



# The Distinction

Spring 2018

A collaboration by  
the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Honors Program



**Recognized in the 2017 Student  
Electronic Category by the  
National Collegiate Honors Council -  
First Runner Up in the Nation!**

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Omaha

# Table of Contents

---

## Graduates

- 1 May Graduates

## Honors Student Association

- 3 HSA's Superb Spring  
A recap of this year and farewell from the HSA President
- 4 Make Room for More Studying  
Details on the newly-remodeled Honors lounge
- 5 Volunteering 4 Honors  
An account of a student's 4th year volunteering for the DSC

## Honors FUSE Projects

- 6 FUSEing Education and Language  
Student uses FUSE to research education
- 6 Making Outstanding Advances  
Student examines MOA in cells using FUSE

## Study Abroad

- 7 Making a Mark in Denmark  
Details of studying abroad in Denmark

## Honors Stories

- 8 Talking the Talk  
Two Honors students give talk at Future Business Leaders of America state conference
- 9 Travel to United Nations  
A recap of Social Work Day Conference at UN
- 10 A Different Race to Run  
New Student Body President recaps wild election

## Honorable Mentions

- 11 Professor Profile  
Dr. Ramazan Kilinc
- 11 Alumni Spotlight  
Emily Timm

## Honors Artwork

- 12 Alex Chase
- 12 Katie Thompson

## Honors Program

- 13 Honors Spring of Fun



[@UNOHonorsProgram](https://www.facebook.com/UNOHonorsProgram)



[@UNOHonors](https://twitter.com/UNOHonors)



[@UNOHonors](https://www.instagram.com/UNOHonors)



[@UNOHSA](https://www.snapchat.com/add/UNOHSA)

---

Chris Winchester,  
Newsletter Editor  
Marina Madrigal,  
Newsletter Co-Editor  
Sam Lauritsen,  
Staff  
Kayley Scott,  
Staff

## May Graduates

### **Raul Aguilera Ramirez**

"The Economic Impact of a US Talent Shortage on Midwest Companies"

Advisor: Dale Eesley

College of Business Administration

### **Sydney Edens**

"Managing Media for the Genius of Warren Buffet"

Advisor: Karen Weber

College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

### **Andrew Aulner**

"The Japanese Client"

Advisor: Lisa Sandlin

College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

### **Sophie Ford**

"Crystal & Gem: A Magazine Concept for the Millennial Audience"

Advisor: Ashley McFeely

College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

### **Kyla Buettner**

"Ketone Bodies and Signaling in Pancreatic Cancer Cell Lines"

Advisor: Pankaj Singh

College of Arts and Sciences

### **Virginia Gallner**

"Room at Our Table": Analyzing the Efficacy of Pro-Refugee Social Media Campaigns Based on Hospitality Values and Resource Sharing"

Advisor: Gina Ligon

College of Arts and Sciences

### **Antonio Campbell**

"Simple Approximations to the Renewal Function"

Advisor: Steve From

College of Arts and Sciences

### **Savannah Greenfield**

"When Beauty is the Beast: An Analysis of Beauty Propaganda and its Effects on the Female Consumer"

Advisor: Jonna Holland

College of Arts and Sciences

### **Erin Dabbs**

"Strategic Analysis of LifeLoop, LCC: Current Positioning and Recommendations for Future Growth"

Advisor: Leif Lundmark

College of Business Administration

### **Jennifer Grisso**

"Individual Case Study: An in Depth Look into LA Fitness"

Advisor: Julie Johnson

College of Business Administration

### **Erin Dimon**

"Effects of Site-Directed Mutagenesis on the Structure and Function of Coxsackievirus B3"

Advisor: William Tappich

College of Arts and Sciences

### **Brian Hodges**

"CSLC Tutoring Portal"

Advisor: Douglas Bertelsen

College of Information Science and Technology

## May Graduates

### Audra Langer

"Translation of ILUNO Resources into French"  
Advisor: Juliette Parnell  
College of Arts and Sciences

### Xavier Royer

"Teaching Through Roleplaying"  
Advisor: Todd Richardson  
College of Arts and Sciences

### Cassandra Nguyen

"Detection and Assay of Isoniazid Utilizing Isocratic High-Performance Liquid Chromatography"  
Advisor: Ronald Bartzatt  
College of Arts and Sciences

