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Arts & Letters: The Magazine of Potter College at Western Kentucky University

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Welcome to our spring issue of Arts & Letters! Politics and public affairs have been the order of the day over the last several months, so in this issue we’d like to show you how Potter College is engaged in public discourse. Some of that involvement focuses on politics, and Saundra Ardrey, head of the Political Science Department, will introduce you to the roles our students and faculty played in the electoral process during the recent Presidential campaign. In keeping with a political theme, our Alumni Spotlight focuses on cartoonist Whitey Sanders, who has spent a lifetime skewering our political leaders with his art and his wit.

Not all public discourse is political, and our faculty and students are also deeply involved in the cultural life of this region. Barren County native and English Department faculty member Wes Berry talks about how our students move from the political to the personal and from a global view to local concerns.

This issue will also give you a glimpse of a tremendous gallery show of Civil War photographs that were displayed in Mass Media & Technology Hall. Curated by Photojournalism faculty member Tim Broekema, the show highlights the pioneering work of Civil War photographers, with a particular emphasis on photographs of the aftermath of the Battle of Antietam, perhaps the bloodiest single day in American history. Robert Dietle, head of the History Department, has provided concise and informative captions for the images Tim has selected. All in all, Tim and Robert have given us a remarkable window on the defining event of our history.

Not everything in Potter College is happening close to home, however. The College also continues to be part of the university’s “international reach,” and this issue lets you tag along on three remarkable international trips to Britain, Cuba, and Ghana, where Potter College faculty and students studied politics, literature, and musical theatre. You’ll be intrigued by what they’ve learned!

It’s been an eventful several months in Potter College, and I think you’ll enjoy this issue of Arts & Letters!

DAVID D. LEE, Dean
Potter College of Arts & Letters
Contents

Message from the Dean .......................... Left
David Lee

The Election Season
Experiencing the Democratic Process First Hand ........... 4
Saundra Ardrey

Photographs of a Nation Divided .................. 8
Mac McKerral

The Real Work:
Catalyzing Civic Engagement .................... 14
Wes Berry

Alumni Spotlight
Bill “Whitey” Sanders ............................. 18
Jo-Ann Huff Albers

London School of Economics ...................... 20
Edward Yager

Study Abroad
WKU in Cuba ...................................... 22
Walker Rutledge
Studying Musical Theatre in Ghana ................. 25
Jordan Campbell

Arts & Letters Departments
News from PCAL Departments ..................... 28

International Research Notes ....................... 32
ELECTION SEASON
Experiencing the Democratic Process First Hand

BY DR. SAUNDRA ARDREY
Election 2012 was a time of political and social turmoil that pitted Republicans against Democrats, conservatives against liberals; it may have been a rollicking, helter skelter time for the American people, but for the Department of Political Science it was magical. This election year, as during every presidential election, students of the political process merged theory with practical application. While the political science curriculum introduces students to such concepts as participation and democratic theory, in an election year they get to experience those concepts at work.

The election cycle began for WKU students at the Republican and Democratic conventions in August. Partnering with the Warren County Republican Party, Political Science professor Scott Lasley escorted a group of students to Tampa, Florida, where they survived both political and hurricane-force winds. WKU students were there as Clint Eastwood scolded the empty chair and as Ann Romney shared the qualities she most admired in her husband. Department chair Saundra Curry Ardrey took students to Charlotte, N.C., for the re-nomination of President Obama. Political Science student Chelsea Cornett interned with the DNC and received unprecedented access to the Convention floor.

The Department, working with the Political Engagement Project, ignited student participation with the theme “What’s your tag?” We partnered with Housing and Residence Life, Student Government Association, the Office of Diversity Programs, and academic units to engage students from across the campus community in the excitement of the campaign season. The library presented exhibits on the Constitution and on American presidential elections. The School of Journalism and Broadcasting, the Department of Political Science, and the Institute for Citizenship and Social Responsibility presented a live musical and multi-media presentation about the First Amendment and music subjected to censorship or bans. Hundreds of students turned out for Debate Watch, a festival of music, food and information. In addition to procuring literature informing vote choice, students engaged in several fun activities such as sumo wrestling, a water balloon fight, and adding their opinions to a graffiti mural. Senator Rand Paul shared his views with students, and College Republicans and Democrats debated issues.

But by far the biggest and most significant event was September 25, National Voter Registration Day. In 2008, six million Americans told the U.S. Census that they did not vote because they did not know how to register or they missed their state’s voter registration deadline. Students in the Political Science Senior Seminar set out to make sure no student was left out of the 2012 election. With the help of Spirit Masters, Big Red and President Gary Ransdell, they registered over 1800 students.

Presidential transitions in the United States are noted for the relative ease with which the transfer of executive power and leadership is accomplished. We witness a radical shift in focus – from campaigning to governing by an incoming administration. As William Galston and Elaine Kamarck point out in “The Transition: Reasserting Presidential Leadership,” “The peaceful transfer of power from one President to the next is an enduring and gripping drama of American democracy.” (See Mandate for Change, ed. Will Marshall and Martin Schram).

Every four years the department of political science offers an opportunity to experience that drama. On January 19, led by political science professors Saundra Curry Ardrey and Roger Murphy, a group of 41 WKU students, faculty, staff and community folk traveled through the night to arrive in Washington, D.C., on Sunday at midday. First stop, a trip to the Hill to pick up inauguration tickets, provided by Senators Rand Paul and Mitch McConnell and Congressman Brett Guthrie. We expected long lines just like four years ago, but what a difference a second term makes. There was a line, but it did not circle the block. There was excitement in the crowd, but the euphoria of 2008 was noticeably
The pageantry and the feeling of “we’ism” were the perfect antidote to a cantankerous election season.
absent. After picking up tickets, math professor Peter Hamburger and his wife, Edit, and M.P.A. graduate student Alex Burton made a mad dash to the Kentucky Democratic Party reception hosted by Governor and Mrs. Steve Beshear.

Monday morning, Inauguration Day, started early. The swearing in ceremony was at 11 a.m., but with standing tickets we knew we had to get there early to secure our spots. The tickets put some of us close to the stands, some just behind the seated section, and a few further back just beyond the reflecting pool. Some could see the stage but most had to depend on the Jumbotron. None of this mattered very much because we were witnessing the peaceful transfer of power. The pageantry and the feeling of “we’ism” were the perfect antidote to a cantankerous election season. Among the crowd of half a million, there was a shared sense that no matter who won, despite fights and debates, this was a time to come together to celebrate our democracy and to hope for a better tomorrow.

After six hours of standing, though tired, we were not ready to leave. The parade was yet to come. A few hours later, there they were: the President and First Lady waving, smiling and walking past us on Pennsylvania Avenue. Later that night, it was time for music and dancing at one of the official Inauguration Balls. Political Science majors David Williams and Allison Feikes donned their tux and gown, respectively, for the Commander-in-Chief Ball. As they awaited the arrival of the first couple, Allison and David were entertained by Alicia Keys, John Legend and others. Still later in the night, the two watched as Michelle and Barack Obama danced on stage. Allison said, “The night was amazing. I’m a Republican but this was worth the trip.”

Early the next morning the group took a tour of Washington, D.C., monuments before meeting Senator Rand Paul. “Isn’t it something that just regular people can discuss issues and express their opinions with an elected official? Guess that’s what democracy is all about,” exclaimed M.P.A. graduate assistant Tim Gilliam. Students spent the remainder of the day exploring the capital on their own.

