
HONORLEAD

FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS HONORS PROGRAM | FALL 2019

Mary Klayder leads 50th study abroad trip



Longtime Honors Program Faculty Fellow Dr. Mary Klayder reached a remarkable milestone in 2019, leading students on her 50th study abroad trip on the spring break London Review. She then topped her own record when she took students on the British Summer Institute, for trip number 51. And she is not done yet.

Klayder began leading trips annually in 1998, when she started the London Review. She had previously gone on her first trip, the British Summer Institute (BSI) in 1990, and wanted to find a way to take more students abroad. So the spring break London Review was born.

Through the years, she came to take over the BSI, a six-week summer program, and she created Travel Writing in Costa Rica, a winter break trip, in 2006. Leading and overseeing three trips a year since 2006, Klayder spends about two months per year teaching KU students abroad.

"If I just loved traveling, I'd go different places. As a teacher, I like seeing students learn their own sense of growth. Taking people who have never thought that they would have the chance to go is exhilarating," Klayder says.

With Honors Opportunity Awards available to students, she adds, Honors students can offset the cost of studying abroad. Also, because the trips are during school breaks, students can take the opportunity without compromising their semester class schedules.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Photos clockwise from top: Scotland, British Summer Institute, 2019; National Gallery of Art, London, date unknown; Travel Writing in Costa Rica, 2013.

All photos by Mary Klayder



“Honors has always thrived from a diversity of ideas and experiences.”

Letter from the Director

The fall semester is an energizing time filled with welcoming new students to KU and reconnecting with returning students. As the semester draws to a close, I want to thank the many individuals who have welcomed me to the Honors director role. I have spent the past several months meeting with students, faculty, administrators, and alumni to learn about others' experiences with Honors and to envision a dynamic path forward. In particular, I'm grateful to my predecessor, Dr. Bryan Young, for the support and insight he provided as I returned to Nunemaker Center after having previously held positions with the program from 2004-2010.

Honors has always thrived from a diversity of ideas and experiences. As Honors director, I am an art historian following a civil engineer in the role, and unlike others who have combined the director position with a faculty appointment, I am a full-time administrator. I deeply enjoy research and analysis, with my most recent work focused on the measurement of student learning. As with my predecessors, I am strongly committed to academic excellence and take great joy from teaching and mentoring. It is an honor to step into the director role.

On a daily basis, I observe the many ways Honors engages and supports talented students. Honors advisors bring a high level of knowledge of University requirements and academic opportunities to their conversations with students. Honors faculty inspire and guide students as they deepen their learning through undergraduate research, service learning, study abroad, internships, and national scholarship and fellowship competitions. The Honors seminars continue to connect new students with a small cohort of peers while sparking their intellectual interests through engaging and culturally relevant topics.

As the program has many strengths to build upon, the future will also hold important work for Honors. We will be expanding our advising capacity, developing interdisciplinary upper-division Honors courses, and investing in shared experiences to foster greater connection during students' time in Honors. While our students' diverse academic interests require flexibility in program requirements, we also want to better recognize the significant role community plays in shaping a student's academic success and well-being. To this end, we will continue to engage our students in important conversations about ways to build healthy and equitable communities that inspire individuals. As our alumni feature of Libby Johnson beautifully demonstrates, great things happen when we practice empathy, creatively and collaboratively address challenges, and invest our talents in the success of others.

I hope that you are as excited about this work as I am and look forward to sharing our progress in the months ahead.

Sarah Crawford-Parker

Sarah Crawford-Parker, Ph.D.
Director



London Review 2018 Photo by Mary Klayder

CONTINUED FROM COVER **50th study abroad trip**

Each trip has grown to have its own rhythm, Klayder says. In each place, students hit the ground running with lots to do, but by the end, the pace slows a bit. For London Review, the last two days are free days. In Costa Rica, the trip ends with time on the beach. For the BSI, they wrap up their time in the Scottish Highlands.

"We start at a maniacal pace in the city on each trip, then move to a slower place by the end. I want them to be able to reflect," she says.

Klayder has a favorite part of each trip for herself: getting a sandwich at Borough Market in London, Monteverde cloud forest in Costa Rica and the Isle of Skye for BSI.

