Spring 2017 has been a busy time for the Honors Student Association! We started off the semester with Karaoke Night where students met their representatives, sang karaoke, and played board games. HSA also hosted our Blood Drive in February in collaboration with the American Red Cross. With the help of the Honors and UNO community, we got over sixty donations.

In light of recent events, HSA hosted a Travel Ban Forum. We invited faculty members with expertise in relevant fields and allowed students with different views to take part in discourse about the issues that affect us all. Furthermore, HSA helped showcase the Honors Program to prospective students in other events such as the Distinguished Scholar Competition and Admitted Student Day.

Finally, we have speakers from local organizations, such as Lutheran Family Services, coming to talk to students about getting involved in their community on April 11. We will also clean local parks and plant trees to make our community greener on April 23. While this semester may be ending, HSA will be hard at work planning for the upcoming fall semester to make it honorific!
May 2017 Graduating Seniors

**Patrick Colgan**  
College of Arts and Sciences and  
College of Public Affairs and Community Service  
Majors: Economics and Social Work  
Advisor: Claudette Grinnell-Davis

**Shelby Dorn**  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Major: Chemistry  
“Determining Dimerization of Mannose 6-Phosphate/Insulin-like Growth Factor II Receptor”  
Advisor: Jodi Kreiling

**Emma Flynn**  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Major: English  
“Social Media for Fiber Media: Revamping and Refreshing Social Media Outreach for 21st Century Fiber Artists”  
Advisor: Jeremy Lipshultz

**Rema Idriss**  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Major: Biotechnology  
“Proton Movement in the Product Release Step of Kynurenine 3-Monoxygenase from Pseudomonas fluorescens”  
Advisor: John Conrad

**Brandon Kirk**  
College of Information Science and Technology  
Major: Computer Science  
“Reverse Engineering Robot Swarm Behaviors”  
Advisor: Raj Dasgupta

**Justin Korth**  
College of Business Administration  
Major: Business Administration  
“Tax Code Reform: 30 years in the Making”  
Advisor: Jillian Poyzer

**Bashayer Hammadi**  
College of Education  
Major: Speech-Language Pathology  
“Clinical Practicum Experience: Articulation Disorders”  
Advisor: Jill Kumke

**Josiah Krutz**  
College of Information Science and Technology  
Major: Computer Science  
“Automated test generation”  
Advisor: Harvey Siy

**Benjamin Hayworth**  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Majors: Philosophy and Physics  
“Scientific Quasi-Realism: An Answer to the Problem of Model Making and Idealization in the Physical Sciences”  
Advisor: Andrew Newman

**Nicholas Lauber**  
College of Information Science and Technology  
Major: IT Innovation  
“glinnO - Music Event System for Omaha Nebraska”  
Advisor: Doug Derrick
May 2017 Graduating Seniors

Matthew Martens
College of Information Science and Technology
Major: Bioinformatics
"The Influence of Heavy Metal Stress Factors on Artemisinin Production in Artemisia annua"
Advisor: Dhundy Kiran Bastola

Mark Peters
College of Information Science and Technology
Major: Computer Science
"Swarm Robotics Modeling and Applications"
Advisor: Raj Dasgupta

Ananya Mitra
College of Arts and Sciences
Major: Biology
"Potential drugs to treat African Sleeping Sickness"
Advisor: James Hagen

Katherine Schwartz
College of Education
Major: Pre-Elementary Education
"Using Assessment Information to Guide Instruction"
Advisor: Chuck Peterson

Emmalee Nelson
College of Education
Major: Elementary Education
"The Importance of Libraries"
Advisor: Glenda Willnerd

Megan Stokebrand
College of Arts and Sciences
Major: Mathematics
"Historic Crime Analysis"
Advisor: Dora Matache

Madison Nutter
College of Arts and Sciences
Major: Medical Humanities
"The Shortage of Healthcare Professionals in Rural Areas"
Advisor: Karen Murch-Schaffer

