

# FIFTH ANNUAL HONORS AWARD CEREMONY

## UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

### FACULTY AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

#### *Honors Professor of the Year, 2009-2010*

Leonard Steinhorn, School of Communication

#### *Honors 101 Faculty*

Jeffrey Adler, David Bosco, Michelle Egan, Lauren Feldman, Carolyn Gallaher, Pek Koon Heng, Patrick T. Jackson, Benjamin Jensen, Philip Johnson, Robert Johnson, Sarah Menke-Fish, Barbara Palmer, Matthew Pascoello, Anthony Quainton and Leonard Steinhorn.

### STAFF AWARD

#### *Outstanding Contribution to the Honors Community*

Rasheda Clark, Director of AU Catering

### ALUMNI AWARD

#### *Outstanding Honors Alumni*

Manan Shah, SIS/SPA, 2007

### STUDENT AWARDS

#### *Outstanding Honors Freshman*

Regan Alsup, Lien Tran

#### *Outstanding Honors Sophomore*

Elise Campbell, Julia Young

#### *Outstanding Honors Junior*

Daniel Catt, Shirin Karimi, Christopher Miller

#### *Outstanding Honors Senior*

Han Chen, Sonia Tabriz, Greta Wicklund

#### *Outstanding Leadership in the Honors Community*

Sarah Brown, Michael Roche, Megan Yarbrough

#### *Honors Scholar Award*

William Flynn, Andréana Lefton, Jon Weakley

## HONORS STUDENT NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS AND FINALISTS

### *Harry S. Truman Scholarship*

2009: Kyrie Bannar; Jenna Sablan, finalist

2010 Finalists: Lauren Barr, Emily Pfefer, Kelsey Stefanik-Sidener

### *2009 NSEP/David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarship*

Titus Stout, Elizabeth Tseng; Lauren Cater, alternate

### *2009 Killam Fellowship*

Jeannette Bergfeld, Alexander Thorp

### *2009 Morris K. Udall Scholarship*

Julie Munro

## STUDENT RECOGNITION

### *Honors 101 Mentors*

Lauren Allen, Lindsey Anderson, Jennifer Bryer, Trent Buatte, Ryan Carter, Daniel Catt, Cheryl Chan, Jeremy Cohen, Andrew Feierman, Rachel Ford, Alyssa Frederick, Jack Freund, Elin Harm, Emily Heltzel, Kerianne Lartz, Meredith Lukow, Amanda Magnavita, Emma Morgan, Steven Moss, Olive Ochuba, Joseph Patterson, Leah Pope (co-chair), Carmen Rios, Michael Roche, Alexandra Schultz, Thomas Simpson, Rebekah Smith, Sonia Tabriz, Luah Tomas, Katherine VanLent, Emily Watson and Jon Weakley (co-chair).

### *Student Honors Board*

Avram Billig, Trent Buatte (treasurer), Ayal Chen-Zion, Sam Hagedorn (director of communications), Kent Hiebel, Kate Kawakchuk (secretary), Michael Roche (president), Alex Severin, Angela Smith, Katie Sullivan, Joe Wenner, Rachel White, and Megan Yarbrough (vice-president).

## FIFTH ANNUAL HONORS AWARD CEREMONY

### UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

### FACULTY AWARD

#### *Honors Professor of the Year, 2009-2010*

#### **Professor Leonard Steinhorn**

**Director, Public Communication Division, School of Communication**

**Affiliate Professor, Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences**

The University Honors Program is delighted to name Prof. Leonard Steinhorn Honors Professor of the Year for 2009-2010 because of his exceptional service and teaching in the Honors community. Prof. Steinhorn is highly committed to his Honors students – serving as an active faculty mentor in the Honors 101 freshman orientation program, a dedicated Capstone advisor and a charismatic Honors Colloquium teacher. Students find him engaging and supportive both inside and outside his classroom. He goes far beyond his duties in an effort to aid and encourage students who seek his assistance. For the faculty standard he sets, we salute Prof. Steinhorn as the Honors Professor of the Year.

