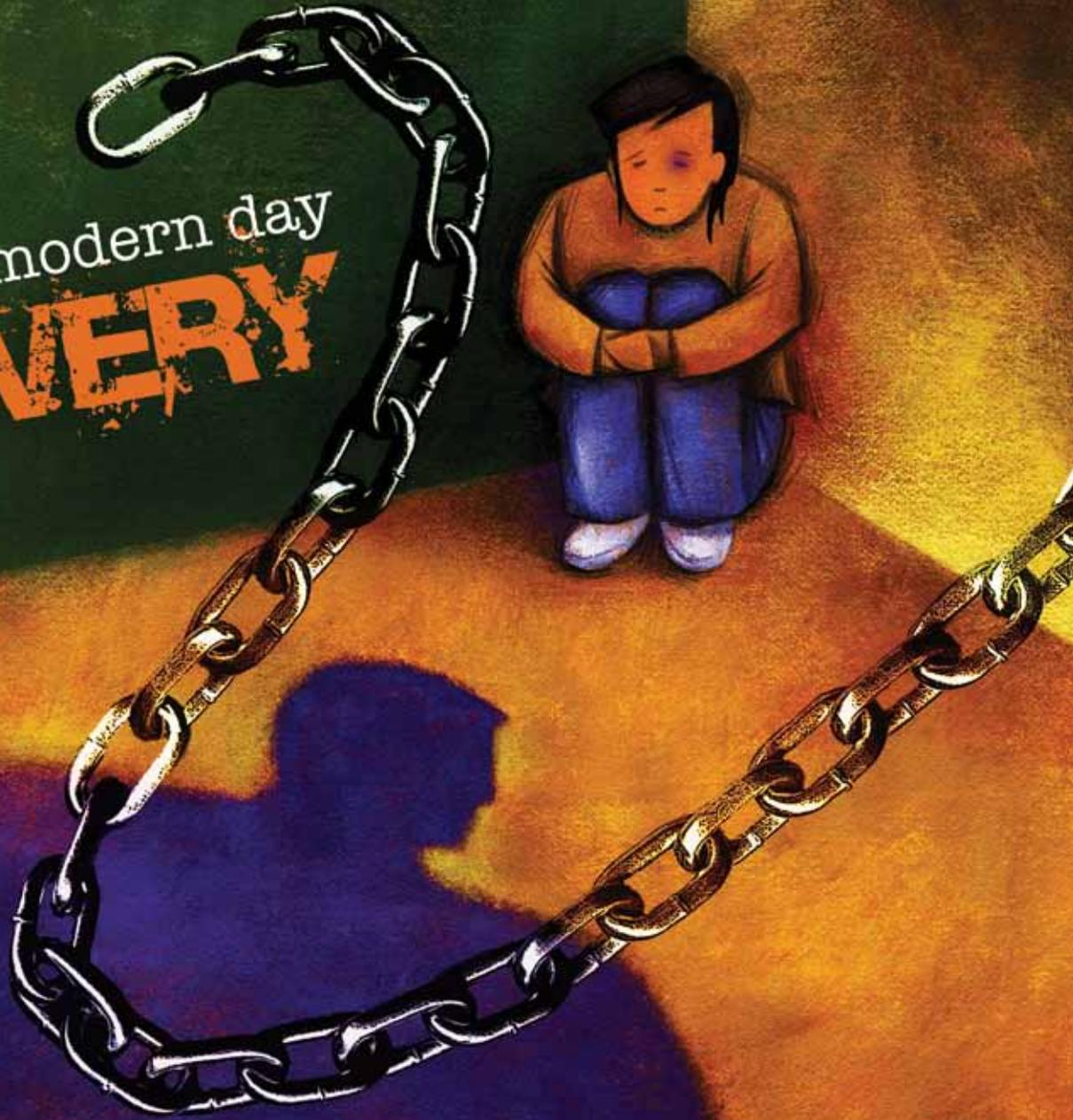


INSIGHTS

GEORGETOWN COLLEGE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

WINTER/SPRING 2011

exposing modern day
SLAVERY!



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GROUNDBREAKING NEWS ■ Tradition of Rucker Hall is remembered with construction of new Rucker Village



INSIGHTS

GEORGETOWN COLLEGE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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going further

with the
GC Honors Program

BY | REBEKAH TILLEY

The evening of the London premiere of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 1* was the kind of cold, wet November night only England can produce. After hours of waiting, Georgetown College junior Katie Rapier watched the procession of stars including Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Helena Bonham Carter. But the highlight of her soggy vigil was when J.K. Rowling walked up to her and signed the planner Rapier grabbed at the last second as she headed out the door that morning.

