

INSIGHTS



DIVISION of ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
SCHOOL of THE ARTS AND PROFESSIONS
Department of English and Modern Languages

Volume 10
Issue 1
September 2007

Fall '07 Brings Leadership Changes *Search for New Department Chair Continues*

The beginning of each academic year brings change; this year is no exception.

The Department of English and Modern Languages welcomes more than forty freshman English majors, a new fulltime faculty member, and several new faces in the academic chain of command.



English education major Michael Guy (L) discusses his transfer to UMES at Enrollment 101 this summer

Photo by Robin Hoffman

Longtime faculty member Chester Hedgepeth has been named interim chair of the department while the search to find a permanent chair continues.



Dr. Hedgepeth

"I am excited about working with (our faculty) to make our department one of the finest," he said. Supervision of the department is not new to Dr. Hedgepeth; he was chair of the English department earlier in his career at UMES. Since 1992 he has served as director of the University's African Language Research Project. He will lead both entities until a new department chair is selected.

The search committee continued to interview department chair candidates over the summer, but no decision regarding the vacancy has been announced.

A new dean of the School of Arts and Professions (SAP), under which the English department operates, is expected to be named shortly. Dennis Ignasias, dean of the University's School of Graduate Studies, is serving as acting SAP dean until then.

All academic departments will report to a new Vice President for Academic Affairs. Charles Williams joined the UMES family

in July of this year.

Our newest assistant professor, Terry Smith, is experiencing a campus homecoming. Look closely; her face may be familiar.

She was Terry Tannacito when she taught in the UMES English Department in 1999. For the last eight years she



Dr. Smith

has been teaching at Frostburg State University. "I grew up in Worcester County," Dr. Smith said. "I'm glad to be back home."

While we welcome Dr. Smith, we bid farewell to Alice Smith, a member of the department's support staff, and to faculty member Rob Burns. Ms. Smith accepted a position in the University's Department of Physical Therapy; Mr. Burns has returned to the private sector.

CONGRATULATIONS !

Barbara Joann Seabrook was promoted from assistant professor to associate professor of English with tenure this summer.



Dr. Seabrook

Dr. Seabrook serves as coordinator of the English teacher education program.

Photo by Robin Hoffman

NEW AND IMPROVED

This edition of *Insights* marks a change in its presentation.

Note that our newsletter is now a PDF file which permits our readers to print a paper version of this online publication if they choose.

The format change also allows us to provide active Internet links where appropriate.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Evan Burton, a member of the Class of '07 who twice was selected as the outstanding student in the English Department, is pursuing an M.F.A. in creative writing at City College in New York. He expects to complete his degree in 2009.



Mr. Burton

SINGING IN PARADISE

English Major Describes UMES Concert Choir Trip to Barbados

By Heather Molnar

Editor's note: Ms. Molnar is a senior English major from Salisbury, Maryland who is considering a career in journalism. She is one of two English majors who perform with the University's highly acclaimed concert choir.

(Ms. Molnar is the subject of another article on [page seven](#).)

At the end of the spring semester, members of the UMES Concert Choir packed our shorts and sun block and set out to serenade the citizens of the beautiful tropical island of Barbados.

Each year, the choir goes on a weeklong tour. We have traveled to London, the Bahamas,

France, and Germany. This year, the choir headed to paradise where we enjoyed white beaches, crystal blue waters, and island hospitality.



Barbados beach

All photos provided by Ms. Molnar

Although the heat was intense, the choir toured a sugar cane factory and various historical sites throughout the island. We also had the opportunity to perform at several local churches as well as a children's school.

Our concert at the school was the highlight of our trip. The children were so excited to see us; after the program they were given a chance to meet us and ask questions.

After posing for many pictures, answering countless questions, and giving endless hugs, we boarded our tour bus to leave. As we drove away, the children touched our hearts as they cheered for us and chased our bus waving frantically.

We went to the school to perform and entertain the children instead, we left in awe of them. It was a moment that I will never forget.



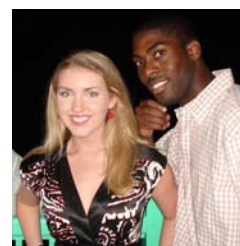
Ms. Molnar and island students

My fellow English major in the concert choir, Joseph Campbell, said his fondest memory of the trip will be "being around all of the good people."

The people of Barbados are enchanting,

mysterious, and fun loving. Everyone we met made us feel at home and seemed to enjoy our music. Even though the type of music we perform is totally different from the music of the island, everyone was receptive to our style.

