A Word from the Director

Early in the summer of 2010 our Provost, Dr. Kina Mallard, asked me if I would be willing to serve as Director of Carson-Newman College’s Honors Program. After some prayerful deliberation, I said “Yes.” It was a frightening proposition at the time, but also very promising. I knew it was a huge job, but I knew that it would involve rich rewards. After six years of leading this fine and storied program, I can say for sure that these years have among the richest of my career.

That being said, it is also time for me to move on to other endeavors, especially scholarly ones that would be impossible while leading this exceptional and far-ranging Honors Program.

Later in this annual report, you will read a few seniors’ Honors Program memories that have persisted. I have plenty of those, as well: the awed silence of our students as they heard Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony live in Knoxville; the breathless laughter as they watched a most raucous performance of Shakespeare’s *Comedy of Errors* in Staunton, VA; some worried moments when I wondered if some my play choices maybe were a little “edgier” than I had anticipated; the quick police response as one of our students had scaled the CDC in Atlanta to retrieve a misplaced racquetball; many joyful messages of acceptance into medical schools, professional schools, and graduate programs. I could list scores of such memories, each a testimony to the reach and the effect of this Honors program, to the vision and work of those who preceded me in shepherding it, and to the work of literally scores of persons who cooperate every year to make it work. I will miss it indeed.

Those six years have seen Carson-Newman’s transition to a University, the installation of a new Provost, a new academic organization scheme, record enrollments both in Honors and campus-wide, and hope for the future. Thanks to the help of many of you reading this, the program is strong and positioned to go even further. We have acquired the use of the Honors Campus House (which will house 7 young men next year), the Honors Commons, and a dedicated administrative assistant who keeps our processes running smoothly.

And I am very pleased to be able to hand the baton of Director to Dr. Andrew Smith (see article below for about him), a wonderful scholar of Religion and C-N Honors Program graduate from 2002. My departure is made easier for me to imagine due to Dr. Smith’s inimitable skills and dedication to the program. And the fact that I taught him in the freshman Honors seminar Humanity and the Cosmos during his first semester in college provides a reassuring sense of continuity.

Finally, I am very thankful to the many friends and supporters of the program whom I’ve had the honor to meet during these years. You have all blessed my life considerably. Thank you all for your thoughts, prayers, and other ways of support for our wonderful program, in the past and in the future.

Brian Austin
For the upcoming academic year, Dr. Andrew Smith will be taking over the position of Director of the Honors Program. Dr. Smith has a B.A. from Carson-Newman College, an M.Div. from Mercer University, an M.A. from Vanderbilt University, and a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. Dr. Smith came back to Carson-Newman in 2011. He currently teaches courses in church history and Baptist history, and he directs the Oxford Studies Program. He is married to Pamela and has two children, Elizabeth and Charlotte. He enjoys reading and spending time with his family.

“I am excited about the Honors Program because it gives students a chance to do original research in their fields, giving them a chance to prepare for graduate work in their respective disciplines. I also look forward to developing relationships with some of the most outstanding students on campus.”
Adventures in Glasgow

(Honors student Tiffany Potok spent the spring semester at the University of Glasgow, as part of the Principia Consortium of Honors Programs. This is a note she sent to the Honors Director near the end of the semester.)

Hello Dr. Austin!

I LOVE Glasgow, and I am having an amazing time here! I am taking Forensic Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Social Psychology, Neuroscience of Decision Making, and of course the Scottish Enlightenment! I actually just turned in my first paper for that class this morning. I was curious about how the credits will transfer back to Carson-Newman; is it a pass fail system or a letter grade GPA based system? I had coffee with a few of my friends from UVM and we were discussing that. I attached a copy of my schedule just in case you needed more information.

Now for the fun stuff! I have been going on tours with the Student Tours Scotland, for future travelers I highly recommend it! The guide is Gary Brown and he takes coach tours to places all over Scotland and tells stories and mythology of the area. So far I have been on two, one to Stirling and the Hermatige forest, and another to the Ayrshire coast. It has actually been awesome weather, but it's still amazingly beautiful when it's windy and raining in my opinion. I love the country! I was in Belfast this past weekend and I got to go to the giant’s causeway and I walked across the Carrick-A-Rede rope bridge. It has been such an amazing opportunity!

Hope you are well!

Tiffany Potok!
Medical Humanities (HUM 470 AHR) is the new honors class this year where science meets humanity.

Students have described the course as thought-provoking and oddly interesting. As students come into class, they form a semicircle around Dr. Austin and Prof. Halfacre, the professors for the course, to ready themselves for deep intellectual discussion. Students were tentative to start the conversation, but their inner thoughts quickly thawed as they contributed to heated topics. Some specific subjects mentioned were how to tell if people are trustworthy, the idea that time is unidirectional, the level of vulnerability needed as a caregiver, and passively eliciting information from patients in a way that does not change their story. Students did not only describe what they found interesting from the textbook, but they also delved deeper into the *whys* of what about the chapters made them feel that certain way. Surely when these students leave, they feel the deep richness and value of human life.
Honors Weekend Feedback: Parent Surveys

On a scale of 1-5 (5=extremely valuable, 1=not valuable at all), how valuable were the following sessions to you (please rate all that you attended)?

