September 2008

Welcome to the Freshmen Scholars!

Congratulations:
- Lan Tran, who was awarded a $41,500 fellowship from the EPA.

Congratulations to our graduating senior scholars!
- Brendan Adams
- Nickole Bennett
- Jaclyn Boyce
- Catherine Chudinski
- Kathryn Cooke
- Eileen De La Cruz
- Raechel Link
- Lauren Stroyek

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Intellectual Inquirer

Summer at Oxford

Poet Matthew Arnold once described Oxford as a “sweet city with... dreaming spires,” but after my eight hour international flight, two hour bus ride, and subsequent walk to the Exeter College campus lugging my fifty pound suitcase, my thoughts about the city were anything but poetic. When I finally reached the college, I had to drag my luggage up five flights of spiral staircases to my room at the top floor. While the staff would never admit it, I believe the stairs are designed as a hazing ritual for new students. Although my first impressions of Oxford were not positive, a full night’s rest made me more receptive to the upcoming three-week course. Every weekday morning the English Literature Program had a plenary lecture, in which professors would visit the campus and discuss topics in English literature. Despite being held at 9 AM, the lectures were interesting, and covered topics such as “Beowulf” and the fidelity of its recent film adaptation (I can honestly say I did not expect to see a semi-nude Angelina Jolie during my time studying abroad) and “The Victorian Novel: Soap Opera and Serial Killers.” The variety of the morning lectures enabled both graduate and undergraduate students to get a wider, more comprehensive view of English literature, in addition to the specialized courses students selected.

As an undergraduate, I was required to take two courses: Jane Austen and the Regency and Shakespeare on Stage and Screen. Both classes required substantial reading before the courses began, and I felt like I was training for the Strong Woman competition after carrying my Norton Shakespeare anthology around England. The classes met twice a week for two hours, and during the final week, we were required to turn in a 2500-word essay on a topic provided by our professors. Although both courses were great, I really enjoyed my Shakespeare course because we compared different plays and film adaptations and critiqued their interpretations of the texts. It was interesting to see the divergent interpretations of Shakespeare’s plays and directors’ choices to omit portions of the text in favor of their own visions of the plays.

Although I was busy with coursework, I had time to do sightseeing as well. Since Oxford is such a small city, everything is within walking distance. Exeter was located in the center of the city, so the attractions were all fairly close. I went to the Botanic Gardens and watched a cricket match, but I still have no idea how to play. However, I am a firm believer that if men can play cricket in white shorts and sweaters without breaking a sweat, then it is not a real sport. While cricket baffled me, I was very interested in the literary history of Oxford. For instance, Christ Church College not only inspired author Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, but it also was the spot where scenes of Harry Potter were filmed. In addition, authors J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis frequented the pub The Eagle and the Child, known by the locals as “The Bird and the Babe,” to work on their novels over a pint of beer.

Despite the difficult voyage overseas, my trip was a once in a lifetime experience. I can’t believe I actually studied at Oxford College, and I’ll never forget my time in England. I certainly won’t miss the food (being a vegetarian in the land of meat and potatoes is a very difficult experience) or the cold, rainy weather in the middle of July, but I will always remember my academic experience there. I learned so much in those three weeks, and the courses reminded me why I chose to be an English major in the first place.
President’s Message

Dear Scholars,

Welcome to the 2008-2009 semester! For some of us it is the beginning of an exciting journey in our academic career, and I’d like to take this opportunity to welcome the Freshman Scholars who are joining our ranks. Others are reaching the end of their college years and the rest fall somewhere in between. I want to extend congratulations to all the Senior Scholars who have dedicated their time so diligently to this organization. Just one more year, y’all...keep up the good work! Class of 2012, I’m excited that you have made the decision to come to Virginia Wesleyan College. This school will serve you well, and you will never forget the friendships and connections you will make with fellow students and faculty. During your collegiate years, continue with the excellent scholastic achievements you attained in High School. Remember to maintain balance between your school responsibilities and your personal life. Join a club, sorority, or fraternity; get involved in community service; be involved in athletics. Do things that will maximize your college experience without minimizing your grades. You can do it! Just don’t be afraid to say no sometimes, because you can’t let yourself get too overwhelmed. Scholars, continue doing what you do best by maintaining the academic success that first admitted you to this program, and take advantage of the opportunities it offers you. Ask for help when you need it and give help when asked.

