Letter from the Editor

2015 was my year to go places! I started in January with ten days in London, then ran a half-marathon in Paris in March. (Before you get too jealous, let me add that these were my first—of what I hope will be many—trips to Europe, ever.) In May, I crossed the finish line of the Buffalo Marathon—my first (and last!) full marathon.

Professionally, I ended my 20-year stint as the instructor for Freshman Honors Colloquium, a course common to all of our Honors Scholars during those years, and assumed the role of Alumni Coordinator and Advanced Honors Program Coordinator. Although the previous Honors Today editor, Karyn St. George (Administrative Director and my new supervisor) has left some big shoes to fill, I am grateful that she is still here to guide me in my new duties. I also feel fortunate that my job is to help keep in touch with and plan events (read: parties) for the brightest, coolest group of “on the go” alumni around!

I look forward to following and chronicling your adventures. Read on to hear about the places your fellow alumni have gone and a bit about where the Honors College has been as we gear up for our 35th anniversary celebration this year!

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Special thanks to Katherine Chien, Honors Scholar, Class of 2017, for her editing assistance.

A Stage for Reflection

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Dean of Undergraduate Education
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This year is a year of important anniversaries, not least of which is the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare, to be commemorated on April 23rd with a floral procession from his birthplace to his gravesite within the town of Stratford-Upon-Avon in Warwickshire. As I am researching a book on the memorialization of Shakespeare, I recently visited Stratford for the third time in my life. If references to it in his work are anything to go by, Shakespeare was indifferent to his hometown, not bothering to mention it once in his plays and poems. For the casual tourist whose experience is framed by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the independent charity that works to make Shakespeare accessible to the million visitors who come to Stratford every year, you would think that he had the same deep bond to it that Bruce Springsteen has for the Jersey shore. Yet Shakespeare is noticeably absent wherever you turn, like a great getaway artist, eluding his pursuers at every turn. The house he was born in has been altered so much that little remains of the original floor plan, while the house he retired to was entirely demolished in 1759. The wooden bust that oversees his grave was put in place seven years to was entirely demolished in 1759. The wooden bust that oversees his grave was put in place seven years after he died, and looks more like a pub sign than a fitting monument to the greatest artist that ever lived. There are no things of his, no verified sightings or footstep fossilized in the river’s ooze. With no body to look at, we are assured instead that his spirit fills the town, settling like a heavy gas about the landscape and animating its grottoes, quivering its timorous willows, and propelling its regal swans on their nautical missions. All is traces, shadows, insinuations.

Without Shakespeare, Stratford is not dissimilar from many of Britain’s market towns with their pedestrianized town centers tenanted by the same chain stores—Starbucks, Carphone Warehouse, Marks and Spencer. This one is perhaps a little more geared towards the academic crowd, as there are two tweed outlets within 92 feet of one another. Feeling the need to uphold my end of the bargain, I bought a jacket in each one. I was there to do some work in the archives housed in the headquarters of the Birthplace Trust, an unlovely building described by the revered architectural historian, Nikolaus Pevsner, as “handsome…and highly praiseworthy, because so entirely uncompromising in such a hallowed spot.” Is that “uncompromising” meant to be sarcastic, I wonder? Like when I commend a student on his “uncompromising” choice of hat?

The building is the antithesis of Tudor—a low and bunkerish slab of pallid brutalism, fronted by a brick curtain behind which is a canopy on concrete stilts and dark rectangular windows set back from the street. As archly municipal inside as out, with heavy fire doors, sturdy carpet and narrow corridors that epitomize local government, I feel like I can conduct my research while also answering a summons for placing prohibited items in my recycling tote, or complaining about the neighbor’s cat. Despite such inauspicious ambience, the staff are outstanding and the collections unrivalled, and I come to appreciate it for avoiding many of the clichés encountered in the rare book rooms of the Ivy League, whose oak panels, flying buttresses, and marble busts all seem to have been acquired from a wholesale outfitter of highland-themed lodges.

When not in the library, I spent most of my time in gardens. Stratford is filled with lovely gardens, and if I have one abiding image of my visit, it is how nice it was to sit in these beautifully managed and manageable spaces, designed to evoke a kind of herbaceous bliss. The gardens are based on Elizabethan models—“Shakespeare would have sat in a garden like this”—again elusive, authentic by inference alone. Yet in these pollinarian Edens of rosemary and bumblebees, and small, blushing apples with bark-like bouges around their stalks, I was undoubtedly stricken with a general air of summery contentment. Who cares if it wasn’t authentic, it was evocative. It allowed me to imagine something outside of myself and fantasize about a past that included my own previous visits to this town at the ages of 15, 31, and 46—three very different encounters with Shakespeare at three very different phases of my life. Stratford comes up short when judged in terms of hard evidence of the retrievable past, but when thought of as a stage for reflection, a place to take a moment to bring together the strands of life, it isn’t half bad.

This year is also a big year for reflection in the Honors College as well, as 2016 sees us celebrate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the program. Beginning in 1981 with a class of just 21, Honors is now enrolling over 400 students a year through both the freshman class and Advanced Honors programs. We have a fantastic year of celebrations ahead, so let us set the stage with some photos from our own archive as you ready yourself for a big party to coincide with Homecoming this fall. Please send in your own reminiscences and photos if you have them. They don’t have to be authentic, they just have to evoke a feeling!
I consider myself both a first generation American and a dual citizen of Brazil. Born in Elmira, New York to a newly immigrated family, my hybrid identity has shaped my personal and academic development. As a minority student, I have been motivated to achieve academic excellence and also to be a positive example of my community. After transferring to UB, I joined the Honors College as an Advanced Honors Scholar in my sophomore year.

For nearly a year, I worked on developing the research project for my senior Honors Thesis. I wanted to find a project that showcased both my art history and global gender studies majors. Through my coursework I had already tried to identify and better understand the connections between gender, race, and art production. The idea for my project truly took shape in the fall of my junior year when I took a History of Brazil course. While working on a research paper on artist and activist Abdias do Nascimento, I noted a general lack of scholarship on Afro-Brazilian artists, even in the Portuguese language. The information and artwork that I was finding were familiar with in my studies, leading me to examine the similarities amongst black diaspora artists. Specifically, my research began to focus on the use of art as a form of social activism.

