

The Ampersand

UIC Honors College

September 2001

Important Upcoming Dates

Agreement Forms Due	Fri., Sept. 7
HCAB Social	Fri., Sept. 7
Scholarship Information Meeting	Wed., Sept. 12
Society of Future Physicists Induction Ceremony	Wed., Sept. 19
Fall Tuition & Fees Due	Mon., Oct. 1

A Message from the Dean

All of the Honors College staff join me in extending a warm welcome (or welcome back) to every Honors College student. With you, we look forward to an exciting program of activities this year - honors courses, special events, and most of all, the chance to meet and work with honors students and faculty. We hope to get to know each one of you! Please feel free to consult with me or any one of the staff listed below if you have questions.

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Come Socialize with the Hungry Ghost!

The Honors College Advisory Board has socials every month for Honors College students. They are full of fun, food, and activities. Our first Social is this **Friday, September 7th from 4 to 6 p.m.** in the Honors College Lounge of Burnham Hall. Socials are a great way for both students and faculty to interact in a casual atmosphere while enjoying snacks and interesting conversation.

This year, the HCAB Activities Committee is celebrating holidays from around the world at each one of its socials. For the month of September, we will introduce you to the Festival of the Hungry Ghost, celebrated yearly in China and Japan.

At this Friday's Social, the Honors College will celebrate the Festival of the Hungry Ghost in its own way. Although we're not sure if ghosts will be attending, we hope that a good number of Honors College students and faculty come to share in good food, interesting conversation, and a dash of international culture before letting loose for the weekend. So, bring your friends (both alive and undead) to the Honors College Lounge in Burnham Hall from 4 to 6 on Friday! See you there!

To find out about the legend of the Hungry Ghost, go to page 6.

Help is Just Downstairs!

by *Natasha Singh*

It's only the third week of the semester and you're already confused! Well, the Honors College can help. No, the Honors College advisors won't take your classes for you, but there is another great resource sitting right under you (literally).

The Honors College has tutoring available to anyone who needs help in their classes. Between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, Honors College tutors are available in the lower level of Burnham Hall in Room B21. You are welcome to walk in and take advantage of their resources. Tutors are available all throughout the day, in a variety of subjects. All the tutors are Honors College students who have had good experiences in their classes and can help answer your questions.

Check the tutoring schedule at the Honors College front desk or on the web page at: <http://www.hc.uic.edu/tutorintro.htm> to find out when tutors in specific subjects are available.

If you need any further information on tutoring please feel free to contact **Shifali Arora**: sarora1@uic.edu, **Rishi Garg**: rgarg3@uic.edu, or **Natasha Singh**: nsingh3@uic.edu The Honors College tutors are waiting to help you!

New Student Day: A Smashing Success!

by *Shifali Arora, Caroline Nguyen, Shilpa Raju*

The Honors College started the year off with a bang with its first big event, the Honors College New Student Welcome, held on Friday, August 17th.

Even before the sun rose, HCAB members were up and ready for action. Freshmen wandered into the Inner Circle groggy-eyed around 8 a.m. and helped themselves to a delectable UIC breakfast. As they waited for the festivities to begin, they were able to socialize with each other and their Honors College Consultants. The freshmen were then introduced to the Honors College staff.

Dean Madia gave a heartwarming welcome to the new students. The students also heard remarks by Dr. Aruna Jha and Dr. Robert Lees from the Counseling Center. HCAB members entertained the freshmen with their hilarious parody of the movie "Bring it On." The enthusiastic Honors College and Spartan cheerleaders showed their spirit and pride through their fantabulous cheers and exuberant performance. (I smell a daytime Emmy!).

The freshmen were then split into fourteen groups and met with their Student Consultants. They then set off on a scavenger hunt that led them all around campus. As they scurried from Mario's Italian Ice on Taylor Street to the Student Services Building, they learned where all their classes would be and learned interesting little facts about the places. The groups to finish first were awarded spiffy prizes. Afterwards, the students were escorted to meet their honors core class teachers. This gave them the opportunity to preview the upcoming coursework and personally talk to their professors.

