

**NCHC E-letter**

**April 2004**

**Edited by**

**Elizabeth Beck ([lcbeck@iastate.edu](mailto:lcbeck@iastate.edu))**

**Carol Lamb ([cjlamb@iastate.edu](mailto:cjlamb@iastate.edu))**

**NCHC Website: [www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org)**

**NCHC email: [nchc@iastate.edu](mailto:nchc@iastate.edu)**

**A note from Norm Weiner, NCHC President**

I recently received an e-mail from a member in response to my letter about the Strategic Planning Committee meeting in February. She was concerned that there are too many priorities, with (apparently) no one accountable to deliver them. She was concerned also that NCHC, like many other organizations, seems to have relatively few people who usually do most of the work, so the number of priorities may be too great. Finally, she asked why expanding our monograph base is our Number 2 priority. I have been encouraged to share my response with the entire NCHC membership. I hope you find it useful.

*Thanks for the e-mail regarding strategic planning. In the interest of clarification let me respond to several points you raise. First, you write, "There is an old saying that an organization with too many priorities has no priorities at all." True. At the same time, an organization with no priorities becomes no organization at all. The priorities listed are just that: priorities. We aspire to them; we hope to meet as many of them as possible. Will we succeed? Maybe; maybe not. But if we don't try, we'll never succeed. And NCHC has never engaged in the process of priority or goal setting before. So although what we have here may be ambitious, perhaps not totally doable, it seems important to me to stretch ourselves.*

*As for who is to "accountable to deliver," that would be NCHC's committees. At the Strategic Planning Committee meeting in Atlanta, the participants felt that each priority was realistically able to be accomplished by one or more of the standing and ad hoc committees. (Note too that the priorities extend into 2005, so what we're hoping for -- what we're encouraging -- is that each committee develop a plan and a budget to present to the Executive Committee in June.) Until now, NCHC committees have operated pretty much as independent entities, which is to say (a) they have gone about their business without involving any other NCHC committees; or (b) they have gone about their business without consulting the NCHC Executive Committee; or (c) they have conducted no business at all. We hope that the priorities established in Atlanta are a first step -- and I stress that it's a first step -- in rectifying all these situations and move us forward with some coherent planning. All this will involve almost all the committees, not just a few people.*

*Next, the priorities and their order. Obviously, this was the topic of our entire two-day discussion in Atlanta. While individuals at the meeting may have disagreed with some of the particulars, what emerged was a consensus. The monographs are a high priority because NCHC members have made it clear to us that they appreciate this very tangible*

*and useful benefit of membership and would like to see more of them. Trends in honors education -- #6 -- seem important to track so NCHC can respond to them intelligently and authoritatively. A perfect case in point is the increasing call from administrators to turn honors programs into honors colleges. Should there be standards or criteria? If the NCHC doesn't stay ahead of these trends, they may roll right over us. The most effective way to do this is to try and stay aware of the trends by tracking them. And of course many of the priorities are connected, reinforcing and supporting each other.*

*I hope this addresses your concerns. I appreciate your feedback as we try always to move forward as an organization.*

### **Conference Update from Virginia McCombs, 2004 Conference Chair**

As you anticipate the national conference in New Orleans, let me add one more reason why you should attend this conference and bring your students. Our plenary speaker, John M. Barry, has just published a new book, *The Great Influenza*, about the influenza epidemic of 1918. The book covers the horrific impact of this epidemic as well as taking a fascinating look at the revolution in medical research that occurred as a result of this disease. *The Great Influenza* has already hit the NY Times Best Seller List, and it has received rave reviews from major news sources around the country. At our conference, Mr. Barry will be speaking about the topic of his earlier best-seller, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*.

### Conference Deadlines

Call for Consultants (Lydia Daniel): April 15, 2004

City as Text© Pre-registration (Bernice Braid): May 12, 2004

Presentation, Idea Exchange, Poster Session, Diversity Workshop: May 12, 2004

Newsletter Contest (Hallie Savage): June 30, 2004

### Conference Gala

This year's Gala is another exciting feature of our conference. The gala site is Mardi Gras World, home to the workshop of world renowned Blaine Kern, whose workshop crafts floats for not only Mardi Gras in New Orleans but carnivals around the globe. In addition to the music of the Creole Stomp, guests will be treated to a jazz band, a mini Mardi Gras parade, tarot card readers, magicians, and a tour of Kern's workshops where artisans will be working on floats. The food will be plentiful! We should all have a memorable evening.

