

The Ampersand

UIC Honors College

February 1998

Important Upcoming Dates

Feb. 9, 10 & 11	HCAB Blood Drive
Feb. 20	Honors College Social
Feb. 21	Medical School Admission Seminar
March 7	Honors College Ball

Still in Spin on Sale Now

For the low, low price of *only* \$1.00, you can own one of the finest collections of student writing available on this or any other campus.

Still in Spin is available in the Honors College main office, 103 Burnham Hall.

You might even be lucky enough to have one of the contributors autograph your copy!

A Message from the Dean

Greetings to all of you. Happy New Year. My thanks to those of you who sent us holiday greetings. Welcome to those of you who are new to the Honors College, and welcome back to those who are returning. I hope that you enjoyed your holidays and the break.

Hopefully, despite the end of priority registration, you were able to register for the classes you needed. Academic Affairs and LAS opened more sections to meet the demands for courses, and departments did their best to respond to the Honors College's requests for individual students. As I wrote to you, the staff at the College was eager to assist in these matters. Dean Janet Madia especially deserves accolades for all her efforts. I think that the situation will be much better for the next semester.

In the meantime, I would like to encourage you in your studies. The spring semester is very demanding; indeed, it is difficult. The winter is not always clement in the Midwest, and later, toward the end of the semester, the joy of the early part of the spring, with its warmth and the beauty of the nascent vegetation, takes the mind away from class work. I am exhorting you to give your studies the same kind of attention that has enabled you to be members of the Honors College. Do your very best and don't be afraid to ask questions of the instructors or the teaching assistants when and where it is needed.

Remember that the computer lab is open until 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and until 5:00 on Friday. We will continue to assist you as much as we can. Good luck, and have a successful semester!

Lansiné Kaba
Dean

Honors College Code of Conduct

On January 28th, the Honors College issued its Code of Conduct, an official document which outlines what is expected of Honors College students in terms of their use of its facilities. All Honors College students are responsible for abiding by the Code, therefore, all Honors College students should read it carefully.

Please let us know if you have questions. The Code will be posted in public spaces within the College facilities and is also published on page two of this issue of *The Ampersand*.

Honors College Code of Conduct

This document details the rights and responsibilities of Honors College students as they pertain to the use of Honors College facilities. Please read it carefully. Honors College students who violate the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or removal from the College. Violations of the Code include any intentional misuse or abuse of Honors College privileges or resources.

The Honors College facility was relocated to Burnham Hall and significantly renovated in the summer of 1997. The College now occupies elegant, comfortable quarters which we must keep in excellent condition. Everyone is therefore asked to respect not only Honors College students, faculty, and staff, but also the furnishings and equipment.

The Honors College is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination in any form. While the Honors College defends free speech and freedom of expression, Honors College students must respect the diversity of their honors colleagues and be aware that what might not be offensive to some students may offend or be perceived as discrimination or sexual harassment by others. This can occur because of differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, religion, age, class, and communication style, among others. Because the Honors College is a microcosm of UIC, and thus a diverse multi-national and multi-ethnic community, everyone is expected to be sensitive to the impact of words and actions on others.

The Honors College fully supports the University of Illinois Nondiscrimination Statement, which can be found in its entirety in the UIC Timetable. For additional information on or assistance with the equal opportunity, affirmative action, and harassment policies and procedures of the University of Illinois at Chicago, please contact the Office for Access and Equity, 304 Administrative Office Building, 1737 W. Polk St., Chicago, IL 60612; the phone number is 312/996-8670.

The following rules consistent with the principles of individual responsibility and mutual respect must be observed:

1. No shoes on the furniture.
2. No writing on furniture or walls.
3. No music in public areas except walkman-type private units.
4. Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and must not leave trash or food behind when they leave the College.
5. Food stored in the refrigerator must be removed promptly.
6. No smoking or chewing of tobacco.
7. Fliers may be posted on bulletin boards, but no tape may be used on walls, doors or furniture.

Honors College Computer Lab (109 BH):

Computer lab users are responsible for leaving their workstations clean. Keep in mind that absolutely no food or drinks are permitted.

The Honors Computer labs are intended for academic work, thus priority is given to users doing classwork. Students using computers for games, social e-mail, net surfing, or other nonacademic work when other students are waiting to use the lab for their class assignments will be asked to leave.

Only Honors College Lab Personnel can make modifications or changes to lab hardware or software, including loading or unloading software, plugging or unplugging peripherals, reconfiguring machines, or making any modifications to the printer, including refilling paper.

The Honors College Lab Personnel are not responsible for private computers owned by students.

Hacking, excessive noise, violation of computer software copyrights, or other disruptive behavior in the Computer Lab can result in suspension or revoking of computer lab privileges or Honors College status.

Honors College Tutoring Center (114 BH):

No food or drink is allowed. This applies to tutors as well as those being tutored. Tutors may not bring friends to their tutoring sessions. Tutors who have no current clients should study quietly and refrain from distracting conversation.

Honors College Lounge (121 BH):

This is the only area of the College where food is allowed. Please be sure to clean up after yourself. To respect the sensibilities of others, please do not bring strong-smelling foods to the College.

