

## Economics Major Explores the Impact of the Grand Coulee Dam



**Estela Navarro**, a WSU Honors College student who graduated in May in economics, policy and law, investigated the Grand Coulee dam, thanks to the Honors College.

She said she fell in love with WSU when she was introduced to the School of Economic Sciences, and knew this is where she belonged.

Estela Navarro ('22)

Navarro was inspired to look further into the effects of the Grand Coulee Dam when a capstone course in fall semester 2021 introduced her to the topic. She looked into the economic impact on removing the dam, as well as the impact it has on the environment and Native Americans.

“This project will help me post-graduation because I am getting the experience of looking into topics that raise the hard questions,” she said.

Navarro wants a career in policy making and her experience with her Honors thesis research has given a glimpse of what her career could look like in the future.

Navarro loved being a part of the Honors College. She enjoyed being an Honors mentor and getting to know the first-year students, as well as how Honors prioritizes discussion-based classes.

“With the Honors College, I got to explore topics that I normally wouldn’t have had the opportunity to.”



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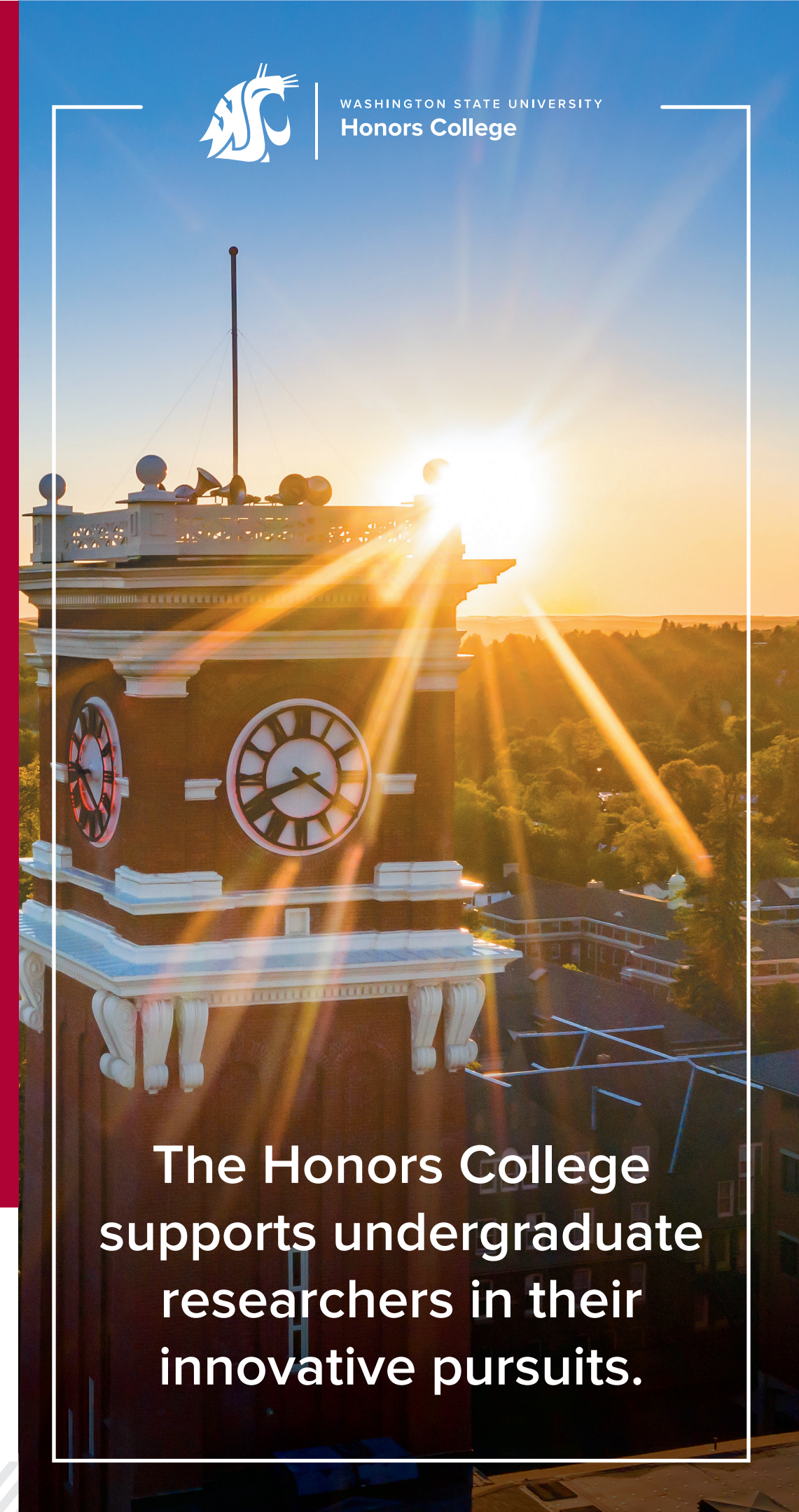
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supports undergraduate  
researchers in their  
innovative pursuits.



