

HONORS OUTLOOK

SENIOR SCHOLAR EXTENDS THE CLASSROOM

By Anna Rinko, Class of 2019

Starting college, I simply didn't picture myself studying abroad. It seemed expensive, difficult, and just not something I planned to seek out. My perspective shifted when my best friend gushed about the possibility of studying abroad, and walked me through the logistics that would be involved. The program she was looking into offered a film internship that piqued my interest, and that sealed the deal. Spring semester junior year I was on my way to Bath, England, for a semester with Advanced Studies in England, a rigorous program with ties to University College, Oxford.



Spring Break in San Sebastian, Spain

The clichés about study abroad are true. It shifts your worldview and gives you memories that will last a lifetime. You get to meet all sorts of people with different life experiences and politics—not to mention all of the amazing places you may go, some of which I never would have even conceived of visiting. I was able to sprint up the tallest sand dune in Europe. I drank champagne at the

Moulin Rouge. I saw the Scottish crown jewels in Edinburgh. To top it all off you're sharing these experiences with great people, some of whom will become lifelong friends. I now know people in Canada and Australia who were pivotal to my experience. I would definitely encourage those who are skeptical about study abroad as I was to really take another look and reconsider the prospect. It's worth it.

AN EVENING AT THE THEATER

by Thomas Blackburn & Morgan Freeman, Class of 2022

This spring the Honors Student Advisory Council chose for the program field trip seeing a local production of the musical *The Color Purple* at the Riverside Center for Performing Arts in Stafford County. *The Color Purple* is based on a novel of the same name by Alice Walker and has been celebrated for its display of a sisterhood of strong black women in the deep south during segregation. Once we arrived, we were seated for dinner and dessert. A unique aspect of the Riverside Center was that our servers were actually the performers in the production and our dinner tables were right before the stage on which the magic of the musical would play out. When the production began, we were transported by an extraordinary story and inspiring music. This experience was both captivating and moving. By the end of the performance students were in awe of the protagonist's voice that powerfully communicated the emotion and strength of Celie's life. Filled with laughter, tears, and movement, we learned, discussed, and began to understand what a beautiful representation of art and history was. As new members of the Honors Program we immediately felt welcome, and this experience built a connection between us that is unforgettable.

Scholars and faculty at *The Color Purple*



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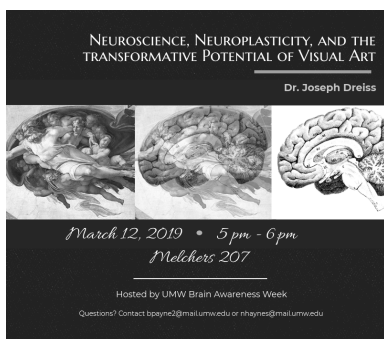
PATHWAY TO MED SCHOOL

By Matt Tovar, Class of 2019

BRAINY SCHOLARS SHARE THEIR PASSION

By Nicole Haynes & Brighton Payne,
Class of 2020

We were excited to introduce Brain Awareness Week, which is a global initiative run by The Dana Foundation, to UMW. It's a week dedicated to learning about the brain and advancements in brain research. We first learned about BAW in high school, and after arriving at UMW, we were inspired to bring it to the Fredericksburg community.



Ultimately, with encouragement from the Honors Program, we shared our passion for the brain with others, which took the form of an interdisciplinary lecture that combined STEM and humanities given by Dr. Joseph Dreiss from the Art and Art History Department on "Neuroscience, Neuroplasticity and the Transformative Potential of Visual Art." It was an amazing experience where seemingly opposite fields like art and biology came together; Dr. Dreiss's discussion about the sculptures by Harriet Whitney Frishmuth, and the interconnection between the emotions portrayed in the sculpture and the emotions that the viewers experience, was particularly interesting.

We hope to make BAW an annual celebration at UMW.

May 31st, 2017 was a day my world forever changed. It was the day that two years of sleepless nights, 16-hour ER shifts, and endless studying finally came to fruition. It was the day I was notified of my acceptance into the GWU Medical School Early Selection Program. Moreover, I was the first student from the UMW Honors Program to have been accepted into this prestigious program. The Early Selection program, an agreement between George Washington University and the UMW Honors Program (one of just ten with this opportunity), allows students to apply for provisional acceptance into one of the nation's most competitive medical schools two years ahead of their peers. Students who excel in their pre-medical courses, attain significant amount of clinical and non-clinical experience, and have a pronounced passion for serving humanity through medicine apply during their sophomore year of college. If accepted, they are encouraged to pursue other hobbies and interests throughout their remaining two years. For me, this included reigniting my passion for music by attaining a music minor as well as furthering my research in nanotherapeutic neuro-oncology. May 31st, 2017 seems like just yesterday; however, with medical school now less than four months away, it's become clear to me just how fast time has passed. Although the mountains ahead of me seem impossible, I know that my education at UMW and the experiences gained through the Honors Program equipped me with the best possible tools to tackle even the most impossible of climbs.



Image courtesy of Always Avery Photography

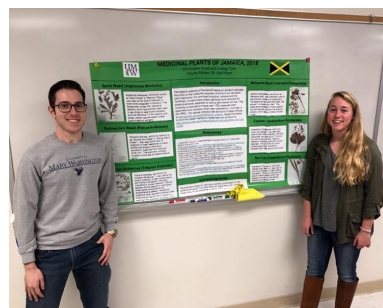
IN BOTANICAL SERVICE

by Chris Good, Class of 2021

As part of my Honors Service Learning requirement, I participated in the Herbarium Digitization and Research Project. Like many Biology Majors, I had heard of the Herbarium but knew little about it. Located in the basement of Jepson Science Center, the Herbarium is a curious room that houses preserved botanical specimens. My friends could not believe when I told them more about what is in the Herbarium, including preserved specimens from the 1800's, a giant seed pod as long as your arm, and thousands of specimens collected in Jamaica.

What I love about this project is that the students come from a variety of academic disciplines, meaning each student brings their unique set of skills to the table and can pursue interests ranging from imaging to geo-referencing to research. My favorite thing that I learned on the project is how many specimens in the Herbarium have medicinal properties, especially how, for centuries, people have used these plants to treat issues ranging from gastrointestinal ailments to microbial infections.

Chris Good and Lindsay Tyler



You can follow the UMW Herbarium on Instagram
@mary_washington_herbarium