Abigail Wayman
College of Arts and Sciences and College of Public Affairs and Community Service
Majors: Sociology and Gerontology
"Hanging Out with Older Adults: How Interaction Affects College Students' Attitudes toward Aging"
Advisor: Mary Ann Powell

Chelsey Patten
College of Arts and Sciences
Majors: Biology
"Murine Models of Splenic Margina Zone Lymphoma: A Role for Cav1?"
Advisor: Christine Cutucache
TEDx a High Note in College Career

By: Virginia Gallner

Have you ever wondered what diatoms have to do with dinosaurs? Perhaps you have pondered the mysteries of existence, even the nature of the universe, but have you stopped to consider how an infant conceptualizes the world through language?

TED brings together thinkers, doers and idea-makers from across the globe to give talks on their areas of expertise. It is a playground of ideas – one that has inspired countless individuals to start their own independently organized TED events.

I have been a part of the TEDx community since August 2015. Two of my close friends facilitate the TEDxOmaha Salons, a discussion forum ranging from fifteen to fifty people who meet monthly at the Kaneko downtown. In the first Salon I attended, we discussed cybernetic technologies, joked about artificial intelligence in popular culture, and debated the existence of the soul in the span of one hour. From that point forward, I was fascinated.

Soon after that first Salon event, my friends invited me to attend a leadership meeting. Within the first few months, I was assisting with event coordination and facilitating conversations among diverse individuals. My experiences in the Leadership Team have empowered me to start new endeavors of my own – namely, submitting a TEDx proposal. Naturally, upon discovering our university offers a TEDx event of its own, I was intrigued. Imagining what it might be like to experience the other side of TEDx - from the stage, rather than behind the scenes – I applied for TEDxUNO 2016 and was turned down the first time, but encouraged to apply again.

To my delight, my proposal for 2017 was accepted. Experiencing TEDx from the other side was indeed every bit as surreal as I had imagined. At the Speakers’ Dinner in December, all the 2017 speakers were seated with TEDxUNO alumni who would share some of their own tips and tricks. I remember sitting down with a gentleman who greeted me warmly, but with some undertones of skepticism. “You think you are prepared?” he said to me. I nodded, trying to muster my confidence. “Forget it. You are not prepared. You never will be, even if you practice five hundred times. Nobody ever is.” I am paraphrasing a bit here, if only from the blurring effects of memory, but the message was the same. He believed no one could be prepared for that moment: walking onstage, stepping into the view of the audience, and delivering what he considered the most important talk of a lifetime.

Perhaps it was this statement that gave me the incentive to keep going. Over winter break, I dedicated myself completely to research, writing, and practice. Out of all my endeavors over the past few years, TEDxUNO was one of the most harrowing, but also the most rewarding. The support of my friends and family, as well as the collaboration with my dear friend Carlyn Hendler on flute, made this talk come alive.

In the weeks following TEDxUNO, I have been playing as many live shows as possible. Sharing my music that day reminded me why I do what I do. Music does have the power to change people and to provide a voice for the stories that are so often overlooked. You can find my talk on YouTube: “Listen, Sing Out, and Be Heard.”
Expanding Perceptions at SD Honors Conference
By: Lauren Deetz

From March 23-25, Dr. Patton and a small group of Honors students attended the Upper Midwest Regional Honors Conference in Brookings, South Dakota. South Dakota State University generously hosted the conference, which featured keynote speakers, student and faculty presentations, roundtable discussions, and poster presentations. Between listening to speeches and talking with other universities, we were able to network and exchange ideas with other Honors programs.

The presentation sessions covered a variety of topics, some of which included mental health, study abroad programs, and environmental issues. The roundtables allowed students, teachers, and Honors administrators to exchange ideas and perspectives on topics such as encouraging deeper in-class discussions or promoting the counseling department. The conference provided us with a wonderful opportunity to share the UNO Honors Program while expanding our perception of what it can look like in the future.

