

VOL. XXXVI

NO. 6

# THE HONORS REPORT

MARCH 2022



**Welcome back from spring break!  
The March edition includes:**

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**The Honors Report is always looking to feature Honor College students' accomplishments! Please submit your "Points of Pride" or nominate a friend to be featured, so we may acknowledge and celebrate these achievements! Reach out to Beth Roberts with your ideas.**

**Consulting Editors**  
Beth Roberts  
Dr. Elizabeth Thyrum

**Student Editor**  
Claire DeVinney

**Student Writers**  
Bronte Spidalieri, Camryn Gurecki,  
Claire DeVinney, Elias Peluso



## March

Tues, 1 -@6:30pm -Virtual Resume Review with ELCM; Zoom Meeting ID294 629 5508  
Thurs, 17 -Mentoring Communities Day  
@10am-2pm -Cupcake Decorating; Franklin House  
@12:15 -\$2 Shamrock Shake HCSA Fundraiser; Franklin House  
Sun, 20 -@8:00pm -Movie Night; South 4th Floor Study Lounge  
Sun, 27 -@7:00pm -HCSA Meeting; SMC 118  
Tues, 29 -@7:00-8:00pm -Registration Walking Taco Social; Great Room in South Village

## April

Sat, 2 -TDB -Honors College Bus Trip to New York City  
Wed, 6 -@6:00am -Honors College Early Registration for Fall 2022  
Sun, 10 -@1:00pm -Phi Kappa Phi Induction and Reception; Lehr Dining Hall  
Sun, 24 -@1:00pm -Spring Recognition Banquet; Lehr Dining Hall  
Sun, 24 -@7:00pm -HCSA Meeting; SMC 118

## SAVE THE DATES!

**Wear green to Franklin House on Thursday, March 17th and receive a free Honors College item. Happy St. Patrick's Day!**



**The spring Honors College Recognition Banquet will take place on April 24th at 1pm in the Lehr Dining Room. Look out for an email signup in late March - we hope to see you there to celebrate our spring graduates!**

**March 17th is also Mentoring Communities Day. Grab your mentor or mentee and head to Franklin House at 10am for cupcake decorating, 12:15pm for a \$2 Shamrock Shake HCSA fundraiser, or to the MU double header softball games at 2:30pm and 4:30pm. We hope to see you there! The day is open to all of students.**

## COURSE REGISTRATION REMINDERS

by Elias Peluso

The spring semester is more than halfway complete! Keep up the great work - it's a downhill slide from here. But don't forget that it's also time for course registration. That's right - Honors students will register for courses on **April 6th at 6 AM**. So, mark your calendars, be prepared to wake up early, and make sure you are following all of these steps:

1. Check your Ellucian **degree audit**, accessible through your MAX login. This will show you all the courses you must take in order to graduate in your chosen major.
2. Check Millersville's **Fall web schedule**, available starting March 1st. This online course listing shows which courses are offered in the Fall 2022 semester, including the time, location, and professor.
3. Write out a **proposed course schedule** of your choosing. You will need to show this to your advisor, so make sure your plan is clear. Be aware of course prerequisites!



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## COURSE REGISTRATION REMINDERS CONT.

4. **Meet with your advisor** and/or Dr. Thyrum at least once before registration. Don't hesitate to ask questions or for clarification until you fully understand your course registration. Your advisor may spot a requirement that you may have missed.
5. **Get your TAP number** from your advisor or Dr. Thyrum (honors TAP #s start with "466" or "499")
6. Go to the course registration social on March 29. This event will be held on March 29 at 7 PM in the South Village Great Room. It is the perfect opportunity to ask practical questions about course registration and to connect with other Honors students while enjoying a walking taco. We will also bring games!
7. Familiarize yourself with the registration portal on MAX. It is very important that you understand how to use the online portal prior to registration. It would be wise to ask for other's opinions on how to use this resource to the fullest.
8. **Log in to MAX by 6 AM on April 6** to take advantage of your early registration!

