Message from Department Chair Marianne Montgomery

It’s been a YEAR. I’m incredibly proud of faculty, staff, and students in the Department of English who have persevered and done their best through some very hard times. I send condolences to all who have lost friends and family and strength to those who are struggling.

As I write this message, ECU is looking ahead to a return to campus in the fall. I want to see our students gathering in crowds, making new friends, and expanding their worlds. I want to see them huddled together, working collaboratively in the classroom. I want to see them packed into the Boneyard, cheering on the Pirates. I don’t want them isolated and quarantined, alone. And I certainly don’t want them to have to return home because the virus spikes on our campus. To assure a healthy academic year, the kind that’s full of anticipation and promise, we all – students, faculty, and staff – need to get vaccinated.

As we are learning, the vaccines work astonishingly well to prevent serious illness. I got my (painless) Pfizer shots this spring; and I’m looking forward to seeing how the university will promote vaccines to students as they return to campus. Visit myspot.nc.gov to find YOUR shot; and, of course, talk to your health care provider if you have concerns or questions. Go get your shot … and go English!

Folklorist in Demand as COVID-19 Expert Amid Ongoing Pandemic

Andrea Kitta is internationally known for her research on medical folklore and vaccines, so she has been in high demand as an expert in recent months.

She recently represented the United States as a panelist at the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics International Panel Discussion Webinar in addition to speaking at four national events and being interviewed by Slate, Al Jazeera, and The Huffington Post, among others.

Kitta also served as a consultant for various projects, including the Boston University Epidemiology COVID-19 Response Corps and the COVID-19 Collection in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. And with a team from ECU’s Brody School of Medicine, she and her graduate students conducted fieldwork on attitudes towards vaccines.
Publications & Creative Activity


**Margaret Bauer.** “Grief in Polite Society.” *Deep South Magazine.*

**Margaret Bauer.** “My Mother’s Day, 1989.” *Deep South Magazine.*

**Margaret Bauer.** “Remembering Randall.” *North Carolina Literary Review.*

**Margaret Bauer.** “When a Cajun Calls: Louisiana Priorities, circa 2002.” *The Dead Mule School of Southern Literature.*


**Helena Feder.** “Cold Inside: Sexual Climate Change.” *Guernica.*


**Marame Gueye.** “Cooking Yassa with Ami.” *Bellingham Review.*

**Marame Gueye.** “In Senegal, Women’s Bodies have Become a Political Battleground.” *The Washington Post.*

**Christy Hallberg.** “Grievous Angel.” *Still: The Journal.*

**Christy Hallberg.** [Review]. *Litro Magazine.*

**Christy Hallberg.** “Shifting Phantasmagoria.” *storySouth.*

**Christy Hallberg.** “Winter Women.” *Deep South Magazine.*

**Tom Herron.** “Mixed Up: Race, Degeneration, and ‘Old English’ Politics in Spenser’s Bower of Bliss and Castle Joyous.” *Spenser Studies.*

**Amanda Klein** appeared on *For Real: The Story of Reality TV* – a documentary series on E! – to discuss her book, *Millennials Killed the Video Star: MTV’s Transition to Reality Programming,* which has recently been published by Duke University Press.

Dr. Klein stated that her research “examines the historical, cultural, and industrial factors leading to MTV’s shift away from music videos to reality programming in the early 2000s and 2010s.”
Tom Herron (editor cum al.). *John Derricke’s The Image of Irelande: With a Discoverie of Woodkarne: Essays on Text and Context*. Manchester UP.


James W. Kirkland. [Review]. *North Carolina Literary Review*.


Amanda Klein. “How MTV’s Jersey Shore Fetishized the Guido, a Subversive Ethnic Stereotype that America Disdained.” *Salon*.


Liza Wieland. “Bad Quarto 1964.” *After the Pause*.

Liza Wieland. “Upstart Crow.” *After the Pause*.

Fellowship

**Eddie Moore** received an Interinstitutional Scholars for Diversity and Equity Fellowship through ECU’s Office for Equity and Diversity. His research focuses on intersections between African American literature and masculinity and sexuality studies. During the summer fellowship period, he worked on revising material from his dissertation into a journal article.

Finalist

**Jenn Sisk** was a finalist for the Global Partners in Education Rosina Chia Teacher of Excellence Award for her work with Global Understanding classes. Nominations are made by partner institutions around the globe. She was among 42 nominees and 10 finalists.

