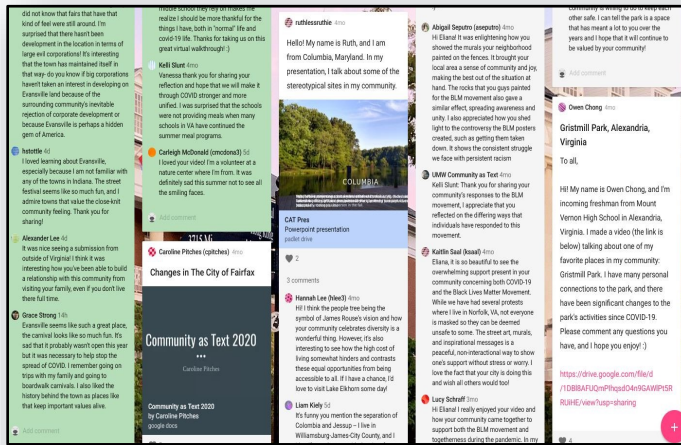


# Honors Outlook\*



## \*Pandemic Edition the Second

### COMMUNITY AS TEXT GOES VIRTUAL

The cancellation of pre-arrival programs this Fall meant that Honors needed to pivot quickly to adapt its signature City as Text™ orientation. Our CAT student directors — Macy Justice, Hanna Carey, and Carleigh Rahn— and a fantastic group of CAT student leaders helped arrange our Community as Text activity on Padlet. We invited current and incoming Honors students to create artifacts addressing one or more of the following: a) How has your local area or town changed, or how has your perception of that community changed, over the last four months as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic or Black Lives Matter movement? b) What is your favorite spot in your local community or area? Why? c) What makes the street or place that you live in your local community unique or special? Students were also invited to view and comment on the collected artifacts. Our site received videos, poems, slide shows and Prezi, drawings, an ArcGIS storymap, and more. If you'd like to view it, you may do so here: <https://padlet.com/umwhonors/cat2020>.

Below are a just a few reflections from participating first-year Honors students, our Class of 2024:

#### Charlotte Russell: "Electric Slidin' Around Chesapeake"

When I found out that this year's Community as Text program was to create an artifact sharing information about our hometowns, I knew that I had to put a creative twist on mine. After all, there's not much to say about growing up in Chesapeake, the third most boring city in the United States. I wanted to create a fun video that would bring joy to others during these unprecedented times. When Dr. Slunt and Dr. Scanlon mentioned in the information session that they had never seen an interpretive dance, I decided to take on the challenge. The only problem was that I don't consider myself a dancer, with the exception of line dances, so my solution was to do the electric slide at each place. In the process of making my video, I visited some of Chesapeake's most beautiful locations and gained a deeper appreciation for my hometown through sharing it with others.

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## THE HONORS PROGRAM

IN FALL 2020

*Like all units and programs at the University of Mary Washington, the Honors Program has worked hard this semester to try to retain a bit of normalcy for our students—and, maybe even more importantly, the sense of community that we strive to have at the heart of all we do.*

*To this end, we have hosted about half a dozen “drop-in-and-chat” zooms with the program staff, continued our weekly Honors Community Guided Meditation online, sent gingerbread kits out for home building instead of hosting our usual stress-breaker building contest, and managed to open the Honors Commons under strict safety limitations.*

*Additionally, we adapted our existing professionalization and development programming, including a program on informational interviews and professionalism online hosted by Paul Binkley, the director of the Center for Career and Professional Development, and an Honors workshop by Safe Zone, highlighted in this newsletter.*

*Here we also share reflections on the adapted first-year programming for our biggest incoming class ever; unique projects completed in this semester’s iteration of HONR 201: Honors Service Learning; and our first ever city-and-campus Scavenger Hunt.*

*We look forward to what the Spring semester will bring with our incredible community of scholars who make it all worthwhile.*

— Kelli Slunt & Mara Scanlon

## COMMUNITY AS TEXT REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

### *AJ Gluchowski, Bethlehem, PA*

The Honors Program at Mary Washington was a major part of my first semester. The Community as Text program played an essential role in making sure I was comfortable at the college. The program was adapted from its usual setup due to the Coronavirus; however, I found it extremely humbling to research and share the history of my home town with other Mary Washington students. I explored the history of our industrial district, as well as the formation of my high school’s marching band and bagpipes corps. Coming from a historical town in Pennsylvania, in which I learned to play the bagpipes, I felt right at home moving to Fredericksburg and participating in the university’s Eagle Pipe Band.

