

ARETÉ

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY

NEWSLETTER OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Jane Freed Awards
2. Robert Putnam
3. Profiles of Patel and Shaw
Beechwood Renovations
4. Guatemala Spring Break
Dr. Elizabeth Gilmartin
5. Baltimore Conference
A Letter from the Dean
6. KONY
Italian Club
7. *Made in Pakistan* Documentary
8. Relay for Life
9. My Home in Birch
Dr. Danuta Sz wajkajzer
10. Sister Act on Broadway
AWP Conference
11. Money Matters
Career Choices Round Table
12. Alumni Spotlight

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The End of a Yearlong Process Sana Rashid

The Honors School of Monmouth University hosted its Annual Awards Ceremony on April 19 in the historic Wilson Great Hall. During this event, Honors students were recognized and awarded for various accomplishments.

One important part of the ceremony is the recognition of the Jane Freed Award recipients. This year, 22 Honors students were nominated by their advisors. Out of those students, Jennifer Tortorelli, senior anthropology/education Major; Dharm Patel senior biology major; Gillian Shaw, senior chemistry major; Courtney Luk, junior english major; and Matthew-Donald Sangster, junior psychology major, received the Jane Freed Award for Best Honors Thesis Proposal and a \$1,000 award. Terence Bodak, Tamari Lagvilava, and Vincent Marchese received recognition for Excellence in Academic Writing and Research, which carries a \$300 award.

The criteria for selecting the best proposals depended on the originality and creativity of the project, according to Dr. Kevin Dooley, the Dean of the Honors School. Also, the depth of the research and the quality of the argument and presentation are key factors.

Getting selected for the Jane Freed Award is not easy. All of the 22 Honors Thesis Proposals were read by the Honors Council, which consists of Dooley, Jane Freed, and 13 representatives from academic schools at Monmouth.

The thesis proposals selected covered a wide variety of topics including, "A Critical Analysis of American Education" by Tortorelli; Shaw's "Design of a 'Greener' Oxidation Process for the Synthesis of Polyol Alkanoic Acids;" "Effects of Lipopolysaccharide-Induced Inflammation on Hypoxia-Inducible Factor-1 Expression in the Rat Testis" by Patel; Sangster's "An fMRI Study of Sensory Processing Sensitivity;" and an



Photo Courtesy of Reenie Menditto

Sangster, Luk, Shaw, Patel, and Tortorelli, (left to right) the winners of the Jane Freed award, with Jane Freed (center).

exploration of Chinese mythology and Romantic literary aspects through Luk's short story, "The Dragon's Pearl."

Patel spent many hours in lab and writing his proposal and thesis and agrees that "it was all worth it. I learned to think critically about my work and write it up scientifically."

Tortorelli said, "I put more work into my thesis than any other project I have done, not because it was a more difficult assignment, but because it was the first time I had full control over what was included and I wanted to be proud of what I produced."

Sangster spent over 500 hours on his thesis. "There has not been a week in the past year where I haven't put at least six hours towards this project."

Not surprisingly, all the winners come from different academic majors and are well-rounded. Luk is a member of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society, and she is the secretary for Artists for Change.

Patel said, "As part of my thesis research, I have been able to present my work at regional and national conferences." He is also very involved with the Honors School and the School

Meet the Author of *Bowling Alone*

Terence Bodak

This past January the Honors School and the Department of Political Science and Sociology, co-sponsoring the first of an annual Visiting Scholar Series, invited Dr. Robert Putnam to come to campus. Putnam, who is the Malkin Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University, as well as a past recipient of the Skytte Prize—one of the world's highest accolades for a political scientist—came to campus on January 27 to discuss the findings of his most recent book, *American Grace*.

First-year Honors students were already familiar with Putnam before he even came to campus, as they were assigned to read his book, *Bowling Alone*, which deals with the decline of American community participation. Dr. Kevin Dooley, Dean of the Honors School, states that he chose to assign Putnam's *Bowling Alone* because it "emphasizes the decline in the way that Americans once were: socially active, community oriented, and civically engaged. It might motivate some of our Honors students to realize that their individual success is due in the large part to the people around them, which might perpetuate a greater commitment to others."

Speaking before a full Wilson Hall Auditorium, Putnam discussed the level of religious affiliation in the United States, as well as the connection between religion and politics in our country. Unlike many Western European nations, to which the United States is most closely related politically, the United States has a much higher level of affiliation between its citizens and organized religion.

Many in the audience, including the Honors School's own Reenie Menditto, Director of Student Standards, Advising and Services, were surprised to see one of Putnam's charts. Menditto stated that she was "surprised to see that in terms of religious affiliation, the US was more closely related to Saudi Arabia and Iran than to Western Europe." Although the United States' level of religious affiliation is higher compared to that of Western Euro-

pean nations, Putnam's evidence also showed that older generations are much more religious than younger generations.

In his presentation, Putnam stated that in the current era of American politics, it is believed that many people vote based on social issues related to their religious beliefs; however, Putnam was clear to point out that current trends go against this commonly held belief. With this, Putnam stated that, although Americans have the highest level of religious affiliation, Americans as a whole are a much more tolerant people compared to citizens of other countries. This suggests that belief in faith leads to respect of others' faiths.

The Honors School hopes to continue having scholars come to campus to speak. Dooley states that "bringing the author to campus serves a few purposes. First, it can oftentimes demystify the scholar. When a scholar comes to Monmouth and engages an audience and is open to a Q and A session, it allows the students to be inspired on a more personal level. Secondly, it also can bring continued attention to the topic. A book is a great way of beginning a discussion on a topic, but having the author in person can continue it further."

For next year's book, Dooley is leaning towards selecting one that features a topic related to the sciences. Dooley states

that, "What I have found is that scientists can inspire artists, poets, and historians in the same way that those in the humanities and social sciences can inspire business, science, and technology."



Photo Courtesy of Reenie Menditto

Dr. Robert Putnam recently came to campus to discuss his most recent book, *American Grace*.

The End of a Yearlong Process Continued from Page 1

of Science.

Shaw received the American Chemical Society Freshman Chemistry Award in 2009 and the Senior Chemistry Award from the Chemistry Department. Tortorelli was awarded Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar from the Anthropology Department the same day she discovered she was a Jane Freed Award recipient.