## PEER MENTOR INTERVIEWS

**Jess Hetrick is a sophomore Geology major expecting to graduate in May 2023. She is excited to continue in her role as Honors College Peer Mentor!**

Interview Conducted by Bronte Spidaliere

**Q: How do you feel the Honors College has added to your Millersville experience?**

A: "The Honors College has consistently encouraged me to explore my academic interests and become the best version of myself. While working on my thesis, I have made connections inside and outside of the University. I feel prepared for life after college. The Honors College wants you to succeed and provides the necessary resources to do so."

**Q: Why did you apply for the Peer Mentor position?**

A: "The previous Peer Mentor, Michael Skros, spoke with me about the position and I could tell that he really loved it. His excitement motivated me to apply."

**Q: What is the most important quality to have as a leader or peer mentor?**

A: "Empathy is the most important quality a leader should have. Acknowledging and making an effort to understand someone's situation has the ability to improve their mood and overall well-being. This quality is extremely important, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic."

**Q: In what ways do you think Peer Mentors can add to the college experience?**

A: "Peer Mentors build community and encourage students of all levels to interact and make connections. This position enhances the Honors Freshmen Experience, which ensures that our incoming students feel comfortable and supported in this new environment. Peer Mentors also work with commuter students to make sure they are included and engaged."



**Jess Hetrick**

## PEER MENTOR INTERVIEWS CONT.

**Q: Do you have a goal for your position as a Peer Mentor? If so, why have you set this goal and what will you do to accomplish it?**

A: "My goal is to spend more time at Franklin House. The atmosphere is both academic and relaxed, plus you get to see Beth and Dr. T! I hope that my increased attendance will encourage more students to utilize the many resources that Franklin House has to offer."

**Q: Any piece of advice for incoming students who are confused, nervous, or unsure?**

A: "Choose the Honors College! My freshman year of college was entirely virtual, and I was afraid of losing my love for learning. With Honors courses and the support of Dr. Thyrum and Beth, I have always felt included and engaged."

**Q: Are you involved in other groups, clubs, or jobs that you'd like to mention?**

A: "This semester I started tutoring for the Earth Science department, which is totally new for me. The position has allowed me to connect with faculty and help my peers: it has been extremely engaging and rewarding. College is the perfect time to try things outside of your comfort zone and potentially discover a new passion!"

**Brenna Chernich is a freshman Early and Special Education major expecting to graduate in May 2025. She is an Integrated Studies Coach, and is excited to begin her position as an Honors College Peer Mentor.**

Interview Conducted by Claire DeVinney

**Q: What has the Honors College added to your MU experience?**

A: "I've had a lot of service opportunities, and having the help of my mentor has been really helpful with deciding what courses to take and getting advice. I've been able to have courses that made me think in new ways. My favorite Honors course so far has been COMM 100H with Professor Machado. I liked that it increased my confidence, and it was nice to have as a freshman because Professor Machado answered all the questions that we had about Millersville. It was a good introduction to the Honors College."

**Q: Why did you apply for the Peer Mentor position?**

A: "It was an opportunity to get more involved and to help out my peers in whatever way I can."

**Q: What do Peer Mentors add to the college experience?**

A: "Something important Peer Mentors do is helping get freshmen oriented. We also get them set up in a mentoring community, which is something that has been helpful for me as a freshman. I want to help newcomers find that supportive figure for them."



**Brenna Chernich**

## PEER MENTOR INTERVIEWS CONT.

**Q: Do you have a goal for your position as a Peer Mentor? If so, why have you set this goal and what will you do to accomplish it?**

A: "My specific goal is to really support the first year students. To support everyone, but especially first years, because for me my first year was definitely an adaptation. I think it will be good to have someone that recognizes that struggle. I also want to make myself as present and available as possible to all the Honors College members. I chose this goal because I really like serving people in whatever way I can."

