In October of 2014, MFA students Clair Rogers and Thomas Delano began working with a group of residents at Ecumen Pathstone Living, an assisted living facility for older adults. The students conducted poetry and prose workshops for the residents, with a focus on memoir. The prompts the students chose were designed to facilitate good mental and emotional health, often focusing on feelings or memories centered around holidays such as Halloween and Thanksgiving.

Rogers and Delano explained that residents were initially concerned they’d have trouble remembering events or the past, but as they engaged with the sensory-led prompts and began writing, “their memories flourished.” Staff members at Ecumen Pathstone said several of the writing exercises were “transformative,” which was seen through the residents’ elation in sharing memories and their eagerness to participate in conversations about their work. For Delano and Rogers, these workshops were transformative as well. “We’ve always felt a deep connection with elders,” they said. “This has been a wonderful way to spread our talents as well as remind us how important it is to love the people in your life. We happily encourage any interested faculty or students within the English department to share their talents among their community.”

Thomas Delano and Clair Rogers received the Dr. Ronald Gower Scholarship for their work at Pathstone.

Contributed by Clair Rogers & Thomas Delano

Eleven-year Technical Communications Collaboration Continues to Bear Fruit

Contributed by Lee Tesdell

Technical Communication, Art, and Printing Services have worked together for the past eleven years to create the documents for the annual conference of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW), held in a different city each year. The theme this year was Exploring the Value of Technical Communication, and the conference was held in Tampa, Florida, on March 18.

Students from the Art and English Departments work on the documents. Art professors help students design the artwork that a Technical Communication student then incorporates into the printed programs. In 2015 Nolan Graf was the art student who worked on the project. “I wanted to use type as a main focus with this piece due to the impact that letters have on us in a society,” Graf noted. “Letters form words which then relay messages that people can follow. These messages are the beginnings of directions, which are created to eliminate confusion with a process. This clearness is of utmost importance to us to attain whatever goal we are striving for.”

Technical Communications faculty Lee Tesdell then worked with student Lindsey Tollefson to create the program file itself in Adobe InDesign. Tollefson enjoyed “having an opportunity to utilize my graphic design background in combination with my Technical Communication coursework to create a usable, functional technical document.” She continued: “My goal was to not let the design interfere with the communication, but instead to format the content in a way that aids usability and creates a highly functional conference guide.”

Finally, consultations were made with Doug Fenske and Ryan Schuh from University Printing Services. Fenske and Schuh checked the created files, then pre-pressed, printed, folded, trimmed, stapled, and boxed the conference documents at a competitive price.

The project is supervised by Lee Tesdell of the English Department.
**CELEBRATING NATIONAL POETRY MONTH**
For the second year in a row, professor Diana Joseph worked with Katy Clay, Angela Duryee, and Richard Terrill to facilitate a National Poetry Month video series. Students volunteered to read poems on camera, and a poem was posted each day in April on the website. Archived videos can be viewed here: http://mavtube.mnsu.edu/mav_events/poetry_month_2015.html.

**ENGLISH STUDENTS ‘ZINE IT UP IN TAMPA**
*Contributed by David Puthoff*
Lora Strey, Heidi Fuhr, and David Puthoff were accepted to the Conference on College Composition and Communication, held in Tampa, Florida this year. The theme of this year’s conference was “Risk and Reward.” The title of their presentation was “Zino-phobia: The Risk of Unconventional Assignments,” and it was based on a zine unit the three teaching assistants developed in the spring of 2014. In the presentation, they discussed the ways in which the innovative unit was a risk and the ways in which it failed to meet expectations. The presentation was well-attended and met with good cheer from other instructors using zines in the classroom across the nation.

