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## contents

- 1 Director's Notes
- 3 Fall 2014 Convocation
- 4 National Day on Writing 2014 Celebration: A Conversation with Paulette Stevenson
- 4 Behind the Scenes Writer Award
- 5 Symposium on Second Language Writing 2014
- 5 2015 ASU Composition Conference Preview
- 6 Coffee and Conversation with Andrea Lunsford
- 6 Professional Development and Virtual "Brown Bags"
- 7 Digitation Tips and Tricks as the Rollout Continues
- 8 The Reach of Writing Programs
- 8 Risks and Rewards in Public Scholarship
- 9 Justa Writer Workshop
- 11 Volunteering with the St. Vincent de Paul Society
- 12 The Lessons of Reading & Writing
- 13 Spotlight On...
- 14 Amenities, not Humanities (Book Review)
- 17 Welcoming New TAs
- 20 Welcoming New Instructors, Lecturers, & FAs
- 20 Kudos & Milestones

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## in this issue:

This issue of Writing Notes focuses on the ways that we, as teachers and scholars in Writing Programs, engage with communities—within the university and beyond it. As Director Shirley Rose points out, the relationship between our teachers and the communities of the Phoenix Metro area is one of the strengths of our program. These relationships provide mutual enrichment, as is evident in Paulette Stevenson's reflection on our celebration of National Day on Writing; the resounding success of ASU's hosting of the Symposium on Second Language Writing; Cindy Tekkobe's modeling and mentoring of public scholarship in her composition classes; Deb Schwartz' beautiful experiences in her Justa Writer workshop; and Susan Bernstein's innovative Stretch course with the Gila River Indian Community.



## director's notes

By Shirley Rose, Director of Writing Programs

As the Fall 2014 has drawn to a close, Writing Programs here in the Department of English of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has been the focus of national attention. A proposed re-definition of the workload of our Instructors is at the center of a discussion taking place in *Inside Higher Education* and on Facebook, Twitter, and other internet venues. Our Instructors' workload is currently defined as 80% teaching and 20% service and professional development. The proposed change is to make their assignment 100% teaching, thus Instructors would go from a typical 4/4 assignment (4 classes in Fall and 4 in Spring) to 5/5 with no time for service or professional development.

I won't review the arguments for and against this change that have been made nor the evidence to support or refute them that has been provided in these discussions in higher ed media and social media—with one exception. I do want to address here some of the comments that have been made about Writing Programs' practices of hiring ASU English Department graduates as full-time teachers. Generally speaking, for a higher education institution to hire its own graduates has been frowned on because of concerns about "inbreeding" (with all the unsavory connotations that metaphor carries) and the appearance that graduates are not qualified to find employment elsewhere. When I first came to ASU as Director of Writing Programs, I was surprised to learn that nearly half of our Instructors have ASU PhDs and MFAs, and it seemed obvious to me that needed to change. Since then, as I have learned more about the role that ASU plays in the region and the university's aspiration to be socially embedded, I see things differently and I'll explain why here. (continued on page 2)

## director's notes (continued)

While it is uncomfortable to be the center of unfavorable attention, this is an opportunity to highlight the university's special relationship to our local community and to make more visible Writing Programs' contribution to developing and maintaining that relationship.

Some commentators on the move to a 5/5 load in the national-level discussions have offered the fact that 50% of so of our teachers are our own graduates as evidence of something gone awry with our processes of preparing graduate students in our department. But I see this differently. For anyone aspiring to study English at the graduate level in a research university in the Phoenix metropolitan area, ASU is the only option. For anyone aspiring to teach writing in a research university in our city, the twelfth most populous metropolitan area in the nation, ASU is the only such workplace. Compare that narrow set of options to those available to prospective graduate students and aspiring university faculty in, say, the Boston metropolitan area, which is ranked tenth in population and where there are sixty institutions of higher learning, nine of which are classified as research universities. Obviously, Boston residents who want to stay in town to study for a graduate degree and continue to stay in town afterwards for a long-term teaching career at a research university have more options than Phoenix area residents who want to stay here to participate and contribute to the city's continued cultural and civic development. Let me be clear: my point is that Phoenix area residents have fewer choices, not that they have poorer choices than Boston residents.

Think of ASU and the Phoenix region as a closed system. Just as the placement of an ASU WP Carey School of Business MBA in a job at U.S. Airways here in Tempe or the placement of a Fulton School of Engineering PhD at Intel in Chandler would be evidence of successful placement for those academic programs, I think we could see placement of some of our English Department PhDs and MFAs in our own writing programs in the same way. But we don't. One reason we don't is that the jobs our own graduates take right back here in our department are poorly compensated non tenure-track positions.

If our graduates were finding full-time teaching jobs at other research universities, the way graduates of Brandeis University might be finding full-time NTT teaching jobs at Tufts University or University of Massachusetts-Boston, they might appear to be more successful, but there is in fact very little difference in these two outcomes.

Across the country, PhDs and MFAs in English are taking non tenure-track full-time teaching jobs because this is the way the work of higher education teaching is being restructured. Although there are more PhDs and MFAs being graduated across the country each year than there are new tenure-track positions opening, there is not an oversupply of English graduates qualified to teach college-level writing. Our own "closed" system here in Phoenix, where ASU is in many ways a microcosm of higher education in the U.S. demonstrates this. We do not in fact have a large pool of qualified applicants for our part-time and full-time teaching positions in our department.

Reasons for restructuring the faculty here and at other colleges and universities around the country are complex, but as our situation at ASU demonstrates, it doesn't have as much to do with supply and demand for a qualified workforce as it might seem to uninformed observers. We are able to see that supply and demand is in fact in balance, though we might not be satisfied with the compensation and working conditions for our faculty. The available supply of a qualified workforce could quickly change if our own graduates chose not to teach for us. The demand for their work, however, is unlikely to decrease, as the university continues to grow.

It's been useful to hear perspectives from faculty around the country as they have participated in a discussion of "the situation at ASU," but any of them who denigrate our Writing Programs faculty or our graduate programs because so many of them are teaching in the same department where they studied simply do not understand the situation. •





## fall 2014 convocation

By **Steven Hopkins, Assistant Director of Writing Programs**

On August 18, Associate Director of Writing Programs in the Department of English Adelheid Thieme welcomed 161 faculty, staff, lecturers, instructors, and teaching assistants to the opening convocation for the Fall 2014 semester here at Arizona State University.

After mingling while eating a classic German breakfast, veterans and newcomers of ASU Writing Programs were welcomed by College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean of Humanities George Justice as well as Chair of the English Department Mark Lussier.

Dean Justice praised Writing Programs for the impact it has on ASU student success. "It would be impossible to overstate the importance of the work you are doing in helping our students succeed."

Mark Lussier thanked Writing Programs instructors for working to fulfill the vision of ASU President Michael Crow. "He wants to be this close to impossible, but still get it done: This is the crew that does that on a regular basis."

Afterward, faculty and staff announced Writing Programs accomplishments and previewed upcoming events. Dr. Paul Kei Matsuda introduced new developments in Writing Programs offerings for multilingual writers. Others announced upcoming conferences and other opportunities for students and faculty.

Then, with the help of several Writing Programs graduate Teaching Associates, Program Manager Demetria Baker presented Writing Programs policies in the form of a mock news broadcast that had the audience laughing.

Director of Writing Programs, Dr. Shirley Rose, provided a progress report on how ASU Writing Programs has responded to recommendations made by the Consultant-Evaluators from the Council of Writing Program Administrators since Spring 2010. She explained how current and future initiatives such as our pilot of the Digication e-portfolio software align with these recommendations.

### Digication Initiative

This year, 50 Teachers and close to 1700 students will be piloting the assessment features of Digication, and all students and writing teachers will be piloting the showcase features of Digication.

With these pilot programs Writing Programs hopes to accomplish its goal of valuing student writing through assessing student learning outcomes, conducting research on student writing, and showcasing student writing.

After the main convocation gathering, Writing Programs instructors, including the new TAs, participated in workshops on implementing Digication in their own classrooms.

Two weeks later, on September 2, teachers and faculty gathered for a Town Hall Meeting in which all were free to discuss issues and concerns about Digication.

### Who Writing Programs Is

For this 2014-2015 school year, Writing Programs welcomed 30 new Teaching Associates into three different programs.

These New TAs are a part of the 96 TAs teaching in Writing Programs, who make up just under half of the entire staff of the 217 Writing Programs teachers on the ASU Tempe campus, which also includes 38 faculty Associates, 60 instructors, 10 professors, and 13 lecturers.

This Fall, Writing Programs taught 523 Sections of Writing Programs classes altogether serving 11,326 students. This was a 4.4 percent increase in the number of sections and an 8.7 percent increase in the total number of students being taught by ASU Writing Programs since last Fall.

Assistant Director of Writing Programs, Steven Hopkins, created a video debrief of Convocation, which can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/ASUWPconvocation2014>.



## national day on writing 2014

A Conversation with **Paulette Stevenson, Instructor**

### How did you get involved with National Day on Writing?

I got involved as a committee member three years ago when we first celebrated it because I thought it was an interesting event and a different way to do service in the department. Since then, it's become my baby, I guess.

