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LETTER FROM THE Executive Director

Welcome to the second issue of the Binghamton University Scholars Magazine. This issue has been created from start to finish by our undergraduate Scholars, and I could not be more proud of them. The intent of the Scholars Magazine is to inform the Binghamton University campus and beyond about our incredible Scholars, what they have to offer, and what they are accomplishing while at Binghamton University.

The Scholars Program has undergone many changes since I became executive director just a few short years ago. Without losing sight of the great vision of the Program’s former directors, our vision now is to gather the best and brightest students on the planet, provide them with a cohesive living/learning community of their peers, provide them with extraordinary opportunities to pursue their academic, personal, and professional goals, and to share their talents with the greater community. In the spirit of opportunity and community, all freshmen Scholars now live in the Scholars Learning Community in the Newing College residential community with options to remain together for all four years. For the 2014-15 academic year we will have 175 Scholars living in the Scholars Learning Community.

As has always been a hallmark of the Scholars Program, our instructors are the best of the best, and our Scholars students are fortunate to have their dedication to the Program. We have incredible support from University President Harvey Stenger, Provost Don Nieman, Vice-Provost Don Loewen, our vice-presidents, deans, and many others. We have an incredible mentoring program consisting of top administrators, faculty, and others, including our sophomore, junior, and senior Scholars. Our Scholars Advisory Board consists of distinguished faculty, administrators, and Scholars students, and this team does an outstanding job of providing guidance to the Scholars Program. The Scholars Council consists of student leaders who offer an insightful student perspective to the Program, as well as a host of social and professional activities for all of our Scholars.

Our Scholars earned an incredible number of accomplishments this past year including first place in the Federal Aviation Administration design competition, twelve Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society inductees, President’s Awards, a Chancellor’s Award, national presentations, two Harpur Fellows, and numerous scholarships. Within the pages of this issue of the Scholars Magazine, you can read more about our Scholars accomplishments and our program. In particular, you will get a glimpse of the world-class students we have right here at Binghamton University, including their participation in undergraduate research, international experiences, various clubs, field trips, and community engagement activities.

Each of our Scholars contributes to the Scholars family in his or her own way, and I have never been more proud of them. I am sure I have left out some important accomplishments, and for that I wish to apologize. I am honored to be executive director of the Binghamton University Scholars Program, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have the dream job of working with so many talented, enthusiastic, and just all-around great people.

Sincerely,

William Ziegler
In the Binghamton University Scholars Program, community service is an essential part of student learning. This semester, Scholars have taken leadership roles in several community service projects in the greater Binghamton area, developing close ties with CHOW, Kopernik Observatory, the Johnson City Senior Center, and the Magic Paintbrush Project in order to help each organization achieve its goals.

CHOW, the Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse, is a church-run emergency food provider for in-need citizens throughout Broome County. With 60 pantries and soup kitchens located throughout the county, CHOW provides over three million pounds of food annually to the Binghamton area, supplying children and senior citizens with much-needed sustenance. While CHOW continually provides the community with food, there is still a need for more. A team of Scholars is working to find sources of funding to bolster CHOW’s ability to secure additional food for schoolchildren in Broome County, as well as to provide on-site assistance.

The Kopernik Observatory & Science Center was founded in 1974 by the Kopernik Society of Broome County as a means of educating children and adults in the Broome County area in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. The Kopernik Observatory offers classes and events to students of all ages, ranging from stargazing to STEM-related camps and outreach programs. However, as many in the area are not aware of the special services the observatory offers, Binghamton University Scholars are working to rebrand the observatory, using social media to embolden the observatory’s public image in the hopes of drawing in new students and generating more interest in STEM fields.

The Johnson City Senior Center is a non-profit facility that seeks to provide programs and services that encourage seniors to independently improve their health and well-being. Helping it serve its current seniors while adapting to meet the needs of the elderly of the future, a group of Scholars has been working to provide the center with a variety of engaging events for its seniors—plays, musical performances, and even a talent show—to enrich their experiences and draw them to participate.

