

HONORS PROGRAM

CENTERING COMMUNITIES

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Greetings

From Our Editors

Hello, all!

I am proud to present to you another issue of the Honors Program Newsletter. It is one that brings me joy. I am happy to have been a part of another great issue. There is so much in store for the Honors Program at Barry University. While we may be small in numbers, our words and enthusiasm make up for our portion. I encourage our readers to treasure the work of all who have contributed to this issue. It is a reflection of our passion and dedication to the program. Each time that I persist to finalize an issue with my team it brings a smile to my face. I have no doubt that what we are doing at Barry University and within our community will also bring that same smile. Grab a cup of tea or coffee, whatever your choice may be, and read into our growth like the trees we see so often. What was once a seed has bloomed into something beautiful. We have all connected and sprouted from the root up! Enjoy our progress as we aim to captivate change around us. Thank you to the faithful readers. I welcome newcomers to something that is bigger than us. Happy reading family and friends.

-Shanieya Harris

Senior Editor

Hello everyone!

Thank you so much for taking the time out of your busy day to read our February 2022 issue! As one of the newsletter team's new co-editors, I have been blessed with the opportunity to work alongside Shanieya Harris (Senior Editor) and Alyssa Diaz (Journalism Editor) to produce quality issues. As an artistic individual, I can honestly say that I've always enjoyed writing creatively. I enjoy writing about the topics I'm most passionate about, without feeling as though I have to structure my words and phrases in specific ways in order for readers to find my work acceptable. Writing is a powerful tool. Yes, it takes discipline and concentration, but once you start, the real challenge becomes stopping. If you're a creative individual who enjoys expressing your thoughts through writing, I challenge you to take upon yourself the task of writing an article or two for our newsletter! Let's make our voices heard as we "branch out," and connect with those around us!

-Rebeca Miranda

Associate Editor

Hello there!

I'm so thrilled you're here! We hope you all enjoy the current issue! I can say that as a first-time Guest Co-Editor, it's been such a wonderful experience. I wanted to be a part of the Newsletter not just to showcase my passion of writing and journalism, but also to meet amazing people. It leaves me feeling like I'm a part of the Barry community, and I greatly enjoy learning and hearing about the students' stories. I've learnt to never set limits for myself, to step out of my comfort zone, and to let myself grow. The opportunity to serve on the Newsletter will further my opportunity to improve my craft and provide me with more possibilities in the future.

-Alyssa Diaz

Journalism Editor

Honors Program Student Advisory Board



Walter Macwaters, Co-Chair



Brianna Lopez, Co-Chair



Shanieya Harris, Senior Editor



Jennie Ludice, Secretary



Rebeca Miranda, Associate Editor



Alyssa Diaz, Journalism Editor

Provost Interview

Written by Walter MacWaters

Let's start with a little bit about your background. What did you study in school? And how did you end up at Barry as the Provost?

Well, I went to college where I was growing up; I grew up in Indiana even though I'm originally from New Jersey. I went to college at Purdue University after high school and studied psychology. It didn't take long for me to pick that. I took introductory psychology when I was a freshman and loved it and I knew right away that it was the major for me. I was just fascinated with why people do what they do, and I really liked science. I liked systematic investigations to answer questions and psychology really does that. Fairly soon after I started taking classes in psychology, I knew I loved being on campuses and I loved being in college and I liked that whole academic environment, so I thought, 'I really think I need to become a professor of psychology'. I finished at Purdue, and I immediately went the next Fall and started a doctoral program at the University of California, Santa Barbara. I was there for 5 years and got my PhD there. After that, for my first job I did post-doctoral research at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. Then I went to the University of Florida and I was there for two years as a visiting professor. Then I left there and went to Georgia Southern University where I was a faculty member for 17 years; that's where I worked my way up through the ranks. Then I went to Indiana State University and became the Dean of Arts and Sciences for 6 years. Then I knew I was interested in being a provost. Barry crossed my radar and I pursued that because I wanted to be somewhere that the mission was something I really believed in. Now I've been here for six years!



What do you see as your role here at the university?

