



Houston
community history public

build home ideas fierce trendsetters
frontier
CIVIC houston involvement

CENTER

... A LIFETIME

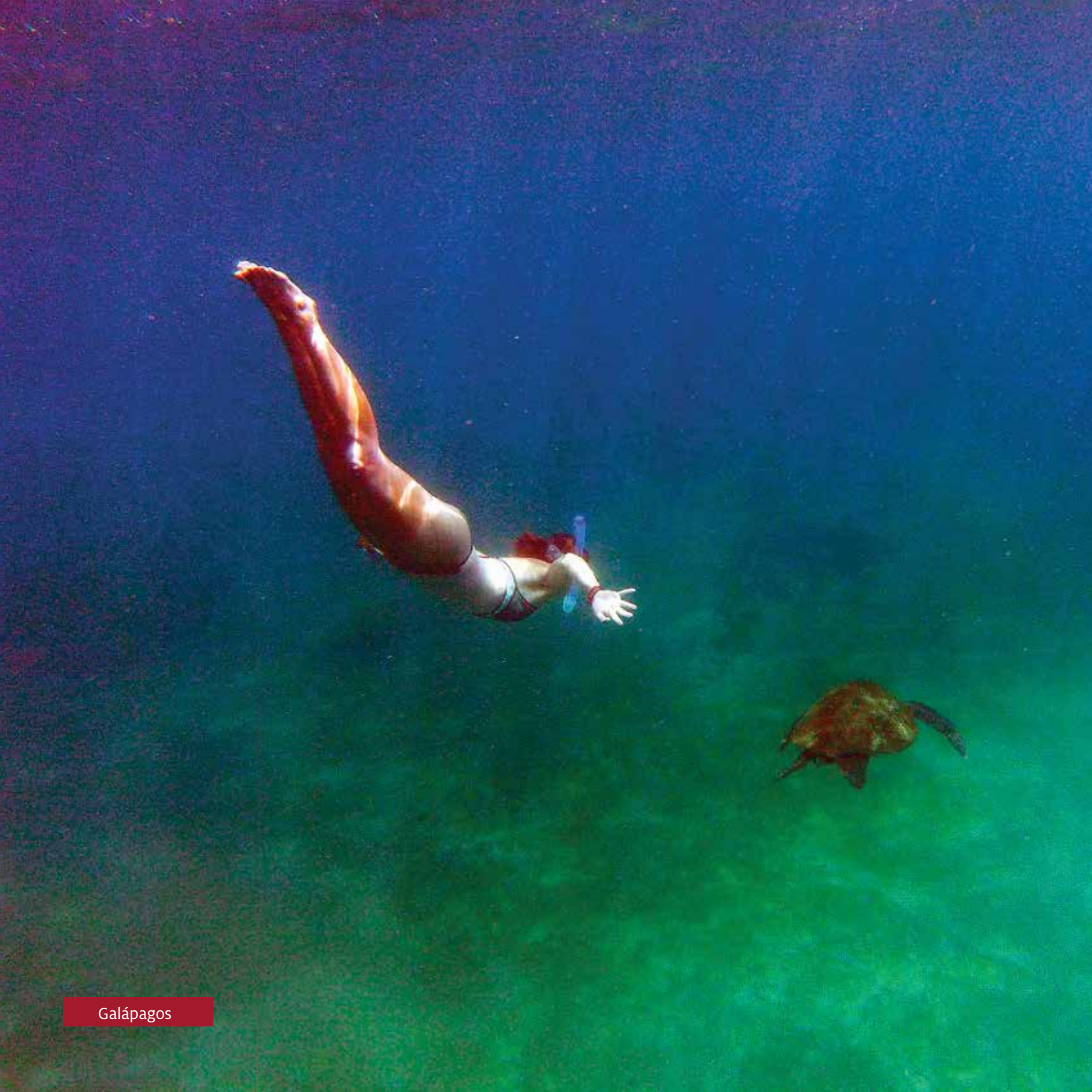
SUCCESS THAT LASTS

GRAND CHALLENGES

GREAT BOOKS

SHINE & RISE

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**
THE HONORS COLLEGE

William Monroe, Dean

SHINE *e* RISE

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

uh.edu/honors

M.D. Anderson Library
4333 University Drive, Room 212
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THIS IS THE HONORS EXPERIENCE

A recent article on the impact of unchecked technological progress caught my eye, particularly this line, which has haunted me: “The motto of the 1933 World Fair in Chicago was ‘Science Finds, Industry Applies, Man Conforms.’”

Even today this holds true—scientists and academics ask questions and find answers, while engineers and technologists make the search for knowledge possible. But who dictates how scientists receive funding for research, what products engineers design, what technologies to which man must conform? Some third party? What checks and balances exist to ensure these leaders implement changes that are in the best interest of everyone? These questions made me realize that STEM professionals must be more socio-politically aware of their actions and become better leaders. Our current political atmosphere is particularly indicative of this. We can no longer afford to sit inside a lab or behind a desk discovering and designing while allowing others who have little understanding of the technicalities to make all the decisions. We must strive to inform others and have a broader impact upon society.

This is why the Honors Experience is important.