**COMPOSITION COLLOQUIUMSHARES IDEAS**
*Contributed by Jacqueline Arnold*
Interim Composition Director Jacqueline Arnold and Composition Instructor Lindsy Mason have started a new monthly forum for those teaching composition to share ideas and discuss classroom strategies. Each colloquium begins with a 10-15 minute panel presentation given by Minnesota State Mankato instructors with experience implementing classroom techniques based on the scheduled topic. This is followed by a Q&A and open discussion session in which attendees can brainstorm new ideas, share concerns and issues, and connect with fellow composition instructors in a casual academic environment, complete with cookies. Topics have included “Collaborative Classroom Techniques,” “Innovative Use of Classroom Technology and Multimedia Projects,” “Teaching Composition to Multilingual Students,” “Project Based Learning,” and “Writing Across the Curriculum.” Attendees at the meeting feel they have benefited from the opportunity to share teaching ideas and concerns with one another. Says Mason: “We hope this forum has helped create some sense of community among the many instructors involved with delivering composition courses to our students.”

**GOOD THUNDER READING SERIES LAUNCHES**
**“GOOD THUNDER PRESENTS” PROGRAMMING**
“Good Thunder Presents” is an extension program of the Good Thunder Reading series. Started by Diana Joseph, the program supports literary events and activities for area community groups. Since its launch in 2014, Good Thunder Presents has facilitated several events and workshops in the community. Minnesota State Mankato MFA alum Trisha Speed Shaskan, author of over 40 books for Younger Readers, gave a reading for children at the 410 Project in downtown Mankato. Student readers were chosen to present their work on the topic of “Disguises” at St. Peter Arts Center (featured readers were Michael Torres, Kit Arbuckle and Alicia Catt). Current MFA students read children’s poetry at Ecumen Pathstone Living in an event titled “A Poetry Reading for Children and the Young at Heart” (readers included Matt Hall, Thomas Delano, Christopher Hopkins, Lissa Honebe, and Kit Arbuckle). Finally, several ongoing creative writing workshops were led by MFA students at locations such as Ecumen Pathstone Living (Thomas Delano and Clair Rogers), Harry Meyering (Cimarron Burt, Kate McLam and Taylor Tolchin), and Aktion Club Theater (Taylor Tolchin and Kate McLam). Good Thunder Presents programs will continue in the 2015-2016 academic year.
GRADUATE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH ASSOCIATION HOSTS 3rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Contributed by Fran Kennedy
The Graduate Scholars of English Association (GSEA) hosted its third annual English graduate conference titled “More Than Writing” on April 25, 2015. This conference invited graduate scholars from all English disciplines to participate, including those who study English Literature, Technical Communication, Teaching English as a Second Language, Teaching Writing, and Creative Writing. The conference focused on narrative in terms of craft, analysis, and pedagogy. The GSEA was pleased to welcome Professor Florence Amamoto, Department Co-Chair in English and Associate Professor in Japanese Studies, and Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies at Gustavus as the keynote speaker. Using her knowledge of various English disciplines, Professor Amamoto drew a common thread between the different areas of study within the English department.

AWP HELD IN MINNEAPOLIS
The Association of Writing Program (AWP) held its annual conference in Minneapolis this April. Undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, adjuncts, and alumni attended the event. Professor Geoffrey Herbach was on two panels discussing young adult literature; Diana Joseph’s two panels focused on the teaching and writing of creative nonfiction. Alumni Kirstin Cronn-Mills, Kris Bigalk, Bronson Lemer, and Luke Rolfs presented on panels as well. Sponsorship was provided by the Blue Earth Review, the Good Thunder Reading Series, the English Department, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities. Individual donors helped secure eight hotel rooms for graduate students, costing a total of nearly $6700. Donations are still being accepted for that effort (we still have a ways to go!). To support fledging writers, go to www.mnsu.edu/giving (be sure to designate English as the area, and Creative Writing as the fund). Students appreciate it!

