

INSIGHTS

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



April 2022
Volume 39 Issue 3

HAWK'S EYE VIEW *Interviews as a Teaching Tool*

Hawk Media members are learning the fundamentals of television production through the weekly creation of a short interview program.

The conversations are called "Hawk's Eye View." Recent programs have featured the president of the UMES Student Government Association [Ayotomiwa \(Tommi\) Fashola](#) and the university's new Endowed Chair in Entrepreneurship and Innovation [Pamela Allison](#).

Hawk Media is an English department effort to mentor students interested in hands-on production skills.

Members rotate roles as they create "Hawk's Eye View" so each student experiences a variety of technical responsibilities as well as booking guests and conducting on-air interviews.



(Above) Bruce Bennett interviews SGA President Ayotomiwa Fashola



(Below) Kamille Little discusses entrepreneurship with Dr. Allison

YOUTH VOICES *Powerful Student Essays*

Interested in knowing more about how it feels to be an 11-year-old African immigrant attending an American school for the first time? That's a [subject freshman Clerkson Ngolle chose to write about](#) in his English composition class.

Professor Amy Hagenrater-Gooding continues to challenge her students to write essays that are worthy of publication. She has coordinated with public relations director Bill Robinson to post some of those noteworthy essays, including Mr. Ngolle's, on the university's website.

Like Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding, adjunct composition instructor Lauren Hatch Pokhrel is particularly proud of her student's narrative essays.

"I, for one, was profoundly impacted reading about the lives of our students here at UMES and honored that they shared them with me and the class," she said. "I believe they deserve an acknowledgment for their courage, and other faculty would be happy to be reminded of our first-year writing students and the rich experiences that they bring into our classrooms."



Mr. Ngolle

Photo by Jim Glovier

SENDING CARE AND CONCERN

Language Professor Attends D.C. Rally in Support of Ukraine

Language professor Carole Champagne, who has traveled extensively in Eastern Europe, attended the "[Stand with Ukraine](#)" rally on March 6 in Washington, D.C.

Estonian, Slovak and Latvian diplomats all spoke in support of the Ukrainian people at the gathering held outside the White House.

Dr. Champagne feels a particular affinity to Ukraine. She grew up in Chicago where there is a significant population of Ukrainian descent, and her family roots extend to Poland and Lithuania.

"I used to speak some Polish because half of my family came from Lithuania and Poland to Chicago," she said. "My childhood friend was Ukrainian. The language and culture are similar to Polish language and culture, including similar vocabulary, design, art and architecture, folk music, and of course, cuisine."



Photos provided by Dr. Champagne



Crowd outside the White House rallies to protest the Russian invasion. Dr. Champagne (left) gave people sunflowers, the Ukrainian national flower and symbol of solidarity and resistance.

REGIONAL S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G BEE

English Department Contributes to the Event's Success

Nearly 20 local students, who all won spelling competitions at their individual schools, gathered in the Ella Fitzgerald Performing Arts Center on March 5, to determine a regional winner.

Coincidentally, the speller who wore the label of contestant number one, was the number one speller by the end of the event.

After more than a dozen rounds, [Jeffery Hsia, of Bennett Middle School in Wicomico County](#), was crowned the



Mr. Hsia

winner of the 2022 Maryland Eastern Shore Regional Spelling Bee. He will compete at the [Scripps National Spelling Bee](#) in May.

University personnel volunteered to staff the event. They included English faculty member Marilyn Buerkle, the bee's official pronouncer, and Tahja Cropper, a member of the university's public relations staff who earned her UMES English degree in 2015 and served as a judge.



(L to R) Ms. Cropper, Mr. Hsia and Ms. Buerkle

Photos by Joey Gardner

A SXSW 2022 ADVENTURE!

By Dana Little
Assistant Professor of Digital Media

Editor's note: Dr. Little recounts her trip to the recent South by Southwest conference, a celebration of technology, film and music in Austin, Texas, March 11-20.

[South by Southwest](#) is a wholly unique and deeply enriching experience. It envelops the corners of my practice-based research and courses taught in the Digital Media Studies Program and the Hawk Media student group. The sheer volume of what I learned about future tech trends, digital course content, shareable skills development, and key contacts is staggering. While at the conference, I shared audio and video with students uploaded into Canvas, so the event immediately proved valuable to current students.