### *Eliana Nachman, Richmond, VA*

I really enjoyed creating my artifact! Although not a typical way to get to know people, it was interesting and fun. I created mine about my neighborhood’s response to the Black Lives Matter movement gaining momentum over the summer. In the process, I realized how proud I am to be from Richmond and the community I grew up in. It was nice to get to share that part of me before joining a completely new community. I also had a fun time exploring more of Virginia through everyone else’s videos. I learned a lot more than I was expecting to and it really got me excited to get to know people from all different places.



## Pen Pals: You’ve Got Mail

by Aber Gadelrab ‘23

This past summer, the UMW Honors program created a new way for incoming students to connect with their fellow upperclassmen through the use of pen pals. This initiative was created in order to allow students to gain the ability to form new connections, especially in such hard times. There were two different types of ways for the students to communicate with one another. The first method that could be used was the traditional way of mailing letters that we refer to as “snail mail,” while the second method was through emails. We had both rising and current students fill out a questionnaire about their interests and which form of communication they would prefer. Once these questionnaires were completed, the students were matched up and they were allowed to begin the process of creating these new bonds.

In my personal experience, I was lucky enough to have two pen pals. It was actually very comforting to know that my own experiences could be useful to rising students. Not only had I been able to experience being a freshman in both pre-pandemic and in present-day pandemic atmospheres, but I had the opportunity to share my own wisdom. I aided my pen pals in navigating through their new chapter of their lives by answering any questions they had as well as welcoming them to the UMW family.

## A Focus on Service: HONR 201 Projects

### Maya Jenkins, President's Community Advisory Panel



This past June, I was nominated to serve on the President's Community Advisory Panel (CAP). The panel was created to account for the UMW Police's involvement in a protest that took place near campus and to create recommendations for President Paino that exemplify an understanding of safety that corresponds with UMW's values. Using CAP as a service-learning project has given me the ability to reflect on the meaning of service with my fellow Honors students in our monthly seminars, and it has made me question my previous understanding of what it means to lead. It has exposed me to the difficulty that comes with being a representative of various marginalized groups. I value these experiences as a part of my service-learning project because they cannot be replicated in a traditional classroom setting.

### Gabriel Jose Paguada Matteson, Youth Advocate Programs

For my service project I acted as a special project volunteer assisting the Global Youth Voices to Inform and Transform project at Youth Advocate Programs (YAP). YAP is an internationally recognized nonprofit organization exclusively committed to the provision of community-based alternatives to out-of-home care through direct service, advocacy and policy change. This project is especially important at this time as YAP has recognized young people sharing stories during the pandemic provides a protective factor as global health and economic crises may lead/have already led to a mental health crisis. In September, I joined youth and staff in six countries doing Peace Walks for International Peace Day. My Fredericksburg Peace Walk allowed me an opportunity to reflect on my service project and have a virtual exchange with people across Australia, Guatemala, Sierra Leone, England, Ireland and the US in support of advocacy, system change and program services that are truly in service to youth. I was able to see a new kind of shared humanity as we all face the challenge of a global pandemic.



### Keegan Fredrick, UMW Votes

During this past semester, I was involved with the University of Mary Washington Votes or UMW Votes organization in an effort to engage in my campus community and Honors Program. Through the Honors Program's Service Learning course, I was tasked to volunteer with a local service organization and decided to work with UMW Votes. Over the fall semester, I and other volunteers organized several events to encourage and educate students about the voting opportunities in Virginia. Even with the recent COVID-19 pandemic, we planned, organized and led Get Out the Vote events, such as weekly tabling and Walking Wednesdays, where volunteers walked UMW students to the local polling location. During these experiences, I and other volunteers were able to provide information about voting opportunities and encourage people to vote and vote early. UMW Votes also held a Vote Early Day event on campus where information about voting was given, games about voting were held, and volunteers chalked the main campus walk to tell people about early voting. We also held a Halloween event, Pumpkins to the Polls, where students were able to paint voting-themed pumpkins for a contest. Ultimately, through this experience in the Honors Program, I was able to engage in a unique opportunity to promote civic engagement within the University of Mary Washington community.



