

ALETHEIA

The Shackouls Honors College Newsletter

Spring 2015

Aletheia is a Greek word normally interpreted as “truth,” or “reality.” However, *aletheia’s* original meaning suggests discovery or revelation, a notion that is more aligned with the traditions of education and enlightenment.

Jamie Aron

*2014 Truman Scholar
Honors Student
Class of 2015*



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY™

JUDY AND BOBBY SHACKOULS
HONORS COLLEGE



Dr. Christopher Snyder

Dean, Judy and Bobby
Shackouls Honors College

DEAR STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS:

Mississippi State University is the home of the Judy and Bobby Shackouls Honors College, a residential college of 1400 students of high academic achievement in the heart of a great public research university. After nearly forty years of a growing University Honors Program, a gift from Judy and Bobby Shackouls transformed a program into a college, and I have been proud to lead that college as dean for the last four years.

Building an intellectual community in honors means connecting ambitious and intelligent students with faculty who are outstanding teachers and researchers. It also means mentoring undergraduate students as they compete for distinguished external scholarships and apply for the top graduate and professional schools in the nation. In each of the last three years, Shackouls Honors College students have won the most prestigious national award in the STEM fields (the Goldwater Scholarship), the highest recognition for undergraduates pursuing a career in public service (the Truman Scholarship), and the oldest and most prestigious international award for student leaders in all fields (the Rhodes Scholarship). In the last year alone, our students were accepted into postgraduate programs at the University of Cambridge, Cornell, Virginia Tech, UC Berkeley, Vanderbilt, Emory, Stonybrook University and many others.

It is in an honor and a pleasure to work with such young men and women. I hear that every day from our mentors and advisors, our Faculty Fellows, and our committed honors staff. We are a community of professionals committed to the best in undergraduate education, and we believe in the power of the liberal arts to help students realize their potential and give them the skills and flexibility to adapt to an ever-changing job force and to rise to leadership positions. Our distinctive honors curriculum—the Cursus Honorum—was built with these goals in mind.

I always enjoy hearing from our alumni who see what great things the current honors students are doing and who are proud of the direction the Shackouls Honors College is heading. If you are interested in supporting the growth and opportunities available to MSU students who are part of our honors community, if you want to be part of their future success, please give me a call at 662-325-2522 or send me an email at csnyder@honors.msstate.edu. Don't forget to visit our web site (honors.msstate.edu) to see what our faculty and students are currently doing, and stop by Griffis and North Halls for a visit when you are in Starkville.

With all best wishes,

Dr. Christopher A. Snyder
Dean and Professor of History



THEATRE CONTINUES TO THRIVE AT THE HONORS COLLEGE

Dr. Donna L. Clevinger | Senior Faculty Fellow | Professor of Communication/Theatre

This has been a wonderful year for theatre at the Honors College. Beginning a week before fall semester, Dr. Donna L. Clevinger, Senior Faculty Fellow, held auditions for the Greek tragedy, *Medea*, written by Euripides for outdoor performances in late September. That's right. The Griffis Hall patio was turned into the streets of Corinth as Medea, Jason, Creon, a chorus of women and others told the story of love, hate and revenge. As the sun set behind Zacharias Village, the audience watched Medea fly off at the end of the play on her chariot flanked by dragons. (It was really a Segway decorated by honors students and rolled across the upper balcony). With audiences enjoying dinner on the grass and the actor's words echoing throughout the courtyard, *Medea* was a memorable event for Classical Week 2015.

In February, the Forum Room of Griffis Hall became a city in Illyria and a nearby seacoast for *The Many Faces of Love and Desire* based on the works of William Shakespeare and adapted by Dr. Eric Vivier, Assistant Professor of English. Dr. Donna L. Clevinger, director, staged the play in an arena type setting with the audiences and the actors sharing the same

space. The actors played characters found in the play *Twelfth Night* as well as performed 14 of the Bard's most popular sonnets and speeches. Performances had the audiences spellbound by the ageless words of love and the beautiful costumes. Violin music of the period was performed by an honors student tied each evening into a lovely Valentine gift. The event was the beginning of a tradition – having a theatrical presentation during the spring semester's Shakespeare Week.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR 2015-2016 SEASON:

September 29-30

Clouds by Aristophanes will be presented as part of Classical Week 2015, featuring Socrates spreading his "wisdom".