Good question. The Provost (and I think my role) is the chief academic officer. The President basically runs the place, and he has a cabinet – handful of people that have different divisions of the university because universities are pretty complicated and have a lot of pieces. A major piece, I'd say maybe *the* major piece, is its academic piece. People come here to get academic degrees in academic areas, and you need a person who understands that and oversees that. That is the role of the Provost and I see that as my role. I work with the Deans to make sure the academic programs [of each college and school] abide by standards for accreditation. I oversee the quality, nature, and delivery of the academic programs as well as interfacing with the community.

That sounds like there's quite a lot on your plate and run by your office. I've heard that the Honors Program is now directly under your office's auspices. What will this mean for the Honors Program and its members?

I don't know if it will change the daily life of our Honors students much if at all. This is a structural change, and a little change, really. The Honors Program is thriving and we love it. One of the things I was looking at was 'where does the Honors Program lie in the structural architecture of our academic affairs division?'. We want to have it so that students all different undergraduate majors are able to be in it and that's why I thought we should position the Honors Program kind of at the top of the hierarchy of academic affairs. It's really a symbolic change, in some ways, but it makes sure we keep our eye on making it open and available to students of all majors.

Provost Interview Continued

Written by Walter MacWaters

I know we have been charged with growing the Honors Program. What do you see as important about this growth?

First of all, it's a fabulous program and it's a great opportunity for students to have an honors experience if they are able to do that and take advantage of it. I thought when I took a good look at this that the number of students in the Honors Program was kind of small – I think it was in the mid-20s – and there's room for more. I want it to be more visible and accessible and I want people to know more about it. What is important about that growth is the increased visibility so we can share the wealth, in a sense – so more students can get involved and take advantage of our wonderful faculty and the wonderful experiences that make up that program.

I know that both the university and the Honors Program are looking at moving towards test-optional admissions. What are your thoughts on that?

Well, it's a national movement for one thing. It's a very interesting time to be looking at higher education. Test optional admissions is something that's growing across the United States, and I think it's about access, to a great extent. At Barry, we want to be open and accessible to students who want to come here and that doesn't have anything to do with standards of admission. Rather, it's about access of admission and process of admission.

Do you have a vision for the Honors Program or for student leadership on campus in general?

My vision of the Honors Program is that it be highly visible. It's our best undergraduate students doing amazing work and being highly successful while they're at Barry and then when they leave Barry.

It can be a real jewel in the crown of a university to have a strong Honors Program where students are engaging in work with faculty, whether that's in the form of research or community service. It's the personification of a lot of the mission, really, at its highest levels of functioning. My vision is that it be visible and that we use the successes of the students to tell the story of Barry. It's not just great for the student or wonderful for the faculty member who gets to work with that student, it allows the university to bask in that as well and it shows what we're about. We do that already to some extent, but I want to magnify that because I think it can bring benefits to our entire institution.

Do you have a message for any prospective student leaders?

You know, I was one of those students when I was an undergraduate; I was really interested in leadership. I found it stimulating and fun. To be a student leader gets you in the mindset and the practice of accountability for what's happening around you. It's training for how to work with other people collaboratively. When you lead a group, you are the spokesperson for that group, you are the advocate for that group, and you are to some extent accountable for that group. There is so much room in the world for people who know how to do that with kindness and compassion and effectiveness. In my opinion, it's a way to live a purposeful life. It does come with some cost; being accountable for what's going on is a duty and a responsibility, but also your agency in it can be fun and very gratifying and fulfilling. It's all about good communication, having a great attitude, being interested in other people, and being passionate about topics you find interesting.

Experiencing Life as New Arrivals to the Honors Program

Written by Alyssa Diaz

Many of us have life goals and ambitions and generally have expectations with where you want to go during our university journey. How would it feel, on the other hand, to know that you have the possibility to be an honors student? Have you ever had the idea that all your hard work leading up to this point will result in you being accepted into Barry University's Honors Program? Doesn't that have a nice ring to it?

It's something I never imagined I would be capable of. Receiving that approval letter reminded me of how passionately I desired it in the first place. Ever since, I've known that I'd have to strive for what I desired, and that this was just the beginning. I realized I had to take this seriously and ensure I lived up to the expectations that came with being an honors student.