Recognized

**Tom Herron** was recognized at the ECU Research and Creative Activity Awards ceremony for “Castle to Classrooms,” a project that is supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Innovation Grant.
Beyond the Classroom

The following article, reprinted with permission, first appeared on the ECU home page under the title “Beyond the Classroom: Getto’s Students Build Experience While Serving Community.” Jules Norwood is a staff writer for ECU’s News Bureau. The photograph is courtesy of Rhett Butler.

Guisepppe Getto, associate professor of English, is the 2021 recipient of the University Service-Learning Teaching Excellence Award.

“Service-learning is a reflective form of teaching,” Getto said. “I was taught that the hyphen is important. So it’s not just service, and it’s not just learning; but it’s a combined approach. The idea is that the service feeds into the learning, and the learning enables you to serve a community group.”

Getto’s area of expertise is engagement through technology; he works with entities inside and outside the university to produce content and to help them make use of digital technology. English 3880, a business writing class, is a perfect fit for involving students in the process.

“I do a needs assessment with the community partner before the class starts ... and then I invite them into class to talk about their needs,” he said. “And then the students work with the community partner to write for them and revise it. “It can be any form of writing that the nonprofit needs – a blog, a newsletter, static website content, social media content.”

The students get firsthand experience with doing market research, learning to identify and write for a specific audience.

“The biggest feedback I get from students is it’s real life,” Getto said. “There’s a real audience that they’re writing for.”

When he started having students work with nonprofits rather than creating fictional situations, engagement skyrocketed, he said.

“They know that it’s a fictional situation when we do that,” he said. “They’ll take it seriously because they’re students, and hopefully they value that, but when there’s a concrete audience, suddenly it’s like, ‘Wow, this is a nonprofit that

Faculty Author Awards

The following faculty members were recognized at the Joyner Library Faculty Author Awards.

Guisepppe Getto. Content Strategy in Technical Communication

Jeffrey Johnson. The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne, Volume 5 (The Verse Letters)

Andrea Kitta. The Kiss of Death: Contagion, Contamination, and Folklore

Kirstin Squint. Swamp Souths: Literary and Cultural Ecologies

Liza Wieland. Paris, 7 a.m.
helps kids with cancer and their families. We need to help them!’

“That kind of magical feeling is what got me addicted, because it’s just so much easier to engage students in a real-world scenario.”

On the flip side, it helps nonprofits, which don’t have the resources or staff to produce the content they need.

Riley’s Army has been a longtime partner. Getto’s students evaluated the website and provided feedback. They researched the websites of other nonprofits to help Riley’s Army make its site more effective. For example, the previous page lacked a prominent donation button, Getto said.

His students have also provided website feedback for Daughters of Worth, a local organization aimed at educating, equipping and empowering girls to become women of influence in their communities.

“Throughout the past five years, Dr. Getto has partnered with Daughters of Worth to provide website development training, support and specifically ‘adopting’ our organization through his service-learning classes,” said Liz Liles, founder and CEO of Daughters of Worth. “These experiences have not only allowed us to receive the insight and clarity needed to better advocate for the girls of our communities through our social media and website presence, but to also align us with phenomenal student leaders who have truly impacted our organization and the participants of our programs.”

Getto said with service-learning, the reward system is built in, but receiving the award and hearing from community partners that his work is making a difference means a lot to him.

“Teaching is impactful for students, but to have that added impact on the community, it’s just very satisfying to be recognized for that,” he said.
Awards & Honors

**Will Banks.** 2021 Stonewall Service Award. Conference on College Composition and Communication.

**Margaret Bauer.** 2021-2022 Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Reassignment Award.

**Erin Frost.** Servire Society. ECU.

**Christy Hallberg.** *Who's Who of Emerging Writers 2021.* Sweetycat Press.

**John Hoppenthaler.** 2021-2022 Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Reassignment Award.

**Laura Jolley.** Servire Society. ECU.

**Andrea Kitta.** Servire Society. ECU.

The following faculty were named Honored Instructors by ECU Campus Living: **Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs, Helena Feder, Timm Hackett, Andrea Kitta, Randall Martoccia, Ken Parille, Zachary Perkinson, Marc Petersen, Angela Raper, and Jenn Sisk.**

