

# With Honors

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The University of Louisville UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

Summer/Fall 2006

Web: [www.louisville.edu/a-s/honors](http://www.louisville.edu/a-s/honors)

## Eye Opening And Valuable

By Clare Gervasi Kalb, Spanish

As a junior Honors student, I took part in the Board of Overseers Mentoring Program in more than one way.

It was my good fortune to participate both as a student mentee in the program, and as the student assistant to Luke Buckman, the Honors counselor coordinating the program. Along the way I gained a greater appreciation for not one, but two career choices. While my official experience with Dr. Mary Gordinier was eye opening and valuable, working with Luke to organize the mentors before the selection process was also a learning adventure.



U of L Honors student Haylee Ralston spends Friday afternoons at Yew Dell Gardens. She is pictured here with her mentor, Dr. Paul Cappiello, the executive director of the gardens. (See page 2)

How was I able to follow a top doctor around for a whole school year? The Mentoring Program offers high-achieving juniors at U of L a hands-on taste of their chosen profession with the guidance of respected professionals. For example, those who are majoring in political science with the intention of becoming lawyers apply to be matched with an established attorney in the Louisville community. The attorney shows the student mentee the daily workings of practicing law, as well as a personal overview of what it feels like to perform the job. (continued on page 2)



Participants in the international Honors seminar studied the culture of Morelia, Mexico, as well as the local criminal justice system.

## Criminal Justice Seminar Experiences Cultural Revelation

By MariaTeresa de la Cruz  
Political science, justice administration

Cobblestone streets, exposed plazas, ornate and opulent chapels and a slow-delicate pace would describe the city of Morelia in the state of Michoacán, Mexico. Following the Honors Overseers International Seminar titled "Comparative Criminal Justice Systems" taught by Professor Deborah Wilson, sixteen students spent ten days in Mexico studying its criminal justice system. The system is surprisingly responsive and treatment-oriented, but more unexpectedly, the students had the opportunity to immerse themselves in an unusual aesthetic experience. The most astonishing feature of Mexico was its attachment to religious traditions, made particularly evi-



MariaTeresa de la Cruz

dent in the many preserved chapels. After touring *El Cathedral de Morelia*, *Templo de las Rosas*, *Tupataro* and *Templo de las Monjas*, students were filled with the full weight of the importance of Catholicism. In addition to the very graphic biblical effigies, there were towering columns, and panels depicting the story of Christ as represented in elaborate ceilings illustrating scriptures. As students strolled through these chapels like glorified tourists with digital cameras in hand, worshippers were praying,

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Honors students immersed themselves in unusual aesthetic experiences in Morelia.

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# Eye Opening and Valuable

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Pre-law as well as pre-med students participate in high numbers in the program; however, they are by no means the only curious students. The Board of Overseers has an array of capable and willing professionals who guide students in a multitude of occupational aspirations. Besides law and medicine, other professions requested have included broadcast journalism, ethics, electrical engineering, advertising and music editing.

Although a wide selection of mentors is available, there are a limited number of slots for student participation. The first 50 students to respond to an invitation to participate are accepted and matched with a mentor by the Board of Overseers. My interest was exploration of a career in medicine, so the board matched me with one of the doctors in the James Graham Brown Cancer Center's Gynecologic Oncology department. I met with Dr. Mary Gordinier more or less weekly throughout the school year, and she introduced me to other physicians and discussed with me my professional interests. Dr. Gordinier was very open and honest with me about the excitement as well as the responsibility that accompanies her job. She also shared her own educational and professional path that eventually led to medical specialization and a position at U of L's medical school.

Participation is a yearlong commitment, a considerable amount of time for both the students and their busy mentors. The generosity and philanthropy of the community professionals, and determination, diligence and consideration on the student's part are evident. The success and enduring popularity of the program are testaments to how worthwhile this commitment is for both parties.

