



news

MARCH | 2026

Message from the Honors Assistants

Dear Kathwari Honors Students,

As we head toward the close of the spring semester, we wanted to thank you all for your engagement with the Honors Program. Whether you joined us at events, spent time in the Honors House, or contributed as a volunteer, your presence truly means so much to us. We know it's not always easy to show up, and we genuinely appreciate the time and energy you've shared with our community.

We're especially excited for our final event of the semester—our **End-of-the-Semester Picnic on May 4th**—and we would absolutely love to see you **there!** We hope that you all have enjoyed our events this semester as much as we have enjoyed putting them together. As always, if you have any suggestions for us, please feel free to stop by our office or email us at honors@wcsu.edu.

Lastly, we wanted to remind you all that we are a resource for you, whether it is Honors-related or not. It's okay to ask for help, and it's just as important to take care of yourself along the way. We hope that registering for the Fall semester went smoothly and we encourage you to finish this semester off strongly. **You've got this!**

With appreciation,

*Your Honors Assistants
Andrea, Jayden, and Maddie*

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Honors Success Stories

KATHWARI HONORS STUDENT KARRINA FURTADO ENGAGES WITH ACADEMICS AND CULTURE IN GREECE

During the fall, Karrina Furtado, senior Public Health major, studied abroad in Thessaloniki, Greece. This program offered a variety of courses in the Humanities and Psychology, Furtado's minor, and also gave her the opportunity to experience Greek culture, form lasting friendships, and enjoy the scenery, including "the most beautiful sunsets."



In her marketing course, Furtado engaged in experiential learning at a local hotel, building confidence with intercultural communication. Furtado was also able to visit sites from myths she studied, including Aphrodite's Rock in Cyprus, and Mount Olympus. Furtado appreciated the relaxed and welcoming nature of Greek culture, as well as Thessaloniki. "The boardwalk was always full of life, with people singing, dancing, talking, fishing, and just enjoying their time outside." The central location allowed her to travel to other Greek cities and nearby countries. In Rome, she had the chance to walk through the Porta Sancta of St. Peter's Basilica.

Overall, Furtado most values the connections she made. "I will never forget the people I met during my time in Greece and while traveling. Many of us exchanged contact information, and we still keep in touch," she says. Furtado is also grateful that the travel funding she received allowed her to completely focus on learning about the culture around her, soaking up everything it had to offer.

As she plans to attend graduate school and become an Occupational Therapist, Furtado knows her experiences will benefit her future career. "I visited places where not everyone spoke the same language as me, which challenged me to communicate in different ways and become more patient and adaptable," she says. "[This] is an important skill in occupational therapy, when working with people from diverse backgrounds."

Read the [full story here](#).



Honors Success Stories

KATHWARI HONORS STUDENTS HANNAH ALEXANDER AND GIANNA FANELLI NAMED 2026 HENRY BARNARD DISTINGUISHED STUDENT AWARD WINNERS

Hannah Alexander and Gianna Fanelli have been named 2026 Henry Barnard Distinguished Student Award winners. The award recognizes seniors with outstanding academic achievement and engagement. Both students have pursued dual degrees alongside the rigorous academic commitments of the Honors Program.

Alexander will graduate with a Bachelor of Music in Performance – Cello, and a Bachelor of Science in Justice and Law Administration – Legal Studies. Alexander’s decision to pursue degrees in both Music Performance and Legal Studies has provided her with different areas in which to share her knowledge, including her upcoming senior recital and her involvement in the university’s award-winning Moot Court team. “While I know music is and will always be a huge part of my life,” she says, “I’m interested in commercial law and its ties to the music community in areas like intellectual property and copyright law.”

Fanelli will receive a Bachelor of Business Administration in Financial Management, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Fanelli also is concurrently taking classes to earn a Master of Business Administration in December 2027. Fanelli explained, “The Financial Management and Psychology disciplines challenge me in different, yet complimentary ways. Together, they gave me both structure and perspective. It has clarified the kind of professional I aspire to become — someone who understands the financial frameworks that drive organizations, and the human dynamics that sustain them.”

The Kathwari Honors Program congratulates Alexander and Fanelli for their exceptional multidisciplinary achievements.

Read the [full story here](#).