### Madeline Killian, STEM Videos for Preschoolers

As part of the honors service learning class, I found a way to virtually volunteer and use my Physics major by sharing my passion for science with preschoolers through a series of science lesson videos. Though I was unable to meet with the kids face to face, I was still able to enhance their curiosity through fun experiments and lessons about germs, static electricity, photosynthesis and prisms/rainbows. Knowing the children were excited and enjoying my experiments in their classes was rewarding for me because I feel that learning about STEM at a young age is extremely important.

## UMW Safe Zone Workshop Offered for Honors

by *Eli Keith*,  
class of 2023

The Safe Zone workshop that I attended this Fall was one of the most rewarding experiences that I had this semester. The session presented an opportunity for us all to learn about others' experiences and how we can create a community that is inclusive of LGBTQ+ community members. It was both refreshing and moving to be in an environment where we all could discuss biases, impressions, and moments of learning solely for the purpose of spreading awareness and improving the communities we all are a part of. In 2020, being a scholar means being conscious and knowledgeable about the social issues that exist, and Safe Zone training can help achieve that for Honors scholars. I was reminded as I took the training that discussions surrounding gender and sexuality and how they affect the way our society functions do not occur nearly enough, particularly among those who are more privileged than others in this way. Students that attend Safe Zone training can begin to change that fact.



# GONE HUNTING!

## HONORS PROGRAM SCAVENGER HUNT

**Needs:** fresh air and exercise; time away from the laptop screen; human contact; relaxation

**Teams:** partners or small groups of Honors students and friends (masked!)

**Challenge:** solve up to 15 rhymed clues to determine what place on campus or in the city each refers to, then find that place and record your triumph with a (safe!) group selfie

**Outcome:** see below



We wanted to participate in the scavenger hunt because it sounded like a great way to be involved in the Honors community, and a great experience for exploring campus and Fredericksburg. As freshman entering UMW in a Covid world, we knew little of the area, and the scavenger hunt was challenging because of this. However, the scavenger hunt provided a great opportunity to learn more! Our favorite site was Carl's. The ice cream was definitely a fun bonus of the experience! The greatest victory, as cheesy as it sounds, was the fun times we had between going to the sites. It was a highlight of this semester! —Erin Caine and Logan Kurtz, Class of 2024



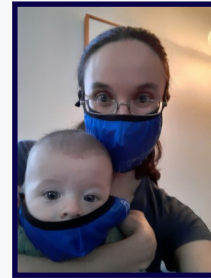
This semester I participated in a socially distant scavenger hunt through the Honors program. When I first saw the announcement, I thought it looked interesting, but was not sure who to do with it because a lot of my Honors friends were not on campus this semester. When Martin reached out on the current Honors student GroupMe, I responded eventually, and I am so glad that I did. Exploring campus and a bit of downtown Fredericksburg with him was a lot of fun, and I found some spots I hadn't found before. It also allowed me to meet a freshman that I might not have met otherwise. —Jessica Thorne, Class of 2023



When I messaged the Honors group chat looking for a partner for the scavenger hunt, I really didn't expect a response. It was something I did completely on a whim, partly because it sounded fun, partly because it was something to do in this lonely semester. I took a chance putting myself out there, but it paid off, because I had a great time with Jessica. The scavenger hunt was a great way to get some exercise, learn about Fredericksburg, and of course, win some sweet Honors prizes. However, the best thing I took home from that day wasn't a prize: it was a new friend. —Martin Eykamp, Class of 2024



THANK YOU  
to Honors scholar  
Maddy Slunt  
for designing our new  
UMW Honors Program masks  
(modeled here by program staff)



### **(Take-and-Make) Gingerbread House Contest Winners**

*Most Creative: "Elves in Quarantine" by Charlotte Russell*



*Most Likely to be Devoured: "Frosty and Fido's Festive Façade" by Rebecca Young*



*Best Overall: "Next on Dateline: Witch Lures Children into her Gingerbread House with Plans to Devour Them" by Dayton Keffer*



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