Please follow these regulations to help us maintain a clean, enjoyable environment for all students, faculty, and staff of the Honors College.

Honors College Copy Room (125 BH):

Students must see the reception staff to access the copy room and for assistance if the machine does not function properly; i.e., students must not attempt to fix it or reload paper.

Honors College Quiet Study Room (120 SEO)

A limited number of carrels are available in 120 SEO for students who need total quiet for their study. No talking is therefore allowed, and students using the room who wish to engage in conversation must move elsewhere.

“A Celebration of Excellence”

On Monday, November 17th, 1997, Provost Elizabeth Hoffman gave the keynote address at the first annual Honors College Convocation. Here is the text of her inspirational remarks.

Students, faculty, honored guests:

I am honored to present this, my first, keynote address as Provost at UIC. I am particularly honored to speak at the first Honors College convocation. The topic of my address is “A Celebration of Excellence.” The Honors College is a place where excellence is expected. But, what is excellence? It is not just being smart. You are all very smart. You are the best and the brightest. But are you excellent yet?

Aristotle once said, “excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then is not an act but a habit.”

To me, excellence is not just an assessment of quality. It is a culture in which the very best is expected of every individual and everyone works together to foster and encourage excellence in themselves and in everyone else. Moreover, everyone is encouraged to take risks to be the best they can be. Excellence can be described by three seemingly disparate themes:

1. Follow your passion and work to be the best that you can possibly be.
2. To whom much is given, much is expected.
3. Don't be afraid to fail.

You are the best and the brightest. You have been given great talents. It will be so easy for you to get good grades without trying very hard. So easy to slide by. Get a good degree and a good job. Always be successful. But you can do all that without using half your talents, without pushing yourself to the limit, without surpassing yourselves.

Yet, if you don't work to surpass yourselves, the world will not have the advantage of your gifts. To take advantage of your talents, you must try things that you and your friends have not tried. Try the impossible. And, because you are trying new things, you might fail. But, you can't be afraid of failure. All great scientific and artistic successes are the wins snatched from countless defeats.

Great science, for example, requires constant experimentation. Most of the experiments fail to identify anything new or different. But great scientists learn something new and important from every failed experiment, that leads them to the next experiment and perhaps the next failure. Scientists must develop and maintain a culture of excellence, in which only what is tested and confirmed is accepted. And, they must always be prepared for the possibility that the next scientific genius will disprove their latest theories. Their passion for science and for the process of discover keeps them searching. Eventually, if their models and experimental techniques are correct, they discover the top quark, the black hole, the colliding galaxies, or the gene they are looking for.

Great musicians, artists and athletes must spend countless hours practicing. Much of that practice doesn't result in beautiful music, art or sport. You can look at it as failure. But, it is actually a process of trial and error. A process of learning by doing. A process of learning how to make beautiful music, beautiful arts, or winning sports. A culture of excellence in music, art or sports.

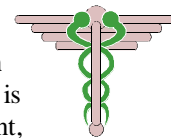
We need to apply these techniques to learning to surpass ourselves in all endeavors. But, our educational systems put so much emphasis on getting good grades that we create an atmosphere that discourages failure. For those of you who are so intelligent and so talented, the system encourages you to stick to the easy and the safe in your intellectual endeavors.

So, how do you give back what is expected from your great gifts? How do you create a culture of excellence for yourselves? How do you let yourself risk failure by trying to do things with which you are not familiar? The only way is to follow your passion in life.

(cont'd. on next page)

Medical School Admission Seminar

The eight medical schools located in Illinois invite you to attend their winter medical school admission seminar on Saturday, February 21, 1998, at the Billy Graham Center in Wheaton. The Center is located at the intersection of College Ave. and Chase St. in Wheaton. The seminar will provide students with information about what it is like to be a medical student, the educational opportunities at each school, and the practical aspects of the admissions process.



The seminar begins at 10 a.m. and runs until around 4 p.m. It is free of charge and open to all levels of undergraduate, graduate, or postbaccalaureate students.

Anyone in need of transportation to the seminar should contact **Anita Vijayakumar**, President of the Society for Future Physicians, at 312/355-8352, to reserve one of a limited number of seats available in University vehicles reserved to take students to the seminar.

Honors College T-Shirts Available

Get your honors college t-shirts. Available from any HCAB member, or in the Honors College main office (103 Burnham Hall), these one-of-a-kind designer (Honors College student **Togay Atac**) addition to your wardrobe will make you the envy of anyone on campus.

You can check out the design on the Honors College web page at: <http://www.hc.uic.edu/tshirt.htm>

For the low cost of only \$10 for a lg or x-lg. and \$12 for xx-lg., they are not only attractive but inexpensive. And girls, the xxl's make great pj's!!

What Have You Done for Your Fellow People Lately?

Are you feeling the need to do something that could really help your fellow citizens? Then come and give blood.

HCAB will be holding a blood drive on Feb. 9, 10, and 11. A sign up sheet will be located at a booth in the CCC concourse on Feb. 4, 5, and 6.

So come and out and give some blood - you'll feel really good about yourself afterwards!

Are You Ready for a "Night Under the Stars?"