Dr. David Shattuck and I were recently discussing the merits of Honors Engineering. I believe he hit the nail on the head when he said, “Honors is about teaching and strengthening critical thinking.” Although critical thinking can be taught as a part of engineering courses, there is so much to this skill beyond the technical. Just as the best marathon runners train not only by running, but also by swimming, weightlifting, and climbing, we need to sharpen our critical thinking abilities in different areas of life. Honors provides many opportunities for students to practice critical thinking both outside the classroom and outside their field of study.

Through the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF), headed by Dr. Karen Weber, I was able to collaborate with Dr. Kevin Bassler in the Physics Department at





the University of Houston. During this fellowship, students set their own path of inquiry, conduct research with world-class faculty, and explain the impacts of their findings during Undergraduate Research Day. Personally, this experience was transformative, and a fundamental reason I am pursuing a master's thesis at the University of Houston; moreover, seeing my colleagues developing into more robust, reflective individuals speaks volumes for the value of this program. Many of these individuals—such as Craig George ('18), Serrae Reed ('18), and James Russ ('18), among many others—have, since the completion of their SURF fellowships, set the bar for leadership and excellence within the Honors College and the University as a whole. I am sure that they will continue to be leaders in science and engineering well into the future.

That undergraduate research experience, however, still lies within the realm of STEM, and critical thinking should be taught in other areas as a matter of course. Every Honors student takes the Human Situation course, undoubtedly an excellent tool for sharpening critical thinking skills, and an opportunity to intensely debate with the professor (I'm sure many professors have nightmares about students). I still find myself reflecting upon the *Odyssey* and *Nietzsche* when I feel lost. Other opportunities for this type of learning are available through Honors. I was fortunate to travel abroad as a part of the 2017 Honors trip to Wales and Ireland. Professors Robert Cremins and Jonathan Zecher led us on an eye-opening and thought-provoking adventure through Ireland and Wales so that we could understand the complex history behind the Irish revolution and the current political situation in that part of the world. I believe learning to analyze complex political histories facilitates the thought process necessary to make informed socio-political decisions as well.

But the Honors College is not just a place for people to sharpen their abilities; it is a community—a community that fosters and encourages the leadership and mindfulness necessary to have a meaningful, positive impact on society.

