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## Honors Oracle, March 2015

Marshall University Honors College

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Marshall  
University's  
Honors  
College  
Newsletter

# The Honors Oracle

The Oracle

March 2015

## Welcoming Alumni Back to the Family

### Upcoming Dates:

March 30-April 5: Second-year through senior advising appointments

April 6: Recommended date to apply for December 2015 graduation

April 9-10: Early Registration for Honors students

April 14: Assessment Day

April 27-May 1: Dead Week

May 4-8: Exam Week

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By Callie Snodgrass  
Marshall University  
Honors College staff is small but mighty. This year they welcomed a new staff member to the team, Marshall alumna Cara Bailey.

Bailey is the outreach coordinator for the Society of Yeager Scholars, a new position in the Honors College. As outreach coordinator, Bailey has a wide variety of responsibilities, including being a liaison for many different campus groups.

"I am the central contact on campus for the current Yeager Scholars, Alumni Yeager Scholars, Marshall Foundation, Yeager Board of Directors, Honors College, and students who are interested in becoming Yeager Scholars," Bailey said. "Whatever people need, they can come to me for help."

As outreach coordinator, Bailey mainly works with Yeager Scholars and the Yeager Program. She is responsible for some of the recruitment, outreach, marketing, public relations,

and communications for the program. She also gives tours of the Honors College to interested potential honors students.

Although she has a large number of responsibilities, Bailey is more than willing to help out in the Honors College. She recently collaborated with Dr. LoCascio to update and launch new Honors College and Yeager Program websites, and is now working on new promotional material for the Honors College.

Bailey was a facilitator at the Honors College Food for Thought dinner this year, which gave her the opportunity to meet new honors students. She said she enjoys being able to work with honors students every day.

"I love working with students who want to learn and are eager to be a part of campus life," Bailey said. "Honors College students seek opportunities and I like helping them seek ways to progress in their careers."

Bailey graduated from Marshall in 2006 with her Bachelor of Arts degree in print journalism. She was born and raised in

Huntington and said she bleeds green.

"I love that I can help bring the best students to Marshall with this job" Bailey said.

Bailey is married and has two kids, Bodhi and Adora. She enjoys attending Marshall games and riding bikes with her family. She is also very active in the community, serving on the Board of Directors for the Wild Ramp and Create Huntington.

Bailey considers herself to be a resource for students. She has an open door policy and wants all honors students to know that she is available to help.

"My doorplate may say 'Yeager Scholars,' but I am here to help all honors students" Bailey said.



# Living in an Honors Community



Willis Hall is a dorm specifically for students of the Honors College.

By Jared Casto  
Marshall

University's Willis Hall will begin its transition into an Honors Residential College, providing greater advantages and a dedicated home on campus for Honors students in the fall semester.

By transitioning Willis into an Honors Residential College, Housing and Residence Life hopes to specifically meet the needs of and appeal to the distinct curricular interests of Honors students.

Having an environment composed of Honors-only students allows specialized amenities to be offered to those living in Willis Hall. A recent program called Faculty Fellows could perhaps be the most

substantial asset, allowing Housing and Residence Life to work with Academic Affairs and connect faculty and other departments to Willis Hall.

John Yaun, director of Housing and Residence Life, said the main objective of the transition is to support developmental and academic success.

"We would have more of a faculty presence in the hall, Honors classes taking place in the building, and mostly all the students in the building would be Honors students," Yaun said. "All of those things can affect retention and GPA in very positive ways."

A concern that many Honors students have is bringing their non-Honors roommate

along with them. While this is currently possible for Honors students living in Willis and will continue to be in the near future, eventually phasing out this option could prove to be essential.

"The goal is to get the community to be 100 percent Honors students," Yaun said. "I think the goal is if we can get all Honors students living there, then we'll look at probably not having [non-Honors roommates] in the future."

Marshall currently has Living Learning Communities in Willis, as well as Freshman North and South. While the Living Learning Communities in North and South will remain during the next year, there are plans to move 20-25 first-year students into Willis during the

2015 fall semester.

By providing access to specialized resources and offering a shared environment between Honors students, Housing and Residence Life is demonstrating its vested interest in the Honors students who live on campus.

Yaun said the residence hall transition would reinforce the work ethic Honors students encounter in the classroom.

"If we can [achieve this] through faculty involvement, programs, activities, faculty presence, having classes in the building, all the students in the building being Honors students and sharing those similar interests, I think that will accomplish many of our goals," Yaun said.

