

Evolving Traditions



This fall's Honors Kickoff welcomed the return of the iconic Honors "Jump" photo, which started in 2020, when six-foot distancing was a Covid-inspired cautionary norm.

The Honors Convocation and March, began in 2006 and was once led by Dr. Hollingsworth's bagpipes. Today, it features the Pride of Tigerland Drum line, the Book of Honors signing ceremony, and the Gonfalon Reception.

The Sorting Hat Ceremony, which began in 2013 at Wintersmith Park, is now held in the Ataloa Theatre. With help from Jamie Davis, this year's ceremony was more grandly theatrical than ever (see the cover of this newsletter!).



- **36** Years that ECU has recognized Honors Program graduates
- 462 Total number of ECU Honors Program graduates 1989-spring 2024
 - **3** Honors Program Directors, 1989 to the present
 - 12 Years Dr. Benton has served as the Program Director
 - **19** Fall Honors Program Convocation Marches
- **24** Faculty who received compensation for mentoring Honors Projects and Theses in 2024 (the most ever)
- **31** Honors Projects and Theses completed in 2023-2024
- **30** Percent of Honors students who identify as first-generation college students
- Percentage of Honors students who are Pell Grant eligible due to financial need
- 37 Percentage points that the Honors Program graduation rate surpassed ECU's overall 4-year graduation rate in 2024
- 3 Number of Honors Students among ECU's 5 Nigh Award finalists in 2024



ALAS, POOR YORICK!

This fall's Oklahoma Shakespeare trip featured a first-ever pre-show visit to the Museum of Osteology, where Honorables contemplated skulls, much as Hamlet would in that evening's drama. Inspired by the Danish prince's study abroad experience in Wittenburg, we also stopped by Fassler Hall, where we dined on German fare, and then descended to the Dust Bowl, where Arete won the Honors House Bowling Championship.



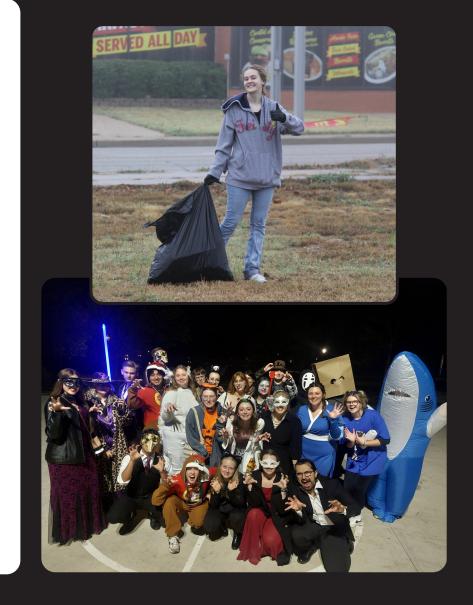
PROMWEAR, TRASH BAGS, & COSTUMES



On the Tuesday before
Halloween, Honors co-hosted
a *Carrie* Prom Night with the
English department. Donned
in their Promwear best,
students and faculty began the
evening discussing Stephen
King's 1974 horror novel and
finished it watching Brian
DePalma's 1976 film.

On the first Saturday in November, Honors, the President's Leadership Class and the BLA joined forced to pick up trash on Ada's downtown streets.

On Halloween night, costumed Honorables haunted Wintersmith Park before retreating to Faust 159 for trick-or-treat candy, House costume and trivia contests, and an evening of Werewolf gameplay.



BREAKING RECORDS

A New Mayor in Town



\$14,000 raised (a whopping 41% increase over the previous high!), this year's Crowdfunding Campaign broke all records. Senior **Business Administration** major Arely Hernandez came up with the idea for a fundraising contest among current Honors students, and sophomore Ethan Starr helped that idea pay off—literally by single-handedly bringing in 12 donors and \$1200. For his efforts, Ethan was celebrated at Honors Thanksgiving as "Mayor of Athens" (thanks for the sash, Megan Lewis!). We were thrilled that a record-high 48 Honors Alums donated and offer a special a vuvuzela blast for the generous donations made by alums Trevor Berg (\$600) and Jennifer Barnes Kearns (\$500), HSA faculty advisor Dr. Andrew Wells (\$500), and the families of current Honorables John Kelso (\$1000), Titus Higle (\$750), Ileen Hull (\$750), and John Gladders (\$575), in addition to the annual \$1000 scholarship sponsored by alums Allyson and Talor Stewart.

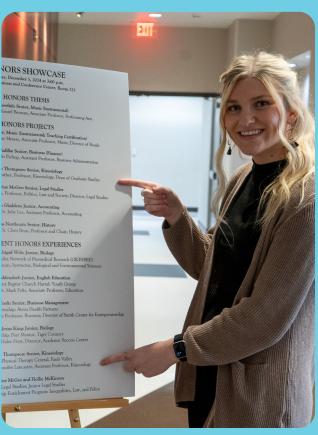
With 232 donors and over

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Last spring, when he was spending a semester at the Swansea University in Wales (U.K.), Brad Henry International Scholar Twan Yellowfish (pictured top right) recorded a three-song hiphop EP, titled "Here,." That EP formed the foundation of his creative thesis, "Hip Hop's Voice in Healing." At our Fall Showcase, Twan played an excerpt from that EP, featuring a Native American drum track played by a family member and talked about how his thesis incorporated what he had learned about Native American intergenerational trauma, mental health, healing, and humor into hip-hop culture. Twan's was one of three theses presented. Twelve Honorables presented on semesterlong projects, 8 on internships, 3 on Oklahoma Scholar Leadership Enrichment Program seminars, and 1, Arely Hernandez, presented on the semester she spent in Brazil.







"I love witnessing passionate people talk about their work. ... You could tell Seezan (pictured above) had put in enormous amounts of effort into her physical therapy presentation and was proud to share it."

> - Zach Idlett (Sophomore, Business Administration)