I realized how much effort it takes to be a member in the honors program. Throughout the term, there have been several ups and downs. This can be a huge adjustment, specifically with my major in Communications and minor in Journalism. It has become clear to me how thankful I am to be a part of such great program. It's been a wonderful ride so far, and I'm looking forward to seeing what happens next. I'm completely certain that some of my peers, who are also new honor students, will agree with me:

Rebecka Mellor, Freshman,

Major - Education



"I found out about the honors program through my softball coach here, who saw I had good grades in high school and recommended it to me. Receiving the acceptance letter was exciting because I know it is an honor and a privilege to be a member of this program. I was equally excited and nervous about it, because although I knew it would be challenging, I was excited for the bonds I could form through it. My biggest struggle in balancing the program has been with softball. My advice to anyone thinking to join the program is that with hard work and good time management, it is more than possible for anyone to excel in this program."

"At first, I was kind of debating on it because I am a transfer student and doing the program would make me have to stay an extra semester for additional credits. But mainly, I've never done something like this program. It's something new and I wanted to see where it takes me. I felt good getting the acceptance letter. This shows me that grades matter because when you get opportunities like this, it shows that you're working hard and that there's benefits. The hardest part would be considering that I have to sacrifice more to stay on track."

Kendall Hovius, Freshman,

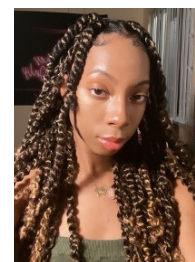
Major - Marine Biology



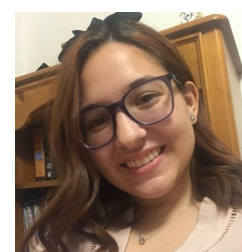
"I was reading a lot about Barry, and I decided to apply. I really wanted the opportunity to take classes that were unique with other honor students, and I was like, "Wow this is actually happening!" I was excited to meet others who were just as excited about learning as I was. The difficult part would be my first honors class being outside of my major and making sure I have time in my schedule with other classes. My advice is that it can't hurt to try. You're going to meet amazing people and get to do a lot of fun things. The best part has to be all the activities and events we've done so far."

"My applying to the Honors Program here at Barry was a last-minute decision. Upon transferring from another institution, I learned about the program, and decided I wanted to apply. I am beyond glad that I did! Even though this is only my second semester both at Barry and in the program, my growth both academically and socially has been noticeably exponential. Forming part of this community has not only helped me grow in my academic endeavors, but has also facilitated my "branching out," so to speak, as I form relationships with like-minded professors and peers. I would have to say that the biggest challenge I've been met with thus far is finding a healthy balance between the demands of being a music education major and my Honors Program coursework."

Sky Benton, Junior,
Major - Criminology



Rebeca Miranda, Junior,
Major - Music Education





Alumni News Stefan Jugmohan



Stefan was accepted to the Honors Program at Barry University in Fall 2017. In May 2020, he successfully defended his Senior Honors Thesis and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (in Finance). His thesis title was, "The Impact of a Student Managed Investment Fund on Students' Financial Literacy and Academic Performance." In addition to sending in an article written about him and his company, Stefan said hello to all HP, as well as wishing all HP students a productive and successful semester. Above is an adaptation from the article; via QRcode.

Stefan has always been ahead of our time, always thinking outside the box and helping others. In one of his honors classes, Stefan proposed his business ideas as part of his final project. The idea reflected on Stefan's commitment to help the less fortunate and his business experience included running a charitable foundation (One smile for One Person) in Trinidad and Tobago after finishing high school. Right after graduation from Barry, he started a company, The Business Tool Kit. Since its inception last summer, his startup company has does quite well.

(Visit <https://www.thebusinessstoolkit.com/> to learn about Stefan's company).

