Feel Free to Change Your Mind

Thank you for having me here today. Congratulations to the families and friends of our graduates and thank you for all of the support you have provided to the students we are here to celebrate. Congratulations and thank you to the faculty and staff of the Clark Honors College for a job well done. And, of course, congratulations to our graduates! This is your day!

There are two reasons I chose the title of my speech: Feel Free to Change Your Mind. In early April, I received an e-mail from the dean’s office asking me for the title of my speech. I responded, “Why would I have the title of my speech in April when the speech isn’t due until June?” When I discovered that the printer needed the title in order to print the programs, I was unmoved—unmoved, that is, to write my speech. I was moved to come up with a title. Clearly, I needed some wiggle room . . . I think I did pretty well, didn’t I?

The second reason I chose the title of my speech is that it reflects, in simplified terms, the belief I have in the power of a liberal arts education to overcome the increasing economic and political pressures for universities to become job mills and for graduates to prove their worth by the value of the first job they take after graduation.

My own story in some ways reflects the point I am trying to make. I started at the honors college in 1978, the year we moved into Chapman Hall. I graduated in 1982 during another time of economic uncertainty. When I arrived, I was a pre-med biochemistry major; when I graduated, I had an honors degree in art history and a job in business management. A decade later, I had returned to school, become a teacher, and discovered the driving focus of my work world. I did grant-funded education research, spoke nationally and internationally about mathematics education, and best of all, worked with children, helping them discover the power of reading, writing, and mathematical reasoning. I can guarantee you that there was nothing in 1978 or in 1982 that would have indicated I was headed for a career in education.

Let’s take a minute and analyze my story. I came to college wanting to be doctor, having grown up in a scientist’s home. When I realized that this was the wrong choice for me, I took advantage of the liberal arts core in the honors college to smoothly transition into an art history major that combined my love of history and art, which I had studied as a child. I took the job in business because during the ’82 recession, I was lucky to get it. I worked my way up, including a stint in IT, which broadened my knowledge base and gave me strong management skills. These skills proved useful, as did my science and art history background, when I became a teacher. The missing ingredient had been passion. I never actually liked my job.

My dad gives great advice. When I graduated and got my job, he said, “There is a difference between a job and a career. I have been lucky enough to have a career in science. When you have a job, you get up, you go in to work and do what you have to do and then you leave. When you have a career, you wake up thinking about your day, you can’t wait to get to the office, you often stay late, and when you get home you are still thinking, planning, talking about your work.” He also told me to not be afraid to keep looking for a career if the first try didn’t pan out.

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I have a passion and commitment to Honors education, so it is humbling to join and serve as Dean in the Robert D. Clark Honors College. My passion for Honors is longstanding, having most recently proven over the last three years rebuilding, diversifying, and leading the Honors Program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. For me, Honors integrates teaching and research and shares love of acquiring new knowledge with our most motivated and talented students. But Honors education has its critics within the Academy. Some question the role of Honors education in the larger institutional goals of a top-tier research university. Some argue that Honors education is too expensive, caters to too few students, and wastes time when students should be focused on skills needed for future careers. Today we face a crisis in American education, as articulated in recent books such as former Harvard President Derek Bok’s Our Underachieving Colleges. We face budget issues in higher education, a mass-education model, and did. However, for the rest of you, this taught who knew when he was six that he would become a professor. And look I did. That decade I mentioned in the model of classic small liberal arts college education, Honors demands that students learn to read, write, research, present, and discuss. They also learn leadership, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship by participating in community projects, internships, and civic engagements. For the UO, the CHC is a beacon to recruit gifted, high-achieving students. Honors provides a great democratizing effect, making the education of elite institutions accessible, often closer to home, and much lower in cost. Research shows that a successful Honors College raises the intellectual demographic of an entire institution. Rankings go up, institutional goals for higher standards, retention, achievement, and graduation rates rise. Innovations in pedagogy, including experiential learning, encourage students to take intellectual risks and explore the confines of disciplinary boundaries. The success of Honors is felt widely across the institution. The CHC has a firm foundation. We are now well positioned to increase our international engagements, expand opportunities for experiential learning and research, and diversify our curriculum to address scientific literacy. Continuing to build relations throughout the UO will be essential. I look forward to working together to meet the challenges ahead as your new Dean in the Robert D. Clark Honors College.

