



HONORS COLLEGE

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY



GREETINGS

Welcome to the fall 2021 issue of the Honors College alumni newsletter. We hope you are all doing well and find this to be a great window into the current happenings in the Honors College. With things progressively returning to normal, there is much to share!

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BACK IN THE SWING OF THINGS - ALUMNI OPPORTUNITIES WITH STUDENT PROGRAMS

Getting back to three-dimensional campus life has been so rewarding this semester! While the Honors College has fully resumed in-person teaching and other activities, we are still offering a mix of virtual and in-person programming. Virtual events are most often organized as Zoom sessions that we share on Facebook Live to get a broader reach and maximize convenience. Virtual programs are wonderful opportunities for alumni volunteers to share their expertise and connect 1:1 with students. Below is a brief primer on student engagement activities this semester. **If you are interested in participating in virtual programming or in any of the opportunities below, please email Alysia Davis, Director of Student Engagement, at davis4am@jmu.edu.**

- We are in the busy season of admissions recruitment, and Honors Ambassadors are making themselves available during drop-in Zoom sessions and 1:1 conversations with prospective students. **If you know a prospective student interested in learning more about the Honors College, please reach out to Dr. Davis.**
- The Madison Honors Leadership Council (MHLC) recently completed a successful fall recruitment, and are in the midst of planning programs for the rest of the semester, including social, professional development, and service events. **MHLC is looking for alumni who are currently enrolled in graduate or professional school to participate in a virtual grad school prep panel on Monday, November 8 at 5:15 p.m. If you're interested in participating as a panelist, please reach out to Dr. Davis by November 4.**
- Diverse student programming continues to be a feature in the Honors College. We hosted a follow-up to last year's conversations about the book "Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World - and Why Things are Better Than You Think" - this conversation about COVID-19 communication and data featured guest faculty presenters Cindy Klevickis (ISAT) and Michael Klein (WRTC). The Toolbox Workshop series continues to offer our student the "soft skills" they need to succeed. Major Mixers help students get connected with peers in their major areas. And a new series, Adulting 101, teaches students practical skills like financial literacy. Our Honors Book Club and writing peer group Work In Progress also continue to thrive.
- We were excited to take a group of students to James Madison's Montpelier in early October, and students in the Book Club are looking forward to a trip to the Edgar Allen Poe Museum in Richmond in early November.

IN THE HONORS COLLEGE, WE'RE ALL FAMILY

It was amazing to welcome more than 700 guests to our Family Weekend breakfast! Honors faculty, staff and student dished up a delicious meal to our wonderful students and their families. The first 100 lucky parents to register received complimentary Honors Parent sweatshirts. Following breakfast, we hosted a Saturday Scholars program with Honors faculty member Amelia Underwood (Military Science). Attendees were treated with a chance to see a sample Honors seminar lecture on leadership.



Pictured above: Students and families enjoying Family Weekend festivities.

Don't miss your chance to come "home" again at Homecoming!

Honors has fantastic Homecoming opportunities on Friday, November 5 and Saturday, November 6. **Join us for the Duke Dog Dash on Friday, November 5 at 4 p.m. at Hillcrest** – this leisurely 1 mile walk around the upper Quad will be a perfect way to ring in a great weekend. Be sure to stop by to visit with Honors students at QuadFest on Friday, as well. The Honors table will feature a "Guess How Many" game – guess the number of pieces of candy in jars for a chance to win the goodies and Honors swag! Then, on Saturday, come by Hillcrest for our free Homecoming tailgate before the game. We'll have all the tailgate food classics. **Find details on the JMU Homecoming website: <https://www.alumni.jmu.edu/>.** Don't delay – register today!

THE HONORS ADVANTAGE

JMU HONORS PERKS: ENRICHED CURRICULUM

With the recent alignment of credit hour and curriculum requirements between Track 1 and Track 2 students, all Honors Scholars are now working towards completing a Honors Interdisciplinary Studies minor that totals 25 credit hours, 19 credits of Honors Core coursework and 6 credits dedicated to the Honors Capstone Project. Read more about the coursework requirements: <https://www.jmu.edu/honors/curriculum.shtml>

You will notice that research/experiential learning and diversity classes are now credit-bearing and part of honors curriculum requirements. This change in curriculum provides students a comprehensive academic experience in an integrated learning environment.

“The Honors College and their curriculum in particular has greatly enhanced my experience at JMU,” shared **Chloe Banaszak**, a sophomore Theatre and Psychology double major. “Through an Honors college course, I met others who think more like me, and want to enrich our learning experience as much as possible. These people have allowed me to see JMU in a new light, and because of that, my time here is much more fulfilling.”



Honors senior Angel Santiago enjoys lunch with renowned author, David Epstein

HONORS CAPSTONE PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

The following student spotlight gives a glimpse into the ongoing work of an exemplary Honors student. Best of luck to Jessie and her peers as they complete their capstone research during the 2021-2022 school year!



Jessie Beddow ('22), IDLS

My Honors capstone project focuses on the representation of diversity in picture book characters. Since I am studying to be a teacher, this topic is important and relevant to my future profession because all students should see themselves reflected in the stories they read. I collected data for the research in Year 1 primary school classrooms in London. I am specifically looking at the identities of main characters and how they are portrayed in the texts!