Mr. Dick Wilson, a member of the Board of Overseers, senior vice president at UBS Paine-Weber, and a mentor himself, agrees. About 15 years ago, Andy Arnold was a mentee of Wilson's, and now he's one of his partners. Wilson says of his involvement in the program: "It gives us an opportunity to develop long-term relationships with you, the students. It's a gifting of yourself and there's really no better way to do it. I can't think of a better way to encourage youth than through this program."

Wilson has been involved for 20 years in various mentoring programs, and has provided students a reservoir of guidance and information. "My role as a mentor is to encourage a mentee in their career, and in some situations, perhaps direct them toward a career that might be a little more meaningful. By giving them a real world overview of brokerage, I've managed to save [some students] long hours of heartbreak."

This first-person view of a career can be invaluable to the student. I learned so much from Dr. Gordinier by going on rounds with her, attending physicians' meetings and talking to her during the occasional tête-à-tête. I also discovered through the experience

I've been working weekly at Yew Dell Gardens, a nonprofit garden in Crestwood. My mentor is Dr. Paul Cappiello, the executive director at Yew Dell. Each week is different; I may be weeding, planting, stratifying seeds or helping to organize for educational events. There is some overlap between what I've learned about horticulture and what I learn in my biology classes; however, there are valuable lessons in learning about how nonprofit organizations function and other practical experiences that simply can't be taught in the classroom.

--Haylee Ralston, biology with an ecology focus

that it was perhaps more job than I wanted to sign up for. This was important for me to realize before spending innumerable hours and dollars preparing for medical school and beyond. I gleaned so much from my experience in the program -- not only the details of medical practice, but equally as important, I gained a tangible respect for the role of the physician in a way I would not otherwise have been able to appreciate. In other words, I think I accomplished the goal outlined by Mentoring Program coordinator Luke Buckman. According to Luke, "the best thing about the program is letting students discover things about themselves. We are not looking for students as receptors of information; we are looking for them to examine themselves from an active perspective. The student has to be able to take the info the mentor gives and do something with it; it's a reciprocal relationship."

The Mentoring Program is a microcosm of all the things I love about the Honors Program: it's a great opportunity to learn something worthwhile and interesting; it's presented in a unique way; there is plenty of room for independent decision making; and it's so easy to participate. The program is, as Dick Wilson says, simply "way too much fun."



Besides meeting regularly during the year, mentors and mentees attend a mid-year check-in at the University Club. Clockwise from top left, Laura Bishop and Kentucky State Medical Examiner Barbara Weakley-Jones, M.D.; Jay Jordan, the New Center for Contemporary Art, and Megan Robertson; Larry Palmer, LL.B., Urban Health Policy Chair, and JaNae Martin; and Ronald Karroll and Ray Strothman of Strothman & Company PSC.

## Honors Students Land Premier Undergraduate Science Awards

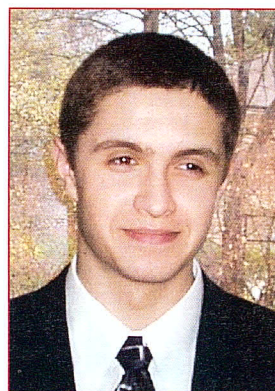
### Goldwater Scholar Times Two

The prestigious Goldwater scholarship, considered the top undergraduate award of its type, has been awarded to Boris Chernomordik, chemical engineering, and David Soleimani-Meigooni, biology with a concentration in subcellular and genetics. The Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation this year awarded 323 scholarships to undergraduate sophomores and juniors studying science, mathematics and engineering. The scholarship covers tuition, fees, books and housing.

Successful Goldwater candidates typically apply in the third year of their academic career; remarkably, both David and Boris are second-year University Honors Program students. Multiple Goldwater awards are uncommon at any university, creating a double cause for celebration.

Both students are also Grawemeyer Scholars, a U of L scholarship research program designed for undergraduates with high potential for research career accomplishments.

