

# HEA FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER



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## HEA at 35 Campaign

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- 1) Go to [give.ncsu.edu](http://give.ncsu.edu)
- 2) Click "Chose a Fund," scroll down and click "Other - I would like to give to a different area" and click "Continue."
- 3) Type the name of the fund into the box: "Higher Education Program Fund, 079074" or "Higher Education Program Support Fund, 079098"
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## GREETINGS FROM HEA AND THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Dear NC State Higher Education Program students, faculty, staff, alumni & friends:

Our Higher Education alumni and current students at NC State continue to excel in all areas of higher education and beyond. In this newsletter you will read stories about some of these amazing individuals. For example, Dr. Tara Hudson, who graduated last May recently received the Bobby Wright Dissertation of the Year Award at the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) annual conference. Tara's dissertation addressing interracial friendship development and sustainment was directed by Dr. Alyssa Rockenbach. This newsletter also highlights one of the exciting internships master's student Benoit Sabourin embarked upon this summer in Kuwait.

Our Higher Education Association (HEA) continues to play a vital role within the Higher Education Program. HEA is in the process of redefining its role as a graduate student organization. This year, HEA enhanced their signature programs and pursued the development of new initiatives. Your support has helped HEA honor the organization's legacy while at the same time build the foundation for our future. Some highlights from the fall semester include:

- The establishment of the Welcome Back Cookout for all new and returning students
- A redesigned Careers in Student Affairs Month panel with over 30 prospective applicants in attendance
- The creation of a professional mentor program
- The development of a higher education administrator discussion series

In addition to these new programs, HEA is excited to continue the Faculty Fundraising Dinners, Pack Pals (Peer Mentor) program, and monthly professional development workshops. HEA is excited to continue the Faculty Fundraising Dinners, Pack Pals (Peer Mentor) program, and monthly professional development workshops.

We are pleased to introduce HEA at 35: A Campaign for the Next Generation of Higher Ed Leaders. As we look to celebrate our 35th Anniversary soon, the program and HEA are seeking your support to ensure that students have a wide array of opportunities to develop their leadership, research, and other professional skills in order to graduate with the ability to pursue their career goals (ways to give back included on the left). Your contributions to the campaign would be greatly appreciated.

Next semester we will welcome a group of highly qualified candidates to campus for Recruitment Weekend, engage in the third annual Scholar Practitioner Series Conference, and congratulate a new group of graduates. We look forward to connecting with everyone at a spring conference or at NC State!

With Wolfpack Pride, 

Park Watson, President HEA, Class of 2016

Audrey J. Jaeger, Program Coordinator, Alumni Distinguished Graduate Professor

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: CARRIE HANAYIK HAWES

BY DAWN CULPEPPER, 2ND YEAR MASTER'S STUDENT



Carrie Hanayik Hawes (M.Ed., '06) is a self-proclaimed data nerd. As the Assistant Director for Employer and Experiential Development in the Career Center at Virginia Commonwealth University, she draws daily on her data-crunching skills in order to develop metrics that tell a story about the success of her department and the students at VCU. In an educational landscape where data drives decision-making, Hawes' quantitative expertise and passion for student services gives her a competitive edge in the student affairs market.

Based on this love of numbers, it should come as no surprise that Hawes served as a Researcher in the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) during her time at NC State. With NILIE, she gained significant exposure to quantitative methodologies and developed a deep appreciation for the role of research in higher education practice. In addition to her role as a researcher, Hawes was also encouraged to explore student services during her time in Raleigh. Through internships with NC State's Union Activities Board (UAB) and Peace University's orientation program,

Hawes gained a better understanding of the student-facing side of higher education that complemented her research-based assistantship.

As president of the Higher Education Association (HEA) in her second year, Hawes felt her time at NC State was characterized by the rich experiences and variety of positions and classmates she had been exposed to as a result of being in the Triangle area. Hawes finds her experiences at Duke and NC State regularly inform the work she does in her current role. Recently, she has been successful utilizing her strengths in data-mining to create a dashboard for her office that monitors monthly, semester, and annual metrics on the programs that her department implements. Hawes stated, "As you come through the program, don't feel intimidated to reach out and find out what people do."

