

Arts & Letters

The Magazine of Potter College at Western Kentucky University

A large, detailed photograph of a classical statue of a woman, likely a personification of Art or Poetry, holding a large, ornate floral arrangement above her head. The statue is set in a grand hall with a high, vaulted ceiling and chandeliers.

Continuing
a Tradition
of Excellence



Message from the Dean

Van Meter Hall
is celebrating its
100th birthday
with a sweeping
restoration,
preparing it for
a new century
as WKU's prime
performance
venue.

Welcome to the new issue of *Arts & Letters*! This time we're highlighting some of the people who make Potter College the special place that it is. You'll meet the remarkable group of Potter College faculty members that WKU has designated as University Distinguished Professors. It's the university's most prestigious faculty honor, and we're proud that ten of the 26 UDPs have come from Potter College, more than from any other college. You'll also meet four accomplished young people whose active lives illustrate the tremendous possibilities that are available to Potter College students. They are putting their Potter College education to work as they make a difference in our world both at home and abroad.

This issue will also give you the chance to learn more about how the faculty, staff, and students in Potter College go about creating the excellence that is characteristic of our programs. You'll see how our faculty are using technology to bring our graduate courses to students distant from Bowling Green, be they teachers in Metcalfe County or combat soldiers in Afghanistan. You'll look through the camera lens at our fabulously successful Photojournalism program, and you'll step backstage to see how our Theatre and Dance Department prepares students for the professional entertainment world. And you'll have a chance to sit down with one of our most famous graduates — Grammy- and Dove-winning gospel singer Larnelle Harris — for a conversation about his remarkable career.

Finally, I think you'll particularly enjoy the chance to renew your acquaintance with an old friend, Van Meter Hall. The university's oldest building is celebrating its 100th birthday this year with a sweeping restoration that has prepared it for a new century of service as WKU's prime performance venue. I think you'll be amazed by Van Meter's new look.

Distinguished faculty. Ambitious students. Successful programs. Great facilities. All hallmarks of a Potter College education in the 21st century.

David Lee
Dean, Potter College of
Arts & Letters

Arts & Letters

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Sally Ray
Assistant Dean, Potter College of Arts & Letters
<sally.ray@wku.edu>

COPY EDITORS

Wes Berry
Assistant Professor,
Department of English

Stacey Biggs
Chief Marketing Officer,
Office of Public Affairs

Mina Doerner
Assistant to the Dean,
Potter College of Arts & Letters

ART DIRECTOR

Tom Meacham

DESIGNERS

Marcus Dukes Senior Designer	Scott French Graphic Designer
Cole Davis	I-Ping Kuan
Bennett Hibbler	Naketia Staten

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Clinton Lewis	Matthew Powell
---------------	----------------

WRITERS

Eric Bain-Selbo	Mac McKerral
Carol Cummings	Mary Ellen Miller
Cecile Garmon	Mary Murphy
Stacey Gish	Lindsey Westerfield
Jonathan Jeffrey	Michael Ann Williams
Molly McCaffrey	Sally Ray

TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEW WITH LARNELLE HARRIS

Rebecca Karr

About the Cover

"Spring", part of "The Four Seasons" statuary group,
by Professor Aristide Sartorio in 1911 (see page 25).
Photo collage by Marcus Dukes.

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Carol Cummings



Matt Vaughan, a junior from Mexico, Missouri, holds a "Make Poverty History" sign during the ONE Campus Challenge at WKU.

Building Bridges for ONE Humanity

BY LINDSEY WESTERFIELD

Potter College of Arts & Letters provides an academic home for some of WKU's most distinctive students, setting themselves apart from the crowd through research, national scholarships, public service, study abroad, and more. Meet four Potter College students who, through motivation and determination, have embraced exciting opportunities afforded them through a Potter College education and are making a difference in our community and world.

Out of Many, ONE

Matt Vaughan was a difference maker before arriving at WKU, but it was here that Matt's quest to change the world soared to new heights. Having worked with the ONE campaign and established a Global Service Club in his hometown of Mexico, Missouri, Matt and a cohort of fellow students saw

the need for a student-driven global awareness organization at WKU. After spending hours discussing a variety of social justice issues, ranging from child soldiering and climate change to global health and poverty, Matt led his friends in collectively founding a WKU chapter of the national organization Americans for an Informed Democracy (AID).

Matt says that AID eventually became an umbrella organization to encompass the different yet interconnected issues that impassioned him and his friends. When he heard about the ONE Campus Challenge, a nationwide competition to raise awareness about global poverty, Matt pitched the idea to AID. "Everyone supported getting involved in this rock and roll movement," Matt says. "Not only did WKU win the competition, we were also recognized as the 'Most Globally Aware Campus' in the nation, which sent a message that WKU students are serious about changing the world."

As a junior Political Science major with a concentration in International Relations and minor in Anthropology, Matt says his academic pursuits drive his success. "Learning about the science, research, and theories behind political systems and changing cultures has expanded my personal philosophy, which is the driving force behind my involvement in the social movements of AID and ONE."

Dr. Sandra Ardrey, department head of Political Science and co-director for the Institute for Citizenship & Social Responsibility, speaks enthusiastically about Matt's strong sense of social responsibility. "Matt takes full advantage of the many opportunities we offer for civic and political engagement. As a political scientist, it's really rewarding for me to see how Matt, working with the ONE Campaign, takes the concepts and theories learned in our classes and uses them to address global issues. This is what student engagement is all about."

Artistic Inspiration

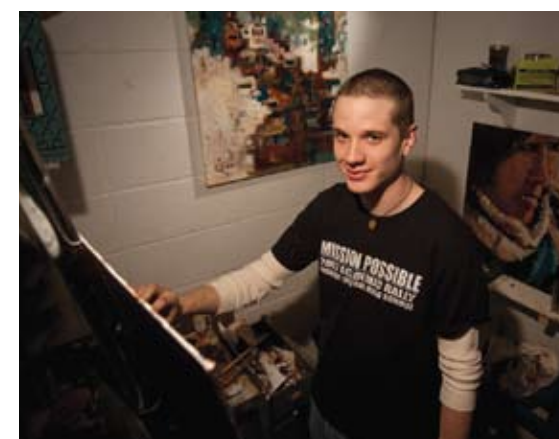
Jesse Hazel was installing an art exhibit in the Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center gallery when he first learned about WKU's Chinese Language Flagship Program through a faculty member. One of nine federally funded programs in the nation that promotes fluency in Mandarin Chinese and offers annual opportunities for travel to China, Jesse knew he wanted to be a part of what Flagship had to offer. Jesse coupled his major in Visual Arts with his interest in Chinese, and as a junior from Bowling Green, Kentucky, he says that the resources and skills he has gained from his trip to China "are just footsteps to the limitless opportunities ahead of me."

Jesse is finding new inspiration for his artwork through studying the Chinese culture. Along with traditional Chinese painting and philosophies like Taoism, Jesse's current influence is Xu Bing, a Chinese artist whose works question the written word, usually in the form of the Chinese character, demonstrating how both meanings and written words can be easily manipulated. Xu created more than 1200 characters that mimic Chinese characters, but have no known meaning, and printed them in books with traditional formats, on wall posters,

and on giant billowing sheets, which he installed in exhibition galleries to form a ceiling or sky. Xu's works reflect his thinking about Chinese art and culture after the Cultural Revolution. Through Jesse's search for fresh ways to communicate visually and to express himself, he has found "a new vocabulary" for his art that "creates a layer of richness and authenticity" in his artistic process.

Brent Oglesbee, Art department head, comments: "Jesse exhibits the kind of curiosity that we want to see in our art majors. He has discovered opportunities to make the most of his artistic talent by using visual art as a bridge between cultures."

After graduating from WKU, Jesse plans to move to Beijing to pursue his career of painting meaningful and intriguing art that combines all of his interests and passions. "The most unique experience with studying both art and Chinese language is that I'm always doing, thinking, and pursuing both everyday. My Chinese makes my art better and my art makes my Chinese better," Jesse says.



Jesse Hazel is a junior from Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Modeling the Way

Brooke Shafar went beyond "making the most" of her four years at WKU—she blazed a trail that continues to inspire others. An undergraduate from Taylorsville, Kentucky, Brooke earned a double major in German and English with a minor in Film Studies and completed an original Capstone Experience/Thesis Project through the Honors College. Brooke pushed her academic and extracurricular pursuits to the next level by publishing in a national literary journal, *The Rectangle*, published by Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society, and by earning

one of WKU's highest academic honors as Scholar of Potter College. Brooke studied abroad twice during her undergraduate career, once in Munich and then in Berlin. This positioned her well to apply for and win one of the very competitive Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships to spend a year as an English Language Teaching Assistant in a German school.

During her 2008-2009 Fulbright experience in Mainz, Germany, Brooke helped a group of students prepare for an internationally recognized English proficiency exam. "I was so proud of them when they all passed for their language level," Brooke says. "I also had the chance to sit in some lecture courses at the university, one about Film history, which was a nice exercise for my German."

Dr. Laura McGee, associate professor of German and a Fulbright Scholar herself, continues to serve as a mentor to Shafar. McGee says, "Brooke impressed me from the first German course she took with me. She is disciplined, creative and resourceful in her academic work. It was always a pleasure to read her papers and to have her contribute to class discussions. Brooke has so many talents that when it came time to choose a direction for graduate school, she really struggled with her choices."

Brooke is currently in the process of earning an M.A. in German at Washington University in St. Louis and looks forward to teaching an introductory German course in the coming semesters.

Teaching for Life

Katherine Hale has a variety of long-term goals that include being a teacher, an interpreter, an international traveler, and even a public servant. These aspirations are closer than ever to fruition

with her designation as a recipient of a 2009-2010 Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship grant. Receiving one of only 15 Fulbright grants available to teach English in Argentina, Katherine will

spend nine months immersed in Argentine culture while teaching English and volunteering in the community. Dr. Larry Snyder, PCAL Associate Dean and an advisor to Hale, notes "Katherine has a genuine intellectual curiosity that is quite refreshing. Her academic training will hold her in good stead for this appointment."

Hailing from Nicholasville, Kentucky, Katherine is a 2007 Potter College and Honors College graduate with majors in Spanish, German, and Religious Studies, and previous international experience.

Choosing to enrich her language studies as an undergraduate, Katherine spent two semesters abroad—once in Morelia, Mexico, through the Kentucky Institute for International Studies, and again at the University of Education Vienna in Austria. On this trip to Argentina, Katherine looks forward to the teaching opportunities as well as the community service she will complete: "In continuation of

my most recent work as a Preschool ESL Assistant in Warren County Schools, I plan to volunteer at an orphanage, working in small groups with preschool-aged children with the goal of developing their pre-literacy skills."

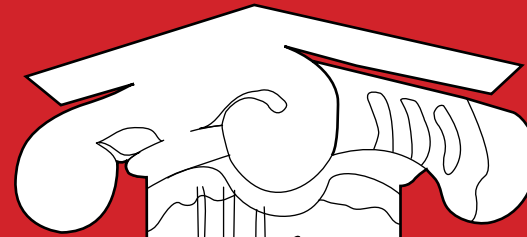
Katherine notes the importance of her faculty mentors at WKU, saying "I am particularly grateful for the professors who were instrumental in helping me receive this grant: Dr. Larry Snyder, Dr. Laura McGee, and Dr. Sonia Lenk." Among other goals, Katherine plans to pursue graduate work upon her return from Argentina, laying the foundation for a promising future.



