

HONORS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

REMOTE REALITY EDITION



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GREETINGS! (THOUGHTS ON A REMOTE REALITY)

"In early August 2020, HPSAB marked its new beginning for an upcoming new academic year, a year that cannot be matched by any definition of our times. After a surreal summer and lots of reality checks in the midst of the pandemic, with lockdown exhaustion, we came back together as a group, only with what we knew and being reminded daily to take one day at a time. For some of us, everything we were used to doing is now a thing of the past. Among the first things Dr. S asked us to do was to contemplate on this thing so called the pandemic, COVID-19, and a few other common terms. We all had something to say about our experiences of being in isolation, living in confined spaces, and facing many uncertainties in life. In the end, HPSAB chose a thoughtful idea presented by Emma. We chose 'remote reality' as the theme for the Fall 2020 term for the Honors Program and its newsletter. We hope that our reflections on the remote reality in this and future issues will be received by our readers based on how much we have in common as humans. We are indeed in it together and only through support that we can provide to each other will we survive this and any future crises of our times. For some of us, the remote reality revealed many aspects about humanity. We witnessed how some cope with this remote reality better than others. In all, we hope that the Honors Program students will continue to find many lessons from this crisis and be able to look back many years from now on how resolute we were able to overcome life difficulties, when faced with uncertainty. If you are familiar with *The Predator*, the 1987 film, we hope you will agree that the protagonist revealed that despite all life obstacles we face, we must remain vigilant and continue to live in the present. While we sometimes long for the past and can't help but wanting to plan for the future, the remote reality reminds us consistently that life is full of uncertainty and among the best way to go forward is to continue our daily living based on a wisdom that there is nothing more certain than the uncertainty."

- Dr.Sirimnagkala (Faculty Advisor)



GREETINGS CONT.

"Hello all! What a year it has been. I've learned a lot over the past few months, as I am sure we all have. Primarily, I have learned that each of our struggles are so unique that nobody could possibly prescribe a perfect solution, so I won't try. Instead, I will impart the single most important guiding principle in my life up to this point, which I hope will provide some insight on how to live well in these unusual times. If all you try to be is a good person, you will invariably impact the world far more than striving to be a great one. We have all had to make many adjustments in this shift to a remote reality but this principle still holds true. If anything, it is more important now than it has been in my entire life. So take care of people. Say hi to people you know and to people you don't. And never put greatness before goodness."

- Walter M. (Co-Chair)

"The current status of our community as stuck within this remote reality was concerning, at first. Life moves at such a fast pace, especially for college students who are trying to keep up with assignment due dates, while also balancing jobs and a social life. But the pandemic forced us to slow down tremendously. For some, that meant not having a job. For others, that meant taking up new hobbies or developing new talent. Regardless of what you chose to do during quarantine, your life is and will be changed for it, simply due to the adjustments we all have had to make. This remote reality has allowed me, and I hope all of you, to learn to take everything in baby steps. Slowing down and taking a step back from the fast-paced nature of our worlds taught me the tremendous need to stay in touch with and take care of myself. If there is nothing else that you take away from this newsletter, from this quarantine, from this remote reality, I hope it's that you are the maker of your own fate.

And with that responsibility comes a perpetual need to care of yourself before caring for anything else. I hope you can all remember that as the semester continues."

- Brianna L. (Co-Chair)

"Many things have changed since quarantine was announced back in March; since then we've all pretty much just been going with the flow, taking this new normal in stride to the best of our ability. Something that I personally never gave much thought to until it concerned me personally, though, is how much the job hunting process has had to change.

As someone entering the job market during a pandemic, there are certain things I consider normal that most people probably never had to worry about. For example, the application process takes place solely online and all interviews are conducted over Zoom. It's odd being interviewed to work somewhere without physically being there.

During an interview for a job as a restaurant server, I was informed that since everyone has been cooped up at home for so long, they have sufficiently higher expectations for what makes a good dining experience. Plus, people are scared, and many don't even risk eating out anymore. Therefore it's up to every employee working together to make sure the customers feel as safe and comfortable as possible and that they leave satisfied. During such an uncertain time, it's the least we can do.

