

HONORS NEWSLETTER

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The Honors Conference: Ten Years after its Inception and Fourteen Years after the Establishing of the Honors Program

By Dr. Paris Svoronos– Chemistry

The Honors Program at Queensborough started in 2000 with two students in Chemistry and has developed into a series of 15 full Honors classes and approximately 120 Honors contracts per semester. Every year about 25 students graduate with an Honors certificate after having completed a minimum of 12 Honors credits and a cumulative 3.40 GPA. Many students insist in taking more than the minimum and more than a half dozen have graduated with 30-plus such credits. The first Honors Conference was held in 2005 with approximately 70 presenters and the number has tripled ever since. The students get their first chance to present their own research findings to an audience that consists of both faculty and fellow classmates. Many of them, especially in Science and Business, proceed to make their presentations in local, regional and national professional conferences and competitions. As a result of their exposure several of them have had the opportunity to apply and get awarded National Science Foundation summer research internships from renowned institutions. These include Princeton University, Cornell University, Rutgers University, Georgetown University, CUNY, Hope College, University of South Dakota, Binghamton University, University of Buffalo, Stony Brook University as well Cold Spring Harbor, the Food and Drug Administration and the New York City–Division of Environmental Protection (NYC–DEP). It is such experiences that strengthen the students' resume while providing them with the confidence needed to confront the real world upon graduation from their post–QCC career.

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Teaching Creative Writing with Honors Contracts

Department Dr. Jan Ramjerdi– English

The Honors Program has given me the opportunity to work individually with highly motivated, talented creative writing students. As a writer and teacher, I appreciate the chance to mentor young writers, teaching them advanced narrative techniques, acquainting them with the work of current fiction writers whose work provides a context for their own, offering them strategies and exercises for creating new stories, developing works-in-progress, preparing final work for publication and award submission, and introducing them to the academic and professional opportunities for fiction writers. The rewards for me have been the creative stimulation of talking with my Honors students, reading their work, witnessing their growing confidence in their abilities, and contributing to their success as students and writers.

The Honors Program Library Workshop

Students participating in the QCC Honors Program are required to take a Library Research Workshop. The Workshop enhances existing skills and offers options in developing new research methods.

The Workshop provides students with a forum to discuss their research techniques, share research strategies with other participants, learn new methods in selecting and evaluating sources, along with learning about the research support network available to them at the QCC Library.

Library Workshop components include:

- Evaluating Internet Websites
- Legal and Ethical Use of Sources
- Online Database Searching
- Primary versus Secondary Sources
- Use of CUNY+PLUS Online Catalog

A recent survey was conducted about The Honors Program Library Workshop and the Top Ten comments from the QCC Honors Student completing the workshop are:

- I did not know I could access *The New York Times* from 1851.
- Did not know about the online databases and that they were full-text...online newspapers and journals.
- I learned what a Boolean search is.
- I learned what periodicals are.
- Navigation of available resources from the CUNY library.
- That we have databases available to us and we can borrow books from other CUNY libraries.
- How to do an advanced search in GOOGLE and select a specific domain.
- The difference between HTML and PDF files.
- How important the source is that we use for our research.
- I did not know there are more resources than GOOGLE or Wikipedia.

The Student Honors Library Program workshop will not only help the Honors Student while in attendance at QCC, but will serve as a tremendous resource during the student's academic research experience.

Making Human Biology Fun for Young Students

By: Dr. Areti Tsimounis– Department of Biological Sciences and Geology

"Very fun and educational", "It was something different and I enjoyed it", "It was very interesting and it increased my knowledge of the human body", "It encouraged me to do things I hate to do", "It was a fun and cool way to learn about the nervous system", "I loved it": These are a few of the comments written by participants of the two laboratory workshops on human anatomy and physiology. The workshops were led by QCC Honors student Ms. Ushma Giri under the guidance of Dr. Areti Tsimounis of the Department of Biological Sciences and Geology. The participants were middle and high school students in the Science and

Technology Entry Program (STEP) and Project Prize, which are two pre-collegiate, community outreach programs held on Saturdays at QCC for students in grades 6–12. The young students learned about organs of the human body by dissecting animals. In addition, through simple experiments conducted on themselves they learned about how their vision, hearing, and sense of touch function. The workshops were part of the Service–Learning activities of Anatomy and Physiology II coordinated by Dr. Sharon Ellerton. STEP faculty members include Dr. Simran Kaur, Dr. Joan Peterson, and Mr. Peter Campbell, and Project Prize is directed by Sherri–Ann Simmons Terry.

Conducting Research at the ECET Department

By John Buoncora

Queensborough Community College Engineering Technology Department students Edwin Garcia, Andrew Perez, and Landen Kwan presented research projects at the Columbia University Undergraduate Science Journal Research Symposium (CUSJ) in year 2014. The project Mobile Autonomous Robot based on a Raspberry Pi Board was presented by Edwin and the project Hydrogen Fuel Cell Catalyst was presented by Andrew and Landen. The faculty mentor on the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Catalyst project is Kee Park. The QCC Honors Program provides students the opportunity to perform research and present their research results at conferences such as the QCC Honors Conference, CSTEP Conference, and the CUSJ Symposium. The students and their faculty mentors work together in a collaborative enjoyable setting, while applying theoretical concepts to build

engaging projects. Students in the Electronic and Computer Engineering Technology programs at QCC take technical courses in electrical and electronic circuit analysis, communications, control systems, digital electronics, microprocessors, and computer programming, along with their general education courses. Each technical course contains both lecture and laboratory components. In the laboratory, students build circuits, measure electrical quantities, and troubleshoot problems while applying the theoretical knowledge that they have gained in lecture. The students further their knowledge by working on honors research projects. It is a wonderful experience for both students and their faculty mentors to work together on projects related to the QCC Honors Program.

Conducting Hydrogen Fuel Research at Queensborough

By Dr. Kee Park – ECET Department

The Honors program at Queensborough Community College has provided exceptional and dedicated students with the opportunity to not only excel in the rigorous program but also the availability of cutting edge research projects. My experience with Queensborough Community College's Honors program is in conducting a hydrogen fuel cell research with a group of students from the Honors program, who have dedicated their time and effort to conduct research and experiments. I found these students to be very independent, yet work well with their other classmates and have very good understanding of basic theories and the ability to solve problems using critical thinking. Their dedicated research activities have led to other opportunities such as summer research program at SUNY Farmingdale and SUNY Binghamton. They were also accepted to present their research findings at various conferences and symposia



including the Columbia Undergraduate Science Journal Symposium, the Advance Energy Conference and the ACS Northeast Regional Meeting. These students have graduated and go on to exceptional research institutes such as New York University and Cooper Union. I found that the Honors program is an invaluable part of Queensborough Community College's learning tools and will continue to support the program with dedicated research.

Teaching Honors Students at Queensborough as an Adjunct

By Dr. Soraya Svoronos–Chemistry

As an adjunct faculty member of the Chemistry Department I taught honors courses and conducted research for a couple of years. I cannot express my feelings in one paragraph but I can summarize them in one simple sentence "I was blessed to be able to interact with our Honors students and being part of this program." Every single one of our Honors students have their own success story that makes Queensborough a very special place for us faculty to be motivated. The Honors program opens the doors to our students

for a very successful future as they are engaged in the classroom and are willing to get involved in research and other impact activities.

Because of their professional meeting presentations and participation in the Honors conferences these students can handle their transfer in a seamless fashion. I have seen repeatedly how they excel in four-year colleges and end up graduating with post-graduate degrees.

Teaching Honors Research Students in Chemistry

By Dr. Sharon Lall–Ramnarine– Department of Chemistry

I have been teaching honors chemistry students for many years and it has been a very rewarding experience. The honors research classes allow me to work with students individually and involve them in hands-on research in the laboratory. Engaging students in research in the formal setting of an honors "class" forces them to prioritize working in the lab and the course requirement of a research presentation at the end serves as further motivation. The honors research students are overall bright and motivated These

classes allow them to prove that they can commit to a project for a semester or more and produce presentable results. The experience gives them the edge they need to get into professional programs / four-year schools. It is gratifying to give QCC students the opportunity to reach their dreams, to make them aware of the career options available to them and to play a role in shaping them as they mature into expert professionals in their fields.

Honors Contracts in English

By Dr. Alisa Cercone,

I am relatively new to the honors contract process and very inspired by the work that I see coming from students who have completed honors contracts and those who are currently working on one. Last May, I attended the Honors Conference for the first time and had a student who wrote an amazing paper that tied Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities to the Occupy Wall Street movement. This year, I am working with a student who is writing an academic paper on

male and female roles in pre and postcolonial Nigeria and how the roles and expectations of each gender changed accordingly. It is truly amazing to see students buzzing with academic zeal and I look forward to this year's conference as well. As a faculty member, I am moved by our students and welcome the challenge of mentoring projects that have the potential to take on such wide and varied topics.

Queensborough Mock Trial Team Competes in Regional Tournaments

By Prof. Ted Rosen

This year, for the fifth straight year, Queensborough Community College's Mock Trial team competed in the American Mock Trial Association's ("AMTA") national competition, in which, approximately 600 teams of students from colleges and universities throughout the country (including approximately four two year colleges) competed by trying the same case. This year the case was a criminal homicide case based on a fatal car crash caused by an alleged drunk driver. Students competed by serving as lawyers or as one of 10 witnesses. Team members presented opening and closing statements, introduced evidence, asserted objections to offered evidence, conducted direct and cross examinations, and role-played as witnesses in mock trials at which panels of three volunteer lawyers presided as mock jurors and judges.

This year QCC had three teams in the AMTA competition. Over the weekend of February 3rd – 5th, one of QCC's teams, consisting of seven students, competed in the AMTA Philadelphia Regional hosted by Drexel University and held in the Criminal Justice Center in Philadelphia. In four rounds, our team competed against teams from the University of Pennsylvania, Elizabethtown College, Seton Hall University, and Stony Brook University. QCC was the only two year college in the Philadelphia Regional. As a result of their effort, the team was awarded The Spirit of AMTA award – given to the one team in the tournament that best exemplifies AMTA's ideals of civility, justice and fair play and is based on rankings provided by each team's opponents. QCC received twenty-nine of a possible thirty ranks from the opponents it faced. This was the third time in its existence that the QCC team had won the Spirit of AMTA award.

The following weekend, QCC competed in AMTA's New Haven Regional Tournament hosted by, and held at, Yale University. In the New Haven Regional, twenty-six teams from 20 colleges and universities, including Yale, Princeton, Brown, Columbia and Wesleyan University competed by trying both sides of the criminal case in four rounds. The two teams

of nine students each from Queensborough (the only two year college in the New Haven Regional this year) competed in hard-fought trials against Wesleyan University, Trinity College, Marymount Manhattan College, Hunter College, Roger Williams University and the University of Connecticut.

At the New Haven Regional, two members of the Queensborough team were awarded the very prestigious and difficult to earn Regional Outstanding Witness Award. This award is presented to the ten students, who, in performing as witnesses in the mock trial competition, earned the highest rankings from the judges presiding at their respective trials out of the more than seventy-eight students competing in the Regional tournament as witnesses. Andrew Kim, earning nineteen out of a possible twenty ranks, tied for second place for his portrayal of Dr. Ashley Norton, a medical expert who is called as a defense expert to establish reasonable doubt in the accuracy of the breathalyzer test administered to the defendant. Shirley Aguilar, earning eighteen ranks, tied for third place, for her performance as Police Officer Ryan Foster, the first officer responding to the accident scene and who, as a member of the police department's fatal crash team, reconstructed and analyzed the crash for the prosecution. In commenting on Andrew's performance after one round, one of the "judges", a practicing trial lawyer, stated that he had cross-examined more than fifty medical doctors testifying as experts in court and that Andrew was as good as any of them. Shirley, who won praise from the judges presiding over the rounds in which her team competed, also doubled as the defense's accident reconstruction expert – a difficult part which she mastered in only a few days after a change in strategy by the team in the final week before the competition. QCC was one of only three colleges in the New Haven Regional to have received two of the Outstanding Witness Awards. This is the second time in the five years of its existence that Queensborough has earned the Regional Outstanding Witness Award.