My struggles with this research paper solidified my desire to apply for a grant to go to Brazil and conduct my own research. Working closely with three mentors from disparate disciplines, I completed my first grant proposal in the spring of 2015 and was awarded the Honors College Research and Creativity Fund for the upcoming summer. This grant was just the opportunity I had been looking for and established the beginnings of my research project.

Once the grant award was confirmed, I began to solidify my plans for interviewing artists. My uncle is a practicing artist in Brazil and he put me in contact with one of his peers, Afro-Brazilian artist Sidney Amaral. During one of my exchanges with Amaral, I disclosed my interest in the work of artist Rosana Paulino. To my surprise, he and Paulino were close friends and he offered to put me in touch with her. The various relationships I built with Afro-Brazilian artists and museum workers developed through this close-knit and supportive network.

In this way, I was able to make several important connections and interview ten practicing artists at varying stages of their careers. For example, I met members of a contemporary artists’ collective in São Paulo called Presença Negra, which consists of approximately 200 Afro-Brazilians who attend cultural events such as museum exhibitions, gallery openings, and activist demonstrations. Their approaches are incredibly diverse--some utilize social media like Instagram and Facebook to post their art, others perform in the street, or petition a theater production featuring blackface. My dissertation will investigate the engagements of presença negra and other artists in performative expressions of blackness. These interviews and the work that I did during my time in Brazil are the foundation of my undergraduate thesis and potentially my graduate work as well.

Part of my motivation to pursue an MA in art history is driven by a desire to work as a museum curator. This position would allow me to continue my scholarship and use museum pedagogical methods to share the artwork of Latin American artists. I wish to further my studies to better conceptualize how the Americas could be discursively engaged outside of power structures and reclaim influence of the diverse cultural ties of marginalized people. It is my goal to contribute to and expand the discussion of the art that is coming from minority artists in Latin America.

For my summer research I traveled straight from Berlin, Germany--where I had been studying abroad--to São Paulo. Since my parents are from Brazil, I was able to stay with family while I was there. Being in Brazil for academic work and research really cast the University at Buffalo in a positive light in the eyes of my family and professional acquaintances. They were impressed to hear about the type of scholarship coming out of UB and the Honors College. I am so thankful to the Honors College and to those alumni who support Honors students in their academic endeavors. The entire process of my undergraduate thesis and the positive research experience I had in Brazil has affirmed my goal to work as a curator. Earning a research grant, having the chance to seek out my dreams and pushing myself as a student and person are just some of the rewarding moments that will mark my time as a UB undergraduate.
When planning out your life after high school, it is great to already know what you want to do professionally - and I certainly knew even back then that I wanted to be a nurse! I really enjoyed the idea of having my career focused on caring for people, and to this day that is still what I love most about my job. Another benefit of my profession is that there are lots of opportunities for part-time work, which develops multiple skill sets and provides flexibility in crafting my professional schedule.

I started on my career path as an Honors College student at the University at Buffalo (then known as the Honors Program). Being in the Honors College was a great complement to the standard undergraduate coursework in nursing. The requirements of the Program motivated me to pursue my personal interests as well as the myriad opportunities that come from being at a large research university. My senior year, I was an undergraduate research assistant for Dr. Yu-Ping Chang in the School of Nursing. My work with Dr. Chang gave me a variety of research-related skills and resulted in my first research poster presentation. This experience in turn inspired me to go on and pursue my Master’s Degree.

I fulfilled another Honors College requirement by joining the UB Symphony Orchestra as a clarinetist, which, combined with the rigorous nursing curriculum, provided balance to my undergraduate experience. In Symphony Orchestra, I was able to study epic pieces such as Beethoven’s 5th Symphony. Also, I met a cellist who became my best friend and my husband. We have been married five years now and have a one year-old son. The experiences encouraged by the Honors College added depth to my college career, and definitely had a hand in shaping what I wanted out of life, both professionally and personally.

Now, almost seven years after completing my BS in Nursing at UB, I continue to recognize that I’m at my best when I’m having fun, whether that be at work or in pursuing my hobbies. I have never found it easy to balance all of my activities and interests, but it’s worth all the effort I put in to make sure that I’m spending time on my career, with my friends and family, and on some hobbies that are just for me. I’m certain that achieving the ultimate work-life balance will be a lifelong pursuit. It’s so easy to let professional activities dominate the schedule, especially with how much I enjoy and value my career. One of the main ways I’ve been able to avoid this pitfall is by choosing part-time positions. These positions, either held simultaneously or individually, have let me experience nursing from a variety of practice perspectives while allowing me adequate time for other life goals.

Over the last seven years, I have been able to experience staff nursing at two large teaching institutions, Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) in Buffalo and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) in Boston. These positions are what the general population would think of as traditional nursing positions, where during my shift I coordinate care for an assignment of four to six patients. This includes, among
other tasks, monitoring vital signs and physical assessments, administering medication, and participating in admission and discharge planning. Currently at BIDMC, I am a member of a “float team” that works on a variety of fifteen medical-surgical floors to fill in additional staffing needs, such as sick-calls and extended leave requests. Specialty floors that I visit range from surgical ones like transplant, orthopedic, and trauma to medical floors including cardiac, neurology, and vascular. This position continuously challenges me by introducing me to new medications, surgeries, and treatment plans. One of the most surprising realizations in this position is that although all the floors are very different, nursing across specialties can be more similar than I would have thought. Another beneficial aspect of this position is that I am a per-diem employee. This means that my contract with the hospital is for a minimum of sixteen self-scheduled hours per month, which gives me the flexibility to work around my second position.

This fall, I started as a school nurse at KIPP Academy Boston Elementary, a public charter school that currently serves kindergarten and first grade Boston students. KIPP’s mission is to help provide inner-city students, who historically have lower rates of college attendance and graduation, with a school environment that inspires them and provides access to the resources needed to continue on to earn a college degree. Working within a school has been a great change from other positions I’ve held, and demands a very different skill set. Not to mention that I get to spend my days with the cutest little group of students!

School days do involve a lot of Band-Aids, sore throats, and tummy aches, and those times I can easily help our kids get back on their feet and back into class. However, being a school nurse immerses me in several areas of public health, health promotion and preventative care. This can encompass tasks such as monitoring and treating asthma, making sure that our school and field trip environments are appropriate for kids with epilepsy, and identifying barriers to medical care to ensure that kids get adequate medical attention throughout their time at our school. I have the opportunity to work alongside individuals from different educational and professional backgrounds, and to be a resource for the students. My job is to work closely with students and their families to help kids be the healthiest they can be so that they can excel in school. I am grateful that this position allows me to utilize much of the skills and knowledge I gained as part of my master’s program. As an added benefit, it has a parent friendly schedule that follows the public school calendar.