It's time to get those suits, ties, dresses, and formal wear out of the closet and ready for the 5th annual Honors Ball. On March 7th, you and 250 of your closest friends, faculty, staff, and fellow honors college students will be dancing the night away (under the stars, of course!) at the Top of the Doral Plaza in the heart of Chicago on Michigan Avenue.

Tickets are on sale in the Honors College (103 Burnham Hall) daily and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 11-3 in the concourse of CCC. Each ticket costs \$30.

So save your money and go looking for the gorgeous date to take to the ball with you! If you have any questions, please e-mail Comilla Sasson at csasso1@uic.edu. If not, go out and buy those tickets!



Honors College Social

All Honors College students are invited to the HCAB-sponsored Social on Fri., Feb. 20th at 3:00 p.m. in the Student Lounge, Room 121 BH.

Come join us for some relaxed conversation with other students and Honors College staff members and enjoy some refreshments, too.

This will be your opportunity to meet other Honors College students, professors, deans and advisors in an informal atmosphere.

If you have any questions, please contact Roopa Chakkappan at rchakk1@uic.edu

Provost Hoffman

(cont'd. from previous page)

Do you love math and science? Then throw yourself into math and science. Work on problems no one else is working on. Conduct your own experiments. Read everything that interests you about math and science. Find friends that love math and science as much as you do. Participate in undergraduate research. Become part of the culture of excellence of science.

Do you love to write? Then write. About everything. Take creative writing courses. Find friends who love to write. Submit pieces to writing contests. If you don't win, take your essays to someone who can help you write better.

Whatever you love doing, learn to do it well. Every time you succeed, push the limits a little harder the next time. When you don't win, ask an expert how you can improve the next time. Use every failure as an opportunity to learn. Keep in mind that if you never fail you have not pushed yourself to the limits of your talents. You are not giving back what is expected from the gifts you have been given.

But, failure is difficult. If you love what you are doing and can't wait to get back to it, failure becomes a learning experience and not a debilitating experience. Let me offer some examples to make this point.

If you go skiing for a week and never fall down, you probably haven't tried any tough slopes. If your softball team wins all its games, you are probably playing in too easy a league. If you get straight A's, you probably aren't taking hard enough courses. If you play every piano piece perfectly, you probably aren't working on hard enough pieces. No matter how talented you are, these are ways of stretching your minds and your talents to explore your limits. Do it, risk it, try it. It will pay off in great accomplishment and satisfaction in the long run. It will develop a culture of excellence among you and your friends.

In the words of Abraham Lincoln: "I do the very best I know how - the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing so until the end."

I promise you: if you develop a culture of excellence; if you follow your passion; if you take risks and surpass yourself; if you give back the great gifts that have been given to you, you will live a long and satisfying life. You will get up each morning excited to face the challenge of each day. By your own enthusiasm and hard work, you will make everyone around you more productive and more satisfied. You will bring a culture of excellence with you. Henry Ward Beecher once said "Hold yourself responsible to a higher standard than anyone else expects of you. Never excuse yourself."

Celebrate excellence with me and make it your passion in life. I wish you all the best at UIC and in whatever passion you follow. Let this convocation be the impetus for a commitment to excellence. I look forward to following your progress.

Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Recipients

The following Honors College students were recently awarded Martin Luther King, Jr. scholarships:

Amanda Arevalo, Junior, Pre-Physical Therapy; **Tramayne Butler**, Junior, Anthropology; **Alejandro Castro**, Junior, Teaching of English; **Christopher Enoe**, Senior, Biological Sciences; **Carl Mayes**, Junior, Criminal Justice; **Grisel Ramirez**, Junior, Psychology; and **Ernesto Rosen**, Senior, Philosophy.

Congratulations to all.

Bao Down Under

by Bao Nguyen

Everyone once in awhile, a person needs to step out of his or her routine and generally “get away from it all.” People have different ways of accomplishing this. As for me, I am a believer in the therapeutic qualities of travel. This being the case, I jumped when I had a great opportunity to take a step out of my daily routines. Perhaps because of a slight tendency towards being overzealous, the step I took just happened to be some thousands of miles long. The day right after my last final last semester I embarked on what would become a month-long journey across the South Pacific region, including the countries of Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, and Tahiti.

Fiji is your basic tropical paradise. Warm and humid weather, palm trees, and the like are all around. Whether it’s scuba diving off the local beaches, eating in exotic restaurants, dancing the night away with the locals, or simply catching some sun, Fiji can accommodate you. Not heavily commercialized, the influence of mass tourism has still not touched this locale. In fact, only recently has television pervaded the area.

The most interesting feature of Fiji, however, is not so much the lush tropical setting, it’s actually the natives. It seems that no matter where you go, the locals will greet you with a hearty “BULA!” Very congenial, the locals will sometimes go out of the way to help, which is nice, considering my erratic sense of direction.

The islands have an interesting history, and the native culture is fascinating. Thought the natives have had a history of cannibalism, I can assure you that this is no longer the case. However, should this detract you from your gustatory experience, I remember that excellent vegetarian dishes are also available.

