

## *Welcome to Hon-Our Way*



**TURN ON YOUR LIGHT, AND LET IT SHINE BRIGHT**

Hello and welcome to the first issue of “Hon-Our Way,” the monthly newsletter. In the past, many of us were confused as to which events were scheduled, which had passed and what had happened when those events took place. The “Hon-Our Way” team intends to change that. We will bring you the

latest "honorsy" news, discussions, and ideas, as well as features designed to aid you in your quest to transfer to an excellent university or four-year college. So join us each month and discover what is new in the wide world of Honors

*-By, Raphael Doelker-*

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- ◆ Transfer Workshop
- ◆ Angels for Haiti
- ◆ Walk for Animals
- ◆ Berkley Conference

## *Columbia is waiting*

Many of us would like to transfer to prestigious schools, but have concerns. As community college students, we often worry about finances and our grades may suffer if we are working full-time while still trying to take a heavy course load.

Schools like Stanford, U.C. Berkeley, and Columbia beckon to us, but we don't quite know how to make the transition. Well, good news. Those dreams are not out of reach.

On Friday, March twelfth, Michael Taylor, formerly a fellow community college student, shared his experiences



with Honors students and guests. Michael transferred from San Diego City College to prestigious Columbia University in the Big Apple. He came to Mesa to give back, to give us hope and to encourage us to pursue our dreams.

Taylor, a former Marine, said he “barely finished

”High school” before enrolling in the Corps when he was seventeen. After he finished his tour of service, he enrolled in City College to pursue his academic career. Like many of us, he gravitated to the Honors Program in search of excellence. When the time came to transfer, he decided to

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listen to his adventurous side, daring to climb high and reach for the stars. He applied to and was accepted by Columbia, an institution that shaped many of the future leaders of this country.

Taylor said, "I worked my butt off, but I now have harvested the rewards. My philosophy has always been: On the first day of school, I walk into the class with an 'A,' and the syllabus is the instruction manual how to maintain that 'A.' This philosophy has guided me through the courses and encouraged me to do the as-

*Honors Corners*

Many private universities, including the University of San Diego, still offer "late consideration" applications for the fall, 2010 semester. In the case of USD, the deadline is May 1<sup>st</sup>. For those of you writing personal statements for various colleges, keep the following tips in mind.

First, remember that the per-

signed work"

Taylor also mentioned that it was crucial for his acceptance to be part of PTK and encouraged us to participate in this wonderful organization.

The cost to pursue an education at Columbia is around \$40,000 per year. So even if we do get the grades, complete the Honors Program, do all the extracurricular work, apply and win acceptance, the question remains. How are we supposed to pay for it? The good news is that there are numerous schol-

arships as well as federal and private student loans available. According to Taylor, "If you really want it, you make it happen."

So for all of you overachievers, dreamers, and ambitious scholars, reach for the stars, strive for more and don't let anyone ever discourage you.

-By, Raphael Doelker-



son reading your essay may have waded through dozens or even hundreds of other essays before setting their eyes on your gem. Run-on sentences, tongue twisting vocabularies, and a disorganized essay will not endear you to such people.

Be clear and concise, and above all, put the personal

into the personal essay.



RELAX AND HAVE A CUP OF TEA!  
TAKE A STEP BACK AND YOU WILL  
FINED YOUR INSPIRATION.

I once knew someone whose introductory sentence discussed the relationship between phylogeny and ontogeny. Not only did this violate the tongue twister rule, but it also gave his personal essay a rather pompous and impersonal tone.

To stand out from the crowd, be real and touch the reader emotionally. Impress the person with how well you would fit into her college and how much she would enjoy getting to know you.

Do this through the use of personal details. Tell your reader the ways in which you are unique. Write about a dream that motivates you, a hobby that outfits you with useful skills, charity work that illustrates your compassion, or work experience that attests to your commitment. Cover the event that focused your interest on your current major. Describe an experience that testifies to your leadership skills. If you overcame obstacles, by all means, describe them and the lessons you learned, or the character that you developed. Assume that your reader would like to help you, and give her good reasons to follow that inclination.

