

# INSIGHTS

Department of English and Modern Languages  
SCHOOL of EDUCATION, SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND THE ARTS  
DIVISION of ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



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## A SEMESTER TO REMEMBER

### COVID-19 Forces University to Shift to Alternate Instruction Methods

As the U.S. struggled to combat the threat of the deadly coronavirus, UMES administrators decided in mid-March to ask students not to return to campus following spring break. They opted to shift instruction from face-to-face classes to distance learning for the remainder of the semester.

Most students and faculty moved to an online environment through Blackboard, the university's learning management system, and heeded Governor Larry Hogan's request to practice social distancing.

That forced isolation resulted not only in changes in classwork, but also led to some creative substitutes for daily activities and entertainment. We share some of those alternatives through photographs submitted by department personnel.



English professor Amy Hagenrater-Gooding (left) spent quality time with her new yellow lab puppy.



Debra Laforest, a staff member in the Foreign Language Instructional Center, was busy crocheting multiple items including an intricate neck scarf (above right).

Junior English major Freddie Walls (right) meets with his academic advisor in a Google Hangout to plan his fall schedule.



Digital media instructor Marilyn Buerkle (above, top right) attended a virtual meeting of the "Eggheads" book club.

Faculty member Kimberly Galloway-Holmes reports her three-legged cat, Junior (right), was "surprisingly tolerant" when dressed in doll clothes by her daughter.



## THE SHOW MUST GO ON

### UMES Writing Center Director Reminds Campus of Online Options

Even though the UMES Writing Center tutors will not be in their Wilson Hall office for the remainder of the semester, the center's director, Terry Kundell, says they are still busy assisting the campus community.



Dr. Kundell  
Photo by Jim Glover

The center has offered online tutoring on weekends and during

summer and winter sessions in the past, so the peer tutors were ready to assist when the campus halted face-to-face instruction in March.

"We are fully prepared to help students online," Dr. Kundell said. "Access to the writing center is easier than ever since students have direct access to My Writing Center Online through the UMES portal."

Typically, the e-tutoring is a two step process. A student submits his or her

assignment, along with any faculty directions and/or rubrics, by noon on the day of a scheduled appointment and, by 10 p.m. that evening, the tutor will upload a document with written comments and advice which is delivered by email to the student seeking assistance.

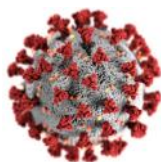
If a student prefers to interact directly with a tutor, it is possible to schedule a Google chat, a phone conversation or a Facetime session.

## INTERNSHIP CUT SHORT

Samantha Hernandez, an exercise science major who is earning a Spanish language minor, was forced to end her community health internship in the Andes Mountains of Peru as a result of concerns caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Ms. Hernandez had to wait nearly a week for a flight, but she was able to return home safely.

Spanish language professor Carole Champagne reports her student would have welcomed the opportunity to continue working in her adopted community.



*Coronavirus graphic courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

## SPELLING BEE VOLUNTEERS

Once again, the English department provided valuable assistance at the annual [regional spelling bee](#) held on campus on March 7. Faculty member Marilyn Buerkle marked her seventh year as the official pronouncer at the event. Adjunct digital media instructor Nicole Webb joined her as a judge.



*(L to R) Ms. Webb, Ms. Buerkle, Bee champ Hannah McCabe and additional UMES judges Kate Brown and Urban Wiggins  
Photo by Joey Gardner*

## MAKING OUR VOICE HEARD

President Heidi Anderson traveled to Annapolis recently to testify in support of legislation that would end a more than decade long court battle to provide additional funding for the state's HBCUs.

She was joined by a group of UMES faculty, staff, students and alumni.

The English department was represented by junior Ewa Okulate.

The legislation passed both the Maryland House and Senate and awaits Governor Hogan's signature.



*Maryland House of Delegates*

*Photo provided by Parys Lassiter*

## CELEBRATING THE CHINESE NEW YEAR UMES Language Students Make Cultural Connections

While classes were still meeting face-to-face, students enrolled in CHIN 102, Intermediate Chinese, got some hands-on experience making dumplings or 饺子 (pronounced Jiaozi in Chinese).

A roughly two week celebration of the new year is the most important holiday in

China and Chinese speaking countries. The students were reminded by their instructor, Ashley Lin, 饺子 is a traditional food served during the holiday. In Chinese culture, the dumplings symbolize longevity and wealth, and are a traditional must-eat food on the eve of the Chinese New Year.



*(L to R) 张雅琪 (Yakira Jones), 谢孟凯 (Michael Sebsbe), 施仁民 (Roman Smoot) and their dumplings*

*Photos by Ashley Lin*

To celebrate the new year, albeit belatedly, CHIN 102 students learned about the ancient culinary tradition and then tried their hand at making their own dumplings.

While this activity helped to enrich students' cultural knowledge, according to Chinese tradition, this experience will

also bring good luck to the students during the current Year of the Rat.

Under the direction of Ms. Lin, the students made 饺子 consisting of pork, shiitake mushrooms and cabbage, but they can also include other ingredients such as shrimp or corn.

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# BAY TO OCEAN WRITERS CONFERENCE

## *Creative Writing Students Attend Eastern Shore Forum*

By Eleshia Jones

*Editor's Note: Ms. Jones is a senior honors student majoring in Exercise Science. She is enrolled in the English department's creative writing class, which attended a recent regional writers conference.*



*Photo of Ms. Jones by Bill Cecil*

A group of students enrolled in ENGL 207, the department's creative writing class, attended the [Bay to Ocean Writers Conference](#) in Wye Mills, Maryland, on March 7.

