

“A Day in the Life  
of a UHC Student”

This composite, from contributions by Ariana Sutton, Jackie Wirz, Jeff Morgan, Kyle Shaver, Alexander Johnson and Sathya Ravichandran, is not representative of any single student.

6 : 1 3

Since I am a morning person, I wake up at around 6 a.m. After showering, dressing, and eating breakfast — usually cereal with banana and frozen blueberries or a toasted bagel and a banana — I practice a daily devotional. Starting my day with a meditation is refreshing. Then I catch up on the news and read about the topics I want to discover but are never assigned in class. In the busy world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, I find this is the only way to keep my sanity and positive mental attitude.

With the daily newspaper and a magazine article or two read and email checked, I pack my bag and dash out the door to catch the Number 5 bus. A couple of observations on college life are necessary here. First, the weight of a student’s bag is proportional to the week of the term. The first couple of weeks barely necessitate more than a single notebook; as time goes on, the bag gets loaded down with ten-pound bricks of labs to grade, books to read and the trusty laptop computer that crashes more often than the stock market. Second, time is most valuable

*Jackie Wirz, junior,  
Biochemistry, relaxes  
in the SLUG*



Photo by Linda Wallace

in the morning. It’s no problem to spend fifteen minutes on the phone or at the Beanery when the sun has set, but those fifteen minutes mean all the difference in the world when the clock is swiftly moving from “on time” to “late” without your permission.

7 I have spent

all of my Tuesday and Thursday mornings this year, about three or four hours at a time, analyzing and graphing data for my thesis. It is good to arrive at lab early and get on a computer before it is crowded. On the way, I make a stop at the Chemistry Dept. office for my first installment of candy — today it is crispy M&M’s — a very good omen! The morning passes slowly, whether I’m doing thesis work or attending class. As the morning comes to an end, I head to the SLUG (Students Learning UnderGround — the UHC Student Learning Center) to check email and send greetings to friends. On the way to the SLUG, I make another necessary stop. When I get to Strand Hall I stop by the University Honors College office and get candy installment number two; I hit the jackpot with miniature Snickers bars! A visit to the SLUG greatly replenishes my spirit, since this is a place perpetually filled with interesting people. I have had to limit my visits to the SLUG recently since its cheerful attitude, although comforting, can be habit-forming.

1 2 : 0 6

Most days I go home for lunch — usually a sandwich, leftover pasta or a toasted bagel, yogurt and fruit. On Tuesday however, I go to Luther House. They offer lunch to students and faculty; I have gone to almost every one this year. The people are fun and the food is always delicious.



Photo by Linda Wallace

UHC students volunteer at the annual OSU Kaleidoscope event, a weekend visitation program for recruiting students of color.

Plus I love the company, since otherwise I would go home and sit in front of my computer while eating, responding to emails. I much prefer the company at Luther House. My favorite lunch there is the pizza rolls! Yum! No matter what they are serving though, I always look forward to Tuesdays because I know I will get a good lunch and great conversation.

I devote a lot of time each day to working for the CHRONICLE—the UHC student news magazine. I have a vision of making the magazine a color publication and establishing it as another official source of student media at OSU, so I am always doing something to reach that goal. Recently, the CHRONICLE staff and I sent out memos to all OSU staff and faculty asking them to announce in their classes that we are looking for students to help write

con’t on page 2

A Day in the Life..., con't from page 1 for the magazine, as well as for articles submitted by faculty and staff. Usually I get about six to eight emails a day from writers asking for input, or other inquiries about the magazine, so I'll be in the SLUG writing back. At other times, I'm in Hovland Hall working on layout for the magazine or following up on press releases, interview contact and donors relations.

