

SPRING 2019

The FLAME

HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT MAGAZINE

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The FLAME



HONORS COLLEGE SPRING 2019

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James J. Buss
Dean
Honors College

Illustration created by Roy Smith.

FROM THE DEAN

Students in the Honors College at NKU enjoy unparalleled support from our faculty and staff. We work to tailor the honors experience to meet the needs of individual students by offering unique and exciting classes, enhanced undergraduate research opportunities, support for study abroad and links to companies and organizations across the Greater Cincinnati region. We view the Honors College as a laboratory of learning where students, faculty members, and the broader community exceed the bounds of a conventional university education.

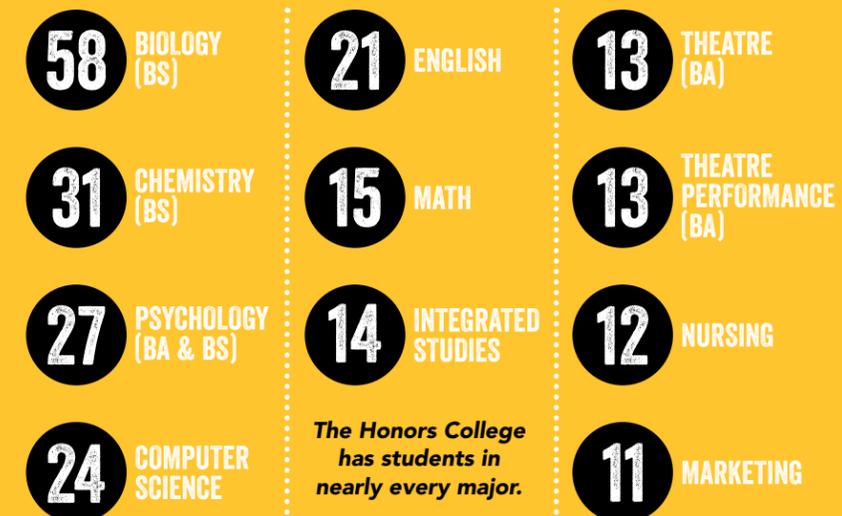
Whether honors students hope to attend graduate school, become a lawyer, tackle med school or gain meaningful and successful employment upon graduating from NKU, the Honors College is here to help them thrive.

We are excited to serve more than 470 current NKU students, and we hope to serve many more in the future. This magazine, written and produced by NKU Honors College students, provides some insights into the vast world of honors at NKU.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you would like to learn more about the Honors College or NKU.

HONORS BY THE NUMBERS

TOP HONORS MAJORS (FALL 2018)



59 DOUBLE-MAJOR HONORS STUDENTS

1 TRIPLE-MAJOR HONORS STUDENT

HONORS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

\$25,000 FOR STUDENTS TO STUDY ABROAD

\$10,000 FOR STUDENT TRAVEL TO OFF-CAMPUS EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Honors upgrades status and space

The start of the 2018-19 school year was a big one for honors at NKU. What was once known as the Honors Program is now the Honors College—complete with a new space in the recently renovated Founders Hall.

Students studying in the Health Innovation Center Forum, located just around the corner from the Honors College suite and classrooms.



Honors House, former home of the Honors Program.

Prior to this past school year, the Honors Program occupied a house that was located on a hill at the edge of campus. The building—formerly home to NKU presidents—was retrofitted after 1999 to house the Honors Program.

While the Honors House no longer sees students coming and going, it does hold sentimental value for current upper class students. "I'll miss the Honors House simply for the fact that it was where all of my honors stuff was for my first three years here," said senior Savannah Purcell. While the building was convenient, because it was reserved solely for honors students, Purcell notes that it also felt disconnected from campus and, in recent years, in need of further renovations.

The new Honors College occupies much of the second floor of newly renovated Founders Hall. The Honors Suite includes a large area available for students to socialize, study or visit honors

faculty and staff. Freshman Coralynn Spicer loves hanging out in the Honors Suite. "If you happen to ask a question while hanging out in the suite," she says, "one of the faculty or staff will peek their head out of their office to answer it."

