My goal has always been to attend law school. I had no idea that studying English would also allow me to gain exposure in Irish history and literature, computer coding, and zombie films in relation to eighteenth-century texts.”

—Dani Perez ’18
Welcome.

Composing my greeting to all of you—alums, colleagues, students, friends—provides me the chance to pause and assess the state of the department, our achievements, and the challenges before us. The ongoing worry, of course, is our dropping enrollment, which seems to have leveled off a bit, though a large drop in the number of potential students in the traditional age bracket looms on the horizon. We continue to broadcast the message about the value of the English major—and the wide range of employment opportunities our students discover upon graduation. Our efforts continue, meanwhile, to redefine and assess exactly what we want our students to learn, to re-articulate our goals, and to publicize them as widely as we can.

This is my chance, also, to publicize the outstanding achievements of our faculty, students, and alumni, the awards won, and the honors received. Highlights in the list include the prestigious Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, received by Martin Espada for his lifetime accomplishments, and Steve Harris’s winning the Fulbright Distinguished Research Chair in Arts and Social Sciences in Canada and North America, one of the most coveted appointments in the Fulbright Scholar Program. As always, our faculty members are astonishingly creative, producing each year a new crop of eye-opening, award-winning books. Jordy Rosenberg’s Confessions of the Fox has especially been a success, welcomed with extraordinary acclaim almost everywhere, from The New Yorker and New York Times to the Huffington Post. Rebecca Lorimer Leonard’s Writing on the Move: Migrant Women and the Value of Literacy, the book that ensured her award of tenure, won a 2019 Outstanding Book Award from the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the highest award in her field. Peruse the list of other faculty-written books below. But also take note of the long and impressive list of publications by alums of our graduate programs!

Our new colleague Maryorie Rubright, who is also the new director of the Arthur F. Kinney Center for Interdisciplinary Renaissance Studies, invested enormous energy and acumen in successfully organizing Keith Hamilton Cobb’s performances of American Moor, his residency here, and the associated programming and events. Jen Adams oversaw the celebrations of the Oxford Summer Seminar’s 50th anniversary. And the MFA Program’s revival of the Juniper Festival was an extraordinary success. Read about all of these events below.

I am sad to have to say that our beloved colleague Ron Welburn has now retired. His reflections on his career appear in this newsletter. I am also extremely sorry to report that another beloved retired colleague, Gary Aho, recently passed away. The department did not add any new faculty members this year, but our committed and lively teachers and scholars sustain a vibrant intellectual and creative life here in South College. What we do, of course, relies a great deal on the generous support of our alums and friends. We are very grateful for your ongoing contributions—to the general gift fund, scholarships, and special programs—which enable us to support our talented undergraduate and graduate students, including those with financial needs, and to maintain such special programs as the Juniper Initiative, the Oxford Summer Seminar, and the Professional Writing and Technical Communication Specialization.

This newsletter provides a glimpse of the fruits of your support. I hope you will enjoy reading about the department and the people who make it the thriving community it is, and I hope you will keep in touch with us and share your own memories and accomplishments.

Randall Knoper, Chair
Martín Espada was awarded the 2018 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, presented annually to a living U.S. poet whose lifetime accomplishments warrant singular recognition. It is one of the most prestigious awards given to American poet—and, with a prize of $100,000, one of the nation’s largest literary prizes. Sponsored and administered by the Poetry Foundation, publisher of Poetry magazine, the prize was formally presented to Espada at a ceremony on June 11. Don Share, editor of Poetry magazine, observed, “Martín Espada’s work and life tell the real and lived story of America, in which the importance of poems and legal rights go hand in hand.”

Stephen Harris was named as the Fulbright Distinguished Research Chair in Arts & Social Sciences in Canada and North America for 2018–19. This award includes a one-year appointment at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario. Fulbright Distinguished Chair Awards are among the most prestigious appointments in the Fulbright Scholar Program. Harris’s research project is titled “Semantic Field Parsing in Literature.” He will be programming a computer to identify and categorize noun phrases in Old English literature.