In fact, Hawes has heeded her own advice about staying connected to the Wolfpack network by recently co-authoring an article on professional development for student affairs educators with Dr. Audrey J. Jaeger, Professor of Higher Education, Dr. Karen Haley, Associate Professor (Portland State University) and doctoral alumna, and Jenny Johnson, Associate Director in Career Services for Engineering Professional Master's Programs at Duke University and masters alumna. Overall, Hawes' master's education experience was a period of tremendous professional growth and learning, and she highly values the sustained relationships she built with higher education faculty and her peers during her time at NC State.

*"As you come through the program, don't feel intimidated to reach out and find out what people do."*

—Carrie Hanayik Hawes  
M.Ed. '06

## GRADUATION SPOTLIGHT: ALLISON MITCHALL

BY ALICIA KEATING POLSON, 2ND YEAR PH.D. STUDENT



Congratulations to Allison Mitchall who graduated this month with her Ph.D.!

Allison's dissertation titled "Influences on the Motivation of Low-Income, First Generation Students on the Path to College: A Cross-Case Analysis using Self-Determination Theory" was written under the direction of Dr. Audrey Jaeger.

When Allison entered the Higher Education program, she knew she wanted to study college access. She was inspired to study the experiences of low-income, first-generation students because of the many students she worked with through her role at NC State. These students often had limited support on their path to college and she was always so impressed by the perseverance they showed in order to get to college.

So often, we study our own experiences and this was true for Allison as well. As a first-gen, lower-income student, she was curious what motivated students of a similar background to remain on the path to college. Some of the best moments Allison had in the program revolved around spending time with other doctoral students. She has great memories of laughing on a break in class, talking about career goals in the parking lot, working on a group project, or doing peer reviews together at a coffee shop. The people Allison met were smart, funny and offered her a lot of support, ideas, and encouragement over the years. After a long day of work, they made those late-night 3-hour classes go by quickly!

After 10 years working at NC State, Allison recently transitioned to a new job in the college access field. She serves as the Program Director for the new eAdvising initiative at the College Advising Corps, a non-profit organization located in Chapel Hill. The organization works to improve college access for low-income, first-generation students across the country. The opportunity to study issues related to college access in the doctoral program really helped Allison prepare well for this position!

## ASHE DISSERTATION OF THE YEAR: DR. TARA HUDSON

BY ALICIA KEATING POLSON, 2ND YEAR PH.D. STUDENT

Dr. Tara Hudson (Ph.D., Educational Research & Policy Analysis '15) was recently named as the recipient of the 2015 ASHE Bobby Wright Dissertation of the Year Award for her dissertation, *Interpersonalizing Cultural Difference: A Grounded Theory of the Process of Interracial Friendship Development and Sustainment among College Students*. Named in memory of Irvin Lee (Bobby) Wright, this award recognizes a dissertation each year that serves as an exemplary model of the methodology employed.

Dr. Hudson's doctoral research used grounded theory to develop a theory of the process by which college students develop and sustain interracial friendships and how the institutional environment shapes this process. Dr. Alyssa Rockenbach, Associate Professor and Dr. Hudson's dissertation chair, says, "Tara's research makes a substantial contribution to educational research and moves scholarship forward in new and exciting directions. What makes her work all the more meaningful is her study's relevance given pressing educational and social challenges both nationally and globally. I am delighted to see Tara's work recognized by ASHE. She is so very deserving of this award!"

We had the opportunity recently to ask Tara some questions about her dissertation research, winning the dissertation award, and what she is doing now as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at University of Notre Dame.