While my career path has not been the most traditional by any means, it has been fulfilling and I am continuing to learn all the time. The nursing profession and its variety of positions has been a perfect fit, as well as a fun way for me to keep my professional activities fresh and new. My undergraduate years in the Honors College gave me both professional and social benefits: I was surrounded by an extraordinary group of students right from that first day. Moving into my freshman dorm room in Governors Residence Hall, I met a group of friends who I still talk to almost every day (KC, AG, AM, NT) and who have inspired me to keep pushing forward in my career.)
any of us have fond childhood memories of reading Little Golden Books—the popular series of children’s books with trademark golden spines. I had quite a collection of Little Golden Books as a kid, and one book, simply called Dinosaurs, stood out as my favorite. Imagine my surprise when Disney Publishing Worldwide asked if I’d be interested in illustrating one—for Disney Pixar’s upcoming film The Good Dinosaur. I was extremely honored, yet filled with the anxiety of wanting to do it right. It was the realization of a life-long dream, but it came with an overwhelming sense of responsibility to continue the legacy of all the great artists who came before me.

Since I last wrote an article for Honors Today, I’ve been fortunate enough to hold a number of interesting jobs, though the career path that eventually led to this point has been challenging and unexpected. Inspired by my love for animation, I chose to pursue a career as an artist by enrolling in the University at Buffalo’s School of Visual Studies. In 2001, shortly after graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Art degree in illustration, I moved to Los Angeles to chase my dream of becoming an animation artist.

After several years of persistence, Fox TV Animation offered me a job as an artist on their hit show, American Dad. The dream had become a reality. I worked for several seasons as a storyboard artist on American Dad and illustrated 2 issues of Fox’s popular Family Guy comic book series (you can read all about my experience at Fox in the Spring 2007 issue of Honors Today). Though the production schedules were intense, I have very fond memories of meeting fans and hearing how much the TV shows meant to them. I went on to draw storyboards for Mike Judge’s short-lived show, The Goode Family, on ABC and Comedy Central.

In 2011, I received an incredible opportunity when The Walt Disney Company recruited me as a creative lead for Walt Disney Imagineering. In this role, I led creative conceiving, artistic vision, and approach to developing interactive...
entertainment for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts. My role at Disney provided hands-on experience creating for families and children for the first time in my career. Many of these projects were designed to educate kids as well as entertain them; with my fellow Imagineers, we dreamt up new and exciting ways to teach kids the benefits of healthy habits and the transformative power of color. Interacting with families and children brought a new dimension of satisfaction and gratitude to my creative career. I also led portions of Disney’s Next Generation Experience, a massive, vacation-planning initiative aimed at providing guests with a more seamless and entertaining experience at the theme parks and resorts.

One of the many advantages of working at Disney is the diversity of opportunities within the organization. Based on my experience in the interactive space, I transferred from Imagineering to Disney Publishing Worldwide, where I currently work as a senior digital designer creating apps for mobile devices. In this role, I work very closely with the filmmakers at Pixar and Disney Feature Animation. In comparison to animation or Imagineering, the production schedules on most apps are relatively fast. In the 2 years I’ve been in Digital Publishing, I’ve worked on more than 6 apps that are already in the Apple App Store including Cars: Daredevil Garage, Inside Out: Storybook Deluxe, Big Hero Six: Baymax Blast, The Good Dinosaur: Storybook Deluxe, and Disney Karaoke: Frozen—a #1 app in iTunes in 24 countries.

Creating apps—particularly storybook apps—requires a close working relationship with Disney’s Storybook Art Team. Many of the illustrations created by these artists are used in Digital Publishing’s apps. While designing The Good Dinosaur: Storybook Deluxe app, a director of art and design asked if I’d be interested in illustrating a Little Golden Book for The Good Dinosaur. He explained that his team was currently vetting several artists for the job and asked me to submit art samples in my own personal style, like audition drawings. It’s rare to draw Disney characters in your own personal style; we called this an “interpretive style” rather than being perfect, or “on-model” with the approved character designs. With all the phenomenally talented artists at Disney and Pixar, I really didn’t think that I would have much of a chance at getting the gig, but I was determined to give it my best shot. I spent a few days immersing myself in the art and history of Little Golden Books. My goal was to capture that classic look and feel from the ’50s and ’60s, though it was also very daunting to think that my work could be compared to these legendary Disney artists. I studied all my heroes, from classic Disney legends like Mary Blair and Eyvind Earle, to modern masters like Kevin Dart, Ronnie del Carmen, and Tadahiro Uesugi. I drew three playful, retro-inspired drawings of Arlo and Spot from The Good Dinosaur and sent them off for consideration. Lo and behold, a few weeks later I found out that I was chosen! Illustrating a book while also working a full-time job requires an immense amount of discipline and determination. For six months I designed apps by day and illustrated the Little Golden Book every night and every weekend. The schedule, the workload, and the pressure were intense, but when I finally held the first advance copy of the book in my hands, I knew it had all been worth it. In November, Pixar invited me to a book-signing event at their studio in Emeryville, California, where I signed books with artists and filmmakers who worked on The Good Dinosaur. I must’ve signed over a hundred books to date. I’m very grateful for the opportunity, and for the management at Disney to trust me with this passion project. It’s been an incredible honor.

“At the core of every art form is a story; from animated TV shows to theme park attractions, every creative project stems from a narrative that must be conveyed visually.”
Gerry Rising’s 40-year teaching career in math education oddly enough began while he was a first-year graduate student in English; he quickly realized that literature was not the right path for him. That experience also provided the SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus with an invaluable perspective—that of the struggling student—which he credits with helping him to become a better teacher. “Teaching is very rewarding, particularly when students recognize what you are trying to do with them,” Rising notes. “I hope that they identify with the fact that I am on their side. I have always enjoyed working with youngsters and I have been blessed to work with bright students all through my career.” Included in that long list of academically talented students are the many graduates of UB’s Gifted Math Program (GMP), which Rising co-founded in 1979, as well as the inaugural cohort of 21 Honors Scholars, who took the first ever honors seminar with Rising back in the fall of 1981.