Staff Transition

**Corina Jury** has joined the department staff as an Administrative Support Assistant.

Panels & Presentations

**Helena Feder.** “Outdoor or Experiential Learning in the Online Classroom.” ECU Technology Tailgate.


**Anna Froula.** “The Ethics and Politics of Military Media Studies.” Society of Cinema and Media Studies.


**Marame Gueye.** “Fleecing Senegalese Women.” University of London.
North Carolina Literary Review editor **Margaret Bauer** (second from right) discusses the growth of the state’s writing industry over the past 15 years. Other panelists were (l-r) the late Randall Kenan, NC Literary Hall of Fame 2018 inductee; Daniel Wallace, author of *Big Fish: A Novel of Mythic Proportions*; and Ed Southern, Executive Director of the NC Writers’ Network.

**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’s 2021 National Conference.

**Christy Hallberg.** “Aperture.” [Reading]. *Micro: A Podcast for Short But Powerful Writing.*

**Mark D. Johnson** (with Mahmond Abdi Tabari). “Pre-task Planning and L2 Production: A Research Synthesis and Quantitative Meta-analysis.” American Association for Applied Linguistics Conference. Houston, TX.

**Mark D. Johnson** (with Jingjing Qin). “Teaching Argumentative Writing to Second Language Learners: Insights from a Quantitative Meta-analysis.” American Association for Applied Linguistics Conference. Houston, TX.

**Donna Kain.** “Teaching and Learning Multiple ‘Wicked’ Problems Virtually.” ECU Technology Tailgate.


**Gera Miles.** “No Superheroes Required! Facilitating and Reinforcing Learning in the Classroom Through Graphic Essay Creation Via Adobe Spark.” ECU Technology Tailgate.
Gera Miles. “Black to the Future: Tracking Folk and Family Ways from Africa to the Americas.” PCC Global Programs and ECU’s Ethnic Studies Program.

Marianne Montgomery (with Linda Kean). “Developing Faculty in Fixed-Term Positions and Working to Create an Inclusive Faculty Culture.” ECU Office for Faculty Excellence.

In Memoriam

Michael Aceto died July 21.

His primary research areas were creole languages, sociolinguistics, diachronic linguistics, and Englishes around the world. His interests also included the interface of language and cognition as well as the perceived divide between spirituality and science.

He was the author of Contact Englishes of the Eastern Caribbean; and his scholarship appeared in Language in Society, English World-Wide, American Speech, and Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages.

Angela Raper. “Using ‘Reacting to the Past’ to Develop Rhetorical Skills.” Inclusive Pedagogy Roundtable: ENGL 1100 & 2201. ECU.


Outreach & Media Coverage

Marame Gueye was a recent guest on the academic podcast The Africanist and was interviewed by international news outlets Al Jazeera and The Christian Science Monitor about the unrest in Senegal.

Tom Herron’s NEH-funded “Castles to Classrooms: Developing an Irish Castle in Virtual Reality” project was featured in a two-page spread in the February/March 2021 issue of Medieval Warfare magazine.


Amanda Klein’s recently published book, Millennials Killed the Video Star: MTV’s Transition to Reality Programming, was featured in East Magazine and on the ECU home page.
North Carolina Literary Review Celebrates 30 Years of Publication

The late W. Keats Sparrow, who served ECU as Dean of Harriot College and as Chair of the Department of English, once had a vision: to create a journal that would complement the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association’s history-focused publication. The North Carolina Literary Review (NCLR) was the realization of that dream; and in 2021, the highly lauded journal released its the 30th print issue.

NCLR’s current issue explores North Carolina authors “Writing Toward Healing.” In light of the past year’s pandemic and many social and political tensions, the concept of writing as a tool for healing is nothing short of timely ... and completely coincidental, according to Editor Margaret Bauer (left), who “had in mind the need for healing in the country, politically, and the world, environmentally.”

As it turned out, there are few references to COVID-19 in the issue but a lot of discussion of tools for dealing with the physical, emotional, psychological, and sociological healing needed after over a year of sickness, deaths, isolation, and other suffering inspired by the pandemic.

The 2021 cover (above) was designed by ECU School of Art and Design Professor Cynthia Bickley-Green, whose Lamentation was recently selected by the North Carolina Museum of Art for its Museum Park. (Continued on the next page)
Inside the issue are works by a myriad of North Carolina authors that reflect the healing nature of fine art. The publication is filled with poetry, interviews, essays, and short stories by and about North Carolina authors. And in addition, winners and honorees of the following prizes are featured: the Doris Betts Fiction Prize, the Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize essay, the James Applewhite Poetry Prize, the Ehle Prize, and the Randall Kenan Prize.