Sangster is also very involved on campus. He is the President of Phi Sigma Eta and a member of the National First Year Honors Society and the Philosophy Club. Also, he is the Vice President of Global Service Project, Treasurer of Study Abroad Club, a leader of Mission: Philosophy. Further, Sangster is the co-author of *The Stranger Inside: Stories from Beneath the Mirrored Glass*.

The Chief Advisors and the Second Readers also had a significant role in helping the students create a unique piece of work, while encouraging them to pursue their thesis. Luk is grateful towards her Chief Advisor; she said, "Dr. Frank Fury kept reassuring me that I was doing a great job, so I should not doubt myself"

There are more benefits to the Jane Freed Award besides the recognition and prize money. Each of the students are given an op-

portunity to publish their completed thesis proposals in *Crossroads*, the University's Honors journal dedicated to undergraduate research.

Since she is only a junior, Luk plans to put her focus on raising her GPA and pursuing her Master's degree. Patel will be studying Molecular Biosciences in Rutgers University's graduate school. Sangster plans on spending another year at MU to finish his minor and other classes. Shaw will be attending the University of Notre Dame to continue her chemistry studies in inorganic and surface chemistry.

Tortorelli also has high goals in mind: "I am planning on pursuing a teaching job. Within the next few years, I would like to pursue a Master's degree in the field of education and I would like to become a school principal one day."

Sangster hopes to further develop his thesis by working with Dr. Bianca Acevedo on her research. After graduation, Sangster "hope[s] to enroll in a Ph. D. program for Neuroscience to continue researching Cognitive Processes, Emotionality, and the general field of Theoretical Neuroscience.

Patel particularly would "like to sincerely thank Jane Freed for supporting the Honors School throughout the years. Her support has allowed students like me to have an extremely enriching academic and cultural experience at Monmouth."

Where To Next?

Alison Abate

As May approaches, it is the end of a year for many students at the University, but it is the end of a four-year experience for seniors. At the Honors School, we value our seniors and look to them as positive influences for the underclassmen.



Photo Courtesy of Gillian Shaw

Gillian Shaw plans to receive her Ph. D. in Chemistry from Notre Dame University.

Two of these seniors who are about to become Honors School Alumni are Gillian Shaw and Dharm Patel.

Shaw, from Old Bridge, NJ, majors in chemistry with a concentration in chemical physics and advanced chemistry. She said, "I believe that the Honors School is a tightly knit community and my participation has added to my experience at Monmouth." Her plans for the future include going to graduate school for her Ph. D. in chemistry at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana.

For Patel, from South Plainfield, NJ, biology is his specialty. He is graduating as a biology major with a concentration in molecular cell physiology. After living

in Honors housing for two years and participating in multiple Honors opportunities, he said, "I have truly enjoyed the one-on-one mentorship I have received from faculty members. I will miss that very much. My experience with the Honors School has been an integral part of my experience at Monmouth."

Patel is currently working on his Honors Thesis. He also believes that Reenie and Erin have become the Honors "moms away from home," which seems to be a consensus among many Honors students. In addition, he is supportive of the ideas that Dr. Kevin Dooley has brought into the Honors School during his first year as Dean and looks forward to hearing more about them in the future. Right now, Patel plans on pursuing a Ph. D. in Molecular Biology and Pharmacology.

The Honors School has helped these students grow and has encouraged them to pursue their dreams and further their education. We wish both Gillian and Dharm luck in their future endeavors.



Photo Courtesy of Dharm Patel

Dharm Patel plans on pursuing a Ph. D. in Molecular Biology and Pharmacology.

Beechwood Gets a Facelift

Taylor Glynn

The Monmouth University campus seems to be changing constantly: new buildings are being resurrected, flower beds are being tended to perfection, and solar panels are being added to almost every surface in sight. One large change, however, has those involved with the Honors program particularly excited. Beechwood Hall, the residence hall that many Honors students call home, is in the early stages of a major renovation.

"Honors students really enjoy living in their suites, so we are looking forward to upgrading the common areas for them to enjoy and utilize as well," say Reenie Menditto, Director of Student Standards. She, along with the Assistant to the Dean, Erin Hawk, will also be enjoying the effects of the renovation with a timely expansion of their offices. Office space will also be revamped for a more comfortable and spacious working environment.

For many, Beechwood serves as much more than just a place to sleep. It currently has a lounge on the lower level in which students can relax and work in the comfort of their own building. The residence hall contains computers in the front lobby and also houses offices that belong to some of the busiest people on the University campus. This renovation will extend the entire first floor, which means added luxuries for Beechwood inhabitants.

Students will benefit greatly from the decision to

remodel. The first of these additions will be an enlarged computer space and "quiet room" where those working into the latest hours of the night can study in library esque quarters. The lounge area will also be extended in order to provide more space for students in need of relaxation. Finally, the kitchen area will be revamped.

One of the most exciting details of these big plans for Beechwood will be outside the building itself. A patio will be placed behind the residence hall and will be the perfect spot for events such as the annual Honors School barbeque. Students will be able to enjoy the sun in the comfort of their own backyards.

Not only are these changes in the interest of students' increased happiness, but for work efficiency as well. A conference room will be added to the floor, which will be used by Dr. Kevin Dooley, Dean of the Honors School, and his associates for meetings. This revamp of the floor will also provide a place for prospective students and their parents to discuss a bright Monmouth future.

"It is absolutely important for prospective students and their families to discuss their experience at this school in a professional and spacious environment," said Dooley, "We are all very excited for the big change, even though it is still early on. I'd also like to say that Patricia Swannack is the woman who made this all possible, so I would like to thank her for all her hard work."

The renovations are still in the process of being solidified, but the plans for Beechwood Hall look quite promising.

A Different Kind of Spring Break

Amanda Kruzynski

When people hear about a college spring break, they normally think of students going down to Florida, Mexico or other resort locations to party. One rarely hears of students going to do volunteer manual labor for their spring break. But that is what I did.

Professor Jeffery Wilhelms took two Monmouth University students and 12 Rutgers University students, and Dr. Chris Hirschler took four other Monmouth University students, down to Guatemala for a nine-day volunteer trip.

For the trip, we worked with an organization called Salud y Paz. This organization provides healthcare, health education, and dental care for communities that normally would not get any of this help. On the property, they also have a preschool for first-grade students. Our mission on this trip was to help with the addition of a second floor of a building to provide rooms to house patients when surgical teams come into the clinic. The



Photo Courtesy of Amanda Kruzynski
Lake Atlan from Panajachel, one of the spots that the students visited in Guatemala.

organization gets about six surgical teams a year, and for the week each team is there it normally does between 150 and 200 surgeries.

