



PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
Honors College Support Document

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Question: Why should Pittsburg State University have and financially support an Honors College program?

Assertion: The Honors College is the primary group on campus that is dedicated to attracting, retaining, and engaging high achieving students and student-leaders and providing them with a community of their peers. The Honors College member span the entire academic setting across campus. A strong Honors College directly correlates with strong student leadership, enhanced academic engagement, and a strong university.

Pillars of the Honors College:

Academic Achievement

Honors College students strive to achieve academically and to seek out opportunities beyond the classroom to enhance their collegiate educational experience.

Involvement and Leadership

Honors College students strive to continue to develop their leadership skills, both within the Honors College Association and through active involvement and leadership in campus clubs and organizations.

Service to Others

Honors College students understand and appreciate the importance of giving of their time and energy to the campus and surrounding communities.

Service to the Honors College

Honors College students understand and appreciate the importance of investing their time and efforts to work for the good of the Honors College Association, including programs such as the Peer Mentor Program and active participation in TEAM efforts.

Community

Honors College students thrive best in a community of like-minded students who engage in social activities to build a strong, long-lasting bond with others in the organization. For this reason, Honors College students will strive to be active and engaged in various social events sponsored by the organization.

Supporting Evidence:

Programming:

Students in the Honors College are required to do a minimum of 2 hours of community service each semester they are in the program through HCA sponsored projects. The group is constantly seeking out new opportunities and some of the ongoing projects they are involved in include:

Natural Ties

2nd Grade ESOL Reading at Westside Elementary

Via Christi Nursing Home monthly visits
Special Olympics Basketball
Special Olympics Track and Field Day
Salvation Army Toy Sorting
Salvation Army Bell Ringing
The PITT Project
The Big Event

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in undergraduate research, as well as the Academic Honors program and in many cases the outcome of their research is presented, shared, and incorporated into the pedagogy within their respective departments

Students not only form a community of scholars within the Honors College where they support and mentor the younger students and each other, but this mentoring and support spreads beyond the group through serving as tutors and providing other academic support for non-honors students in the department

Students who participate in internships help to build connections between PSU and the various companies and organizations they work for, sometimes resulting in new funding such as the Black and Veatch scholarships in the College of Technology

Facts about Honors College:

Of the 80 freshman, sophomore, and junior students in the program during the 2019-2020 school year, the students completed 298 total community service hours in HCA sponsored community service projects in that timeframe, even amidst the Covid pandemic which started in March. This does NOT include hours they completed in projects outside of the HCA.

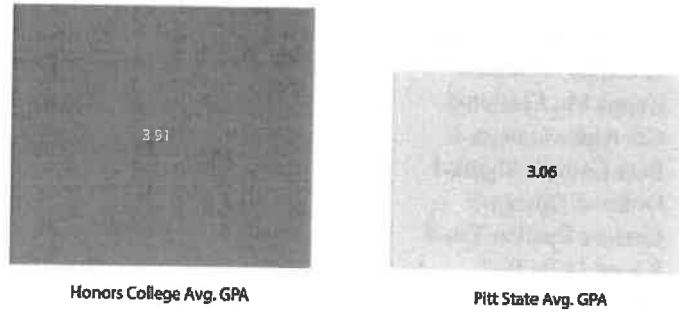
Members started/founded the following student organizations or community service projects

The PITT Project
Gamma Alpha Lambda (GAL)
The Food Recovery Network project
Psychology and Counseling Club

16 members are involved D-II athletics as follows:

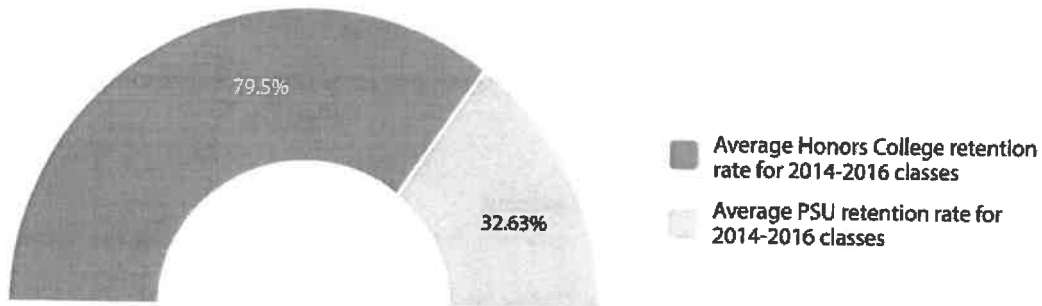
Cross Country and Track-5
Cross Country only-1
Track only-2
Football-1
Volleyball-4
Baseball-2
Cheer-1

In the spring of 2020, members had an average GPA of 3.91 compared to the university average of 3.06. 49 of the 111 members in the spring of 2020 had a cumulative GPA of 4.0



Members have a higher four-year retention rate than their non-honors peers as shown here

	Honors College	University
Fall 13 cohort	25 of 32=78%	29.6%
Fall 14 cohort	26 of 33=79%	33.8%
Fall 15 cohort	28 of 36=78%	31.7%
Fall 16 cohort	25 of 30=83%	35.4%



105 members are involved in the various student clubs and organizations across campus, with a total of 94 different clubs and organizations represented. *Please see the appendix for a detailed listing of those organizations*

67 members have been inducted into an honor society on campus, with a total of 13 different societies represented. Below is a listing of the honor societies and membership records

Phi Eta Sigma-62
Lambda Sigma-13
NSLS-6
Phi Kappa Phi-9
Omicron Delta Kappa-6
Pi Kappa Lambda-2
Kappa Mu Epsilon-5
Chi Alpha Omega-1
Beta Gamma Sigma-1
Order of Omega-2
Gamma Epsilon Tau-5
Kappa Delta Pi-2
Sigma Tau Delta-1

Over the course of their time at PSU, 19 members have served as the President of a student club or organization, 34 have served as Vice-President, 14 have served as Secretary, 16, have served as Treasurer, 9 have served as a Chair, and 40 have served in leadership positions listed as "other". *Please see the appendix for a detailed listing of those leadership positions*

21 members have been involved in undergraduate research projects over the past three years. *Please see the appendix for a detailed listing of those research projects*

Members have participated in 70 study abroad programs in the window from Fall 2015 through Fall 2019, which represents 15% of the total PSU students participating

22 members have had internships over the past three years

16 members have served as student employees around campus including positions in:

Chemistry
Biology
Technology and Workforce Learning
Center for Reading
Axe Library
Manufacturing Engineering Technology
Mathematics
Writing Center
History
Campus Activities Center

There are 44 students in the past four years who have represented the university in an official capacity such as Crimson Club, Admissions Office Ambassador, University Advancement Ambassador, Gorilla Gateway Peer Mentors.