The 2021 print issue is available via subscription and can also be ordered directly from UNC Press or through local independent bookstores. *NCLR Online* is an open access journal and contains unique content from the printed issue.

*North Carolina Literary Review* is produced at East Carolina University and is published by UNC Press. Additional funding is provided by the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association. For this issue and strategic planning after three decades of *NCLR*, ECU also received funding from the North Carolina Arts Council. See nclr.ecu.edu for more information.
Retirements

2021 has seen the retirement of four of our colleagues. We wish them well in post-academic life!

**Jeffrey Johnson**, former Chair of the Department of English, served as the Director of the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Voyages of Discovery Series. Specializing in English Renaissance literature with particular emphasis on the poetry and prose of the era, he is the author of *The Theology of John Donne* and was a General Editor for *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, a 10-volume critical collection published by Indiana University Press and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

**Rick Taylor** served the department as Director of Composition, Director of Undergraduate Studies, and Area Coordinator and Graduate Advisor for Multicultural and Transnational Literatures. He directed the Summer Study in London for 30+ years and stated that the experience and the lifelong friendships and partnerships the program fostered were a career highlight, along with service to the study of and students of multietnic literatures.

Outside the university, he was active in Southeastern Women’s Studies Association (SEWSA) and the Society for the Study of Multi-ethnic Literature of the United States (MELUS). His scholarship includes two books as well as numerous articles on theatre history; women writers; research methods; and the intersection of eighteenth-century British literature, postcolonial studies, and Middle Eastern Literature. He was recognized with the Board of Governors Distinguished Professor for Teaching Award in 2017.

A Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor, **Liza Wieland** served as the college’s Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Development.

She is the author of three collections of short fiction, five novels, and a volume of poems. Her work has been recognized with two Pushcart Prizes; the Michigan Literary Fiction Prize; a Bridport Prize (UK); and fellowships from The National Endowment for the Arts, The North Carolina Arts Council, and the Christopher Isherwood Foundation.

She was the recipient of a Research and Creative Activity Reassignment Award, a Harriot College Research Award, and two Department of English Research and Creative Activity Awards.
When I arrived at ECU as incoming English Department chair in 1992, I had no idea I would remain in ECU’s English Department for the next 29 years. I had had an entire career by the time I arrived at ECU, but I had never previously spent more than five years teaching at any one institution. I graduated from the University of Chicago with an AB in English in 1970 and received my MA in English from the University of Michigan in 1971. As I was a graduate teaching fellow at the University of Michigan between 1971 and 1976 – teaching two composition classes per term and, eventually, some upper-level literature classes – my last year here at ECU, 2020-21, was my 50th year of college teaching.

After a terminal two years at Lamar University, I taught at Northern Michigan University and then got an administrative position without rank at Lorain County Community College in Ohio. As I got to deal with other disciplines in addition to English and as I was in charge of most community arts and humanities programming in their well-funded, state-of-the-art theater facility, this was the most interesting job I ever had. Between 1983 and 1987, I founded a community orchestra, five jazz ensembles, a dance troupe, and a summer theater program. However, I had also published several books while at Lorain CCC; so in 1987, I took a position as full professor and English Department chair at Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania. I was hired there as a full professor without having had to go through a promotion process. And I have been a full professor for the past 34 years.

After five years at Shippensburg, I was hired as English Department chair at ECU in 1992. But having had enough of college administration by 1997, I resigned as chair to become a professor here, teaching primarily the undergraduate science fiction and the short story courses, making my last few years here quite a pleasant experience. What made it even better was having the opportunity to teach courses I loved to teach in the company of the talented group of teachers and scholars that constitute this English department.

Since getting out of graduate school, I have published seven scholarly books, about 80 scholarly articles, and one novella. I have also edited over 100 volumes that have appeared in the “Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy” and the “Critical Explorations in Science Fiction and Fantasy” book series, and I have been Film Area Chair for the Popular Culture Association for the past 30 years. But I figure that I owe the world something a little different. Thus, in my retirement I plan to work on producing one elegantly beautiful novella. I have a title, a beginning and an ending, a setting, a sequence of events that must be turned into a plot, and scores of personality traits that must jell into characters. I expect that this will take several years, at least. Wish me luck!
Whichard Visiting Distinguished Chair in the Humanities

The ECU Department of English and the Gender Studies Program hosted **Kirstin Squint** (right) as the 2020-2021 Whichard Visiting Distinguished Professor in the Humanities. She will continue in this position through spring 2022.

