PUTTIN’ ON THE HITS

Drama Society Wows Audience Again

Weeks of rehearsals paid off for the dozens of students involved on stage and behind-the-scenes in the annual dinner theater production on campus.

This year the UMES Drama Society, under the direction of English faculty member Della Dameron-Johnson, presented a musical review of popular songs from the 1970s and ‘80s entitled “Puttin’ On the Hits.”

The performers played to a packed house for three nights. Audience members sang along with many of the familiar tunes including Purple Rain, Brick House, Stayin’ Alive, and I Will Survive. They were even invited to jump on stage for a dance number.

The audience also enjoyed a sumptuous gourmet dinner prepared by students majoring in hotel/restaurant management.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT SELECTED

Ms. Truttman (L) receives her award from English Department Interim Chair Betty Taylor Thompson

Photo by Jim Glovier

Mishayla Truttman, a senior from Gresham, Oregon, was honored as the outstanding student in the Department of English and Modern Languages at the University’s recent honors convocation.

“I was surprised when I was told I was receiving the award,” she said. “After my surprise, I was grateful to be recognized for all my hard work.”

Ms. Truttman is an English non-teaching major with a minor in Spanish. Her cumulative G.P.A. is a perfect 4.0. She is a member of the varsity softball team and a tutor in the UMES Writing Center.

Ms. Truttman hopes to attend law school following her graduation from UMES, but plans to focus on LSAT preparation before she applies for admission.

MAKING A MESSAGE

Students Compete in National PSA Contest

UMES students have created four public service announcements and entered them in a national competition sponsored by the National Association of Broadcasters’ Education Foundation.

This year’s contest features a first amendment theme; each entry celebrates freedom of speech. The winning message will earn its creators $3,000 in scholarship money.

The members of the four UMES production teams are all volunteers at Discover UMES, a campus organization that offers students interested in communication careers an opportunity for hands-on television experience.

WMDT TV, the local ABC affiliate, has agreed to air the PSAs created by the Discover UMES students. The station also featured the students in a recent news story about the competition.
By Barbara Seabrook
English Education Coordinator

Our English Education Graduates are Teaching!

Shannon Schoffstall received her B.A. degree in English Education in May 2008. She is currently teaching 8th grade Language Arts and Social Studies at Easton Middle School in Easton, Maryland.

Here’s what she has to say about her career choice:

I could not be happier than to be teaching 8th grade at Easton Middle School. Although some days my attempt to fulfill the multifaceted needs of my students can become increasingly arduous and discouraging, at the end of the day, when I see twenty-five thirteen-year-olds sitting quietly with all of their innocent eyes on me (which is a short lived miracle), listening intently to what I’m saying, I know that it is all worth it.

I feel that UMES prepared me effectively for my teaching experience. Dare I say that I feel MORE prepared than some of my more experienced colleagues?

I am glad that I chose teaching as a profession because it gives me the opportunity to grow personally and academically while also filling young minds with knowledge that will open the windows of the world to them where they sit. In short, I think teaching is like parenting—it’s the most difficult but also the most rewarding job.

Scholarships Available for English Education Majors

English Education majors are eligible to apply for scholarships in the Education Department at UMES.

The scholarship application should be submitted along with the Application to Teacher Education at the end of the sophomore year. Applications are available online at www.umes.edu/Education.

Scholarships are awarded to English Education majors after they are officially accepted into teacher education.

How English Education Majors Become Teacher Candidates

English education majors must submit the Application to Teacher Education at the end of the sophomore year.

A committee in the Professional Education Unit reviews the application to make sure the applicant meets these requirements: a minimum overall GPA of 2.75; passing scores on PRAXIS I or qualifying SAT, ACT, or GRE scores; and successful completion of 45 semester hours with a grade of “C” or better, including certain specified courses (EDCI 200, ENGL 101, ENGL 102, ENGL 203, MATH 102 or higher, PSYC 200, and a selected science with lab instruction).

After official acceptance into the education program, English Education majors are deemed official “Teacher Candidates.”

Criminal Background Checks Required for English Education Majors

Criminal background checks are now required before education majors can visit schools to complete their clinical, field, and internship experiences. English education majors should go to the Education Department on the second floor of Hazel Hall to sign the paperwork and begin the process as soon as possible because it can take several weeks.

These Professional Education courses require school visitations to complete field/clinical/internship experience hours: EDCI 200, Introduction to Contemporary Education; EDCI 311, Comprehensive Assessment in Education; EDCI 406, Classroom Management; EDCI 409, Teaching Reading in Content Areas I; EDCI 410, Teaching Reading in Content Areas II; EDCI 425B, Curriculum and Instruction in English; EDCI 480B, Teaching Internship: Middle/Junior High School; EDCI 490B, Teaching Internship: Senior High School; EDSP 428, Communication and Collaboration in Special Education; PSYC 303, Adolescent Psychology; and PSYC 307, Educational Psychology.

Anyone interested in teaching middle or high school English/Language Arts should contact Dr. Seabrook prior to the spring semester of the sophomore year.

HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION SCHEDULED

The UMES chapter of the national English honor society, Sigma Tau Delta, will induct three new members this month.

According to chapter president Candace Johnson, the organization will welcome juniors Renardra Brown and Quanika Lewis and sophomore Cherish McMillan into its ranks.