February 18-19

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare will be presented, complete with a mask ball, sword fighting and romance.



HONORS STUDENTS PRESENT AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Honors students Jamie Aron, Kylie Dennis, Lien Van Geel, Alex Ward, and Sally White attended the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in April to present research spanning the fields of politics, biological sciences, and the humanities. Hosted this year by Eastern Washington University in Cheney, Washington, NCUR is an annual conference which brings together nearly three thousand students from around the nation to promote discussion of scholarship and the collaboration of students and faculty to enhance the scope of undergraduate research.

Each of these students had the opportunity to participate in the Shackouls Honors College summer study abroad program at the University of Oxford in England last summer where they were enrolled in a faculty-led course on Shakespeare taught by MSU English professor, Dr. Thomas Anderson, as well as a one-on-one tutorial of their choice with an Oxford don. In addition to working with top researchers in their fields and broadening their understanding of British history and culture through a series of excursions, these students were given access to the wealth of material in the renowned Bodleian library and the private libraries of select colleges within the university. Dennis and Van Geel have continued to develop the specific research they started in Oxford and will be presenting essays at NCUR that reflect the subjects of their humanities tutorials.

Kylie Dennis is a junior English major minoring in Psychology and Gender Studies. Her essay stems from her tutorial on the prose works of the Brontë sisters. Her work examines the Brontës' use of layered narration and masculine pseudonyms in carving out a space for female authors in the male-dominated Victorian literary circle.

Lien Van Geel is a junior double majoring in Classics and English. Her presentation will center around her work in Dr. Anderson's Shakespeare course. In her essay, she analyzes evidence of Ovid's transformative tales in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, focusing on the resulting availability of alternatives to masculine authority for Paulina and Hermione.

Jamie Aron, Alex Ward, and Sally White continue to pursue the undergraduate research experience they enjoyed in Oxford, branching out into other areas of research with their professors and mentors at Mississippi State.

Jamie Aron is a junior double majoring in Political Science and Mathematics. Her presentation derives from her recent course in Political Analysis. Her essay considers the impact that the differences regarding gender related ideologies within America's two party system has on the prevalence of female candidates within each political party and on the ability for these women to take office.

SHC OFFERS NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSE

As a part of the rigorous Cursus Honorum curriculum, the Shackouls Honors College strives to provide a variety of new interdisciplinary courses for students each year. These courses encourage students to engage in the discussion of specialized topics while also drawing connections to the larger fields of social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, fine arts, and the humanities.

This semester, a collaborative course taught by representatives from MSU's history and English departments is encouraging students to approach a subject that pervades many of these fields of study: the apocalypse.

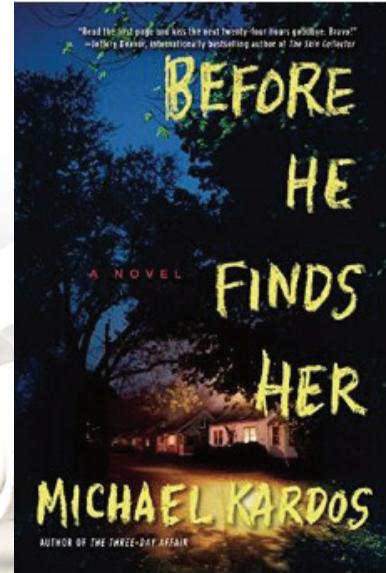
Dr. Michael Kardos, co-director of MSU's creative writing program, and Dr. Matthew Lavine, assistant history professor specializing in the history of science and American popular culture, have combined their research interests to engage students in discussion of their course "It's the End of the World as We Know It: Literature, History, and the End of Days."

Alex Ward is a junior double majoring in English and Philosophy with a concentration in Religion. He is also pursuing a Gender Studies minor. His essay stems from his recent introductory course on Ethics. His work will consider the application of Linda Zagzebski's moral theory of Exemplarism to existing objections to Divine Command Theory, offering an approach to divine "goodness" that does not discriminate among theistic belief systems and benefits theorists and laymen alike.

Sally White is a junior double majoring in Microbiology and Biological Sciences with a minor in English. Her work reflects her continued research with her mentor, Dr. Janet Donaldson. Her poster will examine the effects of bile salts and an acidic environment on *Listeria monocytogenes*, a bacterium that causes the food-borne disease listeriosis.