It was Rising’s involvement with GMP that made him a natural fit to be a part of the planning committee for UB’s then nascent Honors Program, which began under UB President Robert Ketter. Rising calls Ketter, who was President in the aftermath of some of the university’s most tumultuous times, “the right president for the right time.” Rising himself arrived at UB in 1965 and he recalls the volatility of the Main Street Campus during the early 1970s—including tear gas, police marching around campus, and long lines of student protesters. After the passionate idealism of these students, Rising noted a shift in student thinking towards a more pragmatic approach to higher education, where undergraduates viewed their degree as a means to a job. Against this backdrop, and with Ketter, in Rising’s words, as the driving force, the new Honors Program emerged as a way to attract and cultivate students who sought more from their undergraduate education.

In those founding days of UB Honors Rising was part of committee discussions centered on the selection process for students and what an honors curriculum should look like. The cornerstone of the new curriculum became the honors seminar, a year-long course that would build community and engage the freshman honors class in stimulating discussion. Rising humorously recounts that he ended up teaching the seminar because “no one else seemed willing to do it.” He also volunteered because of a recently published Pulitzer Prize-winning book, Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid by Douglas Hofstadter, which Rising says “was a wonderful book with all kinds of interesting aspects to it.” The class met on Sunday nights in the new boardroom on Capen Hall’s fifth floor. The scheduling was both a testament to Rising and the students’ dedication and of the difficulty in finding a common time in the crowded schedules of UB’s highest achieving freshmen.

Long-time Administrative Director Dr. Josephine Capuana says of Rising and other faculty who went on to teach seminars in the Honors Program: “Kipp (Honors Program Academic Director, 1987-2011) sought out faculty who had the best reputation as teachers. The thing that excited
these instructors the most was that the seminars gave them the opportunity to teach a course on a subject that they might never have been able to teach otherwise.” She went on, “Professor Rising’s students loved the seminar because he structured class so that they could talk about ideas more fully. He was really their first introduction to the Honors Program and his class was so different from their other classes—they could exchange ideas and go into intellectual territory that they had not gone into before.”

One of those students, John Assad, now Professor of Neurobiology at Harvard Medical School, remembers the seminar and its instructor fondly: “The book linked together elements of mathematics, art, and music, with an overarching theme of how complex systems emerge from simple, interacting ‘dumb’ elements. Dr. Rising skillfully kept us engaged on difficult topics, such as self-reference and its relation to intelligent systems. He is a wonderful teacher-- kind and generous. He was the perfect person, always clear and patient, to lead an introductory seminar for a bunch of wet-behind-the-ears freshmen.”

As it happens, Rising was also the perfect person to establish UB’s long-standing Gifted Math Program, which over the years has become a natural pipeline for new Honors Scholars. As a professor in Learning and Instruction, Rising was heavily involved with the new math curriculum in secondary education. Recruiting the assistance of one of his recently graduated students, GMP co-founder Betty Krist, Rising used his university sabbatical to develop

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Professor Rising setting out on one of his scooter trips, which included circling each of the Great Lakes.
the program for mathematically gifted 7th-12th graders. Rising taught the first class of thirty-nine students; in its second year the GMP model of sixty entering students—two classes of thirty each—was established. “I mostly weaned myself out of the actual teaching after that,” Rising says, “and the program has been wonderful. It is in great shape now. I am just delighted with how it has gone.” It has clearly gone quite well: GMP has over 400 graduates who have moved on to pursue diverse and successful careers. Although he retired in 1994, Rising says he still enjoys attending some of the program events and activities “just so I can keep a finger in the pie.”

A Rochester native, Rising enlisted in the Navy on his 17th birthday and attended the University of Rochester before and after his year of sea duty in World War II. He started his undergraduate career as pre-med, but says “that lasted just until they started dissecting things. I was the editor of the college paper so I became an English major.” After that frustrating year of graduate school in English, Rising took the first job that was offered to him—teaching high school math. Although he hadn’t majored in mathematics, his Navy background had provided him with enough math courses to teach the subject. Plus, Rising adds, “I loved teaching math—so I became a math teacher and went off in that direction.” That direction ended up taking him all over the country. Rising describes himself as a “migrant teacher”, with stints at several New York State high schools including his hometown in Brighton, and later the University of Minnesota, the University of Connecticut, New York University (where he earned his PhD), and the University of Rochester. Along the way he even coached high school football, at one point winning twenty-three games in a row. Although he self-deprecatingly adds, “By the time I finished I probably lost many more than that.”

Until fairly recently Rising also authored a weekly outdoors column, “Nature Watch” in The Buffalo News. The gig originated from his passion for bird watching, but he says, “Over the twenty-five-plus years of the column, I learned all about wildflowers and hiking--it was a wonderful thing. Plus it gave me an excuse to tell my wife I was out hiking for work.” Rising and his wife Doris have been married for forty-seven years; he has two children from his first marriage, as well as four grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Currently he is co-teaching a graduate seminar on teaching algebra, which he says “gets me back in and is great. The students are just wonderful and so eager.”

Rising sees many parallels between the Gifted Math Program that he co-founded and the Honors Program he helped usher in. Both send important messages to the surrounding community about the caliber of the University’s academic programs and both provide their students with an intellectual camaraderie that Rising likens to the bonding that happens in athletic programs. “The Honors Program has done wonders here and it has been handled very well. I have tremendous respect for Kipp and Josie and what they gave to UB. I think the university has recognized and supported the Honors Program and has gained much by its presence. It is the best thing about the university. It remains a great place.”

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Dr. Tara Jabbaar-Gyambrah
Senior Assistant Director, University Honors College

As a lifelong learner and alumna of the University at Buffalo, I am happy to return home to a place that cultivated my love for teaching, research, community building, and student success. Although I grew up in a small town in Champion, Ohio, I spent my summers visiting family in the WNY area, which helped me when my family made the transition to Buffalo, New York during my senior year in high school. It was at UB, where I earned my doctorate and participated in experiences such as teaching, studying abroad in Ghana, conducting research, and coordinating a peer mentoring program, that I shaped my portfolio, both professionally and academically.

The University Honors College is a hub for innovation and creativity that challenges students to maximize their potential through student engagement. In my role as Senior Assistant Director in the University Honors College, I am responsible for coordinating and teaching the Honors Colloquium, advising students, organizing days of service for fall/spring semesters, and managing the Greiner Shared Interest Housing program.