FILM SHOWCASE GIVES AUDIENCE TO STUDENT FILMMAKERS
Contributed by Maz Rezzek
The Spring Showcase screened short films from English 317 Film Production students on April 23. The event included an evening of short films (narrative and non-narrative) envisioned, developed, and executed by Minnesota State Mankato undergraduates over the course of this spring semester. In addition to an Audience Prize for “Best Film” at the showcase, there was also a Jury Prize announced. The jury was comprised of faculty members from departments within and outside of the Film Studies minor. “The audience award for Best Film went to: Payton Prafke for his film, “Mattress For Free.” The jury award for Best Film went to: Ivo Eller for his film, “Panic.”

GOOD THUNDER READING SERIES 2015-2016 VISITING AUTHORS
The Good Thunder Reading Series is pleased to announce its 2015-16 program.

9.10.15 Fiction and creative nonfiction writer Roxane Gay
10.8.15 Nadine B. Andreas Visiting Writer Residency: Fiction writer, memoirist, cartoonist, and playwright Lynda Barry
11.12.14 Poet, fiction writer and creative nonfiction writer Michael Torres
2.11.16 Poet Jenny Yang Cropp
3.15–3.18.16 Eddice C. Barber Visiting Writer Residency: Poet and creative nonfiction writer Jonathan Johnson
4.14.16 Robert C. Wright Minnesota Writer Residency Fiction and nonfiction writer Susan Power

TESL STUDENTS TUTOR L2 LEARNERS IN NEW PROGRAM
TESL Professor Sarah Henderson Lee is currently partnering with Civil Engineering (CIVE) Professor Stephen Druschel on a tutoring program between TESL students and CIVE second language (L2) learners. The L2 students hail primarily from Brazil and Saudi Arabia, according to TESL Professor Glen Poupore, and are sponsored by their governments to receive an education at Minnesota State Mankato. While many of the students have taken intensive English language courses, Dr. Druschel noticed some would benefit from further tutoring and therefore reached out to the department’s TESL program. Henderson Lee stated that she “jumped at the opportunity to work with him to better meet the needs of second language learners in this context.” While TESL students occasionally sit it on CIVE classes to gain further knowledge of the course materials, Henderson Lee explained that “our tutors are language not content specialists; however once some of the language barriers are crossed, the content is more easily acquired by the civil engineering students, making the sessions valuable to both tutors and tutees.” Poupore noted that the program is “not only good for the University as we expand the number of international students, but it is also good news for the English Department since it provides our TESL students with teaching opportunities.”
Notes from the Chair

by Matthew Sewell

Last year in this space I referred to a wave of retirements in the English Department, and this year the faculty invested a significant amount of time and effort on national searches for new instructors. I’m happy to report that we had a very successful hiring season — but first I’d like to highlight a few details about our departing colleagues:

David Chapman earned a B.S. in entomology from Ohio State University (2000) and an M.A. in Technical Communication from Minnesota State Mankato (2008); he is also finishing a second M.A. from Minnesota State Mankato in Software Development this year. He joined us in 2010, and he’s leaving to become a full-time software developer at Fun.com in North Mankato. He describes his career path as “biologist to data analyst to grad student/faculty manuscript editor to stay-at-home-dad to technical communication instructor to software developer” (whew!).

Sue Johnston earned a B.A. in English and German from Moorhead State University (1972), and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of Minnesota (1980, 1984). She joined us in 1989, and last year she was honored to receive the first Diversity Award from the College of Arts and Humanities. After retirement she plans to “turn back into a hippie” by camping, gardening, reading, traveling, and spending time with her Llewellin English setters.

Donald Larsson earned a B.A. in English from George Washington University (1971), and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1974, 1980); he began at Minnesota State Mankato in 1981. Over his time at Minnesota State Mankato, he served as director of the Humanities Program, chair of the English Department, president of the local Faculty Association, statewide president of the IFO, and as a peer reviewer for the Higher Learning Commission. He will continue his work with HLC (including helping Minnesota State Mankato with its reaccreditation visit in 2016), and he was recently elected to be a regional delegate to the Modern Language Association. He’s also applied to be a docent at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts “to keep that [teaching] endorphin rush going!”