Brooke Shafar ('08) is a graduate from Taylorsville, Kentucky.



Katherine Hale ('07) is a graduate from Nicholasville, Kentucky.



PERITI ILLUSTR Potter College's Distinguished Faculty

BY CECILE GARMON

The University Distinguished Professors (UDP) program serves "to recognize university faculty members who have served the University with distinction and have compiled an outstanding record of achievement in teaching, research, and service." Established in 1996, the UDP has honored twenty-six faculty members from across the university with this distinction. Ten of these outstanding faculty members have come from Potter College of Arts & Letters. Within Potter College, six have had a home in the History Department; two more came from Philosophy and Religion; Folk Studies and Anthropology and Music have each supplied one "distinguished" member. Potter College's distinguished faculty members reflect what academia establishes as the epitome of faculty responsibility; each honored member of the group provides exceptional strength in all three traditional areas of faculty life and each one also offers areas of specialty that serve as models for all faculty and inspiration for those who seek distinction.

PERITI ILLUSTR

Potter College's Distinguished Faculty

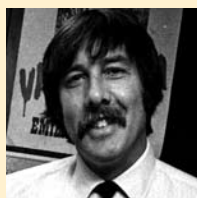


Carlton Jackson

The First University Distinguished Faculty member was Carlton Jackson (History) whose term spanned from 1996-2001. Jackson's research production includes many pages of refereed books, articles, stories, and edited works. He has received four Fulbright Senior Scholar Grants (to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Finland), has taught in Belize, and was teaching in Shiraz, Iran, in the fall of 1978 when he had to leave because the revolution started. Jackson describes his work as "eclectic" because so many topics have interested him that he moves along from one topic to another.

Jackson firmly believes that there must be a strong connection between research/writing and good teaching. Every article he writes finds its way into his classroom and he considers it ridiculous to say that a professor can either be a good teacher or a good researcher but not both. Faculty are obligated to provide public service, to share what they have learned with the public. In ranking the importance of his work he says that teaching is first, research and writing is second, and travel has taken the third focus of his time.

Jackson's path to the professoriate did not follow the regular pattern; his academic credentials began with earning a GED rather than a regular high school diploma. Bored as a high school student, Jackson dropped out of school and joined the Air Force where he first found access to higher education. He is positive in reflecting on his career and has few regrets because he has done what he loved to do and has had the opportunity to move forward with academic freedom in multiple exciting activities.



Richard Salisbury

Richard Salisbury (History) was identified as "Distinguished Faculty" to serve from 1998-2003. Salisbury, who specialized in Latin American history, international relations, and the influence of Spain and the U.S. on Latin America, won both the research and teaching awards for the University

prior to his selection as "distinguished." Salisbury served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Venezuela from 1963-1965 and held Fulbright awards for research and teaching in Costa Rica. He served as USIA Lecturer in Mexico, Honduras, Panama, Bolivia, and Chile during the 1960s, 1970, and 1980s.

With more than twenty-five publications and seven edited works, Salisbury delivered numerous presentations at conferences and consultancies. He served as Director of the WKU Undergraduate Latin American Studies Center and won many awards and honors (including awards/fellowships from NDFL, State University of New York, Department of State, Melon Grant, Fulbright-Hays Research study, National Endowment for the Humanities, and WKU). In addition to his research, Salisbury was known as a superior teacher and developed a strong rapport with students. He received rave reviews from the students who studied with him. *Dr. Salisbury passed away in 2003.*



Marion Lucas

Marion Lucas (History) served as University Distinguished Faculty Member from 1999-2004. Lucas' area of research focuses on the Old South, Civil War, and Reconstruction. His research production includes two books, numerous articles and reviews in academic journals, short articles and biographies, and many conference presentations since 1972. He has won numerous awards from historical groups and his research has earned significant grant support.

Pleased to be considered exceptional, Lucas agrees with the other UDPs that a good teacher has to have an active research agenda to support his teaching. For Lucas, the most satisfying aspect of a very good 37 year career is the outstanding students whom he has known and the ways in which those students have commented on his influence and help in their lives.



James Baker

From 2001-2006 James Baker (History) served as a University Distinguished Faculty member. Baker, whose work focuses on American biography and

British Studies, notes that the award recognizes longevity in service as well as regular instructional assignments. The award requires a strong record of publication with peer-reviewed books and articles. Baker held two Fulbright Senior Lectureships (in Korea and Taiwan), taught in Kings College-London, Spain, and Canada, and held sabbatical leaves for research in Italy and China.

With more than fifteen books, sixty articles, fifty scholarly papers, and one hundred book reviews, Baker's work has spanned multiple areas of research. Baker began teaching at WKU in 1968 and has calculated that he has taught more than 14,000 students during his lifetime. When asked about the changes to the faculty since he came to WKU, he commented that the faculty has grown much stronger; the faculty have more advanced degrees and can report more accomplished research and service than in earlier years. Baker suggests the fact that the History Department has garnered a disproportionate share of the awards is the result of a very stable environment which promotes faculty growth and development.



Carol Crowe-Carraco

Carol Crowe-Carraco (History) was selected a University Distinguished Faculty member in 2002-2007. A Georgia native, Crowe-Carraco was trained in

English and American History. She focuses on Kentucky History, State and Local History, and Tudor-Stuart England.

Crowe-Carraco is frequently seen across campus wearing unusual hats and has even been spotted on her way to class dressed in a red elf costume intended to bring home some essential point to that day's lesson. Her interest in the role of women in contemporary society led her to work with others to establish the Women's Study Program at WKU and to chair the first regional women's conference which was held at WKU for a

number of years. She is also the "founding mother" of the Ohio Valley History Conference, a regional professional conference.

Crowe-Carraco explains that she "worked hard, paid her dues, and contributed in the areas of teaching, research, and service." She is probably best known for her mentoring of students and for continuing to stay in contact with students after they have graduated. Over the years, Carol has made innumerable presentations to various local historical societies and library groups, usually dressed as a historical Kentucky woman and describing that woman's life and contributions to the state. Some day someone will likely travel around dressed as Crowe-Carraco and describe her contributions to WKU students and to people of the Commonwealth.

In 2004 two Potter College faculty members were chosen as University Distinguished Professors (2004-2009); both Joseph L. Trafton and Michael Seidler serve in the Department of Philosophy and Religion.



Joseph Trafton

Joe Trafton is a Professor of Religious Studies and has taught at WKU since 1977 when he came from Duke University. With major teaching fields in

New Testament and Second Temple Judaism, Trafton specializes in non-canonical Jewish writings, primarily the Psalms of Solomon; the Dead Sea Scrolls; the Book of Revelation; and historical Jesus studies. He has taught more than 20 different courses and speaks or reads eight languages. Trafton has published two books, more than 65 chapters and articles in edited books, 23 reviews, and several journal and magazine articles. He is a member of the international team of scholars that comprise the Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project and is currently working on a volume for the internationally-acclaimed series, *Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature*.

However, Trafton's contributions to WKU do not rest solely with his research; he is very highly regarded for his teaching. Twice he has received

PERITI ILLUSTR

Potter College's Distinguished Faculty

the Teaching Award for Potter College. Recently the students of SGA named him the SGA Professor of the Year for the Potter College of Arts & Letters. Joe is sought after as speaker by both on-campus and off-campus groups. His resume incorporates the three essential components of a distinguished faculty member: teaching, research, and service.



Michael Seidler

Michael Seidler has taught in the Department of Philosophy and Religion since 1986 and has been Professor of Philosophy since 1998. He teaches courses in the history of philosophy and in ethics, especially bioethics. Seidler has been a bioethics consultant and member of the ethics committees at local hospitals for many years. His primary area of research centers on the work of Samuel Pufendorf, whom he describes as his “gateway author” into the early modern period. Seidler has edited and translated three books on Pufendorf’s writings, with a fourth in press. He also has more than twenty articles and thirteen reviews in print. Seidler says that his “research deals chiefly with the moral, political, and legal philosophy of the early modern era -- from 1500 to 1800 -- and its relation to comparable philosophical issues today.”

When asked to explain “distinguished,” Seidler said that it means to stand out, to have accomplished something of note, to be special and perhaps worthy of emulation. He added that others may see you as distinguished according to some shared value, but you don’t ever think you do enough. Seidler was awarded the University Award for Research and Creativity in 1997. He believes that distinguished professors must have significant accomplishments in all three traditional areas, and the balance must be at a high level.

Of the three areas, Seidler favors teaching, despite his devotion to research. “There is nothing like the experience of repeatedly engaging fresh minds in a classroom and freely conversing with them about things that you think really matter.” Also, he added, “Whether you know it or not, you are often there at the right time for the right student, and can make a major difference in an individual life. What could be better than that?”

Seidler works in several foreign languages, especially Latin, German, and French, and over the years he has established close professional and personal relationships with an international group of colleagues. He mentioned that belonging to a community of scholars provides a shared focus and pursuit that both justifies and rewards one’s efforts. “The common life of the mind, which transcends both place and time, offers a context in which life can have meaning.”



Michael Ann Williams

Michael Ann Williams (Folk Studies and Anthropology) serves as Distinguished University Professor from 2007-2012. Williams, who became head of the Department when it was created, considers that a distinguished professor must go above and beyond the norm, not just in one area but in all three -- teaching, research, and service. According to Williams, all the University Distinguished Professors have distinguished themselves in other ways as well. Williams herself has received much recognition for her professional work, having won the Potter College service award and the University research award.

She agrees with the other members of this group that what really distinguishes her work relates to the outstanding students whom she has taught. Graduates of the WKU program have found employment in many different areas, including academia and related positions with the state, the Smithsonian, the Library of Congress, and the United Nations. Preservation also forms a significant area for employment in agencies such as the Kentucky Heritage Council and the highway department. Williams moved into folklore at the intersection of anthropology, architecture, and material culture.

One of Williams’ interests in recent years has been the development of the graduate program in folklore which has reached a very high standing among folklorists across the nation, an achievement due in great part as a result of the focus that Williams and the faculty have provided to the College. Her leadership in research publication, extensive public service, and strong

teaching provides clear evidence of reasons for her selection as a University Distinguished Professor.



Michael Kallstrom

Michael Kallstrom (Music) is the first faculty member in the arts to be named a University Distinguished Professor (2008-2013). An active composer and performer, Kallstrom created *Electric Opera*, a series of five solo vocal works with electronic tape, puppets, and videos that have been performed over 200 times in the U.S. and Canada. He was commissioned to compose a children’s opera, *School’s Out*, for a local elementary school as part of a musical residency with the school. His compositions have been performed in at least eighteen countries around the world and are available on compact disc.