### Matthew Spicka

"The Safety in Sanctuaries; a Threat Assessment for Omaha Churches"  
Advisor: Patrick O'Neil  
College of Public Affairs and Community Service

### Michael Palandri

"Genetic Variation in Nebraska Northern-Long Eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) Populations"  
Advisor: Jeremy White  
College of Arts and Sciences

### Ashley Steffes

"The Types and Effects of Dating Violence Among College Students in Omaha"  
Advisor: Gaylene Armstrong  
College of Business Administration

### Sara Pinkelman

"Strategic Alignment of Future Goals: Mutual of Omaha"  
Advisor: Brent Clark  
College of Business Administrations

### Marissa Wiese

"They Say It Where I'm From: Using the Language of Idioms to Compare the Characteristics of Individualism vs. Collectivism"  
Advisor: Chin Chung Choa  
College of Arts and Sciences

### Sofia Rahmanzai

"The Prevention and Management of Hospital Acquired Infections"  
Advisor: Donald Rowen  
College of Arts and Sciences

### Harim Won

"Investigation of bradyzoite differentiation initiation in *Toxoplasma gondii*"  
Advisor: Paul H. Davis  
College of Arts and Sciences

### Rachel Rice

"Micron: Changes for Continued Success"  
Advisor: Brent Clark  
College of Business Administration





## HSA's Superb Spring

A recap of this year and farewell from the HSA President

By: Alex Wasinger

**W**hen I first became involved with the Honors Program in the fall of 2015, I set a goal for myself to be just like the well-rounded leaders of the Honors Program one day.

My UNO Honors experience has been slightly unorthodox. I did not immediately come into college right after high school and although I started in the Honors Program, my first year on campus I was simply a disengaged commuter student who was not involved in anything. I do not believe I even knew where the Honors building was located. At the time, I thought the only benefit for me being in the Honors Program was to have an additional thing to add to my resume. I was very wrong. By chance, that year was around the time that the Honors Program introduced a new director, Dr. Lucy Morrison.

Dr. Morrison brought a positive change to the demeanor of the program. During my sophomore year, I responded to one of these newly introduced "hump day" emails from our director for an opportunity to get involved in the Honors Student Association. The inviting nature of the Honors Program had caused me to step out of my comfort zone and do something I would not normally do. Immediately, I met other Honors students I admired and who I aspired to be. I found something that I felt strongly connected to.

Since that time, both the Honors Program and our Honors Student Association has grown in leaps and bounds. There has been a stronger presence from incoming freshman who are more connected to the program than ever, thanks to Dr. Morrison. We even had to increase the number of freshman representatives we selected this year in HSA just to accommodate for the overwhelming involvement by new Honors students and their desire to get involved. It makes me excited for what the future will bring for the program.

For this year, HSA had a couple of main focuses for the Honors Program – who are we and how can we contribute to the experience of Honors students. Here are a few ways we accomplished them:

**We created our identity.** Through various projects, we created ways to help you know what HSA does and how we make the Honors Program better. Our newsletter, created by Chris Winchester, is setting the national standard for content created by Honors students and giving our voice a larger audience. We also collaborated with a talented Honors student, Emily Redd, to create a new design for our organization to be more professional. Finally, we are continuing to explore ways to expand and reach more Honors stu-

dents and we are now on all the major social media sites.

**We strived to make a difference.** While we were not always successful in our endeavors, everything we tried to do, we did it with a purpose. We highlighted important matters in open forums that affected our local community as well as our entire country. We donated our time to give back to others whether it be through bake-sale fundraisers to raise money for various causes or talking to middle school children to show them that their dreams can become realities. We also continued to honor past traditions such as blood drives for the Red Cross and sent survival bags during those rough final weeks of the semester.

**We celebrated individuality.** My number one favorite aspect of the Honors Program is the collection of amazing students that you are surrounded by. Although we all have high standards, no Honors students are alike. Therefore, coming together outside of classes is so important; there is so much to learn from other Honors students that academics alone will not teach you. These are why our social events that we held are so important to us and why we continue to find ways to make them better. There was always a way to be connected and being in the Honors facility feels like a second home sometimes.