—Erich McMillan

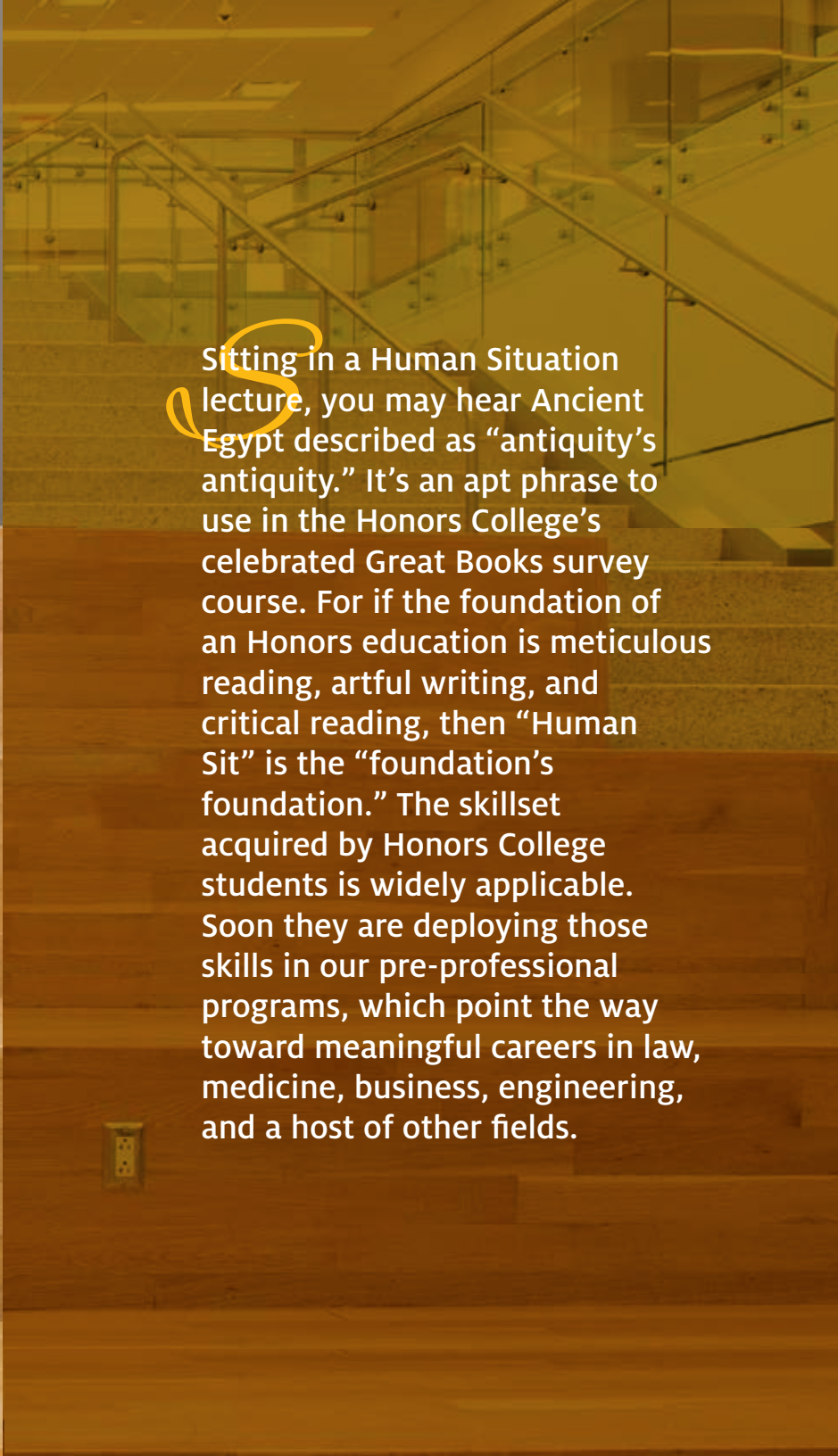


A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a light blue sleeveless button-down shirt and black pants, stands on a wooden library floor. She is smiling and holding a red rectangular sign with the words "GREAT BOOKS" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. To her left is a black tote bag. In the background, several other students are sitting on wooden bleachers, some reading books. The setting is a bright, modern library with large windows and recessed ceiling lights.

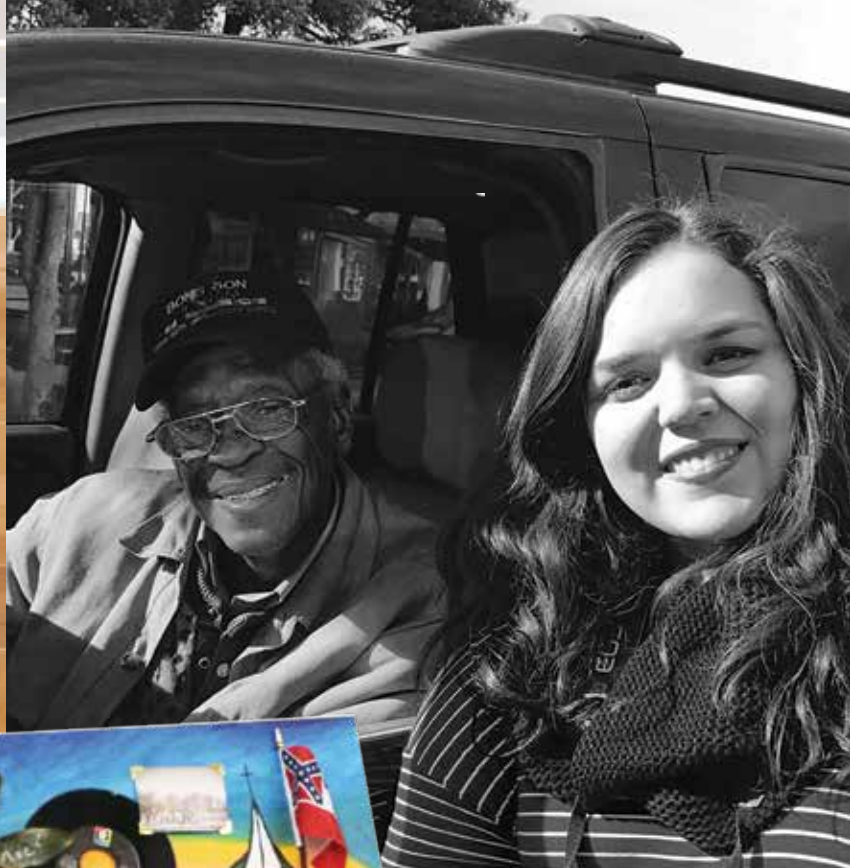
GREAT BOOKS



Sitting in a Human Situation lecture, you may hear Ancient Egypt described as “antiquity’s antiquity.” It’s an apt phrase to use in the Honors College’s celebrated Great Books survey course. For if the foundation of an Honors education is meticulous reading, artful writing, and critical reading, then “Human Sit” is the “foundation’s foundation.” The skillset acquired by Honors College students is widely applicable. Soon they are deploying those skills in our pre-professional programs, which point the way toward meaningful careers in law, medicine, business, engineering, and a host of other fields.



Creative Work



Artists and Their Regions is the signature course of the Creative Work minor. The class explores the often crucial influence of “place and space” on artistic output. In 2017, the region in question was the world famous Mississippi Delta—a land of fertile soil and fertile imaginations. Students read great works by William Faulkner, Richard Wright, and Anne Moody, before travelling to the Delta to hear its blues and the echoes of its intense history.

Leadership Studies



In the Honors College, the slogan is true: leaders are readers. Among the Great Books that our Leadership Studies scholars examined in 2017 were works by Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Xenophon, Shakespeare, Hume, and Kant. These texts provided evergreen insights into issues of ethics, politics, and rhetoric. Our emerging leaders were also writers, as classes such as Immersion Journalism and Narratives in the Professions helped them tell their own stories as well as the stories of others.