Jessie was a 2020 Hillcrest Scholar. The Hillcrest Scholarship helped make it possible for her to collect her capstone data in London. [Read more about her Hillcrest Scholarship proposal.](#)

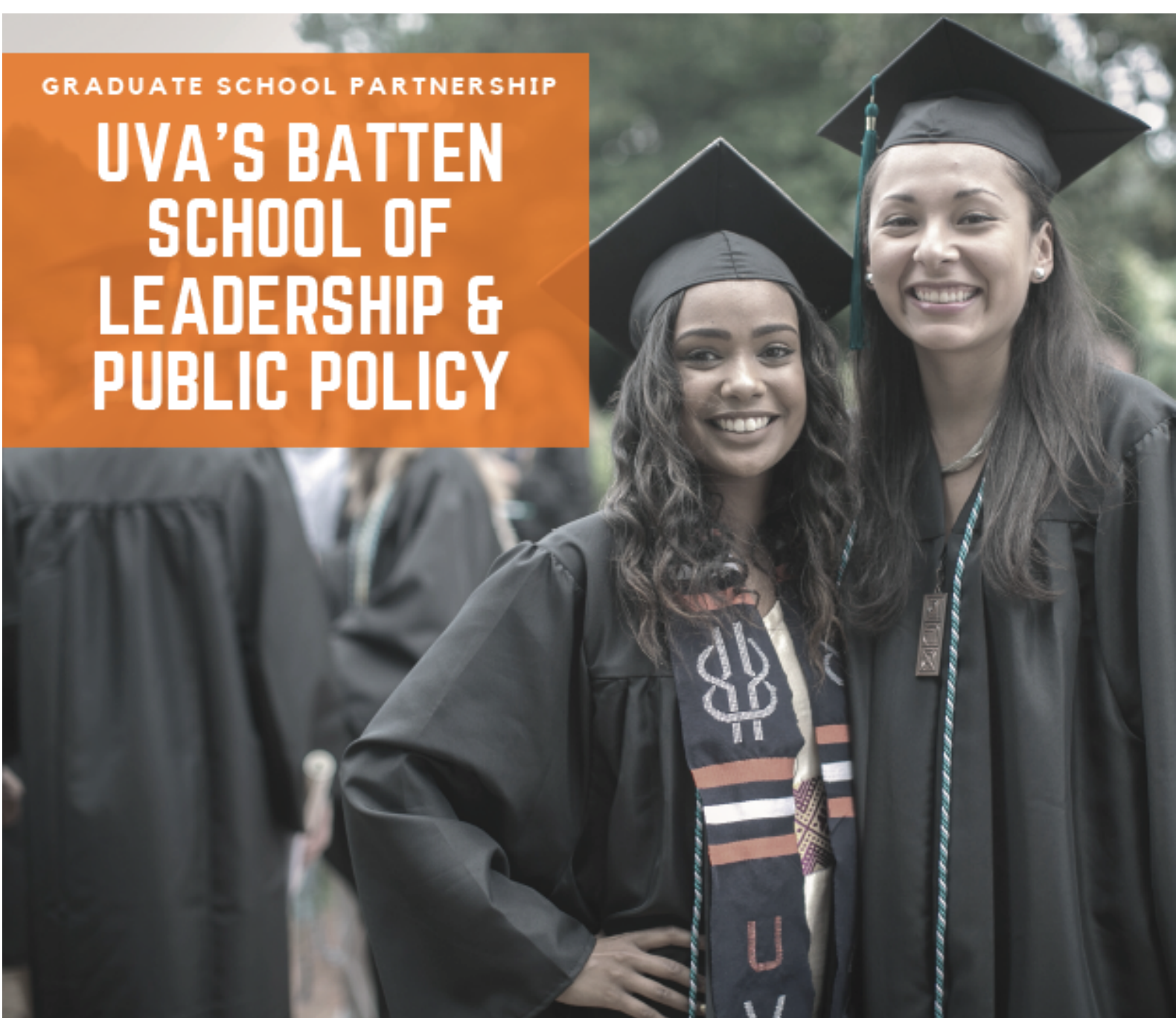
UVA BATTEN SCHOOL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALUMNI

The Honors College has an exclusive partnership with UVA's Batten School of Public Policy and Leadership available to *graduating Honors students and alumni*. Students/alumni interested in pursuing a MPP (Masters of Public Policy) will receive a waiver for the Batten School application fee, and those admitted will receive a guaranteed fellowship. To learn more, watch this short, recorded FB Live info session: <https://fb.watch/8WOgN2OMBj/>.

**Informational flyer on the following page*

GRADUATE SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

UVA'S BATTEN SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP & PUBLIC POLICY



Do you want to be a catalyst for real and lasting change?

Our two-year, full-time Master of Public Policy program offers students the chance to focus on the result of policy — solving society's most pressing problems.

[BATTEN.VIRGINIA.EDU](https://batten.virginia.edu)

JMU HONORS COLLEGE STUDENTS & ALUMS RECEIVE:

- An application fee waiver
- If admitted, a *minimum* guaranteed annual fellowship of **\$12,500** (Virginia resident) or **\$20,000** (non-Virginia resident)



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Stay Connected

The Hillcrest Club is a network designed with Honors grads of the last decade in mind. Nothing is required to join. We hope that the Hillcrest Club will help keep recent graduates connected with each other and with JMU Honors. The Hillcrest Club Advisory group works to plan alumni opportunities for the young alumni network.

If you are interested in becoming an Advisor contact Dr. Davis at davis4am@jmu.edu.

Have news to share with the Honors College alumni community?

Please fill out this form to be included in the next newsletter.

All alumni are encouraged to follow the Honors College on social media to learn more about engagement opportunities. Alumni messages are primarily shared through LinkedIn. Please also follow JMU Honors on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. *See links below.*

ALYSIA DAVIS, DIRECTOR OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Contact Alysia Davis with any questions or if you are looking for engagement opportunities! She can be reached at davis4am@jmu.edu.

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