Thank you for all the help I received throughout the year from faculty and students to make it a successful one, especially those students on the HSA Board who went above and beyond and set the bar high for future years; as well as the help from the Vice President of HSA, Patrick Hodson, who is the perfect embodiment of the Honors program by challenging me to be better and also being a close friend. The future leaders of the Honors Program and HSA give me no reason to doubt the growth and creativity that they will bring to Honors for the upcoming year. I cannot wait to see what new things they implement and how high they can stand on the shoulders of those who came before them.

Now that the year is almost over, I can confidently say that I am nowhere close to being the person that I set out to be when I first set my goal. I still have failures and have a lot to learn, but having all the amazing Honors students around to expand my thinking and push me to be the best version of myself has far exceeded any goal I could have imagined.

Have a good summer break Honors Students!

Cheers,  
Alex

## Make Room for More Studying

Details on the newly-remodeled Honors lounge

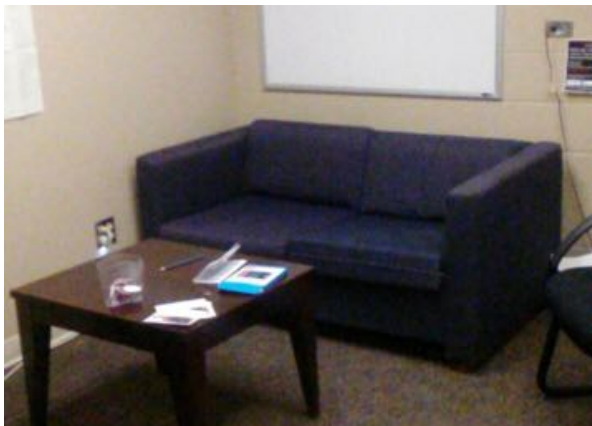
By: Caelyn Armshaw

Communication between the Honors Student Association (HSA) representatives and the Honors students was a major focus of the HSA this year, and that initiative gave way to an increased representative presence in Kayser and the snazzy new suggestion box located in the computer lounge. The name of the game for the HSA in the fall semester of 2017 was, "Give the people what they want." Of course the 'people' HSA was reaching out to were the Honors students on UNO's campus, and one of the things those wonderful people wanted was a more comfortable and utilizable lounge space.

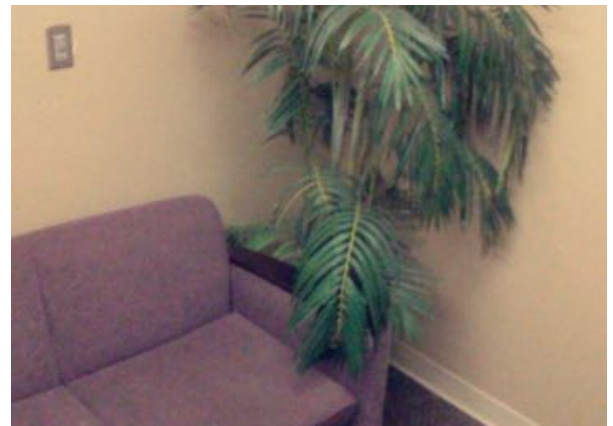
In a meeting with Dr. Morrison, HSA representatives brought up the idea of redoing the lounge, and Dr. M jumped into action faster than agnu being chased by a lion. Dr.

M found compromises between the goals suggested by students and the guidelines put in place by the university to help create an awesome space for Honors students to hang out and have riveting discussions about sacred places after Dr. Patton's exciting colloquium or a quick peer-editing session for Dr. Marx's next essay (or just to take a nap).

The lounge now has a giant community whiteboard sporting a doodle of a friendly giraffe, a sound system personally donated by Ms. Green, new art, and an entirely new layout. HSA has been overwhelmed by the positive response of students and we look forward to making more of your suggestions become a reality. Stay tuned for what is coming next and keep leaving suggestions in the suggestion box...the new lounge was just the start!



*A view of the study space as you walk into the room.*



*The newly-remodeled study space.*

## Volunteering 4 Honors

An account of a student's fourth year volunteering at the DSC

By: Alex Swenson

The 2018 Distinguished Scholarship Competition (DSC) went extremely well and represents the fourth time I have helped with the event. While it can be hard to get up early on a Saturday morning to volunteer, I have always enjoyed being part of the DSC and am glad I could help with it each of my years at UNO. In past years, students would eat breakfast at the Scott Conference Center and then complete activities in Mammel Hall. However, for the 2018 edition, the breakfast and activities took place in Milo Bail and CPACS, respectively.