### What happened this year for NDOW?

This year we had two booths. One was at the Danforth Chapel, where students would either finish a story or answer questions on white pads. Then there was the booth in the LL building where we were trying to get more physical or material with the way that students participate with NDOW. We had magnetic poetry, which was a huge hit. Students would take a couple minutes and try to put something together, and then they would take a picture and send it to their professor for extra credit or tweet it out. We also put some modeling clay down where students could make words and shapes and then do the same thing. Writing Programs and some L2 writing teachers put together a few videos that we projected on a screen as well.

### What do you hope people get out of NDOW?

I really hope that people get out of the classroom and engage physically with writing, engage physically with each other, and talk to each other outside of the classroom instruction space. We want people to have a little bit more fun with the type of writing that we do and the type of teaching as well. (continued on page 15)



## ASU behind the scenes writer award

By **Bruce Glenn, Instructor**

As an important part of ASU's National Day on Writing celebration, Melissa Bordow, ASU Foundation senior communications specialist, received the fifth annual "Behind-the-Scenes Writer of the Year" award. The award is presented to a staff writer at ASU who regularly produces outstanding writing but rarely, if ever, receives much recognition.

Bordow writes with the "real ability to craft a story, develop a narrative, and bring her subjects to life," according to Bordow's nominating supervisor and VP of Development Communications Debbie Williams

"On any given day," says Williams, "Bordow must be a master of many topics in order to represent ASU activities with intelligence and authority."

Bordow's job is indeed challenging. She is charged with writing feature stories and profiles in such a way as to engage potential donors' imaginations and commitment to financially support ASU's programs.

There's the moving way Bordow recently wrote the story of a 19-year-old ASU freshman. Inspired by his dying Mexican grandfather's example of lifelong giving, the student volunteers to personally serve patients at St. Joseph's Hospital. At ASU, he studies hard to someday become a primary care physician with support from the university's Doran Community Scholar's Program.

Then there's the story Bordow told about the ASU Armstrong Scholars. These ASU students grew up with challenging family lives, many in foster care or as orphans. Some even came to the U.S. as refugees from war-torn homelands. Bordow describes how they generously volunteer to give back—this time by helping the U.S. State Department provide temporary apartment housing for refugee children fleeing persecution and war in their home countries. (continued on page 15)





## symposium on second language writing 2014

By **Katherine Daly O'Meara, Associate Director of Second Language Writing, and Sarah Elizabeth Snyder, Assistant Director of Second Language Writing**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Second Language Writing (SSLW) was hosted at ASU on November 13-15, 2014. SSLW is an international conference that brings together scholars and professionals in the field of second language (L2) writing to discuss research, pedagogy and other important issues that extend beyond the field and into other trans-disciplinary, cross-institutional settings and contexts.

The 2014 SSLW conference theme, "Professionalizing Second Language Writing," highlighted "the need for a shared professional identity and standards" in the field of L2 writing, which has been growing steadily over the past two decades ([sslw.asu.edu/2014](http://sslw.asu.edu/2014)). Dr. Paul Kei Matsuda, Professor of English and Director of Second Language Writing at ASU, is a founding chair of SSLW and represented the Writing Programs as the 2014 Symposium Chair. Many ASU Writing Programs teachers and English/Linguistics graduate students participated in the event, whether contributing to the organizing committee, presenting their own research and projects, serving as session chairs, or devoting their time as volunteers for the conference.

Overall, the conference welcomed over 440 attendees from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania. ASU professors headlined the symposium in a number of ways: Dr. Shirley Rose presented at the L2 Writing Institute, sharing her consulting experience in the presentation, "Writing Program Administrator as Consultant." Dr. Mark A. James participated in the round-table lunch seminar, discussing his research in motivation and transfer in second language acquisition with graduate students and professionals alike. Dr. Bryan Smith organized an invited colloquium, "L2 Writing Across Diverse CALL Contexts." And Dr. Paul Kei Matsuda participated in the L2 Writing Institute ("Making Your Presentation Striking") and spoke in his well-attended featured session, "L2 Writing Apocalypse and the Future of the Field." The conference proved to be an excellent reminder of how fortunate we are to have such a rich collection of second language writing scholars, collaborators and advocates at Arizona State and within our Writing Programs.

If you would like more information about the Symposium, please view the program book at [sslw.asu.edu/2014/program.pdf](http://sslw.asu.edu/2014/program.pdf); you can also view tweets, Facebook updates and photos across social media platforms by searching for the hashtag #sslw2014.

Notable ASU contributions are listed below. A sincere thank you goes out to all participants, especially those hailing from ASU—the Symposium would not exist without you!

(continued on page 16)

## 2015 ASU composition conference preview

By **Susan Flores, Conference Chair**

The 2015 ASU Composition Conference will be held Saturday, February 28, 2015, on the ASU Tempe Campus in the Language and Literature building. Proposals for the conference were due December 15, 2014. If you have any questions about the proposals, contact Brook Michalik at [Brandon.Michalik@asu.edu](mailto:Brandon.Michalik@asu.edu). We have been busily preparing for this event since October, preparations that will not be complete until conference day. We work very hard to assure those who attend a worthwhile day of learning and interaction with fellow English Composition teachers.

This year, our keynote speaker is Dr. Mark Lussier, our department chair. His talk is entitled "Composition's Role in the Department and in the University." All of us will be interested in hearing what he has to say.

Throughout the day, there will be a variety of presentations on teaching strategies, pedagogy, research, and technology which we can use in our own classes. It is also an opportunity for Writing Programs teachers to be a part of professional development. There is no fee for the conference; it is open to all who wish to attend. For more details, see the conference website: <http://english.clas.asu.edu/asucc-2015>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Susan Flores at [Susan.Flores@asu.edu](mailto:Susan.Flores@asu.edu). We look forward to seeing you all in February! •

## coffee and conversation with Andrea Lunsford

By Rebecca Robinson, Assistant Director of Writing Programs

On September 19th, the Institute for Humanities Research hosted a faculty seminar on collaborative research in the humanities with a panel of scholars, including celebrated composition scholar Andrea Lunsford, Emeriti Faculty in the Department of English at Stanford University. As a co-sponsor of that event, ASU Writing Programs and the Department of English also hosted an informal “Coffee and Conversation” with Dr. Lunsford and Writing Programs teachers.

Dr. Lunsford advocated for the importance of collaboration in humanities scholarship, and shared her own experiences as a collaborative researcher and researcher of collaboration as she has seen the subject move from an institutional anomaly to a recognized necessity, particularly with the rise of Web 2.0. She argued that collaboration enables methods and projects that would otherwise not be possible.

Over coffee and light refreshments, Writing Programs teachers and Dr. Lunsford shared experiences and discussed ways to navigate the interpersonal, material, theoretical, methodological, and stylistic challenges of researching and writing together with fellow scholars and among our students. “Collaboration is the new normal,” said Lunsford, yet she noted that tough questions remain to be answered about how we facilitate and acknowledge that kind of work. •



## professional development and virtual “brown bags”

By Ellen Kennedy Johnson, Lecturer

Last summer, I attended the inaugural European Conference on Teaching and Technology in the Classroom, where educators from all over the world met in Brighton, England to discuss global trends in digital learning. Like many of the conference participants, I attended hoping to have that “light bulb” moment, allaying all the doubts I’ve had about this irresistible and inescapable digital learning revolution.

Some of these uncertainties revolved around several concerns: are we making students more digitally adept—indeed a necessary skill for workplace survival in the 21<sup>st</sup> century—but making them more socially inept, what is the teacher’s role in the blended learning classroom, and was jettisoning traditional learning practices to present information to young people in the most appealing way expanding or contracting their capacity to learn? And perhaps a more vital question is whether this almost full-scale adoption of teaching with technology contributes to or mitigates the digital divide.

Understanding that these kinds of concerns are shared by educators all over the world made me want to open up discussions here in the department about these same kinds of questions and work together with other instructors to discuss what their personal best practices are when teaching with technology in the traditional, hybrid, or online formats. As a founding member of the Committee for the Innovation of Online Technology (CIOT), I asked Dr. Rose if we could implement discussions among our faculty that could count toward their professional development. My idea was to institute some variation of the

tried and true “brown bag” discussion, but I puzzled about the difficult task of getting people to come together face to face given our varied teaching schedules and the growing number of online teachers not coming to campus.

I discussed this problem with Heather Hoyt, chairperson of the Workplace Writing Committee, and together we decided to combine our two groups and offer the brown bags virtually through a Blackboard organizational group called Writing Teachers and Brown Bag discussions. This fall semester served as a pilot, with six of us examining ideas in three different discussion board topics. Each board was open for two weeks and members were asked to post at least three times.

To date, our topics have included “Academic Freedom and Social Media: The Salaita Case,” “Coursera and Other Online Platforms: Are They Useful in Writing Classrooms?” and “Sharing Social Media Activities.” Some of the themes already scheduled for the Spring Brown Bags examine digital anthropologist Mimi Ito’s research on “connected learning” and a forum about Big Data. Topics chosen include some written or audio background on the subject. The discussion begins, and participants post asynchronously. If you subscribe to the discussion board, posts will come to your email electronically.