Jordy Rosenberg’s novel Confessions of the Fox was a New York Times Editor’s Choice selection and was shortlisted for the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize and recognized by The New York Times, the Huffington Post, Buzzfeed, and Kirkus Weekly as one of the best books of 2018. The New York Times heralded it as “a mind-bending romp through a gender-fluid, eighteenth-century London … a joyous mash-up of literary genres shot through with queer theory and awash in sex, crime, and revolution.”

Siyo! Greetings to all! I write this within two weeks of becoming officially retired from the UMass Amherst English department, my professional home since spring 1992: 27 calendar years, culminating close to 40 years of full-time teaching. Being retired is going to be a bittersweet—not having to adhere to established routines, teaching, mentoring, and program and committee involvement and leadership. However, delayed writing projects will have my attention.

In spring of 1990, I received an invitation from the department’s then-chair Bob Bagg to apply for a position teaching American literatures. Joe Skerrett had recommended me and to his memory I owe a tremendous debt. (You can read my appreciation on the online site for MELUS: The Journal for the Society for the Study of Multiethnic Literature of the United States.)

Joe's consciousness about American studies paralleled my doctoral work at NYU, but I was fortunate to begin honing my interdisciplinary background from childhood knowledge, eventually writing poems, developing a serious interest in many forms of music, and becoming an amateur musician.

Two insights stay with me from my days in college at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania: I encountered Penn professor Morse Peckham’s Man’s Rage for Chaos, which discussed natural relationships between art forms, and then had writer-in-residence playwright Ronald Milner affirm those relationships by telling me that Faulkner was the “funkiest writer in the English language…. He swings like a Lester Young or a Charlie Parker. I began to appreciate how the stories told in performances prevailed as democratic interactions.

By the ‘70s, American studies faced interdisciplinary resistance. NYU’s English and history faculty told me they did not work across the aisles and the American music professor felt that Charles Ives was overrated. But Ralph Ellison’s course, “Fiction and Democracy,” offered an interdisciplinary respite.

These kinds of experiences prepared me for a life at UMass Amherst. In April, I hope to share my perceptions on both indigenous studies and jazz as democratic foundations for American studies, music especially being globally contrapuntal to current anxieties in the U.S. political economy—just a few notions from (with apologies to composer George Russell) the chromatic universe of an urban Indian.

**ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT**

Kate (Olesin) Hale ’09  
**Executive Editor, National Geographic Kids Books**

Can you tell us about your career so far? My first job after graduating from UMass was as an assistant in the division I still work in. I’ve now been a children’s book editor for nearly a decade. During my first couple of years working full time, our list started to balloon and grow and more editors were needed to handle the work. Eventually, I moved up through the ranks to the position I’m in now. Lots of people wonder why I’ve been at one house for so long, and my answer is that it never gets boring. One day I’ll be working on a book about dog communication and the next it’ll be a biography about an inspiring scientist. I learn new things all the time—things I wished I learned when I was 10 years old!

And your work now? As an executive editor, most of my job is people and project management, but also editing manuscripts and dreaming up new book ideas. I manage a team of editors and the strategy for what we fondly call the “kid-driven” side of our nonfiction list. These are books that we try and make so much fun to read and look at that kids won’t even realize they’re learning: bright poppy colors, giant splashy photographs, lively narrative, and a heavy dose of awe—some animals and other content kids love. I also started editing middle-grade fiction books under our new imprint, where we publish titles that combine real information with a fun fiction story.

Is there a project you worked on of which you’re most proud? I have a lot of favorite books I’ve worked on. It’s been so much fun to learn about crafting stories for audio. Favorite book read as a child, as an undergrad, and this year? In that order, the Redwall series by Brian Jacques; The Return of the Native, by Thomas Hardy; and Circe, by Madeline Miller. Many who work in publishing are what some call a bookworm. Are you? I’ve always been a bookworm, but now I think the more appropriate word for me is “storyworm.” I love reading, but also watching (movies and television), listening (podcasts and radio), and playing (video games). There are so many amazing ways we can experience stories today.

