

HSA Happenings

Edited By: Mackenzie Taylor and Finn Schmidhuber

TO BE HONORABLE IS TO SERVE



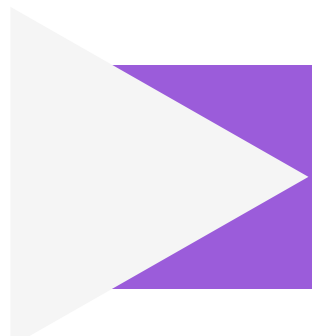
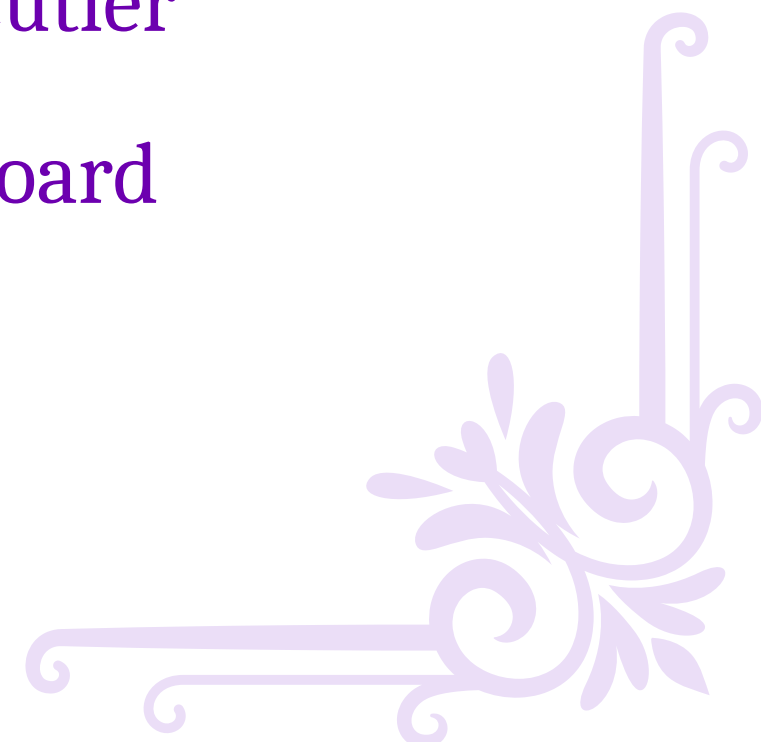
HSA Happenings is...

A student-produced monthly newsletter created and distributed by the Honors Student Association. Its purpose is to supplement the West Chester University community's knowledge of the Honors Student Association's activities and endeavors.



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Letter From the Editor

Hi H.S.A. Members, Alumni, and Prospective Students!

Can you believe we only have a couple more weeks of the semester?! The holiday season is right around the corner and there is so much to be thankful for, including our community here at WCU. With the end of the semester, though, comes the dreaded finals week. Finals are undoubtedly one of the hardest, most demanding weeks for college students.

As such, it is crucial to keep in mind your well-being and prioritize your mental health. Remember to take breaks, keep doing what helps you destress the best, and put yourself first. Whether it be sharing holiday traditions and recipes, learning some new affirmations, or hearing advice from some Honors faculty, we hope this edition of HSA Happenings can help make this finals season a little easier. Just remember that no matter what, the Honors community is here to support and aid you all in your wonderful endeavors.

