COLLEGE LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION
National Conference to be Hosted by UMES

Preparations are underway for the sixty-ninth annual convention and seventy-second anniversary of the College Language Association (CLA), hosted by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. The conference will bring hundreds of scholars to Delmarva next March.

The conference theme is “Liberation as Theme and Strategy in Languages and Literature.” The program chair, Warren Carson, finds the theme uniquely suited for our region. “Our conference theme...is so appropriate to the Eastern Shore, the geographic area that birthed Frederick Douglass, Henry Highland Garnet, Harriet Tubman, and many other great liberators,” Dr. Carson said.

The invitation to host the meeting came from UMES President Thelma Thompson, a former president of CLA.

“As a member of the local Executive Planning Committee, I am enthusiastic about the opportunity afforded the University of Maryland Eastern Shore to serve as host,” said Rita Lamb, Dean of the UMES School of Arts and Professions. “We are grateful for our visionary president...for extending the invitation.”

It is expected that many members of the UMES English department will present their scholarly research at the event.

The conference will be headquartered at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa and Marina in Cambridge, Maryland, March 25 through 29.

READ FOR THE RECORD DAY
Faculty Member and English 101 Students Participate

By Bonni Miller

Editor’s Note: Ms. Miller teaches an array of English courses including composition, technical writing, poetry, and fiction.

How did The UMES Child and Family Development Center and the English Department contribute to a new world record? By reading, of course. October 2 was JumpStart’s annual Read for the Record day. The goal of the day was to set a record for the largest number of children sharing a reading experience. More than 425,000 children read or listened to Corduroy, the classic story of the bear in overalls who longs for a home. Fifteen of those children were in the UMES Child and Family Development Center (CFDC).

I first learned about Read for the Record only a few days prior to the event, but, even with so little time, I really wanted to participate. Michele Hertel of Pearson Education supplied me with stickers and copies of Corduroy so that each child could take a copy home. My plan was to read with the children in the CFDC and with the children in my daughter’s pre-school. I knew this would be a very rewarding experience for me, but I was surprised when my freshmen students decided to join me.

I mentioned the Read for the Record day in English 101, and several of the students asked if they could accompany me to the CFDC. Arshaneka Ross, Jazmin Bibb, and Tirri Waters were all very enthusiastic as they read the story with the children, and they were so happy to be able to give the children books to take home. Since we participated in Read for the Record, Nick Chupek, another student from the same class, has contacted the CFDC to read with the children on a regular basis. I couldn’t be prouder of my freshmen students who are setting such a wonderful example for the youngsters about the importance of reading and for their colleagues about the importance of community service.
CHECKING OUT THE COMPETITION

English Majors Take DC Road Trip To Communications Job Fair

When hundreds of well-dressed, well-coiffed, and well-educated college students attended Howard University’s recent communications job fair hoping to make a positive impression on a future employer, there were two dozen UMES English majors among them.

In addition to meeting with more than eighty recruiters from radio, television, advertising, and public relations companies, the students also had the opportunity to attend panel discussions with industry experts offering advice on how to stand out in a highly competitive job market.

“I got a lot of different points of view about internships and jobs,” junior Emmanuel Hall said. His colleague, Jibri Faison, agreed. “It made me realize what I really need to do,” Mr. Faison said.

The students learned how important securing internships can be. Nearly every employer they met with stressed the importance of gaining some sort of job experience while they’re still in school.

“It is important to have an internship. I kept hearing that over and over,” said senior Marla Stewart.

The trip was organized by the English department’s internship coordinator, Marilyn Buerkle, and Theresa Queenan, director of the UMES Office of Career Services. Funding for the trip was provided by the University’s Division of Student Life and Enrollment Management.

LANGUAGES & PEACE

International Conference Scheduled

The African Language Research Project, directed by English faculty member Chester Hedgepeth, will hold its fifth international conference on the UMES campus this month.

“I have been hard at work in the field of African languages for twenty-three years and have found these conferences to be the crowning glory of my career,” Dr. Hedgepeth said.

The three-day event, which begins November 7, will focus on the role of languages in world peace. More than a dozen different panels are expected to explore the topic through a variety of means including literature, music, and religion. Scholars will also discuss language instruction, the preservation of languages, social linguistics, and the role of language in development.

Two conference guests will offer featured remarks. Jacqui Robinson from the National Security Agency’s National Cryptologic School will address the group at its awards banquet; Ambassador Akec Khoc of Southern Sudan will deliver the keynote address at a luncheon on November 8.