Usually at the breakfast, an Honors student will sit at each table and converse with the students and their families. This is always an interesting experience. One year, I sat with the Pottawattamie County District Attorney and his son. This year, it turned out the student I sat with was interested in majoring in math (which is what I am majoring in). They had a lot of questions which I was able to answer and I am glad I was able to be a resource for that family. Out of my four years helping with the event, the conversations I had at this year's breakfast might have been the best.

After breakfast, the Honors volunteers led the students to the main lecture hall in CPACS while their parents stayed in Milo. Once the students were seated in CPACS, they were divided into four groups with different colors. There were three main parts to the competition in CPACS: essay writing, interviewing, and talking to the Honors panel.

Essay writing takes up half of the time so two groups complete that activity while the other two groups switch between interviewing and the panel. Once the first two groups have finished writing, the groups flip so the other two groups can write their essays. I was part of

the Honors panel so I cannot talk much about the interviews or essays. The Honors panel gives the high school students the opportunity to ask Honors students about college without any "adults" in the room. This was actually the third year I have participated in the panel.

The groups were a little smaller compared to past years and I believe this was beneficial. It was relatively easy to get the students to ask questions and come out of their shell. It makes sense since that is part of the idea behind smaller class sizes. Just like breakfast, I think participating in this year's panel was the best experience for me yet. I hope the high school students had an equally positive experience and were able to get some valuable information from the panel. The way the students talked about the interview and essay sections leads me to believe those parts of the competition went well too. Overall, the 2018 DSC was a success and I am very glad I was able to help with it.



*Honors students volunteer at the Distinguished Scholarship Competition during the interview round of the day.*

## FUSEing Education and Language

Student uses FUSE to research education

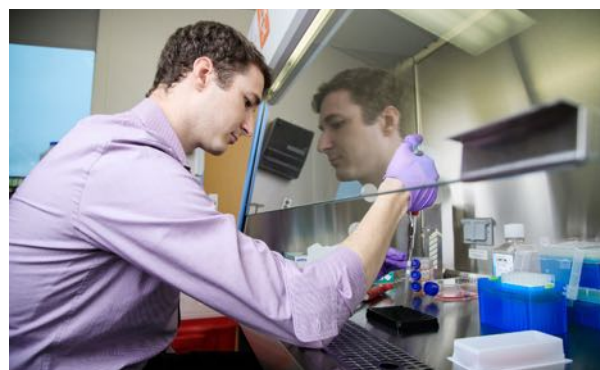
By: Bailey Morley

Research was never something that sparked my interest. Through further exploration of my goals and interests in my field of study, however, my sentiments toward research began to change. Now, I am embarking on research pertaining to two of my passions: education and language. I recently received a FUSE grant for my proposed research on the beliefs of teachers titled: Teacher Beliefs about Focus on Form: Differences and Similarities among Native and L2 Spanish Speakers.

I am studying both Spanish and secondary education with endorsements in Spanish and ESL, and as I contemplated teaching, I began to wonder about the best practices for teaching grammar in a language classroom. Due to this, I thought it would be helpful to identify common beliefs of Spanish teachers about focus on form, a type of grammar instruction that teaches grammar through communicative tasks. My research seeks to specifically identify discrepancies and similarities between the beliefs of Spanish as a foreign language teachers who are native Spanish speakers and teachers who learned Spanish as a second language.

Research pertaining to the beliefs of teachers has become increasingly popular due to the impact that teacher beliefs have on teaching practices. Although I am only researching the beliefs of teachers, I still believe this research will have further implications on their practices. This research will provide prospective and current Spanish teachers with a greater understanding of assumptions or biases they may have about grammar instruction due to their personal experiences with the language.

I would like to use this research in order to inform my own practices in my future classroom. I am grateful for this opportunity and excited to begin this journey of discovery and to provide teachers with another means in which to voice their beliefs. I believe research in education positively impacts the lives of teachers, students, and the community and can subsequently impact the world's future.



Senior Sean Watson in the lab.