*Q1: What inspired you to pursue your dissertation topic?*

"I started thinking about my dissertation topic back when I was in the master's program at NC State. I knew I wanted to focus on a topic that had implications for social justice and equity, especially around racial justice; these are values I've held since I was young and have continued to develop throughout college and my career. So when I had the opportunity, I chose paper and project topics that would allow me to explore different angles on this broad idea and expose me to different bodies of relevant literature. I danced around different ideas for a while, but none quite stuck until my last semester in the master's program, when I took Dr. Joy Gayles' diversity class. Toward the end of that course, our readings for the week focused on how racially diverse student bodies facilitate students'

learning and development. One of the articles we read was Anthony Antonio's (2001) study of interracial friendships, "Diversity and the Influence of Friendship Groups in College," in which he highlights the critical importance of diverse friendships and peer groups for student learning and also critiques existing research on racial diversity and learning. Suddenly, as I was reading his article, it all came together in one of those beautiful "eureka!" kind of moments. I still remember it so clearly: it was one of those beautiful, warm spring days, and I was sitting outside on my deck reading for class as the sun shined down on me. I let my mind wander a little as I was reading, and the next thing I knew, I was furiously

writing down my thoughts, my hand barely able to keep up with my brain. When I finished writing, I had my problem, purpose, and a tentative research question. Then I sat back in my chair for a moment and just went, "Whoa." And then I think I ran inside to tell my husband, Glenn: "OHMYGOSHKNOWWHAT!MGONNARESEARCH!!!" He was sweet enough to get excited with me even though he probably thought my brain had gotten a little overheated sitting out in the sun, because who gets that excited about research?"

*Q2: What does it mean to you to be recognized with the 2015 ASHE Bobby Wright Dissertation of the Year Award?*

"Receiving the Bobby Wright Dissertation of the Year Award is incredibly meaningful, especially given how personal my dissertation research was for me. It's a wonderful validation to know that all the time and energy I invested in developing, researching, and writing my dissertation paid off! But what was perhaps most meaningful about receiving the award was that it signaled to me that I'd accomplished one of the things I'd aimed for in designing my research: to challenge existing ways of doing research in the higher education field in order to generate new knowledge, rather than recycling the same theories others have used time and time again. I've always loved the picture frame metaphor that Dr. Audrey Jaeger uses in *Org Theory*—that a theory is like a picture frame that a scholar can use to focus on a specific aspect of a broader research topic. Depending on the frame you use, what you see in the big picture of your topic will be different.

But when we, as a field, only have a limited set of picture frames to call upon, we'll always be restricted in what we can see."



*"But what was perhaps most meaningful about receiving the award was that it signaled to me that I'd accomplished one of the things I'd aimed for in designing my research: to challenge existing ways of doing research in the higher education field in order to generate new knowledge, rather than recycling the same theories others have used time and time again."*  
—Dr. Tara Hudson '15

## ASHE DISSERTATION OF THE YEAR: DR. TARA HUDSON

*"I think I was fortunate to be able to identify a topic that was meaningful to me at the scholarly, personal, and professional levels, because I had multiple sources of momentum driving me forward."*

—Dr. Tara Hudson '15



*Q3: What do you do in your role as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Notre Dame?*

"Broadly speaking, in my role as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at Notre Dame's Center for Social Concerns, I collaborate with the Center's Associate Director for Research and Assessment, Jay Brandenberger, and other colleagues to examine college students' learning and development related to moral and civic responsibility, leadership, ethics, and faith, especially learning and development resulting from curricular and co-curricular community engagement. I also work with Center staff and faculty to assess student outcomes of Center programs. In addition, although I'm not teaching this year, I am planning to teach an undergraduate course next fall.

When I was searching for jobs last year, Dr. Alyssa Rockenbach told me that being a postdoc is a great gig, and she was right. As a postdoc, I spend nearly all of my time doing research (designing studies and analyzing results using both quantitative and qualitative methods), disseminating the results of our research via publications and presentations, and engaging with research in other ways (such as helping my colleagues plan their own research projects). It's rare in academia to have a position that lets you focus so intently on developing your own research agenda and skill set with minimal other responsibilities, and so it is a luxury in many ways. Of course, postdocs are temporary positions, so I can't stay in this bubble forever! But I'm hoping it will give me a good foundation for applying to tenure-track faculty positions next year."

