Message from Department Chair Marianne Montgomery

We are delighted that we made it through the fall semester with no classroom outbreaks! Everyone is struggling to some degree, and there are no easy paths forward; but I take some comfort in focusing on our core mission of student success. We are rising to the challenge, meeting students where they are and helping them learn and grow, even in these hard times.

I was heartened to have students back on campus with increasing numbers vaccinated. It’s been great to attend on-campus events, such the October reading by rising North Carolina literary star Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle, author of the debut novel *Even As We Breathe*. Clapsaddle is an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and her reading was organized by Whichard Distinguished Professor Kirstin Squint. This is the last year of Dr. Squint’s term as Whichard Professor in English and Gender Studies, and she will cap off three eventful years by hosting U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo for a reading on March 30. In the six weeks before Harjo’s reading, the department will lead

The Department enthusiastically supported the Y’all Means All campaign, which was coordinated by the university’s Dr. Jesse R. Peel LGBTQ Center. Standing (l-r) are officers Matt Cox, Donna Kain, and Tracy Morse. Kneeling (l-r) are Lida Cope and Marianne Montgomery.

Continued on the next page
Publications & Creative Activity

Ben Abel. “Thirteen.” (Parts 1 & 2). Dead Mule School of Southern Literature.


Margaret Bauer. “At Loose Ends.” Chautauqua.

Margaret Bauer. “I Miss You When the River Turns Peach.” Chautauqua.


Michelle Eble, Temptaous Mckoy (PhD, ’19), et al. Anti-Racist Scholarly Reviewing Practices: A Heuristic for Editors, Reviewers, and Authors.


Helena Feder. “Stealing Hunters in the Snow.” Critical Read.


Chair’s Message (continued from the previous page)

an NEA Big Read of Harjo’s book An American Sunrise. We’ll distribute 500 free copies of the book in the community and sponsor book discussions, a concert, a pottery workshop, and events for kids and teens. Learn more about these events at English.ecu.edu/bigread and be sure to pick up a free book at Sheppard Library or another distribution location around Greenville, starting February 15. We are excited to celebrate reading in the community!

Also in the spring, we expect to host finalists for the position of Assistant Professor of writing studies. We hope to hire a new colleague working on cultural rhetorics, Black rhetorics, critical race theory, intercultural communication, or a related focus. The search committee is working hard now, and I look forward to welcoming our new faculty member in August. The department’s Executive Committee is leading a process to determine other tenure-track hiring priorities, so I hope this is the first of several new hires in the coming years.

Go English!

The Common Reader • Fall 2021


Marame Gueye. “Senegal: To Whom Do Women’s Bodies Belong?” Al Jazeera.


John Hoppenthaler. “Night Wing over Metropolitan Area.” You Are the River.

John Hoppenthaler. “At 2 AM.” Northern Appalachia Review.


Andrea Kitta. “Critiquing Internet Culture.” What Folklorists Do: Professional Possibilities in Folklore Studies.


Andrea Kitta. “‘An Epidemic of Meanings’: The Tenuous Nature of Public Intellectualism, Reflexivity, and Belief Superstition.” Advancing Folkloristics.

Andrea Kitta (with Lynne S. McNeill and Trevor J. Blank). “Folklore: Getting Others to take the Discipline Seriously while Remaining a Serious Folklorist.” Advancing Folkloristics.


Follow the Department of English at English.ecu.edu and on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
Christy Hallberg’s Reputation, Debut Novel Rise Like a Zeppelin

Christy Hallberg read from her debut novel, Searching for Jimmy Page, in the Faulkner Gallery of ECU’s Joyner Library. The event – where she was interviewed (above) by Randall Martoccia – was co-hosted by the North Carolina Literary Review and the Department of English.

Throughout the fall semester, Hallberg actively promoted the book in a variety of media outlets:
• excerpt: The Coil
• interviews / readings: Author2Author Podcast; Booked on Rock Podcast; Charlotte Readers Podcast; The Goldmine Podcast; Heart of Markness, The Led Zeppelin/Classic Rock Podcast; HocTok; Indie Book Talk Podcast; Lucid Radio; NPR/Blue Ridge Public Radio; Malaprop’s Bookstore; and Southern Literary Review
• local news coverage: The East Carolinian, Greenville Magazine, and The Reflector

The novel was published by Livingston Press and has received two American Writing Awards in the categories of Best New Fiction and Fiction: General.