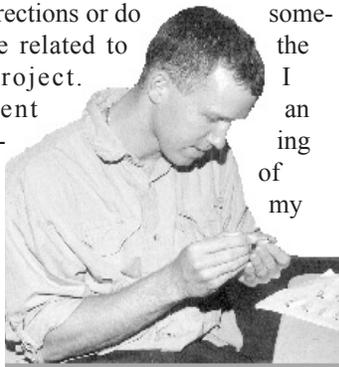
3 : 3 2

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday, I am finished with classes by 3:30 p.m. On Tuesday and Thursday, I have dance classes in the afternoon and evening. I have Latin dance, Cool Shoes Ballroom Performance class, and Lindy Hop. Tuesdays and Thursdays are great with all these dance classes, but they are kind of exhausting. After classes, I head home for dinner, unless I'm staying on campus for a meeting or lecture. I check email again and have dinner.

Dinner is often pasta, or a veggie burger, or homemade soup. I have had fun experimenting with soup and pasta recipes this year. TV is rarely watched, and I try to prepare one special meal to share with friends at least once a week. A group of us get together one or two nights a week for WWF, poker, movies, a party, or some other social activity.

7 : 0 6

On those nights when I don't have something social planned, I start my readings or sit down to work on my thesis. I must write sections or make corrections or do something else related to the thesis project. I have spent a m a z - number hours on this thesis year. That has been



very different from any of my other years at OSU. Previously, I was only dealing with classwork and once my homework was

Jeff Morgan, senior, Economics, has a busy "me time" at OSU.

done, I could take a break. This year, whenever classwork is done, my thesis is always here. has felt like my work is never done! But I have done a good job managing my time and getting parts of it finished at a good pace, so this term I am facing only minor adjustments and preparing for my defense. That is no small task, however, so I still have lots to do.



Photo courtesy University Publications

Sathya Ravichandran, junior, Microbiology

Usually around 10:30, I feel sleepy enough that I can't do my best work anymore. So once again I log on and check email, writing to friends and family. I pick out my clothes for the next day, brush and floss my teeth, wash up and head to bed.

It is usually about 11:00 by the time I turn off the light. I know I am a morning person and I get teased for going to bed kind of early, but I function better retiring early and getting up early. I always get a kick out of sitting in the SLUG and hearing people brag about their sleep habits. People don't realize it, but it's almost a kind of subtle ego contest.

"Oh man, I only got five hours of

sleep last night."

"Yeah, well, I'm getting by on only four!"

And you can see the pride beneath their façade, much like the look of a champion after an intense boxing match. Well, I'm not a champ so I feel kind of like a bum when I tell the world I usually get about seven or eight hours of sleep a night. I'm the kind of weakling who just can't push myself until the wee hours to do work unless I procrastinate and have to turn something in the next day. So I usually hop into bed fairly early, after writing in my journal for about 10 minutes.



Photo by Linda Wallace

Ariana Sutton, center, senior in Environmental Science who I am, and I came to accept that a long time ago! I am content. I don't mind the clock ticking, unstoppable, into the future, because my present is content and the future can only offer more.

## University Honors College — 1999-2000

Jon Hendricks, *Dean*  
Jane Siebler, *Head Advisor*  
Tammy Henderson, *Adm. Office Mgr.*  
Carole Ann Crateau, *Writing Instructor*

Lawson Knight, *Foundation Dev. Specialist*  
Linda Wallace, *Admis. Spec., Newsletter Design*  
Stacy Williams, *Office Specialist*  
Peter Fritz, *GTA*, Megan Horst, *GTA*

University Honors College at OSU  
229 Strand Hall  
Corvallis, OR 97331-2221

Ph. 541- 737-6400 Fax 541- 737-6401  
honors.college@orst.edu  
<http://osu.orst.edu/dept/honors>

HonorsLink® is a publication of the Oregon State University Honors College

## Words of the Past...

*We continue with our view of OSU's Honors Program (1965-1991) ...*

*Margaret Meehan, Honors Program Director, 1974-1986, demurred when asked for a comment. Instead, we offer insight from two people who were part of the program.*

*As Isaac Newton noted, we all see further when we stand on the shoulders of giants —*

In the Honors Program, Margaret Meehan created a community of scholars and students who shared a vision of what an education should be. Now, as students are torn between competing views of the purpose of their university experience and besieged by talk about measurable outcomes and marketable skills, it may be helpful to look again at our hopes for our students. These seven points, which I articulated at a meeting many years ago, were nourished by the Honors Program's convictions about what it means to be well educated.