Kallstrom believes distinguished professors must be well respected by their colleagues and should try to fulfill all three aspects of an academic professor (teaching, research and creative activity, and service). He suggests that the faculty at WKU is much more active than in the past and the reflection of “distinguished” carries a broader background which makes the campus academic life much more dynamic. Faculty in the creative and performing arts carry a very heavy teaching load which sometimes impairs the possibility of creativity. So for Kallstrom, one of the responsibilities of a “distinguished” professor is to encourage the emergence of creativity as example to both students and other faculty.

Seeing students succeed offers the most satisfying aspect of university life for this distinguished professor. And as a composer and creator, he takes great satisfaction in noting the spread of his compositions across the world.

In reflecting on the University’s role in faculty development, Kallstrom believes the University should make every effort to keep the professoriate as active and intellectually involved as faculty tell students to do. In this way all individuals contribute to the intellectual life of the University.



Richard Weigel

The most recent addition to the rank of University Distinguished Professors (2009-2014) is another historian, Richard Weigel. Before being named “distinguished,” Weigel had won three of the four college awards for faculty: Public Service, Research, and Advising.

Weigel served as Head of the History Department for two terms and as interim Head of the Modern Languages Department. His University and public service includes long lists of external evaluations for history departments, task forces and committees, book review editor for the local newspaper, and chair of the local Housing Authority Board.

A scholar in ancient history and medieval history, Weigel’s published research includes two books and more than thirty journal articles. He notes that the term “distinguished” originally included strong focus on research with perhaps strength also in teaching and a record of public service. Like his distinguished colleagues, Rich agrees that research forms a base for a good teacher and that research activity reinforces teaching and reflects one’s ability to disseminate information in the public forum.

Weigel receives great satisfaction from the recognition and appreciation that his students have shown over the years and their comments about the ways in which he has worked with them and helped them to reach their goals.

Note: “Periti Illustri” is the Italian translation for “learned experts”. A “peritus” (from the same Latin root as “expert”: i.e., experior) is someone skilled or expert in an area, having knowledge based on long practice in the field. It can apply to non-academic fields like lawyers, but is also appropriate for anyone who has established themselves as an authority in a discipline, has a reputation for this, and may be consulted by others. “Illustre” (i.e., bright, shining, illustrious) is very close to “distinguished.”

Folk Studies

A Tradition at Western

BY MICHAEL ANN WILLIAMS

The average undergraduate who wanders into a general education class in Folk Studies at WKU probably doesn't realize that folklore classes are not routinely offered at all universities. Not only are there more than a few undergraduate courses to choose from, but a student can pursue a minor in folklore. More importantly, WKU has the largest program in folklore in the United States and has led the discipline in developing training for Public Folklore and allied professions.

Folklore research has a long history at WKU. Gordon Wilson, head of the English Department from 1928-1959, researched and wrote about local folklore in Kentucky. Ballad scholar D. K. Wilgus came to WKU in 1950 while he was still working on his doctoral dissertation for Ohio State, which would eventually be published as the landmark *Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship since 1898*. Wilgus left in 1963 to help found the folklore program at UCLA, but not before inspiring one WKU student, Lynwood Montell, to follow in his

footsteps. Montell went on to pursue his doctoral studies at Indiana University and then returned to WKU to help create, along with Mary and Kenneth Clark, the folklore program at WKU. The first M.A. in folklore at WKU was awarded in 1973.

Among the first graduate students to study folklore at WKU, Peggy Bulger is now Director of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. From 1999-2001, she served as President of the American Folklore Society. Peggy is only one of many former students who have taken leadership roles in the discipline. WKU Folklore graduates hold such positions as "Executive Director, Vermont Folklore Center," "Executive Director, Traditional Arts of Upstate New York," and "Program Director for Traditional Arts and Accessibility, Southern Arts Federation." Other WKU Folk Studies graduates went on to pursue Ph.D's and now teach at places such as University of Missouri, Berea College, Arkansas State, and Eastern Carolina.

Folklorists study traditional or vernacular expressive behavior. As a discipline, it is uniquely situated between the study of human culture, literature, and the arts. Although a relatively small discipline, folklorists are often especially qualified to span a broad range of interests. In the 1990s, academically trained folklorists chaired both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. WKU graduates have also taken leadership roles in public service. Martha Yates Newton (who also has a B.A. in Communication from WKU) served as Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in a previous administration and Dina Abousamra currently works as a Humanitarian Affairs Officer for the United Nations.

The visibility and success of WKU folklore students, graduates and faculty continue to attract new students to the program.

The broad scope of folklore is also exemplified by WKU's faculty. How many individuals host a popular radio program AND help train medical students to be better doctors? Are experts in Western saddle making AND early 20th century horror fiction? Study log cabins AND early country music radio barn dances? The international interests of WKU folklore faculty range from slave trade routes in Nigeria to the Welsh diaspora in Argentina.

A hallmark of WKU's program is the practical hands-on training offered to the students, who may choose to pursue tracks in Public Folklore, Historic Preservation, or Thesis. For the past several years, graduate students have worked on rehabilitating and restoring the circa. 1820 Gardner House, located at the Upper Green Biological Preserve. Preservation students have also successfully nominated structures to the National Register of Historic Places and have participated in an oral history project for the Eastern Band of Cherokees. Public folklore students volunteer at the Kentucky

Folklife Festival and prepare lesson plans that are used in local schools and museums. Internships also provide valuable experience for students. In recent years students have volunteered at agencies such as: City Lore (New York), Craft and Folk Art Museum (Los Angeles), Norwegian Emigrant Museum (Hamar, Norway), Traditional Arts Indiana, Hancock Shaker Museum, Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, Museum Victoria (Melbourne, Australia), Appalshop, and numerous local agencies and museums.

The visibility and success of WKU folklore students, graduates and faculty continue to attract new students to the program. A notable indicator of the success of the program is the number of students who come to WKU from universities that have folklore programs of their own, such as Indiana University, UCLA, University of Oregon, Ohio State, Utah State, University of Wisconsin, and Memorial University (Newfoundland). Other students have earned undergraduate degrees from Vanderbilt, University of Kentucky, Wake Forest, Case Western, Bryn Mawr, Carnegie Mellon, and of course, WKU. Typically students come into the program with backgrounds in anthropology or English (the closest allied disciplines), or perhaps journalism, art or music, although the program has admitted students with majors that range from mathematics to Latin. Discovering folklore as the possible intersection of all that interests them, prospective students often email with the question: I am interested in [this, that and the other], is this folklore? Yes, and WKU is the place to study it.



From Local to Global Promoting Religious Literacy

BY ERIC BAIN-SELBO

At the top of the Hill (literally at the top, on the third floor of Cherry Hall) is a hidden academic treasure at Western Kentucky University. With approximately 100 majors and more than 50 minors, the Religious Studies program in the Department of Philosophy and Religion is one of the few public, undergraduate programs in the country. With a diverse and prominent faculty, the Religious Studies program covers an incredible range of religious history and geography.

Students in the Religious Studies program interact with scholars who are nationally and internationally recognized in their fields. Whether a student wants to study the Bible or the Hindu pantheon, the Koran or Buddhist monasticism, there is a faculty member in the program who can instruct them. Though Religious Studies students pursue many different career paths, the program prepares them well for future academic studies. Program graduates have gone on to earn graduate degrees at top graduate programs in Religious Studies in the country, including Harvard, Florida State, Notre Dame, and Yale. With the addition of the new Asian Religions and Cultures major (beginning Fall 2010) and the prospect of a new M.A. program in Religious Studies in the near future, WKU's Religious Studies program will continue to make its mark in the field.

The program has greatly enriched the local community and the region. Faculty members regularly share their expertise with local faith communities and civic organizations. Last year the program initiated the Community Religious Literacy Project (CRLP). The CRLP is designed to provide community organizations in the WKU region the opportunity to tap into the expertise of the Religious Studies faculty. Faculty members provide lectures, lead discussions, and provide consulting services to community organizations. In February, the CRLP co-sponsored the Interfaith Dialogue on Earth Care, a unique opportunity for WKU faculty,

staff, and students to join with members of the local community to discuss the ways that the world's religions can address ecological crises and sustainability issues. With the CRLP, the Religious Studies program affirmed its commitment not only to the education of WKU students, but the local community as well.



Leaders in their Fields

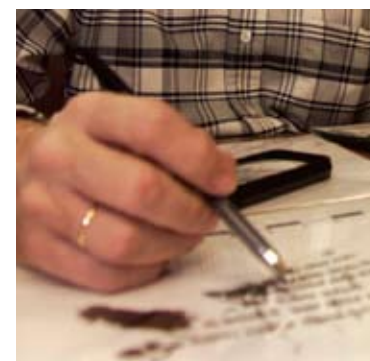
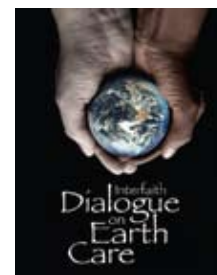
Dr. Joseph Trafton works in the areas of New Testament and Second Temple Judaism, including the Dead Sea Scrolls. He specializes in the non-canonical, first century B.C.E. Jewish work known as the *Psalms of Solomon*, and is one of the foremost experts in the world on the work. His scholarship contributes significantly to the disciplines of New Testament and Second Temple Judaism studies. In 2005, he published *Reading Revelation: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. His expertise in the New Testament, as well as the Dead Sea Scrolls, leads to numerous speaking invitations in the community and beyond.

Dr. Jeffrey Samuels is an internationally recognized scholar of Buddhism and culture in South and Southeast Asia. He recently completed a manuscript on Buddhist monastic culture in Sri Lanka, and has embarked on a new research topic that involves writing a social history of Theravada Buddhism in Malaysia. In 2010, he published *Attracting the Heart: Social Relations and the Aesthetics of*

Emotion in Sri Lankan Monastic Culture, culminating approximately 10 years of research on Buddhist monastic culture in Sri Lanka. His primary area of teaching is religions of Asia. His courses cover Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Taoism, and Confucianism. Because his research focuses on these areas,

he is able to bring first hand experiences to class and, thus, impact student learning in a more tangible way.

Dr. Isabel Mukonyora is trained in Christian history and theology, and specializes in Christianity in Africa (including both colonial and post-colonial periods), women and religion, and religion and ecology. In 2007, she published *Wandering a Gendered Wilderness*. Her work has led to the creation of several new courses that have enriched the curriculum: Christianity in Africa, Women and Religion, Postcolonial Christianity, and a new course next year on religion and ecology.



A New Generation

Recently, the Religious Studies program welcomed two new faculty members who will ensure continued quality in both scholarship and the classroom. A recent graduate of Boston University, **Dr. Scott Girdner** specializes in Islamic Studies, with a focus on the history and varieties of scriptural exegesis—including philosophical, mystical, legal, and contemporary approaches. Additional interests include the comparative study Islamic, Jewish, and Christian scriptures and traditions of interpretation, particularly philosophical and mystical hermeneutics. **Dr. Ingrid Lilly**, a recent graduate of Emory University, provides expertise in Hebrew Bible, focusing on issues in the textual criticism of variant literary editions of biblical books. Her work in cultural approaches to the Hebrew Bible is especially relevant to students and the community—she teaches how biblical texts relate to their original political and cultural contexts, and in turn, how they are situated in more modern contexts.