And look I did. That decade I mentioned included exploration of other options, and your decade should, too. It is very easy to feel like you need to know now what you are going to do. Some of you will be part of the small group who actually does know and has always known what you will be, like the first grader I taught when he was six that he was going to go to the Air Force Academy. And did, however. For the rest of you, this careerism, poorly prepared students, faculty issues, and more. Honors education is the bright spot in this sea of discouraging news. Feel free to change your mind. University of Oregon Clark Honors College
I currently volunteer at the King County Jail in downtown Seattle as a math tutor to inmates hoping to complete their GED. Taking an Inside-Out prison exchange course at the Clark Honors College sparked my interest in working with inmates. First, in class with both inmates and fellow college students, I was surprised at the open relationships I built with each inmate. We knew each other for so little time, yet we instantly could discuss any topic without feeling silenced or fearing rejection. Second, not many American middle-class, college-educated citizens get a chance to spend time with inmates. Starting my professional life in Seattle, I promised myself that I would engage in my new community by volunteering. I don’t think of it as “giving back.” I am serving others, but for me, volunteering is also a great avenue for accomplishing my personal goals and developing myself as a world citizen. Tutoring inmates requires a surprising amount of patience, an ability to explain and pack- ing, an amount of patience, an ability to explain and packing.

I left the Clark Honors College very impassioned about social justice as a result of the Inside-Out course I took with Professor Suzanne Clark, and political science courses that taught me a subaltern story of American history—one that opened my eyes to the lack of opportunity and systematized injustices that exist for low-income communities and predominately people of color. I saw public education as the lever for sweeping reform. I completed three years of service for Teach For America in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Founded by Teach For America alumni Dave Levin and Mike Feinberg, KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) originated in Houston before adding a second site in New York. It now operates 141 schools across the United States. Eighty-six percent of KIPP students come from low-income families, and more than 83 percent of KIPP alumni have gone on to college. The national average ratio for students from low-income communities who go on to college is closer to one-in-ten. I remain with KIPP because, as the statistics suggest, they have created a model that works and continually improves to level the playing field for students.

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Photo: Ben Enbrok

I currently work for Teach For America in Dallas, Texas, in one of the largest urban school districts in the country. Every day, my third graders are faced with unimaginable challenges of violence and poverty. Education and learning how to be resilient to life’s challenges, both inside and outside of the classroom, is their way to a brighter future. Every week, I teach them the same values the CHC instilled in me: resiliency, passion for education, and team work. On days when my job feels most difficult, I remember how being a student in this CHC inspired me to be a better leader and push the limits of my own education to one day be prepared to help others.

PHOEBE PETERSEN ’13

During my sophomore year, I took an Inside-Out course through the Clark Honors College. Inside-Out brings twelve to fifteen “outside” students together with an equivalent number of incarcerated men and women in a quarter-long academic course behind prison walls. The class was a powerful learning experience: it opened my eyes to inequalities I never knew existed.

Inside-Out inspired me because I saw how education is a turning point for people. Repeatedly hearing that many of these incarcerated people rarely had a teacher who liked them, made an effort to get to know them, or even told them they could do something with their lives made a huge impact on me. I, on the other hand, easily had at least a dozen teachers who built my confidence and told me that I would be successful.

Currently, I teach fourth grade in Baltimore as part of Teach For America. One thing that motivates me every day is seeing how the education my fourth graders receive on a daily basis translates into future performance and support for their aspirations. I teach in a very poor neighborhood, one that has some rough statistics—crime, drug use, arrest, and poverty. My students will face a lot of problems in their lives, and I try to equip them with the skills necessary to think through these challenges and overcome them. The Clark Honors College provided me with opportunities to engage in social justice and exposed me to a variety of world perspectives and life experiences. This is something for which I am deeply grateful.
Giving Back in a Global Environment

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CLASSROOM IN THE ANDES

BY MARK CAREY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, CLARK HONORS COLLEGE

In summer 2013, I traveled to the Peruvian Andes for field research on the societal impacts of climate change and diminishing water supplies below the world’s most glaciated tropical mountains, the Cordillera Blanca (White Mountains). Although I have gone to Peru at least once a year for the last thirteen years, this time was different—and it was particularly exciting—because I was able to take a dedicated Clark Honors College research assistant, Kelsey Ward, on an environmental studies major who had just graduated a few days before departure. Kelsey has been conducting research with me for more than two years, and this was an exciting culmination for both of us: an interdisciplinary classroom in the Andes.