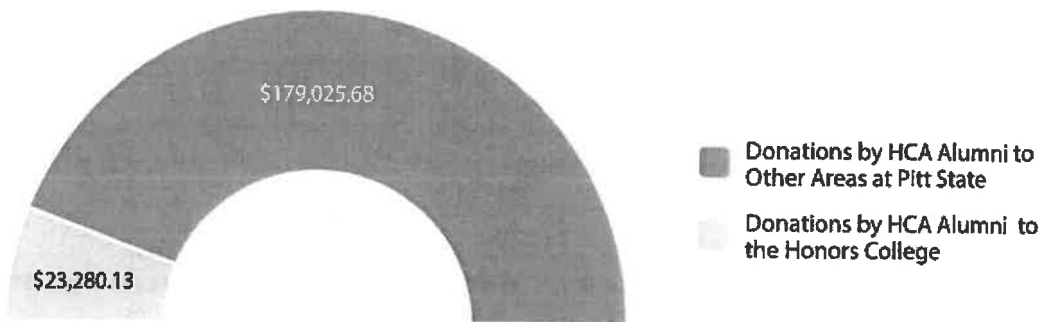
- Admissions Office Ambassador-9
- Advancement Ambassador-8
- Crimson Club-10
- Peer Mentor-4
- Pitt Cares-2
- Resident Assistant-8
- PASS Project-2
- Department of Teaching and Leadership Ambassador-1

Each year at commencement, the university recognizes two seniors who have proven themselves across the campus community and are selected for the Outstanding Senior Award. Here is the list of recipients since 2012 who were members of the Honors College:

- 2012 Holly Hrabik and Zach Krumsick
- 2013 Jessica Berberich
- 2014 Nick Popejoy
- 2015 Ellen Wieberg and Michael Giffin
- 2017 Katelyn Flood
- 2018 Kolleen Gladden and Nick Bartelli
- 2019 Gretchen Reed
- 2020 Piper Misse

Honors College Alumni Donation Records:

Upon review of a giving report created by the Office of University Advancement, in the period from 1993 to 2020, there have been a total of 371 alumni of the Honors College donate money to the university in some capacity. Within those 371, there have been a total of 2,811 individual donations made to various programs and fundraising initiatives. Of those donations, which total \$202,305.81, a total of \$23,280.13 has gone directly to the Honors College and the remaining \$179,025.68 going to other areas of the university.



Testimonials:**Alumni Testimonials:**

Jessi Headrick
Christina Metzger Kromminga
Ann Hutchison
Rachael Sachs
Rikki Miller Eckols
Charles Ault
Ellen Wieberg and Dustin Bonzo
Carson Letchworth
Mary Clow
Erin Geeding
Nick Bartelli
Austin Masters
Katie Nance

Jessi Headrick

The first goal of the Honors College is to attract high-quality applicants and retain them as high-achieving students until graduation.

As a senior in high school, I considered other college options that offered more financial support, but I was drawn to the Honors College at Pittsburg State after attending interview day. Throughout the interview process, it was clear that Dr. Fuchs cared immensely about the program and its members, and I was eager to surround myself with other high-quality, high-achieving students I met on interview day that would challenge and inspire me throughout my college journey. Simply put, I was attracted and committed to Pittsburg State because of the Honors College.

The second goal of the Honors College is to provide educationally enriched experiences for its members. This includes intellectually stimulating general education honors courses at the freshman and sophomore level and departmental academic honors courses at the junior and senior level.

Looking back, it is those classes that were the most helpful and beneficial to me personally and professionally. To this day, I find myself applying what I learned in my general education honors courses to both my personal life and my career as a teacher. The departmental academic honors courses I took in American literature prepared me to teach that subject myself at the high school level.

The third goal of the Honors College is to provide a socially responsive, supportive environment for its members, whereby they feel personally connected to others throughout the college.

Between living-learning communities in the residence halls, peer-mentorships, monthly meetings, annual social events, and community service opportunities, I always felt connected to my fellow members in the Honors College. Ask any Honors College alum, and they will tell you that those personal connections extend well beyond their college years.

The final goal of the Honors College is to **promote a sound start for incoming freshmen.**

As a first-generation college *student*, I was and still am incredibly grateful for the advice and support I received my freshman year through orientation, enrollment, and advisement. Without the Honors College, I do not know how I would have navigated my college experience, let alone my freshman year. I am a first-generation college *graduate* today thanks in large part to the Honors College.

In short, I believe the Honors College is important to have and support because it succeeds in fulfilling its goals. I sincerely hope that the program will continue to benefit students of Pittsburg State for years to come.

Christina (Metzger) Kromminga

How did HC help you get to where you are today?

- The Honors College is the reason I came to Pitt State
- Gave me a scholarship that (along with running) helped me graduate debt free
- The HCA connected me with people and classes who challenged me academically and made me a better person.

What was the most helpful and beneficial part personally and professionally?

- I loved being around people who were motivated in all areas of their lives- the organization breeds excellence
- Honors courses were incredibly enjoyable and insightful - the format and classmates helped me learn
- the requirements pushed me to learn beyond my field of study and allowed me to expand my learning within music education
- I was fortunate enough to go on two study abroad trips which were fantastic life experiences and major highlights of my collegiate career

Why is HC important to have and support?

- The honors college is a group that attracts and supports some of the brightest students
- These students are incredible members of their departments and help the community of Pittsburg
- This learning culture is invaluable and a positive/unique aspect of Pittsburg State University - it would be a detriment to the university and larger community if it no longer existed.

