RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

English Honor Society Welcomes Seventeen New Members

The UMES chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, a national English honor society, inducted seventeen new members at a formal ceremony held recently in the University’s Student Services Center. The event marked the local Psi Mu chapter’s thirty-fifth year of continuous operation on the UMES campus.

New members include Simone Bentley, Rayna Brown, Lorien Crawley, Khadija Elkharbibi, Kennice Evans, Ebony Hahn, Gabrielle Hall, Randall Hill, Lauren Holmes, Jordan Kydd, Chelsea Logan, Quiana Montgomery, Angela Onley, Keith Savage, Ja’Nay Stephens, Kimberly Wells, and Lawrence Wersen.

All of the students maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better. Each was required to submit an essay explaining his or her interest in the organization and also was interviewed by the English Department Chair Betty Taylor-Thompson.

The new members and their guests were reminded of the value of striving for excellence by the guest speaker, Madonna Johnson.

Ms. Johnson earned her English degree at UMES and, following thirty-five years as an English instructor in the Worcester County, Maryland public schools, has returned to her alma mater as an adjunct English professor. She told the new honor society inductees that they validate Sigma Tau Delta’s mission of excellence. “Excellence is on purpose. It doesn’t just up and happen,” she said. “Perfection takes practice...continue to commit to quality.”

The organization’s president, senior Justin Stewart, described Ms. Johnson’s remarks as “a powerful, inspirational message.”

A large group of family, friends, and faculty were joined by the Dean of the School of the Arts and Professions, Rita Lamb, and the Vice President of Student Life, Quentin Johnson, for the ceremony.
UMES Drama Society advisor Della Dameron-Johnson says one of her greatest joys as a teacher is to watch a former student succeed. “It’s one of the perks of education,” she said. “You don’t get paid a lot, but the success of your students is rewarding.”

As a student in the University’s Honors Program, junior Cherish McMillan was invited to greet guests and assist them as they made their way to the ballroom. Seniors Khadija Elkharbibi, Jibri Faison, and Manny Hall were members of a student video crew conducting interviews and recording the event.

Senior Jordan Kydd served as a campus escort for a professional production crew that was creating a marketing video for the University. While Ms. Kydd expected her role to be off-camera, she was interviewed by the crew and she appears twice in the finished production. To view that production, click here.

English faculty member Mignon Anderson who accompanied her to the luncheon.

“I nominated her because I personally wanted to give her public credit for all that she does for us,” Ms. Anderson said. “Ms. Jones-Bailey is especially proactive in how she anticipates the needs of students, faculty, and staff...She simply looks out for everyone who comes her way, and her presence in the English Department has enriched everyone’s experience...She is terrific and deserves to be recognized.”

Earlier this year, UMES personnel were invited to nominate a co-worker who deserved recognition for performing random acts of kindness for students, faculty, staff, and/or the general public. Ms. Jones-Bailey was nominated by English faculty member Mignon Anderson who accompanied her to the luncheon.

“At. Dr. Dameron-Johnson’s invitation, Mr. Thompson discussed his roles in film and on television with interested students.

Saranna Kinard, an English major from Columbia, Maryland, said she expected to be intimidated by his celebrity status, but found Mr. Thompson’s presentation unexpectedly warm and welcoming. “He was open to a lot of questions,” she said. She plans to utilize his advice on how to stretch a dollar between gigs once she launches her own acting career.

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Discover UMES, a Title III supported video production unit staffed by student volunteers, launched a new production this semester. The students have created a program they call “On the Yard.” The show is recorded in the Discover UMES studio on campus and posted for viewing on YouTube.

“On the Yard” is a combination of campus news and conversations about topics that interest college age adults. “We give them something they can relate to,” says Jibri Faison, a senior English major who co-hosts the program. Mr. Faison and four colleagues—Omare Dennis, Khadija Elkharbibi, Lynette Gilchrist, and Manny Hall—choose the topics for discussion, shoot and edit the video inserts, create graphics, serve as studio camera and audio operators, produce and host the program, and upload the finished product to the Internet, under the supervision of the Discover UMES supervisor, Erika Forsythe.

“I’m so proud of the students,” Ms. Forsythe said. “This … is a demonstration of what can happen when you go above and beyond what is expected of you and push yourself to take advantage of resources that can help build your professional portfolio and express your creativity.”

The students involved are having fun, and they’re practicing career skills.

Ms. Elkharbibi would like to see more students get involved. “It’s right here on campus; it doesn’t cost anything and it definitely gives you great experience,” she said.

MAKING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS
UMES Students Consider Summer Coursework in Salamanca, Spain

Twenty-one countries around the world speak Spanish as their primary language; more than 47-million Americans speak Spanish too. Those are some of the statistics Patrizia D’Adamo Roldan used to persuade UMES students they should learn the language by studying this summer in Spain.

Ms. D’Adamo Roldan is the director of U.S. operations for an organization called Travel and Education. She came to the UMES campus at the invitation of faculty member Carole Champagne to discuss study abroad opportunities.

“I don’t care what your major is; we need Spanish speaking professionals in all disciplines,” Ms. D’Adamo Roldan told the students who attended her presentation. She outlined programs at the University of Salamanca that included Spanish for Health Professions and Business Spanish.

Ms. D’Adamo Roldan delivers a lively presentation on course options to a group of UMES students

Salamanca programs are open to students at all language levels. Credits earned there can be applied to the four semester foreign language requirement for UMES English majors.

Two UMES students, Shakeena Goode and Cendy Gonzales, plan to study this summer in Salamanca. Other interested students should contact Dr. Champagne for more information.

“Since 1218, the University of Salamanca, the oldest university in continuous operation in Spain and the second oldest European University, has educated a global community,” Dr. Champagne said. “It also established the first school of international programs in Spain in 1929, the oldest of its kind in Europe.”

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