## ACTIVE AND ENGAGED

### Chemical Engineer Tackles Climate Change



**Aline Uwase**, a WSU Honors College student majoring in chemical engineering, plans to make the world a better place through research into clean energy technology and reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

She is an undergraduate researcher working with faculty member Su Ha in the O.H. Reaugh Laboratory for Oil and Gas Research in the Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture. She is investigating the effects of electric fields on reforming reactions to reduce their energy demand.

They use catalysts to enhance the reactions and take data measurements to investigate the effects of electric fields on those reactions. The cost of this kind of energy conversion is typically expensive and not feasible to maintain. Uwase hopes her research will help reduce the cost.

Uwase said she was drawn to this research because she wants a career in carbon dioxide capture and utilization.

“People should care about this issue because this topic is essential for environmental efforts and the reduction of fossil fuel energy.”

### Honors Student Dives into Mindfulness



**Reid Brown**, a WSU student in the Honors College double majoring in English and French, found an Honors initiative on Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) to be a key to her research into healing for female, sexual-assault victims.

With the help of her thesis advisor, Annie Lampman, Brown researched the MBSR approach and how people react to stressful situations. It allowed her to learn how to be mindful while dealing with tough topics within creative non-fiction, the area she aspires to pursue as her career.

“This project gave me the opportunity to self-reflect on where I’ve come from, and how I have come to see myself in this world as a woman,” she said. She learned how to be compassionate toward herself first and prioritize her mindfulness.

## PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Brown plans to go to graduate school and her Honors thesis research will be part of her application material. She further hopes that her research will be featured at academic conferences in the future.

Overall, she greatly appreciates her membership in the Honors College. In fact, it’s what drew her to enroll at WSU in the first place. After Honors orientation, she knew she had found a home, a community, and access to countless mentors. She was also impressed by the beauty of the area surrounding the university, and that her courses taken in high school at a community college transferred to WSU, she said.

“The compassionate mindset in Honors helps so many students, and the team of mentors telling me I’m doing enough is what kept me going.”

### Honors Thesis Research Aligns with Career Goals of Future Neurosurgeon



Justin Arthurs

**Justin Arthurs**, a first-generation WSU student and member of the Honors College, conducts research into how hyperbaric oxygen can be used to treat military brain injuries.

He was inspired to major in neuroscience and take a pre-med track from people close to him who struggle with mental health challenges. He saw all sides to the healthcare system, opening his eyes to both the good and the bad. This motivated him to becoming

a physician, he said.

Arthurs wanted to explore the topic of hyperbaric oxygen treatments due to his personal connection with a family member in the military who struggled with a brain injury after being involved in an explosion when deployed.

The research he is doing directly correlates to his future. He is going into the U.S. Air Force and will continue to pursue his goal of becoming a neurosurgeon.

Arthurs said, “Even if this research doesn’t pan out the way I hope, I still feel like this project gave me a chance to challenge the medical field with different perspectives about the way things are done.”

The project has given him a chance to think introspectively. The Honors College provided the opportunity to learn about himself through this research, different classes, and the amazing professors he’s had, he said.

## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

### Philosophy and Political Science Student Researches News Biases



Malea Loukides ('22)

**Malea Loukides**, a WSU Honors College student double majoring in philosophy and political science, focuses on the biases of national news and the impacts of social media.

She always knew she wanted to explore the world of political science, yet she was drawn into philosophy once she started her studies at WSU and made connections with faculty.

Loukides pursued the topic for her thesis project after learning about the nationalization of news in her classes and how local news gets overlooked. Yet, she noticed social media wasn’t covered and wanted to look into its role on the issue.

“There’s a lot to be learned about the topic and we don’t understand the full effect of social media, as well as the role it plays in politics,” she said.

Loukides plans to go to law school. Her Honors thesis has shown her that she can do a lot within the world of research as well, broadening her career dreams.

She feels that the Honors College has given her a global approach to learning that she did not experience before. Honors helped make her a well-rounded scholar, giving her the resources and tools she needs to be successful in her education, career, and life.

### Our Values

**Compassion.** Through kindness and support, we demonstrate a genuine interest in each other’s well-being and growth.

**Teamwork.** We all play an important role in the success of the Honors College and support the efforts of our team members as we work toward achieving a common goal.

**Respect.** We welcome each other’s diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas within an inclusive and non judgmental environment.

**Excellence.** We hold ourselves to a high standard in all that we do.