University College Connection

From the Dean’s Office

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** Regional Mail **

University College is responsible for getting mail from the Bowling Green campus to the regional campuses. If you have an item that needs to go to South Campus, Elizabethtown, Ft. Knox, Glasgow or Owensboro campuses, you may drop off your mail at: Tate Page Hall, Room 201, or call our office (745-4092) for pick up.

Please CLEARLY label the mail with the person’s name, campus, building name, and room number.

Your cooperation is appreciated!

Where’s Big Red?

Big Red (JUST LIKE the image to the left) is hidden somewhere in this newsletter. Be the first to find him and you win a University College travel mug! Email wendi.kelley@wku.edu and tell us where you found him!
Over sixteen years ago, I hopped and hobbled into Paul Bush’s English 100 class. I was late, something I detested myself. I’d broken my ankle on the way to class—turned it so severely the top of my foot was scraped and bleeding. He said I should leave and go to the E.R. I insisted on staying through the first class. I was a nervous, self-conscious non-traditional student, and this was my very first semester—very first week—in college. I feared that if I left, I’d never talk myself back through those doors.

I’m glad I stayed. On the scarred wooden desk was Paul’s “briefcase,” a cardboard box with dinosaur stickers layered all over it, filled with mysteries I was sure would do me in. He said he believed in “starting at the beginning,” and that’s what he did: Grammar, sentence structure and complexity, word choices, and prewriting techniques. Paul was a stickler for good grammar and punctuation. Several students in the room were also non-trads, and none of us had the courage to admit that we needed a “refresher,” and some of us wondered out loud how we missed these things in high school. However, without “dumbing us down,” Paul leveled the field so that each of us felt comfortable, yet challenged.

Over the course of the semester, Paul re-instilled in me a love of writing I had, until then, learned to squelch. While several essays he assigned resulted in pieces we were both proud of, one, for me, was life-altering. His assignment seemed simple—on the surface. He forced us to ask ourselves poignant questions (and give honest answers): why are we here; what are we going to make of this time; and what are we planning to do with it in the long term. And we thought this was just an English class!

Because of the research for this one paper, I changed my major. To English. (Sorry about the fragment, Paul.) Here I was, a non-traditional student, starting over after having done everything in reverse, and I had to go home and tell my husband and family that, because of a research paper, I was changing my major from a tidy little business degree to English. Yeah, right. What next? Marine biology?

Fast-forward through graduate school, several years of part-time teaching at our “community college” (that our university has renamed so frequently, it may, by the time of this publication, have yet another name), and I am sitting here at South Campus, my office directly opposite the office door of a man who changed many, many students’ (and others’) lives through his teaching, advising, mentoring, and friendship. So many times since I was hired to be a member of this incredible group of English faculty, I’ve tapped on that door—for advice (even on grammar), to laugh, and sometimes, to vent. That door was always busy, and behind it was always a patient, smiling face—someone who would put down his pen, lean back, and look his visitor in the eyes, someone who was always the first to say, “I’ll do that,” no matter what “that” was. He inspired the same ethic in his students, his colleagues, and friends.

Paul served as KADE president 2010-2011 after serving two consecutive terms as secretary. He was also KADE’s dedicated webmaster from 2008-2013 and was in process of revamping the website to increase its visibility nationwide and demonstrate the outstanding work and service of our KADE organization.

Paul was a musician who entertained locally and at events. I remember one KADE meeting when, that evening, we gathered in the hotel lobby around Paul and his guitar (which he was never without), and he played while we sang (as best we could).
Paul’s poetry demonstrates his love of words and rhythm and his exceptional talent as a writer. Last semester, he met faithfully with our student-led creative writing group, offering support, advice, and encouragement—bringing his own writing for critique, demonstrating we are all equal in our need for feedback and affirmation as part of such a group.

A passion for teaching, a passion for learning, a passion for giving and doing, and a passion for life resonate with the way Paul advised and mentored his students, his colleagues, his friends, his community, and his family. Paul believed in his students and understood their trepidations. Many, many students, like me, crossed the threshold into his classrooms and, through his dedication, guidance, and assurance, discovered something about themselves. Paul knew fear can lead to a chance not taken, and he bespoke the rewards of such chances—how very much they—the students—are worth it after all.

Paul Bush, aged 55, died December 20th at his home from a burst heart aneurism. He was with his wife and son—Shirley and Jeremiah. Paul was an Associate Professor at Western Kentucky University and a long-time member and staunch supporter of KADE. We may have lost a great man, but his wisdom and influence continue to disseminate, spread by everyone he touched.