As a young Trinidadian, Stefan instilled strong work ethics which has served him well, particularly during his time at Barry. Stefan would tell people that college was no walk in the park. His endurance got tested as things became more difficult with each passing academic year. Yet it was Stefan's resiliency, humbleness, open-mindedness, and respect he has for others that afforded Stefan to be where he is today. His Senior Honors Thesis is now regarded as one of the top theses and often used as a model for other Business students in the Honors Program. After he got married, Stefan and his wife, both Barry alumni, launched a U.S. version of his company in June 2020. Among the company's main features was to give small companies the much-needed opportunity to compete. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Stefan's company found a niche to provide services to "mom and pop" stores who needed the digital commerce know-hows to survive. Since then, his company continues to provide social media marketing services, ranging from logo designs to website designs to small business owners so they too can thrive in this land of opportunity. Job very well done, Stefan! Stay grounded in your profession and living the Barry's core commitments!

Why Do We Celebrate Black History Month?

Written by Heaven Laster-Torres

“There is no American history without African American history,” said Sara Clarke Kaplan, executive director of the Antiracist Research & Policy Center at American University. The Black experience, she claimed, is immersed in “everything we think of as ‘American history (2021).” Black History Month is an annual celebration of the accomplishments of Black and African Americans that began in 1915. Every United States president since then has dedicated February as Black History Month. Additionally, the United States influenced other countries, like Canada, to dedicate a month towards Black history (2010). At first, this month was used to teach the youth about Black and African Americans’ contributions and achievements. Many of these contributions were forgotten, overlooked, and neglected as part of the national narrative. Over the recent years, Black History Month has become a celebratory month of not only the Black and African Americans’ who contributed to American history, but all those who have impacted on a global scale through achievements and activism. For Americans, February is an opportunity for everyone to explore Black history, get involved in conversations that surpass the subjects of racism and slavery, and focus on Black leaders and their accomplishments. In regards to the younger Black population, this month provides a chance to imagine what the future can look like. An enlightened nation honors and learns from its past, and will not allow the vital facts about the collective memory to fade. In the words of Lonnie G. Bunch III, 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, “There is no more powerful force than a people steeped in their history. And there is no higher cause than honoring our struggle and ancestors by remembering” (Tedeneke 2022).



COVID Far from Home

Written by PeeKay Stoffle

In 2019, Covid-19 began to affect the lives of everyone in this world and change the course of history. During the unknown times of mandates and restrictions, the thought of a normal freshman year of college as a student-athlete was no longer possible. Getting the news of online classes and no longer having a college soccer season, I sought other ways to continue my pursuit of soccer while having an experience that would prepare me for college life. The opportunity of playing soccer and living in Valencia, Spain arose so I prepared my passport, left my family and friends, and flew across the world alone.

When I arrived in Valencia, I felt a sense of excitement as it was the first time I was on my own. The beginning months of the experience were everything I was hoping for. My days consisted of playing soccer, learning the Spanish culture and language, exploring the beach and markets, and meeting new people and friends. During these four months, Spain had low cases of Covid-19 and had mandates that contain the spreading. Back in Miami, the whole country was shut down and people were restricted from normal life. At this point, I knew my choice of leaving home and living in a different country was the right decision. However, my luck was about to run out.

After being able to enjoy my Christmas back in Miami with my family, I was on my way back to Valencia to finish my experience. Christmas back in Spain was a cause of concern for Covid-19. Many civilians in Spain traveled and went to see family and friends during the holidays.

Protocols began to not be followed in Spain and it resulted in high spikes of cases and the continuous spreading of the virus. As soon as I returned, I was no longer going to be living the unrestrained lifestyle I did in the beginning. Almost immediately, players in my team and residents in the residence began to test positive for Covid-19. This resulted in practices being canceled, lunch being delivered to the rooms, and no more gatherings with others. Even though I tested negative, I was to remain in a small single room for 14 days without seeing anyone or doing anything. I was mentally challenged, alone, trapped, and faced with the uncertain of being in a country far from home. During this time all I was able to do was read, work out, and watch shows and movies for 14 days instead of living the experience I sought out for. Valencia implemented stricter protocols to protect the city and my experience was no longer my own.

Covid-19 has affected lives throughout the world. I was lucky to have the experience in Valencia which was full of adventures and challenges. I was able to experience a beautiful culture and lovely people which made the hard unexpected times worthwhile. I can't wait to one day return to Valencia.



