Welcome to the 2017-18 English Department Newsletter. It has been a year of growth and changes, and I am happy to have the opportunity to share some of the highlights with you. As I have mentioned in previous columns, much of the English Department’s past and present success is due to the help it receives from its friends. We are generously supported by an extensive network of alumni and students, active and retired faculty, and other fellow travelers who believe deeply in the kind of humanities education that we offer. We are calling this network The Friends of English. If you are receiving this newsletter, we hope that you will count yourself as a member of this group. Last fall, we held the first meeting of our Friends of English Advisory Board, a group of English Department supporters dedicated to helping us realize some of the potential in our extensive network of Friends. They came to campus for a day-long meeting which culminated in a talk by R. A. Dickie, a Cy Young-Award-winning knuckle ball pitcher, best-selling author, and former UT English major who talked about the ways his life was enriched by his experiences as a student here. As we discussed in our first meeting, the Board’s primary goal is to improve communications between the English Department and its Friends and between the Friends themselves. This, in turn, should help us with the recruitment of new students and the job placement of our graduates, two of our other major goals. We also discussed ways to increase our scholarship funds to support students already enrolled in the program, the fourth of our four major goals. The members of the Board received copies of A Practical Education: Why Liberal Arts Majors Make Great Employees by Randall Stross and George Anders’s You Can Do Anything: The Surprising Power of a “Useless” Liberal Arts Education, two books that document the kinds of success that Liberal Arts majors generally and English majors in particular are having on the job market. I recommend these to anyone who has any doubts about the English Major’s continuing relevance.

We also decided to survey those on our mailing list to get a sense of the different ways that our Friends might be willing to support the Department. The response to this survey has been very positive. From personal experience I can testify to how inspiring it is to hear of the various and surprising ways majoring in English has helped our graduates make their way in the world: From medicine, law, and teaching to baseball and public service, our majors lead interesting and productive lives. If you have not had a chance to respond to the survey but would like to contribute to any of the goals mentioned above, please let me know.

Speaking of help from our Friends, it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the major gift that the Department has received this past year in support of its Writing Center. Because of the generosity of Judi and Jim Herbert and the Herbert family, we have been able to significantly expand and improve the services that the Writing Center offers, and this has major benefits for all students at the University of Tennessee, including our English majors and graduate students. We have initiated a new undergraduate peer tutoring program in order to provide more one-to-one help for students, and in order to staff this program we have hired 20 undergraduates. Not only was this helpful for the students who sought the tutors’ feedback in the Writing Center, but it also helped the undergraduate tutors themselves grow as writers and communicators. To coordinate the new peer tutoring program, the English De-
Misty Anderson was on TalkNews Radio for an interview and podcast about Christmas before and after “A Christmas Carol.” Her documentary “The Making of The Busy Body” aired on East TN PBS on November 5th, but you can also see it online at https://theatre.utk.edu/the-busy-body/. She currently serves as the Chair of the MLA’s Executive Committee on Religion and Literature. Misty also secured funding through Ready for the World, Thornton Athletics, the Division of Student Life, the PRIDE Center, Kinesiology, and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies to bring Wade Davis, former NFL football player and LGBTQ issues consultant, to campus during the run of The Strangers. He and playwright Chris Peña did a joint talk after the March 4 matinee of the play, and the next day Mr. Davis gave a public talk about combating homophobia in American sports. Misty also produced the pilot of Play it out. She has just completed the second volume of The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama, which focuses on particular performances of each play that are of special historical interest. She directed a production of Horace Walpole’s gothic incest tragedy The Mysterious Mother on May 2 at the Yale Center for British Art, then co-moderated a full day conference on gothic drama as the final event of Walpole’s 300th birthday. She ends the year-long series marking Walpole’s 300th birthday. She continues to serve as a member of the Executive and Steering Committees of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, for which she ran this year’s $25,000 Non-Tenure Track Faculty Travel fund- raiser; and on the board of the new River and Rail Theatre Company in Knoxville. She begins her term as President of the UTK Faculty Senate in late July after an eventful year as President-elect.

Service Learning and Literary Studies in English (edited by Laurie Grobman and Roberta Rosenberg), which contains an essay by Senior Lecturer Robin Barrow-Nichols, has been named the winner of the 2017 Teaching Literature Book Award, an international, refereed prize for the best book on teaching literature at the university level. The award is presented biennially by the faculty in the graduate programs in English at Idaho State University. In July, Barrow-Nichols presented a paper entitled “Dressed to Ride: Women’s Cycling in Jackson, Gissing, & Doyle” at the Victorian Popular Fiction Association in London, and in October she presented “Masculine Shock and Psychological Trauma in Victorian Fiction” at the Victorians Institute conference at Furman University.


The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded Katy Chiles a fellowship for 2018-2019. Katy was also elected to the Advisory Council for the American Literature Society, and she accepted an invitation to become a Consultant Reader for Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers. Last summer she attended Rare Book School at the University of Virginia. She presented portions of her book project at the ACLA Conference and the “Bibliographies Beyond the Disciplines” Conference, and she published an invited review of Jerome McGann’s edition of Martin Delany’s Blake; or, the Huts of America in American Periodicals. She is currently at work on a commissioned essay for African American Literature in Transition, Volume 1, 1750-1800 (Cambridge UP), Along with Anne Langendorfer and Matt Smith, Katy helped organize UTK’s Frederick Douglass Day, which celebrated Douglass’s birthday and brought together over 100 UTK students, faculty, and staff to participate in the Smithsonian’s online “transcribe-a-thon,” where volunteers helped transcribe the historical records of the Freedman’s Bureau. This past summer she worked with UTK Hodges Library and the Knoxville YWCA’s Phillis Wheatley Center on the “Phillis Wheatley Poetry Project,” which brought underserved high school students to campus to read Wheatley’s work, to see the first edition of Wheatley’s Poems in UTK Special Collections, to compose and present their own poetry, and to tour the UTK library and campus.

Last fall Dawn Coleman published “The Bible and the Sermonic Tradition” in The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in America, edited by Paul Gutjahr, and reviews of five Melville-related titles in Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies, for which she serves as book review editor. Her Preaching and the Rise of the American Novel was published in 2016) in the Fall 2017 issue of the MLA’s Delegate Assembly as the focus for LLC African American Studies. She was elected to the MLA’s Delegate Assembly as the forum delegate for LLC African American Studies. This post is for 2018-2021. In March, her article “Plantation Counter-narratives: Disrupting Master Accounts in Contemporary Cultural Production” appeared in The Journal of American Culture. A second article, “Poetics and Care in the Wake,” will be published in the May issue of ASAP/journal. Commander presented a new project entitled “Theatrical Speculations” at the Slavery’s Reinvention symposium at Rutgers University in April. She also traveled to Annapolis, Maryland, in April to give an invited lecture entitled “Freedom Flights” for the U.S. Naval Academy’s Africa Forum. Commander was awarded a Chancellor’s Research Grant for Fall 2018.
In October, the book Margaret Dean co-wrote with Scott Kelly was published by Knopf and landed at #5 on the hardcover nonfiction bestseller list that week. A very positive review of Endurance appeared in The New York Times Book Review, and an interview that she did with Kelly (“Astronauts get Writer’s Block, Too”) appeared in the New Yorker Science Blog.

