

SCHOLARS MAGAZINE

Spring 2017

Scholars
Serve in the
Binghamton
Community

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The President Stenger
Perspective

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Scholars Go to Greece

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From the Desk of Professor Ziegler

Dear Scholars and Friends of the Scholars Program,

We began this academic year welcoming nearly 150 new freshmen Scholars and nearly 300 returning Scholars to the Program. The retention and graduation rates of Scholars rival those of the most well-known colleges in the U.S. and beyond. I am very proud that our freshmen Scholars have the highest SAT scores and high school GPAs of any honors programs across the entire 64-campus SUNY system. However, these remarkable statistics do not just happen. It takes the support of the entire University to attract and retain such successful students and I want to thank President Stenger and Provost Nieman for all they do to support the Scholars Program. Additionally, I want to thank the Scholars Program staff of Katherine Bouman and Mary LaCourt, our Scholars Mentors, Scholars Faculty, Scholars Program Assistants, and Scholars Council for their contributions to the success of our Program.

This academic year, we offered a record number of 31 sections of Scholars courses. However, we offer enrichment beyond the classroom, and as I write this letter, I am trying desperately to stay out of last place in the Scholars Stock Market Game, which is just one of our Scholars Professionalism Week initiatives. In the fall, President Stenger joined nearly 150 Scholars on a hike to Buttermilk Falls in Ithaca. This past winter, our Scholars took their annual ski trip to Greek Peak and I breathed a sigh of relief when everyone returned with all bones intact. In February, President Stenger and I hosted over 100 Scholars at a Binghamton Senators Hockey Game, and we recently held our annual Scholars semi-formal.

As we begin to think about closing out the academic year, I am proud to announce that six of our Scholars have received the highest awards offered by SUNY and Binghamton University. Kaitlin Biagiotti, Jesse

Cole, Emma Ryan, and Emily Venezia have been awarded the Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence, SUNY's highest award. Emma Ryan and Jonathan Aranov have been awarded the President's Award for Undergraduate Student Excellence, Binghamton's highest award; and Emily Venezia and Rebecca Gryzbowski have been awarded Honorable Mention - President's Award for Undergraduate Student Excellence.

In the pages that follow, we present articles about several Scholars involved in research and in the performing arts. We also feature two Scholars and their experience attending the National Collegiate Honors Annual Conference. Additionally, we have an article on what some of our new graduates will be up to in the coming years. We close out by highlighting our first study abroad Scholars course—through which over a dozen students will be heading to Leros, Greece in May.

It has been another great year and I want to thank all of our Scholars and all those who support them at Binghamton University, at home, and beyond. To those who are graduating, I provide my best wishes for great success in all of your future endeavors. To our returning Scholars, I wish you a happy and healthy summer and I will see you in the fall!

Professor Ziegler

Professor William Ziegler
Executive Director, Binghamton
University Scholars Program
Associate Professor, Watson School of
Engineering and Applied Science
Principal Investigator, Federal Aviation
Administration ●



Scholars in the Arts

By Emma Williams ('19)

Lights, camera, action!

Aside from excelling academically, Scholars students have a strong representation in the arts on campus. Although many of our students are not pursuing careers in the arts, they are still passionate about creative expression. Binghamton Scholars are found in a wide range of artistic groups, including WHWR Radio, Studio Art, Glee Club, University Choir, and many more. In a program with a number of STEM-related majors, some might be surprised to see the artistic passion and talent Scholars bring to campus.

As a Theatre Major, I am intrigued by what motivates others to create art. In my experience, art is a means of expression, and an escape from the stressors of daily life. Samantha Palladino ('19), a Business Administration major and Vice President of the Note to Self Acapella group, feels the same way. "If I didn't sing, I don't know what I would do," she said. Vocal performance is a way for Palladino to de-stress; she started singing in the third grade. She also remarked

that many acapella performers on campus are not pursuing degrees in the performing arts. These students participate in these kinds of groups as an escape from coursework.

Another student who grew up performing, Anjali Patel ('19), says that she performs Bhangra dance because "I have been dancing my whole life and it is something I really enjoy doing with the friends I have made on the University team." Patel is a Nursing major who feels a sense of community when dancing.

Many artistic communities create a sense of family, which is part of the attraction for students across a spectrum of majors. Another enticement is the ability to devote oneself to a medium of expression that might not be accessible in other aspects of life. This level of commitment can release stress, an all too familiar feeling for Scholars. Art can be the place to let go and express one's self. It is a space where strong community bonds form. ●



Emma Williams ('19) in *Bells Are Ringing*



Simone Debellis ('20) and her artwork at a painting event



Anjali Patel ('19) and members of the Bhangra Dance Team



Scholars having fun at Boo at the Zoo



Sam Palladino ('19) and members of Note to Self

Dr. George Catalano has been active and influential in the Scholars Program for over ten years. In 2000, he began his career at Binghamton University as a professor of mechanical engineering and as the Director of the Freshman Engineering programs. He was drawn to the field of teaching because of the personal freedom and opportunity offered to him every day. In 2004, he became the Scholars Program Director. He left this position in 2008 to study turbulent fluid mechanics in bioengineering. He believes the Scholars Program benefits from "new blood and new ideas," and remains active in the Program.