Here is what the Honors Program stood for then, and our hopes for our students now:

- ◆ We want them to be able to distinguish good from bad—in logic, in art, in science, in government. We want them to distinguish good reasons from bad reasons, sound policies from disasters, true from false, probable from improbable, right from wrong, and to care very, very much about the difference.
- ◆ We want them to know things—glories, tragic mistakes, small miracles, useful statistics, mindless trivia, ideas great and small.
- ◆ We want them to be steady on their feet, even in a stiff intellectual wind, which is another way of saying we want them to be principled.
- ◆ We want them to be able to make connections: to draw conclusions, to figure equations, to make analogies, to see the old in the new, the new in the old, the art in the science, the hope in despair.
- ◆ We want them to be completely, incurably, joyously curious.
- ◆ We want them to be delighted by other peoples' joy and saddened by the sorrow of strangers.
- ◆ We want them to be useful, to have the skills to make a difference, to be contributing citizens. It doesn't matter what career they choose; it takes some skill to make the world a better place for their having lived in it.

*Kathleen Dean Moore, Chair, Department of Philosophy*

In the spring of 1975, taking a staff position in the Honors Program rescued me from a waitress job at a local restaurant. The Director, Margaret Meehan, was a former teacher of mine in History and she offered me a job as her secretary at the Honors Program. It was an exciting opportunity for me to get reconnected with academic life while earning money for law school.

The Honors Program was run with style, grace, integrity and excellence and it grew into a strong, interdisciplinary program for the University's best and brightest students. Margaret worked tirelessly to provide students with a wide variety of seminars, encouraging them to explore beyond their regular fields of study. She enlisted OSU faculty and community members to teach seminars on subjects ranging from Art to Zoology. Through her dedication, insight and wisdom, Honors provided students a forum to expand their horizons and recognize their full potential.

Besides the academic excellence of the Honors Program, it provided local artists an opportunity to display their talents. The adjoining classroom in Bexell Hall, where many of the Honors seminars were held, became a rotating gallery. A print I fell in love with in the Honors Gallery by local artist Barbara Weber, still adorns my office today.

During the three years I worked for the Honors Program, Margaret became much more than an employer to me. For almost thirty years, she has been my mentor and treasured friend. With her encouragement, support, guidance and love, I achieved my dreams. I will be forever grateful to her.

*The Honorable Janet Schoenhard Holcomb, Benton County Circuit Court Judge*

## FUNDRAISING

### The Watchword: Excellence Now

It is about intellectual capital. The goal of the Honors thesis is to engage students in a process that stretches them beyond customary boundaries and yields a product they can be proud of for years to come. Participatory learning has a salience both unmatched and enduring.

UHC students enter with profiles that would rank them among the very best in the country. And they come with high expectations of themselves and their experiences at OSU. Once on campus, their work begins in earnest and does not end until commencement — if then.

As students near the end of their coursework they undertake their thesis projects, working closely with a faculty mentor and two other professionals. Upon completion they earn OSU's most prestigious undergraduate degree, the Honors Baccalaureate. As the students themselves have said, the thesis is a bridge, not a culmination.

The thesis is formidable, daunting not only because of cerebral challenges but because of practical contingencies. Not least of the latter is the necessity of finding funds to carry out the project in a fully professional manner. Sometimes faculty mentors or families help, but just as often it is students themselves who shoulder the load.

Great students become great leaders and return long-term dividends to our state and to our lives; they should not be constrained or distracted by an inability to provide funds to fuel their potential. That is where you and the Excellence Fund come into play.