*Q4: What are your future career goals?*

"Ah, the million dollar question, right? My goal for

a few years now has been to find a tenure-track faculty position in a higher education program (preferably one that grants both master's and doctoral degrees), and I'm planning to make those the focus of my job search when I'm back on the market next year. But my current postdoc position, along with my experience writing my dissertation, has helped me realize how much I truly enjoy research, especially research focused on student learning and development. Asking questions, designing studies to answer them, and getting to "play" with and make sense of the data that results—these are the things that get me excited to come to work every day. So I'm also planning to look for positions that are more research-centered, such as those at centers and institutes whose research interests are aligned with mine. And another postdoc position isn't out of the question, if it presented a strong opportunity to gain additional mentorship and develop my research agenda and skills even further.

{Moreover} I had a personal connection to this topic, which gave me additional motivation to pursue this research. One of my closest friends in college (and in high school as well) was a woman who was born in India and moved to the U.S. with her parents when she was two years old. Many of my other closest friends in college were also interracial. One of the reasons my topic resonated with me was because of my experience in these relationships, and after I identified my topic, I spent a lot of time reflecting on how my friendships with her and with my other friends whose racial and cultural backgrounds differed from my own might have shaped my own learning and development, especially my commitment to social justice. In addition, working as an academic advisor for five years showed how powerful students' experiences outside the classroom are for their learning and development, especially diversity experiences and interracial interactions; yet it also showed me how infrequently students were willing to step outside their comfort zones to engage in these sorts of experiences, and how colleges and universities do little to encourage or support them in doing so.

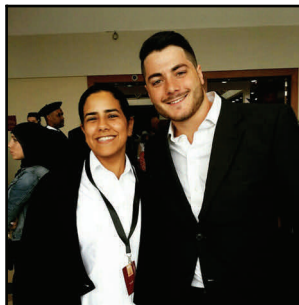
I think I was fortunate to be able to identify a topic that was meaningful to me at the scholarly, personal, and professional levels, because I had multiple sources of momentum driving me forward. I spent five years developing and then researching this topic, and somewhere along the way it went from being just the topic of my dissertation to being a central part of who I was. (And I'm so glad it worked out, because I would have had a lot to lose if it didn't!) I'm not a parent, but I imagine it's a little bit like what it might feel like sending a child off to college: you've invested so much of yourself helping that child develop into an adult, you feel like you've done a pretty good job of it, and now you're releasing that child into the world and hoping s/he will go forth and make you proud."

## SPENDING THE SUMMER IN KUWAIT

BY NICOLE DITILLO, M.ED. '15, 1ST YEAR PH.D. STUDENT

During the summer of 2015, second year master's student Benoit Sabourin seized an opportunity of a lifetime—a summer internship at the American University of Kuwait (AUK). Going into the program, Benoit knew he was seeking an internship that would combine his passion for travel and other cultures with a career in student affairs. Benoit first learned about the internship at AUK through the HEA weekly email blast, and immediately contacted the program coordinator. Following the end of classes in May, Benoit jumped on a plane and headed to Kuwait City.

The American University of Kuwait is a liberal arts institution modeled after the American higher education system. Citizens from Kuwait, neighboring countries in the Middle East, and around the world are enrolled in the small private institution of 2,100 undergraduate students.



Benoit divided his time between the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Student Life. Through his role in the Registrar's office, he learned the administrative operations that maintain the registration system of a university, including class changes, grade replacements, and graduation material. Through the Office of Student Life, he was able to create a theory-based student-employee training program with learning outcomes. Arriving during Ramadan, Benoit was immersed in Islamic culture, and gained a thorough appreciation for the traditions and values of Muslim culture.

Through this international experience, Benoit gained a new understanding of higher education in the United States. While the American higher education system is arguably more accessible to some populations than others, Benoit found that by comparison there is significantly more equity in our colleges and universities than in Kuwaiti systems.

*"This internship gave me the confidence to pursue job opportunities in higher education in countries around the world."*

*—Benoit Sabourin*

*2nd Year Master's Student*

## DISSERTATION GRANT: ASHLEY CLAYTON

BY NICOLE DITILLO, M.ED. '15, 1ST YEAR PH.D. STUDENT



Ashley Clayton, a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education program, received one of only four dissertation grants awarded by the Association for

Research (AIR). Ashley's proposal was awarded the maximum amount of \$20,000.