Kelsey did not just help me with historical research in Peru’s National Library, where we put on white gloves and dug through a decade of old newspapers to help understand past water use in the Santa River Valley. For this trip, Kelsey was part of my collaborative National Science Foundation–funded research team. My collaborators are from Ohio State University, McGill University, University of Quebec, University of Texas at Austin, UC Santa Cruz, and UC Berkeley, and our disciplines span from history (me) to glaciology, hydrology, botany, biogeography, and human geography. Earlier this year we founded the Transdisciplinary Andean Research Network (TARN) to bolster our interdisciplinary research activities and boost our outreach efforts in the Andes.

One of our first major TARN activities was to get under-graduate students from all of our respective universities together in Peru for a week of field research and learning about every aspect of our field—to literally create an interdisciplinary classroom in the Andes that utilized superb student skills for research and the classroom. In doing this, I also realized I love what research work entails: from delaying at the base of a glacier to converting GPS units into decimal degrees, from identifying plant families in a plant survey of a wetland to reading newspaper articles in the National Library in Spanish, it was so rewarding to see the theory put into practice. I always knew there would be a context in which taking Rock Climbing III alongside Advanced Geographic Information Systems and Systematic Botany would become useful.

With a look toward the future, Kelsey explained, “I have just finished my bachelor’s degree in the very multidisciplinary field of environmental studies. My background in this field could take me to many different directions. On this trip I saw examples of how people take ownership of their path in academia, creating new fields of study to match their interests and to fit into where they see themselves making the greatest difference. For now, as I continue to explore where my interests will take me, I work as an interpretive park ranger at a national park in the Sierra Nevada—Kings Canyon National Park. My experience in Peru has given me powerful tools with which to communicate the realities of climate change to park visitors, explaining the ecological and human impacts. There are many parallels between the Cordillera Blanca and Sierra Nevada, and I am a stronger environmental educator because of the knowledge and experience I gained related to climate change impacts, environmental justice, and holistic watershed health.”

In the end, our shared time in Peru advanced my understanding of Peru’s extraordinary natural environment and its people, and increased my appreciation for the ancient techniques of Andean environmentalists. I was happily surprised to see that I actually knew quite a bit about the tropical plants all around me. Now I pass on the ancient knowledge of natural farming to students from China, Belgium, Korea, and Canada.

Giving Back by Mentoring, Tutoring, and Teaching

WENDY BOHMAN ’03

Instead of giving “back,” I prefer “paying it forward.” As an undergraduate, I began paying it forward as a student orientation staff member, a student ambassador, and as a mentor. My experience in Peru transformed the farm’s disorganized seed closet into a usable seed library, and gave permaculture tours to groups of young dreadlocked spiritual seekers. And then, after two years in the jungle, I knew it was time to move on. Arriving at Chiang Mai, Thailand, to work at an educational farm, I was happily surprised to see that I actually knew quite a bit about the tropical plants all around me. Now I pass on the ancient knowledge of natural farming to students from China, Belgium, Korea, and Canada.

AMELIE ROUSSEAU ’11

After my graduation from the Clark Honors College, I came to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, India. I was there to organize a three-week student service trip with the UC’s Alternative Break Program. I ultimately spent a glorious five-months learning yoga, reading, writing, and exploring the charming colonial seaside town of Pondicherry. When Alternative Spring Break came to a successful end, I was far from ready to leave. I began to spend more and more of my time on the ashram’s beautiful natural farm. The farm was special in that it was completely self-sufficient. For someone who yearned to learn the ancient techniques of cultivating crops naturally, I had found my classroom, my home and heart on forty acres of food-filled jungle.

On the farm, I never knew what tomorrow would bring. I wrote a reference guide of the farm’s medicinal plants, transformed the farm’s disorganized seed closet into a usable seed library, and gave permaculture tours to groups of young dreadlocked spiritual seekers. And then, after two years in the jungle, I knew it was time to move on. Arriving at Chiang Mai, Thailand, to work at an educational farm, I was happily surprised to see that I actually knew quite a bit about the tropical plants all around me. Now I pass on the ancient knowledge of natural farming to students from China, Belgium, Korea, and Canada.

Four years ago, Teach For America ushered me from the tranquility of life as a Clark Honors College student to become an urban schoolteacher. The realities of teaching in a low-income school quickly became clear. I constantly struggled to find free resources that engaged my students, made them think critically, and taught them essential twenty-first-century skills.