I hope y’all have a wonderful semester! Feel free to come to me if you need anything.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Mabry

Our Scholars’ Summer in Review

Scholars don’t seem to slow down during the summer months. Here is what has been happening with some of you:

Rebecca Driscoll moved with her family, because her father (who is a Methodist minister) was transferred to a new church in Williamsburg. She took an archaeology class at William & Mary over the summer since she was living so close to the college. The class was to follow up on her interest in a career in the field. With the class finished, she is now encouraged to continue that pursuit.

J.C. Caldwell worked as a Girl Scout Camp Counselor this summer. She especially enjoyed teaching the girls new things and having fun with them. She learned that working with the other counselors sometimes proved to be challenging, but was able to pull through for the kids. Another part of her summer was being on the Orientation staff for the new freshmen. She enjoyed being a staffer because it gave her a chance to catch up with VWC friends and also to meet the Class of 2012. She thought it was a good opportunity for the new students to meet upperclassmen.

Another scholar enjoyed working on the summer Orientation staff as well. Chavon Freeman joined the staff because she had appreciated her staffers when she was a freshman. She had a great time talking with the parents of the incoming freshmen because she believed that it was important to make them feel that they had made the right decision sending their children to Wesleyan. She also enjoyed meeting the new students along-side her fellow classmates, working together to encourage the nervous freshmen. She learned that her excitement rubbed off on them and made them feel less apprehensive. One personal highlight was celebrating her brothers’ graduation from High School with her whole family.

John Maravich, one of our SGA senators, worked with Drs. Malcolm and Schaus on the Green Roof project atop Smithideal Hall. He learned that a lot of work is required for successful scientific research and also how important such research is. He also realized that for projects such as the Green Roof one, sometimes significant amounts of cleaning and preparing materials may be required before any analysis is even possible.

Nicholas Rafiord was awarded a grant to conduct research on geckos in Trinidad, and he says this was the highlight of his summer. There were too many great experiences to list, he said, but the entire experience was amazing. He also managed his county’s new athletic complex, which he was used to since it was his 2nd summer doing it. He loved earning money, and hanging out with his friends and family, but Trinidad topped it all.

Also among our summer travelers was Carolina Solms-Baruth who went to Istanbul to learn Turkish. She worked in Hostels while she was there, preparing and serving food. She also tutored a Turkish man in English. She learned the impor-

(Continued on page 3)
Summer Research Experience  

Project: Role of Semiaquatic Turtles in Lake Nutrient Cycles  
Species of Interest: *Chrysemys picta picta* and *Trachemys scripta*

Over the past two-and-a-half months, I have been working with Dr. Maynard Schaus to examine the role semiaquatic turtles play in nutrient cycling. Unfortunately, field projects rarely go as smoothly as you anticipate when planning a procedure. 

At times, my project was fun, exciting, frustrating and stressful, but this is very much reflective of my experience as a VWC student approaching graduation. 

As a freshman, I came to Virginia Wesleyan knowing that I was interested in both biology and chemistry. I had also pre-determined that I wanted to take the MCAT and apply to medical school. As my studies continued and I was exposed to different perspectives and opportunities, the expectations that I had for myself changed dramatically. I became increasingly uneasy and unhappy with what I thought I should be doing. To my dismay, a black-and-white image of myself as a doctor that I created in high school was beginning to limit my actions as an adult.

Prior to conducting projects over the past two summers, I never thought of myself as “cut out” for field projects. There are so many variables that can come into play beyond the parameters presented in a laboratory setting (i.e. weather, availability of supplies, tampering, etc.), not to mention that field work often lacks the comforts of an air-conditioned classroom. Facing challenges along the way forced me to develop problem solving skills and a great deal of independence - as a professor is not always nearby to answer questions.

I guess that you can say that my lifestyle has become a lot more “empirical” in nature, largely due to these experiences. Answers certainly do not come quickly in research, but there is a larger purpose in existence which is not always within the immediate grasp of our awareness. At the end of August, I submitted my application for the Peace Corp, and I hope to work toward environmental conservation, education or health awareness. In terms of my summer work, the ten turtles active in our experiment have been released, and analysis of the data continues as our parameters of interest have expanded.

All of our turtles survived the 4-week sampling period and Dr. Schaus and I are planning to submit a manuscript for publication detailing our findings.

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“Curiosity is the very basis of education and if you tell me that curiosity killed the cat, I say only the cat died nobly.”

~Arnold Edinborough

(Scholars’ Summer in Review, continued from page 2)

...tance of fitting into a conservative Muslim country as a woman. She felt that she matured while being in Istanbul because there were two terrorist attacks while she was there, which hadn’t happened since 2003. One of the best parts of her visit was when her cousin came from Germany to visit and they enjoyed the local food, nightlife, and especially a few days on a friend’s sailboat in the Aegean Sea.