Sincerely,

Mackenzie Taylor

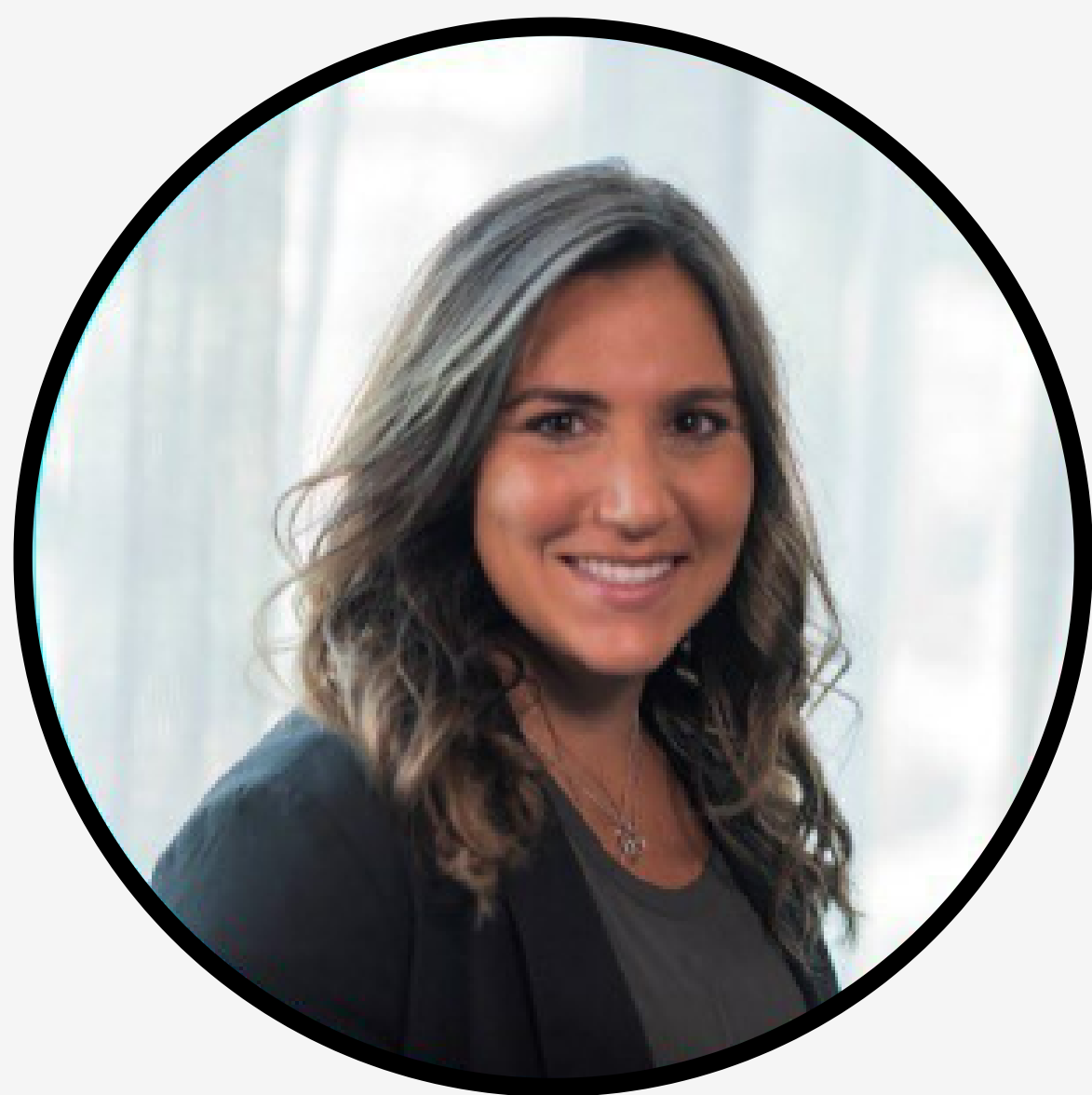
Mackenzie Taylor



Alumni Spotlight

Information courtesy of: Julie Stinson

Morgan Boulay



Honors College Class of 2012

Major: Business Management

Minors: Spanish and International Business

Current Position: Account Development Executive at OpenText

Favorite Honors Memory:

"That's a hard one. Probably going to South Africa. It was a once in a lifetime experience and the culmination of my honors experience"

Honors Capstone:

"I planned a 5k to benefit The West Chester Food Cupboard."

Involvement at WCU:

"Club Swim Team, Colleges Against Cancer, Fundraising Chair for HSA, Dance for a Chance"

Where they are now:

Since graduating I worked in hospitality at Marriott for 8 years, but when Covid hit I switched industries and am now in tech. I currently live in Olney, MD with my husband and our Portuguese Water Dog Molly."

Favorite Honors Class:

"Self awareness with Dr. Helion"

Anything you want to share?

"Students are always welcome to reach out. Happy to provide any insight I can."

HSAH Thanksgiving Cookbook

Our Honors community has so much to celebrate during the holiday break! As such, we wanted to compile an HSA Thanksgiving Cookbook to share some recipes that bring our Honors friends joy and hopefully you too now!

