

Duke University

Assessing Our Success: Year Four

I'm the first to admit that when I hear the word "assessment," both my eyes and my brain glaze over. Phrases like "learning objectives" and "measuring outcomes" – an integral part of the contemporary educational environment – do not inspire me to do my best work. Luckily for me, my co-director, Emily Klein, is an enthusiastic assessment whiz. Luckier still, the Baldwin Scholars has had guidance and support in all its assessment efforts from Matt Serra, Director of Academic Assessment for Trinity College.

Before we had selected the first Baldwin Scholars, when the program was in its earliest stages of development, Matt came to us and asked us how we intended to assess our efficacy. He was excited about the opportunity to get in on the ground floor of a new program, and we were grateful for his expertise (and that of his assistant director, Jennifer Hill). Matt first asked us to articulate our program's goals and objectives, a difficult exercise but a useful one. Next he asked us to connect those goals and objectives to the elements of the program, so we could evaluate whether each element was doing what we wanted it to. Finally, we devised an instrument to measure the qualities and skills we sought to develop in our Scholars: increased self-confidence, effective networking relationships, increased self-knowledge, better understanding of women's issues, and learning to become



An end-of-the-semester trip to Goodberry's for frozen custard

active agents of change.

We knew that we could use our instrument to measure change over time in our Scholars, and therefore decided to administer it to them as soon as they were admitted to the program, and then again when they graduated (and probably again 5 years post-graduation, though we are not there yet). Matt suggested that we use control groups to determine if our Scholars end up looking different from other women in their class year. We ultimately settled on two groups: women who applied to the Baldwin Scholars but were not admitted, and women who expressed interest (by returning a postcard the summer before they matriculated at Duke) but did not apply. A sample of women from those groups took the survey as first-year students and again as graduating seniors. We sweetened the pot for them by offering \$10 gift certificates to a local mall.

We have had access to the first-year “before” data for four years now, but did not see our first senior “after” data until late this spring, once our first cohort (and their sisters in the control groups) graduated. This was the moment we’d been waiting for, as it provided us with our first data point: did the program make a difference for our Scholars? Were they measurably different from their peers in self-confidence and leadership abilities? The envelope please . . .

The assessment results were better than we had dared to hope. The graduating Baldwin Scholars reported much higher self-confidence, self-knowledge, and belief in the possibility of change than did their peers. They grew in confidence speaking in public even when they knew their views would be unpopular. They demonstrate greater awareness of women’s issues and they see themselves as highly qualified leaders. Their peers tended to stay the same or even decline slightly in all these markers; if you plotted the results on a graph the Baldwin Scholars’ line would rise sharply while the control groups’ line remains straight. We also tracked the Scholars’ extracurricular and academic performance. 16 of 18 held leadership positions in campus organizations during multiple years. 12 of 18 participated in mentored research, and 9 of 18 graduated with distinction in their first or second major – more than twice the rate of graduation with distinction for the entire 2008 graduating class. Their mean cumulative GPA was also significantly higher than either of the control groups.

In short, our first assessment data points tell us that the program works. We are delighted with that news, especially as we head into our program review this coming fall. We are less delighted with the news that the women not in the program – all those we turn down every fall, and many of those who never apply – are not enjoying the same benefits that our Scholars do. Though many congratulate us for having 117 applicants for 18 slots – a sign of exclusivity – we do not feel good about turning away 99 women who are reaching out for support. We have shared our findings with the Women’s Center and others who serve women on campus, and we will be thinking about how some of the best parts of the program could be replicated for a wider audience.

Some of you may be hearing from us this fall as part of the program review; we will be seeking your feedback as parents, alumnae, internship supervisors and friends of the Baldwin Scholars. You are, of course, most welcome to send along such feedback to us anytime. Best wishes for a wonderful summer and we’ll be back in January to tell you about the Baldwin Scholars class of 2012!

Donna Lisker, Co-Director of the Baldwin Scholars Program

The Inaugural Mother-Daughter Weekend



Moms of Class of 2011
Baldwin Scholars gather at
the Friday night reception

In April 2008, we held our first Baldwin Scholars Mother-Daughter event. We were pleasantly surprised to have FORTY moms join us for a fun-filled weekend of activities.

We kicked off the weekend with a Friday night dessert reception for Baldwins and moms.

On Saturday morning, Donna Lisker gave a “state of the union” address for just the moms, giving them details about the Women’s Initiative, the creation of the Baldwin Scholars program, our goals and activities, and our roles in their daughters’ lives. This session proved to be one of the most popular of the weekend.

Joined by the students, we held a discussion of the book *You’re Wearing That?!* by Deborah Tannen about mother-daughter communication. Afternoon activities included the women’s lacrosse game and a belly-dancing lesson.