—Trish Lindsey Jaggers, Instructor of English (thank you, Paul), Academic Support Department, University College of Western Kentucky University; trish.jaggers@wku.edu

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Human beings are driven to seek Truth---if for no other reason than so they can turn and run from facing it.”—Paul Bush on his Facebook page, October 18, 2013

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When I was down on my luck and in trouble; when the Dean laughed at me and told me I didn’t belong here; when I was angry and scared and had no idea what I would do with my life; you looked at me and you said:

Robert...you surprised me.”

I’ll never forget you, Paul. You were the greatest professor I’ve ever had; no one cared more than you. I’m ridiculously lucky to have ever called you a friend. —Robert Swackhamer, a former student, posted this on Paul’s Facebook page, December 20, 2013.
Carlous B. Yates, Director of Student Support Programs at South Campus comes to us from Jefferson Community and Technical College. In his new role he oversees four major programs that focus on the success of our students at South campus. Carlous, will be responsible for the following programs:

* University Experience (UCC175C/176C) program on South Campus Academic Wing
* Cornerstone (1st year retention) program
* South Campus Living Learning Community (A.C.E.S.) program
* Summer Early Entry (SEE) program (Summer Bridge)

Carlous worked at Jefferson nearly 10 years in Student Affairs. He served as Student Affairs Specialist III, Admissions, Recruiter, and as a Senior Admissions Advisor and an adjunct Instructor in the Reading and Academic Success Division. He developed key relationships with area high schools, which led to significant increases in applications from many of his schools. He created and advised Jefferson’s Student Ambassador Program and has served as a mentor for Change Makers and Check and Connect programs, both geared toward student success and retention. He has chaired the steering committee for the Showcase of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) for Louisville and is a graduate of the prestigious KCTCS President’s Leadership Seminar.

Carlous was also instrumental in leading the college’s Super Sunday effort. It is the largest minority recruitment event in Kentucky. He was also active in developing important community relationships over the years with YMCA Black Achievers, Canaan Community Development Corp., and many other community organizations. Last year Carlous, along with Reneau Waggener, Division Chair for Reading and Academic Success Division at Jefferson, launched a dynamic mentoring program at Doss High School called One Team/One Dream. This program helped a group of uncertain young men become college-focused and successful in high school. In 2012, Carlous was named “Outstanding Community Support Person of the Year” by the Louisville Education and Employment Partnership (LEEP) a coalition of schools, government and business leaders, for his work to help students transition to college. He was presented the award by Louisville’s Mayor Greg Fischer. He also is a sought after motivational speaker, last year delivering the keynote address at a senior event for his alma mater, Metcalfe County High School.

In addition, his support and mentorship to numerous students over the years helped ensure their academic and personal success. His office is frequently a hub for students, who stop in to study, get advice or who simply need an understanding ear. Carlous earned a bachelor’s degree in Sociology and a Master’s of Education Degree in College Student Personnel from the University of Louisville.
New Staff Members

The Alice Rowe Learning Assistance Center is excited to welcome Ibrahim Altraifi and Yazeed Alruwaii to our tutoring staff. Ibrahim and Yazeed will be tutoring math, physics and chemistry. The LAC is open Monday through Thursday from 7:45 to 6:00, Friday 7:45 to 2:00 and the following Saturdays from 9:30 to 1:30. Walk-ins welcome. No appointments are necessary.

February 15
March 1
March 22
April 5
April 12
April 19
April 26
May 10

The LAC is a dynamic center. The primary goal of the LAC is to provide students with the resources they need to become successful, independent learners.

- Friendly Staff
- Convenient Hours
- Multiple Services
- Great Location
I certainly didn’t expect to attend Sundance during college. In fact, when I told my parents that WKU was offering a study away course to the festival, I was only mentioning it in passing, (trying not to focus on how badly I wanted to go.) I didn’t expect that they would encourage me to attend. Luckily, they did.

I have learned so much here at Sundance, and I have experienced more than I could have imagined. For me, the aspirations of being a filmmaker began at fourteen—staying up late watching indie films on our circa ’84 television set. Less than a decade later, I’m here at Sundance, watching phenomenal new films and incredibly talented filmmakers.

