

**NCHC E-letter
November, 2003**

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The Conference Program is now up on our web site: www.nchchonors.org. Complete presentation descriptions and times, as well as special events are listed in the Program.

City As Text©

Janet Burke reports that they are no longer taking reservations for City As Text©; however there may be a few spaces left if you can be flexible. If you want to be part of CAT©, please come to the Opening Session in the Grand Ballroom on Thursday at 1 p.m. You should have two choices in mind, but please understand that the Explorations you want may be full.

2003 NCHC Awards

Third Annual Presidential Leadership Award

The National Collegiate Honors Council will honor University of South Dakota President, **James W. Abbott**, with its prestigious Presidential Leadership Award. Dr. Abbott is recognized this year for developing his Honors Program as part of a visionary plan “to make USD the best small, public university in the country.”

Over and above his commitment of economic resources, including expanded merit-based scholarships, Dr. Abbott’s involvement in Honors has a very personal touch. He welcomes freshman Honors students at a reception in his home and hosts a banquet for graduating seniors and their thesis advisors to culminate their academic achievements. Dr. Abbott stands for NCHC as a model of presidential leadership in the academy.

Student of the Year Award, from Ashley Carlson

This year’s Student of the Year Award goes to **Elizabeth Peck** from the University of New Mexico. Ms. Peck, double majoring in Music and Russian Language, has been Editor of *Scribendi*, the WRHC literary magazine, and has attended and presented at NCHC and WRHC conferences for the past two years. A Truman Scholar, Ms. Peck has also been a principal player in the University of New Mexico Orchestra and Wind Symphony.

And, because it had a very, very close race this year, the Student Concerns Committee decided to name a Runner-Up Student of the Year: **Natalia Miteva** from Columbia College. Ms. Miteva is Bulgarian, and in addition to Bulgarian, speaks Russian, English, and Spanish. She has presented at NCHC and SRHC conferences for the past three years. Ms. Miteva has a specially designed major that incorporates her interests in dance, international studies, and language.

2003 Portz Grants

The Portz Grants Committee awarded grants to three universities. Following are the names and projects that were funded:

- **University of North Florida** in Jacksonville, Florida: *The Ghana Project*
- **Northeastern State University** in Tahlequah, Oklahoma: *Second Annual Honors Student Retreat*
- **Kent State University-Stark Campus** in Canton, Ohio: *Information Upgrade*

2003 Portz Scholars

Robert Davis, University of Alabama
Mass Loss and Blunting During High-Speed Penetration
Robert W. Halli, Jr. Honors Director

Joy L. Nelson, University of Texas at San Antonio
Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives: Eliminating Harmful Traditional Practices Affecting Women in Islamic Societies
Richard Diem, Honors Dean

Joseph Swanson, University of Southern Maine
Toward Community: The Relationship Between Religiosity and Silence in the Work of Søren Kierkegaard
Jan Thompson, Honors Director

Newsletter Award Winners

Student Coordinated

First Place: **Central Michigan University**, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan
Second Place: **Salisbury University**, Salisbury, Maryland
Third Place: **Roosevelt University**, Chicago, Illinois

Faculty/Student Coordinated

First Place: **Southwest Texas**, San Marcos, Texas
Second Place: **Southeastern Louisiana**, Hammond, Louisiana
Third Place: **Mott Community College**, Flint, Michigan

Coastal Studies National Honors Semester, Hood College

Hood College is excited to announce that they have received a sufficient number of students to run the Coastal Studies National Honors Semester this spring. However, there are still a few remaining seats and they certainly do not want any interested student to miss this tremendous opportunity. They will continue to consider late applications until the NCHC annual meeting. For more information, please contact Ron Albaugh, Coastal Studies Semester Coordinator: albaugh@HOOD.edu or 301-696-3652.

From Past President Rosalie Otero:

Dear Fellow NCHC Members,

I would urge you to vote **FOR** the proposed Constitution and Bylaw changes and **FOR** the change in dues structure. I just ended my tenure as an officer of the NCHC and I can tell you from personal experience that this organization is extraordinary. It is the only organization that I've belonged to that really cares about its members—students, faculty, staff, administrators. It really attempts to be all things to all people. As we know, that is an impossibility, especially given the variety of Honors programs/colleges across the nation, but the NCHC does make every effort to do things that will benefit its vastly diverse membership.

The NCHC Executive Committee, officers, and many committee members, including the Finance Committee, have struggled with the financial plight of the organization for several years. This is not something that just happened recently. The questions and concerns about the NCHC have been debated, deliberated, contemplated and examined for the past six years. Proof of the seriousness with which these issues have been considered is the fact that, six years later, we are finally asking members to vote on the future of the organization.

Everyone has been most conscientious and concerned about placing additional financial burdens on its members. However, as you can see from the various financial reports and articles found in the NHR and on our website, the NCHC is at a dual crisis concerning its resources: people and finances.

Concerning People:

The NCHC has always depended on the generosity and dedication of volunteers to do its business. The NCHC has expanded and progressed not only at the expense of these individual people, but also on the beneficence of institutions that agree to support these volunteers in their efforts for the NCHC. Radford University and Earl Brown are prime examples of this kind of contribution. Now, however, we cannot find an institution who is willing to be as charitable as Radford University. With our newest EST, we have had to contribute \$50,000 to Iowa State for the services of Elizabeth Beck. In addition, we are finding it more and more difficult to find individuals who are willing to run for Executive Officer nor institutions who are willing to support such individuals. You will note that we have had unopposed candidates for EST and VP in the last two elections.

Concerning Finances:

I will not reiterate the cost of operating the organization. You can certainly find the financial reports that indicate the NCHC does not have sufficient income to support its publications, mailings, committees, etc. In addition, it has become more and more obvious that an organization of this size really needs an Executive Director and permanent staff as well as a more permanent site of operations. We are not (and have not, for several years) considering that the NCHC should be in Dupont Circle or become involved in lobbying efforts or even “play with the big boys.” But we do need headquarters that are permanent, that don't move with the change in EST every three to

six years. Currently two institutions have offered space for the NCHC-- the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Gallaudet University. Although the additional dues will help the NCHC in its progress toward a permanent headquarters and an Executive Director, the primary reason for raising dues is for the regular, fundamental business of the NCHC. If we believe in the NCHC as an important and purposeful organization, then we have to be willing to fund it.

Sincerely,
Rosalie C. Otero, Immediate Past-President