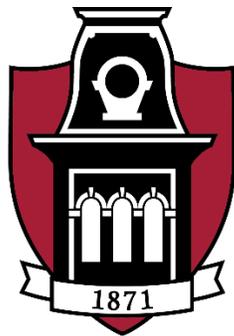


Honors College Annual Report



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS®

2022-2023

From the Dean

Dear supporters and friends of the Honors College,

2022-2023 was a record-breaking year in key areas of our honors enterprise:

- Dollar value of study abroad and research grants awarded: \$2,195,064.
- Number of honors students served: 4,025.
- Number of Fellows on campus: 370.
- Number of Path Scholars on campus: 100.
- Number of prospective students served: 1,600.
- Dollar value of external scholarships and awards: \$1,750,000.

Our agile staff curated professional, academic, and social experiences for the University of Arkansas' honors scholars and broadened the college's national profile in the theater of honors education at the university level.

Importantly, the Honors College team strategized about updating admissions policies to be more in line with national norms by adding a more inclusive admittance option that includes a holistic review of applicants. The new policies have yielded an incoming class for fall 2023 of about 1,100 honors scholars. Our Futures Hub—now fully staffed with four outstanding mentors and advisors—has expanded the ways in which we engage with honors students and augmented the career choices available to them. The results have been dizzying with programming ranging from partnerships with student-success units across campus, development of professionalization seminars, and intensification of internship training. This year, the Honors College will proudly celebrate the first ten years of our Path Program, a phenomenally successful recruitment and retention machine for students from underserved communities across the state of Arkansas.

As we look forward to applauding a decade of our Path Program, we fondly look back on the fall 2022 reception lauding the first twenty years of the Honors College. The Honors College advancement team devised and deployed an extraordinary donor campaign—20/20/20—which yielded first-time benefactors to the U of A. Always happy to take honors out into the community, our curricular team engaged a network of local leaders and prosperous alumni both to teach our current crop of students and to mentor them through their career ambitions. The result has been wildly effective, generating internship gigs, opportunities to shadow local physicians, and pipelines to prestigious graduate and professional institutions.

2022-2023 will be a difficult year to top in terms of the academic and professional victories of our students. But Team Honors is ready for that challenge and will intensify our commitment to the honors undergraduates under our care. Armed with a repertoire of interdisciplinary seminars, international education opportunities, and leadership cultivation strategies, the University of Arkansas Honors College will take its talented cohort of scholars to the heights of academic achievement, both here on campus and across the globe.

Lynda Coon
Dean

Students

Enrollment

The Honors College has made significant contributions to the growth in the student body at the University of Arkansas as well as enriched the quality of this group. This was another banner year in Honors College new student recruitment.

- Total Honors College enrollment grew to 4,025 in Fall 2022, a 6.5% increase since 2018.
- The Honors College was able to enroll a new freshman class of 1,434 new students for Fall 2022, a new record for the college. The average ACT for the class was 30.3 and the average GPA was 4.1. Other important statistics include:
 - 56% of the class is from Arkansas
 - 19% of the class is from a racial/ethnic minority group
- For Fall 2023 admission, the Honors College changed its admission procedures and removed some of its temporary COVID-19 policies. Moving forward, students can be admitted to the Honors College through either a) an automatic admissions process for students with at least a 28 ACT composite and 3.75 high school GPA or b) a holistic review process for students with at least a 3.90 high school GPA. Currently, the new freshman class of honors students for fall 2023 is projected to be over 1,100 students, a more sustainable number for the college moving forward. Official numbers for this class will be released once the university publishes its 11th Day Enrollment Report.
- From July 2022 to June 2023, the Honors College had over 1,600 prospective students visit campus with their families to meet with recruitment staff. This is easily the most campus visitors to Gearhart Hall in a single year. In addition, the Honors College continues to host its signature recruitment events, including Convocation, Discovery Day, and Fellowship Interview Day. Honors recruiters also meet with thousands of students through various outreach efforts, both in person and over virtual mediums.
- This year's Honors College Fellowship class of 79 was selected from 764 qualified applicants. Their average ACT composite score was 33.9 and the average GPA was 4.25. Arkansans make up 85% of the new Fellows class and 10% are first-generation college students. As competition continues to increase for high-achieving students across the nation, the Honors College Fellowship remains an important competitive advantage for the University of Arkansas as it recruits the best and the brightest students from the state of Arkansas and beyond.
- Of 370 Fellows, 315 are supported exclusively by the Walton Family Charitable Support Foundation gift, while 36 are supported by fellowships created by private donors matched by Walton support such as the Bodenhamer Fellowship. Eighteen additional Fellows are supported entirely by the Sturgis Endowment while one Fellow receives support from the Boyer Endowment.

