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Uncovered and Without Shelter

A young black woman student leader and singer coming of age

February 16, 2011
7:30 p.m. Van Meter Hall

For over four decades, Bernice Johnson Reagon has been a major cultural voice for freedom and justice. An African American woman's voice, a child of Southwest Georgia, a voice raised in song, born in the struggle against racism in America during the Civil Rights Movement of the 60s and 70s, she is a composer, songleader, scholar, and producer. Perhaps no individual today better illustrates the transformative power and instruction of traditional African American music and cultural history.

Dr. Reagon will deliver a moving and memorable performance of song and spoken word to celebrate WKU's Black History Month on Wednesday, February 16, at 7:30 PM (CST) in Van Meter Hall. The concert is free and all are welcome. Seating is on a first-come, first-seated basis. For more information, call the Women's Studies Program at 270-745-6477. The Women's Studies Program hosts this Black History Month event, with the following co-sponsors: the Cultural Enhancement Committee, Campus Activities Board, African American Studies, English, Folk Studies and Anthropology, History, the Institute for Civic & Social Responsibility, and Music.
Message from the Dean

Welcome to the Fall 2010 issue of Arts & Letters. This time we’re spotlighting the role that Potter College plays in extending the university’s international reach. Part of that effort involves giving our students plenty of opportunities for international experiences. One of our study abroad pioneers, Jim Flynn from the English Department, will give you an overview of the tremendous range of study abroad choices available to our students each year. We’re determined that students engage actively with the cultures they are experiencing, and Saundra Ardrey from Political Science will show you how she made that happen during a special study abroad experience in Ghana.

Fullbright Awards are among the most prestigious grants in international education, and Potter College has an outstanding record in securing them. Assistant Dean Drew McMichael writes about faculty recipients of these awards over the last forty years, and Jeanne Sokolowski will introduce you to four very impressive young women who received Fulbrights just last spring. Recent graduates of Potter College, they are spending the next year teaching in Argentina, South Korea, Germany, and Indonesia. Incidentally, the Chronicle of Higher Education recently published a list of the universities like WKU that led the nation in Fulbright Awards to students. WKU was second on the list nationally with 41 recipients, all from Potter College.

Of course our students can also have international experiences without leaving the United States. Approximately ten percent of Potter College faculty members have come here from another country. Assistant Dean Sally Ray will introduce you to one of them, Professor Jak Njoku of our Folk Studies program, who is doing some fascinating work on links between Africa and the United States forged during the African Diaspora.

An important part of preparing students for global experiences is offering a curriculum that is attuned to the changes that are shaping the 21st century, so in this issue you’ll learn about two new Potter College majors, the International Affairs program housed in the Department of Political Science and the Asian Religions and Cultures major housed in Philosophy and Religion. You’ll finish your tour of the Potter College globe with an introduction to the University Wind Ensemble’s upcoming trip to Costa Rica. It’s a performance tour with a decided student engagement twist that offers a special opportunity for our Music students.

This issue also features a salute to our four Potter College faculty award recipients for 2010, and we are especially delighted that two of them also received university awards. Finally, on a sad but proud note, we also remember two members of the Potter College community lost in the last few months—Professor Paul Wozniak, the distinguished head of the Department of Sociology, and 1st Lt. Eric Yates, a 2008 Potter College graduate killed in the fighting in Afghanistan.

David Lee
Dean, Potter College of Arts & Letters
This past year, as in years gone by, Potter College students and faculty have been practicing their international reach. Some did it while slogging around an Ecuadorian rainforest; some while riding the Zahnradbahn (cogwheel railway) to Zugspitze, the highest point in Germany (“Wear solid shoes, dress warmly!”); students of dance danced their way into the culture of Civitavecchia, Italy; while history and art history students and faculty feasted on an embarrassment of cultural riches (and lots of pasta) in Rome, Florence, and Venice; meanwhile the somber histories of Krakow and Budapest occupied the attention of political scientists. Students of dance and dance educators traveled through various countries and cities, some to enjoy the dance and some to explore the culture. Students and faculty have been traveling abroad. And on this front, Potter College—promotes international aspirations, but none with more immediacy and impact than through study abroad. And on this front, Potter College faculty and students have been traveling all over the globe. Since 2008, a total of twenty-seven study abroad courses have been led by Potter College faculty, and during 2009-10, 136 students with majors in Potter College participated in study abroad programs. This past year, Potter College’s study abroad offerings have been rich and diverse. Potter College faculty have led students on short-term courses in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Ecuador, England, Korea, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Turkey, and Ghana, and the leaders come from many different departments and disciplines: English, History, Theatre and Dance, Art, Journalism and Broadcasting, Modern Languages, Sociology, and Political Science. The courses have varied formats: some with travel to different sites, others remain at one location. In some cases, students live with families; in others they stay at hotels or hostels or in university residence halls. Two of the courses (in Ecuador and Ghana) included service learning projects to enhance students’ cultural awareness and social responsibility with hands-on work benefiting their host communities. Potter College faculty have also taught in semester-long programs this past year: Beth Plummer (History) and Jerry Daday (Sociology), at Harlaxton College, England, and Melissa Stewart (Modern Languages) directed the semester in Spain through KIIS.

This level of study abroad involvement is not surprising. For one thing, Potter College’s international education efforts embody the liberal arts mission of giving our students opportunities to explore other worlds and to open their minds to other possibilities. We do this in our classrooms and through research and service too, but a properly prepared learner standing agape in the Roman Pantheon or clambering through the dank dungeons where slaves were imprisoned in Ghana’s Cape Coast Castle or contemplating the horrors of Auschwitz or marveling at the magnitude of material space and spiritual aspiration expressed in York Minster—all of these experiences can open—and expand—minds. Furthermore, Potter College has a long history of international education leadership, starting as early as 1964 when the Foreign Language Department, headed by Dr. Paul Hatcher (later Dean of Potter College), developed a summer term in Mexico for students of Spanish. The 1970’s saw the development of popular London theatre tours after Christmas; an agreement with the University Paul Valéry in Montpellier, France, which allowed WKU students to study there for a semester or academic year; and short-term study abroad programs to Central America led by various Potter College faculty. In the mid-70s, WKU joined with some other Kentucky Modern Language departments in the state to form the Kentucky Institute for International Study (KIIS), now headquartered at WKU. In 1982, another consortium, the Cooperative Center for Study Abroad (CCSA), aimed at English-speaking international destinations, was founded at WKU. PCAL faculty have played prominent roles in both of these consortia, and they continue as important venues for international educational experiences for students and faculty alike.

