As you’ll see in this semester’s issue of the Quadrille, Fall 2018 was an epic one for the Ogden Honors College. You might, for example, notice our stunning new “campus identification sign” on the cover, which I predict will be the site of generations of honors graduation photos. Come see it in person!

Inside these pages you’ll also read about how we welcomed our largest, most diverse class in the history of the College – 745 students in all, more than 13 percent of LSU’s record-breaking freshman class.

We made some outstanding additions to our OHC team as well, bringing on board five new staff members this term. I am proud to have them join our family and encourage you to learn more about them on page 6.

Finally, I’m delighted to share that we can now officially call our newsletter “award-winning”: The Quadrille received 2nd place in the National Collegiate Honors Council Faculty/Administrator/Student – Print newsletter category at this fall’s national meeting.

Thank you for keeping in touch, and for your continued and valued support. Wishing you and your family a joyous new year,

Jonathan Earle
Roger Hadfield Ogden Dean

Contributing Writers:
Sophia Brazda, ‘22
Jacqueline DeRobertis
Alison Satake
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On the Cover: We recently had a new Roger Hadfield Ogden Honors College sign installed on the front lawn.
Gary Younge, award-winning journalist and editor-at-large for The Guardian, gave the keynote address at the 2018 Ogden Honors College Convocation. Speaking directly to the hundreds of Honors College students packed in the Royal Cotillion Ballroom of LSU’s student union, Younge addressed his award-winning work, Another Day in the Death of America, as well as the complex themes of gun violence and journalistic integrity that the narrative so delicately and intricately discusses.

Younge’s approach to political journalism has earned him such acclaims as Britain’s 2015 Foreign Commentator of the Year Award, the David Nyhan Prize for political journalism from Harvard University’s Shorenstein Center, Hunter College’s 2017 James Aaronson Career Achievement Award, and most recently, the 2018 Society of Editors Press Awards’ Feature Writer of the Year. He is also known for authoring other critically-acclaimed titles such as No Place Like Home: A Black Briton’s Journey Through the American South, Stranger in a Strange Land: Encounters in the Disunited States, Who Are We – and Should it Matter in the 21st Century?, and The Speech: The Story Behind Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Dream.

Dean Jonathan Earle introduced the keynote speaker and began the convocation with an invitation for all present to recognize the educational opportunity of having read Mr. Younge’s book as part of the Honors College Shared Read program during the summer and hearing from the author in the address that followed.

Decorated with the renowned J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize from Columbia Journalism School, Another Day in the Death of America focuses on the effects of gun violence on America’s youth. From a random date of his choosing, Nov. 23, 2013, Younge chronicles the fates of 10 young people, ranging in age from 9 to 19, who died that day because of firearms. His accounts of their stories present a far more intimate and nuanced treatment than the reporting of their deaths in local news media.

“Back in school, there was a common journalistic aphorism: When a dog bites a man, it isn’t news because it happens so often, but if a man bites a dog, that’s news … but over the last few years and since doing this book, I’ve wondered if there should be an addendum to that adage,” Younge explained. “There are times where there is great value in asking, why do dogs bite people? Who owns these dogs and why are the same people getting bitten?”

With these questions, Gary Younge sought to challenge journalistic norms and “put humanity behind the statistics.” Venturing to their hometowns and conducting extensive interviews with the family and peers of the fallen, each chapter retells the events that led to their deaths. With accounts of victims whose hometowns range from rural farming communities in Michigan to urban South Chicago, Younge uses such diversity to challenge generational rationalizations such as the idea of the “worthy victim.” A gun death is a tragedy regardless of the victim, his or her academic standing, or gang affiliation, he argues, explaining how such trivial redemptive qualities shouldn’t “determine whether you live or die.”

Additionally, Younge’s text brings to light a tragic, existential fact of black parenthood in America. While not explicitly a racial narrative, of the victims of Nov. 23, 2013, seven out of the 10 victims were young, African American males.

“What became clear while writing this book was that black people were being held responsible for their own deaths,” Younge shared in his address. “There’s this dominant notion that these deaths were happening to parents who were neglectful and children who were foul.”