Our surgery team helped one of the students, Louisa, who was crossed-

eyed, which was impairing her vision. She still needs more surgery to correct it completely, but without this clinic, she would not have received any help at all and would have lived her whole life with the impairment.

During our visit, we were able to experience a new culture. We saw not only the beautiful country that Guatemalans live in but also how poorly they live. For everyone at some point on the trip it really hit how well we have it at home. There were children on the street trying to sell you things so they could go to school or women trying to sell you things so she could feed her children the next day.



Photo Courtesy of Amanda Kruzynski
Amanda Kruzynski and Louisa, a young girl who had eye surgery.

As well as volunteering, we also were able to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience of climbing up an active volcano. Making it to the top was hard but rewarding for we were able to see for miles and miles the pure beauty of their land.

This was the most amazing experience of my life. I made so many new friends, was able to make a difference in people's lives, and made my mark on the world by doing something good. I would definitely do this trip again in a heartbeat and would recommend everyone take a trip like this at some point in his or her life because as Mohandas Gandhi said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

Meet Dr. Elizabeth Gilmartin Maria Carvalho

There are many different types of role models that one looks up to in life. A role model could be a parent, a friend, or guardian, but one role model who teaches others how to succeed in life is Dr. Elizabeth Gilmartin.

Gilmartin is a professor in the English department who teaches College Composition I & II, Literature I & II, British Literature I, and Irish Literary Studies.

Gilmartin received her Bachelors of Arts from Georgian Court University and her Master of Arts in English from Seton Hall University. She then later received her Ph. D. in English from New York University. In college, Dr. Gilmartin decided to become a professor since she "loved the college atmosphere and was really inspired by a number of great professors as an undergraduate."



Photo Courtesy of Monmouth University
Dr. Elizabeth Gilmartin's specialty is Irish Literature.

Gilmartin was raised in Freehold, New Jersey. She attended St. John Vianney High School in Holmdel, New Jersey. Throughout her life, she studied the flute. As well as adoring the flute, Gilmartin had a passion for 80's

and 90's alternative rock and Irish music. Recently, her main focus has been taking care of her baby. She also said, "When I have more time, reading is a top hobby."

Professor Gilmartin's specialty is Irish literature. Her favorite works are by J.M. Synge, James Joyce, and Kate O'Brien. She enjoys the Bronte sisters, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Paradise Lost*, and *The Divine Comedy* and loves contemporary writers such as Emma Donoghue, Margaret Atwood, and Colm Tobin.

Gilmartin showed interest in working at Monmouth University after receiving her Ph. D. in 2001. Although the position was originally intended to last one year, 11 years has past and she is still a professor here. She said, "Being able to get a full-time job in the area near your family is quite rare in the academic world, so I am very lucky." It is evident that Gilmartin loves her career as she said that she "loves teaching, interacting with students and helping them improve their writing or explore works of literature."

All of her hard work is noticed by her students. As I am completing my second semester here at the University, I had the pleasure of having her as my professor for both semesters. The passages read throughout the past two semesters have impacted my interest in different types of literature.

The biggest suggestion that Gilmartin has to her students is to read. She states, "We are all moving so far away from the enjoyment of reading. We will miss out on so much if we lose the ability to read for pleasure."

The Honors School Visits Baltimore, Maryland Dharm Patel

Students and staff from the Honor School traveled to the historic city of Baltimore from April 12 to April 15 to attend the Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference at the Hyatt Regency Inner Harbor. This year's conference theme, *Competing Claims: Divisions and Coalition* brought together students to discuss dynamic interactions in the arts and humanities, social sciences, business and technology, natural and applied sciences and education. From the conference website, "The site of the 2012 NRHC Conference, Baltimore, calls us to be movers and shakers, to locate ourselves amid diversity and forge new and vibrant ways to connect and to sustain life through science, literature, social science, business, education, art and culture. Only amid opposing forces can creativity abound."

Students in attendance were seniors Maria Ferrara, math

and education major, Duncan Smith-Sebasto, marine biology major, and Dharm Patel, biology major. Honors School staff in attendance included Dr. Kevin Dooley, Dean of the Honors school, and Reenie Menditto, Director of Student Advising. Ferrara presented her Honors senior thesis work concerning Mixed ANOVA, Smith-Sebasto presented his Honors senior thesis field research on the queen conch population in Cape Eluthera, Bahamas, and Patel presented his Honors senior thesis research on inflammation in the male reproductive tract. Neighboring schools in attendance included The College of New Jersey, Farleigh Dickinson University, and College of St. Elizabeth.

Beyond the conference events, which included other paper and poster presentations, a luncheon, banquet, and the key note speech, the MU group was able to explore the city of Baltimore and share laughs with MU alums Jenani Jayakumaran and Cody Ross Pitts over dinner. Both former students are pursuing graduate work at the Johns Hopkins University.



Photo Courtesy of Reenie Menditto

Dharm Patel, Maria Ferrara, Reenie Menditto, and Dr. Kevin Dooley enjoy the breeze from the Baltimore harbor.



Photo Courtesy of Reenie Menditto

Maria Ferrara presents her Honors senior thesis.



Photo Courtesy of Reenie Menditto

Dr. Kevin Dooley, Dharm Patel, Maria Ferrara, Duncan Smith-Sebasto, and Reenie Menditto learn about other theses at the main aspect of the conference.

A Letter from Dr. Kevin Dooley, Dean of the Honors School

I hope that all of you had a productive and thoroughly enjoyable year as a part of the Honors School. As you know, the Honors School at Monmouth University is designed to provide you with a top-rate learning experience that can benefit any major or area of interest. From the clustered courses to the Honors Proposal and Thesis, the curriculum is specially tailored to benefit you in the most intellectually engaging way.

Over the past few weeks, we have been quite busy planning for the second year of our Honors Peer Mentoring Program. Thanks to Terence Bodak, who is graduating this semester, we have a firm foundation from which to proceed. Terence will hand off leadership duties to Ryan Murphy who, next year, will head a mentorship program of 25 mentors. We are all very thankful for the continued interest in the program and to all of those who made this past year such a success. Without your support, our first-year students would not have had such an easy transition to Monmouth University.