The full cookbook is linked, but below is our contest winner, Holly Liebenberg, with her Christmas Tree Spinach Dip Breadsticks!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1U0xzz3cjRAllcm8c7fBGR7Fyo9jyYCnz/view?usp=sharing>



Christmas Tree Spinach Dip Breadsticks

Holly Liebenberg

First place winner

INGREDIENTS

12 oz Frozen chopped spinach thawed and squeezed dry

6 oz cream cheese softened

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon onion powder

1/4 teaspoon chili powder

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1 teaspoon Italian seasoning

1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
salt

1 cup grated cheddar OR mozzarella cheese

1 tube refrigerated thin crust pizza crust

2 tablespoons butter

1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning

1/2 teaspoon garlic



PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In a bowl, beat together the spinach and cream cheese.

Add garlic, salt, onion powder, chili powder, pepper, and Italian seasoning and beat to combine.

Add parmesan cheese and 1/2 of the cheddar or mozzarella cheese and beat to combine. (The other half of the cheddar or mozzarella cheese will be sprinkled over the filling when you shape the Christmas tree.)

Shape into Christmas tree as directed in the post.

Bake for about 22 minutes until quite golden brown on top and cooked through on the bottom.

Melt butter and stir in garlic salt and seasoning, then brush over breadsticks.

Serve warm.

Wellness Affirmations

By: Ellie Poplar



Wellness is an essential quality that college students do not prioritize enough. Numerous students who attend a university struggle with balancing their schoolwork, mental, and physical health. Statistics depict that [“the rate of American students with suicidal thoughts or other suicide-related outcomes increased 47% from 2008 to 2017 \(from 7.0% to 10.3%\)”](#) (Bouchrika, 2022). Another statistic shows that [“six out of ten college students experienced ‘overwhelming anxiety,’ while over 40% were saddled with crippling depression”](#) (Bouchrika, 2022). To cope with the stress, anxiety, and depression numerous students experience while attending a college/university, affirmations are useful. Affirmations are, [“positive phrases or statements used to challenge negative or unhelpful thoughts”](#) (Moore, 2019). Studies show that [self-affirmations decrease health-deteriorating stress](#) and are linked to positive academic achievement by mitigating GPA decline in students who feel left out at college and demonstrate lower stress and rumination (Moore, 2019).

In the Wellness Committee, during HSA on Thursday nights, students researched to compile affirmations that were sent out in the HSA weekly update. Jordan Avallone, the committee’s leader, created a chart of different types of affirmations. The subtopics include affirmations for love, joy, health, prosperity, career/academics, and release. The weekly affirmations in the newsletter for the week of November 7th include: “I accept and approve of myself,” “I do not let thoughts and judgments affect me,” “I am unique and that is my gift,” and “I am proud of how far I have come.” These affirmations are impactful on the wellness and mental health of Honors Students at West Chester University because they can find a sense of peace and reassurance after reading them. The weekly email is sent out on Monday morning each week, so these affirmations will be able to resonate with the students as they are entering another week of classes and work. Students can refer to these affirmations in the weekly email if they feel stressed and need to read something that will help them release that stress.

- Ellie Poplar

Professors' Advice

By: Dr. Tischio, Prof. Urrutia, Dr. Martin Gerardina L., and Dr. Wooten

Dr. Tischio:

To avoid becoming overly stressed by all the work that is due at the end of the semester, try to think only about what you can do something about this moment or with whatever time you have available. If you have half an hour between lunch and a class, pick a task you can complete in that time. When I was working 5 days a week and writing my dissertation, I would often do that. With half an hour I could proofread several pages of my dissertation, and so that would be the task for the moment. I didn't worry about the next chapter that needed to be written because I couldn't do anything about it at that moment. This helps to keep your stress levels lower.

Prof. Urrutia:

Simple activities to weave into your end-of-the-semester routine.

1. Practice simple stretches to release tension when sitting at a desk for long periods of time.
2. Always stay hydrated by keeping a full water bottle with you while working.
3. If and when you feel stress bubbling, take a short walk to clear your head.

and most important

When home for the upcoming break make sure to bring back some pre-cooked and/or frozen meals that can be easily heated while you are working. Food is FUEL.

Attached below is a video showing you how to do some desktop stretches!