- Six-year graduation rates for those who began in honors inched slightly higher to 84.07% (compared to last year's 83.64%) and continue to remain well above the rate reported in 2018 of 80.9%.

Curriculum

Enrollment in the Honors College's interdisciplinary courses included 320 students in 23 courses. This is in addition to the \$448,121 the Honors College provided to the six academic colleges to support their honors offerings to more than 3,000 students in departmentally listed courses. The Honors College continued to offer a variety of courses that take students out of their comfort zones and into contact with ideas, scholars, and students from other disciplines.

- Former Executive Director of the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and incoming University of Arkansas Senior Advisor for University Advancement Sandy Edwards partnered with thirteen gifted honors scholars from multiple colleges and disciplines in an innovative, interdisciplinary romp through the creative process titled "Inspired." Edwards taught the seminar at TheatreSquared and invited artists, musicians, entrepreneurs, actors, and architects to describe their own creative process while simultaneously drawing inspiration from the engaged students seated around the seminar table. Students walked away with a new appreciation of their own talents as creators and learned lessons of professional and personal resilience from the visiting faculty.
- Our Trajectory classes continue to bring the community and professional world into the classroom for honors students. In the spring 2023 course Med School, 15 pre-med students were instructed by Dr. Mack Ivey, Liebolt Chair of Premedical Studies and associate professor of biology, and Jonathan Langley, Honors College Director of STEM and Pre-Medical Professions. Throughout the semester the students heard from a host of guest speakers, including local physicians, current medical residents, and a state representative, as well as received guidance on their medical school application materials. After a talk from Dr. Patrick Travis (founding partner of Highlands Oncology Group), one student followed up with Dr. Travis and began shadowing at the clinic.
- Law Professor Tiffany Murphy led a Signature Seminar titled "Wrongful Conviction," which attracted the most applications of the 2022-2023 academic season. Honors scholars lucky enough to win a seat in this rigorous seminar examined substantive causes of wrongful convictions and the procedural mechanisms allowing for the litigation of actual innocence claims. Students investigated legal cases, assessing the innocence of those currently incarcerated and the system used for their exoneration. The Honors College has found seminars taught by law faculty to be a highly effective tool in recruiting efforts as well as a professionalization opportunity for ambitious undergraduates. Other Signature Seminars included a human history of climate change, native American fiction and the extractive industries, portraits of death in art, and a global history of women's soccer.
- One-hour courses offered by the Honors College allow interdisciplinary learning to be accessible for all schedules. In the Retro Readings series, topics included "10 Really Bad Emperors," which gave the students a crash course in tyrannical leadership from the past coupled with cautionary tales for the present as well as Herodotus. Forums tackled

subjects like cybersecurity, university administration, midterm elections, and public health on campus as well as career paths produced by the nimble libraries of the twenty-first century and the dazzle of Razorback athletics.

Advising and Student Success Programming: The Honors College Futures Hub

In 2020, the Honors College launched the Futures Hub, a central team of honors staff who work with honors students to connect them with resources across campus and in the community so that they may make the most of their honors experience. The Hub also helps students determine and prepare for their plans for after graduation. Futures Hub staff continue to organize their work under the “**G.R.E.A.T.**” framework where they assist students with **G**lobal experience, **R**esearch, campus and community **E**ngagement, **A**cademics, and future **T**rajectories such as graduate school, professional schools, and employment.