The members of the 2012 Queensborough Mock Trial Team

The members of this year's QCC Mock Trial Team are:

Shirley Aguilar, Duane Alexander, Oluwadamisi K. Atanda, Thalia Berrospi, Clemens Bastos, Julie Ann Belaustegui, Nathaly Callejas, David Coba, James Correa, Jace Dunn, Gabriela Gomez, Ahmed S. Islam, Anwal Kassim, Andrew Kim, Helen Kwok, April Maroshick, Mayur Pathak, Anthony Rivera, Daniel Shokunbi, Sam Mishra Shrikant, Kandola Singh, Jeremy St. Clair, Frank Wu, Renee Young and Owen Yun.

The team's faculty advisors are: Professor Kelly Ford, Professor Leslie Francis, Professor Stephen Hammel, Professor Ted Rosen and Mrs. Bonnie Cook.

Mock Trial Team: Mock Republican Presidential Primary Debate

By Prof Ted Rosen

This past March, members of the QCC Mock Trial Team presented a Mock Republican Presidential Primary Debate. Students played the part of the then four major Republican presidential candidates, Governor Mitt Romney (Anthony Rivera), Speaker Newt Gingrich (Jace Dunn), Senator Rick Santorum (G.B. Omotade), Congressman Ron Paul (Shirley Aguilar). The candidates were asked questions by a panel of "distinguished journalists" consisting of Kandola Singh, Julie Ann Belaustequi, April Maroshick and Ahmed Islam. Owen Yun and Helen Kwok served as the moderators.

Three "wives" of the candidates were in attendance in the audience: Mrs. Newt Gingrich (Nathaly Callejas), Mrs. Rick Santorum (Thalia Berrospi) and Mrs. Ron Paul (Gabriela Gomez).

The questions posed to the candidates covered a broad range of issues. The candidates were given a minute and half to respond to each question and were permitted the opportunity for rebuttal upon request.

Using skills developed from their experience in Mock Trial, the student candidates answered the questions based on their review of material obtained from actual debate transcripts and the web sites of the candidates. The answers were not scripted.

Queensborough Community College
Presents the
Eighth Annual Honors Conference
Celebrating Student Research and Academic Life
Friday, May 9, 2014
12 Noon to 4PM
Medical Arts Building – First Floor and Basement
www.qcc.cuny.edu

The Fed Challenge Competition: Ten Years Later

By Professor Ben Murolo, Business

This Spring will mark the tenth year that Queensborough has competed in the Fed Challenge competition. The Fed Challenge is a nationwide intercollegiate competition sponsored by the regional Federal Reserve offices. On May 2nd, the QCC team will host a scrimmage with North Shore Community College. The judges for this event will include an Executive from Flushing Bank, a Professor from Gateway Community College along with other local Community leaders. The members of the team include Paul Donato, Dominick Witkowski, Girrel Banks, Eric Hong, Lijuan He, Hua Khuu, Nadine Balkaran, Vijay Shenoy, Jonathon Morales, Andres Torres and Yan Zhao. Faculty advisors are: Prof. Ed Hanssen and Prof. Ben Murolo.



First and Fun Experience with an Honors Class

By Sujun Wei, Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Chemistry Department

It is truly a privilege to teach “Introductory College Chemistry” Honor Class (CH-127) lecture at QCC. I am working very closely with Professor Thomas Wong who is teaching the laboratory session of the same course. We are trying our best to synchronize our course materials so our students are fully trained in all aspects. Compared to my regular 127 class from the previous semester, this class is more united as one probably because they meet every Friday from morning to late afternoon. The students are more engaged, hard-working and passionate. I encouraged them to ask questions whenever they have one in mind by raising their hands. I shared my personal experience back in 2004 as a non-native English speaker to encourage those who are still suffering from English. I have respected their privacy by sending out individual emails to ask their permission before sharing their homework to the rest of the class.

I also adapted an online homework system called Connect from McGraw Hills. They love it! I also adapted an online homework system called Connect from McGraw Hills. All of them loved it! Besides chemistry, I noticed that some of them do not know how to write emails in the appropriate format. Therefore I corrected them on the blackboard, and explained the differences between “reply”, “reply all” and “cc” (very very trivial things but could be very useful in their future career!). On the same date, one native speaker student named Cathleen Carousso taught me and the rest of the class that “cc” stands for carbon copy, a traditional method back to the era before internet!! How would I know if she did not tell me on that day?! I have a lot of fun stories similar to this in the class! Last but not least: I recruited one research student You Wu from this class; I am looking forward to carrying original research with her in the following couple of years that she will hopefully present both at the Honors and ACS conferences!

Biotechnology as an Honors Section- A course with a cold spring harbor lab experience

Dr. Dr. Nidhi Gadura– Biological Sciences and Geology

I have been teaching honors Biotechnology course at QCC for more than five years. The quality of students on our campus never ceases to amaze me! For those who are not always driven at first, these opportunities serve as a turning point for them and an incentive to be their best. The skills that the students earn are there for life. Starting this semester, we are privileged that Cold Spring Harbor Lab, a lab with international recognition, has agreed to let our students participate in their DNA Barcoding project. I plan to introduce this as an honors project in our Genetics class. Students who participated in the pilot study this semester were thrilled with the experience. They learned state of the art molecular biology techniques while enjoying their projects!!! That is the best way to teach science! Icing on the cake is that these experiences become part of student's resume and help open other doors for them in the future.



Offering Honors Contracts in Mathematics

By: Dr. Kostas Stroumbakis– Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

In just about every mathematics class, there are students willing and able to go above and beyond the limits of the course. At Queensborough we are fortunate to have a large percentage of such students! To meet their potential, I started offering honors contracts in September 2012. This gives me extra work, but it is rewarding on many fronts. Clearly it is rewarding for participating students and for me. However, honors students also help inspire the rest of the class, and this is not a small achievement.

To match capable students with challenging and interesting projects, I have prepared a pool of topics relating to various disciplines. Mindful of the extra load, we enter into a handshake agreement to void the contract if it interferes with coursework. The work is gratifying through the term but more so when I see the students' proud ownership of their achievement through their presentations during the Honors Conference and beyond..

Learning to Think Critically: The Honors Program Library Workshops

By Professor Susan Sciammarella, Library

I have been asked by students when they come to participate in the Honors Program Library Research Workshop, "Why do I have to be here and take this workshop?" My response is to help you, as the researcher, to think critically. Thinking critically is the core of evaluating, selecting and using sources effectively. Everyone uses critical thinking skills daily. When we go to the Internet to purchase an item, we carefully scan sites to see what would be the best bet in terms of price and quality. We find ourselves clicking page after page to view additional choices. We want to make sure that we are getting the real deal. I instruct the students to apply these existing skills to academic research not only to take what comes up on the first page, but also to look and to apply certain criteria to each source. The goal is to determine if the information is appropriate for their research project. The following is a basic set of guidelines to select information from the Internet (Google, Yahoo, and so on) when doing academic, personal or work-related research:

Establish authority. Who is the expert in the subject

field providing the information? If there is not an individual with credentials, look for an organization which can provide expertise. Examine bias. Does the source seem biased? Are you looking for information with a particular point of view? Try to determine if the agenda of the site is clearly presented. Determine accuracy. If we are just learning about our topic, how do we know if we are getting the correct information? This is where we may have to go back to the authority in order to rely on an expert in the field, or organization, to ensure accuracy. Provide a time frame. Always put your topic in a time frame. Do you need old information, new information, or both? Look for dates on the page. When was a site last updated or reviewed? Assess usability. It is the responsibility of each individual researcher to determine if the information selected can be used effectively in their paper, speech, or research project. You are now empowered to make the best choices when sifting through thousands of sources.

Mentoring Biology Students in Anatomy and Physiology

By: Dr. Mangala Tawde– Department of Biological Sciences and Geology

I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to mentor students for the Honors program almost since I have joined QCC. I have mentored several Biology students over the years and it has been immense pleasure to work with these motivated folks. These are students from my Anatomy & Physiology as well as Microbiology classes who want to go above and beyond their classroom curricula and aim for higher goals. Some of them have worked to develop advanced curricular materials for their peers whereas most have conducted basic science research in a Microbiology research lab. Their curious minds have worked tirelessly to conduct experiments

to find answers to questions and proudly present their work at various scientific meetings. But I am grateful to the Honors program which have provided these students the forum to challenge themselves, find and express themselves; which have transformed them into more confident and accomplished, proud individuals. Many of my research students continued their research after completion of their Honors commitment which is a testimony of how valuable the program has been to all these students. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to mentor and look forward to inspire my students through the venue of Honors program.

Teaching Bioinformatics as an Honors Class

By: Dr. Peter Novick– Assistant Professor, Biology

I have had such an incredible experience participating in the QCC annual honors conference. This is my fourth year at QCC and also the fourth year that my bioinformatics students will be presenting their work. BI357, Bioinformatics, is an upper level research based course designed to teach students DNA and protein analysis. For three years, this course has been run in consortium with the Joint Genome Institute's bacterial genome analysis program (IMG–ACT) which allows students to annotate newly sequenced genomes. Adding this honors component has allowed students

to go above and beyond the basics, think critically and make predictions about why certain species express certain traits. These students get a rewarding educational experience from this hands–on, self discovery research. Furthermore, the analysis and presentation of their data at the annual conference is a great way for them to think like a scientist, organize their data and practice their presentation skills. I am looking forward to participating in this conference for many years to come.

Accounting case Competition: A business Honors Opportunity

By: Drs. Shele Bannon & Kelly Ford

It has been very exciting this year to work with honor students on our first Accounting Case Competition through the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. The teams faced competition from four–year colleges and were required to work together to complete a personal financial plan for a fictitious recent college graduate. Like typical students, he had a large amount of student loans and some credit card

debt. It was exciting to see our students explore and analyze several possible courses of action including starting a business, recording an album, or possibly developing a new app. In conclusion, our participants rose to the occasion and submitted an excellent plan. It is always an honor to work with dedicated students who are committed to excellence. It was truly the highlight of our semester!

THE HONORS PROGRAM at Queensborough Community College is a comprehensive academic program that provides an enriched classroom and overall intellectual experience to students who have demonstrated high academic achievement. Honors scholars have an opportunity to expand their knowledge in areas of particular interest, to distinguish themselves among their peers, and to make an acknowledged contribution to the intellectual and cultural life of Queensborough. In this way, honors scholars develop the strong academic and leadership skills required in the pursuit of advanced degrees and challenging careers in New York City and beyond. Honors scholars take a combination of honors and non–honors classes, and may earn honors credits through honors contacts. To graduate as an honors scholar, students are required to complete successfully a minimum of 12 honors credits and have earned an overall 3.40 GPA. Transfer credits are not included. No special or extra fees or costs are required to register for honors classes.

