

# HSA

## *Happenings*

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## *Happenings in Honors*

### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual HSA Date Auction



Emcees Brian Schwabenland  
and Rebecca Anderson

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Date Auction, one of HSA's largest annual fundraisers, shaped up to be a very successful event. To accomplish this we upped the ante. More food, more bidding paddles, and more raffles along with a diversity of the University's finest gentlemen that made the night unforgettable.

Due to collaboration with multiple organizations across campus, a variety of well-dressed gentlemen were bid on by audience members competing to win a date (perfect for V-Day!). We had athletes, fraternity members, and even the 2014 Mr. WCU!

A raffle with a wide range of great gift cards added to the night's excitement. All of the preparation and planning by the fundraising committee guaranteed something for everyone. The event provided a good time – for a good cause - even if you didn't go to "buy a guy"!

Because of those who did choose to buy or donate, we were able to raise just over \$1,400 to benefit HSA's chosen beneficiary for the year, Safe Harbor. The proceeds will be going to assist them as they fight homelessness and hunger in Chester County. ~ *Matt Nolt*

### **PASSHE: Summer in Norway**

The PASSHE Summer Honors Trip is an educational experience, which takes place each year to give two honors



Fundraising Chair Matt  
Nolt and volunteers

students from each state university the opportunity to study special topics courses abroad while earning college credit and forging new relationships. This year's program focuses on Norway, specifically the nation's leading initiatives of environmental sustainability and the Nobel Peace Prize. We will spend the first week of this experience studying here at West Chester University with two students from each of the PASSHE schools, as well as faculty members Dr. Kevin Dean, Dr. Charles Hardy, and Dr. Denise Polk. During the second week, we will travel to Norway, staying at the American College of Norway, and visiting the cities of Moss and Oslo. The last few days of the trip will be spent on the western coast and the town of Stavanger. In addition to educational initiatives while in Norway, we will also be experiencing some of the nation's culture and history, including visiting one of the world's top natural wonders, Pulpit Rock!

The first special topics course we will be taking is HON 355 *Norway's Nobel Idea for Promoting Peace and Developing Leaders*. In this course we will be studying the various aspects that go into choosing candidates for the Nobel Peace Prize, since the Nobel Peace Institute is located in Norway. As a PASSHE system, our end goal is for all of the students on the trip to complete research and come together to choose one individual to nominate for the Nobel Peace Prize! The second class is HON 355 *Environmental Stewardship Challenges of the Twenty-First Century*. In this course we will have the opportunity to partner with the environmental protection agency in Norway, one of the leading countries in conservation initiatives, to conduct research on environmental systems.

We are both very excited to not only learn more about the education and culture of Norway, but also to meet other honors students throughout PASSHE schools. These experiences combined will expand our world-view and allow us to be more engaged in our global community.

~Sarah Walker and Marissa Giovinazzo

## Upcoming Events

~March 18th - Grad School Fair

~March 28th - Semi-Formal

~April 12th - Aid to South Africa

## Service Trip to North Carolina

During the last week of winter break, a group of seven West Chester University Students embarked on an eight-hour journey with Dr. Helion, Dr. Chuck Shorten, and Mr. Rick Stevenson down to Swan Quarter, North Carolina. We were joined by seven other students and faculty from East Stroudsburg and Rowan Universities. Partnered with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), we spent a week repairing and rebuilding homes horribly damaged by various hurricanes and tornados. The trip was nothing short of rewarding and eye opening.

We had the opportunity on multiple occasions to speak with the property owners and hear first hand accounts of how the storms had affected and still continually impact their lives. One woman was trapped inside her home, which was picked up off of its foundation and moved five feet away from its original location. The floorboards were completely ripped up, walls caved in, windows shattered, and her roof was unsalvageable. Unfortunately, it was not possible to repair her home due to the monstrous amounts of damage that occurred, but UMCOR received enough funding and volunteers to build a new home for her on her same property. With basic structure constructed from a previous crew, our team worked together to make advancements on the house in areas such as siding, plumbing, roofing, and construction of a deck. The homeowner's uplifting attitude was very inspiring and helped make the long, cold days worthwhile. Our team as a whole was very touched not only by the appreciation exhibited by those we helped, but by the community members in general.

