Three New Faculty Members Join CHC

Three new assistant professors joined the honors college faculty in September, bringing with them a diverse set of new perspectives to the program.

Assistant professor of literature Monique Balbuena, a native of Rio de Janeiro, was educated in Brazil and at the University of California, Berkeley, where she received her Ph.D. in comparative literature. Most recently, Balbuena was a Harry Starr fellow in Judaica at Harvard University. She is a poet and translator specializing in Jewish literature from North Africa and Latin America. She is especially interested in the literature of Sephardic Jewish communities written in Ladino.

Balbuena’s dissertation combines stylistic analysis and cultural theory to examine the work of three multilingual and multicultural Jewish poets who write from an oppositional or marginal position, using minor or threatened languages—Algerian Sadia Lévy, Israeli Margalit Mattiahu, and Argentinian Juan Gelman. By showing how their choice of languages and threatened languages—Algerian, Israeli, and Argentinian—impact their work, Balbuena challenges the notion that a minor or revolutionary literature can only be written in a major or dominant language. “My dissertation was conceived in large part as a response to and a critique of Dolezal and Guattari’s formula for ‘minor literatures’ in their book Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature. I argue that minor literatures can emerge from multilingual settings and conditions, and that minor languages have the power to challenge and reinscribe major languages,” Balbuena said.

In addition to teaching the honors college literature sequence, Balbuena will teach a Hebrew love poetry course in the spring, as part of an arrangement with the Judaic Studies Program and the Department of Romance Languages.

“I have many interests and I like having the opportunity to work in these areas,” Balbuena said. Of the honors college students, Balbuena said she looks forward to teaching students who are more engaged and driven. “My bar is set high,” she said.

Assistant professor of literature Toral Gajarawala grew up in New Jersey and studied at New York University and the University of California at Berkeley, where she received her Ph.D. in English. A comparative poet and translator specializing in South Asian literature, Gajarawala studies the representation of marginality in the works of contemporary Bengali, Punjabi, and Hindi poets (including untouchable caste) literature and their use of tropes that signify difference and resistance to the colonial and postcolonial orders.

When news came last June that Jeff Whitty ’93 had won a Tony award for his libretto of the Broadway musical Avenue Q, an honors college staff member went to the Robert D. Clark Honors College to retrieve the bound copy of Whitty’s honors thesis. It was gone.

“I’ll probably show up on eBay,” Jeff said on a recent visit to the university.

The thesis was a play Whitty wrote the summer after his sophomore year and later staged in the Pocket Playhouse. “It was the beginning of a sensibility that eventually, a decade later, led me to Avenue Q,” Whitty said.

According to the Avenue Q website, the play follows the story of Princeton, a bright-eyed college grad who comes to New York City with big dreams and a tiny bank account. He soon discovers that his only neighborhood in his price range is Avenue Q; still, the neighbors seem nice. Together, Princeton and his newfound friends struggle to find jobs, dates, and their ever-elusive purpose in life.

Whitty may have taken inspiration for the story from his own journey. Soon after earning his bachelor’s degree in English, Whitty boarded the Green Tortoise Bus outside the Knight Library and headed for New York City.

“Over the ten days I traveled on the Green Tortoise, every inch the bus went east was the farthest east I’d ever been in my life,” Whitty said. “I moved to New York blind. I wanted to be in theater. I didn’t know how. But I knew that my future was in New York.”

Whitty earned a master of fine arts from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, continued to write plays, and found work as an actor on Broadway, regionally, and in film and television. That work eventually led him to an April 2001 interview with a creative team of songwriters and producers, looking for a writer.

“At that point, Avenue Q had little story, a wild grab bag of characters, and several terrific songs,” Whitty said.

After Whitty and the two songwriters produced an “unwieldy” first draft, a director came on board, enabling a new level of collaboration. The first draft was thrown out, a new draft was written, then Whitty combined the two. The group held readings as the work developed, finally staging an off-Broadway production in March 2003. The response from the critics and the public “exceeded everyone’s expectations by winning Best Book, Best Musical, and Best Score honors at the Tony Awards ceremony.”

“One of the most amazing things about Avenue Q’s success is that all kinds of people respond to it,” Whitty said. “It’s easy to make people laugh, but my favorite response is when people say that they cried—it stars puppets after all.”