Through a generous challenge by a UHC student's parent who prefers anonymity, Honors has set up an endowment account that, with your help, may one day ensure that all Honors students have access to resources that will enhance their thesis learning.



continued on pg. 4

### Fundraising — con't

The donor stands ready to help and may augment his original pledge via a contribution in the neighborhood of a 40:1 match. He hopes others will share his view and indeed many have joined the cause. Mrs. Anita Summers, long-time friend of OSU, stepped forward with a gift of appreciated stock to jump-start the endowment drive.

Honors students themselves have joined in the effort and have deposited nearly \$2000 into the 'Excellence Fund piggy bank' in the main office. Students' families have stepped up and made personal donations so the Excellence Fund can reach its target figure by June 30. One student, who also prefers anonymity, wrote a check from her personal account

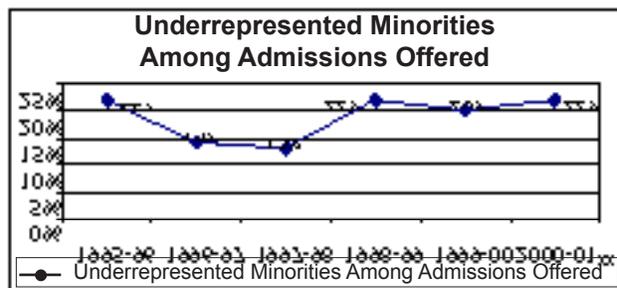
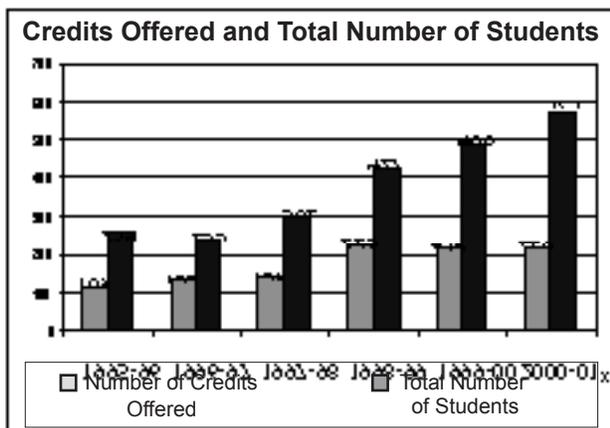
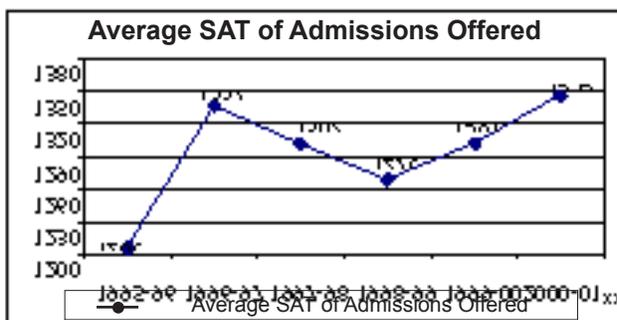
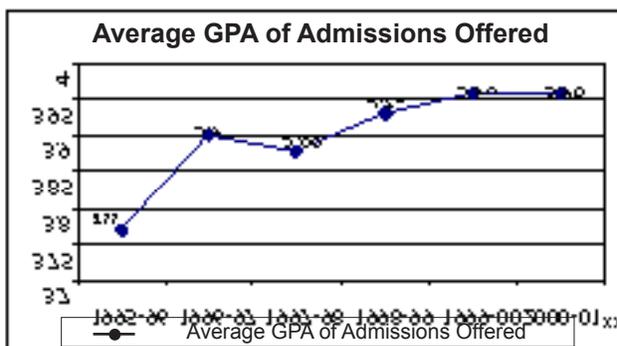
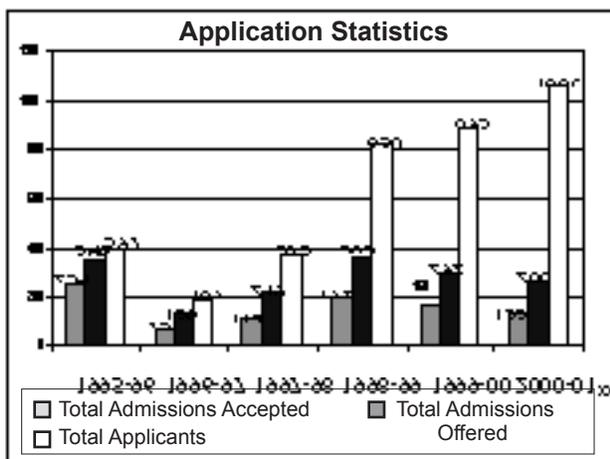
for \$1000 — saying it was a way to give back, to help those who follow her in the UHC. Beth Tilgner (sophomore, Liberal Studies) obtained two season passes donated by Timberline Ski Area to raffle off for the Excellence Fund. When the OSU chapter of Phi Kappa Phi learned of the initiative they too recognized the benefits and made a significant contribution. Even with these generous contributions we still have a way to go.