Ann Hutchison

1. During my college search, I had planned to attend a larger university that I felt could better serve my needs. The presence of the Honors College was the reason I applied to PSU and my interactions with the program during the interview that subsequently led me to choose Pitt State for my undergraduate education.
2. The Honors College is important as it not only recruits highly motivated students to our university, it also creates an environment for collaboration across disciplines. This gives our students an invaluable foundation for the skills they will need following graduation. The experience I gained interacting with my classmates uniquely prepared me for my interdisciplinary work as a physician.
3. During my time with the HCA, I had the opportunity to serve as president of our association. The leadership skills I gained have been invaluable in my current position. Not only did I learn important skills, I also gained the confidence to know I was capable of making relevant and sustainable changes in my local healthcare system. This has pushed me into a leadership position despite my
4. During my senior year at PSU, I had the chance to create a community wide service project that has continued since my graduation. The honors college supported me in a colossal undertaking and supported the following classes in continuing a project that benefited the surrounding communities, in particular the elderly and disabled.
5. The travel stipend provided to Honors Scholars provided me an opportunity I otherwise would not have been able to afford. I was able to travel to Romania on a medical missions trip which provided a unique view on healthcare in severely underserved areas. This stimulated my interest in rural healthcare which has led to my current career in general surgery with plans to return to an underserved area to provide healthcare to those most in need.
6. While the education and leadership skills I gained being a part of the Honors College are invaluable, I would argue the most important things I gained are the relationships. From the friends I can still call despite being hundreds of miles apart to the professors who still check in from time to time, the people I met in the Honors College are the people who have made me the person I am today. I truly believe I owe them my success (both personally and professionally) and will be forever grateful to the HC for bringing us together.

Rachael Sachs

Dr. Fuchs,

I cannot emphasize how much the PSU Honors College helped me to grow into who I am today! Thank you for all that you have done to make the program what it has become. I still remember our first year going through Freshmen Experience together, having a roommate who also prioritized academics, and then having the unforgettable experience of studying abroad in Italy and Greece. Wow!

How did the Honors College help you get to where you are today?

The Honors College gave me an instant community of excellence with others who pushed me to have high expectations. Not only did they prioritize academics, but also community involvement and service.

Looking back, what was the most helpful and beneficial part of the Honors College for you personally and professionally?

I think the most beneficial part of Honors College was taking the Honors courses. Being surrounded by peers who also pushed themselves academically helped me to engage in discussions and learn how to have positive discourse.

In your opinion, why is the Honors College at PSU important to have and support?

Honors College is vital to not only the university but also the community. I am not sure that I would have attended PSU if not for the Honors College. I am from Wichita originally but now have chosen to reside and work in the Pittsburg area. The Honors College attracts students who not only want to better themselves but also those around them.

I am so grateful for the support and community of the PSU Honors College. Thank you, Pitt State!

Rachael

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Mrs. Rachael Sachs
Girard High School
Mathematics

Rikki Miller-Eckols

How did the Honors College help you get to where you are today?

- Today, I am a dental hygienist, which is not at all what I set out to do while attending PSU. With that being said, the experiences I had, primarily due to HC, directly relate to my field. I am cultured and can relate to various people, in part, because of my study abroad trip to Europe. I now work with special needs patients, in which my skills have been enhanced because of my work with special Olympics. I am a leader amongst my colleagues because I was able to lead my HC class as a representative. I am analytical because the honors college classes were more than just busy work, they forced me to think for myself as a young adult. The list of skills I have today as a result of the HC is lengthy, but I was told to keep this brief. In short, the HC at PSU played an incredibly large part in who I am today as both a member of the workforce and a member of society.

Looking back, what was the most helpful and beneficial part of the Honors College for you personally and professionally?

- Professionally, the HC provided countless opportunities for leadership and service, which not only look great on a resume, but more importantly teach character. Between special Olympics, community cleanups, food pantries, the list of ways to serve and lead was endless.

-Personally, it provided me with a second family and a home away from home. I absolutely hate change and that first week of college was brutal for me. I was homesick, stressed, and just plain unhappy. My honors college family came to the rescue (even before we really knew each other) and made me feel like I belonged. We had movie nights, ice cream runs, and jam sessions. These are friends I will have for the rest of my life. I even got a husband out of the Honors College deal. I never knew I would have so many doctors as members of my wedding party, but thanks to the HC, I have really successful friends.

In your opinion, why is the Honors College at PSU important to have and support?

- I could go on and on about how wonderful this program is. I believe it is vital to PSU in the way that it draws hardworking, successful students. I can say without hesitation that I would not have attended PSU had it not been for the Honors College and the scholarship I received. Looking back, that thought is heartbreaking because I now consider PSU to have been one of the best decisions I have ever made. It's sad to think that I would have missed out simply because the Honors College did not exist. I may have initially joined the HC because of the scholarship, but it didn't take me long to realize that the organization provided so much more than a financial gift.

Dr. Fuchs,

If you need anything else, please don't hesitate to ask! I would bend over backwards (which is a lot for me) to make sure this program stays at Pitt. Garrett and I send our love.

Rikki

Charles Ault

I hope all is going well- or at least as well as it can be going given the state of the world.

I saw your post on the Honors College Facebook page and figured I'd give my responses to your questions:

Q: How did the Honors College help you get to where you are today?

A: First and foremost, the Honors College helped me pay to attend Pitt State. Without the financial assistance the Honors College offered I likely would not have been able to afford to attend PSU. But the impact of the Honors College offers extend well beyond that. Through my involvement in the Honors College I made many friendships and even met my wife, which has had a great and lasting impact on the way that my life has progressed since then.

It is safe to say that without the Honors College I would not have attended PSU and I cannot fathom how different my life would be as a result of that.

Q: Looking back, what was the most helpful and beneficial part of the Honors College for you personally and professionally?

A: There are two things that I really got out of the honors college that I do not think college would have provided me had I not been involved- access to superior instruction and the opportunity to engage in meaningful public service.

The honors classes that I was able to take through the Honors College- namely Honors English Composition and Intro to Political Science- are perhaps the most influential classes I have ever taken. I still use or think about many of the things I learned in those classes on a daily basis. By taking specially-selected classes with peers who were also engaged and interested in the material I was able to get what I would characterize as the best that PSU had to offer. I felt that it helped me to develop into a well-rounded citizen-scholar rather than just a specialist.

The community service opportunities offered by the Honors College are genuine and fulfilling. The network of student-led volunteering that springs from the Honors college is truly amazing both in size and in scope. With the exception of my last semester I always did the minimum acceptable amount of community service to maintain membership. It is perhaps my greatest regret about my time at PSU is that I did not make better use of this network and volunteer more. The times that I did volunteer were perspective-granting and humbling.