Prof. Steinhorn is the author of the much debated book on the baby boom generation, *The Greater Generation: In Defense of the Baby Boom Legacy*, which inspired his beloved Honors Colloquium, “Talking About That Sixties Generation: Understanding Baby Boomers and How They’ve Shaped Us.” His Honors Colloquium, “Campaign 2000: The News Room and the War Room,” was covered weekly by CNN and reported on in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. His similar Honors Colloquium in 2004 was followed closely by the NBC affiliate in Washington, D.C., and his 2008 election course was both covered and webcast on the Washington, D.C., FOX affiliate. Although Prof. Steinhorn appears regularly as a political commentator on television and radio, he is never too busy to advise Honors students or present a “mock class” to prospective Honors students and their families. The University Honors Program takes great pride and pleasure in honoring Prof. Steinhorn, a highly valued and distinguished member of our Honors Community.

## STAFF AWARD

### *Outstanding Contribution to the Honors Community*

**Rasheda Clark, Director, AU Catering**

Creating a welcoming community is a high priority to the University Honors Program and, in pursuing this all-important mission, Honors has a great partner in Rasheda Clark. As Director of AU’s catering efforts, Rasheda does her utmost, with the aid of her excellent team, to help us roll out the welcome mat at a range of Honors events – all while keeping us within budget! Whether Honors is hosting a big event for hundreds of people, like the Welcome Week’s Writer as Witness Breakfast with Honors freshmen, or sponsoring a more intimate gathering such as an Honors Tea Talk, Rasheda takes great care to attend to all the details, large and small, and delivers – without fail – great hospitality.

As AU’s catering coordinator since 2001 and in her current role for the last two years, Rasheda has impressed us in the course of our happy collaboration as warm and personable, patient and understanding, and always professional. Highly flexible and resourceful, she is ever ready to help, whatever the challenge du jour. Much of Rasheda’s day-to-day activities involve numerous contracts and countless details of staging events, but she views her work and her role more broadly, in terms of building strong, collegial relationships with the various campus offices, which she and her team members ably serve – and it shows.

It is with great pleasure that we recognize Rasheda Clark for her “Outstanding Contribution to the University Honors Community” in light of her leadership of one of AU’s busiest and most important offices. Her efforts help foster community in Honors and at AU, enhance the stature of our program and, with it, the reputation and success of the university as a whole.

## ALUMNI AWARD

### *Outstanding Honors Alumni*

**Manan Shah, SIS/SPA, 2007**

The University Honors Program takes great pride and pleasure in recognizing Manan Shah, who graduated from AU in 2007 cum laude with a double major in International Studies and Political Science and a minor in Religion and with University Honors. As a student, Manan was the founding chair of our Honors 101 freshman orientation program and the winner of the University-wide Charles W. Van Way Student Achievement Award in 2007. In his nomination for that prize, Manan was aptly described as “Mr. Service” for his extraordinary record of student service at AU. Since graduation, Manan has been working for Novo Nordisk with the National Changing Diabetes Program. His important work assessing current diabetes quality measurements around the country has resulted in a publication in a peer-reviewed journal. He also launched and maintains the first-ever pharmaceutical industry non-branded initiative on Twitter.

Manan's service to our community did not end when he graduated, as he quickly joined our Honors Alumni Advisory Committee so that he could continue to "give back." When he learned that we wanted to start an Honors alumni-student mentorship program, Manan volunteered to serve as a mentor and to chair the effort. In that role, he has travelled multiple times to Washington, D.C., to help shape and launch this important program, which has begun to engage more than 50 of our students and alumni, starting in January.

For his dedication, leadership and generosity to AU and to the University Honors Program and community, we present Manan Shah with the 2010 "Outstanding Honors Alumni Award."

## STUDENT AWARDS

### *Outstanding Honors Freshman*

**Regan Alsup** (*Film and Media Arts, International Studies*) has been at AU only a short time, but she's already attracting notice. Regan distinguished herself in the classroom last fall by achieving a 4.0 GPA. In addition to her academic pursuits, she finds time to figure skate and participate in the AU women's club hockey team, for which she will serve next year as the team's president. Regan also has a strong commitment to the community, reflected in her work with the AU chapter of Invisible Children, an organization dedicated to changing the Lord's Resistance Army, made up of child soldiers, in northern Uganda. This spring, Regan plans to participate in the Alternative Spring Break trip to Ireland that will focus on peace building in a post-conflict society. Honors is pleased to recognize Regan Alsup with an Outstanding Honors Freshman Award.