"It was a childhood dream come true. I couldn't believe it," said Rapier, a longtime Harry Potter enthusiast.

London is a long way from Rapier's home in Bardstown, but it was only a short train ride from her temporary home at Oxford University.

Rapier was spending the semester living her own version of the Hogwarts life at Oxford as part of the Georgetown College Honors Oxford Program.

This is just one of the places that the Georgetown College Honors Program is taking students. From nurturing freshmen to preparing students for the next step in their adult lives, the Honors Program takes the best of Georgetown's liberal arts curriculum and supportive community to create an intellectual and social experience that is second to none.

Freshman honors student Kurtis Mann took a close look and chose the

Georgetown College Honors Program over Harvard.

"Georgetown wants the best and they actually look at the people rather than just a score," the Shelbyville native said. "I like the small class sizes, and especially the interaction I had with professors my first semester. When I visited and saw the close-knit environment, those were all things I was looking for. I didn't just want to be a number."

Barbara Burch, professor and chair of both the Department of English and the Honors Program Committee, pushes the point further by noting

“You come to college to learn, and this is just a better way to learn.”

- Joel Federspiel, Honors Program senior

that the Honors Program is about cultivating students and not creating a cutthroat academic environment. "The Honors Program is a combination of the supportive atmosphere where honors classes aren't there to weed you out and figure out who the really smart kids are, but rather to nurture students and keep reminding them that they are capable," said Burch.

During his first semester at Georgetown, Mann took Honors English 112 with Burch and did additional work in his Calculus II class to create an honors increment. The honors increment consisted of Mann

and another honors student meeting with their calculus professor every Monday after class to work on 3-4 additional equations and talk through concepts in-depth. "It wasn't necessary to pass the class, but it really helped me understand a lot more," said Mann. "I was actually excited about doing it."

While the Honors Program at Georgetown has been in existence for many years, it was completely overhauled in 2001. The previous program did not begin until a student's junior year and focused heavily on a senior thesis. The revamped program is more inclusive, broader-based and starts from the moment students step on campus as freshmen.

"We didn't have anything that was challenging our best students at the time that they needed it

most, which is when they first come to college and they need to set the trend for what the rest of their college career is going to be like," said Rosemary Allen, provost and dean of Georgetown College, an instrumental part of the Honors Program overhaul.

One of the benefits of adding honors classes, increments and reading groups was that it fostered communities among honors students with nothing in common except being part of the Honors Program.

"The intellectual coterie is really important," said Burch. "Just like any school, there are tribes, and students

get drawn different ways socially, but their connections in the classroom tend to transcend all of that."

After freshman year, honors students can take one-hour honors classes called reading groups that include diverse topics such as "Christianity and Postmodernism," "Moral Psychology," and "Why is Sex Fun?" The class format allows students to experience the kind of academic depth rarely found outside of graduate school "... while not having to write a 25 page paper on Foucault," explained Allen.

It is during this phase that many honors students are applying to the Georgetown College Oxford Program. While any Georgetown College student can apply, only honors students qualify to receive the Honors Oxford Scholarship - a \$1,000 yearly stipend starting freshman year which makes them eligible for an additional Oxford International Studies Scholarship that covers all fees for study at Regent's Park College for up to a full class year.

Getting J.K. Rowling's autograph was merely the cherry on top of Katie Rapier's Oxford experience. There were some adjustments to becoming a student at Oxford: tea with her fellow students twice a day, biking two miles to campus which "scared my mother half to death" and class time reduced to a single one-hour weekly tutorial with a professor.

"It's a very independent learning process," Rapier described. "That one hour you have with the professors one-on-one is more than you could ever get in a week's worth of class with 30 other people."

A double major in philosophy and psychology, Rapier studied philosophy at Oxford and is planning to apply to graduate school to pursue a Ph.D. in Clinical Science. In addition to giving her confidence that she has the intellectual capability to tackle graduate school, Rapier said the Oxford experience assured her she is ready to step fully into adulthood.

"You grow up a lot going abroad," said Rapier. "And while it's not quite the real world, it lets you know you can handle it. When I graduate next year, I don't think it's going to be nearly as daunting."

The real world looms before senior Joel Federspiel. On the first day of his last semester at Georgetown, Federspiel made it a priority to meet with his honors thesis advisor to complete the final phase of the Honors Program before graduating in May.

While the word "thesis" can cause students to lose their intestinal fortitude, this chemistry/computational science major is approaching his project on organic synthesis with tremendous enthusiasm. For Federspiel, the appeal of the Honors Program was always the challenge.

