

INSIGHTS

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



IN-PERSON HONORS CONVOCATION! *English Department is Well Represented*

For the first time since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, the annual [UMES Honors Convocation](#) was a mask-less, in-person event that included family and friends.

The campus community gathered Thursday, April 14, in the Ella Fitzgerald Performing Arts Center to celebrate the academic accomplishments of more than 600 students, including 14 English majors.

The keynote speaker for the program was also a representative of the UMES Department of English and Modern Languages. A former Miss UMES, Krystin Richardson earned her English degree summa cum laude in 2003.

She went on to graduate from law school,

served as a state prosecutor, and is now a district court judge in Baltimore County, Maryland.

Rather than use her long list of accomplishments as inspiration for current students, Judge Richardson focused instead on the challenges she encountered in her career.



Judge Richardson

The judge told the audience she took the qualifying exam for law school three times before she earned an acceptable score. She also revealed she had been rejected by all of the schools in her first round of law school applications, including the University of Maryland where

she ultimately earned her degree. Her message was one of perseverance. Based on the applause after her remarks and the students who sought her out following the

ceremony, her message was well received.

The department was also proud to salute senior Christian Ferguson. Not only was he recognized as the outstanding student in the English department, he was also selected by Dean Marshall Stevenson to receive the School of Education, Social Sciences and the Arts' Award of Excellence.



Mr. Ferguson

Photos by Jim Glover

In addition to the accolades he received at the honors convocation, Mr. Ferguson was inducted as a member of [Phi Kappa Phi](#), an extremely prestigious all-discipline honor society, in a separate ceremony on April 29.

WATCH PARTY PLANNED

Join Us for "Theater-On-Demand"

The English department invites the campus community to the debut of "Electric Bodies, Laughing Flesh" on Friday, May 6, at 4 p.m. in EASC 3104.

The work is the creative brainchild of Professor Amy Hagenrater-Gooding who



invited faculty, students and staff to write and perform original monologues centered on body positivity. Then, in partnership with the department's [Digital Media Studies Program](#), the performances were recorded and edited into an interdisciplinary video production.

It's described as theater-on-demand. Following the watch party debut, a link will be made available, and viewers will be able to access the video at their convenience, multiple times, from any location.

ENGLISH MAJORS RECOGNIZED FOR G.P.A.s of 3.5 OR HIGHER IN 2021

- Kendall Barrow
- Matthew Barwick
- Chace Davis
- Christian Ferguson
- Brittany Hall
- Lahela Hall
- Danah Hayman
- Tyler Holmes
- Kamille Little
- Laura Menendez
- Ewaoluwa Okulate
- Lucas Thorpe
- Ciani Wells
- India Wingfield



TWO DAYS OF INSPIRATION

Digital Media Personnel Meet Thousands of Local Students

More than 3,000 local 8th graders, representing schools in Maryland and Virginia, along with their home-schooled counterparts, traveled to the Wicomico Youth and Civic Center recently to begin to explore career options.

Dozens of companies and higher education representatives were on hand to answer their questions at [J.A. Inspire](#), an annual event organized by Junior Achievement of the Eastern Shore. The students were primed with specific questions from a previous class session that prepped them for the event.

Each organization was asked to create a hands-on activity to give interested youngsters a small taste of what it might be like to work in a particular industry.

Marilyn Buerkle and Bill Brophy represented the English department's digital media program.

Students who visited the digital media booth were treated to the magic of "green screen" technology. They also received information about [Star Power](#), the English department's TV production daycamp for 7th, 8th and 9th graders scheduled for June 27-July 1 on the UMES campus.



(Top) UMES equipment creates a portable control room.

(Middle) Ms. Buerkle answers visitors' questions. Photos by Todd Dudak



(Below) Mr. Brophy meets with a student interested in camera operation.



JA INSPIRE
Hands On. Minds Opened.

READING AS A WAY OF LIFE

Terry Kundell, director of the [UMES Writing Center](#), declared her lifelong love of reading in a [book review](#) published in the most recent issue of "Forum," a publication of the Phi Kappa Phi honor society.



Dr. Kundell

Photo by Jim Glovier

Dr. Kundell reviewed "[Books Promiscuously Read: Reading as a Way of Life](#)" by Heather Cass White.

She told the readers of her review that she has often felt the need to justify time spent reading. So the author's premise that reading should happen daily left Dr. Kundell reassured. "The points she makes in her propositions are many, but they all serve to validate a life spent reading," Dr. Kundell said.

D.C. GALA SALUTES BONO

Language faculty member Carole Champagne took advantage of one of the perks of serving as the UMES [Fulbright Program](#) advisor.