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<th>Session</th>
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Praise for the Weekend:

“This weekend is a great time to interact with current and prospective students. It is also very informative for the parents.”

“The weekend was well done on all fronts. Very informative and provided excellent insight into the honors program and campus life.”

“We had the pleasure of eating with several current Honors Students. We were very impressed. The students represented C-N exceptionally. Rachel was a GREAT host to our daughter.”

“Well designed and run sessions. Kudos to staff and students who participated!”

Suggestions for Improvement:

“We were disappointed that there were not other scholarships available besides the 5 full tuition scholarships.”
Honors Weekend Feedback: Student Surveys

On a scale of 1-5 (5=extremely valuable, 1=not valuable at all), how valuable were the following sessions to you (please rate all that you attended)?

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<td>5</td>
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Praise for the Weekend

“The cadaver lab was interesting to me; however, the tour became overtly long and somewhat monotonous.”

“The tour of the honors house was enjoyable. I really enjoyed the weekend. Thank you!”

“God used this weekend to confirm even more this is exactly where I am supposed to be!”

“I thoroughly enjoyed and respected Dr. Herring and Mr. Lepper in my interviews. It really showed the kind of people at CNU.”

“The mixer was excellent. I wish there was more time to hang out with the other potential honor students.”

“Thank you for being so helpful and flexible! Everyone went out of their way to help.”

“I thoroughly enjoyed the mixer and just meeting the honors students and having questions answered. PLEASE keep Caleb and Aaron for the tours! They were amazing to spend time with, and they were an outstanding help and asset to me.”

“The meeting on Friday and the banquet were similar to past tours (the info), but meeting the students and faculty was very helpful and enjoyable.”

“I had a great time and look forward to coming to Carson-Newman.”

“This weekend has helped me make my mind up. I can say with full confidence CNU is the place for me! Thank you!”

“The Alumni interview was really helpful, and very relaxed and informal.”

“I loved how the interviews went; I just wasn’t too keen on how things were spaced out. We had about an hour to kill, at one time, and didn’t know what to do. But overall, I really loved it!”

“The only issue that I had was that the honors mixer ran together with the Cadaver Lab tour so I miss over half of the mixer, but overall, awesome experience. Honors House was great!”
“I loved the weekend here at Carson-Newman! The staff was very helpful, and meeting new students was wonderful. Thank you for putting it all together!”

“I really enjoyed the schedule layout, as it made it easy to relax and enjoy being at CN. Thanks for a great weekend!”

(Regarding Alumni interview) “Helped me to see a different side than our specific interviews. Bonded well and saw possibilities of what I could do here.”

Suggestions for Improvement

“There was a lot of free time between the opening meeting and the faculty interview.”

“I liked the idea of the mixer but I wasn’t extremely comfortable talking to so many people I didn’t know – it may have been a little better if people could have met one another first.”

“Opening meeting seemed a bit hectic, especially when trying to meet host.”

“I liked it overall, but I feel that it was too spread out. The essential components could be done in a few hours, and some of the other stuff felt like filler. Except the cadaver tour, that was rad.”

“I felt as though the opening meeting kind of dragged on. It felt a little more time consuming than necessary. As for the Cadaver Lab, I truly only went for curiosity. I’m not pre-med, but it did give me a good understanding of the classroom environment though.”
Honors Majors: Extremely Diverse

Majors of Honors Students
Fall Trip Summary

The 2015 fall honors trip took a group of 27 students and two professors to Cincinnati, OH. After piling onto a charter bus the group selected a movie to watch and all settled in to enjoy a collaborative cinema experience. After a quick stop for lunch, the group arrived at the Cincinnati Art Museum to appreciate the culturally vibrant exhibits, ranging from Degas’ dancers to a preserved mummy. The museum presented art in all mediums such as audio, video, paintings, sculptures, and many more. The group proceeded to the Montgomery Inn Boathouse, where the Honors Program bought everyone a delicious dinner that they got to eat as they watched the boats go by on the river. After dinner, the group was taken back to their hotel. Everybody had a chance to change clothes before heading off to the main event of the trip, an evening at the theater to see the play *Cyrano de Bergerac*. After a fantastic performance, filled with laughter and smiles, the group returned to the hotel to rest up for the trip back the next day. The students went their various ways in the hotel, with some going to bed early, some splitting off into groups to play games, and other staying up late to get their homework done.