Following Younge’s address was a question and answer portion, and the convocation closed with a book signing.
LSU Chemistry Professor Teaches the Science Behind Art in HNRS 1036

LSU Department of Chemistry Professor John A. Pojman may seem like a surprising choice to teach a medieval art class at first. He is not an artist, but he became fascinated with the materials used by artists throughout history and the chemistry of art materials after he invented a type of clay that cures with the application of heat in less than a minute. Sculpture artists have adopted Pojman’s invention as an art medium, which has inspired him to offer a new perspective on art.

“Most people don’t realize that the ‘drying’ process of oil paints is actually a chemical reaction between oxygen and the oil molecules to create a giant molecule,” Pojman said.

With his interest piqued, he started studying how materials, especially polymers, have been used throughout art history. This semester, Pojman is teaching a class in the LSU Odgen Honors College called The Materials of Art. His students learn the chemistry of fresco-making and watercolors, and they actually make their own materials in class each day.

“Dr. Pojman’s class is a perfect representation of what an Honors class can be,” said Ogden Honors College Dean Jonathan Earle. “It puts one of LSU’s best scientists in front of our outstanding students, in a way that emphasizes collaboration, experimentation and inter-disciplinarity. Oh, and it’s tremendously fun, too.”

One of the recent topics in Pojman’s class was tempera painting in which natural earth pigment powders were mixed with egg yolk to create a durable paint that was popular before the advent of oil paint.

“Because the dried egg yolk is inflexible, the painting must be performed on a rigid surface, and wood was the usual choice,” said Pojman, who loaded up his car with plywood donated by the RoyOMartin Plywood Plant for his students to use.

Before the students could use the tempera they prepared in class, they applied a layer of rabbit skin glue and then several layers of gesso, a white coating material composed of rabbit skin glue and gypsum.

“I absolutely loved today’s class! I’ve never used tempera of any sort, so it was a cool experience,” said LSU first year student Adam Chlebos from McKinney, Texas, whose major is Mechanical Engineering with a minor in art.
The Roger Hadfield Ogden Honors College welcomed an historic incoming class in Fall 2018, in more ways than one.

At 745 students, the Honors class of 2022 is the largest ever admitted to the College, up 25.4 percent from last year’s incoming class. The Class of ’22 also boasts a 27.6 percent increase in the number of out-of-state students, as well as a more diverse overall makeup at a 67.6 percent increase. With high ACT and SAT scores and grade point averages, 99 percent of incoming Ogden Honors students receive merit-based scholarships, whether through TOPS or other sources.

“By all available metrics, the students coming in the fall are even more impressive than their predecessors,” Ogden Honors Dean Jonathan Earle, Ph.D. said. “The fact is that more high-achieving high school students in the state are choosing LSU, and more out-of-state students are turning their attention to Louisiana and the Honors College for higher-education options.”

The 2016 renovation of the French House marked a turning point for Honors education at LSU, representing an investment in the state’s future through support of its high-achieving students. Featuring updated classrooms, a student support hall, a study lounge and the refurbished Hans and Donna Sternberg Salon, the French House serves as a space for Honors students to immerse themselves in the academic and cultural experience of an Ogden Honors education.

In 2014 philanthropist Roger Houston Ogden bequeathed a $12 million gift to the College in honor of his late father, Roger Hadfield Ogden, and his son, Dr. Roger Hadfield “Field” Ogden II. The gift, which remains the largest unrestricted endowed gift in LSU’s history, has transformed the Honors College by providing it with the resources to expand its services.

“In considering investing in the future of Louisiana, LSU comes front and center to mind,” Ogden said during the naming announcement. “Every state that has made great strides has done so by prioritizing and investing in a flagship university to drive the state forward. When considering the many worthwhile investments we could make in LSU, one that ranks high is the Honors College.”

Nearly four years removed from the endowment, the Honors College has flourished as a hub for in-state students searching for a community of scholars within LSU’s flagship campus and out-of-state students eager to experience the best Louisiana has to offer. With its thematic approach to each year of academic study, the Honors College equips students to become citizen leaders.
Abbi Griffith joined the Ogden Honors College in 2018 as the Recruitment Coordinator. Her primary role is communicating with prospective students about all of the unique opportunities that the Ogden Honors College has to offer. Originally from New Orleans, Louisiana, Abbi graduated from LSU in 2018 with a Dual Degree in Psychology and French. During her time as a student, she was a member of the 2018 Honors Leadership LSU Class of 2018, she lived and worked in Laville Honors House all four years, and led several volunteer experiences with Volunteer LSU taking her to new places in Baton Rouge, the United States, and the world. Abbi loves to travel to new places; her favorite adventures so far have been her internship working with Middle Eastern Refugees in Indonesia, and her experience leading a team to teach in schools / train teachers in Ghana, Africa.

