



The Flight of the Phoenix

Alumni Newsletter from the WKU Department of English | Spring 2016 | Vol 2



Dear Alumni,

We are delighted to inaugurate the second issue of *The Flight of the Phoenix* for alumni and friends. This newsletter is one of several projects from Dr. Angela Jones' Editing and Publishing class and is a great example of our efforts to provide students with meaningful hands-on experiences to complement their traditional coursework. I offer a special thanks to Page Harrison, our new student-worker, for editing the final copy of *The Flight* that you are currently reading.

This year's issue of *The Flight* includes a number of wonderful stories from 2015-16. We offer mini-profiles of alumni, new faculty, student Fulbright scholars, faculty award winners, and emeriti faculty who passed away this year. We profile our new postdoctoral fellow who will lead the Robert Penn Warren Center; spotlight our linguistics program; highlight our creative writing, literature, and

professional writing concentrations; and feature Emeritus Professor Russell Moore.

Whether you are reading a hard or electronic copy of the newsletter, we hope you enjoy it. We would love to hear from you and learn about what you are doing, so drop us an email, give us a call, or come by Cherry Hall if you're in the neighborhood.



All best wishes,

Rob Hale
Head of English
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HOLLY LOGSDON: INTERN AND GRADUATE

By Tyler Keeton

Holly Logsdon graduated from Western Kentucky University in December of 2015 with a major in creative writing and a minor in professional writing. As any student would be ecstatic over his or her newly-acquired degree, the goal was one step higher for Logsdon. As “a self-described older, non-traditional student with a full-time job and family,” obtaining an undergraduate degree was a hard-won, lifelong dream of Logsdon’s.

The most significant experience in Logsdon’s academic career was her work in the Students Teaching English Paper Strategies Program, or **STEPS**, under the supervision of Dr. Rob Hale. STEPS is a site constructed to assist with writing successful literature papers. STEPS assists students in identifying themes and literary devices within different texts and helps with the construction of effective thesis statements.

On her extracurricular time at WKU, Logsdon says, “I wasn’t able to get as involved with student activities as my younger classmates. I would have loved participating in the English Club or studying abroad or joining a writing group. On the other hand, my children watched me set priorities, balance my commitments, and strive for excellence in every class, every semester.” Logsdon is



extremely appreciative of dedicated instructors like Dr. Rigby, who taught her to craft artful and effective sentences, and Drs. Jones and Rice, who equipped her with essential professional writing skills. Logsdon explains, “My WKU experience has been rewarding for both myself and my family, and I’m a proud graduate of the English Department.”

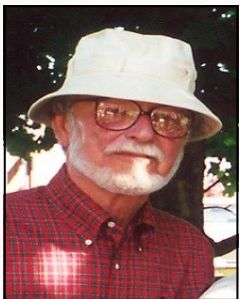
Since 2009, Logsdon has worked full-time in the WKU Office of Student Financial Assistance, where she specializes in FAFSA processing and verification. She says, “I use both creative and professional writing skills on the job. Students often tell me that I’m the first person to explain the financial aid process in terms they can understand, and their feedback motivates me to be an effective communicator.”

Logsdon devotes much of her free time to working towards publishing a memoir, which she is currently finishing. She also plans to develop a devotional series to inspire those around her. Logsdon lives with her husband and two children, and she is thankful for her family for being such a strong support system. “They were always supportive and encouraged me to stick with my goals and earn my degree, so we’re celebrating the newfound freedom together.” •

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. James Heldman, Jr.

1930 – 2015



Dr. Jim Heldman was a veteran of the United States Air Force, where he served during the Korean War. Prior to coming to WKU in 1972, he earned his MA in Drama and his PhD in English at the University of North Carolina. He specialized in

the study of Victorian literature, with a concentration on Jane Austen. Dr. Heldman served as the head of the WKU Department of English from 1972-1979, and continued to teach at WKU until 1997. He was also Vice President of The Jane Austen Society for many years and the founder of the Wee Drammers Club. Dr. Heldman is greatly missed by WKU and the English Department.

Dr. Robert Ward

1927 – 2016



Dr. Bob Ward was veteran of the United States Army and served in Korea. He taught high school English in the Northeast and earned his PhD at the University of Iowa before coming to WKU to teach English in 1969. Dr. Ward specialized in 18th-century literature and Milton and published books on

the early history of the book trade, 18th-century Irish social history, and Irish schools from 1500-1800. He served as the book review editor of EIRE-IRELAND and spoke at a number of conferences, including the Sixth International Congress on the Enlightenment in Brussels, the Anglo-Irish Literature meeting in Belfast, and the International Irish Studies meeting in Hungary. Dr. Ward retired in 1993 and is greatly missed by the English Department and the WKU community as a whole. •