For future use, I made key connections that will impact all UMES students. A couple of examples are a meeting with Dr. Loretta Chen, co-founder of [Activation Group](#), creating virtual reality (VR) experiences, who is interested in developing my idea for a VR experience featuring the underground railroad; and a meeting with the filmmakers

behind the Netflix documentary "[The Great Hack](#)," Karim Amer and Guvenc Ozel who want to bring their VR experience "Persuasion Machines" to UMES to educate students on cyber security. I participated in their "show," an immersive VR factual story narrated by will.i.am and Bits Sola. It was like being a player in their documentary with the surveillance and cyber intrusion leaking out of each corner of our digital daily lives.

Also, at a brief meeting after a podcasting panel, talking about my students and courses, a young man tapped my shoulder, asked, "Did you say, that you're with UMES?" I showed him my conference badge and nodded. He excitedly said, "I'm Jordan Crafton. My brother is [Jason Crafton](#), the head coach of the UMES basketball team." Jordan is a filmmaker and podcaster, and I hope to have him as a guest joined by his brother for a class podcast on community. Those are just a few examples of a massive collection of contacts and visual/audio assets I can't wait to share with students and colleagues. Additionally, my hope is to find the funding for a group trip to SXSW with students and faculty in the coming years.



Dr. Little and Loretta Chen



Virtual Reality participants in action

Photos provided by Dr. Little

"This is not a normal conference. 'South by' isn't a festival that happens one time a year, it is a creative community that I am very, very, very grateful to be a part of."

Amy Webb, researcher and founder of the Future Today Institute

ARCHIVE PRESENTATION

UMES Interdisciplinary Research Discussed

English faculty member Gabriela Vlahovici-Jones was one of five UMES employees who participated in a panel presentation at the 53rd annual conference of the [Northeast Modern Language Association](#) on Saturday, March 12, at the Marriott Waterfront Hotel in Baltimore.

Dr. Vlahovici-Jones was joined virtually by social sciences professor Kathryn Barrett-Gaines and in person by a faculty member from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Linda Forristal, and two UMES librarians, Sharon Brooks and Janet Eke.

Their conference panel was titled "Finding Fun and Fellowship in the Archives."

All five women have been involved in a grant-funded project to categorize and digitize a wide variety of campus archive materials to make them more readily available for research by academic scholars and the local community.



(L to R) Dr. Vlahovici-Jones, Ms. Brooks, Dr. Forristal and Ms. Eke

Photo by Debra Bourdeau

In addition to the conference discussion, two previous campus presentations have been held at UMES to share interesting materials that have surfaced through the ongoing project. The group also plans a series of three, live-streamed discussions titled "UMES Once Upon a Time" on April 29.

The archival materials in the Frederick Douglass Library's Special Collections Department are designed to preserve the history, culture and literature of African Americans, the Eastern Shore of Maryland and the university itself.

NEW SPANISH TUTOR

The department has selected a native Spanish speaker to serve as a peer tutor for students who need help in SPAN 101 or 102. Laura Menendez, a sophomore digital media major, began her new responsibilities following spring break.



Ms. Menendez

Photo by Joey Gardner

For the first time in recent memory, Spanish tutoring will happen in Wilson Hall where the Spanish classes are taught.

Ms. Menendez meets with students in Room 1107, across the hall from the [UMES Writing Center](#). She is available Monday and Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; Tuesday from 9 to 10:30 a.m.; and on Thursday from 9 to 10 a.m. and again from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Ms. Menendez will stay busy. She is also a member of the UMES cross country and track and field teams.

CELEBRATING KINDNESS

When Arabic language instructor Tegwa Fadl Alla heard about the local [Jefferson Awards](#), recognizing those who truly make a difference in their community, she jumped at the chance to nominate her friend Muna Elobaid.



Dr. Fedl Alla

Photo by Debra Laforest

Ms. Elobaid is a UMES staff member and, like Dr. Fedl Alla, a member of the growing Sudanese community in Somerset County. "Newcomers need a lot of support," Ms. Fedl Alla said. "Muna is always the first person to reach out and provide help."

