“Being a part of an honors community through the Honors Program really helped me feel comfortable and adjust to college life,”

TJ Cappel
a sophomore from Cincinnati, Ohio

Being part of a Honors “community” makes a difference

TJ Cappel was an honors student at his high school in the Cincinnati area, so when he was recruited to play soccer for Shawnee State, he began to check out what programs might be available. He says the more he learned, the more comfortable he became with his choice of schools – and the relationships he began to form through the SSU Honors Program helped with his transition to college.

“The support that you receive through the program is one of the biggest benefits, especially for a new student,” he said. “There is always someone to help you – whether it’s with your major, homework, learning to live on your own, or figuring out how to manage more challenging courses. There’s always someone there to help you in the honors community.”

TJ is a sophomore majoring in international relations and economics and serves as a resident advisor in the honors housing unit. He says that beginning college as a part of a group helped to give him the confidence that he needed to be successful.

“It’s the ‘community’ aspect of the Honors Program that really makes the difference,” he said. “College is an adjustment – and knowing that you’re not alone and that you are already part of something, makes it so much easier. We have done some group projects outside of the classroom, like start a recycling initiative that has helped bring us closer together – while making an impact on our larger campus community.”

Being part of that community means being involved, having some fun, and building relationships, TJ says.

“My advice to incoming freshmen is to be flexible,” he said. “Strike a balance. College is about learning and you should definitely take your studies very seriously, but you need to take some time to have some fun. Join a club. Become involved in a sport. Go to campus activities. Being part of a community like the Honors community helps you be a better student.”
Making a Difference in the Community

Nearly 100 honors students have volunteered with Sierra’s Haven since Fall 2011. Our students have also provided community service through Habitat for Humanity, Relay for Life, Scioto County Clean-up, Operation Christmas Child and with area nursing homes.

Pictured at Sierra’s Haven are: (back, l-r) Feres Kasem, Dr. R, Lori Shonkwiler, Chelsey Thompson, Ian Ridgeway, Jared Kemper, Don Loughry, Alexis Courtney, Jessica Newton, Sarah Harper. Front LtoR: Katrina Stonebreaker, Sabrina Brown, & Kayla Drummond.

HONORABLE MENTIONS • FALL 2013

Learning that Extends Beyond the Classroom

Co-curricular field trips are a part of the Honors experience. Last year, students visited the Cincinnati Symphony and renovated Music Hall. Approximately 40 students and Dr. Rader joined Dr. Michael Barnhart (professor of Music1201) for a pre-concert discussion, dinner at the Montgomery Inn, a tour of the Music Hall, and a performance of Beethoven’s 9th Symphony.

This fall 50 students and Dr. R will be joining Dr. Isabel Graziani and Dr. Lane Reiser (professors of Arth 1101) to take a field trip to the Cincinnati Art Museum, followed by a dinner at Andi’s Mediterranean restaurant. Next fall, the Honors Program is planning a field trip to Cleveland to visit the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and the Cleveland Museum of Art.

2013 Honors Program Orientation

We welcomed our largest cohort this fall with 61 students! Honors students were offered early hall move-in, with shuttles to Walmart & Kroger and an ice cream social. An all-day orientation on Wednesday featured True Colors personality program with Dr. Rader and Dean of Students, Marcie Simms presenting. Orientation Team Leaders included: Allison Falgner (captain), Jared Kemper, Christina Green, Kayla Drummond, Brooke Barker, Lauren Pernestti, Anthony TJ’ Cappel, Marlee Martin, Ian Ridgeway, Kassandra Mullins.

Honors Staff

Allison Falgner (assistant to the director), Kassie Mullins, TJ Cappel, and Keri Boyce (residents assistants in the Honors/Scholars hall complex). Allison was also honored as a Standout Scholar in the most recent Admission’s recruitment viewbook and Keri was awarded our Honors Program Scholarship in 2013.
Making Connections through Honors

“The Honors Program allows you to make connections,” Kassandra Mullins says. “As an incoming freshman not knowing anyone, that ended up to be more valuable than I could have imagined.”

A sophomore environmental engineering major from Meigs County, Kassandra says that she had plans to attend a larger university. When she visited Shawnee State, those plans immediately changed. She says she felt connected to SSU at once, and has been happy with her decision for a variety of reasons.

“I’m a first-generation college student,” she said. “I have always been a little shy, but very involved in high school. I knew college would be different, and, to be honest, I was a little afraid of that. I didn’t realize just how many opportunities I would have at Shawnee State. The Honors community has been great. I’m a Resident Advisor in our honors hall and have enjoyed helping our freshmen residents build connections of their own. I also work in the Admissions Office, participate in the SSU Emerging Leaders program, and am a Presidential Ambassador — all which make my experience here even more rewarding.”

Kassandra says that she advises incoming freshmen to get involved and to use resources available in college – but to understand the differences between high school life and college life.

“College is more challenging, which is good for honors students. Socially, it’s an opportunity for you to connect to people based on your interests, not just based on being in the same class. You’re also given more opportunities to figure out just what those interests might be.”

Bonding Trip to Columbus Zoo

They weren’t really sure who the “animals” were as their two vans of crazy students and Dr. R took over the Columbus Zoo on a cold, winter-like Saturday in mid-April. Shown is senior, Jared Kemper.
We’re proud of our recent graduates who graduated with honors. Sixteen of the last seventeen Honors Program candidates graduated either magna (3.75-3.89 GPA) or summa (3.9-4.0) cum laude.

Twenty-eight Honors students joined Shawn E. Bear & Dr. Rader in the Shawnee Bear Run including (back, l-r) Lexi Courtney, Christen Green, Sami Jenkins, Lori Shonkwiler, Keri Boyce, Allison Falgner, Marlee Martin, Saad Yamlikha, Shawn E. Bear, Jordan Deever, Sarah Harper, Dr. R, Clay Kipling, Siana Cecere, Ian Ridgeway, Jessica Edingfield, Brandi Zlatkind; (front, l-r) Kassandra Mullins, Chelsey Thompson, Marisa Hike, Kayla Drummond, Brianna Bogg, Emily Maple, Grace Horacek, Karlie O’Brien, & Carson Tucker. Not pictured: Rhayvon Blaynok, Miranda Melvin, Daniel Evory, Marcie Reed

What does it mean to be an Honors Student?

Honors students maintain a minimum 3.3 grade point average while taking specially designed Honors courses and completing several community service projects.

Outstanding Scholars Graduate with Honors

Celebration of Scholarship

The annual SSU scholarship conference features original research, literature reviews, and presentations/posters. Seven Honors Program students presented their research projects. Caleb Sibert, a senior in psychology, won the Dean’s Award for his research and creation of a public service announcement addressing the issue of college binge drinking.

Fall 2012 Commencement: (l-r) Dr. Rader, Stephanie Days, Lauren Basler, & Misty Alcorn.

Spring Commencement: (l-r) Megan Paeltz, Shauna Hetler, Caleb Sibert, & Mandie Maxwell.