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The Promethean: Spring 2014

Elizabeth Cramer
*The College at Brockport*, beth.cramer1120@gmail.com

Nicholas Kinney
*The College at Brockport*

Ashley Brotherton
*The College at Brockport*

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In the Fall semester, I realized time was running out. I was a senior at last and had yet to do an internship, which is pretty crucial in the Public Relations field. I scrambled. But, through it all, I had my number one choice picked out. My dream was to intern for the American Cancer Society (ACS), specifically Relay For Life during the height of the college Relay season. I used the contacts that I made at ACS through the years of being on Brockport’s Relay For Life planning committee and got in touch with the Relay For Life Senior Manager. I was persistent, and probably slightly annoying, but I finally got an interview.

If there is one piece of advice I can give you about interviewing, that is be prepared. In every way, shape, and form; be prepared. Dress professionally but be comfortable in what you are wearing. Dress pants and a nice shirt can go a long way in taking you from hot mess to collected. And plan your outfit ahead of time. Make sure everything is clean and your shoes don’t smell (it sounds weird but trust me). Next, study up. Learn everything you can about the company and the person interviewing you. Peruse their website, poke around their social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and whatever else they might have). Look up common interview questions and practice answering them on the spot. It also helped me think ahead about what my three best traits are that apply to the company and some negative traits that will come out positive in the end (“I am so obsessive over being organized!” or “I can be a perfectionist at times”). I also looked up questions to ask the interviewer at the end that will impress them. I actually used a couple of them. I really like the question, “What would a typical day in this position be like?” and “As of right now, can you think of any reason why you wouldn’t hire me?” The second one really threw them off and, I like to think, impressed them.

I am not going to lie, when I saw that the American Cancer Society offices are located at 1120 South Goodman Street, I thought it was fate. I tried to calm myself but I was just too excited. This was my dream internship, my number one choice. I told them this in an email and in my interview! I even sent a thank you email to the interviewer and expressed how much I wanted the internship. All of my hard work paid off: I got the internship! I was elated. I could not get off cloud nine for months.

Once I actually got to the office, I was not disappointed. The Relay For Life Event Specialists were all so kind and eager to give me and my fellow intern, Katey, work to lighten their load. My supervisor is one of the nicest people I have ever met too. She keeps us laughing and motivated to do our best. Even on the boring tasks like the Valentine’s Day mailing Katey and I were given to do on our very first days in the office, we had so much fun.

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On Friday, May 16 at 4:00 pm in the New York Room of Cooper Hall, graduating seniors who have completed the Honors College curriculum will participate in a special ceremony that recognizes their academic success. The Honors Graduation Ceremony is held each May on the day before the college-wide Commencement Ceremony. During the ceremony, graduating Honors seniors are formally presented with the Prometheus Medal by their chosen Thesis Director. The thesis is considered the capstone experience of the program not only because it is a major scholarly or creative project, but because it is a unique expression of each student’s intellectual curiosity. The process of producing it involves working closely with a faculty member who shares that curiosity, and therefore, it is most fitting that Honors students are “hooded” with the Prometheus Medal by their Thesis Director.

The Prometheus Medal was specially designed over a decade ago by Robert Marx, Emeritus Professor of Art. Cast in bronze, the medal weights over one pound and depicts the face of Prometheus surrounded by beams of light. Inspiration for the medal design came from the Prometheus sculpture featured in front of the Allen Administration Building on New Campus Drive. According to Greek mythology, Prometheus symbolizes the characteristics of intelligence, creativity, and inventiveness—and these characteristics are reflected in the thesis projects of Honors seniors. As usual, the thesis projects for this year spanned the disciplines, including topics such as campaign finance reform, sediment transportation in flash floods, obesity and health care expenditure, open math problems, culturally responsive classrooms, economic impact of same-sex marriage, Kurt Vonnegut’s novel Slaughterhouse Five, feminism in the poetry of Claribel Alegria, video games in education, and representations of masculinity in animated children’s programs—just to name a few.

Over the years Honors seniors have expressed much praise for their thesis director. Many have reported that their director was a great source of motivation and inspiration in completing a challenging work, and that the experience of completing a thesis was both personally and professionally rewarding. I look forward to congratulating all our graduating seniors and their thesis directors at the ceremony on May 16!

