

Honors Banquet

Alessandra Brown & Verida Leandre

The A&T Honors Program held its Annual Honors Awards Banquet on the 21st of April. This event recognizes the achievements of outstanding senior students and others who have made significant contributions to the Honors Program. The Alumni Event Center was eloquently decorated, a delicious dinner was catered, and students and faculty were serenaded with musical interludes.



The guest speaker for the

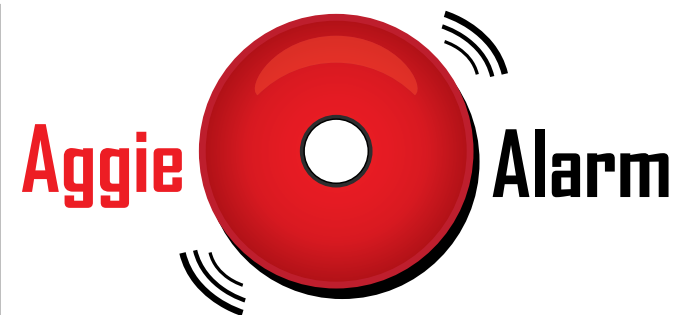
night was Dr. Dennis Kimbro, a bestselling author and dynamic motivational speaker who detailed what makes “the greats great.” Dr. Kimbro painted a vivid picture of life as a grindstone; that is, individuals determine whether life smashes them apart or polishes them smooth. Dr. Kimbro also encouraged audience members to believe in themselves and commit to personal excellence because, ultimately, we are all responsible for ourselves.

His rousing keynote address inspired the audience to surpass expectations and continually strive for excellence, a message consistent with that of the A & T Honors Program.

Workshop

Continued from page 3

attire. An etiquette luncheon was also offered. As an attendee at the conference, the most impressive and influential part of the weekend was the Senior Scholars themselves. Their biographies were amazingly impressive and ambitious, and their lists of accomplishments were never ending. It was inspiring to realize that so much could be accomplished during one’s colligate experience. The conference was a remarkable learning experience and provided a great opportunity for social networking. The Honors Program should be proud of all the hard work the Senior Scholars put into the conference, as it was truly a memorable weekend. I recommend the conference to anyone who can attend it in the future.



News and notes from the University Honors Program at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.

SPR 09

Change is Coming Our Way

What was once a straight forward walk or drive around campus has lately become a tangled trip. The usual paths are obstructed by a crane or a bulldozer, a fenced in area or a road block, forcing many of us to find alternate ways to get around. This flurry of activity is aimed at rejuvenating the A&T campus; a university “face-lift”. Coinciding with this change, the University Honors Program is undergoing a similar but less obvious transformation. The Advisory Council and the Honors Program administrative staff are in the process of expanding the program into an Honors College. According to Dr. Davis this distinction will “make the Honors Program more prestigious. An Honors College shows a

University’s greater emphasis on honor and excellence, and will be valued as much as any other college, such as Engineering and Arts & Sciences.” While there is no singular model for a successful Honors College or Program, there are common characteristics and attributes that successful institutions share. In preparation for this transition, the Honors Program sent envoys of students and administrators to visit the well established Honors Colleges of Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of South Carolina, during the Spring 2009 Semester. Among those Honors students were sophomore Alessandra Brown and junior Robert Story, both of whom recounted their prospective trips.

Mission

The purpose of the Aggie Alarm is to serve the Honors Program, report on matters pertinent to Honors students, and to inform Aggies everywhere about important academic and extracurricular matters. The Aggie Alarm is dedicated to providing superior, helpful information concerning the NCAT SU Honors community. As a student staffed and lead organization, the Aggie Alarm can provide a novel prospective of campus life.