Veteran Leadership

Religious Studies students also benefit from the expertise and classroom experience of several veteran faculty members who continue to teach in the program.

Transitional Retirees like **Dr. John Long** (Biblical Studies) and **Dr. Alan Anderson** (Social Ethics) make valuable contributions to the program and its students. **Dr. Larry Snyder** (Religion in America), Associate Dean of Potter College, also shares his expertise with students by teaching regularly in the program.

From the senior members of the faculty to new faculty members to veteran teachers, the Religious Studies program at WKU continues to do extremely well—providing students in the Commonwealth with one of the best programs of its kind in the country.

Note: Dr. Eric Bain-Selbo is a leading scholar in his field whose work focuses on the intersection of religion, politics, ethics, and popular culture. Trained in religious ethics, his research in recent years has expanded into an array of areas of cultural criticism. He is the author of three books, *Mediating the Culture Wars*; *Judge and Be Judged: Moral Reflection in an Age of Relativism and Fundamentalism*; and *Game Day and God: Football, Faith, and Politics in the American South*.



Creative Writing:

The Cherry on Top of the Hill

BY MOLLY MCCAFFREY

SWEEP!

On a crisp autumn afternoon last semester, senior Ryan Hunton checked his email in a computer lab in Cherry Hall. That's when he found out that—for the second year in a row—a WKU student had won the statewide Sarabande Flo Gault Student Poetry Competition, and that, this time, he was the one taking home the top prize.

Down the hall, junior Morgan Eklund was also checking her email when she learned that not only had she placed in the contest a second time—one of her poems had earned first prize the year before—but that WKU students had swept the contest, with Hunton capturing first, Eklund nabbing second, and senior Brittany Szabo picking up third.

If this moment seems like a fluke, it shouldn't. WKU creative writing students have been earning recognition for their work for years.

In fact, recently WKU creative writing students and alums have published far and wide. Just last month, Alex Taylor (B.A. '04)—who has been named one of Kentucky's "Ten Up and Coming Writers"—published *The Name of the Nearest River*, a collection of short stories, after winning the 2010 Linda Bruckheimer Prize in Kentucky Literature, and last year Jennifer Bradbury's (B.A. '97, M.A. '04) young adult novel, *Shift*, and Emily Schulten's (M.A. '04) poetry collection, *Rest in Black Haw*, were published as well.

WKU creative writing students and alums have also landed editorial jobs at the *The Yalobusha Review* and *Ploughshares* as well as internships with Sarabande Books; had their plays performed at the Public Theatre of Kentucky; been published in well-established journals such as *Oxford American* and *Prairie Schooner* and up-and-coming magazines like *Narrative* and *Thoreau's Rooster*; been recognized in the Associated Writing Programs Intro Journals contest; and have gone on to a long list of M.F.A. and Ph.D. programs across the country including the Iowa Writers' Workshop, Rutgers, UT-Austin, Georgia State, and the University of Mississippi.

Students have opportunities to work in publishing here at WKU as well. The English department is home to *Zephyrus*, the student-run literary journal that comes out every spring and is overseen by faculty advisor David Lenoir, and Steel Toe Books, an independent poetry press run by Tom C. Hunley. *Zephyrus* has been published in one form or another for over fifty years, and Steel Toe publishes two to three collections of poetry each year. Both provide students with experience evaluating manuscripts, editing, and publishing as well as experience with marketing and web design.



WRITERS FOR ALL SEASONS

On a cold Saturday morning at the end of January, five local high school students gathered around a large conference table in the basement of Cherry Hall for the Kentucky Young Writers' Workshop. Most kids their age were still asleep at that time, but these teens were more interested in learning how to write poetry and fiction than they were in sleeping off a tough week of classes. One of the students was a refugee from Burma who had just moved to Kentucky, and whenever it was his turn to read what he had written, the other students leaned forward, eager to hear more about his extraordinary experiences.

One floor up from these high schoolers another group of creative writers could be found: those who had been selected to participate in the three-day Winter Writing Workshop. These adult students were even more honored to be hanging out in Cherry Hall on a Saturday morning because they had been selected from a large number of applicants to study with an established writer from outside the WKU community. Competition for this workshop is so intense—and a spot so desirable—because students study with writing luminaries such as Silas House, George Ella Lyon, and Jane Gentry Vance.

This scene is re-created just about every season in Cherry Hall.

For instance, in the fall the English department hosts the annual Jim Wayne Miller Celebration of Writing, now in its thirteenth year. This three-day festival coordinated by Potter College Teaching Award winner Mary Ellen Miller—who recently published "The Literary Influences of Jim Wayne Miller" in *Appalachian Heritage*—kicks off with a poetry contest for undergraduates, includes a one-day workshop for contest finalists, and finally concludes with a public lecture. Last fall's presenter was Vivian Shipley and other speakers have included Wendell Berry, Bobbie Ann Mason, and Robert Morgan.

The summer session also offers an opportunity for students to work with a prominent writer when the English department brings a distinguished visiting professor to Bowling Green for a three-week creative workshop. Like the Winter

Workshop, the genre of the summer course rotates. The first year the summer workshop focused on fiction and was led by novelist and Pulitzer Prize finalist Lee Martin. National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Fellow and poet Denise Duhamel came to campus for the second summer course, and this coming summer, Deborah Marquart, winner of the Pen USA Creative Nonfiction Award, will be here to conduct a creative nonfiction workshop.

But these courses and workshops aren't the only opportunities for creative writing students at WKU to mingle with nationally known writers. The English department also sponsors a Visiting Writers' Series that has hosted writers as diverse as *New York Times* bestselling author Tom Monteleone and Guggenheim Fellow David Kirby. Additionally, the department works in conjunction with both the student-run Artchival Studios and the Cultural Enhancement Series to host names as big as former Poet Laureate Billy Collins, who appeared in Van Meter Hall this April, and screenwriter and director Spike Lee, who spoke to students in Diddle Arena last year.

PRACTICING WHAT THEY PREACH

Professor Tom C. Hunley had just lost successive games of Crazy 8 and Go Fish to his four-year-old son, Owen, last year when he received a message informing him that well-known radio personality Garrison Keillor wanted to feature one of his poems—"The Dental Hygienist"—on his award-winning radio show, *The Writer's Almanac*. And it wasn't long before Keillor came calling again to ask if he could feature a second of Hunley's poems, "Father to the Man," on the show this past February.

It's no wonder Keillor is interested in reading Hunley's poems on the air. Hunley has published three full-length poetry collections—most recently *Octopus* in 2008—and a chapbook of his greatest hits, literally called *Tom C. Hunley's Greatest Hits*, is coming out in 2010.

And Hunley is not the only creative writing faculty member making a splash on the publishing scene. Professor David J. Bell—or David Jack Bell as his readers know him—published his second novel, *The Girl in the Woods*, last year. Both of Bell's novels are thrillers designed to keep the pages turning while touching on important social issues. Bell's first novel, *The Condemned*, was lauded by David Morrell, author of *First Blood*, who said that the book gave him "the tingle I felt when I read Richard Matheson's *I am Legend* for the first time."

All of the faculty in creative writing are publishing in a variety of venues, including esteemed magazines such as *Fourth Genre*, *TriQuarterly*, *Verse Daily*, *Western Humanities Review*, and *North American Review*, and playwriting professor Pat Taylor is an active force in local theatre. Perhaps the success of the creative writing students can be at least partially attributed to the faculty in creative writing, many of whom have publications worthy of faculty at the best colleges in the country. And the dedication of the creative writing faculty cannot be understated either. Nonfiction writer Dale Rigby was the Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society Professor of the Year in 2006, and one of Rigby's essays, "The Dead Skin Scrolls," was also mentioned in the *1999 Best American Essays*.

There is a long tradition of literary excellence in Kentucky, a fact best demonstrated in the English department's Robert Penn Warren Room, which houses artifacts from the Pulitzer Prize winner's home and office. The creative writing faculty at WKU is keeping that tradition alive today as the program continues to grow. The achievements of the students and faculty in recent years—along with the contributions of world-renowned visiting writers—have put a program that already had a distinguished literary history firmly on the map.

WKU AND POETS LAUREATE

MARY ELLEN MILLER

WKU (specifically the Creative Writing Committee and the Robert Penn Warren Committee of the English Department) has had a long-time and close association with poets laureate at both the state and national levels.

Guthrie, Kentucky, native Robert Penn Warren was named the nation's first poet laureate in 1944. After the Robert Penn Warren Center was established at WKU in the 1980's, Warren's widow, Eleanor Clark, donated his personal, working library to WKU's Kentucky Library.

Two WKU professors, the late Jim Wayne Miller and retired professor Joe Survant were named Kentucky Poets Laureate in 1986 and 2003 respectively. A third state laureate closely associated with WKU, Joy Bale Boone, was named in 1997. Ms. Bale Boone was co-founder of the Robert Penn Warren Center.

In the spring of 2010, the current state laureate, Gurney Norman, gave a WKU reading sponsored by the Creative Writing Committee, and former national laureate, Billy Collins gave an April 13 reading sponsored by the Cultural Enhancement Committee.



“PJ”

Develops into Picture Perfect Program



William Randolph
Hearst Award

BY MAC MCKERRAL

Joe Howell stood in the Gallery in Mass Media & Technology Hall on Feb. 6 and took in the exhibit — Hearst Collegiate Journalism Award winning photos that spanned 20 years taken by Western Kentucky University photojournalism majors.

Howell, a 1995 “PJ” graduate, came from Nashville to a reception that day recognizing the photojournalism program’s phenomenal history. Other former students joined him, along with current majors, faculty, WKU administrators and FOPs (Friends of Photo), as photojournalism Associate Professor Jeanie Adams-Smith calls them. Adams-Smith, a 1990 graduate of the School of Journalism & Broadcasting’s (SJ&B) photojournalism program, won a Hearst award in 1990.

In the Gallery, Howell turned toward a 1994 Hearst award-winning photo he took, a scene Norman Rockwell might have put on canvas: A huge ox in profile with a stepladder leaning on the animal’s side and a boy lying face-down on the ox’s back.

Howell, an intern when he took the photo, said that the boy spent the day at a festival in Michigan entertaining visitors by using the ox’s back as a stage. When the boy took a break from his routine and assumed — for just a second — a nap-like position on the ox’s back, Howell, as they say in PJ, captured “a moment.”

“The thing that amazed me was the quality of the work,” Howell said about the Gallery exhibit. “It’s very inspiring. In some way, we were all touched by a school of thought.”

The program’s story of distinction is inspiring and extends worldwide: first place in the Hearst awards photo competition 17 out of 20 years; a bevy of Pulitzer Prize-winning photographers; and graduates who have achieved the highest level of visual storytelling.

In fact, the acronym “FOP” might just as easily translate to the “Fraternal Order of Photo” because, as Professor James Kenney explained during the reception, the roots of

the program run deep—back to spring 1976 with approval of the photojournalism major and leadership from: Bob Adams, now Student Publications director, who taught the first photo class; David Sutherland, the first program coordinator; his successor, Mike Morse, professor *emeritus*, who took the program to a higher level; and founding director of the SJ&B Professor Jo-Ann Albers and her successor, Dr. Pam Johnson.