After leaving Fiji, my next destination was New Zealand. A land of rolling hills, rainforests, fjords, and the occasional glacier, New Zealand offers a little something for everyone. The small population of about three million leaves plenty of room to roam. That is, unless you decided to pay attention to the some 53 million sheep that live there! Naturally, there is some dispute to this, as Australians like to joke that the actual number of sheep is 56 million. Also in New Zealand are the native Maori, a Polynesian people who boasts a culture akin to Hawaiians.

There’s a lot to do in New Zealand, but not enough space to list it right here. Some of the things I managed to do include: walking on a glacier, walking under a waterfall with an umbrella, go luging down the side of a mountain, go spelunking, and riding on jet boats. New Zealanders (or Kiwis as they call themselves) are a friendly people. I learned a lot from the people there, like how to write your name with rocks while standing in a volcanic crater or how to jump between boats while speeding down a river. Although New Zealand also has a huge hole in the ozone layer above, I recommend going there, albeit with a bottle of SPF 30!

After New Zealand, I arrived in Australia. Australia is a huge country, nearly the size of mainland America. It offers a wide range of scenery, from beaches to rain forest to the dry sands of the outback. Some of the geography in Australia is nothing less than spectacular, like Ayers Rock. Ayers Rock is, well, a gigantic rock in the middle of the outback. Seemingly coming out of nowhere, the large geological formation doubles as sacred ground for Australian aborigines, an elusive and diverse people about which no statement is wholly true. I especially recommend visiting the area on New Year’s Eve, because after watching an unbelievable sunset on Ayers Rock, I spent the night drinking (non-alcoholic beverages, of course) and dancing the night away with tourists from all around the world. Where else can one waltz with Germans one minute and sing with Japanese the next?

Another spectacular sight to see is the Great Barrier Reef off of the coastal city of Cairns. The array of tropical fish and coral formations is unlike any other. In Cairns, you’ll also find luscious rainforest over which gondola rides have recently been built. Of more than passing interest is the aboriginal culture center, where you can learn about local history and how to throw spears and boomerangs.



(cont'd. on next page)

Why Join the Honors College Advisory Board?

by Rachel Daniell

Since elections are coming up for next year’s HCAB, I want to share some of the reasons why I wanted to be a part of it. It wasn’t just one reason; it was actually a combination of many reasons. It all started out my freshman year here at UIC...I became friends with a few people from the Honors College through my classes, and also met some of them at the Honors College New Student Day. I felt that I somehow wanted to become a part of the University on a larger sense. Everything seemed so big here and some people seemed so distant and I wanted to get things down to a size where I was comfortable.

Elections were announced for a group called the Honors College Advisory Board, and I decided to look into it. I found out that this was a culturally and intellectually diverse group of students, concerned about each other, and the role that the Honors College plays in the University. They were hard workers who wanted to get things done, but also wanted to have a good time doing it. This was a way to meet new friends that I already had something in common with – the Honors College. They liked to work together on projects for students in the Honors College such as the Ball and luncheons, and they also represented Honors College students by acting as the voice of the student body to the University administration. After I learned all of this, I was certain that I wanted to become a part of this thing called HCAB. I was elected as a Member-at-Large for the 96-97 year and my experience was so rewarding, that I ran for Treasurer for the 97-98 year and was elected again.

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How I Found True Happiness

by Amit Parikh

A little over a year ago I started volunteering at a hospital. The original reason I started volunteering was because medical schools look at volunteering favorably and I figured it would help my case, since I want to go to medical school. Going into this position I had the notion that I would just go in for few hours, maybe see some exciting things, and even come out with a recommendation or something at the end, and that was it. I never thought it would have a serious impact on me.

Over the course of my volunteering I saw many things, many different types of people in different circumstances. To my surprise my experiences did change my thinking and reasons for doing things. When I first started most of the things I did were so I could get ahead and become more powerful and wealthy. After volunteering for a while, I found myself in a situation where I was doing things simply because it made me happy. It had been so long since I had this feeling- it woke me up.

It made me question if my choices were the right ones for me, and if they would truly make me happy. I learned what truly makes me happy. It is not money or power, but just helping others in whatever capacity I can. With this new mind-set, it has become clear that medical school is for me. On the other hand, if I am not for medical school, it would be okay, and I could find other fulfilling work.

Volunteering helped me decide what I want from life and from myself. I think volunteering is a great experience, and that everyone should do it. Not only do you feel a sense of happiness and accomplishment, you are also helping others and giving something back to the community. Today, people think too much about themselves, and take too much of what they have for granted. Volunteering is one way in which you can change some of that. I encourage everyone to contact your local hospital, park district, school, or any other program and get involved in volunteering.

Bao Down Under

(cont'd. from previous page)

If you prefer more metropolitan settings, you can visit Melbourne or Sydney. Both are modern and very cosmopolitan, but Sydney is perhaps the more interesting city. From the arched domes of the famous Sydney opera house to the new Star City casino, I guarantee that you will not run out of things to do. Best of all, most sites are within walking distance of the downtown area. Sydney is currently an especially hot place to go considering the 2000 Olympics are but two years away. Sydney also has lots of friendly people. For example, a waitress took the liberty of showing me around town and we ended up gambling the night away at the Star Casino (the gambling age is twenty; I made it by two weeks). I don't advocate gambling, but I'd like to classify this as an educational experience.

