

INSIGHTS

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


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MAKING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Campus Guests Offer Unique Opportunities

UMES students had the chance to consider international study—and the careers a study abroad experience could lead to— thanks to their language professors last month.

Phillip Broussard, who serves as the director of the [UMES Foreign Language Instructional Center](#) and teaches Japanese and French classes, arranged for two of the three campus presentations.

On November 12, [Yolanda Kerney](#) discussed her career as a U.S. diplomat working in the Congo, the Caribbean and the Republic of Guinea. Her presentation focused on a number of student internship programs and pathways that lead to global careers.

"One of the common misconceptions students have about the Foreign Service is that applicants must be fluent in a language," Dr. Kerney said. "While the ability to speak a second language fluently is useful, the Department of State will provide language training to diplomats."

She also reminded students that [U.S.](#)



(L to R) Dean Marshall Stevenson, Dr. Kerney and Mr. Broussard

Photo by Debra Laforest

[Foreign Service officers](#) come from all backgrounds and disciplines, including engineering, art, music, education, science and business.

On November 19, a representative of the [Boren Award](#), Michael Saffle, talked to students about scholarship opportunities, study abroad and foreign language learning.

The Boren Award is a



Mr. Saffle

Photo provided by Mr. Broussard

lucrative scholarship opportunity that is part of the [National Security Education Program](#), offering up to \$20,000 a year in study abroad funding for undergraduates and \$30,000 a year for graduate students.

Spanish language professor Carole Champagne hosted a campus visit by Barbara Daibert from [Universidade Federal Juiz de Fora](#) in Brazil on November 5 and 6.

Dr. Daibert was scheduled to meet with President Heidi Anderson, Provost Nancy Niemi and interested deans to strengthen study abroad agreements. She also encouraged UMES students to attend a [tuition free summer program](#) at her university.



Dr. Champagne, Dr. Daibert and English Department Chair Dean Coledge



Tysheira Spruill and Charles Brown starred in the English Department's Black Box Theatre production of "[Fireflies](#)" on November 15, 16 and 17.

The play, written by Donja Love, chronicles the disintegrating relationship between a minister and his wife, set against the backdrop of the 1960's civil rights movement.

FRIENDS IN THE EXECUTIVE SUITE

Students Interact with UMES President Heidi Anderson

The English department is fortifying its relationship with UMES President Heidi Anderson through its students.

When Dr. Anderson entertained a graduate of the Class of 1963 on November 19, she invited a group of students to talk to Audrey Gill and her husband. The group included junior English major Freddie Walls, a Hawk Mentor in the [Center for Access and Academic Success](#).

Afterwards, in her weekly email to the campus community, Dr. Anderson extended her “sincere appreciation” to the “fantastic” students



Mr. Walls (third from right) poses for a group photo during a meeting with President Anderson (far right) and her guest Audrey Gill (center).

Photo provided by Mr. Walls

for the hospitality they displayed.

Earlier in the month, a host of [Hawk Radio](#), the student managed radio station supervised by the English department, invited the president to appear on his podcast. Dr. Anderson had [a lengthy, candid conversation](#) with Michael Sutton which covered a wide variety of topics.

The month also included the naming of the recipient of the Hollarin’ Hawks’ new Anderson Award.

It was created by the pep squad as a



Mr. Sutton and Dr. Anderson

Photo by Bill Brophy

tribute to the president’s enthusiastic school spirit and salutes the student who displays the most Hawk Pride.

Junior English major Augustus Roberts was the inaugural Anderson Award winner.



Mr. Roberts

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Annual Service Award Ceremony Includes English Faculty and Staff

Seven members of the Department of English and Modern Languages were recognized recently for their service to the university.

The annual service award ceremony, organized by the Office of Human Resources, was held on November 20, and more than 100 employees who reached incremental career milestones in 2019 were thanked publicly.

Staff member Leon Lewis from the English department’s digital media program celebrated a five year employment anniversary, as did English faculty members Cynthia Cravens and Mari-jo Ulbricht.

Debra Laforest, a technical support assistant in the Foreign Language Instructional Center, marked ten years with UMES.

The department’s administrative assistant, Gayla DeShields, and Spanish language professor Carole Champagne both were honored for 20 years of service.

Two staff members, John Tilghman from Residence Life and Frederick Wheatley from Physical Plant, along with Lois Jones-Douglas, a faculty member in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, were the longest serving members at the ceremony. They each have completed 40 years of UMES employment. Appreciation was also offered to those who have retired during the year. That list included Spanish language faculty member Nydia Gregory.