But her favorite part of leading study abroad trips isn't even part of the traveling. "I love the moment we come back. The room is just raucous; they've gotten to know each other so well. I love that moment of jubilation," she says.

Even with as many trips as she has taken to each place, no two trips are the same year to year. Free time is built in for London and BSI, and Klayder says students find all kinds of unique places to see on their own. She has continued

to evolve and add to Costa Rica, as well, having added a cooking class and a tour of a chocolate manufacturer to the slate.

The trips do not function as typical group tours, where everyone is lockstep all the time. In fact, Klayder requires students in London and BSI to find their own way to some trip locations, so they can have the experience of using public transportation and navigating a city. It is supposed to be about learning and growing, after all.

How many more trips will she lead? Klayder has not set an end point just yet. Although she says perhaps another year.

London Review 2020 will mark a first for her: David Brown, Klayder's husband and an adjunct lecturer with the KU School of Law, will join her on the trip. He will have held down the home front for the previous 52 trips, so now he finally has the opportunity to see how these trips are done. He will be learning from a master. ■

To help create opportunities for Honors students to study abroad, go to www.honors.ku.edu/giving, or fill out the enclosed envelope and select Mary Klayder Study Abroad Opportunity Award.

NEW FACES IN NUNEMAKER



DARREN CANADY

Professor Darren Canady joins the University Honors Program as a Faculty Fellow. Canady is a native Kansan, associate professor of English and has taught at KU since 2010. He earned his M.F.A. in dramatic writing from New York University and his artist diploma in the Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program at The Juilliard School. His plays focus on storytelling and often represent the culture of African-American life in the Midwest. He earned his B.A. in creative writing from Carnegie Mellon University.

This fall, Canady taught an Honors seminar called "Drama for your Earpod," which focused on scripted podcasts. The class involved discovering and listening to podcasts, as well as having students script a pilot episode of their own podcast. "I want them to be able to realize that the pop culture narratives we engage with are dealing with realistic questions," he says.

Canady has ideas and plans for working with the Honors Program, in addition to his courses, and he enjoys connecting with the students. "Honors students are endlessly fascinating. I'm routinely surprised at their desire to learn and engage and to spark," he says.

Honors seminar focuses on ending world poverty

This fall, Honors students analyzed ways to eliminate global poverty by the year 2030, in a unique seminar taught by Dr. Elizabeth Asiedu, professor of economics and University Honors Program Faculty Fellow.

The course, called “Eliminating World Poverty by 2030: Is this Goal Realistic?”, is based on the United Nations’ 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) adopted by member countries in 2015. The SDGs are the blueprint for achieving a better and sustainable future for all countries, developed and developing, by 2030. The goals include ending poverty and inequality, protecting the planet, and ensuring peace and justice for all. Poverty, according to the U.N., is defined as living on \$1.90 per day or less.

“The goals provide students a sense of how the rest of the world lives; a large share of the world lives in poverty,” Asiedu says.

Examples of the SDGs for developing nations are: Goal 2, “Zero Hunger;” Goal 5, “Gender Equality;” and Goal 9, “Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.” Examples of the environmental goals for all nations include: Goal 11, “Sustainable Cities and Communities;” and Goal 13, “Climate Action.”

The students, led by seminar assistant and Honors Program senior Annabel Dolan, scrutinized the SDGs and examined specific nations’ approaches to achieving the goals. The students chose the goals they were most interested in from one of three clusters: health; development and poverty; and environmental; and presented as small groups about their cluster. They based their presentations on countries such as Zimbabwe, South Korea, China, Sweden and Madagascar.

“Being able to focus the class and incorporate everyone’s interests, addressing all the goals and linking the aspects of poverty together has been interesting,” Asiedu says.

Integrating the goals with questions such as “Are wealthier countries healthier?” has sparked both conversation and research among the students.