Medicine & Society



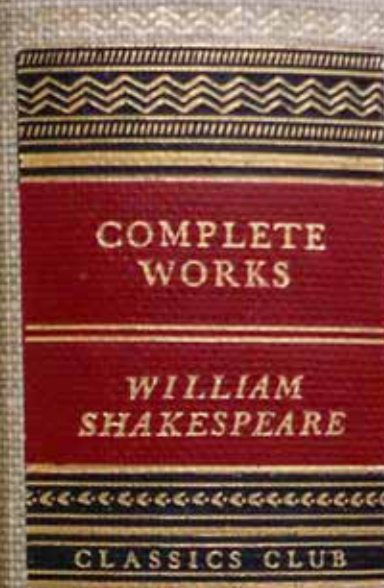
The foundation course of the College's groundbreaking program in the Medical Humanities is called, tellingly, Readings in Medicine & Society. In the spirit of the Human Situation, our Great Books survey course looks to wisdom, both ancient and modern, to gain perspectives on one of the great human projects, health care. Texts under consideration range from the secular to the sacred, from Hippocratic writings to contemporary essays. Subsequent MedSoc classes add historical, anthropological, and literary dimensions to the rich, scholarly endeavor that is Medicine & Society.



Phronêsis: Politics and Ethics

Each year, the Honors College's Politics and Ethics program hosts the Ross M. Lence Master Teacher Residency. One of the highlights of the 2017 residency—indeed, one of the highlights of the spring semester—was receiving a visit from world-renowned Shakespeare scholar Dr. James Shapiro. He demonstrated, with the aid of two pairs of professional actors, how directorial decisions can lead to radically different versions of the same scene from *Macbeth*.

Throughout the year, *Phronêsis* showed its own commitment to the Bard's brilliance through its Shakespeare Reading Group, taking a close look, both on the page and on the screen, at plays such as *The Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Coriolanus*.



Energy and Sustainability



Our interdisciplinary Energy and Sustainability minor provides students with opportunities to meet and learn from industry innovators and leaders. It is also a forum for critical analysis of the big issues and themes in the energy sector. Last year these included corporate social responsibility, sustainable development, the changing landscape of cities, and the history of our hometown, Houston—the energy capital of the world.




Certificate in Global Studies and Research

We often describe Honors College students as “dual citizens,” as they belong both to the College and to the school of their particular major. A further truth is that they are also global citizens, an identity that they are able to explore in this far-reaching interdisciplinary program. After a grounding in international business coursework, students examine the many guises—economic, political, cultural—of the globalization phenomenon. The certificate program is closely allied with two major areas of undergraduate engagement: study abroad and research. Indeed, it is one of the best bridges within the Honors College to the Senior Honors Thesis.

business
economics
history
literature
sociology



GREAT BOOKS



The life of an Honors student is one of thinking and acting. In the fall of 2017, the theme of our Grand Challenges Forum—a Friday tradition that features inspiring speakers and leaders from beyond the hedgerows—was “Bold Actions.” The actions Honors students take are bold because they are informed by careful and innovative thinking. That thought process begins in Honors-based programs and minors focused on some of our world’s most important issues and opportunities. In terms of both service and exploration, the other side of the hedgerow starts in the University of Houston’s immediate neighborhood and extends around the globe.





GRAND CHALLENGES



UHCAREs

In 2017, Houston faced the greatest challenge in its history: Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath. The Honors community responded by organizing and leading a campus-wide initiative known as Cougar Assisted Relief Efforts—UH CAREs. Teams of volunteers were soon using their grit and expertise in projects such as home gutting, mold remediation, and water testing. What began in a crisis continues in an era of recovery and rebuilding. UH CAREs is involved with ongoing projects that will improve and enrich the city of Houston and the lives of its citizens.



Mentorship Program

The Honors Mentorship program is a support network for students joining the Honors College. Mentors organize social events and regular meetings to help students make friends, learn what UH and the Honors College have to offer, and ease the transition to university life. Each student is assigned a mentor who, in addition to organizing social events, is a direct point of contact in case a student needs assistance. Mentors are trained to direct students to the appropriate resources if they cannot provide assistance themselves. Students participated in mentor-led events called Explore Houston, which included the Twilight Campus Tour, Day of Service, the Honors Coffeehouse, and the Honors Organizations Fair.





Grand Challenges Forum

The GCF is where our academic community comes together to hear reports from the front lines of research, entrepreneurship, activism, and advocacy. Each Friday, Honors students get an opportunity to listen to, and engage with, experts in a particular field of study or endeavor. The themes for these talks during 2017 were Revolutions and Bold Actions—personal and public, local and global. The Grand Challenges Forum is a place for questions and answers, narrative and arguments, reflection and resolve.





M-Level Programs

2017 was a bumper year for our M-Level programs. Our Model Arab League team, an Honors tradition since 1988, brought home 11 awards from their first international competition. The Model United Nations program came under the auspices of the College. And our students did exceptionally well at the inaugural Model G20 Summit, held at American University in Washington, D.C. UH Honors teams won Best Overall Delegation and Honorable Mention status, representing the United States and Saudi Arabia, respectively.



Service Learning

Bonner Leaders

The University received national recognition during 2017 in the form of an EPA Food Recovery Challenge Award. A major factor in earning this accolade from the federal agency was the great success of the Campus Kitchen at UH (CKUH), which is one of the signature projects of the Bonner Leaders, our dynamic service learning program. Committed to winning victories for Houston communities in need, the Leaders provided hope and help throughout the year, partnering with local schools, agencies, and non-profit organizations. Mentoring students and planting gardens were among the many services performed by these enthusiastic students. In 2017, the burgeoning program saw its inaugural cohort become Honors alumni.