Student Reflections

From the Queensborough Community College Honors Program to a Summer Research Internship at Georgetown University's Chemistry Department

By Daysi Proano

I feel lucky to have been a student at Queensborough Community College and in particular to have been a part of the Honors Program because there I discovered my passion for chemistry and biology. I started taking honors classes in spring 2013 and quickly became aware that the classes demanded extra work and were more challenging. By working on my oral presentations, I felt the need to expand my knowledge by conducting research, so I got the opportunity to work under Dr. Paris Svoronos who served as my research mentor. After a New York City–Department of Environmental Protection (NYC–DEP) paid internship in the summer of 2013, I was fortunate to be offered two summer chemistry research internships at The University of

Tennessee, Knoxville and at Georgetown University. I chose the one at Georgetown since my mentor received his Ph.D. there, and I feel happy that I will be working in the same place as he did when he was a graduate student. In addition, I feel that the Honors Program at QCC will not only help me improve my laboratory skills but will also allow me to gain knowledge from esteemed professors and broaden my experience in the research field. In conclusion, honors classes motivate and challenge me to study harder and give me a more in-depth knowledge about the sciences and allow me to pursue more valuable opportunities.

Taking Honors Courses in Calculus I and General Chemistry I: The first steps for a Career in the Sciences

By Nitika Pandey

I have learned a great many things from being part of the honors courses such as Calculus I and General Chemistry I. This experience has changed my entire outlook toward my future academic career. Before my freshman year at QCC, I was shy, had low self-esteem and turned away from seemingly impossible challenges. Honors courses have altered all of these qualities. The biggest adaptation I had to make in my life was moving

to college. However, starting college and taking honors courses helped me with my weaknesses and changed my approach towards solving problems. My experience in honors courses taught me to do work to my fullest potential and think more deeply in every problem. I also believe that my Mathematics and Chemistry professors helped me a lot in making adjustments towards doing mistakes..

Starting with Honors General Chemistry I and Graduating after Completing Ten Honors Classes

By Eung Jung Shin

This will be my last semester here at Queensborough Community College. It seems only yesterday that I came here, but when I look back, I was able to accomplish many tasks at hand due to the dedicated support and devotion from both Dr. Paris Svoronos and Dr. Jun Shin. I definitely could not have made it thus far without their love and care. The first honors course I took with Dr. Svoronos changed my life infinitely, as I am taking my tenth honors course this semester and will begin my second Summer Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) with Dr. Gillmore's research group at Hope College, Michigan. I will be working on "Photochromic Photooxidants: A New Application of Old Photocromes, toward Gating Photoinduced Charge

Transfer." I enrolled in our college approximately three years ago and began without much determination, focus, or understanding of my future pathways. Meeting with Dr. Shin and working on his research projects has broadened my understanding of the chemistry principles and applications. Through his devoted guidance and mentorship, I also began to appreciate, respect, and love the chemistry field. This genesis was made possible through my first honors course with Dr. Svoronos. I will dearly appreciate and be forever grateful for his work.

Starting my Science Career Through Honors General Chemistry I and II: An Enlightening Experience.

By Hyo Jung Shin

When I was growing up in Korea, I was a liberal arts major pursuing a business degree. This traditional mindset continued when I arrived in the United States and enrolled at Queensborough. However all changed after meeting Dr. Paris Svoronos. He introduced me to the sciences by enrolling me into his Honors General Chemistry I (CH-151) class. His class had such a profound influence in my approach to learning and studying chemistry. Dr. Svoronos not only has a wonderful teaching style, he also knows the very best way for his students to understand the complicated subject matter. He teaches how to apply the concepts to problems by making students think. He urges students to engage, use their mind, and solve the problems on their own by coming up to the board. Personally, I think this is the very best way to learn and study not only Chemistry, but any subject matter that requires analytical thinking. Now I am more confident, engaged, and enthused about asking the right questions in any

class and this is all attributed to one brain transformation class, which I deeply appreciate and admire. I have already had a summer internship at the New York City-Division of Environmental Protection (NYC-DEP) through Dr. Svoronos efforts and have presented my findings at the NERM Meeting at Yale University last October 2013 and Columbia University in April 2014. Many professors just teach, but not Dr. Moni Chauhan's Honors General Chemistry II (CH-152). She explains and immerses herself to her students by ensuring that her class fully understands by solving ample of questions for review. This is Honors 152, where many challenging questions are solved in multitude of ways and learned by doing. I very much enjoy the congenial learning atmosphere where students' questions are always treated with respect and care. Thanks to Dr. Chauhan's kindness, students are free to ask their questions in class. This atmosphere makes students active and more participate in class. I am very pleased to take honors CH152 with Dr. Chauhan

Honors Opportunities for a Chemical Engineering Student

By Landen Kwan

Both the Honors and the Research Programs at QCC have widened my horizon. I have been in the Honors Program by taking Chemistry and Mathematics, and have engaged in hydrogen fuel cell research with Dr. Kee Park of the ECET Department.

The reason I joined these programs at the beginning was because I thought they would be beneficial in pursuing further my education. Later on, I found out that they not only benefit my future, but also enhance my knowledge both in and out of class.

When I first started my Honors experience with Honors General Chemistry I, I thought it was tough and unbearable. We had to practice a lot to make sure we could follow up. Although it was hard, I think it was challenging. Any students who love the challenge and have passion in chemistry should be taking Honors Chemistry classes.

instead of critical thinking. However in Calculus II Honors (MA-442) I learned that we actually had to do much more to survive.

Thanks to Professor Paris Svoronos, I was given the opportunity to take part in a research on hydrogen fuel cell under ECET's Professor Kee Park. I have always wanted to become a chemical engineer and I know that this research will definitely prepare me in this endeavor. During the research project, I have cooperated with my teammates, communicated with faculty staff in different departments for experiments and researched for information about hydrogen fuel cells. It was a great chance to learn something outside of class. Last but not least, I have understood more about my career goals because as I worked on the project more, I ended up growing more interest.

Conducting Research in a Biology Lab: An Application to What I Learned in my Honors Classes

By WeiWu Li

I have been involved with Dr. Nidhi Gadura's research project on "Screening the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* genomic library for genes involved in copper induced cell death.", sponsored by Copper Development Association (CDA), since June 2013 with the hope to gain lab skill and experience. Our project involves the understanding of the biological mechanisms in copper induced cell death. The project is intended to uncover all the genes that are involved in copper mediated cell death, which would be potential drug targets in the future. The experience of conducting research under Dr. Gadura provided me the platform to apply the knowledge and techniques, such as DNA extraction, making competent cells, and transformation, that I had learned in the

Biotechnology class. Not only did I strengthen my knowledge, but I also developed analytical and management skills throughout the research experience. The most important thing that I have discovered from this research experience was my love in conducting research. Having been exposed to the research was a precious opportunity because I presented my projected poster at a tri-state regional conference, the Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists (MACUB), and one national scientific conference, the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS). This has been a tremendously significant application of what I have learned in my Honors Chemistry and Biology courses which epitomizes why research at the undergraduate level is unique experience in a community college.

The Food and Drug Administration Experience: The Consequence of Joining the Honors Program

By Brian Um

I met Dr. Svoronos nearly four years ago. I call it a blessing in disguise. Not really knowing who he was at that time and only needing to register for my perquisite courses, I was mysteriously led to him because he was the chairperson of the Chemistry Department, and I needed an over tally! He was not only very gracious in his demeanor but was very generous with his time. Unfortunately, due to family affairs, I ended up dropping out from all the courses which he carefully placed me under, including his Chemistry 151 Honors! Fast forward four years later, I came back after receiving a personal email from him asking how I was and what I was doing. I casually replied that I was planning to come back to school and without any hesitations he replied, "Then come and see me."

This was last semester, and having completed the Honors Chemistry 151 class with him, I can honestly say that it sure was not easy and not for the faint heart, but it definitely matured my thinking. The drive and motivation to succeed not only in his class is tremendous, but his caliber and dedication to his students show throughout. My current internship with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a testament to his care and devotion and again to his efforts. I have been accepted to present my FDA findings at Columbia University's Undergraduate Research Symposium on Easter Sunday April 20th. I must admit that this all began thanks to a single honors course that was followed by several other courses in chemistry and biology. There are still many unfinished tasks ahead, but knowing that I am better prepared for the future gives me a definite advantage.

Conducting Chemistry Research as an Honors Course

By : Damian Ewko

Being a chemistry Honors research student is an experience second to none. I have learned not only how to conduct research but also how to write better, search procedures in the literature and present in a conference. Having a mentor that guides me in research has so far given me a

unique opportunity to develop myself. The Honors chemistry research program is a very good asset that has so far brought me closer to achieving some of my academic goals. In this capacity we also have to attend seminars that are conducted by scientists from many renowned institutions and universities.

Taking Honors Courses: The First step Towards my Hopeful Career in Dentistry

By Miryam Peralta

My experience in the Honors Program at Queensborough Community College has been very invigorating. I have learned how to be involved in different activities especially in the Honors chemistry courses. I already took two honors chemistry classes, General Chemistry I and II, in addition to two one-credit Chemistry research courses, under Dr. Paris Svoronos. These will be particularly helpful for my academic future as I intend to become a dentist. In addition I hope to earn Honors credit in Biology this Spring 2014 semester which will secure the minimum of

12 Honors credits that I need to graduate with an Honors certificate. Chemistry and Biology graduates are well prepared to assume professional positions in industry, education, or public service. I have already been accepted to present my research findings at Yale University last October 2013 and Columbia University on April 20. I firmly believe that I will benefit from this excellent program as students before me have done. I look forward to the next level because I know it will have a great impact on my future career and life.

My Experience With Honors General Chemistry I

By Zarina Cara

Taking an honors class has aroused my determination for improvement in many ways. Let me tell you about my experience taking my first honors class at Queensborough Community College that's chemistry 151-Honors. Before taking my very first Honors chemistry class I was in Introductory Chemistry CH-127 and I thought it was easy so I ended up getting an A. When I was picked up for General Chemistry I honors, I knew it was going to be challenging but I did not expect that it would change my view towards my goals. Taking Honors Chemistry has changed my perspectives for higher achievement and for better understanding and studying. No matter how challenging it may be and no matter how difficult exams can be, I learned that anybody

could do better if more studying and more effort is put into it. Chemistry honors is not just a regular class with power points or handouts. Instead it is a class that gives students an opportunity to come to the board and learn every little detail of chemistry. No matter how much I may be struggling in class, I learned to motivate myself and believe that it is never too late to make up for mistakes. I found myself shy at times but I realized it is not worth it since I know it will not take me anywhere. I learned to participate, come to the board and work the problems out with the help of my professor and my classmates. I learned that as long as I show effort and commitment I can pursue my dreams, whatever they may be.

My experience with the Biology Honors courses

By Nazia Bhatti

When I started at Queensborough I had no clue about how beneficial the Honors Program was. My first honors course was in Pre-Calculus (MA-440) where we had a series of workshops where the mechanism of mathematics was discussed with the intent to provide a mechanism of our own. This was an unexpectedly nice experience as I signed up for it, without knowing what it really entailed. I also completed two classes Biology –BI 201 with

Dr. Patricia Schneider and BI-202 with Dr. Urszula Golebiewska. In the former case I had the opportunity to conduct laboratory research on the bacteriophage DNA. The most exciting part through of my honors courses was the opportunity to present at the honors conference and have my name in the Honors program. Indeed the honors courses are a great opportunity to extend my knowledge on the topic and to work in a cohort of students who have similar ambitions

Starting Honors Courses at QCC via Pre-Calculus

By Jihyun Lee

I first learned about Honors classes at QCC when I was taking Pre-calculus (MA-440). The class was really uninteresting to me because it appeared easy and when my professor noticed that he recommended that I try an Honors Calculus (MA-441) class. It was more difficult, more challenging and I could see that the professor was truly passionate about teaching the students. Compared to the “regular” class, the Honors class involves a greater attention by professor due

to its smaller size so I focused better and learned more. I understood the subject more thoroughly through the Honors class which gave me confidence to speak out and present at the QCC Honors Conferences. I later took Honors Chemistry I and II classes and conducted research under Dr. Jun Shin, the results of which I presented at many conferences. In conclusion the Honors classes raise the standard of the college and should be supported by the administration and all departments.

