

7 January 2021

Dear friends of the SEBS General Honors Program,

Happy New Year and greetings from our remote equivalent of Waller Hall. We are starting this new year with some exciting changes.

After 6 years as director, Dr. Jason Grabosky has completed two terms as director and will be focusing on his role leading the Urban Forestry Program and as a faculty member in Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources. As Director he kept the program steady even as external changes left a massive wake, guided its move to more welcoming facilities, and grew the student body. After two terms as director, Jason has left an indelible imprint on the honors program for which we are enormously grateful.

I am excited to be following in those footsteps. For those that don't already know me, I began as a faculty member at Cook College/SEBS in 1997 and have a great fondness for the traditions of the school. I am a Professor of Landscape Architecture, so you can wind me up just asking about field trips, hands-on learning, Central Park, and integration of physical and social sciences. My research investigates applications of geospatial technologies to measure the ways our environment shapes us, particularly our health. Much of that research is conducted through the GeoHealth Lab Group at the Grant F. Walton Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis.

While the new year starts under different circumstances than what we had hoped, it also offers us a chance for a fresh start. My tenure as director begins at a fascinating time. I started working with both Jason and Janice Geiger a couple years ago to develop ideas for maintaining the integrity of our honors program while growing our size, diversity, and reputation. In many ways this is simply a continuation of the implementation that began last year with the students' collective efforts to shape a new mission for our Honors Program.

Janice and I are working to make much of this transition seamless for our students, some changes you can watch for include forging a stronger sense of identity for our program, an increased social media presence, and increased student and faculty roles in shaping the program's future. We will share more as we make progress on these throughout the year, but you can watch for evidence of the change on our program website at <https://sebshonors.rutgers.edu/>, or on Twitter and Instagram at @SEBSHonors.

As our honors program continues toward its goals it will be important that it be guided by more than just a couple people. You have probably already noticed that I refer to the program as “our program.’ If we want our honors students to fulfill their highest potential, we need a program that benefits from a community of contributors whose collective knowledge, energy and wisdom can only improve the honors experience. I will be asking more faculty and staff to become involved in teaching interdisciplinary honors seminars, connecting students with research, leading small group activities and developing plans for our future. We are also going to be turning to our students and asking them more about what they want and giving them opportunities to take ownership of more programmatic elements.

Working together we can make 2021 a great year for our honors program. I look forward to helping all of you find a way to share in that success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Tulloch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "T".

David Tulloch, Ph.D.

Director, SEBS General Honors Program  
Professor of Landscape Architecture