Please join us for peer collaboration about these timely issues. To join the group email [Heather.Hoyt@asu.edu](mailto:Heather.Hoyt@asu.edu) or [Ellen.Johnson@asu.edu](mailto:Ellen.Johnson@asu.edu) with your ASUwrite username and we will put you on the roster. •



## Digication: tricks & tips as the rollout continues

By Shavawn M. Berry, Instructor

As Writing Programs continues its rollout of Digication to create a large archive of student writing, I've been busy finding inventive ways to use it in my courses. Last year, as a part of the initial pilot project for it, I created a professional portfolio to demo the platform for my students, particularly those in my English 302–Business Writing courses. That course has long featured an e-Portfolio assignment, so integrating Digication



into it was easy. I simply had the students set up their e-Portfolios on Digication, rather than in Weebly, Wix, and Googlesites, as they had in the past. The initial results were mixed, but *I learned a lot about the platform*, what works best, and what is challenging for students. I also discovered the absolute value of providing them with visual examples of what I expect when they compile their portfolios. Two of my business writing students won English Department e-Portfolio awards for their portfolios at the Digital Showcase in the spring. By the end of fall semester this year, it's clear this new technology has promise.

This fall I taught English 101. By the eighth week of the session, I went over the Digication platform with the students and had them set up a portfolio using the template provided by Writing Programs. As I returned their graded first essays, I cautioned

them to revise their work based upon my review and comments, and post it in Digication as soon as possible. After each subsequent essay, the process was the same. In addition, I had them add a section for free writes. Using writing I published in the past year, I provided an example of an e-Portfolio for them (sign in to see link: [https://asu.digication.com/shavawn\\_m\\_berrys\\_sample\\_english\\_101\\_eportfolio/Home/published](https://asu.digication.com/shavawn_m_berrys_sample_english_101_eportfolio/Home/published)). I wrote up the instructions for the reflective letter and included them with that sample portfolio. By the time the final week of classes arrived, they'd all gotten very comfortable with the platform. We checked and double-checked everyone's work for the inclusion of all elements. In the end only one student didn't have all portions of his portfolio when I went in to grade them. The others did a fabulous job creating portfolios that showcased their work. One student emailed me after the class was finished and said she was "thrilled to show [her] parents" her work in Digication (and they were thrilled to see it!).

In English 374–Technical Editing, I altered Assignment #1 to include work in Digication. The whole class worked in one Digication portfolio and created an online magazine featuring articles written and edited by the students on editing, freelancing, creating portfolios, finding work, etc. The magazine, *The Perry White*, named for Clark Kent's editor at The Daily Planet, has four sections, as well as a cover page, an introduction from the Managing Editor, and a contact page. As the instructor for the course, I was in charge of the finalized version of the magazine; however, all students were co-editors with editing and review privileges. We worked together directly through the platform, outlining a style sheet to choose appropriate and consistent fonts, heading and images. Then, we polished all elements until we'd produced an excellent magazine. Some of this was done as homework and some was done via editing workshops during class time. In order to see *The Perry White*, sign in to Digication first, then click this link: [https://asu.digication.com/the\\_perry\\_white/Home/published](https://asu.digication.com/the_perry_white/Home/published). The magazine is public only at ASU per my request.

So, next semester when you think about Digication, consider the *possibilities*. There are many ways to creatively utilize this platform in ways that students find informative, educational, and fun. •

Listen to more Writing Programs share their Digication innovations at the Fall 2014 "Digication Jam Session" at <https://soundcloud.com/asu-writing-programs/digication-jam-session>



• writing takes place •

## the reach of Writing Programs

By **Rebecca Robinson, Assistant Director of Writing Programs**

Social engagement is central to the work of Arizona State University, as the “New American University”. Our mission is not only to teach college students and produce innovative research, but to extend our scholarly work into the public sphere, to cultivate relationships with local communities in ways that not only inform our teaching and scholarship, but also benefit those communities and individuals outside the university.

Our Writing Programs teachers are experts at forging such mutually beneficial relationships, yet the extraordinary work they do is rarely recognized beyond their classrooms and workshops. This year, Writing Notes features stories from several of our teachers and students about the research, writing, and service they are doing with local communities and larger publics. As Cindy Tekkobe notes, such engagement often involves some degree of discomfort, yet the rewards are great. Deb Schwartz recounts how her Justa Writer workshop not only gave homeless seniors the opportunity to develop and display their creative talents, it also reinvigorated her own writing and scholarship. And Adelheid Thieme’s student, Emanuel Bécquer also discovered how important is personal connection to those whom he is training to serve as an aspiring medical doctor. We hope you enjoy reading their stories. •

## risks and rewards in public scholarship

By **Cindy Tekkobe, Faculty Associate**

As instructors in ASU Writing Programs, we are favorably positioned to model for our students the key role scholars play in engaging matters of public concern and debate. I encourage my students to select research topics that are trending in their social media feeds and cull topics from their favorite news and culture blogs. For example, recent student research projects include investigations into the way revenge porn asymmetrically impacts women; the classroom disadvantages of English-only curriculum in border communities; and the postfeminist rhetorics of makeovers in online beauty blogs. Meanwhile, my dissertation project is a feminist critique of several online communities and contexts, where I find that perceptions about gender and gendered performance strongly influence how women’s digital literacies and practices are assessed.

Seeing my students learn from my struggle with doing scholarly work in the public eye made the experience a little bit less uncomfortable for me as a female researcher, and a lot more rewarding for me as a teacher.

While I often bring my work into the classroom as I model for students the methods and practices of academic research and writing, my experience with GamerGate this semester really brought home for my students the necessity of scholarly public engagement. “GamerGate” is a complex mangle of community activists, digital platforms and online practices, but the short version is that within the

greater community of video gamers exists a thread of resistance to the emergence of women, LGBTQ-identifying persons, and people of color in the development of video games. Conceived as a response to the “threat” of these emerging voices, GamerGate is a loosely organized movement credited with everything from hacking the private information of its opponents to email campaigns against advertisers who support online platforms for these emerging voices. While GamerGate contends it is a peaceful movement, some women, like feminist video game critic Anita Sarkeesian and independent video game developer Zoe Quinn, have been the targets of credible bomb, rape and death threats.

Because of my research, I was invited in September to join a roundtable discussion on GamerGate hosted by Iowa Public



Radio. Many of my students are avid video gamers and personally invested in GamerGate. In our class meetings, we examined my case studies and discussed issues from the radio round table. Students were surprised and amused to discover a brief mention of my work in the Wikipedia entry for GamerGate. I will be honest - I am uncomfortable with attention. I prefer to stay in the background and be part of a group. Perhaps it is an inherent trait, or perhaps it is learned and gendered behavior; it may be both. But this is a feeling many of my students relate to, and when I push them into the uncomfortable spaces of peer review and presentation, I reassure them by sharing that I am uncomfortable alongside them. And this female-gendered discomfort with being forced into the public eye is one of the primary weapons of the GamerGate movement as it exposes women in the gaming industry, opening them up to harassment and threat.

I feel like my students and I both benefitted from working side by side this semester, me on my dissertation and GamerGate, and my students on their own research projects. The immediacy of my rhetorical context, for example, helped my students zero in on the their own contexts and emphasized the importance of audience for them in a way that seemed current and relevant. And modeling my processes for them brought clarity and focus to those processes for me. I will close with another bit of honesty: seeing my students learn from my struggle with doing scholarly work in the public eye made the experience a little bit less uncomfortable for me as a female researcher, and a lot more rewarding for me as a teacher. •



## Justa Writer workshop—a story of hope

By **Debra A Schwartz, Instructor**

I was in the wilderness as a writer. I was writing business letters, business reports and research reports with recommendations for clients, but I wasn't *writing*. I was on automatic pilot for the most part, producing product but not *creating*. That's when I learned about Justa Center, and shortly thereafter began the Justa Writer Workshop there.

Justa Center is a Phoenix-based day resource center for homeless seniors. It is located in The Zone, deemed the city's worst neighborhood at night, right down the street from the Central Arizona Shelter System. The workshop has become one of the best and richest experiences of my life because of its participants. It started out as a 45-minute session once a week in May 2011, and grew into a beginning group and then an advanced group, the latter which met for two hours a week for two years. In February of this year, participants in the advanced workshop read their work to a full audience as part of ASU's Project Humanities kick-off of Humanity 101. They were paid. They could hardly believe they were being paid! To share their writing, just like pros! The experience filled their hearts, mine, and those in the audience, who laughed and cried listening to the stories—some, but not all, reprinted here. We hope you enjoy them.

Lynn Nicholson's memorable story about Braveheart the cat is one of my favorites, and his Halloween story makes me laugh at the thought. James Fenical's exploration of whether he really wants to be in a romantic relationship ends with a giggle. Chef Phillip Debibar's Christmas satire about a UFO is too long to print here, but an excerpt is provided. Each has given permission to publish these works. I've also included a poem I wrote as part of an exercise with these gentle men, and others in the workshop that day. The words we had to use are underlined.