Watching William H. Macy’s panel was inspiring, as he is so very talented and yet so humble. Seeing one of my favorite actors exude such modesty and truthfulness in terms of failure made me feel like I might have a future in this industry. In short, Sundance 2014 has been surreal and wonderful.
Coleman Martin–Sundance Satisfaction

While packing for the 2014 Sundance Film Festival, I became filled with anxiety. What’s it going to be like? How on Earth do I compile a schedule for myself from a catalog of dozens and dozens of films? Would I get completely overwhelmed and shutdown? None of these things happened to me.

Once we got to Park City the first day and got acclimated, everything began falling into place. I learned how to schedule my days out so I could take events hour by hour and knew what films I’d be tackling for the day. I became a professional at the eWaitlist on the Sundance App. (Yes, there’s an App. for Sundance). It even became manageable to get around Park City on the transit system.

Park City is a breathtaking city with views of mountains and wonderful little restaurants, shops, and art galleries. There’s lots to see and do that’s affiliated with Sundance like visiting the YouTube Lounge or the Music Café downtown Main Street. Be prepared while walking on Main Street because you could run into various celebrities like True Blood actor, Joe Manganiello, like I did or encounter Robert De Niro at a screening and be able to ask him a question. It’s always nice to have your camera phone or handheld camera ready for these spotings that could happen at any given time.

The films are probably the best part of the experience. Not only are you seeing films with like-minded people who have a passion for film and entertainment like you, but also most times during the festival, the cast may show up as well as the director and producer of the film. These are the best times to pick directors brains and see what the process of filming a movie is like. It seems that no question is off-limits like what did you leave on the cutting room floor or why did you cast a specific actor or actress in a role?

Overall, I couldn’t think of a more hands-on film experience than attending the Sundance Film Festival. I’m leaving here feeling more creative and inspired than I have in years. I’m even considering volunteering at next year’s Festival. I have made some contacts here that I hope to keep and eventually use after graduation from WKU in May of this year. If there’s another class coming to Sundance next year from WKU, jump at the opportunity! It’s so rewarding!
Bonner Leaders begin issue-based service this semester

The Bonner Leader program at WKU makes a significant impact in the community through meaningful service. The academic year began with eight new freshmen in the program, and already these students are experiencing the gift that service work is to the community, as well as to their own personal growth. Bonner students established primary partners to work with last fall and are continuing these partnerships into the spring. These long-term relationships allow the Bonner students to formulate sustainable solutions to issues they see in the community while learning the ins and outs of non-profit organizations.

This spring the Bonner Leaders will divide into three groups to address three pressing issues in the community. Through group meetings, research, planning, and creative action steps, the Bonner students will implement solutions for the community issue they choose to address. At the close of the academic year, each Bonner student will have completed a total of 300 hours comprised of service experiences, training and enrichment opportunities. As a group, Bonner Leaders will contribute to over 2,500 hours of service.

The Hill House

The graduate students in the Hill House program at WKU continue their work in a neighborhood bordering main campus located at the corner of 11th and High Streets. This spring students will focus their attention on a new partnership with the Academy at 11th Street, located just down the street from the Hill House. Working with landlord Bob Basham and Academy director Marisa Duarte, Hill House students and staff met individually with Academy students and gave them an opportunity to discuss their goals and ambitions. Utilizing those interactions, Hill House students are developing a Career Fair to be held at the Academy this March; the Fair will tailor to the individual interests and needs of the students at the Academy, with the intention of guiding the students to take steps towards achieving their life goals, leaving school with a better understanding of themselves and potential career options.

The Hill House is a program created for graduate students who want to make a difference in the local community. Four graduate students are selected each year for the program. They serve as graduate assistants, live together in a house on East 11th, and use their academic interests to conduct applied research and develop community projects. For more information, contact Lauren Cunningham, Community Engagement Coordinator at the ALIVE Center at lauren.cunningham@wku.edu or Nic Hartmann at the Institute for Citizenship and Social Responsibility at nicholas.hartmann@wku.edu.
The Campus and Community Network

The Campus and Community Network (CCN) has been a great way to connect WKU campus and community members. By facilitating these interactive meetings, WKU faculty and staff have had the opportunity to network with community members and discuss the different needs that presently face Bowling Green. Examples of pressing needs identified through the network have included limited resources for the immigrant and refugee community, informative resources for the senior community, and services for the homeless in our area.

As a result of CCN, groups of partnering individuals and organizations work together to resolve some of the gaps in services and find collaborative ways to address community needs. Current groups include Amigos Resource Network, the Homeless and Housing Coalition of South Central Kentucky, Be Healthy BG, and Educational Resources for Youth and Adolescence.