Students appreciate the unique educational opportunities study abroad affords. Nils Herdellin, who traveled with Roger Murphy (Political Science) to the Czech Republic this summer writes, “When you actually travel to places you’ve read about, you make connections in ways different from sitting in a classroom.” Likewise, Regina Durkan, who visited the Brontë home in Haworth and the nearby Yorkshire moors with her Honors British Literature class with me and Clay Motley (Honors College), summarizes how the field trip there helped her bridge her reading of literature with the reality of place:

“Sure I read about the moors in The Hound of Baskerville and Wuthering Heights and used my imagination to conjure one up. But it wasn’t until I was actually in Haworth, England, running around the moors that I fully sensed what Doyle...
"...Students comment that study abroad gives them a greater sense of confidence in themselves and their abilities to manage the unfamiliar..." and Brontë were writing about. I was able not only to see the moors, but feel the mounded land, smell the heather, listen to the whispering wind..."

The reward of seeing their students open up to the possibilities of new places, of sites associated with their studies, is a recurring theme among faculty who are study abroad veterans. Guy Jordan (Art) says of his Art History course in Italy: “There is tangible excitement when one is able to show students actual objects and buildings of historical importance... actual works of art, not just images projected on a screen.”

In addition to academic content, students are learning about the foreign culture they are experiencing, which leads to a greater understanding of their own country because they are constantly doing comparisons/contrasts. Walker Rutledge (English) in his British Literature course has his students add to a communal list of “things you would rarely see in Britain,” (e.g., people chewing gum; numerous obese people; oversized pickup trucks; ice machines; Wal-Mart, public restrooms). Laura McGee’s German language and culture classes include some meticulously planned assignments requiring her students to complete small-group city walks that amount to challenging and eye-opening cultural scavenger hunts.

And make no mistake, faculty leaders of study abroad programs work very hard—to ensure the academic integrity of their courses and to help their students learn, have a good time, and stay safe. As virtually every study abroad faculty will tell you, this is a 24/7 job. Teaching internationally can be challenging, but as Roger Murphy points out, “You may not have a traditional classroom but the location is your classroom and you can seize any opportunity to provide instruction.” Roger also points out that technology helps students and faculty keep up with academic work overseas. In fact, Roger teaches a web course simultaneously with his study abroad course, and students with him in the Czech Republic use their laptops to share information about the historical/political sites they visit with the students back in the U.S. Guy Jordan used technology to get around Italy’s policy of prohibiting non-natives from lecturing at historic sites, which “gives art historians fits when standing helplessly in front of the Duomo in Florence, unable to say anything.” He got his say via podcasts, which students could view on portable media players.

About the responsibility faculty feel for students overseas, Joon Sung wrote, “I had no idea if he was a vegetarian; she is taking lots of pills everyday, and he has an allergy to beans, etc. The roles of the program leader are sometimes closer to what parents do.” Even at Harlaxton, which has a professional support staff, Jerry Daday reports that he felt he had to "look after" the WKU students in particular and that at times he was a little overwhelmed by this. Jerry says that he was especially called on to help calm some stressed-out students when the volcano eruption in Iceland looked as if it were going to strand them in the UK at the end of their term. One more thing students learn in study abroad is to expect the unexpected...and to deal with it. In fact, many students comment that study abroad gives them a greater sense of confidence in themselves and their abilities to manage the unfamiliar, whether that might be learning how to shop in Ghana, to catch the right train in Berlin, or to negotiate the cultural hazards of dining out at an Italian trattoria.

Potter College’s commitment to international education continues, as indicated by the number of faculty with study abroad courses scheduled (as of this date) for upcoming terms, including Patricia Minter (History) London; Walker Rutledge (English) England; Joe Glaser (English) Scotland; Sandra Hughes (English) Italy; Lloyd Davies (English) Switzerland; Pat Taylor (English) Greece; James Baker (History) Ireland and Scotland; Sonia Lenk (Modern Languages) Ecuador; Scott Girdner (Philosophy and Religion) Morocco and Spain; Joseph Trafton (Philosophy and Religion) Greece; Lorraine Fader (Music) Prague; Eddie Cuisnier (Modern Languages) Quebec; Melissa Steward (Modern Languages) Spain. Additionally, next year Andrew McMichael (History) and Niko Endres (English) will teach semester-long courses at Harlaxton College, England, and Immaculada Pertusa (Modern Languages) will direct the semester in Spain program through KISS. Potter College’s international reach reaches farther all the time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Special thanks to Dr. Raymond L. Cuvens for sharing his 1984 article on the history of international education at WKU, which appeared in Approaches to International Education, Earl L. Backman (ed.), published by the American Council on Education. Thank you also to colleagues who contributed information about their study abroad classes. In addition to those specifically cited in the article, I also thank those who provided valuable background information: John Petersen (Political Science), Richard Weigel (History), Saudra Andrey (Political Science), Sonia Lenk (Modern Languages), Clifton Brown (Theatre and Dance), Melissa Steward (Modern Languages), and Tom Millington and Judy Scott (Study Abroad and Global Learning Offices).

Jim Flynn is Professor of English at WKU and for the 2009-2010 academic year served as Interim Chief International Officer.
Four Potter College Students Receive Prestigious Fulbright Awards

BY JEANNE SOKOLOWSKI

In 2009, Western Kentucky University was named one of the top U.S. producers of Fulbright students among Master's degree-granting institutions. The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government. Established immediately after the end of World War II by the late U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright (Arkansas), the Fulbright program is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

This year, four Western Kentucky University graduates—Jennifer Dooper, Dawn Reinhardt, Eileen Ryan and Emily Wilcox—have been awarded 2010-2011 Fulbright grants. All four are graduates of departments within Potter College of Arts & Letters and the University Honors College. Dooper, Ryan, and Wilcox will be teaching English in Argentina, South Korea, and Indonesia, respectively, while Reinhardt will travel to Germany on a research grant in German literature and language.

Jennifer Dooper

Jennifer Dooper of Owensboro, KY, double majored in English and Spanish. Dooper will actually be returning to Argentina, where she stayed with a host family for five weeks on a study abroad program with WKU professor, Sonia Lenk. According to WKU's Office of Scholar Development, which coordinates and processes student applications for the Fulbright, English Teaching Assistants (ETAs) in Argentina instruct at Teacher Training Institutes, and the Fulbright Commission in Argentina looks for applicants who have Spanish language proficiency, teaching experience, and a demonstrated interest in a career in education. This profile aptly describes Dooper, who is considering several options for a career in education, either at the secondary or post-secondary level. Dooper spent one semester as a teaching assistant for Professor Ted Hovet of the English Department. Of Dooper's teaching, Hovet said, "I was especially impressed at her ability to provide students with a mixture of positive feedback and specific direction for improvement: a valuable (and rare) combination at any stage of teaching experience!"

Dooper is currently teaching English and Humanities part-time at her former high school, Owensboro Catholic High School, and will depart in March of 2011 for Argentina. "I'm very excited about testing out my teaching skills and fully immersing myself in the rich Argentine culture," Dooper said. "What with tango, beef, and their beautiful dialect, the Argentines have a lot to share with me!"

