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Read the newsletter online  
at:

<https://www.barry.edu/honors-program/newsletter.html>

## Welcome!

Welcome to April! The end of the semester is in our sights. These times are full of statements like “buckle down,” “stay on track,” and “keep your focus.” While these things are important to remember (I should know, I’ve been battling senioritis all spring), I want to welcome you all this month by reminding you that there is another piece of advice to remember.

I encourage you all to take care of yourselves as this month wears on. It’s very easy to think that the best way to pass your classes is to study all of the time. Study and homework become more important than other tasks. This is a successful strategy - to an extent. Don’t forget the importance of sleep. Your body becomes less efficient as sleep deprivation creeps in. Also, be sure to keep eating well. Filling your body with processed sugar feels great in the moment but ALWAYS leads to regret. Finally, I cannot recommend highly enough that you ought to keep your body in motion. If you’ve sat at a desk for three hours only moving your fingers, do your body and mind a favor and stand up. Walk around your hall. Put on some music and dance like a maniac. Our bodies didn’t evolve to sit in chairs; be sure to treat it. I look forward to crossing the stage with many of you on May 7th. Let’s make sure we get there in one piece!

Alek Sayers

### Interesting Fact

It turns out April showers are not the only things that bring May flowers! A study done in 2013 demonstrated that **rising temperatures** are the primary cause of earlier flowering times. Record-breaking temperatures in Massachusetts and Wisconsin resulted in the earliest flowering times ever recorded for most spring-flowering plants. Where does the saying come from, you might ask? The earliest source of the saying is a poem written in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century by Thomas Tusser. The poem goes as follows:

“Sweet April showers  
Do spring May Flowers”

Read more at: <http://fivethirtyeight.com/datalab/do-april-showers-bring-may-flowers/>

## What's Happening This Month?

- 9: Scholarship Engagement Project
- 21: Evening of Celebration and Appreciation
- 22: Earth Day

## Riddle of the Month

Only one color, but not one size, stuck at the bottom, yet easily flies. Present in sun, but not in rain, doing no harm, and feeling no pain. What am I?

A Shadow

## Position Wanted

The Honors Committee is looking to fill a student representative position on the committee. The committee oversees all university-wide honor society applications and organizes the university's Honors Convocation. If you are available from 2 – 3 on select Mondays and are interested in increasing your student leadership experience, please contact Dr. Sirimangkala. Spring 2016 meeting dates and location: 04/11, 04/25, and 05/02, Landon 204.

## Join HPSAB

The Honors Program Student Advisory Board is looking to fill positions for the Fall 2016 semester, as our beloved senior members move on to new endeavors. Please send questions and other inquiries to Dr. Sirimangkala at [psirimangkala@barry.edu](mailto:psirimangkala@barry.edu).

## Guest Lecture Series

The spring Guest Lecture Series (GLS) took place on March 28<sup>th</sup> and was a great success. The topic of this semester's GLS was Political Persuasion: Deciphering the Political Codes. The event had a great turnout (the HPSAB organizers even had to cut questions to remain within time limitations!). The three panelists included Dr. Larry Byrne, Dr. Leah Blumenfeld, and Dr. Nickesia Gordon, all highly praised professors of Barry University. The panel topics included political development and tactics, campaign promises, and the impact of today's social media usage on politics. Each panelist provided a unique and helpful viewpoint on the aforementioned key topics, as each specializes in a different field of study. Dr. Larry Byrne, of the Department of English and Foreign Languages, explored the ideas of rhetoric, motivation and persuasion to vote using Aristotle's three primary proofs, the idea of control versus freedom, and more. Dr. Leah Blumenfeld of the Department of History and Political Science drove home the idea of government structure and its role in passing bills as well as the media's role in shaping the news. Lastly, Dr. Nickesia Gordon, of the Department of Communication, focused largely on social media topics such as the medium as the message, social construction of archetypes and stereotypes, and media ownership's role in politics. Arguably, the most important take-away from this event was the importance in being an informed and educated voter and doing one's "homework" prior to making decisions. We thank all who organized, came, or participated in this event for their time and attention and cannot wait for another successful event next fall.



# Pay It Forward Collage

April 20<sup>th</sup> is Pay It Forward Day. The day emphasizes the importance of people from all over the world giving to one another and making a positive difference. Pay It Forward Day is a day to remind each of us the power of giving, and how we can make the world brighter with simple acts of kindness. We, at HPSAB, hope this collage gives you a little bit of inspiration and the will to pass on a good deed of your own.