“Good theater overcomes our defenses and puts us in a childlike place where, despite the artificiality of a stage and costumes and script, a bit of life is represented that people allow themselves to experience. It’s magical. A group of people say, ‘Watch me!’ and another group says, ‘Yes, yes, we’ll watch.’”
Gajarawala says her dissertation looks at the correspondence between narratives of marginality that grow out of two entirely different social, cultural, and historical formations. The narrative strategies used in these novels, short stories, and autobiographies go beyond the imaginations of the authors, she explained. The language itself is a social code that is a reflection as well as construction of their social realities.

One example of what she found was the use of images of stagnation. In terms of the physical body, texts depict images of people maimed and broken, of corpses and carcasses. These images of stagnation also extended to the form of the narratives themselves, where otherwise beautiful prose would be broken down into the rhetorical device of the list.

Gajarawala has infused literature from South Asia and West Africa into the course in ancient literature she is teaching this term. Issues of marginality are explored by asking how, when reading literature from long ago that privileges the lives of kings and nobility, do you learn about communities that have been neglected?

This winter she will teach a course entitled Spaces of Confinement: A Study of Prison Literature, using prison-themed fiction (Dickens, Nabokov) and nonfiction that draws on prison experience (Najda El Saadawi, Leonard Peltier) to explore the way we understand social space, discipline, and punishment.

Gajarawala says the subject interests her because she taught literature for some years at San Quentin prison, and because her uncle was imprisoned by the British government for an act of sedition during India’s fight for independence.

Assistant professor of history Dayo Mitchell received her Ph.D. and M.A. from the University of Virginia, and her B.A. from Williams College.

A native of Sacramento, California, Mitchell works in the broad field of Atlantic history. Her research focuses on the connections among Africa, Europe, and the Americas from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries.

Mitchell said her dissertation examines the interplay of citizenship and race in the British West Indies during the first half of the nineteenth century, particularly the ability of former slave societies to influence the British government.

“I looked at free people of color—not slaves, not whites—to see how they stylized their version of equality and how they participated in the civic and economic life of the islands,” Mitchell said.

Her research focused on the islands of Trinidad and Dominica, both with a French heritage dating to the eighteenth century and both with less than 100 years of British occupation. The free people of color were a disparate group, Mitchell explained. Some owned slaves, some were day laborers for big plantation owners. Mitchell said what interested her was how the leaders were able to, at least temporarily, build a coalition that coerced the British government to raise the free people of color from second-class citizenship to full equality with Whites.

“This political agitation by the free people of color was only a part of larger changes, including the end of British slavery in 1838, as the British Empire sought to reinvent itself as a humanitarian, progressive entity,” Mitchell said.

Mitchell said the opportunity to teach at Clark Honors College was appealing on several levels. The small, liberal arts mission of the college fit with her own experience as an undergraduate student. “The emphasis on small classes, being challenged to think, learning to write well, all fit with the way I do things,” Mitchell said. “I like the university as well. It will give me the opportunity to do a lot of interesting things. And I’m not a big city person—I know Eugene will offer more than I have the time to take advantage of.”

From the Director

This is an exciting year at Clark Honors College. As I write, we have 175 enthusiastic freshmen who are beginning their first college courses. We have three new faculty members, each of whom stretches our curriculum in new and interesting ways. This increases our faculty roster to ten outstanding teachers and researchers. In addition, we have three new staff members joining three veterans to help us all function smoothly. One of these is Shirley Perez West, who will work to enhance our communication with honors college alumni, beginning with the revival of this newsletter.

The university is supporting Clark Honors College in important ways, recognizing our role in attracting strong students to our campus. For example, our own 1998 graduate, Marisa Tabizon, has returned to the UO as assistant director of admissions, charged with recruiting top scholars for Clark Honors College and other university programs.

Our recently established internship and mentorship programs are continuing to grow, with the kind help of many CHC alumni who want to help today’s students get a good start to their careers.