Following their presentations at NCUR, these students are continuing their individual studies and working on their senior theses as part of the Cursus Honorum program offered by the Honors College.

This course uses literature as a lens with which to understand people's changing perception of the end of the world throughout history and to determine what these accounts reveal about the people who produced them. Students are currently reading works from Jack London, H.G. Wells, and E.M. Forster as well as more contemporary authors such as Kevin Brockmeier and Michael Farris.



Kardos said the inspiration for the course stemmed from the rise of apocalyptic works

of literature in the 20th and 21st centuries and the prominence of doomsday themes in popular films and television. However, Lavine noted that human's obsession with

The End is more than just a modern media trend:

"We often tell students of history to think of the work we do as storytelling; well, eventually the story will have a last chapter, too. And this is something that virtually all human cultures have known, and thought about, and wrestled with. Even intellectual and mythological traditions that believed in an infinite and endless universe still tend to have humans appearing at a given point in time, with the implication that they can and will cease to be."

By facing the preoccupation with The End that seems to cross cultural and generational boundaries, Kardos and Lavine hope that students will learn more about the historical context that gave rise to changes in apocalyptic ideas, the literature that continues to explore and sensationalize it, and the merit of discussing a topic that helps to identify the role of the individual in the fate of greater humankind.

Lavine said, "Thinking about the End is not an inherently gloomy or depressing thing, as it turns out. But studying how a culture envisions its end is almost always an excellent insight into how they see themselves and their place in the greater scheme of things."

Kardos and Lavine report that students have responded well to the course and continue to generate interesting discussion. They also said that they would be willing to offer the course again at a future date, Honors College and the fate of humanity permitting.

PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY HOLD COURSES ON LEADERSHIP

Nandita Gupta reflects on her unique opportunity to be taught by MSU's president and first lady

“LEADERSHIP IS NOT ABOUT TITLES, POSITIONS OR FLOWCHARTS. IT IS ABOUT ONE LIFE INFLUENCING ANOTHER.” - JOHN C. MAXWELL

I began a new journey after coming to Mississippi State University to pursue my undergraduate studies. It has been a truly amazing journey so far and I am grateful for all the experiences that this university has offered me.

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In Fall 2013, I was selected by the Shackouls Honors College for a special leadership seminar course taught by the President, Dr. Mark Keenum. It was a great honor to be selected and we interacted with various leaders and experts in their respective fields: Gov. Tate Reeves, Rep. Alan Nunnelee, Former Lt. Governor Amy Tuck, Senator Roger Wicker, Mrs. Rhonda Keenum and many other prestigious leaders who shared their stories and experiences with us; this had a huge impact on my career goals and education. One may not experience everything, but one always has the opportunity to learn from other peoples' experiences.

One of the leaders we met was Amy Tuck, Former Lt. Governor and Vice President for campus services. Serving as the Vice President is not an easy job; one has to handle the operations of the entire University, from shuttle and parking operations to utility, repairs and administration. One not only needs to have a tough skin and take important decisions every day, but also handle different kinds of people in different environments. Amy Tuck's parting words to us were, "No matter who you are, and what you do, you never stop learning. We never really graduate." These words truly resonated with me and I have tried to embrace this advice in my life. As Dr Keenum puts it, "It's never going to be easy; you will have those sleepless and troubled nights. The only way you will learn is when you actually face those situations in life."

The spring of 2015 gave me the opportunity to interact with Mrs. Rhonda Keenum and other women leaders through her Women & Leadership seminar class. This class offered a novel direction, a diverse spin on leadership. We discussed feminism and gender equality along with the various situations faced by women in different fields. Megan Mullen met with the class during one session and she left us with valuable advice: "Go where you're wanted and don't sell yourself short. Some moments may seem insignificant but they lead to great opportunities." Every day has been an inspiring experience for me and I've learned something new from everyone I've met through these classes! Some challenges that I faced seemed insurmountable but all the advice and information that I absorbed in these classes has helped me resolve these challenges.

Leaders need to make decisions that are not popular but they have the courage to stand up for themselves and for what they believe in; they surround themselves with talented people. My long term goal is to work in the field of rehabilitation robotics; I want to see technology making a positive impact in the lives of people who may not be as fortunate as others. I don't know my exact trajectory and where life would take me, but I do know that I will try my best and work towards my dream. I will never give up on my vision and I will honor the support and faith that my parents, mentors, and loved ones have in me. Both these classes strengthened my character and empowered me with the tools to realize and implement my vision. I've learned to believe in myself and to stand up for my values and beliefs.