The highlight of the day proved to be the *All of the Above* play, which is an annual performance of monologues written by Duke women. The play was co-directed by Baldwin Scholars Kelley Akhiemokhali and Natalie Basile (both '08) and also featured Laura Welch ('08) as an actress.

Feedback about the weekend was very positive. Dads, watch out...you’re next!

Gifts to the Baldwin Scholars Program

We offer our sincere thanks to the following donors for their gifts; we appreciate their leadership and their belief in all that our Scholars can become.

Kelley Akhiemokhali '08
Beverly Bayham (mother of Lindsay Bayham '09)
Emily Grey '03
Margaret Taylor Smith '47

Women as Global Leaders Conference – March 2008

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

In March, four Baldwin Scholars, Andrea Dinamarco ('08), Julia Chapman, Clare Murray, and Brittany Hesbrook (all '10), presented a panel entitled "A Cross-Cultural Examination of Women as Political Leaders: Brazil, United States, and United Arab Emirates" at the Women as Global Leaders Conference hosted by Zayed University in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Student leaders from more than 180 countries came together to participate in workshops, roundtable discussions, and panel presentations led by scholars and non-profit professionals from the most prestigious institutions in the world, including the Kennedy School at Harvard, Doctors without Borders, UNICEF, and the United Nations. This year's theme, "Learning Leadership," featured keynote speakers such as Jane Fonda and Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York.

Our panel was divided into three papers united by the common theme, barriers to women in politics. The first paper was an honors thesis authored by Andrea Dinamarco, an International Comparative Studies major, on women politicians in Brazil. Julia Chapman, a Biomedical Engineering major, Clare Murray, an Art History major, and Brittany Hesbrook, a Political Science major, organized the second paper, which explored the campaign processes of Carol Moseley-Braun and Hillary Clinton in the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections. A third paper, "UAE: The Preclusion of Women in Government and Family Perceptions," was written by Fatema Saleh Al Marzooqi, a Zayed University student who attended the conference with Andrea in March 2006. Together, the three papers shed light on barriers associated with high-profile positions that transcend the cultural practices of a particular political system.

The four students raised over \$10,000 to pay for expenses associated with the trip. They received funds from many departments around campus including the Pratt School of Engineering, the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Education, the Scott Lee Stephenson Award in ICS, Student Government Travel Grants, Trinity Deans Grant, and the Baldwin Scholars Program.

- submitted by Andrea Dinamarco '08

Front row (L to R): Julia Chapman,
Brittany Hesbrook, Clare Murray

Back row: Andrea Dinamarco



Sasha Stein ('09): Duke in New York

I've always wanted to live in New York City and this summer I had my chance. I became instantly addicted. There is so much life and culture here and I can't believe I have already been here for a month and a half. During our first group meeting for the Duke in New York Arts and Media program, my professor told me to be sure to make a To-Do List in order to remember all the great things I wanted to do, the things I actually accomplished, and the things that I'd have to come back and finish; it was the best advice I was given. During the summer course, we explored various parts of Manhattan, ranging from Chinatown and the Financial District, to the Upper East Side and Harlem. I gained exposure to the culture of the city, while also gaining factual knowledge about the historical relevance of each location.

This summer I've also worked and gained hands-on business experience at Universal Records in the New Media Department of Universal Music Group. Knowing little about contemporary music, I figured doing an internship in the music industry would provide an exciting opportunity for me to learn the business components of producing and promoting albums. In my position, I was trusted with designing and implementing several promotional packages intended to both market and inform music company executives about upcoming artist releases. I've come away with a much greater appreciation of the work it takes to successfully develop and market a new album. I also think I am much more well versed in the rap and general music industry than I ever thought possible.

I constantly learned and explored this summer. Not only did I gain experience at my job and have a chance to foster my creativity, but also I was able to take advantage of New York's numerous attractions. I visited incredible museums, attended Broadway shows and festivals, and perused Greenmarkets in Union Square and Brooklyn, which only furthered my cultural orientation to the City. I feel I have engaged New York in a unique way through my internship and the DiNY program...and I have loved every minute of it!

Sasha Stein (R) with classmates and "the bull" in the Financial District



Fun photos from the Spring 2008 semester



(L to R): Aubrey Bonhivert ('09), Anita Pai ('08), Rosa La Cerva ('11), and Brittany Hesbrook ('10) chat with Soumya Natarajan, Program Coordinator at the Duke Women's Center, at a reception in January.

Maya Robinson ('11) with legendary journalist Helen Thomas after Thomas' lecture on Super Tuesday.



(L to R) Kate Van Buskirk, Awa Nur, Brittany Hesbrook, and Tosin Agbabiaka enjoy the Baldwin Ball in February

Contact us...

We'd love to hear from you!

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Best wishes for a relaxing summer!
Donna, Emily, and Colleen