My Experience in the Honors Program: A Change in my Approach as a Student

By Stephen Montiel-Melgar

At the beginning of the semester, I expected a little more than a rigorous academic setting and additional credits in honors courses. While I cannot speak for the rest of my peers, I would have to say that I started off with a poor work ethic in my assignments and quizzes. This was probably because in a regular class sometimes professors would give me the benefit of the doubt and provide me with extensions and/or re-takes as I needed them. I have gradually improved with time and now I am aware that I should have been putting in far more effort from the start.

Taking Honors classes in General Chemistry I and General Biology II have shown me that I should expect the coursework and my obligations to become increasingly difficult in the future. Although the notion sounds rudimentary, the actual experience does not become any less profound. Instead of merely labeling these courses as “difficult,” they could, in my experience at least, be labeled as “eye-opening.” In retrospect I am glad I took them as I know that I am ready for greater challenges in the future.

Taking Biology Honors Classes:How They Helped me in my Application Process to Optometry Schools

By Woojin Park

My studies at Queensborough Community College were not the beginning of my undergraduate life. I already had a B.S. in Health Sciences from Stony Brook University when I decided to take supplementary science courses at QCC. I also started working as a biotechnology intern. All the steps I needed to follow in the lab were very useful when I took Honors Microbiology. The steps I required to follow using lab equipment were very similar to what I did in the college's microbiology laboratory, which of course gave me a head start.

I decided to follow a career in optometry and was accepted in several programs after working with an optometrist while I was taking classes at QCC. Simply just taking classes does not help one to decide which field fits one's personality or interest. I was glad that I was given opportunities to explore more outside of classroom to find what I love. The Honors classes I took such as Biotechnology, Genetics and Bioinformatics actually enhanced my resume which made me a better candidate when I applied to the various colleges.

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How My Honors Experience in Chemistry Helped me Get Two Consecutive Summer Internships

By Moses Stephen

The Honors classes at Queensborough Community College act as a gateway to internships and research opportunities. The first Honors Class I took at QCC was during the Spring 2013 with Dr. Paris Svoronos in General Chemistry I. As a result I was given a paid internship opportunity at the New York City-Division of Environmental Protection (NYC-DEP) the following summer where I had a practical experience of what I studied in that honors class. At the same time I was given the opportunity to present my findings at several conferences including the 2013 NERM Meeting at Yale University and 2014 Columbia University's

Undergraduate Research Symposium. During the Fall 2014 I had the opportunity to take Honors General Chemistry II with Dr. Moni Chauhan and registered for an independent research study under Dr. David Sarno. All these classes helped me deepen my knowledge about chemistry. The independent study and research under the mentorship of Dr. Sarno gave me practical experience using scientific instruments and the opportunity to present my research work at several conferences. As a result of all these and under the recommendation of Dr. Svoronos and Dr. Sarno I was awarded a paid REU research opportunity for this coming summer at Binghamton University.

I am really thankful to the Honors program for its help in developing me as a student.

Taking Honors CH-152 and Conducting Research in Nanochemistry

By Chinara Feizullayeva

The greatest things about Queensborough Community College are the honors classes. I have taken a few of these courses, including Fundamentals of Chemistry (120), General Chemistry I & II (151,152), Biology II (202), and have completed honors contracts for Biology I (201) and Precalculus (440). All of these classes are tailored to maximize the amount of knowledge you're able to learn in one semester to help you achieve success in the field you wish to pursue. On top of these honors courses, I have also taken part in research in the Chemistry department under the mentorship of Dr. Moni Chauhan. Taking part in research is an amazing experience that exposes you to real science. All of the material that you learn in your lectures is applied in the laboratory. My research topic is on Nanomaterials and doing this research with Dr. Chauhan has exposed me to the new world of nanometals and techniques to analyze them. She has given me the training and knowhow in the field of polymers and materials which is rare to achieve in a community college setting. Last year I

presented my research at the undergraduate research symposium at William Paterson University in NJ; ACS undergraduate research symposium at City College; and our very own Honors Conference here at Queensborough. This year I presented at the 22nd Annual CSTEP conference where I have won 1st place in the Chemistry 1 category. I will be presenting at the ACS undergraduate research symposium at St. John's College and the Honors Conference at Queensborough. It is very exciting and fulfilling to be able to talk about what you have worked on for countless amounts of hours in the laboratory with fellow research students from all around the state and professors. With the guidance of Dr. Chauhan I applied to the C-SURP summer research internship at CUNY. It is quite competitive and one would think that it is domain of four year college students. I am glad that I got the internship for the summer of 2014. I would recommend for everyone to take full advantage of all that Queensborough has to offer including the amazing honors courses that are taught by overqualified staff and the research opportunities that will shape our future.

Taking Honors Chemistry and Calculus Honors Classes as a pre-Engineering Major

By Andrew Lee

I have taken Calculus and Chemistry Honors classes as a pre-Engineering major. From those experiences, I have learned that to improve, I need to challenge myself into levels above the norm. From those classes, I gained only great education but also made close personal relationships with equally ambitious friends and professors. These relationships opened many doors such as internships and career advices. Now I am on my way to a four year college and

because of my experience with the honor classes, I feel more prepared. I have finished internships and research projects which gives me the confidence to take pride in myself wherever I go in my future. The Honors classes, taught me more than the regular classes, increased my intelligence and opened my eyes to new ideas on the subjects. Without these opportunities I would not have been as experienced and confident as I am today. I would recommend this to any future students of QCC.

Taking Honors Classes vs. non-Honors Classes: A Comparison

By Alix He

Honors classes are definitely different from regular subject courses because the professors challenge students to explore beyond the classroom experience. Throughout this semester, it has been hard for me to adapt with all the workloads and long study hours but I will not forget the experience of meeting students who want to achieve their dreams as much as I do and working with professors who put more than 100% of effort to create a future for all of the students who are willing to do more than just attend a class and maintain their GPA. In addition, the professors encourage and give many chances to students who don't do as well. Honors classes definitely taught me to be more independent because in the four year colleges, almost all of

the courses will be similar to honors classes here in QCC. However, honors classes are really difficult and students need to be dedicated to their work in order to do well. Extra work will definitely be a given and homework assignments will need to be done. The workload created a lot of stress for me because I had to study many of the materials by myself and the tests were extremely difficult so I always spend countless hours studying again and again. Honors classes can be overwhelming with all of the studying and there are seminars that students are required or highly recommended to attend. The seminars can go from right after class ends to the late afternoon and even during the evenings. When taking honors classes, there is definitely no time for social and/or personal time because of the seminars and the studying.

Taking my First Honors Class at Queensborough

By Jeonghyeon Song

This spring semester is the first time that I take an Honors class, something I did not even know it existed at QCC. I took Introductory Chemistry (CH-127) in the Fall 2013 and because of my performance my professor recommended that I take Honors CH-151. The Honors program at QCC provides an enriched classroom and overall intellectual experience to students who

have demonstrated high academic achievement. This course involves independent studies, research and participation in professional seminars where renowned professors give talks on advanced topics. I have enjoyed the challenge and have connected with my fellow classmates who are eager to collaborate irrespective of their background.

Honors Biology and Chemistry: The Way to Broaden Your Interest in the Sciences

By: Viviana Torres

I was given the wonderful opportunity to participate in the honors courses offered by the Department of Chemistry and the Department of Biology. During my time in these courses, I was challenged by my professors with complex problems and in-depth readings. These challenges exposed me to higher scientific terminology, which enhanced my understanding of the course material. In addition to the challenges presented on tests or assignments, the professors also required students to present PowerPoint presentations, in which we further

analyzed a particular section of the course and applied it to an everyday situation. These projects allowed me to visualize the concepts and to appreciate truly the advancements within the scientific community. Furthermore, I was also exposed to a serious academic environment in which all of my peers expressed determination and commitment towards their studies. The exposure to such an environment further motivated me to succeed in class and interact with peers that shared a passion for science and research.

The Honors Program at Queensborough; A Wonderful Educational Experience

By Farai Mutukumira

While I know quite a few aspects of Queensborough Community College that contributed to my wonderful educational experience, the Honors program is among the most important ones for me. In the Honors General Chemistry II course, I was part of a small, critically thinking group of students who share both genuine interest in the subject matter and a desire to get the most out of the class. I am a competitive person and being in such a profound program pushed me to work extra hard to keep my grades higher all the time. I taught myself to manage time well With the honors program

Honors vs. Non-General Chemistry Classes

By Melissa Alrasheid

Compared to regular classes I find that the honors classes are far more challenging, yet more beneficiary. The main reason I prefer the honors section is that the professors are much more involved with the students and more challenging in their way of teaching. A perfect example would be my General Chemistry (CH-151) professor, Dr. Paris Svoronos, whose consistent pushing and

one has a lot of work to do and I had to stay on top of all my school work because I wanted to do great in all of my subjects. The honors program also helped me show my academic capabilities, taught me to be disciplined and enhanced my public speaking skills through presentations as well as communication with my colleagues. I also feel as though I have established very rewarding professional relationships with my professors. The honors program has been a rewarding experience and I will forever cherish and be thankful for the opportunity of being a part of it.

challenge transforms the student's attitude.

I found that the Honors section improved my work ethics and it forced me to work harder against the constant flow of course obligations. I know that this is not only preparing us for the future but is also building a foundation for the rest of our lives. I feel very fortunate to be a part of the honors program and I hope other students see its long term benefit.

The Effect of Honors Classes in My Education

By Veronica Yakovishina

Being in an Honors section has encouraged me to try my hardest to do well in my classes because it is more challenging than my non-honors classes. Although I struggled to keep up at times, I learned how much I can accomplish and the value of putting extra time and effort into my schoolwork. It gave me the opportunity to meet classmates with common goals, and they acted as a support team and motivated me to strive to be the best student I could be. Being involved in this program made me realize how much potential I

have, and it opened up possibilities for the future such as additional honors classes and research opportunities. My experience has made me stand out as a student and has prepared me for the competition of the real world and 4 year colleges by helping me develop better studying and test taking skills and strengthening my critical thinking abilities. I feel that taking Honors classes has helped me get the most out of my education here at QCC and build a strong foundation for the rest of my academic life.

Microbiology Research Program: An Empowering Experience

By Kanchanpreet Kaur

Education is not only learning of the facts but also the training of the mind. I learned a lot from microbiology lectures and the textbook, but being able to be part of the BI-311 honors research program was an absolute privilege. Working with and learning from such an experienced and helpful mentor like Dr. Mangala Tawde made the experience even more pleasant. During the whole semester my mentor Dr. Mangala Tawde was right beside me to guide me throughout the whole process. She taught me how to conduct experiments, collect data and analyze all findings. The whole experience was so empowering and

The whole experience was so empowering and confidence and prepared me for any future research opportunities. During the semester we conducted experiments to study the relationship between secondary metabolites of different strains of Actinomycetes by observing their anti-microbial activity. I was able to present my findings at MACUB conference at Bergen Community College on October 26th 2013. A research opportunity like this will help empower students and build their confidence the same way it helped me.