We are about to launch our first Clark Honors College study-abroad program, a small exchange of students with the National University of Singapore. This is one of Asia’s premier universities, a multicultural institution where English is the language of instruction. In addition, this will be the second year of a busy set of programs centered around the honors halls, with debates by experts on such topics as film, U.S. elections, and gay marriage. Now, after a year as director of Clark Honors College, I understand better than ever how and why it is such a unique and vital institution.
2003 Award Winners

The following students were recognized in 2003 for outstanding scholarship:

1. Anna Simone Barnett, biology. President’s Award. “Anticodon Context Effects in Gencode-Accepting RNAs of Escherichia coli.” Anna was recognized by faculty members in history, literature, and her home field of biology as among the best and the most inquisitive students they had seen. Her thesis on the structure and function of Gencode was described by one reader as “at once a technical marvel and a model of literary precision.”

2. Shannon Bird Wachter Boettcher, chemistry. President’s Award. “Electronic Plastics: Engineer- ing Electric Fields in Poly- acrylate Ionomers.” Shannon’s work has been described as “brilliant and the work that has yet been done by one under- graduate in chemistry at the University of Oregon.” While excelling in an extremely rigor- ous program of liberal arts, he conducted practical and theoretical research on new semiconductor interfaces, resulting in a promising basis of two upcoming publications.

3. Brita Marie Ameel, humani- ties and French. Robert D. Clark Award. “At the Aquarium and Other Poems: A Navigation in Poet- ics.” Brita’s thesis combined a critical commentary with a marvelously collected history of her own poems, poems that were char- acterized by startling images. Brita wonderfully unveiled how a poet and a poem evolve.

4. Jenelle Kiara Bray, chemis- try and mathematics. Robert D. Clark Award. “The Structure, Biological Function, and Local Dynam- ics of the Signal Transduction Protein CheY.” Assistant Profes- sor Marina Guenza described Jenelle’s senior thesis as an outstanding work, and notes that her thesis member Profes- sor David Strom called Paul’s “amazing technical skills.” Beyond this, Strom added that Paul was “the most remarkable undergraduate I’ve taught since I came to this university twelve years ago.”

5. Catharine Rose Hochhalter, psychology. William J. Robert Award. “False Memory: The Effect of Study Repetition on Nonstudied Memories, with commendable kinesin.” Much of cell behavior depends on the direct transport of macromolecules inside the cell. Understanding the molecu- lar mechanisms involved in the motion of motor proteins is fundamen- tal in the long-standing battle to prevent developmental defects, as well as cardiovascu- lar and neuronal diseases, all of which result from defective molecular transport.

6. Melissa Marie Magaro, psy- chology and Spanish. William J. Robert Award. Depression and Deficits in Inhibitor Control.” Committee members marveled at Melissa’s sophisticated hypotheses and analyses, pointing out that her “amazing technical skills” and largely self-directed. Her work was judged to be on par with the best graduate students’ work in psychology.

7. Paul J. Csonka, physics. Aaron Novick Award. “Properties of Thin Vortex Rings.” Ian’s thesis project in physics establishes for the first time formulas for the kind of motion we associate with smoke rings. It has already led to one published article and another forthcoming.

8. Margaret Ellen Maffai, phi- losophy and Italian. Barbara Corrado Pope Award. “Self and Contract: Representa- tion as the Condition of Poli- tics and Social Belonging.” Margaret’s primary adviser says that her thesis provides the foundation for an important book in philosophy. Her analy- sis of embodiment and the law uses the work of feminist philos- ophers to critique Enlighten- ment notions of individuality, contract, and promise. Her groundbreaking work touches important contemporary issues of race, class, and gender, including legal authority, amnesty, and the death penalty.

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10. Yasmin Lori Ravid, the- ater arts. Barbara Corrado Pope Award. “Parable.” Yasmin Ravid worked as director, artistic di- rector, and technical director to bring her vision of the par- able of the Prodigal Son to the stage. With a non-Anglo cast who worked on devising the production, Yasmin brought out the meaning of forgiveness in a multimedia, yet virtually wordless, theatrical event of enormous emotion and vitality. Her work will appear in an other Oregon venues in Salem and Portland.