Dawn Reinhardt

A double major in German and English, Dawn Reinhardt will spend a year in Munich, researching sixteenth century German Teufelsbuchar, or "Devil Books," and taking classes at the second largest university in Germany, Ludwig-Maximilians Universität München (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich). Her project will focus on exploring correlations between the Protestant Reformation and the beginning of the Teufelsbuchar genre. Dawn was also able to take advantage of a specially-sponsored six-week language course in Germany that began in mid-August, to further augment her language skills. "The Fulbright is offering me an opportunity that I never thought possible," Reinhardt said. "Thanks to them, I get to spend a year in Germany studying a subject I love. What could be better?"

Dawn hails from Crossville, TN. Her application was supported by Dr. Laura McGee, Professor of German and intern head of the Modern Languages Department, who applauded Dawn's savvy in creating a solid foundation for a successful Fulbright application. "Dawn was smart about her studies at WKU," Dr. McGee said. "She established a solid foundation in literary studies, added a foreign language to help expand her research capabilities, and gained international experience through a semester abroad in Regensburg, Germany with the Kentucky Institute for International Studies. She also took the time to talk to her professors outside of class, receiving mentoring and establishing the basis for some solid letters of recommendation."

Eileen Ryan

In July, Eileen Ryan of Louisville, KY, traveled across the globe to South Korea to teach English. Ryan completed a double major in Journalism and English. Ryan and Dooper were roommates while at WKU, and applied for Fulbright grants at the same time, although the announcement of ETAs to Argentina was made earlier than for the awards to South Korea. As Eileen relates, "Jennifer called me two minutes before my class and told me there was an official-looking brown envelope in our mailbox. I had to sit through a whole class before I could open it, and when I finally opened the letter in my room, I screamed so loud people in the building probably thought I was being murdered!"

Ryan chose to apply to South Korea in part because of that country's innovative tradition of "citizen's journalism." While in Korea, she hopes to contribute pieces to English language newspapers or blogs in her free time, as well as study the Korean language. Undergraduate Honors Advisor and Assistant Professor of English Walker Rutledge noted that, "a talented and vivacious researcher, writer, and speaker, Ms. Ryan may soon become the most sought-after teacher in South Korea. What good fortune awaits her students!"

Ryan's Fulbright term commenced in July with a six-week orientation course in Goesan, South Korea, where English Teaching Assistants were given intensive training in basic Korean language and English as a Foreign Language teaching methods, before beginning her placement in Cheonan, a mid-sized city about an hour south of Seoul. She will be teaching at Cheonan Woolseong High School, a co-educational school of about 1,500 students.

Emily Wilcox

Emily Wilcox of Louisville, KY, received a BA in Art from WKU in 2009. Already a seasoned traveler, having spent four months in both India and South Africa during her undergraduate career, Wilcox welcomed the challenge of applying to teach English in Indonesia, where she is excited to incorporate art into the English language classroom. "Art is an aspect of culture that communicates about values and worldviews in a way that's both poetic and accessible," Wilcox observed. "It's a tool for understanding humanity, which is such an important focus when it comes to globalization in our world."

The ETAs in Indonesia are often placed in rural areas, outside major cities, and so Fulbright looks for applicants they believe to be resourceful and flexible. Wilcox recently learned that her placement will be in Balikpapan in East Kalimantan, on the island of Borneo.

These four students are among the more than 1,500 U.S. citizens who will travel abroad for the 2010-2011 academic year through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. For the 2010-2011 cycle, a total of six WKU students (five from departments within Potter College of Arts & Letters) applied for Fulbright grants; all four whose applications advanced to the second round were offered grants. Students applying for the Fulbright and other nationally prestigious scholarships work closely with the staff at the Office of Scholar Development, as well as with faculty mentors, such as Potter College professors Arnold, Hovet, Jordan, McGee, and Rutledge.

As Dr. McGee said, "We have a lot of talent on this campus. I'd like to see more students pursue prestigious fellowships for study and research abroad in the future," Dr. David Lee, Dean of Potter College of Arts and Letters, is delighted by the successes of Potter College students in this year's competition. Dean Lee also underscored the synergy between faculty and students, saying, "I'm particularly proud of the wonderful partnership that links talented students with committed faculty and staff to make outstanding achievements like this possible."

Jeanne Sokolowski is the International Scholarships Coordinator in WKU's Office of Scholar Development.
The Fulbright Scholar Program sends 800 U.S. faculty and professionals abroad each year to more than 140 countries to lecture, conduct research, and to participate in seminars. Scholars receive grants ranging from two to twelve months in all academic disciplines and many professional fields. For faculty who are eligible, the competition is stiff with several thousand applying in a given cycle; the application and review process is rigorous, and is often years in the making. Of the 39 Fulbright Scholars at WKU, 21 have come from Potter College. At a time when colleges and universities must prepare students to be competitive in an increasingly global marketplace, Potter College’s Fulbright Scholars are advancing this goal.

Faculty play the leading role in driving campus internationalization and the kind of faculty engagement that the Fulbright experience provides is essential. Fulbright Scholars are among the nation’s leaders in developing institutional capacity for international engagement. In Potter College, returned Fulbright Scholars have contributed to internationalizing curricula, promoting study abroad, attracting foreign students and faculty, and enhancing international involvement among colleagues and communities.

The Fulbright experience has been so rewarding that some Potter College faculty have received multiple awards from the program to a variety of countries. Professor Emeritus Carlton Jackson, of the Department of History, first traveled on a Fulbright to India in 1971, followed by another Fulbright to neighboring Pakistan in 1974, and then completed his tour of the subcontinent on a 1985 Fulbright to Bangladesh. During the 1989-1990 school year Jackson served as the Fulbright Bicentennial Professor of American Studies at the University of Helsinki—one of the prestigious “Fulbright Chairs.” Professor Emeritus in History Charles Bussey has been to both Norway and Denmark on separate Fulbrights.

For faculty thinking of applying for a Fulbright, the veterans’ advice is both unanimous and simple: be flexible. “Show your willingness to speak to any and all manners of clubs, organizations, and associations,” notes Professor Jackson, while Professor Bussey says “don’t be afraid to take a chance.” In Norway he was asked to, and did, teach a course on the American South, despite it being outside his area of expertise. In Denmark, Professor Bussey taught “America in the Sixties” for the English Institute, which “added enormously to my experience.” Flexibility seems to be the key for a personally and professionally rewarding Fulbright experience.

There are many strategies regarding where and how to apply. Professor Laura McGee, of the Department of Modern Languages, spent a year in Germany on a Junior Researcher grant. The pre-tenure trip continues to inform her scholarship. She advises faculty to plan early, starting in the spring. Professor Jackson has been a proponent of waiting until the application date and then finding which countries still seek out scholars. Echoing the theme of flexibility, he advocates applying to wherever an opening exists.