Prior to joining the University Honors College, I served as the Director of Multicultural Affairs at Hilbert College for six years, where I oversaw a high school to college program, coordinated co-curricular programs, co-led strategic planning initiatives, developed and implemented diversity workshops, and taught academic courses in the Liberal Studies department.

My life's mission is to empower and equip individuals with effective tools to reach their maximum potential. When I'm not at the office, I enjoy spending time with family and friends, traveling, listening to live music, and reading poetry.

Jessica Gorski, Academic Advisor, University Honors College

Hello! I was fortunate enough to join the Honors College staff as an Academic Advisor in mid-October. Previously, I spent four years working at Daemen College as the Associate Athletics Director and Senior Woman Administrator after spending three years as the Academic Learning Center Coordinator and English teacher at Mt. St. Mary Academy. My transition to UB came at a perfect time as it was during mandatory advisement; although my first few days were quite busy, it was refreshing and invigorating to work with Honors Scholars as they planned their course schedules, began looking into study abroad programs, and secured research or internships to help them obtain field experience. In addition to one-on-one advising, I coordinate the College's peer mentoring program for incoming Honors Scholars, all academic advising activities and assessment of advising for the Honors College, and our annual Junior Workshops Series, and I serve as the Honors College Liaison for the Undergraduate Advisement Council, Academic Advising Assessment Team, and Second Year Experience committee. The positive buzz about UB is absolutely true; the research opportunities, diversity among students and faculty, and pride in the university is unparalleled among other local institutions, and I am so fortunate to be a part of it.

Brandi Moses
Assistant Finance/HR Manager for the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Education

Having been born and raised in Buffalo, NY, I pursued my undergraduate education at the University at Buffalo and received a Bachelor’s of Arts in Communications. I continued my education at Buffalo State College and earned a Master’s of Science in Higher Education Administration, formally known as Student Personnel Administration. With my passion for education and enjoyment in working with college students, I began my professional career at Buffalo State College in the Continuing Professional Studies office and transitioned to the University at Buffalo in 2012.

Currently serving as the Assistant Finance/HR Manager for the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Education, I assist with HR and financial administration for multiple UGE units as well as the day-to-day office management, including supervision of student employees for the University Honors College.

Prior to joining the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Education and the Honors College’s staff, I served as the office manager for the Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) for three years, where I managed the day-to-day office administrative activities, including supervision of support staff, personnel related workflow, finance, budgets, and programming events.

In my free time, I like to stay engaged in my local community. I currently serve on the board of the Buffalo Urban League Young Professionals and like to volunteer and attend community organization events and activities. I also enjoy spending time with family and friends, listening to music, organizing, writing, and especially traveling!
What if I told you I knew what candy was sitting in your kitchen cupboard? No, I have not been following you, but I have been stocking the shelves you shop in your local grocery store. While you leave for work or school, a small army of vendors enter your neighborhood stores, battling the competition for prime real estate. The greatest group of vendors, or perhaps, the sweetest, work for The Hershey Company. Every morning, more than 20 employees from Hershey’s Syracuse district fan out across New York State, working with store managers to ensure your favorite candy is in stock and readily available for you to buy. Every pallet, every extra shelf, every seasonal aisle is a negotiation. The best vendors get the most space and ensure that you, the consumer, buy our product instead of the competition’s.

The Hershey Company is one of the few that uses their own employees as vendors, because the company values their employees and knows that treating them well pushes them to work harder to increase sales. On top of their usual team, the Syracuse district takes on two interns, one in Syracuse, and another in Buffalo—me! I stumbled upon the opportunity via UB’s School of Management Career Services website and after researching the company, I knew it would be a great fit. Milton Hershey started the company selling caramels and quickly transitioned to chocolate. Much of his fortunes went to educating and housing orphans in the Milton Hershey School in Pennsylvania. Since then, the business has grown to become the largest chocolate manufacturer in America. But, mostly importantly, The Hershey Company is a family company. We still look out for those in need, we focus on education, and we care about our environment and take initiatives to cut back on waste.

After switching my major from biology to business, I sought vindication that I could work in business. My experience at Hershey’s improved my communication skills and confidence, important traits for those who want to be leaders in their career. Life is about selling. To get into college, I had to sell myself to the University. To get my internship, I had to sell my experiences. Whether or not I stay a salesman or move into another field of business, the importance of communication cannot be overstated. I would love to study the supply chain of a business and sales is the very end of that chain. After this experience I find myself wanting to know the beginning and middle processes of selling a product. When I began searching for a position, I wanted to work for an international corporation and I could not have selected a sweeter company. I love the people the most; my colleagues take the time to teach me their selling techniques, while my store managers are always eager to team up to increase sales.

As an intern, I embark twice weekly on a route that takes me as far south as Hamburg and as far north as Niagara Falls. I work in six different stores between Tops and Walmart brands and visit each store one to two times per week. As I enter my stores, I quickly walk the aisles, observing and noting my various displays. I jot down any items that may be out of stock or needing attention. Then, I discuss with key decision makers in the stores. I aim to benefit both my company and the store I am working with. By creating “better together” displays, I accomplish just that! For instance, by placing Hershey’s chocolate bars next to graham crackers and marshmallows, I can create a festive display for summer camping trips.

Prior to a holiday season, the Hershey’s team gathers at a hotel for a regional meeting. We discuss the sales tactics we will utilize to win sales during the season. Grouping twenty-five salespeople together allows us to brainstorm methods for creating displays that will ensure a high sell-through. We work to know our stores and their people. I walk in and ask how my store managers are. I know their life stories and I have their phone numbers. The best selling technique is to be genuine—know your product but do not sneak it into the store. I can joke around with my managers, laugh, have a good time, and then have a realistic conversation about where to place my products to best increase both parties’ sales. More than any vendor group I have met, Hershey’s employees are genuine, wholehearted, and friendly people. We care about the people we work with and believe in our product.

Every time you pick up that bag of Hershey’s Kisses, know how much work it took to get that bag into your hands.

From my team to your household, we hope you have Hershey’s in your heart. Enjoy!
I’ve never really been one for believing geographical stereotypes, but the cliche of near-constant rain in England? That one is spot on! This past summer, I was fortunate enough to be able to spend ten weeks researching at one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the world—the University of Cambridge in England. Four other UB students and I took part in the inaugural year of the University at Buffalo Cambridge Undergraduate Scholars Program. When I first found out that I was able to attend the Program, I was thrilled, but as my take-off time counted down, the excitement slowly turned into mind-numbing nervousness; I was going to be in a foreign country without my family, friends, or mentors to support me. Moreover, I would be working in a genetics laboratory which, as a chemistry major, was certainly a step outside of my academic comfort zone.