The grant supports doctoral students exploring issues in higher education using NCEC or NSF national datasets. Ashley's dissertation, titled "The Effects of College Counselors on College Access: An Inverse Probability Weighting Analysis", looks at the impact of specialized college counselors in public schools on college preparatory and enrollment outcomes.

Ashley's research interest stems from her work experience with underrepresented students. Specialized college counselors in public high schools are a relatively new phenomenon, due in part to the increase of non-profit college access

organizations. Past research has focused on traditional counselors, but there is little research on the experience of specialized college counselors and their effectiveness at improving college access.

Ashley used NCEC's High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HLS:09) to examine how the presence of a specialized college counselor impacts students' FAFSA completion, the number of application a student completes, and college enrollment.

The results of her research will inform public school districts and nonprofit organizations on how they may utilize college counselors to be more effective. The AIR grant gives Ashley the opportunity to focus on her research, purchase the necessary statistical software, and present her research at conferences.

Receiving the AIR grant is a great honor, and Ashley is quick to thank faculty advisor Dr. Paul Umbach for his encouragement and support throughout the application process. Receiving the grant has given Ashley the confidence to apply for future research grants and more assurance in the job market in her ability to secure external funding. All recipients of the AIR grant are required to finish their dissertation by 2016, and will present their findings at the AIR Forum in New Orleans, LA.

## DOCTORAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: HELEN WU

BY JAMAAL HARRISON, 2ND YEAR MASTER'S STUDENT

Mian "Helen" Wu is a new doctoral student in the Higher Education program! Helen comes to us all the way from Kunming, Yunnan! She went to Hong Kong Baptist University to study International Journalism for her undergraduate work and then got her master's degree in East Asian Studies from Duke University. Helen is passionate about higher education and her research interests include the acculturation process, psychological well being of international students, and workforce development.



In her first semester, Helen has had several memorable experiences so far as a doctoral student. She feels the finance course taught by Dr. Paul Umbach has opened her mind to academic capitalism and Dr. Joy Gayles foundations course has encouraged her to further explore the depth and possibilities of her research interest in acculturation.

Helen's favorite experience so far has been attending the Annual ASHE Conference in early November in Denver, Colorado. She enjoyed meeting fellow scholars with similar research interests and participating in inspiring conversations. She feels the training she has received via her coursework this semester prepared her well to be successful at ASHE.

We are so happy to have Helen here at NC State, and we look forward to seeing all of the great things she has to offer! Congratulations, and thank you for sharing your experience and expertise here at the Wolfpack Nation!

*"Hold your head up and smile. You're not being drowned, you're being watered."*

—Marissa Disla

*1st Year Master's Student*

## MASTER'S STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MARISSA DISLA

BY JAMAAL HARRISON, 2ND YEAR MASTER'S STUDENT

Marissa Disla is a first year master's student in the Higher Education Administration program. Her assistantship is with University Housing, where she works as a Resident Director for Tucker Hall. As a Resident Director, she supervises a staff of 20 students, and serves as a member of the Exploratory Studies Village Council. In addition to these responsibilities, she is a teaching assistant for the Leadership and Resident Mentor USC 220 class.



When asked how her first year in graduate school was going she replied, "Although it has only been a few months I have learned so much thus far as a graduate student, both in and outside of the classroom. I am so excited to be working in this role and to be part of the Higher Education Association's (HEA) executive board this semester.

I had a wonderful recruitment weekend experience." Marissa added that as a first year master's student, she thought she had to have it all figured out, but through the help of the faculty and second year students she realized that the purpose of this program is to not only teach about the development of students, but also to teach students more about themselves.

Marissa shared, "A quote I recently heard and has stuck with me is, 'Hold your head up and smile. You're not being drowned, you're being watered.' Throughout our time here as graduate students, we may feel overwhelmed and sometimes defeated, but we must continue to grow and take each experience as a lesson. Higher education and student affairs staff play such an important role in the student experience. Often times, we can take these challenging experiences, learn from them, and pass the lessons learned on to our students."