The students who pass through the program remain bound by a passion for visual journalism and a willingness to maintain a standard of academic and professional quality second to none.

“There’s always been a collective sense of the way to be a great photojournalist, a great visual journalist - a great storyteller.”

“These images go far beyond an award won,” Kenney, the SJ&B photojournalism unit coordinator, said of the gallery exhibit. “Our goal is not to win a contest. It’s to tell a story. Mike Morse came here when there was nothing. I came here with a program already established. I just had to make sure I didn’t blow it.”

Brian Wagner, a 2004 graduate, said blowing it was not an option.

He said the program comes with “a motion” — a vortex of energy and creativity shaped by superb faculty and constant peer review, a signature the program has maintained since its inception.

“Whatever it was, it came before I got there,” said Wagner, a 2003 Hearst award winner, who teaches photography at Maryville College outside Knoxville, Tenn. Wagner freelances and plans to expand his repertoire in graduate school in the area of fine arts photography. “I didn’t question the motion. It wasn’t a known understanding. But (success) was an expected reality.”

He lauded the benefits of students critiquing students in order to elevate everyone’s work.

“It was great to be surrounded by people who were so inspired,” Wagner said.

Howell said the peer review process did not involve students looking through rose-colored lenses.

“A lot of times, students can be much more brutal than teachers,” said Howell, an information officer and staff photographer at Vanderbilt University. “It could be very competitive — even mean-spirited. But that can motivate you so much. There was an intensity about it that helped push you forward.”

And it pushed the program forward, too.

Dr. David Lee, dean of the Potter College of Arts & Letters lauded the program by saying, “This (program’s record) is an achievement of an entirely different nature,” Lee said.



President Gary Ransdell certainly understands that nature.

He graduated from WKU in 1973 with a degree in mass communications and intends to maintain his role as the “First Fan” of photojournalism.

“I’m going to continue to brag on you every chance I get,” Ransdell said during the reception, where he also thanked state Rep. Jody Richards, D-Bowling Green, for helping secure legislative backing for building MMTH and putting the SJ&B faculty and staff all in one place.

Howell said that during his time in the Gallery, he reflected most on the program’s success as witnessed by the work of its students.

“There’s always been a creative well to draw from — fertile ground,” he said. “There’s always been a collective sense of the way to be a great photojournalist, a great visual journalist — a great storyteller.”

From the Home Front to the Battlefield... The World of Distance Learning

BY MARY MURPHY

As the definition of a typical college student expands to include adult learners, stay-at-home moms and dads, military service men and women, commuters, and those who want to attend a state college but do not want to leave home, distance learning provides a flexible and convenient opportunity for students to earn a degree. With the ever-increasing popularity of online learning, Potter College is at the helm of developing and delivering quality online graduate programs that meet and exceed student expectations.

Last fall, the departments of History and Sociology launched two graduate degrees offered completely online. The Master of Arts in History and Master of Arts in Criminology are distinctive programs that provide diverse student populations the opportunity to pursue a desired course of graduate study. Both graduate programs incorporate the convenience of distance learning with the technicality and uniqueness of the individual program.

The M.A. in Criminology is a 33-credit hour program focusing on the development of research skills to gather and analyze criminological data, as

well as explore the causes of offending and victimization in violent and property crimes. The program is extremely successful among students who are geographically bound, as well as those who wish to combine face-to-face classes with online courses. Students pursuing the degree are looking to enhance their opportunities for a career in law enforcement, juvenile justice, corrections, the courts, and a variety of social service agencies and non-profit organizations. Many students enrolled in the program are currently in the workforce, making the online program a logical and convenient choice.

Graduate student Shane Wells believes the faculty in the Criminology program rank just as high or even higher than faculty at any other university, and he appreciates the online format. "My goal is to apply to the FBI later this year, so an online program allows me the opportunity to relocate and finish my degree if necessary."

"We've received very positive feedback from the students," said Dr. Jerry Daday, a Criminology

professor who oversaw the launch of the Criminology program. "My colleagues and I try to offer classes that are challenging and rigorous and that require critical thinking, analysis, and writing. Based on the comments we have received from students, I think we are succeeding in meeting those goals."

The M.A. in History has also seen great success. The program consists of a 36-credit hour, non-thesis option, and provides a rotating course list that allows students the opportunity to complete the degree in as little as three years. The degree is popular among working professionals who are unable to attend face-to-face classes, including teachers, business persons, and attorneys, and military personnel in other areas of the United States and overseas.

Dr. Andrew McMichael, associate professor of history and an instructor in the online graduate program, explains, "The online M.A. in History gives our department the chance to extend our educational mission quite a bit."

Last fall, McMichael enrolled First Lieutenant Paul Corbitt in his online American Revolution and Early Republic, 1776-1815 course. Corbitt, a native of North Carolina and soldier in the U.S. Army, participated in the class from the Forward Operating Base Altimur in Afghanistan. According to McMichael, "He was a combat soldier who went on patrols for part of the day and worked on his online course in his 'off hours'."



Dr. Andrew McMichael

The opportunity to meet the needs of new student markets through distance education creates unique challenges for instructors. According to Dr. McMichael, "One of the main challenges I encountered last fall was flexibility with deadlines because there would be times when Corbitt would go out on patrol and then not be able to make it back. Or the base would be attacked. It's not that I'm particularly strict with deadlines when there's a good excuse, but with an online discussion the days during which the discussions occurred were restricted and the students needed to log on frequently to participate. So he'd often miss out on a discussion because of combat patrol. Of course, this put other students' excuses in perspective when he'd explain that he couldn't make the discussion period on time because his convoy hit an IED and came under attack."

Through the convenience and cutting-edge quality of these online programs, students are not only given the opportunity to achieve something they may have never considered possible, but they also have the advantage of having an online platform that caters to their individual needs.

Dr. Robert Dietle, department head of History, remains particularly proud that what was a modest beginning to the M.A. program in History, can now be proclaimed extremely successful. "The department now faces the pleasant challenge of scheduling enough online classes to meet student demand," said Dr. Dietle.

"Through the convenience and cutting-edge quality of these online programs, students are not only given the opportunity to achieve something they may have never considered possible, but they also have the advantage of having an online platform that caters to their individual needs."

21st Century Makeover

BY JONATHAN JEFFREY

A century ago, anxious students and Bowling Green citizens watched construction workers erect the first new campus building on Western's fledgling campus. They viewed the architectural drawings for the building on exhibition in a downtown storefront, but even those carefully executed renderings belied Van Meter Hall's grandeur. As the centenary year of Van Meter Hall's dedication approaches, students and local citizens are once again intrigued by this venerated structure and anxious to view the results of its major alterations and additions.

As the Southern Normal School grew in cramped quarters downtown, Henry Hardin Cherry no doubt cast an envious eye on the attractive campus of the Pleasant J. Potter College for Young Ladies. The college's hilltop site afforded a commanding view of a growing city and presented the ever-clever president with a symbolic location for his growing institution. In 1906 the state established one of its two new normal schools in Bowling Green, affording Cherry the opportunity to purchase the Potter property for construction of his own "academical village." In a bold and progressive move, he hired architect Brinton B. Davis and landscape architect Henry Wright to develop a master plan for the new college campus. The duo presented a

lovely design which included a circular arrangement of buildings around the hill's perimeter.

The campus already boasted a significant classroom building as well as a president's home, vestiges of the defunct Potter College. The first new structure for the Western Normal School was a major administration hall that would contain ad-

ministrative offices, three classrooms, and a 1,600-seat auditorium for chapel services and community events. Cherry viewed daily chapel meetings as a bonding experience for the students, particularly as enrollments rose; thus, a commodious meeting hall was of paramount importance. Cherry



RIGHT: The outstretched arms of *Lyric*, a newly acquired piece of sculpture, welcome visitors to each of the auditorium's performances. Selected by President Gary Ransdell, *Lyric* is a cast bronze work created by Mr. Tom Corbin of Kansas City, Missouri. Corbin also created *Walking Woman*, a sculpture installed on WKU's campus near Grise Hall, in 2006. His work appears in over 20 galleries and showrooms nationally. Individual collectors include Tom Hanks, Jack Nicholson, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and the late Frank Sinatra.



also wanted the building to reflect the institution's promising future. Agreeing, Davis chose a Classic Revival style that hinted of the Acropolis's Erechtheion temple with its stately portico, classic ornamentation, and handsome location atop College Hill.

Davis had hoped that the new building would be faced with the white oolitic limestone, known in trade circles as Bowling Green limestone and found in abundance in Warren County. However, the county's major quarry experienced labor disturbances and declared bankruptcy in 1910; it reopened in time to provide the cut-stone trimmings used throughout the building. Most of Davis's later campus designs at Western specified the white limestone. After a number of delays the Administration Building was dedicated on May 5, 1911.

Davis's brilliant design created a bastion of knowledge to top the city's highest hill. A student who first saw the campus in 1913 thought the administration building "was the biggest building in the world." For students coming from farms on the Barrens or near the Knobs, this majestic structure towered. Pride manifested in the new building was



apparent at its dedication as thousands toured the facility. The student paper praised the Administration Building, citing its gleaming "white columns" and the "open doors" that beckoned students to enter and "conquer ignorance." Local residents complimented the building's attractive masonry and stone exterior throughout the construction process, but they anxiously anticipated the opportunity to view the structure's interior. They were not disappointed. In the beautifully appointed lobby, Davis included imported stone, sweeping marble staircases with wrought iron balustrades, Spanish floor tiles, classical moldings and columns, and an attractive stained glass skylight. The auditorium was the city's largest meeting space, impressive with its capacious wood-paneled stage, massive brass light fixtures, heavy draperies, and the sea of theater seats. For approximately \$125,000 Davis had created the aura that Cherry envisioned for Western, as the president was "concerned with the biggest, the highest, the best, the most worthwhile, and the most beautiful."

Western officials named the new auditorium Van Meter Hall in honor of Charles Jacob Van Meter, a steamboat captain who provided one of the school's first major monetary gifts; an auditorium at the school's old downtown location had previously been named for Van Meter. The entire structure was christened the Administration Building. The



In February 1931, a Bowling Green newspaper dubbed Louisville architect Brinton Bearegard Davis (1862-1952) the "Hill Builder" for his untiring efforts as Western's architect. With the exception of two major projects, Davis designed all the college's hilltop structures from 1909 to 1937, including nine major buildings, a swimming pool, and a stadium. Besides his work at Western, Davis, who maintained an office in Louisville, designed buildings in eight states. Perhaps his most important work was Louisville's InterSouthern Insurance skyscraper. In Bowling Green Davis also designed City Hall and the Denhardt Amory.