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The Exchange at VCU

Alessandra Brown
Features and Copy Editor

The Honors Program trip to Virginia Commonwealth University was a tactful and productive meeting between the staff and student representatives of both institutions. Beginning with a cordially guided tour of the campus and lunch in the cafeteria, the itinerary quickly progressed to an intensive conference that lasted much of the day. Talking points included student engagement in honors, honors curriculum, faculty development, and recruitment and retention strategies, to name just a few. This positive, free exchange of ideas pro-

moted a better understanding of the issues, obstacles, and priorities that are at the core of attempting to carry out a transition to an Honors College. It was apparent that the larger matters included funding and organizing the infrastructure for such a change. After round-table discussion, the students of VCU and A&T were permitted to have a separate meeting



to address in-depth the surrounding details of how an Honors College is run from a student’s prospective. VCU students attested that the premiere programs that are most beneficial and unique to their Honors College are a Summer Research Institute and seminars. However, in conjunction with the purpose of the trip, the students felt that the most important aspect that allows for the success of any Honors College is that the staff and students feel a sense of connection, rather than obligation, to the program.

STUDENT INTERVIEW

An Afternoon with Jonathan A. McCoy



Ve Leandre, Editor

Most Americans spend their formative years in colleges and universities. They enter as naive teens full of hopes and dreams, and leave as experienced adults with new and changed perceptions. Somewhere amid freshman orientation, Homecoming, wild weekend parties, early Monday morning classes and lazy Friday afternoons, students grow up. They discover true values, passions and beliefs as they become adults. College is not just the best four years of life; it often represents the most important years.

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing Jonathan McCoy, an A&T Honors Program student who took advantage of all the best opportunities this university has to offer and emerged as a poised and confident leader. Mr. McCoy graduated in May with a perfect 4.0 G.P.A. Although he is at the top of his class, his A&T experience consisted of much more than all-nighters and acing exams. Jonathan McCoy successfully balanced a full and challenging academic course load with extracurricular and social activities.

Mr. McCoy had unlimited opportunities in selecting a school, but he picked North Carolina A&T because “the school offered the best mix of strong academics and social activities.” When asked how the Honors Program enriched his academic career, Jonathan replied, “The most enriching parts have been my involvement in the College of Engineering Dean’s Ambassador, Alpha

See McCoy, Page 3

USC Visit

Robert Story
Managing Editor

Students and faculty from the North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University Honors Program met with representatives from the well-established Honors College at the University of South Carolina.

Interim Honors Program Director Dr. Ray Davis said, “Our goal is to learn as much as we can about their college, including best practices in honors education, how the program is administered, [and] services provided to [the] student.”

The A&T Honors Program was represented by Dr. Davis, Mrs. Williamson, the Assistant Director for the Honors Program, Dr. Deborah Barnes, the Associate Dean for University Studies, and four Honors Students. The meeting was arranged to help lay the groundwork for the transition from an Honors Program to an Honors College at A&T.

Discussions covered the areas of specialty that each of the University of South Carolina’s five advisors are responsible for, the minimum number of consultations a student must complete in a year, and the history of the Honors College.

The University of South Carolina has a well-established Honors tradition with 30 years of experience as an Honors College in addition to 20 years of experience as an Honors Program.

The University of South Carolina’s Honors College works to facilitate student engagement in research and travel, requires an Honors thesis be completed for graduation, and is highly selective. The university maintains a student-run Honors Council that gives students a stake in the administration of Honors and encourages student involvement

Emerging Leaders Workshop

By Sylvia Obell
Staff Reporter



The Emerging Leaders Conference took place at A&T’s campus on February 20-22nd. The workshop was created by the Senior Scholars, a select group of accomplished Honors upperclassmen, for the freshman and sophomore Honors students. The weekend consisted of workshops and small group sessions, and topics included internships, interview tips, graduate school exploration, public and political service,

and studying abroad. Workshops were led by a variety of successful facilitators, from lawyers and judges to some of A&T’s own faculty. During the group sessions, students participated in activities to develop their positive personal qualities, as well as create presentations for a case study. All of the case study presentations were well done and addressed a variety of issues here at A&T ranging from campus security to cafeteria food. The cafeteria study was so informative that it was recommended to be presented to the A&T Student Government Association.