It must have been a persuasive nomination. [Ms. Elobaid won the award!](#)

LOCAL WRITERS GATHER

English Students and Faculty Attend Conference

A group representing the UMES Department of English and Modern Languages attended the annual [Bay to Ocean Writers Conference](#), held on March 5, at Chesapeake College in Wye Mills, Maryland.

Department Chair Dean Cooledge accompanied adjunct instructor and UMES English graduate Shannon Hinman, and current English majors Dawrae Gibbons and Christian Ferguson to the event. In addition, adjunct instructor Bill Cecil served as an official photographer for the conference.

The event is presented by the [Eastern Shore Writer's Association](#) and has become an annual road trip for the department. "I enjoy this conference for the personal motivation it gives me as a writer," Dr. Cooledge said, "but also for

the tips and ideas that I can share with students in my classes."

The department's participation was funded by the Willetta C. and Horatio W. Jones Endowment Fund. Mr. Jones earned his UMES English degree in 1978.



(L to R) Ms. Gibbons, Mr. Ferguson, Ms. Hinman and Dr. Cooledge

Photo by Bill Cecil

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WELCOME HOME, JUDGE!

A 2003 UMES English graduate has agreed to return to campus to serve as the featured speaker at the university's Honors Convocation on April 14.



Judge Richardson
Photo by Mario Williams

Krystin Richardson, a former Miss UMES, earned her English degree summa cum laude and went on to complete a law degree at the University of Maryland. She is currently an associate judge of the district court for Baltimore County.

Prior to her current appointment, Judge Richardson served as an administrative law judge with the state Office of Administrative Hearings and, earlier in her career, as a prosecutor in Baltimore County.

ASK THE EXPERT

Faculty Member Featured on Local TV Newscast

When a reporter from WMDT TV, the local ABC affiliate in Salisbury, Maryland, wanted to explore the potential educational benefits of a popular new online game, she looked to experts at local academic institutions for their opinions.



Anissa Lopez's story focused on Wordle, a game that gives users six chances to guess a daily five-letter word. She included an interview with Dana Little, the newest faculty member in the UMES digital media program.

Dr. Little told her the use of games in instruction can be beneficial.

"It's not necessarily meant for long term learning, and that's where the challenge is for teachers," Dr. Little said, "but as far as



Dr. Little

Photo by Jim Glovier

it being a game, something that you can use within your course material, it can be fabulous because it increases engagement."

Ms. Lopez also interviewed a professor at Wor-Wic Community College who echoed Dr. Little's opinion that the use of games in higher ed can be a productive tool.

Sheila Blossveren, director of developmental instruction said "when these students are just sitting there doing these brain games ... their focus is 100 percent."

Both educators warned that some online gaming can become addictive and, in that case, would create a worrisome distraction to learning.

BABY HAWK VISITS

Congratulations to Earl Holland, Class of 2005, on the birth of his daughter Sophia Renee. She arrived at 8:44 p.m. on Tuesday, January 4, measuring 21 inches and weighing 7 pounds, 4 ounces.

Both her mom and her dad are avid sports fans so, while Sophia may not appreciate it just yet, she is already scheduled to attend the home opener of the Baltimore Orioles on April 11. Maybe she will be a much-needed good luck charm for the Os!



The Holland family—Mom Stephanie, Baby Sophia and Proud Papa Earl—on a recent visit to the UMES campus.

HEADED TO D.C. BUREAU

The Washington, D.C. bureau of NBC News is Danielle Jackson's next career stop. She joins the national network as an assignment desk editor later this month.



Ms. Jackson at her commencement in 2016
Photo by Jim Glovier

Her success in landing a premier journalism job in a city where national news is made daily does not come as a surprise to her instructors. Ms. Jackson was a member of Sigma Tau Delta, the international English honor society, and was selected as the English department's outstanding student in 2016, the year she graduated magna cum laude.

Most recently, she served as a weekend assignment editor for Newsy in Atlanta.

YOU'RE INVITED

Don't forget the Department of English and Modern Languages holds a monthly social at 3 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month during the fall and spring semesters. It's an opportunity for English and digital media majors to get to know each other and their instructors. Join us at Wilson Hall on Wednesday, April 6.



Hawk Media members stop by the department's March social

Photo by Debra Laforest

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.