, though, when my baseball career ended in my freshman year of college: I was a walk-on, so to speak, and after the first week of practice, it became clear that I should walk off. So much for my shot at the majors.

Since then, the old baseball adage has come back to me in other ways—not so much about hot shots and slow rollers, but about all the other things that come bounding across the infield of life, sometimes fast and always frequent. In my professorial/administrative suit world, it’s classes, committee meetings, office drop-ins, writing deadlines, and above all, insistent emails that seem to demand immediate response. It’s all worthwhile stuff, I guess, but there’s a lot of it, and it doesn’t stop coming.

On a good day, I can play it, but sometimes it begins to play me, and at some point I have to call time-out.

Baseball season reminds me to do that. I operate on a college calendar, so I never make New Year’s resolutions on January 1. Instead, I try to take some time toward the close of the spring semester—like right now, a little after Opening Day—to think back on the year that’s ending and look ahead to the one that’s coming. Call that making Old Year’s resolutions, perhaps, but it helps me get grounded during the summer before taking a bunch of academic grounders in the fall. Anyway, it works for me.

Maybe you have something that works for you. I hope so. We all need to find enough self-awareness to see the whole field, to be intentional about what we have to do, to play the ball before it plays us. As Richard Ford, one of my favorite novelists, puts it in *The Lay of the Land*, we might even “try to achieve what athletes achieve when their minds are clear, their parts in concert, when they’re ‘feeling it,’ when the ball’s as big as the moon.”

And with that, I will refrain from any further baseball metaphors and simply wish you a good summer, with your minds clear, your parts in concert, and, if you’re lucky, “feeling it” for a few months.

Mark Your Calendars



GT Honors Program

4th annual Expo

Thursday, April 28, 2011

4:30 – 6 p.m.

Ford ES&T Building Atrium

ALL WELCOME



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