The Magic Paintbrush Project is an organization that creates and operates creative workshops for thousands of people diagnosed with developmental disabilities, seeking to not only help those afflicted, but also their families and caretakers. These programs strive to meet the special needs of each individual by focusing on that person’s unique traits and abilities, and Scholars have been involved in helping run these programs and helping to enable the project to fund and create new projects for the future.
This year, Binghamton University Scholar Bridget Murphy had the unique opportunity to spend a few weeks immersed in one of the world’s most interesting countries—India. One of the first students to represent the Scholars Program in India, Bridget was exposed to myriad customs and cultural practices that differed immensely from anything she had encountered in the United States. A junior majoring in business management and psychology, Bridget is already accustomed to working with people, as well as adapting to dynamic situations, both of which contributed to her positive experience abroad. However, she still had much to learn. Of all countries, India is particularly daunting due to its large population, but Bridget didn’t let that scare her.

In India, Bridget was able to learn about new customs, such as the practice of exchanging gifts at business meetings, and the social rule that dictated that only like-gendered people would hold hands in public. Men would only hold the hands of other men, and likewise women would only take the hands of other women. Beyond observing others, Bridget also participated in the culture, joining in the celebration of many traditional Indian festivals, such as Holi and Lohri, two Indian holidays celebrating spring and winter, respectively. At these celebrations, Bridget was given the opportunity to wear traditional Indian clothing and assimilate into the festivities.

While there was much to make an American feel intimidated about being in a new country, Bridget was also aided by the fact that the vast majority of Indians speak English as a second language. This convenient fact allowed her to easily communicate with almost everyone she encountered. The pervasiveness of the English language also helped to create an atmosphere in which Indians regularly watched American television programs, such as “How I Met Your Mother.” Just as Bridget was fascinated by the culture of India, so too were the locals fascinated by Bridget and her fellow students. Many in India often asked them to stop for photos.

Bridget’s international experience helped her to become more appreciative of others’ backgrounds, as well as piquing an interest in the cultures and customs of other countries. Though she has been home for months, even today Bridget finds that her travel to India prompts her to seek out new experiences here in the U.S., illustrating just one of the many ways her study abroad trip had a lasting impact on her life.
Denise Lobo

Junior and Binghamton University Scholar Denise Lobo took advantage of Binghamton’s robust international offerings to spend time off the coast of Southeast Africa in the island nation of Madagascar. Madagascar is a unique specimen of geography, and Denise was able to visit such disparate locales as canyons, barrier reefs, and desert, in addition to the rain forests that Madagascar is famous for.

As a biology student, Denise spent a sizable amount of time researching the nutrition of families in rural Madagascar and studying the relationships between family size and overall nutrition of children. Surprisingly, she found that with an increase in the size of a family, the level of nutrition increased as well. While this may seem like an unlikely scenario, Denise and her fellow students surmised that the larger family was able to complete more work, thus bringing in more food per person.

In addition to her research, Denise volunteered her time to the communities of Madagascar, partaking in a wide range of activities serving the community. One project involved planting native trees to encourage the growth of the rain forest, which has been subjected to heavy slash-and-burn farming, leaving only 5 percent of the original forest standing. In another project, Denise volunteered at a local library to teach native children English.

Madagascar is one of the greatest biodiversity hotspots in the world. Denise took advantage of the unique setting to explore her research interests. Supplementing her research with philanthropic work helped to create a memorable study-abroad experience.
Binghamton Scholars are known for their academic success, but many students are just as involved around campus as they are in the classroom. One of perhaps the most Scholars-dominated clubs on campus is the Binghamton University Glee Club, with about a quarter of its musical members hailing from the Program. Established in September of 2011, this student-run group is a co-ed singing and dancing group that performs songs in a variety of genres, most accompanied by a band of student musicians. This talented group has performed at Spring Fling, Winter Madness, and more, in addition to various off-campus community events and a final performance at the conclusion of each semester.