When I became an education specialist at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, I knew I had the opportunity to promote and create resources to do just that. I wanted to share the passion for interdisciplinary scholarship and independent research I developed as a history major at the Chic. Now, I travel from West Virginia to Hawaii to support teachers in bringing social studies and its interdisciplinary nature to life. In short, I hope to recreate for students across the country a similar intellectual experience to the one provided me at the Chic.
Once, while a student in the honors college, when struggling with a particularly challenging essay about Chaucer in literature class—the first draft of which had come back peppered with edit marks in green pen—I dared to wonder what my liberal arts education would have to do with my future job. Plain and simple, I knew I wanted a job that would allow me to give back to my community. But it wasn’t yet clear to me what that goal had to do with ancient texts, historical happenings, and their interpretations. In the years since, I have come to understand that these two pursuits have very much to do with each other.

On a sunny afternoon the week before classes began, I stood in front of a group of CHC students in 180 PLC. The room seemed cavernous, but the energy of the students was ground down in the front of the room, their faces were open and welcoming. As I told them about Explore Identity—a yearlong program exploring issues of race and identity happening this year on campus—they nodded and smiled. When I threw out my first question—“What is one thing that Ms. Norris felt to be a “model minority.” Other students wondered “Why should I feel guilty just because I’m white?” And so began a lively discussion about prejudice and stereotype, and the students were surprised to learn about the impact of returning World War II veterans in laying the groundwork for the Civil Rights Movement. Another talked about being able to relate to the pressure of being labeled in the eyes of her community. I discovered my one’s vocation is the place at which one’s deep

Elizabeth Leavitt ’03

American writer and theologian Frederick Buechner wrote that one’s vocation is the place at which one’s deep gladness meets the world’s need. After graduation and serving as an AmeriCorps volunteer, I finally discovered my vocation. As a caretaker, a teacher, and a community leader. In my work, both as an educator and ordained minister, interpretation is a central task. Whether I am explaining the theological underpinnings of the Bhagavad Gita with students or sharing messages of comfort at the bedside of a dying member of my congregation, I draw on a body of knowledge—ancient texts and practices, metaphors and stories, personal narratives and current events—that requires careful, thoughtful, and ongoing interpretation. Drawing together such diverse sources and using them to challenge, comfort, inspire, and instruct others is a major part of how I give back. Though my educational journey took me far beyond the walls of Chapman Hall—to a graduate program in religion at Harvard Divinity School, as an adjunct professor of religion at Bunker Hill Community College, and through the process of ordination in the Presbyterian church—I see the roots of all this in my time at the CHC. If I am able to inspire students, equip community leaders or help offer insight into what it means to live a reflective life, I am able to do so because of an education that prepared me to read the world, its people, and stories, and make meaning of them.

Mary Ellen Dinneen ’83

Member, CHC Advisory Council

When I arrived at the UD as a freshman, the Clark Honors College was in its infancy, so I had few preconceptions of what was in store for me as an honors college student. Upon graduation, I realized that the CHC had been the frosting on my academic cake. It had challenged me and stretched my ability to think in ways I could not have imagined. So, I was thrilled to be asked to be on the CHC Advisory Council when it was established. Similarly, after a thirty-year career as a junior high school counselor and teacher, I entered retirement with eagerness, some discomfort, and only the barest outline of what my retirement would look like. I chose to become a part-appointed special advocate (CASA) in Clackamas County near Portland, Oregon. A CASA works as a link between a child who is no longer safe in the care of his or her parents and the judicial and the public safety nets, which take over wardship. As one might imagine, every child has unique needs. Consequently, I am always exploring, investigating, and learning as I work with these very vulnerable children and teenagers. My work as a CASA has once again challenged and stretched me, and allowed me to use old skills in new ways, and is the frosting on my retirement cake.

I have a little difficulty thinking of my work with the CHC Advisory Board and CASA as “giving back.” To me, I’m the lucky one who has had the opportunity to sit down at life’s dinner table and eat two desserts.

Vanessa Elonk ’06

If you read any article or study about our generation, you tend to find the following points: 1) our standard of living, educational attainment, and economic opportunity are already significantly lower than Generation X, let alone our Baby Boomer parents; 2) we think we are special, entitled, and lack the hard- and soft-skills needed in the twenty-first century economy to make any real contribution right now; and 3) we are “wily” ambitious and out-of-the-box thinkers who care about making a difference, but still need to figure out what that looks like. In sum, we have great intentions, but are facing some challenges that can’t be overcome with just a few good ideas, and we should lower our expectations. And if you are like me, I find these observations true in part, but also infuriating. We can give more and will do more.

