

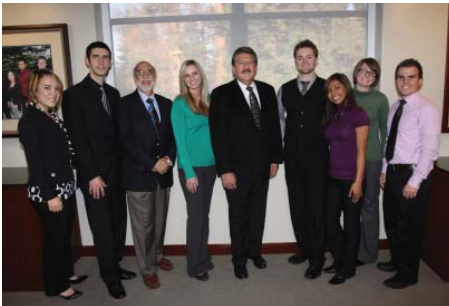


Spring 2010

Celebrating the First Cohort

When the first 30 or so graduates from Sacramento State's fledgling Honors Program receive their diplomas in late spring, there will be plenty of proud people at the ceremony. But none more so than a trio of leaders without whose guidance this moment might never have happened.

George Craft, professor emeritus of history, tried to create such a program three decades ago, but his efforts were swept aside by the cross currents of campus constituencies.



Whitney Clark, Vladimir Petrosyan, Roberto Pomo, Kimmie Montgomery, President Gonzalez, Aaron Dukovich, Rosie Duaz, Campbell Ellis, and John Arndt

But Craft persevered and in 2006 persuaded Roberto Pomo, who was preparing for a sabbatical after a particularly tough year directing the Theater and Dance department and overseeing the nascent school of arts, to apply for director of the embryonic Honors Program.

Rather than take the time off to work on several long-deferred projects, Pomo, after being selected as director, committed himself to creating and nurturing a special program that would challenge students to excel. That meant crafting a demanding curriculum, recruiting a cadre of dynamic classroom instructors to teach the intensive courses and raising the funds for student scholarships.

Which brings us to the unstinting support of President Alexander Gonzalez, without which the program might have foundered. From the first student cohort to the current class, he has provided whatever funds are needed to ensure that each beginning student receives a \$500 stipend. Moreover, the president believes the program dovetails with his Destination 2010 campaign to transform Sacramento State into a more welcoming, dynamic, and community supported campus.

Honors is a linchpin of what kind of a campus we want to be, he says. "Dr. Pomo and the Honors Program have been very successful in attracting outstanding students to the university. The program brings immeasurable value to our academic program and to the students who participate."



Director Pomo readily agrees. Despite the many demands of sustaining and strengthening the Honors Program, he says that it has

been the "best professional experience of [his] life." He hastens to add that were it not for the president's abiding commitment to the program, "we wouldn't be here."

As the youngest of 18 honors programs in the California State University system, Sacramento State's has the smallest endowment. But the peripatetic, perpetually optimistic Pomo is determined to put it on a secure financial footing.

Founding Father

Achieving that goal will be especially difficult given California's chronic budget crises that have strained higher education to the breaking point. But the generosity of those who support academic excellence has been a Godsend.



The philanthropic Stremple, Ose, Ermet, Rao, Sokolov and Guardino families have helped provide the program with a firm foundation.

Pomo plans to amass a million-dollar endowment before he retires that will enable the program to sustain itself on the accrued interest.

Meantime the director is particularly gratified for the support he has received thus far from the administration and the faculty he has selected to challenge the



Honors students. He's no less appreciative of the program's advisory board, which is looking for creative ways to help put Honors on a stable financial footing.

The board understands how tenuous state funding is, and

will be for the near term, and is thereby committed to finding the resources needed to secure the program's future.

The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.

--F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Crack-Up" (1936)
US novelist (1896 - 1940)

Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire.

--W. B. Yeats

George Craft has a Mr. Chips countenance that can be deceptive. The esteemed emeritus professor of history at Sacramento State isn't one to shrink from challenging the status quo on campus when it comes to academics.

Craft was determined to resurrect the university's Honors Program that became a casualty of the nationwide campus unrest that was endemic throughout the late 1960s. Branded by some as elitist, honors remained dormant until 2000, when the administration seemed supportive. But a curricular committee torpedoed the idea.



Undaunted, Craft and several colleagues kept plugging for the program's revival. They began to gain traction soon after the inauguration of President Alexander Gonzalez in 2003.