The club has a welcoming atmosphere that has attracted numerous students, Scholars among them, to join the club. Maura Lewis, one of the founding members of the Glee Club and a member of the Binghamton University Scholars Program, states that Glee Club’s unique musical zeal and friendly nature has really encouraged anyone with musical talent to try out. On the Scholars’ presence, Maura states that this is “because the group itself is multi-talented. It doesn’t surprise me that many intelligent people are also musically inclined.”

Emma Ryan, co-chair of the Glee Club choreography committee and current freshman Scholar in the club, feels that involvement in both groups gives her a unique social experience. “Having the connection between Scholars and Glee allows us to get to know some of our fellow Scholars on a different level... Glee allows us to enjoy connecting with people over common interests not related to our academic goals, which leads to a lot of passion in our performances.” Alan Thi, another freshman Scholar, agrees that “having
other Scholars in there made it a lot easier to fit in with the group. Scholars is all about finding opportunities and expanding your horizons, and I think Glee definitely did that for me.”

Recognized for its social atmosphere, strong ties, and musical talent, the Binghamton University Glee Club knows how to put on a show, but it’s not the only activity on campus with ties to the Scholars Program. Another extracurricular club known for its Scholars’ presence is the WHRW radio station, where numerous Scholars have their own talk and radio shows. Justin Heller and Anna Wang, two Scholars of the class of 2017, currently host their show “Sunbear over the Wango.” Both decided to get involved after two sophomore Scholars, Mallory Schmackpfeffer and Itai Ferber, showed that even freshmen could get their own shows through a semester-long apprenticeship.

As for the Scholars presence on the radio, Justin and Anna both agree that the Scholars Program will always be heavily involved with extracurriculars due to the outgoing nature of its students. Justin added that within WHRW there is “definitely a noticeable Scholars presence,” and that he can see “Program involvement growing in the coming semesters,” with the influx of interested freshmen. With their radio clearance exams behind them, these two Scholars are extremely excited to co-host their show. Broadcasting on Monday nights, they plan to focus on playing multiple styles of rock. As for their future plans as DJs, Anna adds that she’s “excited to see what we come up with!”

These two clubs, along with countless others, serve to highlight the scope of what Scholars are capable of. The presence of the Program in a variety of extracurricular activities has led to a very positive experience for the Scholars who choose to be involved in activities on campus.
In the United States, one of the central distinctions between a “college” and a “university” is the institution’s commitment to and capacity for doing research. In comparison to colleges, universities tend to be larger and more suited for doing research, and Binghamton University is no exception. Self-described as a research university and ranked by the Carnegie Foundation as a university with “high research activity,” Binghamton offers unique opportunities for students and faculty interested in doing research. Indeed, with over $31.7 million in sponsored research expenditures for the 2013–2014 year and available tools to request and acquire additional funding and research grants for new projects, Binghamton offers unwavering support in its funding for research. With upcoming programs like the Freshman Research Immersion, a three-semester program intended to prepare new freshmen for doing research, Binghamton is increasing its support and dedication for expanding the frontiers of human knowledge.

The Scholars Program is no stranger to Binghamton’s research programs, with many of our students doing groundbreaking research with professors on campus. The following are several selected biographies of students actively participating in research at the university.

**Brandon Pereyra**

**Mechanical Engineering Major (2016)**

As a scientist, Brandon is dedicated to doing research in the field of sustainable energy. He believes that sustainable energy is vitally important for our future because we depend so heavily on our dwindling supply of fossil fuels, which greatly damage the environment.

Last summer, Brandon took part in a National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program at Cornell, where he worked on a research project titled “Surface Scatters on Slab Wave Guides for Uniform Bacteria Growth.” The project aimed to improve existing photo-bio-reactors (chemical tanks in which algae convert sunlight into useable bio-fuels via photosynthesis) by producing higher density algae cultures, which help increase bio-fuel output. The bio-fuels produced are just some of the alternative, sustainable forms of energy that could potentially replace today’s fossil fuels. Brandon’s work was published in the REU NNIN 2013 Research Accomplishments journal, a journal compiled by the National Nanotechnology Infrastructure Network that highlights student accomplishments in research.