The Catalano Effect



By
Catherine
Michie('19)

Through teaching for the Scholars Program, Dr. Catalano can explore topics outside of his typical research interests. He has crafted many unique and diverse Scholars 280 courses on subjects such as wolves, peace, and animal ethics that have given Scholars the chance to explore new and current matters.

Dr. Catalano undoubtedly has a passion for teaching. However, he has many interests outside of Binghamton University. He cites writing and riding his motorcycle as some of his favorite pastimes.

Anyone that has taken a course with Dr. Catalano can attest to his student-friendly approach to teaching. "Class with Dr. Catalano was always laid-back; everyone could voice their opinion without judgment," said former student, Emma Williams ('19). He fosters a classroom environment that values everyone's ideas and beliefs.

All students are encouraged to express their thoughts and consider alternate perspectives. He facilitates discussions with his "talking stick." The person holding the stick may speak freely and uninterrupted. This models what

it really means to listen. Students even have the ability to showcase their creativity through artwork. Tables are turned for the "Teacher for a Day" assignment, which gives every student the chance to design a lesson for the class. Clearly, Dr. Catalano steps away from a traditional teaching approach to provide a more engaging and exciting atmosphere.

Dr. Catalano currently conducts aerospace research and teaches for the Biomedical Engineering Department. He also plans to design another one-of-a-kind Scholars course. If you are interested in reflecting, listening, and discussing current issues, you should definitely consider enrolling in a course with Dr. Catalano! ●

Students enjoy the Fall scenery on the annual apple-picking trip



The President Stenger Perspective

By Katherine Loomba ('17)
and Emma Williams ('19)



President Stenger greets Scholars students after they surprised him with a birthday celebration (left) and enjoys a day out hiking at Buttermilk Falls (right)

President Harvey Stenger has been in charge of Binghamton University since taking office in January 2012. He created The Road Map, a five-prong approach to guide the University's resources and investments, in order to establish it as "the Premier Public University of the 21st century." Throughout his five years here, President Stenger has fostered Binghamton's growth, and will no doubt continue to do so in the future. We had the opportunity to talk with him about everything from his visions for Binghamton to his travel antics and his middle name!

[EW]: What are your visions for Binghamton University?

[HS]: To be a place where students come to follow their passions, become successful citizens and purposeful people. A place where faculty and staff can provide meaningful contributions to their disciplines and to our community.

[KL]: What do you feel is the most pressing issue facing higher education today?

[HS]: The rising costs that many universities are imposing on students through rapidly increasing tuition. We are lucky, through good planning and fiscal management, that Binghamton has not followed others and has taken a more rational approach to increasing costs.

[EW]: What has been your biggest challenge as President of Binghamton University?

[HS]: To grow our campus and programs while balancing all of our needs and constraints.

[KL]: What should be #1 on a Scholar's Binghamton bucket list?

[HS]: At least one super internship!

[KL]: What is your favorite Scholars event to attend?

[HS]: The hike in the fall to either Buttermilk or Taughannock Falls.

[EW]: What was your favorite childhood book?

[HS]: "Goodnight Moon." I read it dozens of times to my daughters.

[KL]: What is your best travel story?

[HS]: The family vacation when we rented a minivan and spent 33 days driving across the country and back—7,700 miles and lots of national parks.

[EW]: What is your middle name?

[HS]: Glenn

[KL]: Is there anything else you would like to include in your interview in this publication?

[HS]: I love the Scholars Program!

Thank you again to President Harvey Stenger for taking the time to answer our questions, and for his continual support of the Scholars Program! ●

Scholars Go to Greece!

By Katherine Loomba ('17)

In Spring 2016, the Scholars Program sponsored its first international perspective course with a study abroad component. Although students enjoyed learning about Istanbul in Scholars 280D: "Imperial City of Splendors at the Crossroads of East and West" - taught by Professor Kent Schull - the Spring Break trip was cancelled after a series of terrorist attacks in major cities throughout Turkey.

This spring, Professor Schull is teaching a Scholars class on the refugee crisis, with plans for an end-of-semester service trip to Leros, Greece. Schull has been inspired by the University's recent push to promote service and service-related learning. He has also observed a tangible desire among Binghamton students to help others. He wants to harness this energy to help displaced individuals overseas. His goal is to change the rhetoric regarding refugees.

When asked about how Scholars will be prepared for potentially stressful situations, Schull explained that the students will be volunteering in a refugee shelter, rather than a refugee camp. The shelter is a place where refugees from North Africa and the Middle East can reunite with family members who have already been accepted into Europe. Although no preparation can fully represent the experiences in store for Scholars, Schull seemed confident that by keeping journals and supporting each other, students will be able to adequately process their emotions.