## MOBILE ROBOTICS AT MU: INTERVIEW WITH ELIAS PELUSO

**The MU Mobile Robotics Team won several awards in the 2021 Annual Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering Student Division Robotics Competition for their robot, "TURTLE." Elias Peluso, Honors student, junior robotics and control systems major, and Mobile Robotics Team member, shares his experience.**

Interview Conducted by Camryn Gurecki

**Q: How did you become part of the team? What interested you about mobile robotics?**

A: "As a "robotics and control systems" major, ATMAE was an obvious choice for a club to be involved in. Ever since I saw the Disney-Pixar movie WALL-E in 2008, I knew I wanted to work in robotics. I have always enjoyed the ability to create things, and the field of robotics has the most satisfying output in my opinion. Additionally, skills in this area have numerous applications that are only expanding in number and utility."

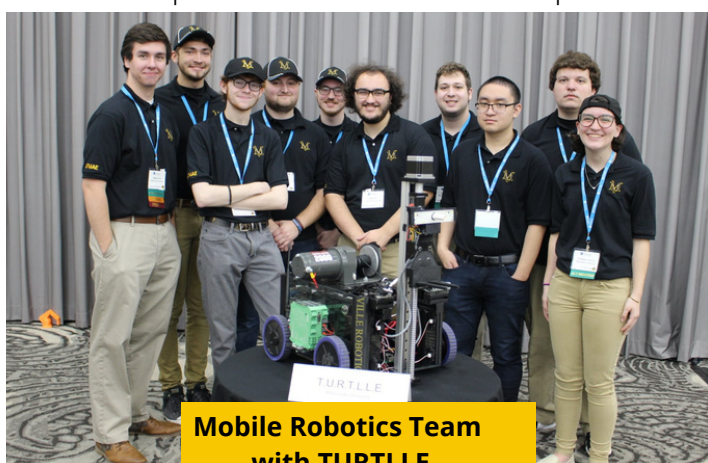
**Q: What did TURTLE (the robot) have to be able to do to compete?**

A: "Our most recent competition was the ATMAE conference in Florida. This particular challenge involved placing the robots in a small maze, tasking them with grabbing objects from a shelving unit. Participants could either attempt the manipulative challenge, in which the robot is remote

controlled in real time, or the autonomous challenge, in which all the robot's actions are preprogrammed. Our team chose to focus on the autonomous route, constructing a mobile robot essentially from scratch and returning home with multiple awards."

**Q: What was the most challenging/most rewarding part of building TURTLE?**

A: "I was unfortunately unable to travel to Florida for the actual competition, so my work on the



**Mobile Robotics Team  
with TURTLE**

project was done beforehand. Within our team, we were split up into smaller groups to work on specific parts of the project. My group used SolidWorks to design the chassis (the outer shell) design for the fabrication team to construct. The most difficult part was the fact that we needed to continually reshape and redesign the parts to fit the changing needs of the rest of the team. This process was very rewarding, however, because I was simultaneously taking a SolidWorks class that semester and was able to use these skills for a real-life application."

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**Q: What are some real-life applications of the technology that you worked with to build TURTLE?**

A: "The field of robotics has a plethora of applications. Competitions such as ATMAE provide terrific exposure to the many disciplines within the field. Some real-life applications include building robots for manufacturing, medical purposes, household appliance design, and entertainment purposes (animatronics)."

**Q: What did you take away from this experience, and how may it be able to help you in the future?**

A: "A robotics competition such as ATMAE shows how truly important teamwork is to a real job in robotics. Because there are so many practices involved, effective coordination and communication is vital in this field."

**Q: Your thesis is in the applied engineering department. What are you researching?**



**Elias Peluso**

**How did you decide on this topic?**

A: "There are limitless possibilities for a project in robotics, but I needed to determine a senior thesis project idea that is both practical and is within the scope of my current skill set (while still challenging myself, though). I chose to build an "automatic door" machine that is adjustable to fit any door and has many control options. This project is practical because it could be used to increase disability access to residences. My project is currently in the proposal stage; I will work on it throughout my senior year starting in the Fall."

**Q: Did being part of the mobile robotics team influence your thesis work? If so, how?**

A: "ATMAE did not influence my thesis project or topic specifically, but the exposure to the various types of work helped me better understand the scope for a thesis project."