Brandon is also doing research at Binghamton’s Center for Autonomous Solar Power, working under Professor Charles R. Westgate to fabricate more efficient solar cells for the production of solar energy. He is considering going to graduate school to get a master’s or PhD, and aims to work in National Labs or in industry, dedicated to research.
Amanda Fong
Psychology & Management Double Major (2016)

Amanda got involved in research because she wanted to apply a more hands-on approach to learning psychology than her classes offered to her. Amanda feels that doing research allows her to use what she learns in the classroom and apply it in real-world experiments on the minds of students around her. Besides, she explains, with so many professors doing prominent and important research in the field, she wanted to get involved as early as possible to take advantage of the University’s resources.

Amanda is conducting a study about the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, designed to address the question of whether the age at which a bilingual speaker learns a second language affects the acquisition of additional languages. She is working with Christopher Tufo, another Scholar, under the guidance of Professor Peter Donovick in the school’s Institute of Neuropsychological Research. Looking ahead, Amanda aims to continue doing research throughout the rest of her academic career.

Christopher Beard
Computer Science & Mathematics Double Major (2016)

Interested in computers from a young age, Christopher came to Binghamton predeclared as a computer science major. Here, he learned of the many research opportunities the Computer Science Department offers its students and decided to get involved. Research excites Christopher because it offers the possibility of exploring something that could be beneficial to society, and as a researcher, he is able to work towards making that discovery.

Christopher works with several other undergraduate students under the instruction of associate professors Nael Abu-Ghazaleh and Dmitry Ponomarev, who are working to develop safer and more secure memory access models for computers to make it much more difficult—or impossible—for malicious code to infect computer systems. The result of their research could be highly beneficial for the computer industry, as they could significantly alter the way computer hardware works to partition memory into separate, safe areas of access. Christopher intends to continue doing research at the conclusion of this project, taking advantage of the other research opportunities offered by the Computer Science Department.

Gabrielle Schiller
Nursing Major (2016)

As a nursing student, Gabrielle does research to try to make Binghamton a healthier school. She is participating in the Decker School of Nursing’s Interdisciplinary Tobacco Research Use Program (ITURP), and along with Cassie Anzalone—another Scholar in the program—she works to help provide students with the resources to make healthy decisions for themselves. She is looking to pursue a master’s in public health, and intends to continue doing her research until then to gain a better understanding of public health and how she can work to improve it.
Since arriving at Binghamton University in the summer of 1966, Peter Donovick, a professor of neuropsychology, has seen the University expand and evolve in many ways. Although he never planned on becoming a professor, looking back, he is glad that his life experiences led him to teaching. Donovick has seen generations of students walk in and out of the gates of Binghamton University, and he has always found it highly rewarding to personally interact with his students, getting to know them and understand them.

When Donovick first entered college, he did not have a clear sense of direction as to what area of interest he wanted to pursue. One day, while home from spring break, he signed up for the Marine Corps on a whim, and his life changed forever. After his time with the Marines, Donovick returned to academics with a new outlook on education and his future. The Marine Corps gave Donovick a very clear sense of what he did not want to do in his life: he did not want to wear a suit to work every day, he did not want to work in industry, and he definitely did not want a boss. Instead of worrying about exams, deadlines, and the future, Donovick focused on studying the topics he found interesting. Eventually, this led him to graduate school, where he focused on his interests in behavioral neurosciences, which led to him joining the faculty of Harpur College at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

Donovick began his career by collaborating with Professor Richard Burright, a collaboration that continued until Burright’s death in 2003. Throughout this time, undergraduates were involved in both professors’ research, presenting and publishing their findings at conferences and in scholarly journals. The Environmental Neuropsychology Laboratory, of which Donovick is now director, has investigated many aspects of gene environment co-action on brain and behavior, including traumatic brain injury, parasitic invasion of the brain, disease and aging and attitudes toward the aging process. In doing this research and working closely with students, Donovick’s passion for shaping young minds has only grown.