On August 1, 2022, Jonathan Langley began his role as Director of Premedical and STEM Professions. In his role Jonathan works with honors students in the STEM disciplines as well as those who are preparing to enter health professions schools such as medical school, dental school, pharmacy school, and more. Before joining the Futures Hub, Jonathan worked for 10 years at the University of Arkansas, first as an academic advisor in the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, and later in the Office of Nationally Competitive Awards.

The Futures Hub staff provides large-group workshops, as well as small group and 1:1 advising. This year, the Hub provided a record-breaking 870 one-on-one appointments and over 2,000 student interactions in workshops and community events. Continuing their commitment to inclusion, Hub staff offered virtual programming as well as in person events in Gearhart, Hotz Hall, the Multicultural Center, and the new CORD Student Success Center.

- **Global experience:** Futures Hub staff provide a range of study abroad assistance to students. Many students benefit from programming and 1:1 advising that introduces them to study abroad – what it is, why it is worthwhile, and how to do it - while students with unique or complex goals receive highly specialized advising. Staff also guide students through the four study abroad grant deadlines, results of which are explained below.
- **Research:** The Futures Hub focused on two key areas of the research process: getting started and making progress on drafting the thesis, with the goal of helping more students complete meaningful projects. As part of National Undergraduate Research Week, the Honors College helped host a Research Poster Competition. Fifty students presented their research to the campus community.
- **Engagement:** Futures Hub staff help students consider strategic engagement, specifically how intentional choices about extracurriculars, volunteer work, leadership, and more can aid students in their long-term goals while also giving them an enjoyable and engaging experience in college. Staff launched the Community Leaders program, a new initiative for Arkansans who are the only students from their high school to come to the University of Arkansas Honors College. This program helps students get involved at the university, utilize their resources, and develop their leadership skills.

- **Academics:** In addition to managing the full suite of courses described in the Curriculum section, Futures Hub staff work to help honors students maximize their opportunities. Working with advising staff across the campus, Futures Hub staff identify prospects for top graduate schools and awards, create intervention plans for honors students who are struggling, and work with those in the middle to “tip” their future toward more competitive educational options and careers.
- **Trajectory:** Futures Hub staff work with students to set them on a path for professional success through key experiences that can forge business connections and fine-tune career interests such as internships and job shadowing. Students are provided feedback and suggestions to enhance their resumes, cover letters, personal statements, and interview skills.
 - Prioritizing connections with the community, Futures Hub staff piloted the Honors Engineering Externship at Tyson (HEET) as well as a short-term internship program with the United Way and its member non-profits. Through a partnership with the Pryor Center, an honors research team completed an oral history of TheatreSquared.
 - The Honors College collaborated with the premed advising program and the student success center to provide MCAT tutoring to 14 students. Of the 14 students who participated, five were first-generation college students, five reported a race/ethnicity other than white, and four were from rural communities in Arkansas. On average the MCAT scores of participating students increased three points from the initial baseline MCAT offered in January to the mid-semester MCAT offered in April. This translates to a nine-point increase in the average percentile rank of students.

Nationally Competitive Awards

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the University of Arkansas continued a long tradition of students winning competitive awards, as U of A students received \$1.75 million in fellowships and scholarships. More than 265 students earned awards at both the state and national level and were recognized for their commitment to academic excellence, research, public service, leadership, and community involvement.

- Anna Mathis of Valley Springs was named a 2023 Harry S. Truman Scholar. Mathis, an honors agricultural education, communications, and technology student, is the 26th Truman Scholar from the University of Arkansas. Since 2013, 10 U of A students have been named Truman Scholars.
- Stephen Pierson, an honors mechanical engineering major was chosen as a 2023 Barry M. Goldwater Scholar.
- Alex Davis, an honors agricultural business student with a prelaw focus, and Amelia Southern Uribe, an honors broadcast journalism and political science student, were selected as Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall Scholars. One honors student was selected as an honorable mention.