Leaving the great city of Sydney, I arrived in Tahiti. Another tropical paradise, Tahiti is perhaps best described as a place to relax. Despite the gorgeous setting, Tahiti doesn't boast the same kinds of activities of the other countries I visited. Even so, one can catch their fair share of sun and sand on the blue water beaches.

In retrospect, I highly recommend you take a trip to this region of the world. Despite the range of breathtaking scenery I was exposed to, what I enjoyed even more was the variety of people you can meet, should you be so inclined. For example, I learned how to speak a little German and Yiddish, danced with total strangers, and swapped stories with people ranging from waitresses to doctors to holocaust survivors. Travelling cannot only be relaxing, but an educational experience. I figure as long as something isn't excessively stupid or harmful, try it. It makes life much more interesting.

Join HCAB

(cont'd. from page 5)

I gained valuable experience, from working on fundraising, to helping organize the Ball, to meeting with the administrators of the Honors College. Just being around the Honors College, I learned what I need to do to get things done and how to go about doing them. I learned some things about the way this University works and who to talk to if I had problems. Most importantly, from being a part of HCAB, I have gained valuable friends. The people I have met through the Honors College Advisory Board are people who have come together from all different walks of life with some of the same things in common. Their peers respect them, they want to represent Honors College students, and are open to all people with different beliefs. We have had some fun meetings and some not-so-fun meetings, some trying times and some great times.

Above all, we have learned about the way things and people in the "real world" work. We have all grown from these experiences and they have given us quite a lot of memories. The board that represents you, the students of the Honors College, has elections coming up for the 1998-1999 year – and they are looking for a "few good PEOPLE" (just to be PC). I encourage all of you to run for a position as HCAB Member-at-Large or Officer and make a difference in the Honors College in the next year. All it takes is motivation to get things done and a willingness to be open to new ideas and experiences. So get that application started already!



Bold & Vibrant:

Joey

by Mimi Roy

Mimi Roy.: *What did it feel like being a triplet when you were growing up? Did it ever annoy you? Did other people think it was weird?*

Josephine Volpe.: It felt great. It was like having two best friends who looked like you. A lot of people thought it was neat. We're fraternal triplets and they're both taller than me, so we don't look that much alike, but there's a resemblance. We also have an older brother who's 29. There were times when we all got angry at each other and yelled at each other and fought. But through it all, we remained close.

MR: *How was your high school experience?*

JV: High school? It seems like a long time ago. I went to Glenbrook North High School. I was part of a program called the Principal's Honors Program. It was a program where I had my honors classes — english, science, math, etc., — with the same 15-20 people for all four years. It was great because we really got to know each other. I learned so much more than the usual classroom stuff. We learned to communicate with each other, deal with each other. It taught me a lot about people.

MR: *So being with these people made your experience more human? At my high school, we had so many students that we were each given an ID number. I still remember mine: 672900.*

JV: Yeah, that must have been weird. But you probably had a lot of kids in your class. We just had 400 in my class. My class wasn't very big, but that didn't make it limited. I had some really great relationships with a few teachers. One of my teachers took a group of students, including my sister and I, on vacations to Europe during our junior and senior years. I loved those trips. I went to Italy, England, Ireland, all over Europe. I remember one experience my senior year. We were in London, and on the day before we were about to leave, one of our friends got run over by a car. That experience, combined with the death of a few other friends that year, made our class come together. It was a very emotional experience for us.

MR: *Finish this sentence for me: "People who knew me in high school thought I was. . ."*

JV: Well, I got the award for Best Brain. I guess people thought I was smart, talkative, friendly. Maybe they thought I was nuts. And they thought I was short.

MR: *Now the height factor. I know you must have been probed about this for most of your life, but do you think that because of it, it's made you a more forceful and colorful personality?*

JV: Oh, definitely. I was always shorter than everybody else and it made want to reach higher, talk louder. I was always outgoing and I got attention because I was a triplet and I was short. But I didn't just want to sit there all the time. I wanted to be an active participant.

MR: *Why did you apply to UIC? What made you decide to come here?*

JV: I applied to about eight schools, including University of Chicago. But my mom thought I should give UIC a chance. I'm a city girl and I wanted to go someplace urban. I really hated the architecture. That was when the cement bridges were up on campus. But I liked the fact that the average student was not the usual 18 year old Joe Cool. There were a lot of different types of people here: continuing students, transfers, people of all races, classes. When I got word that I won one of the University Scholar awards, I was excited.

MR: *Looking back on the past three and a half years that you've spent here, what would you say are the highlights of your experience?*

JV: Highlights? Gosh, that's hard to come up with. There were so many of them. Well, I loved living on the Honors Floor. It turned out to be one of the best things. There were so many new, interesting, and intelligent people to meet. My two years of living on the Honors Floor gave me a great sense of community. I love the Ball — when I chaired it, when I helped out while president of HCAB, and now, just being part of it. It's neat to see that after all that hard work, all that suffering and tension, that it works out, and it's beautiful. Working at the Honors College is also a plus. I think that at some point in my life, I would like to get involved with university administration. I also loved working on my University Scholar project. It was an analysis of Velazquez's "Las Meninas," examining how the perspective doesn't work out correctly in the painting and the ramifications of the error in perspective.