Photo: Becky Hale

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**Yashika Issrani ’20**

“I always knew I wanted to become a lawyer but didn’t know what major I should particularly take in preparation.... I knew [that English] was a major I could succeed in, considering my passion for reading, my analytical eye, and my writing skills. Moreover, I justified my choice of major through a practical lens: I was confident that it would prepare me for a rigorous career in law.”

Photo: Cynthia Ntimaru

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**Warren Charleston ’19**

“I came into UMass undecided in Humanities and Fine Arts and added English in my second semester of sophomore year. I chose English as a major mainly because I was good at writing, but also because I liked the style of classes that the English department had to offer.... English classes offer so much room for discussion and critical thought, and when I joined the English major I immediately felt that. I felt like my voice was heard.”

Photo: Benjamin Dussault

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**UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHTS**
We’re doing everything we can looking for new partners on campus, developing a new career course, encouraging all of our students to do internships, and reminding ourselves and others of our many unique assets, especially our dedicated teachers and talented students.

**UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES**

Like English departments across the country, we are facing headwinds in terms of undergraduate enrollments. In fact, the number of English majors at UMass Amherst has been declining since 2009, even as the total number of undergraduate students has risen. The main reasons for the decline are economic: as the cost of college and the debt burden on students and their families have increased, the perception that English is not a good investment has also grown. Research shows that the reality is nowhere near so bleak, but it is a challenge to get that message out.

We’re doing everything we can to confront the situation: looking for new partners on campus, developing a new career course, encouraging all of our students to do internships. We’re also reminding ourselves and others of our many unique assets, especially our dedicated teachers and talented students.

Take Nicholas Blaisdell, who graduated last spring. A student from Peabody, Massachusetts, Nick won the department’s Sanderson Prize for best essay on any subject in May 2017, was named one of the university’s 21st Century Leaders in May 2018, and completed an honors thesis, “An Investigation into Capitalism and Unfree Labor in the Twenty-First Century.” According to English Professor Joesyln Almeida-Beveridge, Nick developed this “sophisticated and extensively researched thesis from papers he had originally done for English 202 on Ottobah Cugoano and Friedrich Engels, which led him to an independent study, ‘Discourses on Capitalism and Slavery,’ 1780–1850.” Contributing to the evolution of this project from its inception, and seeing Nick become a confident and stellar researcher, has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my professional life.

After graduating in May, Nick returned to Peabody to run his volunteer summer tutoring program (pvto.weebly.com). “This summer,” he wrote in an email, “we again had more than 200 students and nearly 40 tutors, who taught weekly classes in English, math, science, and SAT prep for grades 1–12 for free!” Starting in August, Nick entered the College of Education’s TEACH 180 Days program, which will lead to a master’s degree and teaching license. “I’m currently teaching five 10th-grade reading and writing enrichment courses at Springfield’s High School of Science and Technology,” Nick wrote, “where the students are 70 percent Hispanic, 17 percent black, and 10 percent white. About 80 percent quality as economically disadvantaged.”

For Nick, studying English at UMass Amherst was both intellectually rewarding and good preparation for life after college. For many students, as it was for Nick, English is a bridge to other fields of study as well. At Springfield’s High School of Science and Technology, Nick was named a 2018 National Student of the Year by the Massachusetts Citywide Board of Education’s Young & Bright Program. Nick developed this “sophisticated and extensively researched thesis from papers he had originally done for English 202 on Ottobah Cugoano and Friedrich Engels, which led him to an independent study, ‘Discourses on Capitalism and Slavery,’ 1780–1850.” Contributing to the evolution of this project from its inception, and seeing Nick become a confident and stellar researcher, has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my professional life.

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**GRADUATE STUDIES**

The graduate program in English enjoyed a highly productive 2018. Nine students defended their dissertations and received their PhDs: Eli Bromberg, Isabel Espinal, Daniel Ehrenfeld, David Katz, Liane Malinowski, Priscilla Page, Lauren Silber, William Steffen, and Meghan Swarvy. In addition, ten students passed their two-area exams and five students successfully completed their advisory sessions or qualifying exams.