In February, Mary Dzon gave a lecture and led a seminar on apocryphal infancy legends at the University of Illinois. In May, Mary served as an opponent for a dissertation defense at the University of Oslo.

Amy Elias participated in the “Impossible Times” seminar and gave a paper at the roundtable she organized entitled “Against Endtimes: Continuity as Critique” at the October conference of the Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present (ASAP/9) in Oakland, CA. She continues to serve as Director of the UT Humanities Center, and in March she met with legislators in Washington, DC, at the NHA Advocacy Day on behalf of the NEH. With her co-editor-in-chief Jonathan Eburne, she edits ASAP/Journal, which this year won the 2018 “Best New Journal” award from the Council of Editors of Learned Journals. Her article “The Voices of Hayden White” was published in the April 22, 2018, issue of the Los Angeles Review of Books. She is a member of the executive committee for the International Society for the Study of Narrative, has joined the editorial board of Contemporary Literature, was a judge for the MLA’s Matei Calinescu Book Prize, and serves on the 2018 conference program committee for The Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present.

Stan Garner contributed a paper entitled “Blinding Gloucester” to the “Violent Bodies, Violent Acts” working group at the American Society for Theater Research Conference in Atlanta on November 16. The third edition of the Norton Anthology of Drama, which he co-edits with J. Ellen Gainor (Cornell) and Martin Puchner (Harvard), was published earlier last fall. His review of Julia Jarcho’s Writing and the Modern Stage: Theater beyond Drama appeared in the Spring 2018 issue of Modern Drama. His book Kinesthetics Spectatorship in the Theater: Phenomenology, Cognition, Movement will be published later this year by Palgrave Macmillan.

Martin Griffin’s essay “Officers and Men” appeared in January in Herman Melville in Context (Cambridge UP, 2018). Together with Chris Hebert, Martin is organizing a one-day symposium on the theme of American Political Fictions for this coming September; the symposium is based on their jointly edited Stories of Nation, which was published last year as volume 48 in UT Press’s TSL series.

Jessi Grieser has been named assistant editor of Linguistics On, a new book series from Routledge focused on publishing short, topical monographs about Linguistics for undergraduate audiences.

Tom Haddox’s “Myth as Therapy in Lee Smith’s Oral History” was published in the Winter-Spring 2015 issue (which, despite the date, appeared in print in July 2017) of the Mississippi Quarterly. His review of Critical Insights: Short Fiction of Flannery O’Connor, ed. Robert C. Evans, appeared in the 2017 Flannery O’Connor Review. He was awarded the 2018 Andrew J. Kappel Prize in Literary Criticism for his essay “Unmaking Generations: On Gayl Jones’s Cor-

regidora and the Pastness of the Past.” It is awarded annually by the journal Twentieth-Century Literature for a “work submitted to the journal during the preceding year that is judged to make the most impressive contribution to our understanding and appreciation of the literature of the twentieth century.” Haddox’s review of David Crowe’s Cosmic Defiance: Updike’s Kierkegaard and the Maples Stories was published in the Autumn 2016 issue of Religion and Literature (which, despite the date, appeared in print in February 2018). In February, he presented a paper entitled “Rethinking Gayl Jones’s Achievement in Light of Die Vogelfängerin” at the Society for the Study of Southern Literature Conference in Austin, and in April, he presented a paper entitled “Rethinking the Third-Person Narrator in Muriel Spark’s The Comforters” at the International Society for the Study of Narrative Conference in Montreal. In March, he was appointed to the Editorial Advisory Board of The Flannery O’Connor Review.

Bill Hardwig, along with coeditor Susanna Ashton of Clemson University, edited Approaches to Teaching the Works of Charles W. Chesnutt (MLA Publications 2017). In part 1 of this volume, “Materials,” Hardwig and Ashton survey the critical reception of Chesnutt’s works in his lifetime and after, along with the biographical, critical, and archival texts available to teachers and students. The essays in part 2, “Approaches,” address such topics in teaching Chesnutt as his use of dialect, the role of intertextuality and genre in his writing, irony, and his treatment of race, economics, and social justice.

Joy Harjo was named an Artist of Change Fellow by the Ford Foundation. This award “will support visionary artists and cultural leaders in creating powerful works of art that help advance freedom, justice, and inclusion, and strengthen our democracy.” She will use this award to...
create arts mentorships in her Mvskoke community and to continue developing a musical that will restore the Mvskoke people to the origin story of blues and jazz. She traveled and performed all over the country and internationally last fall, including the Queensland Poetry Festival in Brisbane, Australia; Royal Festival Hall in London, Northern Michigan University, Returning the Gift Literary Festival (for Native literature) at the University of Oklahoma, Central Michigan University, Pima Community College in Tucson, ASU/Phoenix Art Museum (with two PhD students Katie Condon and Jeremy Reed), and was a featured speaker for the Haslam Global Awareness Speakers series at UTK. Her poetry collection How We Became Human, New and Selected Poems, was one of the featured selections for the National Endowment for the Arts Big Reads Project. She performed and spoke for Big Reads community projects in Poughkeepsie, NY and Flagstaff, AZ, and had three others scheduled. Poems appeared in POETRY Magazine, and probably in other places. This spring, her poem “An American Sunrise” was selected for the Best American Poetry 2018 anthology and her poem “Running” was accepted by The New Yorker. She judged the Walt Whitman First Book Award for the Academy of American Poets. In September, her community arts mentorship project for young Mvskoke women 15-25, For Girls Becoming, was launched in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Five young women have been studying under Mvskoke master artists in poetry, saxophone, songwriting, painting and design, and basket making. She performed at the University of Northern Alabama, University of Connecticut, East Tennessee State University, the community book program at Fort Lewis College where she also reunited with her band Poetic Justice for a performance, the #MeToo Philanthropy Conference of the NoVo Foundation, the NEA Big Read program in Eugene, OR, UNC Asheville, Wordfest Asheville, and to help honor Marilyn Kallet at her retirement party. She was awarded the Zimmerman Award for an outstanding alumnus by the University of New Mexico Alumni Association, and she was invited to participate in the PEN World Voices conference, to be a panelist for “America Real & Imagined” at the Brooklyn School of Music, and to be the AWP Gala speaker and a panelist at this year’s AWP Conference.