Finally came the luncheon out on the lawn in front of SEO. Fontano's Subs provided classic sandwiches, which were complemented by a myriad of pastas, potato salads, and scrumptious cookies. Once lunch was finished, it was time for a little socializing. Freshman **Nirav Shah** stated, "They say the high school years are the best years of your life, but after experiencing the festivities of the Honors College New Student Day, I beg to differ."

Thanks to everyone who worked hard to make it a new student day to remember!

To see photos from New Student Day, visit the Honors College web page at: <http://www.hc.uic.edu>

Fall Scholarship Deadlines

Now that you're back in the swing of academic life, it is time to begin thinking about scholarships. The Office of Special Scholarship Programs can provide information about available awards and assistance in the process of applying. Make an appointment with the director to discuss your goals and interests to see what awards might be able to help you in reaching your goals.

Several nationally competitive awards have fall deadlines and require immediate action if you are interested. Websites and deadlines are listed below. Check out information about the awards and attend a meeting or make an appointment to get more details about the UIC application process.

For graduating seniors:

Fulbright: for one year of study in one of over 140 countries, www.iie.org/fulbright, UIC deadline: Sept. 29

Gates Cambridge: for 1-4 years of study at Cambridge, www.gates.scholarships.cam.ac.uk, UIC deadline: Sept. 20

Marshall: for 2 years of study at any British university, www.acu.ac.uk/marshall, UIC deadline: Sept. 20

Mitchell: for one year of study in Ireland, www.us-irelandalliance.org/mitchell, UIC deadline: Sept. 20

Rhodes: for 2 years of study at Oxford, www.rhodesscholar.org, UIC deadline: Sept. 20

Informational meetings on Rhodes, Marshall, Gates, Fulbright and other graduate fellowships:

Thursday, Sept. 6, 3:30-4:30 in CCC, Monarch room

Wednesday, Sept. 12, 3-4 in Honors College conference room

For continuing sophomores and juniors:

Goldwater: for students planning careers in research in science, math and engineering, www.act.org/goldwater, UIC deadline: Nov. 12

Truman: for students planning careers in public service at a leadership level, www.truman.gov, UIC deadline: Nov. 12

Udall: for students planning careers related to the environment, www.udallfoundation.org, UIC deadline: Nov. 12

For more information about these and other awards, contact the Office of Special Scholarship Programs by calling 355-2477 or e-mailing the director, Beth Powers at bpowers@uic.edu

Focus on a Fellow: Dr. Mrinalini Rao

by Sonia Krishnan

As every Honors College student knows, completion of an approved honors activity every semester is required to maintain your membership. Freshmen fulfill this requirement by taking an honors core course, but after the freshman year, there are several other options from which students can choose. There are opportunities to further enrich your undergraduate experience by participating in research, seminars, volunteering, and so on.

Additionally, students are assigned to an Honors College fellow who approves the activities students select each semester. However, they do much more than just sign agreement forms. They can also act as advisors, mentors, and provide guidance with respect to classes, activities, and plans for graduate school and beyond. Therefore, it is important that students take advantage of their fellow's expertise by getting to know them and meeting with them on a semi-regular basis, at the very least.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with my fellow, **Dr. Mrinalini Rao**, and learn a little about her life and experiences, which proved to be quite interesting for me.

Although this is Dr. Rao's first year as a fellow, she has been working at UIC since 1984, mainly in the College of Medicine. She is a professor of physiology and biophysics, and teaches gastrointestinal physiology to medical students, along with participating in other team-taught courses. Dr. Rao has administrative experience, serving as an Associate Dean of the Graduate College for the past two years. She also runs a research lab, in which participants study the molecular regulation of ion transport across epithelial cells, particularly in the gastrointestinal tract. Dr. Rao has given lectures at the Honors College, and has advised Honors College students, some of whom have worked in her laboratory.

Dr. Rao agreed to become a fellow this year based on her past experiences from advising both medical and undergraduate students. She enjoys observing the development and evolution of their thoughts and plans over the course of their college careers. She feels that her job is to serve as a sounding board for students to discuss their ideas and interests, as well as being a helpful resource when the students want to get involved in certain programs and activities.

Some of Dr. Rao's interests include cooking, reading with her book club, embroidering, and walking. With respect to her career and responsibilities at UIC, she says, "I really enjoy my job, and enjoy coming to work every morning." Dr. Rao hopes to help in making her students' experiences at UIC and the Honors College as productive and rewarding as possible, and she's looking forward to getting involved in more Honors College activities.