By Clara Maynard  
The Honors College Student Association (HCSA), Phi Kappa Phi and the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association are collaborating on a book drive for St. John's House throughout the month of March.

St. John's House, an afterschool program for children living in Huntington's Marcum Terrace neighborhood, began as an outreach by St. John's Episcopal Church. The group provides healthy meals, homework help and educational activities for

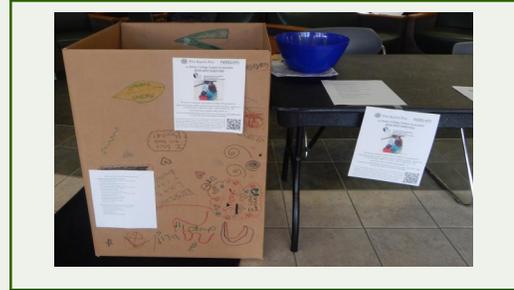
the children.

Mary Beth Reynolds, Phi Kappa Phi President, said the organization wanted to do something to help others.

"Phi Kappa Phi as an organization promotes literacy. Their motto is let the love of learning rule humanity," Reynolds said. "The idea is that learning is important and without literacy you can't learn."

Before the end of the event, Tuesday Simmons, HCSA President, Phi Kappa Phi Vice President and Honors College student, said she had high hopes for the drive's

## Books for Brighter Futures



outcome.

"I am hoping the book drive will bring in enough books that we are able to provide a copy of each book for each of the children," Simmons said. "This would allow all the children to take books home to read and

encourage reading as a hobby."

The drop boxes will remain in place until April 2, when students from the Honors College and Communication Disorders Department will meet to make a final count of donated books.

By Robert Bordelon  
The long history of prostitution poses a major question for modern historians and feminists: Why do cultures support, enforce, or ignore sex as a commodity? A seminar taught by Dr. Laura Diener this semester attempts to explain this question in her honors course "Agency, Identity, Resistance: Prostitution in Historical Perspective."

The course looks

throughout history to the many examples of prostitution and the women it affected, the regulations imposed on it, and the reasons behind it.

Beginning at the dawn of civilization and traveling through cultures like Victorian England and Feudal Japan, the seminar examines not the politics of the debate over legalization, but the historical and cultural context in which

the answers to those questions might be found.

This semester is the first time the class has been offered and the level of interest pushes it to be offered again.

Though several ideas where considered as the course was being developed, the massive outpouring of positive feedback told Diener that this was the right direction to move in.

Diener said much of the buzz seems to come from the students themselves.

"I have really fantastic students, with this being the first time I have ever taught this class," Diener said. "And the students are teaching it along side me, contributing articles that I wouldn't have thought of and having

perspectives I had never considered. I'm really impressed by my students."

Sarah McComas is an Honors College student who is currently in the class. In her opinion, a huge part of the seminar is relating historical readings with modern ideas and stigmas that constantly appear in pop culture's references to prostitution.

She said the class offers a unique perspective she hopes many other students can experience.

"I think [the seminar] offers so much more diversity and room for discussion than a lot of the other topics that are offered," McComas said.

Diener hopes to develop this course into one that will be offered on a regular basis in the Women's Studies department.



## Prostitution in Perspective

# Local Weather from Dorm Rooms

By Ian Lovern  
Joseph Fitzwater, Honor's College Junior, had no expectations when he began pursuing meteorology. When he created his first forecasting website in high school, he definitely didn't expect that his passion would land him in the pages of USA Today.

Fitzwater's interest in meteorology began at age six, when he visited a local news station and was shown how their meteorologists read the weather charts. However, it was many years before he acted on his interest.

"I had to have surgery my junior year of high school," Fitzwater said. "I had to take three weeks off of school. That finally gave

me some time to learn how to put a website together. I bought a few books on writing code and purchased my own domain. Then I just learned as I went."

Fitzwater's learning experience didn't stop there. While his website started out pretty simple, piggybacking off of other forecasts, Fitzwater was determined to become independent. He purchased his own Doppler radar machine and subscribed to various weather maps for North American as well as the rest of the world.

With his new tools in hand, his website quickly evolved to become more sophisticated and accurate. However,

while he has the same instruments as the big boys, there is one thing that sets Fitzwater's website apart: the subject matter.

"I'm from a small area that never seems to get good weather coverage," Fitzwater said. "We only see what is happening in Charleston and Huntington. I wanted to put together a website that would shed some light on the more rural areas of West Virginia and let people know what was happening there."