After initially being introduced to the Scholars Program by Scholar Eliza Anderson, class of 2011, Donovick now conducts a significant amount of his research with undergraduate Scholars. A variety of topics have been researched, including the influence of meditation on academic ability, bilingualism, and the connection between the training college athletes receive and the incidence rate and severity of head injuries. Other ongoing research has looked at how owning pets or having a chronic disease influences one’s attitude toward aging. The inspiration for this research has not only stemmed from the work of Burright and Donovick, but many of the students who have had the rich experience of working on these groundbreaking studies.

From his early life experience to the time he has spent in education to the many connections he has formed with his students, Professor Donovick holds a lot of rich experience and a true passion for education that make him an invaluable member of the Scholars Program and Binghamton University as a whole.
After finishing high school, Miles Garwood took a gap year in order to volunteer for his church and to participate in the Generation Peace Academy program, a religious program that allows young adults to embark on international service projects. Miles's service project was a trip to Trinidad and Tobago, where the volunteers spent three weeks at the three communities of Mon Repos, St. Barbs, and Soogren Trace cleaning gutters, painting infrastructure, and working to improve the morale of the people living there. Although Trinidad and Tobago is considered a first-world country, these communities are still developing, and they struggle with gang violence and underground crime. Miles and his fellow volunteers spent time inspiring the young people of these neighborhoods to better their circumstances by improving their neighborhoods, staying in school, and believing that there are opportunities in life beyond gangs and crime. Such a mindset is important for improving the life of the community.

The locals were not always welcoming. In all three communities, local residents called gatekeepers ensured the volunteers’ safety using their connections with the local community. Even so, in Mon Repos, local residents only gradually acclimated to the foreigners. By the last day, however, many of the locals had joined Miles and the other volunteers as they painted murals near the community center. That night, they all sang songs in a large circle, symbolizing the community’s newly found hope. In St. Barbs, a community previously visited by volunteers, the mood was much more welcoming and appreciative as locals readily helped the volunteers paint curbs and walls. The last community, Soogren Trace, gave the iciest response, eliciting a much greater feeling of danger and unease. The task there was to paint an enormous retaining wall, a five-minute walk from the community center where Miles and the volunteers stayed. Though a short distance, this walk evoked the greatest sense of danger that Miles felt during the whole trip.

When Miles returned home, he was glad that he provided assistance, but was sad that the trip was over. He views the trip as being one that was “difficult, but worthwhile.” This gap year allowed Miles to get a better perspective on the world, which has helped him excel in the Binghamton University Scholar’s Program. More important, however, is the lasting impact he had on these communities and how he and his fellow volunteers inspired the locals to believe that their communities were worth caring about. Miles helped give the residents of these three communities the perspective that will enable legitimate improvement in the lives of the people in this impoverished corner of the world.
Every Thursday evening from 8–9:30 p.m., students file into a lecture hall on campus to try their hand at learning to code. With attendance anywhere between 50 and 100 students, it may be daunting to face the audience at times, but HackBU founder Daniel O’Connor takes the turnout in stride. To see so many students interested in learning to code—especially so many with no prior experience or engagement with computer science—is exciting to him and the other co-founders of the club. Inspired by similar ventures put together by ambitious students at other universities, O’Connor started HackBU as a way to bring enthusiasm to Binghamton about what he calls “hacker culture,” a culture less interested in “hacking” as the media portrays it, and more invested in creating a community of students interested in applying innovative uses of technology to solve real-world problems. To O’Connor, the term “hacking” has nothing to do with gaining unauthorized access to computer systems, and everything to do with “encourag[ing] students to work on side-projects, create their own start-ups, and genuinely enjoy programming.”