Anne O’Meara earned a B.A. in Mathematics and English from Clarke College (1970), an M.A. in English from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (1972), and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Minnesota (1989). She began at Minnesota State Mankato in 1989. In her time here, she served as TA director and also chair of the department. After retirement, she plans to travel, and may even accomplish her goal of playing in 50 bridge tournaments in 50 states over 50 weeks.

Gretchen Perbix earned a B.A. in Rhetoric and Speech Communication from Drake University (1999), and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Scientific and Technical Communication from the University of Minnesota (2001, 2006); she began at Minnesota State Mankato in 2005. She’s leaving us to focus on the cider and apple business (Sweetland Orchard) that she runs with her husband.

That’s more than 100 years of combined experience we’re losing this year! The English Department has benefited a great deal from the contributions of these colleagues; on behalf of our students, staff, and faculty: thank you.

I’ll mention, briefly, a few things about the new instructors who will be joining us in Fall 2015.

Edward Avila [Ph.D., University of California San Diego, 2012]: before joining Minnesota State Mankato, Edward was Assistant Professor of English at Eastern New Mexico University, where he specialized in Chicana/o - Latina/o Literature and Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S. Edward’s research focuses on Latina/o transnational narratives and Latina/o literary and filmic representations of im/migration under contemporary liberalism in the Americas.

Robin Becker [MFA, Louisiana State University, 2000] joined us a year ago, but we weren’t able to include her in the 2014 newsletter. Prior to Minnesota State Mankato, Robin taught Creative Writing and Composition at the University of Central Arkansas. Her first novel, Brains: A Zombie Memoir (HarperCollins, 2010), is narrated by a professor-turned-zombie who retains sentience and pretensions. She’s at work on her next novel, whose characters are all fully alive.

Sarah Henderson Lee [Ph.D., Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 2011]: Sarah was previously Assistant Professor of TESL at Lindenwood University; recently she co-edited a special issue of TESOL Journal (Fall 2014).

Lindsy Mason [MFA, Minnesota State University, 2014]: Lindsy’s research focuses on collaborative service learning projects to build writing skills; recently she co-edited a young adult nonfiction anthology called Love and Profanity (2015).

Steve Rybin [Ph.D., Ohio University, 2009] is co-editor of a recent collection of essays entitled Lonely Places, Dangerous Ground: Nicholas Ray in American Cinema. His research areas are film authorship, film and media performance, and film history.

Elizabeth Williansen [Ph.D., Indiana University, 2009]: Before joining us, Liz was an Assistant Professor of English at Kent State University – Stark. Liz teaches medieval and renaissance British literature, including Chaucer and Shakespeare, as well as the history and modern structure of the English language. Her research examines individual and group identity in medieval narrative, particularly focusing on depictions of treachery in Middle English romance and on representations of foreignness in early travel writing.

Donna Casella is currently serving as one of the invited scholars on Columbia University’s online Women in Film Pioneers project. She is working on essays on women filmmakers in Ireland and a featured article on women screenwriters in the U.S.


Danielle Haque authored the article “The Postsecular Turn and Muslim American Literature” in American Literature.

Sarah Henderson Lee co-edited a special issue of TESOL Journal (September 2014), titled Critical Perspectives on World Englishes. She also presented “Bridging the Home-school Literacies of ELLs: Toward Positive Change in Teacher Education” at the Symposium on Second Language Writing in November 2014 and “Crossing Contexts: An Online Writing Project Between Multilingual Learners” at the American Association for Applied Linguistics in March 2015.

Geoffrey Herbach’s novel Fat Boy vs. The Cheerleaders was included on The American Library Association’s YALSA 2015 Best Fiction for Young Adults list.

Mary Sue Johnston presented a paper at the Annual Willa Cather Conference in June 2014.

Donald Larsson organized and moderated the panel “Michael Haneke: Vulnerable Minds, Bodies, Spectators” at the MLA Convention in Chicago and will serve a three-year term (2015-2018) as a Regional Delegate (Great Lakes) for the association. He participated in two peer review team visits to universities seeking re-accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission and in the HLC’s summer workshop for Peer Reviewers. Finally, his was the winning caption for Inside Higher Education’s December cartoon caption contest.


