

HSA President's Welcome

By Christine Klingaman (HC XII)

171,600 minutes is how the Honors Student Association measured a year of service during the 2012-2013 academic year. Put into simpler terms, 2,860 hours (the equivalent of 120 straight days of service) were clocked by members of every grade over the past two semesters. While some spent their time volunteering through HSA, others dedicated time to various campus organizations, worked in the borough of West Chester, their hometowns, or even served abroad. Alongside the recognition as the 2012-2013 Service Organization of the Year by the Office of Student



Leadership & Involvement, HSA was excited to award the first graduating class with the recognition of *Donna Carney Sustained Service Scholars*. This cohort of 16 graduating students completed a minimum of 6 semesters of at least 30 hours of service during their time here at WCU. These graduates (as pictured) are now featured on display in the center lounge of Allegheny. We are certainly proud of the commitment to service that our members make! Under the leadership of the executive board and chairs of each of the 25 committees, we are excited to welcome all new members and continue our commitment to academics, service, and leadership throughout this coming year!

Russia Project

By Emily Polefka (HC XIII)

When I stepped off the plane in St. Petersburg I knew that we would be seeing the most beautiful sights Russia had to offer. What I was not prepared for was the beautiful people we would meet. While part of our trip was dedicated to exploring areas of the country, the bulk was spent working with students at Herzen State Pedagogical University in St. Petersburg. During our time at the University we got to meet and interact with the college students in a panel led by Dr. Dean, President Greg Weisenstein, and various leaders from Herzen itself.



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PASSHE Summer Honors Program

By Amy Millar (HC XII) and Brianna Plaxe (HC XIII)

When people ask us what we did this summer, we have some pretty exciting stories to share! On May 26th, we moved into the dorm room at Bloomsburg University that we would call home for the next week. In fact, we would be living out of our suitcases for the next three weeks as we travelled through Western Europe. This year's PASSHE Summer Honors Program was a study of music and media in five European cities: London, Salzburg, Vienna, Venice, and Rome. We began our journey at Bloomsburg, taking two three-hour classes a day alongside students from each of the PASSHE Honors Colleges. Our Professors, Dr. Magolis and Dr. Jelinek, squeezed a semester's worth of information into our week-long session. Dr. Magolis taught us what it meant to be media literate, helped us create our own blogs and websites to document our travels, and got us thinking about the way media impacts our lives. Dr. Jelinek shared his extensive knowledge of music and even gave us a chance to practice our conducting skills in class. Our heads were spinning by the time we boarded our flight out of JFK, but we knew we still had so much to learn. As the saying goes, "Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I'll understand." Starting in London and ending in Rome, we were about to embark on a journey across Western Europe that would teach us unforgettable lessons about the world.



For the first class, we studied music abroad by attending several performances and visiting the homes of famous composers. On our first night in London we joined the British as they celebrated the Queen's 60th Coronation Anniversary at the "Coronation Classics" concert. We spent another night at the Apollo Victoria Theater for an unbeatable performance of *Wicked*. In Salzburg, Austria we visited Mozart's birthplace and enjoyed a piano recital by Damir Sertić, a famous Croatian pianist who played pieces composed by Mozart on a fortepiano. After the short recital and a chance to talk with Damir, we were all amazed by Mozart's undeniable talent and creativity. Looking around at the beautiful mountains that surrounded us in Salzburg, we knew exactly what Julie Andrews meant when she sang, "The hills are alive with the sound of music" in the 1965 film, *The Sound of Music*. Our tour took us to see iconic locations from the film including the "Sixteen Going on Seventeen" gazebo and the church where Maria married Captain VonTrapp. Our tour guide gave us the inside scoop about the real-life VonTrapp children, who, as a matter of fact, were not too thrilled when their father decided to marry Maria. Our next musical experience was in another famous Austrian city, Vienna. Our time here really brought our music history lessons to life! We took guided tours of Beethoven, Schubert, and Haydn's homes, attended a performance of the Vienna Philharmonic, and saw "The Barber of Seville" at the Vienna Opera House, followed by a backstage tour.

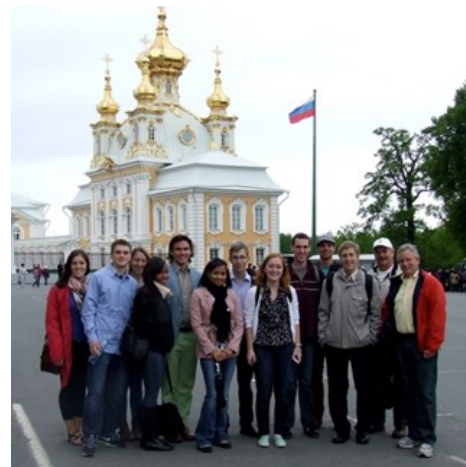


The second class focused heavily on media exposure and styles in the different countries. While abroad, we examined media through television, athletics, newspaper, and radio. The British Broadcasting Corporation, located in London, has a wonderful juxtaposition of architecture featuring the original 1960 building and the brand new television studio. Both of us had the opportunity to broadcast a story in a simulated newsroom! The tour was lively and engaging, and we learned a lot about the BBC's inner workings. In Salzburg, Austria, we explored another avenue of media in the Red Bull Arena, where the only advertisements allowed are Red Bull sponsored. The stadium is

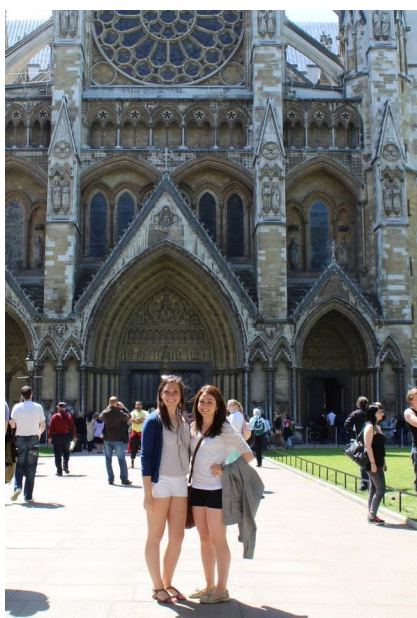
lined with Red Bull graffiti and pictures of the team. As the host of the European Championships in 2008, the arena was expanded to almost double its original size.