Q: In your opinion why is the Honors College at PSU important to have and support?

A: As an out-of-state student who did not participate in athletics the Honors College was the only substantial scholarship available to me. Without the Honors College I would not have been able to afford to attend PSU and I would have ended up going somewhere else. Without the Honors College and the scholarship opportunities it grants incoming students it will be difficult to attract students who have scholarship opportunities at other universities. Many Honors College students go on to be leaders around campus- Leaders in Student Government, Club Presidents, Outstanding Seniors, Undergraduate Researchers, and much more. Without the Honors College Pitt State will lose the opportunity to attract these students.

But the benefits of the Honors College extend beyond the financial. By directing us and holding us to high standards we are led to be our best and to reach our greatest potential- academically, interpersonally, and for our communities. The Honors College provides a network of academic and well as personal support. The relationship that Dr. Fuchs fosters with each and every one of us is often vital to our success as students. I know that it got me through one of the darkest chapters in my life.

Q: Any more input?

I once compared the scholarships given out to the Honors College to those given to the football team at PSU and found them to be roughly equal. During times of budget constraints everyone has to make sacrifices, but eliminating the Honors College and the opportunities it provides students will gut PSU of many of its most impactful who make PSU what it is and return some of the greatest dividends over time. I think that eliminating or cutting the Honors College would result in lasting negative change to the University as a whole.

I hope this is useful!

Warmest regards,

Charley Ault

Ellen Wieberg-Bonzo and Dustin Bonzo

I'm writing this on behalf of Bonzo and myself since a lot of our story overlaps but let us know if you need separate answers or in a different format.

- Personal: My husband and I met because of our involvement with Honors College. We were in separate classes, separate majors, and our only overlap was from HC activities and the friends we met there. Without HC, our lives would have been forever changed as we would not have met each other at PSU.
- Personal: The HC is able to create bonds that last forever. We have both met our closest friends from the HC (in all different grades) and they remain our closest friends today. HC is a strong advocate for relationship-building, which is so beneficial to college students. It is similar to the bonds formed in residents hall, sororities, or sports activities - and should be valued as such.
- Professional (Bonzo): The HC provides academically minded students a place to come together to study and work together to learn more and better. The strong biology students that we had in my class led most of us to the medical path and created a solid group of doctors who can consult and work together still today. I have the ability to contact doctors across the country if needed because of the HC.
- Importance: Neither of us would have come to Pitt State if it wasn't for the direct involvement of the HC. We tell people that all the time when speaking about our college experience and what led us to PSU. Both Dustin and I were paying for school by ourselves, and as high-achieving/frugal students, HC gave us an outlet to have the best experience possible while able to work during and save as much as we could. To come out of college without debt is a blessing that most do not have the luxury of saying about their college experience.
- As a corporate recruiter for a Fortune 500 Company, with its main location in Kansas, we had never been to a PSU Career Fair to recruit students. As a graduate of the HC, I was able to prove the value in recruiting and retaining students from local Kansas schools. As a large corporation, we are now recruiting at PSU - starting in 2019 - due to the HC and the high-quality students that we can place to stay in KS.
- If I had not gotten into Honors College, I would not have gone to Pitt State. I am currently planning on coming back to SE Kansas to be a doctor in the area and help support the town as best we can. We do not have family in the area and without this connection to HC and PSU, we would not be planning to move to Pittsburg to build a home.

Ellen and Dustin Bonzo

Carson Letchworth

Dr. Fuchs,

I hope all is going well in this weird time. I saw your post to the Facebook group and wanted to contribute. I plan on writing small sections about different points.

The HCA is a springboard for like minded people who want to excel in their collegiate career. People who actually go to a college for the education purposes alone are few and far between. The HCA brings 30+ freshmen in every year who are there to learn, to better themselves, and to better the PSU community. I learned to appreciate my time spent volunteering during my tenure with the HCA. Since I've graduated, I still volunteer every winter for the salvation army ringing bells at local stores in my community, I started a Harvesters volunteer group for incoming interns with my employer, and I've led groups to clean up trash and perform small home repairs. This was inspired by my time spent volunteering for the HCA during the Big Event. The HCA not only gave me great opportunities on the education front but it broadened my respect for the person sitting next to me.

The HCA's study abroad program was something I never really thought I would appreciate up until I participated in it. Being able to travel to different countries and experience their culture, architecture, history, and art all of the while feeling secure knowing that I am traveling with a group of people who are looking out for me was an incredible sensation. Since traveling abroad with HCA, I have traveled to 4 continents, 21 countries, and experienced incredible things all because of what the HCA was able to introduce me to.

If I think of something else to write, I'll send it your way!

Carson

Mary Clow

Hi Dr. Fuchs! I hope you are doing well. Here are my reflections on the honors college, I hope it helps. Feel free to paraphrase or pull out points as needed.

The PSU Honors College is the entire reason I chose to attend Pitt State. When I talked about wanting to go to a state school, many teachers and family members tried to convince me that my brains were better suited for an Ivy League or other elite university. When I met with college representatives from various institutions to choose a college, I was impressed by the honors college program at Pitt State. I felt confident that the Honors College would provide an enriching academic experience that I wanted, and I was right. Being part of HCA activities like meetings and study abroad trips allowed me to be surrounded by academic peers and the honors gen ed classes challenged me in ways that I was used to from high school honors and AP classes. Without the honors college I wouldn't have attend Pitt State, and if I did my experience would have been much less fulfilling.

Mary Clow, class of 2015

Erin Geeding

I know I transferred before I was able to technically graduate from the honors college, but I saw your post on the Facebook page and wanted to provide my input.

Because of the Honors College I was able to figure out exactly what I wanted to do and where I wanted to be. Like many freshmen entering college, I had a very vague idea of a career path (emphasis on the vague). The Honors College connected me to the right people and helped me develop that vague idea into a real plan.

Through the Honors College I was able to step outside of my comfort zone and serve the community. I remember our parking lot clean-ups after football tailgates, just as a quick example. There were constant opportunities to serve in the Honors College in many different capacities making it easy to be involved and feel like I was making a difference, however small.

Academically, the courses the Honors College provided were always pushing me. I still credit the Honors College for teaching me the skills necessary to be successful in graduate school. From something as simple as learning how to study properly, the Honors College taught me to stick to the grind, even when things got tough, and that I always had support from the faculty at PSU.