The Excellence Fund is a gift opportunity with more bang-for-the-buck than is usually the case. There is the match, possibly 40:1; the opportunity to help

students be as good as they can be, without constraints; the endowment that will yield benefits for all future Honors students; and there is the joy of knowing that one's personal generosity can enhance the value-added potential of participatory learning. In this way Honors has a positive impact on the entire campus. Finally, there is the realization that we need your help. In making a donation, you can claim the amount as a charitable contribution to Oregon State University. If that sounds like a win-win situation, please consider a gift via the OSU Foundation/UHC Excellence Fund.

**Interested in supporting the University Honors College?**  
**Contact:** Joe Hendricks at 737-6400 or Honors.College@orst.edu  
**Mail donations to:** OSU Foundation/UHC Excellence Fund  
 850 SW 35th St., Corvallis, OR 97333

## UHC Graphic on Growth 1995 - 2000



\*\*Projections for 2000-01

## Accounting for Herself

One faculty member who has left an impression on Oregon State and the University Honors College is Mary Alice Seville, College of Business. A 17-year veteran professor at OSU, she has made exemplary contributions through her service, teaching, and expertise in accounting.

Seville was a member of the group that gave shape to the University Honors College, the UHC Council, from 1996-99, (chair from 1997-99). The Council is the policy-making body of the UHC, made up of faculty and students. Among other things, the council oversees the creation of the admission essay questions, does much of the reading of those essays, and approves annual coursework offerings.

Throughout her career, Seville has maintained a dedicated research interest in non-profit organizations' use of accounting information. One of her favorite projects was her work, from '92-'99, with the Financial Accounting Standards Board task force. FASB establishes and recommends improvements in standards for financial accounting for all entities except governments. Seville says the project was a highlight because the participants "had direct input into accounting standards." Her work with FASB left her with admiration for those who set accounting standards.

### UHC Student Receives Two Distinguished Awards



*Thomas Young, sophomore, Biology, with a bird of prey at Hawk Haven Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education Center.*

Thom recently received two prestigious awards; the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and a two-year appointment as a Barry Goldwater Scholar for his research on ecosystem conservation.

Thom spent spring term 2000 in Costa Rica doing research.

As the primary organizer for an OSU orientation program called JAW Breaker, or Junior Accounting Workshop, Seville had a few desired goals for the program. First, she wanted to see connections between accounting students and faculty. Second, by inviting accounting professionals to participate, the workshop successfully introduced students to the business world, linking them with mentors in problem-solving activities.

Seville is not just an academic; she enjoys walking, horse-back riding, and rafting. She was a United Way Boardwalk Trainer in 1989-90, and served as a board member for the United Way from 1990-96. She has rafted the Deschutes River, and is constantly on the lookout for new challenges. In August, she will participate in her third Hood-to-Coast relay. With medals to show for the past two years, she'll be a force to reckon with again this year.

