

OF NOTE:

- 20 students graduated from the Honors Program in 2009
- This summer honors students traveled abroad to Greece, Finland, Ireland and Switzerland. See page 2 for a student report.
- The Honors Directors attended National Collegiate Honors Council conferences in San Antonio and Iowa State University.
- An articulation agreement was reached with the Honors Program at the Community College of Allegheny County, facilitating the matriculation of CCAC students into the RMU Honors Program
- Honors Co-Director Philip Harold presented his research in Boston last August at the American Political Science Association's Annual Conference.
- In August, Honors Co-Director, Monica VanDieren presented her research at a math conference in Będlewo, Poland.

Honors Student Center Opens

Honors students coming to campus for the opening of the 2009-10 school year will be able to enjoy the new Honors Student Center, a space exclusively for the use of honors students on campus. The Center is centrally located on campus, in the lower-level of Franklin Hall, with an entrance by the walkway between the second floor of the Nicholson Center and Hale. All honors students will be able to use their Patriot card to access the Center anytime for relaxation, study, and events for honors students. Right next door, the Educational Technology Center features a Mac lab, a lab with



The new Student Center provides a central location on campus for honors students to study and gather

the latest computer technology, and trained staff to assist students with questions about how to use it all. The Honors Student Center has wifi, internet, and laptops will be available for honors students to check out.

Honors Program Expands

In addition to 35 entering freshman students, over 20 high-achieving RMU students will join the University Honors Program for the 2009-10 school year. These "Continuing Scholars" were invited to apply based on their academic record, and were accepted in a very competitive selection process. This is the first year that continuing students have been admitted into the program.

Incoming honors freshman students will take the First Year Experience (FYSP) course as a pre-session the week before the fall semester begins.

The RMU Co-Directors will teach this one credit course with Honors Student, Sheila Strong, who says, "Taking FYSP as a pre-session with the other Honors students will surely jump-start the close family that Honors students become."

Undergraduate Research Conference a Success



James Schellhammer presents his senior honors thesis.

Over thirty Robert Morris students participated in the third annual Undergraduate Research Conference sponsored by the Honors Program.

The event, which was very well-attended, featured these presentations by senior Patriot Scholars and an awards ceremony conferring "best paper" awards to four students.



Postcards from Abroad

Honors student, Channing Frampton, reports on his summer trip: Traveling to Finland with Dr. Vanhala for the first three weeks in June was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I can't imagine a more unique way to spend my study abroad experience. Though the seven of us who went experienced the coldest June in 60 years that southern Finland had seen, there was just too much to see and do to let the weather get in the way of our adventure. From the bustling streets of downtown Helsinki, with everyday citizens dressed as fashion models, to the peaceful settings just north of the Arctic Circle, this country had much to offer. My reason for going on the trip was to conduct research for my honors thesis that deals with commercial and public broadcasters in Finland. Meeting employees of actual TV stations there was one of the highlights of the trip. I even got to give a sample weather forecast at Helsinki's MTV3, Finland's largest commercial TV station. In addition to my research, there were unexpected surprises such as a visit to a reindeer farm, a climb to Finland's northernmost weather station and radar tower, and an artistic look at the work featured at the International Film Festival of the Midnight Sun. My plans to return to the country are slowly coming together, and I am planning on applying to the University of Tampere's masters program.



Channing Frampton at MTV3 in Helsinki



Israel, May 2009

Seven RMU students went on a study tour of Israel last May with Professor Philip Harold. During the spring semester they took a class on the history and politics of Israel, and then got to see the country they had studied during an unforgettable 11-day tour around Israel. The trip began with three days in Jerusalem, learning about the history of Ancient Israel and the origins of Christianity first-hand. The students crawled through a 2,700-year-old tunnel built by King Hezekiah, left notes in the Western Wall, and saw the sites of the last supper, passion, and resurrection of Jesus. Seeing the holy sites of Christianity and Judaism was breathtaking and moving, as was the visit to the Holocaust museum, Yad VaShem. The students encountered many aspects of modern Israeli history at many sites such as Latrun, Kastel, Sde Boker, and the Golan. They rode camels and stayed in a Bedouin tent one night, and another night were treated to home hospitality by Israeli families. Masada, the desert palace of Herod the Great overlooking the Dead Sea—which the students floated in—was also a major highlight. As one student put it, the whole experience “can only be described using one word, perfect!” If you are interested in participating in next year's study tour, either for college credit or not, please inquire to harold@rmu.edu for more information.

Patriot Scholar Kudos

Tara Maxwell, honors student and track and field team member was named 2008-09 NEC Female Student-Athlete of the Year.

