

# The Ampersand

UIC Honors College

November 1998

## Important Upcoming Dates

Thanksgiving Holiday	11/26 & 27
Spring Registration	Through 12/11
Final Exam Week	12/7 - 12/11
Fall Grades Mailed	12/21
Fall Grades Available Via UIC Express	12/23
Spring 1999 Semester Begins	1/11/99

## National Collegiate Honors Conference: Honors in the Loop by Puneet Shroff

This year's National Collegiate Honors Council Conference (NCHC) was held at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago from November 4-8 and provided an opportunity for honors students, staff, and faculty from across the United States to exchange ideas concerning successful honors education. While different seminars dealt with topics ranging from the implications of policy-making within an honors program to the opportunities available to honors students, the conference allowed me to expand my view of different honors programs and to hopefully bring some of those successful ideas to UIC.

On an academic level, there were many programs dealing with various honors curricula. I attended an interesting session that featured a discussion of the senior thesis. While much of the discussion was based on developing a thesis from a student's and faculty's perspective, it led to a debate on whether senior theses should be mandatory within an honors program. This led to a more philosophical debate of the roles and goals of an honors program or college. Other informative sessions discussed ways to build a cohesive honors community among commuters as well as providing further insight in the enhancement of honors residential life in the dorms.

As a student, however, I found the conference to be most useful in providing numerous opportunities available to honors students that we here at UIC should be taking advantage of. One extremely interesting opportunity is the Honors Semester, usually held both fall and spring semesters, and sponsored by the NCHC. About thirty students from across the country spend this semester in a specified location with honors professors and engage in studying the specified topic of the semester. Some of the students I met had participated in an Honors Semester in New York City where they studied global communication, interpretations of modern art, and ethnic neighborhoods. Their response to the Honors Semester was overwhelmingly positive and encouraging. Another interesting program presented was the Social Security Challenge. This is a project, conceived by two college students from Texas, that intends to educate college students on the economic and political implications of the Social Security system and hopes to utilize student involvement and suggestions as a means of reforming the system. Look out for a discussion soon here at UIC!

The Conference also featured several notable speakers. Renowned ethnobotanist Dr. Mark Plotkin discussed his work in the Amazon Rainforests. He discussed the unknown animals and plants of the forest that can contribute so much to the pharmacological and medical fields. Yet, he also stressed the maintenance of the rainforests and the tribal groups as the first responsibility of environmentalism. Dr. Plotkin also presented some very interesting political, social, and biological insights into the field of ethnobotany. Visit <http://www.ethnobotany.org/> for more information.

*(cont'd. on page 3)*

## Don't Forget!

**Remember, ALL Honors College students MUST register for HON 222 each semester. HON 222 - Honors Activity is zero (0) credit hours and is required each term, except for summer.**

**For Spring 1999, the call numbers are as follows: 53267 (for students whose last name starts with A through L); 53256 (for students whose last name starts with M through Z).**

## A Spooky Social

by Eric Yang

October 30<sup>th</sup>—the day before Halloween. A social was held on this day, but not your typical Honors College Social. Because of its relative closeness to Halloween, the Honors College Advisory Board decided to make it a special one with a Halloween theme. For this delightful occasion, we decorated the Honors College lounge in the macabre style of this ghastly holiday. Black and orange streamers hung from every wall and corner, and the images of pumpkins and witches were seen throughout a place normally reserved for studying and quiet conversation. Cookies, instead of cold cuts, were served, with designs of ghouls and witches and other characters associated with the festival of the dead.



In addition to all these new alterations, there was another special element of the social—pumpkin-carving. Bobbing for apples was momentarily considered as another event but for sanitation purposes, it was denied. Twenty pumpkins had been supplied for the artistic mutilation of any student who wished to create a masterpiece for their own, either as a decoration for their

house during Halloween, or for a creepy illumination tool for candles to be put in. The turnout of eager students wanting to carve their own pumpkins was impressive. Conveniently, the pumpkins had been already emptied of their slimy innards. Given oversized kitchen knives, as well as plastic knives, markers, and anything that was left over in the Honors College decoration supplies, the pumpkin cutters went to work.

Because not every pumpkin develops the same way, and not everyone decorates their pumpkin the same way, there were a number of many interesting works that were created. They ranged from your basic conventional jack-o-lantern, to composite carvings of others. For instance, **Anne Kopec** carved a magnificent mural of the night sky in her pumpkin, making it a less frightening and more breathtaking work. When later putting a candle in the gut of the pumpkin, the stars and other celestial designs that were carved into the pumpkin's flesh lit up, creating an amazing effect. **Comilla Sasson** carved her pumpkin into the likeness of the president of the Honors College Advisory Board, **Puneet Shroff**; needless to say, the resemblance was almost exact—except for the orange pallor on the pumpkin's face. Also, **Minesh Shah** did a self-portrait with his pumpkin—with a twist. By utilizing the purple velvet streamers from some miscellaneous decorations, he gave his "Little Orange Shah" purple sideburns, and proudly carved his signature "M" in the back of the pumpkin's head.