Drs. Craven and Gregory and Ms. Ulbricht were unable to attend the event. The other English department honorees are pictured to the right.



Clockwise from top left: Mr. Lewis, Ms. DeShields, Dr. Champagne and Ms. Laforest receive their awards from President Anderson.

Photos by Jim Glover

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PAIRING TWO DISCIPLINES

Ewa Okulate, a junior double majoring in English and Marketing, was part of a group of [UMES Honors Program](#) students who participated in the joint conference of the [National Collegiate Honors Council](#) and the [National Association of African-American Honors Programs](#) in New Orleans, Louisiana, November 6-10.

Ms. Okulate's presentation was titled "English and Marketing: How Two Majors Collide and Play an Important Role Within One Another."



Ms. Okulate during her presentation

Photo by Semaj Fielding

CONFERENCE TEAMWORK

Faculty members Mari-jo Ulbricht and Gabriela Vlahovici-Jones presented at the annual convention of the [National Council of Teachers of English](#). The event was held November 21-24 in Baltimore.



Ms. Ulbricht

The pair collaborated on a panel they titled "Digital Researching, Writing, and Storytelling."



Dr. Vlahovici-Jones

Photos by Jim Glover

The conference theme was "Spirited Inquiry." Keynote speakers included [George Takei](#) and [Henry Louis Gates Jr.](#)

ACADEMIC ROADTRIP

Film Students Travel to Baltimore Conference

The [Quarles Humanities and Social Science Institute](#) at Morgan State University hosted the third annual Conference on African American and African Diaspora Studies, November 7-8. This year's theme was "400 Years Later: Reflecting on Four Centuries of African American Endurance."

Four students enrolled in Cynthia Cravens' African American Cinema class (ENGL 457) presented a panel discussion titled "Shaping Black Experience Onscreen." Dr. Cravens served as moderator.

The students' presentations included Asha Cole: "Viewing African Characters on American Television"; Evan Crump: "The Power of 'Power'"; Dianne Smith: "Depictions of Black College Experience in 'Grown-ish' and 'Dear White People'"; and Freddie Walls: "The New Black Renaissance: From Harlem to Hollywood."



(L to R) Mr. Crump; Mr. Walls; Ms. Cole; Olufunmbi Adebisi, who joined his classmates for moral support; and Ms. Smith

Photo provided by Ms. Cravens

"We hope to repeat the panel here at UMES on December 9 from 3-5 p.m. in the EASC, Room 3104," Dr. Cravens said. "We have added three more students to the itinerary and will provide light refreshments. We hope to see everyone there."

IS THE END NEAR?

The Future of English as a Discipline Discussed

"Literature and Trauma" was the title of a panel that included UMES faculty member Amy Hagenrater-Gooding at the 2019 conference of the [Midwest Modern Language Association](#).

The event, hosted by Loyola University, was held November 14-17 in Chicago. The conference theme was "Doubles, Duality, Doppelgangers."

Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding presented her forthcoming chapter (Demeter Press, 2020) "Smother Love: Maternal Filicide in Veronique Olmi's 'Beside the Sea'."

"Although the conference was about duality and doppelgangers in literature,



Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding in Chicago pondering the future of the English as a discipline.

Photo provided by Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding

many of the sessions dealt with the duality in the discipline of English," Dr. Hagenrater-Gooding said. "Although many decry that English as a discipline is dying, what I saw was innovative ways English departments are embracing a new identity that encompasses science, technology, and agriculture."

The keynote speaker at the event was [Jerrold](#)

[Hogle](#), Professor Emeritus of English and University Distinguished Professor at the University of Arizona.

Next year's conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

DON'T FORGET!

The last department social of the semester will be held from 3-4 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4, in Room 2111 in Wilson Hall.

COME HUNGRY!

STEM FESTIVAL

One might not expect to find the English department at a campus festival that celebrates STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities, but the department's digital media studios were a popular destination at the [5th Annual Maryland STEM Festival](#).

The November 6 event, organized by the [UMES Extension Office](#), brought hundreds of community K-12 students to the Engineering and Aviation Sciences Complex.



Guests practice their TV anchor skills. Photo by Jim Glovier

URBAN TEACHER AHEAD

English Major Prepares for the Classroom

Richard Oakley will walk the stage at the university's December commencement ceremony knowing his next steps will lead to a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University.