The next Campus and Community Network meeting will take place on March 7, 2014 from 10:00am-12:00pm at the WKU ALIVE Center. During this meeting time, existing groups will share their accomplishments, challenges as well as their future goals. Members will also have the opportunity to complete a guided evaluation activity to determine how to best measure their impact. New members are always invited to participate in making a difference through the Campus & Community Network.

For more information on the Campus & Community Network, contact our Office Associate at julia.rivas@wku.edu or give us a call 270-782-0082.

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### Spring Events

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Steps to $100 Solution</td>
<td>February 18th</td>
<td>ICRS 115</td>
<td>6:00pm-8:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus and Community Network Meeting</td>
<td>March 7th</td>
<td>ALIVE Center</td>
<td>10:00am-12:00pm</td>
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<td>Hill House Informational Meeting</td>
<td>March 4th</td>
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<td>6:00pm</td>
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<td>Bonner Informational Meeting</td>
<td>March 6th</td>
<td>ALIVE Center</td>
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<td>Bonner Informational (Webinar)</td>
<td>April 3rd</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<td>Hill House Block Party</td>
<td>April 5th</td>
<td>Hill House</td>
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<td>National Volunteer Week</td>
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<td>CANstruct for a Cause</td>
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<td>Presidents Volunteer Service Award</td>
<td>April 17th</td>
<td>Kentucky Library and Museum</td>
<td>7:00pm-9:00pm</td>
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<td>Impact Expo</td>
<td>April 28th</td>
<td>Gary Ransdell Auditorium 1st Floor</td>
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<td>Hill House Presentations</td>
<td>May 14th</td>
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The $100 Solution™

The $100 Solution™ is geared up for another exciting spring semester of service-learning opportunities in the Bowling Green and surrounding communities. This semester the program is celebrating new partnerships, new faculty involvement at our Western Kentucky University regional campus in Elizabethtown, and new students working with various community organizations to perform meaningful service guided by the five principles of The $100 Solution™: partnership, reciprocity, capacity-building, sustainability, and reflection.

Among our new partners are Dr. Donielle Lovell of WKU’s Sociology department in Elizabethtown, teaching Sociology of Gender course, and the nation’s number one high school, the Carol Martin Gatton Academy for Mathematics and Science. Junior and seniors from the Gatton Academy are working to create hands-on math activities for students currently placed in the Warren Regional Juvenile Detention Center, based on Kentucky’s new core content. Dr. Lovell’s class will begin working with Elizabethtown and surrounding counties to serve with organizations connected to course content related to gender.

The $100 Solution™ is a service-learning model that utilizes course learning objectives combined with the five principles of service-learning to answer a central question for students: with this $100 bill, what can we do to enhance quality of life for others? It teaches students to ask what they can do rather than self-determining needs of others, and it demonstrates that many social problems exist that can be solved with small amounts of money, or rather, by even thinking beyond monetary solutions to make a difference in their community. For more information about The $100 Solution™ contact Lauren Cunningham, Community Engagement Coordinator at the ALIVE Center at lauren.cunningham@wku.edu.

Cunningham and Spaulding selected to speak at IMPACT Conference

WKU ALIVE Center’s Community Engagement Coordinator, Lauren Cunningham and Communications & Marketing Coordinator, Aurelia Spaulding will speak at the IMPACT Conference in Valparaiso, Indiana at the end of this month. According to their website at impactconference.org, the IMPACT Conference is historically the largest national gathering of student leaders, administrators, faculty, and nonprofit staff committed to engaging students in service, activism, politics, advocacy, and other socially responsible work. Cunningham will be discussing the Hill House program in a session titled Taking it to the Streets: The Western Kentucky University Hill House. The Institute for Citizenship & Social Responsibility’s Public Scholar Coordinator Nic Hartmann will co-present with Cunningham. In addition, she will talk to students about Creating a World of Change through The $100 Solution™ at Western Kentucky University. Spaulding will meet with students to discuss the Big Red’s Blitz day of service in a session titled, A Blitz of Service in the Community. In addition, she will provide a workshop on their service-planning tool in the session titled, Partnership Tool Kit: Creating Service that Matters After Graduation.
From the Amazon to Machu Picchu: Community, Place and Leadership
Study Abroad to Peru 2014

Dr. Jane Olmsted, head of Diversity & Community Studies and coordinator of the Master's degree program for Social Responsibility and Sustainable Communities, and Dr. S. Kay Gandy in the School of Teacher Education, led a study abroad to Peru December 26, 2013-January 17, 2014. The course provided students an opportunity to include an international aspect in their program of study and the opportunity to research topics related to their graduate work.