Success is not only measured by your achievements, but also by your impact in others' lives. I believe that it is very important to pass on important values and ideas to someone else, so that those ideas may benefit others and have long reaching consequences on society. One never stops learning and these leadership classes have helped me learn from others and share my ideas and vision with them. As Eleanor Roosevelt puts it, "The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience."





SHC WELCOMES NEW FACULTY FELLOWS

THE SHACKOULS HONORS COLLEGE IS PROUD TO WELCOME THREE NEW FACULTY FELLOWS TO THE HONORS COMMUNITY THIS YEAR: DR. KRISTIN BOYCE, DR. JONATHAN EDELMANN, AND DR. ERIC VIVIER.



Dr. Kristin Boyce is an assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion and she joins MSU most recently from John Hopkins. Her current research focuses on early analytic philosophy as well as the philosophy of art, specifically in the areas of literature and the

performing arts. She is currently working on a book project entitled *Why Wander into Fiction? Philosophy, Literature and the Condition of Modernism*.

Outside of the university, Dr. Boyce is an affiliate of several national organizations related to her research, including the American Society for Aesthetics, the American Philosophical Association, the American Comparative Literature

Association, and the prestigious Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. At MSU, she currently teaches a section of Logic as well as “The Quest Begins” with plans to teach “Quest II: The West and the Wider World” alongside an upper-level seminar entitled “Philosophy as a Way of Life?” in the fall.

Dr. Boyce said that one of the greatest benefits of having an appointment with the Honors College is the opportunity to work with students over the course of their undergraduate education as they discover and engage with “some of the richest and most rewarding books that have ever been written.”

She encourages all Honors students to take into consideration the value of the distinct *Cursus Honorum* curriculum: “It is hard to over-estimate the uniqueness and value of the opportunity that it presents. Not many institutions in the country make it possible to acquire at one and the same time a classical education and first-class training in a particular area of research specialization. Don’t let that opportunity get away from you without thinking about it very seriously.”



Dr. Jonathan Edelman is an assistant professor of religion in MSU's Department of Philosophy and Religion. His current research focuses on the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition, a leading 15th century Hindu tradition from North India that reconsiders the Hindu

scriptural tradition as a devotional doctrine that affirms the reality of the world, self and a personal God. His research also investigates the intersection of science and religion with a focus on Hinduism and biological theories.

He is currently involved in numerous organizations on and off campus that reflect the diversity of his research interests, including serving as the editor for the *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, an academic advisor for the Hindu American Foundation in Washington DC, and a club advisor for MSU's Bhakti Yoga Club and the Yoga and Meditation Club. In the

fall, Dr. Edelman hopes to further develop his own views on religious violence by teaching a new interdisciplinary course entitled "Just War or Just War: Political and Religious Philosophies on the Use of Violence."

Dr. Edelman said that some of the Honors College's greatest features are its commitment to providing a dynamic and friendly environment for discussion of scholarship and its distinctive curriculum that challenges students from a wide variety of disciplines to enrich their individual research with interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary courses.

He encourages parents and students at MSU to take advantage of the benefits of the Honors College:

"Your daughter or son has a wonderful opportunity here to gain a small, private college education within the context of a major state research university. In short, they can enjoy the best of both worlds without the exorbitant tuition fees. This facility would not be possible without external funding. I feel very grateful to the donors who have made this opportunity available to me and my students, and humbled by the opportunities they've provided."



Dr. Eric Vivier is an assistant professor of English, as well as a faculty affiliate in the Department of Gender Studies and he joins MSU from the University of Wisconsin. His current research centers on early modern English literature with particular

interest in the satire of the 1590s and early 1600s, which he argues functioned as both a vehicle for religious and cultural controversy as well as a subject of controversy amongst writers of that period. He is currently working on an article regarding Thomas Middleton's Calvinist satire and a book project on the enigmatic literary quarrel between Thomas Nashe and Gabriel Harvey.

This semester, Dr. Vivier teaches two sections of "Quest II: The West and the Wider World" with plans to teach "The Quest Begins" as well as a section of Honors British Literature Before 1800 in the fall. He also serves as the faculty director for MSU's creative arts journal, *The Streetcar*, the founder of the Honors College's Monthly Playreading Group, and a faculty advisor for the prestigious Society of Scholars.

