Annual Report 2015-2016

The Kathwari Honors Director: Christopher L. Kukk, Ph.D.
The Kathwari Honors Assistant Director: Jessica Lin
The Kathwari Honors Student Assistants: Alexis Koukos (Accounting), Kimberly Lockwood (Biology), Jessica Plouffe (Psychology), & Rachel Rossier (English and Art)
The Kathwari Honors Council: Dr. Missy Alexander, Dr. Margaret Astrup, Brennen Diaz (student), Dr. Stavros Christofi, Dr. Michele Ganon, Dr. Bernard Gee, Dr. Donald Gagnon, Kimberly Lockwood (student), Dr. Michael Nolan, Dr. Stephen Wagener, Dr. Rotua Lumbantobing, & Dr. Darla Shaw.

Honors Statistics:

Last Academic Year: 2014-2015
- Number of Students Beginning of Fall 2014: 218
- Number of Students Withdrew or Removed: (-9)
  Retention Rate:  = 96%
- Number of Students Graduating in May 2015: (-29)
- Number of Current Students Remaining: 189
- Number of Incoming for fall 2015: +41
  Total Number of Students at the end of summer 2015: 230
  Average GPA: 3.71

Current Academic Year: 2015-2016
- Number of Students Beginning Fall 2015: 230
- Number of Students Withdrew or Removed: (-11)
  Retention Rate: 95%
- Number of Students Graduating in May 2016: (-41)
- Number of Current Students Remaining: 178
- Number of Current Students Added in 2015-2016: 11 (as of April 25)
  Total Number of Students at the end of spring 2016: 230
  Average GPA: 3.69
Honors Summary:

- The Kathwari Honors Program accepted 41 incoming freshmen and 11 current students for the 2015-2016 academic year, resulting in a growth from 155 to 225 students.
- The Kathwari Honors Program officially moved into the newly renovated Kathwari Honors House in the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year.
- As of the moment, the Kathwari Honors Program has received over 500 applications for a total of 70-90 incoming freshmen slots (an increase of 20-40 incoming students from last year).

The 2015-2016 academic year was a year of growth and change for the Kathwari Honors Program. In April 2015, we officially received a $1 million donation from Mr. & Mrs. Farooq Kathwari (which endowed the Program), formally changed our name to the Kathwari Honors Program at WCSU and celebrated the renaming of Alumni Hall as the Irfan Kathwari Honors House. In fall 2015, the Program officially moved into the Kathwari Honors House. In spring 2016, the Program sent out around close to 400 acceptances for the incoming Fall 2016 class and is expecting another major growth. The Program currently has 219 Honors student. The Kathwari Honors Program has a 95% retention rate and will be graduating its largest class in its history with 41 Honors students as members of WCSU’s Class of 2016.

Honors Student Development & Community Activities:

- Offered 8 Honors courses in fall 2015, the most Honors courses to be offered in one semester in the program’s history, and 6 Honors courses in the spring 2016 semester for all Honors members and accommodated several Honors Enhancements for nursing and education students.
- Assisted with scholarship and graduate school applications as well as internship opportunities.
- More than 40 Honors students participated in Western’s Day of Service on 25 September 2015.
• Hosted a Welcome Back Craft event in the newly renovated Kathwari Honors House and the WCSU Midtown Student Center on 10 September 2015.

• Organized a trip to New York in the fall 2015 semester (9 October 2015) to visit the New York Botanical Gardens. This trip, as well as all the trips we organize, was open to all WCSU students.

• Hosted a Halloween Party with a pumpkin decorating contest, a bake sale, and raffle prizes on 30 October 2015 as a fundraising effort to support our Relay for Life team.

• Hosted documentary day on 19 November 2015 where we showed and then discussed, Pay It Forward.

• Hosted our second annual Game Night on 25 February 2016, as a fundraising event for the Family and Children's Aid in Danbury, CT. This event is open to all WCSU students and all are encouraged to bring a donation as an entry ticket to the event.

• Organized a trip on 2 April 2016 for 30 WCSU students to see the Broadway production of Finding Neverland. This trip was also open to all WCSU students.

• Participated in the WCSU Relay for Life in April 2016.

Honors Recruiting & Outreach:

• Participated in all June 2015 orientation days.

• Participated in Clubs Carnival on 30 August 2015 to attract students to the program.

• Participated in the Ancell School of Business’ Ancell Day and hosted a booth to attract students to the program on 9 September 2015.

• Hosted a booth on Western’s Second Annual Fresh Check Day on 16 September 2015 to help increase awareness of mental health issues, reduce the stigma and misconceptions that may deter students from asking for help and guidance, and increase the overall wellness on campus.

• From August 2015 through May 2016, the Kathwari Honors Office interviews applicants and processes their applications. In addition, we coordinate with
the coaches of several of WCSU athletic teams to bring scholar-athletes to the Honors Program.

- Participated in WCSU’s Street Fair on 17 October 2015 to attract students to the program and to answer any questions visiting family members may have about the program.
- Participated in WCSU’s Open House.
- Coordinated with WCSU’s Office of Admission an Honors Brunch during Accepted Students Day (9 April 2016) to provide information about the advantages of the Kathwari Honors Program to eligible students by G.P.A. and SAT scores.
- We hosted a PeaceJam Slam event at Western on Saturday, 23 April 2016, for middle and high school students from Danbury, Hartford, Newtown, Bethel, Waterbury in Connecticut as well as from Amherst and Pittsfield in Massachusetts. We had around 80 students in attendance. Twelve of our honors students were the mentors for the students at this event, while our Director was the keynote. We are looking to host another Slam in the fall.