Professor Kent Schull lectures about the ongoing refugee crisis

At the shelter, students will work to improve the facility for refugees. Schull emphasized that something as simple as a proper library stocked with coloring books and art supplies is crucial for refugee children to establish a sense of normalcy during such a stressful time. Scholars will also help refugees do laundry and prepare food. These simple tasks can have an important, stabilizing impact on the refugees' overall experience.

Schull understands not all Scholars can travel to a refugee shelter overseas, but encourages students to raise their voices and create awareness about the realities of the refugee problem. He suggests helping raise funds for service projects that aid refugees locally, like at the American Civic Association in Downtown Binghamton. Doing so will help Scholars broaden their worldview, in keeping with the aims of the international perspective of the course. ●

Leros, Greece



Scholars Serve in the Binghamton Community

By Jessie Rubin ('19)

Students in the Scholars Program give back to the Binghamton community in many ways. This year, the Scholars Student Council Community Service Chair Mike Jean ('18) has worked with his committee to organize several service opportunities. Events have included a can drive, Willow Point Nursing Home visits, blanket-making for local hospitals, and planting trees around the University Downtown Center.

In addition to these voluntary opportunities, Scholars enroll in a service-learning course. In the past, SCHL 227 was entitled "Leadership, Project Management, and Service." In this course, Scholars learned the impact of community service through semester-long group projects. This year, the course was renamed "If Not Us, Who? If Not Now, When?" The updated course pushes Scholars to think critically while developing a long-term project, through readings, bi-weekly reflections, and guest lectures. Alison Handy Twang is the Assistant Director of the Center for Civic Engagement as well as a PhD student in the



Scholars Ivanna Grynyk ('18) and Michael Jean ('18) planting trees

College of Community and Public Affairs and one of the instructors of the course. She hopes that with her assistance, "Students will develop their own civic identity and learn what concrete strategies they can use to change the world." Thanks to Twang's relationship with the Center for Civic Engagement, students are already finding engagement opportunities specific to their intended professions.

Caleb Schwartz ('19) finds great value in the remodeled class: "I really enjoy SCHL 227 because it gives us a space to analyze how we can be best engaged in our community. This is something that is easily forgotten in the flurry of coursework, exams, and extracurriculars, so it's great to take a step back and see where we fit into the bigger picture. Hearing other Scholars talk about their own values and attitudes toward changemaking has been fascinating, and helps me reflect on my own."

Opportunities like those offered by the Community Service committee and SCHL 227 empower Scholars to evoke positive change. ●

Scholars unite against cancer



2016 National Collegiate Honors Conference

By Lauren Nardacci ('17)

Not all honors programs are “one size fits all.” This was evident at the National Collegiate Honors Conference (NCHC) in Seattle, Washington this past October. Hundreds of different honors programs were represented at the conference, including honors colleges large and small, from honors colleges with study abroad opportunities to community college and private school honors programs. In general, the honors programs all had varying academic requirements for students.

I presented on the Binghamton University Scholars Program with Assistant Director Katherine Bouman and my fellow Scholars Program Assistant Kaitlin Biagiotti ('17). Our presentation specifically discussed how our Program focuses more on the freshman experience and less on the traditional honors thesis in the final college year. Through the freshman SCHL 127 course, Scholars Living Community, and the variety of social events targeted toward freshmen, our Program creates a tight-knit Scholars community among freshmen as they settle onto campus. We have found this results in a high retention rate. It was interesting to tell our story and then hear the stories of other honors programs.

Many administrators from other honors programs agreed with our additional desire not to make being in an honors program an extra burden for students by not requiring an honors thesis. However, there still need to be requirements for students to fulfill to graduate with honors; in our case, these upper-level requirements are Scholars III and Scholars IV. Programs much larger than ours have the extra resources and faculty to oversee honors theses for each of their students. This is why “one size” does not fit all honors programs.

Besides presenting on our Program, I listened to a variety of other lectures. I learned about initiatives from student data analysis to alumni relations, and from computer-based courses to community service components of other programs. The Honors College at the University of New Mexico has a large and involved alumni network. They have an alumni relations committee that develops programming including a book club and networking events spanning

the country. While such would be great to implement for our Program, it is unrealistic at this time due to our limited staff size and alumni base. However, I believe developing a plan to get alumni more involved will be an important step in the growth of the Binghamton University Scholars Program.

Overall, attending NCHC in Seattle was very rewarding. Kaitlin Biagiotti ('17) enjoyed being able “to converse with professionals and students who are passionate about higher education. After attending multiple sessions and participating in open discussions, I left with many new ideas to incorporate into the Binghamton University Scholars Program. I was also grateful for the opportunity to present because I developed my public speaking skills and gained confidence answering thought-provoking questions.”