Service Learning

Data Analytics in Student Hands (DASH)

The DASH program is an inspired synthesis of the College's culture of intellectual curiosity and its commitment to civic engagement and community advancement. DASH allows students to become protagonists in—and not just observers of—the rapidly developing field of Big Data. The DASH cohort has a particular interest in community health issues. Participants use the latest computational tools and methodologies to improve the lives of their fellow Houstonians, many of whom live in neighborhoods close to the University.





Speech and Debate

The University of Houston's Speech and Debate program is housed in the Honors College and aims to harness the competitive energy of UH undergraduates to engage them in research, argumentation, and leadership on the grand challenges facing contemporary society. The co-curricular program is part of the Leadership Studies Minor, where students are also offered courses on public policy, leadership, and other topical issues. The team has been invited to the nationals 23 times, where our debaters have garnered three top speaker awards, one second place finish, one third place finish, and has been one of the top two seeded teams five times.



Study Abroad with The Honors College



What was notable about the growth of the Honors College's Study Abroad program in 2017 was not just the number of trips that took place, but also the variety of the experiences they provided. Along with the classic model of the cultural tour, students could also avail of opportunities to conduct scientific research and participate in medical service learning. They then brought these international perspectives back to their classes and their peers in the College. Honors goes out into the world, and brings the world back to the Honors College.

Explore scenes from the 2017 study abroad trips on the following pages.

