

# THE JACK, JOSEPH & MORTON MANDEL HONORS COLLEGE

## The Honor Roll

### MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Welcome to the third edition of our college newsletter, *The Honor Roll*. We produce the newsletter to showcase student accomplishments and major events in the life of the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Honors College. It's been a busy and exciting year in the College. What follows are a few of the highlights:

- We welcomed our first cohort of Mandel Continuing Scholars as part of our

pipeline partnership with Tri-C.

- We honored Amanda Dennison, '09 as the second recipient of our Distinguished Alumni Award.
- We inaugurated our new student group, Mandel Vikes.
- We celebrated our first-ever Mandel College Senator, Morgan Schultz, as she joined the ranks of the Student Government Association.
- We offered admission to the class of 2022, a group that included 14 high school

valedictorians. By cultivating a small college atmosphere within the Mandel Honors College and then combining it with the advantages of a large public university, we provide a welcoming home for high-achieving students at Cleveland State. I hope you enjoy reading more about our year in review.



### INAUGURAL STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION SENATOR FOR THE MANDEL HONORS COLLEGE

By: Morgan Schultz



I had the honor of being named as the inaugural Student Government Association Senator for the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Honors College in the first few weeks of my first semester at Cleveland State. As it was my first semester in SGA and I was the first ever senator for the Honors College, I was a little lost and overwhelmed with all of the responsibility

and all of the expectations I set upon myself. With this uncertainty, I wanted to focus on spreading the word that I was available for the students of the Honors College if they had any faculty, SGA-related, or other concerns, and, most importantly, I wanted to listen to the students and learn how I could help. With this in mind, I planned a 'Meet the Leadership' pizza party for the fall semester. Through this event, I learned that the most important thing that Honors College students want to see is more activities to increase the already emphasized community-feel of the college. Meanwhile, I was participating in SGA Senate meetings and voting on issues that directly impact

our students. Late April will also bring more excitement with a 'Carnival' for the honors students with pizza, candy, games, and more! It was such an honor to be the first Student Government Association Senator for the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Honors College. I have loved serving the students and learning the importance of advocating for students' needs politically through SGA decision-making and personally through listening to the students and putting on events for their benefit. I have such high hopes for the future of this partnership between SGA and the Honors College and I cannot wait to see what is in store for the next few years!

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## GETTING HONORS INTO STUDENT GOVERNMENT

By: Cameron Caputi



I cannot say enough about how important the Honors College at Cleveland State has been for me. I grew up in Buffalo New York, Cleveland's cousin in the North East. I never thought I would end up in Cleveland, but a friend suggested I apply, so I did. I turned in my application to the Honors College about 45 minutes before the deadline, in the nick of time I made one of my most life changing decisions. When I was accepted into CSU I made a trip up to Cleveland

and I was as impressed then as I am now with the personal touch the Honors College provides student's like me. Priority registration has allowed me to graduate with my degree in Urban Studies a year earlier than expected. Also, the classes I contracted a honors level have allowed me to develop personal relationships with professors that I am now conducting research with. But, maybe the most under appreciated aspect of the Honors College is the community that has developed (much in part to our new lounge). That is why as Speaker of the Student Government Senate I worked hard, in conjunction with the SGA executive board, to ensure that this community had representation. This year we were able to appoint our first Honors College Senator and update our constitution to ensure that this position is permanent. These last couple years have been amazing for

me, being able to participate in immigration research with the Urban College, being President of College Democrats, and being the Speaker of SGA can all be traced back to the support I have received from my Honors College classmates or faculty support from the college. So, what I am trying to say is thank you, and I hope that all prospective and current students understand and appreciate this program and what it can do for them.



## A WORD FROM NURSING



All junior honors nursing students presented posters at the ["New connections in healthcare Research day"](#) here at CSU that was sponsored by Nu Delta the local chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International.

Also, three of our honors/scholars students, Amanda Mina (senior), Veronica Lysyj (junior), and Sheen

Sano (junior), will be presenting their research work as posters in April at the [Midwest Nursing Research Society Annual Research convention](#) which is an honor to present at.

## ENGAGEMENT REAWAKENED

By: Rachel Jablonski

“Hello, Sir, you look like you need a cookie!”  
 “Ma’am, can I offer you some delicious banana bread?”  
 Christine Campbell, president of the Mandel Vikes Honors College organization, enthusiastically circled the second floor of the Student Center, drawing customers to the organization’s first fundraising event, a bake sale. Campbell, an outgoing freshman with a strong belief in the causes she pursues, was especially suited for the job. Likewise, she has proved an asset as the president of the club itself.

Mandel Vikes began anew in the Fall semester of 2017 under the leadership of Lina Billings, Makenna Daus, and Christine Campbell. Since the first meeting, in which Daus and Campbell made 30-second “elevator speeches” to determine the club’s president and vice-president, Mandel Vikes has grown to include a student chair to represent each of its “Five Pillars” along with a small committee under each chair.