Suicide Stoppers
By: Caleb Moyer

The Suicide Stoppers is a group project dedicated to raising money for the Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide. The group members are Caleb Moyer, Matthew Spicka, and Andrew Roehr, and this project originated during the 2017 College of Business Applied Leadership course. Each group was tasked with choosing a philanthropic event they cared about and for which they would like to raise money. Because of the ties each one of us has to teen suicide, we decided this would be an appropriate charity for us.

During the month of March, we received donations from several UNO and community organizations. As of March 16, the group had received donations from Lawlor’s Custom Sportswear, the UNO Bookstore, and the Nebraska Lottery; however, many more groups have shown interest in donating and we anticipate receiving several more donations to raffle off. After receiving these donations, raffle tickets are going to be sold during April. At the end of April, the winners will be notified and the prizes distributed to those winners. After this, 100% of the proceeds will be sent to the Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide (SPTS).

The mission of the SPTS is “to reduce the number of youth suicides and attempted suicides by encouraging public awareness through the development and promotion of educational training programs.” Because teen suicide is one of the leading killers of teens in the United States, we decided to raise money for this charity to help the cause.

Overall, the project is off to a great start and we hope to continue our efforts to raise money. If the money we donate saves even one teen life, we will consider our efforts and time we spent a huge success. If you would like more information about the project or to buy raffle tickets, please reach out to Caleb Moyer at cjmoyer@unomaha.edu.
Honors Students Host Business Competition
By: Trevor Koger

The second annual high school business competition was held at Mammel Hall on February 3, 2017. Almost 200 students from area high schools attended the event. Attendees not only competed for honors in several business areas, but they were competing for $9,000 of scholarship money from the College of Business. This competition was created and organized by the College of Business Administration Scholars Academy, currently made up of 20 sophomore students and 20 freshman students. All members of the Scholars Academy are part of the University Honors Program.

Students at the competition were able to compete in three events: Business Math (9th and 10th grade only), Business Calculations, Personal Finance, Introduction to Business (9th and 10th grade only), Accounting, Marketing, Banking, Economics, and Entrepreneurship. The winner of each event receives a $1,000 CBA scholarship.

Freshwoman, Samantha Jo Young served on the business competition committee this academic year. According to Samantha, “The business competition was a hit! We saw many bright students demonstrate their knowledge of business. It was a great day to be a Mav and show students why UNO CBA is the way to go!”

The CBA Scholars Academy is already planning on next year’s event and is excited to continue hosting a successful high school business competition.

Do Not Resist
By: Maggie Bockart

Do Not Resist is one of the most moving films I have ever experienced. This documentary covers the militarization of local police forces across the nation, and it is nothing short of a chilling wake-up call. Do Not Resist is an in-depth analysis of police subculture within American society, addressing how violence and hostility has been allowed to permeate our police force.

Opening with the civil unrest which occurred in Ferguson, Missouri after the shooting of Michael Brown, the film investigates a wide variety of examples of the drastic police militarization taking place within our nation. The audience witnesses clips of Dave Grossman’s speeches during his police training conferences, which include statements such as, “What do you fight violence with? Superior violence. Righteous violence. Violence is your tool … You are men and women of violence.”

The documentary shows interviews with many individuals who are conduits assisting the militarization of the police force, who state increased weaponry is an absolute necessity because ISIS could attack at any time. Do Not Resist also goes into extensive detail about the legislation surrounding the proliferation of military-grade weapons within American cities, revealing there is effectively no monitoring system or training in place for police forces that choose to purchase military paraphernalia such as armored cars. Congressional hearings discussing these armored cars explicitly state they are not issued to be used for riot suppression, yet many police stations are under the impression this is their main function.

