

# INSIGHTS

Department of English and Modern Languages  
SCHOOL of EDUCATION, SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND THE ARTS  
DIVISION of ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

  
U M E S  
September 2021  
Volume 38 Issue 1

## WE'RE READY ... MASKS ON ... LET'S GO! *Fall Semester Begins with a Warm Welcome and a Fond Farewell*

The fall 2021 semester began with masks, COVID-19 vaccination cards and a brand new degree program offered by the Department of English and Modern Languages.

English majors, including five new freshmen and several transfer students, were joined for the first time by ten students majoring in [digital media studies](#), a bachelor of arts degree approved by the state just last year.

"The addition of digital media as a formal degree program in our department is a direct result of student demand," Department Chair Dean Cooledge said. "We believe the program is off to a great start and will prove to be yet another incentive for students to choose UMES."

The new program gained a new faculty member. [Dana Little](#), who earned a



Dr. Little



Dr. Johnston

Photos by Jim Glovier

doctoral degree in fine arts from the University of Glasgow, a master's in writing at Johns Hopkins University and a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Georgia, will serve as an assistant professor. This semester, in addition to her other classes, she'll introduce a new course in social media.

While the campus community was welcoming Dr. Little, it was also saying goodbye to a longtime composition and linguistics faculty member.

Sandy Johnston, who began her UMES career in the Center for Access and Academic Success before moving to the English department, has accepted a position in the Somerset County public school system.

Dr. Johnston's commute to work from her home in Crisfield will be sharply reduced. She'll be teaching ninth grade English at [Crisfield High School & Academy](#).

Because of pandemic restrictions, the department has been unable to hold its traditional monthly socials since March of 2020. However, determined to provide some semblance of the collegiality the get togethers provided, the department scheduled an outdoor, socially distanced, welcome back event for September 1. What had been monthly plates of homemade cookies and brownies became bags of packaged treats designed to "grab and go."

## WE COULD ALL USE MORE JOY

### *English Faculty Member Leads "Delightful" Campus Project*

Associate Professor Amy Hagenrater-Gooding wants UMES to have a delightful semester.

She is the force behind a multidisciplinary "One Book" project that encourages the entire campus to read "[The Book of Delights](#)," the New York Times best seller by Ross Gay.

She describes it as her "campaign for delights and joy and mental health and shameless and



Photo provided by Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding

relentless beating of the exuberance drum!"

The One Book program kicked off in August. The [Henson Honors Program](#) bought copies for its freshman cohort to begin their first of many delightful semesters.

Numerous copies of the book have been provided by the non-profit educational organization [Maryland Humanities](#) and will be on reserve in the Frederick Douglass Library.

[Goodreads.com](#) summarized the work as "a genre-defying book of essays ... that record the (author's) small joys ... that



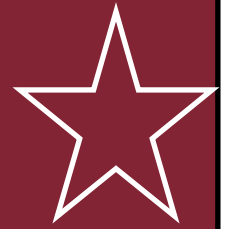
we often overlook in our busy lives."

With so much collective stress over the last year, Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding wants us all to acknowledge and celebrate the things that delight us.

She envisions, among other things, a series of [Hawk Radio](#) shows that discuss the joy of science or math or agriculture. The English department may also schedule a symposium at the end of the spring semester to discuss what we've learned by focusing on our joy.

Book cover displayed courtesy of [rossgay.com](#)

# CONGRATULATIONS ENGLISH GRADUATES!



## VIRTUAL THEATER PRODUCTION

### *Powerful Monologue Delivered Live on YouTube*

Because cast rehearsals and a final production staged in the small theater space in Wilson Hall would have been strictly limited by the need to socially distance last semester, the English department opted to try something new, different and—most importantly—safe.

Two students agreed to collaborate on a dramatic monologue presented live on YouTube.

Senior English majors Christian Ferguson and Augustus Roberts teamed up to present “[Soul Searching](#)” on Friday, May 7, from the Engineering and Aviation Sciences Complex.