MR: *You seem to have a great appreciation of art — obviously, since you're an Art History major. What drew you towards an Art History major in the first place? What do you plan to do with your knowledge after graduation?*

JV: During my junior year, a group of us went to Italy with our AP European History teacher. He was someone who really influenced me. He had a Ph.D in Art History and he introduced me to the wonders of Renaissance Art while I was in Italy. I eventually hope to go into teaching and research. What fascinates me about art is that it's completely manmade in conception. My main interests are Renaissance, pre-Colombian, and colonial Latin art. I am especially interested in the hybridity and tension that exists between the indigenous culture, the colonial culture, and the new, emerging national identities of South American culture.

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My Winter Excursion

by Shivangi Bhatt

Over Winter Break, I went with my mother, father, and brother to India. To some, this is not uncommon - many people I know go to India quite often, especially if they have family there. But the last time I went there, I was eight years old, and quite frankly, I didn't have the maturity at the time to fully appreciate how beautiful and diverse India really is. This trip was a wonderful opportunity to see people and places that I had been hearing about for many years.

I loved meeting all my cousins, aunts, uncles, and friends of the family we had there. My family is from the Western state of Gujarat, and we spent the first week of our vacation there, just seeing people. The amazing thing about all of this was the warmth that everyone extended to my brother and I when they met us, even though they hardly knew us at all. I was a bit intimidated by the sheer number of relatives I have (my father had 12 brothers and sisters, and most of them still live in India with their children and even grandchildren), but when we actually met them, everyone was so quick to accept us as family. One thing that helped was that both my brother and I speak our parents' native language, Gujarati, quite fluently, so we really had no trouble communicating with our family there. It was incredible how loving everyone was with each other, even in a family so large.

Life in India is certainly more difficult than our lives here, although my family there hardly even seemed to notice all the things that I found tiresome at first. Things that we all take for granted here, such as running water, or flush toilets, or a bed of one's own, are not always an option in India, especially for those who are not as well off. My family is probably middle class, but it is nothing like middle-class America. Every morning, they have to wake up at 5:30 a.m. and pump the whole day's water into huge barrels. Then, everyone bathes and walks a mile to the temple for the morning prayers (my family is also extremely religious). When they return home, the women make breakfast and feed the whole family. Finally, around 9:30 a.m., the men go to work, and the women continue all day with the household chores. Lunch is the biggest meal, when everyone comes home from work and eats with their families. Evenings are relaxing, and then everyone spreads mats on the floor and goes to sleep. And, like clockwork, it all happens again the next day. It sounds boring, even primitive, but I am not doing them justice with my words. Life in India (at least in my family) is simple, yet rich with love, devotion, and culture.

(cont'd. on page 10)

MR: *I've heard you do research. Would you describe some of it for me?*

JV: I've worked with David Sokol, a professor in the Art History department, on background research on the Newberry Library here in Chicago. Right now, I'm researching the art found in the charity balls done by the Artists' Equity in the 1940s and 1950s. I'm looking into the costumes made for some of them, the murals painted on the ballroom walls and the other decorations, brochures, and programs.

MR: *Is there a place called "home" for you? How would you define this home?*

JV: I would describe this home as my parents' house. I can live independently in my apartment here, but I can also go back anytime I want to. My parents have lived in the same house for 32 years. It's a place that's fun, lighthearted, totally candid. There's so much stuff in it. It's really an accumulation of our lives. It has its own aura. It's a totally organic thing.

MR: *Home is also about the people who live there. Is it just your immediate family, or do others contribute to the atmosphere there? What is your descent?*

JV: I'm of Italian descent. I've learned so much from my immediate and extended family. My mom has a twin and she's been like a second mother to me. My great-aunt was like a grandmother to me after my mom's mom died. From all of these people, I've learned unconditional love. My extended family is a part of me.

MR: *What would you say is your most humbling experience?*

JV: My most humbling experience? Wow, that's hard. I really haven't thought about it. I guess I'd say watching my mom as I grew up, all the stuff that she went through when we were little, and how she never complained, how she was strong through it all. I would like to be like her. She enjoys life. She's always happy. There's a lot of other experiences, too.

MR: *What are your hobbies and interests?*

JV: Well, I really like to sit and watch t.v.. I like reading novels, mysteries. I'm an avid reader of magazines. I love pop culture. I'm a self-proclaimed Hollywood fanatic, obsessively watching shows like "Entertainment Tonight." I love to cook. I don't get as much time as I used to, but I love to experiment with recipes. I dabble in drawing and ceramics, but I'm not amazing. And I love people, talking to them, being with them.

MR: *Where do you see yourself in ten years?*

JV: Ten years. . . well, ten years older. I'll be working with lots of people. Hopefully, I'll have my Ph.D and I'll be teaching at a university. I see myself surrounded by friends and family. I'll have a husband — sensitive, caring, perfect, intelligent, etc.. I'll be active in research. And I'll just be more me.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Now, those of you reading this may think this is rather belated and definitely late - but please, read on to find out why it's NOT.