Marissa is an outstanding first-year student here at NC State University, and will be a great asset to the field. Congratulations Marissa, and we take pride in you being a part of the Pack!

## BRIDGING SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

BY PATTI BAYNES, M.ED. '14



As the program director of the NC State College Advising Corps, a n o n - p r o f i t organization that seeks to increase the number of low-income, first-generation, underrepresented students who enroll and complete

college, I have the privilege of working with the k-12 side of education, while working with and keeping up with matters in higher education. I employ recent NC State graduates who serve as college advisers in rural high schools, to assist students in navigating their path to post-secondary education. The program serves in 10 counties across NC and we are partnered with 21 rural high schools. We are also partnered with a national organization, The College Advising Corps, which has advising corps in 14 states across the country.

In North Carolina, we are fortunate to team with Davidson College, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, to serve

students state-wide. The college adviser works alongside guidance staff to create and enhance the college-going culture within the school, assist students apply to college and fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), connect and inform parents of the college process, and involve community members to broaden the mission of college access.

Having spent over five years in this work, between practice and research, I have a deeper understanding and importance for the P-16, or P-20 pipeline. While my understanding has been driven by the need to ensure all students have equal access and opportunity to post-secondary education, despite economic and social barriers, it is also important to note the need for an educated populace to sustain the workforce of our future. According to Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce and their state report, "Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020," written by Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl (2013), "Twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia will be at or above the 65 percent proportion of jobs (nationally) that will require post-secondary education beyond high school in 2020" (p. 2). Bridging secondary and higher education is becoming not just a catchy phrase or idea, but more of a necessity and reality for the future of our state and country.

*"Bridging secondary and higher education is becoming not just a catchy phrase or idea, but more of a necessity and reality for the future of our state and country."*

—Patti Baynes,  
M.Ed. '14

## WOLFPACK UNITY: TALLEY STUDENT UNION

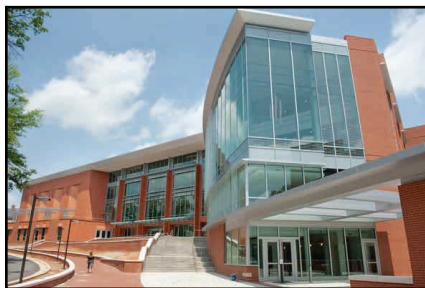
BY MADDIE BREEN, 2ND YEAR MASTER'S STUDENT

The student union on a college campus serves as a central gathering place for students, faculty, and staff and is designed to enhance the quality of life of the campus community. The Talley Student Union serves as the student union at NC State University. For the past four years, Talley has taken on a major renovation and expansion project estimated to cost \$120 million.

Originally built in 1972 as a student activities and cultural resource center for 14,000 students, Talley was in need of more space to accommodate a growing student body of more than 34,000 and needed a serious rejuvenation to update its outdated and rundown facilities. The renovation and expansion was completed through two phases. Phase I was completed in 2014 and included the opening of several shops, restaurants, and meeting rooms. Phase II is now complete and the building is now completely open to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community!

Spring 2015 was full of anticipation for the official unveiling of the completed Talley Student Union.

As a graduate assistant in the department for almost a year, I was in the loop about construction timelines, how seriously people took the fact that student fees contributed to the project, how excited students were about accessing this innovative space, and how eager student affairs professionals were to move into their new and centrally-located office spaces.



The look on students' faces as they tentatively stepped into this newly renovated part of the project is something I will always remember. People looked around in awe at the giant wolf in the center of the building, students running around trying new chairs and lounge spaces, and community members exploring office spaces to examine the different features these spaces had to offer.

The Student Union is uniquely poised to help the university achieve its mission: to promote an integrated approach to problem solving that transforms lives and provides leadership for social, economic, and technological development across North Carolina and around the world.