This is the second time that the instructors offered a study abroad course to Peru for these groups of students. A service learning component and trip to Machu Picchu were added to the course this year. Doctoral student and course intern Christian Ryan-Downing worked with Project Amazonas President, Devon Graham, to identify and coordinate the project. Dr. Graham has worked in the Peruvian Amazon with the non-profit organization Project Amazonas since 1994 and has served as president and scientific director of Project Amazonas since 1997.

The service project focused on three primary improvement projects: clean and repair of the rainwater collection tank, resurface of chalkboards, and repair of broken school furniture. With help from Project Amazonas staff, and local community members (and children especially!), all of the desired improvements were completed. The group also took school supplies, including children’s scissors, colored paper, crayons, and other things and conducted an impromptu lesson on how to make paper “snowflakes” to decorate the classroom. “The completed project exceeded my hopes and expectations,” Christian said. “The school still needs much improvement – roof repairs, painting, and other such things – but our work made a difference. The engagement of the children was the best part. The experience taught us to be adaptable – working with the resources practically available and within conditions that weren’t exactly easy. Moreover, the experience allowed us to engage with the community in a deeper way - helping them to improve the most important space in their community, and hopefully touching their lives as meaningfully as they have touched ours.”

Two graduate students in the SRSC wrote their reflections about the course—specifically about their time in Iquitos and down river, in the jungle. Excerpts are included below and on the follow pages.

Iquitos, Peru, by Beth McGrew

Accessible only by airplane or boat, Iquitos is situated in the bowels of the Amazon Basin, and smells like it. The city is very much alive with about 500,000 residents. The rubber boom of the 1800s contributed significantly to its development, infrastructure, and population, though Iquitos’ prosperity from the rubber industry was short-lived, as developers began to farm rubber trees more efficiently in Malaysia. Currently, its economy is primarily dependent on oil, minerals, and tourism.

Iquitos is a loud and smelly town: a fermenting cocktail of urine, rotting fruit, and dog feces, steaming with exhaust. The primary mode of transportation in Iquitos is the motor-taxi, which is a motorcycle with a small open-air cab attached for passengers. Though these motor-taxis clog the streets with noise and exhaust, they provide an agreeable occupation for thousands of men (women may have personal motorbikes but do not generally run taxis).

(continued)
We happened to be in Iquitos during a festive couple of weeks. Still within the 12 days of Christmas, the town was heavily adorned with Christmas decor, complete with a manger complete with ancient anteaters and monkeys, along with Natives guarding the manger scene, in the main square, the Plaza de Armas. We celebrated New Year’s with the locals—mostly as their entertainment. However, we succeeded in pulling them onto the dance floor for the final countdown and learned that yellow is their lucky color for the New Year. In fact, yellow undies were particularly lucky! (Photo by Jane Olmsted)

We were even present for Iquitos’ 150th anniversary. They had a big street party complete with a band, parade, street performers, and games along the boulevard, which hugs the Nanay River, where families gathered and danced well into the night.

As part of the class, we explored several communities in Iquitos, including a trip to the Medicinal Plant Botanical Garden, the massive Belen Market, Bella Vista (port community), Puerto de Productores, an orphanage for boys, as well as the Manatee Rescue Center, run by the Research Institute of the Peruvian Amazon and supported in part by the Dallas World Aquarium. One focus of the Rescue’s efforts is on youth education, as a means to discourage future generations from hunting manatees. (Photo by Jane Olmsted)

This photo is of housing in Iquitos. A young boy is repairing a thatch roof, and in front of the thatch roofs are two aluminum roofs. Providing Peruvians with aluminum roofs is part of a government program to “improve housing living standards.” In actuality, thatch roofs are sustainable in that they produce no waste, have no carbon footprint, can be repaired at no cost, and are just as effective as aluminum at preventing leaks. (Photo by Beth McGrew)

Reflections on the Amazon Rainforest by Jacqueline Adams (Photos by J. Adams unless noted)

When I was first approached about going to the Amazon rainforest I was ecstatic, but then I considered all the elements of the jungle I feared like snakes, jaguars, piranha, parasites, disease, and mosquitoes. I watched films and Bear Grylls handing out life-saving measures on old Discovery Channel clips. I feared the living organism that grants life and sustains communities; I feared my home, mother-nature. I never considered the women of the Amazon who braved the jungle fearless with children on hips at the age of sixteen. I never thought about the children of the Amazon carrying river water into their homes and attending school with deadly spiders in a concrete building with rainwater cycling into buckets on their dirt playgrounds. It was the unforeseen fears I did not count on, but soon made peace with once I embraced the idea of sustainable communities.

