



THE MASON MINUTE

Spring 2013 Issue

The Start of Spring and the Class of 2017

Sarah Gallagher Dvorak
Director of Undergraduate Admissions

The beautiful spring weather that the Washington, D.C. area is known for is finally here, and with the cherry blossoms and sunshine comes our newly admitted Class of 2017! This year's freshman class is looking exceptionally strong, with talented students coming from all over the world to join the Mason Nation.

After a busy few months of reading nearly 21,000 applications (we saw another record-breaking year!), hosting seven on-campus admitted student events, and traveling to over fifteen off-campus events throughout the country, our staff is looking forward to welcoming our future Patriots to campus for Freshman Orientation this summer, as well as counseling rising juniors and seniors as they begin to navigate the college application process.

If you have any questions on behalf of your students, please don't hesitate to contact the Admissions Counselor for your high school by visiting: <http://admissions.gmu.edu/meetMason>.



In this Spring 2013 issue of *the Mason Minute*, Mason's e-newsletter for high school guidance and college counselors, you'll hear from **Elena Johnson** about summer opportunities with the Washington Scholars Program for talented rising juniors and seniors. **Grace Zamorano** will share the story of Victoria Jones, an Honors College freshman who was awarded the prestigious Critical Language Scholarship by the State Department. You'll discover how we can ensure that your students will have a smooth college transition through our Transition Resource Center's

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initiatives. And finally, our Director of Undergraduate Student Services will share with you some of the unique academic and research opportunities available to students in Mason's world-renowned School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR).

On behalf of our entire Mason admissions team, I want to thank you for all of your hard work this year! We are so excited to see our newly admitted freshmen, many of whom you sent to us, accomplish great things at both Mason and in their professional careers that follow. If not for you, they would not be as well-prepared to achieve their dreams! I hope you have a great end to what I know was a busy school year, and hopefully you have some time to relax and enjoy this springtime!

Have a fantastic spring!

The Washington Scholars Program

Elena Johnson

Program Director, Washington Scholars Program

Hello, counselors! We are gearing up to welcome 500 high school students to campus this summer for the **Washington Scholars Program** – our **summer leadership program** for high school students from all over the country and around the world. We are still accepting applications from high school sophomores and juniors, so share the word with your fantastic students!



The Washington Scholars Program provides students with the opportunity to engage in a week-long residential learning opportunity focusing on one of two emerging fields: the **environment/conservation** and **journalism/new media**.

During the **Washington Youth Summit on the Environment (WYSE) Conference**, students interested in the environment and conservation studies are sure to fall further in love with these exciting new areas of study by engaging with distinguished faculty, guest speakers, and practitioners from the National Geographic Society and National Zoo, among others, in an unparalleled academic experience on Mason's campus, just outside of Washington, D.C.

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Summer Classes!

Are your students looking for fun ways to boost their college applications this summer? They may wish to take a peek at our **Summer Term Classes**, programs, and institutes, including:

The Summer Game Institute

Where Art & Technology Learn 2 Play!

Take a Computer Game Design course, taught by Mason Game Design faculty, and discover this fast growing field of study (for-credit is available).

The following week, we offer the **Washington Journalism and Media Conference (WJMC) Conference** – a unique leadership opportunity for aspiring journalists. Students will have direct access to the political scene of D.C. and gain valuable experience with our WJMC partners, including the Newseum. We are thrilled to announce that Hoda Kotb will again be joining us as conference speaker.



During these summer conferences, students will:

- Receive unparalleled access to our nation’s capital
- Explore their future careers
- Experience Mason’s campus
- Hone their leadership skills
- Network with professionals in their fields of interest
- Have fun and **earn college credit!**

Students who are interested in applying for **WYSE** or **WJMC** may **submit an application** to be considered. Our students are generally in the top ten percent of their class, with a demonstrated interest in the environment/conservation or journalism and/or new media. If you have a student who would like to be considered for either of these summer conferences, please have them visit wsp.gmu.edu/nominations to submit a self-nomination. Interested students may also contact the Program Directors at wyse@gmu.edu or wjmc@gmu.edu.



If you have questions about the application process or the program schedules, please contact the Washington Scholars Program at (703)993-5010, or visit our websites at wyse.gmu.edu or wjmc.gmu.edu.

Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest!

WYSE

Like, Follow, Pin!



WJMC

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Transition Resource Center

Jennifer Johnson

Associate Director for Staff Development, Transition Resource Center

Mason's **Transition Resource Center** (TRC) is an office dedicated to enriching students' entire learning experience, both inside and outside of the classroom. The TRC offers services, programs, and classes to help students make friends, navigate the classroom, the campus, and the greater Mason community.

Among these popular programs offered are the **University 100 courses**. In these small, discussion based 1-credit transition classes, first-year students learn how to take advantage of Mason's resources, develop academic skills for success, and discover ways to get involved on campus. As an added benefit, students who take a University 100 course become automatically eligible for free tutoring in any course during their first year.



These University 100 courses also come with the exciting opportunity to join a University 100 **Living Learning Community** (LLC) that focuses on a fascinating subject, such as Arts, Business and Economics, Engineering, Global Studies, Major and Career Explorers, and Outdoor Adventure. These LLCs help freshmen find a smaller home within the larger Mason community, as these students live on the same floor as their classmates who are taking the same University 100 course. The course will cover the core curriculum listed under University 100 General Sections, but it will also focus on the particular LLC topic of interest.