Campbell sees a particular significance in the Events Chair, at least at this stage of the organization’s development, because it is a convenient way to “get our name out there, make more students aware of the group, and then to bring higher numbers to off-campus events.” Because events often take place in the Student Lounge or somewhere equally accessible, more students are able to attend or find themselves accidentally attending, which gives members an opportunity to share the goals of Mandel Vikes.

*“Mandel Vikes began anew in the Fall semester of 2017 under the leadership of Lina Billings, Makenna Daus, and Christine Campbell.”*

The Fundraising Chair was head of the bake sale, but is planning other ways to provide for the organization’s events, such as a candy bar sale or partnership with a restaurant in the area.

Campbell particularly looks forward to the day the Service Chair takes the Mandel Vikes to the Ronald McDonald House. She is especially passionate about this venue and describes the fulfillment she has felt in the past when she helped lead crafts with the children in the House.

Campbell, a Mechanical Engineering major, balances her responsibilities as president, such as scheduling meetings and events, overseeing the chairs, and filling in any tasks that tend to slip through the cracks, with her rigorous academic work. She suggests that any and all Honors or Scholars students get involved because it’s an excellent opportunity to meet new people and to hold a leadership position on campus. She and the other members of the organization desire to see it grow and to see at least two assistants to each chair.

Her favorite memory as she’s been involved over the past academic year is having met the group’s members and bi-monthly meeting attendees. Campbell says, “We exist as a small-scale CAB [Campus Activities Board] for Honors students. In the end we strive to raise involvement in the Honors College and have people meet people they otherwise wouldn’t.”



The organization’s Five Pillars are Academics, Adventure, Events, Fundraising, and Service. The Academics Chair is responsible to organize educational or enriching events. Recently, students eating lunch in the Honors Lounge on a Tuesday afternoon welcomed a representative from Career Services. Students came to the event prepared with their resumes to take advantage of the opportunity.

The Adventure Chair plans time to go off campus and engage with the city of Cleveland. Members of the organization have already taken a trip to the Cleveland Museum of Art, and future proposals include an evening at the Metroparks Chalet to Toboggan or a day at Cedar Point.



## MANDEL CONTINUING SCHOLARS

By Isabel Alberto

The next stage of growth for the Cleveland State University (CSU) Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Honors College is here. Through the generosity of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation and in partnership with Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C), we are thrilled to announce the brand new Mandel Continuing Scholars Program. We are extremely excited about the already growing future of this program and could not be more proud of our first class of students, each of whom are currently preparing for graduation in Spring of 2019.

The Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Continuing Scholars Program is setting a new national model for honors students to transition from a two-year college to a four-year university. The nearly \$3.5 million grant from the Mandel Foundation will support students in earning their associate's degree in two years at Tri-C and then transferring to CSU to complete their bachelor's degree in another two years. Five students from Tri-C's Mandel Scholars Academy were accepted as the program's first class, with plans to expand the transfer number to twenty-five a year by 2020. The pipeline grants students access not only to special scholarship funding but also to items like unique honors coursework and personalized advising support. This way, academic talent will be fostered at Tri-C and then mature at



CSU so that students can graduate with distinction and become engaged leaders in the community.

So, how has CSU's Mandel Honors College changed? Construction last summer helped add two new offices to our suite at MC 106 and we have welcomed two new staff members. Dr. Adrienne Pounds was appointed as Program Coordinator in January, 2018. She has dedicated her career to helping students of all backgrounds achieve their goals and we know the program will be in excellent shape in her capable

hands. Karenia Ferguson was named as the new Honors Advisor for the program in March, 2018. We know that our students will be getting the highest quality advising in her care and are excited to have her on the team.

What do these changes mean for current students? Not to worry, we are still accepting the same number of students into our Honors Program and our Scholars Program and still have unique advisors for each. The biggest change current students can expect is just to see a few new faces around the Honors Offices and Lounge. Since the founding of the Mandel Honors College in 2014, and even back at the very beginning of the Honors Program in 2004, we have prided ourselves on being an inclusive, sup-

portive, and engaging community. We know that our new staff and students will be welcomed to the



college and we are all looking forward to where this new partnership will take us!

### DPT: DEVELOP, PROGRESS, TRANSFORM

By: John DeMarco

I was challenged to write this article describing how the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Honors College helped me get to where I am today. I say “challenged” for two reasons. First, I am nowhere close to being described as a great writer; second, because I find this question so difficult to accurately answer.

was actually getting **denied** entrance into the then called, “Honors Program.” Instead, I was granted access into the, “Scholars Program.” After being turned down, I would say I subconsciously got a chip on my shoulder. I felt determined to show the Honors College that a mistake was made.

So, first of all, who am I, and where am I at today? If I have not met you already, my name is John DeMarco. Currently, I sit as one of the Student Representatives to the Cleveland State University Board of Trustees. Additionally, this semester is my first taste of CSU’s Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT) program.

Through the process of my undergraduate degree, I followed through with dedication. Yet, the same people who denied me in the beginning, ended up being one of my strongest support groups. Instead of telling me what to dream, they told me to just dream big and we will help you along the way. Throughout every strenuous semester, they were my second backbone.

