

# The Humanities Scholars Corner

## Mission Statement

The Humanities Scholars Program enables undergraduate humanities scholars to become independent thinkers who examine cultural products and practices from a multitude of perspectives. The program provides educational opportunities and strong support for learning, research, and civic engagement to talented young scholars who, over time, have an impact on the intellectual atmosphere of the campus and will make significant contributions to society through the humanities.

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Welcome Class of 2021!



## A Note From The Director

In fall 2013, the Class of 2017 and I started in the Humanities Scholars Program together. In these four years, I have witnessed the full cycle of their professional and academic journey, from the time they arrived to UMBC to their graduation this past May. It is indeed fascinating to see the growth of all the humanities scholars, who do not hesitate to expand their learning opportunities by extending their study abroad semester to a year; who engage in research at UMBC or abroad; who from their first year participate in international archeological digs or apply for international internships; who lead workshops for fellow humanities scholars in our Professional Series; and who are participants in the UMBC community and make our campus thrive. No wonder I enjoy writing the recommendation letters for Fulbright applications and graduate schools for rising seniors! And as the humanities scholars enter the ranks of alumni, I look forward to learning about their new endeavors either in graduate school or on their new jobs. I will be on sabbatical this fall conducting research in Spain, and as good as it sounds, be sure I will miss the Humanities Scholars Program Alumni reception on October 14. Professor Tim Phin, who will be the Acting Director, will welcome all of you. I look forward to seeing all of you on my return. – *Dr. Ana Oskoz*

# Alumna Interview



*Eva Janotta graduated in 2012 with majors in Gender + Women's Studies and English, and a minor in Spanish.*

*What activities were you involved in while at UMBC?*

I was a member of Women Involved in Learning and Leadership, also known as WILL, for all four years. During my last year I was a member of the English Honors Thesis group and the Gender and Women's Studies Planning Committee. I loved seeing how a program was organized from the inside. I also joined Baltimore Racial Justice Action in my junior year, where I learned about how white supremacy works in our contemporary world. Lastly, I took swing dancing lessons at Mobtown Ballroom in Baltimore. They were So. Much. Fun. I dance to this day!

*What were some highlights of your time in the Humanities Scholars Program?*

I LOVED all the field trips we were invited to take to the theater and other cultural outings. Study abroad (I went to Lima, Peru) was also a highlight, not just of Humanities Scholars Program, but of my life.

*How did the Humanities Scholars Program shape you professionally? What skills, knowledge and experiences have you brought to your professional/academic life?*

Through the Humanities Scholars Program I improved my critical thinking skills and my writing/communication skills. The community also taught me that there are so many people who *want* you to succeed. They want to help, and they're willing to give their time and energy to *you*.

*How would you define the Humanities Scholars Program in five words?*

Challenging. Friendly. Supportive. Close. Fun.

*What are you doing since you graduated?*

After I graduated, I worked full time as an Executive Assistant, then I became the Communications Coordinator at MOM's Organic Market (a local grocery chain). For the first two years I lived at home with my parents to save money. In 2015 I left my full time job and started my own social media and marketing company, called Simply Put Strategies (my dad named it!). While I built the business, I worked part time at the local grocery store. As of early 2017, my business is full time!!!!

*What do you have planned for the future?*

This fall I'm embarking on a new adventure and moving to Phoenix, AZ with my partner, Steve (I met him at UMBC, but he didn't have the good fortune of being an HSP student). A few months ago I started going "zero waste," meaning I'm trying to reduce the waste I consume by buying groceries in bulk and avoiding plastic packaging like the plague. I also plan to expand my business.

# Program Highlights



Julian Tash presenting at the 68<sup>th</sup> Japan-America Student conference

## Research and Publications

Once again, the scholars took their research beyond their courses at UMBC. Junior **Julian Tash** (History and Asian Studies) was accepted as a delegate to the 68th Japan-America Student Conference and was selected as the American delegate to give a speech at the Consulate-General's private residence in San Francisco. Alumni **Melina Latona** (Global Studies) and **Jennifer Wachtel** (History) published their works, "Changing the Nature of Education in the Valleys of Bolivia" and "An Unlikely Refuge: Jewish Refugees from Nazi Europe in Shanghai, 1933-1945," respectively, in the *UMBC Undergraduate Review*. Junior **Emily Grace** (English) published her poem, "The Florist on Fenwick Street," in *Bartleby*. Emily also conducted an interview with WMBC about poetry and her writing process with an editor from *Bartleby*.