**Q: Has working on your thesis and competing with the mobile robotics team affected your future plans? Do you hope to continue working in/studying robotics or applied engineering?**

A: "Yes, I plan to make robotics my life's work. I hope to be able to use my skills to design consumer products similar in nature to my automatic door idea, but I believe the most altruistic application would be to work on medical robots for surgery. On the other side of the coin, I believe the most fun application would be to work on the animatronics for businesses such as the Disney Parks."

**Q: What advice do you have for students who are considering doing research in the applied engineering department? Or, what advice do you have for applied engineering students overall who want to get involved/sharpen their skills?**

My advice to prospective AENG students would be to not shy away from asking for help. Students are entering these classes with various levels of prior experience, so a certain existing skill level cannot be expected of students. As someone with virtually no prior experience in electronics, I have found that the necessary assistance is, in fact, readily available to students, either from peers or professors, but one must take advantage of this to ensure the context is understood.

**Cedrick Kazadi is a senior Information Technology major and student who is about to graduate from the Honors College. In the past, Cedrick has served as the Political Chair and Vice President of the MU NAACP chapter, and currently serves as the chapter's President. Below, he shares about his leadership experience with the MU NAACP.**

Interview Conducted by Claire DeVinney

**Q: When did you join the MU NAACP? What made you want to join it?**

A: "I became interested in the second semester of freshman year—that's when I applied, and I officially started the first semester of sophomore year. What made me interested: I just wanted to be part of campus and find a community, and there were many different clubs that I attended, but I was looking for a club that was bigger than just making friends and going out. It was what they stood for—and NAACP advocates for education and political and social rights on campus. The tight knit community was about trying to better each other and making campus a better place, which was the main reason I wanted to get involved."

**Q: You've been the Vice President and Political Chair of the group, and you are now the President. How did you begin to take on a leadership role in the organization?**

A: "You have to have a chair in order to be part of the board, which is scary because a lot of people sign up thinking, 'I just want to be a general member,' but if you want to be on the board, you have to have a chair. Political Chair was interesting because I wanted to learn more about politics, so I thought, 'You know, I'll do it.' I eventually started getting the hang of it and took time to actually learn about the organization. I think I was on the board for about a year before I became Vice President. The way I got into Vice President: I was a sophomore, and most of the Vice Presidents and Presidents were seniors and juniors so I thought, 'I'm up next, so why not?' Most of the members thought I would make a good fit. It was scary, but I thought I would dive into Vice President. I got the hang of things, and then eventually I was like 'Why not? Who else knows better to become President? I'll go for it.' I got voted in and it was the best decision I ever made."



**Cedrick Kazadi**

**Q: What is the hardest part of being NAACP president? What is your favorite part?**

A: "Hardest part: time management. We're all college students, and when you have college students looking at you for leadership—in order to create that sense of community for students of color on campus—it becomes more than just being President of a club. In high school, you think, 'I'm President, and my advisor will do everything.' When you're NAACP president, you do everything. There's eight other students on the board that look up to me, and then there's the

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## MU NAACP CONT.

campus community, when it comes to students of color or faculty, or the diversity office or things like that. Essentially I'm responsible for creating this community while I'm a student being part of it. That's the hardest part: trying to create a community that you are a part of. I'm a student, and now I have to create this and make it happen as a student for other students. It becomes a lot—finding the balance between academics and knowing that you are leading other people. The best part is the community that you get to build. These strangers become friends and these friends become family. The exposure to different things, learning about different people, the skills you get to learn, especially interpersonal skills, time management, and public speaking, is fun. At the end of the day, the most important thing, I would say, is relationships."



**MU NAACP can be found at:**

<https://getinvolved.millersville.edu/organization/naacp>

[millersvillenaacp@gmail.com](mailto:millersvillenaacp@gmail.com)

[@naacp\\_mu](https://twitter.com/naacp_mu)

### **Q: What is a personal goal that you have for the NAACP under your leadership?**

A: "My main goal is to try to integrate the group of students of color into the rest of the university. I feel like there's a disconnect, so my main goal for NAACP is to fill that gap between students of color and everybody else on campus. Some ways that we try to do that is connecting them to different resources on campus, like ELCM, that they might not know about, or study abroad, or different resources that students might not go out of their way to learn about. That's my goal, to bridge that gap as much as I can before I graduate."