Finally, the association of the Honors College cannot be matched. The friends I made at the overnight have lasted through graduations, moves to different states, and major life events. Those friends are still some of my best, and they're the first I want to share anything with.

I loved my program at MSU and I know I am exactly where I am supposed to be, but nothing can beat the Honors College. I'll promote it to anyone and everyone!

Hopefully you're receiving lots of helpful messages and that things are going well! Let me know if there is anything else I can do to help.

Thanks!

Nick Bartelli

"If it went for the Honors Program and scholarships I simply would never have chosen PSU. Even if it meant paying more at other schools with their scholarship offers, I would have chosen a school that offered me a program and scholarship over one that didn't

I would have never gone on to be Outstanding Senior Man, I would have never been Academic Affairs Director and expand the free printing service at SGA for students or created a study grant scholarship program.

Even though I would've loved Pitt State regardless, I have to be honest in saying I wouldn't be a Gorilla today if it weren't for the Honors Program."

Austin Masters

Hey Dr. Fuchs,

It's been a long time! Hope you are doing well, even with everything that's happening in the world. I saw your post in the Honors College Facebook group and wanted to respond because Honors College was incredibly important to my college experience and helped provide a springboard to start my career.

The Honors College shaped every aspect of my college experience and was vital to my success in college. When I was making a decision on where to go to school I had applied for multiple different programs and being offered the scholarship helped me make my decision to attend Pitt State. In all honesty If I wasn't given that scholarship I definitely would've gone to a different university that offered more incentives.

The Honors College overnight helped me become more comfortable with the transition out of my small town and begin to develop relationships with my classmates before I started in the fall. In high school I had known all my closest friends since we were really young and spent all my time with them in sports, but I knew college was going to be different. I never had that built in friend group that so many others have because of what they're involved in. The friend group I was able to find was through the Honors College. My friends were all incredibly different, but everyone had a common drive to explore whatever their interests were and weren't afraid to be uniquely themselves. That's something I really valued in my time with the Honor College at Pitt State.

Growing up and through college money was always something that I had to be worried about. My friends were always better off financially and were able to pursue opportunities that always seemed out of reach for me. The financial impact of the Honors College truly changed the trajectory of my life. The study abroad stipend allowed me to spend half a summer in Europe that I would've never even considered without this assistance. It was this trip that led me to pursue the career that I now am in and inspired my interest in understanding people of different backgrounds and cultures.

During my years in school I was able to have an on campus job for less than 20 hours to provide for my basic needs. If I didn't have my scholarship I'm certain that I would've worked a more time intensive job that would have really detracted from studies and my experience at Pitt State. If I would've graduated with the same debt that many of my non-Honors College peers were in I'm also sure that I wouldn't have immediately pursued my graduate degree that is necessary for the job that I now do.

The impacts of the Honors College and financial benefits that come with it are incredible when looking at my college experience and now my life, but that's not the only reason this program should continue to be funded. The program should be funded because it helps attract the kind of

students who enrich the Pitt State experience. The students in the Honors College have a wide range of interests and fields of study, they are a diverse group, and they are leaders throughout the campus. They are the kind of students that have options and offering the financial incentive to get them to become part of the Pitt State family and the support that the Honors College gives to ensure they are successful in their time on campus is important. These people become leaders in their professions and communities and model what it means to be a Pitt State Gorilla. These are the kind of representatives the college should aspire to attract and the Honors College is important in turning these prospective students into Gorillas.

The Honors College has truly changed my life and I hope that it continues to change the lives of the next generation of Pitt State students as they try to make their way in the world.

Wishing you the best,
Austin Masters

Katie Nance

Hi Dr. Fuchs,

Hope you and your family are doing well! I saw your post on Facebook and wanted to send this email as the Honors College was such an important part of undergrad for me. It's so sad to hear the validity of it is being called into question.

The Honors College provided so much during my time at PSU and for that I'll always be extremely thankful. The Presidential scholarship made it so that money and loans were not items to stress about. Which, in an already stressful environment, was a huge weight off my shoulders and allowed me to focus more fully on classes. Additionally, the travel stipend allowed me to study abroad, making me open my eyes to a more global environment and allowing me able to think from the perspective of a global citizen, not just an American citizen.

As well as providing opportunities, having the honor of being in the Honors College does grant individuals a reputation. In classes at PSU, Honors College students are usually held to higher standards while also knowing that we will likely produce high quality work. When I interviewed for graduate school, my committee was impressed that I was in the Honors College and had attained such a distinguished scholarship. This helped me to get a full ride fellowship to graduate school at one of the top colleges in the nation for my discipline.

And lastly, it provides a friendship network that you have throughout undergrad. I remember starting classes as a Freshman more at ease because I already knew several people. I also appreciated Honors classes for the same reasons: knowing that I'd be in a class full of friends who studied just as hard as I did.

To take away the Honors College would mean taking away funding opportunities for students who are working extremely hard to succeed. It would take away potential future recognition, as you would no longer be able to proudly say that you were part of an Honors College or had a full

ride to undergrad. And it would take away connecting with others who are of a like mind, attitude, and determination to succeed.

I hope that this will help, but please let me know if there is anything else I can do!

Best regards,

Katie Nance
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Faculty Testimonials:

Dr. Barbara McClaskey
Dr. Paul McCallum
Dr. David Hurford
Dr. Susan Carlson
Dr. Rion Huffman

Dr. Barbara McClaskey

Over the years the Honors College students have added to the accomplishments of our university students as well as the rigor in classes. Based on interactions and experiences with these students, they add to class discussions and often ask challenging questions leading to additional explorations of different perspectives. The students who are part of the Honors College are not the only students at Pittsburg State that value academic rigor, research, and service to others, but they have been excellent examples and role models. By demonstrating their commitment to academic excellence, they can serve as an inspiration to others. One of the most recent Honors College students that truly was admired and inspired by her peers in nursing, peers on the cross country and track team, as well as faculty and students across campus was Piper Misse. These students find the time to serve others and participate in university activities while maintaining high academic standards, demonstrating to others that one can effectively manage time and energy if one chooses to adopt those commitments. Honors college students often are found leading organizations and activities throughout campus.