## Making Outstanding Advances

Student examines MOA in cells using FUSE

By: Sean Watson

In Dr. Paul Davis' lab in Allwine Hall, we study the organism *Toxoplasma gondii*, a parasite that shares many genetic similarities to the microbe responsible for malaria. Due to these similarities, our lab utilizes *T. gondii* as a model organism to investigate experimental antimalarial drugs. Once a compound has been shown to exhibit anti-parasitic properties in the lab, its function within the cell, termed mode of action (MOA), must be determined before it is suitable for clinical trials and its eventual clinical adoption.

The MOA of many drugs is through the deactivation of a specific protein to which the drug binds; a process which ultimately leads to the death of the parasite. As new antimalarial drugs are developed, the specific protein to which the drug binds is generally unknown. Because parasites are eukaryotes and thus have many of the same proteins as humans, it is essential to demonstrate that the drug does not have high affinity for human proteins which would lead to undesirable toxic side-effects. Thus, through elucidating the mode of action, we can more appropriately determine the safety of the drug.

I am currently working on the optimization of a protocol that would help to quickly and robustly determine the MOA of experimental compounds. I applied for a FUSE grant to help fund this project in January of 2018 and was notified the funding had been approved in February. I have found writing FUSE proposals to be helpful as it requires the development of a clear, step-wise plan and realistic timeline to complete my project. Through the funding of this project, the Office of Research and Creative Activity is helping our lab to expand our knowledge of experimental antimalarial compounds.



## Making a Mark in Denmark

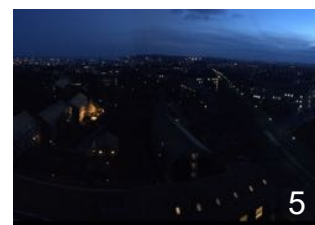
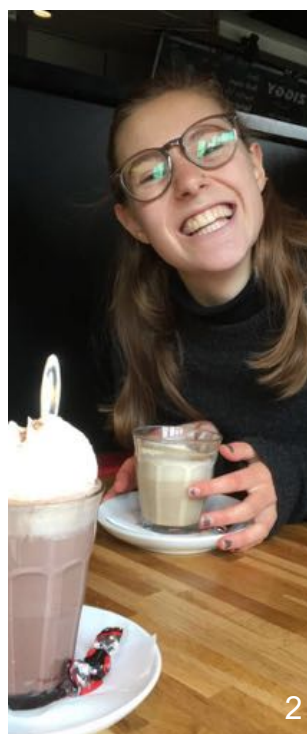
### Details of studying abroad in Denmark

By: Charlotte Reilly

When I first arrived in Denmark for my semester abroad, I was excited, but also apprehensive. I knew I would meet life-long friends and learn about a new culture, but I also had to give up seeing my family, friends, and Panera Bread for five months. I thought if I can handle being an Honors student, work, extracurricular activities, homework, and a social life back home, surely I can live in a new place. But the challenges of balancing home life and embracing a new culture are vastly different. I am used to my chaotic schedule in Omaha. I did not realize I would have an equally chaotic schedule in Denmark, on top of not knowing the language, the city, or the people.

The first week I was flooded with different emotions. One day I would be amazed by scenery and the newness of everything; the next day, I was bitter that stores are not open 24 hours and candy is more expensive. Eventually, my roller coaster of emotions smoothed. I learned the key to making any place feel like home is to build connections. Yes, with people, but also with stores, bars, streets, even advertisements at bus stops. I see an advertisement of an old man excitedly holding a coke zero all over Aarhus. I found it funny the first day I saw it when I was exploring downtown with my friends. Because I made that connection, I now feel at home every time I pass that advertisement.

I have substituted the dollar section at Target with a store called Flying Tiger. I traded in Panera Bread for the Royal Danish Library's lunch buffet. I have not replaced loved ones, but I have made handfuls of new friends who have become my Danish family. The UNO Honors Program encourages students to challenge themselves. I never felt the need to push myself further when I was in Omaha. I was comfortable where I was. Now I understand why challenges are so important, even if they can be scary. They force you to try things you do not think you are capable of. If it were not for this 'scary' adventure, I would not be planning trips across Europe. I would not be treating myself to Daim chocolate bars on rainy days. I would not have met my Danish family.