The conference included five sessions. Each featured a variety of workshops with choices that honed in on many of the students' writing interests such as how to begin your writing, how to revise, fiction, non-fiction, character development, memoirs, poetry—which

was one of the class favorites—and many more.

All of the students and our teacher, Dianne Pearce, chose to attend "Unlocking Your Voice: Spoken Word Activism," a session presented by Amber Green who, to our surprise, was a former UMES student. She spoke on the importance of community and the importance of working together to make a difference by using poetry.

One of the more memorable points she made was that she enjoys making people feel uncomfortable. Ms. Green believes once someone is comfortable being uncomfortable, they are able to acknowledge and discuss the hard issues that are causing our communities and nation to still be divided.

Following her session, Ms. Green joined us for lunch. She gave each student advice and guidance for their individual writing projects.

There were three more sessions before the day came to a close. Each student experienced additional workshops such as "The [Skinny Poem](#) Workshop" by Truth Thomas. In that session, we learned how to create a skinny poem and were reminded of the importance of having confidence in our work.

UMES senior Iyana Barnard said she enjoyed the marketing workshop she attended because it gave her more insight on selling a book. She is currently hard at work attempting to publish her first book.

Overall, each student enjoyed the day and truly appreciated the opportunity to attend and be a part of a writing community.

The Bay to Ocean Writers Conference served as a great opportunity for the students and gave us the inspiration needed to keep writing and to never give up on our work.

# LITERATURE, LANGUAGE AND HISTORY

## *Professor Attends Scholarly Event in Boston*

By Carole Champagne

*Editor's Note: Dr. Champagne is a professor of foreign languages and coordinator of the department's Spanish language minor.*



*Photo of Dr. Champagne by Jim Glovier*

I participated in the [Northeast Modern Language Association 51st Annual Convention](#) in Boston March 5-8. The opportunity to network with international scholars and authors was very rewarding.

Multilingual interdisciplinary sessions included "Digital Humanities," "Writing Across the Curriculum," and "Humanities on the Road."

A workshop with Brazilian Shakespearian scholar [Joao Cezar de Castro Rocha](#) was inspiring. The brilliant author shared insights into the

triangulation of locations and conflicts between characters through a "theory of everything" that encompassed the Americas as the third distant angle that supported the weight and drove the action at the center of conflict in Shakespearian drama.

The author of "House of Sand and Fog," [Andre Dubus](#), shared his journey of understanding struggle through the written word.

The 250th anniversary of the [Boston Massacre](#) was commemorated with reenactments at the Old State House. I performed as one of the witnesses at the [Faneuil Hall](#) reenactment of the debate before the trial. My speech was based



*The defense and prosecution present their arguments at the reenactment of a Boston Massacre trial at Faneuil Hall.*

*Photos by Dr. Champagne*

upon historical records.

Reminiscing my halcyon days as a New Englander, I longed to linger with my compatriots in Boston Strong.

# PROVIDING AN HBCU PERSPECTIVE

## UMES Writing Center Tutors Travel to Regional Conference

The opinions of the UMES Writing Center tutors who attended the annual [Mid-Atlantic Writing Centers Association Conference](#) (MAWCA) in early March were highly sought after.

The theme of the event was “Decolonizing Writing Center Practice,” and the UMES tutors were some of only a few presenters representing a historically black college or university.

Their panel was titled “Students’ Right to Their Own Language and to the Language of Those in Power: A Historically Black University Writing Center’s Perspective.”

It included a discussion of the controversial issue of teaching standard written English in a writing center.



(L to R) Dr. Kundell and tutors Jessie Clatterbuck, Nikolas Mejia, Cita Christian, Christian Ferguson, and Ciani Wells at Towson University

“It was wonderful to bring a minority perspective to a mostly majority group,” said sophomore English major Ciani Wells.

The UMES presentation came at the end of the two day conference and was extremely well attended.

“We had close to 50 people attending our session, which is amazing given the total registration for the regional conference was around 150,” Writing Center Director Terry Kundell said. “I have been presenting at MAWCA for several decades, and this was truly the best presentation a tutor group of mine has ever given.”

The tutors received a special invitation to begin the event by attending lunch and a small group conversation with the keynote speaker, [Romeo Garcia](#).

# HELPING TO SHARE OUR MESSAGE

## Digital Media Program Assists On and Off Campus

The English department’s digital media program was involved in two very different types of recruitment efforts in March.

Kia Proctor, an English graduate who works in the [UMES Office of Admissions and Recruitment](#), asked if her boss could field questions from prospective students while streaming live over the internet from the department’s TV studio.

It took a little ingenuity, but the answer was yes.

The event became a project for the students enrolled in TELC 238, the department’s TV production class. More than 50



(Left, Top to Bottom) Staff member Bill Brophy at Junior Achievement event; TV production students provide crew for Admissions FAQ show; and control room software displays streaming statistics



new recruits “tuned in.”

The digital media program was also part of an event sponsored by [Junior Achievement of the Eastern Shore](#). Several thousand local 8th graders came to the Ocean City Convention Center for hands-on career demonstrations. Staff members Bill Brophy and Leon Lewis set up a portable “green screen” for attendees to try their hand at TV weather presentations.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW SIGMA TAU DELTA MEMBERS!

Although COVID-19 has forced the postponement of the English honor society’s formal induction ceremony, the department is pleased to announce the organization’s newest members: Christian Ferguson, Kenetria Redfern and Ciani Wells.

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