Fulbright Scholars are among the nation’s leaders in developing institutional capacity for international engagement.

While the Fulbright experience is profound for those who undertake a semester or a year in another country, the experiences are far deeper and more lasting than a simple semester abroad. While applications stress the desire for good teachers and strong researchers, a common theme among Fulbright veterans is the people they meet. Professor McGee engaged in a wide range of research related to German film and culture, and made numerous professional contacts that helped broaden the scope and increase the depth of her work.

Some contacts are more personal. Professor Bussey believes that “the best part of the experience was meeting incredibly kind people both in Denmark and Norway.” In Pakistan, Professor Jackson befriended a young boy who had called him a “billy goat” because of Jackson’s full beard. Jackson had picked up some rudimentary Urdu, and surprised the boy by responding to the taunt. The two became friends thereafter. Jackson notes the
Students intrigued by international events, cultural differences, global trends, and desiring a competitive edge to compete in a global market will find Potter College’s International Affairs major an ideal program that fits with their interests.

At WKU, the International Affairs major clearly reflects workplace and societal changes and the ways academic institutions have responded to these changes. Housed within the Department of Political Science, International Affairs, an interdisciplinary major, integrates courses offered from over a dozen departments spread across three university colleges, recognizing that student success in a global age requires an understanding of international issues and a respect for other cultures, languages and beliefs.

The program’s global focus is the primary reason Steven Jones, a senior, chose International Affairs. “The world of today is globally interconnected in virtually every aspect. By having a strong understanding of global issues, trends, and cultures through this major, I hope to make a positive difference in the world (while serving my country), even if only a little,” Jones explains.

In 2002, the Kentucky legislature passed a resolution promoting internationalization within higher learning. WKU’s vision to become “a leading American university with international reach,” is a bold response to this challenge. Promoting international research, recruiting high quality international faculty, staff and students, and expanding study abroad opportunities have served to internationalize the institution. Academic program development is another vital component to achieving this vision.

Through the integration of knowledge and skills from several disciplines, including Political Science, History, Geography, Philosophy, Religion, and Economics, International Affairs students are given flexibility in career choice. Graduates with a degree in International Affairs pursue careers in international and public affairs, international business, diplomacy, public service, journalism and international humanitarian work. Because organizations increasingly seek graduates with knowledge and sensitivity to other cultures and international issues and trends, the International Affairs major is also an attractive choice for a second major, allowing students to develop a global understanding of issues to complement their specific career goals.

With forty-five total credit hours and language instruction through the intermediate level, the International Affairs major is enhanced by opportunities to participate in simulations, such as the Model United Nations, internships, and study abroad programs.

For Sarah Hood, a senior major in International Affairs, the program appeals to her varied interests. According to Sarah, “I chose International Affairs because I liked the political science program, but I have a wide-variety of interests. Because International Affairs is an interdisciplinary major, I can study a broad range of topics while keeping my political science base.”

Whether it is serving our government or the international community, or promoting international sensitivity within the local area, International Affairs graduates possess the knowledge, skills, and values for success.

Roger Murphy is associate professor in the Department of Political Science and oversees the program in International Affairs. For more information, contact roger.murphy@wku.edu.

Andrew McMichael is assistant dean and associate professor of History in Potter College of Arts & Letters.
BY JEFFREY SAMUELS

We do not have to travel far to understand the growing importance that Asia is playing in the world today. The home to some of the most ancient and formative civilizations in the world, its influence in the West is tangibly felt, particularly in the areas of religion, entertainment, art, politics, and business. With some of the world's fastest growing economies and largest populations, the study of the region is becoming increasingly important.

Fortunately for students at WKU, this fall marks the beginning of a new major on the Hill: Asian Religions and Cultures. Defined quite broadly, the geographical regions covered by the major include the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. Although the major is housed within the Department of Philosophy and Religion, it is interdisciplinary, requiring students to take courses from at least four different areas of study such as religious studies, history, geography, anthropology, modern languages, political science, performing arts, sociology, literature, and film studies.

Eric Bain-Selbo, head of the Department of Philosophy and Religion, sees the new program playing an important role at WKU and in the region: “The phrase ‘The Asian Century’ has been used for several years now. It refers to the idea that the 21st century will be one in which the continent of Asia will have a preeminent role in the social, political, and economic character of the century.” To ready ourselves for the century, Bain-Selbo asserts that “it is imperative that educational institutions in Europe and the United States make efforts to connect with students and faculty in Asia and that they provide curricula that help students in the West understand the lives and social systems of the peoples of Asia.”

In introducing students to the religions, histories and cultures of diverse Asian societies, the major will provide the necessary background to view national and international issues from multiple perspectives as well as to appreciate the interdependence among the various geographical regions of the world.

Preparation Students for a Global Community

The New Major in Asian Religions and Cultures

BY JEFFREY SAMUELS

We do not have to travel far to understand the growing importance that Asia is playing in the world today. The home to some of the most ancient and formative civilizations in the world, its influence in the West is tangibly felt, particularly in the areas of religion, entertainment, art, politics, and business. With some of the world's fastest growing economies and largest populations, the study of the region is becoming increasingly important.

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By instilling a sensitivity to the region, the major prepares students to apply to graduate programs, as well as for work in the fields of business, for government and non-government organizations, as journalists, in international affairs, and in the field of education.

It builds upon a distinguished religious studies program, the only one at a public institution in Kentucky.

Preparing students to be competitive in the workforce and for graduate school is one of the strengths of the Asian Religions and Cultures major. Amy Eckhardt—Director of Office of Scholar Development, and Director of WKU’s Chinese Flagship Pilot Program—has noted that “Through language study and coursework included in the Asian Religions and Cultures Major, students can officially document and demonstrate to future employers and graduate programs expertise and study in a part of the world that has become increasingly significant for Kentucky, the United States, and the world.”

The major is the only one of its kind in Kentucky and its focus on Asian religions and cultures makes it stand out among Asian studies programs in the United States. It builds upon a distinguished religious studies program, the only one at a public institution in Kentucky. It also complements WKU’s growing international reach by facilitating the understanding of Asian content: its past, present, and future. Finally, it draws on other global initiatives at WKU including the Chinese Flagship Pilot Program and Kentucky's first Confucius Institute.

Students who choose the Asian Religions and Cultures major must take three religion courses, two courses in history and/or political science, a one-year language sequence, and three electives. Students must also complete a senior project, which will allow them to draw together the breadth of their knowledge and understanding while focusing their interests on a topic that is most meaningful to them. While the major centers on courses currently offered at WKU, there are opportunities for studying abroad: along with participating in exchange programs in Turkey, Jordan, China, Taiwan, Japan, and Korea, students could get credit for study abroad courses offered in Asia and the Middle East during summer and winter terms.

Alongside the new major are two tracks within the Asian Studies minor: Asian Religions and Cultures and East and South Asia. There is also a Middle East Studies certificate, which is coordinated through the Department of Philosophy and Religion.