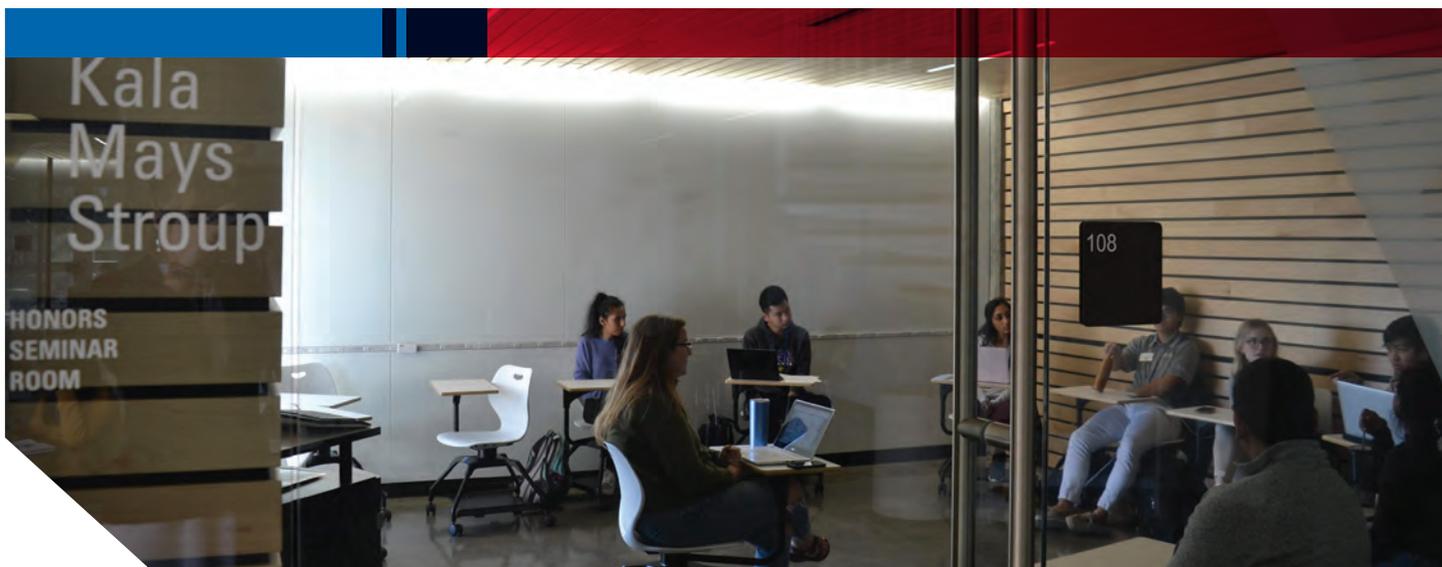
The students have a variety of majors and backgrounds, so Asiedu and Dolan say that seeing them exchange ideas unifies the concept of the class.

“All of the students say they want to make a difference. If you want to change and make things better, you need to have an idea of who you want to help. Who is it that you’re helping? It’s an important question,” she says.

Asiedu and Dolan have been surprised that several of the students in the class have seen poverty in developing countries firsthand. Many students have family connections in developing countries and have visited those countries, which Dolan says has spurred social interactions among the students. Students have shared stories with their classmates about the living conditions they have witnessed, including brown drinking water and a lack of electricity. Asiedu says that has helped bring the U.N. goals and discussion to life in an unexpected way.

“If you want to change and make things better, you need to have an idea of who you want to help.”

Asiedu’s specialty is developmental economics, so focusing on the U.N. goals became a natural fit for her Honors seminar. Her aim for the students is to understand the challenges faced by the world community and suggest practical and creative ways to address these challenges. ■



Honors Program senior Annabel Dolan leads a discussion in Dr. Elizabeth Asiedu’s seminar, “Eliminating World Poverty by 2030: Is this Goal Realistic?” The class is held in one of the renovated classrooms in Nunemaker Center, which features natural light and movable furniture ideal for a seminar.

FEATURED ALUMNI



Libby Johnson '12, director of operations and lead designer at DC Design in Oakland, Calif., leads a discussion about empathy with her clients.

'12 Libby Johnson

shares expertise in human-centered design at KU summer camp

"In order to solve a problem, you have to understand and include the people experiencing that problem," says Libby Johnson, University Honors Program alumna.