2004 Award Winners

In 2004, the following eight students were recognized for outstanding scholarship:

1. Timothy Patrick Johnson, history and political science. President’s Award. “Rationality, Eclecticism, and Deci- sion Making: Redefining Norma- tive Standards of Judgment and Choice through Gigerenzer’s Critique of the Heuristics and Biases Program.” A major dispute exists among decision theorists as to the adaptiveness of various heuristic techniques used in many domains—hypothesis— that her thesis provides the foundation for an important book in philosophy. Her analy- sis of embodiment and the law uses the work of feminist philos- ophers to critique Enlighten- ment notions of individuality, contract, and promise. Her groundbreaking work touches important contemporary issues of race, class, and gender, including legal authority, amnesty, and the death penalty.

2. Jenelle Kiara Bray, chemis- try and mathematics. Robert D. Clark Award. “The Structure, Biological Function, and Local Dynam- ics of the Signal Transduction Protein CheY.” Assistant Profes- sor Marina Guenza described Jenelle’s senior thesis as an outstanding work, and notes that her thesis member Profes- sor David Strom called Paul’s “amazing technical skills.” Beyond this, Strom added that Paul was “the most remarkable undergraduate I’ve taught since I came to this university twelve years ago.”

2. Scott Alan Pattison, envi- ronmental science. President’s Award. “The Restoration Ecology of Festuca roemeri.” Scott’s study of the feasibility of reintroduc- ing native Oregon grasses into the Willamette Valley was praised by his advisers as brilli- ant research likely to have direct implications on the im- mediate environment of Eugene.

3. Michael Karl Brunne, Russian and German. Robert D. Clark Award. “Total Physical Response Storytelling: An Analysis and Application.” Michael’s thesis placed total personal response storytelling within a context of approaches to the teaching of foreign languages and to story- telling, evaluated its strengths and weaknesses, then tested it creatively in a middle school German language setting. The result was a new understanding of a revolutionary method that a new generation of teachers is now using.

4. Ting Ting Zhou, psychology and biology. Robert D. Clark Award. “False Memory: The Effect of Study Repetition on Nonstudied Words in the DRM Paradigm.” Ting Ting Zhou is an elegant writer and meticulous research- er who addressed a controver- sial issue, the formation of false memories, with commendable evenhandedness and grace.

5. Todd Jeffrey Crum, physics. Aaron Novick Award. “Toward an Understanding of Protein Motors: A Molecular Dynamics Study of Kinesin.” Todd’s thesis focused on under- standing the processes that rule the motion of the motor protein kinesin. Much of cell behavior depends on the direct transport of macromolecules inside the cell. Understanding the molecu- lar mechanisms involved in the motion of motor proteins is fundamen- tal in the long-standing battle to prevent developmental defects, as well as cardiovascu- lar and neuronal diseases, all of which result from defective molecular transport.

6. Nathan Daniel McVeigh, psychology and classics. Aaron Novick Award. “The Influence of Retrieval-In- duced Forgetting during Sec- ond-Language Acquisition.” Nathan investigated how the brain accesses a second or third language and how interference occurs between languages in the process of retrieval. His work will have implications in how languages are taught.

7. Melinda Suzanne Reynolds, Spanish. Barbara Corrado Pope Award. “Underrepresentation of Latinos in the Sciences: A School-Based Approach to teaching mathematics.” Nathan investigated how the brain accesses a second or third language and how interference occurs between languages in the process of retrieval. His work will have implications in how languages are taught.

8. Christa Marie Shively, women’s studies and history. Barbara Corrado Pope Award. “Cleaning the Streets of New York City, 1890–97: A Look at the Intersection of Municipal Politics and Women’s Activ- ism.” In a brilliant piece of orig- inal historical research, Christa revealed a little-known piece of American history, in which a group of determined women organized to confront munici- pal government and succeeded in removing the filth from the streets of New York City. Her meticulous investigation into voluminous primary documents has produced a work that will undoubtedly benefit future researchers.
Faculty News

Henry Alley’s short story, “The Dahlia Field,” was accepted by Torquere, a journal out of the University of Alberta. His second book, Second Life, was a finalist in the Ellixt Press Novel contest. Last summer he attended Ron Carlson’s juried advanced writing workshop at the Aspen Summer Words Writing Retreat and Literary Festival.

Monique Balbuena has recently been honored by the Koret Jewish Studies Publications Program with a subvention for publication of her new book, Diasporic Sephardic Identity: A Transnational Poetics of Jewish Languages. Her article on “The Language of the Synagogue and Brazilian history will be published by the Center for Jewish History in New York City.