In addition, Reenie and I had the pleasure of taking three of your Honors colleagues to the annual meeting of the Northeast

Regional Honors Council in Baltimore, Maryland, from April 12 to April 15. Seniors, Dharm Patel (Biology), Duncan Smith-Sebasto (Marine Biology) and Maria Ferrara (Math/Education) presented posters based on their Honors thesis research. A great time was had by all. In the future, please look out for announcements regarding presentation opportunities at regional or national conferences. We look forward to taking a number of you to present your work. Presenting at conferences is a tremendous opportunity for undergraduates, so please let us know how we can help.

Lastly, as we look back on a year of accomplishments and forward to a summer of rest and relaxation, remember that you are all very special to us. We are here for you and will always try to foster your academic experiences as best we can. So, over the summer, if you are in the area, drop in and say hello. And of course, take care of yourselves and each other. Good luck and best wishes from the Honors School.

All the best,

Dean Dooley

KONY: From Inside Uganda

Amanda Gruber

On March 5, Invisible Children released a video that had the main goal of popularizing one man: Joseph Kony. This video has created widespread reactions and opinions across the world.

Who is Joseph Kony? Invisible Children's Kony 2012 website says, "Joseph Kony is the world's worst war criminal. In 1987 he took over leadership of an existing rebel group and renamed it the Lord's Resistance Arm (LRA). The LRA has earned a reputation for its cruel and brutal tactics. When Joseph Kony found himself running out of fighters, he started abducting children to be soldiers in his army or 'wives' for his officers."

The site says that the LRA encourages its soldiers to rape, mutilate, and kill the civilians they meet, and although the LRA is no longer active in Northern Uganda, where the group was formed, it is still present in the Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, and southern Sudan.

"In its 26-year history, the LRA has abducted more than 30,000 children and displaced at least 2.1 million people," says the Kony 2012 website.

There are reports available to the public on Invisible Children's website, and a simple Google search can reveal sources of information on Kony and his actions in Africa. In addition, there have been responses made through blogs and video posts by those who support and those who oppose Invisible Children's campaign.



Photo Courtesy of thingsweforget.blogspot.com

Joseph Kony, leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, has abducted children to be soldiers or wives for his officers.

story of a single 'bad guy' whose capture would magically restore

In an article in the *New York Times*, Noam Cohen says, "The grounds for objection to the video are many. Some critics begin and end with its deep misrepresentation of the current state of play...Others chafe at the implicit 'white man's burden' message of the video...and others object to the reduction of a complex situation to the

harmony to a conflict-scarred region."

Current residents of Uganda also have an opinion about Invisible Children's Kony 2012 campaign. A missionary couple and their two young children, who wish to remain anonymous, have been living in Kampala, Uganda since May 2011.

"My initial reaction was one of agreement and jumping on board. Kony is an evil man and he needs to be brought to justice. After I watched the video again, thought about it, and did research on Invisible Children, I became a bit more skeptical of the means used to garner support in the video, such as playing off emotion," said the husband.

The couple has followed Invisible Children since it was founded, and they are aware that the organization's goal is to draw attention to Uganda. "They do some work on the ground in Uganda, but from what I have heard it is not very much," the husband said.

The couple supports the awareness that Invisible Children promotes, but is not certain about their entire campaign. "From my perspective," the wife said, "Invisible Children is really good at promoting awareness and making people care, which is a good thing. But their presence on the ground is worth much more. Equipping the people to help themselves is not a good thing. It's a hard situation, especially now that the United States is sending money."

The couple has heard other locals talk about the Kony 2012 campaign and what results could come of their actions. "I've heard some people say that the Ugandan military know right where he is, but now that they are getting money, they won't ever 'find' him, in order to keep getting funds. This is entirely just what I have heard on the street, I don't have an official references," the wife said.

Like the Kony 2012 website stated that the LRA is no longer acting in Uganda, the couple said, "The LRA has not been a threat to Uganda since 2006 and was never a real threat, except for in the northern end of the country."

"Kony is not a current threat to Uganda but that does not mean he is not a threat at all," said the husband. The couple explained that, in agreement with the Kony 2012 website, he is just now continuing to act in other countries such as Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, among others.

Although Kony is not currently acting in northern Uganda, there is no question that he has committed atrocities there during his lifetime. The husband said, "If Invisible Children does only one thing well, it is that they made millions aware of what Kony and the LRA have done in Uganda. I applaud them for that. When we see injustice it is our responsibility to do something about it. I think that is a lesson we ought to learn from this."

Partecipa nel Club Italiano

Ottaviana De Ruvo

The Italian Club has come a long way since it began on campus. The Italian Club was dormant for the past few years, but, in 2011, Francesca Emma, Genevieve Fasano, Lorenzo Russomano, and I gathered and met with Signora Maria Simonelli to restart the club and try to do something different.

A club with only ten members expanded to about thirty-five members. Now one may believe that he or she needs to be Italian to have some sort of relationship to the Italian culture, but that is not the case. We have members that are not even Italian. We want

our club to be as diverse as possible. Our goal is to spread Italian traditions throughout the University.

In the beginning of the fall semester, students were able to attend the Leadership Conference, which is held every fall semester on campus, to gain more knowledge on how to make the club flourish. This helped us have a greater insight into what we can do to improve our club criteria, create more events and attract more students to join.

The Italian Club understands that many students have busy schedules, so meetings are only the first Monday of the month. The club hosts other events, such as the Language Festival in October. A group of talented students was able to practice and dance the tarantella for the de-

Bringing Pakistan to the University

Sana Rashid

On February 21, as part of the Caravanserai, a cultural program with a series of events aiming to bring insight into the Islamic culture, the University hosted producer Ayesha Khan, who has produced a documentary entitled *Made in Pakistan*.

Made in Pakistan was the winner of the Audience Choice Award for Best Documentary at the South Asian International Film Festival in New York. The viewing attracted University students, faculty, community members, an internet radio host, and our very own President Paul G. Gaffney II.

The documentary features the lives of four upper middle-class Pakistanis in Lahore, the fashion capital of Pakistan, from 2007 to 2008, as they pursue their career goals and enjoy their personal lives. Tara is a single woman and event manager; Mohsin is a politician representing his father's campaign; Rabia is a young married mother, teacher, and writer for a magazine; and Waleed is a lawyer and a devout Muslim. By providing an insight into their individual lives, the aim of the documentary, according to Khan, is to showcase the silent majority of Pakistan and dispel the stereotypical view of Pakistan and its people, which is amplified by the media and is evidenced in the label given it by *Newsweek* as "the most dangerous place in the world."