As said previously, it is a formidable task to condense all the ways the Honors College has prepared me for success. However, the most impactful aid I received

From firsthand experience, I saw the Honors College continually strive to bring out the best in every student they have. In doing so, they helped me develop, progress, and transform.



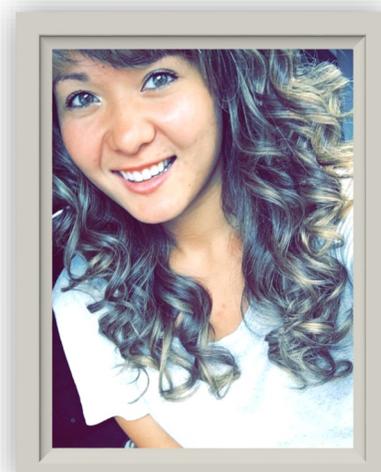
### SPEECH AND HEARING SUBMISSION

Lina Billings is presenting a poster of her Honors research project at two venues:

Billings, L. & Gordon Pershey, M. (2018). *Speech sound development in English and Russian*. [Cleveland State University College of Sciences and Health Professions Research Day](#) (Cleveland, April).

Billings, L. & Gordon Pershey, M. (2018). *Speech sound development in English and Russian*. [Ohio Speech-Language-Hearing Association \(OSLHA\) Annual Convention \(Columbus, March\)](#).

The OSLHA presentation was peer reviewed prior to acceptance. Her poster is eligible for a student poster award.



## MEET THE NEW HONORS COLLEGE STAFF



Karenia Ferguson, M.S.ED  
Mandel Continuing Scholars  
Academic Advisor

Karenia Ferguson received her BA in Communication from the University of Toledo in 2012 and her MEd in Counseling from Old Dominion University in 2014. She has worked as an exploratory academic advisor at Kent State University and AmeriCorps college guide for College Now Greater Cleveland. When she is not working, she enjoys going to concerts, art museums and vegan restaurants.

**STOP BY THE THIRD FLOOR OF  
THE STUDENT CENTER ON MAY  
1ST FOR A MEET AND GREET!**

Elizabeth Okwudi, received her BA in Communication from Cleveland State University (CSU). Years later, she received her Master of Science in Management (MSM), from Indiana Wesleyan University. She returned to her alma-mater CSU in 2008, and worked as a Career Coordinator until 2016 when she became an Academic Advisor. Elizabeth believes in nurturing diversity and motivating every individual to soar- in-spite of the odds. She loves dancing (teaches African dance), and engages in lifelong learning. She is presently pursuing her Ph.D. in Urban Education at CSU.



Elizabeth Okwudi, M.S.M., CPRW  
Honors Program Advisor



Adrienne Pounds, Ph.D., M.B.A.  
Mandel Continuing Scholars  
Program Coordinator

Adrienne Pounds, alum of Ohio University, has helped first-generation college students, veterans, adult learners, transfer students, and international students achieve their goals, through recruiting, advising, teaching, and career coaching. She enjoys jazz music and is passionate about individuals reaching their goals.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Yoey Feigenbaum****B.S. - Electrical Engineering, May 2014****M.S. - Electrical Engineering, May, 2017****What have you been doing since graduation?**

I've been working at Rockwell Automation. I started as an Electrical Engineer doing Sustaining Engineering for their ControlLogix platform and now I am doing Project Management for the Sustaining Engineering team.

**How did the Honors College help prepare you for success?**

The Honors College challenged me to take Honors level courses, which helped my academic rigor. The Honors lounge was a great place to study, talk with other students, and relax in between classes. Most importantly, the Honors Department staff and advisors were instrumental in shaping my course schedule and setting me up for success during my academic journey.

**What was the best part of being in the Honors College?**

My favorite parts of being in the Honors College were the friendships I built with staff and students and the honors experience classes that gave me interesting perspectives on different academic areas that I wouldn't have otherwise been able to obtain.

**Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?**

I don't know exactly what I'd like to do in the next 5 year but I want to gain a global perspective of my company and industry, learn management skills, and work towards leadership positions to provide as much value as I can.

**Do you have any advice for current Honors College students?**

Don't be afraid to try new things or gain new perspectives. Some of my favorite classes and experiences in college were from being open to new opportunities and change.





If you know of a Mandel Honors College student who has engaged the CSU community in an exceptional way, won an award/scholarship, presented at a conference, studied abroad, etc. and would like them featured in our next newsletter, please contact the

Mandel Honors College at:  
[honors.program@csuohio.edu](mailto:honors.program@csuohio.edu)

### MANDEL HONORS COLLEGE

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### THE JACK, JOSEPH & MORTON MANDEL HONORS COLLEGE

The mission of the Jack, Joseph & Morton Mandel Honors College is to provide an academically challenging curriculum and leadership training for high-achieving students. An honors education is a privilege, but also a responsibility, and so we also encourage leadership development among our students. Through our Honors College Ambassadors program and other opportunities we encourage our students to be engaged citizens of the College and the larger Cleveland State Community.