Dr. Vivier said that what he enjoys most about his work with the Honors College is the curiosity and drive of the student body:

"They are willing to engage with big questions in the Quest classes even though these questions may not have concrete or satisfying answers. After our discussion of Rene Descartes's *Meditations* earlier this semester, I overheard one say to the other, 'Yeah, but how do I even know I exist? Does existence exist?' Honors students come to class excited to talk about what they have read, and they are willing to pursue ideas on their own outside of class."

HONORS COUNCIL

The Honors Council is a group of 18 students elected by their peers to serve as the student governing council for the Shackouls Honors College. Honors Council plans such events as Honors Convocation in the fall and Honors Week in the spring. Other events include trips, movie nights in the courtyard and in Griffis, trivia nights, and seasonal events such as capture the flag and pumpkin cuts.



Council members on a canoe trip in Spring 2015

HONORS STUDENTS WIN PRESTIGIOUS WRITING AWARD

This fall, honors students Kylie Dennis and Lien Van Geel were recognized for their tremendous achievements in individual research and composition in the prestigious 2014 Peyton Ward Williams Jr. Distinguished Writing award competition.

Overseen by a panel of English professors from Mississippi State University and funded by the Association of Retired Faculty, this award honors the memory and service of its namesake, Professor Emeritus of English, Dr. Peyton Williams. Each year, the award and the accompanying honors are presented to the student who submits the most exceptional paper in an upper-division English course.

Dennis was awarded the top prize for her essay “We are arrant knaves all. Believe none of us’: Power and the Construction of ‘Truth’ in Shakespeare’s Hamlet.” Incorporating Michel Foucault’s discussion of “regimes of truth,” Dennis examines the correlation between power and discursive “truth” in Shakespeare’s cast of master orators and failed wordsmiths.

Dennis is a junior English major from Florida pursuing a double minor in Psychology and Gender Studies. She was recognized for her award at the ARF Christmas Banquet. Copies of her essay are bound and catalogued in the Mitchell Memorial Library for public access.

Honorable Mention was awarded to Lien Van Geel for her essay “Shakespeare’s Own Metamorphosis: From Hermetic Revenge to Ovidian Alternatives



in *The Winter’s Tale*.” Surveying the restrictive treatment of women and female agency in the early works of Shakespeare, Van Geel examines the playwright’s departure from the “insular logic of hermetic revenge” in his late play *The Winter’s Tale*, foregrounding instead his acceptance of the value of forgiveness.

Originally from Tessengerlo, Belgium, Van Geel double majors in English and Classics in addition to her honors pursuits.

Both students recently participated in the Shackouls Honors College summer study abroad program in Oxford, England. They had the opportunity to visit the birthplace of Shakespeare and to supplement their undergraduate research with sources from the renowned Bodleian library. Van Geel will return to Oxford next semester. Both Dennis and Van Geel plan to present their work at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research in the spring.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



CAMERON CLARKE
PHYSICS
JACKSON, MS

The Shackouls Honors College is proud to recognize the tremendous achievements of senior Honors student, Cameron Clarke, over the course of his undergraduate career at Mississippi State. Clarke will graduate this semester with a degree in physics, a minor in mathematics, the Cursus Honorum certification, and an undergraduate Honors thesis in astronomy written under the direction of Dr. Angelle Tanner.

Originally from Jackson, MS, Clarke was accepted into MSU in his junior year of high school as a result of his high academic achievement. After demonstrating similar success in his freshman year, Clarke was invited to be a part of the Honors College’s rigorous summer study program at the University of Oxford in England where he had the opportunity to study Logic with the Oxford don, Dr. Edward Kanterian. He regards this trip abroad as well as his initial experiences with the Honors curriculum and faculty as highly influential in directing his academic path.

Clarke said about his current success, “None of this probably would have happened without those first few Honors classes in my major with Dr. Dunne and the early academic impact from my time spent in Oxford with Dr. Snyder and all the students and professors involved with that program.”

In addition to the guidance provided by the Honors College, Clarke received crucial mentorship from Dr. Jim Dunne, professor of Experimental Medium and High Energy Nuclear Physics at MSU and winner of the 2012 Grisham Master Teacher Award. Their relationship culminated in Clarke’s recent induction into the Society of Scholars, the highest honor available to undergraduates at MSU, at which Dr. Dunne presented Clarke’s introduction.