Mary Ellen (Hayes) Travers, left, with associate director Louise Bunting at Oxford (March 2013)

We aren’t the first generation to face criticism from those farther along than us. Our parents’ generation was thought of as the hippie freeloaders who cared more about following the Dead than giving back to society. They ended up proving their parents’ generation wrong, and we will too, maybe even more so. Why? Because we have to.

We are in a place where income inequality is at its highest levels since the twentieth century, union participation at its lowest since 1916, and overall civic engagement and protection of the public safety nets—public schools, food stamps, and even voter protections—at their greatest peril since the 1960s. Now is our time to give back beyond just charity, to find ways to correct these systems that have gone awry. A college-educated person is now privileged, a member of an increasing minority population in this country where college attendance has become less possible for all children and youth, especially for the growing number of poor and minority students in our nation. The greatest gift we can give is therefore our ear to those seeking those same opportunities we have had, and our voice to speak up for those without one.

I realize this is some lofty language. But know that there are countless ways to do this, and it starts right in your own community. Find a nonprofit related to your passion and volunteer, attend a school board meeting, educate yourself and those around you on policies that are working and those that aren’t, call your legislators, and vote. We can make a difference if we just start speaking up and getting involved. Deep down, our greatest strengths are not in what we own but in our humanity and service to others.
Giving Back—Improving Health Around the World

JOSH LUPTON ’11

The Clark Honors College taught me the value of a well-rounded, liberal arts education, both inside and outside of the classroom. At Oregon, I volunteered at a free medical clinic that gave me balance and perspective. For me, giving back is not a one-sided affair where those who “have” give to those who “have not.” Instead, it is a two-way exchange where those who are doing the “giving back” take away something often entirely different but equally valuable. I choose to give back because doing so makes me feel fulfilled, gives me genuine happiness, and reminds me who I am working so hard for, and in almost all instances allows me to learn something about other cultures and people.

After graduating from the CHC, I studied in the United Kingdom on a Marshall Scholarship, first at the University of Cambridge in a basic science laboratory, then at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for my master’s in public health. At both institutions I worked with individuals who’ve dedicated their lives to academic research with the hope of benefitting society—despite the often long hours and low pay.

Now that classes have started, I will begin teaching English as a second language to adult immigrants at a local community center in the evening. Language can be the biggest barrier for many in getting health care. I am confident that this experience will be a two-way exchange. In the future I hope to use my public health background, and the spirit of giving back nurtured by my time at the CHC, to be a physician who strives to support the poorest and least fortunate among us.

ANNA STEEVES-REECE ’10

Finishing up at Clark Honors College in 2010, I couldn’t have pictured my life in 2013. I could barely imagine defending my senior thesis; but it was my thesis on reproductive health and maternal mortality in Ecuador that Schimdt had led me to serve as a health promotion Peace Corps volunteer in the northern mountains of Nicaragua. During my first two years of service, I gave countless health talks, organized translation for medical missions and volcano climbs, and even helped lead a UO alternative spring break group. However, my favorite job was working in radio. I loved giving shout-outs to the numerous members of my host family (inevitably forgetting at least one person and never hearing the end of a plug) and playing music by foreign artists—anything from Mami Chao to Angelique Kidjo to Daft Punk (a favorite of my host grandma). But the best part was having a platform to speak to a large audience and to give information to people throughout my remote site of Rancho Grande who wouldn’t otherwise have access to that knowledge. On my show Platilcando con Anna (Chatting with Anna) I interviewed representatives of non-governmental organizations such as CARE and Save the Children. I spoke with local community health workers, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and other local leaders about the challenges in our community, and what people could do to improve their quality of life on a day-to-day basis.