Another exciting option for students is to participate in **Project Peak**, a two-phase, 1-credit course offered only in the first semester at Mason. The first phase consists of a five-day wilderness adventure trip held the week before a student's first semester begins. Students will kayak down the beautiful Potomac River, rock climb the sheer walls of Great Falls National Park, hike, camp in tents, and cook on camp stoves. Project Peak students will then reunite in a University 100 course that builds on the foundations that were laid during their pre-semester adventure, and which focuses on success in college.

Our newest initiative is **Project Sneak Peak**, which is a one-night, two-day trip

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beginning on the second day of a select number of freshman orientation sessions. Along with a group of fellow freshmen attending summer orientation, students participating in Project Sneak Peak will select to participate in either:

- Rock Climbing & Camping Trip (July 9th – 10th)
- Kayaking & Camping Trip (July 12th – 13th)
- D.C.-Based Community Service Trip (July 16th – July 17th)

This is a wonderful opportunity for students to be part of an once-in-a-lifetime experience that builds long-lasting friendships and memories. No experience necessary – just a willingness to have fun and be open to new adventures!

For more information about any of our programs or services, please visit our website at www.transitions.gmu.edu or call the TRC at 703-993-9082.

Mason Research

Grace Zamorano

Honors College Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator

An important component of the **Honors College** academic experience is the **Office of Fellowships**, which advises promising Mason undergraduates across all disciplines regarding the application process for nationally competitive fellowships and scholarships, such as the Truman, Marshall, Fulbright, Boren, and Critical Language Scholarships.



With a dedicated Fellowship Advisor, Honors College students are advised as early as summer orientation about these prominent opportunities in the hope that they will begin developing the appropriate skills and experiences necessary to secure these scholarships and fellowships, and catapult their undergraduate careers in an extraordinary way.

Victoria Jones, a University Scholar and Honors College freshman from Virginia Beach, Virginia, was recently awarded a prestigious **Critical Language Scholarship** by the State Department. This scholarship will allow her to study advanced Turkish for eight weeks this summer while fully immersing herself in the country and its language. In fact, Victoria will be living with a Turkish host

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family during her studies abroad.

As a Global Affairs major, Victoria explains, “Advanced Turkish classes are very hard to find, so I am determined to learn as much as I can in just eight weeks. I am looking forward to building lasting relationships and eating delicious food! I am sure my summer will be engaging, productive and formative.”

Experiences such as these define the Honors College experience. I hope you will encourage your juniors to consider applying to the Honors College this fall (to do so, they must **apply by November 1, 2013**) so that they may take advantage of all of the enriched academic and social benefits of this prestigious program.

The School for Conflict Analysis & Resolution

Brydin Banning
Director of Undergraduate Student Services

This year, the **School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution** (S-CAR) at George Mason University is celebrating 30 years of developing theory, conducting research, and engaging in practice that interrupts cycles of violence. An interdisciplinary field, Conflict Analysis and Resolution draws on concepts from sociology, political science, anthropology, communication, and psychology to understand the root causes of conflicts and appropriate methods for their resolutions.



S-CAR offers a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Science, a minor, and an accelerated Master of Science in Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Students take a core set of courses within the department that focus on theories of the field, research methods, and practice techniques. They then focus their remaining coursework on interpersonal, community, organizational, or international conflicts.

With roughly 250 students pursuing a major in Conflict Analysis and

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Resolution, S-CAR has a small community feeling within the larger campus environment. Classes are small (typically no larger than 30), and through the use of simulations, role playing, and discussions, courses are highly engaging and participatory. Faculty frequently mentor students on in-class assignments and research projects, while academic advisors help students plan their semesters to maximize their time and take advantage of opportunities.

Many of our students pursue **study abroad** opportunities, such as traveling to Turkey over Spring Break to learn about the conflicts arising from an influx of Syrian refugees, or spending the semester in a direct exchange program in Chile, England, or Korea.

While our students come from a variety of backgrounds and have a wide array of interests, they all come to our program with a sense of wanting to affect change in their communities or in the world. With that in mind, we encourage and support students as they get involved, either on campus or through internships. We have a number of students with leadership positions on campus, such as campus tour guides, residence hall advisors, and summer orientation leaders. Additionally, our students have interned at federal agencies, court systems, law firms, school systems, international NGOs, embassies, nonprofit organizations, and on Capitol Hill.

In line with the variety of internships, S-CAR students are prepared for numerous career paths. Students with an interpersonal focus may continue into counseling, mediation, or social work, while those with a community/organizational focus may consider education, public policy, management, human resources, or consulting. Students with an emphasis on international conflict may end up in careers in international development, intelligence analysis, or diplomacy. With a curriculum that provides opportunities to develop and practice skills in problem solving, critical thinking, written and oral communication, and cross-cultural understanding, our students have the necessary career competencies that all employers seek.

If you or your students would like to learn more about Conflict Analysis and Resolution, please visit our **website** or email me at **bbanning@gmu.edu**.

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