While most Americans (and others in the Western world) traditionally celebrate New Year's Day on January 1st (according to the Cesarean calendar), few realize much of the world may not be celebrating the new year at the same time. In the East, especially in the Asian Pacific, the date of the new year varies, according to the movement of the moon- which early agricultural civilizations relied on heavily.

In the United States, this New Year's celebration is collectively referred to as the Chinese New Year, due to the numbers and influence of the Chinese community in this country. The Lunar New Year is also celebrated throughout Asia (in addition to the Chinese) by the Koreans, and the Vietnamese. Thais also celebrate the New Year, but a few months later. Following is a brief summary of the events, dates, and practices that take place.

CHINESE

Name of celebration: Chinese New Year or Lunar New Year
Days: Jan. 28, 1998 – Feb. 11, 1998 (15 days, the exact date of the celebration varies each year, depending on the movement of the moon)

Year: 4696, Year of the Tiger

Special practices, and ideas to remember:

- * honoring family, ancestors, and the Buddha with offerings of food, entertainment, and money

- * cleaning out the misfortunes of the past year, resolving to be a better person

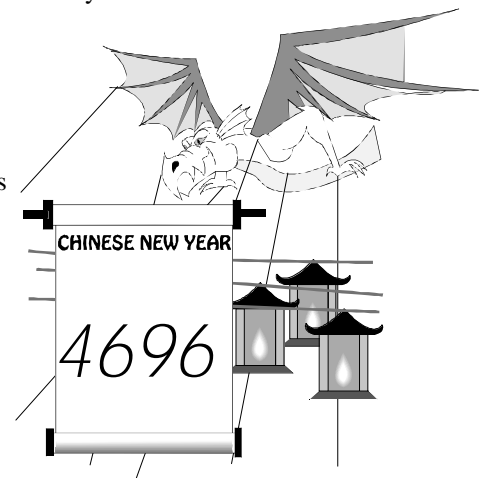
- * being superstitious-eating auspicious foods with family, saying blessings

- * decorating with banners of red, gold, and with newly blossomed flowers

- * entertainment: lighting firecrackers, watching/participating in the lion dance, playing music

- * exchanging red envelopes (filled with money) with family and friends

Here in Chicago, Chinatown hosts a celebration of every year on the Sunday during the 1st week of New Year's- this year it was on Jan. 31st in the early afternoon. Featured are firecrackers in front of each store, a parade from Cermak to Wentworth, and lion dances.



(cont'd. on next page)

Winter Break

(cont'd. from page 8)

After spending some time with our family and friends in Gujarat, we took a quick tour of South India. Let me tell you, taking a "quick" tour is a nearly impossible thing to do. There is so much to see and do in the Southern states, but due to time constraints, we could only spend eight days there. We flew to the city of Chennai (formerly known as Madras), then rented a car and hired a skilled driver, and started our mad run. We would drive every day for five to seven hours, then see some amazing, mind-blowing sights, and get back in the car and drive again. We covered almost 3000 km (that's over 1800 miles) in less than eight days. Being in the car for that long was quite frustrating at times, especially in parts of rural India where the roads were unpaved and full of holes. But in all honesty, it was worth every second of that insane car ride to see the incredible things we saw. All the beautiful temples, majestic palaces, and scenic landscapes were more amazing than I had ever imagined. The best part was that many of the things we saw, such as the monolithic shore temples at Mamallapuram or the enormous temple city of Madurai, are part of the subject matter for a course I am currently taking, Art History 320 - Asian Architecture.

Our tour ended in Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay), where we stayed with family friends in the most posh part of town. This was a contrast to everything I had seen so far - while all of the other parts of India I had been to had opened my eyes to the diverse Indian culture, everything in Mumbai was super-American, from the clothes they wore and the music they listened to the lavish shopping malls and extravagant parties they went to. For New Year's, we went to the Breach Candy Bath Club, a popular hangout for Indian movie stars and the rest of Mumbai's most elite society. Amidst the dance music, the strobe light, and the high-fashion crowd, I would never have guessed that I was in India at all, but I had realized by then that this was a growing part of India's culture as well.

After our tour, we went back to Gujarat to spend our final days shopping, spending time with our family, and just taking in the surroundings. This period of relaxation gave me some time to reflect on everything I had seen and helped me come to a few solid conclusions. I realized that family is wonderful. It's so nice to know that there are people in this world who will be there for you, even if you barely know them at all, solely on the grounds that you share genes with them. I experienced and got a clearer understanding of the problems facing India today, including extreme poverty, a weak government, disease, overpopulation, and pollution. I felt something strong inside me that wanted to fix those problems and revolutionize the whole country. I saw the desperate conditions of the country's poor, and my heart went out to them; at the same time, I considered myself fortunate that my parents had worked hard and risen up from this to give me the life that I have today. I saw a country brimming with a beautiful culture and an ancient heritage and felt happy that I could ever be a part of it.

My trip to India was not only a much-needed vacation. It gave me a broader sense of the world and opened my eyes to the wonder that surrounds me.

