



# The adventures of Nola



Part 4: The Thrill of the Climb

# USA revisited

In November 2014, one year old Nola returned to the United States for the 49<sup>th</sup> [NCHC](#) conference in Denver, Colorado. Quite a different place from where she was born, in New Orleans....however: all Sheraton hotels are basically the same, so the conference itself was quite a familiar experience.

But let's not get ahead of things. First there were work field visits and city explorations. This year Nola enjoyed the comfortable company of 15 honours professionals from the HU and several others from Dutch 'partners in honours crime'.



Proud to be HU Honours

Monday morning starts with [an introduction](#) to Ken Wilber's "Integral Theory" by Hedwigh, the initiator of Tuesday's visit.

Nola is curious to find out what the whole 'hoo-ha' is about, sounds exciting, but also a bit dazzling.

The HU Honours crew meets up in the lobby of the hotel (not the Sheraton) for the start-up dinner down town. Is everybody wearing their HU Honours baseball jacket? Not Nola, it didn't come in her size ☹



# Regis University



*The first work field visit was to Loyola's 'sister university' (see Nola1). After an introduction by Sylvia, the organizer from Rotterdam, a group of mainly Applied Sciences colleagues visited the university campus for a tour and get-together with honours colleagues and students from [Regis](#).*

☞ 'hit the road'



Finding Nola!  
@Link  
(meeting point in  
the Sheraton lobby)





☞ Soul food

Nola feels @home straight away. It's all about Vision, Mission and Identity....seems so much easier when you have a religious framework to guide you.

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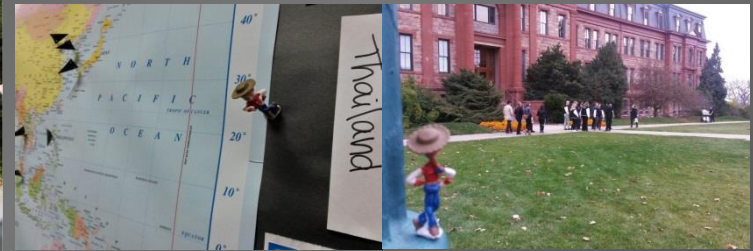
### Mission & Identity

The distinctiveness of a Jesuit education stems from its deep-rooted history and a mission grounded in faith and intellectual rigor. Since its beginnings in 1548 when the first Jesuit institution opened its doors in Messina, Sicily, Jesuit higher education remains committed to academic excellence, service, leadership and caring for the whole person. We invite you to learn more through our publications, videos, websites and a catalog of speakers available for conferences and events on Jesuit campuses.



The Dutch delegation splits into three groups for a tour of the campus, but it's not all that big so we keep bumping into each other, and Nola gets a chance to catch up with the rest, every now and then.

CAMPUS TOUR



Nola listens carefully when a Regis colleague explains about the semi-independent Health Centre for training and consultancy, good ideas for honours back home.

# Ken Wilber

Tuesday was the highlight of the work field visits. For starters in a physical sense: the view from Wilber's penthouse on the 19<sup>th</sup> floor was stunning. The impact of Wilber's theory and the interaction with the master himself took another couple of days to really hit.



Integral Theory



Like a true 'guru' Ken Wilber arrives when everybody is well seated and doesn't stay on for small talk.

And as Ken talks about spirals and integration and development and so on and so forth, Nola thinks about.....Halloween, well you know it's all about spirits in the end anyway.

# Nola was there





# University of Denver

*Wednesday the next university visit was scheduled. After yet another public transport adventure the HU Honours crew ended up in the cellar of one of the main buildings...that's where all exceptional education was located, such as service learning, the honours programme and the international desk.*



*↳ Social platforms*



Once you start seeing public transport as an interesting social platform, getting around most cities is actually quite fun, Nola thinks, as she observes the group purchasing tickets, waiting, chit-chatting, connecting, ...





Service Learning



And this concludes the work field visits, tomorrow the conference starts with City as Text. Nola can hardly wait.

Not much new in the presentation on [service learning](#), but Nola spots a valuable quote on the wall. Impressed she is, because despite what we all know and learn, it is always good to keep a focus on what should be at the core of our service .....and our teaching.