The next year Craft headed a committee to recreate an honors program. He credits Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education Greg Wheeler for the program's rebirth. "But it would have never happened without the president's blessing," Craft says, who kept the critics at bay.

Craft served as acting director for two years, setting academic parameters, negotiating with campus departments and finally, casting about for someone to run the program.

Roberto Pomo emerged as the most qualified of the several applicants. Craft, who has taught at Sacramento State for nearly four decades, is justifiably proud of the director's commitment to the program, particularly to the students. "Roberto has given so much of his time and energy to making honors among the best programs in the CSU system."

Craft's sentiments are commonplace among those closely connected with the Honors Program.

Wordsmith in Waiting

The toughest adjustment Jesus Lopez had to make as a first year Honors student was speaking out in class. That and persuading his skeptical mother the following fall that he would rather become a writer than a kinesiologist.

As a fourth-year student, the contemplative young man is comfortable majoring in English. He prefers reflection and writing, but speaking before a group is not quite so daunting for him. Jesus has presented a research paper for the past three years during the annual California State University Honors Consortium. "I didn't mind speaking then," he says, "because my paper provided a guide."



There were a couple of forks in his road to Sacramento State. Having just missed a full scholarship at the University of California, Berkeley, Jesus was on track to attend UC Davis. Then came an

invitation from the Honors Program.

Earning advanced placement credits at his high school in Salinas was one thing. Making the academic transition to Sacramento State's selective program was quite another, particularly for a student who prefers to remain in the shadows.

But it wasn't long before his professors began to discover that their reticent student's written expression had plenty to say. Like most talented writers, he is a keen observer. Look beyond his quiet demeanor and one discovers a perceptive, sensitive person who is interested in public service.

In fact his public service project, a requirement for all Honors students, is working with a woman's group to assist, among others, the victims of domestic violence. He wants to help make a difference in the lives of the dispossessed and disadvantaged.

As the youngest son of parents who have worked very hard all their lives, Jesus understands how fortunate he is to be earning a college degree. And how proud he is to be a part of the first cohort of Sacramento State's Honors Program.

Faculty Profile

Professor Elizabeth Ebrahimzadeh defies students' expectations.

At first blush they may be tempted to dismiss the diminutive, well-dressed math instructor as a bright woman whose field of study is destined to put them to sleep. But that facile perception fades as soon as she steps into the classroom.



"My stage experience," she says, "helps me to connect with young men and women who might otherwise assume that the study of mathematics is dull." To the contrary, her thought-provoking classes have resonated with all manner of students during her 24 years at Sacramento State.

Little wonder, Director Pomo has made this dynamic professor a mainstay of his program.

Ms. Ebrahimzadeh's contagious enthusiasm for mathematics and her students has been enhanced by teaching an Honors course since the program's inception. She enjoys Honors students who are motivated to excel, adding that their sophistication and drive make them a joy to teach.

She cites the reasoning skills her Honors students demonstrated in a written assignment about the federal bailout of the financial institutions. They researched conservative and liberal sources alike. Their papers predicted the socio/economic position they expected to occupy 10 years hence.

This semester's Honors class will calculate the cost and prospective benefits of the competing health-care proposals. As such, she says, they will come to appreciate where their taxes are apportioned.

Professor Ebrahimzadeh has stayed at Sacramento State basically because of her students, many of whom are working to pay for their education. Her Honors students will stipulate they are getting their money's worth.

Rosie from Roseville

Rosemarie Duaz is determined to become a nurse practitioner notwithstanding the several obstacles in her path.

For starters, she must maintain a potent grade-point-average and then ace the standardized exam to get into Sacramento State's impacted nursing program. Once she earns a bachelor of science degree it's on to graduate school.



But the personable Rosie, as she prefers to be called, seems up to the challenge. The second-year Honors student brims with enthusiasm and a ready smile that suggests she would be an excellent nurse.

That enthusiasm is what prompted Professor Pomo to recruit Rosie for the Honors Program during first year orientation two years ago. He realized that her strong academic record and solid work ethic made this young lady a perfect fit.

He was right. Not only has Rosie made her grades and many friends, she is a peer mentor for First Year Seminar students. She also works part-time at a Roseville mall and commutes daily to campus.