Contribute to The Promethean!
The Honors College Newsletter is an award-winning publication dedicated to the Honors College faculty, students, and alumni. Articles are written by Honors students and are designed to provide information to the Honors community. Content will include a variety of topics, including research, Honors news and events, student and professor spotlights, experiences, and creative work. For submissions or more information, please contact Dr. Kowal at dkowal@brockport.edu.

Honors College Office: Holmes 219; open 8am-4pm
Prometheus sculpture on cover created by Arno Breker.

Phone: (585) 395-5400
Email: honors@brockport.edu
As the semester comes to a close, many people begin to ponder what they have done and what they could have done differently. As a graduating senior, I’ve been evaluating not only this past semester, but my entire four years of undergraduate studies. I am writing this article in hopes that someone will take away some advice that will help them make the most of their four years of college.

As Honors students we are all extremely motivated, but are we motivated for the right reasons? What has motivated me over the last four years is the pursuit of being the best of the best, to have a high GPA that will get me into my choice of graduate programs. Was this the right way to take on college? My answer would be no. Sure I have had many great experiences and learned a great deal along the way, but I think if I was motivated on a more personal level I would have gotten more out of college.

I have always been a “resume builder.” Everything I have done has had a purpose; I have never really done much of anything for pure enjoyment. I have enjoyed many of the things I have done, but when I am constantly thinking about how the extracurricular activities and classes I have taken can better me for the future, I lose something in the moment. Joining clubs and committees for pure enjoyment is probably something that is alien to many Honors students. However, my advice to you would be: Do it. What do you have to lose?

On a more positive note, being so involved in the Honors College has helped me create lifelong friendships, connections, and skills that I am forever grateful for. As a Student Coordinator of the Peer Mentor Program for two years, I was able to meet dozens of Honors students from many different backgrounds and gain some invaluable organizational and problem solving skills. As co-editor of this newsletter I have had the privilege to work with Honors students from different fields that I know nothing about. All in all, my experience with the Honors College has been one of great stress and of great rewards.

With that being said, my biggest regret of the last four years is not getting more involved with organizations within my own major. I have committed so much time and energy to the things I do in the Honors College that I neglected things I could have been doing in the School of Business and Economics. I could have made stronger connections with professors and businesses that look to employ Brockport students. My advice for you would be to find a balance: become involved with Honors, but also get involved in your department. Both will prove to be influential to your success and happiness here at Brockport.

So what do I have to show for the last four years of my life? I have an Honors family, a diploma, and the credentials to obtain admission to a variety of graduate programs. What I am missing is the intrinsic enjoyment in the things I have done and a better balance to my life. In the end, if there is one piece of advice I could leave with my fellow Honors students, it would be to get involved on campus and to get involved in yourself—the things you enjoy.

Pictured at left (ordered from left to right): Nicole Fuller, Noah Reger, Nick Kinney, and Cody Luetger—four Honors peer mentors (2012).
Every day in the ACS office is a new adventure, one I would not trade for the world. I will be so sad to see it end on May 7. I love these people, this adventure, and this cause. The cause of cancer awareness has always been close to my heart and it is so refreshing to be around people who have the same outlook on the disease as me.

If there is one more piece of advice I could leave with younger Honors students, it would be to get experience in whatever you want to do. Start early, get as much experience as you can, and make sure you know where you want to go.

Almost everyone has been touched by cancer in some way. I like to use that phrase, “touched by cancer” because cancer is something that gets to you deep inside and it literally touches you in some way, shape, or form. Cancer is a dark and powerful word and has the ability to do some pretty terrible things.

I was diagnosed with a brain tumor when I was 12 years old and was truly blessed to know that it was not cancerous. However, I did undergo an eight and a half hour surgery to have the mass removed because my tumor was causing me to go blind. I faced some of the same challenges that cancer patients do. It was from that moment on that I knew I wanted to give back and work with kids in the same predicament when it came time to choose my career.