I liked how NCHC was a way to observe how other honors programs are run. There is so much diversity among the programs and different curriculums and opportunities suit different honors programs well. As our students, faculty, and staff change, our programming will have to adjust accordingly. The most important thing, though, will be to preserve the family feel of the Binghamton University Scholars Program. The family feel is what many of us Scholars prize most—the support and love tangible within our community. ●

Program Assistants Kaitlin Biagiotti ('17) and Lauren Nardacci ('17) with Assistant Director Katherine Bouman at the NCHC conference





Scholars Council, 2016-17

What's the Scoop on Scholars Council?

By Alyssa Goodman ('19)

Entering college is an overwhelming process, marked by anticipation and fear for the college years and beyond. However, first-semester freshmen Scholars are put at ease quickly, through events hosted by the Scholars Student Council, the student-run component of the Scholars Program. Once welcomed into the Scholars family through these events, many students choose to show their appreciation for the Program by obtaining positions as Scholars Council leaders.

The Binghamton University Scholars Program has helped me, a sophomore majoring in Psychology and Human Development, feel at home. Immediately upon my arrival at Binghamton, the Scholars Program put me at ease. It is through the Program that I have made my best friends and discovered opportunities that defined my college master plan. I give back through my role as the Public Relations Chair on the Scholars Student Council.

Mauricio Montes, a freshman majoring in Psychology and Human Development, is the Freshman Class Representative, who is "planning events that will get freshmen better connected to other classes and bring the Scholars community closer together." For Mauricio, the value of the Scholars Program is simple: "The best part about the Scholars Program is that it provides so many great opportunities. I really don't

know what my experience at Binghamton would be without it."

Ashley Berlot, a sophomore majoring in Integrative Neuroscience, is the Social Chair. Her responsibilities include planning social events for the Scholars both on and off campus. "My position is really important in bringing together our Scholars to form bonds through fun activities. I like that I directly unite people who may not interact much otherwise."

Will Albert, a junior majoring in Integrative Neuroscience, is the Junior Class Representative. He has gained beneficial leadership experience and met people he wouldn't have interacted with otherwise. He works to keep his class involved in the Program despite many members moving off campus.

Jordan Dundas, a sophomore majoring in Political Science and Accounting, is the Academic Chair. She holds events as opportunities for academic and professional growth in order to prepare college students for their college careers and beyond. When asked why her involvement on Council is important to her, Jordan replied, "I love the Scholars Program, and I want to help it grow and become even better. I appreciate the opportunity to bring any comments or suggestions to the attention of those with the ability to do something about them."

Scholars Council provides students with the opportunity to use their passion for the Program to contribute to its growth. ●

Student Mentors Make an Impact

By Neha Sharma ('20)

What is your favorite part of being a Student Mentor?

Caleb Schwartz ('19), majoring in Environmental Studies and Political Science: "My favorite part of being a Student Mentor is having the chance to be actively involved with the freshmen Scholars. It's exciting to see the different goals each Scholar brings to Binghamton University, and to be a part of the vibrant community as it grows throughout the year."

Julianna Nerone ('19), majoring in Biology: "My favorite part of being a Student Mentor is connecting with the freshmen as they get adjusted to life in the Scholars Program, as well as here at Binghamton University."

Jessie Rubin ('19), majoring in Business Administration: "As a Student Mentor, I love being able to interact with incoming freshmen on a more personal level, and watching the connections made that will last a lifetime, all thanks to the Scholars Program."

Heather Manley ('19), majoring in Human Development: "My favorite part of being a Student Mentor is getting to meet new people. Having a connection with the freshmen, overall, not solely personal mentees, makes the program more connected and comfortable for everyone."

Chris Thompson ('19), majoring in Mechanical Engineering: "My favorite part of being a Student Mentor is having the opportunity to plan and hold events for the entire Scholars community."

Jeremy Belkin ('19), majoring in Industrial Systems Engineering: "My favorite part of being a Student Mentor is getting students together for our holiday parties at our home away from home."

Katie O'Donnell ('19), majoring in Industrial Systems Engineering: "My favorite part about being a Student Mentor is getting to know other Scholars who I may not have had a chance to meet otherwise."

Sally Kuan ('19), majoring in Biomedical Engineering: "I really liked telling new students about

my favorite parts of college and the Scholars Program and then watching them fall in love with the same kinds of things. It felt like I got to relive my own freshman year experience."

Doug Wehbe ('19), majoring in Computer Science: "I've enjoyed being an outlet for my mentees' questions and concerns because I had quite a few as a freshman, and I'm happy that nobody is unsure of where they're headed or what to do."

Kerri Percoco ('19), majoring in Psychology - Applied Behavior Analysis: "My favorite part of being a Student Mentor is working so closely with the other mentors to make successful events for the freshmen." ●

Student Mentors Heather Manley ('19) and Jessie Rubin ('19) enjoy a sunny day hiking the nature preserve



Students Take Charge as Scholars Program Assistants

By Tatiana Requijo ('17)

Among countless other opportunities offered to its students, the Binghamton University Scholars Program offers employment to undergraduates. Since its creation in the fall of 2015, however, the Scholars Program Assistant (SPA) role has been more than just a paid position.