While it is an excellent idea to avoid words that tie the tongue into knots, put the thesaurus to better use eliminating repetitive “pet” words. I am very fond of “demonstrate,” and tend to overuse that verb. I tracked its

employment in this piece using the find feature on Microsoft Word and eliminated it in six instances. In its place, I substituted verbs like “testify,” “illustrate,” and “exhibit.” Notice that none of these words force the reader to resort to a dictionary.

In addition, use the thesaurus to build a dynamic personal image through the use of action verbs. Avoid passive verbs like is, was, are, were, or has been. Go through your essay and circle each one. Often, active verbs lurk in the same sentence, just waiting for you to discover and use them. If not, Google a synonym. For other tips concerning dynamic writing, search online for the “Paramedic Writing Method.” Most important of all, remember to stick to the truth. Like a coat of red paint under a layer of white wash, secrets have a way of bleeding through. Don’t invest energy hiding things when you can make points by explaining them. Address the reasons behind issues like gaps, discrepancies, or less than stellar periods in your academic or personal record. Impress your reader with your newfound maturity and show how you have learned from your mistakes. Distinguish yourself from the whiners by taking responsibility.

While on the subject of responsibility, take the time to organize your essay. Write an outline, even if you have already completed your first

draft. This often reveals areas that are repetitive and can be eliminated, or paragraphs that might be rearranged for clarity.

Along the same lines, make sure that your spelling, punctuation, and grammar are correct. Ask a friend who is good at English to review your essay. In addition, make sure to read it out loud. This will often reveal sentences that trip your tongue or violate the rules of grammar.

In the end, your personal essay can be your ticket to the college of your dreams. It represents an important opportunity to distinguish yourself from the crowd, to explain subpar grades, or to set the record straight if you did not travel the usual path from high school straight into college. Use it wisely and you will reap the rewards for years to come.

*-By April Decker-*



**BE CLEAR**

**AND**

**CONCISE,**

**AND ABOVE**

**ALL, PUT THE**

**PERSONAL**

**INTO THE**

**PERSONAL**

**ESSAY.**



**TRANSFER**

**WORKSHOP**

~\*~

**ANGELS FOR**

**HAITI**

~\*~

**WALK FOR**

**ANIMALS**

~\*~

**BERKELEY**

**CONFERENCE**

**UPCOMING HONORS-  
CLUB MEETINGS:**

**ALWAYS AT 4:10**

**IN ROOM G105**

- ◆ April 6
- ◆ April 20
- ◆ May 4
- ◆ May 18
- ◆ Jun 1

*Upcoming Events*

**“Plan Ahead for Your Future” Transfer Workshop, April 6<sup>th</sup>, at 4:10 in room G105**

Plan ahead for your future. The Honors Counselor Naomi Grisham will discuss future planning, what you need to take, general education courses, and common mistakes students make. There will also be a Q and A sessions.

**Walk for Animals, May 1<sup>st</sup>, Crown Point Shores, Mission Bay**

Celebrating San Diego’s love of animals, people from all over San Diego will walk and raise funds to ensure that pets throughout San Diego receive the care they so deserve. The walk will be a quarter-mile walk. This event hopes to dramatically impact the lives of thousands of animals in our community.



**Angels for Haiti, April 26<sup>th</sup> through 29<sup>th</sup>, in the LRC.**

To provide relief for the people of Haiti, Phi Theta Kappa is directing proceeds of this annual event towards the rebuilding of Haiti. Throughout the library, Haitian artwork will be on display. People will be able to buy this artwork through a silent auction going



on throughout the week. They can also buy prints of the art-

work. The main proceedings will take place on Thursday April 29<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Carolle Jean-Murat will talk about the people of Haiti and the silent auction will conclude.

**Berkeley Conference, May 1<sup>st</sup>, Cal Berkeley**

Two Mesa College honors students will present their research at Cal Berkeley. Learning from HTCC, these students hope to give strong oral presentations to other community college students in Northern California. A few other students will attend to watch and learn from this experience.