Squint interweaves the fields of gender studies, Native American studies, US multi-ethnic studies, and Southern literature studies. She is the editor of *Conversations with LeAnne Howe* (UP of Mississippi, 2022); and *Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Responds to Hillbilly Elegy* (West Virginia UP, 2019), to which she was a contributor, recently received a 2020 American Book Award (the Walter and Lillian Lowenfels Criticism Award).

During the spring semester, she
• served as Chair of the Executive Board of the Language, Literature and Culture Forum: Southern U.S. at the annual Modern Language Association meeting
• delivered an invited virtual lecture, “Native Southern Literature and EBCI Author Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle” for the University of North Carolina Asheville Critical Perspectives Series
• delivered a conference paper, “Representations of Disease, Colonialism, and Philanthropy in the Works of LeAnne Howe,” at the American Comparative Literature Association’s virtual meeting

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.

**Whichard Chair Hosts Choctaw Writer LeAnne Howe**

In March, Whichard Chair Kirstin Squint hosted LeAnne Howe (left), an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and prolific writer of fiction, poetry, drama, literary criticism, and screenplays. She serves as the University of Georgia Eidson Distinguished Professor in American Literature.

Howe read from her latest book, *Savage Conversations*, “a daring account of a former first lady [Mary Todd Lincoln] and the ghosts that tormented her,” and shared poems from her new collection *1918*, which explores the impact of the 1918 influenza pandemic on Indigenous Americans.

Following the reading, Squint facilitated a Q&A with the online audience.
Upcoming Events Co-sponsored by the Whichard Chair

In-person events are contingent on ECU’s Public Health Plan and are subject to change

You are the River: Sculpture Unveiling, Reading, and Reception
September 1 • 7:30 pm • ECU Sculpture Garden (outside Joyner) • Ticketed event

Even as We Breathe: An Evening with Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle
October 4 • 6 pm • Black Box Theater (Main Campus Student Center)
Preceded by a reception and fundraiser for North Carolina Literary Review

The Red Justice Project: An Interview with Brittany Hunt & Chelsea Locklear
November 16 • 7 pm • Zoom (online)

Dr. Marty Richardson: Southeastern Native American Cultures
February 2022 • TBA
Made possible by a National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Grant

Searching for Sequoyah film screening with LeAnne Howe
February 25 • 7 p.m. • TBA
Made possible by a National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Grant

Gender to a Tea: Kirstin Squint
The Role of Water in Joy Harjo’s An American Sunrise
March 23 • 1 pm • WebEx (online)

U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo: A Reading
March 30 • 7 pm • Black Box Theater (Main Campus Student Center)
Made possible by a National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Grant

Whichard Chair Kirstin Squint (left) joined Ricardo Nazario y Colon, Jeremy Jones, and Meredith McCarroll for a discussion of Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Responds to Hillbilly Elegy. Squint contributed the chapter “Kentucky, Coming and Going” to the award-winning collection.
CARE Works to Develop Anti-Racism Programming Across College

Members of the Department of English have been actively engaged with the formation of Harriot College of Arts and Science’s Council for Anti-Racism and Equity (CARE).

CARE was established in fall 2020 to “provide a constructive forum for the regular discussion of topics related to anti-racism and equity that include faculty, staff, and students.” Its mission is to develop, promote, and support anti-racism programming and initiatives across the college.

CARE’s Steering Committee – comprised of faculty, staff, and students – was created in spring 2021 and is chaired by Nikki Caswell. Faculty appointed by Dean Allison Danell include Celestine Davis, Seodial Deena, Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs, Michelle Eble, Anna Froula, Donna Kain, and Amanda Klein.

The council has already accomplished several tasks: It has co-sponsored events across the college, hosted a fall and spring Book Club (12 individuals participated each semester), released a statement condemning Asian-focused violence, reached out to campus partners to establish working relationships, and surveyed department chairs to capture the breadth of anti-racism programming across the college.