- John Paul Gairhan, an honors African American studies, history, and political science graduate, was named a Schwarzman Scholar.
- Two honors students won Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships. Jacob Condran, an honors history, international and global studies, and political science graduate, will be teaching in Azerbaijan. Spencer Hazeslip, an honors chemistry and Spanish graduate, will complete his assistantship in Kazakhstan.
- Seven University of Arkansas students and recent alumni received National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships to begin in the 2023-2024 academic year. In addition to the Fellows, two more U of A students and alumni received honorable mentions.
- Twenty-one University of Arkansas undergraduates were awarded the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. This program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, allows undergraduates with high financial need to study or participate in an internship abroad to develop career and language skills.
- Honors College students continue to secure competitive internships in the business, government, and non-profit sectors. These organizations include Arkansas Children's Hospital Northwest, Canopy NWA, J.B. Hunt, Northwest Arkansas Land Trust, Tyson, the United States Department of State, the United States House of Representatives, the United States Senate, Walmart, and several startup companies in the Northwest Arkansas area.

Path Program

The Honors College Path Program recruits students from underrepresented groups who have exemplary records of high-school academic success, but who lack the requisite 28 ACT score required for automatic Honors College admission as an incoming freshman. These students become top-performing college students through a bridge program before their freshman year, intensive staff and peer mentoring, and a growing scholarship program. Updated honors admissions requirements have meant that some Path Scholars are honors eligible as incoming students. To date, 49% of Path students enroll in the Honors College after achieving the required 3.5 college GPA.

- In May 2023, the sixth cohort of Path Scholars graduated from the University of Arkansas. Overall, Path maintains an 82% five-year graduation rate, which is 12% higher than the University of Arkansas' six-year graduation rate.
- During the 2022-2023 school year, Path welcomed its fifth cohort in which all students received scholarship support. Thirteen incoming first-year students are supported by the Walton Family Charitable Support Foundation endowment established in 2018, two are supported by the McMath and Cole endowments, while eighteen students are supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation. The 31 first-year students had an average high school GPA of 3.9 and average ACT of 25.

- More than 52% of this year's students are from a rural area and 54% are first-generation college students. More than 92% became honors eligible in their first year. After their first year at the U of A, the cumulative GPA for the cohort is 3.6.
- Two Path Scholars obtained notable internships. Miguel Marin, an international business major, is completing an internship in London with the Global Equities team at The Omerta Group. Accounting major Kalifa Hulsey was selected for the Tjuana Byrd Internship Program (through the Women's Foundation of Arkansas) and is an accounting intern with Windstream.

Grants

Study Abroad

This year, the Honors College awarded \$1,110,161 across 211 student grants for study in 30 countries on all seven continents of the world. Breakdown by program type is as follows: 3 academic year 2023-2024 with \$34,800 awarded, 21 January/May/August 2023 intersession with \$57,940 awarded, 43 semester (spring and fall 2023) with \$416,955 awarded, and 144 summer 2023 with \$600,466 awarded. The vast majority (90%) of the students traveled to Europe. However, travel to Central and South America (almost 10% of awards) is on the rise.

Travel has nearly returned to its pre-COVID-19 peak, and awards are up nearly 32% over the 2021-2022 academic year. The Honors College decreased the average award amount back to 40% of program cost (from the 50% last year) but have spent more than the endowment has earned. Annual award dollars will begin to fall as the Honors College spends out nearly all of the carryover from the unspent funds for the 2019-2021 academic years.

Research Grants

Research grant numbers still lag behind their pre-COVID peaks, but are also rising, thanks in part to numerous workshops throughout the year to assist students in getting started with research and in preparing applications for SURF and all types of Honors College research grants, including travel grants.

The Honors College awarded 293 grants totaling \$1,084,903.

- **Traditional Research Grants** (146 grants, \$675,000)
These grants continue to be the Honors College's main form of support for campus research. This year, 146 grants were made to students totaling \$456,000 with an additional \$219,000 awarded to their mentors. Awards were made to students in all colleges across 35 majors. The largest number of awards went to biological sciences (12.3%), chemistry and biochemistry (9.6%), mechanical engineering (9.6%), psychological sciences (9.6%), and biomedical engineering (7.5%).
- **Student Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF)** (32 grants, \$90,000)
SURF grants are competitive state grants like the Honors College Traditional Research Grants. By coordinating grant cycles with the state's SURF program, the Honors College leverages its own research funds to make awards to more projects. In all, SURF awarded

\$76,750 to students and faculty augmented by Honors College grants of \$90,000. As in previous years, high-quality proposals not funded by SURF were reviewed for Honors College Traditional Research Grants.