The CHC, the Department of International Studies, and the Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality at the University of Oregon has been a catalyst for everything I’ve done so far. It brought me to Nicaragua to serve as a health promotion Peace Corps volunteer. It taught me how to think critically about global health issues, including prevention of common but deadly pediatric diseases. At George Washington University, while completing a master of public health degree with a concentration in global health, I built on that foundation, studying the role low-tech public health interventions such as basic sanitation and deputizing lay community health workers can have in the prevention of communicable pediatric diseases that contribute to child mortality. Later, in medical school, I was able to put into action what I had been studying through service trips to Haiti, Ethiopia, and Indonesia—working alongside local medical staff members to deliver primary care in resource-impoverished communities, implementing clinical and public health interventions to treat some health issues and to prevent the occurrence of others. The application of my clinical and public health skills are how I give back to the global community. This fall, as part of my pediatric residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital, I will spend four weeks in Tanzania teaching medical residents as a way to give back. I have been fortunate to receive over the years, starting at the UO. It has been my good fortune to work and learn in the service of a broader global community, and it is my hope it will remain a hallmark of my clinical practice as well as part of my legacy as a CHC alumnus.

PETER D. LEIMENA ’05, MD, MPH

My time at the CHC helped nurture an idea planted me at a young age by my grandparents: as a global citizen, I have a responsibility to use my skills to help others and to attempt to give back in equal measure to that which I have been given. At the CHC, I learned how to think critically about global health issues, including prevention of common but deadly pediatric diseases. At George Washington University, while completing a master of public health degree with a concentration in global health, I built on that foundation, studying the role low-tech public health interventions such as basic sanitation and deputizing lay community health workers can have in the prevention of communicable pediatric diseases that contribute to child mortality. Later, in medical school, I was able to put into action what I had been studying through service trips to Haiti, Ethiopia, and Indonesia—working alongside local medical staff members to deliver primary care in resource-impoverished communities, implementing clinical and public health interventions to treat some health issues and to prevent the occurrence of others. The application of my clinical and public health skills are how I give back to the global community. This fall, as part of my pediatric residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital, I will spend four weeks in Tanzania teaching medical residents as a way to give back. I have been fortunate to receive over the years, starting at the UO. It has been my good fortune to work and learn in the service of a broader global community, and it is my hope it will remain a hallmark of my clinical practice as well as part of my legacy as a CHC alumnus.

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Drew Serkes ’11

While I live on the East Coast, after serving as an AmeriCorps VIP: Volunteer in Service to America in Philadelphia, I recently visited Eugene. A fellow Clark Honors College student organizer and I walked through Chapman Hall discussing how our years there led us to our current life paths of service and social change activism. As a CHC student, I collaborated with others to start the social justice group Kaleidoscope, which gave me the confidence to pursue both community service and how to address larger issues of injustice. My blog OrganizingChange.org, describes a vision of where we are going with respect to social change, analyzes what it takes to accomplish social change, and creates action-based toolkits to support these efforts.

It’s pretty easy for me to see the influence of the CHC on my ideas. While my own efforts right now focus on being as useful as I can to those working for social change, I’ll always have the mentality I gained at the CHC to seek out new ways to support others and promote inclusive leadership development.

Quinn Baxter, Class of 2014

I’ve taught the music topic in the Clark Honors Introductory Program (CHIP) for the past four years. The students are always bright and involved individuals who inevitably make me glad I chose the Clark Honors College. Teaching the CHIP is, of course, a good time, but the reason that I returned each fall for the past four years is because I have had the good fortune of being taught by masterful educators in the CHC.

After taking several courses from one, it became clear that the only reason my professor chose his career was to pass on things that he truly believed were important for the next generation to know. I’ve found something that I truly believe in—music—and while I am nowhere near skilled enough at passing it on yet, I am doing something important by introducing students to things that have profoundly changed my life.

Nick ’12 and Zoe Hayman ’12

We didn’t see it coming. At first, serving the Clark Honors College felt like an easy way to meet new friends, get free tickets to Wicked, and justify hanging out with Associate Professor Louise Bishop all the time. By the end of our four years, the CHC had slyly instilled in us the value of service, and ensured we would live this way forever by giving each of us a lifetime accountability buddy.

It all started when Nick joined the Clark Honors College Student Association (CHCSA) in his freshman year. He encouraged me to apply with him to be a leader in the Clark Honors Introductory Program (CHIP). Nick’s CHIP group focused on biodiversity, mine on political activism. This was the first step and we were reeled in by our passions. We spent months perfecting our curriculums, organizing guest speakers and field trips, and mentoring our freshmen cohorts. I hope I’ve made the tools to take an active part in their democracy, but ultimately I know what I received was far greater: connections to fascinating people, experience leading and organizing, and some of my greatest friends.