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BSN Coordinator and University Professor
Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing
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Dr. Paul McCallum

If memory serves, I first taught an Honors College section of Composition in the Fall 2000 semester. With the exception of Spring 2004, when I was on sabbatical, I have taught an HC section of Composition every spring since. I feel lucky that I have been able to do so. Students in the HC are some of PSU's best and brightest. They bring intelligence, initiative, curiosity, and a critical acumen to their classes. Teaching them can be a challenge--and I know that I've become a better instructor for having taught HC students over the past two decades. Students in the HC expect much of their professors, and I've had to "raise my game" when facing classroom after classroom full of sharp, critical, and restless minds. Among other things, I've had to create writing and research assignments that are challenging, engaging, and (let's admit it) fun to complete and to assess; I've had to find works of literature and non-fiction that make bright young people think, and think deeply about the world around them and their place in it; and I've had to develop a classroom persona that can accommodate a rapid flow of ideas and opinions from highly diverse perspectives. Having to do all this has made me, I think, a better instructor in all my classes, and it's a certainty that the assignments and techniques I've developed over the years in my HC classes have greatly informed those in my non-HC courses. In ways both direct and indirect, PSU's Honors College Program benefits all students at this university, and I hope it remains strong and vital for many years to come.

Dr. David Hurford

I hope that you are doing well. I am sorry for the delay in responding. This semester has been quite challenging for a number of reasons.

I have and will always support the concept and reality of an honors college. I am sure that you will be able to generate considerable anecdotal information, but there is also scientific data to support an honors college. I am surprised, to be honest, that anyone on any campus would not immediately see the virtue of an honors college.

I cannot remember the source right now, but a study several decades ago found that the intelligence quotients of children in elementary school could be estimated by the IQs of those who sat near them in class. Those who score highly on entrance exams who will become honors students are likely to have higher intelligence levels and their presence on campus elevates us all, students, faculty, and administrators, alike.

Here is an example:

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nhcjournal/420/>

I wish you well on your quest. We NEED the honors college!!!!

David

"Who Benefits from Honors: An Empirical Analysis of Honors and Non-Hono" by Ted M. Brimeyer, April M. Schueths et al.

Supporters of university honors programs argue that these programs benefit the university and entire student body while critics argue that honors programs reproduce socioeconomic and racial privileges. In an attempt to address these issues, we have used quantitative survey data to compare the background characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes of honors and non-honors students at a medium ...

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Dr. Susan Carlson

Statement on Honors College Students

Dr. Susan Carlson, Professor of English, PSU

I would like to write this statement in support of the current admissions policy for the PSU Honors College. There have been two arguments brought up to change the current system: 1) Honors College students should be chosen mainly on quantitative data (ACT scores and GPA) and 2) Honors College recipients should not be given such a generous tuition and housing package. Although I understand why these arguments have merit, I want to discuss why the current system should remain as it is.

I've taught Honors College classes in English for the last five years, and have been a member of the committee that chooses Honors College students for the last two years. The students themselves are great to work with, and one reason for that is that they have emotional intelligence as well as academic ability. These are young people who are interested in others' views, respectful, able to listen, and aware of the limits of their own knowledge. If we want graduates from the PSU Honors College to become leaders in their communities, then these personal qualities are as important as academic success.

When we choose students for the Honors College, the students' community service and/or high school activities are taken into account, because we are looking for students who can work with others and have practiced the basic skills you need for leadership. The interviews required for Honors College are also critical, because often students who look good on paper are actually not able to communicate well or show personality issues that could create conflict in groups. This is important because students in the Honors College work together, travel together and build a network of support.

The process for choosing Honors College students prioritizes academic ability (ACT and GPA). However, these other issues need to be considered as well in order to choose students who will flourish in the program and go on to successful professional careers.

Finally, I'd like to add that there has been an argument that Honors students should not receive such generous financial support. The problem with this argument is that the students we are recruiting for this program are highly sought after by other four-year institutions and actually represent a very small population. (For example, in 2019 the average overall ACT score in Kansas was 21.2 (out of 36) [Edwards] and in 2017, only 29% of Kansas test-takers reached the college benchmark in all four areas (Reading, Writing, Math and Science ["Kansas"]). When I talked to Honors College applicants in the interviews, I found that many of them wanted to attend Pittsburg State University because it has a great reputation, is a smaller school and is close to home. They've also heard about the Honors College from previous alumni and are excited about joining the program. However, if we reduce the tuition package, we may make it likely that these students turn to other universities with better funding offers.

Thank you for reading this document and considering these arguments.

Edwards, Halle. "Average ACT Scores by State" (Most Recent). PrepScholar. 1 December 2019. <https://blog.prepscholar.com/act-scores-by-state-averages-highs-and-lows>. Accessed 24 September 2020.

"Kansas ACT test results show decline." KASB (Kansas Association of School Boards). 7 September 2017. <https://kasb.org/0907/>. Accessed 24 September 2020.

Appendices

Volunteer Work/Organizations Formed:

- Gorillathon fundraising, educational incentive program for Tri Sigma, Founders Day for Tri Sigma, Educators Rising Regional and State Competitions
- I'm currently helping develop the food recovery network organization, however Covid has slowed us down a little.
- I started the Via Christi Village monthly community service visits through the HCA
- I also helped lead service projects with PES to nursing homes and the animal shelter.
- Community Service- Wooden Toys for Tots, Clubs- Lacrosse Club
- GAL was founded in 2015 on our campus and during my time on that executive team was the first year we doubled and retained almost all of our membership both semesters (60+). We also created many new ways for girls to become involved and leaders within our faith-based social sorority!
- Panhellenic Pays - a scholarship/closet clean-out event for college students and community members. As Panhellenic's Scholarship Chairwoman I developed and implemented this event that raised a \$150 scholarship for a PSU graduate student, and it won "Program of the Year" at PSU's annual Leadership and Awards Banquet.
- Friday night outreach program through The Homestead
- In Lambda Sigma, I am receiving the opportunity to form a new community service project.
- Started and ran school supply drive through premedical and chemistry clubs, organized goodwill and fostering connections service projects through the honors college
- Club lacrosse, Pi Kappa Alpha blood drive
- PACS Food Donation- Director
- Friends Helping Friends
- Pitt Project, school supplies drive for pre med club , bone marrow drive (before it was a club)
- In 2020, our Chapter became recognized by The Wildlife Society on the national level
- English Club is currently preparing a high school video contest/outreach that I am spearheading. I was integral to both the design and creation of the initial Pitt Lit Podcast and Emerald City Lit Mag.
- Psychology and Counseling Society and Mental Health Week put on by Psychology and Counseling Society
- Created a community service project through Gamma Alpha Lambda that benefited VIE medical clinic. It has not become a biannual event through the organization. We make baby blankets to donate to the clinic that are then donated to families.
- Sigma sigma sigma march of dimes craft sale
- I have been actively and directly involved in developing the Cru campus ministry; the ministry is brand new here and I was asked to be a leader for this group