#THROWBACKTHURSDAY: A FACEBOOK FAN FAVORITE

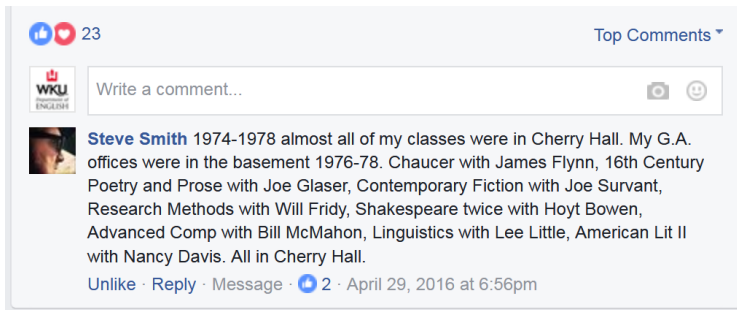
Many alumni may already be well acquainted with the WKU Department of English Facebook page and the series #ThrowbackThursday, or #TBT. For those who have not connected with the department on Facebook yet, #TBT is the longest running weekly post since the page was created in 2013. The concept is simple: share photos from the past that remind fans of what they love about WKU English. The Department of English uncovers photos from the archives or relies on photos that faculty and alumni submit to be shared. Past #TBT photos include an homage to the fire in Cherry Hall in 2006, a glimpse of Professor Mary Ellen Miller dancing with her young husband Jim Wayne Miller (right), childhood photos of faculty, and captured moments from recent and distant faculty holiday parties.



Over the years, #TBT has developed into a sort of micro-community for alumni to come together, reminisce and rejoice in their memories of the WKU English Department, as in the comment about Cherry Hall Room 125 (left). Popularity of #TBT has grown substantially over the past few years with record views of over 2,400 on a single

#TBT post. Department Head Dr. Rob Hale says of the series: "It doesn't get much better than Lloyd Davies in a deerstalker cap or Mary Ellen Miller with a crown!"

#TBT is fun for everyone involved, and the Department of English would like to invite you to submit your own #TBT photos, ranging anywhere from last year to distant decades past. Submit your digital photo to english.office@wku.edu or bring a scan-able photo with you when you visit. See all #ThrowbackThursday photos now when you "Like" [WKU Department of English on Facebook](#).



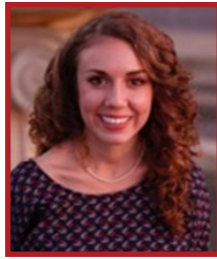
STUDENT RECOGNITION

Fulbright Award Winners



Jarred Johnson received a Fulbright English teaching assistantship to Germany. Beginning in September 2016,

Johnson will work in a German high school, assisting students in English-language instruction and serving as an ambassador for the United States.



Megan Skaggs received a Fulbright English teaching assistantship to Guatemala. She completed an internship in

Guatemala in 2014, and will return in January 2017 to begin her program. She plans for a career in education and international development.



Jessica Brumley received a Fulbright English teaching assistantship to Taiwan. Brumley will be teaching English to students

in Yilan and continuing the research she conducted for her Honors thesis. She hopes to impact students' lives through education and service.

MFA Student Successes

Lena Ziegler published "Fritze's Department Store Window" in *Harpoon Review*, "The House on Shire Lane," in *Open 24 Hours*, "Pink Newspapers" in *Lavender Bluegrass Anthology*, "The Truth About Tattoos" in *Miracle Monocle*, and "Tanked" in *Red Earth Review*.

Leigh Cheak published "Little Girl Likes Lingerie" in *Crow Hollow*. Her poems "Goddess," "Black Widow," and "She Became a Sun" appeared in the spring issue of *A Narrow Fellow*.

Erin Slaughter had works published in *Gravel*, *Off the Coast*, *ELKE*, *Drunk in a Midnight Choir*, and *River Teeth*, including her poem "Elegy for the Body."

NEW ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FACULTY



Dr. Rebecca Brown

Assistant Professor

Dr. Brown received her PhD in English from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Dr. Brown says, "I cannot remember a time when I was not compelled by an intense engagement with the curiosities and complexities of writing, literature, and language." Her dissertation, an experimental novel entitled *They Become Her*, was published in 2014 by What Books Press.



Dr. Trini Stickle

Assistant Professor

Dr. Stickle completed her PhD in 2015, and she also holds MA degrees in Applied English Linguistics and Humanities. Dr. Stickle expresses that her favorite course to teach is Language Communication, calling it "the venue where I can really 'geek out' and share some really complex aspects of language that we so often take for granted."