Melissa Purdue continues to serve as editor-in-chief of the journal Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies, publishing three issues a year. She also authored “That’s what children are—nought but leg-ropes’: Motherhood in Rosa Praed’s Mrs. Tregaskiss,” in Domestic Fiction in Colonial Australia and New Zealand and presented a paper on 19th-century motherhood at the National Women’s Studies Association conference. Richard Robbins gave readings at the University of Nebraska and the Western Literature Association Annual Conference. His poetry was published in Stand, Cincinnati Review, Great River Review, Miramar, and other magazines. He also served as a consultant for Jerome Foundation and Minnesota State Arts Board grant programs.

Richard Terrill presented the lecture, “Creating Subtext in Memoir” for the Writers’ Center at the Chautauqua Institution in Chautauqua, New York.

Jennifer Veltsos presented the paper “It’s Like I Don’t Even Know You Anymore: Analyzing the Effects of Logo Modernization on Corporate Ethics” with Dr. Matthew Sharp (Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University) at the Association for Business Communication in Philadelphia. She also received the ABC Rising Star Award during that conference. In March 2015, Dr. Veltsos presented a poster titled “The Big Chill Online: A Technical Communication Program Reflects after Ten Years Online,” at the Association for Teachers of Technical Writing conference in Tampa, FL.

Emily Bartz (English BA, 2010) is working on her Ph.D. in English at Texas A&M. She completed her MA at North Dakota State University, and her advisor was Dr. Verena Thiele, who graduated from Minnesota State Mankato’s MA Lit Program in 2001.

Jacob Bohrod (Film Studies, 2010) completed his M.A. in critical studies in Spring 2015 at the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts. He will be continuing toward his Ph.D. in the same program starting Fall 2015. His areas of interest include the ethics of interaction in new media, the theory-practice binary in media studies, as well as translation and untranslatability in transnational cinema and visual media.

Corrine Erfurth (Literature MA, 2010) is currently in her second year in UW/Madison’s Curriculum & Instruction Ph.D program, working under Dr. Popkewitz in the Global Studies & Curriculum Theory strand. Her current research interests work to negotiate a post-structural lens in order to problematize trends and norms in education.

Bob Furu (Technical Communications MA, 2013) was hired as a technical writer with Pegasystems, a software company in Cambridge, MA. He specializes primarily in documenting the UI area of the company’s flagship product, Pega 7.

Brittney P. Hansen (Technical Communications MA, 2012) has worked with a variety of organizations such as Waxing the City for Anytime Fitness and Ecolab. Currently she is an e-learning instructional designer at Ameriprise Financial where she specializes in tools and technology.

Allison Heard (English BA, 2014) has a full-time position teaching high school in Austin, MN. She teaches Humanities, Freshman English, and Language Arts classes.

Sara Kosiba (Literature MA, 2002) just received tenure and promotion (Associate Professor) at Troy University in Alabama.

Fer O’Neil (Technical Communications MA, 2013) was offered a contract technical writing position in Munich where he was able to keep his full time job in San Diego while working remotely with the Munich office. Most recently, he was accepted into the Texas Tech Ph.D program for technical communication.

Catherine Penning (Film Studies, 2014) is now doing contract work at True Facade Pictures in Mankato. She does video production, editing, etc.

Jennifer Scarry (Technical Communications MA, 2010) has continued in her role as a technical writer/manager with the American Red Cross and has also been an adjunct professor of English helping non-traditional students gain confidence and knowledge through education. She is also a consultant for a company that writes training for the construction trade.

Verena Theile (English BA, 1995; Literature MA, 2001) received her PhD in English at Washington State University in 2006 and was awarded the Charles Blackburn Post-doctoral Fellowship at WSU. In 2007, she served as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA, and the following year, in 2008, she accepted her current position at North Dakota State University where she was promoted to Associate Professor of English with tenure in 2014.