Just as in the famous passage in Matthew (15:21-28) of a Canaanite woman who is not named, but a Pseudo-Clementine epistle gives her the name "Justa," the stories you read here, other than my poem, show us that every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. I started the Justa Writer Workshop to write with others in a non-critical, non-threatening situation to foster ourselves. The foundation, I explained from the start, would be to cultivate dignity, self-respect, and gain recognition for our efforts. And so it is. •



### Exercise

By **Debra A. Schwartz**

I have been spayed. They have removed my guts, neutered my outlook on life, given me audacity. I am above the law now. Bold, uncompromising, because mendacity no longer becomes me. I have no need to play the corporate game anymore. My guts are gone but my brass remains, like an ordinance against growing old.

## Justa Writer workshop—"Braveheart"

By **Lynn Nicholson**

At the place I grew up, my father's house, there was a small tool shed in the backyard. A cat had kittens in there. She was an outdoor cat, tame, and would not go indoors. All her kittens disappeared except one: An orange *Garfield*-looking cat.

One day I was sitting outside when this kitten came wobbling out of the tool shed. She wasn't old enough to walk steadily, but she made her way to where I was sitting. She sniffed my foot and put her little paw on one of my toes. I reached down and touched her on the back. She flinched. But didn't run.

From then on she was Braveheart. We were best friends. I made sure she and her mother were fed, and (in turn) she visited me in a small apartment in back of my parents' house.

Our friendship was such she once had kittens and moved them into my lap while I was sitting in my easy chair.

She had a signal for everything. A scratch at the door meant, "I want outside." Claws on my leg meant, "Pet me." Sitting on the kitchen counter meant, "Feed me." One night in early summer she got up on my bed and slept with me. She had never done that before.

The next day I was forced to move out of town and could not take her with me. It was painful to leave her behind. I prayed someone would feed her and care for her. She was the best animal friend I ever had. •



## Justa Writer—"the first time"

By Lynn Nicholson

I remember the first time I walked into Justa Center. There was this figure at the front desk, a hippie with a go-tee. He told me Justa Center is a day resource for people over 55 years of age. I showed him my I.D. He smiled and said, "Welcome."

All I saw at first were old people sitting around talking and drinking coffee. I soon left. I kept coming back, though. It seemed like a good place to relax, and I didn't have to stand in line to use the toilet.

One day a woman walked up and said, "Would you like to come play with me?"

"Sure," I said. "Why not?"

I followed her into the chapel. You can imagine my disappointment when I realized she had invited other men into the room. I thought we were going to be alone! But I decided to stick around when I found out it was a writing class.

I've wanted to be a writer since I was in my twenties. I simply didn't have the energy to work full-time and write *The Great American Novel*.

After months of attending class, I discovered how much writing means to me. I was dumbstruck when Debbie read one of my stories to her writing class at Arizona State University.

The story of *Braveheart* was inspired. I know it's easier to write on an assigned subject than to pick something out of the blue. The *Braveheart* story felt good. I knew it was okay for other people to read.

Debbie told me I could write good things. No one ever told me I was good at anything. I won a trophy for my piano playing when I was a teenager and I still love music; but, other than that, nada. I can write much more readily than months ago. I've written some decent stuff if I do say so myself! Right now I'm reading about the subliminal mind and how it affects us. I'm excited about this new learning. I believe it will make me a better writer. I'm grateful for the time with the group. •

## Justa Writer—"Hallowe'en story"

By Lynn Nicholson

It was a dark and quiet night. I enjoyed a horror movie on TV, then retired to my bedroom with a good book. It was "Salem's Lot," by Stephen King. A fine vampire story. It's *especially* scary when the little boy drifts up to the window and starts tapping on the glass and calling his brother's name. *Danny. Danny.*

*That's a good place to stop*, I thought. Right at the scary part! I put the book on the nightstand and reached up to turn out my reading lamp. I heard a voice! "Lynn! Lynn!" It was only a whisper, but I was certain I hear it. I looked around the bedroom. There was no one there. The voice came again, louder this time.

**LYNN!!! Lee-un!**

I said, "WHAT! WHAT DO YOU WANT!"

"Lynn," a low voice spoke out loud. "Come let me in!"

It was my brother at the window. He was locked out of the house! I was pissed. I was scared! I was relieved it was only my brother and not Danny Glick the vampire. I wanted to be angry, but I couldn't be angry at him. For one thing, Robert was bigger than me, and a much better fighter. He thought it was hilarious that he scared me without intending to. •

Just as in the famous passage in Matthew (15:21-28) of a Canaanite woman who is not named, but a Pseudo-Clementine epistle gives her the name "Justa," the stories you read here...show us that every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.



## Justa Writer—"the late lament: a Christmas story" (excerpt)

By Philip Debibar

The bleep on the radar sent an urgent awareness to the North American Aerospace Defense, also known as NORAD, to scramble F-35 and F-16 fighter jets and missile systems. It put them on alert, at the spur of the moment, of something not ordinarily on their radar; but they could not detect the UFO. It was nowhere to be found.

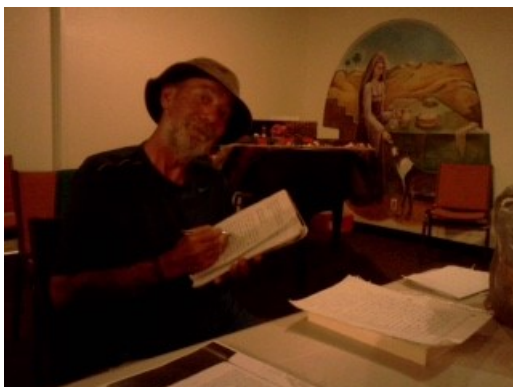
Each year NORAD follows this protocol on the evening of December 24, and the early morning hours of December 25, and, as always, they fail to identify and apprehend the intruder. The first encounter starts in Canadian airspace, flying Southward heading toward the Eastern seaboard of the United States, finally moving across the country, past the West Coast to the Hawaiian Islands. Then it disappears before daylight.

This phenomenon soon will be short-lived and the perpetrator identified.

In Phoenix, Arizona, the country's toughest sheriff, Joe Arpaio, last year set out to capture the UFO. Armed with a tank capable of launching surface-to-air missiles, he set a few traps, each timed from the last location by NORAD, and programmed by computer to explode at the precise moment the UFO would arrive at that spot, calculated by the estimated speed the UFO was travelling, though they knew the figures could only be inaccurate, at best a postulate.

Well known for his advocacy against illegal immigration, and since the occupant of this UFO wasn't an American citizen, seemingly originating from the North Pole, Sheriff Joe was more than determined to take down the UFO. Well, bah humbug! Arpaio knows this alien almost personally, has had intimate knowledge of the perpetrator's intentions since childhood, and knows the occupant of the UFO is a spy who enters and leaves homes through chimneys, stealing cookies and milk, and leaving a calling card in the form of fancy-wrapped packages tied with a bow.

"Shoot down Klaus," Sheriff Joe told his deputies, "He's no citizen of this country. The law is the law and it has to be enforced. This Klaus is without papers...." •



## Justa Writer—"do I really want a relationship?"

By James Fenical

I once had a girlfriend who I truly loved and adored. I'd like to think she felt the same about me because we lived in cohabitation for over a year. Problem is she had some kind of psychiatric stress disorder. One night I was sound asleep having sweet dreams of being at the ocean. The evening setting sun glistening in hues of yellow, orange, red and indigo off the blue waters. The hot sand cascading a warmth as that of an electric blanket upon my skin.

Suddenly my dream turned into a nightmare. She was atop me, pounding her fists across my chest. Not a good alarm clock! •

## volunteering with the St. Vincent de Paul Society

By Emanuel Bécquer, ASU student majoring in Biomedical Informatics

During the summer between my sophomore and junior years, through an internship offered by the English department at Arizona State University, I had the opportunity to work with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel conference in Tempe. During a six-week period from May to June, I volunteered alongside Dr. Adelheid Thieme, Associate Director of Writing Programs at Arizona State University, who has been an active member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society for many years.

Founded in 1833 and named after a seventeenth century saint (1581-1660), the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a Catholic organization that offers various resources and services to the needy

and the poor. I volunteered my time preparing food boxes and visiting the homes of needy families in Tempe, together with Adelheid. As a volunteer, I learned about the various resources and services available to underserved families, as well as some partner agencies the Society works with to serve clients in Arizona.

One of the most important aspects of my internship experience was the ability to meet with people in different situations of need. As an aspiring medical doctor, I was previously volunteering as a medical interpreter at a community clinic for medically underserved patients. (continued on page 14)



## The lessons of reading & writing: stretch & the Portable Writing Center at GRIC

By Susan Bernstein, Instructor



In the Fall 2014 semester, the Stretch Program in First-Year Writing expanded to the [Gila River Indian Community](#) (GRIC). The students participating in the program form a cohort of educators earning BA degrees and working toward the first year of a Masters' degree to become credentialed language and culture teachers for GRIC. In addition to a full year of the Stretch Course, many of the students already serve as full-time teachers in the Community, and all students are engaged in the intensive study of the Akimel O'othom language and the history of Indian education. GRIC pays for cohort tuition, as well as for laptops. The laptops come in handy for Stretch's new paperless curriculum, adapted from the [award-winning redesign](#) at ASU's Downtown Phoenix campus.

