



HONORS

Wildcat

NEWSLETTER



Keeping up with Kenton



I've been thinking lately about the enduring values of Honors education — probably because that's one of the first questions Dean Buss asked when he hit the ground here in Lexington. But, also, because my conversations with alumni over the past three months have encouraged me that the principles of Honors education really are enduring. UK Honors Program alumni from the 1970s all the way through to the 2000s have shared stories that have resonated strongly with my own experiences of Honors over the past eight years. They have shared about how the Honors Program helped them find their community, and their feet, within the bigness of UK. I've heard about relationships with classmates that have lasted for decades — one group of Honors Program alumni meets annually for a reunion! And I've heard enduring memories of the professors and advisors who transformed the lives of their students, setting them off on adventures they may otherwise have missed. I'm encouraged that these things are still happening. Students are still finding their people here in Honors. They are still forging fast friendships in their first-year seminars. They are still establishing deeply meaningful relationships with their professors that they take with them into their lives after UK. And I hope that encourages you.

Share your Honors stories with us. Swing by campus for a coffee or lunch, send me an email or text, give me a call.

P.S. Did you know that alumni can get free professional headshots through UK's Alumni Career Services? [Get your headshot at the Stuckert Career Center.](#)

Upcoming Events



September 15, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m. Join the discussion during the first [Honors After Hours: Let's be Blunt about Cannabis](#).

September 22, 6 - 7 p.m. *The Keeping Space* [screening and discussion](#) in Worsham Cinema.

Sept 22 - 24: Honors on the Road: Visit with Kenton and Dean Buss in the Washington, D.C., area—reach out to Kenton to schedule a visit.

September 28: 3:00 - 4:15 p.m. Join Dr. Jena Seiler's "Creative Entanglements" class to help care for Mathews Garden.

Oct 7, 4 - 5 p.m.: Hear about what your Honors alumni colleagues are doing! Stop by the [CPD Alumni Career Speaker Panel](#).

October 9: 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.: Swing by the Lewis Honors College Scholars Lounge for [coffee and conversation](#) with current students, alumni, faculty, staff, and Dean Buss.

October 15, 5:30 p.m. Prep for midterm elections with a lecture on American elections by Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar Dr. Lynn Vavreck: "[The Unique Role of Campaign Advertising in American Elections](#)."

Nov 11 - 15: Honors on the Road: Visit with Dean Buss in the New Orleans area.

College Highlights



The [Annual Report](#) is here. Some quick highlights:

- Over 80% of Lewis Honors College students are in-state.
- Our students come from across the university - the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Engineering, and Business and Economics are the best represented.
- Over 93% of the Class of 2025 First Destination Survey respondents are employed or attending graduate school within six months of graduation.

Student Spotlights

This month, we're highlighting five students who received stipends from the Rebecca Barnes Timmons Internship Fund to support their participation in internships around the country:

- Emma Green, a marketing and management major, interned with Nike in Beaverton, OR.
- Serena Florell, an integrated strategic communication major, was a buyer for Burlington, Inc., in New York, NY, which gave her experience in the fashion industry.
- Mallory Jones, a public policy major, worked with the Office of U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell in Washington, D.C.
- Katie Beth London, a finance and accounting major, was an audit department intern with the Federal Reserve Bank in St. Louis, MO.
"I've had the opportunity to connect with talented professionals across the Bank and learn more about the important role internal audit plays in supporting the Federal Reserve System," London said.
- Prisha Patel, an architecture major with a minor in business and a certificate in design-build, worked with Gensler in Chicago, IL.
"My ultimate goal for this experience is to work towards bridging the gap between academia and the professional world," Patel said.



Alumni Updates

Kellee James '98 was [named CEO of Oregon Tilth](#), a nonprofit organization focused on promoting ecologically and socially sustainable agriculture. After graduating from UK with a B.A. in Spanish, Kellee founded and led Mercaris—a major marketing platform for sustainable agricultural commodities—until it was acquired in 2023. “My time in the UK Honors program shaped my values, my network, sense of possibility, and therefore my career trajectory, though I didn’t realize it at the time,” Kellee shared. She remembers her Honors classes, like Dr. Pem Kremer’s class, as places to engage in hard conversations about complex subjects and important ideas, civilly and respectfully: “We had rousing, but respectful conversations on topics like diversity in my Honors classes. Those debates honed useful skills for navigating an increasingly complex and divided world.” Congrats on your new position, Kellee!



Faculty & Staff News

[Dr. Pearl James](#) was named one of four UK faculty members as a fellow in the 2026-27 SEC Academic Leadership Development Program.

Honors Memories

What's one moment, person, or experience from your Honors years that you'll never forget? Alum [Rachel Childress](#) met her future husband in line to register for classes at the beginning of her first semester—computer punch cards in hand. Their love for one another grew as they studied the classics together in Dr. Bob Rabel's colloquium class, which Rachel remembered as foundational for her learning and expansive for her worldview.



Appreciation Station

Thank you to all the friends of Honors who supported us over the past month! Your gifts helped students explore their purpose, develop intellectually, and lead with integrity on campus, across the Commonwealth, and around the world.

- Jennifer Durham
- Laurie Hainley

Featured Fund



UK Honors Program alum Rebecca Timmons established the Rebecca Barnes Timmons Internship Fund in 2018 to support internship experiences for freshmen and sophomores in the Lewis Honors College. Internships can confirm that a given path is a good fit, but they can also help students change course if the job isn't what they thought it was going to be. Either way, internships provide powerful opportunities for students to explore potential career paths. See our "Student Spotlight" section in this month's newsletter to see what Timmons Interns did this summer!

Interested in giving? [Click here](#) to give or reach out to kenton.sena@uky.edu for more information.

Stay in Touch



Join our new [LinkedIn Honors Alumni](#) group!

Do you have an update to share, someone you would like to thank or an Honors alum you'd like us to remember? Click the button below to submit a story.

[Submit Now](#)

Would you like to connect with current students as an alumni mentor? Sign up to serve by clicking the button below: [Register Today](#)

If your travel plans are taking you to or through Lexington, stop by and see us! Click the button below to schedule a visit with Kenton Sena. [Schedule Now](#)