"I'm not an English student, I'm a scientist," Federspiel confessed. "It's not my thing, but I can do the work. One time Dr. Burch had me come in for a paper conference and she reads through the whole thing and says, 'I like this paragraph. Start there.' Just the challenge of that, I really enjoyed."

The Oldham County native also enjoyed the close interaction with the professors in his major through honors increments, which include research projects that build on one another. His fed directly into the topic of his senior honors thesis.

Those relationships also contributed to Federspiel landing a coveted National Institutes of Health (NIH) summer internship in summer 2010, working in the lab of Georgetown College honorary alumnus William Douglas Figg, Sr.

"Having that relationship with a professor makes it so much easier to ask for a recommendation letter that can detail what you're capable of," said Federspiel, who is currently applying to pharmacology graduate programs. "They have a lot more insight after working with you than they would having you in class with 20 other



Oxford scholar Katie Rapier, center, enjoyed a visit from her sisters Joanna, 12, and Isabella, 8.



Kurtis Mann with Dr. Barbara Burch, Director of the Honors Program.

Honors Students:
We're looking for you!

If you are a high school senior who loves a challenge and wants a broad cultural experience, apply to the Georgetown College Honors Program. While it is preferable that you have an overall ACT score of 28 or higher, students who demonstrate strengths in individual areas will still be considered.

www.georgetowncollege.edu/honors/

people. They can say, 'I've worked with this person one-on-one and I've seen what kind of research they can do, and how they think.'"

In an academic world that is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, Honors Students at Georgetown College are

equipped with the best of a liberal arts education that covers the breadth and depth of social and scientific inquiry.

"They leave with a bigger sense of context," Burch said. "It's impossible to be invested in the Honors Program and only do your major and walk

away. Between the reading groups, interdisciplinary seminars, and hearing their fellow students present their research projects, they recognize that whatever one individual is working on is part of a network of scholarly inquiry."

Movin' On Up: Alumni of the first Honors 112 Class

WHERE WILL A GEORGETOWN COLLEGE DEGREE TAKE YOU?



1 Rachel Brewer
English/Art

- MA in History with an emphasis in Museum Studies, University of Missouri-St. Louis
- Copyholder at American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville

2 Mindy Beth Capaldi
Mathematics/History

- Studied at Oxford
- Ph.D. in Mathematics, North Carolina State University
- Professor of Mathematics, Valparaiso University

3 Katherine Raines Dale
Communication/Media Studies/English

- Fulbright Scholar to South Korea
- Completing M.A. in Communications, Georgetown University

4 Melinda Lauren Hall
English

- Studied at Oxford
- Fulbright Scholar to South Korea
- M.Th., Princeton Theological Seminary
- Lived and studied in Beirut, Lebanon

5 Christopher Joseph Hammons
Mathematics

- M.S. in Statistics, University of Kentucky
- Project manager, Discover Financial Services, Chicago, IL

6 Jarrod Andrew Lopez
Philosophy and Religion

- Attended Yale Divinity School
- Completing M.Div. at Baptist Seminary of Kentucky

7 Alicia Cornett Maynard
English

- Studied at Oxford
- Full-time mother of two; Charlotte, NC

8 Christian David Parsons
Art

- Starting his own graphic/web design company, Wahoo Graphics

9 Joshua Seth Rodgers
Political Science

- M.A., Patterson School of Diplomacy, University of Kentucky
- FBI analyst, Department of Justice, Washington D.C.

10 Christopher Randall Rohrbough
Biology

- M.D., University of West Virginia
- First-year family medicine resident, Madigan Army Medical Center, Tacoma, WA

11 Carolyn Marie Schnurr
Philosophy/English

- Studied at Oxford
- J.D., University of Maine
- Working for the Humane Society of the U.S. in Washington, D.C.

12 Coy Ray St. Clair III
Biology

- Completing M.S. in Biology, Murray State University
- Researching in ecology
- Won second place in ecology at Kentucky Academy of Science conference

13 Sandra Marshelle Woodward
English

- Studied at Oxford
- Completing Ph.D. in English at University of Wisconsin-Madison

NOT PICTURED

John David Combs
English

- Team Leader at Toyota Motor Manufacturing

Nichole Elizabeth Crawford
Mathematics

- Masters in Mathematics, University of Louisville
- Analyst at The Nielsen Company

Justin Brent Newsome
Biology

- M.D., University of Louisville
- Internship in Internal Medicine at Jewish Hospital in Cincinnati, OH
- Plans four-year Diagnostic Radiology residency, Monmouth Medical Center, NJ