These unusual styles, along with the many others that represented the true diversity of the Honors College student body, were what defined the Halloween social, and made it fun as well. It is hoped that this revived tradition will happen again next year, so more people can come and socialize, meet new people, and make new designs out of pumpkins that no one has conceived of yet.



See the Honors College web page for photographs of the Halloween Social: <http://www.hc.uic.edu>

## Once Upon a Time

by Vandana Khungar

Once upon a time, Jack and Jill, two young UIC students couldn't find any magic in their lives. As they walked through the masses of concrete and construction, they decided that nothing would take them out of this rut. They reminisced about happy times and their childhood and remembered the fairy tales that their mothers would read to them.

"Those were the best times of my life," Jill said to Jack. "I know, and Disney movies just don't do it for me," said Jack. They each thought about their favorite fairy tales some more. "Cinderella is my all time favorite," said Jill, "I want to be swept off my feet out of this boring life by a handsome prince." "Oh, wow, I can just see it, but Sleeping Beauty if my favorite. I want to kiss a beautiful princess and take her away from her dreary life," said Jack.

Then Jack and Jill walked into CCC, where they saw a booth advertising ticket sales for the 6<sup>th</sup> annual ball sponsored by the Honors College. The ball was to be held on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1999 in the Presidential Ballroom of the Midland Hotel. The theme was "Once Upon a Time..." a fairy tale theme. Finally, Jack and Jill could have the magic of their childhood brought back to them. "Wow! This is even better than reading fairy tales! Now we get to be a part of them!" said Jill.

She and Jack prepared for the big night and when it finally came, Jill realized that she could be swept off her feet by a handsome prince, and Jack finally got to kiss his beautiful princess.

## Extended Hours Available for Computer Resources

Due to the increased demand for computer resources that usually accompanies the last phase of each semester, the Academic Computing and Communications Center (ACCC) will be offering extended hours as follows:

All ACCC (Academic Computing and Communications Center) computer labs in SEL will remain open 24 hours on these days:

Tuesday 11/17 to Tuesday 11/24

Saturday 11/28 to Thursday 12/3

Additionally, consulting via the CSO (Client Services Office) will be available for walk-in clients until 7:00 PM (instead of the usual 5:00 PM) on these days:

Monday 11/23

Tuesday 11/24

Monday 11/30

Tuesday 12/1

Wednesday 12/2

Thursday 12/3



# Activism on Campus by Shivangi Bhatt

The UIC community has been witness to many strange and disturbing events in recent weeks. First, the infamous article written in the Chicago Flame, which has been dubbed as racist and hateful. Then, came the news of the death of Matthew Shepard in Wyoming. Affirmative action has been eradicated in two states. Now, there has been an incident of sexual assault on campus, at a time and place that no one would think it unsafe to walk alone. In short, the last few weeks have been eventful, and not in the best way.

What impact do these events have on the students of UIC? Well, I can personally say that I have been quite disturbed by some of the recent news. The hate crimes against Matthew Shepard and James Byrd hit me the hardest, and I was shocked and appalled by the crime committed on our very own campus as well. And I am not alone — many people mourned the murder victims, and the incident of sexual assault has caused a scare among students.

I can be optimistic to a fault sometimes, and I will make an attempt here as well. Almost nothing good can be found in these situations: a young man who never harmed anyone was murdered because of the choices he made, a man was dragged from the back of a truck for being the “wrong” skin color, and an innocent girl was attacked at a time and place where she would never have expected to be harmed. It is sickening, to say the least.

But good can come out of such things, although maybe not in the most obvious way. Slowly, students and faculty are banding together to counteract the hate and violence which embody these vicious acts. After the death of Matthew Shepard, a candlelight vigil was held in the center of campus. Here, students and faculty voiced their opinions on homophobia, bigotry, and hate crimes. After the crime last weekend, a rally against violence on campus was held in CCC. Discussions and rallies have been more and more frequent on campus lately as the political climate at UIC becomes more and more heated. I attended two of these events, and while they moved and affected all those present, I only wish more people had taken part in these activities. Gatherings such as these are a way for the UIC community to increase their awareness of today’s issues, as well as show their support for survivors of the kind of violence they are trying to combat.