The induction ceremony will be held on Friday, May 1, at 7 p.m. in the multipurpose room of the Student Services Center.
When Eric Hammond isn’t concentrating on the operation of computers, cameras, and other technological tools in the English department, he’s thinking about volleyball. That’s because, in addition to his role as an English department staff member, he serves as assistant coach of the UMES women’s volleyball team.

Usually late spring is reserved for recruiting new players and planning for next fall’s season, but this year Mr. Hammond has been organizing a community event that showcased his love of another version of the sport.

Players gathered on a recent weekend for the first UMES Collegiate Sand Invitational (CSI) at Winterplace Park in Salisbury. Unlike the team sport the Lady Hawks play indoors each fall, sand volleyball features doubles competition, often played outdoors.

“The I’m planning and running this tournament to help promote the sand version of the sport, as well as having a fun event,” Mr. Hammond said. “Most of the competing athletes are specialized in their indoor roles, so this is a great opportunity for them to get well-rounded experience and increase their overall skill set.”

Spectators were able to check out players from local and regional schools including UMES, Delaware State University, and Salisbury University. The event, held in partnership with USA Volleyball and the Chesapeake Regional Volleyball Association, featured a round robin format before teams entered a single elimination bracket to decide the champion of CSI 2009.

Local residents are no strangers to the sport—professional beach volleyball has scheduled events in nearby resort towns, and sand volleyball has been an Olympic sport since 1996—but they may get to see an official collegiate version soon. Just days before Mr. Hammond’s CSI tournament was held, the NCAA announced that its Division I Legislative Council had added sand volleyball to its list of emerging sports for women. That could eventually pave the way for competition at some of the institutions whose players participated in CSI 2009.

The UMES Department of English and Modern Languages recently underwent an external review. The chair of the Department of English and Language Arts at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Dolan Hubbard, was invited to the campus to scrutinize the operation of the department and to offer his expert opinion on its strengths and weaknesses.

A faculty committee, led by Interim Chair Betty Taylor Thompson, prepared for Dr. Hubbard’s visit by amassing documentation of courses, activities, faculty credentials, and student enrollment data over the last few years.

Faculty member Ron Webster, who served on the committee, said Dr. Hubbard’s recommendations will help the department improve its programs and better serve students.

The review was initiated by the Division of Academic Affairs and is not tied to any outside accreditation agency. Each of the UMES academic departments periodically conduct such reviews to instigate reflection and improvement.

During his visit, Dr. Hubbard met with faculty members, interviewed students, and observed certain classroom activities.
URBAN LANDSCAPES
Faculty Member’s Essay Published

Faculty member Dean Cooleedge’s essay entitled “Edward Hopper’s Subversive Pastoralism in the Urban Landscape” will be published in a upcoming issue of Cross Cultural Poetics. The publication describes itself as a biannual interdisciplinary journal of poetry, poetics, experimental ethnography, and cultural and performance studies devoted to creating an intercultural exchange in the socially descriptive arts.

In his essay, Dr. Cooleedge explores urban isolation and social discontent as implied in the art of Edward Hopper. He selects four Hopper paintings—Nighthawks, Sunlight on Brownstones, New York Movie, and Sunlight in a Cafeteria—to demonstrate that the artist’s subjects often long for something beyond the frame of the painting. Dr. Cooleedge concentrates on the irony that, amidst the opportunity for connection and companionship, Hopper’s urban landscapes emphasize isolationism and loneliness.

Nighthawks (above) and Sunlight in a Cafeteria (below) are discussed in Dr. Cooleedge’s essay

IN THE INNER CIRCLE
Faculty Member Heads to D.C. for Documentary

A documentary, produced by faculty member Will Rose, will feature footage from an event held recently at the Justice Department in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Rose is recording the unusual journey of his niece, Quincy Lucas, who has assumed a high profile role in the fight against domestic violence. Ms. Lucas began an advocacy organization after her sister was murdered by an ex-boyfriend. Her work came to the attention of the Obama administration, and, as a result, she was invited to be the keynote speaker at a national ceremony recognizing the anniversary of the Victims of Crime Act, hosted by Attorney General Eric Holder.

Mr. Rose, who attended the event, said he was overcome with emotion when she spoke. “I felt the enormity of what she is doing,” he said.

Mr. Rose tries out the podium before the event at the Justice Department began

Students interact with Ms. Sims (R) following her presentation

TELEVISION TOUR
Students in the department’s television production class toured the studio of WBOC TV, the local CBS affiliate, recently. They were invited to observe a newscast from the station’s control room.

“It was fantastic,” said Larry Wersen. “The technology was unbelievable. I had no idea that it was so automated.”

One of Mr. Wersen’s classmates, Chanté Richardson, was equally impressed. “I got the inside scoop,” she said. “I got a chance to actually see how things were done live.”

The students are enrolled in ENGL 238, Television Production and Programming. The production set they utilize in their class was donated to UMES by WBOC.

EXPERT ADVICE
UMES students interested in careers in public relations met the woman Forbes magazine calls one of the world’s best party planners. Andrea Sims, the founder and owner of Lion’s Share Communications, was a guest speaker on campus recently. She reminded students, no matter how high tech we become, public relations is still "all about relationships.”

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