



Alumni Newsletter

Exploring the Capital Cities of China

6,800 miles and 13 hours: in other words, China is half the world away from the banks of the Raritan. An international adventure of this scope isn't an everyday opportunity for a cash-strapped undergrad. So, when the Honors Program developed a seminar with an embedded study-abroad experience in the People's Republic of China, fifteen of my fellow honors students and I jumped at the opportunity. Biochemistry, economics, computer science, and history majors, most of us didn't know a word of Mandarin. With only our innate curiosity, we signed up for the Spring 2017 Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar, "China's Capitals Across Time and Their Linguistic and Cultural Impacts."

Under Dr. Richard V. Simmons, Chair of the Department of Asian Languages, my classmates and I spent the spring semester researching ancient Chinese capital cities and learning how the formation of these cities by different dynasties affected the development of Chinese languages over the millennia. In late May—we hopped on the plane to see the cities we had spent months imagining: visiting five capital cities in ten days was a daunting schedule, but every moment was worthwhile.

Our tour took us from Beijing, the "Northern Capital," to Nanjing, the "Southern Capital," then to Kaifeng, Luoyang, and Xi'an. On our arrival, we visited Tiananmen Square, dominated by the huge portrait of General Mao. Americans think the U.S. is big, but nothing had prepared us for the scale of everything we would experience in China. The next day we visited the magnificent Forbidden City, where we were overcome by the beauty and sheer size of the palace complex. Of course, for our first taste of Chinese food in Beijing, we enjoyed the world famous Peking duck.



Next was Nanjing, much greener than Beijing, where we visited the extensive forests outside the main city and large tombs of great political figures in Chinese history. We also sampled local cuisine, where Nanjing salted duck contrasted with Peking duck.

Our final days in the lesser-known cities were, in my view, the best part of the trip. In Luoyang, we marveled at the thousands of Buddha statues carved into limestone cliffs. Finally we visited Xi'an, a city I eagerly anticipated seeing, home to the largest Muslim population in China and the world-famous Terracotta Warriors. Honoring one of the greatest emperors of Chinese history, Qin Shi Huang Di, founder of the Qin dynasty and first to unify all of China, thousands of handmade clay warriors, each with unique faces, were placed in the tomb to join him in the afterlife so he could continue his conquest into the next

continued inside...

In Their Own Words:



Class of 2017
SASHP graduate
Alexis Holmes
began her medical education as a Twenty-First Century Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine in August.

As I begin the next chapter of my life at Perelman School of Medicine, I can't help but reflect upon my experiences as an SASHP scholar which has helped me to define the physician that I hope to become. I wanted to become a physician because it was a career that allowed me to positively impact people's lives—for a while I thought that I was limited to impacting only their physical state. My experiences as a peer mentor and ambassador within SASHP, paired

with my capstone experience of completing a Certificate in Chemical Education, introduced me to my ability to inspire people and encourage them to fulfill their potential through mentorship. Thanks to the SASHP, I no longer feel that I am only limited to healing patients' physical states. I will be a physician who calls on medicine and also inspiration, encouragement, and mentorship to make a difference in patients' lives physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Message from the Honors Dean

In May 2017, the SAS Honors Program said goodbye to our graduating “Honors Scholars” as they fanned out across the globe—to pursue Fulbright awards in India and Germany; to teach in France; to pursue graduate degrees in the UK and the Netherlands; to study medicine, law, business, and engineering at top professional schools in the U.S.; and to launch careers working for the NIH in D.C., LinkedIn in San Francisco, and Deutsche Bank in London, to name just a few of our Scholars’ next stops after Rutgers.

Thankfully, we anticipate that these students will one day return to mentor our current students, just as our Honors alumni always so generously do. This year more than a dozen honors alumni shared their careers with current students and participated in successful pilots of our new Honors Alumni Shadowing Experience.

We look forward to hearing from you in the coming year. Don’t hesitate to ask us, “How can I get involved?” We’d love to feature you in one of our Honors Alumni Spotlights and catch up with you in April 2018 at our Annual Honors Alumni Gathering.



Jennifer M. Jones



continued from previous page...

world. While movies like *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor* fictionalize the site, the reality is far more impressive. The scope and beauty of these artifacts truly summed up China: vast, ancient, cultured, and highly skilled.

I’ve related only a small fraction of our experience. How to capture a stroll through a Chinese street market in the dead of night, taking in its smells and bustling activity? How to convey the sense of

community as sixteen students savored a meal with fifteen dishes being spun around the table? How to distill into words those quiet moments when we peered out the bus window at the myriad shop signs and distinctive local architecture? I could say it was a once in a lifetime experience, but I’d be lying. We have ten-year tourist visas, so one day soon, many of my friends from the trip and I will be headed back to China.

