



MURIEL A. HOWARD HONORS PROGRAM *Official Newsletter*

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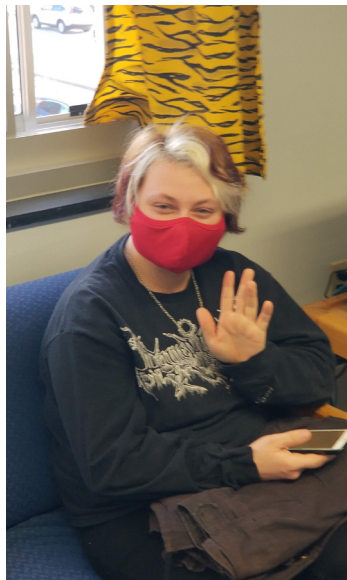
HONORS ICE SKATING

WELCOME TO OUR PROGRAM

36 BUFFALO STATE STUDENTS JOIN HONORS THIS SEMESTER

Our community has grown over the break, thanks to the addition of 36 Continuing Honors Students! On February 2nd, Honors held a Welcome Reception to celebrate our newest Honors students who applied to join the Program after achieving at least a 3.3 GPA while attending Buffalo State University. In their applications, students frequently described wanting a community

in which to feel connected and a place to get more involved on-campus. Keyona Spencer, first-year sociology major, says “I joined the Honors Program because I would be able to have more opportunities in life to be successful and I love challenging myself to hardcore curriculum. I was very thrilled and overjoyed to find out that I’m a part of something bigger.”



NEW HONORS WALL ART



LeeAnne Dutkiewicz, one of our Fall 2022 Honors Interns, spent many hours during Winter Break designing and installing lively new wall vinyl in the Honors entry spaces. Take a look next time you stop by South Wing 3rd Floor!



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Catch up with one of our Spring 2021 Honors Graduates

During Keyona's time at Buffalo State, she was not only in the Honors Program but was also a Resident Assistant (RA) during her last two years of school. She majored in Childhood Education with a Concentration in English.

Keyona graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Spring 2021 and immediately began her teaching career. She was offered the opportunity to teach first grade in New York and was able to make her way up the ladder to become a fourth grade integrated co-teacher. She is currently pursuing her Master's in special education through Touro College full-time while still being a full-time teacher.

Keyona credits the Honors Program and Buffalo State for enabling her to gain the skills of time management and networking. "Buffalo State has allowed me to network and build everlasting connections. I now have the ability to step into a room and manage to gain connections with others that will benefit me in my career journey. This has allowed me to have a community with a plethora of connections to help me become a better educator."

Q&A WITH KEYONA

What was your favorite Honors course?

My favorite Honors class was HON389 which was my Capstone Course Project. This course allowed me to internalize all the information I learned and experienced throughout my college career and create a final project on the impact and role it played towards my future. This was the major reason why I had the confidence and willpower to start job hunting as early as January during my last Spring semester and was successful in gaining my first full time position as a teacher pre graduation. This course had finalized all the skills needed to prepare me for the responsibilities that would await me post-graduation.

What advice do you have for the graduating seniors?

You are close to the finish line, and you should be so proud of yourself. You have surpassed all obstacles life may have managed to throw at you. Day in and day out finding ways to stand strong and continuing to be the phenomenal scholar that you are. Continue to keep that higher goal at top of mind until you reach it whether that is your future career or passion. I am certain that you will obtain it, I am proud of you and through it all ensure to set some time out for yourself to celebrate all that you have done and will continue to do.

What advice do you have for our newer Honors students?

Ensure you set both personal and academic goals for yourself. Never settle for nothing less than your best. Even when things may manage to become a challenge, always remember your purpose and reason. Surround yourself with those who have your best interest and are motivating you to your fullest potential. Don't put off until tomorrow what can be done today. Ensure that you are managing your time wisely but overall enjoy the experience and all that comes with this new chapter in your life.



KEYONA BELLONY '21



ARE YOU AN HONORS ALUM? Please update us on how you're doing!
Scan the QR code & fill out the survey to get a chance to be featured in our newsletter.

FROM RESTRICTIONS TO RESILIENCE:

WHAT DID YOU MISS OUT ON DURING HIGH SCHOOL BECAUSE OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS THAT IMPACTED YOUR ADJUSTMENT TO COLLEGE?