Hallberg’s biography is included in Sweetycat Press’ Who’s Who of Emerging Writers 2021.
Presentations


**Gabrielle Freeman.** Poetry Project. Theater Alliance. Washington, DC.


**Marame Gueye.** “Women’s Bodies as Battlefields in Senegal.” Gender Studies’ GENSing. ECU.

**Christy Hallberg.** “It’s Only Rock ‘n Roll, But Not Everybody Likes It: Contextualizing Violence and Music in Jeff Jackson’s *Destroy All Monsters.*” Popular Culture Association Conference.

**Andrea Kitta.** “God is My Vaccine.” University of Bern, Switzerland.


**Andrea Kitta.** “Communicating about COVID: Understanding how Folklore Affects Medical Decision Making and What to do about It.”

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**John Hoppenthaler’s** “The Weather Down Here” will appear on posters throughout the state as part of NC Poetry Society’s Poetry in Plain Sight Program, an outreach initiative that connects poets, poetry, and audiences. The works will be displayed April 2022 through March 2023 in select arts districts, bookstores, and downtown areas. Communities for Immunity Program. Western Kentucky University.


**Andrea Kitta.** “Vaccine Hesitancy and refusal: Why Your Dad Thinks Bill Gates is Out to Microchip Him, and How to Talk to Him about It.” Tapped. Greenville, NC.

**Sarah Lonelodge.** “Using the IPAR Model to Teach Soft Skills and to Work with Community Partners.” Bridging the Gap between Workplace Writing and Professional Writing Instruction: New Directions in Business and Technical Writing Pedagogy. Rutgers University.

**Sarah Lonelodge.** “Teaching Justice: Engaging Students in Activist Pedagogy Inside and Outside the Composition Classroom.” National Council of Teachers of English Conference.


Eddie Moore. “Erasing the Black Feminine: Ralph Ellison’s Other Invisible Man.” Gender to a Tea. ECU.


Awards & Honors

John Hoppenthaler. Residency Fellowship. Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities. Southern Pines, NC.

Andrea Kitta. English Department Service Award.

Gera Miles. English Department Service Award.

Tim Putnam. Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Senior Staff Excellence Award.

Author Discusses Veterans

Author Ben Fountain, recipient of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction, visited campus to discuss American veterans and contemporary wartime in “The Fantasy Industrial Complex.”

Co-sponsors were the Department of English, the Veteran to Scholar Program, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Academic Affairs Faculty Author Book Awards, hosted by Joyner Library, recognized the following faculty who published books in the past two academic years: Will Banks, Michelle Eble, Helena Feder, Erin Frost, Guiseppe Getto, Tom Herron, Jeffrey Johnson, Andrea Kitta, Amanda Klein, Kirstin Squint, and Liza Wieland.

The following faculty were named Honored Instructors by Campus Living. Faculty are nominated for this award by students: Benjamin Abel, Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs, Joshua Gardner, Timm Hackett, Grace Horne, James Kirkland, Sarah Lonelodge, Gera Miles, Deborah Shoop, Jenn Sisk, and Charles Woods.

Outreach

The University Writing Program, directed by Will Banks, hosted an online, campus-wide discussion group focused on Flower Darby and James Lang’s Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science to Online Classes.

Andrea Kitta was recently quoted in Slate’s “The Fable of the Sick Anti-Vaxxer” and in Foxy Folklorist’s “Shut Up About Bodily Autonomy... Because Public Health.”

Amanda Klein made multiple media and podcast appearances to discuss her book Millennials Killed the Video Star: MTV’s Transition to Reality Programming and MTV’s 40th anniversary. She was interviewed by The New York Times, the Bay Area News Group, and NPR / KERA’s Think Podcast.
Laureen Tedesco was interviewed by Tammy Rose, host of Concord Days, about Harriett Lothrop, Transcendentalist author of the Five Little Peppers series. Tedesco discussed the writer’s early attempts to get published in children’s and religious magazines and about Lothrop’s literary models who included Harriet Beecher Stowe, Louisa May Alcott, and Rose Terry Cooke.

Transitions

Michelle Eble was promoted to Professor.

Corina Jury joined the Department as an Administrative Support Assistant.

Andrea Kitta was promoted to Professor.

Kirstin Squint was promoted to Associate Professor.

Eddie Moore defended his dissertation – Black Queer Homelessness and Horror in the Novels of Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, and Randall Kenan – in English and Comparative Literature at UNC Chapel Hill.