Chernomordik is a chemical engineering major at the Speed School of Engineering and a 2004 graduate of duPont Manual High School in Louisville. He is conducting nanomaterials research with faculty mentor Mahendra Sunkara and plans to pursue a chemical engineering doctorate. In his scholarship application, Boris writes that Dr. Sunkara has currently entrusted him with a project involving diamond films and nano-wires for eventual use in creating more efficient electronics. In addition, he is currently working on undertakings that started after discovering the unintentional, but very interesting, results of spring-like nanotubes.



Boris Chernomordik



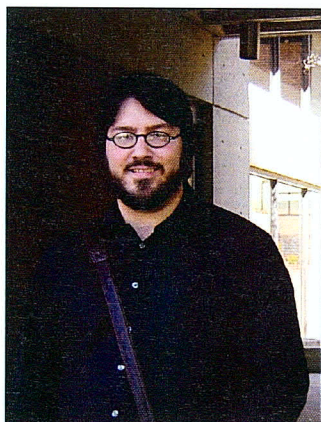
David Soleimani-Meigooni

Soleimani-Meigooni is a biology major in the College of Arts and Sciences and a 2004 graduate of Paul Laurence Dunbar High School in Lexington. He is conducting research with Paula Bates and Donald Miller of the James Graham Brown Cancer Center and plans to pursue a doctorate in cellular and molecular biology. Since the beginning of 2005, David has been working with the University of Louisville Molecular Targets Group to study the use of guanine-rich oligonucleotide aptamers (AGRO100) for targeted treatment of leukemia (U937 cell line). The goal of his current research is to find the molecular and cellular changes that kill cancerous cells following treatment by AGRO100.

"It's really exciting that two of our students have been recognized as some of the nation's most promising young science and engineering researchers," said Patricia Condon, director of U of L's Office of National and International Scholarship Opportunities.

### Malaysian Fulbright

David Wright has been named a Fulbright teaching assistant to Malaysia for 2006-2007. David, an English major who graduated in the spring, aims for a doctorate and a career in community college teaching. A non-traditional student, David earned his Jefferson Community College degree and now his university degree while working full time at a tech job. Entering community college and the university after a period of manual labor, his need to support himself while working on his degree prevented him from exploring other cultures during his undergraduate education. He looks forward to cultural immersion and the investigation of current Malaysian literary activity.



### News Flash: Four Boren Scholars

At press time we received news that three undergraduates received Boren scholarships for yearlong study abroad. Scholars include Ben Arterburn (China), Monica Marks (Tanzania) and Paul Meinshausen (Turkey). In addition graduate student Adam Marlowe, a recent U of L Fulbright Scholar, received the graduate Boren scholarship for study in Korea. Watch for in-depth stories in the next issue of *With Honors*.

Anna Vissman has been named a Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) scholar. Anna, a 2003 graduate in Spanish, has studied and traveled abroad in Spain, India, Mexico and Columbia. The JET program offers a year or two in Japan teaching in a high school or middle school or other post serving Japanese youth.



JET Scholar

# Criminal Justice Seminar Experiences Cultural Revelation

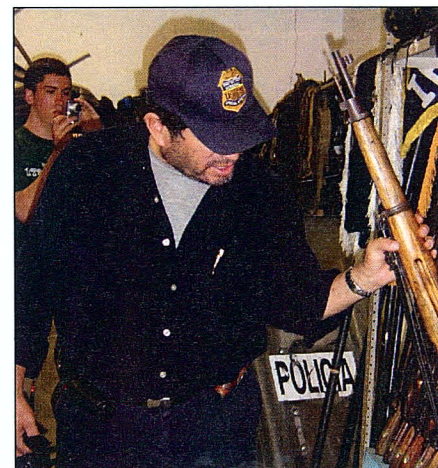
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meditating, and some crying. One parishioner crawled on her knees and kissed the floor all the way from the doorway to the pulpit in some form of penitence, demonstrating the pre-eminent role of Catholicism in Michoacán life.