**2026 Henry Barnard Distinguished Student Award winners
Hannah Alexander (left) and Gianna Fanelli (right)**

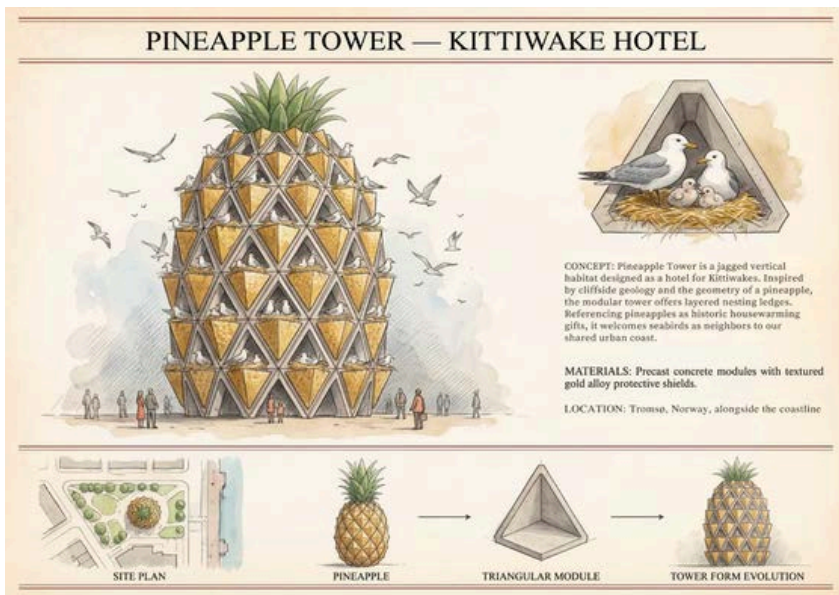
Honors Course Spotlight

HON 400 - HONORS CAPSTONE STUDENTS SUBMIT PROJECTS TO INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION

Students in Professor Clements' HON 400 - Honors Capstone Seminar completed projects for **120 Hours**, an international student architectural design competition based in Norway. The competition is centered around a sustainability issue. This year, the focus was on an Arctic area where tourism is invading the territory of a native bird called the Kittiwake. The winning team will receive 30,000 Norwegian Krone, or about \$3,000.

All students in the two sections of this semester's HON 400 Honors Capstone Seminar created projects in teams of three, working alongside team members from different majors. As the title of the competition suggests, students have 120 Hours to respond to a prompt. Honors students only had 96 hours so that the projects could be reviewed, with a WCSU winner selected to go on to the international competition.

Students produced quality work across the board, so Professor Clements selected two winning teams to submit their projects to 120 Hours. These teams' designs are printed below. **Read the [full story](#) for more.**



Team 0931:
Pineapple Towers—Kittiwake Hotel

Matthew Moody (Media Arts),
Benjamin McKiernan (Secondary Ed),
Alyssa Motalvo (Criminal Justice)

Team 0932: *The Harbor Bloom*

Gabe Martin (Nursing),
Thelma Owoicho (Creative & Prof. Writing),
Sandra Mood (Theatre Arts)

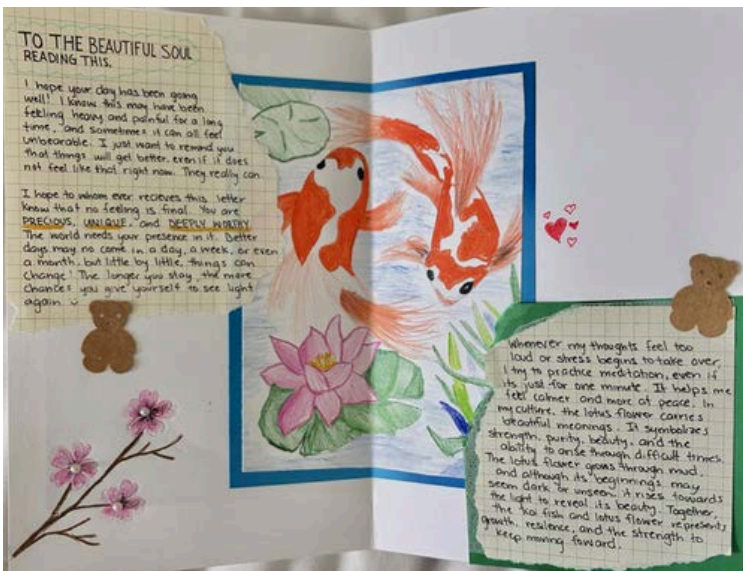


Honors Course Spotlight

STUDENTS IN HON 498 - UNDERSTANDING SUICIDE BECOME CERTIFIED SUICIDE PREVENTION SPECIALISTS

In this course, Professor Reynolds guides students to examine suicide from multi-dimensional perspectives, including biological, psychological, sociocultural, and historical. Students also learn about current prevention and treatment options. While working to become certified suicide prevention specialists, students participated in the “Caring Letters Project,” creating letters with messages and artwork that will be donated to patients who have attempted suicide or have been hospitalized for ideation.