SPAs thus far have been upperclassmen with long track records of active leadership in the Scholars Program, including as Student Mentors or as Scholars Student Council members. Many of these students looked forward to the position as an ultimate way to give back the support and fellowship shown to them over their years as Scholars. SPAs are behind the scenes of many aspects that make the Binghamton University Scholars Program unique. SPAs plan the welcome back pool party at Professor Ziegler's house and the waterfall hike with President Stenger, organize the Professional Mentor program, and put together publications like this magazine, among many other important tasks. At the 2016 Scholars induction brunch, President Stenger introduced this academic year's SPAs as the "big cousins" of the Program. SPAs have years of Scholars memories to look back on while mentoring younger students, and work closely with Professor Ziegler, Katherine Bouman, and Mary LaCourt. They are an essential part of the Binghamton University Scholars family.

The following students are the 2016-2017 Scholars Program Assistants. Maggie Fox is a junior who will be returning to the position for her senior year. Kaitlin Biagiotti, Lauren Nardacci, Emily Venezia, and Tatiana Requijo are members of the 2017 graduating class.



From left to right: Maggie Fox, Lauren Nardacci, Emily Venezia, Kaitlin Biagiotti, and Tatiana Requijo

Maggie Fox ('18), Majoring in Chemistry

Other Scholars Program Involvement
Scholars RA (2016-2017)

What is the best thing about being a SPA?

I think that the best thing about being a SPA is that it allows you to understand the program at all levels; you get to see how everything works. While, outwardly, everything looks like it is running effortlessly, you get to see the amount of work that is put behind the scenes. You begin to appreciate things more.



Maggie Fox

What is your favorite Scholars memory or event?

My favorite Scholars memory is the first day of Scholars 127. We were all going around saying things about ourselves. I forget what someone said that was so funny, but I laughed so hard that I started to snort in class. That was actually how I made a lot of my friends on the first day.

What impact has the Scholars Program had on your college experience?

The Scholars Program has allowed me to meet so many people who I never would have met otherwise, including students and faculty. Some of the faculty have become my mentors, helping me plan what I want to do in the future. When I was first told that this was a family and not an honors program, I could not help but be skeptical. However, it is something that has been proven true time and time again by everyone involved who I have come across.

Future Plans

I am just going into my senior year, so I only have summer plans thought out so far! This summer, I will be interning at the CEA National Lab in Grenoble, France doing Energy Storage Research, as part of the GIANT Internship and an LSAMP REU Program. I hope to do a little sightseeing, as well.

Kaitlin Biagiotti ('17), Majoring in Cell & Molecular Biology and Music

Other Scholars Program Involvement

Freshman Representative (2013-2014)
Scholars Council Vice President (2014-2015)
Scholars Council President (2015-2016)

What is the best thing about being a SPA?

I really enjoy the sense of community when I am working in the office. There are always people working at the table, stopping in to say "hi" to Madison, and watching the eagle/giraffe on the television screen (Scholars like learning about all different topics—we have been keeping up with the growth of a baby eagle in Florida and the pending birth of April the Giraffe's baby via live camera views).

What is your favorite Scholars memory or event?

My favorite Scholars event is the upperclassmen formal at Terra Cotta.

The setting is beautiful and it is a great way for the upperclassmen to stay connected with each other and with the program.

What impact has the Scholars Program had on your college experience?

The Scholars Program has impacted every part of my college experience. Through the Program, I have made numerous friends, I have been able to attend exciting events, I have been given professional opportunities that will impact my future, and I have held many Scholars leadership positions that have taught me valuable life skills.



Kaitlin Biagiotti

Future Plans

This summer, I will be exploring Hawaii and teaching at Choate Rosemary Hall, one of the top boarding schools in the Northeast. Next year, I will be returning to Binghamton University to finish up a Master's in Biology Education and to apply to fellowship programs abroad.



Lauren Nardacci ('17), Majoring in Biomedical Engineering

Other Scholars Program Involvement

Student Mentor (2014-2015)
SPA (2015-2016)

What is the best thing about being a SPA?

Learning about all the behind-the-scenes work that needs to get done and having a voice to make improvements in the Program!

What is your favorite Scholars memory or event?

I really enjoyed Professor Ziegler's Pool Party my sophomore year. It seemed a little bizarre at first to go to his house, but it was actually a great way to kick off the new year and catch up with people I had not seen over the summer. I also always love the New York City trips because I do not get to go there that often!

What impact has the Scholars Program had on your college experience?

I have made some of my closest friends through the Scholars Program. I was also able to get involved in research early on through the professional connections I made!

Future Plans

I will be attending graduate school for a Master's in Biomedical Engineering at Stanford University.

Emily Venezia ('17), Majoring in Nursing

Other Scholars Program Involvement

Student Mentor (2014-2015)
SPA (2015-2016)

What is the best thing about being a SPA?