“I lost a lot of the excitement and motivation that I had previous to the pandemic, causing me to slack off my junior and senior year regarding college research, applying to scholarships, and looking into classes/programs.” Amber Koeth, *First-Year Childhood Education*

“What I missed was what a lot of people think of, clubs, musicals, and many more opportunities to become involved with my high school. I know that I missed many typical lessons on how to deal with people, which definitely is a setback on my social and mental maturity.” Jamie Ervolina, *First-Year Psychology*

“In high school, we were supposed to start preparing for college as late as junior year, but since we were in the pandemic I felt that my class didn’t receive the proper instruction on how to apply or even where to start.” Ayah Abdelhay, *First-Year Speech Language Pathology*

“Our prom was outside on our track field having a speaker for music, bean bag toss, Photo stand, and food stands. It was better than nothing, but it caused us to miss out on the traditional prom.... Even when we were hybrid my Junior year we were divided into groups called the blue group and the gold group and we would go to school on different days. Most of my friends were in the opposite group from me so I still missed out on being able to see them and socialize with them. I wasn’t prepared for what college had to offer me because I missed out on what high school was supposed to prepare me for.” Ashley Eicheldinger, *First-Year Political Science*

DO YOU FEEL THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS HAD A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON YOUR COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS?

“You look forward to this grand step of independence and your first bit of your own freedom, and Covid took that away for many of us. When I applied for college, I had all these visions of how it would be, where I would go, etc. Yet, for the first year and a half I didn’t see any new faces, I sat in my bedroom staring at my computer for hours, and it was nothing that I had been mentally preparing for since I started high school...

...In a matter of a few days, every part of our social lives was stripped away from us and we had to adapt very quickly. The mental effects were detrimental to many. The feelings of isolation and constant doom could send anyone into a spiral. After a year and a half of having to adjust, it’s hard being thrown ‘back to normal.’ How do you make friends or even hold a conversation with someone? The newfound fear that has crept inside all of us about not knowing what would come next, and when will it end?” Jaylyn Zimmer, *Senior Social Studies Education*

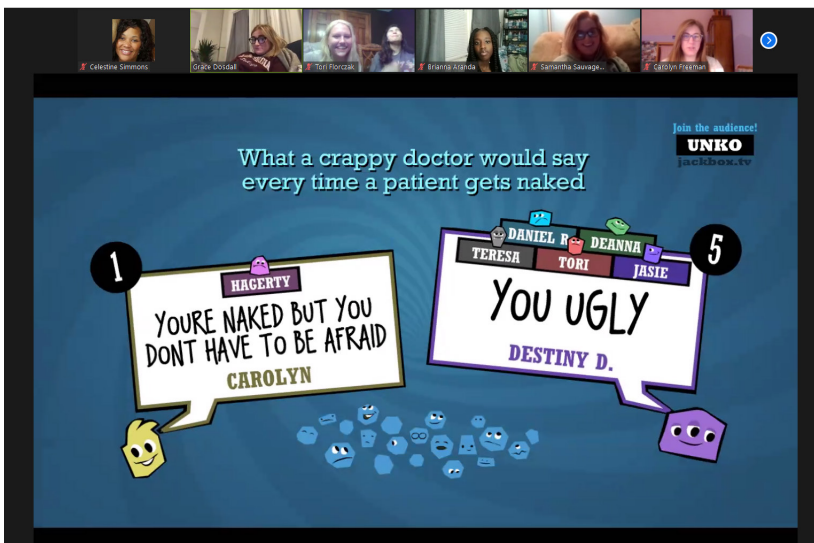
AS WE ROUND THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF COVID LOCKDOWNS, HEAR HOW THE PANDEMIC HAS IMPACTED FIRST-YEAR AND SENIOR HONORS STUDENTS

IN WHAT WAYS DID COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS IMPACT YOUR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE?

“With COVID-19, I was trying so hard to focus on academics where my mental and physical state was nowhere in sight.” Grace Gallagher, *Senior Psychology/Social Welfare*

“Covid-19 was definitely tough, socially; I lived on campus at the time, and felt as though I was locked away in my tiny dorm room more often than not. I lived by myself, due to the restrictions, and felt like I didn’t get to interact with people at ALL.” Jayde Wilkin-Smith, *Senior Art Education*

LEFT: HONORS JACKBOX GAME NIGHT, DECEMBER 2020
RIGHT: HONORS GRADUATE CELEBRATION FEATURING KEYONA BELLONY, MAY 2021



HOW COVID-19 IMPACTED HONORS

WERE THERE ANY POSITIVE OR UNEXPECTED IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC ON YOUR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE?