The Importance of Taking Honors Courses at Queensborough

By Jeff Massena

I am a Biotechnology major, at Queensborough Community College. I started in the fall of 2013 as a Liberal Arts Math and Science student and completed my first semester as an LS1 student. I enrolled in my first Honors class, General Chemistry II, during my second semester. At the beginning I was scared and stressed at the same time, but soon everything was settled since

time, but soon everything was settled since the individualized attention of the professor became the key element. More important is the fact that I was asked to choose a related topic and have an oral power point presentation. I look forward to taking more Honors classes as I understand how significant they are to my resume.

Taking Honors Chemistry Classes After a Ten-year Hiatus from the Academic Life

By Bruni Estrada

Although it has been over a decade since I last set foot in an academic environment, my interest in applying to Naturopathic Medical School led me back to the classroom setting. When I arrived at QCC, I had little to no expectations, figuring that community college was an easy step along the way towards medical school. But boy was I wrong! I found myself at Dr. Sasan Karimi's doorstep, where he graciously listened to my interests and career plans while offering his guidance. Before I knew it, I was sitting in Honors Chemistry 151 class, which by far has been one of the best experiences in my academic career. Countlessly, I was in awe of the sheer talent of my classmates and their generosity in lending a helping hand.

Dr. Paris Svoronos' skillful combination of tough love, funny jokes, and a rigorous curriculum taught me the value of resourcefulness and perseverance. Dr. David Sarno, my lab professor, had an impeccable ability to break down complex topics into simple easy-to-learn format. Chemistry – which was once just a means to an end for me – has now emerged as a newfound interest. Through my honors experience, I now feel much better equipped with the knowledge I have gained to tackle the rigor of medical school. I am grateful to the amazing and dedicated professors at QCC and look forward to many more fruitful experiences ahead.

Honors Chemistry I: A Gateway Course for My Career Goal

By Yueli Chen

This is my second semester at Queensborough Community College. Last semester, I was fortunate to register for Honors General Chemistry I, which was taught by Dr. Paris Svoronos. The smaller class size and the extra work forced everyone in the class to participate and work together. Taking the honors class did not require so much intelligence as it did effort. Even though the class was a challenge for me, I strongly believed that it would benefit me in the future. Successful people always push themselves to accomplish more and are generally not happy to do the minimum. The intellectual stimulation from the honors class was exactly what I wanted.

Consequently Dr. Svoronos introduced me to my current research mentor, Dr. Paul Sideris. The research project deals with solid-state electrolyte lithium ion batteries. The significant skills and knowledge I gained in the Honors General Chemistry I class helped me conduct my research project more efficiently. On April 20, 2014, I will present my research project findings at Columbia Undergraduate Science Journal's Symposium. I am so excited as this will be one of my priceless experiences. Taking Honors General Chemistry is a turning point in my life, and it has better prepared me for my career goal of being a medical doctor.

How honors classes proved my disbelief on myself wrong?

By Abdul w Yousaf

I was an average student throughout my academic career, had no confidence on my academic capabilities, I was lacking motivation and these things started to affect my grades until I got enrolled in an honors Biotechnology class with Dr. Nidhi Gadura. The class was never a piece of cake and for me it was like walking in a snow storm. My classmates were doing very well in that small intensive class, all of them were very confident in their learning abilities. In a positive way this encouraged me to spend my free time on studies instead of watching movies or playing soccer. And strong advisement sessions with Dr. Gadura helped me overcome my fear of failure. In no time there was a huge improvement in my academics results, not only the Biotechnology class I was improving in every class that I took that semester. I had a sense of belief in myself that with sheer and true hard work I can clear any obstacle.

As time passed by I enrolled in other honors courses such as Bioinformatics and Molecular Genetics. I came to conclusion that these courses are noticeably benefitting me. I was able to get a handful of practice in lab and very prized information from my respected professors. On the other hand if I was taking courses just to fulfill my degree requirements, i would have been keeping my self away from these precious resources. These honors courses taught me how to work in a molecular biology lab. Beginning of this semester I started working as research intern at York College with Dr. Francisco Villegas and presented my research poster at Psychology Convention at Hunter College. Moreover I got accepted in a Paid Undergraduate Research 2014 Summer Internship Program at York College. Hopefully this program will be one of many opportunities through which I will be able to use the lab knowledge for experimental purposes

Changing Careers via the Honors Program at QCC

By Ricky Loh

Around 2010, I decided to explore a new career path in the health sciences. I quickly realized that I did not have the pre-requisites, not even the requirements to take those pre-requisite classes, that are necessary for many programs. I decided to return to school as a post-baccalaureate student in order to obtain the necessary credentials. Having never taken any science courses beyond an introductory level, I was keenly aware of what my shortcomings were within the first two weeks of classes. I needed to revamp my dedication towards future learning challenges as well as balance my financial and time commitments. Luckily I was able to have met great instructors who soon thereafter became my mentors. My first experience with the QCC Honors Conference was in 2011. Public speaking was never a particular forte of mine. I can still remember how uncomfortable I was during the opening remarks of my first honors presentation. The auditorium was packed and my two size-too-small dress shirt was digging into the side of my throat. Meanwhile in my mind, I was trying to put together some semblance of a rehearsed script for my presentation amidst laughter, clapping and sweltering heat emanated from the person sitting next to me. I had two presentations to give that day, and, to be honest, when all was said and done, the experience was not too bad at all. I proceeded taking several honors courses in chemistry and biology and conducted research under Dr. Andrew Nguyen of biology at Albert Einstein Medical School. I have presented my findings in several conferences and have tutored in group setting in several courses. Presenting at Columbia University

courses. Presenting at Columbia University, Yale University, City College and University of Maryland were feats I never thought there were possible for me only two years ago. Under the guidance of Dr. Nguyen and Dr. Paris Svoronos, professors of chemistry, I scored quite well in the biology and chemistry portion of the entrance exams for professional schools. I received multiple interviews and subsequently several offers of admission in pharmacy programs. I attribute being able to convey my thoughts within a group and personal setting as one of the key factors of a successful interview. Years ago, I would have to admit that I was never a good speaker, and I barely held eye contact. The Honors Program was the first step of my transformation into a functioning public speaker, an innovative thinker, and a dependable team player. I strongly feel that there are many benefits to participating in the Honors Program. The program is free and one can share their findings within their field with peers and faculty. Why put in so much effort into an endeavor without at least sharing your knowledge with your peers? Graduating with an honors diploma is only a measly twelve honors credit requirement. By participating in the Honors Program, it makes you stand out as a future applicant for institutions of higher learning. Getting to know your mentors outside of the basic classroom setting also makes it easier for them to vouch for you in recommendation letters as contributing members of this academic establishment.

General Chemistry I: My First Honors Experience

By Pui-E Yap

I never took any Honors courses during my first two years at Queensborough Community College until I was selected for Honors General Chemistry I. This is a very challenging course as it involves frequent testing and an enormous amount of homework problems. In addition students are supposed to interact in the class in a constructive way and beyond their level of shyness. Despite its

difficulty I never thought about withdrawing because I know this is an opportunity that will build up my confidence and prepare me for the junior and senior classes when I transfer. The chances to get into honors are rare and many good students request to be part of the program. In retrospect I regret I did not seek such fulfilling opportunities earlier in my Queensborough career.

Honors Chemistry and Calculus: How they can change a Student's Perspective about College

By Bomin Kwon

My experience with the Honors Program at Queensborough started with Calculus I and General Chemistry I. My performance in Chemistry was not as good as that in Calculus and had drop out due to some mitigating circumstances. Nevertheless I found in Chemistry two excellent, caring professors Dr. Paris Svoronos and Dr. David Sarno who are always willing to guide students. It is a very competitive class and the classmates are intelligent but also willing

to help. My Calculus course ended up successfully and have proceeded taking more Honors classes in Mathematics.. In addition all honors professors try to provide internship opportunities to the students. Overall I can say that these two courses have benefited me as they increased my confidence and ability to communicate in English.

Being an Honors Student at QCC: How It Changed My Perspective about Science

By Silvia Salamone

I started attending Queensborough Community College in the spring of 2013. During my second semester at QCC, my advisor introduced me to Dr. Paris Svoronos, who suggested that I take Honors CH-151, which he teaches. His teaching methods are challenging yet inspiring, hard yet rewarding. For the first time in my life somebody made me understand how it feels to constantly be under pressure and still be able to manage and overcome that pressure. Dr. Svoronos managed to achieve that by testing us every two weeks and by making us go up to the board and share our opinion and knowledge with other classmates. Before taking my first honors classes, I did not

Before taking my first honors classes, I did not consider myself adequate to the level of the class, but my professors have helped me improve my self-confidence so that I am now tutoring General Chemistry I, and I am planning to apply for a paid internship at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) during the summer. Since then, I have taken several honors classes, in addition to General Chemistry I and II. These include Biology I and Elementary Spanish II. I know that that honors classes have changed my entire perspective and have made me aware of how science is definitely my future.

Taking Honors Biology, Calculus, and Chemistry: An Eye-Opening Experience for My Future Academic Career

By Nausheen Fathima

I have been greatly enjoying my experience in the field of science so far. I am thankful to be a part of Queensborough Community College (QCC) STEM academy and Honors Program. I have been taking honors classes from my second semester of my college life at QCC. My first honors class was General Chemistry 151. The professor for that class was Dr. Svoronos, who made me realize that honors classes are very helpful to students. CH-151 was an intense course, but it turned out to be great for me. It made me realize that I had to take education seriously and work hard and consistently be successful in my classes and career. After that, I took a few other honors classes such as Calculus I, Calculus II, Biology I,

Genetics, and I am currently taking Biotechnology with Dr. Gadura. I am also working on a research program at Queens College. I got into the research program from my Biotech Honors class with the help of Dr. Gadura. I think that honors classes are very important as they help students understand the importance and necessity of the subject. Honors classes are also useful as they give students a heads up as to what happens at a four-year college. My experience with honors classes has been wonderful. I consider myself fortunate to have been under such knowledgeable and helpful professors who actually care for their students.

How the Honors Experiences Helped Me Get Three Paid Summer Internships

By Sandy Enriquez

From the moment I arrived at Queensborough Community College and was given the opportunity to take Honors Introduction to College Chemistry (CH-127), I knew that it was going to be the beginning of a life-changing experience. Many of the honors classes I completed, such as CH-127, CH-151/152, BI-201/202, BI-456 and BI-357, have tremendously helped me land various positions at paid summer undergraduate research programs. In all the three years that I have been at QCC, I was very fortunate to have been accepted to the New York City-Department of Environmental Protection (NYC-DEP) research program in 2012, the Stony Brook University Biomedical Internship Program in 2013, and the Chemistry REU Internship program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2014. I would not have been able to be accepted to any of these summer internships if it were not for the truly dedicated and wonderful professors I had and especially my mentor, Dr. Paris Svoronos. One of the things that I really improved while taking the honors courses at QCC was

my confidence. It was definitely a tough journey for me because at the beginning I was very timid. Going to the blackboard in CH-151 and CH-251/252 and working out problems made me realize that I should not care about what other students thought about me but that I should care more about my success in the class. The confidence I gained from these honors classes helped me communicate more efficiently with my mentors in these summer undergraduate internship programs and also share some elements of knowledge. In addition, I am also glad that the honors courses helped me get more organized and have pushed me to work harder. Finally I conducted research under Dr. Svoronos which I presented at twelve different conferences including Columbia University's Undergraduate Research Symposium (three times), The American Chemical Society-New York section URS (three times), the MARM Meeting at the University of Maryland and the ACS-NERM Meeting at Yale University. These in- and out-of-QCC experiences have given me the right tools that will serve me when I transfer to a four-year university.