SALLY C. HARRIS’s essay “The Unseen in Le Fanu’s Dark Glass: Ether, Impenetrables, and Narrative” will appear in volume 45 of Victorians Institute Journal this year. Additionally, Sally’s 2017 Faculty First Grant enabled her to change her online lectures for English 295 Online so they are accessible with closed captioning and easy-to-read colors. The grant also helped her transition the lectures to YouTube and create short analysis videos using apps for the iPad, making the content of the course less reliant on expensive—and sometimes unreliable—technology.

HILARY HAVEN’s chapter on editions of Samuel Richardson’s works appeared in Samuel Richardson in Context (Cambridge University Press) in October 2017. She gave a presentation on eighteenth-century “fan fiction” and Samuel Richardson’s sequel to Pamela at the Canadian/Northeast American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference in October. She was also invited to give two community talks this past fall: a presentation on courtship in Pride and Prejudice to the Norris Community Library in late October, and a Digital Humanities talk to the MARCO Graduate Colloquium in November. She published a review of Burney studies over the past two decades in the Burney Journal in early 2018. She gave a presentation on Samuel Richardson’s revisions to Clarissa at the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) conference in March, and she organized and chaired an ASECS panel on “mansplaining” during the eighteenth century. She was also invited to give a community talk on class, conduct, and courtship in Pride and Prejudice at the Blount County Community Library’s “Love and Jane Austen” event in February.

CHRIS HEBERT published the article “My Year of Living Ignorantly” in the January 21 issue of The Guardian.

TOM HEFFERNAN’s latest article on Roman Law and Christian Persecution in the 2nd century has been accepted by the finest peer reviewed journal in the field, the Analecta Bollandiana which is published in Louvain, Belgium.

Over the summer of 2017, NANCY HENRY presented papers at the North American Victorian Studies Association Conference in Florence, Italy, the Women and Markets Conference at King’s College London and the George Eliot Universe Conference in Santa Cruz, California. She also co-organized the Eliot Universe with Jonathan Grossman (UCLA). She has recently co-edited the new Cambridge Companion to George Eliot (with George Levine), due out in 2019 in time for the Bicentennial of George Eliot’s birth. Nancy also attended the SEC Colloquium, “Bridging Boundaries in Nineteenth-Century Studies,” at Vanderbilt University (March 9-11, 2018). She recently completed Women, Literature and Finance in Victorian Britain: Cultures of Investment (forthcoming from Palgrave Macmillan), as well as the new Cambridge Companion to George Eliot (co-edited with George Levine and forthcoming from Cambridge University Press). She helped to sponsor the UT Opera production of Middlemarch in Spring (performed at the Bijou Theater, March 11-12) and participated in a Q and A with the composer and librettist. She continues as an editor of the Journal of Victorian Culture and George Eliot-George Henry Lewes Studies, as well as an organizer of the Nineteenth-Century British Research Seminar (funded by the Tennessee Humanities Center). This summer, she presented talks from her new book project on horses in Victorian literature.

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at conferences in Italy and Denmark. She has recently been designated as the Nancy Moore Goslee Chair in English.

HEATHER HIRSCHFELD’s essay “Playing with Hell: The Revenger’s Tragedy and the Infernal” was published in The Revenger’s Tragedy: State of Play, ed. by Gretchen Minton (Arden). The essay is related to her project on “The Resources of Hell in the Renaissance,” for which she received a Chancellor’s Grant for the spring semester. Her term as President of the Southeastern Renaissance Conference began last fall, and she is serving on the Planning Committee of the Shakespeare Association of America.

In 2018, LAURA HOWES’s essay on “Teaching the Language of Pearl” appeared in the MLA’s Approaches to Teaching the Middle English Pearl volume. In April, she presented recent research on the Troilus frontispiece at the 39th Annual Medieval and Renaissance Forum, “Image and Visual Experience in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance,” at Keene State College in New Hampshire. That trip also included a visit with Professor Emerita Marie Borroff (Yale), with whom she is working on a second edition of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: A Norton Critical Edition.

THORSTEN HUTH presented two papers at two conferences this year: “Conceptualizing, integrating, and assessing interactional learning targets in the L2 curriculum.” 15th International Pragmatics Conference (IPRA), Belfast, Northern Ireland, July 16-21, 2017; and “On graded scales: Interaction, proficiency, and assessment frameworks.” Presented at “Assessing speaking in context: New trends”, Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication (CLIC), Rice University, May 4-5, 2018.

LA VINIA DELOIS JENNINGS participated in the 23rd Toni Morrison Society Bench by the Road dedication on April 7, 2018, in Atlanta, Georgia. The Toni Morrison Society and the Historic South-View Preservation Foundation partnered to place the new bench and plaque to remember the 50th anniversary of Dr. King’s death and also to honor the many important historical figures who are buried in South-View Cemetery, established 1886. King was originally buried there before being moved to his final resting place at The King Center on Auburn Avenue near downtown Atlanta. The Bench by the Road Project is the commemorative initiative of the Toni Morrison Society that was launched in 2008. The presentation and poster of Brooke Hoffner, “Edna Pontellier’s Water Awakening and African Divinity Lasiiren,” took the first place Arts and Sciences Award in the Humanities Division at the 22nd EUReCA competitions held April 16-19, 2018, in Hodges Library. Jennings mentored the project. Early in Hoffner’s research, the English Department funded her field trip to New Orleans to uncover information about the servants of Kate Chopin (1850–1904), who lived in the city and whose novel The Awakening (1899) is also set there as well.

MARILYN KALLET was invited to offer a poem for Chancellor Beverly Davenport’s investiture held on October 13th. She was also asked to compose a poem for the dedication of the memorial garden at the William M. Bass Forensic Center, which she read on October 1st. The Center framed the poem, and it is on display there. Her seventh book of poems, How Our Bodies Learned, Black Widow Press, will be published in the first week of January.

LISA KING’s Legible Sovereignties: Rhetoric, Representations, and Native American Museums was released in October by Oregon State University Press. She gave a talk on her book (“Listening for the Stories: Indigenous Sovereignties and Self-Representation in a Museum Space”) at the UTK McClung Museum in September in anticipation of the book’s release and as part of the opening of the “Northwest Coast Art: A Community of Tradition” exhibit. She was interviewed by the New Books Network about her monograph Legible Sovereignties in January, which was posted as a podcast at http://newbooksnetwork.com/lisa-king-legible-sovereignties-rhetoric-representations-and-native-american-museums-oregon-state-up-2017/.

MICHAEL A. LOFARO notes that this has been a big year for work on James Agee. He has edited Let Us Now Praise Famous Men at 75: Anniversary Essays, written an essay for that volume entitled “Famous Men By the Numbers: An Analysis of Agee’s Changes from Cotton Tenants to Let Us Now Praise famous Men,” and served as the General Editor for two more volumes in The Works of James Agee: Screenplays—“The African Queen” and “The Night of the Hunter,” ed. Jeffrey Couchman; and Complete Film Criticism and Essays, ed. CHARLES MALAND. All three books were published by the University of Tennessee Press in 2017. Michael A. Lofaro also received the Distinguished Research Career at the University of Tennessee Award at the College of Arts & Sciences Awards Ceremony.