After leading CHIPs, we were hooked. I moved on to direct the CHIP program, and Nick became vice president of the CHCSA. I’d like to say we served out of the goodness of our hearts, but the truth is all that’s where we were there. As a team, we organized events for the CHC, worked for the administration and faculty to improve the CHC in the future, and brought students out into the community to spread the impact. Without our ever noticing, the CHC transformed us into leaders and advocates for service, even training the students who would come after us to continue the tradition.

But encouraging us to serve during our college years wasn’t enough. It had happened so subtly we didn’t notice, but when it came time to decide what to do after graduation, the CHC influence was clear. Today, Nick is studying marine science at San Diego State University in pursuit of his master’s degree, and performing research on restoring contaminated estuaries. He also leads the Marine Ecology and Biology Student Association, where he brings science and ocean conservation to the broader San Diego community. I work for KidsBioClub, empowering youth to transform the health of people, communities, and the planet through technology and leadership. I also volunteer with a nonprofit that brings together young people from Israel, Palestine, and the United States for facilitated dialogue.

Our time in the CHC showed us the importance of giving back to our communities, and surrounded us with people who would ensure we always did. In a brilliant checkpoint, the CHC used service to bring us together, and we tied the knot this past July. Because of the Clark Honors College, we continue to challenge each other to seek out new opportunities and answer the call “How will you be of service?”

Molly Hoyer, Class of 2016

Ephemera, the Clark Honors College’s creative arts journal, had a very successful 2012–13. The final publication drew on the talents of fifty student writers, poets, artists, and editors. As assistant editor in chief, I learned many important lessons about leadership, editing, and journal production. Looking to this year, as editor in chief, the staff and I plan to preserve the spirit and nature of Ephemera as a journal but are planning a few changes, such as making the Ephemera logo more familiar to CHC students, and more events such as open mic nights and freshman-orientated creative writing workshops.

Garrett West, Class of 2014

President, Clark Honors College Student Association, 2013–14

The Clark Honors College is easy to describe: a welcoming place where students can study everything, but most important, they are dedicated to each other. The community accepts people for who they are, tries to find a place for them, solicits diverse opinions, and always tries to improve itself. I see the students, staff, and faculty express their dedication every day, and I’m always proud of it. In Chapman Hall, there’s truly a communal sense of duty, to the institution and to the community, that is rarely found elsewhere. Because of this, students are responsible for continuing the CHC’s legacy and making sure to give back to the community that embraces us.

Alex Fus ’13

As a freshman, the Common Reading Program was my first experience with the intellectual life of the Clark Honors College. In that first debate with my new classmates, I knew I had come to the right place! Four years later, Common Reading has engaged CHC students on issues from capital punishment to GMOs to race relations, and the conversation has opened opportunities for students to contribute to the community of minds that expands the CHC far beyond the classroom. ☕️
Louise Bishop, Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Literature will be leading a group of CHC students to Oxford in spring 2014 for the first ever CHC-led Study Abroad program. Bishop’s class will take advantage of her research into medical poety, including a recent essay for the collection, “The Religion and Gender in Medieval Culture, ed. Naoli Kukita Yoshikawa (Cambridge, 2014). Forthcoming, 2014 forthcoming. Students will also pursue individual Oxford tutorials in their majors, as well as a colloquium on Oxford myth and history taught by Prof. Mark Philippott (Oxford History Faculty, Keble College). A signature of the CHC is its commitment to human rights. Since 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of World War I, students will read and discuss that war and human rights issues with Prof. Hugo Slim, who is working with a Research Fellow in the Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, and James Earl, Professor Emeritus of English, University of Oregon.

Mark Carey was promoted to As- sociate Professor of History and received tenure in spring 2013. He also won a five- $459,000 National Science Foundation CAREER grant on “Glaciers and Clasticology: How Nature, Field Research, and Societal Forces Shape the Earth Sciences.” Carey received two university-wide awards in 2013: an Early Research Career Award/OU Research Excellence Award given to him as top two assistant pro- fessors for “outstanding research activities”; and a Faculty Excellence Award from the Center for Multicultural Academic Affairs. Carey delivered a workshop on writing good proposals for extramural funding to students interested in diversity issues on campus. He also won a Williams College Institutional Grant for collaborative teaching with Kathy Lynn in the OU’s Environmental Studies program, which will include a Fall 2014 student conference on Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples. Carey has recently published several articles including two in the American Journal of Economic Geography, one in the Canadian Geographer, and one in Climatic Change. He also has a new co-edited book under contract for Routledge. Knight’s article titled “The High-Mountain Cyprinids: Environmental Changes and Human Risks.”