Do Not Resist shook me to my core; I left the theater outraged with every fiber of my being, but inspired by the strength and unwavering courage of those trying to bring the racism which permeates our society to light. Our nation is riddled with inequality. Our government continues to be unjust; therefore, the people will continue to be resistant. As displayed in Do Not Resist, we will continue to fight and we will continue to protest until we are a nation with liberty and justice for all.
As a lifetime lover of music and a devoted member of the band program in my hometown of Gretna, Nebraska, joining the band at UNO was one of the activities I looked forward to the most before I came here. Marching band season started in August, a week before classes did, so I was able to get a taste of the college experience a little bit earlier than many of my peers. Similar to my experiences in Gretna, being a part of the marching band has been one of the highlights of this school year!

I was able to meet a ton of new friends, and learning the school cheers and traditions was a blast. As the season progressed, it was very interesting to compare marching in high school to marching in college. Similar to the classes here and the school itself, there were some aspects of college band that seemed more relaxed than they were in high school, but there were other times where the work was definitely next-level. The marching band performed at some of the soccer games during the first few months of this year, and we also participated in multiple high school marching events as an exhibition band. The crowds loved watching our performances everywhere we went, and I can't wait to start marching again next year!

Once the season drew to a close, I auditioned for and joined the UNO pep band, also known as the Maverick Machine. For the last few months now, I have been playing at various volleyball, basketball, and hockey games; and, just like with marching band, I’m super glad I joined! The games and events we have performed at have been a ton of fun, and the hockey games have been especially exciting. Best of all, I was selected to be a part of the band that traveled to South Dakota for the Summit League basketball tournament, which has been one of my favorite memories this year. I have been able to make even more new friends by joining the Maverick Machine of course, and many of the friends I met during the marching season are also a part of the pep band, so it has been great to get to spend more time with them as well.

I wondered if all these extra band activities might interfere with my school work, especially with the extra responsibilities of being a part of the Honors Program, but there has not been much conflict at all this year. Many of the times in which I have had Honors events and band performances scheduled at the same times, my teachers have allowed the band commitments to take precedence. While pep band only meets for an hour and a half every Tuesday night, marching band acted as another class with regular meeting times every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoon, so I did need to be aware of that when creating my schedule for first semester. Luckily, it did not create any major issues. Being a part of the Honors Learning Community has even provided me with help in band at times! Some of the older students I have met either were in band before or are still a part of the program, and they all have given me great advice for the coming years. I am really glad I chose to continue participating in band in college, and I can't wait to start it up again next year.
O-M-A-H-A, Omaha Mavs! We are Bre and Delaney and we are freshmen on the Omaha Mavericks Cheer Squad. Respectively, our majors are Architectural Engineering and Neuroscience. Cheerleading at UNO requires us to be available multiple times a week for practice and hockey, volleyball, and basketball games. Along with these, we also participate in at least five volunteer events a semester. Aside from cheer, we are involved in the UNO Honors Learning Community, which requires us to take two to three classes a semester within a small cohort. This community also schedules monthly field trips around Omaha to foster a sense of community. Balancing cheerleading, the Honors community, a job, and our social lives is not always an easy task.

One conflict we have experienced when balancing cheer and Honors included a field trip to the opera *La Bohème* which was sandwiched in-between cheer pictures and a women’s basketball game. A week prior to the event, we talked to Dr. Patton about the possibility of leaving the opera early for the game and he was very understanding. When the day arrived, we did a lot of running around but managed to attend all of the events. The opera was excellent and we were glad to stay to the end. A couple of weeks ago, UNO basketball made it to the Summit League Tournament in South Dakota. In order to cheer at this tournament, Bre had to miss multiple classes, including her Honors-only classes. Missing class was manageable due to a written note excusing her from class, class notes from friends, and online assignments. The Summit League tournament was an excellent experience and it was so great to see the pride that was displayed by UNO. Another conflict we have encountered has been night classes interfering with cheering at games. In order to work around this, Bre had to attend lab at a different time of the week a couple of times and miss a few games when class time took precedence.