Dr. Seville has announced her retirement for June 2001. As for her prospects after teaching, she says they



Photo by Linda Wallace

*Mary Alice Seville answers questions in BA 215H Fundamentals of Accounting, a 4-credit Honors elective course for non-business majors.*

will hopefully include an abundance of travel. "I've hardly been anywhere," she said. On her agenda for this summer is a trip to India and Indonesia. Not surprisingly, as she is an avid educator, Dr. Seville would like to teach abroad during her retirement. She thinks it will give her the opportunity to get to know the countries she visits from a perspective very different from that of a tourist. Of her other post-retirement projects, one she is most looking forward to is volunteering time

## Student Focus: Melanie Spraggins —

### A UHC Student Deeply Involved



*Melanie Spraggins burns her candle at both ends. In addition to being in the University Honors College, she is an Environmental Science Major; Chemistry and Ethnic Studies Minor, with certificate options in Pre-Education and Environmental Ethics. Did we mention she just finished a term as ASOSU (Associated Students of Oregon State University) President? Melanie plans to attend graduate school as a step to becoming a college professor. Here is Melanie's description of her past year at Oregon State University. (Photo courtesy The Daily Barometer.)*

"It has been by no means an easy year balancing my academic work and being the President of ASOSU. Few people know that I am an environmental science major and a member of the University Honors College. It has been challenging

going to meetings between my classes — I have to admit there have been times when I was thinking about student fees rather than listening to my biology professor. Throughout this year, my days have started early and ended late into the night after I finished my homework.

Although I see my career in education, through my involvement in ASOSU, I have become an expert in issues I had not previously known anything about: childcare, student health insurance, workers rights, financial aid, state and federal politics, or managing staff. However, I have enjoyed learning about all the issues students face regardless of whether I have had to personally deal with those problems.

Through my involvement outside the four walls of the classroom, I have been successful in dedicating my year to ensure that all students have a right to a fair and equitable education."

## UHC Grads — Where are they now?

### Joe Voje — First UHC Grad — '97

Joe Voje (HBA, History) finished a four-year Honors Scholar track in two years and returned to active duty in the Navy as an officer. With his wife and two children, Joe left for Pensacola and flight school, only to discover a pesky inner-ear issue and a different Naval track as Aerospace Maintenance Duty Officer. He now oversees 230 sailors and civilian contractors maintaining 14 uniquely configured F/A-18s, including the Navy's newest aircraft.

Flying is still part of his routine, checking high tech computer-assisted weaponry. Encouraging young Naval personnel to do their best and to further their education is more exciting yet. Joe will soon be reassigned from China Lake, California, where he substitutes at the local high school and where critter hunting is a favorite family activity, to join the Golden Dragon Air Group aboard the USS Kitty Hawk in Japan. He hopes for assignment in Europe so he can continue work on his MA, then launch a teaching career at overseas schools run by the Department of Defense.

### Mark Muktoyuk — '98



Mark Suluc Kukuluk Muktoyuk (HBS, Math) just finished his MA in Applied Mathematics at the University of Arizona after two years of hard work and very little rain. In the course of applying for a job as an applied mathematician at a local hydrology firm, Mark's potential employer took particular note of his Honors Baccalaureate degree and he is now employed at that firm. Mark recently married and after traveling in Europe on his honeymoon, will begin working in Tucson.

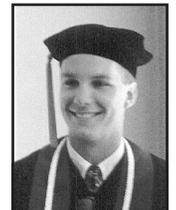
### Anne Marie Vassallo — '98



Anne Marie Vassallo (HBA, Economics) departed for Costa Rica on a Global Graduate internship after commencement to work on microcredit and affordable housing. Anne Marie became very familiar with hurricanes in the year following graduation. While in the Dominican Republic, she was threatened by Hurricane Georges, followed by Hurricane Mitch in Costa Rica, then Hurricane Floyd when she returned home to New Jersey. Prior to entering a joint JD/MCRP (Law and Master of City and Regional Planning) at Rutgers University, Anne Marie worked for the Downtown Corvallis Association Riverfront Project as a liaison to the public.