Kimberly Thompson advanced in title to Teaching Assistant Professor.

Making the News

Samantha Hamilton, English Undergraduate Studies Assistant, was the focus of a Pirate Profile on ECU’s website.

The Department’s PhD program in Rhetoric, Writing, and Professional Communication was highlighted in “Harriot College Doctoral Programs Create Diverse Workforce.”

Eddie Moore’s ENGL 1500 course, Black Family Sitcoms: Laughter and Politics, was featured on ECU’s website in “Cool Classes: Seventeen of the Most Unusual, Unique Classes at ECU This Year.”
Helena Feder, Great Books Host “You Are the River” Dedication

ECU’s Great Books Program, under the directorship of Helena Feder, hosted a reception, sculpture unveiling, and book launch at the University’s sculpture garden, located between Joyner Library and Mendenhall.

The event was the culmination of Feder’s 2019-2020 Mellon/ACLS Scholar and Society Fellowship spent in residence at the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA). While there, Feder worked on three book manuscripts, two of which have recently been published: Close Reading the Anthropocene and You Are the River. A third, Apprehensions, is in progress.

Close Reading the Anthropocene, an interdisciplinary edited collection published by Routledge, “grounds the complex relations between text and world in the environmental humanities.”

You Are the River, published by NCMA, is a collection of 75 literary responses to 75 works in the museum’s permanent collection. Contributing authors N.C. Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green and current and retired English faculty Alex Albright, John Hoppenthaler, Peter Makuck, Luke Whisnant, and Liza Wieland read from their works at the reception.

The event was co-sponsored by the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Whichard Distinguished Professorship in the Humanities, the Keats W. Sparrow Distinguished Chair in the Liberal Arts, and the Great Books Program. The Whichard Professorship is being hosted this year by the Department of English and the Gender Studies Program.

Alex Albright Receives Award from North Carolina Humanities

Professor emeritus Alex Albright was honored by North Carolina Humanities with the 2021 John Tyler Caldwell Award for the Humanities.

The award is given annually to “individuals who have strengthened the educational, cultural, and civic life of North Carolinians through their life’s work.”

Albright founded the North Carolina Literary Review (NCLR) and was its first editor from 1991-1996. In 2015, the magazine established the Alex Albright Prize in Creative Nonfiction Writing.

A virtual reception was co-sponsored by NCLR and the North Carolina Writers’ Network. Margaret Bauer, current editor of NCLR, received the award in 2018.
The ECU Department of English and the Gender Studies Program hosted Kirstin Squint as the 2021-2022 Whichard Visiting Distinguished Professor in the Humanities. Two major events were held during the fall semester.

Eastern Band of Cherokee novelist Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle presented a reading of her debut novel, *Even as We Breathe*, on campus. Her book won the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award and was named one of NPR's Best Books of 2020.

The October event began with a fundraiser for *North Carolina Literary Review*. Shown above at the reception are Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Dean Allison Danell, Whichard Chair Kirstin Squint, novelist Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle, *NCLR* editor Margaret Bauer, and Department of English Chair Marianne Montgomery.

The next month, Squint interviewed Brittany Hunt and Chelsea Locklear, members of the Lumbee tribe, about missing and murdered Indigenous people. Hunt and Locklear host the podcast *The Red Justice Project*. The online event is archived on the Gender Studies Facebook page.

During the semester, Squint also gave a presentation for ECU’s Lifelong Learning Program on Clapsaddle’s novel and published two articles: “Many Identities, One Voice: An Interview with Cherokee Novelist Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle” in *North Carolina Literary Review* and “LeAnne Howe” in *The Literary Encyclopedia*.

The Whichard Visiting Distinguished Professorship in the Humanities is housed in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences and is made possible through a generous donation by the Whichard family in honor of David Julian and Virginia Suther Whichard of Greenville.
Department Receives National Endowment for the Arts Grant

The following article originally appeared on ECU’s home page. Written by Lacey Gray, Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Director of Marketing and Communications, it is excerpted here with permission.