1. Charlotte poses with her cousin Austin near the docks in the center of Aarhus, Denmark.

2. Having a drink, Charlotte enjoys her time abroad in Denmark.

3. Charlotte and her friends celebrate Valentine's Day at her apartment.

4. Taking a break from hiking, Charlotte and her friends brace the cold in Mols Berj National Park.

5. A view of Aarhus, Denmark at night from the Royal Danish Library Tower.

6. Vividly-colored homes in downtown Aarhus, Denmark brighten up the street.

## Talking the Talk

### Two Honors students give talk at Future Business Leaders of America state conference

By: Chris Winchester

**W**hat do you do when you fear something? For me, I face it; and that is exactly what I am doing after being approached about speaking at the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Nebraska State Leadership Conference (SLC). Public speaking for me, like many people, is one of my biggest fears; however, I continue to face this each week with various leadership positions I hold, and now, by speaking at the FBLA SLC. My partner, Bri Eisert, and I have the wonderful opportunity to give a 50-minute seminar entitled, "How to Get Any Job You Want" on Friday, April 6th at 1:00 pm, and we could not be more grateful.

This opportunity came about due to our work on the Career Skills Workshop, a day-long event for 50 – 60 high school students, which teaches them, through speakers and hands-on learning, about resumes, interviewing, internships, work culture, and dining etiquette. I founded this workshop along with Bri, Philip Faughn, and Karina Pisetsky. During our inaugural year, one of the teachers was so impressed with our work and what information was taught that she asked if we would speak at the state conference in April of the following year. Fast forward to 2018, and Bri and I are getting ready to present in front of about 75 students on the topics of resumes, networking, and internships.

Bri and I have been working diligently to prepare for this day. In addition

to writing the description for the seminar, we have written a 40-minute talk which incorporates a PowerPoint, three handouts with information, and an interactive networking activity. This is no small project, and, while nervous for it, I could not be more thrilled to participate.

Being asked to speak at this conference is a huge honor and a major indicator to the work I have accomplished here at UNO. Just two years ago I was sitting in the opposite seat of where I am now, watching various speakers. Now I will be returning to the same hotel and the same conference room I once sat in as an FBLA chapter president, only this time, Bri and I will be the ones all of these students look up to for information and advice on advancing in one's career, a true testament to how far a couple of years in the Honors Program at UNO can get someone.



*Future Business Leaders of America Nebraska State Leadership Conference seminar speakers, Chris Winchester and Bri Eisert.*

## Travel to United Nations

### A recap of Social Work Day Conference at UN

By: Dalton Meister

I am a student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and I am a member of the UNO University Honors Program, much like those of you who are reading this at this moment. I write today to share with each of you the wonderful initiative I took part in over spring break at the United Nations related to my field, social work. The initiative, which took the form of a student forum followed by a Social Work Day Conference at the United Nations, was centered on the dissemination of current and developing resources on climate change and its impact on the progression of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals and related 169 target areas. The weekend initiative was also the celebration of the 35th Annual Social Work Day at the United Nations. Discussions on climate were centered on the effect it has on the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations in 2015.

We learned that, currently, with these goals set to achieve target completion by the end of 2030, we must be ever mindful of all factors that could have the potential to inhibit or impact our ability as the citizens of the member states of the United Nations to achieve these goals. These goals were set in place to advance the quality of life for all humanity; however, in this case, the inhibiting factor to achieving the goals is climate. The information at the conferences about these current and developing resources was provided by the undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty of several universities in the United States and many organizations too numerous to mention, but some were the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the United Nations, the National Association of Social Workers (U.S.), and the Council on Social Work Education (U.S.).

I would like to focus on Saturday, March 25th, when we attended the Fordham School of Social Service which hosted the Student Conference: SDG's, Climate Change and Social Work Practice. The highlight of the event was the period when we were broken up into workshop groups determined by participant interest to attend two separate workshops.

The highlight of the first workshop, titled

Responding to Natural Disasters, which was led by Dr. Madelyn Miller Ph.D. LCSW, was the approach of several topics integral to approaching disaster in a manner appropriate as social workers. We remained mindful as we approached relevant topics such as compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma and resilience, psychological first aid, micro practice and macro practice as a continuum and not two separate forms of practice. In our closing of the workshop, we finished with an exercise that provided each of us with each other's exposure to professional experiences in natural disasters though which we then applied the currently developing response practices found in the field of social work.

