



**Twelfth Annual
College Honors Symposium
Friday, April 24, 2020**

College Honors Administration 2019-20

Director, Professor Rebecca Root
Assistant Director, Chris Brittain

College Honors Faculty 2019-20

Lisa Cassidy
Meredith Davis
John Gronbeck-Tedesco
Pinar Kayaalp
Yvette Kisor
Tae Kwak
Huiping Li
Cathy Moran Hajo
Sam Mustafa
Stephen Rice
Ruma Sen
Mihaela Serban
Ed Shannon
Jeremy Teigen
Leah Warner
Marta Vides

College Honors Student Executive Board 2019-20

Sam Anklowitz
Dahiana Arenas
Nicholas Bykov
Alexa Hacopian
Leana Hacopian
Pietro Lombardo
Constance Marion
Audrey Miller
Gagan Namburi

College Honors Advisory Board 2019-20

Naseem Choudhury - Psychology, SSHS

Susan Hangen - Dean, HGS

Tae Kwak - History, HGS

Rebecca Leung - Journalism, CA

Huiping Li - International Business, ASB

Joost Monen - Biology, TAS

Cristina Perez - Nursing, TAS

Bernard Roy - Philosophy, SSHS

Ruma Sen - Communications, CA

Mihaela Serban - Law & Society, SSHS

Gladys Torres-Baumgarten - International Business, ASB

College Honors Senior Projects

Sarah Browning

Integrated Science Studies

The Experience of Chronic Pain: An Analysis of Physical and Psychological Treatment Options and Outcomes for Patients with Chronic Low Back Pain

Sponsor: Professor Diane Andronaco | Reader: Professor James Gillespie

Justina Celentano

Computer Science

The American iDream: How Technology is Impacting the American Dream

Sponsor: Professor Benjamin Fine | Reader: Professor Lawrence D'Antonio

Kimberly Evans

History

Challenging Columbus: Evolving Views of Christopher Columbus in High School History Textbooks

Sponsor: Professor Sam Mustafa | Reader: Professor Stephen Rice

Stephanie Jaime Guzman

Business Administration

The Value of Migrant Agriculture Farmworkers in the U.S. Economy

Sponsor: Professor Tammi Redd | Reader: Professor Monika Giacoppe

Alexa Hacopian

Chemistry

Determination of Critical Micelle Concentration of Aerosol-OT in a Two-Solvent System by Fluorescence Spectroscopy

Sponsor: Professor Loraine Tan | Reader: Professors Robert Mentore and Sarah Carberry

Blaine Henn

Political Science

The Causes and Effects of Brexit

Sponsor: Professor Sam Mustafa | Reader: Professor Dean Chen

Caleb Herbst

Political Science

Why Locals Run: What Compels Townspeople to Run for their Local Boards of Education

Sponsor: Professor Jeremy Teigen | Reader: Professor Amanda Roberti

Tabitha Jaison

Biology

Benefits on Non-Traditional Medicine in Comparison with Traditional Medicine

Sponsor: Professor Yan Xu | Reader: Professor Kokila Kota

Kaci Kopec

Biology

Using CRISPR Technology to Upregulate EP4 Receptor Expression

Sponsor: Professor Joost Monen | Reader: Professor Yan Xu

Constance Marion

Psychology

Pain Perception and Coping Mechanisms in Human Subjects Presenting with MC1R Variants

Sponsor: Professor Joseph Cataliotti | Reader: Professor Lysandra Perez-Strumolo

Madeline Martinez Fuentes

Political Science

It's More Than Just Milk and Cookies: The Politics Behind School Lunch

Sponsor: Professor Eric Castellanos | Reader: Professor Amanda Roberti

Deckard Montesanto

Communication Arts

RIP: A Purga-Story (A Feature Length Screenplay)

Sponsor: Professor Rowlett Scott | Reader: Professor Stuart Weinstock

Bibhash Mulmi

Computer Science

Foodster - A Mobile Web App

Sponsor: Professor Scott Frees | Reader: Professor Benjamin Fine

Gagan Namburi

Bioinformatics

Bioinformatics Analysis of Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*): An Examination of GEO Datasets to Determine Which Factors Affect Growth and Yield