East Carolina University is one of 61 organizations nationwide selected to receive a 2021-2022 National Endowment for the Arts Big Read grant. The project, directed by Marianne Montgomery, associate professor and chair of the Department of English, which is housed in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, will support a community reading program focused on U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo’s *An American Sunrise.*

“The Department of English is excited to bring our community together through reading. We’ll distribute free copies of Harjo’s poetry collection and have lots of events for all ages, including book discussions, youth arts projects and a concert, all leading up to her reading at ECU on March 30, 2022,” Montgomery said. “Big Read – Greenville will educate our community about the history of southeastern Indigenous peoples, enrich our community through cultural events related to tribal nations, and advance ECU’s mission to serve the public and transform our region.”

The NEA Big Read offers a range of titles that reflect many voices and perspectives, aiming to inspire conversation and discovery. The main feature of the initiative is a grants program managed by Arts Midwest, which annually supports dynamic community reading programs, each designed around a single NEA Big Read selection.

Programming partners for ECU’s NEA Big Read – Greenville include Sheppard Memorial Library, the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Whichard Distinguished Professorship, Down East Flick Fest, Pitt County Council on Aging, ECU’s Ledonia Wright Cultural Center, the East Carolina Native American Organization, and the ECU School of Music.

Questions may be directed to Montgomery at montgomerym@ecu.edu.
NEA Big Read-Greenville Events Scheduled

Below are some of the National Endowment for the Arts Big Read grant-affiliated events that will take place in anticipation of U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo’s March 30 visit to ECU’s campus.

All presentations are free and open to the public and are subject to change as circumstances dictate. Masking and social distancing will be required at all in-person gatherings. For more events and time/location details, visit English.ecu.edu/bigread.

**February 15 • 4 pm • outside Sheppard Memorial Library**
ECU Chancellor Philip Rogers, Greenville Mayor P.J. Connelly, Harriot College Dean Allison S. Danell, Tribal Chairwoman of the Waccamaw-Siouan Indian Tribe Pamela Young-Jacobs, Executive Director and Tribal Administrator of the Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe of North Carolina Jamie K. Oxendine, and other community leaders will kick off the NEA Big Read - Greenville. Free copies of Harjo’s book will be distributed.

**February 25 • 5:30 pm • Greenville Museum of Art**
LeAnne Howe (Choctaw) will screen her film *Searching for Sequoyah*. This viewing will be followed by a community panel with Howe that includes members of the Lumbee tribe. Co-sponsor: Down East Flick Fest

**February 28 • 4 pm • Joyner Library, Faulkner Gallery (2nd floor)**
Marty Richardson (Haliwa-Saponi) will lecture on Native Americans in the Southeast.

**March 10 • 2 pm (pre-registration required) • Willis Building Auditorium**
Kirstin Squint will discuss Joy Harjo and her work in an ECU Lifelong Learning presentation. Free copies of Harjo’s book will be distributed.

**March 23 • 1 pm • Online**
As part of the Gender to a Tea series, Kirstin Squint will speak on the role of water in poems, maps, and stories from Joy Harjo’s collection, *An American Sunrise*. Co-sponsor: Gender Studies Program

**March 24 • TBA (pre-registration required) • Pitt County Council on Aging**
Kirstin Squint will discuss Harjo and her work at the Pitt County Council on Aging. Free copies of Harjo’s book will be distributed.

**March 30 • 7 pm • Black Box Theater, ECU Main Campus Student Center**
Harjo (Muscogee) will discuss *An American Sunrise*. She will also visit several ECU classes and interact with students and faculty.

**April 14 • 7 pm • Online**
Robin Wall Kimmerer (Citizen Potawatomi) will discuss “The Honorable Harvest” as part of the Voyages of Discovery series. She is the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants*. She will also speak with students and local tribe members.

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20th Annual TALGS Conference to be Co-Hosted by Department

ECU’s Department of English and the Greensboro College Department of English, Communication, and Media Studies will co-host the 20th annual TALGS Conference February 12 from 10 am-1 pm.

Mark Johnson, co-coordinator of the event, noted that this year’s event will be the organization’s first virtual symposium, allowing for a trio of prominent scholars to present.

• Jim Cummins – Professor Emeritus at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto – is the author of *Rethinking the Education of Multilingual Learners: A Critical Analysis of Theoretical Concepts*, which was recently published by Multilingual Matters.

• Recipient of the 2020 Horace Mann League Outstanding Public Educator Award, Peter Smagorinsky takes a sociocultural approach to issues of literacy education, literacy teacher education, and related social concerns.

• Dana Ferris’ work has focused on second language writing and on feedback on writing. She is the former editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Second Language Writing* and was the founding editor of the *Journal of Response to Writing*.