Outside of the classroom, Clarke’s presence in a number of campus organizations has also reflected

the diversity of his academic and creative interests. He is the current president of MSU's Astronomy club which regularly schedules public viewing nights and professional astronomer talks for the benefit of students and the community. Additionally, he is involved with the Reformed University Fellowship campus ministry where he serves as a member of their leadership team, the band's pianist, and a self-proclaimed "sometimes-sound technician."

He said about the coalescence of his academic and spiritual interests, "I feel passionately about the controversial intersection of science and religion, which has fueled much of my opinion writing and religious inquiry, as well as motivated my continued study in the most rigorous of the sciences."

Clarke explores his creative interests in his work with MSU's student newspaper, *The Reflector*, where he is the Opinion Section Editor as well as a regular contributor. He is also heavily involved with MSU's creative arts journal, *The Streetcar*, where he serves as the Nonfiction Editor for the journal's third issue.

Recently winning honorable mention in the Goldwater scholarship competition in his junior year, Clarke has and continues to enhance his education at MSU by pursuing prestigious scholarships and research opportunities. Last summer, Clarke took part in a ten week Summer Undergraduate Laboratory Internship from the U.S. Department of Energy which placed him in the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility (JLab), a nuclear physics laboratory.

Under the guidance of Dr. Valery Kubarovsky, Clarke had the opportunity to become familiar with a professional laboratory environment, attend research presentations and public lectures, and work with staff and other interns to develop a new detector for one of the lab's experimental halls.

Clarke said that his experience at JLab also incorporated a significant amount of hands-on research that reflected the topics of study in his current course work and better prepared him to enter the workforce.

"Myself and several others were able to contribute to the research group

we were affixed to by taking copious amounts of data on a large supply of new photomultiplier tubes, analyzing it for interesting characteristics, and using the standard analysis techniques and coding languages of the field to streamline these processes. The work I did was very typical for experimental nuclear physics and gave me a real taste for what the field has to offer later on."

This summer, Clarke will continue to work on JLab projects, learning methods of experimental nuclear physics and working on upcoming experiments in preparation for the lab's upgrade. Next year, Cameron will begin his graduate career at one of the many prestigious physics programs that have accepted him, including the College of William and Mary, Stony Brook University, Rutgers, and the University of Cambridge. His ultimate goal is to earn a Ph.D. in nuclear physics before becoming a researcher in his field of interest.

The faculty of the Shackouls Honors College congratulate Cameron Clarke on four years of academic excellence and are confident that his future will bring tremendous success and accolades that reflect well on the university and the Honors curriculum.



SARAH POPPELREITER POLITICAL SCIENCE, INTERNATIONAL STUDIES SALTILLO, MS

In the fall semester of 2014, Honors student Sarah Poppelreiter had the opportunity to travel to Berlin, Germany as part of a transformative international program for graduate and undergraduate students. A junior from Saltillo, MS and the daughter of Andy and Mechelle Poppelreiter, Sarah studies Political Science at MSU with a

concentration in international relations. She is also pursuing a triple minor in German, Spanish, and international studies.

Her experience this fall was a part of a semester-long internship for the U.S. Department of State in the Public Affairs Programs section of the U.S. embassy in Berlin. In addition to taking several online courses towards her degree, Poppelreiter's duties as an intern included assisting in coordinating high-profile events, public speaking, facilitating research for the embassy, and helping to develop a public diplomacy implementation plan for the goals and programs proposed by the embassy and consulates in Germany.

Poppelreiter's said that her research experience in Berlin was an ongoing endeavor that occurred both inside and outside of the embassy. As a part of her internship, she was asked to research several topics of interest to the U.S. government for use in embassy-hosted events. However, Poppelreiter also conducted research in a field of personal interest, global trafficking, particularly as policies and statistics related to global trafficking affect America, Germany, and some eastern European nations. Using the wealth of resources available to her, she was able to read numerous governmental reports while also speaking to local lawyers and specialists.

An already seasoned traveler after her study abroad in Bavaria, Germany in the summer of 2013 and her role as a student diplomat at the Envision Global Forum in China in the summer of 2014, Poppelreiter said that her internship last semester came with its own cultural experiences and impacts on her understanding of the United States.