Detailed listing of all clubs and organizations the members to or have belonged to over the past three years

Organization	Participants
Pre-Med Club	14
Bio Club	22
Chem Club	23
NRHH	2
RHA	6
Hall Council	4
History Club	1
Campus Democrats	1
French Club	1
Alpha Sigma Alpha	3
Graphic Arts Club	6
SGA	14
GAB	2
Gamma Alpha Lambda	13
Panhellenic	2
Society of Plastics Engineers	2
Society of Women Engineers	3
Student Sustainability Fund Committee	5
Alpha Gamma Delta	2
Dance Club	1
Nursing Christian Fellowship	1
Kansas Association of Nursing Students	5
Marching Band	7
Chi Omicron Rho	2
Pre-Vet Club	2
Hispanics of Today	1
BSA	1
International Student Association	1
Pitt Pals	3
PACS	8

<u>Campus Christians</u>	11
<u>Rock Climbing Club</u>	2
<u>Marketing Association</u>	1
<u>Bowling Club</u>	2
<u>Cow Creek Review</u>	2
<u>English Club</u>	1
<u>Christian Challenge</u>	3
<u>Blank Page</u>	2
<u>Pitt Lit Podcast</u>	1
<u>Emerald City</u>	1
<u>Plastics Club</u>	1
<u>Pre-Nursing Club</u>	7
<u>Enactus</u>	1
<u>Econ Club</u>	2
<u>Finance Club</u>	1
<u>Wildlife & Fisheries Society</u>	5
<u>IIASC</u>	1
<u>Newman Club</u>	8
<u>FCA</u>	4
<u>Sigma Alpha Iota</u>	3
<u>Intermural Sports</u>	4
<u>Food Recovery Network</u>	5
<u>Natural Ties</u>	13
<u>Society of Automotive Engineers</u>	1
<u>Society of Automotive Engineers Baja</u>	1
<u>Society of Manufacturing Engineers</u>	1
<u>American Foundry Society</u>	1
<u>Students for Violence Prevention</u>	1
<u>American Chemical Society</u>	1
<u>Ultimate Frisbee</u>	3
<u>Gorilla Gamers Gathering</u>	2
<u>Circle K</u>	2
<u>Prism</u>	3

Anime Club	1
Horror Club	1
Sigma Tau Gamma	2
Interfraternity Council	1
Outdoor Activities Club	1
KNEA	1
SAW Club	1
Pi Kappa Alpha	2
Pre-Dental	2
Social Work Plus	1
Ping Pong Club	2
Sigma Sigma Sigma	4
Be the Match	1
Educators Rising	1
Slam Poetry Club	1
Rugby Intermural Team	1
Nation Community Council	1
Cru	1
Associated General Contractors of America	1
Rec League Softball	1
PSU Film Makers Club	1
Collegio	1
PR & Advertising Club	1
Phi Mu Alpha	1
International Interior Design Association	2
Homecoming Committee	2
Greek Week	2
Crimson Commons Community Council	1
Math Club	1
Campus Republicans	1
Lacrosse Club	2

Detailed listing of all leadership positions the students have been involved in over the past three years

<u>List of Leadership Positions</u>			
President		Vice President	
National Hall Council	x2	Pre-Med Club	x2
Panhellenic		Bio Club	
English Club		Sigma Alpha Iota VP of Membership	
Lambda Sigma		SGA	
Pre-Med		Panhellenic VP of Recruitment	
Chem Club		Society of Plastics Engineers	
PACS		Blank Page	
Wildlife & Fisheries Society		PACS	x2
Natural Ties		Natural Ties	
SAE Baja		Food Recovery Network	
Sigma Tau Gamma	x2	Chem Club	x2
RHA		Gamma Alpha Lambda VP of recruitment	
Educators Rising State President		Finance Club	
Omicron Delta Kappa		Phi Kappa Phi	
Pre-Nursing	x1.5	Gamma Epsilon Tau	
Bio Club		Nation Hall Council	
Gamma Alpha Lambda		Sigma Tau Gamma	
		Gamma Alpha Lambda VP of Membership	x2
		SAW club	
		Pi Kappa Alpha Internal VP	
		Lacrosse Club	x2
		RHA	
		FCA	x2
		Pre-Nursing Club	x2
		Alpha Gamma Delta VP of Academic Excellence	
		Phi Mu Alpha	
		Sigma Tau Gamma VP of Membership	

Secretary		Treasurer	
Pre-Med	x2	Society of Women Engineers	
Bio Club	x2	Natural Ties	x2
Pitt Litt Podcast (and host)		PACS	x3
Wildlife & Fisheries Society		Graphic Arts Club	
Phi Eta Sigma	x2	Phi Eta Sigma	
PACS		Nation Hall Council	
Gamma Epsilon Tau		Wildlife & Fisheries Society	
SAW Club		Hispanics of Today	
Natural Ties		Lambda Sigma	
Lambda Sigma		Lacrosse Club	
IIDA		Food Recovery Network	
		Chem Club	
		Campus Christians	
		Gamma Alpha Lambda	
Chair		Other	
Music & Alumnae Relations Committees		Section Leader (Marching Band/Wind Ensemble)	
Alpha Sigma Alpha Scholarship Chair		Co-Concert Master	
Alpha Sigma Alpha Ritual Chair		Editor	
Alpha Sigma Alpha Best Friend's day Chair		NCF Officer	
Newman Club Faith Formation Chair		SGA Academic Affairs Director	
Panhellenic Council Chairwoman		Pre-Nursing Exec	
Pi Kappa Alpha Scholarship Chair		Food Recovery Network Leader	
Pi Kappa Alpha Homecoming Chair		SGA Senator	x6
Sigma Sigma Sigma Chaplain Chair		Chem Club Events Coordinator	x2
		Food Recovery Network Partner Coordinator	
		Baseball Sac Rep	
		Cross Country Captain	
		Society of Plastics Engineers KS Liason	
		Student Sustainability Fund Committee Vice chair of promotions	