## DEVELOPING FUTURE LEADERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

BY CALLIE WOMBLE, 2ND YEAR PH.D. STUDENT

I remember reading a Ralph Waldo Emerson quote ten or so odd years ago and committing it to memory. This simple yet profound mantra encapsulates how I strive to live my life:

unapologetically yet with a sense of Sankofa. As a first generation college student from a low-income background, and a Black woman, I have in many ways forged my own path to and through higher education. My loving, single-parent, working-class household provided me with the self-efficacy, grit, and resiliency I needed to excel, but was not able to share tangible strategies on how to navigate college admissions and success, much less graduate school or the Ph.D process.

Thankfully, however, along my journey as a scholar I have been fortunate to connect with numerous resources that have poured into my development and helped me succeed. For instance, I am immensely grateful to the Gates Millennium Scholarship Program (GMSP) for acknowledging my potential and creating an opportunity for me to thrive despite my historically marginalized background.

Not only has GMSP financed all three of my postsecondary degrees, but they have also gifted me with a vast network of likeminded scholars from similar backgrounds across the nation. In addition, I have developed and sustained lifelong mentor-mentee relationships with incredibly generous high school teachers, community leaders, and college professors that have helped to shape my career trajectory. Although I am a trailblazer within my family, I did not blaze my trail alone. I am sincerely appreciative of all the people and programs that have invested in me and I desire to pay forward their investments. I aim to share tangible strategies, insights, and tools to help others who aspire to travel similar journeys.

There are countless bright and talented young minds that have the potential to achieve great things through higher education, but are limited access due to aspects of their identity such as their socioeconomic status, race, and/or gender. This rationale was the impetus for the creation of my consulting firm, The Life Of A Scholar, LLC (LOAS), which I founded in the first year of my doctoral program. Based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, the LOAS provides tailored programs and services to help scholars of

color across the lifespan realize and reach their full potential. We intentionally dedicate time, energy, and resources to helping first generation college students, racial and ethnic minoritized students, and low-income students succeed in higher education. To put metaphorically, we teach our students the rules so they can effectively master the game.

For example, just this fall we hosted our first annual Scholar Academy, which is a free one-day college preparation and success program for historically underrepresented high school and college students and their parents.

Over 40 students, parents, and educational leaders gathered for a Saturday full of roundtable sessions, panel

discussions, catered lunch, and a networking event.

Our evaluations illustrate that the program overwhelmingly exceeded participant expectations, and they felt well equipped for the next stage of their educational journeys. Additional LOAS offerings include our Scholar-Activist Internship Program, which is a mentored internship experience for high school, college, and graduate students as well as recent graduates, and our Pearlina W. Cole Scholarship Program, which will be launching in the spring of 2016.

While still in its infancy, I believe the LOAS is a promising model for purposeful educational outreach to develop future leaders in higher education. As a data-driven firm with a heart for the community, we live at the intersection of research and practice. I believe educational equity is value that joins educational researchers and administrators alike. However, as we climb our own professional ladder and pursue our own career goals, I also believe it is easy to become consumed with our own leadership development.

While achieving our individual successes I challenge us all to also consider the development of others who are in the midst of the K-16 pipeline and make an investment in their success. Perhaps your investment in our future leaders will look differently than mine (i.e. the LOAS) and that is completely okay. There is *plenty* of space for community outreach and engagement endeavors of all varieties, and a diverse cadre of resources is needed to reach and support our increasingly diverse student population. One person may not be able to do everything, but everyone can do something – so whether it's donating your time, your talent, or your treasure, there's always a good reason to give back!



*“There are countless bright and talented young minds that have the potential to achieve great things through higher education, but are limited access due to aspects of their identity such as their socioeconomic status, race, and/or gender.”*

—Callie Womble,  
2nd Year Ph.D. Student



## THIRD ANNUAL PREP PROGRAM

BY LATOSHA WILLIAMS, 2ND YEAR MASTER'S STUDENT

*“As a first-generation graduate student, there were a myriad of spoken and unspoken rules I did not know about when I applied to graduate school...After enrolling in a graduate program, I made a commitment to support traditionally underrepresented racial/ minority students apply to graduate school and to the socialization of these students in graduate school.”*

*—Marshall Anthony Jr.,  
2nd Year Master's Student*

The weekend of October 17-19 six prospective doctoral students and 13 prospective master's students visited NC State campus for the 3rd Annual PREP Program. PREP is a campus visitation program, hosted by NC State's Higher Education program, which seeks to enhance the recruitment of qualified students who are interested in the master's or doctoral program in Higher Education. PREP focuses on students from diverse or traditionally underrepresented racial/ethnic minority (URM) backgrounds. The program is designed to assist prospective students in building a competitive graduate school application.