To find out more about Dr. Rao's research interests and publications, go to: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/mcpb/pages/rao/rao.htm>



Dr. Mrinalini Rao

The Accidental Roommate

by Ada Moadsiri

It was the beginning of a lot of things. It was my first year of college, the first time I would be living away from home, the first time being away from my friends, and the first time I would be living with a stranger. At first I didn't want to make new friends because I already had friends and didn't want replacements. I also had never lived in the same room with anyone before last year.

The first few days were the hardest of my freshman year. My new roommate and I were trying to get to know each other, but we were always missing what we had left behind with high school. Sometimes I felt as if telling her my feelings and what I was thinking was just too much. I didn't want her to know because that would be trusting. Trusting only comes with friendships, not just mere acquaintances. She seemed like a nice person, but in my mind, she wasn't my friend, she would just be "the girl I live with."

I don't remember when it happened but it did. The guards came down. We began sharing stories, then feelings. It's funny because now she and I make fun of how we acted when we first met.

As I write this, I am listening to a CD that my roommate, my friend, made for me. We know one another now more than we did, and we still have more to tell, to listen to, to laugh about, to complain about, to care about. Like most good things, friendships take time, but it's worth it. I am looking forward to this year; I think we both are.

A Note of Welcome

by Jeff Meier, HCAB President

Although influenced by it, I have never quite figured out the mystical allure of school. Perhaps the educational process is enticing to us, capitalizing on our innate curiosity for that which we do not know to draw us back year after year. Maybe some of us are just gluttons for punishment and enjoy the stresses of tests and term papers. Whatever the case, here we all are, starting yet another semester of school. For those of you just starting at UIC, welcome. And, to those returning to these staid dwellings, welcome back. Whichever category you fall into, I hope this semester is starting well for you.

First off, I'd like to introduce the Honors College Advisory Board (aka, HCAB) so that when you get email advertising various HCAB sponsored activities, you know what we're all about. The HCAB is a group of Honors College students elected to represent other Honors College students in various ways. By listening to your comments, organizing and sponsoring leisure activities, and volunteering in the community, we try to improve your campus life while helping our less fortunate neighbors.

An important aspect of the HCAB is gathering and understanding your thoughts and concerns. That said, I encourage all of you to talk with or email HCAB members if you either like what you see relating to the Honors College or think something should be changed. I can't guarantee that one suggestion will do wonders, but if enough people make the same comments, you never know what can happen.

Another way to make your stay at UIC more pleasant is to take advantage of and attend HCAB-sponsored student events. Whenever you hear about or see advertising about an HCAB event coming up, plan on stopping by and checking it out. Invariably, there will be entertainment, lively company, and more often than not, free food.

If then, after contributing a few suggestions and relaxing at the events, you feel inclined to join the HCAB when we help both the students and the community, your volunteering services are quite welcome. We discuss student comments, future events, and volunteer activities at our bi-weekly, Monday-evening meetings, so consider attending one to see what part you can play.

Of course, academics take priority. So, though I hope to see you attend HCAB meetings and activities when you can, I understand that fighting the attraction of monotone lectures and complicated laboratories is not only difficult (yes, I'm being facetious), it can hurt your grades, too. More importantly, there are some pretty interesting tidbits of knowledge that you will gather as a result of all this formal education. So go. Collect. Learn. Enjoy. And, when you get the chance, drop by an HCAB event and join some of your fellow mysteriously allured gluttons for punishment.

A New Beginning for an Ancient Tradition

by Neil Ahluwalia

What do you do for your kicks? I like playing tennis, my roommate in the dorms enjoys watching the B.E.T. music video channel, and the girls across the hall from us are constantly writing silly comments on the message board plastered to our door. In between my bouts of meeting new people, going to tennis practice, and studying, I had a lot of fun last year as a freshman being part of NLVS, the New Life Volunteering Society, an organization that takes underprivileged children sightseeing in Chicago, sponsors activities at homeless shelters, and much more!