The Honors College includes new classrooms, study spaces and a kitchenette in Founders Hall.

The new space definitely gets its share of use. Students gather daily for lunch in order to hang out and talk about their day. "It's like Friends at Central Perk," says freshman Erin Reardon. "My friends and I use this space for two hours every Monday, Wednesday and Friday."

Students are loving the new space. As Purcell put it, "The new honors space feels connected to campus. It is also in the newest, coolest building on campus. That is super cool!"

The Honors College new study lounge.



HONORS COLLEGE



New entrance to the Honors College.

Honors House computer room.



One of two lounge/study areas.

With more than 200 student organizations on campus, finding the right one can be a daunting task. Within the Honors College, one organization strives to make the overall honors experience memorable for students in search of knowledge and community.

So what exactly is the Honors Student Association (or HSA)? The HSA is an

organization dedicated to creating community within NKU's Honors College by hosting social events, providing opportunities to develop leaderships and serving the Greater Cincinnati community through volunteer and philanthropic events.

party and many more events. In the future, students can expect even larger events from HSA, including a day trip to Chicago that is scheduled for April 2019.

According to HSA president, Hannah Brandell, the organization offers a plethora of opportunities for honors students to get involved in their community, their academics and their social life.

Brandell explains that "everyone is welcome at meetings and social events." It is not uncommon to see non-honors students attend HSA activities.

Brandell looks forward to the future. "I am very grateful for my time so far in HSA," she says, "and I am incredibly excited to see our growth over the course of my time at NKU."

HONORS STUDENT ASSOCIATION *by Cheyenne Riley*



organization dedicated to creating community within NKU's Honors College by hosting social events, providing opportunities to develop leaderships and serving the Greater Cincinnati community through volunteer and philanthropic events.

Honors data science major Parker Kain founded the Honors Student Association in 2016. Several years earlier, a different honors student organization disbanded, leaving few opportunities for honors students to congregate and socialize outside of the classroom.

Since 2016, the Honors Student Association has hosted trivia nights, ice cream socials, movie nights, trips to the Kentucky Wool Fest, coffee houses, thanksgiving potlucks, an ugly sweater

"Although 'Honors' is typically seen as a strictly academic-based program, HSA focuses on creating community and giving students social opportunities with their peers. The Honors College is getting larger, and HSA is a way for students to know their fellow classmates who share similar academic interests," Brandell says.

Currently, the organization meets only once a week and prides itself on its low-stress environment. For those looking to become more involved, it also offers further opportunities for the development of crucial leadership skills through work on its executive board.

Since its foundation, HSA has promoted an inclusive and welcoming experience for students. Although the organization is primarily focused toward honors students,



Winning students at the most recent HSA Ugly Sweater Party.

HONORS LIVING: COMMUNITY-ACADEMICS-FUN

by Cheyenne Riley

The Honors college experience has opened doors for first-year students, as well as those who transfer into the program. The resources, community and solidarity of the Honors College have made the transition to college much easier for those who may be anxious about living away from home for the first time or faced with the daunting task of making new friends and assimilating into the environment.

"BY LIVING IN THE HONORS COMMUNITY, STUDENTS HAVE A CHANCE TO MEET PEOPLE WHO SHARE COMMON GOALS, VALUES AND INTERESTS."

While many honors students embrace the innovative curriculum of the Honors College, the experience doesn't need to end there. Students who live on campus and are accepted into the Honors College have the opportunity to room with fellow honors students in the Honors Living Learning Community located in Callahan Hall.

College can be intimidating, especially for first-year students. The Honors Living Learning Communities prove that that doesn't always need be the case. There's always something to do in

Callahan's honors wing—from movie nights with the Honors Student Association to engaging events hosted by resident assistants who understand the challenges of first-year honors students. Whether residents are sharing snacks, joining one another for a study session or just hanging out, there's a place for everyone in the honors community. And, there's always something going on in Callahan.