	<u>Alpha Sigma Alpha Parliamentarian</u>
	<u>Gorilla Gamers Gathering Board Gameshead</u>
	<u>Graphic Arts Club Production Coordinator</u>
	<u>PASS Project Study Group Leader</u>
	<u>Pi Kappa Alpha Sergeant at Arms</u>
	<u>Food Recovery Network food donor coordinator</u>
	<u>Sigma Sigma Sigma Education Director</u>
	<u>Sigma Sigma Sigma Bible Study Leader</u>
	<u>Educators Rising National Competition Judge</u>
	<u>Be the Match Exec Board Member</u>
	<u>GAB Committee Member</u>
	<u>Cru Leader</u>
	<u>SGA Chief of Staff</u>
	<u>Natural Ties Social Media Director</u>
	<u>Alpha Gamma Delta Director of Property</u>
	<u>Phi Mu Alpha Fraternal Education Officer</u>
	<u>Gorilla Gamer Gathering Exec Officer</u>
	<u>Sigma Tau Gamma New Member Educator</u>
	<u>Greek Week Exec Board</u>
	<u>Homecoming Committee Exec Board</u>

Undergraduate research projects:

- Murray, M., Hammesfahr, A., & Rega-Brodsky, C. (2020). Comparison of bat communities captured over ponds and streams in Southeastern Missouri. Kansas Natural Resources Conference. Poster. Murray, M., Hammesfahr, A., Rega-Brodsky, C., & Whiney, J. (2020). Threatened Bat Capture Rates Using an Acoustic Lure: The Impacts of Habitat Features. Pittsburg State University Research Colloquium. Poster. Designed a human dimensions survey for the Southeast Kansas Nature Center to evaluate park visitor demographics, needs, and natural values for the Center's Director. (Dr. Brodsky) Assisted Dr. Christine Brodsky with a nationwide camera trap study for the Smithsonian Institution (Snapshot USA) to observe urban wildlife present in Pittsburg, KS
- The educational system of Italy with Dr. Stuck and Dr. Fincher Raising levels of suicide in schools with Dr. Brannock Digital literacy with Mrs. Abbott STEAM with Dr. Bartlow
- Perception of Atheists with Dr. Bradley, ADHD in college students with Dr. Wood, Music and dementia with Morgan Henning and Dr. Allison

- Font Development Research - Rion Huffman Currently conducting Color Science Research - Rion Huffman
- Departmental Academic Honors with Dr. Gloria Flynn, Mrs. Angela Abbott, and Dr. Bridgette Fincher
- Involved in Researching the Efficiency of Manual vs. Motorized Technical View Camera Apparatus'
- Graphics Research Project (Presented at the Capitol Undergraduate Research Day) - Rion Huffman
- I will soon be added to Dr. Santra's research lab and added into the KINBRE program.
- An advertising research project discovering the view of sports businesses in Kansas.
- I do research with Dr. Gupta and have presented research I have worked on 3 times
- Several, all with extremely long names that I cannot recall; Dr. Ram Gupta (Brooks Neria)
- Morgan Henning - Music and Memory in mild-moderate Alzheimer's patients
- AIW National Cabinet Strength Testing- Mr. Charlie Phillips
- I briefly worked with Dr. Hurford and his dyslexia research
- PASS Quality Initiative Project Peer Mentor for Dr. Thuong
- Development of Transgenic Soybean Plant with Dr. Zurek
- Honors Engagement Project on vaccination with Dr Zurek
- Lab Assistant at the Kansas Polymer Research Center
- Polymer Chemistry Research Dr. Ram Gupta
- Hurford in Developmental Psychology
- Dr. Harries - Research Paper

Professor Rion Huffman Testimonial

Pittsburg State University
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

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October 15, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

In my seven years at Pittsburg State University, I have been fortunate enough to have many experience's with Honors College students. I have been an advisor for nearly all Honors College students that have gone through the Graphics and Imaging Technologies (GIT) Department, and I have worked with many, if not all of them on Academic Honors projects, on traditional classroom projects or larger scale research projects that have garnered national and international recognition.

I strongly support the Honors College as I have witnessed the effect the organization has upon students. The students that come from Honors College are driven to succeed and consistently go above and beyond the typical classroom expectations.

Here are a few examples of these exceptional students in the GIT department and my interactions with them:

- Audrey Dainty (2020 Graduate):
 - Four National Conference Research Presentations (2019, 2020)
 - One mural project still underway (post-graduate)
 - One grant proposal written and funded
 - One photographic image in a National Gallery
 - Two photographic images/graphic design works in Regional Galleries
 - Multiple American Advertising Federation Awards
 - The ONLY two term President of Gamma Epsilon Tau (Graphics Honor Society)
- Josh Tegarden (current student):
 - Presentation at the Capitol Research Summit in Topeka
 - National Conference Research Presentation
 - Currently working on a Needs Assessment for the GIT Department to assess gaps in curriculum in our Digital Media emphasis courses
- Brandon Lee (current student):
 - Brandon is the first student to declare a triple emphasis in our department, which means he will almost be taking every single course we offer. He has still maintained an exceptional GPA despite the heavy course load
 - Acceptance to a National Conference for a Research Presentation (could not present because of COVID)
- Kolleen Gladden (2018 Graduate):
 - 2018 Outstanding Senior Woman
 - Founder of the campus chapter of the Christian sorority Gamma Alpha Lambda Delta
 - Delivered a TEDx speech
 - Currently completed her law degree at the University of Virginia

These are just a few examples of outstanding students that have come from the Honors College. I could list accolades of literally every single Honors College student that has come through the GIT program. These accolades do not even include their many Academic Honors projects that give immense service to the department in many ways.

I have been invited to the Honors College banquet multiple times and I can say that after meeting students from other departments, the accomplishments of the GIT Honors College students are not outliers. The Honors College does a great service to PSU by encouraging these students to come here and give lend their incredible talents and ambition to making PSU a better place in so many ways.

I want to close this letter by saying that I thoroughly support the Honors College at PSU and I appreciate the work that they do in every regard. All students help me grow as an educator, but many times Honors College students are the ones that push me a little harder and help me think critically about issues I may have become complacent with long ago, and for that I am grateful.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chauncey Rion Huffman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chauncey Rion Huffman