Through our experiences this past year, we have learned a few tricks to balancing that could benefit anyone and everyone. A major key to balancing everything is keeping a planner with all tasks, events, and assignments recorded. Sometimes it is beneficial to make a to-do list ranking items by importance. We also find it beneficial to get enough sleep to provide energy for the day and to maintain a healthy diet. Finding a balance between cheer events and class has been made easier thanks to the very understanding professors of the Honors Learning Community and our great cheerleading coach. Overall, we have both enjoyed our first year of college on the cheer team and in the Honors Learning Community, and we plan to continue both next year.
I have lived in Omaha my entire life. Since I’ve been a kid, my parents have tried their best to show me how to be good to those who might have less than I do. Volunteer work is important in our family, and a genuine care and concern for my community has only grown deeper as I have grown up.

I have also been a creator for most of my life. I can’t draw or sing, and I certainly don’t trust myself enough around power tools to build anything worthwhile, so fiber arts called to me and I heeded the call. Nothing delights me more than using my powers for good. Sometimes that’s in the form of sharing the passion with another and hearing how it may have changed his or her life; sometimes that takes the form of giving a garment to someone and seeing the delight that shines in his or her eyes. I want everyone to create – to feel the magic of finishing a project and saying “Yes! Yes, I made that!”

When the Honors Student Association board was brainstorming ideas for service-learning events, it struck me: why don’t we spend a little time creating for those in need? Nebraska winters get chilly, and, while there are places in and around Omaha for those who need a roof over their heads, they can be hard to get to or have spaces that fill up too quickly. Winter gear, those little accessories that we take for granted every day, is always in high demand at shelters around the Metro. I have at least fifteen scarves, hats, and mittens, while there are people around my own neighborhood who don’t have any of those. If I can make even a few scarves for people who absolutely need them, what in heaven’s name is stopping me from doing that right this second?

As UNO Honors students, there is more for us than to just go to class, do our homework, eat, sleep, rinse, repeat. We are living, breathing members of this community in Omaha, and creating something for someone else is an enriching experience for everyone involved. College is a time in which most people begin to find themselves and determine who they are and who they want to be. There are any number of possibilities, why not use some of our free time to become people more invested in the betterment of our community?

This idea turned into an event that we actually executed a couple times. The first time, I taught a small group of students to arm-knit scarves, and it ended up being way more fun than I could have anticipated; by the end of the night we had 4 new scarves to donate. The second time around, we made tie-blankets with some large pieces of fleece. Again, it was a wonderful bonding experience and some genuine good for others came from it. The combination of creation and community service is therapeutic for mind, body, and soul.

All of that being said, we will be making more blankets and coloring placemats for the Children’s Hospital at the next All-Honors HSA meeting, and we would love for you to join us!

By: Emma Flynn

Knitting a Warmer Omaha
Tutoring: a Lesson for Everyone

By: Patrick Hodson

I tutor for Intermediate Financial Accounting 1 because I know the material is tough and many students desperately need help. I took the class last semester and did well enough to be able to tutor this semester and receive Honors credit. This seemed like a win-win to me because I would be able to help my fellow students get through “the weed-out accounting class” while also getting Honors credit for my work. Having the opportunity to tutor this semester has really taught me a lot. Before I began tutoring, I had envisioned myself teaching loads of dedicated and motivated students about the intricacies of financial accounting. The reality was much different, yet no less rewarding.

My typical tutoring session includes two to four students, and I usually help answer questions related to homework problems or fundamental accounting concepts. However, that is only a small portion of what I actually do while tutoring. During my tutoring sessions, I develop friendships with fellow business students whom I wouldn’t have otherwise been able to meet. We learn, laugh, and have a great time for three hours each week. The chance to tutor for Honors credit is a wonderful opportunity to give back to your community while stretching yourself and meeting new people. Tutoring has taught me many lessons about how to best present information to people, it has given me countless chances to build my confidence and develop my ability to talk in front of others, but, perhaps more important than all of this, it has given me a deep appreciation for the hard work our dedicated professors put in to teach us every day.