The Art of the Buon Fresco

When the doors to Van Meter Hall open to the public in fall 2010, visitors will behold the beauty of a 300 square foot buon fresco painting on the wall of the second floor lobby area. Buon fresco, or true fresco, is a complex and very permanent method of large-scale mural painting, dating back to the ancients, becoming prominent during the middle ages and reaching popularity during the Renaissance in Italy. The process involves painting on a small section of freshly laid wet plaster with pigments dissolved in water. As both dry they become completely integrated. The process is

then repeated for the next day's work section, commonly called the "giornata". While seemingly simple and direct, fresco painting is challenging, time consuming, and requires the utmost expertise and skilled craftsmanship.

Mike Nichols, assistant professor of Art, has boldly undertaken the fresco painting project. While very few contemporary artists are trained in the methods, Nichols began his studies in the technique at the Fresco School in Los Angeles. His research continues independently through a combination of reading and materials explorations. In spring

2009, Nichols taught abroad at Harlaxton College, taking time to further his study of buon fresco painting in Italy.

For Nichols, the Van Meter fresco project is an exciting opportunity to introduce visitors to an exceptional art form. "The project offers students and community members the rare chance to see a buon fresco personally and for some to have a hand in its creation. I hope that this mural brings students and community members closer, both intellectually and psychologically, to a rich part of our artistic history," says Nichols. Assisted by seven student apprentices, Nichols will paint the large-scale fresco mural during the spring and summer months.

Professor Aristide Sartorio carved the Four Seasons sculpture found in the niches of the renovated Auditorium. The artist sculpted these voluptuous Art Nouveau figures from prized Carrara marble in 1911 for an international exposition held in Turin, Italy. Warren County native and Ogden College graduate Commodore Perry Snell purchased the pieces and donated them to Western in 1930; the grouping was installed outdoors on the Ogden campus in 1931 and remained there until the late-1990s. After decades of exposure, the sculpture pieces have been carefully cleaned and conserved.



Board of Regents officially changed the name of the building to Van Meter Hall in 1968 after a major renovation.

Like their counterparts a century earlier, students and Bowling Green citizens are eager to view Van Meter's additions and renovations executed by RossTarrant Architects of Lexington. What they find will impress them: cleaned and restored architectural features, bright and attractive meeting facilities, enlarged dressing rooms, improved lighting and acoustics, new seating, a dramatically enlarged stage area allowing greater utilization of the facility, better building access including handicapped entrances and an elevator, as well as the addition of patron bathrooms near the lobby. Befitting an arts facility, Van Meter will also boast several new pieces of artwork, including a major new sculpture, a second floor fresco, and the incorporation of the familiar Four Seasons sculpture grouping in the auditorium itself. One thing that remains from the old Van Meter is the unique Western experience of exiting from an evening performance and walking out into the stars. Thank goodness some things never change!

Lighting Up Stage & Screen

WKU Theatre & Dance Graduates Set Themselves Apart

BY STACEY GISH

"I have a dream, a song to sing, to help me cope with anything..." sings Sophie in the first line of the popular Broadway musical "Mamma Mia." Many WKU Department of Theatre and Dance graduates also have a dream – a dream to make a living performing their passion. Whether passion is acting, singing, dancing, or playing roles behind the curtain and beyond the stage, many talented individuals select WKU because of its reputation of distinction in helping grow students into professionals.

"I felt at home when professors James Brown and Scott Stroot showed me around the department," said Ruby Lewis, a 2007 graduate currently performing with the *Grease* national tour. "It was an easy decision once I saw the campus and the intimate theatre spaces. I could imagine myself growing and working in them."

Indeed, Lewis grew as a solid performer during her years at WKU, acting in productions such as *Sweeney Todd*, *Ragtime*, and *Blood Brothers*. She is representative of a number of WKU graduates who have tasted success on stage and screen, giving loads of credit to the folks in the department for providing a strong foundation of knowledge as well as the confidence to take risks pursuing their dreams.

Professor Tracey Moore, a professional actress and singer herself, capitalizes on the connections she developed in 20-plus years working in New York City in order to get WKU students seen and heard. She organizes an annual showcase in the Big Apple, bringing in casting directors, managers, and casting agents to watch a handful of WKU students perform. The unique opportunity allows students real-world experience performing in front of a cadre of industry professionals, who provide immediate feedback.

Not every student is hired on the spot, Moore said, but the showcase definitely provides future networking opportunities. Moore emphasizes that one of the most important aspects of working as an actor is developing what she calls "an entrepreneurial spirit."

"Students must follow up and stay connected to these people," she said. "Being an actor is not just about talent. Sometimes events do conspire together in our favor, and we call that luck. But luck isn't what got you out the door at 5:30 in the morning to a casting call! You constantly have to market yourself. It's a lot of work."

While Lora Jane Benedict isn't a performer in New York, she certainly agrees with Moore's assessment. The 2004 graduate founded Pointe of Joy Performing Arts Studio in her hometown of Paintsville, Ky. She credits WKU faculty for guiding her in this direction.

"They are so supportive," Benedict said. "They have so many connections and make a real effort to reach out and provide help."

Department Chair David Young appreciates the accolades, but quickly deflects the praise back to the department's alumni.

"Being an actor is not just about talent. Sometimes events do conspire together in our favor, and we call that luck. But luck isn't what got you out the door at 5:30 in the morning to a casting call! You constantly have to market yourself. It's a lot of work."

"It's so important to be open to helping students," he said of alumni. "Once you get there, you should be willing to provide advice and connections so that others can join you." And they do, according to Lewis.

"I've been fortunate to reconnect with many WKU alumni since traveling with *Gypsy* and *Grease*," Lewis said. "There is a great camaraderie among WKU grads. If someone needs a tip or connection, there are hundreds of people waiting to help out – myself included!"



The department distinguishes itself yet again by challenging students through its senior seminar, entitled Performing Arts Career Seminar.

Benedict said of her seminar experience, "We were asked to write a eulogy for our own funeral. We had to think about how we wanted to be remembered." Benedict said she took the assignment very seriously, thinking about her talents, skills, abilities, and how she could use those to help others. This assignment eventually led to her writing the business plan that led to her opening Pointe of Joy.

Benedict's studio won the 2005 Excellence in Entrepreneurship award in the start-up business category presented annually by the Center for Rural Development. The award is given to businesses that demonstrate growth, financial stability, and a positive contribution to the community in the eastern and southern Kentucky regions. Benedict said she was truly humbled to receive this award so soon after opening her business.

While Benedict knew she wanted to provide arts education in her hometown, 2003 graduate Rodney Barge decided to take his chances out West.

"The first time I met Rodney, he told me: 'I want to just blow stuff up!'" Young recalls. Young said Barge was one of the most persistent and hard-working students working behind the scenes on props, staging, and special effects. And yes, Young assures, he did learn how to blow stuff up – in a controlled manner, of course.

Today, Barge helps with the production of about 119 pyrotechnic devices, 120 fireballs, and various other special effects for the Cirque du Soleil show, *Ka*, currently featured at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Barge says he's living his dream, crediting the department in many ways.

"I'm very grateful for each of my teachers. They let me do whatever I wanted and pushed me to do the things I feared," Barge said. "In a good way, I never felt that anything I did was good enough. 'You can do better' became a personal motto."

WKU students distinguish themselves on stage as well as behind it because of the Department of Theatre and Dance's talented and connected faculty, unique courses, exceptional stage productions, and supportive alumni. Students who select WKU are certain to realize their full potential.



Notable WKU Theatre & Dance Alumni



Becky Ann Baker (B.A. Theatre, 1975)

An accomplished actress of stage, film and television, Becky Ann has appeared on Broadway in *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, *Titanic*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Assassins*, and most recently *All My Sons* with Katie Holmes and John Lithgow. Her motion picture credits include *Men in Black*, *Sabrina*, *White Squall*, Steven Spielberg's *War of the Worlds*, *Spiderman 3*, and *Lorenzo's Oil*. Baker has appeared on television's *The Storm of the Century*, *Ruby Ridge*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, *Frasier*, *Sex and the City*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *Oz*, and *L.A. Law*. In 2009, she appeared in the NBC series *Kings*, playing the role of Jessie Shepherd, mother of protagonist David Shepherd. She is perhaps best known for her portrayal of Jean Weir on NBC's Emmy Award-winning *Freaks and Geeks*.



Monique Ryan (B.A. Theatre, 1985)

As a dancer, Monique Ryan has worked with nationally recognized dance companies including the *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater*, *Philadanco Dance Company*, *Patdro Harris Co*, *Gus Giordano Dance Company*, and *Total Dance / Dancical Productions*. These days, Monique is the owner and executive director of *Dance Theatre of Huntsville* in Huntsville, AL.



Michael Rosenbaum (B.A. Mass Communication and Theatre, 1994)

Since graduation, Michael has worked steadily on both the small and big screens. He has appeared in a number of motion pictures including *Urban Legend*, *Sorority Boys*, *Sweet November*, *Bringing Down the House*, and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. He is most recognized for his portrayal of a young Lex Luthor on the WB's *Smallville*.



Regan Kays (B.F.A. Performing Arts, Theatre & Dance, 2001)

Following graduation, Regan moved to New York City to begin her career. She made her Broadway debut in the hit show *42nd Street*. Regan was also cast in *Mary Poppins* on Broadway. In addition to Broadway, Regan has performed at professional theatres all over the country. Her favorite regional shows include *Hairspray*, *The Producers*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Forum*, *Damn Yankees*, and *West Side Story*. Regan also performed on the 2007 Tony Awards and on *Live with Regis and Kelly*.



Matt Long (B.F.A. Performing Arts, Theatre & Dance, 2002)

Matt made his television debut in 2004, playing Jack McCallister on the critically acclaimed, but short-lived WB drama *Jack & Bobby*. In 2007, he appeared in the motion picture *Ghost Rider* in which he played Young Johnny Blaze. Matt recently returned to prime time in January, playing idealistic associate Dylan Hewitt on ABC's law series *The Deep End*.



Adam Perry (B.A. Performing Arts, Theatre & Dance, 2004)

Adam was cast immediately upon graduation in the international tour *Cats* and appeared in the 2006 national tour of *Sweet Charity* with Molly Ringwald. He has appeared on Broadway in *A Chorus Line* and *Wicked*, at the City Center in *Damn Yankees* and *On The Town*, and at the New York City Opera in *The Most Happy Fella*. His television credits include the 81st Academy Awards and 2008 Kennedy Center Honors. He is currently on Broadway in *Promises, Promises*.

Shining Star

A Conversation with Gospel Music's Larnelle Harris

BY SALLY RAY



On the third floor of the Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center, across from WKU's Music department office, is a wall holding twenty-four framed photos and biographies of celebrated Music faculty and alumni. This "Wall of Fame" signifies the department's tradition of attracting exceptional faculty and graduating a respectable list of students who have distinguished themselves as nationally and internationally acclaimed performers and teachers.

Among those "Wall of Fame" members is gospel music's Larnelle Harris. Harris, a 1969 graduate in music education, has wowed audiences all over the world for more than three decades with his magical tenor voice. His name is synonymous with inspirational music and his achievements are noteworthy. In a time of racial discord in this country, Larnelle was one of the first African-American Christian artists to perform in predominantly white churches, helping to heal the racial division. In 1989, his recording of "Mighty Spirit" was featured in a nationwide TV campaign for the Points of Light Foundation, culminating in a performance of the song for President and Mrs. Bush at the White House in 1991. As part of the history-making Mos-

cow Project in the former Soviet Union, sponsored by the International Bible Society and Youth for Christ International, Harris performed the first gospel concert ever held inside the Kremlin only one week after the 1991 attempted coup.