Marianne Montgomery, who participated in early conversations about the mission and goals of the group, also serves on the Steering Committee and organizes the biannual Anti-Racism Book Club. Reginald Watson facilitated discussions of the first book club reading, Michelle Alexander’s The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness; and Amber Flora Thomas will be co-facilitating the fall 2021 book club discussions of On Juneteenth by Annette Gordon Reed.

In April – and in partnership with ECU’s Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies programs – CARE co-sponsored a virtual presentation by journalist Seyward Darby, who discussed her recent book Sisters in Hate: American Women on the Front Lines of White Nationalism.

Colloquium Focuses on L2

In collaboration with the ECU Office of Global Affairs and the ECU Graduate School, Mark D. Johnson organized a two-day virtual colloquium titled “Working with International Student Writers: Perspectives from the Field of Second Language Writing.”

Internationally recognized scholars and specialists provided principles and strategies for responding to and assessing second language (L2) student writing, considering both writing courses and courses in the disciplines.

Johnson serves on the editorial board of the journal TESOL Quarterly and as president of Carolina TESOL Executive Board.
The Department of English congratulates the 28 Bachelor of Arts and 39 Masters of Arts students who received English degrees in May.

Listen to recorded messages by Rebekah Burroughs, Outstanding English Undergraduate, and Meret Burke, Outstanding English Masters student, on our website at English.ecu.edu. There, you can also hear words of reflection from two of our retiring faculty members, Rick Taylor and Liza Wieland.

Graduates and colleagues, we hope that you will stay in touch and let us know where your paths take you. Go English!

**Essay Contest Winner Named**

Emily Nevada Horton received the department’s Paul Farr Memorial Essay Award for her “Comedies of Remarriage, Stereotypes, and a Lack of Black Romance.” She was a student in Amanda Klein’s FILM 4985 “Topics in Film Studies: Black American Cinema” course.
The following article, reprinted with permission, first appeared on the ECU home page under the title “Diversity in English: ECU’s English Department Values Inclusivity, Diversity.” Lacey L. Gray is the Director of Marketing and Communications for the Harriot College of Arts and Sciences.

Each year, faculty and staff of East Carolina University’s Department of English, housed in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, recruit and mentor a diverse population of students. This includes four alumnae who were featured in a national roundtable on Black Technical and Professional Communication hosted virtually by Virginia Tech in December and attended by more than 500 people.

“Being Black in academia can be isolating, depending on who you are, what kind of work you want to do and whether there are people around you who support your endeavors,” said Constance Haywood, who received her master’s degree in English from ECU (‘17) and is pursuing her doctoral degree in writing, rhetoric and American cultures at Michigan State University. Haywood’s research interests include Black feminist rhetoric(s) and literacies, online community-building and digital research ethics.

“When I came into ECU’s English graduate program, I was pleasantly surprised that there were multiple graduate students working alongside me who looked like me and could relate to me both culturally and professionally. The department solidified the importance of Black presence and voice in academia. Their dedication to diversity through the recruitment of Black students (and the invitation of Black thought into classrooms) not only shaped my graduate experiences but continues to shape my own work,” Haywood said. “Long story short, in order for the tough conversations to take place, Black people need to be in the room. At ECU, there were quite a few of us in the room.”

Dr. Marianne Montgomery, chair of the Department of English, said, “The Ph.D. faculty have built and sustained a commitment to diversity of students from traditionally underrepresented groups. The program

(Continued on the next page)
Diversity in English  *(Continued from the previous page)*

is a model for how a focus on equity, diversity and inclusion can have a transformative effect at ECU and beyond.”

Drs. **Cecilia Shelton** ('19), **Temptaous Mckoy** ('19), and **Kimberly C. Harper** ('12) each received their doctoral degrees in rhetoric, writing and professional communication from ECU.

“My time at ECU provided a space where I could exercise my intellectual muscles and grow into a scholar that is prepared to do work in a number of contexts. ECU allowed my values and strengths to emerge. My mentors, colleagues and community were and continue to be valuable collaborators and champions of greater inclusion and justice in technical and professional communication,” said Shelton, assistant professor at the University of Maryland. Shelton draws on Black feminist theory and prioritizes the perspectives, goals and experiences of Black people and other marginalized communities as a way to insist on more equitable solutions to social, political and organizational problems.

Mckoy, assistant professor and co-coordinator of graduate studies for the Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies at Bowie State University, said, “ECU prepared me to work in my field. Diversity and inclusion work requires a great deal of mental and emotional labor, and ECU assisted me in developing solid skills for identifying a work-life balance.” Mckoy’s research redefines the field of technical and professional communication and challenges it to be more inclusive of the communicative and learning practices of Black communities.

