Honors Students Shine Again at Irvine  By Anastasia Keesling

On Saturday, March 6, 2010, the Honors students of the Riverside Community Colleges came together at the Honors Transfer Council of California’s Student Research Conference, hosted by UC Irvine. This year proved to be another successful year as 22 RCCD students and faculty members joined over 300 students from 30 California Community Colleges. In the fourth year of its participation, the number of students from RCC has grown tremendously.

Presenters from the Honors Program at RCC included Emmanuel Chue, Natalie Reid, Corey Savage, Ashley Cutlip, Tatiana Coover, Mitchell Van Dewitte, Christian Zamora, Christina Mastroianni, Stephanie Go, Gage Hunt, Sarah Imsele, Gail Schokannd, Jonathan Choperena, Christian Duran, Dylan Rohr, Ed Keesling, Brian McFadden, Chris Johnson, James Ryan, Eric Andersen, and Kayvan Sasaninia. Their papers covered a wide range of topics from Eric Andersen’s paper on the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Policy of the United States Army to the band Muse and their influence on politics, presented by Corey Savage.

Every student was placed in a group with two or three other students from colleges throughout California. Each student was allowed to present the paper and was given a period for questions from the audience. Jonathan Choperena discussed homosexuality in American film and television which received much praise and was under consideration to be published. Like the years before, the Building Bridges Conference is always a phenomenal event that encourages students to share ideas and build as students and individuals.

Honors News Brief — Dr. Kathleen Sell

We’ve had another terrific year! Our 199 students have written countless papers, conducted surveys for honors statistics projects, eaten vast quantities of pizza at the Quad 15 potluck/pizza parties (and enjoyed Eric Andersen’s efforts from his cake decorating class), participated in research conferences here on campus and at UC Irvine, applied to a wide variety of transfer institutions, and made the program a vibrant community! Our second annual RCCD Student Research Conference nearly doubled in size this year; we certified a second group of UCLA TAP students; the Honors Advisory Council approved curriculum for Biology 1H (which we look forward to adding to our curriculum in the near future); and we hosted the Honors Transfer Council of California for a regional meeting.

Next year promises to be equally active! For incoming students, orientations sessions are scheduled for Monday August 9th and Tuesday August 10th from 10-1 in Quad 15. The sessions will offer info about the program from the classes to the transfer agreements and will also offer peer mentoring — current honors students available to answer questions, share experiences, and offer their best tips! Congratulations to those of our students moving on to their transfer institutions, welcome back to those of you returning next year, and welcome to those of you beginning your journey here!
Student Profile — Nicholas Brazil

How do you feel about being chosen for the student profile?
It is very exciting to be chosen for the student profile. The honors program has been a great experience, and I am humbled to be included in this newsletter.

When did you join the Honors Program and why?
I joined the Honors Program in the spring of 2009. My friend was taking an honors public speaking class, and I had a break during that time so I decided to sit in on the class. I loved the class and was glad I joined.

Which honors courses have you taken and how have they differed from your main lecture style courses?
I have taken honors public speaking, honors art appreciation, honors philosophy, honors statistics, honors American politics, and honors English 1B. These classes allow for a seminar style class rather than a lecture based one. I feel that the discussions and ideas that are presented, are engaging and conducive to a greater learning experience.

What is your major and where do you intend to transfer?
My major is political science. My major is intriguing, and I hope to do something great with it. I intend to transfer to the UC Berkeley. I have been admitted to UCLA and will continue my studies there if I am not admitted to my first choice.

What are your career goals? Do you feel that the Honors Program has helped you in paving your way towards accomplishing those goals?
I want to be the president of the United States. If that goal proves unattainable, I would like to be involved in politics and governance in any capacity. The Honors Program has been a wonderful foundation towards my studying and the rest of my life.

Do you have any words of encouragement or advice for your peers that are working towards transferring to a four-year institution?
Take advantage of the resources available to you here. The Honors Program provides small class sizes with enlightening discussions. The teachers really care about your future and are willing to help you. Study hard, and have fun! =]

“He’s determined, a serious student, curious, and engaged. He’s thoughtful and critical. He will make a fine Golden Bear!”
- Dr. Sellick

Student Profile — Ed Keesling

How did you find out about the Honors Program and how long have you been in it?
I found out about the Honors Program from Dr. Carter who recommended that I apply while I was in her Shakespeare class. Dr. Yoshino also recommended that I apply when I was in his history 6 class. I applied and was accepted. I took humanities 4H last semester. I am now taking humanities 5H.

Do you like the program?
The experience is priceless. I am impressed and inspired by my younger colleagues. Some of them have been accepted to UC San Diego, UCLA, UC Davis, Brown University, Stanford, Cornell University and UC Berkeley. I am very proud to be part of the Honors Program and to be associated with these young men and women.

What do you like most about the Honors classes?
The professors do not simply dispense information; they inspire a thirst for knowledge and understanding. They create an atmosphere where give and take and the free exchange of ideas is encouraged and nurtured.

What is your major and what do you hope to accomplish with it?
My major is English because I enjoy literature. I am happy with what I’ve accomplished. I’m old. I like where I’ve been and I like what I am doing now. I’ve been very fortunate in life.

Do you have any advice for incoming students?
My recommendation would be to give everything that you can to your education because it’s the investment in your future.