By Gabriel Duque SAS '19

In Appreciation: Dean Muffin Lord



Dean Muffin Lord retired in June 2017 after almost 30 years of devoted service to Rutgers University.

Nancy Lord, or, as all the world knows her, Muffin, was a skilled and nurturing advising dean for Rutgers students for almost 30 years. She left a remarkable legacy in which she profoundly touched the lives of literally thousands of Rutgers undergraduates.

Muffin joined the University in 1988 as Assistant Director of the Rutgers College Honors Program. Over the years, she has seen many changes at Rutgers, but probably none as monumental as the creation of the School of Arts and Sciences in 2007. She brought her deep experience and her extensive networks of connections to the task of creating the School of Arts and Sciences Honors Program. She became its first, and to date, only director. Bringing her characteristic warmth to all that she did, she

made Rutgers Arts and Sciences Honors Program a nurturing and supportive home for countless students.

The University and our students are immensely grateful for Muffin’s long and distinguished career of outstanding contributions to undergraduate education. In May 2017, Muffin was presented with a special Lifetime Achievement Award for her dedication to Rutgers students and for her administrative and programmatic leadership in the Honors Programs in Rutgers College and the School of Arts and Sciences.

In June, the staff of the SAS Honors Program hosted a retirement party for Muffin at the Log Cabin at the Rutgers Gardens. Her beloved RU Glee Club, led by Dr. Patrick Gardner, sung her out. The Honors Program’s parting gift to Muffin was a video, produced by Tyler Farnsworth SAS’19 which features her colleagues reading her favorite poem, *Ithaka*, in her honor. You can enjoy the video using the link below.

Muffin cared very much about each of you. Don’t hesitate to keep in touch with her through honorsdean@sas.rutgers.edu. She will be happy to hear from you as she embarks on her new post-Rutgers adventures.

View the *Ithaka* video and leave a message for Muffin and the Honors Program here:
youtu.be/bN0zLg1_ZAA

Love in Honors

It was a big day for Rutgers.

More than 100,000 people showed up for Rutgers Day on the final Saturday of April 2016, breaking attendance records and setting the stage for the University's 250th anniversary.

It was just the type of event that would draw Rebecca Mamone SAS' 11 and her boyfriend Brian Dib RC'09. And once these two Honors Program alums joined the throngs of people on campus, they made the day even more special.

"We met up with friends; it was a great day" Rebecca recalls. "Brian suggested that our friends take a picture of us on the Kissing Bridge. While

a pie yet and wanted to be a team player, so I asked Rebecca and her friend to pie me. Rebecca took a running start from about 100 feet away."

Rebecca, a Cleveland-native, described that she and Brian started spending time together during the spring of her freshman year. "When I came back from Ohio after that first summer, we started dating. The rest is history."

Rebecca and Brian both pursued a liberal arts education through the Honors Program. Brian majored in history, political science, and economics. Rebecca majored in political science

Honors Program experience, are still very much at the center of their lives. They are football season ticket holders and remain good friends with many of the people they met through the Honors Program. "We have a lot of close friends from our time at Rutgers and they are all people that we met through the Honors Program."

Rebecca says she still marvels at how choosing Rutgers changed her life. "When you pick a college, you really only think about those four years," she said. "I never imagined that it would lead to Rutgers law school, to working at the Foundation, and to meeting my husband. All of that came from the single decision of picking a college. It's pretty amazing."



they were taking our picture, Brian got down on one knee and proposed. After nine years together, of course I said yes!"

The Rutgers Day proposal was the perfect culmination of a relationship that had long been set in scarlet. The couple met as undergraduates in the Honors Program at McCormick Hall, where Brian was a Resident Assistant and Rebecca was a first year.

Brian, originally from Marlton, says his first memory of Rebecca was at a Pie Your RA event hosted by Residence Life. "I hadn't been hit with

and history, with a minor in African studies. After college, they both attended Rutgers School of Law-Camden. Brian is now an attorney for the firm of Sweeney & Sheehan and Rebecca works for the Rutgers Foundation.

The couple was married on May 16, 2017, in the Morocco Pavilion at Disney World's EPCOT Center. Brian and Rebecca love to travel, so EPCOT provided the perfect setting for the beginning of their new journey together.

As they begin the next chapter of their lives together, the couple says that Rutgers, and the

SAS Honors Program by the Numbers

51

Interdisciplinary Honors Seminars in 2016-2017

Honors Program Scholars graduated in May 2017

193

31

students from the SAS Honors Program class of 2017 graduated as a Henry Rutgers Scholar

In Their Own Words:



Nicolaus Schrum graduated as an SASHP scholar in May 2017 with an individualized major as well as a second major in linguistics and a minor in psychology. In September, Nic began the Ph.D. program in Linguistics at the University of Connecticut.