The thing that attracted me most to NLVS last year was the flexible schedule of events. The board members understand that students have numerous obligations, and thus, NLVS offers a plethora of events on weekdays and weekends. Members are required to attend the general body meetings, three volunteering events, and one fundraising activity. And if you want to get more involved, you can join one of the committees or apply to be this year's Freshman Representative. Transportation and food are provided for all events and there really is no better way to meet people with common values.

So get off your butt and come to the General Body Meeting - September 5, 4:30 p.m., Room 613 CCC. You can also explore our list of upcoming events and other information by visiting our web page:

<http://nlvs.pages.uic.edu>

or e-mail us at:

uic_nlvs@hotmail.com

UIC's Peer Mentor Program

by Erin Foster

Do you remember what it was like being a first year student? Being in a new environment, with new people, larger classes, and an abundance of information to remember can confuse and/or intimidate a new student. However, here at the University of Illinois at Chicago, there are people to help new students cope with some of those stressors. For freshmen who live in the UIC dormitories, there is a Peer Mentor assigned to their floor. The Peer Mentor's job is to help direct them to available academic resources, as well as help them acclimate to their new living environment.

Peer Mentors emphasize helping new students find a balance between social and academic life. The beginning of the year is the most crucial time for the Peer Mentors to get to know and help their mentees develop their dormitory community. Unlike other advisors or mentors, the Peer Mentor staff lives within the students' community. They participate in floor programs, dinners, and school events with all the other students, forming bonds and friendships. Being a peer and current student also helps freshmen feel more at ease approaching the Peer Mentor staff with questions/concerns they have.

Common questions the Peer Mentor staff encounters include anything from tutoring help to where one can go see an advisor. Peer Mentors refer new students to a variety of academic resources, including the Learning Resource Centers (LRC), the Writing Center, academic advisors, and the multiple libraries and computer labs available on campus. Peer Mentors help students find their classes, register, and formulate goals for the semester. Students also receive help in forming study groups, developing time management skills, and study habits.

Peer Mentor and former mentee, Ana Perez spoke of how this program helped her and why she decided to become a member of the program herself. She recalls what it was like being a "little freshman on a big campus." In her first year here, Ana did not know what to expect. "All the other freshmen were in the same boat as me. If my Peer Mentor hadn't been there, I don't know what would have happened. She was the first person I met here and she made me feel at home." As a Peer Mentor, Ana says she wishes nothing more than to offer her help to all the first year students who live on her floor.

Over the years, the Peer Mentor program has helped to dramatically decrease the number of students who drop out during/after the first semester of their freshmen year. The Peer Mentor staff is a marvelous resource for any new student to utilize while living in the UIC dormitories, so get to know yours!

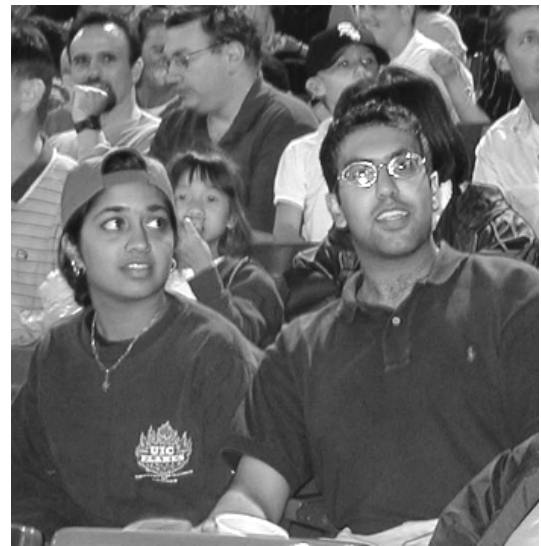
UIC Night at Comiskey Park

The third annual UIC Night at Comiskey Park took place on Friday, Aug. 31st and was sponsored by the Alumni League & Campus Programs. Several current & former Honors College students joined the crowd & enjoyed a picnic before the game, and later, cheered on the Chicago White Sox to an 11-8 victory over the Cleveland Indians. Here are a few photos from the evening.

See the Honors College web page for more photos!



Jason Chang, Jane Jih, Minesh Shah, & Anagha Loharikar



Anagha Loharikar & Puneet Shroff



Chris Turek, Jessica Weir, & Minesh Shah

New Exhibits Coming to Town

by Jenna Kim

Have you been meaning to go out and explore Chicago's world-class museums? This fall, there are more reasons than ever to visit, as the Field Museum and Art Institute welcome new exhibits from around the world.