In addition to Dr. Hedgepeth, English department faculty members who are scheduled to make research presentations include Carole Champagne, Dean Coolege, Ababakar Diop, Clement Okafor, Simeon Shoge, and Betty Taylor Thompson.

Conference participants will also include language experts from Canada, Egypt, Nigeria, and Tanzania.

All events will be held in the Student Services Center. Registration for the conference is open to the public. Conference fees, which include materials and meals, are $175 per person.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

A student who works in the University’s African Language Research Project had a unique opportunity recently. Senior Miles Hill was selected by the project’s director, English faculty member Chester Hedgepeth, to accompany him to a student leadership retreat entitled “Global Concerns and Leadership Challenges.”

The event was sponsored by Howard University. It was designed to help students with a strong interest in international affairs to reflect on the importance of global concerns. “We learned how important it was for our generation to focus on politics and the economy,” Mr. Hill said. “We learned how to cooperate with folks of different backgrounds too.”

Mr. Hill is a business administration major who will graduate next month. In addition to his participation in the English department’s African Language Research project, Mr. Hill is a member of the management team for the department’s student-run Internet radio station.
UMES sponsored its first “Pride Week” recently, recognizing the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) members of the campus community. A series of events, both educational and social, were planned by Student Activities Board President Nakisha Roberson and junior English major Justin Stewart, the president of Uniquely Defined, a support group created by LGBT students.

“Our goal was to promote tolerance and diversity, and to foster acceptance of the LGBT community,” Stewart said. “We are trying to build a common understanding amongst the student body.”

An adjunct member of the English faculty, Patrice Jones, was one of several speakers who participated in a panel discussion that featured professionals who talked about what it is like to be an open homosexual in society today. She was joined on the panel by Josh Crosson and Joey Gaskins from the Human Rights Campaign.

Other events included the screening of a LGBT themed movie, a workshop on health issues related to the LGBT community, an open forum to dispel stereotypes and myths, a talent competition, and a catwalk ball.

Ms. Jones described the week’s events as “fabulous;” Mr. Stewart agreed that the University’s first “Pride Week” was a success. He hopes it will become an annual event.

“We started getting people to talk about the issue,” Stewart said. “But we still have a lot of work to do.”

Uniquely Defined members sought the participation of students from the campus of Salisbury University. Those who attended indicated they would like to hold a similar series of events on their campus.

The interaction between the homosexual and heterosexual communities was also the subject of the UMES Drama Society’s fall theater production this year. The drama society performs under the direction of English faculty member Della Dameron Johnson.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Sade Bell, Class of 2008, has been accepted into the Master of Arts in Teaching program at Goucher College. She wants to eventually teach English at the college level.

Tiana Bragg, Class of 2004, is an associate editor at *Beauty Fashion* magazine in New York City.

Justin Watson, Class of 2004, is a production technician with Comcast’s CN8 regional cable television network in the Philadelphia area. He also coaches baseball at Penn Wood High School in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania.

Stacy Woods, Class of 2007, is a marketing coordinator for KCI Technologies, an engineering firm in Hunt Valley, Maryland.
Two English faculty members have been prominently featured recently in local media presentations related to the UMES campus.

Susan Cooledge’s excursion to Egypt this summer to scout out potential study abroad opportunities for UMES students was the subject of a lengthy feature story in The Daily Times, the Gannett-owned newspaper in nearby Salisbury.

Not long after Dr. Cooledge’s trip was detailed in the local newspaper, Marilyn Buerkle was interviewed for the popular feature “Travels with Charlie” on WBOC TV, the local television station affiliated with the CBS network. Ms. Buerkle, who served as the WBOC news director before she joined the UMES faculty, was asked to comment on the achievements of the late Scorchy Tawes, a longtime co-worker of Ms. Buerkle’s in the WBOC newsroom.

Mr. Tawes’s photography is the subject of an exhibit currently on display in the Mosley Gallery on the UMES campus.

Students who are considering journalism careers but wish they had more “clips” (published writing samples) have a new opportunity to beef up their portfolios.

Black PR Wire (BPRW), a service offered to African American print publications, has established what it calls the HBCU Writer’s Project. Student writers from historically black colleges and universities will get the chance to have their articles posted on BPRW. Those articles may be picked up and published by black publications nationwide.

Student writers must submit editorial pieces that are relevant to the black community. Some of the topic areas of interest include automotive, entertainment, politics, sports, education, and faith-based stories. Students will not be paid for their submissions, but they will be eligible to compete for prizes.

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