The second workshop was titled A Documentary on Climate Refugees, led by the graduate student planning committee for the conference. During this workshop, we watched a new documentary released on climate change and the global impact it has on humanity. We also talked about the way in which we might improve our response to such disasters, our approach to those affected, and our impact on the environment.

As a young and aspiring social work student, I took this experience to mean that we should be ever mindful of developments within social work practice and to know that, like climate, there may sometimes be underlying factors that are beyond the scope of what we are currently educated on how to approach or how to respond to as professionals. Our field, much like many others, is in a constant state of flux and development, and it was a pleasure to see the ways in which the practice has developed to bridge this gap in practice development. It has inspired me to push myself to study more and to learn all I can to become the best social worker I can be!



*The entrance to the United Nations in New York City.*



## A Different Race to Run

### New Student Body President recaps wild election

By: Renata Valquier Chavez

I see every race as an opportunity to seize the moment and a time to enjoy every second in the competition. I hope that everyone experiences that exhilarating feeling I have before racing competitively (or eating ice cream). The presidential race was a different type of competition. I would not wish that stress upon anyone—ever.

I did a total of one day of tabling for my campaign. I decided that if I really deserved to be elected by my peers into the presidential office, then my involvement across campus would speak for itself. As a firm believer in face-to-face communication, I wanted to just talk to people how I normally would and, if they asked, then I would talk about my campaign. Surprisingly, this method and social media got the word out much better than I expected! I was so thankful to see the excitement within my team and from my friends, because I pursued this position to try to better the experience at UNO for everyone. We do not *need* a defined leadership position to make a positive impact. The only thing you need is a goal, passion, and the willingness to keep trying after failing (and like two cups of coffee a day).

Exactly one week before election day, everything fell apart. I cannot thank Honors enough for being so amazing and supportive, because the only place I could think to go after deciding to withdraw from the race was the Honors lounge where Dr. Morrison, Mrs. Green, and Dr. Patton were to listen and give amazing advice. My friends and teammates were so important on that day, because it felt as if the world was against Benji's and my campaign. It took a lot of thinking and persistence from my friends to remind me why I started. Once I remembered, I realized it was still worth the fight to try.

Regardless of what the situation might be, it is so important to be respectful. Competitions have the potential to bring out the worst in anyone, or it can be used as a chance to practice patience and tolerance. We rise by lifting others, never by pushing another person down. I was very track-minded in this race, because it is not possible to control what others do. I can control which actions my campaign takes and how we react to situations;

then at the finish line, or election day in this case, the people of UNO can make their decision.

While I was campaigning I still had the responsibilities of my classes and hitting my mileage for track, which became really stressful. There were many nights when I felt like giving up or skipping class, but growing up I remember how much my dad worked late nights and started early mornings, all while running on little to no sleep. If he could do that for an exhausting job, then I could finish my genetics assignment and everything else for school.

When the results were announced, I had just had my eyes dilated and so I could not actually see the results until someone called me to let me know. I was glad I was with my mom at the time, because I cannot thank her enough for constantly reminding me to be bold and to blaze through my own trails (and to eat more than just Goldfish crackers for lunch). On International Women's Day, it just seemed perfect to celebrate with the most inspiring woman in my eyes.

Each of us is radiating with a fresh perspective and ideas only known to ourselves. I want Student Government to be an accessible platform that allows all voices to be heard and enable Senators to reach out to everyone. I genuinely care about our university and it is an honor to serve the Mavericks as President/Regent. Go Mavs!



*Student Body President-Elect, Renata Valquier Chavez, with Student Body Vice President-Elect, Benji Fountain, in one of their social media campaign photos.*



## Professor Profile

Dr. Ramazan Kilinc

By: Dr. Ramazan Kilinc

I am an Associate Professor of Political Science and Co-Director of the Islamic Studies Program at UNO. I received my Ph.D. (2008) from Arizona State University and M.A. (2001) and B.A. (1999) from Bilkent University, Turkey, where I am from. My recent articles appeared in outlets such as *Comparative Politics*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Politics and Religion*, *Turkish Studies*, and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. I have also written opinion pieces in various media including Washington Post and Open Democracy. I am co-author of a book, titled, *Generating Generosity in Catholicism and Islam: Beliefs, Institutions, and Public Goods Provision* (Cambridge University Press, May 2018). My other book, *Alien Citizens: State and Religious Minorities in Turkey and France*, is under contract with Cambridge University Press.

