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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY · COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Department of English



Message from the Chair

July 2022

Dear Alumni and Friends,

It has been a great honor and privilege to serve as Department Chair for the past four years. I have enjoyed engaging with many alumni, donors, and friends. I want to introduce **Professor Jill Rappoport** as the next Chair of the Department of English. Jill has previously served as Director of Graduate Studies and has won many awards for service and mentoring, including the College of

A&S Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentoring, the William Ward Prize for Distinguished Achievement by a Faculty Member, and the English Graduate Student Organization (EGSO) Outstanding Faculty Award, 2019. Jill is the author of *Giving Women: Alliance and Exchange in Victorian Culture* (Oxford UP, 2012) and of *Imagining Women's Property Rights in Victorian Fiction* (Oxford UP, forthcoming.) Jill is ready for her new role and will offer great leadership to the department going forward.

Please welcome two new members of the English Department who will join the faculty in the fall semester. We are thrilled to welcome them as colleagues. **Dr. Gerónimo Sarmiento Cruz** completed his Ph.D. in English at the University of Chicago. He teaches US poetry and poetics with an emphasis on contemporary minor and minority writing in its intersection with historical and theoretical accounts of the nation state. His research focuses on contemporary U.S. minority

poets, exploring the concept of the “anational” in relation to articulations of collectivities independent from the nation. Also, we welcome **Dr. Jap-Nanak Makkar**, who will join us as an Assistant Professor on the tenure track, having previously served as American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Post-Doctoral Fellow, specializing in Postcolonial and Global Anglophone Literature.

We are so grateful to all our donors, including Mary Campbell, John Cirigliano, and Johnathon T. Davis. We are particularly grateful to Dr. John Wagner who has made a gift in honor of Dr. Jacob Adler, formerly Professor of English at UK. The John Wagner and Jacob Adler Graduate Student Support Endowment in English will help to support the department’s graduate students who demonstrate academic excellence and unmet financial need. Dr. Wagner completed his M.A. at the University of Kentucky, where he particularly recalls the generosity and support of Professor Adler, who taught at UK 1951-69.

Finally, please consider including the Department of English in your annual giving plans. Gifts to the **English Development Fund** allow us to support students with awards that recognize their achievements and help them to attain their goals, while a gift to our **MFA Visiting Writers Fund** allows us to bring exceptional authors to campus to enrich our students’ learning. Please get in touch with the incoming chair **Jill Rappoport** if you would like to discuss how you can get involved with the department and with the alumni and friends of English. Thank you very much for your continuing support!

Best wishes,

Jonathan Allison

2022 English Department Awards

Thanks to the generosity of alumni and friends, the department is able to reward excellence among its students and faculty by supporting their future scholarship in a variety of ways. Donating to a departmental award is one of the easiest ways for you to make a significant impact on our students’ success. Professor DaMaris Hill was our guest speaker at our Annual Awards Day, and a video of the awards event can be viewed [here](#).

Congratulations to our student awards recipients! A list of undergraduate award recipients can be found [here](#), a list of graduate award recipients can be found [here](#), and writing award recipients can be found [here](#).

Congratulations to the following faculty and staff recipients.

College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Promotion of Diversity or Inclusion Award

Crystal Wilkinson



Professor DaMaris Hill provided remarks as the Guest Speaker during the Annual English Awards Day

College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentoring Award

Marion Rust

College of Arts & Sciences Faculty and Teaching Awards in the Humanities

Regina Hamilton-Townsend

Provost Outstanding Teaching Award for Faculty

Regina Hamilton-Townsend

A&S Staff Diversity and Inclusivity Award

Kristen Pickett

Twenty Five Years of Service

Michael Carter

Faculty Retirements

Walter Foreman (50 years of service)

Armando Prats (47 years of service)

Gurney Norman (43 years of service)

2022 UK English Alumna of the Year

Our 2022 Alumna of the Year is [Dr. Salome C. Nnoromele](#), currently the Interim Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion at Ohio University. She was formerly associate dean of campus operations at Ohio University, Southern campus, and she previously spent 23 years at Eastern Kentucky University, where she served in various leadership roles, including as executive director of student affairs, founding chair of the African and African American Studies program, and director of the English graduate program. She was also instrumental in establishing several diversity and inclusion initiatives at ECU, including two highly successful programs: the Freshman Academy and Upper-Class Academy for Diverse Students, aimed at advancing the recruitment and retention of students from various backgrounds. She attained the rank of full professor at ECU and Ohio University. Salome was a graduate student at UK in the English Department in the early 1990s, when she worked with former professor Larry Swingle and she completed her Ph.D. in 1995. She gave recollections of her days at UK in her acceptance speech at [Awards Day](#) in April.