Adding to this unusual aesthetic were beggars, who were a frequent sight. There were old women draped in layers of clothing begging near the chapel doors; children strategically slept on the floor of Main Street with their arm stretched and their hand fashioned in the form of a cup waiting for an offering to fall into it. Contrasting these lamentable sights were the aesthetics found in *Santuario de Guadalupe*—gold-plated

ceilings, saintly statues and floral plaster molds that lined the columns.

Other religious aesthetics were the pyramids of Tingambato (from which the ancient city of Teotihuacan was modeled), Tzintzuntzan and Ihumtzió of Patzcuaro, once a religious center and believed to be the doorway to heaven. This experience in Michoacán, Mexico, imparted religious aesthetics not found in the United States, enriching and humbling this American student.



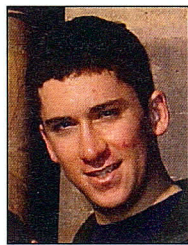
Alex photographs Lic. Vega as he provided an overview of facilities at the training center.

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## Migration Links Morelia, Kentucky

By Alexander Bajorek  
Biology, Spanish minor



Alexander Bajorek

Gathered around the conference room tables, staring at the projected screen with my classmates and professor, I couldn't help thinking that we hadn't strayed too far from home. The presenter, Carlos Vega of the Michoacán Police Department, could probably have used lessons in PowerPoint presentations. But our

class was "Comparative Criminal Justice Systems," and we weren't there to bicker about slide structure. We wanted to learn about the newly formed relationship between Kentucky police departments and Michoacán. Our instructor, Dr. Wilson, didn't hesitate to elaborate as Lic. Vega described the recently formed agreement to slow international criminal immigration problems. The idea was to educate Kentucky's police force in the culture, history and language of Michoacán.

Many police officers from the United States travel to Morelia, Michoacán, and take classes while living with a host family. In turn, Kentucky's police department helps provide the technology that prepares Michoacán's police department for the next couple of decades. During the ten days of our trip, we embarked on our own exploration of Morelia. What we experienced



Seminar members included left to right from front, academic counselor Melissa Stordeur, Courtney McKenzie, Courtney Block, Savannah Wall, Chelsey Stephenson, Teresa de la Cruz; (second row) Sarah Douglas, Emily Revels, Hannah Hodges, Alison Burton; (third row) Marty Stordeur, Lynda Richardson, Kristin Ayres, Katie Schultz; (fourth row) Tiffany Coffey, Audrey Gray, Andrew Feldman, Dr. John Richardson, tour guide Miguel, Alex Bajorek, Dr. Deborah Wilson and Lyndsi Andreas.

## Migration Links Morelia, Kentucky

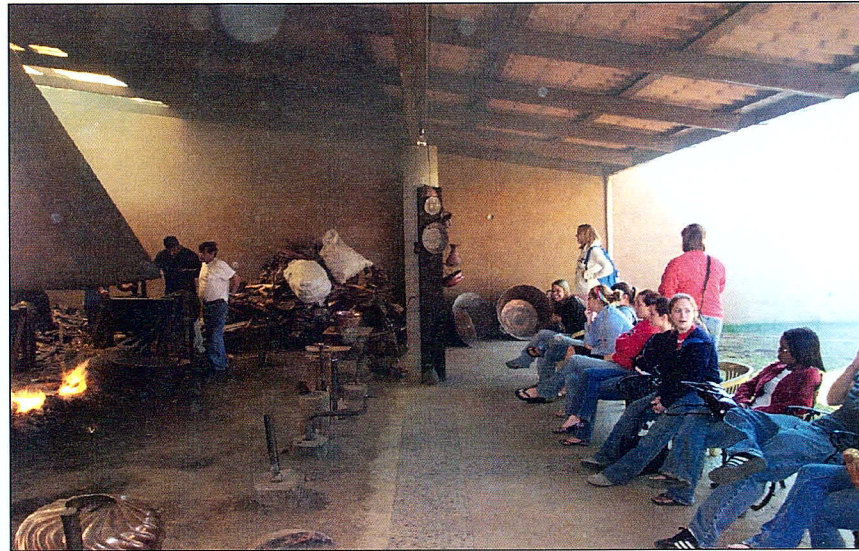
showed us a modern culture infused with past roots: the copper-mining village, ruins, churches and monarchs of Michoacán.