My Honors General Chemistry I Class Experience

By Stephan Smith

The decision to enroll for Honors Chemistry 151 was one of the most important decisions I have made in my academic journey. It was the first time I was taking an honors class, so I did not know what to expect. The Honors Chemistry class is a small size class, so each person in the class received overwhelming attention from the professor. The honors class goes beyond trying to make students pass with a good grade, but more importantly it aims at preparing students for the numerous challenges that lie ahead in attaining their academic aspiration. I was allowed to attend a number of seminars which introduced me to the practical application of chemistry in various fields

enlightened me on researches in chemistry that are currently being undertaken to enhance current technology such as communication. My Honors Chemistry class is currently molding me to strive for my maximum potential. The course workload is heavy and requires me to put out my best effort. Overcoming the challenge had allowed me to become even more determined to succeed. I was also able to harness the work ethic I obtained from Honors Chemistry and applied it to the other courses I am taking concurrently which enabled me to improve significantly as a student.

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

How the QCC Honors Program Helped Achieve my Goals

By Marjorie Morales

Coming into the Queensborough Honors Program has opened many doors and opportunities that I would never have dreamed for myself. The Honors Program offers specialized services for students, such as the peer-led tutoring workshops from students who have done far more than survive the courses in previous semesters – they have excelled in them! But it was more than these tutoring sessions that allowed me to thrive in the Honors program. It was my mentor and coordinator of the program, Dr. Paris Svoronos, who is really responsible for molding the potential of students into a character of quality work. Dr. Svoronos is the source of persistence, and from it he does more than preach for pushing and exceeding above the limit, he lives by it. Through conducting research with Dr. Luis Vargas, I was able to present my work in numerous conferences and receive mentorship from a hardworking, warm, and wise professor who has believed and pushed me to develop

my abilities to conduct independent research. I believe that if it were not for the Honors Program offered in Queensborough Community College, I would not be where I find myself today. It offers students the illustrious opportunity to conduct research, an advantage unheard of in other community colleges around the nation. This exposure to research opportunities has opened many doors for me to develop my research skills in further federal and nationwide institutions, such as the NYC Department of Environmental Protection's (NYC-DEP) Microbiology Laboratory and Brookhaven National Laboratory's Medical Department. I am more than grateful for what the Honors program has provided for me, the skills it helped me develop, and the friendships I have forged with both students and faculty. I am now counting the days until I start Medical School upon graduation from Stony Brook University.

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

From the Honors Program at Queensborough to Pharmacy School: Reflections Four Years After Graduating

By Rosa Rosales-Ronquillo

I believe Honors classes are a challenging and rewarding option to students. As a current Chemistry Lab instructor, I always encourage students to take honors classes. I believe that being part of the program is a rewarding experience for anyone, because it prepares him/her for the future in a challenging manner. In addition the student will have the opportunity to personally communicate with the instructors and interact positively with the fellow students. In addition anyone who completes honors classes will have a better resume when applying to other colleges upon transfer.

When I was a student at Queensborough Community College, I took advantage of any opportunity that was presented to me. I always wanted to succeed. My first step was to take Honors General Chemistry I with Dr. Paris Svoronos. I believe the nature of the class and his mentoring directed me to a path of various beneficial experiences. I also took Calculus and Biology Honors classes giving me an overall enhanced experience that made me a better thinker and a more confident

person. Thanks to the support of Dr. Patricia Schneider and Dr. Svoronos, I was able to conduct scientific research through the "Bridges to the Future" program at QCC, present at numerous conferences where I received awards, became aware of internship opportunities, and had leadership experiences as being part of the President's Council and President of the Chemistry Club. Among the highlights were my two summer-internships at Cornell University and my selection and the first ever QCC All-USA team selected student.

Currently, I work at Pall Corporation as an associate scientist, while teaching part time in the Chemistry Department at QCC. I still have great aspirations for myself and want to accomplish other educational goals. Any student who wants to be successful, should not be afraid to take Honors Classes as life in four-year colleges or the real workforce is very competitive. One needs to be prepared for the challenging process of admission and school work

Taking Queensborough's Honors General Chemistry I Course: Getting Students Prepared for Higher Education

By Jun Ma

The most unforgettable and rewarding experience at QCC for me was taking the Honors General Chemistry I course taught by Dr. Paris Svoronos. He encouraged extra study and full classroom participation. He gave the class extra homework to do so that we would be able to practice more and learn the material better. I had to be strict with myself in studying in order to learn well. Dr. Svoronos is a hard working, dedicated professor who cares about his students a lot. As an international student whose first language is not English, I was afraid to communicate with others in English. He encouraged me to speak English all

the time even after school. Because of this course and Dr. Svoronos, I was prepared in my subsequent Chemistry courses at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities later. I had an internship in Bayer Technology and Engineering (Shanghai) Co., Ltd. in Shanghai, China in summer 2012. After I graduated from the University of Minnesota, I applied for another internship in a research lab in Boston this spring. Dr. Svoronos wrote a recommendation letter for me and I really appreciated that he supported me even after I left QCC. With his encouragement, I believe I can do well and learn a lot in this internship.

From Queensborough to Queens College to University of Buffalo's Dental School: How the QCC Honors Program Helped this Transition

By Karina Bairamian–Scalerio, DDS

I took three Honors classes in Chemistry while being a student at QCC. It was an amazing experience in my early pre-doctoral education. I received an extraordinary amount of knowledge during such a short time in those three classes that helped me have a high GPA and receive scholarships and awards to help further my educational career. During my Honors classes at QCC, I conducted research under Dr. Jun Shin and presented my findings at a dozen local, regional and national American Chemical Society meetings—both in power point and poster form. These experiences strengthened my resume,

especially when I applied to programs after graduating from Queens College, and especially at the dental residency program time! Besides the academically intensive workload, extremely intellectual classmates and outstanding faculty, I have gained not only a great foundation and love for Chemistry but also confidence in my own abilities. The confidence I have built in Honors Classes at QCC have helped me to receive a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry from Queens College and a Doctoral Degree in Dentistry from the University at Buffalo.

From the QCC Honors Program to Medical School

By Rebeca Cho

The QCC Honors program helped me in many ways beyond academic achievements. Internships with the Biology department exposed me to working at a cardiologist's office and after seeing how that doctor cared so much for his patients, I knew medicine was a field I wanted to go into. The most valuable experience I encountered however was the many opportunities in which I had to present myself in front of colleagues and professors on a regular basis. Now that I am in the Medical School of Western University of Health Sciences., not only do I feel more comfortable in holding professional conversations with my professors and visiting lecturers, but I am more confident in speaking up in front of a class of 200 students as well. I was already taught how to

present myself in the Chemistry Honors program by Dr. Paris Svoronos and Dr. Jun Shin. The Honors conferences also provided me with great opportunities to practice my oral presentation skills. As much as I dreaded it, and at times still dread giving such presentations, I am grateful that I was given the opportunity to practice and become more comfortable in this endeavor because it is such an integral part of any professional education, including the medical one. Most importantly, staying in the QCC–Honors program helped me learn responsibility and accountability. I am proud to have been part of this program at QCC and am grateful for all the aspects I learned and accomplishments I achieved.

Conducting Microbiology Honors Research: An Enlightening Experience

By Chung Him Tse

You will never learn how to swim if you do not really get into the water. Learning from the microbiology book can increase your knowledge. However, if you really want to know how the technique you learned from the book works in reality, it definitely is better for you to immerse yourself in that environment. Taking Microbiology (BI-311) Honors research allowed me to work with a great microbiology professor, Dr. MangalaTawde. Nothing is better than having a one on

one interaction with a mentor to guide you through learning. During the semester we have conducted an experiment to study the relationship between secondary metabolites of actinomycetes and their anti-microbial activity. This provided me a great experience on how to work in the laboratory and how to apply those techniques in the future. As a result I presented my findings at the NERM Meeting held at Yale University on October 26 2013. I believe that having this valuable experience will definitely help student succeed in the future

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

Taking My First Honors Class: Twelve Years Later

By Richard Pantano

The decision to stay in an Honors class back in 2001 was perhaps one of the best decisions of my academic career if not the best. I say “stay” because the fact is that I was registered in that Honors Chemistry section by mistake. I showed up to the classroom thinking it was a regular class until the professor mentioned it. I really do not know exactly what made me stay that day or even come back. It may have been the professor’s passion for teaching which was evident, only minutes into her lecture. It may have been the energy that I felt in the classroom knowing that every other student there wanted to excel more than the average college student. Maybe it was something inside me that decided to stop taking the path of least resistance to see if the outcome would be different than what I had been used to and it sure was. The fact is that I continued with more such classes until I graduated.

I now work for a multinational corporation with over 1600 offices worldwide and without exaggeration, not a day goes by that I do not use or think of something that I either learned or experienced taking Honors classes. The one thing that I use the most would be the opportunity that I had to tutor other students. In my current position I need to explain regulations, methodologies and testing results to both clients and colleagues locally and internationally. However if I had to choose one thing that I believe was most beneficial about taking an Honors class it would have to be the interaction with the other students because we all pushed each other to be better with friendly competition which was, honestly, priceless.

My Research Experience in the Chemistry Department at Queensborough: Why this Component of the Honors Program is so Significant

By Sharda Jagdeo

I attended Queensborough (2010–12) and graduated with an LS1 degree in Science and Mathematics. During my two years at Queensborough, I took Honors classes in both Chemistry and Biology and was exposed to a type of academia, where the work was challenging. However the support and help I received from my professors gave me the confidence to excel. During those two years, I fell in love with Chemistry and was able to carry out scientific research in an actual lab, under the mentorship of Dr. Jun Shin. Working in the lab has allowed me to gain confidence which really helps in senior colleges, such as Hunter, where the class sizes are ten-fold that of QCC’s. Working in the lab also made me comfortable working with the materials and procedures. I am

proud and genuinely happy to say that a chemistry lab is a natural habitat for me because of the confidence and comfort I feel while working in one. Research has also allowed me the opportunity to visit and present my work in major scientific conferences such as the MARM in Baltimore MD and the National ACS Meeting in Philadelphia. These exposures allowed me to speak and interact with scientists from all over the nation and different fields, and that type of interaction at such a young age only strengthened my love for the subject. I am beyond pleased to have had the opportunity to be able to take honor classes and perform research at Queensborough and I wish every young scientist to have such an amazing experience.

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

QCC Independent Study Honors: Contract on Sociology of Gender

By John Duran

There's a lot that can be said about the time I spent doing research with Professor Amy Traver. For one, she taught me how to find my own voice amidst the voices of all the researchers and writers we looked up for our project, which wasn't always easy. I learned how to get to the heart of a research paper and not only analyze it but use it for my own advantage as well as creating further theories from what I have read. Then there was the actual project itself, which we both took a long time to discuss on and work with. That's how I learned that working on your own is not always the best because sometimes the ideas of someone else can spark ideas in you, and that's how most of our conversations about the research went. I learned to be rigorous and thorough with my work and to take the time to examine whatever I'm doing from various angles. This, along with time management, has vastly improved my work ethic. I also learned a lot overall about the research

part of sociology as I had never done any type of serious research before, and a lot of the processes I learned about then I'm relearning now in my research class at Queens College. But I think the most important lesson I learned was how important it was to have a great mentor. Professor Traver always took her time to explain her ideas and of what was asked of me. She had already pre-planned and scheduled everything, including our discussions and the time, and it made the transition between student and researcher that much easier because I didn't have to worry about when something was due. Above all, unlike most professors I've had, she listened to me and encouraged me so much along the way and I don't think I would have gotten as far as I did without her support. If ever I have to do research in the future with another professor I hope they live up to Professor Traver's standards.