Dr. Gillian Knoll

Assistant Professor

Dr. Knoll holds a BA, MA and PhD in English Literature. She teaches early modern literature specializing in drama by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. She focuses on how language shapes and represents inner life in early modern texts. Dr. Knoll is co-sponsor of the English Club. She enjoys taking students to the theater, especially to see productions of Shakespeare's plays. ●

WKU FACULTY AWARD WINNERS

The Department of English is proud to announce that English faculty and staff won several awards in the 2015-2016 academic year. These awards are listed as follows, with corresponding photos starting at the top left and following clockwise. After winning the Potter College Faculty Award for Teaching, **Dr. Alison Langdon** was awarded the 2015 University Award in Teaching. **Dr. David LeNoir** won the 2016 Award for



Student Advisement at both the Potter College and University levels. In addition, Dr. LeNoir was recognized with the 2016 Faculty Mentoring Award by WKU. **Professor Walker Rutledge** was awarded the first-ever WKU Undergraduate Mentoring Award in 2016. **Ms. Laura Houchens** was honored with both the Potter College and University 2016 Part-Time Instructor Award. ●

MEET DR. BRUNER

Dr. Nicolette Bruner has been coordinator of the WKU's [Robert Penn Warren Center](#) since 2014, and she will begin a postdoctoral fellowship here in the department starting in the Fall of 2016. After earning her BA from Rice University in English and Psychology, Dr. Bruner spent three years working for a law firm in Washington, D.C. She attended law school at the University of Michigan and earned her law degree in 2008. Dr. Bruner received her PhD in English Language and Literature from the University of



Michigan in 2015. Dr. Bruner's interests include "how American writers have dealt with entities that stretch our understanding of what it means to be a person, from animals to corporations." Her other research interests include animal studies, environmental literature, and Latino literature. Dr. Bruner cites her cultural background as influencing her career path, stating, "as a Latina scholar, I am passionate about promoting diversity in higher education." ●

CONCENTRATION HIGHLIGHTS

Professional Writing

The Professional Writing concentration has recently added a social media marketing internship position. The most recent intern, **Allison Gregory**, says "I was first drawn to this position because of Dr. Rice, the supervisor and my advisor. I thought it would be fun to work for him in addition to the experience I would get from learning about a different side of Professional Writing. The opportunity to experience [social media marketing] firsthand was something that I could not let pass by." Gregory worked to strengthen the online outreach of the Professional Writing program. Find "[WKU Professional Writing Program](#)" on Facebook for more!

Creative Writing

Dr. Tom Hunley published three works in the last year: two poetry collections and one on teaching creative writing. According to Dr. Hunley, his work *The State That Springfield Is In* "consists of forty dramatic monologues in the voices of characters from The Simpsons." Of his second collection, *PLUNK*, *New Orleans Review's* Lee Rossi writes "Hunley's is a dramatic, not a lyric, sensibility. He takes quotidian language and shape-shifts it to suit his aesthetic needs, inserting the

telling adjective or adverb, twisting a conventional phrase." Hunley's third work, *Creative Writing Pedagogy for the Twenty-First Century*, co-edited with Alexandria Peary, has been nominated for the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Outstanding Book Award. Good luck, Dr. Hunley!



Literature

Dr. Sandra Hughes assumed the presidency of the [Nathaniel Hawthorne Society](#) in June of 2016 after having served on the executive board since 2014. She will be organizing a joint conference in Kyoto, Japan, for four author societies: the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society, the Poe Studies Association, the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society of Japan, and the Poe Society of Japan. This conference, which will be held in the summer of 2018 at the Kyoto Garden Palace Hotel in central Kyoto, will focus on the theme of "Hawthorne and Poe in/and the World." •



LINGUISTICS AND ESL PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Western Kentucky University is known for having many dynamic programs that allow for diverse job opportunities after graduation. One such program is the Department of English Linguistics and Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) program.

The classes within this program teach the pedagogical skills and cultural knowledge students need to teach in educational settings. One of the professors in the program, **Dr. Elizabeth Winkler**, describes the program best: "We train students to be teachers of English as a Second or Foreign language. This will get them jobs both in the U.S. and all over the world." In fact, **Dr. Alison Youngblood**, an assistant professor in the department, coordinated a program for English language enhancement that brought engineers from Mexico to WKU.



Dr. Winkler on a recent caving expedition in the Galapagos

However, teaching is not the only career offered to linguistics students. Naming and advertising companies, annotating companies, computer programming corporations, speech and hearing clinics, and even the federal government also hire those with experience in linguistics.

The linguistics and ESL program provides ample opportunity for success as demonstrated by Dr. Winkler's writing of the expanded Kpelle Dictionary which will go to press this summer. She sarcastically exclaimed, "As you can imagine, writing a dictionary is exciting work!"