# City as Text



*City as Text, the traditional start up event of every NCHC conference, send over 400 participants out into the city to bring back information on neighborhoods, people, plans, social environments, cultural heritage and what ever there was to encounter.*



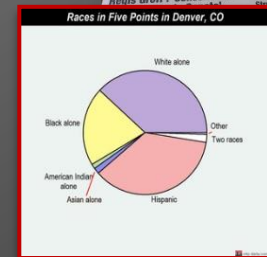
After a short introduction in the main conference room, Nola is send out to discover Five Points.



*so African-American cultural heritage*



The other members in Nola's group are more interested in visiting museums than hit the streets of this fascinating neighbourhood. After a while, they hit back down town, Nola continues on her own....  
....better, sometimes.



Nola discovers all kinds of things in the back streets, the trendy coffee shops, the newspapers and simply by talking to people. Another group feels sorry for Nola for being abandoned. To the contrary, she replies, it's quite fun on my own. They travel back into town together and exchange observations. All part of the CAT experience 😊

Urban Transformation



Gentrification



Nola is back in the Sheraton for the final wrap up. The students impress with their analyses, the lecturers with their support.

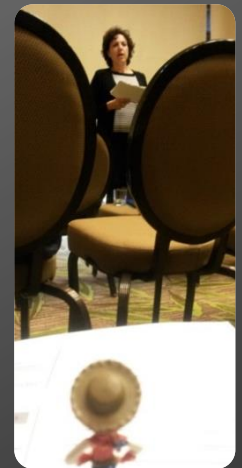
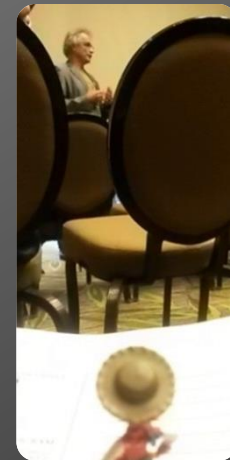
# The Thrill of the Climb

*The 2014 NCHC conference was all about striving, achieving, taking on the challenge to excel and what ever comes with that climb to the top. HU Honours was present with a workshop on [Dutch Didactics](#) in the morning. During the rest of the day everybody flocked out to different workshops and presentations. Every now and then colleagues met up in the coffee bar, around the stalls in the main hall or simply on WhatsApp. Afterwards all experiences were shared on the [HU Honours blog](#) and of course during the wrap-up diner in the Irish pub on Friday night.*



Nola 's focus this year is on study abroad in honours. It starts with the international reception the evening before. Always fun meeting up with colleagues, such as Naomi Yavneh Klos from Loyola University in New Orleans.

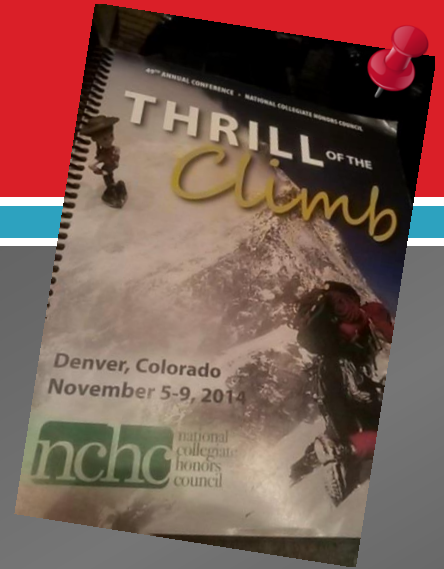
At the international forum Nola makes new friends and is invited to come to Chicago next year to talk about the HU's international honours programme on Europe.



*to Dutch Didactics*



The best part is the most unexpected, Nola thinks, as she listens to keynote speaker [Erik Weihenmayer's](#) amazing stories as a blind adventurer.



# After Hours...

*And maybe the most important part of this excellent study trip was the part we didn't show in pictures and blogs....or at least not consciously. The part that was written in between the lines of visits and presentations. The part that revealed the common ground of inspiration, showed the connections that grew from shared experience, expressed the love for learning and teaching in passionate discussions and above all the part in which we became the HU Honours team, beyond our jackets and ourselves.*



so 'the honours experience'



To Nola the honours experience is also about the laughs and the tears, and the surprises that come with every adventure: scarcely recovered from almost drowning in a pint of Irish red, she finds herself on top of a charity meter: "please park your good deeds here".... ☺