Love and Profanity Book Features Minnesota State Mankato Alumni
In March, 2015, the work of several Minnesota State Mankato alums was published in a SwitchPress book titled: Love and Profanity. This nationally released YA nonfiction book is a collection of short essays about growing up and teenage years. The book features alums Alicia Catt, Clint Edwards, Kara Garbe Balcerzak, and Melodie Heidie as well as Minnesota State Mankato faculty Geoff Herbach. Editors included alums Nick Healy, Nate LeBoutillier, and Lindsy O’Brien (Mason).

Giving
The Department of English welcomes and appreciates your financial support. Your cash gifts and planned gifts fund scholarships, endowments, and awards like those highlighted on this page as well as staff development opportunities. If you are interested in supporting any of these areas, please contact: Jeff Halbur, Senior Director of Development, at 507 389 2775.
The **Norman Adams Award** for an undergraduate English major who demonstrates excellence in English language or literature studies was awarded to Jordan Farmer.

The **Robert L. Carothers Award** for a student who demonstrates excellence in writing was awarded to Molly Kessler.

The **Jane F. Earley American Literature Scholarship** for excellent student work in American literature, based upon both work completed and the potential of work to come was awarded to Elizabeth Mouw.

The **English Major Scholarship** for a continuing undergraduate English major who demonstrates financial need was awarded to Melissa Donner.

The **Harold Fitterer Award** for a junior in English Education with the highest GPA was awarded to Sarah Palmer.

The **Dr. Ronald Gower Scholarship** for students who contribute to the promotion and development of Creative Writing in the larger community was awarded to Thomas Delano and Clair Rogers.

The **Innovation in Teaching Award** for graduate students teaching composition who demonstrate excellence and innovation in curriculum design or teaching practice was awarded to Eric Blix and Thomas Delano.

The **Raymond & Florence Sponberg Scholarship** for a female graduate student in her second or third semester was awarded to Nigina Boltaeva.

The **Marcia Thompson Award** for an accomplished undergraduate major pursuing a career in English Education was awarded to Riley Hicklin.

**Robert C. Wright Awards** for continuing undergraduate and graduate students whose writing samples are determined to be the best by an outside judge were awarded to Taylor Tolchin (1st), Kate MacLam (2nd), Justin Eells (3rd), and Thomas Delano (Honorable Mention).

The **Youel Award** for an outstanding graduating major whose achievement predicts an outstanding future career was awarded to Amanda Fox.

The **Outstanding English Graduate Student Award** for a graduate student in the last year of his/her program who has demonstrated outstanding professional activity during his/her graduate career at Minnesota State Mankato was awarded to Elizabeth Horneber.

**Gower Award: Dr. Ronald Gower’s Legacy**

Dr. Ronald Gower was a longtime faculty member in English (from 1970 through 1996; he chaired the Department from 1982 to 1988), and he was instrumental in establishing the Creative Writing program. He passed away in November 2013. After his death, his family contacted the English Department about establishing an award in his name, and it was decided that the award would go to creative writing students working within the greater community. Hugh Gower, Dr. Ronald Gower’s son, noted that former students still approach the family to express their appreciation for Dr. Gower. It is the hope of the Gower family that students who receive this award hold a “sense of humility, and duty, to share with others the experiences of life, through whatever means, but obviously through writing primarily.” Gower added that “The scholarship is just a small way for us to continue [Ronald Gower’s] passion for helping students.” The English Department thanks the Gower family for their support.

The 2015 Gower Award went to Tom Delano and Clair Rogers for their work leading a creative writing workshop at Ecumen Pathstone Living. The first award was given in 2014 to Lindsey O’Brien and Deanna Larsen for their work teaching a creative writing course at FCI-Waseca women’s correctional facility.
FLASHBACK

English Department Graduate Instructors: 1987-1988


Image retrieved from Graduate Studies Bulletin 1986-87, p. 46.