Europe



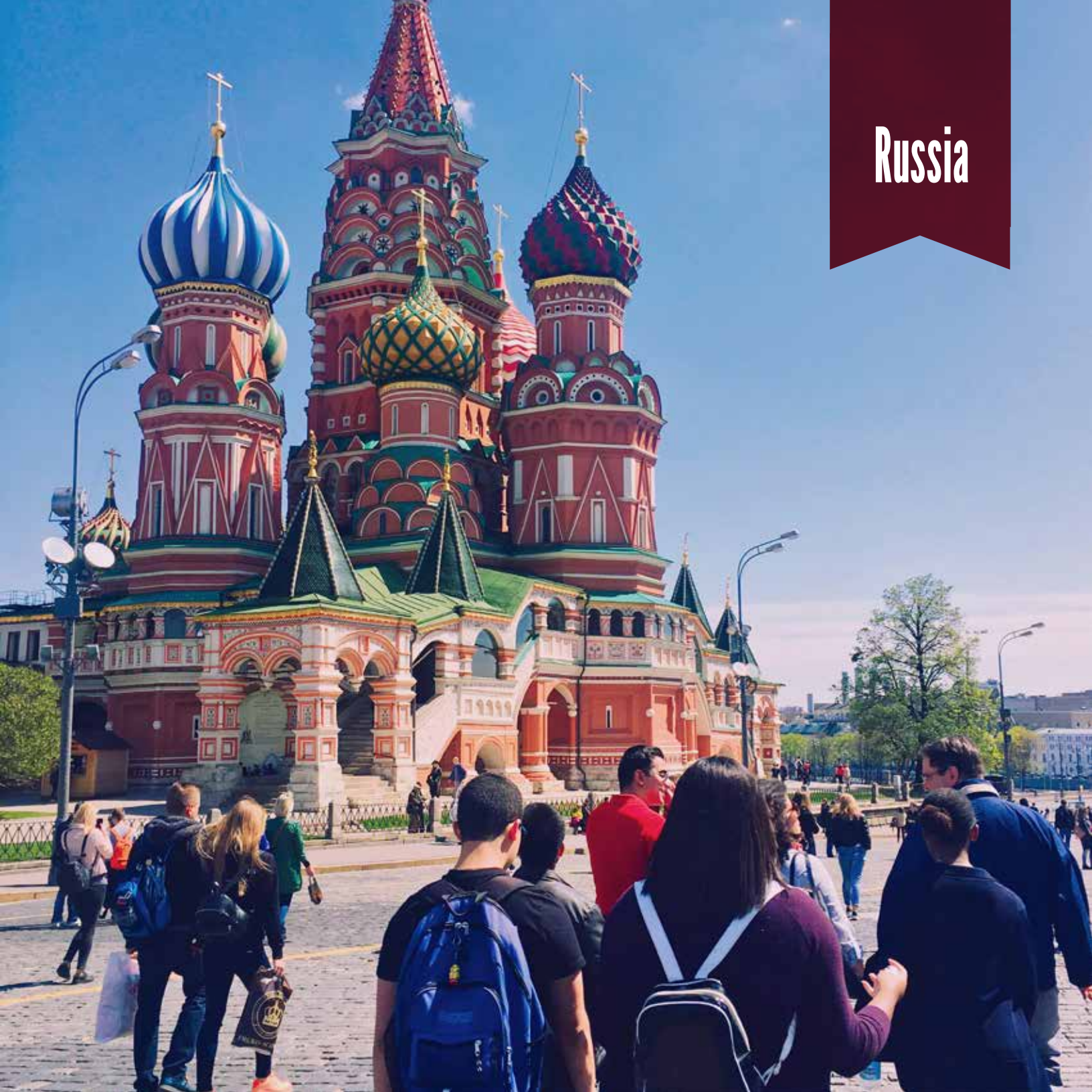
Galápagos



Honduras



Russia



Ireland Wales



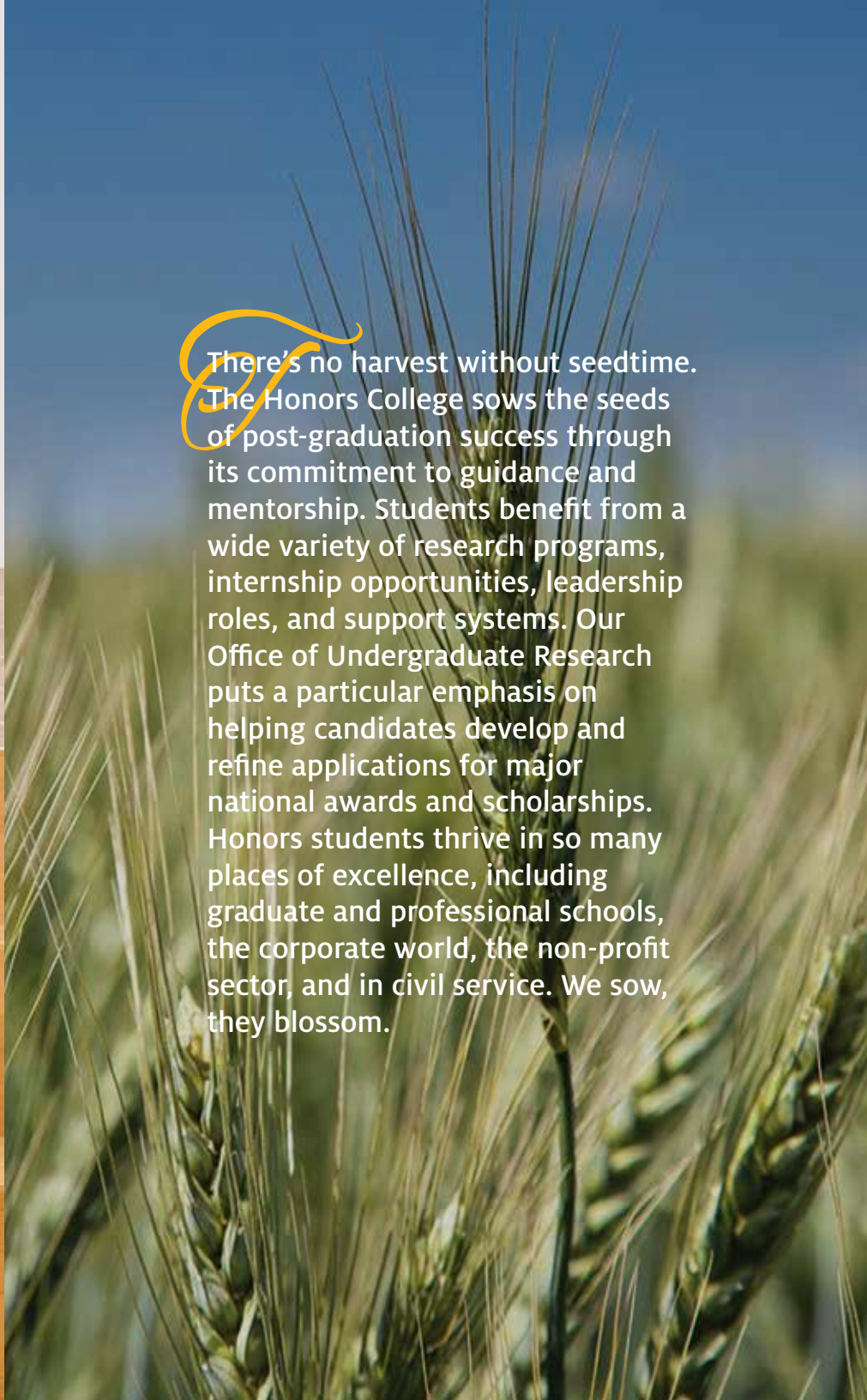
Peru





SUCCESS THAT LASTS





There's no harvest without seedtime. The Honors College sows the seeds of post-graduation success through its commitment to guidance and mentorship. Students benefit from a wide variety of research programs, internship opportunities, leadership roles, and support systems. Our Office of Undergraduate Research puts a particular emphasis on helping candidates develop and refine applications for major national awards and scholarships. Honors students thrive in so many places of excellence, including graduate and professional schools, the corporate world, the non-profit sector, and in civil service. We sow, they blossom.



Houston Scholars

2017 was a great year for this developing program. An academic year of mentoring, discussing, informing, and critiquing helped put 20 emerging scholars on the road to success in terms of their research or service projects. That translates to 20 more “peak experiences” in undergraduate education at the University of Houston.



Houston Early Research Experience

No fewer than 30 Honors students—all freshmen or sophomores—took part in this intensive seminar experience at the end of the spring 2017 semester. These are some of the most promising young scholars in the College, the kind of students we hope to see doing research and applying for competitive awards in the years ahead. The rich programming of those two weeks in May included faculty mentorship, guest speakers, and field trips in the Greater Houston area.