Rosie's mother, a graduate of the University of the Philippines, is a dietician at Mercy Hospital. Her father owns a landscape business. Both emigrated to this country from the Philippines three decades ago. Her younger brother attends Sierra College.

She readily concedes that the Honors Program was tougher than she expected. But the bond that developed among her freshman cohort helped her through the rougher patches. Now she finds herself lending a helping hand to others.

Reaching out to others comes naturally to her. Whether it be in the Honors lounge, where classmates congregate, or cheering on the program's flag football team, Rosie is quick with a word of encouragement or consolation. As such she's the kind of person one can count on to be there. This determined student is destined to be a caring, compassionate caregiver.

Advisory Board Member

Margie Campbell and her husband Bill are best known at Sacramento State for their generous support of the university's successful men's and women's tennis programs, which Bill directs.

Margie is an accomplished player on the amateur circuit, and she has played competitively for several decades. The Campbells also own Spare Time, Inc., which features 10 family oriented racquet clubs in Greater Sacramento.



Her range of interests extend well beyond the courts. She's a voracious reader, takes flute lessons and travels extensively. And she spent a week last summer just outside of Biloxi, Mississippi, building houses with a group of AmeriCorps volunteers under the auspices

of Habitat for Humanity

"We lived in a deserted Singer Sewing Machine factory," she says, "and it was one of the best things I've ever done in my life."

Being able to help folks in a coastal area devastated by Hurricane Katrina convinced her of the value of public service. It also prompted her to wonder if some Honors students might consider spending their spring break helping and getting to know something of others in need.

Margie believes in taking chances. She could have attended UC Berkeley but chose UCLA instead because it was farther away from her hometown. An art history major, she thrived in the sprawling city's cultural centers.

Several years ago she spearheaded Art After Noon, a program of lectures by Sacramento State professors that brought people to campus and organized visits to museums and private collections.

Margie wants Honors students to become "citizens of the world." They couldn't have a better example than this cultivated woman.

Another Generous Benefactor

Robert “Bob” Guardino was born in San Jose, California, May 25, 1941. He typified the third generation of those Italian immigrant farming families who came to this country during the early 1900’s and established themselves in the San Francisco Bay Area’s rural community.

After learning, working, and growing up on the family’s apricot orchards in the San Jose region, Bob



moved his wife, Valerie, and their two children, Michael and Gregory, to California’s lush central valley in 1966.

He created Guardino Ranches, which in turn prompted the family business to grow throughout the region. Soon, that burgeoning business consisted of hundreds of acres of apricot and cherry orchards,

and grape vineyards spread throughout the valley.

Bob’s passion for cherries was manifest in his expertise on growing techniques, innovative tree pruning methods, and harvest timing, all of which was sought by growers throughout the central valley. As a result of his work, thousands of acres of cherry trees proliferated and produced fruit at historic levels. This became part of his proud legacy.

Bob’s love for his family, his tireless work ethic, and drive for success sustained him through the many successes and failures of farming. Working the land, however, became a pivotal part of his life. It taught him an appreciation for the land, its history, its health, its fragility. It sparked his fascination and admiration for geology, wildlife and the simple beauty of nature.

While Bob put a lot into the land he farmed, it gave back so much more. Which helps explain why this generous man has established a scholarship fund for Honors students, many of whom are looking to make a difference and give something back to their community.

Swedish Spring Sojourn

Kirsten Johnson is very excited to be studying abroad this semester in Sweden. The fourth-year Honors student is taking courses at Goteborg University with a view toward burnishing her coordinated major in International Business and Marketing.

Prior to making her trip to Sweden, she completed 21 units at Sacramento State and worked as an intern with the Data Systems Group. The internship, which began the previous summer, gave her hands-on experience



in marketing. She worked with a software program that streamlined hospital billing. She also completed her public service project at Grant High School, where she helped students in a food processing center to hone their marketing

skills.

Kirsten came to Sacramento State because of the personal touch that pervades the Honors Program. She still recalls how Professor George Craft took her to lunch and explained the program. And how Director Pomo punctuated the welcoming atmosphere and made her feel at home.

