

Nevaeh Braucks

HNR 475

Dr. Leah White

### Why Honors?

From the first day of college, the Honors program has been a resource I knew I could count on to support and challenge me in ways I did not expect. I, like many others, joined without knowing much about Honors besides the superficial benefits that the program boasted- early registration, discounted printing, and an opportunity to join the Honors Learning Community and live in a nice dorm. However, after four years in the program, I have earned much more than those perks that drew me in. Honors has made me a more conscientious student who not only does work at a high level but actually takes the time to reflect on it, causing me more deeply develop my values as a lifelong learner and citizen of the world.

Early on in my program as a Theatre Generalist, I was not sure the Honors program would work well with my degree, but it has fit perfectly with the Honors curriculum. The three pillars of our program are leadership, intercultural engagement, and research and creative activity. These three competencies are critical to the thoughtful and impactful theatre which I strive to create. Since joining the Honors program, I have become more intentional about integrating them into my practice. Even if I stray away from theatre onto another life path, the way that I have learned to view the world through these lenses will certainly make me a valuable asset to any team I join.

My favorite thing the Honors program has done for me is introduce me to opportunities I would not have otherwise known. Specifically, I have volunteered with Aktion Club Theatre for

over a year, assisting in two productions and many rehearsals starring actors of many abilities from the Mankato area. Aktion Club would have never been on my radar without the program's encouragement, and I do not think I would have been able to make it a priority to fit into my chaotic schedule without the pressure of the Honors program. Working with them has completely changed my perspective on theatre and how I interact with the world as a whole, and that's not something many of my non-Honors peers have experienced.

Even though I graduate in only a few short months and technically won't be in the Honors program anymore, I know my time learning will not have ended. This has reprogrammed the way I experience things and evaluate my growth, and I know that its impact will only continue to develop over time. The Honors program faculty, students, and alumni are a very strong network full of resources and knowledge that I know I'll be able to lean on, no matter where I end up post-grad. I will always be an Honors student.