My fears were debilitating and kept me from processing the beauty that surrounded me. My first night in the jungle was aboard our boat, La Nanita. She made her way down the Amazon River from Iquitos, Peru into the Amazon rainforest. She floated softly and seemed to be at peace carrying us over river lettuce (a manatee treat) and past pink dolphins into a sunset we posed with in front of cameras. The sky turned from gray, to blue, to pink and purple. I felt heroic, like a goddess floating toward the unknown and the mysterious. When night fell and the sounds of the
jungle became the soundtrack to the darkness my heroine status seemed to float further downriver while I stayed in my body with my fears to keep me company. In the darkness my fellow travelers and I searched for bats the size of small dogs.

There is an instant community in the jungle. For some reason there is a bond the moment the boat is boarded and every individual has the same destination. I cannot explain the trust I manifested in such a short time period for those aboard La Nanita. Perhaps apprehensions, new surroundings, or the physical closeness in the jungle all create a desire to feel whole and one with a community. We sustained one another no matter our fears, silliness, or annoyances. We cared for one another and it is extremely foreign to love others so quickly, but being surrounded by a new place, the kindness of those without American privileges, and nature’s peaceful movement created a world of familiarity that brings closeness to those who have only recently met and those who lack knowledge about one another. We are taught to distance ourselves, compete, and win. There is no greater joy than throwing down armor and embracing collectivity.

It was only in the jungle I realized the importance of community and care. Despite my beginnings on the Amazon River when we arrived at Madre Selva (Mother Jungle) Biological Research Station with our guide, Dr. Devon Graham from Project Amazonas, I finally felt at peace. The first day we braved the jungle path through thick walls of heat, humidity, and mosquitos. I certainly feared running into giant snakes and spiders, but after ten minutes in the jungle the trees began to shift from large to unimaginable. Trees with spikey roots, shallow roots, roots that grow like spider legs, and trees that appear to never end. The sky blends with the forest roof and the leaves become my safe haven. My fellow travelers kept me at ease and my heart began to bloom. I could feel my fears slowly falling to the ground and the forest replaced my emptiness with overwhelming calm and the silence of peace. I have always loved Kentucky forests, but there is no preparation for the relentless green the Amazon offers as a gift to those who visit.

First stop on the river, lily pads by Jaqueline Adams

The following day we made our first visit to a surrounding community called Santo Tomas. It is a religious community that escaped into the jungle to avoid outsiders and persecution which reminded me so much of the beginnings of colonization in the states. We strapped on our privilege with boots, long sleeves, pants, bug sprays, and swallowed our malaria pills with chloride filled water that traveled with us from the city. We navigated the Orosa River where the Madre Selva Biological Research Station was housed in our privileged boat with fuel and motor. I call these privileges, but the question often arose, “What is privilege?” Is privilege American amenities or closeness and freedom in nature? We were greeted by young faces with tiny bodies, big smiles, and embracing touches. A large red cross sits at the top of the hill in Santo Tomas. We made our way up the hill and to the (Continued)
school which houses bats, a muddy floor, a dirty water tank, old chalkboards, and battered desks filled with wandering spiders known for their deadly bites. Our service project made a dent in the issues around the school. We cleaned the water tank and restored desks, chairs, and the chalkboards.

It wasn’t in the tasks that I saw community, but in the labor. Children, local parents, and community leaders joined us in creating small changes. These children carry siblings, play soccer, pose for photos, and enjoy staring at digital cameras. Beyond their daily routine and the unpaid labor most engage in while caring for their families and communities, these beautiful children valued touch and laughter even if our languages did not align. They genuinely enjoyed our company and every member of our group showed devotion and care when playing soccer, painting chalkboards, and sweeping up puddles. There was a communal effort to sustain education and happiness. There is a strange sensation walking through the Amazon rainforest, but like the trees and their expansive reach from sky to ground, I felt the community of Santo Tomas embrace us with the same overarching feelings of joy and love. This community surrounded us with lush kindness.

Every creature in the rainforest is reliant on another to sustain their lives, spread seeds, and sustain their habitat. The human communities in the rainforest are no different because they sustain community in alliance with nature. Even in my fellow travelers I saw a cycle of sustainability through our labor and care. These elements of labor create caring communities. We met a midwife in Santo Tomas who had delivered over twenty four babies and healed community members from Santo Tomas to Iquitos without ever receiving payment. Her daughter will sustain her work for community out of care. This labor of love was present and extremely prevalent in the women and children of the Amazon.