I have always felt that each person has a cause – an issue or goal that stirs up a desire within him or her to change the world around him or her. We all wander through life, looking for a purpose or a calling, and once it is found, we devote major parts of our lives to working towards that goal. At least, this is a very idealized vision of what I would *like* life to be. But even if we all don’t live with this idealistic fervor, it is nice to have something fulfilling, aside from the mundane rituals of day-to-day existence, which makes life worth living. Often, getting active in something that you care about, or that you feel is important, helps set you in the right direction. And many times this spirit of activism starts on the college campus.

When I first came to UIC, I felt that it had nothing to offer me as far as a spirit of community or the activist feeling. There were many things that factored into my sentiments: firstly, UIC is mainly a commuter school, and seeing the campus virtually deserted every day after 5:00 p.m. was certainly not comforting; secondly, I never took the initiative to find out what was going on outside of my little world. Today, two years later, I am involved in two of UIC’s many student organizations and I take notice of everything that goes on around me. I see that UIC, although it may not be your typical university campus, has much to offer students in terms of getting involved with current matters. Every rally, discussion, and vigil is a door to another world of issues that need to be resolved and acted upon. It is wonderful to see people banding together to voice their opinions and come up with solutions to contemporary problems, even if it must be inspired by such misfortune.

Let us all take a moment to remember both the victims and the survivors of the hatred and insanity that is rampant in the world today. Let us open our eyes, wake up, and take notice of what is going on in the world around us. And most importantly, let us *do* something about it.



## NCHC (cont'd. from 1st page)

Author Sara Paretsky is perhaps best known for her “V.I. Warshawski” character in a series of crime mysteries all set in Chicago. V.I. Warshawski is the street-smart, less- than-perfect private investigator. In a very well attended early Saturday morning session, Ms. Paretsky addressed the issue of heroes and major influences on her writing. A fascinating and engaging speaker, she also shared with the audience her limited experience with the filmmakers of the Hollywood bomb, “V.I. Warshawski.” She felt that neither the essence of her heroine or the *real* city of Chicago was captured. Ms. Paretsky indicated that the producers were not interested in her insight into the main character or the real Chicago locations of the book’s settings. Despite the star power of Kathleen Turner, “V.I. Warshawski” was short-lived at the box office. After her speech, Ms. Paretsky graciously signed copies of her latest book for a very long line of admirers.

Amidst all the seminars and planned social activities, there was an additional emphasis for participants of the conference to explore the wondrous city of Chicago. Chicagoans often forget about all this great city has to offer. The evenings and free periods of the conference afforded visitors and natives alike opportunities to enjoy the city life. A special treat was the conference-sponsored “Evening of Art” held at the Art Institute. NCHC participants were invited to attend a special reception (featuring free food!) and view the special Mary Cassatt exhibit. Many participants of the conference also took advantage of the concurrently running Chicago Humanities Festival.

The conference was a rewarding experience as it opened my eyes to the myriad of opportunities available to honors students. If any of the above sounds interesting or if you would like to know more about the Conference in general, please contact me at [pshrofl@uic.edu](mailto:pshrofl@uic.edu)

# The Society of Future Physicians

by Rajeev Garg

The semester is almost coming to an end and the Society of Future Physicians is wrapping up with its last events for the term. The semester itself has been a busy one for the Executive Board Members who planned and organized many of the activities held this semester. We started off the year with a reception that was held at the Faculty/Alumni Lounge in the College of Medicine. Among the speakers who came were Dean Kaba, Dean Madia and Dean Sandlow who gave a lecture on "What it Means to Be a Physician."

Our first event was the Chicago AIDS Walk, in which a group of students walked with the UIC Medical Center one early Saturday morning at the beginning of the semester. As an organization, we were able to raise over \$700 to help fight the on going battle against AIDS.

Our next event was a Medical Ethics Discussion in which members debated some of the most controversial topics in medicine today. These included such issues as physician-assisted suicide, socialized medicine, and legal aspects of medicine.

Recently, we invited a group of medical students from the UIC College of Medicine to share their experiences about life in medical school. They also offered helpful advice on suggested undergraduate courses, how to prepare for the MCAT, and how to apply to medical school. In the next couple of weeks, the Society of Future Physicians will be holding its last events for the semester. On Tuesday, November 17th, Dean Madia addressed the group at a seminar entitled "How to Get into Medical School." The topics discussed included taking the MCAT, the application process, and admissions into medical school.

The final event for the semester, due to the interest and success of the first, will be another medical ethics discussion dealing with some new and controversial topics. For next semester, the Board Members are working on a project that we are excited to get started for the first time at UIC: a medical mentorship program. This will provide the members an opportunity to shadow physicians, spending time with them in a clinical setting. It will give them a chance to experience medicine first hand. In addition, we will be inviting speakers from all areas of medicine to give talks on the different opportunities that will exist in the field.