## Humanities Scholars Program Salon

This year, the program held the third Humanities Scholars Salon in April 2017, two weeks before URCAD. At the Salon, which also served as a rehearsal venue for URCAD, scholars **Flora Kirk** (Ancient Studies), **Elena Beck** (MCS), and **Dylan Elliott** (History) received feedback to fine-tune their presentations.

The Salon also featured juniors **Emily Grace**, **Kelly Wan** (Global Studies), and **Mary Farrell** (MLLI) discussing their time abroad and offering advice to students preparing to go abroad.

## Professional Series Workshops

As in the past, we conducted the Professional Series Workshops to help prepare humanities scholars for their future endeavors. Humanities scholars participated in the Public Speaking and Professional Attire Workshop, provided by Junior scholars **Rebecca Haddaway** (English and Global Studies) and **Carrie Cook** (English), in which first- and second-year scholars practiced 30-second elevator speeches and learned how to dress for professional events. This information was put into practice at the Scholars Selection Day! After the Resume Writing Workshop, provided by **Dylan Elliott**, scholars revised and submitted their resume to Career Services for final approval. With their new approved resumes, scholars applied for and obtained summer internships. In the Humanities Applied to Service Workshop, Shriver Center Assistant Director Lori Hardesty and junior **Morgan Zepp** (English and Global Studies) presented different volunteer and service learning opportunities. First- and second-year scholars commented that the workshops encouraged them to search for opportunities.



Dever Cunningham, Colin Hrenko, and Jonathan Harness practice their 30-second speeches

## Study Abroad Salon

This year humanities scholars studied in China, Costa Rica, Estonia, France, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The emphasis that the program places on the benefits of study abroad is well noticed by the scholars who search for even additional opportunities to study and research abroad. First-year humanities scholar **Rachel Szpara** (MLLI and Asian Studies), for instance, was awarded a Huayu Enrichment Scholarship to study at the National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei this summer. Junior **Flora Kirk** and freshman **Jonathan Harness** (Ancient Studies and History) were selected to participate in archeological excavations in Bulgaria and Jordan, respectively. Scholars search for study abroad opportunities that allow them to continue their studies, explore new possibilities, and enhance their intercultural competency.



Flora Kirk at Corvin Castle, in Romania



Anthony Alberti in the U.K.



Meeting with Dr. Hrabowski

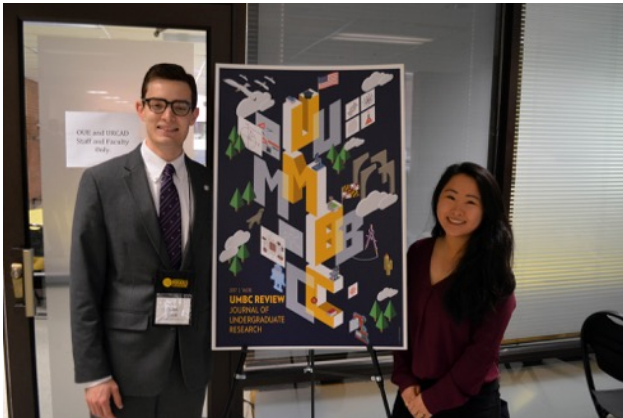


First Year Scholars and Dr. Hrabowski

## First Year Seminars

How do children and their nation interact? How does the nation utilize children as symbols or actors for political ends? In the fall 2016 humanities seminar, guided by professors Erin Hogan (MLLI) and Tim Phin (Ancient Studies), scholars examined these central questions within Western Culture, by investigating literary, legal, visual, filmic, and critical texts. UMBC President Freeman Hrabowski joined them to talk about his participation in the Children's March in Birmingham, providing scholars with an example of children's political convictions and agency.

In their spring 2017 humanities seminar, "Reorienting Culture," scholars engaged in an expansive repertoire of transnational popular, literary, material, and visual artifacts. With professors Tamara Bhalla (AMST) and Fan Yang (MCS), scholars explored how Asia, in both its local and global incarnations, reorient the way we think about culture.



Dylan Elliott with co-editor Emily Huang of the *UMBC Undergraduate Review*

### Internships, Service, and Work

Humanities Scholars participate in internships, service work, and hold on- and off-campus jobs. For example, junior **Ahana Kowdley** (MLLI and Political Science), accepted an internship with the Humane League Grassroots for Baltimore VegFest as Webmaster, and first-year scholar **Julia Byrne** (History and Political Science) is currently an intern for Maryland State Senator Roger Manno.