The TESOL / Applied Linguistics Graduate Students (TALGS) Conference is an academic event organized by Linguistics and TESOL graduate students and faculty at the two institutions.

The conference is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is required.

For more information, please contact TESOL@greensboro.edu.
Randy Marfield (PhD ’16, MA ’07) was featured in the recent issue of Harriot College of Arts and Sciences’ alumni magazine, Cornerstone. The article – written by Lacey Gray, HCAS Director of Marketing and Communications – is re-printed here with permission.

Randy Marfield (left) is a professor of English and cultural rhetoric and the chair of the Department of Languages and Literature at the University of Belize. In his roles as chair and professor, Marfield assists students and instructors in information gathering, locating resources, and planning and organizing seminars and meetings.

Marfield completed two degrees from East Carolina University through financial aid and waivers and also served as an English tutor and later taught freshman composition and research methodology in ECU’s Department of English. He said his degrees and experiences at ECU have made him extremely confident in his knowledge and abilities in rhetoric, writing, and literature.

“Both my masters and Ph.D. degrees prepared me for the field, and I am able to keep up as the knowledge evolves,” he said.

While earning his degrees, Marfield attended numerous professional, literary, and writing conferences, including one in Romania in 2012 and one in Florida in 2014, where he was able to meet several well-known authors and researchers. In addition, he was an active member of ECU’s African Students Association and International Student Association, where he served in the roles of secretary and vice president, respectively.

“We were all about making international students feel welcomed, to have a community to be a part of and a voice,” he said.

Marfield said his career highlights have included publishing his work as a doctoral student and finishing his dissertation. He still plans to publish in the future and said, “I believe there is much that needs to be said from the perspective of developing nations in this new age of writing and communication.”

### Computers and Writing Conference Set for May

The Department of English will co-host a Computers and Writing Conference May 19-22 in ECU’s Main Campus Student Center.

Focusing on the theme “Practicing Digital Activisms,” participants will present scholarship on how to practice, promote, and analyze digital activisms toward social justice.

More information can be found at cwcon2022@org.
Students in English 3870: Introduction to Editing and Publishing (above) successfully completed the 10th anniversary issue of *The Lookout: A Journal of Undergraduate Research at ECU*. Housed in the Department of English, the journal showcases undergraduate research papers, literary analysis papers, poems, and creative writing from students in various disciplines. Students in the class created the call for submissions, communicated with authors, reviewed submissions, edited each piece submitted, and designed the publication. A link to the issue is available at English.ecu.edu.

**Donna Kain**, founder and Editor-in-Chief of *The Lookout*, is pictured on the far left.

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Transitions

LaKela Atkinson (PhD ’21). Visiting Assistant Professor. Wake Forest University.

Outreach

Morgan Banville (PhD student) was interviewed on The Big Rhetorical Podcast. The podcast is hosted by Charles Woods.

Publications


Tracy Roberson Woolard (MA ’12). “All the Things the Mohawk Stole.” Talking Writing.


Kristy Woodson Harvey (MA ’10) has written seven novels and regularly finds herself on lists like Southern Living’s Most Anticipated Beach Reads, Huffington Post’s Summer Reading, and the News & Observer’s Best Reads of Summer. Her novel Under the Southern Sky was published in 2021, and this “Queen of the Beach Reads” was recently featured on ECU’s homepage.


From Advocacy to Action: Service-Learning Makes a Difference

Service-learning in the time of a pandemic meant major shifts in the types of projects completed by students in Jenn Sisk’s service-learning sections of ENGL 1100 Foundations of College Writing.

Gone were the times of volunteering at elderly care facilities or tutoring students in local after-school programs. But with the return to campus in the fall, students had some in-person service options, working for the on-campus food bank or the Purple Pantry or caring for animals at The Humane Society of Eastern Carolina. For agencies in need of more indirect services, students were encouraged to support and advocate for causes that they care about. Some students focused attention on cleaning our environment and in small groups conducted trash clean-ups in public green spaces near campus while others collected canned goods, school supplies, and books for various local organizations.

One group advocated for survivors of domestic violence. Students Kimberly Davis and Amritha Alaguraj conducted a donation drive to support our local domestic violence shelter. In addition, they created infographics and posted information on social media to educate and advocate for survivors of domestic violence. The students also distributed posters in restrooms and other public spaces around campus in hopes of reaching a wide audience.