The Senior Scholars also hosted creative events in conjunction with the conference such as a fashion show that demonstrated the differences between casual, business casual, and business professional

See Workshop, Page 4

Something to Be Treasured: A Peak into A&T’s Dance Program

LaRia Land
Staff Reporter

There is something special about the A&T experience, both inside and outside the classroom. While each course of study fuels the needs of the student population, the Dance Program under the Department of Visual and Performing Arts continues to shine brighter than its founders could ever have imagined.

Originally, dance classes were taken through the Physical Education degree program. Now they are offered under their own program concentration through Liberal Studies. Acceptance into the program is dependent upon an audition. Students majoring in Liberal Studies with a concentration in Dance must have a total of 24 credits, and those with Dance as a mi-



nor must have at least 18 credits. Currently, there are fourteen Aggies pursuing a degree in dance under the direction of four professors: Melanie Dalton, Sheryl Stevens, Sara Tourek, and Dr. Eleanor Gwynn.

The goal of the Dance program is to prepare students for the professional and cultural world beyond A&T. The concentration sequence offers a variety of classes that consistently build upon one another from freshman to senior year. Professor Melanie Dalton says that the A&T program is special because “we are able to really focus on what we think is really important.” This includes featuring classes that connect students, mostly of African descent, to their heritage, as well as offering an array of

classes in modern dance and ballet.

Another unique aspect of the Aggie Dance program is the E Gwen Dance Company, which has been a part of the A&T family since the early 1990s. Participation is open to all students, but Dance students are required to join. The Company practices technique in Dunham six days a week, and is highly recognized beyond A&T’s community for the talent and dedication of its members. Dancing with a real dance company provides these students the experience to be competitive in and beyond the dance world.

Overall, the Dance program has installed a curriculum that will help the students “leave with a sense of understanding of themselves and their motivation” so that they can find it in themselves to make whatever they aspire to be come true.

McCoy

Continued from page 2

Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (of which he is President) and Big Brothers, Big Sisters. When asked if it was difficult to maintain a balance between his extracurricular activities and schoolwork, Jonathan stated that he doesn’t commit to more than he can handle and always tries his best to follow through. “At the end of the day, you have your word and your integrity... if people can’t count on that, what can they count on?”

Mr. McCoy also found time to travel and study abroad in Ghana, Thailand, Cambodia, England and Italy. Taking a full course load in a foreign system (Ghana) was challenging, but the experience gave him confidence; if he could succeed there, then he could do almost anything. There were



also cultural differences which added to the challenge, but “the history lessons and connections to my ancestors and the past changed my perspective and my life.”

Mr. McCoy has three tips for his peers: First, four years of college should be spent making a key that will unlock the door to your future. Second, don’t stress; hardly anyone has all the pieces of the puzzle put

together. Finally, enjoy yourself. When asked what he’ll miss most about A&T, Mr. McCoy stated “I will miss the people and the school environment. Not the classes though.” With a chuckle and a smile, the interview was over. I couldn’t help but feel that I’d had the distinct privilege of convers-

ing with a young man well on his way to greatness who is ready to take on the world and carve out a place for himself. Watch out, here he comes!

Great Debaters!

North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University has established an Honors Debate Club in conjunction with the Honor’s Program at the behest of Dr. Ray J. Davis, the Interim Honors Program Director.

Dr. Stephen C. Ferguson II, who has a joint appointment in the Department of Liberal Studies and the Division of University Studies, is the sponsor of the A&T Honors Debate Club.

Newly elected Officers Robert Story, President; Demetria Rouse, Vice-President; Victoria Revelle, Secretary; and Community Service Co-Chairs Celeste Paylor along with Dr. Stephen Ferguson encourage all students interested in joining the debate club to contact Dr. Davis or Dr. Ferguson for more information.