David Frank, Professor of Rhetoric returned from his year-long sabbatical on December 13 after a five-year term as ChC Dean. In July 2014, he will deliver one of four keynote addresses on rhetoric hosted at the University of Oxford. His paper treats the timelines of deep rhetoric in the twentieth century. He has been selected as one of four scholars to present research at a “Supersession” hosted by the Rhetoric Society of America in San Antonio, Texas the same month. Forthcoming articles and book chapters include: “The Vickers-Chin Exchange: A Report from the University of Oxford In- teractive Seminar on Rhetoric in the 21st Century, July 3–7, 2012,” Peking University Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences (2015, in Chinese), “At the Crossroads of History: Benjamin’s Memorial Speech, 12 January 2011,” Rhetoric and Public Affairs (2014), “The Jewish Rhetoric of the Twentieth Century: Chaim Perelman, Double Fidelity, and the Pre-Holocaust Roots of the New Rhetoric Project” in Jewish Rhetoric: Eds Michael O’Dell and Penelope Schwab, (Brandeis University Press, 2014) and an invited chapter in The Making of Barack Obama (Palgrave Press, 2015). He is completing a book, in collaboration with Susanne Clark, on UO President (1969– 1975) and honors college founder Robert Todd (1948–1969). He is also studying the relationship between Symon Zajac Rheo, first president of Korea, and Robert T. Oliver, a professor of rhetoric who served as Rheo’s first advisor, and was funded by the Korea Research Foundation.

Samantha Hopkins, Assistant Professor of Geological Sciences published a paper along with two former graduate students (John Orrick) on the evolution of geographic patterns of mammal body size across the North American continent, in the University of Oregon’s Special Collections and University Archives, from which she and her history of science students mounted an exhibit of 15th- to the 18th-century works, including the first world atlas and the earliest scienti- fic periodicals. The exhibit, “Curiosity and the Oxymoron) will soon appear. His story “My Nick” will appear in The Best American Fiction 2014. He was also awarded a Faculty Excellence Award from the University of Oregon. Professor Frank is participating in a multi-year collabora- tive teaching project with Kathy Lynn in beginning English at the University of Oregon. In 2013–14, he is also teaching the new Freshman Rhetoric class, which will introduce students to the history of the book during the course of which the class plans several notable book exhibits from April through May 2014.

Susanna Lim was promoted to As- sociate Professor of Literature with tenure. Her book, China and Japan in the Russian Imagination, 1865–1922: To the Ends of the Orient, was published in February 2013 by Routledge. In a study exploring images of East Asia in Russian literature and culture, she contends that throughout the centuries, as Russia strove to build itself into an imperial power equal to those in the West, China and Japan came to play an uncommon role in Russian Oriental- ism. Quintessential symbols of the exotic Orient, yet never colonized by Russia or the West, these two Asian states were linked not only to the greatest of Russian imperial fantasies, but also conversely, to a deep sense of insecurity and anxiety regarding Russia’s place in the world. In spring 2013, she taught a new course focusing on the history and culture of modern South Korea in collaboration with the UO’s Asian Studies program. She is on a year-long sabbatical during 2013–14, and has begun work on her next book project, a transnational comparison of Russian writer Leo Tolstoy’s War and Peace (1869) and South Korean writer Pak Kyung-mi’s Shadow in the Land (1994–1995).

Koxan Prazniak, Associate Professor of History, continuing her research on the Silk Roads, returned from the National Science Foundation Research Faculty Award for summer 2013. She spent July in Istanbul, Turkey locating materials for an article on “Artistic Exchange and the Mongol Emperors” and the Nature of Global Projects,” currently in press at Configurations. In 2013–14 Keller will give two conference papers (in New York and Montreal) and two invited papers (in Los Angeles and Chicago). On campus, Keller discovered a largely unexplored regional corpus of Chinese material for his new book (UO’s Special Collections and University Archives, from which she and her history of science students mounted an exhibit of...
Save the Dates!

**January 23, 2014**
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Luncheon, EMU Ballroom

**April 19, 2014**
TEDxUOregon: Identity and Creativity, Beall Hall

**May 15, 2014**
Fourth Annual Undergraduate Symposium, EMU Ballroom

**June 15, 2014**
Clark Honors College Commencement, Matthew Knight Arena