Sponsor: Professor Ash Stuart | Reader: Professor Yan Xu

Angelo Petillo

Accounting

Technology in Accounting

Sponsor: Professor Maggie (Lien-Fang) Ho | Reader: Professor Edward Petit

Benjamin Prill

Accounting

A Study of Ramapo Students' Thoughts and Knowledge of US Tax Law

Sponsor: Professor Constance Crawford | Reader: Professor Katherine Yeaton

Amish Regmi

Computer Science

Story Share - An Android Application

Sponsor: Professor Scott Frees | Reader: Professor Benjamin Fine

Jennifer Seitis

Business Administration and Communication Arts

A Domino or Two (A Feature Screenplay)

Sponsor: Professor Rowlett Scott | Reader: Professor Branislav Bala

Caitlin Shurminsky

Mathematics

Standardized Testing in American Education

Sponsor: Professor Alexander Urbiel | Reader: Professor Tilahun Sineshaw

William Strauch

Psychology

Examining the Impact of LGBTQ+ Workers on a Corporation

Sponsor: Professor Maya Poran | Reader: Professor Joseph Cataliotti

Patricia Szajwaj

Nursing

Fall Risk in Oncology Patients: What Factors Contribute to its Increase?

Sponsor: Professor Kathleen Burke | Reader: Professor Anne Marie Flatekval

Gabriela Ulloa

International Studies

Voices Along the Border

Sponsor: Professor Erick Castellanos| Reader: Professor Rebecca Root

College Honors Senior Bios 2019-2020

Sarah Browning

Sarah has spent the last four years pursuing a degree that combines her scientific interests with her affinity for business and health. Influenced by her passion for fitness, Sarah's research delves into the complexities of chronic pain. With the significant number of chronic pain cases today, there are many different approaches taken to address the pain both immediately and long term. Sarah's analysis explores the various traditional and contemporary treatment options available to patients diagnosed with chronic low back pain, both physically and psychologically, as well as their success rates individually and combined with each other. Sarah's hopes for the coming years are to achieve her MBA and a Project Management Certification.

Justina Celentano

Justina is a senior at Ramapo College pursuing a degree in Computer Science. She is very involved on campus between volunteering with local organizations to having been on the e-board of a variety of clubs. Her research for the Honors Program includes examining student perception of the American Dream and how it has changed with the continuous advancements in technology over time. Her other research focuses are on analyzing data on gun violence in the United States using the programming language Python, as well as using machine learning to dissect data on online news popularity. After graduation, Justina will be starting a full-time role as a software engineer at JPMorgan Chase.

Kimberly Evans

Kimberly has spent the last four years pursuing a history degree and her certification as a high school social studies teacher, as well as being involved in various organizations on campus. Her research focuses on analyzing how the narrative about Christopher Columbus changed through different high school history textbooks ranging from the 1910s to the 1980s. For her research, Kimberly utilized the American History Textbook project on campus, an archive of American high school history textbooks from the mid-1800s to the present. After graduating, Kimberly hopes to get a job as a high school history teacher.

Stephanie Jaime Guzman

Throughout the past four years at Ramapo College, Stephanie has learned lots through her studies as a Finance major. While managing her studies, she has also spent her time at the Center for Student Involvement working as the Student Activities and Revenue Management (SARM) Student Manager. Her involvement at school varies from clubs like the Association for Latinos Moving Ahead where she currently holds the position as the club's Treasurer. In an effort to highlight both her major and her Mexican ethnicity, her research focuses on the impact of migrant farmworkers in the U.S. and their overall impact on the U.S. economy. Throughout her paper, she analyzes both the statistical input of migrant farmworkers and their mistreatment due to reasons which include their legal status.

Alexa Hacopian

Alexa Hacopian will graduate with a major in chemistry and a mathematics minor. During her time, she was inducted into the Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars Honors Society, and is the president of the Sigma Xi Research Honors Society. Alexa has been heavily involved in the Honors Program from being on the admissions team, to being an HDG leader, to serving on the student executive board for the past three years. She currently works at Stryker Orthopaedics where she will begin full-time upon graduation continuing with her current team of Sterility, Biocompatibility, and Chemistry for the Joint Replacement Division. Alexa plans on pursuing her masters in chemistry.

Blaine Henn

Blaine has spent his last four years pursuing a political science degree and spending hours canvassing for a state assembly election campaign. His research focuses on identifying the primary motivations behind Brexit and the long-term effects it will have on the international community. These causes include a look at Britain's historic resistance to the European Union, as well as how recent events in international politics predisposed the United Kingdom to break away. Meanwhile, by regressing into nationalist rhetoric and isolationist agendas, the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU could destabilize the liberal international order previously championed by nations such as the United States. He is applying to graduate school in the fall to pursue a degree in Medical Humanities.