One of the best things about being a SPA is getting

a say in the future of the Program. We are the voice of the students in the Scholars Program and have a strong influence on decisions and changes that are made. I also really enjoy working in the office with all of the other SPAs and Scholars who come in to visit or do homework.

What is your favorite Scholars memory or event?

I don't have one particular memory or event that is my favorite, but I have always enjoyed the welcome back pool party at Professor Ziegler's house at the beginning of the year. I think it is a nice way to reconnect with people you have not seen during the summer months.

What impact has the Scholars Program had on your college experience?

The Scholars Program has had a major impact on my college experience. I have made many of my best friends through the Scholars Program; I relied on the Program heavily during my freshman year to help in the college transition. I have accomplished many of my college goals because of the support I have received from the Program. I am really thankful to have been in the Scholars Program throughout my time here at Binghamton!



Emily Venezia

Future Plans

After graduation, I will be working as a nurse in the Intensive Care Unit support pool at Upstate University Hospital in Syracuse, New York. I plan to go back to school to become a nurse practitioner and/or nurse educator.

Tatiana Requijo ('17), Majoring in Cell and Molecular Biology

Other Scholars Program Involvement

Academic Chair (2014-2015)

Scholars Council Vice President (2015-2016)

What is the best thing about being a SPA?

The best thing about being a SPA is always having my voice heard. Over the past four years, Professor

Ziegler has always recognized my passion for the Program and the work I have put in to help the Program thrive. One of my favorite things he has said this year is that as long as we, SPAs, think an idea is good, he will consider it and find a way to incorporate at least parts of it into the Program. The SPA position truly helps me contribute to a Program I care deeply about while working alongside friends who feel like family.

What is your favorite Scholars memory or event?

My favorite Scholars memory is from my freshman year, when a group of us living on the third floor of Endicott did cartwheels down the hall during a study break. It seems insignificant, but is a memory I cherish as a time when we were carefree and comfortable with each other even so early on in college. I also love the waterfall hike with President Stenger because even though I have been on it three times, it is always a little different! I get to reconnect with Scholars I have not seen in a while and meet students who are new to the program.

What impact has the Scholars Program had on your college experience?

I think the Scholars Program has had at least a small hand in most things I have done in college. The Scholars Program gave me fast friends who I am still close to now, as well as the confidence to pursue campus opportunities. I came in as a shy student nervous about moving away from home, but the strong support of the Scholars Program pushed me to be the successful Binghamton student I am today.

Future Plans

I will begin medical school this coming Fall. I currently hope to specialize in Geriatrics, while also incorporating academic medicine and translational biomedical research into my career. Going to medical school has been my goal since before college, and I am excited about it becoming my plan. However, the Scholars Program truly makes Binghamton University a hard place to leave. ●



Tatiana Requijo

Freshman Research: FRIend, Not Foe

By Zachary Halpern ('19)

I recently completed the Binghamton University Freshman Research Immersion Program (FRI), as part of the Image and Acoustic Signals Analysis Stream. This Program taught me skills such as how to research a topic, how to compile a presentation, and how to operate developing technology. I gained valuable and lasting professional mentorship working with Dr. Shaun Canavan of the Computer Science Department for three semesters.

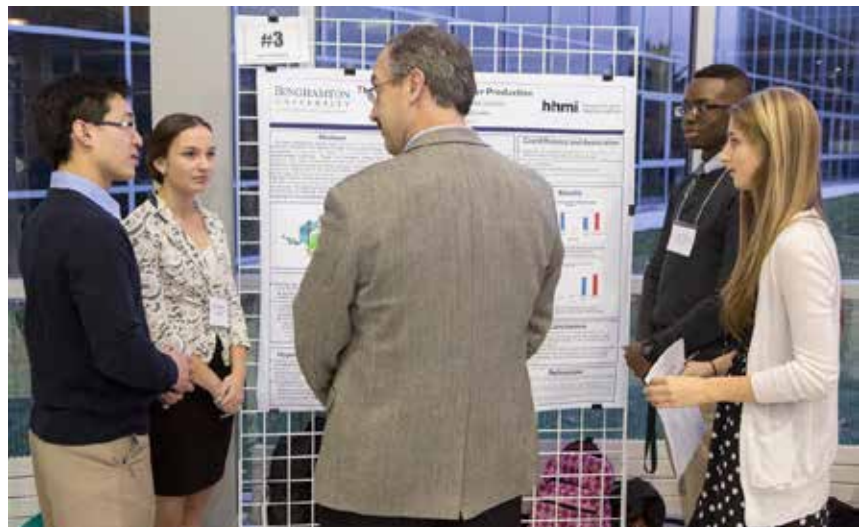
My colleagues and I studied driver fatigue detection. We selected the Microsoft Hololens virtual reality headset to monitor driver motions and head positioning. We used a combination of the C++, C#, Python, and Unity programming languages to process the Hololens data. The main metric we used to detect driver fatigue involved calculating whether or not drivers were nodding off while at the wheel, based on their head motions. We were able to detect the difference between whether a driver was falling asleep or not with an accuracy of almost 98%. Our work set

the foundation for future projects, as we were one of the first research groups worldwide to use the Hololens virtual reality headset for driving purposes.