After word spread across the island of our performances, a local television station invited us to tape a concert that would be aired later in the week. We didn't get to watch the program on television, but when we arrived at the airport to leave, many people recognized us from the broadcast, and they were excited to see us. It made us realize that no matter where you go in the world, music is a universal language that brings people of all genders, ages, races, and socioeconomic classes together as one.



Ms. Molnar and Mr. Campbell

Cooperation in Cairo African Language Projects Planned

The [UMES African Language Research Project \(ALRP\)](#), under the direction of the English department's new interim chair, is forging new partnerships with academic institutions in Egypt.

Chester Hedgepeth led an ALRP delegation to Egypt recently to meet with scholars at Cairo University and at American University in Cairo. Representatives of the three institutions are discussing potential collaborative projects for researching Egyptian, Arabic, and other language dialects. "We are interested in languages that are dying that we might help preserve," Dr. Hedgepeth said.

At Cairo University, Dr. Hedgepeth met with administrators and faculty from five

different academic departments. They plan to participate in an ALRP international conference to be held at UMES in 2008.

Dr. Hedgepeth also met with the chair of the Department of Linguistics at American University's Arabic Language Institute in Cairo. The two may sign a collaborative agreement when they meet again at a Middle Eastern Studies Association conference this fall.



Dr. Hedgepeth (center) at Cairo University

Photo provided by Dr. Hedgepeth

SUMMER 2008 IN SPAIN?

Carole Champagne, professor of Spanish in the UMES Department of English and Modern Languages, is looking for students who would like to study at the [Universidad de Salamanca](#) in Avila, Spain in July of 2008. It will take at least seven students to establish the program; they need not attend UMES.

Universidad de Salamanca is the second oldest university in Europe. "After studying a semester and teaching two summers there, I would love to share my enthusiasm with our students," Dr. Champagne said.

If you or someone you know may be interested, contact Dr. Champagne at X6250 or email her at cachampagne@umes.edu.

WILSON STUDIO UPGRADE

TV Stations Donate Professional Set

UMES television production students will have the opportunity to produce their programs from a professional news set beginning this semester.

When Draper Holdings Trust, the parent company of WBOC TV and FOX21 Delmarva in Salisbury, Maryland decided to phase out a studio set once used for some of its daily news shows, UMES TV instructor Robin Hoffman saw a great opportunity for his students.

Mr. Hoffman, who worked as a fulltime promotions producer for the local stations before joining UMES, asked General Manager Rick Jordan if he would consider donating the set and its studio backdrop to the University.

"It seemed like such a win-win situation," Mr. Hoffman said. "We could significantly upgrade our studio, and WBOC could get a tax credit for its donation."

Mr. Jordan readily agreed to the donation. "We're pleased to be able to assist in the education of UMES students interested in television careers," he said.



WBOC anchor Steve Hammond (L) with Mr. Hoffman on the new television production set in Wilson Hall

The set was installed in Wilson Hall this summer, and Mr. Hoffman has spent much of his time since then moving control room equipment to accommodate the larger set, repositioning studio lighting, and determining

how to "brand" the set with University colors.

The "new look" for student programs will debut this semester in ENGL 238, Television Production and Programming, taught by Mr. Hoffman.

HOLLYWOOD STARS INVITED TO UMES



Public speaking instructor Will Rose is hoping his professional contacts will help make an upcoming University fundraiser a truly "star-studded" event.

The [Art Shell Celebrity Golf Tournament](#) will be held September 19 in Berlin, Maryland. Mr. Rose has sent invitations through the representatives of actors Don Cheadle, Samuel L. Jackson, and Denzel Washington, and director Spike Lee, asking the men to help raise scholarship money by playing in the tournament.

Mr. Rose was an actor before joining the UMES faculty; he's hoping to parlay those stage and film connections into some Hollywood participation in the event. So far there's no word on whether any of his invitations have been accepted.

Mr. Shell, a UMES graduate (when the school was known as Maryland State) and former NFL player and coach, has already secured the participation of many well known athletes.

UMES WEBCAST PROVIDES TV INTERNSHIPS

"Discover UMES" Offers On-Campus Opportunity

Students interested in careers in television news and broadcast production now have an on-campus option to gain valuable experience.