In a word: empathy. But how does empathy fit into anyone's design project? That is the question that Johnson answers for her clients at DC Design in Oakland, Calif., almost daily. And this past summer, Johnson guided a group of 14 high school students to answer it for themselves at the Design the Future camp she coordinated at KU. The camp had only been offered in California prior to this summer, but Johnson knew her home town and alma mater would be a good fit.

"Year-round, I work with nonprofits, foundations and governments to achieve more effective social impact through human-centered design. In the summer, I teach that methodology to high school students," Johnson says.

The way the week-long camp works is that the students are paired with project partners who have a physical or sensory disability. Instead of jumping straight to the engineering lab, the students first get to know their project partner and learn about how that person navigates life with a challenge. The project partners ask the students to design something that will help them in their daily life with work or other tasks, such as a lap desk that will balance for someone who has one leg.

Students apply the human-centered design thinking to brainstorm solutions, build a prototype and test it with their project partner.

"They learn a problem-solving toolkit during a critical time in their lives, as well as team-building skills in a high-pressure setting, and for a real-life client – all the dynamics are at work," Johnson says. "I'm excited to have it in Kansas and the Midwest. I think these types of things need to be everywhere."

While at KU, in addition to being in the Honors Program, Johnson was student body president her senior year. She graduated with a double major in psychology and human biology. Initially interested in social and political engagement, Johnson took a fascinatingly circuitous route after graduation that included an internship in the Obama White House's Office of Presidential Correspondence, working as an au pair in Germany, working at a nonprofit in Bolivia, and, ultimately a master's degree in International Policy Studies from Stanford University, which is how she arrived in California. She says that human-centered design combines her interests in design and social activism on a greater scale.

"The Honors Program was a really important place for me to launch off from at KU. They simultaneously had high standards meant to challenge you and were a community of supportive people who cared about each other," Johnson says. ■

NEW FACES IN NUNEMAKER



AMANDA LIMON

Amanda Limon is the graduate assistant for the University Honors Program. She is enrolled in KU's master's of counseling psychology program. Limon comes most recently from the University of Texas-San Antonio, where she was both an adjunct lecturer and worked for the Institute for Health Disparities Research. She has her master's degree in public health from California State-Long Beach and her bachelor's degrees in psychology and sociology from Cal State-San Bernardino.

With the Honors Program, Limon works with Honors peer mentors and is looking at new ways to build community for students of color, with her career goal of diversifying higher education.

She says her own path to finding what she wanted to do had some twists and turns, and she wants to share her experience and help those struggling to choose a path. "I didn't really think about going to grad school," she says. "Having someone say to me 'You can do this' – I didn't think it in my wildest dreams."

FEATURED ALUMNI



William "Brad" Bradley '77, retired founder of NIC Inc.

'77 William "Brad" Bradley

helped build Kansas and other state governments' online information networks

William "Brad" Bradley, the "father of e-government," did not deliberately set out to change the workings of bureaucracy forever. Rather, he set out to resolve a problem nobody quite knew what to do with and, in doing so, paved the way for decades of innovation.

Bradley, an Honors Program alumnus now in Overland Park, practiced law in Hutchinson, Kansas, a four-hour drive from the law-making capital, Topeka. Because of a lack of communication technology at the time in the 1980s, there was a months-long delay between the time when laws were changed in the legislature and when the details of those laws would be published and sent to the rest of Kansas, including Hutchinson. Bradley and others were hindered from practicing the most updated form of the law.

So, in 1987, he formed a committee, recruiting the voices of others experiencing similar difficulty accessing this information, such as lawyer, insurance

and accounting groups, and used that committee to build a consensus with relevant state agencies. Though he had no formal technology or engineering training, he set to work drafting a law which, once passed in 1990, created the information network of Kansas (INK) — a digital interface framework that is still in effect today.

"You don't have to know technology in order to think of what you might be able to do with it."

Kansas Information Consortium, the company selected as a contractor to build the information network of Kansas, grew into NIC as other states became interested in the model. Bradley joined NIC full-time in 1995 and is considered one of four founders. Though he was educated

as a lawyer, he remembers, "It was so much fun that I started losing interest in practicing law. The fun was that you were really participating in a transformation. You were making all sorts of information available to people at home at night in their bedroom slippers and pajamas."