More to come once I land a job!"

- Emma J. (Consultant)

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ABOUT THE HONORS PROGRAM

IMPORTANT NOTES FROM DR. SIRIMANGKALA

Working closely with our Honors Program Student Advisory Board (HPSAB) faculty advisor, we bring to you the following reported items:

Last May, all seven seniors defended their Senior Honors Thesis successfully (see the list of Spring 2020 graduates and their thesis information on page 5) Congratulations to all! We miss you and do keep in touch!

The Honors Program (HP) also welcomed seven new HP students. You can read about three of the new students (on page 7). We hope to feature all first-year students in future issues. Please look out for a message from one of the HPSAB members for a possible interview.

All Fall 2020 Honors Program courses (PHI 191H, MAT/PHY 240H, and SOC 394H) are taught remotely. HP faculty, we would like to hear from you about your remote reality, including remote teaching experience. We also launched a new app to stay in touch with our fellow HP students as well as the HP faculty. Once HPSAB issues a green light, please click 'join' Barry University Honors Program and HPSAB Slack, under #general channel (invitation will arrive in your BU email). In addition to email and HP distribution list, please feel free to use Slack when you want to communicate with Dr. S and/or the rest of HPSAB.

We look forward to seeing you at **our first remote and mandatory Student Orientation on September 23 at 4 pm. Please note the meeting link Dr. S sent out.** Remember that all Fall 2020 events will be held remotely. In addition to our upcoming Student Orientation, HPSAB is also planning two other Fall 2020 activities, including Guest Lecture Series (HP-GLS) in mid-October and Social Events with HP alumni in late November. As much as we can, we will aim to accommodate everyone's schedule. Currently, Wednesdays and Fridays from 4 – 5 is the preferred time for the majority of us (it is after HP science class). If you are not able to attend any of the program's events, please reach out to Dr. S or any HPSAB members (see pg13 for information on HPSAB membership and how to join HPSAB).

Finally, we welcome Anna Galaktionov and Suzannah Young as the newest members serving on HPSAB. We were most happy when Izabella Ruiz decided to return to serve as our Secretary.

SPRING 2020 HONORS PROGRAM GRADUATES

College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Sofia de la Puente

Graduating Magna Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science in Exercise Physiology

Honors Thesis: *The Mediating Role of Exercise in College Students Sense of Belonging and Academic Achievement*

College of Arts and Sciences

Arin Blake

Graduating Magna Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science in Biology

Honors Thesis: *Examining Racial Disparities in Health Status and Health Outcomes among Women*

Michidael Ceard

Graduating Summa Cum Laude

Bachelor of Arts in English

Honors Thesis: *Parallels between African Syncretic Theology in Literature and Activism in the New World*

Johania Charles

Graduating Magna Cum Laude

Bachelor of Arts in English

Honors Thesis: *Fiction Turned Nonfiction: Feminist Dystopian Novels and the Realities of Women*

Dainely Fabregas

Graduating Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science in Criminology

Honors Thesis: *The Pivot of Modern Slavery: Social Implications of Human Trafficking in Correlation to the Success Rate of Law Enforcement and Social Agencies*

Nicole Rafols

Graduating Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science in Biology

Honors Thesis: *How Sedentary Lifestyles for Children Have Become Predispositions to Heart Disease*

School of Business

Stefan Jugmohan

Graduating Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science Business Administration - Finance

Honors Thesis: *The Impact of a Student-Managed Investment Fund on Student's Financial Literacy and Academic Performance*