In the future, the Honors College plans to expand its involvement with Residence Life and the Learning Communities. For example, Honors College Dean James Buss and Advising Coordinator, David Kime plan to host routine office hours in Callahan Hall beginning this spring semester. All of this is an attempt to meet honors students' needs in the places where they live.

If you are nervous about living on campus and planning to pursue your studies in the Honors College, consider the scholar-centered living communities at Callahan Hall. You will make friends, you will prepare yourself for the future and you will have a lot of fun in the process.





International Student SPOTLIGHT

ONYINYE UWOLLOH
Honors College Junior

ONYINYE UWOLLOH is a first-semester junior who is actively involved with the Honors College. Even though her home is in Nigeria, her second home is Northern Kentucky University.

Onyinye joined the Honors College because of the scholarship opportunities. She likes the fact that honors is a different experience for everyone that joins. Over her time as an honors student, she is very fond of the honors class that set the path for the rest of her college career.

She took a class called "I Need Freedom Too" that focused on the racial climate in American culture. In this class, the students created a podcast named after the class and each student prepared their own thoughts for the podcast.

In her honors course "Moby Dick and the Arts," Onyinye set the path to the rest of her college career without even knowing it. At the end of the course, students were given the option to create an art project or write a 10-page paper. Onyinye's first thought: "I don't know how to draw or paint to save my life." She knew writing the 10-page paper would only keep her inside her comfort zone, so she decided against it and focused on what type of art she could possibly create.

As the deadline was nearing, Onyinye still struggled with what art project she could do. She didn't see herself doing pottery, sewing, drawing or painting. She decided to compromise and asked her professor if

she could do poetry as she was an experienced writer.

For her project, Onyinye created a haiku for each chapter of Moby Dick, but each haiku was written in Pidgin English, which is spoken in Nigeria. She loves that honors gives students the platform to learn and create. Students learn to gain confidence in things they never thought they could do.

"Honors has shown me you can't feel limited by what you can't do." Onyinye encourages students to take on the challenge of the Honors College without fear of the unknown.

STUDY ABROAD AS AN HONORS STUDENT

Studying abroad is a great experience for all students in honors. In fact, the Honors College distributes nearly \$25,000 each year to support students' study abroad experiences.

Traveling abroad not only helps students to understand themselves better, but it also helps them understand other people better. "Sometimes the best way to know

somebody else is to be in their shoes," honors professor Belle Zembrodt explains. Zembrodt strongly believes that studying abroad is far more impactful than simply reading about foreign places.

NKU has many programs that allow students to study abroad—including partnerships with the Kentucky Institute of International Studies, which offers programs in countries where English is not the first language, and the Cooperative Center for Study Abroad, which offers programs for students who want to travel to English-speaking countries. There are even international partnerships available through NKU where students can become an exchange student for a semester.