Wednesday morning, exhausted but filled with memories, we headed back to campus and to the beginning of the semester. Next inauguration, come join us. But you don’t have to wait four more years. There’s always something exciting going on in the Department of Political Science. Contact the department at (270) 745-4558 to get engaged. It’ll be awesome!

In her twelfth year as chair of the Political Science Department at Western Kentucky University, Dr. Ardrey conducts research on the political participation of women and minorities. Her areas of expertise include African American Studies, media and politics, campaign management and public opinion. A graduate of Winston-Salem State University and The Ohio State University, she is recognized as a media analyst for both local and state media outlets. In addition to university teaching and administrative responsibilities, Dr. Ardrey is active in local politics and community activities. As one of the co-founders and co-directors of the WKU Institute for Citizenship and Social Responsibility, Dr. Ardrey is a much sought after speaker and commentator and has received numerous awards and honors, including Outstanding People of the 21st Century.
Photographs of a Nation Divided

BY MAC MCKERRAL

Allan Pinkerton (seated to the right) and his associates (from the left) George H. Bangs, R. William Moore, John C. Babcock and Augustus K. Littlefield in front of a tent in Antietam. Pinkerton, best known for his Pinkerton National Detective Agency that prospered after the war, also gained praise for foiling an assassination attempt on President Lincoln in 1861.
Gabriel Sudbeck sat motionless on a black-lacquered bench in the Mass Media & Technology Hall Gallery, staring intently at a flat-panel monitor mounted on the back wall. A soothing instrumental arrangement flowed from wall-mounted speakers, but the images on the screen appeared mottled and blurred. But the freshman history major from Omaha, Neb., wore a special set of cheesy looking, yet fully functional paper-framed glasses with red-cyan anaglyph lenses that transformed the blur into Civil War photographs in 3-D. Sudbeck described the images as “spectacular.” His description mirrors the reaction from hundreds who have taken in The Gallery and Atrium exhibit “Witness: Photographs of a Nation Divided,” the work of nine Civil War photographers and the 3-D presentation.

Since the exhibit’s opening night reception on Jan. 23, students, faculty, Warren County residents, and school kids bussed in from throughout Kentucky and from Indiana and Illinois have gleaned a deeper, visually powerful understanding of the horrors of the Civil War and the photos taken to report on it.

And why did Sudbeck, who wants to teach, choose a history major? “I think it is the stories,” he said. “I read history and I think, ‘Wow, how did the people pull these things off?” The adage “Great minds think alike” seems to fit when the exhibit’s creative director and editor talks about its purpose. “[The exhibit] is not about the history of the Civil War,” said Tim Broekema, associate professor in the Photojournalism Department in the School of Journalism & Broadcasting. “It’s about the pictures of the Civil War. The photographers had a story to tell.”

With the exhibit up and running, Broekema took time to reflect on how it came together, drawing on another adage: “How does that expression go, ‘Be careful what you wish for.”’ He put portable walls on a budget wish list for The Gallery when MMTH opened more than a decade ago, but that request did not make the budget. The Gallery used portable walls from the Kentucky Museum in the interim, but got its walls this academic year. Exhibit planning that started in August moved quickly, and from Jan. 3 until the exhibit officially opened Jan. 23, it became Broekema’s full-time job, he commented.

One set of walls went up, but invisible walls that sometimes separate disciplines came down. The success of this collaborative effort between History and Photojournalism pleased the Dean of the Potter College of Arts & Letters, Dr. David Lee. “They are not really [geographic] neighbors,” Lee said about the history faculty housed in “historic” Cherry Hall and the School of Journalism & Broadcasting in MMTH, a building that is part of WKU’s “modern” history. And Lee said the strategic location of The Gallery also elevated the exhibit’s profile for the community. “When [MMTH] was built, it was meant to be an entryway to campus,” Lee said. “And then to have the exhibit in two [groupings], the Atrium and The Gallery — people see one part and make a mental note to come back to see the other.”

With this high ground secured, “General” Broekema began enlisting the troops he needed to get the exhibit completed by the start of spring term. Jonathan Adams, a professional in residence in the

Allan Pinkerton, director of the Secret Service, in camp after the Battle of Antietam. For President Lincoln, Pinkerton was really the head of intelligence gathering for the Civil War. They unofficially called it the Secret Service.
Photojournalism program during fall 2012, began digging through historical photo archives and pulled approximately 100 images, Broekema said. Adams showed Broekema accounts about how many photographers shot the Civil War in 3-D, and Broekema acquired the 3-D show from the Center for Civil War Photography. “It was cutting-edge technology,” Broekema said about stereography.

According to Broekema, the real challenge came with establishing for the exhibit a photographer’s must — focus. One of his captains, Dr. Robert Dietle, head of the History Department, provided that. “[Robert] asked, ‘Why not arrange it by photographers?’” Broekema said, “That was a great idea.” Dietle remarked, “That was my one contribution…” although a stack of books on the Civil War piled on a table in his Cherry Hall office suggested otherwise. “Photojournalism and photojournalists — Civil War photographers were the first. They took photography out of the studio,” he added.

Dietle got drawn into the battle because the department’s expert on the Civil War and Reconstruction, Glenn W. LaFantasie, associate professor, went on sabbatical. Dietle admitted that when it came to Civil War history within his academic career, he had been in full retreat. “I’m someone in 18th century Europe,” Dietle admitted. “I’ve been avoiding the Civil War all my life. But I knew where to go to find what I needed.” Dietle said that Civil War photographer Mathew B. Brady early on recognized the value of historical

Above photographs left to right: In September 1862, Mathew Brady sent two of his photographers — Alexander Gardner and James Gibson — to the battlefield at Antietam, where the Army of the Potomac had blunted Robert E. Lee’s first invasion of the North and forced his army back across the Potomac river into Virginia. The battle had exacted a horrible toll. Sept. 17, 1862, remains the bloodiest single day in the nation’s history. Total casualties for some 12 hours of fighting reached 23,000, including approximately 4,000 dead.

Gardner and Gibson reached Antietam within two days of the end of the battle as work crews were only beginning the grim job of clearing the ground of thousands of bodies, both human and animal. Within a few days, working with the awkward photographic technology of the time, they had produced some of the most riveting images in the history of photography, becoming the first to photograph the dead on an American battlefield and the first to bring images of a historical event to the American public. A notice of a gallery show by Mathew Brady appeared in the New York Times on Oct. 6, less than three weeks after the battle itself. With a simple sign hanging in the window of Brady’s New York City gallery, titled “The Dead of Antietam,” Gardner’s and Gibson’s work was put on display for all to see. Crowds of people responded and made their way to the second-floor gallery to get a glimpse of the images. A reporter described “crowds of people constantly going up the stairs” of Brady’s studio at Broadway and Tenth where “hushed, reverend groups standing around these weird copies of carnage, bending down to look in the pale faces of the dead, chained by the strange spell that dwells in dead men’s eyes.”

Although no record exists for what photos were on display, this wall represents what images the Brady gallery may have shown. However, the images were most likely carte de visites (small, cardboard mounted images no bigger than 5-by-7 inches). Thanks to modern-day printing techniques, we were able to reproduce these images to more than 500% their original size. — Federal troops commanded by Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside fought a bitter three-hour battle to cross Burnside Bridge over Antietam Creek. They finally captured it at 1 p.m., Sept. 17, 1862, but the fierce Confederate resistance gave General Robert E. Lee time to reinforce his battle lines. (LOC Gardner)
photography, and he took portraits of many prominent Americans. In fact, Brady acknowledged that. “From the first, I regarded myself as under obligation to my country to preserve the faces of its historic men and mothers,” Brady told reporters of the day. Dietle offered Broekema 12 names of influential Civil War photographers. Broekema whittled those down to eight based on the quality of images, content and photojournalism integrity, he said. A ninth photographer eventually joined the list.