Caleb Herbst

Caleb has spent his last four years pursuing a degree in political science, spending countless hours serving as an elected school board member, Student Government Association president, and peer facilitator (among volunteering in various other organizations). His research focuses on why townspeople run for their local boards of education, willingly engaging in blistering political campaigns, partaking in countless hours of meetings, and facing the ire of the community for virtually no tangible gain. He surveyed over 250 elected school board members across the state of New Jersey, further interviewing several board members young and old. As local politics is woefully under-studied in the political science arena, this research can be expanded on in the future to explore how prevailing trends in the motivations of school board members may impact the decisions that they make. After graduating, Caleb is looking forward to taking a gap year to travel before continuing his education in one way or another.

Tabitha Jaison

Tabitha is a senior Biology major at Ramapo College, with a minor in Gerontology. She currently works as a clinical information manager at Clara Maass Medical Center, and has been involved with various organizations, including Alpha Phi Omega, the Biology Club and has worked at the Center for Student Involvement at Ramapo College. Her research project consists of an elaborate study of non-traditional medicine such as osteopathic treatment, Eastern medicine etc., in comparison with allopathic medicine. In this project, she discusses a brief history of each mode of treatment, the benefits/drawbacks of each as well as current statistics. She hopes to attend medical school in the future and become an osteopathic physician.

Kaci Kopec

Kaci has spent her last four years pursuing a biology degree and a chemistry minor. She has spent hours in the research lab at Ramapo as well as holding the position of Student Manager of Commuter Affairs in the Center for Student Involvement. She also completed an internship at Pfizer this past summer which was a priceless experience to future her research techniques. Her research here at Ramapo focused on the Upregulation of EP4 Using CRISPR Technology. Upregulating the amount of EP4 receptors on bone marrow stem cells should result in an increase in differentiated osteoblasts, which are vital to bone formation. After graduation, Kaci will be attending New York Medical College to pursue a Ph.D.

Constance Marion

Constance Marion has served on the Executive Board of the Honors Program for two years, has been an Honors Development Group leader twice, and has attended two NCHC conferences. Her major is Psychology. While at Ramapo, Constance has focused her psychology research on sensory perception as a function of the body and a pathway to conscious awareness. After graduation, Constance plans to take a gap year to expand her horizons and gain experience and perspective before applying to PhD programs in Clinical Psychology. She would eventually like to work with adolescents in an inpatient setting.

Madeline Martinez Fuentes

Madeline has spent the last four years learning about United States government, policy making, and politics with a particular focus on constitutional law and the treatment of disenfranchised voters in the country. Her research is focused on the implementation and development of the Richard B. Russel National School Lunch Act, which is responsible for creating programs such as the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. With food insecurity rates on the rise, debates in the United States Congress surrounding the removal of this act become all the more threatening to the health and well-being of the largest disenfranchised population in the country - children. Apart from the Honors Program, Madeline has been an active member of the Ramapo College campus community, taking leadership roles in various organizations such as the Association of Latinos Moving Ahead, the Visual Artists Society, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Model United Nations, and the Omega Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. After graduation, Madeline hopes to work for Teach for America in New Jersey.

Deckard Montesanto

Deckard is about to graduate with a degree in Communication Arts with a concentration in Digital Filmmaking. She has spent the last four years working her own, as well as her classmates', short film sets and getting involved in writing, directing, and editing. The culmination of all this will come in a few short weeks when she goes to present her final film at the school's Senior Project Showcase. After college, she is looking forward to creating more projects alongside her friends and continuing to work on her creative endeavors.

Bibhash Mulmi

Bibhash is an international student from Nepal. With a passion to code, he has spent his last four years pursuing a Computer Science degree. He has been involved in various campus organizations and has participated in different off-campus Hackathons and coding competitions to hone his coding skills. His senior project is a cross-platform mobile web-application that allows restaurants and food businesses to share their content to the users. The users can view details about the coupons and deals of these restaurants in their feed. The feed is customized to the preference of the users. He built the application from scratch by learning various tools, frameworks and libraries. After graduation he will be working as a Software Analyst at Jefferies LLC, an investment firm.

Gagan Namburi

Gagan has spent his last four years pursuing a bachelor of science in Bioinformatics as well as Mathematics and Computer Science minors. He has been involved in the Honors Program executive board and Chemistry-Biochemistry Club. His research focuses on examining factors of growth in switchgrass via bioinformatics resources. Previous research had been performed in a lab setting and primers were tested to examine salt stress tolerance in switchgrass. He will be pursuing a career in data science after graduating.