- **Conference and Workshop Travel Grants** (69 grants, \$64,678)
The number of Conference and Workshop Travel Grant awards more than doubled (from 27 to 69) as more conferences returned to in-person events throughout the US during the year. Students from five colleges and 23 majors traveled to present their research throughout the year. Students biomedical engineering (13) comprised the largest cohort by major, followed by nursing (8) and psychological sciences (8).
- **Faculty Equipment and Technology Grants** (14 grants, \$89,200)
Faculty Equipment and Technology Grants help faculty purchase specialized equipment and software for projects staffed by honors students. This year's call resulted in 14 awards (up from 11 the previous year) totaling \$89,200 for projects related to detecting early autism in children with AI-based virtual reality technology, using 3D food printing to design foods for personalized nutrition, providing access to a podcast booth for students in world languages and cultures to create their own authentic language materials as podcasts, as well as multiple projects to explore means to improve efficiency in battery production and manufacturing industries.
- **Internship and Research Travel Grants** (23 grants, \$106,025)
As with conference travel, international Internship and Research Travel Grants rebounded this year. Eight students participated in international internships in England, Italy, Japan, Spain, and New Zealand. Eleven students participated in extended international research experiences; six of those students collaborated with long-term partners in Dangriga, Belize, to help improve business practices while three worked with the government of Eswatini and two worked with the government of Mauritius, all on agricultural projects.
- **Research Team Grants** (9 grants, \$60,000)
Research Team Grants included projects that took place across four colleges. Project topics spanned a variety of disciplines, from conducting an oral history project for TheatreSquared to an examination of coupled acoustic emission and radiofrequency sensing for dynamic characterization of particulate flow. Team Grants support one or more faculty members who supervise up to four students working on a common research question.

Impact

The Honors College continues its work in attracting talented students to the University of Arkansas, connecting students with resources to facilitate their success, and propelling students into leadership positions in the state of Arkansas and beyond.

Student Success

- **Joshua Jacobs** first took Ancient Greek on a whim, thinking that the class might be an interesting change of pace from his intended political science major. While the class itself was fascinating, it introduced Jacobs to a broader passion for exploring ancient languages and cultures. Jacobs switched to a classical studies major and kept studying Ancient Greek. He soon developed an interest in the Ancient Near East, particularly the societies of ancient Israel and Judah. Jacobs sought out training in biblical Hebrew, which is not consistently offered at the University of Arkansas. Fully determined, he went about creating his own Near Eastern studies curriculum. Spencer L. Allen, Jacob's honors thesis advisor and an instructor in international relations, guided Jacobs through four semesters of independent study in biblical Hebrew, as well as additional studies of biblical Aramaic, Sumerian, and Akkadian. In combining global studies, classical studies, Jewish studies and religious studies, Jacobs had a unique undergraduate path that made him well-versed across disciplines. Starting this fall, Jacobs is pursuing a Ph.D. in Assyriology at Yale University, one of the world's premier programs for Near Eastern studies. As a competitive applicant, Jacob's three-year residency at Yale was fully funded. The program houses the Babylonian Collection, a catalogue of more than 40,000 Mesopotamian artifacts and documents dating back to the 4th Millennium BCE. It is a unique resource that Jacobs is excited to use.
- Growing up watching friends and family travel more than an hour to Louisiana or Little Rock for specialized medicine, **Breanna Kilgore**, Honors College Path Scholar, was determined to find a career path in medical innovation and research. At first, Kilgore did not understand why El Dorado, Arkansas, did not have access to certain medicine, so she started reading about healthcare structures, rural medicine, and medical inequities. Combining her love of technology with her passion for healthcare, Kilgore majored in biomedical engineering with the dream of creating medical devices and being at the forefront of scalable and accessible innovation. While on campus, Kilgore served as the vice president for the National Society of Black Engineers chapter to encourage new generations of Black students to enter STEM fields. This fall, Kilgore will start an engineering fellowship at Rice University's RICE360 Institute for Global Health Technologies. She will help create medical devices for mothers and children in sub-Saharan Africa. Kilgore is no stranger to elite research opportunities. While at the U of A, she participated in the NanoBio Research Experience for Undergraduates at Johns Hopkins University. She also studied abroad in Switzerland to learn about global health and developmental policy from leaders at the United Nations and World Health Organization. Kilgore sees her fellowship at Rice as just the beginning of her career and looks to her experience in the Path Program as a compass.
- **Alex Maldonado Lopez** is very familiar with challenge and sacrifice. Growing up in Berryville, Arkansas, his family faced tremendous poverty, which felt insurmountable at times. After reaching out to Honors College staff to learn more about the program, Maldonado Lopez was inspired to apply for an Honors College Fellowship. At the Honors College, he found community, studied abroad in Ireland, secured valuable research and medical assistant experience at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and other premiere practices across the state, and most significantly, found the

