

# FREEMAN HONORS

Vol. 1, No. 1 FLL 2012 Newsletter of the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College at Texas Southern University

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## ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is the premiere issue of Freeman Honors, the newsletter with information on the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College at Texas Southern University.

It seeks to connect students, faculty and office personnel of the College with its benefactors and partners who may be in the University, alumni, professional and general communities.

The College anticipates that this connection will reflect and cultivate the relationships in a family whose members are dedicated to optimizing the preparation of College students for service as citizens and as leaders of our new Age of the Global.

## Newest Honors College Scholars Include Freshman, Continuing, Transfer Students

For decades, the former Frederick Douglass Honors Program and current Thomas F. Freeman Honors College have concentrated on attracting new students from the tops of their graduating classes in high school.

But for this new school year, the College also sought to draw stellar academic performers who were transferring from other colleges and universities or were continuing as sophomores or juniors at Texas Southern University.

As a result, the class entering this fall is quite different from the "new" class of a year ago. The Fall 2012 group includes 61 students - 40 from the senior year in high school (65.6 percent), 18 continuing at Texas Southern University (29.5 percent), and 3 transfer students (4.9 percent).

In the class that entered the Honors College in the fall semester of 2011, 93 percent of the students came from the senior year in high school, 7 percent were continuing at TSU, and there were no transfer students.

Dr. Dianne Jemison Pollard, the associate dean for academic affairs who also coordinates recruitment and admissions, said the composition of the class entering this fall reflects the policy of recruiting diverse students.

She said it reflects the designing of the program in the College to meet the needs of students who may enter Honors in or after the freshman year.

## Final Students from "Program" Era Graduate

Students in the last class that entered in the "program" era of the history of honors education at Texas Southern University completed their studies for their undergraduate degrees at the end of the spring semester of 2012.

The Thomas F. Freeman Honors College salutes these highly exemplary achievers whose ideas, experiences, achievements and reactions have helped guide the development of the College for more than three years.

These 19 students started in 2008, when the honors unit was a "program" named after the iconic African American statesman, Frederick Douglass.

One member of the graduating class is Kierra Washington, a respiratory therapy major who served as a student assistant in the College office.

The first students in the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College era entered the college in the fall semester of 2009, and will graduate in May of 2013.

## Dean's Message: On the Honors College

The faculty, staff and students of the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College have focused on the development of the program in the College for almost three years. The first phase of that development started in August of 2009, the second in January of 2011, and the third in September of 2011.

The results include the curriculum that received a nod from the University Curriculum Council; the updated criteria for admission, retention and graduation; the new calendar of activities for the fall semester of 2012 (which indicates the integration of academic and other aspects of College life); and the relationships the College is forging with internal and external publics.

Welcome to the new, continually developing Thomas F. Freeman Honors College at Texas Southern University: <http://www.tsu.edu/honorscollege>.

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## **Students Present Reports on Research**

Two Honors students, Jameisha Jones (left) and Chi-Tam Paul Nguyen, made the College proud in their presentations at recent conferences at Texas Southern University and in Baton Rouge, LA.

Jones, advised by Dr. Candy Ratliff, assistant dean for student services in the College, presented the paper *Commuting the Death Sentence: An Alternative for Funding Higher Education*.

She did so during Research Week at TSU, as well as the conference of the National Association of African American Studies and Affiliates in Baton Rouge, during the spring semester.

Nguyen, advised by Dr. Alamelu Sundaresan, associate professor in the Department of Biology, presented research on *Bone Loss in Microgravity Environments* during Research Week in the spring.

He reported that he found that the drug anti-sclerostin is “promising in preventing osteoporosis,” but recommended that the application of it in microgravity environments be the subject of “further study.”

The College congratulates these exemplary achievers, and challenges other students not only to be inspired by their examples but to equal or exceed their achievements in research and conference presentations.

## **Curriculum Receives Nod from UCC**

The University Curriculum Council of Texas Southern University has given its nod to the Honors College curriculum developed by the administrative faculty of the College.

The curriculum revolves around a core that includes three College themes and a central College skill, and requires students to apply the themes and the skill in no fewer than 31 hours in their general education, their majors, and final research/creative/professional projects.

The curriculum also makes maximum use of courses the University already offers. It especially ensures that students meet the requirements of their departments and the College without taking more semester credit hours than they need for their majors (usually, 120 hours).

One group of students, Full Program Scholars, take honors courses in general education, courses with honors augmentations within their majors, and the final honors research/creative/professional project, and start this program when they enter as first-semester freshmen.

Departmental Scholars take courses with honors augmentations in their majors, and the research/creative/professional project, may start as sophomores or juniors, and may be continuing or transfer students.



Dean Humphrey Regis held the first meeting of Friends (external advisory board) of the College on Aug. 25. In the photo, standing with the dean are Friends Linda Edwards, Myra Fance and Daris Willis-Brown. Those sitting are Sandra Fullerton, Bobbie Henderson, Charlotte Booker, and Pastor Vernon Hubbard. Friend and cardiologist Baxter Montgomery plans to be at future board meetings.

## Themes Reflected in College Curriculum

At the center of the curriculum that the faculty leaders in the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College have developed and that has received a nod from the University Curriculum Council are three themes and one skill.

The themes include (1) Interdisciplinarity; (2) the simultaneous location of subjects in Local/National/Global contexts; and (3) Ethics, Aesthetics and Philosophy in the age of the global.