Like in previous years, humanities scholars serve at UMBC and beyond. Second-year scholar **Mairead Alexander** (English Literature and Music) is involved with Little Friends for Peace, a non-profit organization that teaches children nonviolent strategies through cooperative activities. **Sage Burch** (Global Studies and Asian Studies), a junior, volunteered at Relay Elementary School in Halethorpe, MD as a student mentor. Second-year scholar **Colin Hrenko** (MLLI) participated in the Reading Partners at Lakeland Elementary Middle School, where he tutored elementary school students in reading and writing.

Humanities scholars also take on many leadership roles. **Anthony Alberti** (English) was the Communications Director at QUMBC, a queer activist group on campus, and **Rebecca Haddaway** served as the environmental

section's fundraising chair. Senior **Dylan Elliott** was the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences editor for the *UMBC Undergraduate Review*, and **Anthony Alberti**, **Alex Armbruster** (Global Studies), and **Nani Wachhaus** (English and Ancient Studies) served as *Bartleby* staff.

In addition, humanities scholars pursue many employment opportunities. At UMBC, junior **Meg Gomyo** (MCS) is a tour guide and social media ambassador in the UMBC Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Orientation. First-year scholar **Lindsey Green** (History) works as an Orientation Peer Advisor, facilitating positive orientation experiences for incoming students, and **Chelsea Johnson** (MLLI and Asian Studies) is a gallery attendant at the Center for Art Design and Visual Culture (CADVC). **Colin Hrenko** was a Research Assistant for Dr. Erin Hogan, researching the precedent of Spanish-language filmmakers in the United States. Senior **Mary Farrell** is the Student Assistant for the Language, Literacy, and Culture (LLC) Ph.D. Program. Beyond UMBC, sophomore **Nani Wachhaus** is a script writer for Underbyte Studios, where she writes the accompanying text for a "choose-your-own-adventure style" iPhone game.



Lindsey Green at Orientation

# URCAD Presentations

Based on work from their classes, six senior Humanities Scholars gave oral presentations on their research at URCAD on April 26, 2017.



Elena Beck presents at URCAD (Photo by Michael Mower)

## **Elena Beck**

“Nightwish: The Global Fan Culture of a Finnish Symphonic Metal Band”

## **Dylan Elliott**

“Robbing Peter to Pay Paul: The Balancing Act of Maryland’s Intendant of the Revenue”

## **Flora Kirk**

“More Than Just Money: Second and Third Century Coin Circulation in Roman Britain and the Influence of Emperors”

## **Gabriella Roberts**

“Communication Between Immigrant Patients and Health Care Providers in a Local Clinic: An Ethnographic Study”

## **Allison Feeney**

“Here We Go Again: Comparison of Prejudice Against Irish Catholics and Muslims”

## **Emma Barnes**

“The Borderlands: How the Alien’s Territory Becomes Productive Literary Space”



Emma Barnes presents at URCAD (Photo by Michael Mower)

# Awards

The dedication of humanities scholars to their academic work is noticed in their home departments. Numerous Scholars were the recipients of awards for demonstrating academic excellence.

**Allison Feeney**

American Studies  
Outstanding Achievement  
in American Studies

**Gabriela Roberts**

Sociology and Anthropology  
Outstanding Student in Anthropology  
for Exceptional Academic Performance

**Julian Tash**

Asian Studies and History  
Academic Excellence in Asian Studies Award  
The John Bell-Clifford Maas Prize  
for Academic Excellence

**Carrie Cook**

English  
Journalism Award

**Flora Kirk**

Ancient Studies  
Christopher Sherwin Award

**Dylan Elliott**

History  
Joseph D. Reese Memorial Prize



Humanities Scholars (L-R) Flora Kirk, Dylan Elliott, Carrie Cook, Allison Feeney, and Gabriela Roberts

**And more....**

**Dylan Elliott**

Student Affairs Leadership Award  
Outstanding Attorney at the  
Market Street Invitational

**Ian Ralby**

Distinguished Alumnus in Humanities  
UMBC

# Humanities Scholars Highlights

For the third consecutive year, first-year Humanities Scholars created puzzle pieces representing themselves to hang on the Humanities Scholars wall.



At the annual Humanities Scholars Reception, humanities scholars interacted with and learned from UMBC faculty members and Dean Scott Casper.



First-year humanities scholars invited their high school teachers for the annual Exemplary Teachers' Day to celebrate and recognize their dedication to their work and students.



The Humanities Scholars Program Alumni Reception celebrated UMBC's 50th anniversary, and was a great opportunity for alumni to catch up with fellow alums and with past program directors.



And the Humanities Scholars Program has its own graduation cords!