She joined other program supporters at the recent D.C. gala where [Bono](#), the Irish singer and songwriter, received the group's annual [Fulbright Prize for International Understanding](#). He was honored for his humanitarian work combating a global Covid-19 vaccine crisis.

In addition to 500 attendees, the event was live streamed in 35 countries.



Bono accepts his award.

Photo by Dr. Champagne

PROPOSAL REVIEWER

In addition to teaching a full complement of public speaking classes, Jennifer Keane-Dawes has been busy serving on panels as a reviewer of proposals submitted to the [National Science Foundation](#) (NSF).

This semester, she served as a primary panelist.

While we'd love to know more about the types of proposals she encounters, reviewers must exercise discretion. Public discussion of her duties is off limits. "I am not allowed to give any additional information on my role," Dr. Keane-Dawes said.

NSF is a government agency that provides federal support to fundamental research and education in science and engineering.



Dr. Keane-Dawes

Photo by Jim Glovier

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COLLABORATION IS KEY

Looking for Unique Learning Opportunities

Students enrolled in Amy Hagenrater-Gooding's courses are often surprised that she assigns unique projects which frequently include collaboration with others beyond her classroom.

This semester is no exception.

Her students have become talk show hosts, graphic novel authors and, new this semester, they're getting their hands dirty planting flowers.

Students in ENGL 401, Modern Drama, are participating in a weekly podcast, "An Argument for the Humanities." In a partnership with the [digital media](#)



Brittany Hall (L) and Lauren Sumter discuss "I Dream Before I Take the Stand" by Arlene Hutton.

[program](#) arranged by Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding, drama students are asked to connect lessons and themes from a play they've read in class to current issues and events. They broadcast their discussion live on [Hawk Radio](#).

For students enrolled in ENGL 413, Novel East and West, Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding arranged for two very different collaborations.

"In an effort ... to break the 'read a book, discuss a book' formula, students in ENGL 413 are extending their conversation about Japanese novelist Sayaka Murata's work "[Convenience Store Woman](#)" into a gardening project," she



Gardening underway
Photo by Diamond Nwaeze

said. "We focus on ... how one's mental health can be boosted by digging in the dirt and soaking in the sunshine."

Working with Diamond Nwaeze in the 4-H Extension Office, the students are clearing beds outside of Murphy Hall Annex and are planting snapdragons, zinnia and sunflowers.

After reading "[Maus](#)," a graphic novel about the Holocaust, the students in Novel East and West were tasked with writing their own graphic novels. Students in a [sequential arts](#) class, taught by Elvin Hernandez, created cover art for their stories.



A digital cover for an English major's graphic novel designed by art major Gabriell Mebane-McLeod

A GRATEFUL GRADUATE

Like other members of the UMES class of 2020, Javier Garcia's college career ended abruptly. Covid-19 kept him from saying in-person goodbyes or thank yous.

A business administration major with a minor in digital media, he recently wrote to an English faculty member to let her know he's working at NBC Sports in Washington. "I definitely want to thank you for all the information ... you gave to prepare us for life outside of college," Mr. Garcia said in an email to Marilyn Buerkle. "I wouldn't have been presented with this opportunity if it wasn't for you."



NBC Sports crew photo provided by Mr. Garcia. He is pictured standing, far right.

UMES WAS REPRESENTED

When administrators at North Carolina A&T University decided to change the name of a college dormitory [to honor an accomplished graduate](#) who happened to have a connection to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Bill Jones took notice.

Mr. Jones, who earned his UMES English degree in 1978, lives in Charlotte, North Carolina. He remembers when Velma Speight was chair of the [UMES Department of Education](#), so he drove to Greensboro to attend the Speight Hall naming ceremony. You'll note in the photograph that accompanies this article that Mr. Jones is sporting his Hawk Pride, a maroon and grey tie and a UMES cap.



Mr. Jones provided the photo of Dr. Speight and him.

REASONS TO CELEBRATE

The English department's monthly social—held at 3 p.m. in Wilson Hall on the first Wednesday of every month—will be a special multipurpose event in May.

On May 4, the last social of this academic year will be the first one without masks, and we'll return to the tradition of home cooked food rather than being forced to offer only prepackaged snacks.

As we have done at other socials at the end of a semester, we will salute our graduating seniors, but this month we'll also hold an induction ceremony for two new members of [Sigma Tau Delta](#), the international English honor society. Join us as we congratulate junior English education students Dawrae Gibbons and Kendall Barrow on their academic accomplishment.



Insights is published monthly during the academic year. Content is written and edited, except as noted, by faculty member Marilyn Buerkle. The copy editor for this issue was 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.