November 2008 • Capstone Scholars  Now in its fourth year, the Capstone Scholars Program is an educational enrichment program designed to provide opportunities both in and beyond the classroom. Capstone Scholars are a select group of first-year students invited to the program based on their high school academic achievements. Read on to learn more about these accomplished students and their first-year college successes.

New class of Capstone Scholars continues standard of excellence
From this year’s freshman class of nearly 3,900 students, 520 were selected to be Capstone Scholars. Those selected had an average SAT score of 1301, while the average SAT score of the University’s freshman class was 1192. The freshman Capstone Scholars had an average high school GPA of 4.21, while the average GPA of the freshman class as a whole was 3.89.

Over the four years the Capstone Scholars Program has been in place, the scholars’ high school academic credentials have remained impressive.

A little more than half—53%—of this year’s freshman scholars are from out-of-state. Hailing from 30 states, the newest class of Capstone Scholars is 57% female.

Achievements of Capstone Scholars
The Capstone Scholars stand out from their peers through their academic accomplishments and their experiences while at the University.
• 67 scholars completed the Emerging Leaders Program in 2007
• 16 scholars won Magellan Scholar awards
• 1 received a Rotary International Scholarship
• 150 scholars studied abroad in 2007
• The 2007 freshman Capstone Scholars had an average GPA of 3.508 at the end of the year, almost a half-point higher than the average GPA of the freshman class as a whole.

Capstone Scholars pursue diverse interests with wide variety of majors
Students in the Capstone Scholars Program major in programs from all disciplines. Together, the scholars represent 50 majors.

High retention rate and satisfaction among Capstone Scholars
While 87% of the 2006 freshman class returned to the University in 2007 for their sophomore year, 90% of Capstone Scholars returned for the second year of the program.

In a University Housing survey, 93% of 2007 freshman scholars said that their living-learning community contributed to their overall academic experience. In addition, 98% of Capstone Scholars surveyed said they would recommend the program to others.

Of the 552 freshman Capstone Scholars who entered the University in fall 2006, 499 returned to the program for the second year.

Unless otherwise noted, all data comes from the Capstone Scholars Program. For full citations of data and for pdf files of current and past issues go to www.sa.sc.edu/publications.htm
For your reference file
For additional copies, call 777.4172 or e-mail gudridge@sc.edu.

Comments
Your comments and suggestions for future issues of “Causerie” are welcome. Please e-mail saas@mailbox.sc.edu.

Resources to help make our students better students.

Capstone Abroad
www.sa.sc.edu/sa/capstone.htm

In conjunction with the study abroad office, the Capstone Scholars Program sponsors Maymester trips abroad each year. The trips are designed to interest first-year Capstone Scholars in different cultures and to encourage them to pursue additional study-abroad opportunities.

Facts about Capstone Study Abroad:
• Special funding is available for Capstone Scholars for a Maymester or summer trip abroad. Capstone Scholars are eligible to apply for competitive $2,000 Passport Travel Grants to help with the cost of a study-abroad experience.
• There will be two Capstone Abroad trips in 2009, one to Italy and one to Peru.
• Applications for the Maymester programs are due by 12 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 5.

Volunteer opportunities
www.sa.sc.edu/communityservice/

Capstone Scholars are encouraged to participate in a variety of service projects during the year, including Service Saturdays. The Capstone Scholars Program also partners with Richland School District One to provide services including:
• Tutors- Scholars provide one-on-one support to students.
• Classroom Volunteers- Scholars provide support to the classroom teacher.
• Mentors- Scholars are companions, guides, helpers, role models, advocates, motivators and resources.

Capstone Scholars Fellows Program
www.sc.edu/capstonescholars/fellows.html

The Capstone Scholars Fellows Program recognizes especially accomplished Capstone Scholars. Capstone Scholars Fellows receive a designation on their transcripts, are honored at the Second-Year Capstone Scholars Banquet and have their names inscribed on a plaque in the Capstone Study Shack.

Capstone Scholars Fellow requirements:
• Maintain a 3.0 GPA at end of their 3rd semester.
• Complete UNIV 101 with at least a B.
• Earn at least 40 points by participating in Capstone Scholars activities.

Capstone Conversations
www.sc.edu/capstonescholars/opportunities.html

Capstone Conversations are a series of discussions led by accomplished faculty and community members. As part of the University 101 course, scholars are required to attend at least four of the discussions.

Conversations have been led by:
• Elwyn Gary, a World War II B-17 pilot.
• Patrick Hickey from the School of Nursing, who spoke about his experiences climbing Mt. Everest, despite his fear of heights.
• Bobby Kirby, U.S. Secret Service agent.
• Walter Liniger, a professor from the Institute of Southern Studies, who traveled internationally as a blues artist.

The Capstone Scholars Program describes timely topics of interest at the Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support.

1. An informal discussion or chat.
2. A publication.

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