"The entire experience proved to be worthwhile. I found things such as riding a bike through the city and taking an afternoon train to a palace to be the most interesting though because I was able to experience the little things about Germany that make it so distinct. However, I also learned how global American culture really is, and that it has such a large impact on the rest of the world."

Poppelreiter's travel was made possible by the combined efforts of Mississippi

State University and the Department of State. She also received financial support from the Shackouls Honors College which covered her travel funding and the cost of housing in Berlin. She said she was tremendously grateful for the advice and continued encouragement she received from the faculty of the Honors College, particularly Dr. Thomas Anderson, Dr. Christopher Snyder, and Dr. Seth Oppenheimer.

Back at MSU, Poppelreiter continues to expand the research she began in Berlin, using the experience as motivation for her future efforts in politics. She will also draw on the knowledge she gained during her internship in her position as a mentor for MSU's 2015 Women Empowered Leadership Conference (WE Lead) which aims to develop strong female leaders in high schools and communities in Mississippi and the surrounding region.

Poppelreiter said, "I believe this experience has better prepared me for and made me more competitive in my academic and future career. I will endeavor to perform my best and continue gaining international experience for my remaining time at MSU."

Poppelreiter has recently applied for the nationally competitive Boren Scholarship which helps to fund the intensive study of languages in countries critical to U.S. national security. If selected, Poppelreiter plans to travel to Shanghai, China to study Mandarin Chinese. After graduation, Poppelreiter plans to earn a law degree specializing in transnational crime and to pursue a career in combating human trafficking.

In the meantime, Poppelreiter encourages all students to take advantage of the opportunity to study and travel abroad.

"IF YOU'RE AFRAID OR WORRIED FOR WHATEVER REASONS, HAVE COURAGE. THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY, AND IT'S DEFINITELY WORTH THE RISK!"



JONATHAN PETERSON ECONOMICS JACKSON, MS

The Shackouls Honors College is proud to recognize four years of significant achievements for graduating senior Jonathan Peterson. Originally from Jackson, MS, Peterson studies Economics in the College of Arts & Sciences at MSU and will graduate with an Honors certification for his commitment to the rigorous Honors curriculum.

In the summer of 2013, Peterson received a scholarship to participate in the Shackouls Honors College Summer Study program at the University of Oxford in England. During his six weeks abroad, Peterson studied the intersection of political and economic theory with Oxford don, Tudor Jones. He regards this experience as a pivotal moment in his academic career that helped to ground his understanding of economic growth and introduce him to his projected area of research in graduate school.

In addition to the Honors College's financial support of this research opportunity, Peterson says that the diverse selection of Honors courses and the support of the Honors learning community have significantly enhanced his academic experience at MSU.

Peterson states of the distinctive curriculum, "It has helped to broaden my horizons in unexpected ways...By taking Honors courses not listed explicitly as a part of my curriculum [in Economics], I have been able to pull a variety of things into my discipline."

Peterson continued to pursue his academic interests last summer in his internship with MSU's Campus Planning department where he worked under the

university's architect and master planner. As an intern, Peterson says he received real world experience applicable to his future career and had the opportunity to observe the intricacies that go into expanding the campus to meet the university's future needs.

Outside of the classroom, Peterson has also been an active presence on campus. He is currently one of MSU's Alumni Delegates as well as the historian for the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. Previously, he held the position of President in MSU's Men of Excellence, an organization that provides community programs for the enhanced personal, professional, and social growth of African American, Hispanic, and minority males. Peterson was also an active former member of the Student Association and a mentor for the recently disbanded Project AIM, an initiative that paired troubled students in the Starkville Public School District with college students and local adults.

He has continued to capitalize on the lessons learned in his experience with community service by sharing his insight with students and professors from other universities in a series of local leadership conferences. These conferences include the State of Growth conference, the High Five Collective, and the Men of Color Summit where he represented MSU in a panel discussion.

In the fall, Peterson will continue his academic career at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he is the recipient of the prestigious Lasker Fellowship. In addition to waiving the full cost of tuition, this fellowship will provide him with a significant stipend, medical insurance, and a position as admissions coordinator for his department. It is one of the highest honors offered to incoming graduate students. With his concentration on economic development and real estate in his Master of City Planning degree, Peterson hopes to finally merge his research interests with his aptitude for community service.

He says of his future plans, "It is my hope to really learn a few things that could have a positive impact on the state of Mississippi in the long run."

— JUDY AND BOBBY —
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