At the end of our freshman Fall semester, we presented our project at the annual FRI Research Symposium. Students in the FRI Program gain valuable research presentation skill in preparation for presenting to faculty and investors.

Although my time in the FRI Program has ended, my group and I continue preparing our project results for publication. We will soon be able to have our names in a computer visions journal explaining the implications of our results. I am now an FRI teaching assistant, advising freshmen. The FRI experience is valuable because students develop teamwork skills and knowledge. I am so grateful I had the opportunity to engage in research so early in my college career. ●

Below: Zachary Halpern ('19) with President Stenger at the President's surprise birthday celebration



Above: Scholars present their research to Professor Wayne Jones at the 2016 Research Symposium

Scholar Abroad: Florence, Italy

By Sasha Dolgetta ('18)

Studying abroad is incredibly valuable for any student. There is a tremendous difference between being a “tourist” and being a “traveler.” The essence of “tourist” comes from the word “tour.” When you travel on vacation with your family or friends, you are a tourist. You set out to see the major sites, like the Colosseum, and to take iconic photos, like holding up the Leaning Tower of Pisa. You mainly interact with people whose job it is to accommodate and entertain guests. You return home shortly, with souvenirs for family and friends, and resume your daily routine.

As a study abroad student, you are a traveler. A traveler’s journey is more open-ended, spontaneous, and uncertain. One learns the culture of locals, sometimes subconsciously adopting certain aspects. This is exactly what I experienced in Florence. I spontaneously picked different European cities to visit on my four-day weekends, including Vienna, London, Paris, and St. Moritz. Not only did I go to all the major

Italian sites, such as the Uffizi Gallery and the statue of David, but I had a “usual” order at my favorite restaurant. I made friends with the local waiters, enjoying aperitivo (pre-dinner drinks) with them in the afternoon.

It is important to be a traveler. It is important to break out of the Binghamton bubble, and even the United States bubble, to see what else exists out there. It is important to explore other ways to live, and understand other priorities, values, and traditions. Studying abroad is the best way to become a traveler, whether it be for a few weeks, a semester, or a year. One would be surprised at how much he or she could grow during and afterwards.

To learn more about study abroad opportunities at Binghamton University, see the Office of International Education and Global Initiatives’s website, <https://binghamton-oip.terradotta.com>. ●



Sasha Dolgetta ('18) on the Amalfi Coast of Southern Italy

Freshmen Follow Their Passions in Campus Clubs

By Sara Holand ('20)

At Binghamton University, freshmen students can explore their passions and interests by getting involved in some of the 250+ clubs and organizations on campus. Here are a few examples of Binghamton freshmen Scholars participating in various extracurricular activities:

Name: Jack Shearer

Involvement: International Language Association (ILA)

"The International Language Association is awesome! I get to speak some of the languages I'm studying while learning about culture. If you want to learn a language, even if you're a total beginner, you should go to ILA."

Name: Hunter Andrasko

Involvement: Student Association Congress

"I'd always been involved in student government in high school, so when I heard about the SA Congress, I decided to run for a position, and was elected! As a Congress member, it's my responsibility to represent my community. I attend weekly Congress and committee meetings to make sure all campus voices are heard!"

Name: Alyssa Wei

Involvement: Colleges Against Cancer

"I joined Colleges Against Cancer halfway through my first semester because I really wanted to get involved and support cancer awareness and research on campus. Cancer research and awareness have been causes I supported all throughout high school, so it was nice to be able to find them on campus, as well. One of my favorite parts about Colleges Against Cancer is planning the annual Relay for Life event! It's so fun and rewarding to raise money for the American Cancer Society and spend time with friends and faculty for 12 straight hours in the Events Center."

Name: Candice O'Connor

Involvement: Note to Self

"When I first auditioned for the Note to Self Acapella group (previously called "Koinoinia"), I was nervous because I had never been in a small singing group before; nevertheless, I have no regrets about joining the group. Besides singing and constructing music, I enjoy learning and growing as a musician with my friends and mentors. They are all incredible, witty, and talented people, and I could not be more proud to be in a family like Note to Self."



Freshmen on the apple-picking trip



Freshmen enjoy the beautiful Buttermilk Falls

From the Desk of Madison Stenger, Scholars Canine-in-Residence

By Madison Stenger and Ciara Hanlon ('18)

Today is Monday. Monday is Madison Day, and I'm Madison, so Monday is for me!

I once went for a hike with my human (some people call him President Stenger), and there were so many people there! I think my human was supposed to be the main attraction, but, as always, I stole the show. After that, I guess the people wanted to see me more, so on Madison Mondays, my human brings me to a place called "The Scholars Program Office."