My involvement with the Honors students is new. I am teaching my first Honors colloquium, Sacred and Violent, this semester. This course investigates the relationship between religion, violence, and peace. This interdisciplinary course examines historical, political, economic, sociological, anthropological and psychological reasons behind religion-related violence in a comparative perspective. The course also identifies the conditions for co-existence and religious pluralism. To analyze the individual stories of religious co-existence, the students will conduct fieldwork and interviews with the members of the Tri-Faith Initiative of Omaha. This project will produce an informal history of the Tri-Faith Initiative and teach the students the challenges and opportunities of religious pluralism in an era of increasing religious polarization.

My experience with the Honors students so far has been terrific, and I am impressed with the quality of class discussions and the students' interest in the class readings. Our class project is still in the beginning stages, but I have no doubt that my students will produce an excellent piece in the end. Because of all of this, it has been a great pleasure to work with UNO Honors Students and I look forward to what they have to offer in the future.

## Alumni Spotlight

Emily Timm

By: Emily Timm

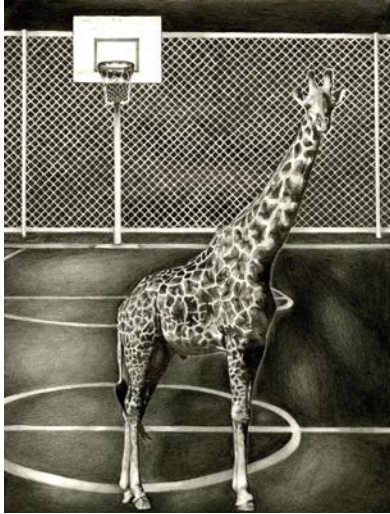
I graduated from UNO in December of 2007. Since then I have been a dual language teacher at Castellar Elementary for Omaha Public Schools. When I was at UNO, I got to speak at the Honors banquet, and I said then that I wanted to teach overseas somewhere. It was my plan. But the plan changed, and in many ways, I feel like I am still living out what I was dreaming in college. I teach in Spanish all day every day to students who are from Mexico, Central America, and South America. I love it.

I am hugely grateful for the scholarship I had through the Honors program at UNO. It meant I could start out as a teacher without any debt, and it also meant that it was easy for me to take as many Spanish classes as I wanted without worrying about paying for extra hours. If there are any future teachers who are also interested in Spanish, head my way. Omaha Public Schools dual language is growing and always in need of more teachers. I'd love to let you visit!



Emily Timm standing in front of Castellar Elementary School, where she now teaches.

## Honors Artwork



*Expectations*

### Alex Chase



*Empty*

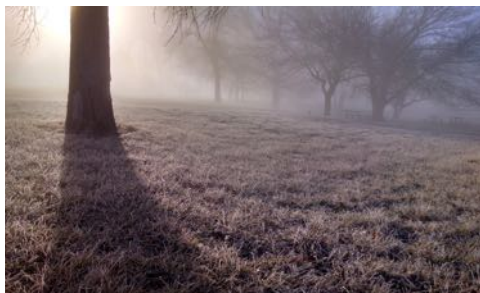


*Waffle Brain*

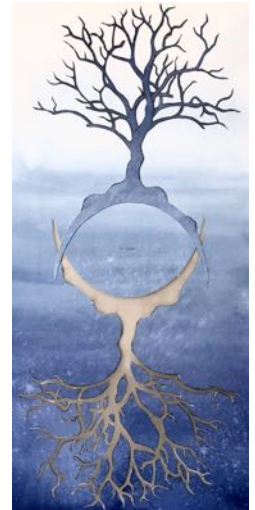


*Draggon Nuzzle*

### Katie Thompson



*Morning Fog*



*Echoed Tree*



## Honors' Spring of Fun





**Dr. Lucy Morrison**

**Lupe Green**

**Dr. Matt Patton**

Director  
lxmorrison@unomaha.edu

Staff Assistant  
mggreen@unomaha.edu

Instructor  
mpatton@unomaha.edu

**Kayser Hall**

6001 Dodge St. Omaha, NE 68182  
402.554.2696  
unomaha.edu/honors-program



**Nebraska Sandhills**  
**By: Katie Thompson**