The director, Nasir Khan, and Khan together have created a brilliant documentary with captivating scenes. They did a great job as well in combining the daily lives of the individuals with the current events that resulted during the State of Emergency declared by the dictator of the time, Pervez Musharraf. While Rabia was trying to interview an aspiring artist, the power

goes out due to "load shedding," and Waleed and other lawyers protest to show their discontent for Musharraf's unconstitutional dismissing of the Supreme Court judges.

Of the four people, Rabia stands out because she possesses a compelling personality and strength as a wife, mother, teacher, writer and editor for the magazine *The Fourth Article*. For example, her ambition to spread her opinions through her free magazine shows her determination to make a change in her community. Waleed is another person who stands out from the others. Also wanting to make a change for the better in his country, Waleed brings a unique perspective to the documentary by addressing his concern for the unstable politics of Pakistan.

All of the interviewees' deep-hearted and saddened response to the assassination of Benazir Bhutto is also a great addition to the documentary and shows the country's sadness as a whole. Prior to watching the documentary, I had expected the focus of the movie to be on contradicting *Newsweek's* statement by showing Pakistan's culture and its diverse group of people living their daily lives from various socioeconomic backgrounds. I did not expect to have a documentary focus on just four individuals of the same social class with promising career paths in similar environments. I was pleasantly surprised by the intriguing and thought-provoking film which was full of great and well-choreographed scenes.

Regardless of the fact that I was born in Pakistan and have visited multiple times, I still learned a lot of new and interesting facts about my home country. And despite the inaccuracy of *Newsweek's* claim, the powerful documentary not only successfully discredits it but also leaves the audience with newfound interest in this politically important country and hopes of a better tomorrow for Pakistan.

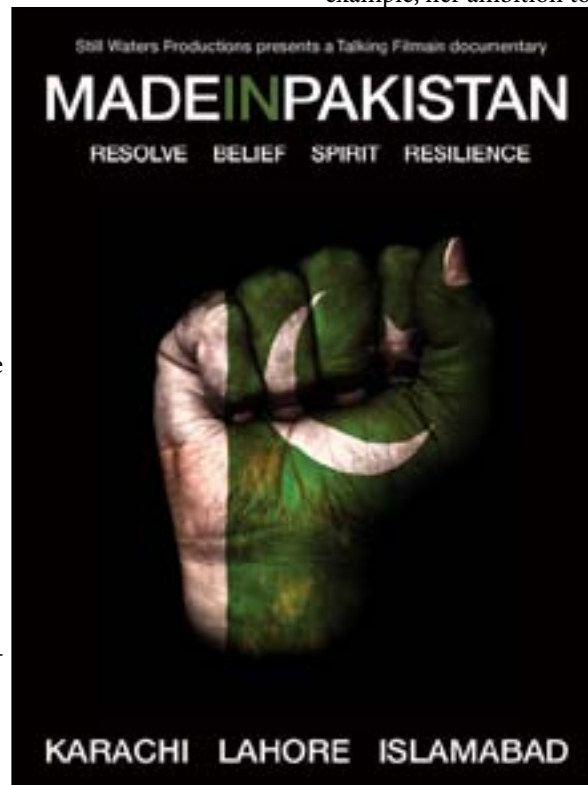


Photo Courtesy of wacnh.org

Made in Pakistan seeks to discredit popular stereotypes about Pakistan.

Aderire al Club Italiano Continued from Page 6

partment. Other students baked Italian cookies and desserts, such as tiramisu, to represent Italian cuisine. For Christmas, members joined together for some pizza, panetone, and Italian Christmas cookies.

As more people were aware of the club, one of the club members was able to draw a design to put on a shirt, which read "Monmouth Italia." Over 30 shirts were sold, and the club was able to raise a lot of money to help them go to dinner together in April. Since there was a high demand of shirts in the fall, the club has also decided it will sell more shirts this spring and will expand its logo to sweatshirts next year.

Now as the spring semester is coming to a close, the Italian Club will host three more events before the club reunites

in the fall. Alyssa Guidice and Genevieve Fasano have met and taught members how to make Italian flag keychains. We now have over a dozen key chains that we plan to sell along with our shirts.

On March 29, Professor Maria Simonelli hosted the Italian Festival in Wilson Hall. The Italian Festival is a way for many people to become aware of the beauty of Italian culture. The Italian club will have many talented individuals take part in the festival. There are several girls who will sing and play musical instruments, such as the violin and piano. Other members will dance the tarantella. In April, the club will have one last hoorah and meet for dinner at a nearby Italian restaurant. Last year, the club attended Amici's restaurant, but this year we plan to attend Porta Pizzeria in Asbury Park for some delicious Margherita pizza. At the dinner I will discuss who will serve as next year's officers and what ideas will be put into action for the following semester!

Ciao!

A Great Reason to Stay Up All Night

Nicole Massabrook

This year marks the fifth year the University has participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, which is an all-night event in the Multipurpose Activity Center. Each team, comprised of eight to fifteen members, had at least one member on the track at all times throughout the night to represent how cancer never sleeps.

While the event took place on the night of April 13 and into the morning of April 14, planning and fundraising started in the fall semester. Students were able to sign up in the fall during Blitz Week, a week in which the \$10 registration fee was waived. Promotion really kicks into high gear in the spring semester with events like Kick-off Week, where a party was held with games and presentations to learn about Relay for Life, and Paint the Campus Purple Week, where students are encouraged to sign up for the event.

In another promotional event called "Jail and Bail," faculty members were held in "jail" and needed to get donations from students to either bail them out or keep them in jail longer. Even the Honors School's very own Reenie Menditto, Director of Student Standards, Advising & Services, participated in the event and asked the Honors students to help bail her out. "We were able to raise over \$3,000 that will be used to help cancer patients in the Monmouth area," Amanda Caruso, co-chair of the Entertainment committee and Honors sophomore, said.

Relay for Life's planning committee also has to keep attendees energized and excited for 12 hours straight. "We're very excited that we're able to have the event inside the MAC this year because in previous Relays we've been prohibited by having to turn the music off after 10:00 pm. Being inside allows us to keep the music going all night long," Caruso said. DJs and live bands are there to keep participants entertained. Laps around the track are themed.

Some of the lap themes this year include a survivor lap, a toga lap, an 80's lap and a Monmouth pride lap. Other activities include a pizza eating contest, dodge ball tournament and a soap box derby.