The Graduate Office has continued to work on mentoring initiatives aimed at supporting our graduate students as they pass through these milestones. In spring and fall, we offered different iterations of the Graduate Writing Workshop, intended to demystify the process of writing by breaking it down into achievable steps. Under the direction of Associate Graduate Program Director Jane Degenhardt, the office also ran a successful dissertation workshop and helped graduate students form writing groups based on research areas. Professor Mazen Nasas continued as international student faculty adviser, helping to support our international graduate students.

Of course, funding is crucial to our students. As experienced by many of our students, funding can be a challenge. As a result, the department has sought opportunities to support our incoming and continuing students. Five of our incoming cohort were awarded Research Enhancement and Leadership (REAL) diversity fellowships from the Graduate School, and four incoming students were awarded Summer Funding Fellowships. In addition, four of our PhD students were awarded a Summer Dissertation Fellowship and two of our students were awarded Dissertation Research Grants. Our students also presented and published their work nationally and internationally, and several received acknowledgment and funding from external organizations.

I took over the position of graduate program director in fall 2018 and have greatly benefited from the support of my predecessor, Aash Nakarni, who for several years oversaw the smooth running of the Graduate Office. I am extremely grateful for his guidance. Finally, our office could not function without the genuine care of our administrator, Wanda Bak. She brings warmth, dedication, and an irreplaceable institutional memory to South College every day.

—David Fleming, Director of Undergraduate Studies

—Daniel Sack, Director of Graduate Studies
MFA PROGRAM FOR POETS AND WRITERS

In 2018 the MFA Program revived the Juniper Festival with a focus on community engagement, celebrating the literary identity of the region; the UMass MFA Program present, past, and future; and the intersections of those communities with the larger literary world. The 2018 Festival featured the small-press and journal book fair, readings, and conversations with editors, agents, and publishers, along with several new initiatives including a student exhibit and spoken-word performance, the audio archives, and a roundtable for admitted students.

The book fair included first-time readers, MFA’s Juniper Literary Festival. Sarah Lapido Manyika and Sally Wen Mao, featured the small-press and journal book fair, readings, and conversations with editors, agents, and publishers, along with several new initiatives including a student exhibit and spoken-word performance, the audio archives, and a roundtable for admitted students.

Also new in 2018, MFA faculty members Edie Meidav and Ocean Vuong taught community workshops in prose and poetry honoring the program’s commitment to inclusion and engagement. In other panels, top editors from renowned local literary magazines The Common, jubilat, Meridian, and The Massachusetts Review discussed their guidelines, how to submit to literary magazines, and behind-the-scenes editorial processes. The Agent and Book Editors Panel featured Victory Matsui (One World), Alexa Stark (Trident Media), and Rebecca Wolff (Fence Books). Writers who wanted feedback on a pitch for manuscripts in progress had an opportunity to talk with UMass Press editors Matt Becker and Mary Dougherty. The 2019 Juniper Festival is scheduled for April 12–13. Keynote readers will be Kim F. Hall, Lyle Hook, Professor of English and professor of Africana studies at Barnard College, Columbia University. Hall’s historically wide-ranging keynote, “Othello Was My Grandfather,” was presented in conjunction with an afternoon Actors’ Studio facilitated by the lead actor of War Horse, Jude Sandy. Together, American Moor director Kim Weild, Keith Hamilton Cobb, scholar Kim Hall, and actor Jude Sandy engaged the UMass community in urgent, open conversations about Shakespeare, race, and America today. (If you would like to read American Moor, the center holds a copy of the play script in its rare book collection. We are the second library in the world to have a copy in its collections; the other is the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C.)