The change in location enabled the program to live stream from the department’s television studio, which

provided important technological connections while maintaining the high production values of prior UMES theater events.

The presentation was written and directed by Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Roberts was the sole actor. He delivered a moving address outlining his lifelong regrets to a virtual audience from inside his fictional prison cell.



Director Christian Ferguson (left) observes from the EASC TV control room.

Because the audience that evening was looking through the lens of a camera, the studio was easily transformed with the addition of just six metal rods and a portable cot.



# SUMMER LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

## High School Students Learn Three Japanese Alphabets in Five Days

The UMES [Foreign Language Instructional Center](#) hosted a 5-day language immersion camp July 12-16 for local area high school students.

It was the first language immersion program FLIC has been able to host since the pandemic began and the first time the camp has focused on Japanese since it became part of the UMES language curriculum in 2018.

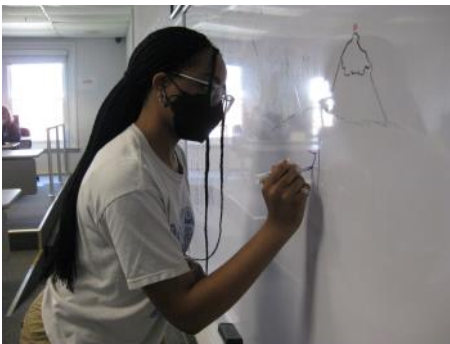
Nine students enrolled in the program this summer. While none entered knowing how to speak or write the language, by the end of the camp, all of the students managed to learn how to read, write and speak basic Japanese.

The instruction was led by FLIC Director Phillip Broussard; he was assisted by Richard Ulbricht.

On the first day of the program, students learned the first of three Japanese alphabets—[Hiragana](#) or ひらがな as it is known in Japan. The first day also

included a brief overview of the country and a discussion of what drew the students' interest in the language.

After the first few days, the students began learning the second alphabet—[Katakana](#) カタカナ.



*Kennedy McClain practices writing the Japanese character for water.*

*Photo by Richard Ulbricht*

On the last day of the program, students embarked on the main and most extensive

part of the Japanese writing system—[Kanji](#) 漢字. The instructors explained the differences between the three alphabet systems and how they are used. They also described the various cultural nuances embedded in the language.

Students spent a great deal of time focusing on the importance of writing in Japanese and on learning the stroke order for each character.

In an exploration of the culture, the group also learned about the popular Japanese visual arts [Manga](#) and [Anime](#), including how they are created and what it is like to be a Manga and Anime creator in Japan.

By the end of the camp, most of the students expressed interest in continuing to improve their Japanese language skills.

“This weeklong intensive language program provided a basic foundation, which will enable students to continue learning,” Mr. Broussard said.

# INTERNATIONAL INSTRUCTION

## UMES Professor is Part of Brazilian University's "Global July" Program

Almost forty students from Brazil, India, Canada and a number of other nations participated in Carole Champagne's [Global July](#) course offered by the [Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora](#) in Minas Gerais, Brazil, this summer.



*Dr. Champagne*

*Photo by Jim Glover*

2021 marked the fourth year the school offered its Global July program, envisioned as a broad variety of free interdisciplinary courses taught on its campus by faculty from all over the world.

That vision was altered this year. COVID-19 forced the international event online.

Dr. Champagne, who teaches Spanish and Portuguese at UMES, was selected to teach a virtual humanities course she titled “A Moveable Feast: The Lost Generation in 1920s Paris.” While it focused on the arts of the period, she infused the discussions with history and biography.

Using current creative parallels, including excerpts from the recent Ken Burns' [Hemingway documentary](#) and the Woody Allen film “[Midnight in Paris](#),” the class discussed the 1920 expatriate arts community thriving in Paris between the two World Wars.

“Current virtual artistic retrospectives and manifestations pay homage to the collaboration and competition between several creative geniuses across artistic genres,” Dr. Champagne said.