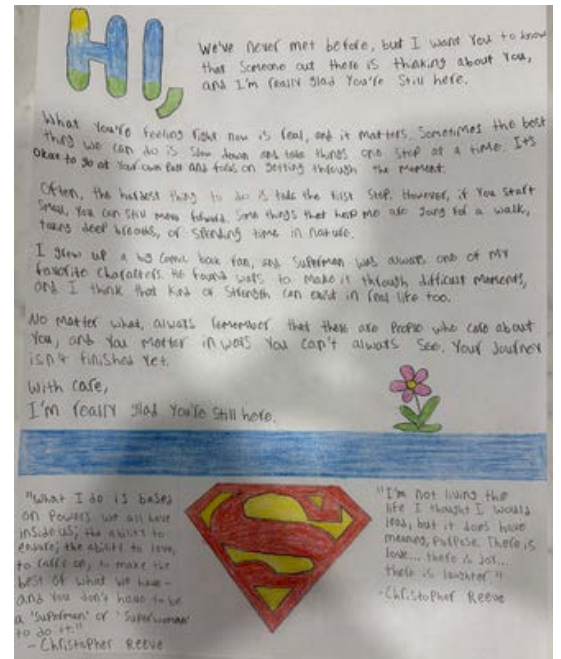
Professor Reynolds highlighted students for their artwork, empathy, and overall humanistic efforts. Y Nguyen, Gregory Scotto, and Nicholas Wiseman shared their letters as well as reflections on their experience.



Letter by Y Nguyen

“Becoming a certified Suicide Prevention Specialist also gave me a new perspective. It taught me how important it is to listen without judgment, notice warning signs, and remind people that support is available. The experience made me realize that even small actions, conversations, and expressions of care can really make a difference.”

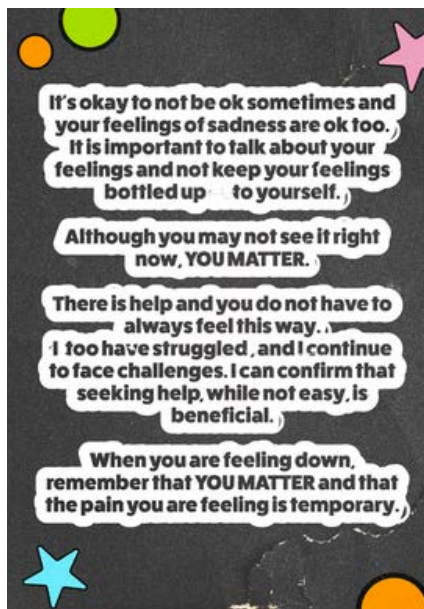
- Y Nguyen



Letter by Nicholas Wiseman

“While working toward becoming a certified Suicide Prevention Specialist, I realized how vital it is to break the silence. Keeping feelings bottled up or trying to handle everything alone usually just makes the weight heavier. I’ve faced my own set of challenges and struggles, and I can say from experience that while reaching out for help isn’t easy, it is incredibly beneficial.”

- Gregory Scotto



Excerpt from Gregory Scotto's Letter

March Snapshot

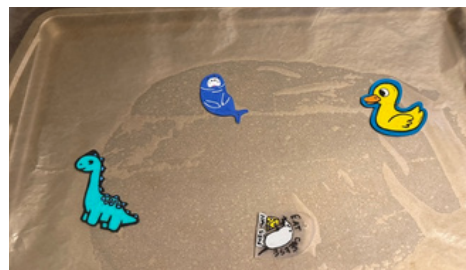
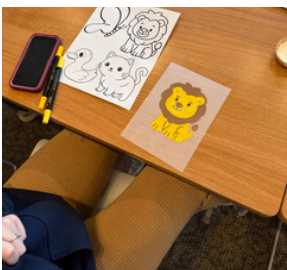
LEADERSHIP THROUGH HORSEMANSHIP PROGRAM

The Kathwari Honors Program partnered with Pegasus Therapeutic Riding for another successful session of the Leadership through Horsemanship Program. Students traveled to Brewster, NY to learn about caring for and interacting with horses. This required students to be present and effectively communicate in order to build trust. This was a unique and engaging experience that gave students a chance to step outside of their everyday environment and gain new perspective.



HONORS DE-STRESS

Honors students were able to de-stress and connect at this event. In the middle of a busy semester, students took a break from studying to enjoy snacks and crafts, including slime and face masks. It was a great chance to prioritize self-care and community.