The weekend included a host of distinguished administrators on campus that provided insight into the graduate school application process and the experience that being a graduate student at NC State provides. Among the administrators were Dr. Lance Fusarelli, Interim Department Head of the Educational Leadership, Policy and Human Development department, who highlighted the Higher Education program as one of the more competitive program offerings in the graduate school.

Dr. Barry Olson, Associate Vice Provost, gave an introduction to the unique structure of Division of Academic and Student Affairs (DASA). Dr. Audrey Jaeger presented helpful information in relation to preparing a strong application and personal statement.

Dr. Demetrius Richmond, Director of Graduate Student Mentoring & Success, shared information about the services provided through the Graduate Student Mentoring & Success office in the College of Education. Campus representatives from across DASA discussed what assistantship options are made available to higher education graduate students. Lastly, participants had opportunities to hear from current students and meet one on one with program faculty.

PREP participant Rae'chelle noted, “The round-table and faculty 1:1 were the best hands down. These were opportunities for me as an introvert to shine.

But also it just felt personal—like my needs as a prospective student mattered.” Kenya, another PREP participant said, “Spending time with current master's and doctoral students was the most memorable aspect of the PREP experience. After my weekend at PREP, I see the true value of having a cohort to go through your graduate experience with. Current students brought a great deal of energy to the weekend and were honest and forthcoming about their choice to select NC State and their experience thus far in the

program. They spoke highly of one another and also about the faculty in the Higher Education program! More importantly, they were straightforward about some of the challenges they've encountered with the course rigors and adapting to a new institution for those who completed their undergraduate education elsewhere.”

Marshall Anthony, who sat on the PREP Planning Committee added, “As a first-generation graduate student, there were a myriad of spoken and unspoken rules I did not know about when I applied to graduate school. Do my graduate and undergraduate degrees have to be in the same discipline? Will my need-based financial aid package for graduate school be similar to undergrad? How important is it to connect to faculty during the application process?

Because of this lack of knowledge, my process to graduate school was not as seamless as it could have been. After enrolling in a graduate program, I made a commitment to support traditionally underrepresented racial/minority students apply to graduate school and to the socialization of these students in graduate school. For the past two years, the PREP visitation program has been an opportunity for me to fulfill this commitment. Access to graduate education benefits the diversity of perspectives in both the classroom and the field as a whole.”

Ultimately the PREP program provided an opportunity to demystify the graduate school application process and give prospective students greater insight into what makes NC State, and specifically the Higher Education program, a great place to think and do.



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**EDITOR'S NOTES:**

BY JAMAAL A. HARRISON, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



The purpose of this newsletter is to help keep the connection strong between past and present members of the Wolfpack who are in the field of higher education. Special thanks to all who wrote for this Fall 2015 edition of the HEA newsletter, including past and present graduate students of the HEA program.

This paper could not have been done without the help and guidance of Dr. Audrey Jaeger (advisor), and contributor(s): Marshall Anthony Jr., Patti Baynes, Maddie Breen, Ashley Clayton, Dawn Culpepper, Mariss Disla, Nicole Ditillo, Carrie Hanayik Hawes, Dr. Tara Hudson, Dr. Allison Mitchell, Dr. Alyssa Rockenbach, Benoit Sabourin, Park Watson, LaTosha Williams, Callie Womble, and Helen Wu. As the Editor-In-Chief, I want to give a special shout out to Alicia Keating Polson (Doctoral Liaison), the backbone of this edition. I could not have done it without you! For ways to give back to the program please do not hesitate to refer to page one. If you are interested in contributing to the spring 2016 edition of the paper please email: [studentorghea@ncsu.edu](mailto:studentorghea@ncsu.edu).

Go Wolfpack!



*Jamaal A. Harrison*