We hope that by taking part in all of these activities, the members of this organization will have a good idea of what medicine is really about and how it is changing. And with this knowledge we hope that each member can strengthen their decision in the career that they want to pursue. We will be holding another membership drive next semester. Keep an eye out for our application.



# The Countdown has Begun: Coping with Finals Anxiety

by Tara Mythri Raghavan

As the last few days of school arrive, students must deal with the most dreaded part of the semester... FINALS! As the semester winds down, students are forced to deal with "Finals Anxiety." Sophomore **Vani Vedam** said "I am totally frustrated and stressed out." What makes students so worried about finals? Obviously, it is because finals can sometimes make or break one's semester grade.

As a student who has been through four sets of finals, I can say to a certain extent that final exams are not as bad as we make them out to be. Remember the countdown has begun and we need to face the inevitable. Although this may seem intimidating, all students, if prepared, can conquer these terrible tests. However, each person needs to find their own unique way of preparing for their respective finals.

Being prepared is definitely the biggest problem that students face. In reality, taking the test is not as difficult as getting ready for it. HCAB member-at-large and senior **Goud Maragani** suggests studying ahead. Although advisors and professors alike suggest that one prepare for finals throughout the semester, this is often not possible. Many students take five to six classes per semester and are often busy with papers, labs, and other tests through the semester, so studying for the exam from the start is nearly impossible.

Honors College student **Michiko Goto** feels that it would be advantageous to have a "Dead Week" the week before final exams. She explained that, on other campuses, there are no classes the week before finals. This would be a great idea, but I don't believe that we will be seeing a "Dead Week" at UIC in the future, unless you count the week after Spring Break.

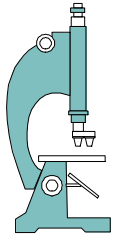
Although cramming is not recommended, if one *needs* to cram, it should be done with efficiency. Cramming the day before or the morning of the final is not a good idea. This prevents information from sinking in and thus makes the study time useless.

(cont'd. on page 5)

# Undergraduate Research: An Excellent Opportunity

by Ankush Goel

As an Honors College student, I often hear that the University of Illinois at Chicago is a Research I institution. When I entered the university two years ago I didn't think I would get the opportunity to do much research, and that all the talk about undergraduate research was just a way to convince us to attend the university. I can now say that there really is an opportunity to take part in some serious research here as an undergrad. During both my freshman and sophomore years, I helped with research in the department of medicine's section of endocrinology.



My research was a clinical study on the incidence of salivary gland tumors in patients who received head and neck x-rays from 1939 – 1962. The cohort of patients numbered almost 3,000 children who received the x-ray treatments for benign conditions of the head and neck. The study showed that there is a relationship between benign salivary tumors and radiation exposure. There were, however, too few cases of malignant tumors (cancers) to make a relationship between salivary cancer and x-ray radiation. Most of the work I did involved the statistical analysis and the actual writing of the paper, which was recently published.

I had the opportunity to work in the section of endocrinology based on a recommendation from a previous research supervisor. The Honors College though, provides an excellent resource: the Undergraduate Research Assistant program, or URA, for short. This program helps students get in touch with faculty who are looking for help in their laboratories, and can be used as an honors activity. To find out more about this program, contact Associate Dean Jeff Lewis at [jlewis@uic.edu](mailto:jlewis@uic.edu).

Overall, I think research experience is invaluable and rewarding for undergraduates.

## Need Good Luck on Final Exams? Try Feng Shui!

by Becky Chan

Feng shui, translated literally, means the movement of wind and water. It is a Chinese philosophy or art of the placement of objects to create a harmonious environment where one lives. It is based upon thousands of years of observing everyday life, though no one knows exactly when it was created. Recently, it has gained popularity in the west since Donald Trump and other entrepreneurs have started building their properties following this philosophy. Feng shui was even featured on the cover of Smithsonian magazine not so long ago. By now, you may now be asking, “what is this all about?”

Feng shui is largely based on chi (chee), or the flow of life energy. The idea is to get chi to flow gently and evenly with the environment, so that one feels harmonious with their surroundings. This is an abstract concept that lies on the subconscious level, so I will attempt to illustrate it by using examples. Imagine that you walk into a house where at every corner, you feel as though you are going to run into a white wall if you are not careful. You might also walk into an office that is so filled with papers and books scattered all over the shelves and desk that it feels stifling. These are examples of “bad” chi, because the energy cannot flow freely. On the other hand, one can also have “bad” chi when the energy flows too quickly. Examples include: living at the intersection of a “T” shaped road because the rush of energy is hitting the occupant directly from the bottom of the T to the top, or hospital corridors where doctors and other medical staff rush in and out of rooms. Remedies include using objects to slow down the flow of energy.