Broekema then turned to fine-tuning his battle plan. “I had proofs taped all over the walls of my office,” he said. “There were 16 different ways to arrange the walls, and that [arrangement] affects your decisions on the images.” Broekema offered some insight into his vision for the exhibit during the opening night reception. “My purpose here was to design a gallery that celebrated the image,” he told attendees “Not that we did not pay attention to the history. Here, the image takes center stage. The images on display here are truly beautiful and horrific storytelling pictures.”

Broekema drafted Adam Wolffbrandt, a senior photojournalism major from Lexington, to turn digital images into gallery prints. Wolffbrandt spent 65 hours just on scanning, toning and printing, he reported. Bria Granville, a sophomore photojournalism major from Georgetown, helped Wolffbrandt break down the previous exhibit to make room for the new and then helped paint. “I am not a huge fan of war,” Wolffbrandt admitted. “I was not really interested in it.” But Wolffbrandt said the knowledge he gained transitioned the hard work into a “pretty cool” experience. And he contributed more than just grunt work assigned to a draftee. The exhibit photos taken by Alexander Gardner of President Abraham Lincoln’s assassination conspirators really struck him, Wolffbrandt said. “I talked ‘B’ into using all of them — six portraits and a gallows image.” A tough idea to sell? “He loved it,” Wolffbrandt said with a grin.

Dr. Lee found all the photos compelling, even though he admits to looking at them in a way others might not — away from the photographer’s center of focus. “What the road looked like, what kind of shoes people are wearing,” Lee said, the slices of everyday life that can add to historical perspective caught his attention. Lee observed during his opening night keynote that the exhibit demonstrated the potential of photography to tell stories, and those images in turn brought to 19th-century Americans a major event in an unprecedented way. Brady hit on the idea of assembling a team to photograph the war, Lee explained. “At enormous
Private Francis E Brownell, 11th New York Infantry, killed the Virginia innkeeper who fatally shot Brownell’s leader, Col. Elmer Ellsworth, after he entered the establishment to remove a Confederate States of America flag which was flying above it. Brownell eventually received the Medal of Honor for his actions; the flag, stained with Ellsworth’s blood, is at his feet. (LOC Mathew Brady)
cost — approximately $100,000 — he hired 18 photographers, provided each of them with a mobile studio in a covered wagon and sent them out to photograph the war.”

Lee also said during the keynote that photographer Samuel Cooley served as a contract worker with Gen. William T. Sherman’s troops, making him perhaps the first “embedded” photographer—not that Sherman held any great love for journalists. “If I had my choice I would kill every reporter in the world, but I am sure we would be getting reports from hell before breakfast,” Sherman once said.

Another WKU faculty member and historian drew a different lesson from the exhibit. Dr. Ingrid Cartwright, assistant professor of art history, taught "HON 300: The Small Picture: Art and Microhistory," an interdisciplinary Honors Colloquium that examined meaningful issues found by studying art and history on a micro scale. The first class met at the exhibit opening night, and the class met in The Gallery later that week, Cartwright said.

Students focused on a debate about two photographs made for “Gardner’s Photographic Sketch Book of the War,” considering whether they truly represented documentary images or had been staged by photographers. Cartwright’s students examined the possible reasons why someone might manipulate the images, she explained. “For propaganda? For financial gain?” Cartwright said. “You can really study the mood, the point of view. We had some wonderful discussions.”

Back in the gallery, Sudbeck discussed his plans to teach history in high school. And like Lee, he drew an everyday life lesson from the exhibit. It came from the exhibit’s side-by-side photos of Lincoln, Sudbeck said. The photo on the left — taken in Springfield, Ill., on Aug. 13, 1860, by Preston Butler when Lincoln was a presidential candidate — might be the last beardless photo of him. The photo on the right — taken on Feb. 5, 1865, by Alexander Gardner — might be the last photo taken of Lincoln alive. The juxtaposition articulates the physical toll exacted on Lincoln while serving as president during the nation’s bloodiest era. “Yeah, when I am having a bad day — things aren’t going right — I think, ‘Lincoln had it a lot worse than me,’” Sudbeck said.

Mac McKerral is an associate professor and News-Editorial coordinator in the School of Journalism & Broadcasting. His bachelor’s degree is in secondary education-history from Arizona State University. His favorite class was Civil War and Reconstruction.
The Real Work: Catalyzing Civic Engagement

BY WES BERRY

One great pleasure of teaching is watching students develop into engaged and responsible citizens. The Potter College curriculum cultivates a whole individual, liberates the mind, and fosters skills such as communication, problem solving, and analysis to help students navigate our fast-changing, complex world. We don’t necessarily train students in a narrowly defined specialty; instead, we tend to be about the big picture. In the face of massive challenges across the globe, this cultivation of an intelligent, reasonable, humane citizenry is vital, urgent work.

A special topics honors English course I taught in 2007, “Literature, Culture, & Environment,” is but one example of how PCAL coursework illuminates the connections between the local and the global, the personal and the political. The course goal was to study human ecology from various fields of study, such as religion, history, economics, anthropology, psychology, and of course, literature. We read economist Lester Brown’s “Plan B: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble” for an overview of worldwide economic, social, and ecological challenges. Associate Dean and Religious Studies professor Larry Snyder gave a guest lecture on religion and ecology in conjunction with our reading of Leslie Marmon Silko’s novel “Ceremony.” Rural sociologist Doug Smith guest lectured on issues in his field, a good complement to our reading of Kentucky writer Wendell Berry’s essays on culture and agriculture. Michael Pollan’s multidisciplinary analysis of our food systems, “The Omnivore’s Dilemma,” inspired some students to become involved in food activism. From Bill McKibben’s book, “Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age,” students encountered a philosophical take on advances in robotics, nanotechnology, and genetic engineering. We attended a Kentucky Author Forum at The Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts in Louisville to hear Wendell Berry and Bill McKibben converse on big problems like climate change. We visited the farm of Andrew Habegger in Allen County to learn about community-supported agriculture. We read Richard Louv’s “Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder”—a study of how today’s youth
are often disconnected from the outdoors and the implications of this for conservation—and took an overnight backcountry camping trip and wild cave tour in Mammoth Cave National Park. I required students to venture out into the woods and sit alone for one hour. Later I asked them to write about the experience. Several told me they’d never spent that much time alone outdoors before.

The students valued the challenging material, multi-disciplinary approach, seminar-style class discussions, and field trips—the real-world utility of our learning—and I rank the course high on my life list of edifying educational experiences.

I recently contacted some of my politically involved students—former and current—to ask how what they learn in Potter College has influenced their community work. Some credit the aforementioned course and writings encountered in my Kentucky Literature course for inspiration. (The Commonwealth has been home to many firebrand writers, including Robert Penn Warren, James Still, Harriette Arnow, Harry Caudill, Wendell Berry, Jim Wayne Miller, Bobbie Ann Mason, Barbara Kingsolver, Erik Reece, and Silas House.) Others were fired up by an American Studies course on the topic “Land, Nature, Wilderness,” a multidisciplinary collaboration of Tony Harkins (history), Roger Murphy (political science), yours truly (English), and thirty students from various disciplines. University budgets don't often allow for team-taught courses across disciplines, and that's unfortunate, as the students and professors were enriched by the exposure to different disciplinary “ways of knowing,” as some of these student testaments reflect.