That and the close relationship she developed with other Honors students provided her with a support system that has sustained and strengthened her at Sacramento State the last three years.

The personable young woman initially planned to be an anthropologist. But she segued to business her sophomore year, and the deal was sealed the following summer, when she encountered several employees from a company about to go international. This piqued her interest in marketing, whereupon she began to focus on a business career.

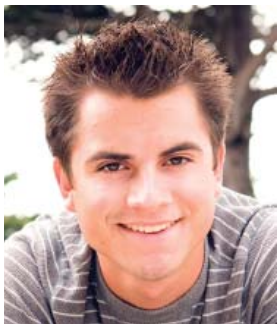
Kirsten’s Honors experience has fueled her determination. She recalls how Professor Ebrahimzadeh’s math class motivated her to take a challenging calculus course.

The 21-year-old typifies the talented members of this marvelous program.

Up in the Air.....

Kyle Decoque's initial plan was to go to medical school and become a doctor.

The Roseville resident had done well in science classes at Woodcreek High and boasted a high-octane grade-point-average to vouchsafe him into Sacramento State's Honors Program. But he found the sight of blood--his own, resulting from a baseball injury--to be unsettling. So, he decided instead to major in business and finance.



This self-effacing young man should do well in whatever career he pursues. His 3.92 grade-point-average thus far suggests that focusing on academics is his strong suit. He carried 15 units during the fall semester and is on track to graduate in four years. He's

completing the spring semester at Sweden's Goteborg University.

Kyle concedes being a tad nervous about the journey to a much colder clime. Having never been outside of California, he's looking forward to encountering another culture. But he allows that it will take some adjustment.

Kyle's adjustment to college, however, has been relatively easy for two reasons. To begin with, Sacramento State was his first choice. And the Honors Program's welcoming environment made the transition that much smoother. He believes the program helps condition students for the academic rigors they confront in classes that are far more demanding than they have experienced.

Like most of his classmates, Kyle works part-time to help pay his way through school. He's a facility manager at a Roseville sports complex for some 20 hours per week. He also works summers, producing graphics for race car decals for his uncle who owns a racing team that competes along the west coast.

Kyle eventually plans to get an MBA, preferably paid for by a firm that will see him as a sound investment. He certainly is.

....to Goteborg University

When Whitney Clark boards the plane headed for Goteborg University, her seat mate could well be her classmate, Kyle. Both are spending the spring semester in a land far removed from the home state they've never left.

Whitney should have no problem making the adjustment to another country. The self-confident young woman is used to language differences. Her Japanese-American ancestry allows her to converse with them. She's also studied Taekwondo, which bolsters her self-esteem.



Born and raised in Sacramento, Whitney graduated from John Kennedy High School, where she was part of an accelerated academic program. Her father has a graduate degree and specializes in health services. Her mother completed community

college and is a massage therapist.

Whitney's major is public relations with a minor in music. She is a self-taught guitar player who also worked 20 hours per week last fall as a campus computer counselor. The busy young lady interned for Ditto Digital Media as well

Whitney intends to get her degree in four years and then consider her options. They include graduate school at either the University of Southern California or the University of Pacific. She's also interested in joining the Peace Corps.

Growing up has been the biggest challenge for her at Sacramento State. But she hastens to add that the Honors Program has been especially helpful in providing the structure and support needed to help her and her classmates succeed.

Whitney's youthful dream of attending New York University dissipated in the glare of comparative costs. She's very content to be in Sacramento, however, because of its sense of community. And she would like to see Sacramento State become even more connected to the community.

From the Director's Desk

As the Honors Program approaches its first graduation ceremony on May 20, at 5 p.m., in the Sacramento State Alumni Center, it seems only a few months ago when the program began in the fall of 2006.

That September our fledgling program was housed on the second floor of Foley Hall, adjacent to the activities of campus housing, yet detached from campus life. Today, we are positioned on the fourth floor of the Academic Information Resources Center, at the hub of the campus, the University Library and the Student Union, where our students enjoy a busy academic and social life as they pursue their individual majors.