**Lien Tran** (*Business, Language and Culture Studies: French*) has already assumed an impressive combination of academic work and extracurricular activities, though she is only in her second semester on campus. Majoring in Business, Language and Culture with a focus on French, Lien is a native of Cyprus, studying at AU after winning a spot in the prestigious Fulbright America Cyprus Scholarship Program. She serves as an AU Diplomat, representing her school abroad. Lien is active in the student-run dance club AU in Motion and has appeared in *Bang, Bang, You're Dead* with the AU Players. A participant in the Case Competition within Kogod Business School, Lien continues to challenge herself to keep moving forward, and is indeed an Outstanding Honors Freshman.

### *Outstanding Honors Sophomore*

**Elise Campbell** (*Biology, Spanish*) has distinguished herself during her first two years as an Honors student at American University. In her short time at AU, Elise has made the Dean's List three times. As a research assistant to Prof. Naomi Baron, Elise is collaborating on a project that analyzes data on gender differences in mobile phone use and she is in the process of co-authoring a paper with Prof. Baron on the subject. Last summer, Elise spent time working for a non-profit in a small fishing village in Peru, and there, discovered her life's passion: to become a physician in the field of women's health and to create a more holistic and practical solution to women's health issues in developing nations. Elise Campbell is an outstanding Honors sophomore and worthy of this award.

**Julia Young** (*International Studies*) is the very model of an Outstanding Honors Sophomore. Julia's work ethic is only matched by her exuberance and personable demeanor. She is known not only for her work as a Student Staff Assistant for the Honors Program, but as a co-founder and co-chair of the Community Learners Advancing in Spanish and English (CLASE), a campus organization connecting AU students who wish to enhance their Spanish-speaking skills with AU staff who are eager to strengthen their English-speaking skills. Julia also serves as an executive board member of Latin and American Student Organization (LASO), takes photographs for the Talon Yearbook, sings for the AU Catholic Church Choir and volunteers for the American Field Service Intercultural Exchange. Her work experience is as broad as it is interesting, ranging from babysitter and English tutor to intern with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Office of Presidential Correspondence at the White House. It is with great pleasure the University Honors Program names Julia Young one of this year's Outstanding Honors Sophomores.

## ***Outstanding Honors Junior***

**Daniel Catt** (*Business Administration*) has spent his time at American exploring the many possibilities for his life. A Business Administration major with a focus on accounting, Dan is considering also studying pre-med and then becoming a doctor. While maintaining a 3.9 GPA, Dan has served as an Honors 101 mentor, a teaching assistant for a psychology course, and freshman service experience leader, along with regularly volunteering at Georgetown University Hospital. He also worked in Kogod's Washington Initiative to prepare income tax returns for lower income Washington, D.C., residents. Dan is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society and has been on Dean's List every semester. In his free time, Dan enjoys playing and composing music on his guitar. Described by his nominator as "an outstanding individual who positively influences the lives of AU students as well as people in the greater D.C. area," Dan is indeed an Outstanding Honors Junior, and the University Honors Program is confident that he will reach the high goals he has set for himself.

**Shirin Karimi** (*Literature*) has found ways to bridge two seemingly disparate branches of knowledge in her time at American University. Pursuing a career in medicine while also completing a major in Literature, Shirin is meeting with great academic success, evident in her selection for the Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society and her standing on the Dean's List every semester. She is currently collaborating with Dr. Monika Konaklieva, working in her "Organic Chemistry" laboratory to research beta-lactam compounds that will be sent to the National Institutes of Health for further development into antibiotics. Last year, she presented her research at the Robyn Rafferty Mathias Student Research Conference and was selected as the Catalyst science magazine co-editor. Shirin is also a consulting editor for BleakHouse Publishing and one of her works was selected as the lead story in the current issue of *BleakHouse Review*. A copy editor and proofreader for two published books, *Miller's Revenge* and *A Zoo Near You*, she has been selected as an associate editor for *Tacenda Literary Magazine*. Shirin Karimi is certainly an Outstanding Honors Junior!