Being a Scholar seems hard. They look at computers all day. But when Ciara's not working, she likes to walk me and play. Maggie drinks a lot of coffee, which Dakota brings to her. I like Dakota a lot – people think our names sound like girls' names, but we are both boys, in case you were confused.

Other Scholars come to visit me, too! There is a nice girl named Kaitlin (we take pictures together), and a girl named Tatiana who works super hard! Nothing distracts her—trust me, I've tried. Three boys come in together: Michael, Chris, and Connor. They say they're doing homework, but they sure talk a lot!

What I love most is seeing how much all these Scholars like each other. They act like a family! Even when they're working, they laugh and have a great time. Sometimes they do weird things like watch giraffes or eagles on TV. But I chase my tail sometimes, so who am I to judge? Professor Ziegler calls the Scholars "the smartest people on the planet," and I can really see why. The only thing that can take them away from their work is a furry guy like me! ●



Above: Madison basks in the adoration of some humans

Below: Madison is pampered by a professional dog-masseuse



Contributor Profiles

Jasper Andrew ('17), Magazine layout/cover

Jasper is a senior Computer Science major from Santa Cruz, California. He likes creating, gaming, and Reese's Cups.

Sasha Dolgetta ('18), "Scholar Abroad: Florence Italy"

Sasha is a junior Biology major and Global Studies minor from Westchester, NY. Some of her favorite things are traveling, brunch, skiing, and watching movies in bed.

Alyssa Goodman ('19), "What's the Scoop on Scholars Council?"

Alyssa Goodman is a sophomore from Dix Hills, NY, majoring in Psychology on the ABA track. She is interested in becoming a child psychologist and working with children with autism.

Zachary Halpern ('19), "Freshman Research: FRIend, Not Foe" and Magazine design/layout/cover

Zachary is a Computer Science and Mathematics major who is certified in EMS. He tries to stay as heavily involved on campus as possible, through roles including the Co-Rec Football Coordinator and Pep Band Vice President. In his free time, he likes to tinker with websites and learn card tricks and games.

Ciara Hanlon ('18), "From the Desk of Madison Stenger, Scholars Canine-in-Residence"

Ciara Hanlon is an out-of-state junior majoring in Human Development and Psychology with a minor in Education. She currently serves as President of Scholars Council and Vice President of Peace Action.

Sara Holand ('20), "Freshmen Follow Their Passions in Campus Clubs"

Sara is a freshman currently studying Geography and Marketing. When not in class or studying, she can be found copy editing for Pipe Dream, drinking mint chocolate chip milkshakes, or watching "New Girl" on Netflix.

Katherine Loomba ('17), "Scholars Go to Greece!" and "The President Stenger Perspective"

Katherine is a senior Neuroscience major from Westchester, NY. She loves the friends she has made at Binghamton and is sad to leave!

Alfred Malomo, Jr. ('20), Editor

Alfred is a sophomore Biology Major on the Pre-Med track who enjoys being part of the Scholars Program. He is a tour guide, tuba player in the Pep Band, and actively involved in the University's Campus Bible Fellowship.

Catherine Michie ('19), "Dr. George Catalano is One-of-a-Kind"

Catherine is a sophomore studying Nursing with a minor in Forensic Health. In her spare time, she loves reading, watching scary movies, and traveling.

Lauren Nardacci ('17), "Thoughts on the 2016 National Collegiate Honors Conference"

Lauren is a senior majoring in Biomedical Engineering from Albany, NY. On campus, she conducts research on the synthesis of nanoparticles as MRI contrast agents, and is the president of Engineering World Health. She really enjoys eating Welch's fruit snacks.

Tatiana Requiño ('17), Editor-in-Chief and Contributor

Tatiana is a senior Cell and Molecular Biology major from Queens, NY. Her campus research links Type 2 Diabetes and the immune response in fruit flies, and she is an RA in Dickinson Community. If you don't like talking or hearing about science, you might want to avoid her.

Jessie Rubin ('19), "Scholars Serve in the Binghamton Community" and Magazine design/layout/cover

Jessie is a sophomore Business Administration major. She works at the Fleishman Center for Career and Professional Development, is on the Society of Human Resource Management Executive Board, is a Scholars Student Mentor, and is on the Scholars Community Service Committee. She loves taking fitness classes, and listening to Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran, and Adele!

Neha Sharma ('20), "Student Mentors Make an Impact", "Students Take Charge as Scholars Program Assistants"

Neha is a freshman Business Administration major from East Brunswick, New Jersey. On campus, she is part of One Special World, SHRM, and the Scholars Social Committee. In her spare time, she watches a ridiculous amount of Netflix.

Emma Williams ('19), "Scholars in the Arts," "The President Stenger Perspective," and Magazine design/layout/cover

Emma is that quirky Theatre major who can always be found doing something weird in Fine Arts. She is an avid Harry Potter fan, loves to bake, and would probably be voted "Most Psyched" if this were a yearbook.



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