Dr. Jeffrey Samuels, associate professor of Religious Studies, is the coordinator for the Asian Studies programs. His research interests primarily center on the religions of Asia, particularly the intersection of religion and culture in South and Southeast Asia. More information about the major may be found at www.wku.edu/asiastudies or by contacting Dr. Samuels at Jeffrey.Samuels@wku.edu.
“This was a totally awesome trip. It just happened that all of us were women, but from very different backgrounds, so right from the start I knew that this would be a life-changing experience.”

- Ashton Elmore, International Affairs Major

Most study abroad trips promise adventure, new places, and new experiences, but for students enrolled in the Explore Ghana trip, travel abroad also brought the opportunity to make a difference by serving others on the other side of the globe. In June, six WKU students, one WKU alumna, and one student from Northern Kentucky University left for Ghana, West Africa, for what would be a life-changing journey.

The purpose of the trip to Ghana was to complete The $100 Solution™ service learning project in Sanka Village, Elmina. The Solution empowers students to turn $100 into a world of change. It is the idea that one can use small amounts of money to promote positive growth. Students ask the question, “With $100, what can we do to enhance the quality of life in your community?” Working with the elders of this West African village, this small group of women sought answers to that question.

The group began several projects - the largest of which was the painting of a nursery and daycare facility. Before painting could begin, the group had to buy supplies. Exercise Science major, Kristen Gunn explained, “I’m used to running to the mall or going into Wal-Mart where everything is organized, in its place, and marked with a price. But in Ghana, shopping was totally different. We went from one kiosk to another, mostly outside. And it’s all about bargaining. After that initial shock, I got the hang of it.”

Once supplies were secured it was time to get down to work. The elders, however, had other plans. As soon as the women set about scraping away paint, sweeping floors, moving chairs and other tasks, the elders took away the tools and directed them to just sit there. Crystal Hardeman, a graduate student in Student Affairs, observed “They were amazed that women were doing this type of work. Once the carpenter understood I really wanted to do this, I became his apprentice and we worked together all week.”

For Biology graduate student, Cynthia Worcester, “There was a special bond that formed between the villagers and our group when we worked together to fix the nursery school. That common goal united two seemingly different cultures, but as we worked and laughed together I realized just how similar people really are, no matter their background.”

Other $100 projects included buying fabric for 78 student uniforms, providing a year’s worth of food for daycare hot lunches, purchasing school books and supplies, and acquiring personal items and clothes for children. We also pooled our money to obtain and install three porcelain toilets, a first in the village.

The work was so challenging that by the end of the week, Ashton Elmore questioned the value of her contributions to the Sanka Village. Elmore reflected on her experience, “It overwhelmed me, but the smiles on the children’s faces made it worthwhile.”

Working in the village offered many new experiences. One adventure took the team to Kakum National Rain Forest. Imagine being hundreds of feet above the ground walking on a swinging bridge far above the tree canopy. “Scary but exhilarating,” exclaimed Ashton. “As I walked out of this amazing rainforest an interesting sign caught my eye, ‘Leave Nothing but Footprints’.”

Kaylyn Pratt, a WKU soccer player and Exercise Science major, couldn’t have picked a better time to be in Ghana. For Kaylyn, “It was really neat to see Ghana play Serbia. We went to a Shell gas station where they set up a big screen television for villagers to watch World Cup matches. Everyone was so into it!!”

The journey also brought somber realizations of the past. Ghana, the ancestral home to many African Americans, played a significant role in the trafficking of African slaves. Thousands of enslaved Africans were imprisoned in slave dungeons before being shipped to Europe, the Caribbean and the Americas. Touring the Cape Coast Slave Castle was especially moving for Crystal Hardeman. She reflected, “It was the most eye opening, emotional experience of my life. I tried to hold back the tears but they kept coming.”

Lindsey Ardrey, a 2007 WKU graduate in Anthropology, remarked, “I was filled with anxiety and mixed emotions about finally traveling to the land of my ancestors. But core principles of anthropology teach an appreciation for cultural diversity and relativity. So from that perspective I was able to put my own worldviews and cultural assumptions aside and genuinely come to value the Ghanaian people.”

Through efforts to make a positive difference in the lives of those who inhabit this small West African village, their lives were changed in the process.
A Musical Mission to Costa Rica

BY SALLY RAY

For more than a century, WKU’s Department of Music has maintained a strong tradition of preparing students in the areas of performance and music education. In recent years, the department has enhanced this musical tradition by promoting international opportunities to strengthen students’ intercultural learning and international understanding of the worldwide music community. With an international emphasis, WKU’s Music department continues to receive impressive invitations for its students.

Last spring, the General Director of Bands under the Ministry of Culture and Youth in Costa Rica invited the WKU Wind Ensemble to participate in the Fourth Annual Costa Rican Festival of Bands in San Jose, Costa Rica in July 2011. The group will present the opening concert of the festival and then participate as a workshop ensemble. The weeklong festival includes a conducting seminar where student conductors from throughout Latin America receive training from master conductors serving as the teaching faculty for the event. WKU Wind Ensemble students will have the opportunity to work with fellow musicians from Latin America, and conductors from South America, Italy and Norway and Latin America. They will present several concerts in San Jose and surrounding communities prior to the opening concert for the festival.

In addition to official performances, the group will devote several days toward service learning and community outreach projects. Projects include teaching music lessons to school-age Costa Rican children, playing alongside the Costa Rican students in their band rehearsals, coaching sectional, and repairing instruments. Each WKU student will bring along a minimum of two gently used woodwind, brass or percussion instruments that have been donated here in the U.S. to give to the civic and or school music programs they partner with in Costa Rica. “This is a wonderful opportunity for the WKU students to fully engage with the people and culture of Costa Rica with music as a common bond. This performance and service learning opportunity for our students is immeasurable,” says Dr. Gary Schallert, WKU Director of Bands.

WKU junior and ensemble member, Curtis Turner, is enthusiastic about the group’s approaching trip. He notes, “Participating in an internationally recognized ensemble is exciting for everyone involved. Our trip to Costa Rica will allow us to travel abroad and gain an understanding of cultural similarities and differences. As the principal band for the San Jose clinic, we’ll showcase our talents and styles to people from other parts of the world. Additionally, we’ll work with local student musicians, providing invaluable experience for those of us majoring in music education. I’m really looking forward to the trip!”

Over the years, WKU’s music ensembles have received notable invitations. In 2005, the WKU Wind Ensemble was invited by the Pizza Ministry of Culture to perform in Moscow for the 60th Victory Day Anniversary. More than 60 heads of state from Europe and around the world, including President George W. Bush, attended the event where the WKU group was the only American musical ensemble represented. In 2008, the WKU Chorale toured northern Italy, performing as part of a mass service at the monumental Basilica San Antonio in Padova, and giving an invited performance in the Bologna Music Festival, along with choirs and orchestras from universities in Paris, Berlin, Innsbruck, and the U.S.