Perhaps my greatest fears were no longer concerning my own well-being in the rainforest, but I laid awake at night growing more and more accustomed to the darkness lit with stars, the sounds of life at night, and the rain that tumbled every night, but one. I felt the rain create a change in the jungle, a refreshing shift that cooled the temperature, fed the plants, and gave the water tank at the local school fresh water housed without mosquitos or river pollutants. My fears had shifted. I embraced the jungle. I swam in the Amazon River, ate food far fresher than any Whole Foods Market could offer, held centipedes, searched for lizards, and played with the young people of the river.
Dr. Olmsted wrote a blog when we returned. She mentioned that fears tend to allow us to only see one tree in the forest. She wrote that in order to see beyond one tree we must let go of our fears to see the whole forest. I felt myself during our night hike into the jungle (where I saw tarantulas, spiders, one fast snake, and several daring insects) releasing my fears and embracing my community and those communities around us in the jungle that knew nothing of my privilege or my fears. I felt whole and embraced by nature and community because I did not stand alone in the jungle, I was surrounded by a forest that gave me shade and developed my faith in my fellow person.

I came out of the Amazon rainforest with tears in my eyes questioning my privilege, longing to keep the closeness of community, and valuing the sustainable nature of the Amazonian communities where care is valued above all other conveniences. I began to fear coming home because I knew here sustainability and community did not exist in my daily life. I feared coming home because I had finally found peace and purpose. My purpose was not to change Amazonian life in the jungle, but to embrace it. Embracing nature and community through sustainable living certainly seems easier than embracing this life of academic solitude in the states. I now fear losing the “jungle effect,” but at least I looked beyond one tree to see the forest. I found solitude in the Peruvian Amazon that can only be found in the mysteries of the jungle and in the loving arms of community.

Jacqueline took this photo as they headed into the jungle. She states, “I feel this tree and I, given Dr. Olmsted’s reflections about fear and seeing beyond one tree into the forest, have a great deal in common. I was focused on my single reflection. I was bare and without lush leaves as we entered the jungle, but I have grown. I can see the green line of thick forest in the distance.

Each of us explored Iquitos in our own ways, listening, questioning, and watching for material relevant to our research. Projects spanned from water accessibility and quality to the role of children in Peru. Iquitos offered a solid foundation on which to build our research throughout the rest of our trip.
ICSR Social Justice & the Academy Speakers Series

By Nic Hartmann

In the fall of 2013, ICSR surveyed its students and found a majority are interested in more social justice-related curriculum and programming. Utilizing this feedback, ICSR is pleased to announce the Spring 2014 “Social Justice & the Academy” Speakers Series. ICSR is bringing three regional scholar-activists to campus to talk about their work.

On February 13, ICSR will host Dr. Judah Schept, an Assistant Professor in the School of Justice Studies at Eastern Kentucky University and a public scholar with interests in the issues of prison expansion and alternatives to incarceration. Dr. Schept’s presentation is “Carceral Expansion, Community Organizing, and Critical Prison Studies: Intersections of Social Justice Scholarship, Teaching and Activism.”

On March 27, Dr. Nirmala Erevelles, a disability studies scholar and Professor of Social and Cultural Studies in Education at the University of Alabama, will be giving a talk entitled “Thinking with Disability Studies/Teaching for Transformation.” Dr. Erevelles, through her research on disability and the body, asks the question, “Why do some bodies matter more than others?”

On April 24, Dr. Rhonda Williams, a historian and founder-director of the Social Justice Institute at Case Western Reserve University, will be on campus. A scholar-activist and educator, Dr. Rhonda is dedicated to establishing the community as a classroom space for student engagement in social activism. Her Speakers Series talk is titled “Expanding Classrooms: Pedagogy at the Social Justice Crossroads.”

All talks will be in the Faculty House from 4:00 to 5:30, with a reception to follow. The events are wheelchair-accessible, swipeable for students, and open to the public.
During winter break, I was fortunate to attend the Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference at Texas A&M University. At this leadership conference I attended several beneficial sessions where I gained knowledge on how to be an effective leader, how to effectively speak in front of a group (whether you are speaking impromptu or not), how to work through adversity (whether it is prevalent in your workplace or in an organization), and how to maintain healthy relationships outside of leadership roles. One notable thing I was able to do was connect with other Black Student Alliance organizations from other universities. Another thing I was able to do was talk to universities outside of Kentucky about their Law programs, which definitely peeked my interest.