From the Honor's Program to the Ivy League

By Daniel Andre Novoa

I must be honest. I never heard of Queensborough Community College before enrolling. It was not my first college experience, but I ruined my previous shot at a decent education. I actually came across this school by total serendipity. Some people never get the opportunity to go to college, but I was given a very rare second chance. I refused to waste that chance. As fortune would have it, it was at Queensborough that I discovered a passion for chemistry, and I found myself in the Honors Chemistry 151 course taught by Dr. Paris Svoronos. This opened the flood gates for me. One third of all my classes were at the honors level. I began doing research in a biochemistry laboratory, and I eventually presented my research at regional and national conferences. Now, I am an alumnus of Queensborough Community College, and I am proud of it (despite the two hour commute in each direction).

Soon, I will be graduating from Queens College with a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry. Shortly thereafter, I will begin work toward a PhD in Chemistry at Princeton University where I was awarded a full tuition scholarship and a graduate student stipend. I realize now that I have come further than I imagined I would have, and, perhaps, I have come further than anyone believed I could. I owe this and so much more to the Honors Program at Queensborough. The academic knowledge gained was just the beginning. The scholastic and life skills I acquired allowed me to take advantage of every opportunity and navigate any obstacle that came my way. I can honestly say that this excellent program in this much underrated school has made me everything that I am today and has prepared me for so much more to come.

Conducting Organic Chemistry Research: A Means to Expand my Scientific Knowledge

By Lena Najjarian

I took several Honors classes in Biology but also conducted Honors credit research under the Chemistry Department chair Dr. Sasan Karimi. The topic was directly related to Organic Chemistry and I had the opportunity to apply in the laboratory what I learned in the lecture. The project was difficult and the work demanded the manipulation of small quantities of expensive chemicals. I was proud to be able to present my research findings at several American Chemical Society Conferences, including the Regional NERM Meeting that was held at

Yale University on October 26, 2013. This was an incredible experience– something that community college students never get the opportunity to enjoy. Upon graduation I was accepted at the Physician Assistant Program at York College where I feel better prepared and I am more familiar with the difficulties associated with scientific disciplines. Thanks to the opportunity I was given to take an honors course, it helped challenge my mind and enhanced my understanding in science.

Conducting Undergraduate Research in Chemistry as an Honors Course

By May Myat Moe

Taking honors classes at Queensborough was the most valuable period in my academic life. The experiences that I had gained during those classes gave me the courage to continue my education beyond the two-year (A.S.) degree. I am currently a senior at Queens College.

I was fortunate to conduct research under the most demanding, yet caring, professor, Dr. Paris Svoronos of the Chemistry Department. I have received several scholarship awards and acknowledgement because of my completing more than 30 credits in Chemistry, Biology and Calculus. . Because of my honors

research work I was able to present my findings at several conferences in different states with many classmates. I learned how to work in a team and was accepted in two summer internships via the recommendation of Dr. Svoronos. Even though I never won any awards from different conferences I attended, I still cherished the honor of presenting at Columbia's Undergraduate Research Symposium. In conclusion going through the hardship of an Honors class one learns how to be self-motivated and focused.

How the Honors program at Queensborough Has Helped Me Excel at St. John's University

By Julia Boroday

Since graduating from QCC honors program I enrolled in the Biology B.S. program at St. John's University. I am currently in my last semester and will graduate in May of 2014. The preparation I received from my studies at Queensborough, prepared me for my coursework and research experience at St. John's. I have successfully completed all of my coursework with an excellent academic record, and was given the opportunity to work in a research lab in neurotoxicology. My research project is focused on the effects of environmental chemicals and their role in neurodegenerative diseases, including

Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease. I am convinced that my preparations for further studies including coursework and research experience that I was afforded by the honors program at QCCC were the key to my current academic success. After graduation I plan to enter a Physician's Assistant program and further my career in the hopes of entering the healthcare industry as a Physicians Assistant. In retrospect I am grateful for the QCC opportunity because the availability of Honors Chemistry and Biology has enhanced my aptitude in the fields during my junior and senior years.

Queensborough to Starting as a PhD Student at the University of Buffalo

By Anibal Davalos

I started at Queensborough Community College taking remedial classes in math and writing. I worked hard in my classes, found guidance in my professors, and signed up for the honors program. The honors program gave me the opportunity to conduct research with the chemistry department, which helped discovering my passion for research. I worked with Dr. Luis Vargas in the synthesis of bisphosphonates derivatives. This research project took me around New York and a couple of other cities to present my work. I felt proud of myself and grateful for the opportunity that the honors program gave me. Next, I was accepted into the Research Initiative for Minority Students (RIMS) program, which granted me the opportunity to conduct research in

accepted into the Research Initiative for Minority Students (RIMS) program, which granted me the opportunity to conduct research in the laboratory of Dr. Sanjai Kumar at Queens College of the City University of New York. Subsequently, I became so deeply interested in research that I transferred to Queens College to continue with the ongoing projects at Dr. Kumar's lab. Now, I am approaching graduation, and ready to start my graduate studies in University at Buffalo pursuing my PhD in organic chemistry. Everything started with the honors program at QCC, unraveling my fascination for science and supporting me while pursuing my dream.

Honors Courses as a Tool Towards Molding My Engineering Career

By Tayyaba Nasar

My experience in Honors courses at QCC have provided me with the confidence and motivation I needed to succeed in further studies. As an engineering science major at QCC I took a majority of math and science courses throughout my stay at the college. I enjoyed my honors classes, in Chemistry and Mathematics, where students would get challenged to their full potential. The honors experience at QCC taught me to push myself farther. I was motivated by the students, who were go

getters, did not let anything stop them from completing their career goals, whether it was going to medical school, or getting another chance in post undergraduate program. I believe if it were not for my Professors at QCC, who believed in me, I would not be where I am today. I have completed my BE in Chemical Engineering from City College with two kids and am currently working as an Environmental Engineer.

Experience of Honors Program: BioPREP

By Jessica Sepulveda

It has always been astonishing to me how science can be the solution to many problems in our world and the gateway to innovations. Queensborough Community College was my gateway to viewing the field of science in a completely new and realistic way. Queensborough gave me the privilege to attend a research program for underrepresented students at Stony Brook University, BioPREP. This summer program consisted of 40 hours a week dedicated to working in the laboratory to treat all kinds

of cells; mine being breast cancer cells. The impact this experience had on me has shaped my goals. I am now a Stony Brook University undergraduate student proudly wishing to pursue a career in clinical dietetics, to assist those with special needs. Queensborough allowed me to acknowledge the countless amount of ways one student can make to the world through the sciences with their helping hand.

Taking Honors Chemistry Classes: How They Alter my Academic Career

By Nicole Yu

The scariest part of college life is wandering through each semester, not sure of what you wanted to do, with no one to help. When I signed up for Honors Introductory Chemistry though, it was one of the most intimidating experiences, but also one of the best choices I have ever made because it gave me a good look of what I finally could do in college. When I became a part of Honors General Chemistry I, I had to begin in a regiment of Spartan-like training. yet filled with love. It sounds funny, but one will understand when this situation becomes part of life. I conversed regularly with my mentor, who was a fearsome man but saw something in me I could not. I did not only have one mentor though. Through Honors courses I was

also able to conduct research, which was the most significant part of my life because I had the opportunity to meet even more great professors who mentored me. Their way of teaching is something I will never forget. There were even opportunities to travel and present at research conferences. I even won an award for my Honors Biology Research I had completed over the summer. All it took was one conversation to change my entire life. Without Honors, I would never have gone through such an amazing adventure in college that helped carved my life. Now I see that there is a clear difference between Queensborough and Hunter College in mentoring.

Starting as a Fine Arts Major and Ending Up as an M.D.

By Sabrina Song

I first enrolled at Queensborough Community College as a Fine Arts major. It was a topic that I found comfortable and was confident in pursuing and a major that I was often told I was talented in. However things changed after my initial year at QCC. This intervention occurred in a simple exchange in dialogue with a colleague on what to pursue after taking specific courses. We were initially taking the same Spanish class, which led to Spanish Honors. My enjoyment and the challenges of this honors class brought out the vigor in me to pursue these classes further. I then realized that taking 12 credits of Honors classes will not only place me as an Honors graduate but also help me pursue Chemistry Honors, which I did not have any prior knowledge of. However, I managed to survive through courses, even Organic Chemistry, which is

known as the hardest course around but ironically, I enjoyed the most. My survival throughout chemistry honors led me to a major change from fine arts to chemistry. I also conducted research under Dr. Jun Shin the findings of which I presented in several American Chemical Society Conferences. Studying is a challenge we often face that can be both enjoyable and stressful. It should never be taken as a chore, but more of a challenge of how far we can go and what dreams we can achieve. I am graduating now as an M.D. and I am glad that I had the courage to take those Honors classes, which changed my life completely. By completing them I was testing my limit and I learned that I could do anything. I also learned that if I could do it anyone who is willing to challenge themselves can do it as well.

How Starting Research at Queensborough Secured My Research Position in the Industrial World

By Marcella Powell

The Queensborough Community College Honors Program was essential to both my academic and professional success. While enrolled at QCC, I became a member of the Honors program and was able to perform research in Biology at both QCC and Queens College. Due to the Honors program, my research experience and good GPA, I was awarded a full Scholarship in Math and Science to SUNY Stony Brook for pursuing a BS in Biochemistry. My previous research experience through the Honors program paved the way for me to join a laboratory and work part-time while attending school. By the time I graduated with my Bachelors of Science I had acquired approximately 4 years of hands-on training and laboratory skills, which was a key factor to being hired

as a Research Scientist right out of school. Currently, I am a Research Scientist III in the Analytical Development group at a Pharmaceutical Contract Research Organization, where I evaluate the safety and efficacy of new small molecule drug candidates using a variety of analytical techniques, including Mass Spectrometry and Liquid Chromatography. The Honors Program ensured my academic success through enrichment programs and opened up opportunities to further my education outside of the classroom, which gave me an advantage when looking for a career after graduation

How the Honors Program at Queensborough Helped me Become the First Member in My Family to Earn a B.S. degree

By Mauricio Murillo

Becoming an Honors student was probably one of the most rewarding decisions I have made as an undergraduate. My very first Honors class was in General Chemistry I. Although I was a bit intimidated by my fellow classmates because of their very high GPA's I soon learned that they were not different than I was. We all shared the same ideas; to graduate and to start working in our desired fields. My experiences in the Honors program opened many doors for me. I was fortunate enough to be awarded paid internships at Stony Brook University, the Department of

Environmental Protection (DEP) and to conduct research in the Chemistry Department under Dr. David Sarno. It was then where I attended several conferences and showcased my findings. I am very thankful for having made that decision because this experience taught me discipline and prepared me for the four year colleges. After graduation, I transferred to City College, majored in Biology and obtained my Bachelor's degree becoming the first in my family to do so.

