

# Message from the Director

by Dr. Gregory Nobles

## A Down Under Encounter

What are the odds? A few weeks ago, I was walking with Hugh Crawford, my Honors Program pal, in Taupo, New Zealand, looking for a lunch spot, when I saw a guy who caught my eye as someone I maybe knew. He was wearing dark sunglasses, and I couldn't quite make him out, but as we passed each other, I said "Gary?"

"Greg?"

It was Gary Schuster, the former provost at Georgia Tech, and the dean of the College of Sciences before that, looking almost incognito and completely out of context. "What are you doing in New Zealand?" he and I asked each other.

Hugh Crawford and I were easy: We came to New Zealand in early January to teach in Georgia Tech's Pacific Program, the third time for each of us, and very agreeable duty it has been. But Gary Schuster had an even loftier opportunity, having been invited by the Royal Society of Chemistry for a four-week lecture tour at each of New Zealand's eight universities. He and his wife, Anita, had a little time for personal touring thrown in, and Crawford and I caught them as they were passing through Taupo on their way from Auckland to Wellington and then to the South Island.

As you might imagine from his invitation to travel and lecture in New Zealand, Gary Schuster is a scientist of considerable prominence, and his work on oxidative damage to DNA, the topic of his talk in Auckland, has been widely celebrated. I knew Gary best, however, as an enlightened administrator at



Photo: Anne Harper

Georgia Tech, an early ally of the Honors Program, the dean who generously offered us a partnership in the Karlovitz Lecture, our signature event each year. (I pause for a plug: This year's Karlovitz Lecture will feature Dr. Helen Fisher of Rutgers University, speaking on "Lust, Romance, Attachment: The Drive to Love and Who We Choose," Wednesday, March 6, at the CULC Auditorium, 6-7 pm. Please choose to be there.)

The Honors Program has always been fortunate to have friends in high places at Georgia Tech, but the surprising serendipity of seeing this friend in such a distant place made me happy. It's good to know that Tech's intellectual reach does indeed extend all the way down to this lovely country at the bottom of the world.

Good on ya, Gary. Your New Zealand notoriety is good for us all, and it still will be when we get back home.

## COURSE ROLLOUT LUNCHEON

Tuesday, March 12, 2013

11 am - Noon

Student Success Center, President Suite A

Come catch up with fellow  
HP students and faculty,  
and get a preview of the HP  
course list for Fall 2013!

## NEWSLETTER STAFF

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Georgia  
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# THE HYPE Honors Program

NEWSLETTER

January / February 2012

## The View from Here

by Dr. Monica Halka

Everyone who's anyone in higher education is talking about global learning and how crucial it is for today's student to become a global citizen. But what does that mean? And why is it so important? Clearly, we'd like all students to expand their perspectives by exposure to other cultures, if only to observe, first-hand, inequalities among developed and developing societies. I wholeheartedly applaud our students who travel to Peru with FIMRC or to Ecuador with ESWB to help in children's clinics or build Habitat for Humanity houses. I do wonder, however, if we are glorifying worldliness at the expense of a serious look at our own surroundings. Should we not first encourage scrutiny of social disparities and environmental injustices at the local level? It seems too easy to romanticize poverty in distant lands while overlooking the hunger, homelessness, domestic violence, and drug and human trafficking within a stone's throw of campus. Too simple to problematize air quality in Beijing while disregarding the same issue in Atlanta. Georgia Tech is perfectly situated to educate about and even help find solutions



to these important urban concerns. Some small steps have been made—affiliation with the west side alliance, partnership with Trees Atlanta—but opportunities are nearly unlimited, and students should be eager to pursue these grand challenges—which are admittedly not as exotic as eradicating malaria, but may, if done right, be more sustainable in the long run.

## What's All this "Networking" Hype?

by Victor Lesniewski

Pokémon Club fundraising. Gingerbread house competitions. Tennis lessons for Malia Obama. There are some extracurricular activities that you simply cannot foresee when reading applications for the Honors Program. While scanning through pages of clubs, hobbies, and achievements, I have found the application format wanting—I can see what the applicants do, but I am not sure I know who they are.

Looking at my meager Georgia Tech application file from five years ago, I don't think I would have let myself into the Honors Program. Looking at the five years since, however, my experiences have had little to do with that application and more to do with a commonly reported truth: person-to-person networking is the primary source for getting a job. Everything has started with a conversation, from my global health internship with the American Cancer Society to my time in Sydney on the board of directors for AIESEC Australia, a leadership

development organization that has a chapter here on campus.

In the three and a half years I spent with AIESEC working on sales and business development across a few continents, I have had surreal moments with the people I have met. I shared the dance floor with the CEO of Coca Cola Enterprises and shared a mysterious green vegetable juice with the winner of Australia's The Apprentice TV show. In the end, it was not what I knew and it was not even who I knew that mattered. The stories that I shared with those people I met ultimately determined the value created by our relationship.

