

Mason Daubenmire

Graduation : 05/03/2024

Honors classes : Bio 1 Honors, English Comp 1 and 2 Honors

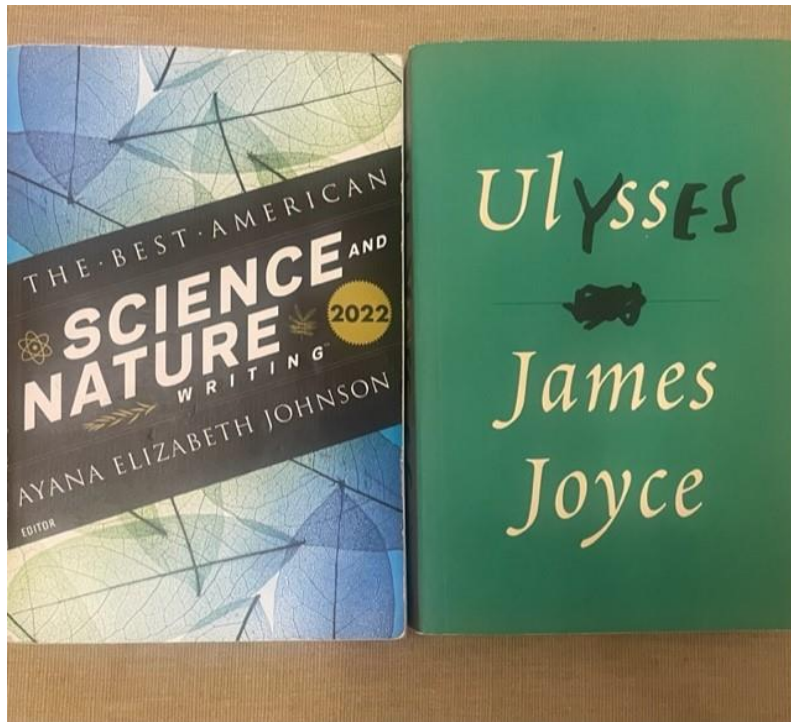
My name is Mason Daubenmire and I'm graduating from Northwest Arkansas Community College with honors as an associate of computer science. The honor classes I took while at NWACC was English and biology, I would have taken more but class conflict during some semesters forced me to take normal classes. When people think of honors, most would probably assume its way more difficult, boring, or just not worth it, but I like to think there are many of advantages I experienced in the honor society while at NWACC. In the beginning I took honor classes to challenge myself and to show greater academic interest in my GPA and diploma, but along the way I found new reasons for being in the honor society. I moved to Arkansas from Florida as soon as I finished high school. Being in a new city and state, I didn't know too many places or people and usually kept to myself until I was invited to join the honor society. After I joined, there was a sense of comradery, as I became friends with some of the members when we held meetings or special gatherings. Making those new friends really helped me establish myself in the NWACC and in Arkansas myself. Most of the friends I made also took a few of the same classes as myself, as there aren't too many honor classes within the school which helped me keep in touch with them, and study better than I would have by myself. Not only where the students super friendly, but the teachers were also nice, as they genuinely wanted their students to go above and beyond, willing to help any time of day if I had an issue with homework, a project, or any random question. We had a party sometimes where we got pizza and played games, to more serious activities from helping in the community. Members in the society were encouraged to participate in everything we did, from picking up trash from the road cleaning up nature, to discussing the future of get together and community service, to even going on field trips such as when the honors program let the students go to Crystal Bridges, an art museum, to visit a limited time exhibit starring Annie Leibowitz, who is best known for intimate photos of celebrities. The students of the honor society cleaned up trash off the side of SE JST, where we spilt into groups to cover more ground. My group particularly was tasked with part of the road where





the Bentonville high school was. While picking up trash we talked about ourselves such as our majors, hobbies, and aspirations, to get to know each other better. I had the most unique thing happen as I found and abandoned pair of wire cutter which was the best prize found during the cleanup. Afterwards everyone went and had lunch together, but I had to leave before we went to lunch, but I'm sure everyone had a great time, as I heard they went to a ramen place near the

street we clean up. During my time in English honors, we debated and wrote essays about diverse and interesting topics, with one of the more prominent ones being when we dissected poems and stories from a book of the best science and nature writing of 2022. It was filled with topics from all varieties, from hot topics such as global warming, to interesting facts about the sea cucumber. If I had to choose the best story we read in class, it would be "The Nature of Plastic." where it discusses how plastic affects our oceans. Most would assume that the entire chapter would be negative discussing about how wasteful and harmful humans are as we throw our garbage away without worrying where it goes, but it also discusses other interesting effects plastic has, from those to being helpful