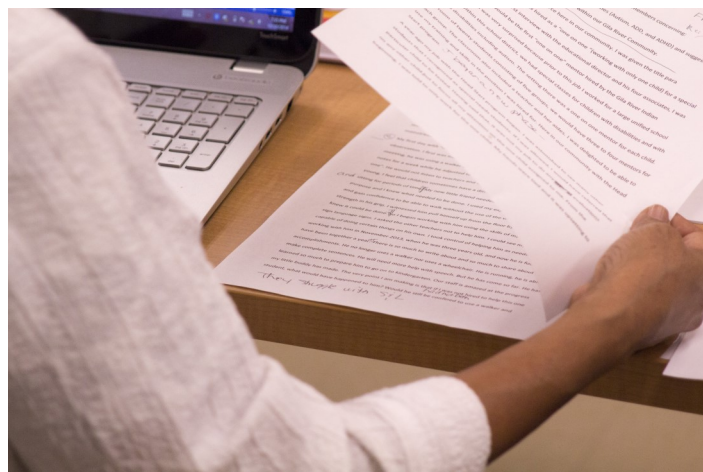
The Portable Writing Center presents an additional innovation at GRIC. Students from the new Teaching Basic Writing Practicum Course, as well as professional educators from outside Practicum, volunteer to offer onsite tutorials to support writing instruction there. This semester, tutors included faculty associate Bill Martin and Indigenous Rhetoric Coordinator and American Indian Studies Affiliate Faculty Kyle Wilson. The Portable Writing Center convened three times in the fall as students worked on revising each of the semester's three writing projects. The first session also saw students' young family members in attendance. The children created original writing projects of their own, including illustrated books and collaborative games, as cohort students and tutors sowed the seeds of writing together.

The final project at GRIC invited students to analyze scholarly arguments on the processes of learning, and to draw analogies to their own work in Stretch for the fall semester. A student from the cohort presented this conclusion:

**“Children are like seeds that can be planted. They grow up to be a beautiful plant or flower. It is the same way with reading and writing. Pouring what you have on their pencil to write, or proudly putting it on a computer. Then it is ready to be printed out.” We need to repetitively teach the lessons of reading and writing. By this the crop will be rich and priceless waiting to be handed out to the educational field. It is our dream and hope that the children of Gila River will be one of the priceless handpicked plant or fruit.**

Next semester Stretch continues at GRIC with English 101, beginning with a study of the rhetoric of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Volunteers are always welcome at the Portable Writing Center. Please contact Stretch co-coordinator and Writing Programs lecturer Dr. Susan Naomi Bernstein ([snbernst@gmail.com](mailto:snbernst@gmail.com)) if you are interested. •



## Visualizing Teaching in Action (the VITA project)

The VITA project (or Visualizing Teaching in Action) is an opportunity to showcase the semi-public spaces within writing classrooms. Writing is generally conceived of as a solo and private activity. The VITA project seeks to make public the activities that go along with writing: teaching, collaborating, brainstorming, and learning from one another. We hope that the project will enable students, teachers, administrators, and others in the public to see what goes on as part of Writing Programs classes.

Participants in the VITA project are volunteers. We ask anyone who is interested in participating to contact one of the photographers for VITA. After agreeing to participate, the photographer and teacher set up a good time to visit the classroom or virtual teaching space. Students also participate on a voluntary basis: all students included in VITA have signed a model release and consent form. The project is explained to them in advance, and they are encouraged to look through past VITA posts.

For more information about the VITA project, including how to participate, visit [the VITA project website](#). •



## spotlight on...Demetria Baker: program manager extraordinaire

By Jill Richards-Young, Instructor

Demetria Baker was an ASU student office assistant when I first started as a TA in 1989, back in the days when the Writing Programs was First Year Composition, David Schwalm was the Director, and Barbara Metcalf ran the office. Now Demetria is the Program Manager, eminently knowledgeable about everything Writing Programs-related, a true stalwart of the Department, and to me an endearingly familiar face. She is someone who will listen, is a remarkable problem-solver, is generous with her time, and, perhaps most important in her stress-filled job, has a great sense of humor. Should she ever decide to leave, I'm convinced that the place might well fall down.

"Things are always changing here," Demetria says, "and I adapt to change really well." Because she likes to solve problems and is adept at handling stress, she sees herself as "a good fit for this position." As well as managing the office, Demetria does the scheduling and staffing of 500 plus classes (as of this semester), works with articulation (which involves transfer students), liaises with a large campus population, particularly the advising community, and is the go-to person for anything to do with the university's writing requirements, especially for English 101 and 102. Also, she is one of the driving forces and entertaining presenters at our annual August meeting, where her creativity is on full display.

Though originally from Southern California, Demetria has her "roots here at ASU," having obtained a BA in Broadcasting at this university, and then coming to live and work permanently

in Arizona in 1993.

Despite her busy schedule, she often entertains family and friends, and while she quite likes regular cooking, she is far more enthusiastic about firing up the barbeque (with charcoal—she sneers at gas) for chicken and ribs. Although it's been two years since she went on a camping trip with her family to Sequoia National Park, she loves the beauty and the relaxation of being out-doors and only half-jokes about "becoming one with nature." She says she's not a photographer, but does enjoy taking photos so she can create collages and calendars for her family, capturing moments through her pictures that "create memories to keep alive." Demetria is a fan of horror movies and shows like *The Walking Dead*. Her taste in music runs to "a little bit of everything," and she reads widely when she has time, particularly African-American literature, "as long as it's good."

The Writing Programs is a great place to work, Demetria says. "I've been able to grow as an employee." While the constant change has always kept her motivated, what she likes best about the job is working with so many different kinds of people, especially the "diverse group of teachers." Let's hope she'll be around for a long time to come! •



## spotlight on...the many facets of Ruth Johnston

By Jill Richards-Young, Instructor



By phone, email, or in person, Ruth Johnston is the Writing Programs' first point of contact for staff, students, prospective students, faculty, and advisors. Ruth's the one with the ready smile, the gentle demeanor, the warm hug, and a sympathetic ear for teachers when they need one. She's also a skilled fixer of glitches, large and small, from coping with an office machine breakdown to dealing with

incomplete student documentation. But as one of the mainstays of the WP for nearly ten years, first as a Secretary Administrative and then as an Administrative Assistant, she does much more than this.

Among her many duties, Ruth assists Demetria by reviewing the names, times, and locations for accuracy on a multitude of class schedules prepared almost a year in advance; orders all desk copies of texts on the approved list; checks all the many book orders and sends them to the appropriate bookstores; schedules classrooms for meetings and conferences; revises and types up office hours lists and office directories; deals with overrides and countless student enrolment issues; and tries always to get people with problems directly in contact with those who can help so they don't have to wade through too much bureaucracy. Also, Ruth handwrites all schedules for 150 plus teachers each semester. "That's one of my favorite things to do," she says,

"because I thrive on accuracy and have always loved letters and writing." When classes are canceled or reorganized due low enrolment or staffing changes, things get really hectic and, as Ruth says, "We become a call center."

Ruth has lived in Arizona fifteen years, but grew up in La Salle, Illinois, and graduated from Illinois Valley C.C. with an Associate of Arts in Secretarial Science. One of her proudest moments was winning the Kankakee Best Cake in the County contest in 1996 with a seven layer chocolate torte. But though she loves cooking, music is her true passion. Ruth has played piano since childhood, while for more than three decades she has cantored in various churches to lead the congregation in song, has sung in variety shows, soloed for weddings and funerals, and performed the National Anthem not only at several sporting events in Illinois, but also, one of her biggest honors, at her high school graduation. Nowadays, Ruth volunteers every Tuesday night at the Red Mountain Senior Home and, as well as her piano playing and church singing, has fun twice a month at Karaoke.

Next time you're in the WP office having some candy and taking note of the seasonal decorations, both compliments of Ruth, you might discuss Bach or Barbra Streisand or perhaps *The Hunger Games* or even the latest rom-com, and she's sure to smile. Ask about her grandchildren, Dylan 16, and Kris 12, and she will beam. Ruth sees no downside to her work, except perhaps during breaks, when it's slow and everyone's gone. As she says, "It's the people that make the job rewarding for me." When she retires next year, we will surely miss her. •

## amenities, not humanities (book review)

By Ellen Kennedy Johnson, Lecturer

*Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life*, by William Deresiewicz, New York: Free Press, 2014.

*Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life* opens as a “letter to [the author’s] 20 year self.” Deresiewicz, a graduate of Columbia University and a former English professor at Yale, laments the path he and many others take to gain admission to and operate within the elitist educational system that he believes is a soulless, conveyor belt into high-paying, high-status financing, tech, and consulting jobs. The lack of coursework in the humanities and the move away from teaching critical thinking skills, he asserts, robs students of developing empathy, any understanding of worldwide realities, and, ultimately, a true sense of purpose. Understanding that his critics will claim his thesis is quixotic, Deresiewicz insists the stakes are high: since these students will eventually become the proverbial captains of industry, their narrow, skills-based education permits them to make poor decisions, often with global consequences.