## Upcoming Events

### Scholarship Engagement Project

Each semester, HPSAB organizes an event called the Scholarship Engagement Project in which the students of the Honors Program come together to aid in group community service. This mandatory event is not only helpful for the community, but for the students in order to get to know one another and work together towards something meaningful. This semester, the Scholarship Engagement Project involves park beautification at East Greynolds Dog Park on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. Students are to meet for transportation at 9AM on the North Side of Landon Parking Lot (by the bookstore). Attire includes Honors Program T-shirts and comfortable bottoms. The group will be landscaping as well as painting. Refreshments will be provided, including muffins or energy bars for breakfast as well as water throughout the day and a picnic (your choice of hotdogs or veggie burgers). The deadline to RSVP for this event has already passed, and an alternative volunteer opportunity will be arranged for those who are unable to attend on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Dr. Sirimangkala or members of HPSAB with questions pertaining to this event. Thank you.



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### Evening of Celebration and Appreciation

The Evening of Celebration and Appreciation will be held on April 21<sup>st</sup> from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm in the Landon Events Room. All HP students are invited to show their appreciation to faculty and staff and celebrate the end of the academic year. Dinner will be served. Please RSVP to Dr. Sirimangkala (psirimangkala@barry.edu) by April 17<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see you all there!

### Senior Honors Thesis Defense Dates

We are proud to announce that five seniors have received an approval to proceed to their Senior Honors Thesis Defense. Each will be held in Lehman 328 unless otherwise noted and all are welcome to attend.

Congratulations to all five members!

**Esther Garcia's defense schedule: April 6, 2016 at 2 pm**

**Tayler Malinowski's defense schedule: April 12, 2016 at 1 pm**

**Natalie Irizarry's defense schedule: April 13, 2016 at 3 pm (Room: TBA)**

**Caroline Alves da Silva's defense schedule: April 14, 2016 at 2:30 pm**

**Bethany Dill's defense schedule: April 20, 2016 at 1 pm**

## World News

### Florida Primary

After the topic of this semester's Guest Lecture Series, HPSAB thought it necessary to report the political news of our area. The Florida Primary 2016 took place on Wednesday, March 15. Results showed that Donald Trump won the Republican vote with 45.7% and Hillary Clinton won the Democratic vote with 64.4% over Bernie Sanders' 33.3%. Now in the Wyoming Caucus Primary is open, and will be followed by New York and

Connecticut in the upcoming weeks. Curious about hearsay and political promises you've heard? Visit [politifact.com](http://politifact.com) to fact check for yourself! An informed citizenry is at the heart of a dynamic democracy.

## Earth Day

Earth Day has annually taken place on April 22<sup>nd</sup> since its humble beginning in 1970. At a time when people were oblivious to the seemingly important environmental concerns, Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, opened the eyes of many in 1962. The book sold over 500,000 copies in more than 20 countries and addressed many unspoken issues and alarming links. Earth Day 1970 became a front-page story and gave the much-needed attention to the emerging awareness. The day was an idea of Gaylord Nelson, a Wisconsin senator who hoped to bring environmental protection to the United States' political agenda. April 22, 1970 was a monumental day that bridged the gap between the many different groups fighting for common values (groups against oil spills, polluting factories, pesticides, the loss of wilderness, you name it). Twenty million Americans partook in the first ever Earth Day, and by the end of 1970 the United States Environmental Protection Agency as well as three acts (Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts) had come into existence. Twenty years after its creation, Earth Day went global for the first time. This time, though, the efforts involved the help of 200 million people from 141 countries, representing all continents. Each year brings more environmental efforts, projects, and acts into life. The fight for a clean environment continues today, and we are all needed more than ever to bring the desired changes to our home, planet Earth. Get involved this year by joining the movement, giving to the cause, or even just spreading the word. Local events include Mother Earth Music and Arts Festival, Moonlight Garden Tour at Vizcaya Museum & Gardens (a beautiful location that HP visited together just this semester!), and many clean-up initiatives throughout South Florida and its state parks. Barry University also celebrates Earth Day annually with activities, presentations, movie screening, and a vendor fair to instill awareness within students, faculty, and staff. Always remember, we only have **one** Earth! Read more at [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org).