KELLI MACCARTÉY was invited by OIT to be featured on their Faculty Spotlight series for 2017. Faculty Spotlights are created to highlight an instructor’s successful use of technology in the classroom and online. Dr. MacCarter has worked over the years with OIT to create web-based interactive tools and instructional videos. She received a Faculty First grant and a grant from OIT to develop her fully-online version of Introduction to Poetry. The Spotlight video can be viewed at http://oit.utk.edu/instructional/strategies/faculty-spotlight/kelli-maccartey/. Kelli was also awarded a Faculty First grant to develop additional interactive online tools for Introduction to Poetry. Her project will be completed in the fall semester.

CHUCK MALAND’s edited collection of James Agee’s movie criticism, Complete Film Criticism: Reviews, Essays, and Faculty News continued on page 6...
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**Manuscripts**, was released in August 2017. It includes all the movie reviews Agee did for *Time and The Nation* between 1942 and 1948, all his published essays on movies (like his famous “Comedy’s Greatest Era”), and a number of previously unpublished manuscripts that give us more insight into Agee as a movie reviewer. Chuck also did a blog post for David Bordwell’s Website on Cinema describing the contours of the project (see http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/2017/06/17/james-agee-astonishing-excellence-a-guest-post-by-charles-maland/) and also reviewed the new Blu-ray release of Billy Wilder’s *The Apartment* in *Cineaste*. At the end of the fall semester he was named the College Marshall at the Arts and Sciences Awards Banquet; he carried the college banner at the spring graduation ceremony.

Senior Lecturer **SAMANTHA MURPHY** attended the South Central Renaissance Conference in Atlanta in April. While there she presented a paper entitled “The Devil’s Service: Witchcraft and Masculine Anxiety in Sixteenth Century Scotland” and chaired a panel on “Shakespeare: Minds and Bodies.”

**MARY PAPKE**’s long review of *Haunting Realities: Naturalist Gothic and American Realism*, edited by Monika Elbert and Wendy Ryden appeared in the Winter 2017 issue of *Studies in American Naturalism*. In March, she served as Pronouncer for the News Sentinel Regional Spelling Bee for the ninth time. At the Chancellor’s Honors Banquet in April, she was presented the Notable UT Woman Award.

**JEFF RINGER** continued to direct the first-year composition program, implementing a number of changes that included restructuring August workshops, adding regular unit check-ins for new PhD students, and reconfiguring the videographer position into a new coordinator of GTA evaluations position. Jeff also led the process of revising *Rhetorical Choices*, the custom textbook for English 101, which will be available for the Fall 2018 semester. Additionally, Jeff collaborated with several RWL graduate students to pilot a writing program research and assessment initiative that will continue in future years. Jeff will be presenting about that research with Josie Portz and Bethany Wood at the Council for Writing Program Administrators conference in Sacramento. In other scholarly news, Jeff presented a paper calling for a posthuman theory of writing transfer at CCC in Kansas City in March. He was on a panel that featured some of the top names in transfer theory, including Kathleen Blake Yancey, Elizabeth Wardle, and Jessie Moore. This invitation follows one he received last year to participate on a roundtable about religion as an understudied subject within rhetorical scholarship at the RSA conference in Minneapolis in June 2018.

**TANITA SAENKHM** published her book chapter on “Working Toward Being a Tenured WPA” in a collection entitled *Professionalizing Second Language Writing* (Parlor Press, 2017), edited by Paul Kei Matsuda, Katherine O’Meara, and Sarah Snyder (https://www.parlorpress.com/professionalizing_slw). Additionally, Tanita (Primary Investigator) and RWL MA student **Joseph Wilson** (Investigator) received a 2017 CWPA (Council of Writing Program Administrators) Research Grant ($2,000) to support their project, “Continual Assessing Placement Procedures for L2 Writers: An Institutional Case Study,” that assesses the University of Tennessee’s ESL Writing Program’s current placement procedures. In Summer 2017, Tanita delivered her research paper on “Second Language Writing Instruction and Teacher Education in Thailand: Perspectives from the Primary and Secondary Schools” at the Symposium on Second Language Writing, in Bangkok, Thailand, in June 2017. At the symposium, Joseph and Tanita also co-presented their paper “Twice Assessing Placement Procedures for L2 Writers: An Institutional Case Study.” They later co-presented a paper on “Continual Assessing Placement Procedures for Multilingual Writers: A Sustainable Framework for Placement” at the Council of Writing Program Administrators Conference, which took place in July 2017 in Knoxville, TN. Finally, Tanita was invited to give two public lectures in Thailand. Entitled “Assessing L2 Writing in the Classroom Context,” one lecture was hosted by the Faculty of Education’s Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Chulalongkorn University. Her second talk on “Research Designs and Theoretical Frameworks in Qualitative Research on L2 Writing” was organized by Chulalongkorn University’s Language Institute.

In March 2018, **TANITA** co-presented a research paper entitled “The Placement of L2 Writers into First-Year Composition Courses in U.S. Colleges and Universities: A Nationwide Survey” with Paul Kei Matsuda of Arizona State University at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, which took place in Kansas City, Missouri in March 2018. This research project was a part of a panel on “New Territories in Placement Research: Investigating and (Re)Assessing Placement Practices for L2 Writers,” and was supported by a CCC Research Initiative grant. At the TESOL 2018 International Convention & English Language Expo in Chicago in March 2018, Tanita presented on “English Writing Instruction and Teacher Preparation at the Primary and Secondary Levels in Thailand.” This project was supported by the English Department’s 2017 Hodges Summer Research Grant. As the Chair-Elect of the Second Language Writing Interest Section (SLWIS) at TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), Tanita also organized and chaired two panels focusing on second language writing. In 2018-2019, Tanita
serves as the Chair of the SLWIS at TESOL. At UTK this spring semester, Tanita was invited by the Haslam Scholars Program to give a lecture entitled “Maximizing Student Agency in Placement Decisions: Multilingual Writers in English Composition Courses,” as a part of the program’s lecture series focusing on global awareness.

**URMILA SESHAGIRI** published an edited cluster, *Mind the Gap! Modernism and Feminist Praxis, in Modernism/modernity: Print-Plus*. In July, she co-organized and presented a paper for a seminar called “Modernism Now” at the Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association in Utrecht; in August, she gave a talk entitled “Modern/Novel: Plotting Against Modernism” at the Modernist Studies Association Conference in Amsterdam. With the support of an NEH Summer Stipend, she traveled to the British Library and the University of Sussex for archival research on Virginia Woolf’s memoir, “Sketch of the Past.”