The adjustment to my new environment began almost immediately. I left New York City in 85°F heat and de-planed in London wearing capris and a t-shirt. Not five minutes after stepping outside, I was shivering. It was around 7°C (or 45°F for my American self) and, of course, raining. Along with two other UB students, I navigated the public bus system to travel from London to Cambridge. Pulling into Cambridge was awe-inspiring! Despite the gray backdrop, the university architecture was breathtaking. My nerves calmed slightly as we met up with the last two UB students in our group and Dr. Satpal Singh, the UB professor who organized the Program. We made a plan to meet up for the first day of the research experience, which launched the busiest and most intellectually challenging ten weeks of my life!

I was paired with Dr. Marisa Segal, a professor of genetics studying the biochemistry of cell development. In embarking on this experience, I expected to learn about genetics and research design, but I ended up learning lessons that will resonate throughout the rest of my career and personal life:

1. Pure Intellect Isn’t the Most Important Thing
   Enthusiasm and dedication were definitely my biggest attributes starting out in the lab. I had a basic understanding of genetics and I have steady lab hands, but the intricacies of protein phosphorylation were above my head. I had two choices: flounder in confusion or keep my chin up and learn little by little each day. I chose the latter option, showing up early every day to read and take copious notes on the methods and reasoning behind each step of the experiments. I met weekly with my fellow UB students and Dr. Singh to discuss papers and research methods. We challenged ourselves and each other with in-depth interrogations of the work we were doing. This attitude led to the summer being the most academically enriching experience I have had the joy of participating in.

2. Trust Your Abilities
   As previously mentioned, I was very nervous before getting to Cambridge. As the days progressed, I realized I had all of the skills I needed to succeed. I had previously worked in labs and taken honors chemistry courses, so I was prepared to rise to the challenge. After nine weeks in the Program, the other students and I each gave a fifteen-minute presentation on our research. The talks were attended by professors and students of the Genetics and Pharmacology Departments. After the talks, several professors complimented us on how much we had accomplished in the short time we were there.

The tour of Hampton Court Gardens was a highlight of the trip. I was able to invite my two UB students and Dr. Singh to join us for lunch. TheUd as a chemistry major, was certainly a step outside of my academic comfort zone.

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The tour of Hampton Court Gardens was a highlight of the trip. I was able to invite my two UB students and Dr. Singh to join us for lunch. The University at Buffalo Cambridge Undergraduate Scholars Program was a transformative experience for me, both academically and personally.
3. Professors are People, Too

Okay, I know this one may sound a little silly, but it’s easy to see professors as elite, and as so much smarter than a mere undergraduate. But, the longer I interacted with Marisa, the more I realized that she was just like me. When outside the lab, whether at dinner, tea time (a twice daily occurrence in the Department of Genetics!), or just chatting in her office, we rarely talked about academics. We discussed politics, relationships, and our visions of the world. She was genuinely interested in my service in the Dominican Republic and my plan for volunteer work in the Buffalo Public Schools. When we did talk about academics, Marisa gave me confidence in my abilities and lots of advice about graduate school applications. I came to view her as a friend. The last week I was in England, I went to Hampton Court Palace with Marisa and the PhD student in the lab. We had a great time touring the gardens and the palace together.

4. Dance in the Rain

The first word that comes to mind when I think of this summer is fun! Rain or shine, I explored Cambridge and learned everything I could. It can be difficult to be away from home for so long, but I never got homesick. We kept busy, spending our weekends exploring London, visiting the south coast of England, and even hopping on a train to Paris for a weekend. The UB students really made the most of our time abroad and didn’t let anything, weather included, get in the way of having fun.

Now, back in Buffalo, it seems a little silly to have been worried about a spot of rain. This fall I will attend Cornell University to earn my PhD in the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, but the lessons of the genetics lab will stay with me always. I’ll never forget the summer – the fun, the knowledge, the friendships, and, of course, the rain!

Alumni Updates

What they’re doing now…

1987

ELIZABETH (BAILEY) BAILEY-SANDS
Elizabeth is the Physical Therapy Supervisor at Beyond Boundaries Therapy for Kids and is also a faculty member in Daemen College’s Physical Therapy Department. She has three children, Kathryn (UB ’17) and Robert (UB ’19), and Jonathan, a Canisius High School junior (and hopefully UB ’21).

STEVE HALL
Steve holds the positions of Full Professor and Graduate Chair in the Louisiana State University Department of Biological Engineering.

1988

JOE ACCURSO
After active duty in the Navy, Joe completed his radiology residency and nuclear medicine fellowship at UB. He is married with three children and working at the Mayo Clinic Florida where he specializes in Nuclear Radiology and Informatics.

1989

PETER BREEN
Peter has been the managing director of the Path to Purchase Institute since its inception in 2003. He and his wife Michele have a daughter, Julia (15 yrs.).

1990

JOHN NEUMANN
John is a Process Engineer at SPTS Technologies in Allentown, PA, and is taking classes in Northampton Community College’s Luther Program and will earn a certification in guitar repair and setup. Last fall he released an album of ambient electronic pieces called Couleurs Lunaires under the stage name Tea With Warriors.

1991

FRED GRECO
Fred’s two oldest children are currently applying to college.

1992

JOHN FEINBERG
John works for Dassault Systemes, Biovia Division, as a consultant in the US Laboratory Sciences & Research division. He and his wife Rachel have a daughter, Cora (3 yrs.).

1993

SEAN GLEASON
Currently Sean works for General Motors as the Director for Transmission Controllers and Software Integration. He and his wife Kathy have a son, Kyle (10 yrs.).

JEFFREY HAJDUK
Jeffrey is currently working as a physical therapist for Liberty Home Care and Hospice in Morehead City, NC. He and his wife Liane have a son, Jacob.

KEVIN KURTZ
Kevin has a new children’s book out in 2016, Sharks and Dolphins. This book for younger readers compares these two ocean predators to show they have more in common than one might think.

Marilyn (Pfahl) De Meyer
Marilyn works as a physical therapist at Rochester Regional Health Care.