Angelo Petillo

Angelo Petillo of Point Pleasant, New Jersey is an Accounting major. Besides being a member of the Honors Program, Angelo is a member of Tau Delta Phi and enrolled in the 4+1 MSAC Program. In addition to his studies, Angelo is currently an Accounting Intern at Corrado Financial Group and served as an Incentives Compliance Intern at the New Jersey Economic Development Authority this past summer. He is proud to have been able to successfully balance his school, work, leadership roles, and social life. After receiving his Bachelors in Accounting, he plans to take the CPA exam and obtain his Masters in Accounting.

Benjamin Prill

Benjamin has spent the last three years pursuing an accounting degree, worked a year as a business tutor, and interned with several companies. His research focuses on what Ramapo students know about US taxes. The knowledge of taxes is important to protecting oneself against scams as well as aiding in financial planning for the future. He will begin studying for the CPA Exam this summer and start a masters program in the fall. He plans to become a Certified Public Accountant.

Amish Regmi

Amish is a Computer Science major and a Math minor. He has spent the last four years being involved on-campus as a student -aide for Institutional Advancement and ITS. He has also been involved in clubs and organizations including International Student Organization, Computer Science and Tech. Club, and Math club. During his junior year, Amish researched and analyzed the performance of various Machine Learning algorithms for Intrusion Detection and Network Security. He will be working as a Software Engineer starting this summer and hopes to go to graduate school for a Peace Studies program in the future.

Jennifer Seitis

Jennifer has spent the last four years at Ramapo working towards a degree in both Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing and Communication Arts with a concentration in Digital Filmmaking. In these four years, she produced a few short films, one of which was "My Name is Anon(ymous)," a documentary she presented at the National Collegiate Honors Council annual conference in New Orleans this past November. Additionally, during her time at Ramapo, Jennifer has also worked with Advanced Systems Concepts, Inc. in Morristown as a Marketing Production Intern and is currently interning with the New Jersey Motion Picture and Television Commission in Newark. After graduation, she hopes to work in the media and entertainment industry either on set or in the production office. Maybe she'll throw graduate school in the mix eventually, too.

Caitlin Shurminsky

Caitlin has spent her last four years pursuing a mathematics degree and secondary education certification. She is currently completing her clinical practicum at a local high school and cannot wait until she has her own classroom. Her research focused on the history, purpose, and effects of standardized testing in American education. Her work in the mathematics, teacher education, and honors programs have greatly influenced her own teaching philosophy and view on standardized testing today.

William Strauch

William sought after a degree in psychology for the past four years at Ramapo College, as well as a business essentials certificate that introduced him to the crossover between psychology and business. He applied this integration to study the impacts that LGBTQ+ employees have on the workplace, examining current research and studies relating to the benefits of diversity within corporations. After graduation in May, he plans to attend graduate school and obtain his master's in business administration, which he will use to further his career as a manager.

Patricia Szajwaj

Patricia is a senior Nursing major and has spent her last two years in clinical placements within various hospitals, as well as learning new skills in the simulation lab in Ramapo's Adler Center. Over the summer, she was a Student Nurse Extern at Saint Joseph's Regional Medical Center working with a registered nurse preceptor, where she further grew her interest in working in the Emergency Department in the future. Her research focuses on the fall risk of patients admitted to hospitals, specifically focusing on the oncology unit and chemotherapy.

Gabriela Ulloa

Gabriela, who is graduating a year ahead of her cohort, has spent her last three years pursuing a degree in international studies and a minor in international business. Aside from being in the Honors Program, she is also a part of the Educational Opportunity Fund Program and is involved in various organizations. She had the opportunity of going abroad last Spring semester to Milan, Italy where she studied at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. Her research focuses on locating and analyzing art placed along US borderlands. She has also created a Google Map pinpointing the art.

COLLEGE HONORS MISSION STATEMENT

The Ramapo College Honors Program is a community of faculty and students dedicated to intellectual, creative and moral engagement. Honors students seek excellence through continual guidance and a distinctive curriculum of critical thinking, intercultural and international understanding, experiential learning, service, and interdisciplinary studies. The end of the program is the beginning of an enriched and accomplished life. Ramapo College invites all who have the aspiration, potential and passion for discovery to join.