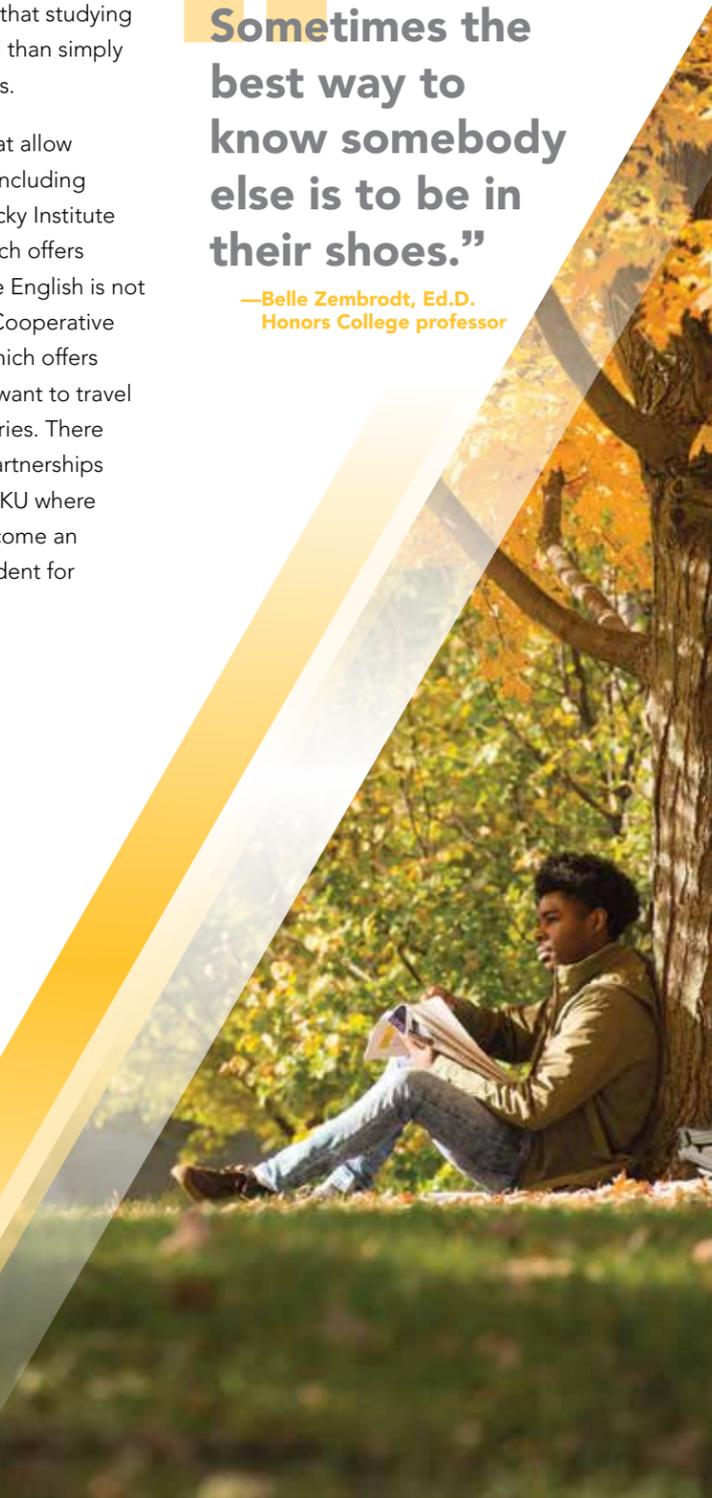
“Sometimes the best way to know somebody else is to be in their shoes.”

—Belle Zembrodt, Ed.D.
Honors College professor

HONORS COLLEGE GLOBAL CONNECTIONS



BY RAVEN MCNEAL



WHAT IS HONORS?

“Honors is an experience, not a class or classes.”

—Raven McNeal
Honors College student

Is honors in college like honors classes in high school?

The resounding answer: NO!

If that's not what it is, then what is honors?

Honors at Northern Kentucky University is different for each student who decides to take on the challenge of the Honors College. It is more of an experience than a series of courses.

Even the classes offered by the Honors College are different, as they provide the opportunity for students to learn about themselves as well as the course material. With 18 or fewer students in each class, honors faculty get to know their students and engage them as students and mentees. This is the true advantage of honors—the support of the broader honors community of faculty and staff who help students achieve their goals. Students also benefit from honors faculty who focus on creativity and collaboration in and out of the classroom.

Regardless of your intended major or your experience with honors in high school, the Honors College at NKU provides a space for curricular co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to help you develop as a person and a student.

NKU HONORS ALUMNI RESPOND TO RECENT SURVEY:

CHRISTINA ROGERS

Vice President of Special Events,
Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

“My honors education helped me to think critically and creatively solve problems, which aids me greatly in my work as I always need to find creative ways to resolve issues and challenges that arise in planning events.”