March Snapshot

KATHWARI HONORS SPRING SEMINARS

The Kathwari Honors Spring Seminars have been a success, engaging students and faculty around critical topics united by the theme of Design Thinking. In March, we hosted three events:

Dr. Pauline Assenza - "How to Avoid Norman Doors: Design Thinking to Solve Everyday Problems,"

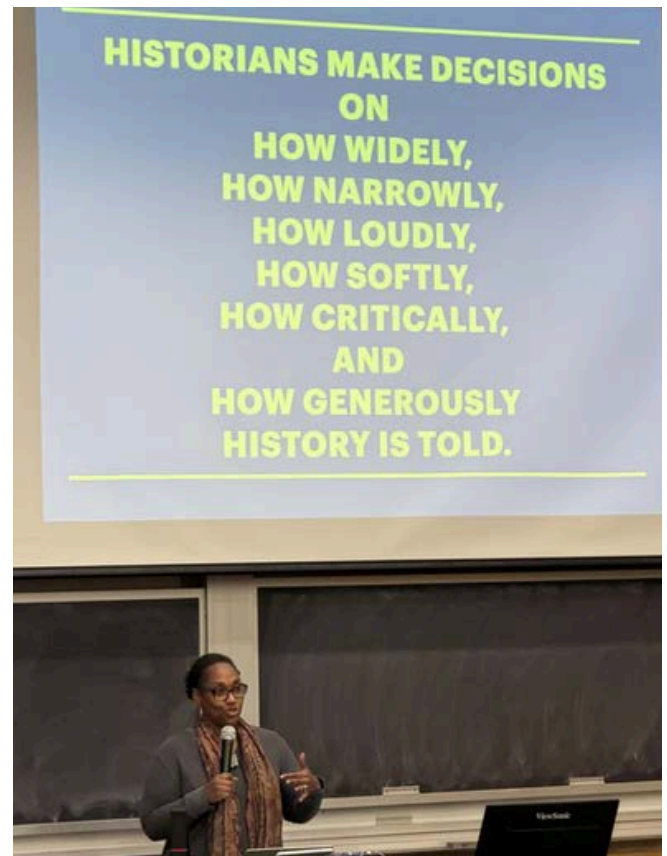
Dr. Marcia Chatelain - "Crafting the Past: How Historians Creatively, Courageously, and Critically Tell the Truth,"

Dr. Christine Hegel-Cantarella - "Anthropology by Design: Imaginative Practices for Social Analysis."

See **Upcoming Events** for details about April's spring seminars.



Dr. Pauline Assenza, WCSU professor, leader the of the Entrepreneurship/ Small Business Management option in the Management Major of the Ansell School of Business, and ERIC@THEGARAGE resource center.



Dr. Marcia Chatelain, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America* and University of Pennsylvania professor.

View [Dr. Chatelain's talk here](#).



Dr. Christine Hegel-Cantarella, WCSU Professor and cultural anthropologist whose research focuses on legal, economic, and environmental issues, led a seminar focused on design thinking in Anthropology.

Upcoming Events

April 24th
FRIDAY

SPRING SEMINAR: RHETT MILLER

This is part of our Honors Spring Seminar series. Rhett Miller is an icon of Americana and contemporary songwriting. In addition to 13 albums with Old97s, he has released 10 solo albums—most recently *A lifetime of riding by night*.

Join us in the Veronica Hagman Concert Hall on Friday, April 24th.

This is a ticketed event. [Click here for ticket information.](#)

May 4th
MONDAY

HONORS END OF SEMESTER PICNIC

HONORS STUDENTS: Before we head out for the semester; take some time to reconnect with those around you. There will be free food, tie-dye t-shirts, friendship bracelet making as well as outdoor games to play with friends!

Join us on the Honors House Lawn from 12 - 3 pm.

Rain Date: Thursday, May 7th

An Evening with Rhett Miller

CONCERT AND Q&A

Rhett Miller is an icon of Americana and contemporary songwriting. In addition to 13 albums with Old97s, he has released 10 solo albums—most recently *A lifetime of riding by night*, which he wrote and recorded just before undergoing and recovering from vocal cord surgery.



Miller is the creator of the *Wheels Off* podcast, for which he has interviewed many of the greats of contemporary Americana music as well as authors, screenwriters, comedians, designers, and other creatives about “the messy reality of creative life.” In 2025, he received with Old97s the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Americana Music Association.

FRIDAY

APRIL 24, 2026

7:00 PM

**VERONICA HAGMAN CONCERT HALL
WESTSIDE CAMPUS**

[Tickets here](#)