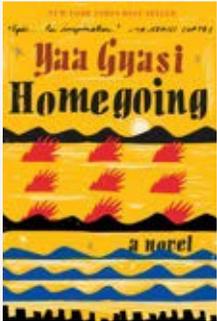
The SAS Honors Program was the center of my academic life while I was at Rutgers. This was true in the ways it is for all of the HP students, through honors courses, trips, and my interdisciplinary honors thesis. More uniquely for me, I also worked in the Honors Program main office, helping to run the program and getting to know another side of university life. My time in the office was a highlight of the week, when I would get to spend time with the deans, help my fellow students, and become

more aware of the goings-on in the university around me.

As for future plans, the comfort in academia given to me by my time working at the Honors Program helped me decide to apply directly to a Ph.D. program, rather than taking a break from school. Linguistics, as a discipline, requires deep collaboration with people of other cultures and backgrounds, and I think my time at the Honors Program has prepared me for that as well.

Were you a Henry Rutgers Scholar? Share your research with hpalumni@sas.rutgers.edu.

2017 Summer Reading Program



What does it mean to go home? How are the lives of your ancestors reflected in your own life? What is the legacy of slavery and colonialism?

The incoming class of the SAS Honors Program contemplated these questions as they read this year's summer reading book and Winner of the PEN/Hemingway Award, *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi.

The novel tells the story of two half sisters from Ghana. Each chapter chronicles the lives of their descendants as the book spans over 200 years of American and Ghanaian history. Gyasi explores the concept of home as the families experience slavery, colonization, war, and racism. New SASHP students discussed the book on our popular summer reading blog.

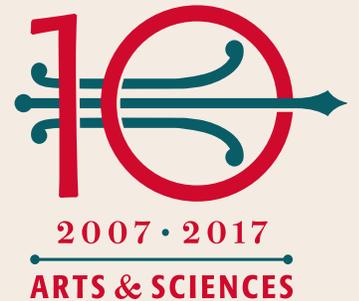
Yaa Gyasi welcomed our new SASHP students with a lecture and book signing on Friday, September 1, 2017, and her novel will also serve as the primary text for the Fall SAS Honors Colloquium. As part of the Colloquium, the SAS Honors Program is planning a student trip to the new National Museum of African American History & Culture in Washington D.C.

Our 2018 Summer Reading Selection Committee will begin work in October. If you would like to recommend a book, please send an email to

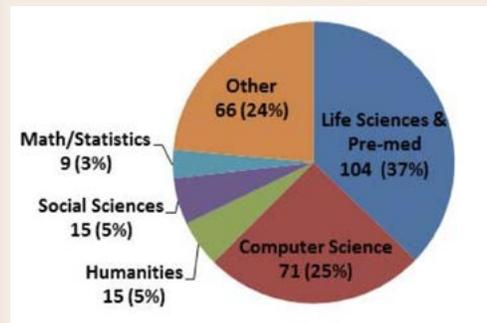
hpsummerreading@sas.rutgers.edu

Save the Date

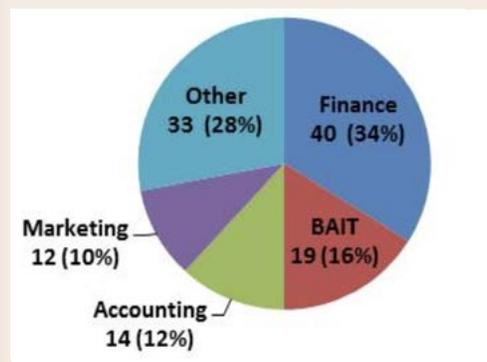
Honors Program Alumni Gathering
Saturday, April 28, 2018 • 4:00–5:30 p.m.



Class of 2021 Areas of Academic Interest for SAS/SASHP



Class of 2021 Areas of Academic Interest for RBS/SASHP



RU GenUN visits UNA-USA Members Day

The SASHP-sponsored chapter of GenUN, "RU GenUN," is part of a national initiative of the United Nations Association (UNA-USA) to educate and empower students to advocate for solutions to global challenges. On February 17, 2017, twelve members of RU GenUN, Dean Karima Bouchenafa, leaders of the Central New Jersey chapter of UNA-USA, and graduate members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (a UNA-USA partner) attended the annual UNA-USA Members Day conference at the UN. The timely conference topic was "The U.S. and the UN: New Leaders, Pressing Challenges." RU GenUN continues to establish itself as a vital presence here at Rutgers.