To cultivate that type of community, HackBU offers weekly workshops to students interested in expanding their skill sets by learning Web development. In these workshops, the members of HackBU supply students of all levels of experience with resources for learning at their own pace, and offer one-on-one help to those who need it. Local and student-run start-ups are also featured during these workshops, where founders come to present about their experiences in forming companies.
built around solving the problems that interest them most, and about the challenges they have had to overcome to do so. In addition to the workshops, the club also organizes trips to local hackathons—weekend-long programming competitions in which teams of students form to do anything from solving real-world problems to building new products, websites, and applications from scratch—and it even hosted its own such competition in April, which was attended by more than 250 students.

Binghamton University is not unique in its interest of promoting this type of hacker culture. This year alone will see dozens of student-organized hackathons across the United States, some new, like HackBU’s own, and some returning staples, like MHacks, PennApps, and HackNY, put on by students at the University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania, and NYU respectively. Binghamton is not even the only SUNY school to offer such an opportunity; students at the University of Buffalo are organizing their second hackathon, also to be put on at the end of April. However, these hackathons are not only for fun and games. They have a lasting impact on the students who attend them. “Computer science classes teach students code, while hackathons teach students to build. One weekend at a hackathon can have a larger effect than a semester of class,” explains O’Connor. “They are quickly replacing career fairs, and sponsors are investing thousands of dollars to recruit students.” Larger hackathons are able to attract big-name companies like Apple, Facebook, and Google, interested in recruiting the brightest students from the university groups that attend them. Winning a hackathon can be a golden ticket in to interview with a company for a job or an internship, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for some students looking to work at highly exclusive companies.

Looking to the future, O’Connor is optimistic about the effect that HackBU will have on the students on campus. He graduated at the end of the semester, leaving to work for Optimizely, a California-based start-up that specializes in writing optimization software for companies, but he says that he would “love to come back to Binghamton and see students going to hackathons, excited about programming, and getting jobs and internships at the top tech companies.” Picking up the mantle will be HackBU’s other co-founders, who are just as excited about seeing Binghamton students interested in learning to code, and building innovative technology to shape the future. In the meantime, however, they will be working hard to represent Binghamton at regional hackathons; inspire students to build, create, and solve the problems that interest them; and foster a community of students here on campus who believe in that goal and are willing to invest in it themselves.
It’s an interesting time to be Vice President of Student Affairs Brian Rose. Since joining Binghamton University in 2008, Rose has seen the University grow and change in a variety of ways. Rose has been involved in projects ranging from the renovation of Newing to the construction of the new Dickinson Community, as well as the development of the new MarketPlace in the center of campus.

Coming from a background in law, Rose’s passion for education led him to Binghamton University, where he has taken an active role in higher education. Rose is satisfied by this decision—“My career has taken me to a point that I find extremely fulfilling and challenging.”

This semester, Vice President Rose is becoming increasingly involved in the Scholars Program. In addition to working closely with individual Scholars as a mentor for the Program, Rose has undertaken the responsibility of teaching a Scholars course in the spring semester. Rose was drawn to the project-based nature of the Program, and a long-standing friendship with Associate Professor William Ziegler also contributed to his involvement.

When asked what he found appealing about the prospect of working with the Scholars, Rose said that he was excited about the opportunity to get involved with the Program on a personal level: “To have the chance to become friendly with a group of students who are generally highly motivated is a welcome change to my daily routine.” Rose is one of many professionals at Binghamton University ingraining themselves within the Scholars Program, developing a sense of community with the students. These mentors have a profound impact on the Scholars, helping the Scholars to develop their own leadership qualities.

The course Vice President Rose taught, “Higher Education and Athletics,” deals with an oft-discussed issue at Binghamton University: football. Approaching the course like a graduate-level seminar, Rose, along with his students, researched the possibility of cultivating an intercollegiate football program at Binghamton University. Beyond this course, the future could find Rose heading a classroom again, as he’s taken an interest in the way cloud computing has changed the dynamics of privacy and the implications the changing nature of electronic media has for legal and policy issues.