“We explored literary works, visual, musical and performance artforms of [The Lost Generation](#), while discussing oeuvres by Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Stein, Dos Passos and other expatriates. We analyzed recent criticism and theoretical applications of literary genres. The legacy and enduring creative inspiration of The Lost Generation is relevant to subsequent generations of artists.”

She described the class as a celebration of Hemingway's “A Moveable Feast” traveling across time as well as place.

Dr. Champagne plans to teach in person during Global July 2022.

“I hope to bring UMES students to the Brazilian university when the pandemic ends,” she said.

*The University of Maryland Eastern Shore is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. UMES prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. Inquiries regarding the application of federal laws and non-discrimination policies to university programs and activities may be referred to the Office of Equity & Compliance/Title IX Coordinator by telephone at (410) 651-7848 or by email at [titleix@umes.edu](mailto:titleix@umes.edu).*

**WANT TO STUDY ABROAD?  
WORRIED ABOUT THE COST?  
CHECK OUT THESE  
SCHOLARSHIP OPTIONS:**

**Gilman International Scholarship: Oct. 5 deadline**  
Students must be Pell Grant recipients. Up to \$8,000 is available.

**Gilman-McCain Scholarship: Oct. 5 deadline**  
Children of active duty service members may apply for up to \$5,000 in study abroad funding.

**Critical Language Scholarship: Nov. 16 deadline**  
Award recipients are selected on merit. Essays demonstrate commitment to language learning.

**Each of these programs has no-fee online applications!**

**Dr. Carole Champagne is a certifying advisor for each of these programs. If you have questions, she can be reached by phone at (410) 651-6250 or by email at [cachampagne@umes.edu](mailto:cachampagne@umes.edu).**

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### *Virtual Guest Speakers Provide Career Advice*

As the spring semester drew to a close, virtual classes and meetings had become so common place in academia and in private industry that guest speakers who couldn't make a trip to campus were perfectly comfortable visiting with students online.

Jason Newton, the morning anchor at Baltimore's WBAL TV, offered advice on careers in broadcast journalism to the students in Marilyn Buerkle's advanced reporting class.



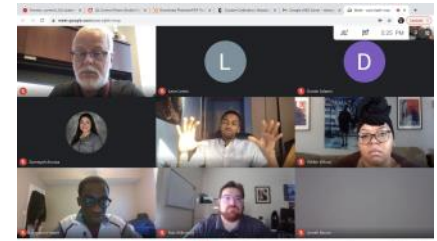
*Mr. Newton as a virtual guest*

Mr. Newton may have felt he owed Ms. Buerkle a favor when she invited him to appear. She hired him in his first television news job when she was news

director at WBOC TV in Salisbury, and he had just graduated from college.

In Rob Wilkinson's TV production class, students had the opportunity to talk to UMES graduate Ben Desta about his job at C-SPAN, the political cable television network headquartered in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Desta, who earned his English degree with a minor in digital media in 2018, talked about his role as a member of a field crew covering the January 6 melee at the U.S. Capitol when an angry mob stormed the building.



*Mr. Desta (center) with TV production class*

## WE'VE BEEN VERY BUSY

### *No Down Time for Digital Media Facilities and Staff*

This may be the first year UMES students can become digital media majors, but the program's sophisticated television production facilities have been in high demand since the building where they are located opened in 2016.

The TV studios are a frequent destination for community tour groups and students enrolled in other UMES programs. This summer was no exception.

Two groups of local students being mentored by the university's pharmacy faculty stopped by to play a game show developed by the staff, and the newest members of the Henson Honors Program spent a morning learning how to operate the equipment.

This summer also marked the return of Star Power, the English department's weeklong television production day camp for local seventh, eighth and ninth graders. This year's Star Power participants had a full schedule of events



*2021 Star Power Campers*

including serving as crew for a local cable interview program, visiting a local television station to observe a live news broadcast, and writing, shooting and editing their own movie.