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK REFLECTION

By Dainely Fabregas



Last Spring, I was fortunate enough to travel to the Bahamas for an Alternative Spring Break Program with Barry's School of Education. The program focused on education and hurricane relief for the Great Abaco Island which had been hit by hurricane Dorian. Once we arrived, I was really shocked by how much destruction the beautiful island had suffered. Thousands and thousands of cars laid on the road destroyed, homes ripped to shreds, and people were living in tents. I was inspired that despite the harsh circumstances there was so much hope within the community. As a group we worked with elementary, middle school, and high school students teaching a variety of different subjects and activities to expose them to different forms of education. When we arrived only three classrooms were in good condition to function, which meant that unfortunately the school could only accept a limited number of students. As a team, we all participated with the community and the students to rebuild two more classrooms so that more students could go to school. Working alongside the community, I learned so much about the Bahamian culture. The people are so admirable, hospitable, and polite that even a four-year-old calls you ma'am. I'm so thankful for this wonderful opportunity because it truly did change me. Not only was I able to help others, but I made memories that will last a lifetime.



NEW STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

By Anna Galaktionov

Amidst the educational, financial, and living complications COVID-19 caused, we are so glad to have three new in-house members join the prestige Honors Program at Barry University!

Anthony Bennetti, Gabriella Reyes, and Cassandra Lee have all gone around obstacles to be accepted into the Honors Program and to adjust to the remote reality in general.

Quick Stats



Anthony Bennetti

- Tampa, Florida
- Sophomore
- Marketing Major
- Baseball Player
- Dedicated



Gabriella Reyes

- Lawrence, Massachusetts
- Sophomore
- International Business Major
- Dancer
- Ambitious



Cassandra Lee

- Chicago, Illinois
- Sophomore
- Business Management Major
- Goal-Oriented
- Softball Player

Bennetti chose Barry University based on the recommendations of new friends he made while playing baseball during the preceding summer. He liked the fact that the university size is small and that he could develop professionally in his sport at Barry. Pushing forward toward the Honors Program, the \$5,000 scholarship was his main thrust to apply, as for many other students. Bennetti also wishes to be challenged with the higher level education the program offers. He hopes to accomplish more than the average and set himself to higher standards, especially in his future career in Marketing. He hopes that the program will highlight his resume and give him an exceptional appearance in front of employers.

NEW STUDENT SPOTLIGHT (CONT.)

Reyes spent her 2020 summer working at three jobs and volunteering at a children's summer camp in an underserved community. Being a woman of color, she favored Barry for its diversity. Just as Bennetti, she liked Barry's small community. She was awarded the Stamps Scholarship and decided to apply for the Honors Program to touch up her education record for future law school. She looks forward to being surrounded by the other dedicated students in the program.

Lee became an aunt over the summer and played lots of softball. She found the softball coaches and the entire Barry community friendly and welcoming. She also appreciated Barry's religious affiliation to Catholicism and its diversity. When sending in her application for the Honors Program, she hoped to be challenged under a harder curriculum. She wishes to be part of the ambitious and exciting Honors community. She believes that the program will help her stand out in the eyes of employers and also give her the confidence in starting her own business someday.

The coronavirus took a toll on most students, including our three new members. Both Bennetti and Reyes will be fully remote this fall, but Lee will be in-person. Bennetti chose the remote option for the opportunity to work ahead. Although Reyes prefers to be in-person, she was slightly worried about travel restrictions and about catching the virus itself. Lee is excited to see her teammates in-person again. The only concerns the remote learners have are technical issues and staying in contact with the professors. Otherwise, they are planning to simply adapt to the remote reality.

Pursuing degrees in the business field, Bennetti, Reyes, and Lee believe that the pandemic has made a huge impact on businesses. If the three were the heads of large companies at this distressing time, Bennetti says that he would take examples from other businesses, Reyes would make sure that the workplace is relaxed and comfortable for the employees, and Lee would implement safety measures.

Although some of us will not be able to meet our three new members in person, we give them our warmest welcome, hope that they will succeed in the curriculum, and wish them the best through Barry's "remote reality."

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT

By Walter MacWaters

The following is an abridged version of two interviews held with the President of Barry University, Dr. Mike Allen, published with his approval. The first seven questions are from an interview that was held on 4-3-2020 and the last four, marked with asterisks, are from a more recent follow-up interview held on 9-10-2020.