Honors Program's Annual Holiday Party!

December 2021



More than our Co-Chair: Brianna Lopez

Written by Michel Winkler

Meet HPSAB Co-Chair Brianna Lopez! Brianna is in her last year and is an English major, specializing in Professional Writing. As a co-chair on HPSAB, Brianna has a leadership role that oftentimes sees her take the reins in planning activities, conducting meetings, and making sure that everything relating to the Honors Program is up to par. Brianna hails from the Bronx, in New York (born and raised), and her family is from Puerto Rico. When Brianna is not busy filling the co-chair role or studying, she can be found in her own world reading, writing, watching Netflix, or visiting different restaurants.



What has been the worst/best parts of your college experience at Barry?

"The lows for me have been the semesters where my schedule was overloaded with English classes, and even though I am an English major, it was still a bit overwhelming. In those semesters, I had to do a lot of writing and the deadlines for each classes' assignments fell back-to-back. The highs have been the opportunities that my time at Barry has brought me. I was able to get an internship that was relevant to my major, self-published a book, and even got the opportunity to work for the university newspaper. While the lows have been low, the highs have also been high. So, it all balances out."

Why did you choose to major in English with a Professional Writing specialization?

"I have always been a writer, and this stems back all the way to my childhood because I was not a very talkative child. Writing was my most comfortable means of expressing myself, even when I had something important to tell my parents. I would feel more comfortable writing it for them to read it. I kind of knew that I would end up majoring in English, the hard part was choosing a specialization. I ultimately chose professional writing because I felt that it would be a good place to start, and Barry's English program has a very diverse catalog of English courses."

Which books have you read that has had an impact on you, and why?

"It's very hard to narrow down all the books that I have read and had an impact on me, but one of my favorite poems is called *The Laughing Heart* by Charles Bukowski, and this poem has had a great impact on me. So much so that I have a little print out of it that I take everywhere because it reminds me to not stress myself out too much, and it encourages me to persevere through hard times."

Which HP courses have been your favorite?

"Humanities 300, where we read *The Overstory*, this course was taught by Dr. S and Dr. Byrne. Reading that type of book was very different for me because at first sight it is not the type of book that I would usually read. It's focus on nature was very interesting and I learned a lot from the book, and the discussions that we had based on the book were very interesting."

More than our Co-Chair: Brianna Lopez Continued

Written by Michel Winkler

How has HP affected your personal and academic life?

"Having to write the honors thesis has impacted my academic life because my thesis changed my focus and trajectory for what I want to do after I graduate. My honors thesis focuses on the first-year English course, more specifically, I redesigned the course so that it better accommodates students who are not English majors. Students usually come out of high school and lack the confidence and writing skills necessary to excel in the course. The way they are taught to write stresses a rigid structure that they must follow at all costs. I feel that writing should be seen as flexible and malleable to each writer. The way I redesigned the course in my thesis better accommodates those students who lack the confidence to give it their best shot."

What advice can you give to incoming HP students, or those who are currently on the same path as yourself? What would you like your legacy to be?

"Get started on your thesis as soon as you can, and I can't stress that enough because I know how stressful it can get if you wait until the last minute. If possible, try not to skip any of your HP courses because you don't want to have too many HP courses being packed into one semester. Lastly, get as involved as you can in the HP community and its activities as it's beneficial to not just you, but also your fellow HP members because it strengthens our bond as a community."

What are your immediate plans for after you graduate?

"After graduating, I will take a gap year and then I will return to school to pursue my Ph.D. in rhetoric and composition. I want to teach first-year English students at the university level. Working on my thesis inspired me to choose this career path, for I learned so much about how other students approach writing, and the techniques and teaching styles. In my gap year, I will try to get a job in book publishing because that is currently the area that I am most interested in. Another possible career path for me could be journalism, local journalism to be more specific because I would want to focus on the Hispanic community. I have some experience from working on the university newspaper, and I am very close to my Hispanic heritage (even though I don't speak Spanish), and so I would want to be part of a community that encompasses that."