It's surprising to hear that many of the activities support and symbolize other divisions of the American Cancer Society. Kaitlyn LaRose, Honors sophomore, is Relay's Fight Back Chair. Her job is to help show others all of the ways that we

can help fight back against cancer. "The Soap Box Derby is an event during the night that represents the Road to Recovery, which is a volunteer part of the American Cancer society where people can volunteer to drive a cancer patient to and from their treatments, as well as offer support to them," LaRose said. LaRose also helps

with Mz. Relay, a drag contest. She said, "The Mz. Relay event is for the Look Good Feel Better program, which offers support groups and free cosmetics to women cancer patients and support groups for male cancer patients."

As of press time, this year's event has over 500 participants on 45 teams and has raised over \$20,000. This event seems to be one of the biggest philanthropic events at the University and grows larger every year. What attracts so many Monmouth students to Relay? LaRose said, "I think Relay has grown

because cancer affects more people each year. We're only students, so you feel that there isn't much you can do, but then Relay comes along and presents an opportunity to do something when you thought you couldn't do anything."

Caruso said that the money raised might even be helping your friends and family. She said, "All the money that we raise at our events goes to local cancer patients."



Photo Courtesy of Michelle Melzi

Relay for Life is a 12-hour fundraiser to find a cure for cancer which many University students participate in.



Photo Courtesy of Marilyn Garcia

At Relay for Life, several activities were set in place to keep students occupied throughout the 12 hours, including Mz. Relay, a drag contest.

My Home In Birch

Kyle Reinhardt

To most Honors students at Monmouth University, there has only ever been one Honors office and one Honors residence hall. What some of the younger Honors students may not realize is that before Beechwood Hall, Birch Hall was the home of the Honors Office as well as the more limited housing offered to students in the form of 11 triples.

Birch was certainly a unique place and the Honors School thrived there for years. Part of what made it so great was its unique configuration. “The first time I went to the Honors Office before I came to Monmouth I was surprised to see that out the door to the office, there was someone’s room right across the hall,” said Duncan Smith-Sebasto.

It was this closeness that helped keep the Honors students in touch with the office. Getting a question answered was as simple as walking down the hall. With such a helpful staff in the office, the way Birch was set up was the key to success for many Honors students. Beyond the convenient location of the office, the way the doors to all of the rooms opened into one large common room was also a factor in Birch’s success. “Having that nice big common room really brought everyone together,” said Sara Boyle. “It was very inviting – everyone would come out and sit on the couches and do homework together.”

Indeed, the community that grew in Birch Hall was very tight-knit. Looking back, the last group of students to inhabit Birch – now seniors – can see where their friendships began. “The setting

resulted in stronger, long-lasting bonds that have been maintained over the years in part by the shared experiences that we had there,” said Jewell Huffman.

It was perhaps this close community that has led to the expansion of the Honors School over the years. Eventually this expansion called for a bigger space to house students and the office, so the Honors School decided to make the move over to Beechwood Hall. Since then, many improvements have been made to Beechwood and three new classes of Honors students have called it home. According to some Honors students, however, there just is not the same feeling of community that previously existed in Birch Hall.

“I’ve lived in Beechwood for almost two years now but I feel like I only really know those who live in my suite very well,” said Gary Kagan, a sophomore. Smith-Sebasto, a senior, agreed, saying, “I’ve lived in both Birch and Beechwood and I just felt as if Birch fostered a better connection between all of the students.”

It is unfortunate that some students seem to be missing out on a significant social side of being an Honors student, but, if all goes well, proposed improvements to Beechwood Hall will help foster a better community for the students. Plans are currently in the works for an addition and remodeling of the first floor of Beechwood. These new plans will include an improved kitchen for students to use as well as an expanded and more comfortable lobby. With these improvements, it is hoped that students will find more occasion to spend time together studying and socializing. Current Honors students agree. Dharm Patel, senior Biology major, said, “It will be nice for all the students to have an area to study and relax. It will bring back the camaraderie amongst students that is the foundation of the Honors culture.”

Meet Dr. Danuta Szwajkajzer

Aarshi Katta

The Honors School at Monmouth University is comprised of many skilled and experienced professors. One of the many Honors professors who is well-known and adored by many students is Dr. Danuta Szwajkajzer from the Department of Science. She currently teaches general chemistry lab and lecture, quantitative chemistry, and principles in organic-biochemistry. Szwajkajzer’s vast knowledge and love for science have enabled her to help and connect with students.

Szwajkajzer grew up in Warsaw, Poland and received her Masters in Chemistry from the Technical University of Warsaw. In order to further her education, Szwajkajzer came to the United States. She attended graduate school at Rutgers University and received her Ph. D. in biophysical chemistry. Szwajkajzer’s dedication to science is apparent in her classes, and students are able to understand and grow from her teachings. Growing up she always had great teachers in chemistry, which was what sparked her interest in the subject.

After Rutgers University, Szwajkajzer became involved in research at Princeton University, where she worked for 10 years. However, she really wanted “to teach and settle down with a family.” So, she started as an adjunct at Raritan Valley Community College, and then became a professor at Monmouth University. Szwajkajzer has been teaching here for the past eight years, and she loves teaching here because “Monmouth University is a great community with small classes. I like to get to know the students. Teaching is fun and I like interaction. The students here are my friends.”

Outside the classroom, Szwajkajzer is a wife and a mother. She has two kids and a dog. In her free time she enjoys watching movies, reading books, traveling, and attending her son’s soccer games. Szwajkajzer feels teaching has helped her maintain a balance between her work and home life. She said, “I should be here,” because she feels she is in her ideal position and is able to teach and spend time with her

family at the same time.

Her favorite part of her job is the “interaction with students,” and she believes that “with teaching I am able to understand and help students.” Also, she believes every student has something new and different to offer. She said that she tries her hardest to “show students the best.” Her advice to students is to “develop interest and curiosity.” She strongly advises them to broaden their scope and go “outside the box” to experience many different options. Szwajkajzer feels getting involved in research is a great way to build up interest.

I had the pleasure of being in Szwajkajzer’s class for Honors General Chemistry lab. Her great sense of humor made every class worthwhile. She is a very wise woman with great passion for the field she is teaching. Her lab made chemistry an interesting subject to learn. I am a biology major and have always struggled with many concepts in chemistry, but Szwajkajzer was able to teach the material in a way that helped me understand. The main point I gained from her was to follow the path that best suits you. I appreciate all the advice she has given me, and I hope to have her as my professor for future science classes I take.