### **Q: The NAACP is a national organization that is over 100 years old, and the MU chapter's website has a list of objectives from the NAACP constitution. One objective begins, "To educate persons as to their constitutional rights and to take all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof..." As a college student leading a chapter of college students, can you explain how you see the relationship between education and the goal of the NAACP to eliminate racial inequality?**

A: "I believe, and I was taught, that education is something that nobody can ever take away from you. Being somebody that grew up in a low-income community, and coming from Philly, education sets you apart from a lot of people. When you bring in racial issues, education plays a big role in that, because if you don't know your rights, the justice system can take advantage of you. We're not experts at everything that we do, but we do have resources that we're connected to, like the Lancaster NAACP branch and the NAACP on a bigger scale. Our main goal is trying to educate students about their rights: when you should speak up, when you shouldn't, when you should request a lawyer, and your constitutional rights. As an American citizen, these are things that you should know. I think that education definitely plays a big role. It does not solve the whole problem, but people being educated on what they should and should not do definitely plays a big role. It's sort of like prevention, which is better than a cure. We try to prevent finding ourselves in situations where we don't know what to solve by educating students about their constitutional rights. We try to make the best out of the situation, but at the end of the day we can't stop what's going to happen. Education is our approach, and scholarship, as far as we can go."



## SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS



**Elena Antonucci**

Elena Antonucci will graduate with a BA in psychology. Elena's thesis was a study titled "Gendered Morality," which examines the effects of gender on moral reasoning. She met life-long friends in Honors student housing, and her favorite Honors class was World Literature with Dr. Jakubiak. Elena comments, "As part of this class we had to present at Made In Millersville which was a wonderful learning experience, and Dr. Jakubiak was always around to help and give encouragement!" Elena was part of the Millersville University choir her freshman year and was a member of Citamard in her freshman and sophomore years. In her junior year, she studied abroad, living with a host family in Florence, Italy, until the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Elena is currently in the process of gaining Italian citizenship. After graduating, she hopes to move to Italy and begin graduate studies in neuropsychology at an Italian University. We wish you luck with all your future endeavors, Elena!

Riley Boike will graduate with a major in Government, Policy, and Law, and two minors in History and International Studies. As part of the Honors College, Riley completed a thesis about the Equal Rights Amendment and lived in Honors student housing, where she made great friends that she still lives with today. Her favorite Honors class was Women and Public Policy, an Honors class by contract. Riley comments, "It's my favorite because I love public policy, and I was able to use the extra work for the honors contract to help with my thesis." While studying at Millersville, Riley has made the Dean's List every semester, and has been a member of Her Campus and the Alliance for Social Change. She has also served as a Senator, Auditor, and Secretary for the Student Government Association, where she is currently the Director of Student Life. Riley is also currently a Student Engagement Assistant at the Dr. Rita Smith Wade-El Intercultural Center, the coordinator of the LGBTQIA+ Allies Living Learning Community, and the student representative on the President's Commission on Gender and Sexual Diversity. She is a Walker Fellow at The Robert S. and Sue Walker Center for Civic Responsibility and Leadership where she is researching voter apathy in college students. After graduating, Riley plans to get a Master's degree in Public Policy with a focus in social policy. Congratulations on all your hard work, Riley!



**Riley Boike**

Katie Riley will graduate with a Mathematics Secondary Education major and a psychology minor. Her thesis topic was "Attuning to College Students During the Pandemic." Katie enjoyed the connections she made in Honors student housing, commenting, "I liked being connected to the people who I had classes with. If I ever had a question about a class or needed to work on a group project, my classmates were just a few doors down." Despite normally disliking English, her favorite Honors class was World Literature because she liked the class's assigned readings. As a Millersville student, Katie was involved in the Alpha Sigma Tau sorority, women's club soccer, and Math Educators at MU Club. She also served as an Orientation Leader and as a math tutor at the Math Assistance Center. After graduating, Katie plans to teach high school math somewhere in PA. Eventually, she would like to return to school and become a math professor. Best of luck in the future, Katie!



**Katie Riley**

**We are halfway through the semester, Honors College! Keep up the good work!**