Harper is an assistant professor and director of the technical writing concentration at North Carolina A&T State University and founder of *The Space of Grace*, a podcast on Black maternal health and reproductive justice.

Between two and six students graduate each year from ECU’s doctoral program in English, said Dr. **Matt Cox**, associate professor of English and director of graduate studies.

“We are proud of our placement of these graduates at higher learning institutions across the nation and even in other countries,” he said. “Our students represent diverse backgrounds and also research and teach in diverse areas. ECU English graduates are making a name for themselves and for our department and our university.”
Awards

Graduate students Kasen Christensen, Kelly Miller, and Zachary Singletary were recognized as Honored Instructors by ECU Campus Living.

Ina Cariño (BA ’16) has won the 2021 Alice James Award and a Joan Leiman Jacobson Poetry Prize.

Mallory De Araujo Miles, a graduate student in biology who is being mentored by Helena Feder, received an ECU Water Resources Center Grant to finish her environmental novel, We Mean No Harm. The WRC hosted a virtual reading from her book.

Sarah Falcon Turner has received the department’s Russell Christman Memorial Scholarship.

Thekra Hindi has been awarded the department’s Charles and Patricia Moore Scholarship in English.

Rich Klindworth, Jr. (MA ’19) received the Outstanding Staff Award for the ECU Chancellor’s Division. He is a public communications specialist for ECU News Services.

Erica Plouffe Lazure (MA ’21) was awarded the 2020 New American Press Fiction Prize for Proof of Me and Other Stories.

Sarah McCullough has received the department’s Ebbs Graduate English Fellowship.

Agne A. Shields is the recipient of the 2021 Bill Hallberg Creative Writing Award for her short story “The Flight.”

Ashton Shope has received the department’s Ebbs Graduate English Fellowship.

Mckenzie Swindle has been awarded the department’s Friends of English Scholarship.

Bridget Todd (BA ’07) won a Shorty Award for Disinformed, a miniseries that is part of her podcast There are No Girls on the Internet.

Quimyra Williams has received the department’s Russell Christman Memorial Scholarship.

Transitions

Karen Harker (BS ’10) has received her PhD in Shakespeare studies at the University of Birmingham’s Shakespeare Institute located in Stratford-upon-Avon in England.

Alicia Hatcher (PhD ’21) has accepted a tenure-track position at the University of Scranton.

Presentations

Ina Cariño (BA ’16) lead a NC Writers’ Network online poetry class.

Ina Cariño (BA ’16) was spotlighted by Vermont Studio Center in its Writers on the Rise series.

MA student Mariot Valcin, Jr. presented his thesis topic at the NCSU Association of English Graduate Students conference and at the 2021 Carolina Rhetoric Conference.

Publications

Message from TCR Editor Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs

First, there was COVID. Then came the cicadas ... and the rains ... and the heat.

But for many of our colleagues whose offices are located in the Bate Building, the summer of ’21 may best be remembered as The Year of the Great Lockout. While Facilities Services workers were making much-needed updates to the 30-plus-year-old classroom structure, its hallways and offices were deemed off-limits from May 5 through August 13. But (as always!) the department found a way to persevere by setting up temporary office space in the University Writing Center, located on the first floor of Joyner Library.

In the meantime, the world kept turning, new and returning students registered for classes, and faculty and staff continued making a difference in their communities. And when mid-August rolled around, the building was ready for the start of a fresh semester.

Looking as if they are rehearsing a Monty Python sketch, (l-r) Administrative Support Assistant Corina Jury, Professor Seodial Deena, and Lead Administrator Laura Jolly are shown moving equipment out of harm’s way.

As you read this newsletter, the cicadas have gone back underground; and our eastern North Carolina weather continues to be predictably unpredictable. But the pandemic remains a global threat, and we must all continue to do what we can to keep ourselves and each other safe and healthy.

In that spirit, we learned in the spring that one of the first humans to receive a COVID-19 vaccination was Coventry, UK, resident William Shakespeare. We find that knowledge comforting.

The Fine Print: If we missed any news-worthy events that took place before May 31, 2021, or – egads! – made an error, please forward a gentle note to TCR editor Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs at dudasikwiggsc@ecu.edu.