Laurie (Wienecke) Vahey
Laurie owns a law firm with three partners in Rochester, NY and was recently married.

1994

BRYAN HANYPISIAK
Bryan was named Editor-in-Chief of The American Journal of Orthopedics and Director of Sports Medicine at Peconic Bay Medical Center, Northwell Health.

Phaelon Silva
Phaelon is a partner at the OB/GYN Association of Ithaca, NY.
Alumni Updates

What they’re doing now…

1995

JOSEPH SZUSTAKOWSKI
Joseph recently accepted a new position as Group Director of Translational Bioinformatics at Bristol-Myers Squibb in Princeton, NJ. He and his wife Renee Lansley, Ph.D. (Honors Scholar, Class of 1996) currently live in Pennington, NJ with their two sons.

1997

CARL MILLER
Carl’s alumni team, The Sheepherders, will be making their 23rd consecutive appearance at UB’s annual mud-volleyball competition, Oozfest, this spring!

1998

KELLY ASHER
Kelly was promoted to the position of Community Coalition Coordinator at the Erie County Department of Health.

SCOTT WAGAR
Scott completed his Ph.D. in English Composition and Rhetoric at Miami University, where he is currently Visiting Assistant Professor.

2000

DAVID BENESCH
David recently joined American Girl as an E-Commerce Solutions Architect.

IFEOIMA IGOBEILI
Ifeoma is employed at Lima Memorial Hospital in Lima, OH.

JESSICA (SPIELBERGER) ROMERO
Jessica is the Upper School Director at Village Community School in Manhattan, NY.

2001

DARREN VOGT
Darren is the Director of Rehabilitation Services at Monroe Community Hospital, in Rochester. He and his wife Alexis have two children, Gabrielle (3 yrs.), and Benjamin (1 yr.).

2002

SAMANTHA (WEISEN) NASHELLO
Samantha Nasello, Fund CFO and CCO [HS1], was promoted to Partner of Scopia Capital Management LP, an investment adviser in New York. Samantha is married to Kevin Nasello, (UB’02), who recently joined CetraRuddy Architecture as Senior Associate. They live in New York, NY and Orient, NY with their two children, David (5 yrs.), and Paige (3 yrs.).

2003

ELIZABETH FOX-SOLOMON
Elizabeth is working for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as a trial attorney.

KRISTIN (HUNGER) SARGEANT
Kristin is the Student Induction Coordinator at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

TURNER GUTMANN
Turner lives in Seattle, WA with his son Henry (3 yrs.), and daughter Violet (1 yr.).

2004

LARISSA (BUSCH) KRAVER
Larissa left her position at The Durham Museum to become the Digital Archivist at the McGoogan Library at The University of Nebraska Medical Center.

BROOKE (MENTKOWSKI) CIANFICHI
Brooke is an Administrative VP and Group Manager in the NYC Commercial Real Estate Department for M&T Bank.

MARISSA (MODICA) DEMONSTOY
Mariissa is an attorney at the Stamm Law Firm in Williamsville, NY and has received the prestigious Albert R. Mugel Award recognizing proficiency in future interests and estate planning law. She and her husband have two young children.

2005

NICHOLAS FALCO
Nicholas was recently promoted to Clinical Pharmacy Specialist at VA Connecticut Healthcare System in West Haven, CT.

SAMANTHA (GOSCH) DEMART
Samantha recently accepted a position as Senior Project Manager at Eric Mower and Associates, an advertising agency in Buffalo, NY. She was also appointed to the Board of Directors of the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network of Greater Buffalo.

MONICA KASSAB
Monica is now working as an administrative assistant at the Embassy of Japan.

CHRISTIE (SYPHRIT) JENNINGS-WYCKOFF
Christie is working with Buffalo startup ClearView Social.

2006

CHRISTA (BISHOP) CUSIMANO
Christa and her spouse are expecting their first child in June 2016.

JORDAN CHANLER-BERAT
Jordan is currently an Attending Emergency Physician at The Brooklyn Hospital Center and Director of Emergency Ultrasound.

2007

AMANDA JONAS
Amanda works for Anthropologie’s corporate headquarters as an apparel merchandiser.

MEGAN (MURRAY) DUPUIS
Megan graduated with her MD/Ph.D. and moved to Durham, NC where she is completing a residency in internal medicine.

2008

GHISLAINE KERSTEN
Ghislane is living and working in Japan, which marks her seventh year living and working abroad. She has been teaching English in various work settings and to various age groups for six years.

NICOLE MORICI
Nicole is working as a physical therapist at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY.

LAUREN (O’SHEA) O’SHEA-HAUZE
Lauren owns her own brewery.

2009

KELLY BENDER
Kelly moved to Los Angeles after graduating from medical school and recently opened an integrated clinic with a fellow doctor. She recently went on her 38th trip to Mexico to run a non-profit clinic with a group called Naturopaths Without Borders.

ANITA BOEY
Anita is a Ph.D. candidate at York University, Canada.

AMY HARDY
Amy has a full-time English and French teaching position at Schulzentrum Geschwister School in Bremerhaven, Germany.

AMANDA MACIUBA
Amanda is a Printmaking Artist-in-Residence at the Lawerence Arts Center for the 2015/2016 academic year.

JACQUELINE SPICER
Jacqueline completed a Ph.D. in History of Art at the University of Edinburgh, UK for research on cosmetics in the Italian Renaissance. She is currently working at Aalto University in Helsinki, Finland, where she received a two-year postdoctoral fellowship.

2010

JEFFREY ACKERMAN
Jeffrey is an ME doctoral candidate at Purdue University.

GRAHAM CLENAUGHAN
Graham graduated with a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Washington and is working as a data scientist at eBay’s Seattle, WA area office.

RYAN CUMMINGS
Ryan is currently in her first year of residency in family medicine at the University of Rochester.

MARK BOOENSHOFF
Mark received a Ph.D. in History from Ohio State University and is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at the New York Public Library.

KATIE (DRESKIN) BOOENSHOFF
Katie is a visual arts teacher in Mamaroneck, NY.

SARAH DURLACHER
Sarah is an MBA candidate at London Business School.

SCOTT GOOSENBERG
Scott is a Policy Research Analyst for Harris Corporation’s Government Relations team.

CINDY SIDERIS
Cindy works in administration at NYU Tisch School of the Arts. She is also currently enrolled in NYU Stern’s Langone Part-Time MBA Program.