for shelter and homes for various sea creatures, to the extremely serious dangers of microplastics in the air and water. The most interesting thing to me though is that the scientist from the study suggest that the plastic in the earth, that combine with minerals to form new compounds is defining a new era, that humanity will look back in the past and determine “This is where it all changed”. While we did work hard and covered diverse topics in class,

we also questioned each other with fun activities. Every year NWACC holds a special art week, where the honors program was included as one of the “Exhibits”. During our time, we held a little game show competition, where we were questioned on internet safety and history. I had the most fun and the least amount of fun at that time, as I was consistently playing the game to win a prize, a new book. That may not seem like a great prize but considering not everyone could win a book, it made me want to compete and win. It was a lot of fun, but also infuriating as one of the questions would be about the history of an obscure ruling in a small court case, and another question would be ask if it’s a good idea to share personal information online. Most of the topics discussed with the questions were new topics that I personally never learned about such as a court case about a punishment given to a student who posted something unpleasant online, but while he was out of school. It discussed how much power does the school system has with its students, even when they are not currently within its wall. I Managed to win a book “Ulysses” by James Joyce, where it is a similar story to “The Odysseus”, an epic written by Homer. After our time was finished, I was given an interview for the NWACC newspaper, mostly because I participated the most. It was certainly an experience I don't think I would have gotten anywhere else.

The reason most people go to college is to prepare themselves for getting a job they’re interested in in the future. What better way to prepare for the future than doing extra work for the same job. I’m just kidding; honors prepared me for transferring to a four-year college by preparing me for more challenging assignments and learning a better work



ethic required for higher education and tougher employment. Honors is a choice people must make, and those who make the choice to challenge themselves by taking advance courses in honors is preparing themselves to take on even greater challenges in the real world as honors teaches you that you need to make the conscious decision to join. It is not forced upon you and is not a requirement, but those who do the work and put in the effort are rewarded with better understanding, better work ethic, and better grades for those who wish to continue their academics by transferring. Honors teaches you that to be rewarded more for your efforts, you need to go above and beyond the normal expectations set by others or even possibly yourself. I think the most challenging project I had at NWACC was an intro to engineering, where we had to design, and create a product that we had to “sell to the public”. My group came up with a wide variety of ideas, mine was a key warmer, as it was in the middle of winter, I thought about a device that would melt frozen locks. It would also work as a rechargeable hand warmer, but we decided against it because we were all unexperienced with actual mechanics, so we decided on making a 3D printed brail label maker, that would dent special thick label paper so blind people would be able to label things like food, drawers, etc., such as how most blind people imprint numbers on money to note their denominations.

One experience I think is especially worth doing in honors was the trip to Crystal Bridges. Even living near crystal bridges, I often don't have the knowledge of special exhibits happening for a limited time or have a group I want to go with. It was a great experience hanging out with some friends and observing artwork from famous artist I've never heard of until then. It was a new experience that many people like me wouldn't have had unless offered by the honor program. A unique fact about crystal bridges is the entrance was designed to have in this semi sphere to create echoes. It's an interesting experience for the first time you visit. If you're not into art, another not worthy thing we did a few times is throw a party/get together. It's not the college parties you'd imagine at a frat house, but it's a nice gathering where we share food (mostly pizza) and play games, from magic the gathering to Nintendo games like Mario cart. The variety appeals to anyone from gamers to card collectors.



For new members joining, or people who are considering it, I have one piece of advice. Just do it, as there are almost no downsides to being in honors. Sure, there might be a little extra work and a higher expectation of yourself, but that's a good thing to push yourself, to strive for more. It's good for your academic record, the classes are often more interesting than the basic courses, and it comes with benefits, such as a special room only for honors, special events just for the honor students, and the most important thing to a teenager (or adult) going to college can get, snacks just for the honor society. Now it's not mandatory to do things on honors, if you are a homebody, you don't need to do the field trips. If you already pick up so much trash on your free time, you don't need to participate in the street clean up, but you should. The goal of honors is not necessarily about studying harder, and trying to advance academically, but it is also about the connections you make with those around you, and the new experiences you don't get from anywhere else. It is not forced to spend time in honors, but encouraged because the new experiences will at the very least be a fun story you can look fondly back on in the future, to something as big as changing your outlook on life, like why you go to college, or what do you want to do after you finish getting your degree. You can be proud to say you graduated from NWACC, and you can be proud that you got your associate degree, but when you walk across that stage at the end of the road, how many people can be proud that they are graduating with honors. I can and you can after you push yourself and join the honor society at NWACC.