The atmosphere in this county with a population of less than 500 was so unlike anything I have experienced before, paralleling that of an old time movie, where neighbors wholeheartedly cared for one another, and genuine friendliness was the standard rather than the exception. The trip will be offered again next winter, and will be the 10th year Dr. Helion has so kindly extended the invitation to his students. I would recommend this trip to anyone who truly hopes to make a difference in the lives of others, as this experience has opened my heart and eyes in ways I truly did not expect. ~ *Julianna Mann*

## Alumni Spotlight: Daniel VanHassent

Daniel graduated from West Chester University and the West Chester University Honors College in May 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Secondary Education. While attending West Chester University, Daniel was very involved in different organizations on campus. He participated in Marching Band, University Ambassadors, the Friars' Society, and of course, the Honors Student Association. In addition, he worked on campus as a Leadership Consultant in the Division of Student Affairs.

After graduation, Daniel ended up first working as a Per Diem Substitute Teacher (per day) for the Chester Country Intermediate Unit (CCIU). Soon after, West Chester B. Reed Henderson High School offered Daniel to serve as a Long-Term Substitute Teacher for September and October teaching AP Psychology and African-Asian Cultures. Daniel also devoted his time working for the Downingtown West High School Marching Band. "On top of teaching, grading, and lesson planning at Henderson High School, I would then travel to Downingtown West High School almost every day from early August to mid-November," Daniel recalls. After he finished up his time at Henderson, Daniel returned to working as a Per Diem Substitute Teacher with the CCIU and with Substitute Teacher Services.

Daniel reached stability when North Penn High School in Lansdale, PA offered employment as a Permanent Per Diem Substitute Teacher, or building substitute. He arrives to North Penn every day and is placed in any classroom as needed. He keeps Dr. Dean's expression, "Be Flexible!" as his mantra, as he can be placed in any classroom even though he was hired specifically for Social Studies. Daniel sums up his transition, "my second day on the job, I was substitute for an Aquatics teacher... My transition to adult life has come with many changes and new experiences so far!"

As for Honors, Daniel took advantage of many opportunities and gained a few lifelong skills. He held four leadership positions in HSA during his college career.



West Chester University volunteers at Swan Quarter

## Community Service

Blood Drives – Help save lives! Blood drives will be taking place:  
 ~ March 3<sup>rd</sup> (Commonwealth, Tyson, University Halls)  
 ~ March 5<sup>th</sup> (Allegheny Hall)  
 ~ March 24<sup>th</sup> (Goshen Hall)  
 ~ March 30<sup>th</sup> (Brandywine Hall)  
 ~ April 6<sup>th</sup> (Killinger Hall)

Adopt-A-Block – Help serve the West Chester community by keeping our streets clean! Happening two weekend days a month, stay tuned for the upcoming March dates!

*For more information on how to get involved on campus, contact the WCU Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs at [www.wcupa.edu/volunteer](http://www.wcupa.edu/volunteer) or [JReindl@wcupa.edu](mailto:JReindl@wcupa.edu).*

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As leadership is the underlying theme of the Honors curriculum, Daniel exuded his understanding of leadership through his positions. Daniel also “caught the travel bug” while in Honors. He went on every Winter Break service trip with Dr. Helion and traveled to South Africa in 2012 and Russia in 2013. He can still relate these eye-opening experiences to his life today. “As a Social Studies teacher, I am able to use these experiences in my classroom when teaching about the world around us.” Four lifelong skills Daniel took away from honors were leadership, organization, time management and flexibility. These skills have helped him in school and in his career. Daniel demonstrates leadership in his classroom and also when he worked with Downingtown West High School’s Marching Band; “A key component of leadership is thinking about what is best for those you are leading.” He learned to be organized and how to tackle his busy schedule with classwork and extra curricular activities. Now, he utilizes his time management skills in his everyday life. As for flexibility, Daniel learned nothing goes as planned. Whether it was course work or something that came up in one of his leadership roles at West Chester, he grasped the idea to “go with the flow” and embraces it in his daily work.

**Daniel leaves three crucial pieces of advice for Honors students:**

1. “Get involved! At least with HSA and one other club on campus.”
2. “Never pass up on an opportunity! You never know what types of doors it may open for you in the future.”

Daniel provided so much information and insight to his life that it is clear to see Honors left a positive impact. He is able to carry on not only the core curriculum he has learned from his major, but also the lifelong skills and leadership that only the Honors College can provide.

*~Taylor McCahan*



HSA Happenings is a student-produced monthly newsletter created and distributed by the Honors Student Association. Its purpose is to supplement the West Chester University community’s knowledge of the Honors Student Association’s activities and endeavors.

*Edited by: Devon Stroup*