**Nick Asher (2011) Major: English Creative Writing; Minor: Sustainability**

American Studies marked a turning point in both my academic career and activist life. Before American Studies I knew some information about various environmental problems—such as peak oil, excessive pollution, and anthropogenic climate change—facing America and the world, but knew little about how and what was being done to reverse or halt their effects and did not understand the interconnections among all of the problems. The coursework, discussions and readings of this class not only helped me to understand the scope of these problems but also taught me something much more valuable—how the problems were interrelated. Peak oil is a problem, but much more so if all of your food comes from across the world; this excessive transportation leads to more pollution, which then further throws the climate out of balance, which then affects virtually all life on this planet.

America and the world at large face many problems, but upon further consideration, they can all be condensed into one: most of us no longer live locally. American Studies helped me to connect the dots by viewing America's environmental problems through a host of different lenses—historical, literary, and political—and to follow their progression through time to the present.

One of the standout moments of this class, which I still think of often, occurred when we were discussing Michael Pollan’s “The Omnivore's Dilemma,” which follows meals from three different sources from beginning to end: conventional or industrial agriculture, organic agriculture, and

Potter College student Nick Asher poses with his study abroad group after planting a tree at a local school near Auroville in India, where Mr. Asher studied abroad.
foraging. One of the professors asked if anyone knew what was in season currently. This was around October, and a quick trip to the farmer’s market would have easily shown what could be grown in our side of the world at that time of year, but no one was able to answer. This moment struck me deeply because it showed how out of touch even educated Americans are with their food system. Wendell Berry puts it succinctly: After this moment, each discussion held a higher meaning for me; I wanted to learn more about what it meant to live sustainably in our world. So, during the course and afterwards I took action: I learned more about the specific problems of mountain top removal, burning coal, habitat destruction, and lack of good old food knowledge, and traveled to Washington, D.C., and Frankfort to protest and learn more about all of the above. I was animated to change our world and the ecological and cultural problems facing it, and I had a background with which to examine each of the problems critically and strategically. If it weren’t for the Potter College of Arts and Letters, my activist career at WKU and afterward would not look the same. I would not have become as active in food politics and certainly would not have worked so hard to create WKU GROWS, the college’s first student-run organic garden. My time spent in Cherry Hall taught me to think critically, and this ever-valuable skill shaped me as an activist.


As an English and journalism major, I find a very clear connection between language and activism. I have repeatedly learned in my Potter College courses the true power of words when they are employed well. The English language has an immense and wide effect on people’s behavior, understanding, and ability to connect with one another. I am a firm believer in using words as a tool for change. Throughout my college career, I have worked closely with an on-campus organization (WKU Aid) to encourage fair trade and local food practices. Two years ago, with the signature of President Gary Ransdell, our organization deemed WKU an official Fair Trade University, thus establishing a committed goal toward fair trade access and education on campus. That year, I served as the Press Coordinator, writing press releases for events that promoted fair trade. As the years passed, the organization added more emphasis on promoting local food practices. I created a guide that informed students where local food can be easily purchased around Bowling Green.

As a journalism major, I have also used my passion for environmentalism to write informatively about issues I believe need more awareness, such as Appalachian mountaintop removal and WKU Office of Sustainability events. My classes have helped me hone in on what makes for good, persuasive and informative writing in a way that delivers the most meaning in the most concise way possible.

Additionally, my literature courses have enabled me to examine social issues I am passionate about through the varying lenses of great writers through the ages: William Faulkner, Gary Snyder, Zora Neale Hurston, and Mary Wollstonecraft (just to name a few). Studying these authors and their works has led to a greater understanding of social issues and empowered me to act in my community. Finally, I have always felt that literature is a way to connect human souls to one another and to understand each other’s suffering or strife. And I know that if we can all just feel a little more connected, we will act to help one another out by whatever means possible.

Graduating from Potter College will arm me with...
the tools necessary to change what needs to be changed in the way I know best: with words.

**Tracy Jo Ingram (2013) Major: English Literature; Minors: Women’s Studies & Creative Writing**

I could speak endlessly about how my education has influenced my interest in and pursuit of social justice. In particular, the Kentucky Literature course sparked my interest in environmental and food justice issues. Reading the works of Wendell Berry led me to a philosophy of and commitment to a local economy, as well as the decision to learn the ways of homesteading. Since then I’ve begun training in beekeeping and gardening. I have also become involved with Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, participating in land reform protests and mountaintop removal policy reform in both Frankfort and Washington, D.C. Currently, I am in the process of applying for several post-graduate programs and fellowships related to such matters, such as FoodCorps and AmeriCorps NCCC.

Aside from our study being the gateway to understanding history, political patterns, diverse points of view, and traditions, it is a critical means to comprehending human relationships and to developing interpersonal intuitiveness. My education in English has also led me to understand the value of the human narrative, therefore expanding my awareness of multicultural issues. As I go on to pursue a Masters in Public Administration/Non-Profit Management, such skills, resources, and knowledge will be entirely indispensable.

**Meg Kennedy (2013) Major: Literature; Minors: Sociology & Women’s Studies**

People often ask me why I study literature. Inherent in that question is a sense that reading can do something only internally and only for the reader. From my experience, that isn’t true. Southern Literature taught me to take pride in where I live, taught me that there is something beautiful about this place, and that it’s okay for me to love it and want to fix it, and to think it’s worth the fixing. That’s why I joined Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, worked for voter registration in this region, and have done service work on mountaintop removal sites in Eastern Kentucky. A writing course with an emphasis on creative-nonfiction helped me more than anything to work through some of those experiences and to understand what my role can be in the world around me.

I’ve long had an interest in sustainability, and I began college working with a student group on the fair trade campaign for WKU. I took the sustainable gardening class at the WKU Farm as well as the local food colloquium. These were wonderful but very separate experiences until I took Survey of American Literature II and read “The Grapes of Wrath.” That book in particular, in conjunction with “The Omnivore’s Dilemma,” gave me a history and a direction for my food justice activism. It let me know that my personal leanings and the small collectives of young people springing up to work on this problematic food system were not unfounded, that we weren’t isolated stars but part of a larger constellation that sent its first rays of light long ago.

In a more general but no less important sense, what classes in English have done is open me up to the validity of others’ experiences and to active reflection on my own. This is simple and radical. Literature woke up my awareness, even through the vast and foggy sea of the information age, and when I found I was awake, activism was inevitable.

Amen. Such clear-minded eloquence and bighearted visions make me mighty proud. These students give me hope and confirm my belief in the value of a holistic education in the things that matter.

**Wes Berry is Associate Professor of English, Director of Graduate Studies, author of “The Kentucky Barbecue Book” (2013), and host of WBKO Go Local, a regional segment of the television show The Local Traveler. Inspired by Kentuckian Wendell Berry and other writers, artisans, farmers and educators who foster a vision of living in a just, humane, healthy and peaceable world, Wes and his wife Elisa raise animals and vegetables for personal consumption on a small homestead near the Green and Barren rivers.**
Western Kentucky University is a magnet for Bill “Whitey” Sanders. Over the years has been drawn to campus frequently, especially to annual Homecoming reunions with his old football team. He has thought a lot about WKU in the last year as he worked on his memoirs to be published in the spring by New South Books. Its title, “Against the Grain,” is an apt metaphor for the editorial cartoonist’s career. In a recent telephone conversation, Whitey Sanders responded to questions about his involvement with WKU and his work.

Q. What did you enjoy most about your time at WKU?

“It grounded me in a time when I needed to be grounded. I needed what Western had to offer. I loved the look of the campus, but more importantly the relationship between faculty and students was more personal, more familial, than in other places. I felt at home there.”