Wanting to pass along some of the lessons of her NCAA gymnastics career, Anne Marie found time to coach 7- and 8-year-olds this past year. During the summer of 2000 she will clerk in the General Counsel Office of Montgomery County, Maryland. Recalling OSU, Anne Marie reports that the Valley Library is a thing of beauty and the UHC tells it like it is — learning is learning to learn.

### Dan Euhus — '99



Dan Euhus (HBS, Chemical Engineering) headed to graduate school at Georgia Tech, via a summer internship in Cincinnati. Discovering eight lanes on the freeway and more people in metropolitan Atlanta than the entire state of Oregon was only slightly daunting to Dan and wife Kim. Not content to simply work on his Ph.D., Dan also turned his Honors thesis into a scholarly submission to a prestigious professional journal. In many ways Dan's graduate work is an extension of his honors thesis. He is researching sodium salt scaling of evaporation heat transfer surfaces with an eye to application in the pulp and paper industry. If he solves the problems, it will be a multi-million dollar solution. By looking at crystallization kinetics, Dan will be in a position to recommend economical and efficient applications. With a National Science Foundation Fellowship in hand, awarded in part on the basis of his UHC thesis research, Dan is assured of support for the three years it will take to earn his Ph.D.

### Rick Osburn — '99

Rick Osburn (HBS, Chemical Engineering) elected to forego a generous graduate school offer to assume a position with Georgia Pacific in Bellingham, Washington. Within a week of commencement, the moving van was at the door. Rick reported to his new position, providing technical support for pulp production facilities and computer modeling of production processes in evaluating capital project design and optimization. Rick contributes to heat and water conservation projects and settling lagoon aeration. As part of his job Rick travels to the Gulf states, Wisconsin and Georgia. Rick's UHC thesis project placed first in a NW Regional competition and that led to a presentation at the AIChE National conference in Dallas.



Together with daughter Christie, Rick has been biking the San Juans and the city of Vancouver. While there he met a Civil Engineer working on an advanced degree in GIS Technology. They plan to marry in the near future.

### Miranda Dodd — '99

Miranda Dodd (HBS, Geology) just dropped by to say she is leaving a position with Hewlett-Packard to enter the Peace Corps for assignment in Mauritania. In a brief note Miranda commented that her UHC thesis will make graduate school considerably easier.

# OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

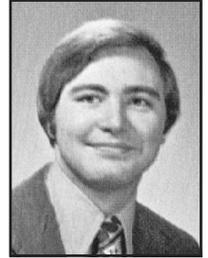
## Honors Alumni Sheet

*Example*

### What ever became of...?

Name: Bill Krippaehne \_

Bill Krippaehne  
1973



Preferred Address\*: 600 University Street, Suite 1525

City: Seattle State: WA Zip: 98101

Email\*: billk@fsci.com

Degree/Major/Year: BA, Humanities & Social Science '73; MBA, '76 - OSU

Current Position: President/CEO, Fisher Co. (1993-); Chairman, Fisher Properties; also a Director of Safeco Corporation

Focus: Broadcast and High-Tech Communications; Property Development/Management; Subsidiaries in Flour Milling and Food Distribution



William Krippaehne  
1999

Accomplishments at OSU/Honors:

'73 Dubach Award; '73 Scholar & Leadership Award; Blue Key Honorary; Honors Program participation and senior thesis

Favorite Memories: Honors Program experience and its leadership

Life Since Graduation: '85-'86 OSU Alumni Association President (1st out-of-state President); serving on boards of a number of non-profit organizations; recent highlight, the development of Fisher Plaza, a high-tech hub in Seattle