**Christopher Miller** (*Political Science, Law and Society*) is truly an outstanding Honors junior, both inside and outside of the classroom. Last fall, Chris completed an internship in association with the Washington College of Law's Innocence Project and he currently has a highly coveted, paid internship with the Public Defender Service of the District of Columbia. Later this year, Chris will also become a published author when two of his original poems are featured in Prof. Robert Johnson's book, *A Zoo Near You*. In spite of missing seven weeks of classes last fall due to illness, Chris was able to successfully complete his courses and was rewarded for his efforts by making the Dean's List. The faculty member who nominated Chris describes him as "working tirelessly, whether it is in the context of an internship, paid work, class work, or academic writing and research." The University Honors Program commends Chris for his great work ethic and exemplary record and finds him highly worthy of this award.

## ***Outstanding Honors Senior***

**Han Chen** (*International Studies*) has succeeded academically, taken on numerous leadership roles and gained invaluable internship experience during her time as a member of the American University Honors Program. In 2008, Han received a coveted fellowship with the International Institute of Public Policy, which allowed her to take summer policy institute courses at Spelman College in Atlanta. Han has also had prestigious internships with the Embassy of France, the Middle East Institute and the Center for American Progress. Currently, Han has an internship with the U.S. Department of Energy. Now in her senior year, Han is giving back to the AU community through her work as a Multicultural Affairs Advocate with the President's Office and her position as a senator in the Undergraduate Senate. The staff member who nominated Han Chen refers to her as "one of AU's shining stars." The University Honors Program could not agree more.

**Sonia Tabriz** (*Law and Society, Psychology*) The accomplishments of Sonia Tabriz both academically and in the area of leadership activities this year are tremendous and undeniable, earning her the title of Outstanding Honors Senior. From 2009 to 2010, Sonia has published numerous works of literary and visual art, co-edited and contributed to two books and co-authored several articles – including one as

written testimony in support of House Bill HR 2289. As if her prolific writing is not enough, her record of service is long and diverse, in roles including fall 2009 Honors 101 mentor, student representative on the AU SPA Academic Integrity Panel, AU Ambassador and treasurer for the organization FLY (Facilitating Leadership in Youth). Sonia also collaborates with Dr. Robert Johnson as a trial mitigation assistant, and serves as the managing editor and text editor of BleakHouse Publishing, while also acting as editor-in-chief of *Tacenda Literary Magazine*. She does all of this while maintaining a stellar 3.94 cumulative GPA. For all she has achieved, Sonia Tabriz is highly deserving of the title Outstanding Honors Senior.

**Greta Wicklund** (*International Studies*) is described by her nominating professor as “an extraordinary student with mature academic commitment.” Greta has done very well at American University, majoring in International Studies. She has also excelled beyond the classroom as an NCAA Division I athlete on American’s indoor and outdoor track teams, serving as team captain since her junior year. Greta was selected as the Patriot League Women’s Cross Country 2009 Scholar-Athlete of the Year. She serves as a tutor and intern for CentroNía, a bilingual charter school in Washington, D.C. Greta is working on a Capstone project called “Parenting and Politics from El Salvador: Empowered Belonging to the United States,” examining parent-child relationships and the formation of civil identities among immigrants from El Salvador. Greta plans to pursue a master’s degree in Teaching English as a Second Language in 2011. Honors salutes this scholar-athlete and Outstanding Honors Senior.

### ***Outstanding Leadership in the Honors Community***

**Sarah Brown** (*International Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies*) has proven herself as an effective leader on campus. Sarah serves as the director of the Women’s Initiative. In this role, she manages a staff of 15 as she works on AU’s sexual assault and women’s health policy initiatives and strives to empower university students, faculty and staff. Having completed internships at the National Women’s Law Center and the National Council of Women’s Organizations, Sarah received the Everett Public Service Scholarship, which is given to a select group of college students nationally who display academic talent, a strong work ethic and dedication to social issues. The student who nominated her for this award said, “Sarah has consistently demonstrated a willingness and ability to support her academic goals by engaging with the community and putting her experience to good use.” Honors certainly agrees, and salutes Sarah as one of this year’s Outstanding Leaders.