[Discover UMES](#) is the University's webcast (a television production available on the Internet), led by producer Erika Forsythe. "It's designed to help recruit potential students; share points of pride with current students; connect with alumni, donors and legislators; and market the University of Maryland Eastern Shore to the public at large," Ms. Forsythe said.

It is also an additional local internship option for students interested in getting

hands-on experience in broadcast news.

[Discover UMES](#) began production last spring. Since it started in mid-semester, too late for students to earn credit through formal academic internships, several students opted to volunteer their labor to create campus related stories. They say it's been a valuable experience.

"I learned so much about the business...I am not only aware of what happens in front of the camera, I am aware of what



Justin Stewart (L) and Millie Harris work on their script

Photos by W. Vincent Gore

happens behind and beyond the camera," said Justin Stewart, an English major who begins his sophomore year this semester. "The best part of the experience was working with professional people who have worked in the broadcast industry," he said.

"Listening to their advice and constructive criticism inspired me..."

[Discover UMES](#) is currently recruiting student crews to assist in webcast production this semester. The project is supported by federal funding through the University's Title III Office.



Shamire Casselle edits her story

Happy B-Day Mr. Heinlein

By Susan Lewis

Editor's Note: Ms. Lewis is an adjunct faculty member in the English department. She has taught composition courses at UMES since 2002.

July 7, 1907, Robert Heinlein, often called the Dean of Science Fiction, was born. Heinlein is considered one of the top three science fiction writers of the Golden Age, the other two being Arthur C. Clarke and Isaac Asimov. Only Clarke, now in his nineties, is still alive.

Although Heinlein died in May 1988, he is still read and revered by many; his books have never been out of print. On July 7, 2007, nearly one thousand people gathered in Kansas City, Missouri to celebrate his life, his works, and his pet projects. Being a reader of Robert A. Heinlein from the age of twelve, I decided I had to be there as well.

Without going into too much detail: What a party! And what great speakers! Dr. Peter Diamandis, founder of the X Prize Foundation, gave as an inspiring a talk on space exploration and its necessity as I've ever heard. He brought films from sub-stratosphere flights, including the one where Stephan Hawkins was a

passenger. I also heard panels from some of Heinlein's biographers and scholars, such as Robert James and Bill Patterson; apparently science fiction is now considered a topic worthy of erudite study and speculation, and is not just for uber-geeks any more.

Heinlein was a huge proponent of space exploration and colonization, and many of the speakers reflected this. Among the guests were Astronaut Buzz Aldrin, NASA Administrator Michael Griffin, and SpaceShipOne Pilot Brian Binnie.

Heinlein is also the father of the modern blood drive and, when alive, would only sign autographs for people with up-to-date Red Cross cards. In his honor, the Red Cross held a drive; the goal was one hundred units of blood. Unfortunately, having donated fewer than sixty-one days earlier, I was not eligible to donate then.

I could name drop some of the other science fiction authors there: David Gerrold, Spider Robinson, the venerable Frederick Pohl, but I realize that while for me, it was like being on a Hollywood movie set, for those who do not share my enthusiasm, they wouldn't mean much. Suffice to say, it was a fabulous way for me to spend part of my summer vacation.

TOP MOM NAMED

Oteria Battle Bell must be very proud of her daughter, English major Danielle Bell. Ms. Bell wrote a touching tribute that resulted in her mother being named the UMES Mother of the Year.



Ms. Bell (L) and her mother

Photo by Matthew Whittiker

The annual Mother-Daughter Banquet was held at the end of the spring semester. Danielle Bell participated in the essay contest that accompanies the event. Among other things, she described her mother as dedicated, determined, and faithful. "It is my goal every day to make her proud," she said.

The winner of the essay contest is a tightly held secret until the evening of the event. The winner almost didn't attend. Mrs. Bell had volunteered to help a friend with a project back home; her daughter convinced her to travel to campus instead, not knowing how rewarding the trip would become.

OFF TO A GREAT START

An incoming freshman English major is the winner of a four year scholarship from the Verizon Foundation. The award will provide \$5,000 annually toward her college expenses at UMES.

Brittany Peterson of Pikesville is one of ten children of Verizon employees in Maryland who will receive scholarships from the foundation.

The program selects recipients based on financial need, academic achievement, and participation in extracurricular activities. The scholarships are for high school seniors who plan to attend an accredited four year institution.

"Our commitment to developing a skilled work force...begins at home, with the children of our employees, said William Roberts, president of Verizon Maryland.

BEST WISHES TO THE CLASS OF 2007!



LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT CAREER

New English Graduate Attends Media Sales Institute at Howard

By Sheria Wooden

Editor's note: Ms. Wooden graduated with a UMES English degree in May of this year.

I remember the day clearly. My classmates and I were leaving Mr. Rose's Introduction to Broadcast Performance class, and we noticed on Ms. Buerkle's office door a flyer about a two-week media sales program at Howard University.

This seemed like a great opportunity for me, although the application requirements seemed very daunting. To apply I needed to submit two letters of recommendation, an interest statement, and a statement about my career goals—all within a short period of time—while continuing to meet the academic commitments of my senior year.

My classmates decided not to apply, but I was determined to find my career path and knew that, even if I was not accepted, the application process would still be a worthwhile experience.

Four weeks later, I was excited to learn that I had been accepted. On June 2, I was on my way to Howard University for the intense two week program.

The goal of the National Association of Broadcasters Education Fund's Media

Sales Institute is to provide students with advice on how to survive and succeed in the media sales industry. Activities included informative lectures taught by professionals from various television networks, radio stations, and cable providers, such as Comcast and Cox; a course on proper etiquette when conducting business with a client over dinner, which was instructed by the Magnolia Sisters; and the first ever "Ernie Fears Golf Clinic," which will now be an annual event during the institute.

A unique element of the institute was that each student was given a case study, and the roles of the students and the lecturers were reversed. The students had to prepare and give a presentation to the representatives of each network.

This aspect of the program was particularly intimidating because this presentation was the key element in determining if one was going to be interviewed by the media representatives for a job opportunity before the conclusion of the program.

I am usually a shy person. However, I could not let that get in the way of this opportunity, because it had the power to determine my future. If I was not selected to be interviewed, at least I would be assured that I tried my best. I overcame my shyness and was even able to use humor during my presentation. At the conclusion of my presentation, I was selected for interviews with ESPN

Disney, Turner Broadcasting Company, and Katz Media Group.

I gained a great deal from the institute. I learned that if I cannot tolerate the word "no" then the media sales industry is not the right career for me. Also, I learned the difference between the media sales and public relations professions.

Most importantly, I learned that maintaining contact with the people that I met during the institute is beneficial, because those relationships may eventually produce a job

opportunity. As a result, I will stay in contact with my fellow workshop participants, as well as the business officials I met.

One might ask: What am I doing now? Well, I am staying in contact with the media professionals who interviewed me and applying for other career opportunities. It is difficult to find employment in the field of communications, but I will continue to search despite my frustration.

My determination has increased as a result of my experience at the institute, and now I live by the advice that I received there: You have to sell yourself, because there is someone always competing with you for a career.

I do not know what my future holds, but if I continue to develop my craft, gain experience, and continually prove myself to others, I will be successful.



Ms. Wooden (far left) and some of her Sales Institute colleagues

Photo provided by Ms. Wooden



Ms. Wooden at Spring '07 Commencement

DEPARTMENT GETS PAT ON THE BACK



Dean Anderson

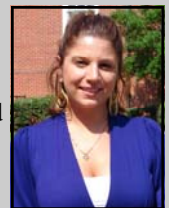
Two projects produced by the Department of English and Modern Languages were singled out for praise during the President's Faculty Luncheon at the close of last semester.

Dean Brenda Anderson made specific reference to the 2007 dinner theater production and to this monthly newsletter.

It's nice to be noticed!

READY TO GO...

Laura Zanrucha, an English Education major, recently passed **PRAXIS** II Content and Pedagogy tests.



Ms. Zanrucha

She will complete her teaching internship in the spring and plans a May 2008 graduation.

IT'S NEVER EASY TO SAY GOOD-BYE

Retirement Luncheon Held for Outgoing Department Chair

More than eighty friends and colleagues gathered to salute Richard Keenan, chair of the English department, as his final semester at UMES drew to a close.

It was a farewell luncheon that almost didn't happen. The event, originally scheduled for May 17, had to be postponed when the guest of honor was stranded by bad weather at Chicago's O'Hare Airport. It is a measure of the affection that the UMES family has for Dr. Keenan that guests dutifully reorganized their schedules to attend a hastily revamped program several days later.

Despite the wrinkle in scheduling, the slightly delayed event, held in the Henson Center ballroom, featured heartfelt tributes and testimonials, a bevy of gifts, and a tear or two. As guests gathered, they were entertained by faculty member Barbara Seabrook at the piano. There

was also a "This is Your Life" slide show created by faculty member Bonni Miller from pictures Marion Keenan, wife of the guest of honor, had secretly culled from family photo albums.