courage to alter his career path toward medical school. With help from MCAT tutoring through a collaboration between the Honors College and the Student Success Center, Maldonado Lopez received a strong score on his MCAT making him a top-tier candidate and helping him secure the prestigious full-tuition Dean's Scholarship to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences – Northwest. With eyes on the next chapter in his educational journey, Maldonado Lopez hopes to work in pediatric care and pay forward the support he received.

Alumni Successes

- **Andrew Wehrman** (B.A., history, *magna cum laude*, '03; M.A.T., '04) works as an associate professor of history at Central Michigan University. His book *The Contagion of Liberty: The Politics of Smallpox in the American Revolution* (JHU Press, 2022) was reviewed in the science journal *Nature* and *The Wall Street Journal* and was named a finalist for the *LA Times* Book Prize for History.
- After completing a Fulbright in South Korea and obtaining her Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, **Courtney Hill** (B.S.C.E., *summa cum laude*, '14) serves as a science and technology fellow at the U.S. State Department's Office of Japanese Affairs. Receiving several Honors College Study Abroad grants as an honors student began her passion for international affairs.
- **Sean Bryant** (B.A., history, international relations, and Middle Eastern studies, *cum laude*, '15) is the director of operations for the 378 Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Sean writes, "I have found myself using my Middle Eastern studies degree when working with the Royal Saudi Arabian Air Force. Having the cultural lens and context has helped me successfully navigate cross-cultural negotiation." He is also pursuing a graduate certificate in joint warfare from American Military University.
- When you check out at your local Walmart, chances are you have grabbed a candy bar from the display near the register. Those confection options were chosen through careful analysis and strategy by **Iliana Borjes** (B.S.Ch.E., '18). The chemical engineering alumna and Path Scholar works as a category management strategist for the Hershey Company.
- **Jacob Purifoy** (B.A., biology, *summa cum laude*, '21) is pursuing a DDS at Louisiana State University School of Dentistry in New Orleans, Louisiana. After graduation, he plans to return to a small town much like the one he was raised in to run a practice in an underserved community. Jacob shares, "The best opportunity you have through the faculty, staff, resources, and peers of the Honors College is to study abroad! It is even better when you can couple it with an honors signature seminar classroom elective or two. It is beyond worth the application process."

College Successes

- Collaboration among honors programs across the state of Arkansas continues through the Honors Arkansas Consortium. This partnership harnesses the best and brightest in Arkansas to develop innovative solutions to pressing issues. The Honors Arkansas 2023

Forum explored contemporary controversies swirling around the concept of privacy. Disciplinary perspectives included: cultural anthropological readings of privacy in global and historical contexts, Western conceptions of “private space,” data science and the ethics of privacy, cybersecurity, legal and constitutional definitions of privacy, philosophies of privacy, medical readings of privacy and human bodies, archival secrets and rights to privacy, state surveillance and individual privacy, architectures of privacy, and privacy, and supply chain systems. Honors scholars from across Arkansas partnered with international business majors from the University of Amsterdam to produce research reflective of the multidisciplinary zeal of the forum. Faculty are contributing to an edited volume to be published by Palgrave MacMillan titled, *Human Privacy in Virtual and Physical Worlds: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (forthcoming 2024).