“It prepared me for anything that could possibly happen. I’m in the mindset with college that if anything happens, at least I’m prepared to go online and do work.” Grace Gallagher, *Senior Psychology/Social Welfare*

“It made me choose a major I loved rather than was safe.” Sebastiano Lombardo, *Senior Music Performance*

“I was able to branch out in ways I never imagined, even academically because I participated in an internship!” Grace Brzycky, *Senior Earth Sciences*

“It definitely trained me to adapt to a sudden situation and being in that situation for so long encouraged me to immediately seek opportunities when it ended which I achieved.” Colby Perrigo, *Senior Television and Film Arts*

“It helped me to understand how to be adaptable and expect unexpected things to be thrown your way, something which will help me immensely in my field (I’m going to be a teacher...what better practice in being adaptable than a global pandemic)” Jayde Wilkin-Smith, *Senior Art Education*

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- NEARLY EVERY SENIOR SOMEWHAT OR STRONGLY AGREES THAT THE PANDEMIC RESTRICTIONS AND DISRUPTIONS HAD A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THEIR COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS
- SENIORS FACED THE GREATEST IMPACT SOCIALLY, FOLLOWED BY MENTALLY AND ACADEMICALLY
- FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS OFTEN RATED THEIR COLLEGE READINESS MUCH HIGHER AFTER THEIR FIRST SEMESTER THAN BEFORE

“RESILIENCE” MAY BE DEFINED AS THE ABILITY TO RECOVER FROM OR ADJUST EASILY TO MISFORTUNE OR CHANGE. DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE BUILT RESILIENCE AS AN HONORS STUDENT AT BUFFALO STATE IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

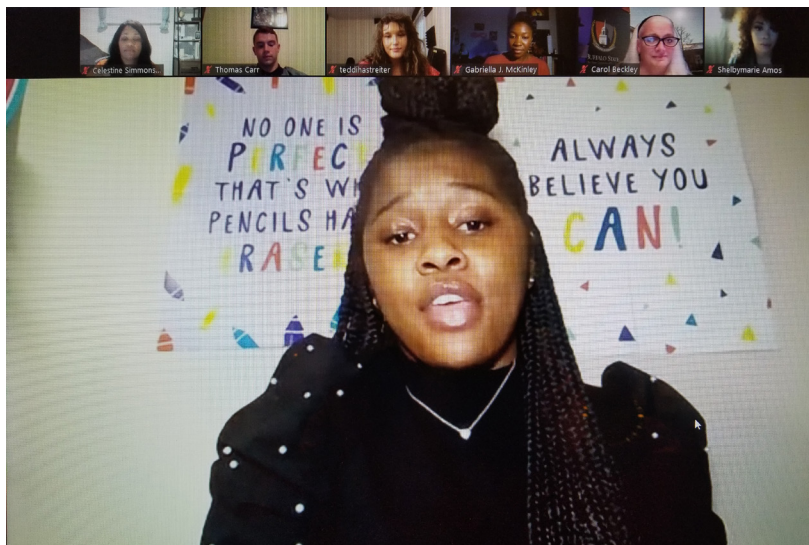
“My first semester was a great way for me to get on track to having a normal life by the liveliness on campus. I have not seen much of that for a while, which was definitely what helped me put myself out there to try harder to get involved and succeed in social and academic aspects. Clearly being an Honors student now, I think I have the right to say my resilience has built itself up as I’ve adjusted to the nostalgic normalcy of what we all took for granted several years ago.” Jamie Ervolina, *First-Year Psychology*

DID ANY ASPECTS OF THE HONORS PROGRAM IMPROVE YOUR ADJUSTMENT TO COLLEGE?

“Everything that I use on campus that has something to do with Honors just kind of allows me to go through my classes a little bit smoother with piece of mind.” Hailey Hankinson, *First-Year Mechanical and Electrical Engineering*

“HON111 Introduction to Honors gave me input on mentality and preparation for my next semester” Kiara Tirado, *First-Year Industrial Technology*

“I thought after the pandemic I lost all my chances to make a difference, but as an Honors student it’s helped me take on leadership and prepared me to get more involved throughout college.” Ashley Eicheldinger, *First-Year Political Science*





APPLY TO SERVE AS A FALL 2023 HONORS LEADER

Following a wonderful kickoff year in Fall 2022, the Honors Leaders peer mentoring program will return this Fall semester. The goals of this program are to provide peer support to first-year Honors students, provide valuable leadership experience to returning Honors students, and to strengthen connections across class years within the Honors community.

POSITION HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- \$600 stipend
- Summer training retreat at Whispering Pines Lodge
- Exclusive Honors Leaders student office space
- 2-4 hours per week average time commitment
- Special Honors Leaders swag
- Closer connections with other Honors Leaders

Honors Leader program coordinator, Matt Baran, encourages any Honors students interested in the position to attend an upcoming information session. “Our inaugural Honors Leaders truly set the bar high in terms of both their mentoring skills and the genuine friendships they built with each other. I can’t wait to see our next Leader cohort shine this Fall.”

Applications will be available by March 1st and accepted until March 20th.