We have accomplished much during these past four years. This includes raising \$548,000 in external scholarship funding, hosting the two-day Sixth Annual California State University Honors Consortium Student Conference, and strengthening the program's curricular structure.

But none of this would have been possible without the commitment of those faculty and staff members who, for approximately two years, spent countless hours creating the General Education Honors curriculum.

Under the guidance of Professor Emeritus of History, Dr. George Craft, the following individuals are the architects of our lower-division curricular foundation: Professors Margaret Cleek, Organizational Behavior; Jackie Donath, Humanities and Religious Studies; Elizabeth Ebrahimzadeh, Mathematic and Statistics; Tom Griffith, Student Affairs; Andrew Hertzoff, Government; Sue Holl, Mechanical Engineering; Beth Merritt-Miller, Academic Advising; Matthew McCormick, Philosophy; Lee Simpson, History; Cindy Sturtz-Sreetharan, Anthropology and Doraiswamy Ramachandran, Mathematic and Statistics.

The faculty who established the Honors upper-division curricula are: Professor Emeritus of History, Richard Kornweibel; Dr. Vanessa Arnaud, Honors Program and Foreign Languages; Professors Ruth Ballard, Biological Sciences; Joan Neide, Kinesiology and Dr. Craft.

The central administration has been supportive, particularly Dr. Gregory Wheeler, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, who is always willing to offer wisdom and insight as the Honors Program matures. These people are at the core of our vibrant academic program whose mission is to serve the rich and dynamic multicultural reality that is Sacramento State.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the Honors students and Honors faculty who remain a source of personal and intellectual inspiration.

Roberto Pomo

Spring Schedule

Honors 3 Seminar: Great Books and Ideas in History:
From the Renaissance to the Present
Communication 4H: Introduction to Public Speaking
Government 1H: Essentials of Government
Ethnic Studies 11H: Introduction to Ethnic Studies
History 51H: World Civilization-100 to the Present
Teacher Education 10H: Critical Thinking and the
Educated Person
Honors 101: Science and the Public Good

Scholarships

President's Honors Scholarship
Edward D. Ermet Scholarship
Rao Family Scholarship
Stremple Math/Science Scholarship
Ose Family Scholarship
Robert S. Guardino Scholarship

Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.

--G. K. Chesterson

Connecting with the Community

When Vanessa Arnaud was a graduate student at UCLA, she was selected as the top teaching assistant among 1,500 contestants. Little wonder why this dynamic professor is a stalwart in Sacramento State's Honors Program.

Vanessa has helped establish the program's International Leadership Forum that draws specialists to the campus to lecture on global issues. She also ensures that students complete their public service component.



Take this year's project at the E. M. Hart Senior Center in midtown. Honor's I students spent hours at the center listening to the life stories of residents. The one-on-one encounters allowed students to interview seniors and then create a poster board display

of photographs to illustrate those stories.

The end result was presented to the seniors, who were grateful for the opportunity to relate their experiences.

It also underscored the lifelong learning theme that Vanessa stresses in her classes.

Her objective is to help students make the connection between the philosophical constructs they are discussing in the classroom and specific problems in the community. To achieve that, she challenges their assumptions.

Vanessa has her students connected with the Central for Multicultural Cooperation, Grant High School, Center for California Studies, Discovery High School, the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra and Women's Empowerment.

Their capstone project in Honors 103 consists of 30 hours of public service, a community-based research paper, and the creation of a documentary film feature for presentation at the International Forum. Several of her students are working on independent projects, including one involving the Elk Grove Police Department.

Suffice it to say that students performing public service is an integral part of Sacramento State's Honors Program.

Please support our students

All tax-deductable donations by cash, check, credit card, bequest or any other means will be gratefully accepted and put to good use by our Honors Program for scholarships and other financial aid for students. You may reach us via phone, email or standard mail. Rest assured that your contribution will be handled with care and confidentiality. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Sacramento State Honors Program
6001 J. Street
ARC 4002
Sacramento, CA 95819-6135
(916) 278-2804
www.csus.edu/honorsprogram



SACRAMENTO
STATE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (home) _____

(cell) _____

Email: _____