Individual students are also finding exciting opportunities to develop their international reach. In 2009, Erin Goad (2009, B.M.) was a featured composer at the International Double Reed Society Conference in England, Melissa Gensler (2010, B.M.) studied in Italy with Grammy Award-Winning flutist Rhonda Larson, and Kailie Rogers (2010, B.M.) studied in Spain with Dutch flutist-composer Wil Offermans.

International travel opportunities are important to furthering the music department’s goals. Dr. Mitzi Groom, Department Head of Music at WKU, explains, “An international performance and service tour will help in recruiting majors and non-majors to specific ensembles and becomes a life-changing experience for all who participate. The department and Potter College will be funding a portion of the Costa Rica trip since it aligns with the university mission for furthering our “international reach.”

Today, graduates are entering a musical world that is increasingly global. International opportunities like the forthcoming Costa Rica visit allow students to gain a broader understanding of cultures and experience life as a musician from a different perspective. At WKU, students are immersed in diverse and international musical experiences that help graduates succeed, not only in music, but also in life.

For more information on how you can support the Costa Rican Project, please contact Dr. Gary Schallert at (270) 745-5893 or email gary.schallert@wku.edu
An important part of the international experience in Potter College is the opportunity to study with an outstanding group of international faculty members. Approximately 10% of Potter College faculty members come from other countries, including South Korea, Japan, China, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ecuador, Colombia, Austria, Hungary, France, Sweden, Spain, Germany, Canada, United Kingdom, and Bulgaria. They often bring with them not only important insights from their native lands, but also fresh perspectives on the American experience as well.

Dr. Johnston Akuma-Kalu "JAK" Njoku, associate professor of Folk Studies, came to the United States in 1983 from his native West African homeland of Nigeria to pursue advanced degrees in Musicology. Upon completing a Master's degree in Musicology from Michigan State University, JAK enrolled at Indiana University where he earned the Ph.D. degree in Ethnomusicology and Folklore, along with minors in African Studies and Cultural Anthropology.

Since 1992, JAK has taught courses at WKU in World Music, Folklore, Ethnomusicology, and Peoples and Cultures of Africa while maintaining a progressive program of research. "I research what people produce as members of a community to understand the values, belief systems, collective memory, common experiences, and the continuing traditions that they share in common," says JAK. "My research considers place names, songs, folktales, and historical narratives about material objects and places in order to learn about the folklore of the Atlantic slave trade. Although we do not know much about how the victims of that tragic event traveled from their hinterland villages in the first place to the coastal towns for shipment to the Americas."

With initial funding from WKU's Office of Sponsored Programs and external funding from the British Libraries Endangered Archives Program, JAK has managed to produce fascinating new findings on the neglected paths of Nigerian slave journeys to the United States. Of particular significance is the Igbo slave journeys in Abia State, Nigeria. Dr. Njoku's research has earned national and international recognition as he has shared his knowledge through presentations, publications, and projects.

JAK's Nigerian research examines the folklore and material culture surrounding the Igbo slave journeys from their villages in the interior of the former Slave Coast to the United States. The contribution of the Igbo to the development of Virginia and the greater American frontier culture is noteworthy. "Enslaved Igbo men, women, and children who traveled by force from many specific locations in the hinterland of Igboiland to North America built what is now known as the United States," explains JAK. "A great majority of those who came to Virginia boarded slave ships in the Nigerian coastal towns of Calabar, Bonny, and Brass."

While retracing the hinterland routes in 2002, Njoku came across evidence that one of the starting points of Igbo slave journeys was the ancient Igbo Temple Complex in Arochukwu in Nigeria. Arochukwu traders supplied slaves to the market in Bende which became the source of slaves to Bonny, also known to be the port of departure for the slaves traveling from the Bight of Biafra to the United States. Having established a direct link between major markets and the points of embarkation, JAK approached the commissioner of Nigeria's Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism who, at JAK's request, briefed the governor on the tourism potential of the link. The governor provided financial support and the commissioner approved JAK's work with the staff of the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism to document the cave in Arochukwu and other sites and monuments in Abia State.

The contribution of the Igbo to the development of Virginia and the greater American frontier culture is noteworthy.

In 2007, a team of cavers from the Hoffman Institute and ethnographers from WKU traveled to Nigeria to explore how to protect the cave and list it as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage site. JAK's work with the Nigerian National Commission on Museums and Monuments has resulted in the Arochukwu Cave being nominated and placed on the temporary list as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

In 2004, Dr. Njoku was appointed to the advisory board of the American Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia. The Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton, Virginia, is an outdoor living history museum. When the Museum received approval
to develop a West African exhibit to complement the English Farm, Irish Farm, German Farm, and American Farm already in existence, JAK served as the principal consultant for the project. He oversaw the construction of an Igbo Farm of historic buildings and recruited volunteers for the project. The Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia continues to preserve the Igbo Farm Village, acquire collections in decorative objects, and staff exhibits with professional researchers including Igbo graduate students and costumed Igbo volunteers as guides for proper interpretation.

"JAK is one of a small number of people who grasped the long-term implications of there being an outdoor exhibit such as Igbo Farm Village in the US..."

Eric Bryan, Deputy Director of the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia, points out that there is an intersection between JAK’s scholarly research, his dedication to the preservation of Igbo language and culture, and his strong desire for a reconnection between Africans and African Americans. “JAK is one of a small number of people who grasped the long-term implications of there being an outdoor exhibit such as Igbo Farm Village in the US, and its potential as safe, common ground where African Americans can learn about the lives of their ancestors, where diaspora Igbo can come to maintain contact with their culture and heritage, and where their children, especially their American-born children, can be immersed in their traditional culture,” says Bryan. “That’s how the Museum sees it, too, and we’re excited by the possibilities, and by the idea of working with Ticha Akuma-Kalu for years to come.”

JAK’s research makes important contributions to the understanding of slave trade journeys. Dr. Michael Ann Williams, a nationally recognized folklore scholar and head of WKU’s Folk Studies and Anthropology department, praises her colleague’s work. “JAK Njoku has been pursuing exciting research in the internal slave routes in West Africa and the various places, especially the cave system, that were part of this history,” says Williams. “Through his research, Dr. Njoku has provided knowledge of and access to places that had been unknown or unavailable to other scholars in America. He has shared his knowledge with other scholars and writers at places such as the Rockefeller Center in Bellagio, Italy, and with the general public, as in his work helping to create the Igbo Village and the Museum of Frontier Culture in Virginia.”

Njoku exemplifies ways Potter College faculty members work together with colleagues from other disciplines. “At WKU, Dr. Njoku has also collaborated across colleges, working with geologists and leading a team to investigate the cave system in Nigeria,” observes Williams.