Deresiewicz’s unrelenting broadside of the Ivies and the Golden Dozen begins years before admission to these prestigious schools. Helicopter parents enable students to have long resumes of activities, internships, and service work. In return, universities, operating as enterprises, lure students by ditching the humanities and offering amenities such as new dorms, gymnasiums, and student centers.

Like excellent sheep, these high-achieving students become “trapped in a bubble of privilege, heading meekly in the same direction, great at what they are doing but having no idea why they are doing it.” In the everyone gets a trophy world of the

elite university, Deresiewicz states that parties enter in to “mutual non-aggression pact[s],” where students agree to do little work and professors rarely show up. The majority of instruction comes from graduate students with little teacher training. And when professors actually teach courses, they are so specialized and protective of their research that free expression and debate are rarely welcomed.

Deresiewicz blames the stalling of social mobility, the struggling middle class, and global competition for this hyperactive response to the perception that a college education is crucial to success, and therefore, the more prestigious the university, the better chance one has of controlling their future in an unpredictable world—a dangerous illusion, indeed. Elite universities are fully complicit in exploiting these fears and, in Deresiewicz’s opinion, have no desire for students to ask the big questions about life and develop in ways that make them feel part of the human condition. After all, these institutions depend on alumni endowments, so fast-tracking students’ entry into Wall Street is pragmatic.

On the bright side, Deresiewicz praises mid-level, regional, non-research colleges for keeping the humanities flame alive, producing more seekers, thinkers, poets, non-profit workers, and students “looking for the world of possibility, not security.” While the book unleashed a fury of critics, chiding the author for his idealism and dismissal of economic realities, I can imagine Deresiewicz restating his claim in reply: “Of course money matters: jobs matter, financial security matters, national prosperity matters. The question is are they the only things that matter?” •

## volunteering with the St. Vincent de Paul Society (continued from page 11)

Through my work with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, I was able to gain greater awareness of the social issues affecting people in need, which helped shape my understanding of their influence on the quality and the viability of patient care.

I am grateful that my work with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul provided me a chance to sit down with families, get a glimpse into their daily struggles, and to listen to and respond to their needs. I learned to understand the importance of not passing judgment whenever help is solicited, and I learned to recognize the role of a subtle gesture like a smile and or a handshake made in creating an atmosphere of trust. A fundamental part of this communication was grasping the significance of responding with empathy. I felt humbled by the gratitude that families expressed in their words, smiles, and tears.

Through my volunteer work at the clinic and food pantry, I have been able to develop contacts that may be beneficial to my future career, and to forge friendships with likeminded students that share similar aspirations to make a difference in communities. Noting the unique opportunity to network with others, I have made use of my experience to lay the foundation for future collaborations with respect to organizations and projects that seek to make an impact in underserved communities.

Most importantly, the opportunity to intern with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel conference offered me a greater sense of social action and responsibility. This feeling of civic duty has been an important motivation for me to continue taking my studies seriously and fit my volunteer engagements into my daily schedule.

This experience has improved my judgment and maturity in setting goals and knowing progress in my daily life. Most of the people I have talked to about my internship have remarked positively about a change that they noticed in my character and self-esteem. I feel very grateful to have obtained these professional and social skills that will have an important impact on the quality of care that I hope to offer my patients as a medical doctor in the future. •



## National Day on Writing (continued from page 4)

### What was successful this year at NDOW?

Definitely the moments when the students just take some time to really think about what they are writing. It's strange seeing that process and seeing the anxiety of actually putting their work out in public. A lot of students got to show their voices in places where they aren't always able to articulate themselves.

One of the prompts was, "What would you do if you won the lottery?" and I remember a Chinese student came up, and I had to explain to him what the lottery was. Then, once he figured it out, he wrote down that he'd build a *real* university in China. For me, that really situated everything and made me think about why NDOW is important. Sometimes we end up thinking of this as just another event where students write stuff and it doesn't mean anything. I mean, we've always tried to do something that makes students think, that has more weight, but sometimes they just don't think about in that way. Sometimes students get extra credit for participating, so they just write whatever, and walk away. So, it was in that moment that I was like, wow, we are doing good work here.

### What do you see as the future of NDOW?

I've been thinking about this for a couple of years: I'd like to put together a student video competition. The challenge has always been that NDOW takes place so early in the semester, so we would have to be on it, or start the video competition in the spring. We have so many teachers that do multimodal/multimedia projects that I think it would be great to actually

see what kind of stuff students are doing and give them an outlet to compete with each other and show that off.



### What's something funny that happened at NDOW this year?

One whole class came together to participate and they were all hung up on writing a story of a hybrid goat-cow. They all understood what it was, like an inside joke. I asked their instructor what it meant and she had no clue. She said, "They're strange. They're lovely, but they're strange." They all had this shared language about this thing. It seemed like a really interesting bonding moment for all of them, too. •

A video of NDOW 2014 can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/ASU-NDOW-2014>



## behind the scenes writer award (continued from page 4)

Or, there's the story Bordow wrote about the ASU professor, who after 47 years of service to the university, is funding a Maroon and Gold Leaders Endowment to help promising undergraduates with financial needs.

"Melissa has impressed me in both her eagerness to embrace a writing style outside her comfort zone [and] her clarity in understanding an effective perspective to achieve a goal," says Williams. "She shows passion for her art and commitment to learning."

The National Day on Writing Committee found Bordow's work to be an outstanding example of how important staff writing is to the university's overall success. There are a great many staff writers at ASU who work hard at achieving effective, even beautiful and graceful writing every day. The award was created to recognize and then celebrate that hard work. •

## symposium on second language writing 2014 (continued from page 5)

### 2014 SSLW Organizing Committee:

Dr. Paul Kei Matsuda  
Katherine Daily O'Meara & Sarah Snyder  
Jianing Liu & Yuching Jill Yang  
Izabela Uscinski  
Juval Racelis  
Youmie Kim & Dan Bommarito  
Dr. Aya Matsuda  
Seckin Sage Gorucu  
Dr. Joseph Mambu, Youngwha Lee, Taimin Wu

Symposium Chair, Web Manager  
Associate Chairs  
Program Chairs  
Program Book Editor  
Social Coordinator  
Exhibits Coordinators  
Hotel Coordinator  
Symposium Photographer  
SSLW Assistants



### Presenters from ASU:

Amanda Hilliard (AACP): "The Effects of Instruction Based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory on EFL Students' Writing Performance"

Junghwa Kim: "Narrative Analysis of a Multilingual Writer's L2 Writing Experience"

Youngwha Lee: "Expressing Emotions in L2 Writing"

Jianing Liu: "A Comprehensive Examination of Chinese Students' Pathways to FYC Courses"

Katherine Daily O'Meara: "Perceptions of Multilingual Students in a Graduate L2 Writing Course"

Juval V. Racelis: "Understanding the Knowledge Bases of L2 Writing Teachers in FYC"

Ryan P. Shepherd, Katherine Daily O'Meara & Sarah Elizabeth Snyder: "Multilingual Writers, Comp and Grammar: Grammar Contracts in the First-Year Composition Classroom"

Izabela Uscinski: "Exploring Student Engagement with Written Corrective Feedback in First-Year Composition Courses"

Taimin Tammy Wu: "Are They Still 'Anxious'? A Pilot Study of Treatment for Second Language Writing Anxiety of EFL College Students"

Yuching Yang: "Reexamining Perception of L2 Writing"

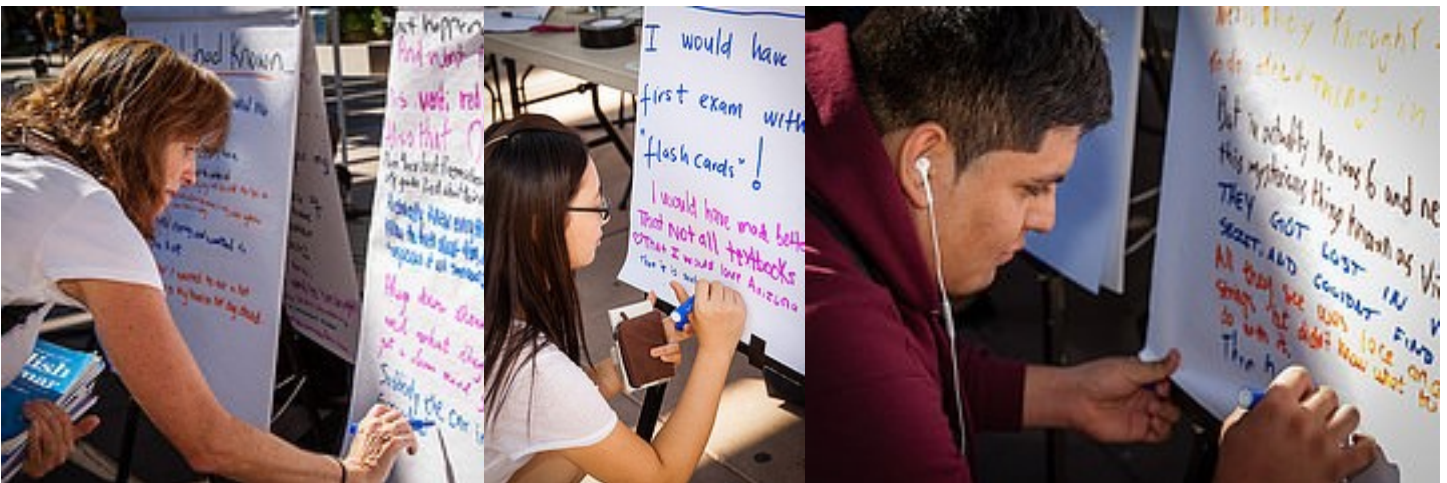


### SSLW Volunteers:

Araceli Amador, Jackie Brady, Hana Choi, Susan Davis, Andrea Dickens, Tonya Eick, Gregg Fields, Stephanie Hartley, Junghwa Kim, J. Alberto Lima, I-Chin Lin, Narin Loa, Lynette Myles, Margaret Morris, Sara Sams, Tomoko Shimomura, Christy Skeen, Sarah Young, Yan Elle Zhao