His recordings of "How Excellent Is Thy Name," "I Miss My Time With You," "I've Just Seen Jesus," plus many others, including his signature song, "Amen," are now considered modern classics. Another Potter College graduate, Barry Landis (M.A. Communication, 1976), formerly president of The Word Label Recording Group and a leader in the Christian music industry says of his friend Harris, "Larnelle is one of the all time greats in Christian music. He defined a musical genre for all of us, and his renditions with Sandi Patti are still some of the most moving music ever recorded. Besides having the greatest tenor voice in the music field, Larnelle is just an all time great guy. He never let his monumental success go to his head."

Honored with numerous accolades including five Grammy Awards, eleven Dove Awards, a Stellar Award and memberships in the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, the Kentucky Music Hall of Fame,

and WKU's Hall of Distinguished Alumni (HODA), Harris remains truly humble about his professional achievements. The lyrics to his 2005 recording of "I Want to be a Star" aptly capture his perspective on career and life:

*Some may dream of being an idol,
With others falling at their feet.
But making all the world my stage,
Just doesn't mean that much to me.
Ask anyone who's been there,
It doesn't satisfy.
It leaves a soul still longing,
For what gives meaning in this life.*

Married to wife Cynthia (Mitzy) for over 35 years, Larnelle has managed to balance a successful music career with being a husband, father of two grown children, and a grandfather.

On a wintry January morning Dr. Mitzi Groom, Music department head, and I sat down with Larnelle in his Louisville home to chat about his WKU years, his musical journey, and life today. In an inconspicuous corner of a nearby room are the numerous awards that document the career of a man who never intended to be a music star, but who stardom found nonetheless.

SALLY: Tell us about your early musical experiences.

LARNELLE: I gave my first concert when I was nine years old back at the First Baptist Church in Danville, Kentucky.

MITZI GROOM: You were a soprano, I'm sure.

LARNELLE: Yes, and being a boy soprano was a tough life. The ladies would just cry when they'd hear me sing the hymns in church, but all the kids my own age would laugh and throw things. Miss Georgia Donehy taught piano lessons to all of us kids and played keyboard and organ for the choir. Between Miss Georgia and Bate High School, the Black high school – we were segregated at that time—I became exposed to music. During my junior year, Bate High School consolidated with Danville High School. I met a guy by the name of McCauley Arthur (Mac). Mac was the director of the band at Danville High School. I was a drummer and Mac saw something in me. He said, "If I get you a teacher (because I couldn't read music) will you learn to read music?" So he found some guy from Centre College who played drums to give me drum lessons. I became so excited about music! Mac also gave me a music theory book. I had absolutely no idea what it was, but I was interested in it.

SALLY: Why did you choose to attend college at WKU?

LARNELLE: Mac was the one that took me to audition at WKU. I went to Western because an alumnus, who was so excited about the place, said "You know what? We need to go down to WKU!" So that's how I got to Western. I auditioned with drums and vocal. I remember meeting Mr. Ohm Pauli.

It wasn't easy in the beginning. Years later I found out that when Mom and Dad dropped me off at North Hall and started down the highway toward home, and I was still standing outside the dorm, my mom said with big tears "Go back and get him! Go back and get him!" And Dad was crying, but he said, "No, if we go back and get him, he'll never amount to anything!" So they just kept going. Had I known this at the time, I probably would have gone with them. It's hard, but that's what it takes to entrust your kid to someone else, to a place where they'll hopefully grow up a little bit. And I can't think of a better place for me to have had that experience than WKU.

SALLY: What was the music department like when you were at WKU?

LARNELLE: We were a pretty close knit bunch of students. Not all of the students were music majors. Dr. Howard Carpenter and really, the entire faculty, were responsible for the closeness of the students.

SALLY: Who on the faculty at the time most influenced you?

LARNELLE: As a student, I studied with Mr. Pauli, David Livingston, Bennie Beach, and Dr. Carpenter. The light came on in one of those classes, and I knew I wanted to learn more. That's important. You learn not for the grade, but because you want to know more. The teacher provides you that opportunity. It can't be forced on you. Somehow, you have to discover your passion, and realize you must learn more to fulfill that passion. So whatever the catalyst is that spurs you on to higher education, it is not somebody standing over you with a whip. And you're paying your money to get the opportunity to fulfill the passion.

SALLY: When you think back on your years at WKU, what do you remember best?

LARNELLE: Well, walking up that hill was one! Also, I used to go home with Dr. Carpenter's son, John, and see those crazy movies. [Referring to John Carpenter, a Potter College classmate and fellow HODA inductee. Carpenter is one of the best known directors of horror films, most

notably for the 1978 smash cult horror film *Halloween*.] At the time I thought “He’s nuts!” I said, “You know what? You need help!” John played bass and he and I would do duets. It was a lot of fun. That group was so tight and many of us still keep in contact.

Of course my best memory’s standing here (referring to his wife Mitzy). We met at WKU and dated seriously our senior year. When I graduated I went on the road and she started teaching school and working on a Master’s degree. Three years later we married.

MITZI GROOM: What was the hardest thing you had to do musically at WKU?

LARNELLE: The senior recital — because I didn’t think I was going to have to do it. I thought that would disappear. I really didn’t grasp the idea of a senior recital early on, but when I did I wanted to be prepared for it. My classmates and I had seen others do the senior recital and we were all supportive of one another. We would practice and hold each other accountable. And when the recital came, I was ready.

SALLY: It’s not easy to break into the music industry; what was it like in the beginning?

LARNELLE: I remember when Mitzy and I returned from our honeymoon, I stood out on the porch with her dad, who was an old railroad guy, big calluses on his hands, worked hard all his life. And here I am, this musician, this dreamer, standing out there in the yard with a rental car. Mitzy had just taken a leave of absence from a very good teaching job and I had no job! I just had a dream! I stood out there and said to him, “Our lives are out there somewhere. We’re going to find it.” He understood that and soberly said “I’m going back in the house.” And that’s what he did.

SALLY: Can you tell us about your musical journey?

LARNELLE: In the music business you find the opportunity. You look to the open door and grab the opportunity. I’ve done everything from playing drums in Vegas with Roy Clark to singing in high school assemblies.



We started on the road with a group called the Spurrllows. The Chrysler Corporation sponsored our tour and there were about twenty kids in the group. We would go into high schools and do sort of a “God and Country” program. I

played drums with the group. Our first stop was St. Louis where we performed at high schools during the day and were the Spurrllows at night. It was really a ministry that followed up on what was done through the Billy Graham Association. When we went into these high schools we couldn’t give our testimonies about Christ or anything about our personal lives, but we could through this “God and Country” tour invite them to our nighttime concerts. And that’s what we did. Seventeen bucks a week and all expenses paid. That’s how our dream started.

Because so many people in the Christian music business knew about the Spurrllows, when my stint in the group was over, I found myself at Word Records. I recorded with them for a few years, then I went to Benson and recorded for them for years, then Reunion. Now I’m with another label.

As I started to record, I found myself in a pretty interesting position. I wasn’t in the traditional places where you find Black artists. I was performing in churches throughout the south and the north that had never had a Black person in their church. We had some similar experiences in the Spurrllows, but to find myself in that situation was very interesting. I believe the Lord used me in that way, to say, “You know what, God’s color blind. We’re going to come, we’re going to worship, we’re going to praise the Lord, we’re going to have a good time, and we are going to put aside our differences for a moment.”

SALLY: When you reflect on your journey, what do you believe contributed to your success in the music business?

LARNELLE: To tell you, I’m still trying to figure that out. I think somewhere you have to find out who you are and be that person. There are many people who are ready to remake you — and sometimes there are areas of your life that need to be remade. But I had to find out who I

was and then be that person. You can’t be everything to everybody.

MITZI GROOM: Your talent had to be part of this, too.

LARNELLE: Well, I think you have to have some talent, but it’s not just about that. You have to have a craft and always work to improve it. You’ve got to continually hone your craft. The Music department at WKU was foundational in giving me the grounding I needed to succeed. At WKU, our teachers were challenging, but they’re not anywhere as challenging or as ruthless as this world.

MITZI GROOM: I’ve heard you talk about lyrics and composing. Do you do both? Do you write your words to your songs?

LARNELLE: Yes. I don’t write everything, but I collaborate with people. That’s always fun, and I love the process of finding just the right word. “I want to be a star, hung somewhere in the silent sky like the one over Bethlehem that brought the humble and the wise. I want the world to know the love and the hope that’s found in you. I’ll shine anywhere you ask me to, I just want to be a star.”

We’re using a connotation of “star” much different from the norm. The song isn’t about being a pop star or a reaction to *American Idol*. The world’s view of stardom is very different from that of God’s. It’s a different kind of star — a star, if we believe the stories and the accounts, that showed the place where Jesus was born. I enjoy the process of writing. It’s not easy.

SALLY: What would you tell students today who have similar dreams as you?

LARNELLE: First of all, make certain you find something you love most of the time. Find your passion. I’ve been very fortunate in finding something I enjoy most all the time. Avail yourself to good people. Surround yourself with good people who can help you get to where you want to go. I believe, as a person of faith, that God has put many people in my life to help me that I didn’t even know I needed. I’ve studied scripture enough and been a Christian long enough that I don’t believe in coincidences. I believe that our steps are ordered. It doesn’t mean that God knows I’m going to do something, that’s not what I’m talking about. But I do believe that God puts people in your life for a reason.

SALLY: You’ve received a number of awards over the years. What do these awards mean to you?

LARNELLE: I remember the first Grammy I was nominated for. We lived in a little house not too far from here. When I got the call about the nomination, I thought somebody was kidding and I said, “Who is this? Who are you?” I had some friends who were real jokers, and it would have been just like them to make that call. When I received my first award, I remember taking it in my arms and going into a corner and realizing, “Oh my goodness, somebody’s listening! This is making a difference.” But over time I realized that awards were nice, but that wasn’t what was important.

And I’ve also had Mitzy to keep me humble. I won two Grammys one year, and when I came home they had a little party for me. The next morning, I get up and on the kitchen table there’s a note from Mitzy, “Congratulations, honey, have a great day! Would you take the garbage out? Make certain that you get that garbage in the garage because you missed that last time.” So, I was going through the garbage can with newspapers and found the edition that had my picture and story about the Grammys. And that’s basically how we’ve operated over the years.

SALLY: What’s been the highlight of your career?

LARNELLE: The highlight of my career was when my kids were born, because it was reality. Most of my

highlights don’t have anything to do with outside this house. I like it here. The industry has changed and I’m at home much more. Grandkids are the biggest project right now. I’m also talking to a company about a new recording, and I continue to perform around the country. But for the most part, my interest is turning more to home.

As our conversation came to a close, we were invited to a downstairs area where Harris enjoys his hobby as a ham radio operator, communicating with other amateur radio enthusiasts around the world. In 2008, he was inducted into the CQ Amateur Radio Hall of Fame.