As to the future, JAK plans to further explore the greater region of West Africa within which the Atlantic slave trade took place. He hopes to secure funding to partner with the National Tourism Commission, Abia State Ministry of Tourism in Nigeria, the Spitiarn University of Nigeria, Kentucky Tourism Board, and Kentucky State University to develop a trail that he has established for ecotourism based on his Nigerian slave route project. “The trail will lead to a Cave Temple Complex in Arochukwu that my research has revealed was used as a hinterland slave-dealing location during the Atlantic Slave Trade,” says Njoku.

2009-2010 Potter College Faculty Award Recipients

BY SALLY RAY

Each year through a nomination process, the College and University recognize faculty members who have demonstrated excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, public service, and student advisement. The College recipients of each award are considered for the University-wide awards, and one overall recipient in each category is chosen. In 2009-2010, Potter College recognized four of its outstanding faculty members to receive these coveted College awards. Two of them received the university-wide award in their respective categories.

Meet the four Potter College faculty members who are making a difference in the lives of their students, profession, and the community.

For Folk Studies & Anthropology associate professor Darlene Applegate, service is a passion. “I’m an educator and a professional anthropologist who is committed to fulfilling my service responsibilities to the profession and the public,” she explains. “I also make concerted efforts to instill a service ethic in my students through role modeling and engaging students in projects.” Over the last five years Dr. Applegate has contributed thousands of hours of service to the university, local community, and professional community.

She has served as president of the Kentucky Organization of Professional Archaeologists, on the Board for the Kentucky Center for Native American Arts and Culture and the Kentucky Natural History Museum, as a principal investigator for the Mammoth Cave National Park Site Stewardship Program, a member of the Native American Heritage Commission, and has worked with the Boy Scouts Merit Badge University. On the university level, she has been active with the Student Research Council, University Faculty Grievance Committee, Potter College Professional Development and Sabbatical Committees, and the Faculty Senate.

Her colleagues throughout Kentucky recognize Dr. Applegate’s dedication and contributions. Wayne Adams, forest archaeologist for the Daniel Boone National Forest, has worked with Applegate for nearly a decade, and says, “I’ve never failed to be amazed at her tireless dedication to her work. She creatively finds new opportunities for her students, while making important contributions to the larger field of public archaeology in Kentucky.”

Whenever possible, Applegate involves students in her anthropological projects and in publishing her research findings, as she did with the WKU Upper Green River Biological Preserve. Folk Studies and Anthropology department head, Dr. Michael Ann Williams, observes of her colleague, “Darlene seamlessly integrates her research activity with her teaching and her service to the community and the profession.”

As for the future, Applegate is always looking for more opportunities to make a difference in the community and state through her service. She says, “Service is important to me both personally and professionally. I only wish I could do more, especially with non-discipline projects, such as volunteering at the local animal shelter and retirement homes.”
2009-2010 Potter College Faculty Award Recipients

Bruce Crawley
University Award and Potter College Award for Excellence in Student Advising

Most any day when he’s not in the classroom, you’ll find Bruce Crawley in his office on the first floor of the Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center listening attentively to an undergraduate student who is seeking his advice. Crawley came to WKU in 2002 as an instructor in the Department of Communication, and assumed the role of Advising Coordinator for the department three years later. Since then, he has come to understand what students want in an advisor – accurate information and caring. According to Crawley, when those needs are met, advice is effective. His concern for students is communicated by his accessibility, timely responses to questions, and strong listening skills.

Crawley’s success in graduate advising receives praise from many of his advisees, including Tom Thomas, a 2007 graduate in Corporate & Organizational Communication. “I was a transfer student with a full-time job and a family at home, and I was nervous about how much time and credits I would lose. At the time I transferred, I was on track to graduate the following year. I feared I would have much more than one year of classes to complete. When I met with Mr. Crawley the very first time, he asked me about my graduation timeline. I plainly told him “One year. I want to be finished in one year.” He looked at me and without hesitating told me that we would make it happen. He explained that I would have to work hard, take a full load each semester, and enroll in winter and summer term classes. I met with him on several more occasions during the year to make certain I was enrolled in the correct classes. I’m not sure who worked harder that year to make sure I graduated on time, Mr. Crawley or me. I never made a move without speaking to him and he was always responsive to my phone calls and e-mails. He took the time to understand my situation and made sure I had the correct information and assistance to meet my graduation goal. When people ask me how I graduated so quickly after transferring, I tell them I had an outstanding advisor, and I owe him all the credit!”

Advisement is a multi-phase process, according to Crawley, often beginning at an open house recruitment event or an Academic Transitions Programs (ATP), and sometimes lasting well beyond the student’s graduation. It’s also something that Crawley takes to heart. He explains, “Our advisees have been entrusted to us by their families, and they depend on us to help them navigate their way to an education in their chosen field. Advisors are coaches, customer service representatives, defense attorneys and advocates, mentors, cheerleaders, dot-connectors, and champions of our disciplines. We fail our advisees, their supporters, our discipline, and the University when we do anything less than our best to help our advisees succeed.”

Since joining the History Department in 2002, Reed has quickly established himself as a gifted classroom teacher who uses culture as a central organizing theme for his course offerings. These “cultural exchanges” serve to move students to a higher level of analysis and critical thought. Dr. Reed’s course offerings reflect his diverse intellectual interests – from Modern Europe to the History of Sport. He keeps his material fresh by incorporating new readings and themes each semester, and he draws on his wide knowledge of modern European history, as well as his own research in urban history and the Tour de France to supplement lectures.

Not only does Reed excel in the traditional classroom setting, but on the web as well. Dr. Patricia Minter, a History colleague of Reed, remarks “Dr. Reed has been a departmental pioneer in online teaching. Anyone who has tried online teaching knows that it requires different skills from the traditional classroom setting, and Eric has quickly mastered them. He has taken his strengths from his face-to-face courses, particularly his use of documents and images as teaching tools and sources for historical analysis, and incorporated them effectively into his online classes to teach how historians use these documents to understand the past and to show change over time.” History department head, Dr. Robert Dietle, agrees that Reed is a departmental leader in new technologies, referencing Reed’s use of a digital recorder to create audio comments on students’ papers. Dietle says, “Students love this type of feedback. Individuals who would not normally read written comments on an essay will listen and respond to an audio file.”

For Eric Reed, effective teaching results from a continuous learning process that has no end. He notes, “I’ve become a more effective teacher by learning from my mistakes, experimenting with different methods, responding to student and colleague feedback, and searching for new ways to engage the broader university community. I’m learning to be a better teacher.”

Engaging students in the learning process is one of the hallmarks of Dr. Eric Reed’s teaching style. According to Reed, the learning process requires flexibility and a continuous exchange of feedback between the teacher and students. And Reed’s enthusiasm and excitement for his subject, along with his appreciation of student views, reinforces that exchange. As one student commented, “Dr. Reed is a wonderful teacher. He is brilliant and comes up with ways to make history fun and interesting. His lectures are never boring, and he always speaks with enthusiasm and excitement. He treats students as equals, asking for our opinions on matters related to campus and the world.”