Although service-learning looked different in the fall, students found creative ways to make an impact in our local community.

Awards

**Alana Baker** (PhD ’17). Rockingham Community College Excellence in Teaching Award.

**Morgan Banville** (PhD student). ECU Department of English’s 2021 PhD Outstanding Research Award.


**Cecilia Shelton** (PhD ’19). CCCC Technical and Scientific Communication Best Article on Pedagogy or Curriculum in Technical or Scientific Communication.

**Maya Williams** (BA ’17). Named poet laureate; Portland, Maine.

Presentations

**Ina Cariño** (BA ’16) led a North Carolina Writers’ Network online poetry class.

Poets **Ina Cariño** (BA ’16) and Renee Nicholson visited **John Hoppenthaler’s** ENGL 2815 Introduction to Creative Writing students.

**Temptaous Mckoy** (PhD ’19) and **Cecilia Shelton** (PhD ’19) spoke with **Erin Frost**’s English 8780 Seminar in Professional Communication: Digital Activisms students.
The Department of English celebrates and congratulates the fall graduating class of 2021. These graduates have gained the tools to read thoughtfully and deeply, to think critically, to analyze the world, and to communicate well in different media and to diverse audiences. To view a tribute to them — and to hear words of wisdom from two award-winning students, Tyler Sehnal and Chloe Easton — visit English.ecu.edu.

Our Outstanding MA Student in English, Tyler Sehnal (left), teaches English Language Arts in the Randolph County School System. As a student of Multicultural and Transnational Literatures, he pursued professional interests in postcolonial theory, world literature, and the historical trajectory of American Orientalism. In addition to completing an ambitious and well-received thesis, he has already published scholarly articles in *New Literaria* and the *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies* and has been recognized for his fiction writing. He is currently applying to doctoral programs while continuing to develop his work for publication.

Hailing from Jacksonville, NC, Chloe Easton (right) is this semester’s Outstanding Senior in English. She graduated with a BA in English with minors in creative writing and communication studies and a certificate in business and technical communication. During her time at ECU, she developed her own voice while helping others in the ECU community develop theirs. She worked for ECU’s undergraduate research journal, *The Lookout*, as well as for the award-winning *North Carolina Literary Review*. She also served in several writing, editorial, and leadership roles at the *East Carolinian*, culminating in the top position as editor-in-chief — all while writing and seeking publication for her own independent creative, analytical, and investigative writing across multiple genres.

The following teaching assistants — nominated by students in their classes — were named Honored Instructors by Campus Living.

Nicole Allen  
Sarah Bartlett  
Codi Renee Blackmon  
Brent Cameron  
Bethany Holmes  
Mary Myers  
Rocky Patacsil  
Zachary Singletary  
Jonathan Willett

### NCLR Awards Albright Prize

Steve Mitchell of Greensboro won the 2021 Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize for “Ultimate Trip.” Mitchell will receive $400, and his essay will be published in the *North Carolina Literary Review*’s 2022 print issue.
A Message from TCR Editor Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs

Like the Munchkins’ re-emergence in L. Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, students and faculty returned to campus in the fall with cautious optimism that the new school year would find us back on the right road – yellow bricks notwithstanding.

After almost two years of online classes, we were ready to pull back the curtain and conquer our Covid fears. Returning to the world of in-person learning, we looked out for each other; and the semester passed with few delays.

Masks, vaccines, and common sense were our traveling companions; and with an unceasing awareness of Oz and effect – forgive me that one please – we were well prepared for the twists that came with battling a common foe.

We celebrated, published, and were rewarded for the work that we love; and our students once again excelled in the midst of ongoing uncertainty. Novice writers in *Amber Flora Thomas’* poetry class hosted a reading to share their talents, and service-learning students in *Jenn Sisk’s* first-year writing sections made a positive impact on our local community. Alumni visited classes to inspire current students, and *Marianne Montgomery* and her team were awarded a grant that will make it possible to bring US Poet Laureate Joy Harjo to campus in the spring.

As the new year begins, we will continue to give students the tools they need to forge their own paths and to write their own happy endings. Success will take brains and courage; but mostly, it will take heart.

*The Fine Print:* If we missed any news-worthy events that took place before December 31, 2021, or – oh, my! – made an error, please forward a gentle note to TCR editor Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs at dudasikwiggsc@ecu.edu. *No Witches were harmed in the writing of this column.*