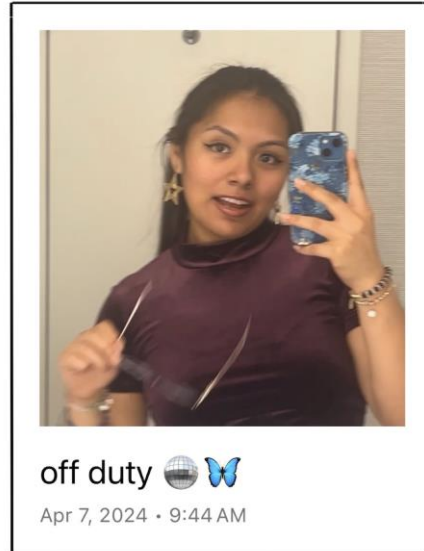


Yullyana Laguna



Class of 2023-2024

Associate of Science, Liberal Arts and Sciences in Global Studies; Associate of Arts

Distinguished Golden Eagle recipient 2023-2024

Honors Courses:

World Civ From 1500

American National Government

Intro to Comparative Politics

Introduction to International Relations

Introduction to the United Nation

I'm writing this in the Honors Hub where I'm surrounded by all my friends, some doing homework, some talking about the most random things ever, but all of us appreciating each other's company. I have met the best of friends here in the honors hub, and it all started when Dr. Gallo invited me into the Honors Program. Truth be told, I was intimidated by the idea of honors in college! It all seemed like it was going to be overwhelming, and I just wanted to get through my classes. However, Dr. Gallo thought I had excellent writing skills and would make a great fit for the Honors Program since I was already in her World Civ From 1500 Honors course.

Section 1:

Demonstrate Engagement



(Figure 1)



(Figure 2)



(Figure 3)



(Figure 4)

Before I knew of the Honors Program, I was basically a ghost on campus. All I'd do is go to my normal classes, go to work, and go home; there was nothing that really gave me the spark to participate in school. It wasn't till I joined HSA that I went from a quiet caterpillar to a social butterfly seeking the answers to the world! I was an officer from Fall 22'-Spring 23', in which I was one of the 3 leaders of the "The Food Picture: Hunger in NWA." I got the pleasure to present our research about food insecurity within NWACC alongside Thanai Hill and Ally Davidson (Figure 1), and during the Spring Arts and Culture Festival we got the chance to present with Cathy May, Jennie Popp, and Daniel Smith. The NWACC focused data revolved around how our campus felt about food prices increasing, accessibility to food and resources, and overall, who were the ones taking the strongest hit to the falling economy? Throughout the semester there were of course other HSA related projects such as "Blind Date with a Book" (Figure 2), "Game Nights" (Figure 3), and our "J-Street Clean-Up"(Figure 4). Over time, even though I gave up my officer position, I was still active within HSA and was a helping hand whenever I got the chance to do so! Although there were other programs that I participated in that brought me out of my little world, HSA was a step forward in engaging more with the school and in general with my community.

Aside from HSA, I also participated in the Latinx on The Rise Mentorship Program dedicated to giving Latino students the opportunity to be mentored by another fellow Latino who is already the industry they are wanting to work in. I did this program with my good friend and fellow Honors student Rosa Aldana and Dani E.Q. as we participated in networking and learning events (picture on the left). These ranged from the DECA Annual Gala to the 2023 Inaugural Civic Engagement Trip where we got to visit: the William J. Clinton Library and Museum, Clinton School of Public Service, Little Rock Central High School Museum, and Arkansas Capital. This was during the time the Mega-Bill (the Learns Act) was being passed, and I got to engage in healthy conversations about the questions I had about the Act with an Arkansas Representative. Not only that, but we met lobbyist Mireya Reith who is the first Hispanic woman on the Arkansas Board of Education and is now the head of the non-profit *Arkansas United*, whose goal is to help educate the



immigrants of Arkansas on resources available to them (picture on the right). My mentor Marina Narvaez gave me a lot of wisdom when it comes to networking with people, which was a big factor as to why interacting with all different types of people comes easily to me. I'd like to think that this also gave me the chance to participate in a lot of side quests, like being the youngest judge for the Bentonville 2023 Wild West Invitational Debate Competition with no Debate experience but tons of MUN tools under my belt like those used in Debate. Although this isn't sponsored by the Honors Program, I was still highly encouraged to join by honors professors and peers.

delegate for said country. Most if not all the Poli-Sci classes I took with Dr. Evans contributed to the knowledge I had of how different systems worked, allowing me to get ahead in Model UN.



Figure 7



Figure 8

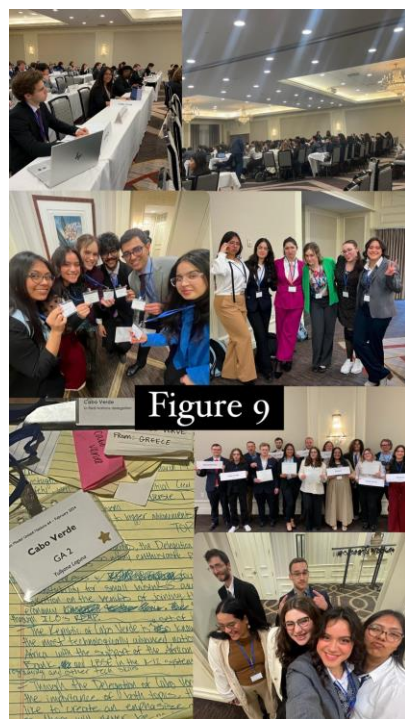


Figure 9

Section 2:

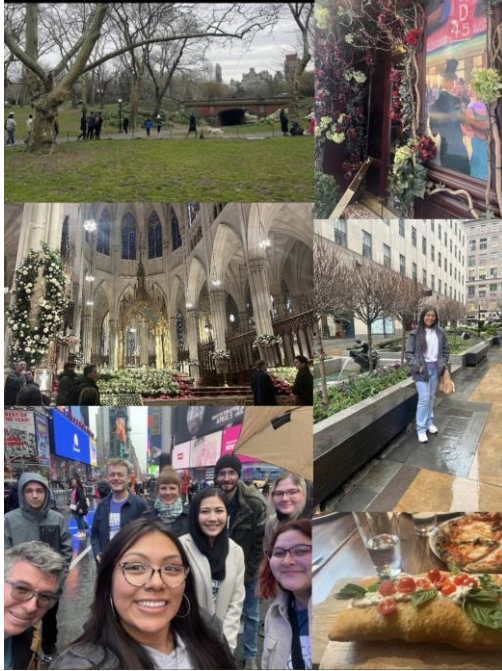


The thing about Honors is, there is not a cookie cutter “ideal” student for the program. There are people from all different types of background with different skills sets that allow you to understand how other people work. Whether you go into the workforce right after NWACC or transfer to a 4-year, everyone must know how to interact and work with diverse kinds of people! I’ve met people from all different walks of life and paths they want to take; from non-traditional students to Brightwater students all with the same ambition and goal of bettering themselves. Maximus Gibbon (left of me in this picture of HSA Spring 23’) is a Brightwater student aspiring to go into the Food

Manufacturing business while I’m going into Diplomacy with no idea how to cook a rare steak! No matter what our goals are for the world, you can catch all honors students working together on our homework and sharing networking contacts as we meet them along the way. The Honors community is one that has prepared me to push myself to get out there and meet all types of people!

Section 3:

NYC daytime exploration at NMUN



There have been so many memorable experiences within the Honors Program, but I will forever be grateful to the Intro to United Nations Class for giving us the opportunity to travel all the way to New York, becoming 1 out of only 6 community colleges in attendance. Throughout my Model UN career, I have been able to make friends with people all over the country and the world, but they were nothing compared to the experience I had at Model UN. I got to experience a lot of many firsts with a bunch of my friends and classmates, including flying! New York also allowed us to work at a different pace, giving us all the opportunity to decide whether we are cut out for a fast-paced work environment. Of course, who can forget the 99-cent pizza and iconic New York hotdogs? A huge shout out to fellow teammates Josh Kay and Becca Trammell who were the main navigators for us throughout the city. The hit of the gavel to commence NMUN gave me chills as we had just heard uplifting words from UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, encouraging us all to work diplomatically to reach the SDG goals we were tasked with. The closing ceremony was unforgettable! With 2,000 students filling the entire United Nations, we were listening to speakers such as Archie Young (Ambassador to the GA United Kingdom Mission to

the UN) and Maher Nasser (Director, Outreach Division UN Department of Global Communication).

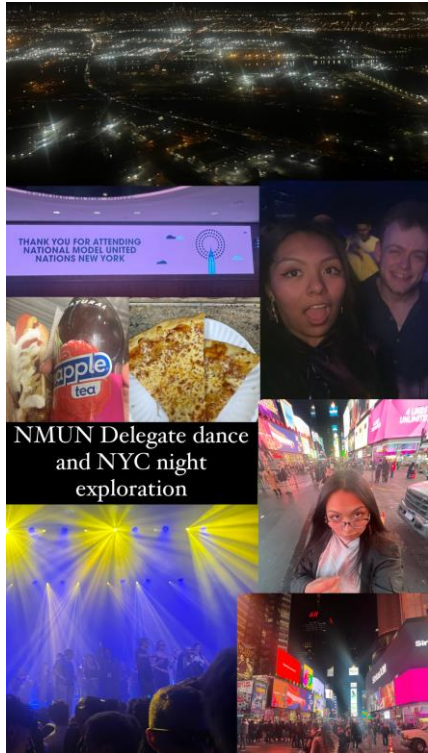
My favorite quote out of the whole conference came from Archie Young who said, "I don't mind looking stupid to be smart". This truly embodies what the Honors Program is about! Even with all the what ifs of society, none of their opinions are going to matter when you are trying to better yourself; the best thing to do is to think about making your younger self proud. 3 years ago, I had no clue that I would have ended up in New York grabbing a bite with international students ranging from the Netherlands to Myanmar, all working to obtain the same goal which is to have fun as we embody the diplomat within us. At the end of most conferences there is a Delegate Dance where we can stop referring to each other as the name of the country we are representing and finally get to know the human behind the mask. I am telling you; I have met lifelong friends through this conference and get chills thinking about how different my life is now. Model UN changed the trajectory of where my career goals are for the better, so do not be afraid to venture out into the unknown. Although I was scared at first, I took my pink Busy Bee notebook and decided to take on the world!



Collaborating with U.S. and international students in committee sessions at NMUN



NMUN closing ceremony at the UN Building



NMUN Delegate dance and NYC night exploration

Section 4:

Be open to new experiences and people, always receive the new with a smile. Especially within Honors where there are a wide range of classes and learning opportunities outside the classroom, even if it's something that's not "within" your field of study just give it a try! You will always be able to learn new skillsets within anything you participate in. Honors is a great way to start expanding your horizons