*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

*– Margaret Mead*

## Member Submissions

### Senior Salute

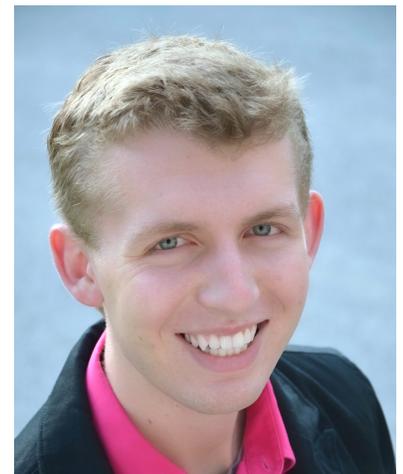
#### Alek Sayers

##### **Where are you from and what high school did you attend?**

I graduated from Brewer High School in June 2012, the school in the town where I am from in Brewer, Maine. It's the town next to Bangor, about a two-hour drive north from Portland.

##### **Why did you choose to attend Barry?**

Several things led me to my ultimate decision to attend Barry! I was choosing



between schools in Maine as well as a conservatory in New York City and Barry. I eventually, through the insight of a dear teacher and mentor I had in high school, determined that Miami (although a place that had never been on my radar prior to applying for schools) was an adventure worth having as a young person and a fantastic place for my career. Four years later and I believe the assessment we had at that time turned out to be more than accurate!

**What is your field of study and what drew you to this field?**

I am studying theatre with a focus on acting, and intend to work as an actor and eventually own and run a children's workshop someday. I was drawn to theatre by the camaraderie and beauty of the art I encountered while working on high school productions and directing children's theatre.

**What is your favorite aspect of the Honors Program?**

My favorite part of the Honors Program is the Guest Lecture Series we host every semester! It is always a lot of legwork, but I love exploring new and relevant topics with speakers from a wide variety of fields and disciplines.

**What is your research topic for your honors thesis?**

My thesis, titled *The Persuasive Power of Theatre: The Experience of Live Action Versus the Written Word*, concerns the effect a performance has upon an audience member who attends a live theatrical performance. I sought theatre as a career because I was enamored by the ability to tell stories that change people, and I've been researching and compiling how thinkers throughout history have believe theatre should and does effect the audience. I also explore a contemporary example using the Fine Arts Department's recent production of *Our Town*, and through surveys I have compared how people who saw the live performance react to those who have only ever read the play.

**What are your hobbies and passions?**

Acting has quickly traveled from being a hobby to a career in a short four years (but I wouldn't have it any other way!) I am a grade-A tabletop gamer; I can occupy myself with Magic the Gathering, Dungeons and Dragons, or Settlers of Catan all day long. However, when I step outside, there is nothing I love more than playing tennis, soccer, hiking, or downhill skiing in the winter!

**What has been your most memorable college experience?**

There are many that deserve a mention here, but I know we're used to reading BuzzFeed articles, so I'll include just one. I've performed in the Broad Auditorium many times since getting to school, but one of my most memorable performances wasn't for theatre. I performed with the music department's ensemble choir for an evening of the Gospel Mass' entirety, and it was an absolute joy. I hadn't sung in a choir since high school, and although I'm not a singer first, I enjoy it greatly and performing in a choir with dozens of other people is such a satisfying feeling. Sort of like a team sport!

**What do you plan to do after graduation?**

I have a job! Starting May 10<sup>th</sup>, I will begin rehearsals for a production of Rock of Ages up in Bangor at Penobscot Theatre Company. The Maine premier! I encourage you all to come up and see it, if only to see the beginning of the beautiful Maine summer season we have every year. After the run of the show ends in early July, I will begin preparations to travel to Edinburgh, Scotland to see the annual fringe festival. I'll return home, pack my bags, and plan an official move down to South Florida to join the ranks of the fantastic theatre community down here!

**Alumni News**

*Thank you for the newsletter! Reading through it was very bitter sweet. It's crazy to think that after only two years away, many of my little HP babies are all grown up and graduating. I'm so proud to see how far everyone has come. Unfortunately, I think my thesis will keep me from visiting for graduation this year, but I will try to make it back down south sometime soon to visit with everyone and meet some of the new HP kids. Send Alek, Bethany, Dr. Byrne, and*



everyone else my love!

Dianna Bellian

*(Co-editors' note: Dianna Bellian graduated from Barry University and the Honors Program in May 2014; she is finishing up her Master's Thesis and scheduled to graduate with her MA degree in Literary Studies from Eastern Illinois University in May 2016. Read more about Dianna in the October 2014 issue)*

## Question and Answer

**Q:** When should we wear our Honors Program T-shirts?

**A:** We have an upcoming event on April 9<sup>th</sup>, the mandatory Scholarship Engagement Project, that we are requiring HP t-shirt attire. In addition to Honors Program events, we urge you to wear your shirt whenever you feel like it. Wearing our shirts around campus helps bring more attention to our group and you should be proud to be a member!

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