What would you like your legacy to be?

"The legacy that I leave at Barry will strongly reflect my body of work, and the things that I advocated for. My redesigning of the English curriculum in my HP thesis will, in my opinion, be the biggest thing that I leave behind because I think it has the potential to cause the biggest change."

Interview of Walter MacWaters:

Written by Andres Jaramillo

A Political science and philosophy double major, Walter MacWaters, has spent his last four years as a Barry University's Honors Program student. He chose Barry University because of its pre-law program and because he did not want to attend a large university. "I wanted something very different from my small town in Colorado, and Miami is just that."

Within the honors program, Walter has been a member of the Student Advisory Board (HPSAB) and began volunteering in the program during his second semester at Barry University. He has contributed a tremendous amount and has been responsible for planning events, writing newsletters, and developing the program to push it forward.

His most memorable event with the Honors Program was the trip to the Norton Museum of Art which broadened his perspective about art and made him appreciate exhibits more. He credits Dr. Erwin's PHI-199H course for sparking his passion for philosophical theory and revealing that philosophy was deeply interesting: full of profound questions and answers.

Upon graduation, Walter has his eyes set on attending law school; however, he is not sure if he will be attending this fall or during Spring 2023. We can expect to see Walter as a prosecuting attorney or state court judge within the next decade!

Ever since he was a kid, one of Walter's hobbies has been playing Dungeon & Dragons and this has developed his ability to work with people and think about moral systems outside of his own. In addition, up until high school, Walter enjoyed playing soccer and his favorite position was being a defender. More recently, Walter has picked up weightlifting/amateur bodybuilding as a hobby which has taught him about dedication to a craft.

Something that is not apparent at first glance about Walter is that he is entirely open and trusts people instinctively. "Despite knowing someone or not, if they need or want to know something I'm all in for it." We will continue to support Walter during his future professional endeavors and wish him nothing but the best on his journey through life.



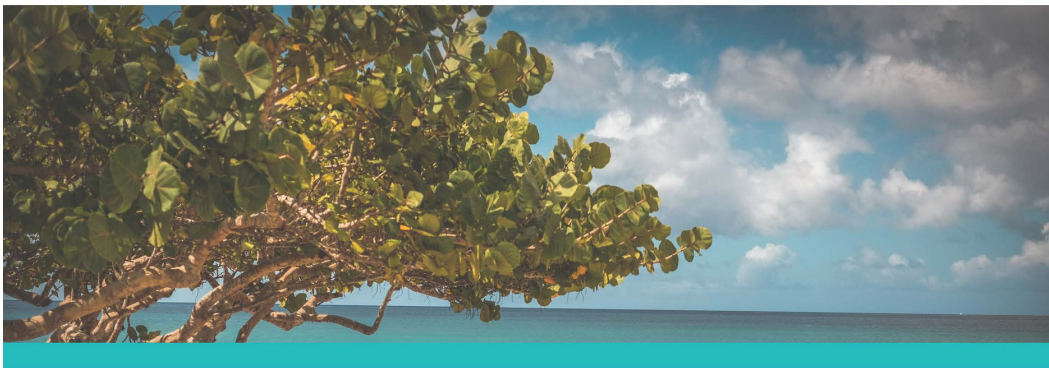
Walter MacWaters, Scholarship Engagement,
Barry Urban Garden, Spring 2022



Walter's Hometown: Trinidad, CO

Upcoming HP Events

- March 19th - Field Trip to Mizell-Johnson State Park (see flyer below)
- March 30th (tentative) - CIW/GLS
- April 22nd or April 27th - Evening of Celebration and Appreciation!



HONORS PROGRAM
SPRING 2022 FIELD TRIP

**DR. VON D. MIZELL-EULA
JOHNSON STATE PARK**

**MARCH 19, 2022
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM**

**A HISTORIC BEACHSIDE ESCAPE FROM
THE NEARBY CITY**

Sign up by March 10th @ psirimangkala@barry.edu
In your RSVP, indicate if you need transportation or a vegetarian.
See pg. 2 of the flyer for health and safety protocol.