*-By Jay Aquino-*

**Honors Reception, May 4<sup>th</sup>, Prada Ballroom Balboa Park**

The Honors reception is for all of us who have done it, who have successfully completed the honors program of SDCCD and are now transferring or leaving the school with their associates. Everyone is welcome to come.

*-By Raphael Doelker-*



## HTCC Conference: Ten Years of Excellence and Opportunities

Honors students across southern California prepared for March 6th, 2010 with at least a semester's worth of work and dedication. This date marked the 10th annual Honors Transfer Council of California's research conference held at UC Irvine. Also known as HTCC, this conference asks ambitious students to show the fruits of their educational careers in posters,

sonal essays. At this HTCC conference all previous records of participation were shattered; with over 300 presentations, three dozen poster presentations, and over 700 conference attendees. This year's conference, held at UCI's newly inaugurated conference center, was quite a transformation from the first conference, where 50 students presented their research.

bated the topic; each one having spoken out at his or her own campus' March 4<sup>th</sup> rally against budget cuts to higher education, armed with the research each had done in preparation for the conference. Scholarship awards marked the end of the conference during which Isaac Alcantar and Kate Humphrey took away awards for Exemplary Achievement. SDCCD honors students represented their schools with academic integrity and a wide variety of worthwhile projects. The highly anticipated day came and went, but revealed a courageous and studious group of SDCCD honors students.



oral presentations, artwork, or performances. Not only is HTCC a chance for students to stand out amongst their peers, but students also have the opportunity to be published professionally, adding distinction to their resumes. Scholarships offering cash prizes and professional recognition were available to the many students who submitted their abstracts and per-

The day began with poster presentations and a friendly introduction to UCI and the HTCC program. Three sessions of oral presentations followed with over 30 San Diego Community College District students sharing their research projects, a record number of SDCCD representatives. This year's "Issues

Forum" (a debate on a current topic of broad interest in California) centered on the role of Proposition 13 in the budget crisis. Four San Diego area students de-



REMEMBER, THE  
HONORS  
PROGRAM  
OFFERS FREE  
SYMPHONY  
TICKETS.

-By Kate Humphrey-



San Diego Mesa College  
7250 Mesa College Drive  
San Diego, CA 92111-4998

Raphael Doelker, Chief Editor/  
Director of Public Relations  
Email: r.doelker@gmail.com  
Jay Aquino, President  
Email:  
mesahonors@gmail.com

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HONORS**



CHIEF EDITOR:  
RAPHAEL DOELKER

ASSISTANT EDITOR/  
COLUMNIST:  
APRIL DECKER

WRITERS:  
RAPHAEL DOELKER  
KATE HUMPHREY  
JAY AQUINO

PICTURES PROVIDED BY:  
ALISON PRIMOZA  
MICHAEL TAYLOR  
RAPHAEL DOELKER

### *Don't Cut California's Future*



THE DOOR WILL OPEN FOR YOU, YOU JUST HAVE TO KNOCK

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, students and teachers all across California took a stand against the state's budget cuts.

Marching across streets and rallying on campuses, they wanted to make sure that their voices were heard. These budget cuts are examples of what's wrong with education in America.

At Mesa, Professor Jennifer Cost organized a rally in the quad. Professor Cost, who teaches an honors Creative Writing course along with Professor Smith, encouraged students to articulate themselves and their passion about their education. Members of all the organizations on campus took to the mike, including but not limited to ASG, MEChA, the Student Veterans Union, and Honors Club. Everyone probably heard MEChA shouting throughout the college to protest the cuts. After the Mesa rally, there was a larger rally at Balboa Park with community college students from all over San Diego.

The next day, many Mesa college professors also marched from Bakersfield all the way to Sacramento. Their plight illustrated just how the cuts affect everyone in education. From the tenured professor to the first grader who wants to go to college, what does this say about higher education? The people in Sacramento would rather keep their jobs and livelihoods than fight for ours. Time and time again the point was made that we pay more for prisons than for our public education in California. We know where our priorities are; we need to work so that Sacramento changes theirs.

-By Jay Aquino-



RAPHAEL DOELKER