That movie, which they titled "Trip Through Time," was shot in the Frederick Douglass Library where, with the help of some special effects and a library wizard, campers starred in fanciful adventures on a pirate ship, in outer space, and escaping a dinosaur. The production debuted before invited family members and friends at a

red carpet premiere at the conclusion of the week.

The digital media staff also recorded congratulatory messages from faculty and staff to air at the UMES commencement ceremony and created a video to mark a \$50,000 donation from the local chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority.



*Sharon Brooks, acting director of library services (left), records a message for May graduates.*

*President Anderson (right) accepts an Alpha Kappa Alpha contribution.*



*Photos by Jim Glover*

# A HOMEGROWN SANCTUARY

## Former Faculty Member Featured On Local Garden Tour

By Barbara Seabrook

### Editor's Note:

Dr. Seabrook was coordinator of the department's English Education program.

Following her retirement, she has continued to teach periodically as an adjunct instructor.



Dr. Seabrook

Photo by Jim Glover

When I retired in February of 2020, I had plans to travel, but when the pandemic hit a month later, my focus changed.

I decided to spend more time gardening and creating a sanctuary for pollinators and wildlife. Now my property is a [National Wildlife Federation](#) certified wildlife habitat and also pollinator certified by the [Lower Shore Land Trust](#).



Photos by Barbara Seabrook

I eliminated all lawns and replaced them with gardens filled with native plants that attract bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Adding two frog ponds provided habitat for not only frogs but also dragonflies, which help with mosquito control.

I have also been creating some garden art, such as a dragonfly made from ceiling fan blades and a dragonfly made from slate and rocks.



I have a resident gray fox named Ferdinand who became a Facebook star during the Lower Shore Land Trust Pollinator Garden Tour in late June.

The tour was self-guided with two LSLT volunteers at each garden to get visitors' names and distribute the tour materials.

The tour included nine gardens, and over 135 tickets were sold. This was an inaugural tour organized by AmeriCorps employee Taylor Carty along with other

LSLT personnel. The event was such a success it will be continued in the future.

Proceeds help with the mission of the Lower Shore Land Trust to increase awareness about pollinators and to promote creation of pollinator habitats in public spaces and backyards. I encourage anyone who enjoys gardening and nature to create a pollinator and wildlife habitat.

During the Pollinator Garden Tour, an artist was sent to each of the nine featured gardens to paint the scene as a surprise gift for the property owners. LSLT also had each oil painting custom-framed.

Ferdinand was strutting around the garden checking out the visitors and making sure he was in the scene the artist was painting. The artist for my garden was Magii Sarfaty, an impressionist painter working in oil and watercolor, capturing the coastal beauty of the Delmarva Peninsula.



In the midst of yet another surge in COVID cases, I feel blessed to have such a tranquil sanctuary for experiencing the sights and sounds of nature while I await an opportunity to travel.



## LAW AND ORDER

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan named Krystin Richardson, Class of 2003, to the district court bench in June.

Ms. Richardson, who earned her English degree summa cum laude, will serve as an [associate judge of the district court for Baltimore County](#). The former Miss UMES earned her law degree from the University of Maryland and previously served as a Baltimore County prosecutor.



Judge Richardson  
Photo by Mario Williams

## POETRY PUBLISHED

A poem, written by creative writing instructor Dianne Pearce, appears in "[Plant People, An Anthology of Environmental Artists](#)."

The book comes from the creators of "The Plants & Poetry Journal."

Ms. Pearce's contribution is titled "The Itch."

The online version of the anthology includes an audio file of Ms. Pearce reading her poem.



Ms. Pearce  
Photo by Bill Cecil

Insights is published monthly during the academic year. It is written and edited, except as noted, by faculty member Marilyn Buerkle. Copy for this issue was proofread by faculty member Amy Hagenrater-Gooding. Photos are by Marilyn Buerkle, except as noted. If you have information you would like to appear in this publication, call 410-651-8349 or email [mlbuerkle@umes.edu](mailto:mlbuerkle@umes.edu).