In October, **ERIN ELIZABETH SMITH** was inducted into the East Tennessee Writers Hall of Fame. That semester she has also had poems appear in *Sakura Review, Red Paint Hill, Crab Fat Magazine*, and *Yes Poetry*. Her third full-length collection of poetry, *Down: The Alice Poems*, was accepted for publication by Agape Editions in 2019. Last spring, SHE was a featured reader at the Little Grassy Festival at the University of Southern Illinois-Carbondale and at Writer’s Day at Indian River State College in Port St. Lucie, FL, where she also gave talks on publishing and the writer’s life. She presented at both the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900 and the New Orleans Poetry Festival and read as part of a National Poetry Month event at the East Tennessee History Center here in Knoxville. Last semester also marked her final one as the Jack E. Reese Writer in the Residence at the UTK Libraries.

**ALUMNI NOTES**


Dale received both his master’s degree and doctorate from the department. His two most recent books, *The End of the End of Everything: Stories* and *The Subterranean Season: A Novel*, were both published in 2015. His story “Death and Suffrage” was adapted for Showtime’s “Masters of Horror” television series. His short fiction has won the Shirley Jackson Award and the International Horror Guild Award, has been nominated for the Nebula and Bram Stoker awards, and has been reprinted frequently in best-of-the-year anthologies, including “The Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy.” In 2016, Bailey received the Lenoir-Rhyne Faculty Scholar Award, which is presented to the faculty member who has made the greatest contribution to his or her discipline during the academic year. More details about Dale’s publications are available at [dalebailey.com](http://dalebailey.com).

Congratulations to **Brannon Costello** (PhD 2004), who was recently promoted to full professor in the Department of English at Louisiana State University. He was also a recipient of a 2018 Mid-Career Rainmaker Award for Research and Creative Activity from LSU’s Office of Research and Economic Development. His most recent book, *Neon Visions: The Comics of Howard Chaykin*, was published by LSU Press in the fall of 2017.
HONORING RETIREES: Mike Lofaro and Marilyn Kallet

At the Department’s spring social this May, we honored two colleagues who retired at the end of the academic year: Mike Lofaro and Marilyn Kallet. Below are edited comments from two colleagues on Mike and Marilyn’s valuable contributions to the department.

CHUCK MALAND:
Mike Lofaro has been a kind and generous colleague to me since I had the good fortune to join our Department in the fall of 1978, and it’s an honor that Allen asked me to tell you a little about his career and achievements as he approaches retirement from full-time teaching. And I hope that in my comments I’ll tell most of you at least a little something you didn’t already know about Mike.

In his studies Mike didn’t start out in American literature. In fact, he earned his undergraduate degree at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where he started out in engineering and ended up graduating with a B.S., majoring in Comparative Literature and Languages and minoring in Aeronautical Engineering. This was not that long after Neil Armstrong first walked on the moon, and I can only guess that his parents lobbied him hard to have at least part of his degree in a practical field—literary studies.

Mike shifted to American literature and culture in his graduate study at the University of Maryland, where he emphasized colonial and early American literature to the Civil War and minored in folklore, with a dissertation on a topic that would become one of his specialties—the biographical image of Daniel Boone.

Mike came straight from graduate school to his job at UT, arriving in 1975. UT was growing and McClung was crowded for space when he arrived. It was a banner year: he came the same year as Don Cox, Tom Heffernan, and Jack Armistead, and all four were shoehorned into the office in 401, which now serves as a snug seminar room. UT was still on the quarter system in those days, and Mike also told me that junior faculty were not given their teaching assignments by John Hansen until the morning of the first day of classes and that they had to be sure to be outside Dr. Hansen’s office before 8 a.m. in case one of their assignments first met at 8 that day. Starting with that hectic beginning, Mike fashioned a consistently productive academic career, teaching, writing, and providing service to the department, college, university, community, and broader profession. Let me hit just a few of the highlights of those three areas.

Mike has loved graduate teaching, and he’s not been one to teach the same Seminar over and over. I counted about 15 different graduate seminars that he prepared with topics as varied as The frontier and development of early American popular literature to 1834; Early American Gothic Fiction; intertextuality and the origins of American Autobiography to 1898; American Humor to 1836 many more. He also taught many undergraduate courses in early American literature and developed, through a secondary interest, a whole raft of different folklore. I often remember students dropping off fascinating folklore projects in a box outside Mike’s office as finals week was winding down.

One thing that always has impressed me about Mike’s teaching is how he has encouraged and mentored many of his graduate students to prepare work for publication and to hone their scholarly skills. For those of you who have been around awhile, Mike helped direct the following graduate students into the world of academic publishing. I’ll mention only a few: Jimmy Killingsworth, Claudia Milstead, Pat Bradley, Mary Moss, Misty McGinnis, Brian Gempp, Katy Burnett, and Hugh Davis, who now serves as the Associate Editor of the James Agee Complete Works project.

Mike also has been a consistently engaged and productive researcher and scholar. His first book, adapted from his dissertation, was The Life and Adventures of Daniel Boone, published by the University of Press of Kentucky. He followed that up with Davy Crockett: The Man, The Legend, The Legacy, 1786-1986, published by UT Press. Fittingly, the major University Press of each figure’s home state published his books.

One thing I’ve marveled at is Mike’s ability to work on a variety of projects simultaneously, some not always closely related. While he was working on Boone and Crockett, Mike also was compiling a massive bibliographic database of Southern manuscript sermons before 1800. This is a project that Richard Beale Davis encouraged, and I remember Mike at a certain time in his career working hard on that project, which came to fruition with a publication of over 1650 entries in 2010, both in fully searchable database and a hard copy print version.

Many of you know Mike’s work has branched into the 20th century, as he’s been actively involved in featuring and preserving the work of one of Knoxville’s literary native sons, James Agee. As the general editor of UT Press’s COMPLETE WORKS OF JAMES AGEE, Mike has been the central driving force into making sure that all of Agee’s published work will be available to scholars and general readers in the future. I consulted closely with Mike as I was preparing my edition of Agee’s movie criticism, and I saw first-hand how devoted he is to the project and how hard he works at getting the volumes published.

In a lot of ways Mike’s engagement with Agee’s work combines scholarship with service, and he’s done a lot of service over the years. To mention just a few, he served ten years as DGS in the English Department, has served on the UT Faculty Senate, the Graduate Council, the Research Council, and the College’s Promotion and Tenure Committee. For ten years he was actively engaged with two international language organizations, including membership on the governing board of the International Association of University Professors of English.