The Field Museum of Natural History is showing two new visiting exhibits. Running from Oct. 3rd until Dec. 9th is an exhibit that may be of interest to Psych majors. The exhibit is "Sigmund Freud: Conflict and Culture." Learn about Freud's life and ideas about psychology. Included in the exhibit are his original manuscripts and letters, photographs, home movies, and personal objects from Freud's study and consulting room.

Another exhibit coming to the Field Museum is "Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth." This exhibit will display artifacts from 2,000 years ago to the present day, ranging from ancient art pieces made to honor Cleopatra to modern movies that have been made about her life. The Field Museum is the only venue in the U.S. that this exhibit will visit and it is a great opportunity to learn more about the life of the most famous Egyptian queen and how she has been viewed throughout the past two millennia. If you want to know more about Cleopatra, there is a new book by Karen Essex titled "Kleopatra," which explores Cleopatra's life as a young woman and focuses on her political and educational achievements.

The Field Museum can easily be accessed by public transportation. It is located at 1400 S. Lake Shore Drive, near Soldier Field. If you're taking public transportation (it's free with the U-Pass now!), you can hop on the #12 Roosevelt bus that will take you right to the front of the Museum. Stops are located on Roosevelt Road near the new South Campus or by the Physical Education Building. You can also take the "L". Take the blue line from UIC towards O'Hare and transfer to either the green or orange line at the Clark/Lake stop. Get off at the Roosevelt stop and walk a few blocks towards the lake. Remember that Wednesdays are free, although the special exhibits will cost you an extra \$5 for the student rate. The museum is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day.

Another special exhibit hitting town is at the Art Institute of Chicago. Showing from Sept. 22nd to Jan. 13th is "Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Studio of the South." The exhibit will show more than 130 works from public and private collections around the world as it explores the interaction between these famous post-impressionist painters as they collaborated and influenced each other while they lived and worked together for two months in 1888.

The Art Institute is easily accessible on the L. From UIC, take the blue line towards O'Hare. Located on Michigan Ave. at Adams, it is just a couple of blocks away from the Jackson stop on the blue line. Tuesdays are free at the Art Institute; other days there is a suggested donation of \$6 for students. The Van Gogh and Gauguin exhibit is pricey at \$20. However, on Tuesdays, the exhibit will only cost \$10. The museum usually closes at 4:30 p.m. but is open until 8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.

I've highlighted some upcoming exhibits that may be of interest to you. Keep in mind though that there are tons of other permanent collections at both museums that are also interesting. Plus, they each sponsor a free day once a week, so go check it out!

For more information, visit the following web sites:

* Field Museum: <http://www.fnmh.org/>

* Art Institute: <http://www.artic.edu/>

The Legend of the Hungry Ghost

Chinese legend has it that a long time ago, there lived a young man, Mu Lian and his widowed mother. His mother was a wicked woman. She often turned away beggars who came to her door asking for food. She liked to jeer at the working poor and their dirty clothes; in essence, the only person she cared about was herself.



Mu Lian, on the other hand was a kind soul. He was a gentle person and always willing to help anybody who was in need. One day he decided to become a monk and this did not please his mother. She scowled at him for being such a useless son; she wanted him to go out and work to earn more money for her. Wealth and materialistic things meant more to her than anything else.

When she saw that she could not dissuade her son, a plan began to hatch in her mind. She decided to play a trick on the monks just to get back at them for taking away her son. Now it was the custom to offer food to the monks (this custom still exists to this very day), but only vegetarian food. Mu Lian's mother thought that it was nonsensical that these monks did not eat meat, so one day she offered food to some monks and slipped in some non-vegetarian items.

According to one version of the story, the wicked woman was punished immediately and was sent to hell. Mu Lian wanted to save his mother's soul because he knew her soul was suffering.

He set out and ventured deep into the bowels of hell. Soon he came upon his mother and he saw that she was sitting a bed of very sharp pointy stakes and was holding on to a basin of blood.

Mu Lian tried feeding her some food but the food would either turn into fire or blood. It was hopeless: he couldn't do anything for her so he left. He returned home and started to pray.