The Kinney Center benefits immensely from the creativity and commitment of those who participate in shaping its programming. The generous collaboration among English graduate students resulted in our 16th Annual Kinney Center Graduate Student Conference, “Spaces of Authority.” Hayley Cotter, John Yargo, and Maria Ishikawa designed a thought-provoking series of panels and, in the spirit of true interdisciplinary dialogue, invited Christopher R. Kyle, professor of history at Syracuse University, to deliver the conference’s memorable keynote. The center was also delighted to join forces with the Five College Book History Seminar to bring Anne Blair, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor of History at Harvard University, for a talk, “Servant-Functions and Author-Functions in Early Modern Europe.” We have a new website! Please visit www.umass.edu/renaissance/ for information about upcoming events and to connect with our rich network of students and scholars. The spring calendar of events also delighted to join forces with the Five College Book History Seminar to bring Anne Blair, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor of History at Harvard University, for a talk, “Servant-Functions and Author-Functions in Early Modern Europe.” We have a new website! Please visit www.umass.edu/renaissance/ for information about upcoming events and to connect with our rich network of students and scholars. The spring calendar of events includes talks by professors Stephen Spieren (Babson College), Lyn Tribble (University of Connecticut), Sean Moore (University of New Hampshire), Paul Yacnych (McColl University), and our own Liz Fox, Hayley Cotter, and Jane Degenhardt.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send an email to renaissance@umass.edu. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send an email to renaissance@umass.edu.
In fall 2018 the Writing Program welcomed two new colleagues. Anna Rita Napoleone joined us as director of both the Writing Center and the Western Massachusetts Writing Project. Napoleone earned her PhD here at UMass Amherst in 2017. Her research examines how first-generation, immigrant, and/or migrant students navigate academic identities and writing. Our new assistant director of the Writing Program is Anna Floch Arcello, who earned her PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 2017. She brings with her an expertise in writing-pedagogy design, power relations in the classroom, and writing-instructor development.

Welcome to both!

This year, the Writing Program instituted an informal monthly “coffee chat” around topics that teaching associates have expressed interest in discussing. Our first coffee chat took place in October and was led by Technology Coordinator Amy Diehl and new Graduate Teaching Associate Angela Kim, about 10 teaching associates engaged in a lively conversation about pedagogy and technology, with Diehl and Kim offering some hands-on activities that teaching associates could right away bring to their classrooms. Diehl will be leading the technology fellows, who will work on some aspect of technology in college writing in fall 2019.

In November, in response to heinous racial and anti-Semitic incidents on campus, grad teaching associates Rachel Briggs and Alyx Ray led a timely conversation on social justice pedagogy and addressing race in the First-Year Writing classroom. Teaching associates came away with some ideas for exercises and writing assignments that would encourage College Writing students to be actively engaged in anti-racist work.

The Writing Program in spring 2019 will sponsor a Social Justice Pedagogy group led by Arcello. These coffee chats will continue in spring 2019.

—Rebecca Dingo, Director, University of Massachusetts Amherst Writing Program

Summer camp is for new experiences. At the Western Massachusetts Writing Project’s “Minds Made for Stories,” a camp for Springfield’s Duggan Academy middle-school students held at the Springfield Armory National Historic Site in June, campers learned about local history, wrote in multiple genres, fabricated interchangeable parts, and even tried marching.

The project, funded by Mass Humanities and the National Writing Project, focused on keeping students learning and engaging during the summer. Campers were immersed in primary sources available at the armory and explored two main World War II topics: “WOWs (Women Ordnance Workers)” and “The Double V Campaign: Victory Abroad and Victory at Home for African Americans.” A temporary display inside the Armory is dedicated to the campers’ writing and art.

WMWP also offered a week-long creative writing workshop for middle- and high-school students on the UMass campus in July. These youth writing programs were two of 96 items listed in WMWP’s 2017–18 site data, which reported over 1,300 participants and 1,200 hours of activities.

Most WMWP programs focus on professional development for educators. Two themes have dominated the site’s recent work with area teachers: project-based learning, the focus of year-long workshop series in Ashfield and Buckland-Shelburne elementary schools and South Hadley middle school; and the College, Career, and Community Writers Program (C3WP), a research-based, federally funded program on argument writing developed by the National Writing Project. WMWP is currently offering its second C3WP institute, this one for literacy coaches and English teachers in Massachusetts Department of Youth Services (DYS) schools for incarcerated youth.

Another WMWP project involving DYS schools is the development of a new history instructional guide. This project, a joint effort by WMWP teacher-consultants and DYS teachers, includes implementation of new state standards for history and social science and creation of 28 exemplar units. This guide is the fourth developed by WMWP for and with DYS teachers.