1) To start off, let's get to know the real Dr. Mike Allen. Where are you from, where did you go to university, what did you study, and what is one thing about yourself you think most people don't know?

I'm a New Englander at heart. I was born in Illinois but lived mostly in Connecticut. I attended Trinity College – a smallish school there – and then University of Connecticut for my master's degree and PhD. I'm actually an introvert by nature, despite my public facing position. I would normally be just as happy to simply blend in, but I am also perfectly comfortable in the leadership roles I have found for myself.

2) Many people say that the journey is much more valuable than the prize at the end. What in your journey inspired you to come here to Barry University?

I'd been in the field of higher ed for almost 25 years, so two factors connected me to Barry. First was the opportunity to work with students who were the first in their family to go to college, which really resonated well with me and my early career and still does today. Second was my previous experience as a university administrator in South Florida, which prepared me for the rigors of the job.

3) Barry, as you know, has built an incredibly rich history since it was founded 80 years ago. What is it like being the first male president of a previously all female university?

This has got to be the question I've been asked most since I was hired. Most importantly, the values important to me are very much the same as those held by the Adrian Dominican Sisters. I realized very early on in interview process that there was just a really strong alignment. The Adrian Dominican Sisters have been incredibly friendly and warm in welcoming me, as has the entire Barry University Community. You mentioned Barry's rich history, and part of that is a tradition of strong and thoughtful mission-driven leadership. I am very honored to carry on this tradition.

4) You seem to me to be a man with a plan. What is your vision for Barry's future in the next 5-10 years?

I have a very different answer now than I would have given three or four weeks ago. Truthfully, it's hard to tell what the world will look like when the dust settles. There are many unknowns and unpredictable variables. Critically, I think there will be a re-evaluation of priorities in all of higher education, the country, and across the world after the new reality emerges. In broadest terms, my priorities up to this point have been growing the external presence of the university. We have around 65 thousand alum who mostly have fond feelings about Barry but the percentage of alumni who continue to engage with the university is low and we need to grow in that aspect. I want Barry to have strong positive presence in South Florida. And I want to continue to build relationships between the university and outside partners in our community.

5) I know that a number of students here are hungry for leadership opportunities and working with the president seems like it would have huge potential for that. Is there anything that the Honors Program and student organizations in general can do to work more closely with your office?

There are two things we are working to start up which will definitely help with that. The first is a Student Leadership Council - a committee of sorts which has diverse widespread representation from all the various clubs and groups at Barry. I want to have a representative body of students to get feedback and ideas about new initiatives and programs and to share information with. The second is the President's Society. Students will apply for this highly selective leadership opportunity and essentially act as ambassadors for the university. Big events for university donors might have members of the President's Society greeting guests and sharing Barry's story, among other potential duties.

6) The Covid-19 pandemic is quite the issue to deal with right out the gate of your time here. In these unusual times, how do you feel being at the wheel, so to speak, and guiding the university through the pandemic?

I honestly feel very comfortable in this position of leadership. I have been through numerous crises in the past which have taught me a lot about how to handle delicate and urgent situations - nothing of this magnitude of course but nobody has. At the end of the day we all have to rely on our core values and principles. For me that means being very forward thinking, being thoughtful, kind, and compassionate for students, faculty, staff, and alumni, being very honest and transparent about what we are doing as a university and why. The hardest part of this situation are the unknowns which are always unsettling. The best anyone can do in a leadership role is communicate well, thoroughly, and openly and I am entirely prepared to do that.

7) I'm sure you are swamped these days by people asking for your comment or input, but do you have any words of wisdom or advice for all the students, faculty and staff who are weathering this storm and keeping the university running?

First and foremost, stay safe and stay healthy. I think everybody understands true gravity of the situation now, but it is especially important for the Barry community to adhere to physical distancing guidelines, wear face coverings and follow all the practices recommended by health experts and required here at Barry while we get through this. The way everyone has adjusted to this has been extraordinary; being able to convert to a remote learning environment in the course of a week is incredible. Everyone's flexibility and willingness to adapt has been amazing and I really want to convey the strong sense of gratitude I feel. The only further thing I can ask is that we all continue be patient and stick together.