Q. What brought you to WKU?

“I transferred from the University of Miami on a football scholarship. Their offense was not suited to me. I was more a drop-back-and-pass quarterback, rather than a running one. My high school coach sent me to Western.” (An NCAA record setter, Sanders had a 66.7% pass completion record in 1953.)

Q. Your editorial cartoons have appeared in countless newspapers and magazines. In all the years, of all the projects, what was your favorite and why?

“My passion was civil rights, civil liberties. It was a social battlefield that I relished. I thought media needed to be aggressive supporters of civil rights.”

Q. Who has expressed the most anger at one of your cartoons and why?

“As far as politicians were concerned, Strom Thurmond and Richard Nixon. Most of the vitriol I received was from organizations like the John Birch Society and the Minutemen in the Kansas City area. I was in their crosshairs for years.”

Q. Is there any one cartoon you’d take back if you could, and why?

“Yes, absolutely. I wrote about it in my book. In the ‘60s I was working in Greensboro, N.C., and was in Woolworth’s at the lunch counter when some black students came in and sat down. It never occurred to me they wouldn’t be served. I saw blacks shopping in the store and getting food from the take-out counter. I had a cartoon done for that day and so I thought about it for a couple of days. I wanted to criticize management. I drew an empty stool, which didn’t represent management. I could kick myself up and down for drawing it. [The image] wasn’t strong enough. I let myself be compromised by reading editorials on the subject. I haven’t done that again.”
Q. Which pre-cartooning historical figure would you most like to have caricatured and why?

“Before my cartooning career, Harry Truman, mainly because I think he was an excellent president. He was a gutsy man of the people. I also truly admired Franklin Roosevelt.”

Q. What is the role of a cartoonist in today’s multi-media news culture?

“Regardless of the medium, a political cartoon is a vehicle for opinion. The cartoonist is a critic, and there should be no doubt where he stands.”

Q. How do you see editorial cartooning influencing other areas of art?

“Through history, art and cartooning are compatible. The predecessors of cartoonists were painters and pamphleteers. In the late 20th century, the tools of cartooning were different — pen and ink and a more comic style. Historically, caricatures contained more realistic, artistic rendering. Today they are more abstract. Both are rooted in the same techniques.”

Q. Should your craft be taught in an art major or journalism major?

“Political cartooning is more closely aligned to journalism than to art. It’s very much like writing a column. You have to do research, know what you’re talking about. It’s not just a light bulb going off. The idea is the most important thing. A poor idea is never successful because of the drawing.”

Q. What advice would you give current or prospective students?

“You really need a solid educational foundation, not art training. Go to a university. Get background in history and social sciences.”

Whitey Sanders was born on October 14, 1930, in Springfield, Tenn., and was an All Star athlete in high school and, later, a standout quarterback for WKU’s football team. His journalistic career started as commanding officer of the Pacific Stars and Stripes Army Unit in Seoul, Korea, in 1955. He worked for the Greensboro Daily News as a political cartoonist, moved to the Kansas City Star, where he was nationally syndicated, and to The Milwaukee Journal, from which he retired in 1991. Sanders said he is slowly giving all his cartoon originals to WKU. The Whitey Sanders Collection is housed in the Kentucky Museum. His bronze statue of coach E.A. Diddle is prominently displayed at the arena. In 1997, he was inducted into the WKU Hall of Distinguished Alumni.

Jo-Ann Huff Albers, founding director of the WKU School of Journalism & Broadcasting, taught her last class at WKU in May 2007 and on August 30 moved back to the Cincinnati area where she had worked for The Cincinnati Enquirer for 20 years in various capacities, including Kentucky executive editor. Between leaving The Enquirer in May 1981 and coming to Bowling Green in May 1987, she was editor and publisher of Sturgis Journal in Michigan and Public Opinion in Chambersburg, Pa., and Gannett general news executive, working with Gannett News Service and USA Today. Her personal professional files are part of the National Women and Media Collection at the University of Missouri.
There are many productive ways in which PCAL faculty contribute to the university’s imperative to be “A Leading American University with International Reach.” One faculty member, Professor Edward Yager (Political Science), has attempted to advance this imperative during the past six years by cultivating a relationship with The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Beginning in the summer of 2006 with a WKU research grant and then again in 2011-12 with a one-year sabbatical leave, Dr. Yager has worked with LSE scholars and students in what has become a very productive scholarly partnership “across the pond.”

Only a couple of months after the release of his book “Ronald Reagan’s Journey” (2006), Dr. Yager left for the LSE to work with Dr. Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey on a sequel project to the book, an automated textual analysis of major Reagan speeches. Another LSE scholar, Saadi Lahlou, joined the research project, and eventually the work was published in the premier journal on the American presidency, Presidential Studies Quarterly. This collaborative effort was so rewarding that Dr. Yager began to explore additional opportunities for scholarly work at the LSE.

The London School of Economics and Political Science is a specialist institution in the social sciences located in downtown London. A total of 16 Nobel Prize winners in economics, peace, and literature have been either LSE staff or alumni, including Bertrand Russell, Friedrich von Hayek, Ronald Coase, Amartya Sen, and Paul Krugman. John F. Kennedy once attended the LSE and so did Mick Jagger, though Jagger may have learned his music elsewhere.

In contrast to Oxford and Cambridge, the LSE is truly an international institution with students drawn from around 145 countries. Only about 15 percent of the 9,000 student enrollment is from North America. So, in Dr. Yager’s view, simply maintaining a relationship with the LSE would give even greater meaning to WKU’s international reach.

Not long after returning from England in 2006, Dr. Yager discovered another opportunity at the LSE that promised to enhance his expertise in his second chosen subfield—political philosophy. His teaching and research interests converged very well with a one year formal program of study at the LSE that promised to provide intensive work in the primary source documents of John Locke, David Hume, F.A. Hayek, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Sir Karl Popper, and others. A one-year sabbatical would provide sufficient time to develop several different research projects to be presented at professional conferences and then advanced to journal publication.

Dr. Yager began planning this endeavor and it all came together for him in 2011-12, when he was awarded a one-year sabbatical to study at the LSE. Living arrangements for Dr. Yager and his wife, Marie, were made through Harlaxton College, and the couple resided at the Harlaxton Manor Gatehouse during their one-year stay in England.
Among the five research projects he has worked on at the LSE, Dr. Yager has a particular interest in three of them. One project examines Scottish philosopher David Hume’s influence on James Madison’s argument for the “extended republic” in “Federalist #10.” A second project explores John Locke’s writings for his foundational views on liberty and equality, the Marxist critique of Locke’s views, and rejoinders in the secondary literature to the Marxist critique. And Dr. Yager’s third project is his favorite. This research project closely examines Locke’s “Letter Concerning [Religious] Toleration (1689),” its career in Western civilization, and the scholarly debate in the secondary literature on the nature and importance of various arguments Locke advances within the “Letter” to his overall case for religious toleration. Dr. Yager finds that an important part of the career of Locke’s “Letter” is not just Locke’s second argument, which advances the view that government coercion is ineffective in altering religious beliefs, but language from Locke’s first and third arguments. In these arguments Locke strongly intimates that individuals have a personal responsibility or duty to their Creator that cannot be delegated or alienated to another, including the magistrate or government official. In Locke’s view this fact of nature suggests the importance of religious toleration by government. Dr. Yager finds that this argument is nearly identical to the one advanced by James Madison nearly a century later in his famous “Memorial and Remonstrance.” However, Madison takes Locke’s argument even further as a fundamental natural right to religious liberty.