Louise Bishop received an Oregon Humanities Center fellowship in fall 2004 and a summer 2004 research award from Oregon Research and Sponsored Programs. In July 2003 she presented “Piers Plowman and the Gendered Imagination of Public Space” at the third International Langland Conference, Birmingham, England; and, at the Leeds International Medieval Congress that same month she presented, “And You Shall Be Whole”: Vernacular Medical Reading and Cure.” In July 2004 she published a book review in the Medieval Review electronic journal.

Joseph Fracchia is giving an honors college colloquium this term, Bodies and Artifacts, based on his current research project. Fracchia’s forthcoming articles are “Die körperliche Tiefe des Marxsschen Verelendungs begriff” in Der Kapitalismus in der Arbeitsprozess und körperlicher Schmerz,” “Subaltern Studies and Collective Memories in Piana degli Albanesi: Methodological Reflections on a Historiographical Encounter,” and “The Price of Metaphor.”

David Frank and his coauthor received the Kohrs-Campbell Prize in Rhetorical Criticism for their book, Shared Land/Conflicting Identity: Trajectories of Israeli and Palestinian Symbol Use, November 2003. He also received the Oregon Humanities Center Research Fellowship, winter term, 2004-5, to conduct research on the rhetorical presidencies of Robert D. Clark. His other publications are “Horror and the Holocaust: Genre Elements in Schindler’s List and Psycho” in the horror film, “Argumentation Studies in the Wake of the New Rhetoric” in Argumentation and Advocacy, and “The Jewish Countermodel: Talmudic Argumentation, the New Rhetoric Project, and the Classical Tradition of Rhetoric” in the Journal of Communication and Religion.


Helen Southworth’s new book, The Intersecting Realities and Fictions of Virginia Woolf and Colette, was published this fall by Ohio State University Press. In an early review, Shari Benstock of the University of Miami calls it “an important book, one that charts the influences and connections between women writers of the early modernist period in ways that outline literary, intellectual, sexual, and political components of feminist modernism.”

Dan Rosenberg’s project, “The Trouble with Timelines” is one of two proposals to be recommended by the University of Oregon for a 2005 summer stipend from the National Endowment for the Humanities. For the forthcoming articles are “Histories of the Future” and “Heterochronies” in the Canadian magazine Esse: Arts + Opinions.

Ce Rosenow’s book of English language haiku, Northlake, was published this year by Mountain Gate Press.

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**Class Notes**

Tiffany Mills ’92 (dance) owns a dance company in New York City, the Tiffany Mills Company. Mills moved to New York in 1995 after receiving her M.F.A. in choreography from Ohio State University. Mills collaborates with contemporary composers, designers, and filmmakers. The company’s most recent project is a trilogy of Tiffany Mills—John Zorn collaborations. The first two pieces were showcased in 2003 at the Guggenheim Museum’s Works and Process series. Mills was also the choreographer for an independent film directed by Amos Kollek and starring Audrey Tautou. *The New York Times* lauded Mills as “smart, fresh, and accomplished.” Mills taught as a guest artist at universities around the U.S. and is currently teaching at Trisha Brown Studios. She works at Trinity/La MaMa, an experimental performance program for college students in New York. In September 2005, Tiffany Mills Company will perform in Oregon at the Portland Institute for Contemporary Arts’ Time-Based Art Festival.

**Ryan Coonerty ’96 (history)** is running for a city council position in Santa Cruz, California. Coonerty is currently the vice president of his family’s business, Bookshop Santa Cruz, and lectures at the legal studies department at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He received his master’s in international relations from the London School of Economics and a law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law. Coonerty served as legislative counsel for the Mark Foundation Task Force on National Security in the Information Age in Washington, D.C. He also served on the professional staff for the National Commission on Federal Election Reform. Coonerty raised $86 million for a school bond campaign for Santa Cruz Schools to repair and remodel its facilities.

**Norine (Madden) McGrath ’00 (General Science, History)** graduated from the Pritzker School of Medicine at the University of Chicago in June, where she met and married her husband in May of 2004. McGrath is now living in Chicago and working as an emergency medicine resident at the University of Chicago.