The copper-mining village of *Santa Clara del Cobre*, now depleted of mined copper, relies on recycling and purchases of copper wire to shape their craft. The copper is heated to phenomenal temperatures using large hand-operated bellows. As the glowing red disk is held by iron tongs, a group of three to eight young men hammer in perfectly timed coordination. In this long practiced manner, they slowly curve and shape their metal objects into all sizes and shapes. As we browsed many identical street stands, it became obvious that save for the occasional specialty shop, there were but few main producers that distributed their products to the middlemen. This miniature copper industry was the livelihood of the town, giving all ages and gender work and income. I found it admirable that they simply adapted to modern circumstances, rather than letting the depletion of their copper mines lead them into decadence.

What really seems to uphold and motivate their culture, however, is a strong moral and religious influence. Although Spanish interaction with the natives in the early 1500s led to much violence and abuse, it has left Catholicism and early colonial churches spread densely throughout the land. Our lodging itself, *Hotel de la Soledad*, wasn't more than a minute's walk from the nearby cathedral. We attended Mass on Sunday, and although the language was lost on nearly all of us, the setting and procession were solemn and breathtaking. Our class spent several days traveling from village to village, taking in their culture that revered the crucified Christ, the Virgin Mary and the many saints that watched over them.

Perhaps the most interesting excursion was the trip to the ruins, particularly Tinganio. Here, over a thousand years ago, the descendants of the Tarascan people (Purepecha) forged their city. They developed crops, raised young warriors and mapped the stars. They engaged in a ritualistic ball game ceremony, in which the winning team's captain was given the honor of sacrifice towards the gods. But 1500 years later, only American tourists occupied the empty ball court, bare and surrounded by avocado groves.

Yet the greatest understanding of our trans-national relationship with Mexico came from a mass of insects, or the monarchs of Morelia. Every year, millions upon millions of mariposas (butterflies) make a several thousand kilometer trip to winter in the mountains of Michoacán. To observe



As the glowing red disk is held by iron tongs, a group of three to eight young men hammer in perfectly timed coordination.

this miraculous sight we hiked up and down a dusty trail, inhaling copious amounts of dust. But it was well worth the trip. As my classmates stared in awe or indifference, I asked myself what exactly drew them to migrate such long distances. But that was the connection to the Michoacán immigration influence in Kentucky. Both were just looking for better conditions: better jobs, more money or a little sun to warm their wings.

To be sure, the analogy can end there. Unlike the migration of the monarchs, the relationship between Kentucky and Michoacán has been newly forged. There are still many questions to be answered, problems to be faced. What does the future hold for other states, and can bordering states with a past history of problems accomplish this level of cooperation? Will the education of our police force make any difference, or will our technology make a difference in Morelia? What problems will we face as populations grow and fight for jobs and resources? After the PowerPoint presentation we were given a short tour of the facility. As we briefly chatted with Lic. Carlos Vega in his office, I noticed several American posters and a Woodford Reserve bottle, turned vase on his desk. Perhaps, I thought, we can hope for a cooperative connection after all.

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*With Honors* is published by the University of Louisville's University Honors Program.

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Editor, Ruth Spangler

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<http://www.louisville.edu/a-s/honors/>

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# Honors 2005-2006



**Southern Regional Honors Conference (SRHC)**  
Andrew Feldman (biology) and Alison Burton (biology) presented "How we ended up in a Mexican prison over winter break" at SRHC in Orlando.