It is said that Buddha heard Mu Lian's prayers and was touched by Mu Lian's compassion. Thus Buddha decreed that once a year, the gates of hell be opened so that the lost souls will be able to roam the earth and be fed. This is why every year on the seventh day of the seventh month in the lunar calendar; the Chinese celebrate the festival of the hungry ghost. This is one of five major festivals in the Chinese culture.

Food and drink will be offered at night outside the gates of houses. This is so that the ghosts do not enter their houses and cause trouble. A traditional food made for this festival is steamed sweet bread. Lanterns are lit to help guide the ghosts to the feasts set out for them. Special paper money is also burned as offerings to these ghosts so that they can take it back to hell and spend it there. To make sure that these souls stay out of trouble, entertainment is set up round the clock, mainly Chinese operas performed on outdoor stages.

An Inspiring Ray of Light

by Kunjali Padhya

If you want proof that determination can get you anywhere, you need only needed to look at the 8 truck, 100 ton convoy that rolled into the United Center last week. Heading up this massive entourage is possibly the world's most powerful female entertainer, a woman who has recorded 13 albums and can sell a concert ticket for two thousand dollars. She goes by only one name, because she can. She is Madonna.

I don't need to write a list of the top ten hits Madonna has released since she began her career in 1982. Even though some of you don't want to admit it, you know almost all of them. Is there anyone else's image that comes to mind when you hear the words to "Material Girl"? Madonna's greatest hits album, "The Immaculate Collection" plays like a soundtrack to the life of anyone growing up in the mid-80's. And every hit had a memorable controversy to go with it. Whether it was rolling around on stage at the MTV Video Music Awards in a practically see through wedding dress, or her tumultuous marriage to Sean Penn, Madonna always made sure she was in the news. Even now, she is still stirring things up. But somehow, Madonna manages to turn every situation to her advantage. She uses her media savvy, a sharp tongue, and quick thinking to emerge from any controversy unscathed. If there was a human version of Teflon, she would be it. Nothing sticks!

OK, you say, so she's famous. Big deal. So why am I so inspired by her? Because just when you think she's got nothing left, she completely reinvents herself, and has everyone talking about her once again. Whether she projects herself as a Marilyn Monroe look-alike, a punk rocker in a kilt, or an urban cowgirl, she always stays true to her real personality, an independent woman capable of taking on the world. She has complete confidence in her decisions, knows exactly what she wants, and exactly how to go about getting it. When they said she couldn't be tamed, she became a mother, started practicing yoga, and emerged as a calmer, more spiritual version of herself. No matter how many personas she takes on, you know that underneath it all, she's still Madonna. For a college sophomore having trouble deciding between chocolate and vanilla, she makes me want to get up, take charge, and ignore anyone standing in my way.



Perhaps the best thing about Madonna is that she gives it her all. Those people who paid two thousand dollars to sit in the 3rd row definitely got their money's worth, and even the people in the two hundred dollar nosebleed seats felt satisfied at the end of the show. Because they experienced 75 minutes of pure Madonna, an entertainment spectacle that is the product of 20 years of attitude, guts, and good old hard work. So girls, get out there, take no prisoners, and don't forget your cowboy hat.

What's New in Entertainment

CD Releases

Sept. 4th -System of A Down
Sept. 11th-Bob Dylan; Jamiroquai
Sept. 18th-Macy Gray; Diana Krall; Tori Amos

DVD

Sept. 4th-Memento;
The Princess Bride
(Special Edition)
Sept. 11th-Blow; The Neverending Story
Sept. 18th-Spy Kids; Driven



In Theaters



Aug. 31st- O;
Jeepers Creepers
Sept. 7th- Rock Star;
Soul Survivors; The Musketeer

New York Times Bestseller List Hardcover Fiction

1. Valhalla Rising, Clive Cussler
2. Suzanne's Diary for Nicholas, James Patterson
3. Cane River, Lalita Tademy
4. Hemlock Bay, Catherine Coulter
5. The Woman Next Door, Barbara Delinsky

Hardcover Nonfiction

1. John Adams, David McCullough
2. The Wild Blue, Stephen E. Ambrose
3. Ghost Soldiers, Hampton Sides
4. Tuesdays With Morrie, Mitch Albom
5. Founding Brothers, Joseph J. Ellis