### Session Chairs:

Patricia Boyd, Jacqueline Brady, Alice Daer, Susan Davis, Andrea Dickens, Trevor Duston, Patricia Friedrich, Maureen Daly Goggin, Peter Goggin, Mark Hannah, Courtney Isabell Fowler, Mark James, Youngwha Lee, Elenore Long, Ruby Macksoud, Keith Miller, Margaret S. Morris, Abigail Oakley, Matthew Prior, Claire Renaud, Shirley Rose, Ryan Shepherd, amy dawn shinabarger, Lupco Spasovski, Adelheid Thieme, Jennifer Waters, Brandon Whiting •





# Writing Programs' New TAs, 2014-2015

Compiled by Sarah Duerden, Instructor



**Ernesto L. Abeytia** is a poet in the ASU MFA Creative Writing Program. He received his MA in English from Saint Louis University and his MA in Anglo/North-American Cultural and Literary Studies from the Autonomous University of Madrid. He also holds a BA from the University of Arizona where he double-majored in English and Creative Writing. His research focuses on 20th Century Literature and Poetry, Robots, and Superheroes. Travel, Diaspora, and Spanish culture are common themes in his poetry.



**Stephanie Bell** is pursuing a PhD in Literature and she is interested in Early American Literature. Stephanie grew up in the Phoenix area but moved to Minnesota for several years for college and graduate school before moving back to attend ASU. She has a BA in English from Northwestern College in St. Paul, MN, and an MA in English from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN. She and her husband live in Glendale where he is attending pharmacy school at Midwestern University.



**Kathryn Bucolo** is a Fiction writer in the MFA program who is from Denver, Pennsylvania, a tiny town in the middle of some corn fields with one traffic light and plenty of cows. The youngest person in her MFA cohort, she just graduated from Gettysburg College in May 2014, earning a BA in English with a Writing Concentration. While she is very excited about being a TA this year, she is even more excited about her recent engagement to the love of her life and planning their wedding for next summer.

**Aria Curtis** is an MFA Creative Writing student in Fiction. She grew up in Atlanta, Georgia and graduated from Emory University with a degree in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. In past lives, she has trained as a midwife assistant, studied Documentary Photography, and taught first grade. She is excited to join the MFA and writing community at ASU.

**Sue Hyon Bae**

**Jessica Boykin**

**Courtney Carlisle**

**Tonya Eick**

**Megan Granata**



**María Álvarez** is an MFA Candidate in the Graduate Creative Writing Program at ASU. María writes with the purpose of exploring "the absurd," a space where she introduces her readership to what she calls "disenfranchised" characters. She is interested in the awkward moments that surface at family gatherings, the complex interiority of self-proclaimed introverts, and the ramping violence of 1980s Latin America; her work crosses boundaries, both figuratively and literally. María pulls her creativity from her native country of Guatemala where she was born and her hometown of Mesa, Arizona where she was raised. She is currently working on her first novel.



**Kayla Bruce** is a first-year PhD student in Rhetoric, Writing, and Literacies. She graduated with an MA in English: Rhetoric and Composition from Illinois State University in Normal, IL, and a BA in English from Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais, IL (about 20 miles south of Chicago). Kayla was also an adjunct at Olivet for one year and has taught several sections of FYC with varying focuses. While at ISU, Kayla had an article published in the *Grassroots Writing Research Journal* in 2014, and wrote her thesis on rhetorical analysis of food memoirs. She would like to continue to do work in rhetorical analysis of life writing here at ASU. When not doing this work, Kayla likes to go out to eat, travel, and hang out with her family, friends, and dog, Finley, who is named after a Packer's player- the team from her home state of Wisconsin!

**Travis Franks** is a PhD student in literature. Travis grew up in Texas, where he was an offensive, defensive, and special teams starter on the 8th grade A-team at Lorena Middle School. His article on Professional Wrestling has been rejected by a number of leading journals in American Studies. He is definitely not the person who keeps eating other peoples' lunches out of the grad lounge refrigerator. Outside of his academic pursuits, Travis is a co-founding member of several bands, including New Heroes of the Old War and Bird Tattoo. If elected, he promises to reinstitute Jeans Friday and to fight for longer summer breaks, more snow days, and vegan options in the cafeteria.

## Writing Programs' New TAs, 2014-2015 (continued)



**Courtney Duculescu** was born and raised in Wyoming, and earned her BA (2011) and MA (2013) in English from the University of Wyoming. She studies Early Modern/Renaissance English Literature, with a particular interest in Milton. Other research interests include Gender, Affect Theory (especially shame), and Performance. In addition to academic life, Courtney has two dogs, Scout and Steinbeck, which keep her busy and entertained.



**Tracey Hayes** is a fourth-year PhD student in the Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics program. Her research interests include Social Media/Networks, Publics and Counterpublics, and Digital Literacies. Tracey received her BA degree from St. Norbert College in De Pere, WI and her MA in English with an Emphasis in Literacy, Technology, and Professional Writing from Northern Arizona University. Her home town is Chicago, and she studied Improvisation at the Second City Training Center. She has adapted really well to heat and desert environs of Arizona, and you can often find her outdoors (either biking or hiking) discovering the different plants and animals of the state. She also enjoys traveling and has lived in York, England. Tracey has presented papers at several conferences including CCCC and Computers and Writing, and was designated a 2014-2015 HASTAC Scholar.



**Abigail Oakley** is a PhD student from Ohio studying Rhetoric and Composition. She moved to Arizona in 2010 and completed her MA in Rhetoric and Composition at ASU in December of 2013. She is currently interested in various aspects of digital humanities including how communities function and communicate and how to use social media as a classroom tool. In her spare time she enjoys seeing movies, hiking, cooking, and cruising social media.

**Amilynne Johnston**

**Myungsung Kim**

**Kevin Lichty**

**Natasha Murdock**

**Glenn Newman**

**Brandon Whiting**



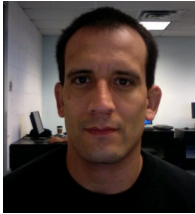
**Gregg Fields** grew up in Oklahoma and Texas and then moved to California. After completing his BA in Literature and Writing at Cal. State - San Marcos, he continued on to complete his MA at CSUSM as well, gaining valuable experience teaching first-year writing as well as interning in the Writing Center. He could be considered a family man, and he feels that his wife and three daughters are truly blessings from the Lord. Gregg is currently enrolled as a PhD student in the English Department's Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics program. He intends to become more specialized in Second-Language Writing, Writing Program Administration, Curriculum Design, and Pedagogy. His research interests include L2 Concepts, Differentiated Literacies, Contrastive Rhetoric/Intercultural Rhetoric, Translingual Writing, Effective Prompt Construction, Rubric Construction, Writing Centers Pedagogy, Compassionate Teaching, Effective Teaching Practices and Pedagogies, Cognitive Theory, and Structuralism/Deconstructive Theory. His master's thesis



**Sayantan Mukherjee** hails from India and presently is a first year graduate student at ASU. He is pursuing his PhD in Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics with focused interests in Linguistics. He has earned his BA in English (literature) from Visva-Bharati, India, and MA in Linguistics, from the University of Delhi in India. He has successfully finished his MPhil (pre-PhD in Linguistics) at the Department of Linguistics, University of Delhi in India. During his Masters, he achieved awards for being the university top-per of Linguistics in the year 2011 and 2012. He speaks Bangla (two different variants), English, and Hindi. He also has working knowledge in Awadhi (said to be a regional dialect of Hindi). His research interests include Second Language Learning/Acquisition for adults, Pragmatics, Semantics, Syntax, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Morphology, Phonetics, and Phonology.



## Writing Programs' New TAs, 2014-2015 (continued)



**Cristian Lopez Villegas** was born in Tepic, Mexico and raised in Orange County, California. He completed a BA in Spanish and a MA in Sociolinguistics (Spanish), both at ASU. He is currently in the Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics program concentrating in Linguistics. He is interested in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Judo.



**Brandon Whiting** is originally from Idaho. He has a BS in Psychology from the University of Utah and an MA in Poetry from the University of Cincinnati. He is interested in how people relate to each other through writing and is studying a PhD in Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics here at ASU.