Products for Impoverished

By: Dominika Jedinak

Women in poverty often can’t afford basic necessities like pads and tampons. Because we pride ourselves on playing an active role in the community, and on helping women, we have been reaching out to members of the community and beyond to help in any way that they can. Because of this, we’re holding a drive during the month of April to collect women’s hygiene products to donate to local women’s shelters.

We’re accepting full and travel-sized pads, tampons, towels, gently used or unused undergarments, clothing, and anything related to women’s hygiene. We have also created a GoFundMe for a collection of funds to donate directly to the shelters in Omaha, including the Siena Francis House and the Open Door Mission Lydia House. Our goal is to help as many women in need to improve Omaha’s community.

During the month of April, help women in need by donating unused women’s hygiene products to give to women’s shelters in the Omaha area.

Bring your items to the hallway in front of room 134 in Mammel Hall on Scott Campus, 6708 Pine St, Omaha, NE 68106.
The impact of an action often extends far beyond that moment, sometimes even beyond a single life. In the case of the late Kristen Toner, her action, choosing to be an organ donor, will live on in six different lives; her goodness and generosity will be immortalized. Kristen was a good friend, passionate student, active community member, and an organ donor.

In honor of Kristen and in partnership with Donate Life Month, Honors freshpeople Elias Witte, Jamie Bish, and Caelyn Armshaw organized an organ donation registration drive on campus to take place at the Milo Bail Student Center on Monday, April 10th.

The event is inspired by Kristen’s selfless spirit. Elias Witte explains, “Kristen always wanted to help people and, especially since she donated six organs, we thought [the organ donor registration drive] would be a nice way to honor her memory… she is going to live on in those six people and now she will help save countless other lives by testifying to the importance of being a registered organ donor.”

The event is sponsored by Nebraska Organ Recovery and will be an opportunity to learn about organ donation and even to register as a donor on the spot. Organ donation and transplant surgeries are an invaluable and lifesaving component of modern medicine that is only possible through the selflessness and forethought of people like Kristen.

If you are not a registered organ donor and would like to find out more information, visit the Nebraska Organ Recovery website at nedonation.org for easy access to resources and registration forms.

In loving memory of Kristen Toner
HSA Rep Features

Patrick Hodson

I am a sophomore here at UNO, studying business at CBA. More importantly though, I am a proud member of the University Honors Program. When I was an incoming freshman, I viewed the Honors Program as being something in which I wouldn't really be able to make a difference. However, as I began to get more involved within the program, I realized just how naïve my previous conclusion was. The Honors Program is filled with wonderful people, and I wanted to meet as many of them as I could. After being elected executive board officer, I wanted to apply to every class representative program. A year and a half ago, when I found out I was moving to Nebraska, abandoning my charming Tennessee life to go live among the corn, I was feeling less than adventurous. When I actually made it out here, not only did I discover that corn is not ubiquitous, but that the people here are so nice they made it their state slogan. Attending UNO has only reinforced my fondness for Nebraska and I could not be more proud to have an active role in such a great university and its Honors program.

I love being a part of HSA because it allows me to work with other students, to make awesome things, like our annual blood drive, annual blood pen. From top to bottom, the Honors program has UNO experienced much that I sure everyone the honors do for them.

As an HSA officer on the executive board, I view my position first and foremost as being a student representative; I want to serve as a conduit between the general honors population and the people who make things happen. When I’m not taking advantage of the honors lounge in Kayser, you can find me stumbling through the halls of Allwine (which, despite the fact that it is a square building, I still get lost in) as a biotechnology major with a pre-med focus. I spend a lot of time in there. While I may get lost in the science buildings, I know my way around a kitchen and love to cook and bake. It is my firm belief that sharing home baked cookies will liven up any class or meeting.

Caelyn Armshaw

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