Dr. Yager anticipates that his work at the LSE will not only result in several journal publications, but will enhance his courses in American political thought, political philosophy, and American government. Already he is planning to return to Harlaxton College in May 2014 to teach a three-week course tentatively entitled “Karl Marx, John Locke and Rival Worldviews.” The course will include a visit to Oxford University, where Locke studied and taught; a visit to the British Museum, where Marx wrote “Das Kapital”; and guest lectures by scholars from Oxford and the LSE. The course promises to introduce students to two of the greatest and most influential thinkers in modern times. And, it just so happens, Harlaxton is close enough to London for Dr. Yager to continue to maintain WKU’s international reach to The London School of Economics and Political Science.
STUDY ABROAD

VINALE, CUBA 1621.55 KM
SANTA CLARA, CUBA 1738.13 KM
ACRA, GHANA 9313.92 KM
GHANA, AFRICA 9081.99 KM
During the 2013 Winter Term, Jerry Barnaby and I had the pleasure of co-leading WKU’s first study tour of Cuba. Our group experiences were wonderfully joyful and wonderfully troubling—educational in the true sense—in that they succeeded in breaking down the pre-conceived, black-and-white, dualistic notions that we Americans often harbor toward our Caribbean neighbor.

Before departure, the students had read three novels and twenty-six essays, and were prepared to make two oral presentations and write four reports. Surely there could be no surprises after such research. Ah, not so! From the moment we arrived in Havana, we were challenged to articulate Cuba’s complexity—which often expressed itself in such enigmas and contradictions as the following:

1) Cubans live longer than Americans and have a lower infant-mortality rate, but by our standards, they live in abject poverty. Yes, healthcare is universal, and there are more physicians per capita in Cuba than in any other country in the world. But the medical equipment that these physicians often have available was dated a half-century ago.

2) Despite the poverty, there are no homeless people living on the streets in Cuba. In fact, it is against the law not to have a dwelling. With state assistance, most Cubans pay no rent. But there are often three generations of family members living in a single, crumbling unit.

3) Literacy is virtually 100% in Cuba, while according to the National Institute of Literacy, 47% of the population in Detroit, Michigan, is functionally illiterate. On the other hand, access to books and internet materials is severely limited in Cuba. To the surprise of our guide, the students’ knowledge of her nation’s rich and troubled history exceeded that of most of her countrymen.

4) Education is also universal in Cuba. If one meets the entrance requirements to attend a university or technical school, his or her expenses are covered. A college professor or physician, however, is typically paid the equivalent of $25 per month. Yes, per month! What this means is that a waiter, tour guide, or taxi driver—i.e., someone who has access to tourist currency—may earn vastly more than the professional. Or, of course, the professional may work as a waiter or cab driver during his or her off-hours.

5) As suggested, the Cuban economy depends heavily upon tourism. In fact, over three million visitors came last year, the majority from Canada. Sadly—and all-too-obviously—ample food is available in the hotels and restaurants, while local Cubans have to get by on their state allotments of rice, beans, and certain other commodities.

6) Cuba may be the safest place on earth since guns are outlawed. Our students felt completely at ease walking down dark, cobblestone streets late at night. And yet, personal freedom is severely limited. Only 5% of the population owns
automobiles, and a person must have government permission to purchase a new one. Sixty and seventy-year-old “Yank tanks” are readily evident on the streets.

7) What perhaps needs to be emphasized more than anything else, though, is that despite the enumerated complications, the Cuban people greeted us with amazing hospitality and genuine warmth. As soon as they learned that we were from Estados Unidos, they immediately wanted to strike up a conversation or invite the students to participate in a dance. As individuals, we could not have felt more welcomed. It was hard to believe that our governments were at odds with each other.

As a couple of students observed, they doubted that they had taken in so much information in such a short length of time since they were infants. Our readings and field trips took us across the breadth of Cuban culture—from politics to literature, from Che Guevara to Ernest Hemingway, from agriculture to the cigar industry, from the Bay of Pigs to the Straits of Florida. We were also keenly aware that we were at the cusp of major changes that are rapidly occurring in this island nation. Will it be Americanized when the embargo is lifted (not if but when)? Will it become another Cancún, another vacation destination populated with all the fast-food restaurants of home? Because these fears are realistic, we returned grateful for having had the opportunity to experience Cuba when we did.

Having taught an Honors Hemingway & Faulkner course on this campus for over twenty years, I have long wanted to take a group to Hemingway’s Finca Vigia estate outside Havana. That goal was wonderfully realized during Winter Term 2013. And I am happy to report that the estate has been splendidly maintained since the writer’s departure in 1960. Indeed, it is just as if he stepped out and will be returning momentarily. Around 10,000 books that he left behind are neatly arranged on his library shelves, and trophies of his two African safaris overlook every room. Outside, his boat, The Pilar, faithfully awaits its captain. Our group was ready to head to the Gulf Stream with him.
The smell of fresh fish baking on an open flame. The sound of a strong beat coming from the stereos in the cars that swiftly pass. The radiant colors of the wildlife and foliage. These are the first sensations one might experience when visiting Ghana. In the fall of 2012, with the help of several scholarships—namely, the Gilman Program, WKU’s F.U.S.E. (Faculty-Undergraduate Student Engagement) Grant, the WKU Honors Scholarship and the World Topper scholarship—I was able to travel to Accra, Ghana, on the Golden Coast of West Africa to study at the University of Ghana’s School of Performing Arts. What an amazing journey!

My time in Ghana was life changing. Not only did I make friends that I will keep for a lifetime, I connected on a very personal level with people from across the globe. I had the
wonderful opportunity to work with the West Africa AIDS Foundation, creating a performance piece for presentation on World AIDS Day. I periodically met with children who were HIV/AIDS positive, some of whom were terminally ill. We worked on songs, dances, poetry and even paintings. Many of these children couldn’t speak English, but I learned a powerful lesson in connections based on expression and body language. A smile transcends all languages and cultures! Seeing these children play and grow was truly humbling.

Not only did I learn about the African way of life, I realized how blessed we are here in the United States to have what we have. During one class period, a child who was extremely ill couldn’t play with the other children due to exhaustion. Still, he stayed strong and smiled as he watched us play. Moments like this are what make me remember to be grateful for the amazing lives we constantly take for granted.

As a musical theatre performer, I was also honored with the opportunity to perform in the annual musical at the university, where I studied African theatre and dance. Of course, the African theatre tradition is quite different than America’s, so I attempted to learn as much of their style and culture as possible while still utilizing much of my own training. This created a wonderful platform for cross-cultural discussion.

In class and through interaction with Ghanaian performers, I learned about some of the continuing paradoxes that resulted from Ghana’s colonial history. Though the Europeans influenced their religious practices (69% of Ghanaians are Christian) and their national theatre, in many ways the culture and people have not fully recovered economically and socially from colonial rule, and Ghanaians strenuously resent this influence. I realized that this is something I could never fully understand unless I was raised and educated in this culture and with these people.

Although I had many “fun” moments in Ghana, my trip was full of tough, gritty life-lesson moments that I am extremely thankful for as well. The average temperature (even in December) was about 96 degrees. For days at a time, the campus water would be out. That means no teeth brushing and no showers. If the water happened to be running, we enjoyed our ICE cold showers. No hot water! Also, I encountered the challenges of being a racial minority from day one. As a presumably wealthy white man, I was targeted with products for sale and pleas for charity. Of course, as an American I was relatively wealthy, but Ghanaians do have a kind of wealth: they depend highly on faith, family and community to bring joy into their lives. Although the African life can be inconvenient and tough, it can also be quite peaceful and refreshing. The people and places of Ghana enriched my life more than I ever would have imagined.