He’s done more than his share in winning prestigious competitive fellowships and garnering recognition for his work: to name a few, he’s been supported by the National Endowment of the Humanities several times, the Huntington Library, the Newberry Library, was a fellow at the National Humanities Center at the Research Triangle in North Carolina; was a Senior Fulbright Lecturer at the University of Vienna (one of the plum Fulbright appointments). Here on campus he won the College’s Senior
Research and Creative Achievement Award; the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Academic Outreach; and just last December, fittingly, was given the College’s Distinguished Senior Career Research Award.

Let me add, as I conclude, that I think Mike has had some fun along the way. In 1986 he was on a panel during a state homecoming celebration with music historian Charles Wolfe, and singer-songwriters Emmylou Harris and Tom T. Hall. You all know Emmylou Harris, but Hall, you may or may not know, had 12 number one country hits, including “Harper Valley PTA” and “A Week in a County Jail.” He also wrote the memorable “I Like Beer.” [Check that one out on YouTube.] I’ll bet that was a fun session. And, as a person of Scandinavian descent myself, the most important thing I found on his vita is that he’s likely the only member of the department ever to do an interview with Svenska Dagbladet, a leading Swedish daily newspaper.

Mike may be formally retiring from full-time teaching, but he has a bunch of irons still in the fire: he’s preparing a collection of three popular biographies from 1833—on Boone, Crockett, and Black Hawk—that will show competing versions of the American frontier in that formative era. With another former UT student that many of you know, the poet Jesse Graves, who now teaches at ETSU, he’s co-editing the volume The Big Game, and co-translated Benjamin Peret’s The Last Love Poems, translated Paul Eluard’s Last Love Poems, Benjamín Peret’s The Big Game, and co-translated the contemporary French poet Chantal Bizzini’s Disenchanted City. There are books for children, recipes, and religion. She holds the distinguished Nancy Moore Goslee Endowed Chair in the English Department, and she has held poetry workshops in Avuillar, France for most of the last decade. She has performed her poems on campuses and in theaters across the United States, as well as in France and Poland. Jon Manchip White, founder of our Creative Writing program, certainly made a fine choice of Marilyn to continue his work and the work of the program, and to bolster it, and enlarge upon it. Jon would be very proud.

Marilyn has been immensely important also in her summer workshops demonstrating to local high school and middle school teachers how best to get their students to respond to poetry. She was instrumental in the founding and development of the Knoxville Writers’ Guild. She has brought to campus a range of symposia about poetry, perhaps most recently the Gathering of Surrealist Poets, which generated a photo in which she’s wearing some sort of huge wooly cape and huge wooly helmet with huge wooly horns that once housed the spirit of an American plains buffalo. She has directed the Creative Writing Program here at the University of Tennessee for most of the years since I’ve been here—with breathers provided by Michael Knight and, now, Margaret Lazarus Dean. She has written beautiful poems in formal verse (sonnets, pantoums, ghazals), free verse, prose poems, experimental poetry, and honestly some stuff I wasn’t sure what it was, though I liked the sound of it, all of it seasoned by her sense of adventure.

The University of Tennessee lists her as a specialist on poetry’s role in times of crisis, as well as on poetry and healing, poetry and humor, poetry and dreams, poetry and Jewish identity. And speaking of dreams, Marilyn has for years taught a poetry writing course called “Dreamworks”—a course that has touched the lives of hundreds and hundreds of students, and I have seen the direct results on them—they have felt emboldened, empowered to delve into the mysteries of their own existences, which has resulted in some of the best work of their lives.

Finally, I want to say that when I arrived here to teach in 1986, there was a small but fervent group of writers and poets in the immediate area. In the years since then I have witnessed Marilyn’s influence and hard ground-level support spread until it seems the entire region is humming along with poetry. Many people helped, but it was Marilyn’s strength and determination that made it happen.
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Congratulations to all our students who were granted advanced degrees in 2017-18.

FALL 2017

M.A.: Sam Cox, “‘Thou art the lorliest lede that ever I on looked’: Arthur and Kingship as Represented by the Alliterative Morte Arthure, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and The Awntyrs of Arthur” (Howes)

SPRING 2018
Ph.D.: Benjamin McClendon, “Tripping without Falling” (Kallet); Caroline Wilkinson, “Ornament and Reward, A Novel, with Critical Introduction, “A Collision between Social Realism and Experimentalism” (Knight)

M.A.: Emily Bonner, “Sensory Subversion: Black Speculative Fiction in Ann Petry’s The Street and Octavia Butler’s Kindred” (Commander); Allie Burns; Julie Cruz; Spencer Frantom; Genevieve Gilliland, “The Abstraction of Meaning in the Digital Landscape and the Communities that Form There” (Morey); Keeley Harper; Kenneth Hawkins; Bryce Patton, “The Sound and Word Can Translate…To the Visual”: Sound in the Adaptations of John Huston” (Maland); Trent Sanders, “Sacred Knowing: Faith-Act and the Limitation of Form in the Poetry of John Milton” (Welch); Hannah Soblo, “I Will Find My Way”: A Case Study of Multilingual Students Developing Their Aspirational Identities (Saenkhum); Joseph Wilson, “Identity and Transdisciplinarity: A Study of L2 Writing Specialist Identity across Contexts” (Saenkhum)

MFA: Mick McGrath, “New Brutalism: A Novel” (Knight); Anna Megdell, “The Dwelling Place” (Knight); Mollie Swayne, “Bermuda and Other Stories” (Knight); Adam Walton, “The Marble Ode ” (Harjo); Nicole Yackley, “Freedom and Other Constraints” (Harjo)

SUMMER 2018
Ph.D.: Kali Mobley Finn, “What Do GTAs Transfer into Their Pedagogical Practices? A Qualitative Study about Ph.D. GTAs and the Transferability of Writing Pedagogy Education” (Ringer); Jacqueline Kerr, “Mapping the Rhetorical Tectonics of Place in Local Discourses of Hydraulic Fracturing” (King); Rosemary Kitchen, “Field Notes for the Magician” (Smith); Kierstyn Lamour, “Pre-Brides and Independent Heroines: Evolving Representations of Female Teen Protagonists in American Film, 1982-2015” (Maland); Andrew Todd, “Presenting Riddles: The Artifact Text in Contemporary Fiction” (Elias)

M.A.: Jacob Baggett, “Medieval Mirroring: Fantastic Space and the Qualities that Native Characters Reflect” (Howes); Johaeng Rho; Erin Walker, “Defamiliar” (Kallet)
The English Department hired a new full-time Assistant Director of the Writing Center, Dr. Pax Gutierrez-Neal, who will design and lead the undergraduate tutor training sessions.

The Writing Center is now able to provide new support for faculty who teach with writing in courses across the disciplines. During this past summer, a workshop supported by the Jim and Judi Herbert Excellence in Writing Endowment brought together faculty from Mathematics, Nuclear Engineering, Philosophy, Political Science, and Theatre to consider ways in which they can help students learn to write better in their courses. The Center is now working with those faculty on redesigning writing assignments and developing new approaches to in-class instruction.