Donald Mitchell Alumni Reflection

By Donald Mitchell

I currently attend the City College of New York, having just graduated from Queensborough Community College with an Associate's degree in Engineering Science. While at QCC, I was involved in research in Organic Chemistry under the mentorship of Dr. Julie Pigza. This was an honors research class which mainly involved organic synthesis. Our area of interest was the applications of oxyallyl silanes and their use as homoenolate equivalents. I learned many things from the experience in the chemistry lab; not only the basic procedures involved in synthesizing and purification, but also the thinking strategies employed in

flash chromatography. Subsequently, I was taught to use the NMR instrument to determine the products formed and also their purity. This experience led to a summer 2013 REU at Iowa State University's Center for Biorenewable Chemicals (CBiRC). There I was placed with Dr. George Kraus, and organic chemist. In his lab I worked on the conversion of the pyrone, methyl coumalate, to substituted aromatics. I presented my findings at the NERM Meeting of the ACS hosted by Yale University on October 26 2013. I have just found

Taking Honors Biotechnology and Bioinformatics Classes at Queensborough: A way to Establish Myself as a Good Transfer Student

By Janet Long

I am currently a senior at CUNY York College, majoring in Biotechnology. During my time at Queensborough Community College, I was enrolled in the honors Biotechnology and Bioinformatics classes. Furthermore, I got the chance to conduct research under Dr. Nidhi Gadura in the Biology department. Being in honors courses and doing research really gave me the opportunity to challenge myself intellectually, because the courses are intense and require a lot of effort on the students' part. I had to learn how to establish good learning and study habits that have really helped me when I began working on the harder, upper level courses in my bachelor's degree. Through this wholly enriching research experience, I was able to extend my knowledge of laboratory and research skills, and I got to implement and hone various techniques often used in labs. The project that I was working on dealt with

identifying the to implement and hone various techniques often used in labs. The project that I was working on dealt with identifying the effects of copper on the bacterial strain *Bacillus subtilis* which has real world applications and I was fortunate to present my findings at several different conferences all over the US. Having prior experience in conducting research at Queensborough really gave me a better competitive edge against other students when it came to getting into a lab at York College. In addition the abilities that I garnered while at QCC have really helped me do well at York. For me, the honors courses and research opportunities available at QCC have provided me with research techniques and a focus that is carried through to the next level of education, and a good foundation for building my academic career.

Starting with the BioPrep Program Opportunity and Aiming at an M.S. in Biochemistry

By Mengjia (Michelle) Lin

I started out with no direction and no clear career pathway. Then, along came Dr. Nidhi Gadura, a professor and the coordinator of BioPrep, a summer research internship at Stony Brook University. I applied with no guarantee of admission, but I thought I might as well give it a try. One day she called me frantically saying, "check your email, check your email!" I was very confused. I checked my email and it read: CONGRATULATIONS!! I was admitted into the program. Through this program, I actually found my career. I was amazed. When the program ended, I wanted to continue doing research. So, I went back and asked my chemistry professor if he knew of any lab openings. He told me all the labs were full. I was very disappointed. I kept thinking to myself I should have asked much sooner. The next day he called me into his office. He told me he had good news and bad news for me. The good news was he found a mentor for me. The bad news was

that I had to stay in Queensborough one extra year if I wanted to conduct research through the Honors Program. Without reconsideration, I took his offer and the one who became my mentor was him, Dr. Paris Svoronos. He took me under his wing. We went to many conferences and presented my findings both in power point and poster forms. After graduating from Queensborough, I was admitted into Queens College, where I currently work under Dr. Wilma Saffran, the Chair of the Department Chemistry and Biochemistry. As of now, I have been conducting research for almost four years, and I love it. I recently applied to the Biochemistry Master's Program at Queens College. I hope to get a positive notification soon, so I can continue my work with Dr. Saffran. At Queensborough I found out what I wanted to do with my life. Through the Honors Program, I found myself.

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

From Almost Dropping out of College to Becoming a Medical Doctor

By Dmitriy Rybitskiy

I would like to share my experiences at Queensborough Community College. I took organic chemistry with Professor Svoronos on e-permit because my home college (Laguardia Community College) did not offer it. I needed the class to satisfy the requirement for medical school. I had a pretty slim chance at medical school admission because I had dropped out of Hunter College two years prior to that time. I worked as an EMT, then as a paramedic to support my family. That gave me a valuable clinical experience but my resume was lacking academic rigors needed for medical school. I was able to return to school when my daughter turned two years old because community colleges have subsidized day care on site. The organic chemistry taught by Prof Svoronos was one of the most challenging yet one of the most enjoyable and valuable classes I have taken in college. He loves teaching chemistry, however, his true passion is for showing the underdogs how to succeed academically. I got a B in the organic I and C- (minimum to pass) in organic II. No medical school

would accept an applicant with C in Organic Chemistry. However, Prof Svoronos saw a potential in me and offered an opportunity for me to do a research in his lab as part of the Honors Program. The project resulted in poster presentations at multiple research conferences, including a regional and a National American Chemical Society meeting. Importantly, it boosted my confidence and I retook chemistry II in the summer and got an A. Emboldened by success, I transferred to a four year college (Queens College) and chose to major in the very subject that I dreaded before – chemistry (actually biochemistry) with a concentration in the Science Honors. I was able to gain admission to medical school. Today, I am in my second year of the residency training in general surgery. I am happily married with a 12 year old daughter. My success would not be possible without Dr. Svoronos' guidance and mentoring for which I am forever grateful.

How the Honors program At Queensborough Shaped Up my Career as a College Professor

By Dr. Hoda Mirafzal

The Honors Program at QCC was definitely a crucial step in my academic path. I took honors courses in mathematics, chemistry, physics and history. The material was covered more in depth and thus my education in those subjects was comparable to the education that students get at the best institutions in the US. Later, when I transferred to Cooper Union to earn my B.S. in Engineering and eventually to University of California-Merced for my Ph.D., I always felt its impact. I saw myself having a very strong background in the fundamental sciences and that was precisely because of the honors classes I had completed at QCC. The challenge I encountered in these classes

continued to interest and inspire me all along. The Honors classes were also generally smaller in size than the regular classes which allowed for a much closer interaction with the professor and other classmates. As a College Professor today, I often find myself applying the same teaching methods that my honors professors applied on me back then. In summary, honors courses provided this challenging, fruitful, and rewarding experience in a friendly class atmosphere that built the foundation of my academic career.

Donald Mitchell Alumni Reflection

By Donald Mitchell

I currently attend the City College of New York, having just graduated from Queensborough Community College with an Associate's degree in Engineering Science. While at QCC, I was involved in research in Organic Chemistry under the mentorship of Dr. Julie Pigza. This was an honors research class which mainly involved organic synthesis. Our area of interest was the applications of oxyallyl silanes and their use as homoenolate equivalents. I learned many things from the experience in the chemistry lab; not only the basic procedures involved in synthesizing and purification, but also the thinking strategies employed in conducting research. During my time in the laboratory my mentor showed me many useful techniques

involved in the synthesis of organic molecules. I learned the various purification techniques such as recrystallization learned the various purification techniques such as recrystallization flash chromatography. Subsequently, I was taught to use the NMR instrument to determine the products formed and also their purity. This experience led to a summer 2013 REU at Iowa State University's Center for Biorenewable Chemicals (CBIRC). There I was placed with Dr. George Kraus, and organic chemist. In his lab I worked on the conversion of the pyrone, methyl coumalate, to substituted aromatics. I presented my findings at the NERM Meeting of the ACS hosted by Yale University on October 26 2013. I have just found out that I got accepted to a second REU paid internship at the University of South

From Queensborough's Honors Program to the Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship

By Yueting Chen

I remember starting my career at Queensborough by taking Honors General Chemistry I (CH151) and Calculus (Math441) during the very first semester. The classes were smaller than normal but involved a great degree of interaction between students and faculty. We were nurtured more carefully and more delicately although we were often harshly challenged. Although taking two Honors courses at the same time was challenging, I believe this is how I learned to handle several difficult courses at the same time and diffuse the pressure associated with them. By completing 32 Honors credits, I made myself more competitive and

succeeded in getting two paid summer research internships— one with the New York City, Department of Environmental protection (NYC-DEP) during the summer of 2012 and one with the Biochemistry Department at Stony Brook University during the summer of 2013. I presented my findings both at Columbia University's Undergraduate Research Symposium (2013 and 2014) and the Northeast Regional Meeting (NERM at Yale University, October 2013). As a result I was very fortunate to be awarded the Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship, the first one ever by a Queensborough student.

Honors Contract in Creative Writing-Fiction

By Stephen Goldberg

My honors contract was in the fall semester of 2012 in my EN201 (Creative Writing—Fiction) class. The task I set for myself was to write short fiction towards an anthology as well as to polish a story of mine for publication, both steps toward my dream of having my own work published. During the semester I read several novels and books of short stories and wrote as many pieces as my mind could conceive. Throughout the semester I bounced ideas off of Professor

Jan Ramjerdi and got suggestions and comments that helped solidify and develop my style. In the end I was left with almost ninety pages of new fiction, in various styles and genres, a couple of which, I felt, were destined for publication. The honors contract for me was a way to prod me in the directions of my dreams. It allowed me to expose myself to more and different works of literature and allowed them to influence the way that I write. I evolved as a writer and had a great time doing it.

The Biotechnology Honors Program at Queensborough: How it Helped my Pharmacy Studies at the University of Maryland

By Jonathan Myung

My experience with the Biotechnology Honors Program at Queensborough Community College has provided me with a number of benefits in my professional as well as my academic career. I had the opportunity to take the Biotechnology Honors class, while I was a microbiology intern at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration through Dr. Paris Svoronos' efforts. The methodologies employed at this public health organization were all familiar to me due to the honors course. The knowledge I gained from this class allowed me to make an excellent impression on my employers, which will have a beneficial effect on my professional career. Academically, the concepts I learned in Biotechnology are still applicable to many of my studies. I am currently a first year student pharmacist at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy. Subjects such as Biochemistry, Genomics, Proteomics, and Immunology have all presented with concepts that I previously learned in the Biotechnology course. The level of understanding I attained from the honors program facilitated my studies and allowed me to perform well in all of these classes. I have no doubt that I will continually be exposed to the concepts I learned in Biotechnology in future classes. I am grateful to have experienced many benefits from the Biotechnology Honors Program. Lastly, I just wanted to thank Dr. Nidhi Gadura for the excellent experience and providing me with the knowledge to become a successful student

The Chemistry Honors Program at Queensborough Community College has taught me concepts that are still applicable to my studies as well as helped ease my transition into pharmacy school. As a first year student pharmacist, chemistry is a subject that lays the groundwork for my future studies. It was required for me to take classes such as Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Biochemistry last semester. Currently, I am taking Medicinal Chemistry I and I am expected to take Medicinal Chemistry II next semester. The Chemistry Honors Program provided me with a strong foundation of concepts in chemistry. I was able to obtain A's for both Biochemistry and Pharmaceutical Chemistry last semester. In addition, I received the top grade for both the first and second exam of Medicinal Chemistry. I have been acknowledged for my strong understanding of the fundamental concepts of chemistry from both my peers and professors, which I can only attribute to the Chemistry Honors Program. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of the honors program. Of course the success of the Chemistry Honors Program can only be attributable to the professors who run the program, so I wanted to thank Dr. Paris Svoronos for providing me with the knowledge and insight to become a successful student pharmacist.

Conducting Research in RIMS: How it Helped me Earn a Summer Internship at Rutgers University

By Nadia Abole

While a student at QCC, I was introduced to the opportunity of conducting research by my Biology professor Dr Raji Subramaniam when she noticed that I had very good grades in General Biology I. I took the offer to join RIMS and conducted research on melanoma cells under Dr. Regina Sullivan. It was a great experience that taught me so much and gave me the opportunity to participate in multiple conferences where I presented our work both regionally and nationally. I discovered other avenues by talking to other students during those meetings and I applied at a summer research internship program at Rutgers University in 2008 to get more exposure to research. I got accepted at this great summer program as one of the hundreds of

applicants nationally, I was proud to represent QCC there as I was the only community college student. My background in research at QCC was so helpful in getting me through that summer program. It was intense work and required a lot of discipline. It allowed me to meet great scientists and helped me choose what career I wanted to pursue in the future. Being an Honors student at QCC has opened so many doors and helped me get in programs that are highly ranked and quite competitive to get in. Doing extra work such as the research programs offered at QCC are pathways to achieve one's dreams in the future. I am grateful that I was part of the Honors group at QCC.