Now, take a good look at your room, office, or any other place you might study for exams and finals. You want to be in a place where you feel comfortable in your surroundings, and uncluttered, as clutter produces a negative effect, so that the chi flow is stifled. When sitting at your desk, it is important to be able to see the door or entrances- so that you may directly see who is coming in after you. If this is not the case, as you may be subjected to interrupted chi from turning around to see who is there. If you cannot move the furniture around you and would like to correct this situation, you may consider placing a small decorative mirror so that you may see who is coming. The lighting of the room should be adequate, as balance in the room is important for the natural flow of chi. Also consider having living things around you, such as small plants or fish, as they stimulate chi. In many Chinese establishments, you may have noticed that there are often fish tanks in the front of the store, as it brings the owners good chi. Thus, it is a good idea to surround your place with living things.

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## Coping

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It is better if one studies the weekend before the test so that the information is more likely to be retained. Do problems the day before the test or read over your notes. This will help you remember the information better. Obviously, the worst thing that a person can do is to take a test without studying at all.

Most importantly, get a good night's rest and eat breakfast before the test! Although this may seem like something your mother would say, it has been proven that students do not think well when they are tired and/or hungry. See, Mom is right!

For those of you who are freshmen, do not let people scare you into thinking that finals are worse than the cafeteria food. Nothing can be that bad! As long as you study hard and are confident, you will do well. Finals are tough, but if you keep an eye on your goals, you will achieve them.

Throughout my career at UIC, I have received and given advice. All I can offer you now is “be prepared and good luck!”

*FYI: For success on your final exams, student should consider a balance between good old fashioned hard work, i.e. studying the material, and getting your own personal chi to flow gently and evenly.*



## Life on the Honors Floor

by Nirali Shah

What does it mean to be in the Honors College? While there are many answers to that question, one of the most wonderful aspects of being a part of the College is the option of living on one of the two Honors floors (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>) on the west end of Commons West. Living on the Honors floor has provided me with an experience that I would never want to give up.

When I first came to college, I was told that the people I lived with would become my family, and what a family it has become! My first year, I met so many diverse personalities, and they helped shape how the rest of my year would be. Some made me laugh; some made me cry. But all in all, everyone around me helped me grow and not feel so lonely that first year.

Because we all share the common bond of being in the Honors College, I have classes with many of the people on my floor. It is very convenient to study with those who live around me. Additionally, it's really nice to live with people who have already taken the classes you are currently in or will be enrolling in, and to hear what they have to say about the instructors and the classes themselves. Discussing classes and experiencing college life together has led to an interesting bonding experience for most of us. Not only are we learning about each other, but we are learning about the Honors College and UIC as a whole.

The required floor activities are quite interesting and help unite the floor. This semester, we had the choice of attending any of the Chicago Humanities Festival's 94 different events. The idea behind the required floor activity is to expose residents to a new and different cultural activity in the city. I can honestly say that if it weren't for this requirement, I would not have known much about the Chicago Humanities Festival. Because I *had* to go, I was forced to expand my horizons, as any Honors College student should. I found that I really had a nice time. Attending events like these together also contributes to the whole residence hall bonding experience.

## Plans for Winter Break? How About Earning Some \$\$?

by Zishan Khan

What to do, what to do? Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or whatever other special holiday you celebrate is beckoning and you are already strapped for cash while you still have so many presents yet to buy. Plus, your girlfriend is nagging you to get her a much better gift than that Julia Child cookbook or that fab tape of Richard Simmons working it in *Sweatin' to the Oldies*...Ahhh!!! Well, this crafty writer might have the solution to your problem, other than just that whole bottle of aspirin.

Just venture to your local shopping mall or one of your favorite stores and you're bound to see a "Now Hiring" sign in the front window. It is the time of the year when almost all retailers hire people (as in college students) to attend to the needs of the millions of over-zealous customers who need to buy the perfect gift for that special someone.

You can get a seasonal job, and when school commences again in January, you can choose to leave (to fully concentrate on that 300 level class) or you can stay on part-time if you extremely dig what you are doing. Working at a store has its benefits, like a paycheck, which your bank account will surely appreciate. Merchandise discounts are a nice perk, too. Another possible bonus is that you just might have some cute co-workers and you do meet a lot of people in general. As for finding a job, I work at Sunglass Hut in Oakbrook Mall, and I know that we are hiring more sales staff. Also, I recently interviewed at J. Crew for a seasonal job and was hired three days later. So, it can be done.



So, if you want to earn some extra cash and you do not have anything planned for the upcoming break, consider a seasonal job and get that special someone an upgrade on that cookbook to... maybe....let's see...some Tupperware and a spatula. (By the way, if you want to keep your significant other, do not follow my advice on gift giving unless you want to end the relationship or get severely injured.) Other than that, I wish you all seasons greetings and "fa, la, la, la, la.....!"