Specifically, Fitzwater's focus is placed on a few counties east of Charleston, which are almost always overlooked by local news stations. Fitzwater thought it was important to provide these areas with the same level of up-to-date information as their neighbors in more populated areas.

Fitzwater wasn't alone in this opinion. Numerous weather prediction entities have expressed interest in what he is doing, as well as multiple prestigious news sources.

Recently, Fitzwater was approached by USA Today, whom will soon be running a story concerning his website.

While this was a surprise, the publicity has been great for Fitzwater.

"The first year my website was running I got about 9,000 hits," Fitzwater said. "The Charleston Gazette published an article about it and I got 2,000 the next day, and 26,000 since then. I'm hoping that as more people read about the website, they will think it's something that is applicable for them as well."

Fitzwater isn't sure where he wants to take his career in meteorology, but he knows he will continue with his website regardless. His plans include further modifying and personalizing the radar that is available on the page in real time, as well as publishing more frequent discussions about current weather patterns and abnormalities. Past that, he is just enjoying working in field that he loves, and plans to see where his passion takes him. Fitzwater's website can be visited at: [www.fitzweather.com](http://www.fitzweather.com).



## Seeing Appalachia on the Big Screen

By Andrew Ely  
Some Honors  
College seminars hit  
closer to home than  
others.

Appalachia on Film is a seminar that is currently offered for Marshall's Honors College students. This seminar, taught by Dr. Walter Squire, intricately intersects the world of Hollywood with the hills of Appalachia. But the connections don't stop there.

"...Some of the more popular of them [the films] may have patterned how viewers, both outside and inside Appalachia, view Appalachia," said Squire. "They depict important historical moments, and some of them challenge stereotypes or 'conventional wisdom/knowledge' of Appalachia."

He too has

intentions of sparking students to piece together their own images of the region, promoting a sense of pride.

Squire said his "principle purpose" for this seminar is to provide a space for rigorous study of Appalachia, its culture, its diversity, and its history.

The class entails a multitude of films, including headliners such as "The Hunger Games" and "October Sky", but also reaches into a lesser-known realm of movies, including an outreach to local video artists, which even include former students, to share their work and open it for discussion.

Squire's seminars do not end with Appalachian Film Studies. Along with Dr. Rachel Peckham of

the English Department, Squire plans to bring a whole new seminar into their repertoire of classes.

"Lie to Me, Truly: Hybrid Nonfiction and Documentary" is a new seminar being offered at Marshall in the fall. This course will be for those who enjoy putting critical thinking into practice as they decipher the falsehoods, and also the bizarre truths, throughout different forms of media. The seminar will examine works that draw from claimed "real life," but might be deceitful in a multitude of ways.

For a complete list of Honors seminars that will be taught in Fall 2015, check out Marshall University's Honors College website, <http://www.marshall.edu/honors/courses>



*"They depict important historical moments, and some of them challenge stereotypes or 'conventional wisdom or knowledge' of Appalachia."  
-Squire*



*October Sky is one of the best known stories coming from West Virginia*



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## Advice about Advising

By Clarissa Bonnefond  
The Honors College introduced a new way of advising for students that are scheduling for the fall semester.

Over the past month, Honors students met with advisors to discuss scheduling and resources such as Degree Works and the Honors College website. Advisors also provided guidance for students regarding the requirements for the Honors College.

First-year students were required to meet with an advisor in order to be able to do their scheduling early. All other Honors students will be able to apply for fall courses early without being required to make appointments. Students wishing to register for seminars, the Honors Oracle and the Steering Committee still require advising sessions.

Sande Yentes,  
Honors College

academic advisor, said the new process would help minimize students' confusion about scheduling.

"We want to meet with [Honors students] so that they are not confused about the curriculum," Yentes said. "It's just a chance to go over everything with them one-on-one. The goal is that they understand how the college works."

Meetings will also be available for students planning to graduate in the upcoming year or have any questions regarding Honors College curriculum.

Advising has already begun, but anyone that hasn't signed up yet can still look for an open timeframe on the scheduling papers outside

of the Honors College Main Office. Students can make an appointment with one of four different advisors, who all have different availabilities for students to come in and discuss their future.

"If someone thinks they are ready to graduate, it is not a bad idea for them to come in, and also people with general questions can come in," Yentes said.

Early registration for Honors students for the fall semester begins at midnight on April 9, and will close the following afternoon. For questions concerning registration or advising, students may see Sande Yentes in Old Main office 230.