Nationally Competitive Scholarships



The work of the Office of Undergraduate Research, which is housed in the Honors College, culminates in students applying for—and often winning—major awards. Among the glittering prizes our students received in 2017 were Fulbright Open Study/Research Grants, National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowships, a Boren Scholarship, and a Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Scholarship.

Honors College students also received recognition from the Marshall and Harry S. Truman Scholarship committees.

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship

Almost 80 students successfully applied for this transformative program created by our Office of Undergraduate Research. They became SURF-ers for 10 weeks during the summer of 2017. These highly motivated participants each received a \$4,000 scholarship, direction from a faculty mentor, and the interdisciplinary feast that is the Brown Bag Lecture Series.



SUCCESS THAT LASTS





Phi Beta Kappa

Following the previous year's installation of the Mu of Texas Phi Beta Kappa chapter in the Honors College, the 2017 induction ceremony saw 51 more of our students join this elite academic honor society. PBK, which is dedicated to excellence in undergraduate arts and sciences education, is as old as the United States of America. Its members are drawn from the top 10% of students studying those liberal arts and sciences. Fittingly, one of the champions of undergraduate education at the University of Houston, Provost Paula Myrick Short, Ph.D., was inducted as this year's honorary member.



Honors Biomedical Sciences

2017 marked a milestone for our prestigious Honors Biomedical Sciences (HBS) program by celebrating its inaugural graduating class. This high-achieving cohort has gone on to even greater success at medical schools across the state. HBS students graduating as part of the 3/4 Program continued on to their second year of medical school at University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston and the John P. and Kathrine G. McGovern Medical School in Houston.

The rigorous program supports unique collaborative research and teaching through the University's member partners in the Texas Medical Center—the world's largest medical complex—providing students with direct access to experiential learning. Coursework not only gives HBS students valuable research experience in the hard sciences, but also interdisciplinary work in the medical humanities.





It is a glittering prize, well earned. But that medallion the Honors student receives upon graduation is not just a sign of achievement; it's also a symbol of community. Our graduates have finished their coursework, but they will continue on their journey of lifetime learning. All of them have been formed by the Honors Experience; many will revisit the College in one capacity or another—joining in The Great Conversation, our signature gala event; contributing their wisdom to our Advisory Board; extending internship and employment opportunities to fellow Coogs; enjoying the conviviality of Homecoming and other reunions; talking to the next generation of Honors students at open houses and invitational events. And so Honors life forms a circle, like that medallion.





... A LIFETIME



Retreat

We have long suspected that the Honors College is a community of superheroes (how else are all those projects completed, papers graded, rooms assigned, funds raised?), but we got proof positive of this theory at the 2017 Retreat. For a start, more than 300 incoming students, 60 current students, and 50 faculty and staff members in the piney woods of Camp Allen, near Navasota, Texas, for two days of orientation, celebration, and deliberation was itself a heroic achievement. Then there was the witty theme: Marvel vs. DC. Led by costumed counselors, teams inspired by the two imaginative universes enjoyed games, meals, and entertainments. Back on campus, many an academic Wonder Woman and Superman was soon to be spotted.



Tier One Invitational



On a Saturday morning in January, the M.D. Anderson Library building bustles with hundreds of prospective Honors College students. They are among the most promising high school seniors from the Greater Houston Area and beyond. This busy day gives them an opportunity not only to interview for the generous Tier One Scholarship, but also to get an excellent sense of the Honors Experience, by going on campus tours, meeting professors from their intended major, and—best of all—hearing from current students.

The Great Conversation



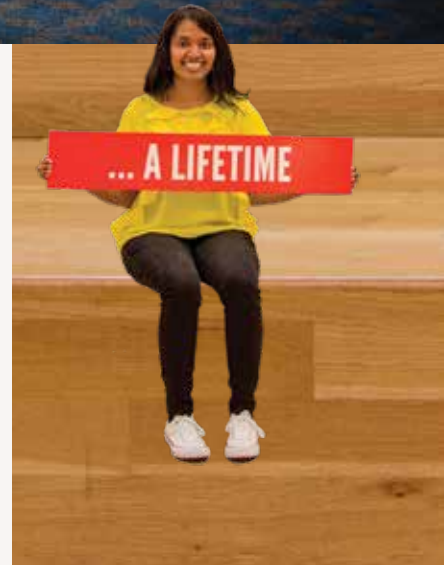
In 2017, the College celebrated its 25th Great Conversation. The award-winning gala fundraiser is an evening of fusion cuisine for the mind, a blend of dinner party and academic seminar. And for the silver anniversary event, what a menu of conversations our guests had to choose from; topics included the future of Cougar football with UH Head Coach Major Applewhite, leadership lessons from “The Walking Dead” television series with Assistant Dean Brenda Rhoden, and several dealing with the repercussions of the 2016 Presidential Election.



Graduation Banquet



Thursday, May 11, 2017, was an evening of celebration and recognition. In the elegant atmosphere of the Houstonian Hotel, we were delighted to present a well-deserved medallion to each new Honors alumnus. Our graduates had earned University Honors, Collegiate Honors, or Membership in the Honors College. Senior Honors Thesis writers also earned Honors in Major. Ten of those researchers received a 2017 Honors Thesis Award for exceptional work. Some of the loudest cheers of the evening were for the recipients of the Areté Awards for outstanding service to the Honors community.