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## Feng Shui

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Living in Honors housing also provides easy access to important information. Since so many Honors College students are active in campus organizations, finding out what's going on around school is a snap. For instance, several HCAB members live on the floors, so it's always easy to find out what's happening in the Honors College. Likewise, executive board members of the Society of Future Physicians (myself included) can get information about events and so on to Honors floor residents much more directly than is otherwise possible. Living on the Honors floor certainly leads to getting more involved with the college.

On a final note, being a resident of the one of the Honors floor for the past two years was and has been an absolutely wonderful experience. I would not want to live anywhere else. To anyone who has the chance to live on the Honors College floors: take it up! You won't regret it.

Feng shui is used best when one is able to create a feeling of balance and harmony in one's personal space. When applied correctly, I've heard that it can make a small, but positive difference in peoples' lives, and even help them to become successful.

By writing this article, I just wanted to inform everyone of one of the many of the interesting things I've learned about Chinese culture. The story of feng shui is far from complete, and if you are interested, I encourage you to look at the many web sites (<http://www.loop.com/~bramble/fengshui> & <http://www.xdimension.com/fengshui> are just a few good ones), or check out any of the number of books that offer more information on this fascinating topic: [http://www.astrostar.com/books\\_8.htm](http://www.astrostar.com/books_8.htm)

Good luck on finals, and hey, if this helps anyone out for exams or finals, please let me know!

## Meet Nadia Jafri

by Naila Mohsin

Meet **Nadia Jafri**, a spring 1998 UIC graduate whose experiences with the Honors College have begun propelling her towards a bright future. For Nadia, the days of fast approaching final exams, never-ending research papers, and super-caffinated all-nighters (a.k.a.- Jolt Kicks) have come to an end, at least temporarily. Although the days of hard work are not over, the fruits of her efforts are beginning to materialize. Nadia earned a computer science degree from the College of Engineering, and is presently working at Andersen Consulting. In this interview, she shares with us some of her memories of the Honors College, as well as the benefits of her education at UIC.

Nadia was an active member of the Honors College for her entire educational career at UIC. She was introduced to the Honors College upon invitation to the University Scholar Program as a high school senior. As a prospective student, Nadia was impressed by the variety of the courses and seminars the Honors College offered. In regard to the selection of UIC over other universities, Nadia states, "The Honors College had much to offer. It was one of the main reasons that I chose UIC."

She recalls her experience at UIC as a pleasant one, particularly crediting the Honors College. For all four years, Nadia lived in the UIC Residence Halls, specifically on the Honors Floor of Commons West. Nadia felt that living on the Honors Floor enhanced her experience at UIC, making a large urban university feel more hospitable and communal. "I felt a sense of community on the Honors Floor. It was where I met some of my best friends, and I had the opportunity to bond with a diverse group of people." It was through this sense of community that Nadia was introduced to HCAB, the Honors College Advisory Board, with which she was involved for three years.

Nadia's participation in HCAB proved to be quite beneficial to her, both socially and personally. "My involvement with HCAB made my Honors College experience more fulfilling and beneficial. I reached a comfort level with many of the administrators, which made approaching them for advice and help less intimidating." Moreover, she emphasizes the utilization of the benefits of HCAB in the 'real world'. "At the professional level, team dynamics are crucial. HCAB helped me foster those skills."

In her spare time, Nadia likes to read, watch movies, and travel. She has traveled to such exotic locales as Kuwait (where she lived for a significant part of her life), Nigeria, Iraq, Spain, France, and Holland. Some of her future goals include traveling the world more extensively, as well as getting an MBA. When asked about an eccentric or interesting fact about herself, she responded "I have to check my alarm clock about 12 times before sleeping".

I ended the interview with the question of her best memory of her college experience. She enthusiastically responded, "There are tons of things that I could tell you about. But, the first one that springs to mind was the time we had a dance party in the middle of the hall during finals week. It was about 3:30 a.m. and everyone was really stressed out. All of a sudden someone brought out their strobe light to the middle of the hall and started playing really loud music. We all (including our R.A.) congregated in the hall and danced the night away."

## Kevorkian: Why?


by Sagun Desai

Just mention the name Jack Kevorkian and it's guaranteed to trigger some sort of reaction. My initial reaction to hearing what he does was one of disgust. However, I have looked back at that first impression and have wondered: is what he does really *that* bad? And if it is, can his intentions behind doing it still be good?

My attitude remains ambivalent on the whole situation. At times, I am disturbed by what he does. How can a human being assist in ending other humans' lives? Although at other times, I wonder if his motivation for doing what he does is really out of a genuine compassion for others. He often comes off as an uncaring individual to the media, because he continually refuses to abide by the law. However, he seems to carefully choose his patients. In addition, he never accepts money for what he does. In this sense, one may believe that his actions may be purely out of consideration for the individuals involved.