HONORS LEADER INFORMATION SESSIONS:

- TUESDAY, MARCH 7TH, 12:30-1:00PM
HONORS HUB
- TUESDAY, MARCH 7TH, 6:00-6:30PM
MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING
- WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8TH, 3:00-3:30PM
HONORS HUB

QUESTIONS? EMAIL BARANMJ@BUFFALOSTATE.EDU



WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR HONORING HONORS

The Honors Program’s annual senior recognition event is back! All Honors students are invited to attend the occasion to celebrate this year’s Honors graduates as well as recognize some invaluable members of the Honors community. Chartwells has been hard at work planning a dynamic food and drink menu based on the Honors Program theme this year, *Creating Change*. In addition to the themed dinner, attendees will enjoy messages from student speakers and President Conway-Turner among others.

Honors graduates from Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 will be recognized on stage and will receive a special gift from the Honors Program. They may also invite one guest to attend.

HONORING HONORS [H²]

FRIDAY, MARCH 17TH

5:00 - 7:00 PM

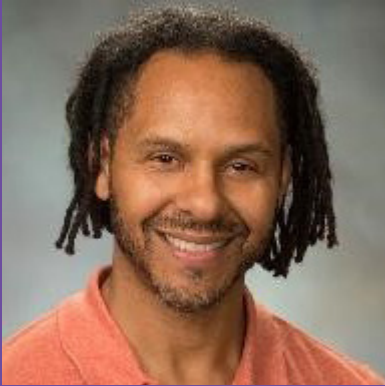
CAMPBELL STUDENT UNION

SOCIAL HALL

RSVP ON BENGAL CONNECT BY
FRIDAY, MARCH 10TH:



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



DR. MARCUS WATSON

**HON303 DIVERSITY SEM:
SAVING AFRICA**

**HON189 DIVERSITY SEM:
INTRO TO AFRICANA STUDIES**

Dr. Marcus Watson earned his PhD in cultural anthropology from Cornell University in 2010 and, since then, has taught for a total of thirteen years at the University of Wyoming (2010-2019) and Buffalo State University (2019-current). His research and teaching reflect his long-standing and current ethnographic studies on the African continent, his theoretical grounding in African-centered thought, and his more recent interest and writings in Black psychology. Dr. Watson has developed a unique African psychology theory called Half-Connecting Theory, which is designed to show what everything in the world looks like from a deep African cultural point of view. At Buffalo State, Dr. Watson teaches Africana Studies courses such as Blacks in Buffalo, "Saving" Africa, and Why Africa Matters, which is a course in Black psychology.

ANY WORDS OF ADVICE FOR CURRENT HONORS STUDENTS?

Congrats on earning the designation of "Honors student." Work hard, go far, and be sure to check and double-check that your intellectual gifts are consistent with creating a future of justice for all. Go Bills!

"I started college as a biology and chemistry major, I ended up graduating with a history degree, and then I went to graduate school in philosophy. In between I took a lot of other courses (my friends said I was majoring in "Intro to"), and I can sympathize with students who want to stay 'undeclared' as long as they can!"

Dr. Grinnell came to Buffalo State in 2007. He has been Chair of the Philosophy Department since 2014, and teaches courses in ethics, political philosophy, and ancient philosophy.

Since 2009, he has been an Honors faculty member and has collaboratively taught with former Director Dr. Guiati, Dr. Johnson, and current Director Dr. McMillan. Additionally, he has served as a faculty mentor for many Honors students participating in the EURO and USRF opportunities. "They've produced some really good, really interesting work - whether they realize it or not - and I'm proud of all of them!"

ANY WORDS OF ADVICE FOR CURRENT HONORS STUDENTS?

Squeeze everything you can out of your time at Buffalo State. Take interesting courses, go to plays or concerts, use the tutoring resources, use EVERYTHING-you're paying for it, after all.

If you focus more on your grade than on what you're learning in a class, you're very likely to end up falling short on both. If you focus on getting as much as you can out of every class, the grades will usually take care of themselves. After your graduate (or get into grad school) no one will care what grades are on your transcript, but they will care a great deal about what you learned and what you can do.



DR. JASON GRINNELL

**HON101 HUMANITIES SEM:
PHILOSOPHY IN THE CITY**

**HON309 WESTERN CIV SEM:
WESTERN IDEALS**

**VISIT [HONORS.BUFFALOSTATE.EDU/COURSE-SCHEDULE](https://honors.buffalostate.edu/course-schedule)
TO BROWSE OUR CURRENT HONORS COURSES!**

HEY HONORS...

WE WANT
YOU!



**INSTAGRAM
TAKEOVER**

SEND US A DM
TO GET INVOLVED



honors.buffalostate.edu



Buffalo State Honors Program



[@buffstatehonors](https://www.instagram.com/buffstatehonors)

| South Wing 330 | Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm | (716) 878-3093