Previous projects produced guides for English language arts, science, and mathematics. WMWP’s fall conference, “Best Practices in the Teaching of Writing,” featured one of its teacher-consultants as keynote speaker. Kelly Norris, an English teacher at Minnechaug Regional High School, read from her recent memoir, Too White: A Journey into the Racial Divide (Blink Bopoks, 2018), in which she describes her struggle with identity and race in America, haunted by the question of what it means to be white.

In other news, WMWP is undergoing a leadership transition. Anna Rita Napoleone, who holds a PhD in composition and rhetoric from UMass Amherst, is now serving as Writing Center director and transitioning into the role of WMWP site director over the year.

—Bruce Penniman, WMWP Site Director
In fall 2018, PhD candidate Thomas Pickering became our program’s teaching assistant and taught “Introduction to Professional Writing.” Students spoke highly of his dedication, enthusiasm, and concern for their intellectual and academic well-being.

This year, many program graduates returned to speak to our classes, sharing knowledge of developments in software, workplace cultures, and long-range career planning. Among the returnees were Taylor Wise ’16 and Christina Sun ’16, both technical writers at athenahealth.

As per tradition, Emeritus Professor John Nelson made a guest appearance in the capstone course, and was characteristically inspiring. In late May, we hosted the annual program reunion at a local restaurant, where current students and grads from years past met and mingled.

Many program graduates returned to speak to our classes, sharing knowledge of developments in software, workplace cultures, and long-range career planning.

We are gratified and reassured that job placement—thanks in part to notices sent by program alumni, now at 360 and counting—was very robust. The list of 11 hires and two placements in graduate programs follows. Congratulations to all!

—Janine Selberg and David Toomey, Co-directors, Program for Professional Writing and Technical Communication

OXFORD SUMMER SEMINAR

On November 26, 1968, The Daily Collegian published a brief article on the Oxford Summer Seminar, then only two years old. The article is accompanied by a picture of the founder, UMass Amherst Professor of English Ernest Hofer, holding what just might be a contract he has signed for the upcoming summer. The agreement would move his very new study-abroad program from St. Hilda’s College, where it had begun, to Trinity College, where the UMass Oxford Summer Seminar has been happily situated for the past 50 years.

The seminar celebrated this milestone this past August with a larger-than-usual high table dinner, at which we all raised a glass to our Trinity hosts. Before the dinner we raised something else: a UMass Minuteman flag, the first flag from a U.S. school to fly over that campus.

The seminar this past summer underwent a few changes. In addition to our usual humanities and social sciences courses, we sponsored two UMass-taught classes, one in psychology and another in communication. We ventured to Stratford to see a Royal Shakespeare Company performance of Romeo and Juliet, which was truly magnificent. (For some students, the England-Sweden World Cup game before it was even more magnificent, and definitely had a happier outcome than the bloody fate of two star-crossed lovers.) We also welcomed back some program alumni. Max and Genevieve Slygh, who met on the program during summer 2008, stopped in for our 50th reception. Ellen Howes (Summer 2015) attended the celebratory dinner. Linda Slakey, former dean of Commonwealth Honors College and affiliated with the program for many years, also visited. It was a true treat to see her at high table once more.

Oscar Wilde once said, “I have the simplest tastes. I’m always satisfied with the best.” Trinity College has for 50 years satisfied our simple tastes by quite plainly being the best. Here’s to another 50 years of the UMass Oxford Summer Seminar at Trinity College.

—Jen Adams, Director, Oxford Summer Seminar
This past summer marked the 11th year of the Department of English's summer study-abroad course, “Alternative Theaters: Navigating the Edinburgh Festival.” It also marked the first year in which the program was officially partnered with the University of New Mexico (UNM).

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival is the world’s largest arts festival, featuring more than 3,500 performances each day, spread across 400 different venues. This past year I joined theater professor Hasley Erdman as the faculty representatives from UMass-UNM theater professor Dominika Laster directed the program and her colleague, playwright Gregory Moss, rounded out our team of instructors. We were also joined by our own emeritus professor Jenny Spen- cer, who founded the course more than a decade ago and who is now leading groups of older visitors to the festival. (For more information on Professor Spencer’s pro- gram, visit “Festival Getaway: Navigating the Edinburgh Fringe” at festivalgetaway.com.)