CAROLA BELL

Associate Registrar,
Cincinnati Art Museum

“Being in honors helped with experiential learning, analytical thinking and problem solving.”

MICHAEL HALES

Chief Financial Officer,
Northern Kentucky University

“Honors education helped to expand my thinking beyond my business classes into a wide array of areas that helped me be a much more complete person.”

BY RAVEN MCNEAL

Honors students engaged in the classroom.

Honors and...

students in honors are able to be involved in a variety of outside student organizations and activities in addition to their class loads.

BY RAVEN MCNEAL



HANNAH EDELEN

Hannah Edelen is the president of the Student Government Association and the student member of the NKU Board of Regents.

“Honors is more than just a transformative experience. It’s taking risks and believing in yourself to do things you thought you were incapable of doing. Honors is having staff and faculty who encourage you to contribute to the world in a progressive, meaningful way that keeps you passionate, inspired and intellectually stimulated. Honors teaches you to approach life with courage.”

Hannah Edelen speaking to the Class of 2022 at their 2018 NKU Orientation.



PARKER KAIN

Parker Kain is a data science major and founder of the Honors Student Association.

“Thanks to our committed honors faculty, we have a community that plans social events and helps make honors more than just classes. Our faculty are responsive and interested in the success and well-being of our students—a result of the one-on-one environment we have in our classes.”



JANIAH MILLER

Honors student Janiah Miller is the president of the Black Student Union, an LGBTQ Ambassador, a member of NKU R.O.C.K.S and chairperson of the Student Government Association’s Student Rights Committee.

“Honors classes are my favorite classes. If I could, I would take a whole semester’s worth of them.” Janiah encourages prospective students to get involved. She says she has grown as a leader through her participation in honors and university organizations. “I don’t think I would be as successful if I wasn’t as involved.”

HONORS RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP It’s All About Passion

BY CHARLOTTE KALFAS

Research is one of the fundamental experiences in the Honors College. This term tends to scare people off; it sounds like another paper to write or a project for students in the hard sciences.

ABBY MILLER, an accounting student, expressed these same concerns at one time—that she didn’t write many papers and didn’t know what research in accounting would look like. Now, Miller has a different opinion. “Don’t be afraid of research!” she says.

Miller changed her mind during a trip sponsored by the Honors College. She traveled abroad for a business class and spent time in Prague, where she heard a presentation about the different accounting standards in the United States and the rest of the world. That topic eventually became the foundation of her Honors capstone project.

Many students share this experience.

ARIEL PORTER, a biology student, suggests that each student “finds something that inspires them to learn more.”

ZORADA PORTER, an English major and Ariel’s sister, encourages students to “find the thing that burns within you.”

Whether a student’s research is the result of a study abroad trip, an honors seminar or simply a lifelong passion, the Honors College enables them to conduct research alongside a faculty member during the course of an academic year. That allows students to transform ideas into reality.

Research doesn’t always result in a long paper. Psychology major ELIZABETH OSIFALUJO is studying chemical mechanisms to determine potential drugs for breast cancer treatment. She explained that she fell in love after shadowing at a lab. Elizabeth felt at home and couldn’t wait to begin her lab research.

DEE BROOMHEAD, an anthropology student, believes the capstone experience boils down to the effort each student is able to commit to it. The Honors College has helped her

discover her passion, she says. Dee spends time living on tugboats on the Ohio River in order to conduct sociological research on the organizational structures and shared culture among deckhands. This kind of out-of-the-box idea is exactly the sort of project that honors has helped these students—and many others—find.

“It’s passion that will turn you into a successful researcher.”





Honors alumnus **MICHAEL HALES** has served as chief financial officer for Northern Kentucky University since 2015. Prior to his return to NKU, Hales worked for The E.W. Scripps Company, serving as vice president for finance of the Newspaper Division, overseeing nearly \$400 million in revenue.