<https://studio.youtube.com/video/38Dwgj05m6Q/edit>

Dr. Martin:

Eat, sleep, and write all your papers early. As for memorization, create a song out of the hardest things to memorize. 😊

Dr. Wooten:

Map out your tasks and due dates, and then break everything into smaller (more manageable) steps.

West Chester Food Cooperative

By: Emily Miller



This month, I interviewed Joey Harkins, a volunteer at the West Chester Food Cooperative. "the Co-op," as it's lovingly nicknamed by the community, seeks to provide local food through a member-owned shop. Any farmer can apply to have their wares sold in-store, from meat to coffee, to even frozen homemade cinnamon rolls.

As of this month, the Co-op has temporarily shut its doors as it prepares to migrate to a new location. Once the Co-op obtains some more member-owners -- members of the community that help fund the Co-op through a monthly donation -- they'll officially settle down into a permanent spot in West Chester.

Joey, who has been volunteering for over a year, has hope for the store to grow and be a large part of the community. When he volunteered, he immediately knew there was a "good vibe," and an established culture in place that gave him hope for the Co-Ops future.

I came with Joey on one of the last days of the Co-Op's in-person sessions last month, and I can definitely see what he means. As we pulled to the curb, Joey hopped out and immediately hugged several of his fellow volunteers. They all conversed and chatted about how things were going, and how Joey could come help for an extra shift the next day to close down. The entire environment was homey and welcoming and is a great place to volunteer.

For more information on volunteering and the Co-Op, visit their website at <https://www.westchester.coop/> or their Instagram @westchestercooperative.

- Emily Miller



Diversity and Inclusion Committee

By: Jonathan Booz

This year, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee has dedicated itself to making HSA a safe space for all students. Our goal is to provide education for students about diverse communities while also ensuring all students feel welcome. On the day of the Diversity and Inclusion HSA meeting, we did a privilege bead workshop. This activity gives students a tangible reminder of the privileges they hold in the world regarding race, religion, ability, sexuality, gender/sex, class, and other forms of privilege. Once the students got their strings with beads filled up, they reflected on the activity by talking about ideas of privilege and recognizing what they previously did not think of as a privilege.

Aside from our meeting, Diversity and Inclusion is planning an environmental racism book club that will begin next semester. We also plan on incorporating more recognition of various cultural holidays in our weekly emails and working with all committees on making their events more diverse and inclusive. Lastly, we plan on hosting international day once again next semester. Overall, we would like to work towards creating an environment that allows for discourse over various social topics, all in the hopes that students, no matter who they are, feel loved, welcome, and represented by our committee.

- Jonathan Booz



A Conversation with Professor Spencer Camacho, Class of 2020 and the Newest Honors College Professor

By Owen Cutler

This month, I had the opportunity to chat with Professor Spencer Camacho, the newest professor in the West Chester University Honors College, about his time at West Chester University, what he learned as a student in the Honors College, and his plans as a professor at WCU.

*Note from the editor: Below is a condensed, partially paraphrased version of the interview. The audio recording and full transcript with more questions are available using the links following the article!

Q: Can you tell me about yourself?

A: "Sure. Well, thanks one for having me. I'm Spencer Camacho, and I was a music education major student here with minors in communication studies, civic and professional leadership, and music production, and I graduated virtually via Zoom in 2020. After that I went to New York University or NYU to study my master's in music technology. So, I kind of springboard off that technology and music combination route that I did at West Chester."

Q: What classes are you currently teaching and what classes are you going to teach in the spring?

A: I'm currently teaching in HON 100 and HON 315, and I will be teaching CPL 120 next semester.

Q: What advice would you give current students?

A: "The relationships we form now are arguably the most important part about being an honors student and being a college student. This time will fly by so fast, and it's not going to be your Oxford comma, or your passive voice. It's gonna be that one person that you were able to bond with in Allegheny Hall when you were feeling down, or the person you always sat next to during HSA. It's those connections that are worth a lifetime, so make sure that you put more eggs in those baskets, as opposed to the ones the straight-A honors students tend to focus on."

Audio File: https://drive.google.com/file/d/10MDC8_AJagATlelLlulsAVvLsjR7hQ/view?usp=sharing

Transcript:

https://wcupamy.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/mt947930_wcupa_edu/EeHfMeHPT9RFoq5EYnX4XkIBs-F53GxtX4L4CR2SyonmCw?rttime=N0Cd6R_R2kg



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