Four Honors Students made the 2008 NEC Fall Academic Honor Roll:

- **Kathleen Caggiano**, soccer
- **Allison Flood**, field hockey
- **Emily Himmell**, field hockey
- **Jessica Stubbs**, Soccer

Michael Church won "best paper" in the junior/senior category in the 2009 RMU Undergraduate Research Conference.

Brendan Berkley won the prestigious Franklin Award of Excellence from the Graphic Arts Association in 2009.

Melissa Wenger received the Honors Travel Fellowship to present her honors thesis, *A Cultural Analysis: Managing a Multi-Cultural Environment within One Building*, at the SAM International Business Conference in Las Vegas.

Honors student and President of the Honors Student Advisory Council, **Sara Meier**, won a National Collegiate Honors Council scholarship for her participation in the Washington Center Summer Internship Program. See the back page for a recount of her experiences.

Prof. VanDieren Profiled in PPG

Honors Co-Director Monica VanDieren was profiled on the front page of the June 1 Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. The article probed her research in model theory and highlighted her career in a field in which women are underrepresented. Prof. VanDieren was the first RMU professor to be profiled by the Post-Gazette in their monthly "Thinkers" series, which features many of the region's best and brightest researchers. Her picture was also featured on the home page of the American Mathematical Society's Math Digest webpage.

Alumni Profile

Amber R. Paranick

Graduated: 2006

Major: Marketing

Study Abroad: Italy

"Becoming a member of the Honors Program was one of the best decisions I made when enrolling at Robert Morris University. The program truly set the course for my academic career and allowed me to learn and grow in an academic organization with students just like myself. The smaller class sizes allowed us to interact on a one-on-one basis with dedicated professors. In preparing the thesis, I realized an interest in advancing my career in research. I went on to pursue a master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh and am currently working as a Librarian at the Library of Congress."

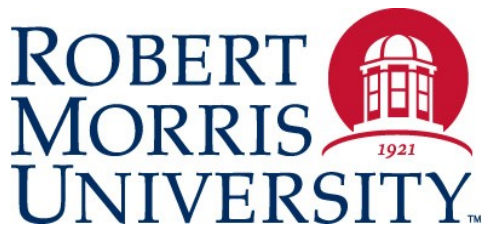


Author David McCullough signs books after his address at RMU. Honors students studied McCullough's work in preparation for his visit to campus.

Summer Camp

Prof. VanDieren attended the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) New Honors Director Summer Camp at Iowa State University this past July.

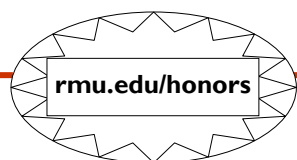
For VanDieren, the Summer Camp was a homecoming of sorts since it was hosted by the honors program which she attended as an undergraduate. Honors directors from over 30 colleges and universities met for three days of workshops and seminars on building, maintaining and improving honors programs. Prof. VanDieren spoke of her visit, "It was affirming to see that the RMU Honors Program meets all criteria established by the NCHC. I found out that RMU's program is a rarity with its co-directorship, and realize that this puts us at a great advantage of broadening the academic honors offerings and diversifying the program." She hopes that the establishment of this cohort of honors programs across the country will spawn honors student collaborations between the RMU and the other universities.



HONORS PROGRAM

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Littera, Civitas, Ductus



Honors Student Sara Meier writes of her summer experience:
I spent my summer break in Washington, DC as a student of The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars. I was an intern at Book Hill Partners, a lobbying, public relations, and government affairs firm, located in the heart of downtown Washington, DC. In addition to my responsibilities at my internship, I was enrolled in a course titled "International Business in the Middle East" to learn more about business procedures in the Middle East. I was also required to attend the Presidential Lecture Series, listening to speakers such as Ralph Nader, Michael Balboni, and U.S. Secret Service Agents. I attended various other events offered by The Washington Center, including a Career Bootcamp Workshop and workshops about networking, resumes, and cover letters. I also toured the Pentagon and visited numerous monuments and museums in our nation's capital.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, Aug. 19

Game Night in the Honors Student Center

Aug. 24-28

Welcome Week

Wednesday, Sept. 2

Activities Fair

Friday, Sept. 4, 12:00-2:30 p.m.

Ribbon-cutting and open house of the Honors Student Center

Friday, Sept. 18

RMU Night at PNC Park

Wednesday, Sept. 23, 5:30-6:45 p.m.

Homecoming Week Honors Open-House and Pre-show Reception
Honors Student Center

Wednesday, Sept. 23, 7:00 p.m.

Irish Performer - *Sean Tyrrell*
Massey Theater

Thursday, Oct. 1

Career Fair

Wednesday, Oct. 7

Academic Majors Fair

Friday, April 16, 2010

Intersections Undergraduate Research Conference
Sewall Center