Hales graduated as a member of one of the first classes of honors students at NKU in the 1980s. As a business major in accounting, he appreciated the skills that his honors education brought to his business degree. Hales believes that his honors classes were different because they were about "how to learn" rather than "what to learn." Ultimately, he concludes these are important skills that "you carry with you throughout your entire career."

SP LIGHT

BY JASMINE SMART



RACHEL CONAWAY is a busy person. As a neuroscience major, she worked with Dr. Christine Curran on researching genes in mice that might help scientists better understand neurodegenerative diseases in humans (such as Parkinson's disease). Rachel presented her findings, which were part of her honors capstone,

at the Ohio Valley Chapter of Toxicology where she received the award for Best Undergraduate Poster.

Rachel plans to attend medical school and suggests that future students follow their passions. "The Honors College is inclusive," she explains, "Several of my honors courses inspired me to appreciate differences and view things through a new lens."

Beyond the classroom, Rachel lettered on the NCAA Division I Women's Soccer team and was named to the 2018 Horizon League All-Academic Team.



Honors alumna **ALAYNA TACKETT, PhD**, has accomplished much since graduating with a degree in psychology from NKU. Following her time at NKU, Dr. Tackett conducted research at Cincinnati Children's Hospital before moving to Oklahoma, where she earned a PhD in clinical psychology from Oklahoma

State University. Since receiving her PhD, she has completed postdoctoral fellowships at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, where she researches the use of electronic cigarettes among youth with asthma.

With more than 30 peer-reviewed publications, Dr. Tackett feels that the critical-thinking skills she gained through the Honors Program at NKU have benefited her in all of her roles as a researcher since. "I truly believe that my training and experience at Oklahoma State and Brown University are the culmination of the skills and mentorship that I received at NKU."



KAILEE KENWRIGHT is a junior biology major who dreams of attending medical school in order to become a physician. She feels like the Honors College has helped her by preparing her for the professional writing that she will have to do in the future, as well as understanding the various disciplines from which

she can draw to approach research questions. She spends a significant amount of time working with biology professor, Dr. Erin Strome, studying cell genetics.

Kailee has also experienced a wide range of opportunities at NKU and in the Honors College. "I traveled to Ireland with the NKU Philharmonic Orchestra to perform concerts in churches and tour the country," she recounted, "It was an amazing experience even though my major is biology."

Honors Learning Communities

BY CHARLOTTE KALFAS

One of the best parts of the Honors College at NKU is that it's an experience tailored to fit each student. The college hopes to further this approach by offering NEW Learning Communities for the fall 2019. These small groups of students (18 per cohort) are designed to aid in a student's academic and professional development.

So far, the Honors College has created Learning Communities centered on Law and Legal Professions, Pre-Medical Professions, Business Entrepreneurship and Nursing. In addition to specialized honors seminar classes, the Learning Communities will also include extracurricular events that will help students learn more about their fields of study.