I would like to thank the Institute for Citizenship & Social Responsibility for sponsoring me for this trip; and I encourage others to take advantage of this opportunity in 2015. Thanks to this wonderful conference I will be able to incorporate what I learned into my different leadership roles.
The International Leadership Association (ILA) held its annual conference at the Fairmont Queen Hotel in Montreal, Canada, from October 30 to November 2. The ILA annual conference brings together leadership scholars, practitioners, academics and leadership professionals to share ideas, renew friendships and make new contacts for professional development while collaborating to gain insight to the most current topics regarding leadership. Associated with the ILA are various Member Interest Groups (MIGs) such as the Ethics, Youth Leadership, Business, Leadership Education and Public. The MIGs provide a venue to discuss current topics in a more specific context. The conference is typical and offers plenary sessions, concurrent sessions for the presentation of papers, panel discussions, and symposiums and posters. Additionally, various colleges and universities hold receptions to present awards, publishers offer their latest publications, and other leadership-associated organizations offer information on their programs.

At this conference, Dr. John Baker presented a paper titled *Observations from an Analysis of the U.S. Army’s ROTC Leadership Development and Assessment Course*. This paper was recently accepted for publication in the international journal *Leadership*. Dr. Baker also participated in a panel discussion titled *Selection vs Inclusion in Leadership Education Programs: Differing Perspectives* and chaired a symposium titled *Leadership in Extreme Contexts*. The hope is in future years more Leadership Studies faculty and students can participate and present research.

One program ILA offers is a student case study competition. The case study competition provides students an opportunity to compete with students from other schools and learn leadership. The competition consists of both undergraduate and graduate categories where teams of four are presented with a leadership problem or situation. Initially, each team develops their solution to the leadership problem/situation then presents their findings to a panel of leadership educators and scholars. The panel then selects four teams in each category for the final competition which consists of additional information that teams must use to develop an additional leadership strategy. Winners in both categories are recognized and receive awards for their effort. WKU hopes to develop a team to compete in future case-study competitions.

Overall, the ILA conference is a very user friendly conference where people are willing to collaborate and share best practices and thoughts. The next conference is in San Diego and will occur from October 30 to November 2. If students are interested in attending, please contact Dr. Baker for more details and to discuss possible academic research to present at that conference.
What is Organizational Leadership—and Why?

WKU created a major in Organizational Leadership in 2012. Many have asked what it is and why consider Organizational Leadership as a major? The following quote may give you a hint. “The purpose of leadership is to change the world around you…” (Stan Slap) That’s our purpose in Leadership Studies -- to train students to go out and make a difference in their world. As President Kennedy once said, “Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other” so we are teaching young men and women the tools, the skills, the attitudes a leader needs to make a difference in his or her community. What are some of these attitudes and skills? They are competencies such as personal and social awareness, the importance of integrity, learning how to work in teams, how to motivate and empower others because they have invested time to know their followers, valuing their workforce as their most important resource.

The Organizational Leadership major is interdisciplinary so students can choose classes from a wide variety of disciplines with a core of leadership and management classes. Some choose to concentrate in particular areas such as business, communication, health, public administration and non-profit. Careers in OL are found in management, supervision, human resources and can be found in the private, public and non-profit sectors.

This is a new major with much promise. It is poised to grow rapidly in the next couple of years. It meets the needs for distance learners, usually non-traditional students, as well as on-campus students, offering a choice of classes both online and face-to-face. If you are interested in the relational aspect of organizations and how to make a difference, please visit our web site: http://www.wku.edu/leadership/.
TEXTBOOK FOR TROOPS

The numbers are in! Textbooks For Troops has helped 134 military students and 22 family members. The program provides for active duty, Guard, reserve, veterans and their families. It offers textbooks, free of charge, for those who are not receiving a book stipend. The books are loaned out each semester and then returned for the next student to use.

This is a scholarship program that keeps giving. These 156 students borrowed 500 books from the lending library. These included 234 books on hand and 266 newly purchased books this semester. Donations of gently used and current textbooks for the program are always accepted and welcome!

For more information contact Teresa Jameson at 745-2180 or Teresa.Jameson@wku.edu.

CanDoo enjoyed a trip to Savannah, GA, to attend the CCME Conference February 10th—13th. He was very popular with all the attendees as well as the local population. Military Student Services’ Teresa Jameson and CanDoo are pictured in front of the ‘Waving Girl’ statue in Savannah.