Two years later, a friend of mine, Meghan Redenbach was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and I am lucky to be one of the people that crossed her path. She was the thirtieth person in the world and the second child to ever be diagnosed with this rare type of cancer. Her tumor was the size of a cantaloupe and burst in her abdomen. Meghan, like most cancer patients, did not let her disease get to her, which is one of the reasons I think cancer touches so many of us. In their time of need and darkness, many of those fighting the disease don’t act like they have a disease at all and are more concerned about others’ well-being rather than their own. Meghan relapsed twice and lost her battle to ovarian cancer on December 24, 2010 at the age of 15. Although I knew her for two years—the two years of her battle—and did not see her or talk to her as often as I would have preferred, she will always hold a special place in my heart. Her legacy will live on through the many people she touched. Meghan’s famous saying, “Man Up,” will forever run through my mind if I have a bad day or start to feel sorry for myself. Through knowing and investigating her illness more in-depth, I know that life is precious. Meghan enjoyed the little things in life and never took anything for granted, a lesson we all need to learn. Her life was short in years but will last for miles in the hearts of those that she touched. She started a book, which those closest to her finished and published this past November. *Meghan’s Journey*, the story of a teenage girl who showed a community how to “man up” in the face of cancer gave me more insight on the struggles Meghan faced, in addition to her family.

Meghan’s life, her journey, and her personality have inspired me in countless ways as I continue on my journey to becoming a pediatric oncologist to help children like Meghan win their battles. Childhood cancer is something I am truly passionate about and I am making it my mission to treat and be there for the kids that need it the most.

Meghan and many of my family members’ battles have all aided in my desire to treat kids with cancer. Currently, I work at Strong Memorial Hospital on the Pediatric Oncology unit and interact with children fighting for their lives. It is amazing how happy those kids are. They aren’t worried about the tubes or the needles, but they are focused on being kids, being happy and living their lives. This is why I want to make a difference. I have been touched through witnessing what cancer has the power to do, and know that cancer won’t get people down but will get people to keep living.
Honors student, Jane Ives, is this year's winner of the Jennifer M. Lloyd Women and Gender Studies Essay Prize for "Blobs and Boxes," written for Honors WMS 360 in Fall 2013.

A Note from the Editors

From the bottom of our hearts, it has been a pleasure to work with you all these past couple years. We hope you will continue the great tradition that is The Prometheus. Being both peer mentors and editors of the newsletter, we have met many wonderful people over the years and we are sad to leave you all. Thank you for the experience you have given us and good luck with all of your future endeavors.

After graduation, Nick will be taking some time off to explore the world from a new perspective before pursuing a joint MBA JD degree.

Beth will be taking some time off as well to look for a career. Perhaps with the American Cancer Society, perhaps with Disney. The sky is the limit.

At Right: Beth and Nick in Poland on the Honors College study abroad program, “Experiencing the New Europe” (2012).
The Creative Honors Student: Poetry

We Are Women

By: Randi Montalvo

Misuse of terms,
Misunderstanding of words,
Taunted with expressions of “being soft”, “don’t be a girl,”
“man up,”
What’s so wrong with being soft? With being a girl? Why
must we man up?
Is there some super power in testosterone?
Some frailty in estrogen?
No, there is no super power. There is no frailty.
Only ignorance, lack of education, even worse lack of want
for change and betterment.

I am woman.
I am soft.
I am hard.
I am strong.
I am weak.
I am beautiful and caring and smart.
I am everything that is human.
I experience every spectrum of emotion, so when I say I know
how you feel believe me!
I have been there, I will be there.
I will hold your hand, wipe your tears, take your words of
anger because you are hurt.
I am here…not because I belong here but because I want to be here.
So do not belittle my existence, my love, and my strength.
I promise you I am the strongest and softest of all creatures
you will encounter.
I am woman.
I grow in love and patience, watered by strength and hope.
Despite being born in the shade of inequality and oppression I
have basked in the light of knowledge and determination.
I work behind the scenes, not because I belong in the back-
ground but because I do not need the spotlight.
I am patient and persistent.
You have always had your equality.
I have been fighting for mine since existence.
I have the right to vote, but not the right to my own body?
But I do not give in,

I will not give up,
I am the future of women.
Be soft.
Be a girl.
Woman up.
We are women!

Lilacs

By: Elizabeth Cramer

Shades of purple, pink, and white
surround the young couple
as they wander through the park.
Fingers mesh together and noses sniff
at every other bush.

Round, tall bushes are scattered
yet placed purposefully and strategically
on the hill as if a wall
of scent lined the road.
As if it would keep anyone out
of their beloved sanctuary.

They come here every year, whether together or apart.
But usually together since that lovely day
when the lilacs were in bloom
and they made a promise.

So the purple flowers forever followed them
but the couple did not mind.
It reminds them of when they were young
and meshed their fingers while walking
through the lilac bushes.