THE
HUMAN SITUATION



YEARS
1977-2017

A Letter From the Dean

Dear Students, Alumni, Colleagues, and Friends:

The pages of this edition of *Shine & Rise* should give you a sense of the rich days the Honors College enjoyed in 2017. It was a year in which we stopped to remember and celebrate an important legacy: forty years of the Human Situation, our signature course, which has been a rite of passage for Honors students of all majors since 1977. This formative experience connects undergraduates of the past and present, united by their shared survival of the challenging texts, the demanding assignments, the legendary faculty, and sometimes, the confounding lectures. In print and in good company—if you couldn't make the party in person, make sure you get a copy of The Human Situation Celebration magazine—we recall and appreciate those who have served as guides and appreciate the splendid, bookish destinations, ancient and modern, to which we have traveled together.



As you can see, we structured this edition of our annual report by making each chapter a step: “Great Books,” “Grand Challenges,” “Success That Lasts,” “... A Lifetime.” We hope this would suggest that the steps we envision for Honors students do not end when they walk the graduation stage. In the years ahead, they will experience many completions, of a course, a degree, a job, that are also new beginnings, of a fellowship,

graduate program, career. Whatever journey they begin, be it geographical, professional, or personal, our alumni can say with quiet confidence that their Honors education has prepared them for success.

The Great Books curriculum represents the foundation of an Honors education. Close reading, critical thinking, careful writing, and spirited conversation. The daring ideas and big questions Human Situation presents become part of a student's mind, of his or her modus operandi. In 2017, "Bold Actions" was

both a theme of our Grand Challenges Forum and a motif in the life of the College as we developed both the curricular and co-curricular facets of the Honors experience. Our students and faculty took the great conversation from the banks of the Bayou City to those of the Mississippi and the Nile. They studied in Peru, Wales, Ireland, and Russia; they served in Honduras and conducted research on the Galápagos Islands.

Back in Houston, in the year of Hurricane Harvey, the need for action was never greater. I am proud of the leadership the Honors community provided at the University through the UH CAREs initiative. In future editions of *Shine @ Rise*, you'll see more of those

"Cougar Assisted Relief Efforts." We are, after all, Houston's University.

The Houston Scholars are just one of the many student cohorts in the Honors College that used 2017 to

achieve the kind of success that lasts a lifetime. Others included our adventurous undergraduate researchers, our nationally competitive award winners, and our inaugural Honors Biomedical Sciences graduating class. We were delighted to celebrate their success and the achievements of all of our freshly minted alumni at

another glittering graduation banquet.

In the years ahead, many of those alumni will join in The Great Conversation—both literally and figuratively. We appreciate their support of our scholarship fund, their participation on our Advisory Board, and the example and inspiration of their professional and personal excellences. We honor their gifts in the pages of this report.

Warm Regards,



Bill Monroe
Dean



Dean Monroe and UHCAREs volunteers take a selfie after working to help people affected by Hurricane Harvey.

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Opposite page: A meeting of the Honors College Advisory Board, which includes presentations by students about their Honors College experience.



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Ms. Wilhelmina "Beth" Robertson
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Mr. Steve D. Stephens
Mr. Nathaniel Lewis Stich
Mr. Stefan Stojanovic
Mrs. Kristina B. and Dr. John R. Stroehlein
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THE LIFE OF THE COLLEGE

MINORS

Creative Work
Energy and Sustainability
Leadership Studies
Medicine & Society
Phronesis: Politics & Ethics

CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

3+2 Honors Medicine & Society/Nursing
Dual Degree Program (UT-Houston)

3+3 Honors *Phronesis*/Law
Dual Degree Program (UH Law)

Global Studies and Research Certificate Program

Honors B.S./M.D. Dual Degree Program
(UT Health and UTMB-Galveston)

Honors Biomedical Sciences

The Houston Premedical Academy
(Baylor College of Medicine)





CO-CURRICULAR UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCES

Bonner Leaders Program

ePortfolio Program

Grand Challenges Forums

Study Abroad and Study Away Programs

Service Learning Programs

Data Analytics in Student Hands (DASH)

Honors in Community Health (HICH)

Model Arab League

Ross M. Lence Master Teacher Residency

Houston Early Research Experience

Houston Scholars

Nationally Competitive Scholarships

Provost's Undergraduate Research Scholarship

Senior Honors Thesis

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship

UH Speech and Debate Program

Galápagos

THE LIFE OF THE COLLEGE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Common Ground Teachers Institute
Cougar Junior Scholars Summer Camp
Phi Beta Kappa Summer Academy

ACADEMIC HONOR SOCIETIES

Omicron Delta Kappa
Phi Beta Kappa
Phi Kappa Phi

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Bleacher Creatures
Club Theater
Great Conversation Decorations Committee
Honors Advocates
Honors Ambassadors
Honors College Mentorship Program
Honors Dodgeball



Italy



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Faber-Economon European Travel
Scholarships
Honors College Scholarships
National Merit Scholars
Terry Scholars
Tier One Scholars Program
Provost's Service Learning Scholarships

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