- The Honors College partnered with the Pryor Center on its “Arkansas Story Vault,” a documentary project rooted in stories told by the people of Arkansas. Supported through an Honors College Research Team Grant, honors students and Fellows produced an oral history of TheatreSquared, the award-winning regional theatre located in downtown Fayetteville. The team met weekly in the theatre’s downstairs Commons space to arrange and conduct over a dozen interviews with its staff and longtime supporters. Working with staff from the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History, the group compiled a record of the theatre’s enduring cultural impact on Northwest Arkansas over the last 15 years. Students joined the project from a variety of majors, spanning prelaw, journalism, and engineering. In a broader sense, the Oral Histories Project aims to showcase the vital role local arts organizations have played throughout Northwest Arkansas. The students also hope to highlight and celebrate the individuals who have made a difference at these organizations. This is the second year that the Honors College has collaborated on the Arkansas Story Vault and plans to continue the research opportunity in future years.
- In November 2022, more than one hundred Honors College alumni, donors, faculty, staff, and friends gathered to celebrate the college’s first 20 years, reconnect with old friends, and honor professors who made an impact. The Honors College also invited alumni to nominate faculty who made an impact on their lives. Forty faculty members were honored and invited to attend the reception, where heartfelt testimonials from their former students were shared. The Honors College continued the celebration with the 20/20/20 campaign, inviting the community to mark the anniversary by pledging a gift. The Honors College surpassed its fundraising goal, and most significantly, the majority of donors were first-time donors to the University of Arkansas. The Honors College continues to change lives here at the U of A: in the classroom, lab, and library, and in Arkansas and abroad. The Honors College team looks forward to the next 20 years.

Conclusion

Sitting in the dean’s office, I have a unique vantage point for assessing highlights from the Honors College endeavors throughout the 2022-2023 academic year. This year saw record-breaking achievements across the college from student enrollment to grants issued to student mentorship.

Looking ahead to 2023-2024, the Honors College plans to foster community on campus, in the region, and nationally. We are excited to introduce our new Community Leaders program, which will bring together Arkansans who are the only members of their high school to enroll in the Honors College. These leaders will benefit from learning about the grant system administered by the college as well as leadership opportunities on campus. Our Honors College Recess, now in its third year of operation, unites honors scholars from each of the six undergraduate colleges, affording them a social hour to mingle and network. The diverse programming offered by the Path Program and the Futures Hub reaches into every corner of a student's career path—med school prep, law school prep, graduate school prep, internship prep, international education prep, and much more.

The Honors College will strengthen connections across campus as well, continuing its tradition of being present at notable events held in multiple units: Student Success, the Multicultural Center, Libraries, the Grad School, Admissions, and the six undergraduate colleges. Together with the Student Success Center, the Honors College will host the meeting of the National Society for Minorities in Honors, which will involve honors leaders from across the U.S. We lead the Honors Arkansas organization, inviting deans and directors to brainstorm about how best to serve high-achieving students from every corner of our state. In Northwest Arkansas, we are happy to maintain our oral history work with the Pryor Center, documenting the development of fine arts institutions in the region. We have significantly expanded our internship program using the generous grant funding from the Walton Family Foundation, placing honors scholars in a variety of positions, both in non-profit and for-profit venues.

Having just returned from Washington, D.C., I am thrilled to report that our alumni are doing splendidly in the theater of politics, diplomacy, innovation, and entrepreneurship. We now have the structure in place to connect current students with ambitious alumni, demonstrating the variety of career paths open to honors graduates. We especially love it when alumni reach out to current students, offering them research opportunities or even internships, as has happened in the past.

Looking ahead to 2024, I anticipate another record-breaking year in our grants machine, internship program, and global education network. I am especially eager to be hosting a national meeting of honors educators and celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Path Program. The Honors College at the University of Arkansas has produced a rigorous, adventurous, and inclusive model for honors education nationally.