**Jennifer Conlon** is studying for an MFA in Creative Writing specializing in Poetry. Jennifer graduated with a BA in English from UNC-Greensboro where she began her poetry manuscript inspired by her brother's service in Afghanistan. She is continuing this work at ASU, while also exploring her interests in hiking, cooking, and obsessing over Star Trek: TNG. She moved from North Carolina with her partner Ben and their two dogs, and they have recently adopted two bearded dragons.

**Melissa Michal Slocum** is working on a PhD in Literature. Her areas of interest include Contemporary Ethnic Literature, American Indian Literature, Trauma Studies, and Education. She is from Rochester, NY, and she has an MFA from Chatham University and an MA from The Pennsylvania State University. Her research includes seeking new ways to teach texts and ideas normally considered outside the literary canon. Her hobbies include hiking and photography. She is also working on a novel.



**Natasha Murdock** is pursuing a MFA Creative Writing specializing in Poetry. She currently lives in Gilbert, AZ with her tiny family. You can find some of her most recent poems in the Cobalt Review and Four Chambers Magazine. She enjoys eating macaroni and cheese, re-reading Harry Potter, and taking one million pictures (a day) of her baby. Her patronus is a fox.

**Sunyoung Lee** is a PhD student in English Literature. She specializes in Medieval Literature. She graduated with an MA in English from Seoul National University and came from South Korea in 2011. She found out that she is good at cooking Korean food after starting to live in America. She is currently writing her dissertation. Her research interests include History of Food Consumption, and Ethic, the idea of gluttony and moderation in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Middle English Literature.

**Dustin Pearson** is an MFA candidate at ASU. He received his BA and MA in English Literature from Clemson University, and his black belt in Tae Kwon Do from the National Karate Institute. He enjoys changing the pitch of songs and would eat white rice and soy sauce regardless of living on a graduate student budget. He is from Summerville, South Carolina. He can be reached at [Dustin.Pearson@asu.edu](mailto:Dustin.Pearson@asu.edu).

## Writing Programs' New Instructors and FAs, 2014-2015

Compiled by **Sarah Duerden, Instructor**



**Adam Hoffman** has lived in both Tucson and Flagstaff and graduated from NAU with an MA in English Literature in May 2011. He earned his BA in Religious Studies from the University of Arizona in 2008. His academic interests include Post-modern Literature, Post-humanism, Deconstruction, Shakespeare/Elizabethan Literature, Classical Literature, and Literature and Cultural Theory. His most recent conference papers include "Cold Trembling and Trepidation: A New Year's Eve Misadventure" (creative fiction), "Hegel in Black Americana: Hegelian Identity Theory and its Influence on WEB Du Bois and James Weldon Johnson," "Drawbacks of Tech in the Classroom: Isolation, Distraction, Dependence," "Here, said she, / Is your card': The Visual Presence of the Tarot in Eliot's The Waste Land." His teaching experience includes English Composition, English Literature, Technical/Professional Writing, humanities courses, honors courses, and Public Speaking. When he is not working he enjoys Buddhism, hiking, vegan eating, running, and film.

Additional new Instructors: **Linda Bergquist, Aimee Blau, Jason Bryant, Michael Cryer, Chad Fore, Christine Gillette, Cecilia Granillo, Soren Hammerschmidt, Adam Hoffman, Sarah Hynes, Erik Johnson, Kristi Perkins, Sara Sams, Bryan Vanginhoven**

**Lauren Simek** is originally from Phoenix and completed a BA in English Literature and Spanish at ASU. After her BA she moved to Indiana University, Bloomington, where she completed her MA and her PhD. Her dissertation examined moral expression in Victorian Literature, and she has two articles so far in print: "Feminist 'Cant' and Narrative Selflessness in Sarah Grand's New Woman Trilogy" in *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, and "The Sounds of Narrative in Longfellow's *Evangeline*" in *Reconsidering Longfellow*.

Additional New FAs: **Lauren Brandenburg, Cindy Tekkobe, Jennifer Downer, Emily Hooper, Kathrine Keller, Anthony Martone, Virgil Mathes, Katie McNamara, Kurt Myers, Daniel Najork, Michael Noschka**



## kudos and milestones! Compiled by **Kyle Grant Wilson, Instructor**

**Meghan Nestel** and her husband, Erik, welcomed baby girl Moira Rose in June with love and joy.

**Jennifer Baum's** essay, "A Different Set of Rules," is being published in the "Best of 2014" print edition of *Newfound Journal*. It has also been nominated for a Pushcart award.

**Valerie Fazel's** dissertation, "YouTube Shakespeares: Encountering Ethical, Theoretical, and Methodological Challenges in Researching Online Performance," was awarded an Honorable Mention by the international scholarly organization The Association of Internet Researchers in August 2014. The annual AoIR awards include one First Prize and two Honorable Mentions within the field of Internet Studies.

**Maureen Goggin** recently published "Connected by Threads: Second World War Prisoner of War Samplers as Effective Therapy for Trauma" in the Volume 20.4, Winter 2014 edition of *Sampler and Antique Needlework Quarterly*.

**Alice Hays** presented at the National Conference for Teachers of English (NCTE) in Washington DC in mid-November. She participated in the "High School Matters" panel, which was one of the featured panels at the conference.

**Youngwha Lee** presented her study, "Emotions in L2 Writing," at the Symposium on Second Language Writing at ASU from November 13 to November 15, 2014.



## kudos! (continued)

**Shavawn M. Berry** has published twelve nonfiction essays in *Rebelle Society* since last spring, including the most recent, “The Invisible World Behind the World” (<http://www.rebellesociety.com/2014/10/22/the-invisible-world-behind-the-world/>). During this time, she's also published fifteen nonfiction essays in *Be You Media Group*, including “Finding a Door that's Open” (<http://beyoumediagroup.com/2014/11/11/finding-a-door-thats-open/>) and fourteen nonfiction essays in *The Anjana Network*, including “Resistance is Futile” (<http://theanjananetwork.net/2014/07/16/resistance-is-futile-change-gonna-come/>). In addition, she published “What I See,” a poem about aging, in *The Huffington Post* in June ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shavawn-berry/featured-fifty-poetry\\_b\\_4384597.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shavawn-berry/featured-fifty-poetry_b_4384597.html)), as well as two personal essays for The Good Men Project. She did a well-received poetry reading for Phoenix Poetry in May alongside Dr. Amira de la Garza and was later invited (by Dr. de la Garza) to join an Institute of Humanities Research Cluster for 2014 -15 where she is working with a small group of ASU scholars studying the creative process through the lens of the 'trickster and mindful heretic.' This fall she informally joined The Pen Project (Prison English) —which she will start formally teaching in January 2015—and presented on the topic of prison education at the TYCA-West conference on October 11 at Mesa Community College alongside Roberta Norales of the AZ Department of Corrections Prison Education Program and Michelle Ribeiro of the NM Department of Corrections in Santa Fe.

**Kyndra Turner** was awarded ASU's Writing Programs' Exemplary Professional ePortfolio Award (2014), which acknowledges Writing Programs teachers for their use of digital ePortfolio platform to create a strong professional teaching portfolio that illustrates their skills as a researcher and teacher. Additionally, this past April, Kyndra gave a lecture, “Frankenstein: In the Energy and Environmental Humanities Context,” to Arizona State University's Energy Club. In Spring 2014, Kyndra completed working on the *Keywords for Environmental Studies* collection edited by Joni Adamson, William Gleason, and David Pellow (in press, New York University Press, 2015). Lastly, as the 2013-2014 Andrew W. Mellon Research Assistant for the North American Observatory's Western Cluster (<http://hfe.wfu.edu/observatories/north-american-observatory/west-cluster/>), Kyndra organized and facilitated several conferences and workshops that brought together literary critics, historians, political ecologists, indigenous studies scholars, and philosophers to work on collaborative projects that can be adapted and re-scaled for different institutions and communities interested in exploring how social values and human behaviors can be transformed together as a key step in developing alternative solutions to the complex environmental challenges we face now and for the future. Kyndra is currently a Ph.D. candidate researching American literature, film, and material ecocriticism at Arizona State University.

**Kyle Grant Wilson**, Writing Program's Indigenous Rhetoric Coordinator (2008-present), accepted the additional status as American Indian Studies Affiliated Faculty at ASU. In addition to English department administrative, service, and committee work, his added AIS duties are to include, but are not limited to: serve in various committees; cross-list or teach AIS courses; participate in AIS sponsored projects or events; collaborate with AIS faculty to participate in projects and events connected to scholarly work, research, and other projects, including serving as PI or Co-PI on grants. •

## call for submissions: *Writing Notes* spring issue

*Writing Notes* is looking for contributors for the Spring edition. We invite **book reviews** of approximately 500 words on pedagogical texts of interests to the Writing Programs. Also, we ask for other article submissions or ideas. Also, we ask for 150-word submissions on “**Classroom Strategies that Work**,” a continuing segment devoted to sharing the practices we employ in our own classrooms with other Writing Programs teachers. Have any article submissions or suggestions? Please share them with us. And don't forget to submit your **Kudos** and **Milestones** during the next semester. Submission information will be sent out early in the semester. If there is something that we have not mentioned that you would like covered in *Writing Notes*, let us know.

Want to discuss what you've read in this issue? Visit the Writing Programs Blackboard site or Facebook page to provide your feedback/commentary.

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