The Writing Division has also been a University leader in developing courses with an Experience Learning component. Through internships and editorial assistantships, these courses allow students to develop and apply their skills in various types of workplace environments. Thanks as well to financial help from Dr. Michael Dennis, we have been able to provide conference funding for undergraduate students who want to network with prospective employers.

There have also been some major changes in our department: Three of our senior faculty members announced their retirements in the past year. Marilyn Kallet and Michael Lofaro retired at the end of the Spring 2018 semester, and Chuck Maland will retire at the end of the Fall 2018 semester. Together these three professors have contributed 120 years of service to the Department! To say they will be missed is an understatement. It is difficult to select from the high points of such long and distinguished careers, but I know that Marilyn’s students will miss her dreamworks course in poetry writing and the way it made poetry a personal and practical part of their lives. As our new poet laureate of Knoxville, she will continue to enhance her already impressive record of public service. Michael’s students will miss the yarns about Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone and the way he can translate backwoods humor of the past into a modern idiom. He will continue to work on his edition of the complete works of James Agee. Chuck’s film students will miss not only his jokes, but his ability to bring the rich history of American Cinema to life in the classroom. We will all remember the crucial role that he played in establishing the Cinema Studies Program here at the University of Tennessee. All three professors will be awarded Emeritus status, and we hope to continue to benefit from their many years of experience. We wish the best of luck to them all.

Finally, let me close by mentioning some of the ways in which the English Department faculty have distinguished themselves in the past year. Last fall, Lisa King’s Legible Sovereignties: Rhetoric, Representations, and Native American Museums was published by the University of Oregon Press, and Endurance by Scott Kelly and Margaret Dean premiered at number five on the New York Times Best Sellers List. Three of our faculty members were recognized at the College Awards Banquet: Marcel Brouwers received an Excellence in Teaching Award; Michael Lofaro was recognized for his Distinguished Research career, and Chuck Maland was appointed College Marshall, the College’s highest honor. At this time, we also learned that Katy Chiles has been awarded a prestigious NEH Fellowship for 2018-19. In the spring, Marilyn Kallet won the L.R. Hessler Award for exceptional teaching and service, and Mary Papke won the Notable UT Woman Award which recognizes those who have brought great distinction to the university. Two of our MA students won Fulbright Fellowships to pursue their work abroad. Trent Sanders will travel to Romania where he will write a play on Romanian Christian exiles fleeing persecution in the 1950s from Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, and Joseph Wilson will be teaching and studying in Kazakhstan while conducting research on multilingual student writing. Once again this year, Joy Harjo has won a major poetry prize. She won the Camaiore International Award for Poetry and traveled to Camaiore in the province of Lucca, Italy this spring to receive her award. Most fittingly, Donna Bodheimer received the College’s Outstanding Academic Support Award.

Thanks to all of you who have supported our mission by contributing to the Department. Your contributions support a variety of undergraduate and graduate scholarships, student research grants and assistantships, and other programs that enrich our students’ educational experience. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the English Enrichment Fund can donate at any time (follow the link at http://english.utk.edu/support-the-department). Those of you who are graduates of our department and those who are not but who follow and support our work remain a crucial part of our success. Our website (http://english.utk.edu) will help us bring you exciting new information on the department and its many activities. We also have a Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/UTKDepartmentofEnglish) which features weekly news about events, readings, pictures of campus life, and faculty and student news. Check it out when you get a chance, and don’t hesitate to let us know if there’s any way these sites can serve you better.

Have a happy and productive year, and please stay in touch.

— Faculty News
The Department and the Writing Center have been the beneficiary of a generous gift from Judy and Jim Herbert. Kirsten Benson tells us a little about Judi and the story behind her passion for writing.

Judi Herbert’s love of English began as a UT freshman, and she graduated in 1963 with a major in English. Her interest in writing grew from her own experience as a grader for English courses and later from her interactions with employees at Neogen, her husband Jim’s (’62, Animal Science) business. She reviewed the resumes of young people who wanted to work for the company and became concerned about their writing skills. When she considered how her support for UT might make an impact, she says she wanted to focus on writing. “It doesn’t make a difference what students are doing—nuclear physics, business, science, agriculture—they still have to be able to express it. It’s one thing to know it, but to be able to communicate it to someone else, to be able to write applications, resumes, publications or any kind of paper, is important.”

Judi has served on the College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Advisory Board since 2013, and she and Jim were named UT Philanthropists of the Year in 2017. The Herberts played a major role in the 2017 Big Orange Give campaign, successfully challenging the UT community to raise $500,000 by offering a matching $500,000 gift for the Writing Center. They believe that helping students become better writers is something UT is already doing well and can expand even further. Their support is helping the Writing Center take transformational strides towards creating a comprehensive array of writing support services, extending its reach to even greater numbers of students and better targeting those with specialized writing needs.

When she visited the Writing Center last year, Judi met with students and staff and observed tutoring sessions in progress. The next time she visits, she’ll see even more going on. Thanks to her support, the Writing Center has developed a new undergraduate peer tutoring program, is offering more one-to-one appointments for students writing in upper-division courses, and created a new service helping students prepare application materials such as cover letters, resumes, and personal statements for law, medical, and other graduate schools. She’ll also be able to stop in this Fall at the Writing Center’s new satellite in Pendergrass Library, where tutors will be able to provide help for students on the Ag Campus.

The Herberts’ gift also is helping to provide more support for faculty who teach with writing in courses across the disciplines. The Writing Center hosted its first faculty work-shop in June 2018, bringing together faculty from Mathematics, Nuclear Engineering, Philosophy, Political Science, and Theatre to explore the disciplinary identities of their fields and discuss ways in which they can help students learn to write better in their courses, such as redesigning writing assignments and identifying new ways to respond to and assess student’s written work.

The Writing Center is not the only beneficiary of the Herberts’ generosity. This summer, the new Herbert College of Agriculture has been named in their honor, and they have created internship opportunities for students who want to be leaders in agricultural and business industries. As Judi is fond of saying, “Jim’s philosophy is ‘To whom much is given, much is expected.’” Their giving is helping to build one of the most important cornerstones of academic and professional success by helping UT graduate students with excellent writing abilities.
EXPRESSING HONORS

Patsy Hammontree Honored by Former Student

William L. Burkhart well remembers the first paper he wrote as a University of Tennessee freshman in his summer honors English class. It came back covered in red ink and marked with a grade of F. However, over the course of an intense four weeks, Professor Patsy Hammontree gave Burk hart the instruction he needed to improve his writing.

This September, William L. Burkhart honored retired English Department colleague Patsy Hammontree’s impact by endowing the Patsy G. Hammontree Literary Scholarship, to be awarded to a deserving student in the UT Department of English.