Marissa Wood says that her most rewarding experience this summer was working with a Junior Olympic volleyball team for girls 14 and under. Her team made it to Nationals in Dallas Texas, which she said gave her an opportunity to get to know the young women better. She was looked up to by her players and felt privileged to be in that position and looks forward to repeating the experience next summer.

And this is just a sampling of scholars, imagine what all the others were doing! Surely, we all are ready to greet a new semester with fresh minds and continue to do what you do best after such amazing summer experiences.
Senior Spotlight: Nickole Bennett

Hometown:
Chesapeake, VA
Education before VWC:
Oscar Smith High School
Major:
Liberal Arts Management
One thing that attracted you to VWC:
The campus, it just felt right when I visited. The scholarship money helped too.
Best memory from VWC:
The day I was initiated into Phi Sigma Sigma.
What you do for fun:
Hang out with my sorority sisters, travel, and watch movies.
Future plans:
Hopefully graduate school in Fall 2009, eventually I want to do event planning.
Favorite course:
Tech Theater with Travis Malone.
Professor who inspired you:
David Garraty is one of those professors that truly wants you to learn what he is teaching but at the same time care and looks out for you. I had him for Honors Macroeconomics and while I didn’t always enjoy his class I was always willing to go.
Favorite Quote:
“Don’t ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.” ~Harold Whitman
H&S underclassmen advice:
Don’t waste a day. You may make mistakes and not everything will seem right but you have to keep pushing through and find a way to achieve your dreams.

Senior Spotlight: Eileen De La Cruz

Hometown:
Grovetown, GA
Education before VWC:
Damascus High School
Major:
Psychology
One thing that attracted you to VWC:
Tie between the small class sizes and being near the beach!
Best memory from VWC:
Too many to name. Just ask!
What you do for fun:
Be silly with my friends and sleep.
Future plans:
Graduate school in the fall for school psychology and work until then.
Favorite course:
Abnormal Psychology
Mentor who inspired you:
Jenn Mitchell-Miller has meant a lot to me.
Favorite Quote:
“It’s always okay in the end. If it’s not okay, it’s not the end.”
H&S underclassmen advice:
Be serious about your classes and the things you involve yourself with but don’t forget to have fun. You’ll go crazy if you never let yourself relax. This is college! Enjoy it while it lasts because it’ll be over before you know it.

Senior Spotlight: Rachel Link

Hometown:
Charleston, SC
Education before VWC:
Tailwood High School
Majors:
Computer Science
Mathematics
Psychology
One thing that attracted you to VWC:
The small class size!
Best memory from VWC:
Making friends and living in Johnston Hall!
What you do for fun:
Draw, write Haikus, read, and go dancing.
Future plans:
Pursue a career either as a counselor or neuropsychologist.
Favorite course:
Modern Geometries and Abnormal Psychology
Professor who inspired you:
Dr. Noe!!
Favorite Quote:
“There are no mistakes, only choices.” ~Ann Richardson
H&S underclassmen advice:
Do your best at everything you do, give it all you’ve got, and you will succeed.
Presenting at NCUR Kim Fahle

Last semester I had the honor of presenting at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research held at Salisbury University along with Kathleen Mabry and Katherine Burchett. It was great to be one of the first people representing Virginia Wesleyan at this prestigious conference.

I presented my research project, The Diverse Art of the Nineteenth Century, which was my honors project for Dr. Howell’s Nineteenth Century Art History class. I looked at the religious art of William Blake, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Paul Gauguin and Eugene Delacroix. The main focus of the project was to examine the differences in their styles and objectives in depicting similar themes. I presented on the first day of the three day conference shortly after we arrived at Salisbury, which was great because I didn’t have time to get too nervous.

The set up for the conference was great. It completely took over Salisbury University and almost all classrooms were taken over for presentations. During each presentation slot, four people presented projects from the same basic academic division, which in my case was art history. The classroom setting was great. Since it was more intimate than a lecture hall would be, the classroom setting fostered some great discussions. Kathleen and Katherine, along with Dr. Schaus and Dr. Howell, our advisors for the trip, came to hear my presentation. Their supporting me meant a lot.