### Registration Fee

The early registration fees (**postmarked by October 8**) for the 2004 Conference remains the same as last year: \$250 for NCHC members, \$375 for non-members. Registration fees **after October 8** will be \$300 for members/\$425 for non-members. The registration fee includes a registration packet, the pre-conference workshops (although pre-registration may be required), all sessions, 2 continental breakfasts, The Presidential Luncheon and Award Ceremony, and the Friday evening Gala at Mardi Gras World.

### Registration Forms

Registration forms for the Conference as well as the workshops (A Celebration of Honors Teaching and Learning, Mini-Institute on Major Scholarship Preparation, Beginning in Honors©, Developing in Honors©, and Students in Honors) will be on-line within 2 weeks.

### Session Proposal Forms

The Session Proposal forms are now accessible on-line ([www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org)).

**Remember, all submissions will be on-line this year.** The deadline for Presentation, Poster Session, Idea Exchange, and Diversity Workshop proposals is May 12. If you have problems accessing on-line forms, please let us know: [nchc@iastate.edu](mailto:nchc@iastate.edu) or call 515/294-9188.

### City as Text©/Master Class Forms

These will be made available on-line very soon. We will let you know when they are.

### **Web Updates**

New on [www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org):

- Conference forms and information,
- Updated Portz Scholar information and nomination form
- Faculty Institute 04 information and registration form
- Nomination Committee information and forms
- Presidential Leadership Award criteria and deadline
- 2004 Committee members and charges

### **Call for Nominations from Donzell Lee, Nomination Committee Chair**

You should have received a mailing detailing officer and standing committee duties, and requesting your help to nominate officers for 2005. This will be the first time we elect and Secretary and a Treasurer as well as a Vice President. In addition, 2005 will be the year NCHC moves into its permanent headquarters so it is vital to have dynamic leadership. **Please send your nominations to headquarters by April 9.** Complete information and forms are on the web site ([www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org)); however, if you have problems downloading them, let us know ([nchc@iastate.edu](mailto:nchc@iastate.edu)) so we can fax you replacements.

### **Spring Executive Committee Meeting/Committee Chairs Retreat, Norm Weiner**

The spring meeting will be in Ames, Iowa the first week in June. If you have ideas or issues you'd like added to the agenda, please send them to us: [nchc@iastate.edu](mailto:nchc@iastate.edu). You are the NCHC—the Executive Committee is your voice. Use it.

### **Mailings from the National Office**

You should have received the following mailings:

- A letter from Norm Weiner discussing NCHC goals for 2004
- A packet of information regarding the 2004 Annual Conference in New Orleans
- Nominating Committee information
- Faculty Institute 2004 registration

- Presidential Leadership Nominations request (We mailed this on March 26. If you do not receive this mailing within the next two weeks, please let us know.)

These mailings are also on our web site: [www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org); however, if you have not received them, please let us know so we can check to make sure we have correct address information.

***Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council from Ada Long, editor***

*JNCHC* is now accepting articles for the Fall/Winter 2004 issue (Vol.5, NO. 2): “The Sociology and Psychology of Honors.” We are interested in submissions that deal with such matters as student demographics; personality profiles (perhaps pre-and post-admission); the honors “environment;” campus-wide perceptions of honors programs and students; standardized tests; honors vs. non-honors curricula; “academic dishonesty” in honors courses and programs, including plagiarism; and service learning experiences in honors. **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS SEPTEMBER 1, 2004.**

**Portz Scholars Nomination Information from Ann Eisenberg and Ira Cohen, Co-chairs Awards and Grants Committee**

NCHC institutional members are invited to nominate one paper per institution written by an undergraduate honors student for the 2004 Portz Scholars competition. The three 2004 Portz Scholars will be featured at a plenary session at the 2004 National Collegiate Honors Conference in New Orleans. In addition, each Portz Scholar receives a \$250.00 stipend. (The NCHC Portz Fund Committee will pay the Scholar's conference registration fees, and the nominating institution agrees to make a good faith effort to defray travel expenses of the Portz Scholar.) **DEADLINE IS JUNE 4, 2004.** Complete submission information is available at [www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org).

**NCHC Listserv**

We receive calls asking how to get on (or off) the NCHC listserv. Complete instructions are on NCHC's home page. Go to [www.nchchonors.org](http://www.nchchonors.org), scroll down to the button that asks “Want to join the ListServ?” and follow the links. Keep in mind that not everyone on the ListServ is an NCHC member and not all NCHC members are on the listserv. However, everyone on the ListServ is interested in Honors education.