Another New Year

(cont'd. from page 9)

- * gathering with family and friends
- * visiting family, friends, and old teachers
- * wearing traditional Korean clothing
- * ceremony held at eldest son's house in memory of ancestors
- * ceremony includes a special bow to bless elders
- * playing special New Year's games

THAI

Name of celebration: Songkran

Days: Early-Mid April

Year: 2542

Special practices, and ideas to remember:

- * time to do good deeds to respected friends, family, elders, and teachers
- * honoring parents and ancestors
- * resolving to be a better person
- * pouring water over each other's heads for three days to symbolize respect and blessing
- * entertainment: watching classical Thai dances, playing music, playing games

So as you can see, my New Year's wish was not belated, since I am Chinese. My family and I, like many others here, also watch the New Year's Eve countdown in New York and Chicago, and celebrate the New Year on January 1st. I think it's always good to have another reason for a celebration, lifting up our spirits in times of work and stress brought on by the school year.

Happy New Year!

My Karma

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I have once again failed
to fulfill the soul's desire
Now comes my destruction
at the hands of one who cares

Inculcation can purge me
of these thoughts of sin
Maybe with your guidance
I can be revived

Hope is my companion
Survival is my hope
Fate shall be my guide
through perils manifest

First destruction of the guilty
then carrion shall burn
heaps of ashes nowhere seen
held in karma's urn

The sins of yesteryear
God's guide shall be
in deciding our tomorrow
the next lifetime for me

Anonymous

Stir It Up!

by Holly Ulasovich

Interested in an innovative and creative environment? Ready to be challenged by unique ideas? Prepared to engage in new cultural sights and sounds? The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) stirs up excitement for the college audience with exhibitions, performance programs, educational lectures and tours, and special workshops.

The MCA, located at 220 Chicago Ave., is one of the nation's largest facilities devoted to contemporary works. 'Stir It Up' is an initiative to build and strengthen relationships between the MCA and Chicago area colleges and universities. Through this program students can become museum members for only \$20.



Current and upcoming exhibitions include 'Envisioning the Contemporary' (through 4/5), 125 works from the MCA's permanent collection that display major art historical developments from 1945 to the present. Late surrealism, Chicago art, minimal, conceptual, and current art will be highlighted. Also on view will be a multimedia tour; 'DeNaturalized,' an exhibition of 15 pieces of art, culture, nature, and technology. Visitors are able to interact with a touch-screen computer kiosk to learn about these works. This is a commissioned piece by Chicago artist Adam Brooks. The Cindy Sherman Retrospective (2/21-5/31) explores this important artist through her provocative uses of photography and mass media techniques.

In addition to these great exhibitions, the museum has the ongoing Hip-Hop Life series of performance programs. The Last Poets (2/13-2/14) will deliver their rap poetry on racism and poverty, a unique poetry form that has evolved since the 1960's. The street meets the theater in the choreography of Rennie Harris Pure Movement (2/26-2/28, 3/1). This urban dance embodies the youth culture and artistic expression of hip-hop. Call the MCA box office at 312-397-4010 to buy tickets. Group discounts are available.

It's time to "stir up" a little fun and excitement! The museum is open from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tues., Thurs., & Friday and from 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. on Wednesdays, and 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Although the performance series are an additional cost, the exhibitions are all included in the museum admission of \$4. Be sure to bring your student ID. The museum is accessible via the CTA bus or el. For further information, call the MCA at 312-280-2660 or e-mail the MCA-UIC campus representative, **Holly Ulasovich** at hulasov1@uic.edu. For information about the Stir It Up Program, call Devorah Heitner at 312-397-3827.

My Most Rewarding Honors Activity: The UIC/NBC Homework Hotline

by Joey Volpe

"What should I do as an honors activity?" That question was foremost in my mind as I walked into the Honors College on Monday, January 12, 1998. For my last semester, I wanted to do something a little different for my honors activity. The NBC 5 Homework Hotline provided the opportunity to do something worthwhile for the community and fulfill an honors activity.

After a short time, I am happy to say that the Homework Hotline is one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Before I started volunteering for the Hotline, I thought of it as a nice service for the community. Yet I didn't really consider the true impact that the Hotline has for most of the children and adults that call us. And I couldn't have foreseen the profound impact that the Hotline has had on my life.



I look forward to my Thursday night on the Homework Hotline. As soon as we walk into the office, the phones light up. Volunteering on the Hotline gives me the chance to work with five other Honors College students to help children and teenagers who call in with homework problems ranging from predicate words to multiplication to physics. For many students, the Hotline is the only way for them to get help. Often, they can't ask for help from siblings or from parents, so they call us. It is a big responsibility, but it is one that I can say I would gladly take on after my experience with the Hotline.

The perseverance of many of these children is remarkable. Often while they are on the phone they have people yelling at them to hang up, or they are cut off in the middle of a problem. Many of these students call back. It is a testament to these children's dedication that they continue to do their homework despite all of the distractions that surround them.



The relationships that are forged between the children and the volunteers are a testament of the continuing importance of the Hotline in the lives of children around Chicagoland and the importance of our work as volunteers. A common occurrence during the evening was one of us calling out, "Is John here today?" The children remember our names because we are important to them. This is my chance to tell you how important these children are to me.

Without the Hotline, my week is not complete. The children make my Thursday evenings exciting, special, and unforgettable.