

Lock Haven University

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Honors Students Ready for Another Great Year

As the new academic year was about to start, the Lock Haven University Global Honors Program welcomed 82 incoming freshmen students to their Class of 2015. The Honors students arrived to campus a few days early to participate in the Global Honors Program's Freshmen Orientation activities. Upper-class honors students were on hand to greet them and help them move into their dorms. After the students got settled into their rooms and parents said their final goodbyes, all the Freshmen Honors Students got together to officially start their Honors Program Orientation.

"The goal of the Freshmen Honors Program Orientation is not only to inform our students about the various dynamic aspects of our program, but also to help them meet other students, create friendships, and get acquainted with the campus," said Caroline Sweeney, who, as Student Associate Director for Admissions, Recruitment, and Retention within the Global Honors Program, was in charge of planning all orientation activities.

The students participated in multiple different icebreakers to meet and interact with other students. After a few initial icebreakers, students were then grouped into Freshman Development Groups, which are groups of 8 to 9 freshmen students coupled with 2 upper-class leaders. These groups, commonly referred to as FDGs, meet twice a week throughout the fall semester to help students continue to develop friendships, get acquainted with campus, help each other with situations that may arise, and to have a chance to escape the stressors of the first semester of college.

"The freshmen in my FDG really enjoyed the orientation program over the weekend. They were all very comfortable walking into their first classes on Monday morning knowing that they already knew some people in their class," said Megan Sargent, a sophomore student in the program who leads the 'Scorpions' FDG.

Other orientation activities included 'first meals' in Bentley, a dance/social in the Parson's Union Building, a program information session, a Photo Scavenger Hunt around campus, and team building exercises. "We always get great feedback from our freshmen students on our Photo Scavenger Hunt. It's a great way for them to get familiar with the campus all while being able to be creative and have a great time. Our most common suggestion for making the Orientation

Program better this year was to extend the time slot of our Photo Scavenger Hunt,” said Brent Barge, the Student Associate Director for Program Development and Leadership in the program.

On Wednesday, August 30, students from across the program as well as professors who are involved with the Honors Program enjoyed a BBQ on the lawn under the campus tent. “It was great to see our professors and students interacting outside the classroom. Many of these students do not meet many of the Honors Professors if they do not get a chance to take their courses, so it was a great way for our students and faculty to see academic sides of the program they may normally not get to experience” commented Chris Brittain, Graduate Assistant for the Global Honors Program.

And on Wednesday, September 7, students in the program will participate in the first Public Issues Forum of the semester on the topic of Human Rights. During Public Issues Forums, students are presented with a current social, cultural, or world issue and are split into small groups to have engaging discussions and debates on the topic. This Public Issues Forum will also draw some concepts from *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson, the summer reading book for the freshmen in the Global Honors Program.

Dr. Jackie Whitling, Interim Director of the Global Honors Program, is very excited about the direction that the program is headed this semester. “We have a great bunch of returning and new students in the Global Honors Program; students that love to get involved, be engaged, and make the most out of their college experience. I’m looking forward to a great semester in the program where we reach heights that we have never met before.” Dr. Whitling, or Jackie to the students, is also in her own ‘Honors Orientation’ this semester, as she is in just her third month as Interim Director in the Program. “I’ve got a great bunch of student leaders and support staff around me, and I’m looking forward to working with them and learning more about the program this semester and helping it grow. This is just a great group we have here; they always seem to have everything under control, making my job a lot more enjoyable.”

Dr. Whitling takes the reins of the program after the departure of Dr. Joseph McGinn, who had been director of the Global Honors Program for the past six years. He departed the University after 21 years of service to assume the duties of Dean of the Honors College at Towson University in Towson, Maryland. Everyone in the Global Honors Program wishes Dr. McGinn the best of luck in his new endeavors at Towson.

Additional information on the Global Honors Program is available on their website at www.lhup.edu/honors Photos from Freshmen Orientation, the Photo Scavenger Hunt, the Welcome Back BBQ, and many other events are on their Flickr page at www.flickr.com/lhu_honors

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