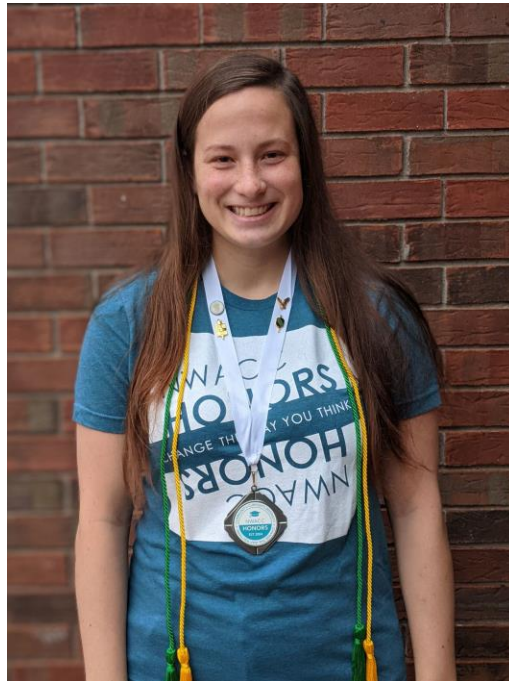


# Sophie Horan

ENGL 1023H Composition II, Honors.  
HIST 2013H History of American People Since 1877, Honors.  
ENGL 2213H Survey World Lit to 1650, Honors.  
ENGL 2223H Survey of World Lit from 1650, Honors.  
Graduated 12/11/2020



## Section 1

### Community, Curiosity, Diversity

The honors program at NWACC definitely forced me to become active in my classes and community. Prior to enrolling at NWACC, I did not know anyone in the Northwest Arkansas area since I had just moved all the way from Savannah, Georgia. I sought out a community that would push me to succeed and I got lucky when I stumbled into Sabrina Chesne's office during my second semester. I wasn't sure how my path would end up, but I am glad I embarked on the journey. I was able to forge close relationships with my professors and classmates. I joined additional honors programs that are available at NWACC and I had the opportunity to volunteer in the community. Without the honors program, my time at NWACC would not have been so memorable. Luckily, I can look back on my time in my first two years of undergraduate studies and smile as I recall all the lovely people and experiences.

One of the ways I was able to demonstrate engagement was through the service learning program. My professor for one of my honors courses, Dr. Huggard, required the class to participate in some form of service learning. I chose the E3 project, or Elmdale Elementary Entrepreneurial project. It functioned as an afterschool program for the fourth graders at Elmdale Elementary School. We would supervise and assist the students while they created and built their own products to eventually sell at NWACC. I continued my work here for three additional semesters until COVID-19 cut short the Spring 2020 E3 project. I was able to lead and guide an amazing group of girls who taught me that a little glitter never hurt anybody. I looked forward to my time with them every week and was sad to see our time wrap up at the end of the semester. This was just one of many experiences the honors program helped facilitate during my academic career at NWACC.



Another experience I had in the honors program helped cultivate my curiosity into other fields of study. I am a political science major, but took a great interest in writing and literature through Professor Chesne's guidance. I ended up enjoying my first class with her so much that I took another class with her the following semester. I was introduced to the national English Honor Society for two-year colleges, Sigma Kappa Delta. At first I was apprehensive, but felt welcomed when I saw familiar faces from the honors program. There seems to be a lot of crossover between the honors program and the several honor societies at NWACC. I was able to take on a leadership role during the Fall 2020 semester as the president. This was my first leadership role in any type of organization, so it definitely was difficult to adjust. However, I think it was definitely necessary for me to take on more responsibility as a leader and expand upon my people skills. Thus, my time with SKD sparked my interest and curiosity into literature and could also be translated into a potential career or further education.



My involvement in the honors program allowed me to explore perspectives as I met new people. I was a fairly new student at NWACC and hadn't been exposed to much of anything. The honors program changed this for the better. I took two classes with one of my favorite professors, Dr. Huggard, one of them being a more rigorous honors course. These history courses opened my eyes, as he taught more than the traditional Eurocentric view of American history. The courses focused on Native Americans and their experiences, as well as the struggle of African Americans who built our country on their backs. One of my other favorite professors, Sabrina Chesne, explored the world of literature throughout the two courses I took with her. We traveled from the times of ancient Japanese samurais to the magical realism of Latin America. Different religions, cultures, and backgrounds



were some of the many topics we discussed in class. I was lucky to have two wonderful professors that took the time to explore perspectives with me.

## Section 2

### Takeaways from Honors Program

The honors program offered many volunteer and educational opportunities that influenced not only my resume but also my soft skills. In fact, I was fortunate enough to earn a transfer scholarship to the

University of Arkansas because of my decorated resume. All the thanks is due to the honors program. The way I interact with people daily has been transformed for the better. I have been exposed to different perspectives and views that allow me to have a more open-minded approach to the world. I have learned to become a better public speaker because of my constant involvement in class discussions. The reward of taking an honors class is the unique structure; they are smaller, so it allows for more in depth conversations about the topic matter. I am now more comfortable talking within a group of people and can hold my own in an academic setting.

Right before COVID shut down the school and transitioned everything to virtual learning, I put these newly acquired soft skills into practice. I was awarded the Golden Eagle of the Month for March 2020 and spoke during the monthly board meeting. The president of the college among others were in attendance and listened as I thanked them for giving me the honor. Without the “preparation” of talking with my peers during my honors classes, I might not have been as confident. Additionally, the relationships I forged with my professors created more determination and certainty in my soft and hard skills.

## Section 3

### A Specific Moment to Share

While most of my time in the honors program was memorable, there have been some moments that stood out. As we have all known too well and experienced this past year and a half, COVID-19 put a wrench in our lives. For one, all my classes that had been meeting in person were now virtual. It was a big adjustment during the spring 2020 semester, but I still completed it. I did not have high hopes or expectations for the annual spring academic awards ceremony because of the unique nature of the semester. I had previously applied for the Academic All-Star Scholarship which was going to be announced during the virtual awards ceremony. The application process was thorough, I had to fill out an initial application in order to advance to the next round. During the next round I normally would have been interviewed in person, but because of COVID-19 I had to record myself answering some questions and put them together in a video. I tuned in to the awards ceremony and was surprised when I heard my name called as the Academic All-Star alternate for NWACC. All my hard work with the honors program, honors societies, and volunteering had paid off. In addition to that accolade, I also received an award as an outstanding honor student that same semester. This was especially



surprised when I heard my name called as the Academic All-Star alternate for NWACC. All my hard work with the honors program, honors societies, and volunteering had paid off. In addition to that accolade, I also received an award as an outstanding honor student that same semester. This was especially

memorable because it represented all the connections and achievements that the honors program made possible. I am extremely grateful for my time with the honors program at NWACC

#### **Section 4**

##### **Advice to Future Members**

For the new honors program members at NWACC I recommend you to take advantage of all the opportunities that it offers. Take the time to join that honor society or sign up for that weekend volunteering event. Take as many honor courses as possible and meet new people. Create strong relationships with your professors in order to challenge yourself intellectually. Open yourself up to new perspectives and diversify your own views. All of these are available at your fingertips once you decide to join the honors program. Make the first step in order to make the most of your time at NWACC.