**The "Outsider and Visionary Art"** seminar taught by Dr. Patricia Condon, Honors Program associate director, created an outsider piece as a class project. Seminar members at work are, from left to right, Emily DeYoung, Kent Getsinger, Anna Krippenstapel, Andrea Mason and Sarah Oesterly. The seminar, the national Honors travel course for spring 2006, toured outsider locales in the South during the second week of May.

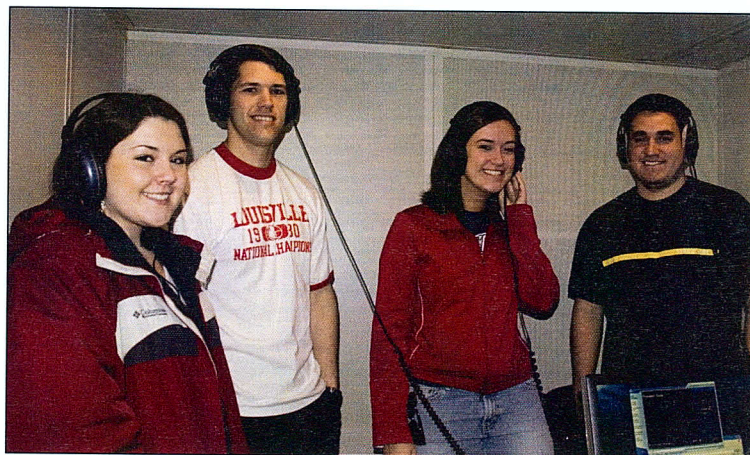


**Dance Marathon** Honors students were prime organizers of the first annual 24 hour dance-a-thon benefitting Kosair Children's Hospital Foundation. The dance marathon executive staff was headed up by many Honors students including Courtney McKenzie (biology), Tia Alton (biology), Chelsey Stephenson (political science), Alexander Bajorek (biology), Sowmya Srinivasan (music) and Bill Brammell (political science) assisted by Honors academic advisor Melissa Stordeur.



**Get Together** Student assistant Clare Gervasi Kalb (Spanish), center, shares a laugh with Honors academic counselor Tony Robinson and director Dr. John Richardson at one of the Honors events, the reading day lunch buffet.

**The "Speech and Hearing"** seminar taught by Dr. Paval Zahorik visited the lab at the Heuser Hearing Institute at the Louisville Deaf Oral School in Old Louisville, including from left Crystal Williamson (psychology), Jason Wells (biology), Betsy Heck (biology) and Justin Cann (chemistry).



# Quick Pics



**Honors Scholars** Thirteen spring Honors seminars reviewed at the Honors Scholars banquet caused a buzz about what to take. "The Arts and Human Development" with Dr. Deborah Davis, "Anti-Terrorism Rhetoric" with Dr. David Anderson, "The Pacific Century" with Dr. Shiping Hua, "The Grawemeyer Awards" with Dr. David Mosley were among the choices. Pictured are Misty Sullivan (psychology), Clacy Camel (biology) and Dr. Hua.

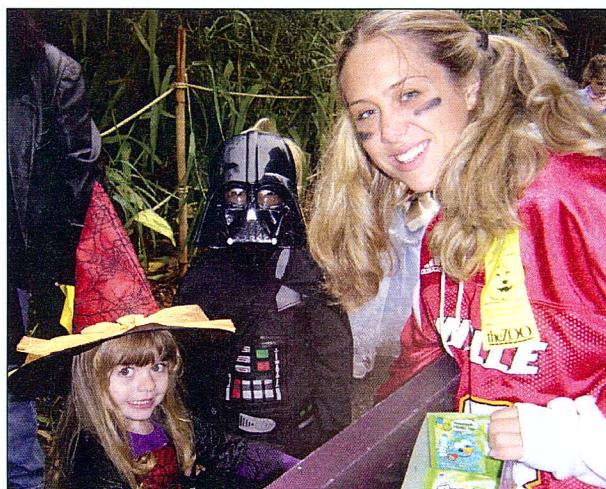


**Volleyball** Between the Etscorn Honors Center and the new U of L Belknap Research Building for nanotechnology, students enjoy a late afternoon game.