Family: Married, four children

\*Check if you grant permission to share with peers or current students

# OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

## Honors Alumni Sheet

### What ever became of...?

Name:

Preferred Address\*:

City: State: Zip:

Email\*:

Degree/Major/Year:

Current Position:

Focus:

Alumni: Please complete this form and return to the UHC, address/fax info pg. 2

Please supply a snapshot

OSU Yearbook Photo — we will supply if in yearbook

Accomplishments at OSU/Honors:

Favorite Memories:

Life Since Graduation:

Family:

\*Check if you grant permission to share with peers or current students

Please join Bill Krippaehne, the model for our Alumni Profile Sheet, in updating us on you and your activities since graduating from OSU's Honors Program/UHC. Our goal is to compile these profiles into a booklet to share with Honors alumni and current UHC students. **Please note if you DO NOT want us to share your information with alumni and/or students.**

# University Honors College

Oregon State University  
229 Strand Hall  
Corvallis, OR 97331-2221  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



OREGON STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Corvallis, OR  
Permit No. 200

## A Taste of Space



By Heather McCaig

My head has always been in the clouds. As long as I can remember I have wondered what it would be like in space. Science fiction further fueled my imagination, and I soon envisioned humanity in a thousand years trying to organize galactic-size governments. I was quick to realize my daydreams would never come true unless the people of today worked to make them reality. Today, space is one of few tangible frontiers left to explore. It is where our future lies. I decided that I will be one of those who will make humanity's future in space the reality that I have dreamed of for so long.

Last fall I heard about a NASA research possibility in Chemical Engineering called the Reduced Gravity Flight Project. This opportunity would involve flying an experiment on NASA's KC-135 microgravity plane, called the

"Weightless Wonder" or more familiarly, the "vomit comet." I didn't think twice about joining. At that time I don't think anyone really knew how amazing this project would be. The project itself was called a Magnetically Assisted Fluidized Bed.

It adapted a technology reliant on gravity to work in space by substituting the gravitational force with a magnetic force.

We wrote a proposal and sent it to the Reduced Gravity Flight Group at Johnson Space Center in Hous-

ton, TX. After three months of waiting, we received word that our project was accepted. At the end of winter term the team traveled to Houston and spent two weeks at the Johnson Space Center.

To experience NASA was truly one of the highlights of my life. Walking into hanger 990 for the first time at Ellington Air Field was awe-inspiring. There were military fighter jets taking off continually, and the KC-135 — as well as another NASA plane nicknamed the Super Guppy — was parked outside. Over the next week we rebuilt the experiment and prepared for the flight. We were given personal tours of Johnson Space Center and met several inspiring astronauts, including Don Pedit — an OSU graduate. We were even able to sit at the consoles in the old Apollo-era control room.

The day of the flight was soon at hand.

The equipment was loaded and procedures planned out. We were issued our flight suits and watched one more safety video before boarding the plane. The first time we hit zero gravity I was totally focused on taking reliable data and not losing my breakfast. I was fascinated with the dust particles floating up from the floor as I concentrated on writing data on a pad stuck down with Velcro. In order to write, I held on to the frame supporting the experiment so I wouldn't float away. But even if I held on I would still end up upside down because sometimes the gravity force would be slightly negative [pointing to the ceiling].

The best way to describe zero gravity is that it is like swimming under water except there is no water [nothing to kick against if you get stuck floating], and one's perception of up and down isn't always accurate. There were several times I could have sworn the experiment was on the ceiling of the plane when I was actually the one upside down.

Each "parabola" of the flight consisted of a 1.8 g portion and a zero g portion. There were 29 parabolas with 25-second intervals of zero gravity in which to collect usable data.

This project was an amazing experience. I would like to believe it is also a beginning. I intend to continue on my path towards space by getting an internship with NASA after my sophomore year. Perhaps one day I will even get to see the earth from orbit.

*Heather McCaig, first year, Chemical Engineering, balances her coursework and love of space with a serious commitment to ballet.*