***8) Over the past several months, much has change in the world around us and in our expectations for the future. What has been the biggest shift in perspective or direction that you have had to make?**

I'd say the biggest change has been our need to become incredibly flexible. Academic institutions have always functioned in a certain way and learning to be flexible and patient has been all of our greatest goal. Something I think we have discovered in the midst of this turmoil is just how much people enjoy being in person around each other, and how much they miss it when that aspect of their lives is removed. For some time now online schooling was thought to be the 'way of the future', and it may still be to an extent, but we have all learned how much we value a personal touch in our education.

***9) I was intrigued to read your statement about the founding of the Barry University Anti-Racism and Equality Coalition. What is your personal perspective on the search for equality and fairness in the university setting?**

This issue has been a real priority both for me and for the university. We at Barry are uniquely positioned to make an impact on our community and the lives of our students in this sector and I think we are all working really hard to make whatever positive change we can. When I say we are uniquely positioned, I am referring to the rich and diverse ethnic and racial makeup of our university community, our long-standing commitments to inclusivity and fighting for social justice, and the sheer talent among us, in our students, faculty, staff and alumni network. We are in a place to be at the forefront of this work, and the Coalition will coordinate and lead our efforts.

***10) What are some of the concrete goals of this committee and what changes can Barry students expect to see in their campus experiences?**

There are three main goals of the BU AREC at the moment. The first is to create a network of support for students who are struggling with the trauma, pain and confusion caused by some horrific acts of violence in the US. We want to make sure we are making resources available to those who need them. The second goal is to educate ourselves and our community on how to better interact and engage with racial topics. And thirdly, it is our goal to utilize all of the incredible expertise we have on campus to make a tangible difference. We have a wealth of students and faculty with incredible ideas and we just want to empower them to create change with these ideas. As far as what students can expect, they can expect to be engaged. We are really looking to have our students as active participants in social change and social justice in alignment with our university values. We want us all to be part of the movement towards positive change.

***11) In times of uncertainty, I am sure you would agree that it is important not to lose sight of the things which inspire and motivate us. What is one thing you are most excited for in the upcoming academic year?**

That's actually a really easy question; I am excited for us all to be back together, in-person and also engaging virtually in a really seamless manner. I am a people person and the opportunity to have everyone back together and able to be with and learn from each other is something I'm really looking forward to. I hope we have all learned not to take things like being around each other for granted and to appreciate having the chance to be together and learn together. I think we will all have a new appreciation for the routine things like in-person commencement ceremonies and other live events, when we are able to resume all of those, and a new appreciation for the connections we have with people in general.

MEET HPSAB

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HP REQUIREMENTS AND HPSAB POSITIONS FOR FALL 2020

GENERAL HP REQUIREMENTS

- Enrollment in Barry as a full-time Undergraduate student (12 credits per semester minimum)
- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5
- Take one Honors Program course each semester
- Attendance of a minimum of two Honors Program events per semester

As an HPSAB member, you will assume the responsibilities of meeting regularly to discuss events and organization of the Honors Program. Being an active participant and a proper representative is pertinent to the position.

Check More Information and Updates @Slack Workspace or Direct Messages to HPSAB @Barry University Honors Program and HPSAB

SENIOR THESIS REQUIREMENTS

- Enrollment in HON-479H
- Attendance of Thesis Orientation
- Defense of Thesis one month prior to Commencement

HPSAB POSITIONS FOR THE FALL 2020

In preparation for the new year, HPSAB would like to announce available positions for Fall 2020 and/or Spring 2021.*

- Social Media Director
- Two Newsletter Co-editors
- Any willing students that would like to form the Newsletter Committee
- We are looking for viable candidates that have demonstrated leadership in the classroom and amongst their fellow classmates.

***Those who are interested please reach out to your HPSAB buddies, any HPSAB members, or email Dr. Sirimangkala: psirimangkala@barry.edu**