Also, linguistics and ESL alumni are achieving success. Currently, there are a number of alumni teaching in China, Korea, Japan, and many other places around the globe, proving that the linguistics and ESL program is a valuable asset to WKU's international reach. •

ALUMNI UPDATES

To read the full profiles of these WKU alumni and many others, please visit www.wku.edu/english/alumni/profiles.php



Michael Croley (Class of 2000)

By Chelsea McCarty

A member of WKU's Honors Program, Croley graduated with a degree in government and a minor in writing in 2000. He then attended the University of Memphis where he received his MFA. Today, he is a professor at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. In December 2015, Croley received notification that he was one of 37 winners—out of 1,763 applicants—who was selected for

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grants for 2016. Croley will be using his grant to finish the research and writing of his third novel, set to focus on Lyndon B. Johnson and his presidency. When asked about the greatest learning experience WKU offered him, Croley cited his time spent in leadership positions in his fraternity, Lambda Chi, which led him to discover his own moral compass and the values that he believed were essential to “the kind of person [he] wanted to be.”



Matthew Morgan (Class of 2005)

By Allison Henson

Morgan graduated with a BA in English, a degree he selected for the appeal of teaching and his love for writing. After graduation, Morgan joined the U.S. Army where he was selected and extensively trained for his job as an Intelligence Officer. Morgan spent a total of eighteen months in military intelligence schools, and then another two years earning

his master's degree in Intelligence Studies with a concentration on Intelligence Collection at American Military University.

When asked if he had any advice for incoming and current English majors, he had much to give, but one piece of advice stood out: "Build professional and personal relationships that you can carry with you past your time at WKU and the rest of your life."



Cindy Childress (Class of 2010)

By Megg Wright

Childress earned her BA in English from WKU, and then she went on to pursue her MA in English with an emphasis in modern British and American literature from the University of South Florida. After earning her MA, she completed her PhD in English with a creative dissertation from the University of Louisiana

at Lafayette. Childress lives in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where she serves as the President of the American Association of Malaysia, an organization that creates a community for American expatriates in Malaysia and raises money for local charities. In that role, which she has held since 2014, she coordinates a board of eleven directors and four hundred members.



Haley Cade (Class of 2013)

By Sarah K. Miller

Cade graduated with a BA in English with a concentration in creative writing and is currently an articulation and transfer coordinator working for a company that aids in maintaining and expanding online degree programs at non-profit educational institutions throughout the United States.

Specifically, Cade manages transfer credits for incoming students to various online degree programs, most often via email and phone communication, which requires that she rely heavily on word choice. She credits her background as a creative writing student for her ability to clearly convey abstract ideas and “tailor [her] responses effectively in a way that fosters a positive work relationship with the client and still allows for progress.” ●

EMERITUS PROFILE

Emeritus Professor Russell Moore began teaching in the WKU Department of English in 1969, along with current faculty member Professor Walker Rutledge, and continued as a full-time faculty member until 2008.

Professor Moore's dedication to the department and love for teaching has not allowed him to fully retire yet, as he has continues to teach one class on campus per semester. Other than the courses he teaches on WKU's main campus, Professor Moore is known for shaping the On Demand courses that students know today. On Demand courses are self-paced and more accessible to students who may not be able to attend courses on campus for a variety of reasons.

Students note that Professor Moore teaches with every fiber of his being. When asked how Moore thought



years. Fellow faculty member Dr. Alex Poole notes this expertise: "Russell Moore is a wealth of information. If you have a question about the WKU English Department, he has an answer!" Also, if only as a rejoinder to Professor Moore's entertaining personality, faculty member Mary Ellen Miller declined comment for this profile stating, "I would just have too much to say!" Faculty members also praise

Professor Moore's fun-loving enthusiasm for teaching, and, when asked how his colleagues would describe him, Moore responded, "Passionate. I love teaching English, and I show it."

Professor Moore's passion for teaching called for him to make courses available to students outside of the traditional classroom setting, and this passion has also sustained him as a deeply caring and energetic Professor for nearly five decades. His actions exemplify the spirit of WKU English.

Today, Professor Moore enjoys spending time with his three grandchildren, traveling, and gardening with his wife. When asked what has been the most rewarding part of his time at WKU, Professor Moore replied sincerely, "that's easy: interaction with students and colleagues." •

{ I love teaching English, and I show it. }
- Professor Russell Moore

students would describe him, his response was amusingly simple: "There is a good review on ratemyprofessor.com!" English Office student worker Sara Ann Alexander has her own review: "Although his personality is silly most of the time, he genuinely cares about his students and colleagues. Professor Moore does great service to his profession through his knowledge of literature, writing, and teaching. Knowing Professor Moore is an honor and a mystery — it's hard to tell what he is going to say next!"

Professor Moore has been ensuring the best education possible for students for over 47



Thank you for reading the Spring 2016 WKU English Department Alumni Newsletter.

Visit wku.edu/english to share your story and find The Department of English on Facebook for more news.



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