For more information about Jordan’s African experience, visit his blog at jordancampbellghana.blogspot.com. For more information about the scholarships available to WKU students planning to study abroad, visit wku.edu/studyabroad.
Art

Professor Lindsay Oesterritter, her ceramic majors, regional craft artists, and interested community members fired the Department of Art’s second load of pottery in a new wood-fired kiln at the WKU farm site. The kiln was designed and built with the assistance of Professor Ted Neal of Ball State University. His so-called “train-kiln” (note the kiln’s resemblance to a train’s engine) uses wood to slowly build up heat. When the kiln reaches the appropriate temperature, ashes from the wood begin to fuse with the raw clay body, producing a variety of browns, black, red-oranges, purples and luster surfaces. For further information about this kiln and the department’s next firing, contact Professor Oesterritter at lindsay.oesterritter@wku.edu.

Communication

Recent graduate Brandon Evilla was nominated by the Department of Communication faculty to be Potter College of Arts and Letters’ representative in the Student Government Association’s Society of Distinguished Graduates. Mr. Evilla was deserving of this award for many reasons, and his resilient efforts throughout his undergraduate years at WKU have more than paid off. Over the years, Mr. Evilla has been active in Housing & Residence Life, served on the Resident Staff Association’s executive board, and completed an internship at the ALIVE Center. Mr. Evilla is planning to attend Ball State in fall 2013, and has an interview for an assistantship position.

English

In the six years Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith has been teaching COMM 349, she has turned the Small Group Communication course into not only a beneficial teaching tool, but also a way for WKU students to give back to the community. Dr. Mize Smith selected a project known as the $100 Solution so students can see the benefits and interact with the people they are helping. The $100 Solution is unique because it gives students the challenge of teaming up with a local organization in need of help, and then assisting the organization with a $100 budget. The budget helps to teach students that a large amount of money is not necessary to make a difference for others. The project also gives them the opportunity to be actively involved in the service, from identifying the problem to implementing the solution. Examples of student projects include hosting a ‘healthy eating’ workshop for the Boys and Girls Club of Bowling Green and planting a garden for the residents of a Bowling Green nursing home.

This spring will see the debut of the English department’s new scholarly undergraduate journal, *The Ashen Egg*, featuring the best critical essays on literature, rhetoric, linguistics, film, and popular culture by current WKU students.

In July, Judith Szerdaheleyi presented a paper entitled “Innovative Techniques and Technologies: Multisensory Assessment in a Web-Based Writing Course” in Barcelona, Spain.

In the recent issue of *Studies in Self-Access Learning*, Alex Poole published a study examining the metacognitive reading knowledge of Chinese university students. http://sisaljournal.org/issues/
Wes Berry’s “The Kentucky Barbecue Book” is now available from the University Press of Kentucky. Wes is also the local host of WBKO’s “Go Local,” a segment of The Local Traveler, a television show featuring Kentucky and Tennessee personalities, products, and food and drink destinations.

Folk Studies and Anthropology

Dr. Michael Ann Williams, Head of the Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology, was elected president of the American Folklore Society in December. She will serve as president-elect for 2013 and then begin a two-year term as president. She is the first Kentucky-based AFS president since Herbert Halpert (then chair of the English Department at Murray State) was elected president in 1955. Brent Björkman, Assistant Research Professor in Folk Studies, was elected to the AFS Board of Directors. WKU will be well represented in folklore’s national scholarly and professional society.

The Kentucky Folklife Program, formerly an interagency program of the Kentucky Historical Society and the Kentucky Arts Council, relocated to Western Kentucky University in the summer of 2012. The program, which has been in operation since 1988, will continue to document and present the traditional arts and culture of all the people of Kentucky. The new director is Brent Björkman, assistant research professor in Folk Studies. In October 2012, the Kentucky Folklife Program's archive was transferred to the WKU Folklife Archive in the Kentucky Building. The staff and graduate students are currently working to make this new collection accessible to researchers.

History

For 40 years the History Department has hosted an academic contest for middle and high school students from Kentucky and northern Tennessee. This year’s competition, held in Diddle Arena, drew 800 eager participants. The high school student who scores highest on the test, which consists of 70 multiple choice questions and an essay exam, is awarded a $1000 scholarship, and the top middle school student, a $500 scholarship. The first and second place winners receive engraved plaques, while all students in the next 5% earn silver and bronze medals. After the test, many of the students tour the campus and so return home with a taste of life on the Hill.

Modern Languages

Chaz Arnold's “Aha” moment about the importance of learning a second language occurred as he was a high school junior. One day, while at the doctor's office for a routine checkup, he noticed a woman with a sick child. Chaz saw that she was unable to communicate with the receptionist due to a language barrier, and as frustration grew on both sides, the woman gathered her child and left the doctor’s office. At WKU, Chaz is a double major in Spanish and Biology who intends to go to medical school. Chaz described in an essay about his “Aha” moment how his experiences in Modern Languages are preparing him for success in his chosen career field: "I have participated in medical interpreting at free local Hispanic health fairs and am studying in Spain this summer to refine my speaking skills. More than anything, I wish to develop a greater sense of confidence in my speaking ability so that I may provide high-quality care to the fastest-growing population within my community.”

Chaz Arnold's Spanish professor, Dr. Sonia Lenk, encouraged Chaz to share his story in an essay contest sponsored by Cengage Publishing. Chaz was one of thirteen students across the United States to be named a Student Ambassador and recognized in the Viajes Spanish language textbook and on its web site. Chaz partnered with WKU nursing student Hannah Johnson to host a Hispanic Health Fair at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Bowling Green in early April 2013.

Dr. Sonia Lenk organized a “Tracing the Unexplored” Lecture Series on the topic of Cuba in spring 2013. With support from Modern Languages, the Office of International Programs, and several other departments across campus, four special events related to Cuba were planned. The centerpiece of the series was a showing of the film documentary “La Maestra: The Cuban Literacy Campaign through the Eyes of a Teacher.” Present for the showing and discussion on February 25 were the film's producer, Catherine Murphy, and Norma Guillard, one of the teachers featured in the documentary. Additional events are publicized on the WKU news blog.
Modern Languages is adding more levels to the eight languages it offers. Assistant Professor of Chinese Dr. Ke Peng has developed a fully articulated Chinese curriculum that guides students from the beginning to advanced levels. Chinese major and minor programs are currently in the approval process. The regular rotation of Chinese courses is designed to help students build their proficiency. Dr. Peng posted some of the creative products of student learning on the WKU Chinese Program YouTube channel.

The Arabic Program, headed by Assistant Professor Dr. David DiMeo, is also adding courses and has established a regular rotation. Students who have begun or who begin their study of Arabic now will be able to continue to the advanced levels. Study abroad is strongly recommended to all students who wish to build their proficiency. WKU student Emmett Stephens began his study of Arabic in Morocco, continued at WKU, and was later awarded a Critical Language Scholarship for additional study of Arabic in Egypt. He explained why study abroad has been so valuable to him: “The greatest thing about studying abroad is meeting new people, and that is why learning a foreign language is so important. You are only one small language gap away from being able to learn something from [and about] millions of people.”

Music

Allen County Music Informances, sponsored by the Laura Goad Turner Charitable Foundation, have occurred again this year. Beginning in 2008, this collaborative project between the WKU Department of Music and The Symphony at WKU has reached hundreds of public school students of all ages. The goal of these public school performances is to promote music literacy among the children in Allen County, Ky, schools.