Students receive introductions to the themes in basic general education courses, develop their understanding of the themes in other general education courses, further develop the understanding in augmentations of courses they take in their majors, and apply this mastery in research, creative and/or professional projects at the ends of their programs of study.

The skill is the application of computers in conducting research, making presentations and producing multimedia documents (including portfolios).

The administrative faculty in the College believe that the curriculum has three strong points. First, the themes give unity to the academic program in the College. Second, the themes and the skill ensure that the education Honors students receive exceeds that which most of their non-honors peers receive in their majors. Third, the themes and the skill will be valuable to the students in their lives as citizens and leaders in the Age of the Global.

## Deans Attend NCHC Summer Institutes

Three faculty administrators in the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College last summer attended professional development institutes conducted by the National Collegiate Honors Council at its national headquarters.

The two institutes focused on (a) the preparation of annual reports and (b) reviews and evaluations of honors programs and colleges, and took place at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, NE between July 15 and July 21.

The three participants from the Honors College were Dean Humphrey A. Regis, the assistant dean for student services, Dr Candy Ratliff, and the interim assistant dean for academic affairs, Dr. Karen Kossie-Chernyshev.

## Honors College Advisors Come from TSU Faculty, TSU Staff, the Community

The Thomas F. Freeman Honors College now has three groups of advisors that the College believes will enhance its program for the education of the honors students at Texas Southern University.

One group, the Faculty Fellows, includes faculty members who help honors students in their departments by serving as mentors, models, and advisors of students with research/creative/professional projects.

Another group, the Campus Advisory Board, includes faculty, students, and staff members who advise the College on academic and other policies and act as liaisons between the College and their units.

The third group is Friends of the Honors College, and includes members of the business, governmental or general communities. They will help by serving as liaisons between the College and these communities, promoting the College within these communities, and securing financial assistance and student-development contributions from them.

## THOMAS F. FREEMAN HONORS COLLEGE: MEANS OF CONTACT

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## From Our Continuing Students: “Pointers” for the New Students

For several reasons, new students in the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College feel nervous.

One reason may be the expectations they, their parents, their instructors, and even their former high schools may have of them.

Another reason may be that for the first time they have to make decisions and take actions without their parents to advise or direct them.

In addition, they have to learn the new entity that is Texas Southern University, and in some cases, the new city that is Houston.

Continuing students in the College have many valuable pieces of advice for the new scholars. Here is a sampling of these pointers:

**“Time management is very important, and making yourself known to your professors is an [added] plus [to your academic experience].” -- Kayla Burrell, Junior, Biology**

**“Manage your time. Don't feel pressured to do any thing you don't want to do. And, attend class and place your academics as [your] number one priority!” -- Brianna Miller-LeForbes Junior, Criminal Justice**

**“When opportunity knocks, open the door.” -- Erik M. Granados, Junior, Journalism**

**“Stay focused, and enjoy your college experience. Since the campus is constantly occupied with different events, it is extremely easy to get caught up in the fun. Learn to successfully balance your fun and studies, and you will embark on a [fulfilling] college journey. Welcome to the Tiger Family!” -- Candice Watts, Junior, Accounting**

**“Success is achieved through hard work and faith. If you want to succeed, study, study, STUDY! Don't be ashamed to admit when you need help. Always have faith in yourself and when in doubt, pray for guidance. There are going to be moments when you are going to be ready to quit, but never give up. When this four year journey is complete, a diploma will not be the only success story you have.” -- Mitongu Kabasele, Junior, Pharmacy**

**“College is not about the partying life. Get your education, because the parties are always going to be there. Your professors do not care if you [study] or not. In their eyes, you are grown; so, whatever you decide to do outside of getting your grades is just a waste of your money. Also, be social. Get to know people who are dependable and are of the same major.” -- Genevia Hawkins, Junior, Accounting**

**“Be ready for a whole new experience of buckling down and having a good time. Enjoy every minute, but don't slack off. It can be EXTREMELY easy to get off track, but remember your priorities and why you are here. Welcome, freshmen!” -- Beatrice Gonzales, Junior, Psychology**

## Call to Alumni: Make Contact With “College”

We at the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College are working with TSU's Office of Advancement on a database of alumni of honors units at Texas Southern University.

The database will include information on those students who were in the Frederick Douglass Honors Program or other honors activities that may have existed before it.

If you happen to be one of these former students, please contact the TSU Office of Advancement or the Honors College to provide desired information about yourself.

In the College, contact: (1) Mrs. Linda Coach-Riley, the College's Business Administrator, at 713 313 7458 (voice), 713 313 1817 (fax), or coach\_lf@tsu.edu (e-mail); or, (2) Ms. Jamesé Johnson, Administrative Assistant to the Dean, at 713 313 6724 (v), 713 313 1817 (f) or johnsonjf@tsu.edu (e-mail).

## FREEMAN HONORS Invites Contributions

The Thomas F. Freeman Honors College invites current and former students of Honors units at Texas Southern University to send items of information for inclusion in future editions of this newsletter.

They may be biographical notes, information on professional progress, descriptions of opportunities for students -- or any information that may inspire, advise and inform students in the Honors College .

Send the information (1) to Mrs. Linda Coach-Riley, College Business Administrator, at coach\_lf@tsu.edu; or (2) to Ms. Jamesé Johnson, the Administrative Assistant to the Dean, at johnsonjf@tsu.edu.

The deadline for submissions is the last work day of each month.