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Organizational Communication.

Eric Reed
Potter College Award for Excellence in Teaching

Since his arrival at WKU in 2006 Glenn LaFantasie, WKU’s Frocht Family Professor of Civil War History, has established an exceptional research record in a relatively brief period of time. Since completing the Ph.D. in History from Brown University in 2005, Glenn has built an impressive record of research and writing while also teaching and maintaining a full schedule of public presentations and lectures. He is a highly regarded and productive historian whose numerous articles, books, and public talks have given him a high profile in the community of Civil War scholars, as well as with a much larger public audience. According to Dr. Michael Vorenberg, associate professor of History at Brown University, “Of the current mid-career scholars in the field of Civil War history, Glenn is certainly one of the top ten in the country in terms of the respect he garners from colleagues, and he is among the top three when it comes to being a prolific writer.”

LaFantasie has authored three highly acclaimed books on the Civil War era, Twilight at Little Round Top (2005), Gettysburg Requires: The Life and Lost Causes of Confederate Colonel William C. Oates (2006), and Gettysburg Heroes: Perfect Soldiers, Hallowed Ground (2008). His fourth book, Lincoln and Grant, which examines the relationship between the Union commander-in-chief and his most successful general, is under contract with Oxford University Press. Additionally, LaFantasie has published numerous and important essays and articles. According to History department head Dr. Robert Dietle, “LaFantasie makes his research accessible to an audience beyond the borders of the academy. Venues for his published work include popular magazines such as The Civil War Times, scholarly journals including The Lincoln Quarterly, and well-respected academic publishers such as Oxford University Press.”

LaFantasie’s path to WKU is unusual. Previously, he worked for several years as the director of publishing at Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., and deputy historian of the U.S. Department of State. His work as an historian resulted in a Presidential Commendation, commendations from the National Security Council and the U.S. Department of State, a travel grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and election as a Fellow in the Rhode Island Historical Society.

At WKU, LaFantasie teaches courses on the Age of Jackson, the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Old South, and the Rise and Fall of the Confederacy. He also serves as director of the Center for the Study of the Civil War in West.

Gordon S. Wood, Alva O. Way University Professor and Professor of History Emeritus at Brown University and winner of the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for History, says of LaFantasie, “Glenn is a sophisticated and productive scholar with an extraordinary talent for conveying history in a readable manner to a wide readership. There aren’t many historians who can do that, and LaFantasie is one of the best. He is an expert on the Civil War and is well known and respected by his colleagues in Civil War history. WKU is very fortunate to have him on its faculty.”
In Memoriam

DR. PAUL R. WOZNIAK
1941-2010

Dr. Paul R. Wozniak, department head of Sociology, passed away unexpectedly June 23, 2010. As the senior department head in Potter College, Paul spent 20 of his 39 years at WKU in that role. Dean David Lee, who maintained a long and close association with Professor Wozniak, observed, "Paul was one of the university’s best and most experienced department heads. No matter what the discussion, Paul had a gift for centering the comment that went to the heart of the issue and a knack for simple, but elegant solutions to frustrating problems. Fairness and a commitment to quality were the hallmarks of his tenure as department head, and the strength of our Sociology Department is a testimony to his skills as an academic leader."

Under Paul Wozniak’s leadership, the Department of Sociology experienced tremendous growth in faculty, student enrollment, and academic programs. An excellent and seasoned administrator, Professor Wozniak was also a superb teacher, mentor, and researcher, having received the Award for Excellence in Teaching from Potter College of Arts & Letters.

Wozniak obtained a B.S. degree in Sociology and Anthropology from Canisius College in Buffalo in 1963 and a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Massachusetts in 1967. While in college, he was a member of Army ROTC, becoming a Distinguished Military Graduate commissioned in 1963. From 1967-1969, he served as a staff sociologist in the U.S. Army Research Office. While on active duty in the Army, he was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal. In 1969, he began his teaching career as an assistant professor of Sociology at Cornell University. He came to Western Kentucky University in 1971 as an associate professor of Sociology and was promoted to full professor in 1978. He served as department head from 1990 to 2010.

Dr. Wozniak is survived by his wife of 47 years, Christine Wozniak, three children, and four grandchildren.

A scholarship has been established in Dr. Paul Wozniak’s memory through the College Heights Foundation. For more information, contact the Dr. Paul R. Wozniak Memorial Scholarship Fund, College Heights Foundation, WKU, 1906 College Heights Blvd., Bowling Green, KY 42101-1016, or phone (270) 745-5266.

FIRST LT. ERIC D. YATES
1984-2010

1st Lt. Eric Yates, a 2008 WKU graduate in Social Studies and History and a commissioned officer through WKU’s ROTC Program, died September 18, 2010, in Zhari district, Kandahar province, Afghanistan when insurgents attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. Yates was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell.

Yates, of Rineville, Ky., was a 2003 graduate of John Hardin High School, and attended Elizabethown Community College and the University of Louisville prior to transferring to WKU. At WKU, his love of history was evident to all who taught him. Dr. Richard Weigel, Professor of History and Yates’ instructor in a course on Ancient Rome, said of his student, “I remember Eric Yates as a good student who was soft-spoken, but always interested in class topics. The fact that he loved Julius Caesar and the Roman Empire is revealing. Many of our students, particularly those interested in military history, like Caesar as a great leader and general. However, loving the Roman Republic shows a degree of sophistication because most students don’t appreciate the freedom and moral values of a government. That says a lot about Eric. He will be missed.”

Dr. Patricia Minter, associate professor of History, was also privileged to have Eric in class. “Eric was my student in HIST 498, our Senior Seminar. That semester, my theme was Civil Rights and Civil Liberties in Global Perspective. Eric was a nice young man, a very quiet one, and I was quite surprised when he came to me and asked if he could write his paper on Gandhi and his years in South Africa. Suffice it to say that this is not a topic frequently pursued by students in ROTC, but Eric was deeply interested in Gandhian non-violence in particular. He did a very nice job. He planned to come back after his four years of service to teach Social Studies back home.”

A campus memorial was held for 1st Lt. Yates on September 23, 2010, at the Guthrie Bell Tower, a site dedicated to the memory of those who died in military service.

His parents, David and Kathy Yates, and brother, Nathan, survive 1st Lt. Yates.

A scholarship has been established in 1st Lt. Eric D. Yates’ memory through the College Heights Foundation. For more information, contact the 1st Lt. Eric D. Yates Memorial Scholarship Fund, College Heights Foundation, WKU, 1906 College Heights Blvd., Bowling Green, KY 42101-1016, or phone (270) 745-5266.

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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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