“Paul Keesling represents the best of our Honors Program that includes a mature man with wide-ranging life experiences and a sharp academic capability”
- Dr. Yoshino
Dr. Carter, you have a Ph.D. in literature, what is you area of expertise?
I received my Ph.D. from UCR in 2000, and my area of expertise was American literature. My dissertation was on a very different path, though. I wrote about autobiographies written by women with breast cancer, and I explored how medical literature often undoes patients’ identities, but how their autobiographies re-assembled them, often in very new and exciting ways. I was especially moved by Audre Lorde’s autobiography, *A Burst of Light*, and then a lesser-known work by a lesbian couple, one of them with cancer, called *Cancer in Two Voices: Living in My Changing Body*.

Why did you want to major in literature?
My two favorite subjects in high school were geometry and English, so my dad thought I should become a lawyer, and he arranged for an internship at his company’s law office. Oh man, did I hate it! Luckily, I figured this out before college. I happily signed up freshman year at Occidental as an English major, and I never looked back!

What quote inspires you the most?
I’m in a book club, and we spent some time reading Buddhist works, including those by Thich Nhat Hanh. One “gatha” that I remember to say every day is, “waking up this morning, I smile. Twenty-four brand new hours are before me. I vow to live fully in each moment and to look at all beings with eyes of compassion.” That really speaks to me. I also love this Barbara Brown Taylor quote, “to open only the doors with stars on them while leaving shut the doors with chicken feathers is to live half a life with half a heart.” And this just means to me that my goal in life is not just to see the positive aspects of the world but to see both the good and the bad and see how I can make things a little better. If I turn away from things that scare me (the doors with chicken feathers), I would just isolate myself in a “happy place,” and that doesn’t really help anyone at all!

If there is one thing that you would have your students extract from your class, what might that be?
A solid confidence that they can read and understand ANYTHING! I hope a love of reading ensues from this knowledge, but I’m satisfied with the confidence to tackle even the hardest pieces. I love that moment when the class turns the corner on “the waste land” and most of them realize, “hey, I can do this!”

What is the most important message that you bestow upon the students concerning their academic career?
I think that most honors students have figured this out already, but remembering that this is not a dress rehearsal is very important. The work you’re doing now is the work you’ll be doing in five years. It’s time to turn in your very best work and not be satisfied with second-best.
I also think that developing relationships with their professors is very important. Think of each class as an opportunity, not just for a letter of recommendation, but for a lifelong mentor.

“Dr. Carter continues to challenge her students to their prime and in taking her class, I feel as though I am able to handle college material to my full capacity.”
- Krizia Yap

Congratulations to Our Transfer Students

Several of our honors students—past and present—are moving on! Here’s where they’re headed:

**Nicholas Brazil**—UC Irvine, UC Santa Cruz, UCLA, UC Berkeley

**Jonathan Choperena**—Brown, Cornell, Pepperdine, USC, UC Irvine, UC San Diego, University of Pennsylvania, Johns Hopkins, UCLA, UC Berkeley, Yale, Stanford

**Nabila Farabi**—UCLA (Biochemistry)

**Robert Flores**—San Jose State (Civil Engineering)

**Kristin Henry**—UC Riverside, Texas State, San Marcos, UC Irvine, UC San Diego

**Christina Mastroianni**—UC Riverside, UC Irvine

**Christy Okpo**—UC Riverside, UC Davis

**Steven Petrivelli**—UC Irvine

**Jordan Rodriguez**—UC Davis, UCLA, UC San Diego

**Samantha Rodriguez**—UC Davis

**James Ryan**—UC San Diego, UCLA, UC Berkeley, USC, UC Irvine, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz

**Kameron Straine**—UC Santa Cruz

**Joshua Wilson**—University of Colorado, Denver, UC Colorado Springs, Colorado State University, Pueblo

**Christian Zamora**—University of Minnesota at Twin Cities

This year all of our UCLA TAP applicants were admitted to UCLA! Congratulations!!
Fall 2010 Honors Classes

**Riverside**
- English 1AH
  - MW 12:30-2:35
- English 1BH
  - MW 12:30-2:35
- Hum 4H
  - TTH 9:35-11
- History 7H
  - MW 9:35-11
- Art 6H
  - TTH 2-3:25
- Philosophy 10H
  - MW 8-9:25

**Moreno Valley**
- English 1AH
  - TTH 10:15-12:20
- English 1BH
  - MW 2:45-4:50
- Chemistry 1A
  - TTH 8-12:35
- History 6H
  - TTH 11:10-12:35
- Philosophy 10H
  - TTH 2-3:25

**Norco**
- English 1AH
  - MW 2:45-4:50
- English 1BH
  - TTH 10:15-12:20
- Political Science 1H
  - MW 11:10-12:35
- Economics 7H
  - MW 2:20-3:45

Speech Communication 9H
- TTH 11:10-12:35

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Upcoming Events

**Summer Honors Hours Riverside City College 2010:**
- **July:** Wednesdays from 10-1 in Quad 15
- **August:** Mondays and Tuesdays from 10-1 beginning August 9th

**Orientations:**
- Monday, August 9 and Tuesday, August 10
- 10-1pm in Quad 15

**Fall Welcome Lunch:**
- Friday, September 24
- 11 am in the Hall of Fame

**Fall RCCD Honors Research Conference:**
- Friday, November 19
- 10-4pm in the Digital Library

**Spring 2011 HTCC Honors Student Research Conference:**
- Saturday, March 26
- at UC Irvine