NIC was responsible for many innovative firsts in digital government; the company built the first portal in the nation to live broadcast a governor's inaugural speech, and digitized extensive archives of manual records, to name a couple. Bradley retired from NIC at the end of 2015.

Despite his lack of formal training, Bradley thrived at NIC by applying many of the same skills he says he learned at KU and in the Honors Program. "You're using the skills you learned in law school or in undergraduate school for logic, for project management, for themes, for strategy. I was kind of known for being creative, and also somewhat strategic. I could see the bigger picture easier than a lot of other folks could," he says.

An English literature major at KU, Bradley studied under the College's "Great Books" curriculum, analyzing Greek, Roman, medieval, and modern literature, learning the constellations and memorizing poetry. Bradley says his multifaceted education played a formative role in his way of thinking.

"There is the information you learn in school, and then there are the skills you learn," he recalls. "And information is important, but the skills are invaluable. Because you can take those skills and transfer them as I did, from English to law, or from English to business."

As Bradley puts it, "You don't have to know technology in order to think of what you might be able to do with it. It takes more imagination than it does technical skill." ■

One Day One KU

Please watch your email and social media for updates about One Day One KU. That day, KU Alumni will come together as part of KU's 24-hour giving campaign. Last year, 145 donors generously provided more than \$91,000 in support of Honors students and helping them realize their dreams.

One Day One KU—join a community of giving to grow opportunities in Honors.





Why We Give.

Jeff Stowell '97, right, with his wife, Carol, and son, Wyatt.

Stowell family creates fund to recruit Honors Faculty Fellows

A unique matching gift established by a University Honors Program alumnus and his family builds an infrastructure for recruiting Honors Faculty Fellows to teach and mentor Honors students.

Jeff Stowell '97 and his wife, Carol, of Park City, Utah, have created the Jeffrey and Carol Stowell Honors Faculty Fellow Challenge, which allows donors to name a Faculty Fellowship or contribute to future fellowships, while being matched dollar for dollar. The goal is raising \$250,000 for the fund to match, which will establish 10 new Honors Faculty Fellowships for five years.

Jeff Stowell, managing partner for Royal Street Ventures, has served on the University Honors Program Advisory Board for 10 years, and in that time, he has come to understand the Honors Program's role within the larger Univer-

sity. With several "opportunity funds" for students having been developed during that time, Stowell saw the need to build and stabilize a system for the Honors Program to continue its relationship with faculty who teach its quality classes.

"The program has grown so much," Stowell says. "We're not going to be able to maintain our rating as a number one Honors Program and keep the growth of students if we don't expand the number of classes."

Academic departments at KU staff their class schedules tightly, and because of funding cuts and other budget constraints, it can become difficult for departments to spare a faculty member to teach a smaller Honors course. However, having those faculty members teach and guide Honors students is critical to the Honors experience.

Honors faculty fellows teach Honors seminars and Honors courses in their departments. By expanding the number of Honors faculty fellows, the Stowell fund establishes important support for Honors courses and high-quality teaching. The fund provides a stipend for faculty who become Faculty Fellows, to recognize their time and commitment to the program, as well as funds that the Honors Program can provide to departments to address teaching capacity issues.

"It becomes meaningful to that department at every step and to that professor. We can offer more classes across more departments, which grows the breadth and depth of the Honors Program," Stowell says.

With the resources in place to secure Faculty Fellows, both the present and the future of the Honors Program's unique first-year seminars and upper-level courses are secure. Although the funds function more "behind-the-scenes" than other Honors funds, Stowell says they will have an important impact.

"It's the plumbing for how the Honors Program continues to expand, and you have to invest in good plumbing. It will institutionalize the ability for Honors students to have faculty resources," he says. ■

For more information about the Jeffrey and Carol Stowell Honors Faculty Fellow Challenge, contact Dan Simon, Senior Development Director at KU Endowment, at dsimon@KUEndowment.org, or call Dan at: 785-832-7378

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In this issue

HONOREAD

FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS HONORS PROGRAM

50th Study Abroad Trip
Mary Klayder

FEATURED ALUMNI
**Libby Johnson
& Brad Bradley**

**Ending World
Poverty Seminar**
Elizabeth Asiedu,
professor of economics

Why We Give.
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