**Rebecca (Jagels) Brooks ’01 (Humanities) and future husband, fellow CHC graduate Chris Brooks ’00, moved to Portland soon after graduation in 2001. Brooks worked as an assistant teacher at several Montessori schools, and as an after school educator of art, puppetry, and creative writing at Buckman Elementary. Chris worked as a corporate computer tech for four years. The couple, who met at UO in 1996 and were engaged in 2002, married in June of 2003. They moved back to Eugene and are currently pursuing their masters degrees in English and history.

**Greg Thornton ’01 (theater arts)** has directed original one-act plays at the Vital Theatre Company, Theatre Studios Inc., the Riant Theatre, and the American Globe Theatre in New York. One of them, *Superhero*, by Mark Harvey Levine, was a finalist for the Samuel French Fifteen-Minute Play Festival. Thornton is also the associate literary manager for Queen’s Theatre in the Park and works in the box office for Roundabout Theatre Company at the Laura Pels Theatre.

**Monica Price ’01 (anthropology)** is currently the director of operations at ExperiencePlus! Specialty Tours. Price coordinates walking and bicycling tours in France and Italy. She will be moving to the U.S. this fall to work for the home office. In January, Price is headed to American University in Washington, D.C. where she will pursue a master of public administration and a master of arts in international development.

**Scott Stevens ’02 (biology)** won a Fulbright scholarship to study in Munich, Germany, where he worked in a marine biology lab and took a few classes. He then interned at the Max Planck Institute of Neurobiology on stipend for five months. Stevens is currently working as a research assistant at the Gene Center at the University of Munich until December. He is in the process of applying for graduate school in ethology.

**Rachel Koroloff ’03 (biology, history)** left Oregon to travel around the U.S. after graduation and ended up in New York City, where she worked busing tables in a restaurant off Times Square. She then traveled through Tokyo and Beijing by train on the way to the Russian Foreigners program at Irkutsk State University in central southern Siberia. Koroloff spent nine months there and then traveled through Russia and eastern Europe. She spent most of her time traveling by bus in Romania and Macedonia. She is currently traveling and studying the history of science as a graduate student at Oregon State University.

**Syd Peterson ’03 (History)** walked with his honors college class in 1999. From ’99 to ’03, he revised his thesis and worked full-time. Immediately after leaving Eugene, Peterson worked for *The Industry Standard*, an “internet economy” magazine in San Francisco. After moving to New York City in 2000, he started work at Lambda Legal, a national organization that recognizes the civil rights of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender, and people with HIV through education, public policy work, and litigation. He started as a paralegal, working at the helpdesk, seeking new plaintiffs for discrimination cases and providing legal assistance and resources to the community. This past June, Peterson was promoted to national legal helpdesk coordinator. In his current position, he collaborates with helpdesk staff members and attorneys in all five offices nationwide. He also coordinates with Lambda’s Outreach Communications and IT staff.

**Joel Weber ’03 (journalism)** magazine is living in New York City and working as a freelance researcher and writer at *Men’s Journal* magazine. Weber also worked for IAG Research, a firm that studies the effectiveness of advertising on television and product placement.


**Wayne Bund ’04 (art, theater arts)** moved to Brooklyn within ten days of graduation and began working for Teach for America. Bund teaches writing, grades K-5, to over 300 kids in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a low-income neighborhood in New York City. He is currently pursuing a master of science for teachers at Pace University for free on behalf of Americorps and the New York City Department of Education. After teaching for a few years, he plans to pursue an M.F.A. in creative writing or fine arts and, someday, return to Oregon.

**Tell Us Your News**

The CHC community of scholars wants to hear from you. Please note changes in your address, employment, career development, professional activities, or personal life that you want to share with your classmates and colleagues.

Mail your information to: Scholar, Clark Honors College 1203 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1293

E-mail: scholar@uoregon.edu

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**Your News:**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>John Johnson</td>
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<td>David Rodriguez</td>
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- John Johnson: 100 Main Street, Eugene, OR 97401
- Sarah Martinez: 200 Main Street, Eugene, OR 97401
- David Rodriguez: 300 Main Street, Eugene, OR 97401

**Contact Information:**

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**School:**

Clark Honors College, University of Oregon

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**Note:** This information is subject to change. Please check the latest issue of Scholar for the most current information.
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