2011

JENNIFER HARAB
Jennifer is graduating from the Jacobs School of Medicine this spring.

REESE HORNBAKER
Reese is a fifth year MD/Ph.D. student at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX currently working towards a Ph.D. in immunology.

LAURA NEESE
Laura is a new adjunct faculty member in Drama and Dance at Hofstra University.

JOSEPH THOMAS
Joseph graduated from the UB (now Jacobs) School of Medicine in 2015 and is completing his first year of residency at University at Buffalo Internal Medicine. He will also be married in May 2016.

LAURA SCHMITZ
Laura completed her M.Arch at MIT in 2015 and is now designing tiny houses at Tumbleweed Tiny House Company in Colorado. She has been invited to speak at the Global Student Leaders Summit in Iceland this March.

2012

ANDREW HUNT
Andrew is working on his MFA degree at Carnegie Mellon University. He will graduate in 2018 with a terminal degree in lighting design.
Alumni Updates

What they’re doing now…

RYAN KOELLA
Ryan is working for CannonDesign in New York as an Architectural Designer.

BROOKE SHAUGHNESSY
Brooke is an Assistant Professor in the School of Management at University of Munich in Germany.

MELANIE STEIN
Melanie was promoted to Environmental Engineer I at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

2013
KELSEY CLARK
Kelsey is a special education teacher in Rochester, NY.

JONATHAN FELICIANO
Jonathan is currently a National Market Research Analyst at cinema advertising company National CineMedia.

ELIZABETH HENNESSY
Elizabeth is working at AECOM as an Environmental Engineer. She is about to publish a young adult steampunk novel titled Grigory’s Gadget under the pen name E. A. Hennessy.

MEGAN (KLYCZEK) KLYCZEK-LAWN
Megan is a nurse in the Surgical ICU at UF Health Shands Hospital in Gainesville, FL. She will start graduate studies at University of Florida for her DNP this fall.

WEST RICHTER JR.
West recently accepted a position as a Banking Officer in the Enterprise Technology Operations department at M&T Bank Corporation.

SAMANTHA SHOIAIE
Samantha is a first-year medical student at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine in Biddeford, ME.

SALLY SMITH
Sally graduated from the UB Graduate School of Education with a Master’s degree in Mathematics Education. She is teaching in a secondary school in Southampton, England.

LAUREN STRICOS
Lauren is an Advertising Account Executive at Time Warner Cable Media in Albany, NY.

JOSEPH SWERDLIN
Joseph is an M.Arch graduate student at MIT.

2014
ANGELA KAPSIAK
Angela is currently a staff accountant at Lumsden McCormick.

ELISE MARTIN
Elise received an MS in Biomedical Engineering from UB and is currently working on her Ph.D.

STEPHEN RABENT
Stephen is finishing his Master’s in Public Policy and accepted a Budget Analyst position at the Congressional Budget Office.

RACHEL RABINOWITZ
Rachel is a Program Associate at the American Jewish Society for Service.

MEGAN ROSS
Megan is in her first year of teaching chemistry and physics at Warsaw Community High School in Indiana. She will receive her Masters of Science Education Degree this summer from Purdue University through the Woodrow Wilson STEM Teaching Fellowship.

DANIELLE TARTICK
Danielle moved to Minneapolis, MN this past summer and started her career with PWC in their Risk Assurance practice.

KARINA VATTANA
Karina is in her second year of medical school at Jacobs School of Medicine.

2015
SEAN BEARDED
Sean is a Graduate Student Researcher in the Basov Group at UCSD.

ALEXANDER DVORSCK
Alexander is currently a law student.

JASON GRINGHAUS
Jason is working on his Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

RYAN HAUSER
Ryan is a Yale School of Management Silver Scholar.

EMMA (JANICKI) JANICKI-GECHOFF
Emma started her year of service with ABLE (Americans Builds Lives Through Education) program in September. She proudly serves in a first grade classroom on Buffalo’s East Side.

ABIGAIL LAPLACA
Abigail recently left for her English Teaching Assistantship in Panama where she will be teaching at a university until December.

SAMANTHA (ROMAND) NIRO
Samantha and her husband live in Denver, CO where she works as the Graphic Design Coordinator for Good Times Restaurants Inc., the parent company of Good Times Burgers and Frozen Custard and Bad Daddy’s Burger Bar.

SARAH STOUGHTON
Sarah is a first year law student at Brooklyn Law School.

MACK WARD
Mack is starting work at Facebook in New York this summer.

CHELSEA WHEELER
Chelsea is attending physician assistant school at D’Youville College.

JESSICA YARNES
Jessica is enrolled at the George Washington University Law School.

Births

SCOTT WAGAR (1998)
Scott and his partner Julianne adopted their first child, Matilda, in 2015.

DAVID BENESCH (2000) and his wife, Hillary, welcomed their second and third child last year. Samuel and Carolyn Benesch were born on April 17, 2015.

SUIJATA (SOFAT) GILL
Sujata and her spouse welcomed the arrival of their twin boys to their family on December 22, 2015.

LAUREN (O’SHEA) O’SHEA-HAUGE (2008)
Lauren welcomed her son Caleb on December 12, 2015.

Marriages

KRISTIN (HUNGER) SARAGEANT (2003) recently married Rad Sargeant whom she met after moving to Scotland in 2009.


MEGAN (KLYCZEK) KLYCZEK-LAWN (2013) was married in August 2015.

EMMA (JANICKI) JANICKI-GECHOFF (2015) married her partner of six years this past summer.

Judging from this level of creative writing, the UB Honors College is definitely on par with other esteemed universities.
I’m thankful.

During a hike in Chestnut Ridge Park near Buffalo, **Ryan Till** accepted geology as his destiny. While others pointed out tree and bird varieties, Ryan says, “I was just looking at the rocks.” Last summer, Ryan, an Honors College student, conducted research to help assess the risk of eruptions at an active volcano field in Arizona and presented his findings at the Geological Society of America’s annual meeting. This summer, he’s getting hands-on experience in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming with UB’s geology camp. He was able to afford to travel thanks in part to UB scholarships. “It was a huge relief to have these expenses taken care of,” he says.

The **best public universities** have the strongest private support.
Save the Date!

Honors All Alumni
35th Anniversary Celebration
Homecoming Weekend
October 7-9, 2016

Photos: From the Honors College Archives