After a good night’s rest everyone rose to a beautiful day and more excursions through the city of Cincinnati. Once everyone had a chance to eat breakfast, the bus took them all to the legendary John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge. Dr. Hussung offered up his knowledge on the bridge, providing the group with a history of the bridge and the story behind its creation. Afterwards, everyone walked across the bridge together and made their way to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Dr. Smith stepped up and gave the group a brief lecture on the history of the Underground Railroad and the museum, along with the principles it was founded on. After a tour of the museum and a few hours to explore the various historical exhibits, everybody took one last group photo in the beautiful city of Cincinnati before piling onto the bus to head to lunch and begin the trip back to Carson-Newman.
Event Highlights
Event Highlights
Senior Profiles

Name: Stephanie Bickford

Hometown: Aiken, South Carolina
Majors: Photography and Communications
Thesis Title: A Rumble in the Silence (A photography project following Rolling Thunder TN Chapter #3)
Thesis advisor: Lisa Flanary
Favorite honors memory: “During the project I was honored to take part in a remembrance ceremony with the family of a fallen soldier. My favorite program memory was exploring Louisville, KY during an honors trip.”
Plans after graduation: “I don't have many definite post-graduation plans yet. I know I would like to continue building my photography and writing portfolios with environmental and journalistic projects.”

Name: Payton Blankenship

Hometown: Statesville, NC
Major: Biology with Secondary Education
Thesis Title: School Campus Science Curriculum: Fostering the Naturalist Intelligence through Interaction with Natural Resources Present on School Grounds
Thesis Advisor: Dr. Matt Wilkerson
Favorite Honors Memory: “There is a tie for my fondest memories in the honors program: clicking “Save” on the final draft of my thesis and my thesis breaking the largest clip in the English Department during proofreading.”
Plans after graduation: “I aspire to teach high school biology and continue learning in a graduate program focused on science education.”
Name: Corey Scott Bray
Hometown: Lafollette, TN
Major: Biochemistry
Thesis Title: Synthesis of Polyphenolic Chalcones that Inhibit Amyloid Beta (1-40) Aggregation
Thesis advisor: Dr. Paul Martino
Favorite honors memory: Working honors weekend every year
Plans after graduation: Pharmacy school or Lab Work

Name: Kara Cabbage
Hometown: Rutledge, TN
Major: Biology
Thesis Title: Using mustard seed meal as a source of glucosinolates and isothiocyanates to control Fusarium Oxysporum Schlect in soils for strawberry production
Thesis Advisor: Dr. W. Robert Trentham
Favorite honors memory: Attending the Dead Day lectures
Plans after graduation: Apply to medical school
Name: Hannah Ruth Davis  
Hometown: Chattanooga, TN  
Major(s): Music Theory  
Thesis Title: An Analysis of Nikolai Kapustin’s Piano Quintet No. 1, Op. 89  
Thesis advisor(s): Dr. Hussung, Dr. Milligan  
Favorite honors memory: My favorite memory in the honors program was the trip to Narrow Ridge with Dr. Vanlandingham and Dr. Osborne. 
Plans after graduation: I will be attending the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music to pursue my M.M. in Music Theory.

Name: Jordan Jones- Self  
Hometown: Clarksville, TN  
Major: Theatre  
Thesis Title: In Absentia  
Thesis advisor: Kyle Biery  
Favorite honors memory: “My freshman year we visited Dr. Austin's hometown, Louisville, KY. We saw an amazing production of Romeo and Juliet at the prestigious Actors Theatre. On the last day, after eating at a local burger joint with a friend of mine, we got lost and had to find a way to contact the bus. Amazingly as soon as we described our location, Dr. Austin knew exactly where we were and directed us over the phone to the bus's location. It was quite the adventure.”
Plans after graduation: Stage Management internships at Crane River Theatre in Kearney, NE (May-August), Stage Management Internship at The Rose/Omaha Theatre Company in Omaha, NE (August-June).
Name: Bailie Roy
Hometown: Sweetwater, TN
Major: Accounting
Minor: Finance/Economics
Thesis Advisor: Dr. Herring
Favorite honors memory: Symphony trips
Plans after graduation: I have accepted an Accounting position at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and hope to pursue an MBA in the future.

Name: Lauren Sharpe
Hometown: Mt. Juliet, TN
Major(s): B.A. in Social Entrepreneurship, B.S. in Accounting
Thesis Title: Driving Technological Innovation & Organizational Change: A Business Technology Consulting Project
Thesis Advisor(s): Larry Osborne & Chad Williams
Favorite honors memory: Visiting the natural bridge on the Lexington, Virginia trip.
Plans after graduation: Obtain my CPA license and work in the social sector. Fields of interest include women’s rights, alternative energy, and financial reform.
Name: Spenser B. Smith  
Hometown: Marion, VA  
Major: Business Administration with an emphasis in Management  
Minor: Applied Psychology  
Thesis Title: Dangling the Carrot: Does it Work? Comparing Autonomy-based and Incentive-based Management Styles on Employee Motivation, Creativity, and Morale  
Thesis advisor: Kareenna Malavanti  
Favorite honors memory: The many adventures of living in the Honors Campus House.  
Plans after graduation: Continue my education by pursuing an MBA.
MISSION
Our mission as Christian educators is to help our students reach their full potential as educated citizens and worldwide servant-leaders.