Mr. Oakley, a senior English major from Baltimore, has been selected to participate in his hometown's [Urban Teachers](#) program.



Mr. Oakley

Successful applicants have at least a 3.0 GPA and must meet certain core competencies. Finalists are also asked to teach a mock lesson. Those who are selected make a four year commitment to the program.

In their first year, the Urban Teacher candidates work alongside an experienced teacher in a Baltimore classroom while taking graduate courses in education after

their school day. In the second year, they begin a full-time, salaried teaching position—often in the same school—with support from an Urban Teachers coach.

The guidance and support continues through year four. By then, program participants will have developed their teaching practices, earned state certification and completed a [Master of Science in Education degree from Johns Hopkins University](#).

According to the program's website, Urban Teachers launched its teacher preparation program in 2009. Since 2010, the organization says it has welcomed 950 aspiring teachers and expanded to 216 schools, teaching nearly 100,000 students in Baltimore, D.C. and Dallas/Fort Worth.

Mr. Oakley transferred to UMES in 2016. He is a member of the department's honor society, [Sigma Tau Delta](#).

A FALL SPEAKERS BUREAU

Communication Skills Beyond the Classroom

Junior English major Cita Christian was a recent guest speaker in Fundamentals of Contemporary Speech (ENGL 203) taught by Jennifer Keane-Dawes.

Ms. Christian, a member of the honors program who serves as a tutor in the [UMES Writing Center](#), spoke to the students about writing their resumes and cover letters effectively.

"She was absolutely brilliant," said Dr. Keane-Dawes. "I was pleased that she was able to present the



Ms. Christian

structural connections between a speech outline and a cover letter. One student said: 'Oh, the cover letter is like a speech outline, Dr. Keane-Dawes!' They understood, and it was gratifying that they were hearing this information from one of their peers."

Ms. Christian was one of three speakers in a Fall Speakers Bureau assembled by Dr. Keane-Dawes. The guests were asked to focus on the application of communication skills beyond the classroom.

Dr. Prince Attoh, director of the [UMES Organizational Leadership program](#), discussed communication strategies for effective leadership.

Woodforest Bank Manager Nicole Thompson is scheduled to speak on the non-verbal messages of credit scores and their role in prospective employment. She also will provide students with financial management strategies.



Dr. Keane-Dawes

Photo by Jim Glovier

CHINESE CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

Language Courses are More Than Grammar and Vocabulary

The UMES students enrolled in Beginning Chinese (CHIN 101), taught by Ashley Lin, got a lesson in the art of Chinese calligraphy on November 13.

Before actually delving into the writing, however, students learned the essence of Chinese calligraphy—patience and perseverance—by preparing their ink with an ink stone and an inkstick themselves.



Inkstick preparation

Through the practice of 永字八法 (eight principles of yong), step-by-step



Brushstroke practice

Lastly, students engaged in writing Chinese calligraphy in the form of 春联, which are long strips or diamond-shaped red paper hung in the doorways. Chinese characters believed to be propitious, such as 福 (good

instructions on writing the Chinese character 永 (yǒng; eternity), students learned eight fundamental brushstrokes that can be applied to the creation of

fortune) and 财 (wealth), are often chosen to bring good luck. This is a common practice in China, Honk Kong and Taiwan to celebrate the coming of the Chinese New Year.



Students display their final product, the good luck charms used to celebrate the new year.

Photos by Ashley Lin

THE ART OF ANIME

Japanese Language Instructor is Recruited

The A.C.T.I.O.N. Anime Society, the campus organization for fans of Japanese animation, held a drawing contest recently.

The competition, conducted during one of the club's regular Friday night meetings, featured 11 contestants. At the end of the night, the judges picked three winners.



Art competition information and photos provided by A.C.T.I.O.N. advisor Phillip Broussard.



The group has a new advisor. Japanese language instructor Phillip Broussard has agreed to serve the organization.

A.C.T.I.O.N. has tentatively scheduled its campus FanCon for April 4. The group describes the event as “a convention that celebrates all things geeky and hopes to draw in fans from all different genres.” Last year it featured events, panels, and vendors, representing things such as video games, anime, comics and manga.

RECRUITING CONTINUES

The English department's digital media and foreign language programs were represented by Marilyn Buerkle and Phillip Broussard at the university's annual open house. The event was held in the William P. Hytche Athletic Center on November 8.



A TV camera helps digital media coordinator Marilyn Buerkle attract the attention of event visitors.

Photo by Kia Proctor

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