Once my presentation was done, I was free to enjoy the rest of the conference. We were so lucky, the weather was wonderful the whole weekend and the Salisbury campus was beautiful. I got to check out all kinds of different presentations including one on whether John Stewart’s The Daily Show is a credible news source, as well as being a surprisingly entertaining presentation on grammar. It was crazy how diverse all the presentations were and it was a pleasure to sit down and hear other students talk so passionately and knowledgeably about topics that I, perhaps, didn’t know much about. One great aspect of the conference was the opportunity to get your work published. I submitted the paper I had written for the presentation and it was chosen to be one of the papers published in the Proceedings of the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. It is such an honor, and I am so pumped that I got this opportunity.

When we weren’t at Salisbury, we were at a hotel right on the beach in Ocean City, which was a treat. Many of the other presenters were at the same hotel and it was funny to see the hotel completely overrun by college students nervously preparing and practicing for their own presentations.

Being able to participate in the National Conference on Undergraduate Research was a fabulous experience, and if I get the opportunity again, I would love to go back. I urge my fellow scholars to consider participating if you get a chance. I hope I will be only one of the first of many to represent Virginia Wesleyan at this conference.

“The ideal curriculum would turn the prevailing undergraduate culture of receivers into a culture of inquirers.”

~ Boyer Commission Report

Mark Your Calendars: Fall 2008 Honors & Scholars Co-curricular Events

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<th>Event</th>
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<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Reception</td>
<td>Wednesday, September 3</td>
<td>3:00 pm</td>
<td>Pearce Hospitality Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Halloween Festival (Haunted Hayride)</td>
<td>Sunday, October 26</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>Hunt Club Farm, Virginia Beach</td>
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<td>Norfolk Admirals vs. Rockford</td>
<td>Friday, November 7</td>
<td>7:15 pm</td>
<td>Scope Arena, Norfolk</td>
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<td>Words &amp; Music—Virginia Symphony</td>
<td>Saturday, November 15</td>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td>Sandler Center, Virginia Beach</td>
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<td>A Christmas Carol</td>
<td>Thursday, December 4</td>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td>Wells Theatre, Norfolk</td>
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Senior Spotlight: Lauren Stroyeck

Hometown: Virginia Beach, VA
Education before VWC: Homeschool & Tidewater Community College
Major: International Studies
One thing that attracted you to VWC:
Only local college to offer a classics major - although I ended up switching majors
Best memory from VWC:
Standing at the foot of the Parthenon, feeling very humbled.
What you do for fun:
Practice taekwondo, play piano, and read voraciously.
Future plans:
Work for an international, non-profit organization doing fieldwork or diplomacy.
Favorite course:
From Athens to Istanbul study abroad trip 2007. It was a life-long dream come true.
Professor who inspired you:
Dr. Landolt inspired me to think more objectively and analytically and with an open mind about everything, even those ideas and beliefs I had taken for granted.
Favorite Quote:
“Be like water.” ~Lao Tzu
H&S underclassmen advice:
Do not skip class unless you have to. Ditching is an easy habit to form, but you will waste yours, your parents’, and your professors’ time and money. You will get as much from your education as you yourself put into it.

Community Service: Circle K International

Looking for an avenue for your community service efforts? Why not join the VWC chapter of Circle K International?

What is Circle K?
Circle K International is the largest student lead service organization in the world. This organization is all about fellowship, leadership and service. The benefits that members receive range from scholarships to attending conferences and receiving awards.

A more prudent question to ask is “What does Circle K mean to you?” Of course, it means something different to each member, but perhaps the sharing of one member’s perspective will provide some insight into this unique organization.

Circle K International is an organization that lets me be a leader when no one else thought I was good enough. I was the shy girl who some looked at as being the one who was kind of smart, but would never do anything. Then I joined Circle K and was able to become PR Chair for our group, it let me flex my creative muscles and even lead a committee at the same time.

Circle K is an organization that allows me to fit in when I have never fit in to any thing before. It is really hard to find people your own age who love doing service just for the fun of it. We are all the same and yet different and that is why I fit in—we as Circle K members are united in our goal of service. I love the smile it brings to people faces when I say I do service for fun. Yes, sometimes I have been asked if I got in trouble, but service is a great passion of mine and it is shared by CKI members across the globe!

Circle K is not about money, awards, or fancy titles. It goes much deeper then that and when you can find another organization that has the power to effect it’s members this deeply I’d love to join it. Circle K has changed my life.

I hope that if you join you will also be affected to the same degree. When I leave VWC and become a high school teacher, I already have plans to start a Key Club, the high school level CKI organization, and become a Kawanian. I hope to be a part of the CKI organization for the rest of my life.

Now it is your turn, come on and join Circle K and discover what it means to you.

Ashlee Edwards