The 2013 Informances consisted of two performances on February 14, 2013. Heidi Álvarez, WKU flute professor, and Sarah Berry, WKU cello professor, collaborated to present “Baroque Music” at the Allen County Intermediate Center, impacting 290 students. As a flute and cello duo, they demonstrated the characteristics of Baroque music such as melody and ornamentation, discussed musical dynamics, and engaged the students in the creation of loud and soft sounds, as well as crescendo and decrescendo.

The second performance took place at the Allen County Primary Center, impacting 300 students, and was presented by John Martin, WKU guitar professor, and Mark Berry, WKU percussion professor. “Rhythm and Style,” performed by this guitar and steeldrum duo, included music from Brazil, Cuba, Trinidad and North America. Discussions centered around style as it related to its geographical origins, the meaning of musical style, and how rhythm helps define it.

The final performance, “Music for Brass,” was presented by Natalie Adcock, adjunct horn instructor, and Lee Blakeman, adjunct trombone instructor, at the Allen County Primary Center, for 290 students. They demonstrated trombone slide positions, discussed the harmonic series, the concept of dynamics, and the hunting horn tradition, and played a portion of Mozart’s Second Horn Concerto, which has been featured on the acclaimed children’s video series “Little Einsteins.”

The Voice in Performance: New York, New York

From March 8-16, 2013, nine undergraduate vocalists traveled to New York City with Liza Kelly, voice professor, to participate in the first Study Away Program in the Department of Music. The goal of The Voice in Performance program was to immerse these students in an all-encompassing music and performance experience. The Study
Away course included events such as private voice lessons, private repertoire coaching, a foreign language diction class, performance master classes, an expression through music and performance class, a closing recital performance, and attendance at multiple professional music events. Students studied with the faculty of The Center for Language in Song, who currently teach or perform at the highest professional level in their field. Classes within The Center for Language in Song were held at The Opera America Center, a newly constructed and world class studio, audition, and performance venue. Students also attended “Othello” at the Metropolitan Opera, “Song of the Midnight Sun” by the New York Festival of Song and a cabaret show at 54 Below.

Religion and Broadway - “Religion and Broadway” was a smash hit! The January course offered by Dr. Joseph Trafton and Paula Trafton has received rave reviews from the 23 students who participated. Prepared with a host of theoretical approaches for thinking about religion, the students then headed to New York City for a week of Broadway shows (eight in total) and conversations with cast members. The Study Away program was so successful that the Traftons already are planning the next excursion.

Philosophy & Religion
The Philosophy program at Western Kentucky University landed one of the most important interdisciplinary conferences in 2013. Thanks to the initiative of Dr. Audrey Anton and with support from her colleagues, WKU hosted the 39th Conference on Value Inquiry. The meeting was held April 11-13 on the main campus, and focused on the theme “Virtue, Vice, and Character.”

The Society for Value Inquiry organizes a conference each year for the purpose of bringing together those scholars whose work represents differences in interests, outlook, and expertise on questions of value. Participants range from budding scholars to the most esteemed researchers in their fields, and they come from colleges and universities all over the world. As one of the largest and most diverse conferences of its kind, the annual Conference on Value Inquiry has a long and rich history stretching back several decades. Over time, the conference has been organized around a variety of themes such as business ethics, free will and science, globalization, multiculturalism, liberty and equality.

In addition to the many scholars who shared their research in response to the Call for Papers, the meeting featured keynote addresses by Dr. Julia Driver and Dr. John Doris, both from Washington University in St. Louis.

Theatre & Dance
Holly Berger and Keifer Adkins are partnering with the Kentucky Museum to create interactive museum theatre pieces that they presented to school groups this spring. Holly portrays two different schoolteachers from the 1800s and Keifer portrays Daniel Boone.

The WKU Theatre and Dance Program was recently notified that it won the Diversion Program of the Year Award in conjunction with the Court Designated Workers from the Warren County Administrative Office of the Courts. The program is run as a partnership between the WKU Theatre and Sociology departments and provides juvenile offenders with the opportunity to enroll in a theatre program in place of community service. They find a place to channel their energy and perform a showcase that they help write and produce. The WKU program was funded last year by a PIE Grant, and this year by a $1000 grant from the ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships.

The WKU Children’s Theatre and Creative Dramatics class spent February working with the 5th graders at Cumberland Trace Elementary School. The culmination of this partnership took place Thursday, February 28, at Cumberland Trace Reading Night when the elementary students performed folktales that the WKU students helped them stage. The principal at Cumberland Trace has been very supportive for the four years this program has been in existence,” said Carol Jordan, Instructor of Theatre and Head of the Children’s Theatre Program. “Elementary schools don’t usually have a full time drama teacher, so they are glad we can help with the drama elements in their curriculum.”
Dr. David DiMeo

Dr. David DiMeo, Associate Professor of Arabic in the Department of Modern Languages, published the article “Egypt’s Police State in the Work of Idris and Mahfouz” in CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 15.4 (2012). The article examines works by two of Egypt’s leading twentieth-century authors on the subject of police oppression in light of the recent Egyptian revolution. It identifies lessons for the current revolutionary leadership in dealing with the lingering effects of police brutality, based on the warnings of leading Egyptian writers after the previous Egyptian revolution in 1952.

Dr. Liu Leheng

As part of the Department of Philosophy and Religion’s Faculty Exchange Agreement with Wuhan University, Dr. Liu Leheng arrived at WKU in the spring. Dr. Liu is teaching a survey course on Chinese philosophy (PHIL/RELS/ARC 401) during the second bi-term. The course (taught in English) covers Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist thought from ancient times to the present day. The course is suitable for advanced students in Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Asian Religions and Cultures as well as other students who have a deep interest in Chinese philosophy.

Dr. Jean-Luc Houle

Dr. Jean-Luc Houle, Assistant Professor in the Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology, spent over a month last summer conducting archaeological and ethnographic research in the Altai region of western Mongolia. Together with Jamsranjav Bayarsaikhan, the project’s co-director, Lee Broderick, a zooarchaeologist from the University of York, and Oula Seitsonen, a cartographer of the U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship to study Chinese intensively overseas, he is currently employing another language. During the spring of 2013, Stovall is researching the politics and economics of the past two Argentinian presidential administrations in Buenos Aires as a foreign policy intern at Fundación Pensar, a highly ranked think tank.

“I’m focusing on Argentina because it’s a part of Latin America we don’t normally talk about,” he said. “The way politics are shifting in Argentina could really have significance for the entirety of Latin America.”

Stovall’s travels do not end upon returning from Argentina. In the fall he will begin his Capstone Year in China for the Chinese Flagship Program. After one semester of fulltime coursework at Nanjing University and a six-month professional internship in China, he will graduate from WKU.

“T love being able to do research; it’s liberating to take a project of your own and turn it into a complete academic work,” he said. “The experiences I have had have made me a very internationally mobile and independent person.”

Stovall is preparing for a career with the U.S. Foreign Service where he would meet with foreign government officials and other organizations to advocate on behalf of the United States.
We hope you’ve enjoyed this edition of *Arts & Letters* and are as excited as we are about the accomplishments of Potter College’s students, alumni, and faculty. Please make a gift today supporting the **Potter College Dean’s Fund for Excellence**. Your financial support will provide increased academic opportunities for students within Potter College, including student support for study abroad, research and creative activity, and innovative learning opportunities beyond the classroom. We greatly appreciate your gift. It’s an investment in the future.

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