“Professor Hammontree gave me a special gift,” says Burkhart. “It was the ability to express myself clearly and concisely, which helped me not only academically and professionally but also in my personal life as well. When we announced the endowment, Miss Hammontree told me that she wanted her students to know the truth, whether they wanted to hear it or not. She expected excellence as she provided a clear path of scholarship and the hard work necessary to achieve it. Many of my initial summer school classmates are now very successful in their careers thanks, in part, to the foundation established by Professor Hammontree. We are most grateful.”

Patsy, who attended the ceremony, was—during her years in the English Department—recipient of both the John C. Hodges Excellence in Teaching Award and the Alumni Association Outstanding Teaching Award. Of the endowed scholarship, Patsy commented, “It means a great deal to me. I’m really humbled by it—I’m surprised he remembered me that long. And I’m glad it’s for the English department, where I spent 37 years. I took my job seriously, and I always gave it my best.”

Thanks to Patsy for her years of service and to Mr. Burkhart for honoring her by helping a deserving English Department student.

Bill Burkhart and His Former Writing Teacher, Patsy Hammontree
By Kelly Frawley

This June, I assisted Dr. Katy Chiles with The Phillis Wheatley Poetry Project. Over the course of three weeks, Dr. Chiles and I shared three sessions with a group of ten year old to seventeen year old students from the Phillis Wheatley Center, a branch of the YWCA that works with underserved secondary students.

During our first session at the Phillis Wheatley Center, we engaged a group of young teenagers in a conversation about the poetry of Phillis Wheatley, Nikki Finney, and Nikki Giovanni. We guided the students through Phillis Wheatley’s eighteenth-century poems. The group was talkative and energetic. As Dr. Chiles shared Nikki Giovanni’s poem “Knoxville,” I heard murmurs rise around the room as students quietly confessed that they liked the poem or that they wished it were longer. The rambunctious group of students fell silent as they watched a video of Nikki Giovanni reading the poem. It was clear that the students of the YWCA connected with the poetry presented in the lesson.

When it came time to teach my lesson at the YWCA about writing poetry, I tailored my lesson to the social and playful nature of the students by framing the lesson as a competition. After delivering a brief lesson on poetic devices in which the students examined the slam poetry of Sarah Kay and Clementine Von Radics, I divided students into small teams. Having noticed the students’ interest in Giovanni’s “Knoxville,” I asked each team to write an original poem about Knoxville. Students could gain points by being voted the best poem by their peers and by utilizing poetic devices. Students laughed and complemented each others’ ideas as they collaborated to write what they hoped would be the winning poem. We ended up with seven complex, honest poems about teenage life in Knoxville. The students asked for a drum roll before I announced the winning poem. After announcing the winning team, I was happy to find that even the teams that didn’t walk away with the prize of a king size Hershey’s bar and a pack Skittles were proud of their work and left smiling.

On our third and final day of the Phillis Wheatley Poetry Project, our small group from the YWCA came to visit campus here at UTK. The day began with a brief campus tour as we made our way to Presidential Court Building where the students ate a dining hall lunch. The day continued with a visit from Julian Wright, a UTK admissions counselor who answered the students’ questions about college. The students were treated to a trip to Hodges Library Special Collections where librarian Chris Caldwell taught the students about rare books and allowed students to take pictures with a signed copy of Phillis Wheatley’s book. Librarian Thura Mack led the students through a tour of the library that allowed them to see the library’s many student resources. We closed the Phillis Wheatley Poetry Project where we started, with an exploration of poetry. The students gathered in the Mary Greer room to read their poems about Knoxville before receiving their own copies of Phillis Wheatley’s Poems on Various Subjects and Nikki Finney’s Head off and Split.

Working at the Phillis Wheatley Poetry Project was the first professional task I took on after graduating from UTK with a BA in English. Watching a group of students with little to no experience with writing poetry as they excitedly collaborated in the writing process was energizing. The Phillis Wheatley Poetry Project reminded me of how much I love teaching poetry and has allowed me to reconsider teaching as a career path. Thanks to the UTK English Department and to everyone who made this project a success and helped to bring poetry to the students of the YWCA. ■
New PhD students won several University-wide awards from the UT Graduate School. Rachel Bryan received the J. Wallace & Katie Dean Graduate Fellowship; Emma Butler-Probst, the Herman E. Spivey Humanities Graduate Fellowship; Harley Campbell, the Seaton Graduate School Fellowship; Emily Jalloul, the Isobel Griscom Graduate School Fellowship.

PhD candidate Katie Condon was a finalist for the 2018 Discovery/Boston Review poetry prize. Recently, her poetry has appeared in Prairie Schooner.

PhD candidate Staci Conner received the 2018-2019 Oscar Roy Ashley Graduate Fellowship from the UT Graduate School and a 2018 Thomas Fellowship from the College of Arts and Sciences.

Kerri Ann Considine (PhD 2017) was the 2017 Fall Commencement Speaker for the UT Graduate Hooding Ceremony.

PhD candidate Allison Pittinii Davis’s poetry book Line Study of a Motel Clerk (Baobab Press, 2017) was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Council’s Berru Award and the Ohioana Poetry Prize.

Richard Hermes (PhD 2018) won the 2018 Phoebe Fiction Award for his story “The Rubber Tapper’s Knife,” and his story “Imagineer” was published by Tupelo Quarterly last summer. In January 2018, together with the rest of Grist’s issue 10 staff, he received the Parnassus Award for Significant Editorial Achievement from the Council of Editors of Learned Journals. In August, in the northwest hills of Connecticut, he married his favorite poet, Katie Condon.

PhD student Lucas Nossaman’s review of Laura Dassow Walls’s biography of Henry David Thoreau appeared in Christianity and Literature in June 2018.

PhD candidate Jeremy Michael Reed published poems this past year in Appalachian Heritage, The Cresset, Psaltery & Lyre, Still: The Journal, Whale Road Review, and the anthology Bright Bones: Contemporary Montana Writing. His work was awarded the John C. Hodges Prize in Poetry by Ladan Osman, and he received the Thomas Wheeler Travel Fellowship for dissertation research.

Trent Sanders (MA 2018) received a Fulbright grant for creative writing in Romania 2018-2019. He also published his article, “The Promethean Form: A Poet’s Ontological Metamorphosis in Emerson’s ‘Self-Reliance’ and ‘The Poet’” in Philosophy and Literature.

PhD candidate Kendra Slayton has been named a UT Humanities Center Graduate Fellow for 2018-2019 for her dissertation, “For commune profit sith it may availle: Gender, Circumscription, and the Common Good in Chaucer.”


Joseph Wilson (MA 2018) will spend 2018-2019 on a Fulbright in Kazakhstan, where he will serve as an English teaching assistant, study Kazakh, and conduct research on multilingual student writing.
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