Sydney Larriviere joined the Honors College in 2018 as an academic advisor for first- and second-year students. With her office located in Laville Honors House, she primarily advises residents and assists with Laville programming. Sydney was born and raised in Lafayette, La. and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from LSU Manship School of Mass Communication. As a student, she was an LSU Ambassador for four years and studied abroad in Glasgow, Scotland.

Sydney’s favorite part of working at the Ogden Honors College is seeing a student she advises get involved in the Honors community and participate in the many programs and service opportunities available.

Molly Ann Walke joined the staff in July 2018 as an academic advisor for first- and second-year students with a focus on student retention and is the staff advisor to Honors College Advocates. She is from Baton Rouge, La., and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from LSU Manship School of Mass Communication and Master of Social Work from LSU School of Social Work with a concentration in children and youth. During graduate school, Molly Ann was a Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) Scholar, where she took classes and internships with a focus on at-risk youth.

A true tiger fan, Molly Ann has only missed one home football game since 2010, and there is no place she would rather be than Tiger Stadium in the fall, the PMAC in the winter, and Alex Box in the spring.

Catherine Weidert joined the Ogden Honors College staff as the communications specialist in October 2018, where she handles all visual and written content for the Honors College and manages all social media channels. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from LSU Manship School of Mass Communication in 2014. Upon graduation, she has worked in marketing and communications within the healthcare field, but is excited to learn more about higher education and advancing the Ogden Honors College.

Her hobbies include daydreaming of a multi-acre farm with her family and 50 rescue puppies and trying out new places to eat.

Dr. Elizabeth J. Stigler is the new thesis and upper division advisor for the Ogden Honors College. She recently earned her Ph.D. with honors in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from the University of Kansas. She also holds two master's degrees in Women and Gender Studies, one from the University of Kansas and the other from Roosevelt University. Currently, Dr. Stigler is serving as a WikiPedia Education Fellow where she works to improve the visibility and accuracy of articles on gender and sexuality studies. She also is on the inaugural Executive Committee of the LGBTQ+ Faculty and Staff Caucus at LSU, the Executive Board of the Czech and Slovak American Genealogy Society of Illinois, where she is also the Editor of their quarterly journal, as well as the Global Advisory board for GRRRL Clothing. In her spare time, she enjoys weight lifting and baking, and is perennially in search of the best shrimp fried rice in America.
2018 Ogden Honors Advisory Council Party
featuring special guest Mary Matalin
“Short-term or episodic volunteering—the one-day thing—is great, but typically in those cases, you do services to a community, not with a community,” said Cindy Seghers, MSW, Director of Career Development. “With long-term sustainable service through Project 225, we are doing service with the community and cultivating the relationships not only with community partners, but with residents themselves, who are recipients of the services, and that’s really important.”

It is difficult to understand the challenges facing any community without working closely with people who live and work in that community. Project 225 is a new student-run program (with oversight from Seghers and Granger Babcock, Ph. D., associate dean) that offers Ogden Honors students the opportunity to get involved with the community through long-term service. Instead of episodic volunteering and service, Project 225 students cultivate relationships with community members and non-profits and are able to continually make a difference in the Baton Rouge community. It creates opportunities for Ogden Honors College students to explore and understand the challenges facing our most vulnerable neighbors.

“What we want is for our students to understand and really embrace the fact that they are part of this community,” said Seghers. “This is their community.”

Project 225 began as the Honors College Freshman Service Project, as a way to encourage freshman year theme of service by hosting a large-scale service project for new and continuing Honors students. The project sought to create a sense of community among honors students while simultaneously connecting them to the community beyond LSU. Over time, Dr. Babcock, Seghers, and Ogden Honors College Dean Jonathan Earle, Ph. D, believed it was necessary to provide ongoing opportunities for meaningful service for Ogden Honors students. So Project 225 was created to offer varied and sustained opportunities.

After just a year of formation, Project 225 has already developed relationships with four community partners: McKinley High School, the St. Bernard Project in Baton Rouge, Volunteers of America, and Volunteers in Public Schools. Through working with Volunteers of America, the students created a relationship and service project with Oak Park Plaza, an affordable housing complex for low-income senior citizens.