So when's the last time you shared your story? Will you be waiting until your next application? If you are unsure about networking or would like to learn how to connect with people in a valuable way, join me at the Opportunity Series event on Tuesday, February 26th and let's talk. You never know where the conversation may lead us.

# The Psychology of Social Networks

by Brandon Abernathy

You know, it isn't often that one sees a student become extraordinarily passionate about a class. Those positive emotions aren't usually typical of my fellow tech students; I hate to say it, but it's true. Having been a part of the Honors Program for about three years now, I figured it was about time to start working on at least one of the three HP Special Topics Courses I'm required to take. Psych 2803, "Leveraging Social Networks" has been one of the most interesting, educational, and applicable classes I've yet taken here at Georgia Tech. Dr. DeChurch does a great job presenting technical data from a warm, humanistic perspective. The discussions thus far have focused on how networks and their components are a part of our contemporary lives, as well as how exceptionally successful people leverage their social networks and use them for mutual benefit all around. As a student, I've truly enjoyed learning about something that takes immediate precedence in my social and professional life, and I encourage that any Honors Student with the opportunity to take this class should jump at the first chance they get. Jasmine Burton, a fellow 3rd year HP student in the class put it quite simply. She says, "professionally, this class encourages students to reach outside their major, age group, and ultimately their comfort zone to ultimately get what and where they are wanting to go."



Brandon Abernathy discusses an in-class exercise with Sara Hojjatie  
Photo: Monica Halka

Building a great network improves long-term stability in the professional world. We are smack dab in the middle of the greatest informational and technological age in the world's history; this is a world where LinkedIn, Facebook, and even Twitter inevitably do have an impact on society's viewpoints and decisions. To have a course that teaches and encourages these crucial success principles is simply very rare.

## Lust, Romance, Attachment

The Drive to Love and Who We Choose

Dr. Helen Fisher, Rutgers University



Wednesday, March 6, 2013

6 - 7pm

Clough Commons, Room 152

Book Signing at 5:30pm

Part of the Karlovitz Lecture Series, presented in cooperation with the College of Sciences

# Student Spotlight

by Katie Geddes

As part of my Honors Program Office Internship this semester, it is my goal to breathe new life into our website and showcase some of the exceptional students that are the backbone of this phenomenal program. High-achieving students are the lifeblood of the Honors Program—our undergraduates propagate the success of Special Topics Courses, the Student Challenge Fund, and various philanthropic endeavors.

This month I would like to introduce our first student in the spotlight, Seth Dubin. Seth boasts a love of design and international travel, and hopes to bring these two passions together post-graduation. "I hope to work for a small design firm where what I'm working on has a huge impact on the company," Seth articulates. "I aspire to apply my projects to global challenges while remaining involved in my local community and volunteering my time and effort to others." After entering the College of Architecture as a freshman, Seth learned more about the Computation Media program and changed his major without hesitation. "I originally chose to study Architecture because of the design aspect, however Computational Media takes the best of two contrasting realms: computer science and liberal arts. This combination allows for limitless opportunity for innovation and creativity."

Seth also found his niche on campus by joining a number of student organizations in addition to the Honors Program. "From the start of freshman year I have served on the editorial board of the Blueprint, Georgia Tech's yearbook. I have also been a member of Hillel, the Jewish student group, for multiple semesters. I recently joined SGA as Historian, a post that suits me well. Together, my activities range from personal interests,



Seth on the spire of Vor Frelasers Kirke in Copenhagen, Denmark. Seth studied abroad in a semester exchange to the IT University of Copenhagen in Fall 2011. He also attended the College of Computing's study abroad program in Barcelona, Spain at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya in Summer 2012. Photo: Clarke Foster.

personal identity, and community involvement. I believe my activities have complemented my college career remarkably well," Seth explains. He is thankful for being a part of the Honors Program and accredits it with creating a small, close-knit community within Georgia Tech. "The Honors Program is always here to support me in any endeavors I have outside of class, whether it is support for a special project or aid in travelling to a conference in New York City. And of course the Special Topics courses have been a welcomed respite from my major and core classes," he laughs. Seth displays the ingenuity and individuality that the Honors Program seeks to promote.

Be on the lookout for more student profiles online in the weeks to come!

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SEARCH FOR

"GEORGIA TECH HONORS PROGRAM"

NEED FUNDING FOR A PROJECT,  
CONFERENCE, OR STUDY ABROAD TRIP?

APPLY FOR A STUDENT  
CHALLENGE FUND GRANT!

Proposals must be submitted by  
May 31st

to [monica.halka@gatech.edu](mailto:monica.halka@gatech.edu). The proposal template is posted on the Honors Program website under the Current Students tab.