Sixteen students from our two institu- tions witnessed performances from around the world and then gathered to meet artists from Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Poland, South Africa, the United States, and the United Kingdom. These ranged across a variety of forms including cabaret, dance, magic shows, puppet shows, mask, street spectacle, and more conventional dramatic theatre. We even saw a performance in the pitch dark of a shipping container. A number of other festivals also occupy the streets of Edin- burgh during August: students were able to attend readings at the Edinburgh Interna- tional Book Festival (the world’s largest of its kind), concerts at the Music Festival, and rally for an evening cèilidh (Scottish contra dancing).

Together, our group saw performances from Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Poland, South Africa, the United States, and the United Kingdom. These ranged across a variety of forms including cabaret, dance, magic shows, puppet shows, mask, street spectacle, and more conventional dramatic theatre. We even saw a performance in the pitch dark of a shipping container. A number of other festivals also occupy the streets of Edinburgh during August: students were able to attend readings at the Edinburgh International Book Festival (the world’s largest of its kind), concerts at the Music Festival, and rally for an evening cèilidh (Scottish contra dancing).

This year students saw between 35 and 50 different performances over the course of their stay and still managed to find time to explore the city, hike up Arthur’s Seat (the mountain in the middle of the medieval city), and rally for an evening cèilidh (Scottish contra dancing).

In introducing students to the Festival and to the world and then gathered to meet artists and developers their responses in conversation and writing. After an online course introducing students to the Festival and to a variety of theatrical strategies, we spent two weeks in Edinburgh. This year students saw between 35 and 50 different performances over the course of their stay and still managed to find time to explore the city, hike up Arthur’s Seat (the mountain in the middle of the medieval city), and rally for an evening cèilidh (Scottish contra dancing).

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The following represent some of the books written or edited between 2013 and 2018 by graduates of the department's PhD program:


### Recent Books

The following represent some of the books written during 2017 and 2018 by department MFA graduates:


RETURNING ALUMNI

Department of English alumni who, either in person or remotely, shared their experiences with us in 2018.

Brent Massey ’03, founder and president, Ridar Systems
Emily Misas ’13, senior product manager, Drift
Maria Pedone ’12, director, editorial and social strategy, Townhouse Digital
Garrett Russell ’12, technical writer, Brooks Automation
Angela Simonelli ’05, supervisor, information development, Rocket Software
Christina Sun ’16, technical writer, athenahealth
Dan Sundyka ’15, web developer, American International College
Nick Treiber ’17, technical writer, Akamai Technologies
Michelle Wade ’13, 412 Youth Zone education coordinator, Auburle
Taylor Wise ’16, technical writer, athenahealth

Lynne J. Agress
Patricia P. Allen
Lois R. Andelman
Emily M. Anderson
Jacob Arkin
Christine A. Ashe
Jeannine C. Atkins
Christopher J. Ayala
Bonnie L. Badin
Kristine M. Baker
Emily Ball
Joshua J. Ballinger
Caroline G. Barba
Gail A. Barry
Attorney John J. Barter
Joseph F. Bartolomeo
David R. Bartone
Sean Jeffrey Bates
James L. Beatrice Jr.
Joanne H. Beckman
Stevie N. Belchak
Elisabeth E. Bennett
Phyllis R. Berdos
Diane B. Berman
David R. Bernstein
Gene M. Bernstein
Naftali G. Berrill
Jedediah P. Berry
Daniel E. Berthiaume
Robert E. Bessel
Jennifer A. Bielack
Harold Byrom Jr.
Maria Black
Emily M. Bludworth
Kerry E. Blum
Kristin L. Bock
Lawrence S. Bohn
Antidote Books
Kathleen S. Breiten
Sam Brewer
Alan R. Burne
Shannon Amelia Burns
Alta-Mae Butler
Roxemarie C. Buxton
Annette Byrdy
Elizabeth Byrne
Joseph G. Callahan
Richard F. Callahan
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