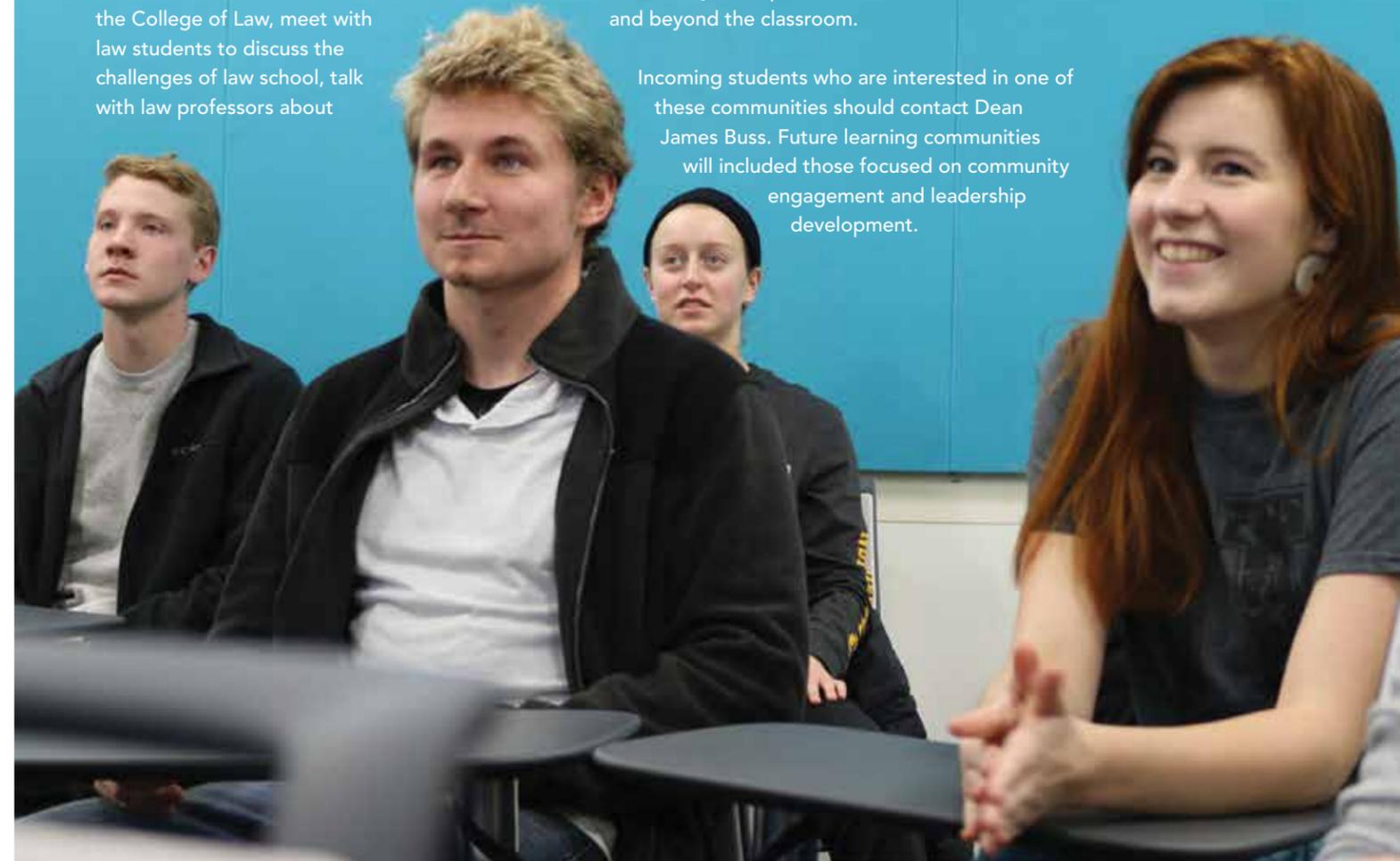
Michael Whitehead, interim dean of the Chase College of Law, explains that students will be able to visit law classes in the College of Law, meet with law students to discuss the challenges of law school, talk with law professors about

current events and even meet with judges who are alumnus of the Chase College of Law.

For the nursing cohort, James Buss, dean of the Honors College explains that students will be enrolled in the same sections of prerequisite classes so that they can form study groups and take advantage of the Honors College study spaces. Students in both the Nursing and Pre-Med Learning Communities will benefit from the Honors College's relationship with St. Elizabeth's Healthcare Network and the new University of Kentucky College of Medicine's Northern Kentucky Campus.

The Entrepreneurship Learning Community will work with the award-winning faculty and staff of the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at NKU, as well as partners in the business community to help students find success both in and beyond the classroom.

Incoming students who are interested in one of these communities should contact Dean James Buss. Future learning communities will include those focused on community engagement and leadership development.



**Looking for an enriched educational experience?
Ready to explore your passion and challenge your curiosity?**

Contact the NKU Honors College to apply!



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