## Kentucky Honors Roundtable (KHR)

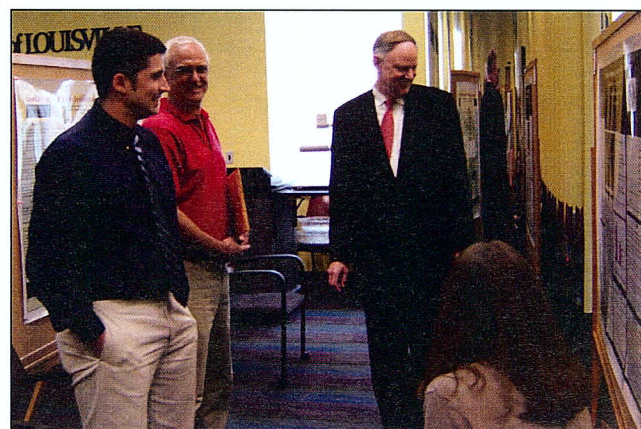
Nisha Haque presented "Shake 'n Shimmy" at KHR. The presentation focused on the revival of belly dancing as a form of daily fitness and soul purification. The spring 2006 KHR was hosted by the University of Kentucky Honors Program. Nisha presented with Rebecca Hernandez, Kelsey Hughes and Paria Majd.



**The Honors Volunteer Program** helped at the Worlds Largest Halloween Party at the Louisville Zoo above. "Football player" Kate Brueggemann (political science) passed out candy to a wicked witch in red.



**Modes of Inquiry** Honors freshman greet each other during Modes of Inquiry, a campus event introducing participants to academic life, Louisville and each other. The front row participants are Derek Jones, Josh Masters and Rudy Spencer.



**Research** Honors student James Cripps and director Dr. Richardson view Amy Bennett's research poster "The Relation of Spontaneous Verbalizations to Motivation Orientations in Young Children" with President James Ramsey at the Undergraduate Research Symposium in the new Belknap Research Building.

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## With Honors

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### Honors Scholars



Thirty-two Honors students achieved Honors Scholars status. Scholars pictured here attended the awards ceremony at the Rauch Planetarium.

The Honors Scholars program, the lead academic program for the University Honors Program, graduated a record 32 Honors Scholars in 2005-2006.

A student who wishes to graduate as a University Honors Scholar may sign on after the first semester in which a 3.5 or higher GPA is achieved. A scholar must maintain a 3.5 GPA or above and take a minimum of 24 credit hours of Honors coursework. Frequently, University Honors Scholars graduate with Honors credits far beyond the required minimum. All active Honors students take at least one Honors Program class per year for a minimum of 12 credit hours.

#### 2005-2006 University Honors Scholars

University Honors Program students who graduated as University Honors Scholars this year are Lee T. Barnwell, Amy Bennett, William H. Brammell, James G. Cripps, Nancy B. DeLaney, Margaret Densmore, Sarah K. Douglas, Joseph L. Feldman, Patrick Fletcher, Jennie K. Jones, Eric C. Kennedy, Sarah Mikowski, Christopher G. Mitchell, Nick Naiser, Judy Nichols, Jennifer L. O'Reilly, Alicia I. Paez, Supraja N. Parthasarathy, Gina Portelli, Ashley N. Revlett, Jessica A. Sanders, Ashley Renae Sartaine, Maria A. Scheitz, Andrew Staples, Thao Thi Phuong Tran, Katherine E. Valentine, M. Jason Wells, Ashley White, Michele L. Wilbert and Yindong Yu. In December Chris Cunningham and Ruthie Schmelz graduated as University Honors Scholars.