



Honors Annual Report 2022-2023

EKU
HONORS

Ximena Patiño Enríquez:

Honors Student Leader and Gilman Scholar

EKU Honors Junior Nursing and Spanish major Ximena Patiño Enríquez had a remarkable academic year in 2022-2023. Ximena has been a leader on our campus throughout her three years at ECU—above all through many leadership roles in SGA. Her experiences and achievements over the past year epitomize the very best of the ECU Honors experience.

In summer 2022, Ximena received a nationally competitive Benjamin Gilman Scholar award, which she used to spend six weeks in the ARCOS home-stay language immersion study abroad program in Granada, Spain.

Back at ECU for fall semester, Ximena joined honors senior Cruz Cardona to represent ECU Honors with a panel presentation at the National Society for Minorities in Honors (NSMIH) on the vital roles of organizations like ECU's Bobby Verdugo and Yoli Ríos Bilingual Peer Mentor and Tutoring Center ("El Centro") in attracting and retaining Latinx students. Ximena also teamed with Cruz as well as Dr. Abbey Poffenberger and Dr. José Juan Gómez Becerra for a panel presentation at the annual meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council in Dallas, TX.

Ximena hardly slowed down in the spring semester, as she presented her honors thesis research at the April 2023 annual meeting of the Southern Regional Honors Council in Charlotte, NC.



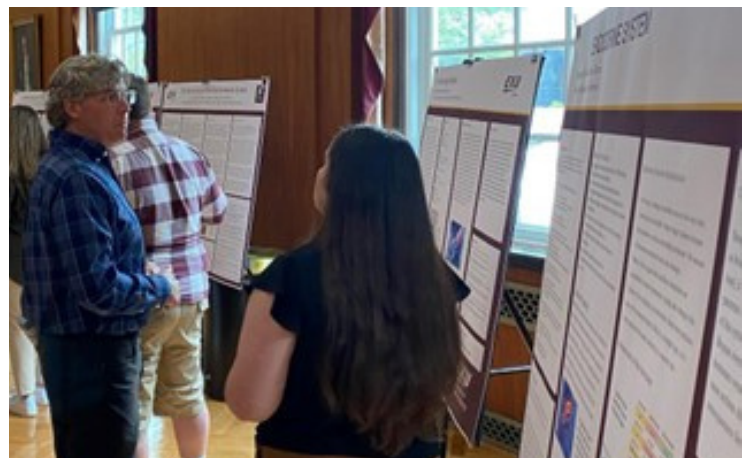
Honors Launch Welcomes New Incoming Honors Students

In August 2022, ECU Honors held its first-ever "Honors Launch" welcome camp for our incoming new first-year honors students. Led by nine current ECU Honors sophomore, junior, and senior "Peer Mentors," ninety of our new honors students enjoyed three days of leadership development and community building activities. Joining us for the Honors Launch closing banquet were ten of our fabulous ECU Honors alumni from every era of the program's thirty-five year history. Our first-year students raved all year about how effective and important Honors Launch was to them in terms of providing connection and scholarly community right from the start of their time at ECU, and several of them will be serving as Honors Launch Peer Mentors this coming August as we welcome our incoming fall 2023 new honors students.



Honors Celebration Day Caps First-Year Honors Experience

In April, ECU Honors hosted its inaugural "Honors Celebration Day" in the Keen Johnson Building. Celebration Day functions as the culmination of our "First-Year Experience." Students from all of our HON 104 "Learning Community" courses shared with the whole ECU Honors and broader campus communities the results of their research and creative projects via posters, oral presentations, and/or tabling events. For the HON 104 Creative Arts Learning Community and their interdisciplinary arts seminar titled "Death and Life," Celebration Day involved an evening final show in Gifford Theatre at which students presented their final projects, ranging from paintings to dramatic performances to poetry and dance and much more. Joining our first-year students as presenters at Celebration Day were a selection of ten of our very best research poster presenters from this year's National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) and Southern Regional Honors Council (SRHC) annual meetings. Honors Celebration Day showcases for our entire community some of ECU's very best exemplars of academic achievement and high-quality undergraduate research and creative arts.