Who is to say if we will ever completely understand the mystery behind Kevorkian's actions and intentions?

**Have any bright ideas about what you'd like to see in the next Ampersand? If so, please contact Nirali Shah at [nshah8@uic.edu](mailto:nshah8@uic.edu) or Jennifer Kosco at [jkosco@uic.edu](mailto:jkosco@uic.edu)**



**We'd love to hear from you!**

# Anticipation and Tori Amos

by Mimi Roy

Walking towards the lake with harsh winds and rain beating down in a fall torrent, my feet poking their way through my stylish black sandals, I make my way to my friend's apartment. It's a Thursday evening near Water Tower Place. All of the store displays are subtly lighted and ready for Halloween. People are rushing to get home and out of the cold rain. Amidst all the hurrying and bustling around me, I want to slow down and enjoy the steady rhythm of the rain, even though I'm bound to catch the first chills of bronchitis. What makes me want to linger in the moment is the building expectation. Anticipating a moment, with all of its potential aspects and consequences, is perhaps one of the few undisturbed pleasures we can get these days. No matter what technological advances we make, nothing can paint the future better than anticipation and the imagination.

And while I'm on this philosophical bent, riding the "L" with Priya (an M2 furiously studying for exams, even as the rain falls), heading towards McGaw Hall at Northwestern, I feel the expectation building up more and more. What is it? It's October 29th. A Thursday night. The "L," with its slow stops and steady pace, seemed an eternity as well. The rain pelts down harder when I'm off the "L." I curse each moment for deciding to wear these sandals and skirt too short for a stormy fall night. In the darkness, I can't tell if I'm stepping on pavement or muddy puddles.

Once we reach the Ryan Arena, we face the Toriphiles. They're usually dressed to the nines in black, sometimes dying their hair red to match the songstress's famous bottle-red locks. A few people are still trying to buy tickets. A guy calls out, "Hey, you want a ticket?" A girl, unsuspecting, says, "Sure." "Well, here you go, third row. Go knock yourself out." The girl turns to us, slackjawed, and asks "Did that just happen?"

Once Priya and I meet up with Togay and Soh Yoon (who are, incidentally, about to get married and have that "just about to get married" aura about them, that look which is so confident and sure), we are about to jump in. The anticipation reaches its climax once we're seated and the lights go down. It's time. A drummer starts to beat long and hard. It goes on and on. And then finally, Tori Amos walks out and sits down at her Bosendorfer, wearing a red-devil mask, horns, and cape over her clothes, immediately launching into "These Precious Things." It's entrances like that which hold the attention of the audience like nothing else.



And she slithers and slides up against her piano the entire night. In my mind, it's almost as if she's making love to the piano. She throws off her costume and resumes her self. Originally, Tori Amos worked strictly with piano, harpsichord, organ, occasionally having string arrangements with her songs. Yet during her tour this time around, she's brought a band — bass, drums, guitar — as well as her piano. Reinterpreting songs like "Father Lucifer," "Putting the Damage On," "Past the Mission," "The Waitress," "Silent All These Years," and "Happy Phantom," among others, she exuded so much versatility. She also went through variations of songs from her new album, "from the choirgirl hotel": "iieeee," "Liquid Diamonds," "Black Dove," "Jackie's Strength," and a rocking/dance/techno version of "Raspberry Swirl." Meanwhile, Tori chatted up the audience with little anecdotes. And every so often, she would jump up from her bench and point towards her husband in the front row, giving her the most childish look. Despite the abstractness of Tori's lyrics, there's an underlying warmth and beauty with them. The mixture of instruments and voice sound out with a concreteness. Meanwhile, the anticipation is in stasis. I'm at the pinnacle of all that I've been expecting.

Tori goes through an encore, and then, for her final encore, she comes out wearing one gigantic white tennis shoe. She jokes about how she had to change in the guys' locker room and how some of her things might have been mixed up with theirs. And then, with perfect composure, she launches into a beautiful song about love and loss — "Northern Lad."

After nearly two hours of great live music, it's time to go. It's loathsome to think that we have to go so soon. All that anticipation sinks down into my throat, ready to settle into a steady hum inside. And once I get back to my place, I sit down, massage my poor feet, and play back the concert inside. The good thing about anticipation is that it's bound to rise up again. In the meantime, you can just let it linger in the air around you.

# Halloween at Heather Lane

by Harris Jatoi

It was a dark and stormy night... well actually, it wasn't stormy or even that dark! It was Halloween. This is perhaps the only day during the year when people can go a little wild and dress up in unusual ways that would normally make other people think they're insane, but not on Halloween. Costumes can range from the typical, cute pumpkin, the evil witch, an enchanting princess, or even a popular action figure. Popular costumes usually include those from a hit thriller movie, such as the white mask from Scream. Whatever the costume, it's fun to take on a different identity, even if it's just for a day.