“We collaborate with the residents on how we can enhance their community,” said William Boles III, Project 225 student director and senior microbiology major. “Oak Plaza is in the middle of a food desert, so we planted vegetables we had donated from another project.”

With projects such as Oak Park Plaza and rebuilding homes for those affected by the 2016 flood, Dr. Babcock said the students realized that there are a lot of vulnerable people in this community who do not have the resources or the opportunity that many of our students have had.

“Economics are completely different; social positions are completely different, so there’s a lot of learning that goes on about those relationships,” said Dr. Babcock.

“Project 225 shows that the Honors College values service, and it’s not just a one-off thing; it requires commitment,” Boles said. “It requires a continual trust with the community that can’t always be maintained with episodic events. There’s something to be said for making the Honors College a leader in the community, a representative of the community in multiple aspects with that long-term component.”

Boles hopes the diversity of interaction with the community continues and expands.

Project 225 is open to all Ogden Honors students and has a diverse array of projects to join. For more information on Project 225, contact Cindy Seghers at cseghers@lsu.edu or Dr. Granger Babcock at fbabco1@lsu.edu.
Alumnus Philip Capone, now a Baton Rouge local again, has the distinction of being the first LSU Honors student selected for the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) in 2008. The CLS afforded Capone the opportunity to travel.

“There was always an interest to travel the world,” Capone said. “There just wasn’t always the means.”

Capone began LSU in 2003, arriving at the Honors College with a comprehensive academic scholarship.

“The Honors College provides you with the flexibility of access,” Capone explained.

Capone claims he was introverted as a freshman, but dove into his classes when he recognized a passion for learning. Though he initially selected engineering as his major, Capone found himself in an honors calculus course that changed his mind.

“The class was with a gentleman who was viciously smart,” Capone said. “It was very challenging, so I made a decision to move away from engineering. Then I moved into business.”

Specifically, Capone moved from engineering to business, then to accounting, and finally to finance toward the end. He graduated with a concentration in the investment side of finance.

His move, he found, paid off. One of his professors took his investment class on a trip to New York City.

“That kind of was the inspiration to move to the investment management track and find a way to get to New York at some point,” Capone explained.

He also had the chance to work with the business college in the Entrepreneurship Department. His student job involved reviewing business plans and helping faculty with their responsibilities running certain classes.

Capone even got to attend international trips with the MBA school to Ecuador and China.

Upon graduation Capone moved to New Orleans to work at an investment bank doing research. Nevertheless, what Capone refers to as the “seed” for exploration had been planted, and he was inspired to apply for the Critical Language Scholarship to go to Tunis, Tunisia in the summer of 2008.

He had, at that point, only received what he described as a taste of international travel with his experiences in Ecuador and China. Capone also fondly remembers Associate Dean Ann Holmes’ Ancient Western Civilization course as inspiring him to see other parts of the world.

“It was a pretty challenging class,” he said. “I may not have academically taken a lot of classes like that after the obligatory first year, but the seeds were there after college, and that kind of put me on the track to get the fellowship with the State Department.”

Capone received the CLS and promptly quit his job.

“It was the first job that I ever quit out of college, which is the exact opposite of what your parents want you to do,” he said ruefully.

The CLS program involved students in different stages of the learning curve of a foreign language spending a summer of immersion in a specific country. Capone studied Arabic in Tunisia, taking full-time courses. According to Capone, it was similar to a college experience – except in Tunis.

“Part of the program is exposure to the culture,” he explained. “On the weekends, we were placed in local homes to kind of appreciate the Tunisian culture.”

By all accounts, Capone had an incredible experience, one that he took with him when he eventually ended up working in finance in New York City. Capone has since traveled to New Zealand, Australia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Peru, Canada, and the United Kingdom – adventures that began with the opportunity to step into a different culture.

Now, Capone has moved back to Baton Rouge as founder and CEO of Meru Global Technologies, located at LSU Innovation Park.

At the end of the day, Capone explained that traveling and seeing the world is a wonderful opportunity, but that you can’t take it for granted – you must continue to learn every step of the way.
2nd Annual Ogden BBQ
Leave a Legacy

With nearly 100 naming opportunities on the Honors Campus, you can make a difference in the lives of our students.

For more information, contact Miles Garrett at mgarrett@lsufoundation.org.