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We also had the privilege of sitting in on one of Herzen’s classes—the focus of that day’s lecture being American pop-culture. During this academic experience, it was hilarious and comforting to connect with foreign students over the meaning of “yolo.” President Weisenstein also signed a contract with the President of Herzen during our trip, ensuring that West Chester will maintain a strong connection with the college through study-abroad and various other academic programs. I am confident that my fellow Honors students and friends would agree that we are so grateful for the amazing people and beautiful sights we experienced while we were in Russia. The memories made with my fellow students and Russian comrades are ones that will never be forgotten.



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Then we met with the executive producer and journalists at the Wiener Zeitung of Vienna, one of the oldest daily newspapers still published in Europe. Since the Snowden scandal was surfacing at this time, we got to hear about the reaction from a fiery Austrian journalist perspective. We also learned that many news sources, while on the constant search for fast and accurate news, rely on social media, like Twitter and Facebook, for details for their stories. On an adventure out of Italy and into the Vatican City, we toured the Vatican Radio studio and met with an employee from Texas! The station broadcasts in 47 languages all around the world. In addition to all the media-based sites we visited, we were challenged to examine the media all around us and compare it to the familiarity of American media. While McDonalds and Starbucks are pretty prevalent everywhere, the uniqueness of the landscapes and architecture make each city intriguing.

The journey abroad left us with an unlimited supply of wonderful memories. One of our highlights was the connection we were able to make with the students from the other PASSHE schools. Experiencing the different places we visited was entirely enhanced because of the people around us. Traveling in such close quarters with the same common goals really brought our group together and made the trip that much more exciting. Another highlight of the trip was the time that we were able to explore the cities on our own. Exploring the London National Art Gallery, picnicking in Hyde Park, discovering the Belvedere Palace in Vienna, dancing around at a Salzburg music festival, and spending a day at the Mediterranean Sea really individualized our trip and helped us escape the tourist mentality. Seeing the culture and the daily lives of European residents in each city deepened our love for the countries we visited and made us eager to plan a next visit! We could not be more grateful for the amazing opportunity to travel, study, and experience Europe through the PASSHE Honors Program.

**Want to learn more about our adventures abroad?
Visit our blogs and websites!**

Bri’s Blog: fromlondontorome.blogspot.com/
Bri’s Website: sites.google.com/site/passhemediameories/

Amy’s Blog: amywcueurope.blogspot.com
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Director's Corner: The Road Not Taken

At the 2013 morning commencement services this past May, graduating Exercise Science senior and Honors College member, Michael Jendzurski delivered a most inspiring student address. As part of his remarks he quoted a passage from poet Robert Frost's work, *The Road Not Taken*. In case you forget this classic work, let me include a few lines here:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth...

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Frost's words hold profound meaning for all the members of the Honors Community: 1) Thanks for taking the road that leads to West Chester University and the Honors College; 2) Rest assured that the choice you have made to take that path will make "all the difference." For me, both these sentiments ring true. As I start each new academic year I am so appreciative of my faculty colleagues and friends among the university's administration and staff who have chosen to lend their time and talents to build and strengthen our community. Additionally, I take great pride and find myself with a wide smile every time I open an email or note from one of our over 600 alumni and parents who choose to make the time to stay connected and share how the WCU Honors experience continues to shape their lives. I also gain a great amount of energy and motivation from the returning students as they share stories of summer adventures, like those had by: 1) Bri Plaxe and Amy Millar who represented all of us at the 2013 PASSHE

International Summer Honors Scholar Program in Western Europe; 2) the eleven member delegation who accompanied WCU President Greg Weisenstein as he formally signed a memo of agreement with Herzen University, one of Russia's premier institutions of higher learning, which signals a pathway to collaborative efforts; or 3) the executive board, who under the leadership of President Christine Klingaman held a full day planning retreat in Princeton which drew insights from our twenty-six committee chairs and program coordinators who chose to step forward and share their gifts in leadership to make the 2013-2014 academic year one to remember.

So to the entering class of 2013, it is with great pleasure that I say welcome. You comprise a richly diverse group of 43 women and men who have claimed 24 different academic majors. Gifted in music, athletics, and academics, you bring experienced roles of leadership in student government, Scouts, and a wide lexicon of clubs and organizations. You come with a commitment to service as seen by the hundreds of hours clocked in volunteerism and service activities through churches/synagogues, community and civic organizations. You mark the 15th group to enter the Honors College under the leadership core and the 35th group to enter the university, since 1979, and be called "Honors Students". There will be many paths that lie ahead in the coming years and many choices to be made. Rest assured that while the choice will ultimately be yours to make, you have a community of support to help in your discernment and to celebrate your choices as you move towards a future in which you will make all the difference in the communities in which you reside.

HSA Happenings is a student-produced monthly newsletter created and distributed by the Honors Student Association Public Relations Committee. Its purpose is to supplement West Chester University community's knowledge of the Honors Student Association's activities and endeavors.