I stopped dressing up for Halloween after grade school. However, I enjoy giving out candy to little trick-or-treaters and seeing their costumes. This is exactly what I did this past Halloween. It was about three or four in the afternoon and I was busy studying chemistry up in my room. All of a sudden, I heard the doorbell (just when I thought I had the alkene reactions down). When I opened the door, a little Power Ranger, a young Superman, and a generic monster immediately surrounded me. I gave each of them some candy and complimented their costumes.

Throughout the day, I encountered several witches, princesses, various action heroes, a pumpkin and some other ghoulish costumes. The last bunch of trick or treaters showed up at seven or eight o'clock. All in all, it was nice to see young children dress up and have fun. We need at least *one* day during the year when we can go a little crazy and defy the norm.

## Spotlight: Downtown Chicago Dining

Our monthly feature on Chicago and all the wonderful things to do in the city—museums, sporting events, cultural activities...we'll cover it in this space. If you have a suggestion, or an event or location you'd like to see written about here, let us know.

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Well, continuing in a series of restaurant reviews, I've decided to branch out a bit more and offer my opinion on the cuisine that, in my opinion, is fantastic—Thai. Thai cuisine has been growing in popularity over the past several years, and Chicago has followed this trend, with many Thai restaurants all over the city. The two Thai restaurants I go to most often are Star of Siam and Thai Castle. They are both popular favorites with many students. *Please note* that I am far from an expert on Thai food and that many Thai people will probably laugh at what follows—but this is all I've had to try!

*Star of Siam: 11 East Illinois Street (near the intersection of State and Illinois); ph. 312-670-0100; delivery and carryout available*

Star of Siam is located in the River North district of the city. The prices are moderate, and the food is fantastic. My suggestion is to go with an empty stomach—you'll appreciate the food much more if you do! The decor is pretty simple, with tables and benches situated in the center and sides of the rooms. The walls are covered with reviews from various Chicago publications and transcripts from television/radio reviews.

For starters, try the *Spicy Beef* and the *Spring Rolls*; the spicy beef is marinated, fried and skewered, and served with some incredible hot sauce (in general, their hot sauces are not for the weak-hearted!), and the spring rolls are stuffed with cucumber, tofu, and bean sprouts and drenched in honey. For dinner, try the *Pepper and Garlic Chicken* and the *Oyster Beef*; also recommended are the *Pad Thai* and the *Fried Hot and Spicy* dish (which can be served with shrimp, beef, chicken or vegetarian style).

I've sampled many dishes there over the six or seven years I've been going there, and I quite honestly cannot remember one time when I walked away dissatisfied. The service is prompt and friendly, the location is convenient, and the price is right. One interesting fact: Star of Siam catered our luncheon this semester.



*Thai Castle: 311 S. Halsted (close to the intersection of Jackson and Halsted); ph. 312-993-0001; delivery and carry-out available; discount (10%) for UIC students; Mon. - Thurs. 11 A.M. - 9:45 P.M.; Fri./Sat. 11 A.M. - 10:45 P.M.; Sun. 4 P.M. - 9:45 P.M.*

Food from this restaurant represents a major dietary staple for many UIC students, myself included. Their food is good, fast, and relatively inexpensive. In other terms: the \$5 you spend buying lunch from the cafeteria can buy a one-entree feast that is a quick 5-minute walk from school. For those of you who would like to try Thai food but a) don't have the time to gallivant to State and Illinois, or b) don't know where to start, Thai Castle is an excellent place to start. Unlike Star of Siam, where I normally go for long, drawn-out dinners with family and/or friends, Thai Castle presents an alternative which is quite proximal to UIC and which is literally fast-food: if you phone in a carry-out order, they will have it ready within five minutes. Another perk: they offer a 10% UIC discount. Enough with the conveniences of Thai Castle; now on to the food.

There are several dishes which I recommend; one is their *Pad Thai*, a dish on the menu of every self-respecting Thai restaurant (to my knowledge), and one which they make quite well. My all-time favorite is *Drunken Noodles*, which, despite their name, will *not* make you drunk—however, they will make your stomach quite happy. This is a combination of stir-fried rice noodles, beef/chicken/shrimp/tofu per your choice, and a wide variety of vegetables. If you want fried rice, always popular is *Thai Fried Rice* or *Basil Fried Rice*. Two other dishes worth sampling are *Spicy Basil Leaves* and *Garlic Chicken*.

All in all, Thai Castle is a great place to get a quick and tasty meal.

*Bon Appétit!*