Rose is fond of the Scholars Program for its unique context, allowing him the opportunity to become involved with students on a personal level that isn’t normally afforded to him. “It also allows me to contribute to an initiative that I see as having a very high value – the focused support and cultivation of high-achieving students.”

As Vice President of Student Affairs, Brian Rose has many responsibilities to the University. His involvement with the Scholars exemplifies his commitment to Binghamton University and is a major influence on the growth of both the institution and the Scholars Program itself.
Buckle Up

Exploring Outside of the Classroom

A major aspect of the Binghamton Scholars Program is how it fosters strong relationships between its students. One way it cements these relationships is through a series of trips throughout the year, which allow students to get off campus and interact with each other in new and exciting locations.

Freshman Scholar Meghana Vulapalli says that she recognized this quality during the November trip to New York City, the itinerary of which involved seeing the Natural History Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. “I really loved my time at both museums, especially some of the more special seasonal exhibits. It was also really cool to start interacting with some of the older Scholars, because it started to broaden my friend network. I still remember going to a butterfly exhibit with a good friend of mine, Sam Meadows, who was someone I barely knew at the time!” When asked more about the trip, she said that she feels that “being surrounded by my friends, fellow Scholars, and Scholar mentors in one of the most exciting cities in the world was truly an incredible experience. And having a New York slice of pizza for the first time was simply awesome.”

Sophomore Eliza Gelis, who was part of a Scholars group that visited Philadelphia last spring, feels the exact same way. She feels that traveling within the Program itself is “an amazing experience,” adding that she is “so lucky to have a program that allows us to visit such interesting places,” and adds, “The opportunity to explore the culture of these cities with my friends was incredible.”

Even smaller trips, such as those to state parks, serve to unify the Scholars. October 2013 marked a trip to Buttermilk Falls, where a group of Scholars hiked alongside University President Harvey Stenger. Freshman Scholar John Montesano said that trips like these are not just beneficial socially, but mentally. “Buttermilk Falls was a really cool way to destress with my friends,” he states. “It allowed me to just get off campus and spend a fun day with my group, and the experience really helped me relax from my studies.”

In this way, the Binghamton University Scholars Program connects all of its students through these specialty programs. Getting off campus allows students to personally and interpersonally benefit from getting involved in the amazing opportunities the Program has to offer.
An Encounter
—Samuel David Bravo

As soon as he walked through the door
He saw the unexpected.
This event, for this young boy,
Was not to be neglected.

There stood a little smiling girl,
Her hands under the faucet.
Her shiny shoes, her flowery dress,
He thought that he had lost it.

Once the boy regained his wits,
(I mean, this was super weird),
He politely raised his voice,
“What are you doing here?”

She had finished with her hands
And her patience ran low too.
She thought about it, then replied
With a little attitude.

“It’s obvious you don’t understand
That you’ve entered the wrong stall.
The bathroom that you’re looking for
Is further down the hall.”

“Why, it’s as clear as day,
I am washing my own hands.
Try it every now and then,
If you ever have the chance.”

“No, what I meant to say is,
What’re you doing in this place?
You shouldn’t be... there isn’t a...
I mean, girls in here - no way”

An Encounter

—Katherine Loomba

Katherine is an
undecided freshman
in Harpur College.
She took this photo
one summer evening
at Irvington’s Scenic
Hudson Park. Katherine
also enjoys hiking
and eating chocolate!

Samuel David Bravo
is a freshman student
studying computer
science and mathematics. Aside from writing,
David also enjoys playing instruments and
folding origami.
Binghamton University Scholars gather at President Harvey Stenger's home for a fall picnic.

Binghamton University Scholars enjoy a hike at Buttermilk Falls.
Binghamton University Scholars learn the value of teamwork on the Newing College recreation field.