Photo Courtesy of Danuta Szwajkajzer

Danuta Szwajkajzer was inspired to teach chemistry by her professors, and now inspires many of her own students.

The Honors School Visits Broadway

Ottaviana De Ruvo

Critics say that Broadway's hit musical, *Sister Act*, has the audience dancing in their seats. These critics and commentators are not wrong. On March 29, the University's Honors School was dancing in their seats and clapping along with Raven Simone's character in the satirical and hysterical Broadway play, *Sister Act*.

The University took 37 students along with some familiar faces we see around the Honors School, such as Dr. Kevin Dooley, Reenie Menditto, Director of Student Advising, and Erin Hawk. Others who attended the trip were Professor Susan Douglass, Professor Noel Belinski, and Dr. Brian Merry.

During the free time given, students and faculty had the opportunity to wander around the theater district, where many ate dinner or got some coffee from one of the many Starbucks in that area. After they grabbed something to eat, students were able

The Monmouth Review Visits the Windy City

Jennifer van Alstyne

The end of February brings hope for spring, but it also brings the Association of Writers and Writing Program's Annual Conference. Every year, The Monmouth Review, a college organization of students who work together to put out a bi-annual literary journal, sends its editorial board to this conference so that they may attend workshops, seminars, and poetry readings. This year, as co-Editor-in-Chief, I was lucky enough to attend this exciting trip to Chicago. Dean Green, Dean Thomas, Michael Waters, and Mihaela Moscaliuc, all University administration and faculty, were also in attendance.

"Each year, AWP holds its Annual Conference and Bookfair in a different city in North America to celebrate the outstanding authors, teachers, writing programs, literary centers, and small press publishers of that region. The conference typically features over 450 readings, lectures, panel discussions, and forums, in addition to hundreds of book signings, receptions, dances, and informal gatherings. The conference, which attracts more than 10,000 attendees and nearly 600 publishers, is among the largest and most beloved literary gatherings in North America," according to the AWP website.

After months of waiting and planning, seven of us found ourselves on a flight with our bags in tow to Chicago, Illinois. Because of University regulations, we were lucky enough to stay in gorgeous Palmer House, a Hilton hotel in the Loop, often praised for its historic architecture and marbled lobby. We settled in for four days of programs, forums, and readings.

The Bookfair took up four rooms and consisted of almost 1,000 booths from publishers, colleges, and programs. We walked through two rooms on the first day and two rooms on the second, making sure to visit every single booth. I have been submitting my poetry to different national magazines, and one of the suggestions they always have during their process is to buy a copy of their journal so that we are submitting things that they might publish. I've been lucky enough to have 11 of my poems published, but now that I'm trying to move up to a higher tier of publications, it became important to me actually to listen to this advice. Three bags

to go sightseeing and even take some funny pictures with Spiderman, who hung out in Times Square.

As soon as the clock struck 8:00 pm, the lights were turned off and the curtains were pulled back. Those who watched "That's So Raven" as children quickly recognized the leading role, Deloris Van Cartier. Raven played the role of a wannabe diva who hoped to find fame and happiness in singing. She had no doubts in the world of her future. Little did she know that some people in her life were about to change her life forever.

If you think *Sister Act* just revolves around a group of nuns in a convent, you are wrong. Each and every character had a magnificent voice, which made the songs extra special. During some scenes, the crowd would clap along with the performers on stage, which filled up the theater with enthusiasm and excitement. The colors on the costumes were ostentatious, filled with glitter. Even the statue of the Virgin Mary, which later in the show became the symbolic figure of the Disco Madonna, was extravagantly bright and beautiful.

full of books and hundreds of dollars later, we returned to our rooms to examine our spoils.

I attended the workshop "Writing & Loss," whereas Andrew Serafin, a junior, attended a workshop on use of rhyme in poetry. Half of us attended a panel discussion entitled "First Books of Poetry: From Manuscript to Publication." The keynote address was given by Margaret Atwood, author of 35 books of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and children's literature, the most famous of which is *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Perhaps equally as important to our trip was the excessive distribution of revolving doors, the disappointment of Chicago-style pizza (which really shouldn't be called pizza at all; it is literally a pie), and the ever-present love affair with Nutella crepes. All those visiting Chicago in the near future should be sure to stop by Bucktown for nightlife, hit Giordanno's if they must try the pizza, and remember that the best gumbo is at Buddy's.

There is great opportunity that comes with being part of The Monmouth Review. From meeting poet laureates to National Book Award recipients, review members have great networking options. They are able to attend workshops at the University, host events and open mics throughout the year, and participate in the publication of an ever-improving journal, which displays the highest creativity of Monmouth students.



Photo Courtesy of Jennifer van Alstyne

The Monmouth Review attended several workshops, seminars, and poetry readings in Chicago to help improve their final piece at the end of the semester.

The Life of Monique “Money” Matters

Lea Callahan

A showing of the film *Money Matters* was held in Pollak Auditorium on February 6. Written, directed, and produced by Ryan Richmond, the film is his first feature-length piece. It was shot in 2008 and was released on November 15, 2011. *Money Matters* was part of Monmouth University’s “On Screen: In Person” series tour.

The Department of Communication co-sponsors this tour, which features new independent American films and filmmakers in communities across the mid-Atlantic region. Monmouth was Richmond’s third stop. His film won the Audience Favorite Award at the Roxbury International Film Festival and Best Screenplay at the UrbanWorld/ Vibe Film Festival. It was also featured in the Tribeca Film Festival. It stars newcomer Terri Abney and veteran actress Anjanue Ellis (*The Help*).

Chad Dell, Chair of the Department of Communication, introduced the film by calling Richmond “avant-garde” and labeling the film as “raw.” He informed the audience of Richmond’s credentials, mainly his degree from the NYU Tisch School of Arts. He said that *Money Matters* “started as a short, but morphed into a feature.”

The film follows a young girl, Monique “Money” Matters, in her tumultuous relationship with her young mother, Pamela. Money, a smart 14-year-old, takes three buses each day to attend Catholic school far away from her Washington D.C. neighborhood marked by poverty. Pamela, a young woman dealing with the consequences of an unplanned teenage pregnancy, attempts to correct her mistakes through her daughter. With religious ideals in the background of the film, the tension between the pair rises as Money feels increasingly alienated both at school and at home. Money’s friendship with another girl in the neighborhood and her mother’s HIV diagnosis push the plot forward and force the small family to mend their relationship. In the end, the film flirts with tragedy, but ultimately resists it and ends with a sense of optimism.