Larnelle may not have desired fame, but his talents cannot be ignored. Whether it’s through his ministry, music, or radio frequency, Larnelle Harris is a voice that shines and inspires.



String Music, Civil War History, and Electronic Media: The Work of Three Eminent Professors

BY CAROL CUMMINGS

Potter College enjoys a diverse and quality faculty in its twelve departments. In recent years, the College has added three new endowed professorships in History, Music, and Journalism & Broadcasting. Support for a world-class faculty is an important priority for WKU's \$200 million New Century of Spirit Campaign. According to Tom Hiles, WKU's vice president for Institutional Advancement, "Distinguished faculty committed to excellence in teaching, research, public service, and civic engagement stimulate students and strengthen the WKU experience. Endowed faculty positions make a direct contribution to the quality of learning at WKU, enabling academic endeavors that would not otherwise exist."

Bill Scott, Glenn LaFantasie, and Kerry Northrup arrived at WKU, not from the traditional path that many academics take, but from established careers outside a public university setting. Their professional experience and expertise has greatly enhanced the meaningfulness of student learning and solidified the high level of quality that is found in these programs. Potter College Dean David Lee observes, "Endowed professorships have brought an exciting new dimension to Potter College. Thanks to the generosity of Jerry Baker, Margaret and Cal Turner, and Richard Frockt, we've recruited some uniquely talented and creative people to WKU and given them a new stage for their skills. We've followed an innovative path by looking for people with a flair for putting their scholarship to work with other scholars and with the community."

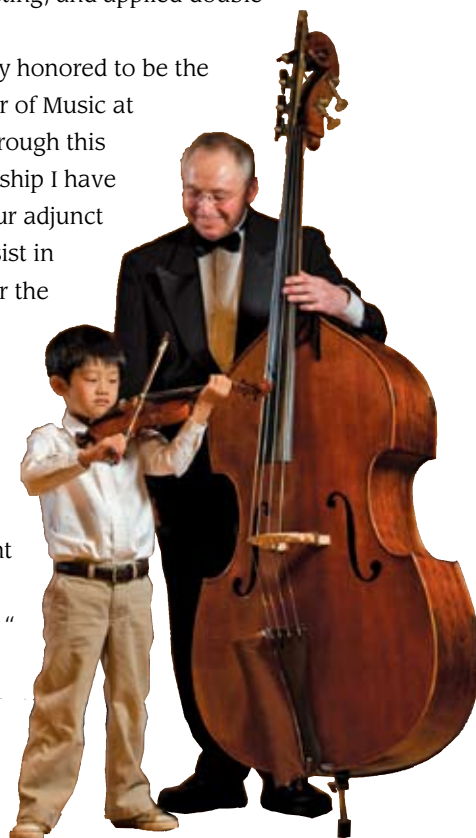
Meet three Potter College professors who are making significant contributions to their respective departments, student learning, and the community at large.

Dr. William Scott, Jerry E. Baker Professorship in Music

Dr. Scott came to WKU in 2003. He has been noted for his work in orchestral development in both the public school and professional sectors. He serves as music director of the Symphony at WKU, directs Chamber ensembles, and teaches courses in string techniques, conducting, and applied double bass.

"I am extremely honored to be the first Baker Professor of Music at WKU," he said. "Through this endowed professorship I have been able to hire our adjunct string faculty to assist in recruiting efforts for the University through our High School String Day at WKU and outreach Master Classes that we have been able to present in Kentucky and neighboring states."

The Baker Professorship was created in 1999 with a \$500,000 gift from alumnus



Jerry Baker. The gift was matched by the Regional University Excellence Trust Fund to create a \$1 million endowment.

The Professorship has funded two state-wide tours of the Ohm Pauli String Quintet and has enhanced the public school strings program by providing funding for the Annual String Finale Concert in Diddle Arena. It also provided a step-up instrument for a musically talented youth. Dr. Scott continued, "We now have a Symphony Orchestra that is composed predominantly of University students; this would not have been possible without the Baker Professorship."

Dr. Mitzi Groom, Music Department Head, has seen first-hand the tremendous effect Professor Scott has had on WKU's orchestral program and the resulting outcome for the local community. Groom notes, "As a result of the development of the Baker Professorship, the Department of Music has been able to impact the musical skill and appreciation of countless college musicians, pre-college private study string students, grades 4-12 public school string students, and a host of audiences in many venues since its inception in 2003," she said. "Bill Scott has excelled in his charge to enhance the quality of the collegiate string students who play in The Symphony, and to develop a string program for our area city and county public school students."

Dr. Glenn W. LaFantasie, Richard Frockt Family Professorship in Civil War History

Glenn LaFantasie came to WKU from the University of Maine at Farmington. He worked for several years as the director of publishing at Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., and the U.S. State Department. Dr. LaFantasie's work as an historian has resulted in a Presidential Commendation, commendations from the National Security Council and the U.S. Department of State, a travel grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and election as a Fellow in the Rhode Island Historical Society. He has written several books on the Civil War era. At WKU he teaches courses on the Age of Jackson, the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Old South, and the Rise and Fall of the Confederacy. Dr. LaFantasie also serves as director of the Center for the Study of the Civil War in West.

"I am truly honored to hold the Richard Frockt Family Professorship in Civil War History," he said.



"This endowed chair brings prestige not only to me as a scholar, but also to WKU, for it indicates the University's commitment to the field of Civil War studies and historical scholarship in general. Since my arrival at WKU in 2006, Mr. and Mrs. Frockt have been vigorous in their support of my research and writing in the field of Civil War studies. I am grateful for their friendly encouragement and interest in my work."

The Frockt Family Professorship was created in 2003 with a \$500,000 gift from WKU alumnus Dick Frockt, his wife, Janet, and their son, Ryan, who attended WKU. The gift was matched by the Regional University Excellence Trust Fund to create a \$1 million endowment.

"I consider myself truly fortunate to hold one of the three endowed professorships in Potter College," he continued. "An endowed chair is the highest honor any scholar can achieve, and I am humbled to have received the great privilege of serving as the Richard Frockt Family Professor of Civil War History." History Department Head, Robert Dietle, views the Frockt Family Professorship in Civil War History as an opportunity to further strengthen the department's expertise in this area and increase visibility of the newly created Center for the Study of the Civil War. "The Frockt Family Professorship in Civil War History allowed the History Department to search for a scholar who had

already established a strong professional presence,” says Dietle. “To help raise the profile of our department and the newly formed Center for the Study of the Civil War, we needed a committed scholar who had connections with the world of Civil War historians; we needed someone who would be able to move easily between a wide variety of audiences: scholarly peers and departmental colleagues, Civil War buffs, potential donors, and the general public. In addition, he had to be an excellent teacher. The endowed professorship made it possible for us to recruit a candidate who fulfilled all these requirements.”

LaFantasie has exceeded his colleagues’ expectations. “When Glenn joined the History Department in 2006, he was already a well-respected scholar with a variety of publications and an interesting range of professional experiences. In the five years he has been with us, he has been nominated for the faculty awards in teaching and public service and, this year, he won the Potter College Faculty Award for Scholarly/Creative Activity,” says Dietle. “Without the Frockt Family Professorship we would not have been able to recruit Glenn to our department.”

Kerry J. Northrup, Margaret and Cal Turner Professorship in Journalism

Northrup is an award-winning career journalist with extensive newsroom management experience and expertise in editorial technologies. Prior to joining the WKU faculty, Northrup was director of publications for the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), the worldwide research and service organization for the news publishing industry and publisher of WAN-IFRA Magazine. He also served as executive director of the IFRA Centre for Advanced News Operations, consulting for 34 newsrooms in 22 countries as a recognized international expert in newsroom organization, multiple-media workflows, and newsroom architecture.

The Turner Professorship was established through a \$500,000 gift from Margaret and Cal Turner, Jr. in 2003. The gift was matched by \$500,000 by the Commonwealth of Kentucky’s Regional University Excellence Trust Fund, creating a total endowment of \$1 million for the professorship, which is housed in one of WKU’s most nationally prominent programs, the School of Journalism & Broadcasting.

“What the professorship funding did is make it possible for someone like me to be somewhere like



this doing what I’m doing for the future of journalism and journalists-in-training,” he said. “I am what they call a professional-in-residence—not a professional academic but rather someone who has worked for a living in news media for nearly four decades. I also bring a different perspective that is not just focused on Kentucky, since I worked internationally for 14 years. I’m looking at the industry and the needs of journalism on a much broader scale.”

Northrup specializes in teaching at the intersection of journalism and technology. This semester, he is teaching Electronic Technologies for Journalism, the gateway course for the new iMedia Certificate, as well as Collaborative Journalism, the certificate’s capstone course.

No one understands better the importance of Northrup’s leadership to the future of the School of Journalism & Broadcasting than School Director, Dr. Pam Johnson. “We were very fortunate and pleased to have attracted someone of Kerry’s caliber to come to work here and were only able to manage that through the resources of the Cal and Margaret Turner Professorship,” she said. In just the few short months since his arrival, Northrup is already making valuable contributions to the program. “He’s changed the conversation to be about technology, not just equipment; about multi-platform, not just multimedia,” says Johnson.

And Northrup’s international connections are making significant differences in students’ learning experiences and opportunities. “Just three months after arriving on campus he was off to India with more than a dozen students trained to professional standards to cover the annual world press summit meetings with some of the most advanced techniques. He hopes to take another team to Beirut at the end of this semester,” said Johnson. “His exceptional international experience in multimedia platforms gives our students opportunities to develop their skills in an international arena. This equals students who go out into the profession ready to start in mid- or upper-level positions versus starting at the bottom.”

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We hope you’ve enjoyed this edition of *Arts & Letters* and are as excited as we are about the accomplishments of Potter College’s students, alumni, and faculty. Please make a gift today supporting the **Potter College Dean’s Fund for Excellence**. Your financial support will provide increased academic opportunities for students within Potter College, including student support for Study Abroad, Research and Creative Activity, and Innovative Learning Opportunities beyond the classroom. We greatly appreciate your gift. It’s an investment in the future.

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For More Information on Giving Contact:

Leslie Watkins

Senior Director of
Development for PCAL
Institutional Advancement
Western Kentucky University
1906 College Heights Blvd.
Bowling Green, KY 42101

Phone: (270) 745-3399

Fax: (270) 745-5300

E-Mail: leslie.watkins@wku.edu



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2010-2011 CULTURAL ENHANCEMENT SERIES

Tuesday, Oct 12, 2010:

Richard Rodriguez speaks
on immigration issues in the
United States.

Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2010:

Masters of the Fiddle:
Natalie MacMaster and
Donnell Leahy.

Monday, February 21, 2011:

Imani Winds: More than a
wind quintet.

Tuesday, March 22, 2011:

Chuck Klosterman speaks
on life through the prism of
pop culture.



Masters of Fiddle: Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy

*All events begin at 7:30 PM (CST) in Van Meter Hall, and are open and free to faculty, students, staff and the community.
For more information, call 270-745-5204 or email cultural.enhancement@wku.edu*