**Michael Roche** (*International Studies, History, Economics*) demonstrates leadership both academically and in the arena of extracurricular activities. Case in point: Faced with the possibility of the Student Honors Board (SHB) not having a president this year, Mike decided to step forward to fill the important role, capping his three prior years of service on the board. The depth of his experience on the board has enabled him to excel in his duties and with the strong support and efforts of his fellow members, make SHB the vital force it has become. For his leadership and service he has earned the admiration of his peers and the appreciation of the Honors Program staff. Mike’s service to his fellow Honors students alone would qualify him for an award, but his academic leadership also merits him special recognition. Mike is the only Honors student known to have ever qualified for Honors distinctions in not one, not two, but three separate majors. Mike has been accepted to the joint JD/MBA program at both Cornell University and the University of Buffalo for the coming fall. The University Honors Program is all the better for the outstanding leadership of Mike Roche and so it is very fitting that he is recognized by this award.

**Megan Yarbrough** (*Political Science, CLEG*) has an understated demeanor that belies just how important and influential her leadership has been at AU and the impact she has had on campus and beyond. Most recently, Megan serves as President of Colleges Against Cancer, a group tasked with coordinating this year’s campus-wide Relay For Life – an event poised to raise thousands of dollars to aid the global fight against cancer. Megan also works as a constituency relations intern with the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and is the vice president of the Student Honors Board, an organization she has served in the past as secretary. She has combined her passions for service and advocacy with internships at the Office of Congressman Dennis Moore (D-Kansas) and the law offices of Michael A. Millet, as well as extensive volunteerism with the American Cancer Society and as a Freshmen Service Experience Leader. Megan’s breadth and quality of leadership, balanced by her humble and personable approach, has earned her one of this year’s awards recognizing Outstanding Leadership in the Honors Community.

## ***Honors Scholar Award***

**William Flynn** (*Physics, Mathematics*) has a passion for research and excellence that is evident to those around him. He has undertaken three major independent research projects while at American University. With the help of an AU Undergraduate Research Grant, Bill is working to create a Hirsch-Meeks fusor, a device capable of creating high temperature plasmas. He produced the highest score ever of any AU student on the Putnam Examination, an annual collegiate mathematics exam, and is also the 2009 Barry M. Goldwater Scholar. Outside of the classroom, Bill shares his love of learning by tutoring area high school students in science and math. For his outstanding academic achievement, the University Honors Program is pleased to recognize Bill Flynn with the Honors Scholar Award.

**Andréana Lefton** (*International Studies*) has grown and excelled academically during her time at American University, taking advantage of every research opportunity available to her. Andréana has completed two internships – one of which occurred in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, three independent studies and two Capstones, and on top of that, has distinguished herself by maintaining a 3.98 cumulative GPA. One of her Capstone projects, “‘Layers, Cells and Constellations:’ Kant and Madison on Politics for a Global Age,” has been described by her nominating professor as “the best undergraduate paper I have ever read.” He adds, “No undergraduate should have been capable of writing an essay of this analytical complexity and sophistication in one semester.” Not surprising, those beyond AU have taken notice of Andréana. Both Oxford University and the London School of Economics have admitted her for post-graduate study. No matter the path Andréana chooses, Honors is confident that this Honors Scholar will find continued success.

**Jon Weakley** (*Political Science*) is not only a strong student, but also a significant leader for the University Honors Program. Jon has spent the last three years with the Honors 101 program – first as a co-mentor and then twice as a co-chair. His constant cheerful demeanor and positive outlook make Jon an approachable leader to his peers. He served as a teaching assistant for the Honors section of “Politics in the U.S.,” leading experiential labs and contributing to in-class lectures while also serving as a research assistant to Prof. Karen O’Connor, the course’s instructor. While maintaining his high GPA and many leadership demands, Jon has also contributed to two publications that are forthcoming in 2010, including the textbook *American Government: Roots and Reform*. It is with great pleasure that Honors presents Jon Weakley the Honors Scholar Award.