In the Q&A after the showing of the film, the audience had a chance to ask Richmond questions. During this session he discussed many aspects of his creative process. The sound design of the film was a topic of interest to many audience members as

a result of its uniqueness. The movie featured melodic, symphonic sounds, which stood in contrast to the urban setting. Richmond remarked this was very purposeful, saying that “I wanted a different sound appeal. I didn’t want it to sound urban.” He went on to explain how he felt that the guitar riffs by Robbie McDonald that he used in much of the film gave it a softer feel of electronic fusion that to the story was “off beat.”



Another hot topic was the story’s point of view. The story is told through the eyes of Money and Pamela, both obviously female. Richmond cited films such as *Akeelah and the Bee* and *Fresh* as his inspiration for the feminine perspective in his film. He said that he wanted to show a “gritty environment through innocent eyes” and thought that accomplishing this would be most effective through the eyes of a young girl like Money. Samantha Tartas, junior Political Science major, commented on how the use of the feminine perspective worked: “I thought the female voices in the film were very authentic, especially coming from a male writer/director. He obviously did a lot of research when he was creating his story.”

Richmond also wanted to comment on the effects of teen pregnancy. Richmond stated that he wanted to show the audience that being a teen mom was about not only facing responsibility at a young age but also becoming an adult parent when the child reaches the age at which she got pregnant. Richmond remarked how he was inspired through personal experience; he said, “In my first year in college, all of my ex-girlfriends had kids...not mine, but it was a shocking realization.”

Although *Money Matters* was originally intended for an audience of African-American women aged 25 to 45, Richmond now feels his target audience lies in the youths of Washington D.C. high schools. He believes his film, although gritty and, at times, explicit, has an educational element to it. As for his future projects, Richmond says he is currently writing a romantic comedy, something more genre-friendly than his coming of age drama. When asked how he thought it was coming along, he replied, “We’ll see how that works out.”

Thinking Ahead to the Future

Genevieve Fasano

One of the most important skills to gain as an undergraduate is the ability to network professionally. On Tuesday, February 7, Honors students hosted and attended the second annual School of Science’s “Career Choices Round Table” event. The night consisted of several panels of different professionals from many fields of science, including biology, chemistry, and medicine. During both the pre- and post-event reception, students were given a chance to meet the panelists and ask them questions about their careers and the paths they took to achieve success. Speakers present at the event included a cosmetic chemist, a genetic counselor, a math teacher, and a medical resident.

One of the main themes of the biology panel was that the road to professional success is not always linear. For example,

a School of Science alumni explained how even though he began medical school upon graduating from Monmouth, he soon realized medicine was not for him and instead chose to pursue a career in finance. This personal anecdote and other reflections by panelists were invaluable to many of the younger students who may still be deciding which career path to take. Many of the speakers impressed upon students that, during the undergraduate and early postgraduate years, it is perfectly normal to change your mind.

According to Moleen Mazdiva, a speaker on the computer science and software engineering panel, “The coolest part of my job is that on any given day, there is potential to save someone’s life. Not everyone can say that.” Next year, the School of Science peer mentors hope to bring in an even more diverse panel of math and science professionals to meet the diverse interests of math and science students at Monmouth.

Four Years Away From Monmouth Reem Alsalman

Preethi Pirlamarla, class of 2007, always dreamed of pursuing a career as a physician, and, only four years after turning the tassel at Monmouth, she was rewarded for her hard work with the title “Dr. Pirlamarla, M.D.”

With perseverance, hard work, and dedication, a degree from Monmouth University can quite literally take you anywhere you want to go. Rewind to four years ago, and you may have seen Pirlamarla as just another friendly student at the library, or, more likely, Edison Science Hall. Now, she is currently treating people at the Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia, PA as a well-respected doctor.

Biology, chemistry, and physics classes have been known to be some of the most difficult for both science and non-science majors. However, it is Pirlamarla’s passion for these classes that attracted her to both Monmouth and the medical field. Besides being a Monmouth Medical Scholar, Pirlamarla was part of the biology honor society (she was president of it during her senior year), and was part of LST, of which she was the secretary as well.

“I loved my science classes and teaching so I tutored students in chemistry, physics, genetics, and biology,” she said.

Pirlamarla was also a member of Amnesty International and has a strong interest in human rights. She organized different fundraisers and events, including one fundraiser to raise awareness for Darfur. Towards the end of college, she also volunteered in an orthopedic surgeon’s office as a way to obtain more exposure to medicine before starting medical school.

Among the many activities she was involved in and experiences she had, conducting research in Dr. Michael Paladino’s lab was one of her fondest memories. She studied how the protein HIF-1 worked in oxygen-depleting environments, most specifically testicular torsion, and she had the opportu-

nity to present at a conference held in Washington D.C. as a part of a platform called Posters on the Hill, where she expressed to Congress the importance of continuing to support undergraduate research.

According to Pirlamarla, Monmouth was instrumental in giving her a strong foundation to build on in medical school. “The biology classes were well-taught and gave me a strong background in science that helped in medical school. The research I did helped me realize that I loved research, and I am continuing to do it now as well,” she said.

Pirlamarla also gives thanks to the Honors School, which was “one of the best parts of Monmouth University. They were extremely supportive throughout my entire four years at

Monmouth. The Honors office always had an open door policy for whenever I needed to come in and talk about anything. Last but not least, they always provided a welcoming place to study that was always well-stocked with food,” she said with a smile.

Pirlamarla’s accomplishments attest to a student who was an outstanding role model and who yet remains a grounded, friendly, and welcoming person. She has proven, through her accomplishments and outstanding record of achievement, what a vibrant life one can paint if one is willing to pick up a brush and boldly add color to a blank canvas.

Pirlamarla left these words of wisdom for any fearful or anxious Biology majors: “Don’t be fearful! Biology is a great field that is always evolving where there is always something new to learn. Don’t be afraid to get involved in research, projects, or approach the biology professors. Explore new things, get involved, travel abroad- do whatever you might want to do. College is really one of the best experiences in your life.”



Photo Courtesy of Preethi Pirlamarla

Preethi Pirlamarla, 2007 graduate, is now a physician at the Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia, PA.



Photo Courtesy of Preethi Pirlamarla

The Honors school graduate said that Monmouth was instrumental in helping her build a strong foundation for medical school.