

## Recruitment Outreach:

### The Honors College Xtreme Discovery Teams

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Submitted 4.03.09

## Overview of The Honors College

The University of Arizona Honors College is a destination for students with the best and most creative minds. The College recruits high ability students to the University and plays an active role in building a more academically robust and diverse student body. Once students enroll at the UA, The Honors College creates a culture for them that supports academic excellence, interdisciplinary interests, and lifelong success. The College challenges students to set high expectations for their academic engagement and provides support so that students can reach their educational and career goals. An Honors education encourages students to step outside their comfort zone and to apply their passions and knowledge in real world settings.

*The mission of The Honors College is to foster an enduring spirit of inquiry and discovery so that artistically and academically talented students develop the courage to address uncommon challenges and the commitment to promote social responsibility throughout their lives.*

The vision of The Honors College is to be a premier Honors College within the American Association of Universities (AAU).

The values guiding the mission and vision of The Honors College are:

- **Excellence** in scholarship, learning, teaching, research and service
- **Responsibility** for selves and our communities
- Identifying and nurturing **talent**
- **Interdisciplinary** perspectives
- Building **community** and connections
- **Diversity** of intelligences, life experiences, values and perspectives

The Honors College is a university-wide academic college that serves nearly 4,000 high ability undergraduates at the University of Arizona and is the hallmark of academic excellence for undergraduate students. A strong and thriving Honors College is imperative to attract, retain and educate distinguished Honors undergraduates from wide-ranging backgrounds. It is also vital in creating a challenging academic atmosphere for non-Honors undergraduates. As all Honors students are seamlessly integrated into all colleges and programs on campus, the classroom is infused with greater academic stimulation enhancing the experience for all students.

The Honors College extends the concept of a land grant university by linking scholarship and creativity to societal and community needs. The College provides educational outreach to high school students through the Summer of Excellence program which, for over 20 years, has provided a challenging academic experience while helping students “learn the ropes” of college life by living on campus, taking a college course, managing their time and finances, and making important social connections.

The Honors College encourages social responsibility by connecting students to internship, leadership and volunteer opportunities on campus and in the community. For example, the Honors Civic Engagement Teams place interdisciplinary teams of Honors interns in local non-profit, community and government agencies.

Honors is the third largest college on campus following The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Eller College of Management, yet The Honors College occupies a unique niche in that all of Honors students are members of at least one other college. Through Honors courses

offered across the curriculum, research opportunities, and co-curricular programs, The Honors College enables talented students to reach the highest levels of excellence, instills a life-long passion for learning, and strengthens the quality of undergraduate education at for all students attending The University of Arizona.

### **Abstract**

The Honors College Xtreme Discovery Teams (HXDT) is a pilot project to bring current Honors College students to regional middle and high schools. Honors students will present findings from research they have done and engage students in grades 6-12 through hands-on experiences. UA students will be role models who will encourage these students to look to The University of Arizona as a viable future path for their education. An additional benefit is that the Honors students will have the opportunity to teach at different grade levels, giving them valuable professional experience to enhance their current education and future careers.

### **Statement of the Proposal**

The Honors Xtreme Discovery Teams program will create an opportunity for current Honors College undergraduates to engage students in grades 6-12 in Tucson and surrounding communities. The main goals of HXDT are to create awareness of the benefits of pursuing a university education within middle and high school audiences and to help motivated students to be better prepared for possible admission into The University of Arizona.

Rather than focus on an exclusive agent to deliver this program, HXDT members would be representative of all Honors students in all disciplines, and not be limited to existing student organizations, for example Honors College Ambassadors, Honors Student Council or Honors Civic Engagement Teams. Charter HXDT members would participate in the design and development of the program and would receive training in innovative pedagogy. The key to the success of HXDT would be to engage students in grades 6-12 through Honors Discovery Workshops (HDWs) with students from any public or private school. HDWs would minimize lecturing and create experiential learning opportunities for students with multiple intelligences based on existing pedagogical methods from Honors classes and colloquia. Students will actively participate in the research and discovery process which will enhance their motivation for a college education. On special occasions, UA Faculty would be invited to interact and engage the students, as well.

A two-pronged strategy will be used to select participating schools. First, HXDTs will visit the top producing schools for Honors College admission. Second, The Honors College will work with the Office of Admissions and Early Academic Outreach to identify schools where service could be enhanced by additional contact with The University of Arizona. These schools are likely to include first generation and underrepresented minorities.

It is the intent of The Honors College to reach as many students as possible through this program, and we have set ambitious goals for the first year. We will target five high schools that traditionally feed students into The Honors College, and ten schools that serve populations that traditionally have not fed into the College. With each of those categories, we hope to work with the 20-30 feeder middle schools. We plan to make four to six visit a year at the high school lever,

and two visits annually to the middle schools. Naturally, some schools will be more engaged than others so more visits may be desired.

Students Reached:

Schools	No. of Schools	Annual Visits	Class Size	Total Served
Honors Feeder High Schools	5	6	30	900
Middle Schools	20	2	30	1,200
Non-Honors Feeder High Schools	10	6	30	1,800
Middle Schools	30	2	30	1,800
<b>Total Served</b>	<b>65</b>			<b>5,700</b>

Initial funding for this program will come from multiple sources (we are seeking funding from other foundations and individual donors) and be used for program development and the first year of operation. This will include two student stipends, materials, travel and incentives for the middle and high school students to give them access to campus cultural and Honors specific events. Motivated high school students identified through this program will be referred to UA summer programs including The Honors College Summer of Excellence. For The Honors College, this is a significant opportunity to recruit the region’s most talented students into The University of Arizona and The Honors College. It is also a wonderful occasion for these brilliant undergraduate students to share the research they have done as part of their Honors education.

In the first semester, we would hire a graduate student to develop the basic program. This phase will include creating teacher templates, study materials, training manual, program guide, workshop template and recruitment materials. In the second semester, an undergraduate Honors student will be hired to implement and coordinate the program.

**Itemized Budget**

**Request from UA Parent and Family Association:**

Program Materials	\$ 4,500
UA Incentives (on-campus programs to entice campus visitations)	\$ 2,000
<u>Travel Reimbursements</u>	<u>\$ 2,500</u>

Total \$ 9,000

**Additional sources of funding:**

Assistant Director for Recruitment & Outreach (10%)	\$ 6,574
Graduate Program Developer	\$ 6,564
<u>UG Program Coordinator</u>	<u>\$ 1,500</u>

Total \$14,636

**Assessment of Desired Outcomes**

We will measure success for this program by monitoring the number of applications made to The University of Arizona from participating schools. These numbers are easily tracked and will let us know if the outreach conducted increased the number of recruits in the region. Specifically, we will gauge:

1. Number of students in grade 6-12 reached
2. Increased number of Honors students participating in outreach
3. Increase in applications from high schools served by the program
4. Number of students participating in the Summer of Excellence program
5. Increased number of new students coming out of regional schools
6. Ability to follow up after the school visits through letters, email and postcards from the Discovery Teams and/or the Dean