The emcee of the festivities was Della Dameron-Johnson, the department's Director of Drama and a colleague of Dr. Keenan's for more than thirty years. Speakers represented the English Honor Society, alumni, current students, and faculty. They brought greetings from the campus community, former students from around the country, and citations from Maryland's governor and House of Delegates.

Gifts included a "memory book" created by the honor society, travel books and guides, gift certificates to encourage fun and relaxation, a collection of letters from out-of-town alumni that couldn't attend the event, and a formal portrait of Dr.

Keenan that has been hung in the faculty lounge in Waters Hall.

It was an emotional moment when junior English major Latrice Green presented a poem she had written in Dr. Keenan's honor. Here are selected excerpts:

... So Farewell my fellow Rabbi.

You've taught us well.

Let's us not say good-bye, let us say farewell.

My mother grabbed my hand and showed me the way.

You took my mind and said, "let's exercise today." ...

So, I say sir, today is a special day.

Farewell, my fellow Rabbi.

You're teachings shall never go in vain. ...



Spanish Language Students Put Their Skills to Work *Food, Fun, Festivities, and Final Projects*

Nearly one hundred Spanish language students gathered to celebrate Cinco de Mayo at the close of the semester last spring. They shared Spanish cuisine they created, were entertained by music specific to the culture, and presented their final projects to the department's Spanish language instructors.



Students enjoy homemade foods at Cinco de Mayo festival

The event is organized each year by faculty member Carole Champagne.

This year the students also had a unique opportunity to practice their language skills

with native Spanish speakers. A group of women, learning English at a local church, were invited to attend. "The Mexican, Guatemalan, and Panamanian ladies were from the St. Francis de Sales ESL class that my wonderful fourth semester student, Ann Hynes, taught voluntarily," Dr. Champagne said.



A few of the native Spanish speakers who participated in the celebration

The department's three fulltime foreign language instructors, Dr. Champagne, Susan Cooledge, and Nydia Gregory, plan another chance for students to make use of

their foreign language skills. The faculty members plan to initiate an informal tertulia, or Café Conversación, in Waters Hall once a month for any student wishing to practice Spanish or French.

"Our group will show films or play live music in a separate room if we can attract a larger crowd," Dr. Champagne said. "We hope that native speakers come out of hiding and share their cultures with us."

FOCUS ON AUGUST WILSON

Two English faculty members plan a unique collaboration this semester.

Dean Cooledge's course, Special Topics in Literature, will analyze the works of playwright August Wilson. Because of that, UMES Drama Society advisor Della Dameron-Johnson plans to stage a Wilson play in November. Students in Dr. Cooledge's course will be required to audition for Dr. Dameron-Johnson's production. Auditions will be held in the PAC, September 12 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Wilson, a prize winning writer, penned a series of ten plays before his death that chronicled the lives of African Americans through each decade of the twentieth century.

SUCCESSFUL SUMMER INTERNS

English majors Holiday Eller and I-Quasia Dorsey earned academic credit this summer while getting a firsthand look at the broadcast industry.

Ms. Eller worked in the sports department at WCCO TV, a CBS owned television station in Minneapolis. Ms. Dorsey worked on the morning show at WPLJ FM in New York City. It appears they left a positive impression of our University on their supervisors; both received excellent evaluations at the conclusion of the summer.

In order to be eligible to earn academic credit, English interns must have completed their sophomore year and have at least a 2.7 cumulative GPA.

ALMOST MISS MARYLAND

Senior English major Heather Molnar, a former Miss Teen Maryland, was a top ten finalist in the Miss Maryland Pageant held this summer in Annapolis.



She also won a preliminary swimsuit award. "Although my eyes were set on the big prize, the swimsuit award was wonderful gratification for all of the hours I spent at the gym," she said.

Ms. Molnar, an Eastern Shore native, is a member of the UMES concert choir and was a recent inductee of Sigma Tau Delta, the English honor society. She completed a fulltime academic internship last semester at the Maryland State Senate.

Insights is written and edited, except as noted, by communications instructor Marilyn Buerkle with desktop publishing by technical teaching associate Robin Hoffman and copy editing by composition instructor Ron Webster. Photos by Marilyn Buerkle, except as noted. If you have information you would like to appear in this publication, please contact our editor at 410-651-8349 or email her at mlbuerkle@umes.edu.