By The Numbers

365

TOTAL NUMBER OF
HONORS STUDENTS
EXPECTED
FALL 2023

1100+

STUDENT
PRESENTERS AT
NCHC SINCE 1990
(LEADS NATION)

18

EKU WINNERS OF
BENJAMIN GILMAN
SCHOLARSHIPS
SINCE 2015

18%

OF EKU HONORS PROGRAM STUDENTS ARE
FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

52

EKU HONORS STUDENTS MADE RESEARCH
PRESENTATIONS AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND
STATE CONFERENCES IN 2022-2023

\$2.1 MILLION+

EKU HONORS ENDOWMENT FUNDS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT
STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS, TRAVEL, AND RESEARCH

Honors Cultural Trip 2023: New Orleans

In the week before spring semester 2023 started in January, ECU Honors' annual Cultural Trip took 32 students to New Orleans for four days of learning, fun, and adventure. The itinerary included a steamboat tour ride to the Battle of New Orleans National Historic Site, an evening of jazz at the Ellis Marsalis Music Center in the Upper Ninth Ward, a group tour of the Historic New Orleans Collection Museum in the French Quarter, a streetcar tour of the Garden District, a visit to the National World War Two Museum, and a Creole supper with Zydeco music and dancing.

ECU Honors' annual January study/travel programs are made possible and affordable each year by the Bonnie Gray Society Endowment—a cooperative endowed fund established by ECU Honors alumni in honors of our founding director Dr. Bonnie Gray.



The Eastern Honors Association (EHA) and Winter Ball 2023



The students of ECU Honors worked diligently this year to revise, update, and modernize our honors student governing organization.

The result of their labors was the Eastern Honors Association, or EHA.

Organized around large committees for which any honors student may volunteer, EHA has broadened participation in honors social and service events among students across our program.

EHA's first big event was the ECU Honors Winter Ball in February. More than 150 students attended and danced into the wee hours of a memorable Friday night.



A Tradition of National Leadership in Honors Education: Honors Conferences

For more than three decades, the generosity of our donors has made it possible for ECU Honors to remain a national leader in sending students to make research presentations at honors conferences across the nation. Since 1990, more than 1100 students from our program have presented at the annual meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC)—a total that far surpasses that of any other honors college or program in the United States. Because of our endowment resources, we have long been able to send students on these transformative conference travel experiences at little or no cost to them.



This year, 52 students from ECU made presentations at such conferences, including the November 2022 NCHC in Dallas, Texas, the March 2022 annual meeting of the Southern Regional Honors Council (SRHC) in Charlotte, North Carolina, and our fall and spring biannual statewide Kentucky Honors Roundtable (KHR) meetings.



Study Abroad

Honors and Study Abroad

With the pandemic finally receding over the past year, the world has opened back up for Study Abroad, and our students have been there to make the most of these opportunities. Thirty-one students from ECU Honors studied abroad in the past twelve months—fourteen of them with the support of Trailblazer Study Abroad grants from ECU Honors. We are very rapidly getting back to the circumstances to which we were accustomed pre-pandemic, when about half of all students in ECU Honors studied abroad at some point in their time with us.

31

EKU HONORS
STUDENTS STUDIED
ABROAD IN 2022-
2023

9

DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES VISITED



Cassidy Cain's

Summer of Learning and Adventure

Rising ECU Honors senior Cassidy Cain had an amazing summer learning odyssey last year. It began with five weeks in the KIIS-Italy study abroad program headed by ECU Honors Associate Director Dr. Erik Liddell. Very soon after her return from Italy, Cassidy took a flight to Alaska to take part in the weeklong National Collegiate Honors Council's (NCHC) "Partners in the Parks" program at Sitka National Historic Site. Together with her fellow Partners in the Parks students from across the nation, Cassidy then made a presentation at NCHC in Dallas last November about their learning experience in Alaska.



Fostering and Recognizing Academic Excellence Across ECU's Colleges

Students from ECU Honors are leaders in classrooms, laboratories, studios, and student organizations across the ECU campus. At the annual campus-wide Scholars' Day ceremony in April, ECU Honors seniors from four of ECU's six colleges were recognized with Dean's Award's or Outstanding Senior Awards in their college, as picture here: McKenna Moore (College of Education and Applied Human Sciences), Lizzy Carter (College of Health Sciences), Sophie Owen (College of Justice and Safety), and Andrew Elliott (College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). More than a dozen of our ECU Honors seniors received recognition this spring as top graduate in their departments and/or degree programs.



Building Opportunity

Give to ECU Honors

You can directly support students in ECU Honors by giving to the Bonnie Gray Society Endowment. Established by alumni at the time of founding director Dr. Bonnie Gray's retirement in 2008, this endowment provides a permanent source of financial assistance for students who attend our Cultural Trips and/or "Sidewalk U." study away programs each year. These trips take students on learning adventures to locales across America and even into Canada and Mexico. Lives are changed and horizons broadened by these cultural odysseys, and the Bonnie Gray Society Endowment helps make them possible each year.

► Visit go.eku.edu/give-Honors to make a gift to the Bonnie Gray Society Endowment.





EKU HONORS PROGRAM

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