Dr. Salome C. Nnoromele (M.A. 1991, Ph.D. 1995) received the 2022 Alumna of the Year award

2022 UK English Alumnus of the Year

Our 2022 Alumnus of the Year, [Jeff Zurcher](#), is currently Secretary and Treasurer of the [Calipari Foundation](#), and Executive Director of the Arington Foundation,

a nonprofit organization that supports youth groups through media, sport and education. Jeff was a 1998 graduate of UK with a double major in English and Advertising, was a regular contributor to the Kentucky Kernel, and was nominated by UK for interviews for the Rhodes Scholarship. A scholar-athlete, he was walk-on safety at the University of Kentucky and co-captained and led the Wildcats in tackles in 1998. Jeff completed a Master's in International Relations in the Patterson School of Diplomacy and a Doctorate in Education in Organizational Leadership at Indiana Wesleyan.

Faculty Notes

Matt Giancarlo will be on sabbatical in 2022-23 while continuing to serve as editor of *Journal of English and German Philology* (JEGP).

Regina Hamilton was recipient of both the **2022 Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award and the 2022 UK Provost Outstanding Teaching Award**.

DaMaris Hill has been appointed Full Professor and was the guest speaker at the English Department Annual Awards Day in April 2022. Her most recent publication is *Breath Better Spent* (Bloomsbury, 2022.)

Peter Kalliney has a book forthcoming with Princeton University Press, *The Aesthetic Cold War: Decolonization and Global Literature*.

Jap-Nanak Makkar has been appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of English, having previously held an ACLS Postdoctoral Fellowship in Anglophone and Postcolonial Literature at the University of Kentucky.

Andrew Milward was the summer 2022 Writer-in-Residence at the Fairhope Center for the Writing Arts in Fairhope, Alabama. His most recent book was *Jayhawker* (University of Kansas Press, 2020.)

Shauna Morgan has been appointed Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of English, specializing in African American and Africana Studies, and Creative Writing. Shauna was also the UK Director of Equity & Inclusion Initiatives in Center for Education and Learning Technology (CELT) and previously held the rank of Associate Professor with tenure at Howard University.

Marion Rust is recipient of the 2022 A&S Undergraduate Research Mentoring Award. She continues to serve as editor of the journal *Early American Literature*.

Michelle Sizemore is Director of Undergraduate Studies and hosted our **English Undergraduate Showcase** in April, where many students read their work to an audience of students, faculty and family members. Michelle was recently profiled in a video about the English program made by the College of Arts and Sciences' **Faculty Voices**.

Frank X. Walker is Director of Creative Writing. He and Crystal Wilkinson led a reading of Affrilachian poets to celebrate Juneteenth at the Lyric Theatre and Cultural Arts Center, Lexington. He also hosted the **MFA Farewell Reading** at

the Burl, Lexington. Frank was featured in a video about the UK English Department made by the College of Arts and Sciences: [Faculty Voices](#).

[Crystal Wilkinson](#) has been appointed Full Professor, and Associate Chair of English. In her role as Poet Laureate of Kentucky 2020-23 she travels across the commonwealth to give readings and lectures. She was recipient of the 2022 A&S Award for the Promotion of Diversity at the University of Kentucky and was also recipient of the [NAACP Image Award for Literature](#).

[Nazera Wright](#) has been awarded an American Philosophical Society-National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship in 2023. She gave the 2022 John E. Eberhardt Memorial Lecture for the University of Kansas in March and participated in “A Roundtable on the History of Black Childhood” at the American Antiquarian Society in May.

[Lisa Zunshine](#) has spent the past year on sabbatical leave, completing archival research in Berlin, Germany. She has recently published a monograph, *The Secret Life of Literature*, MIT Press, January 2022.

Staff Focus

Congratulations to [Kristen Pickett](#), who is recipient of the [2022 A&S Staff Award for Diversity and Inclusion](#). Kristen Pickett is an outstanding Department Manager in every respect. She has worked hard to promote a culture of diversity and inclusion in the Department of English and has a long history of service on committees and bodies which address issues of justice, democracy, fairness, and equity. She served on the University of Kentucky Women’s Forum Board 2015-2021 and University of Kentucky Staff Senate 2021-present. On the Staff Senate, she serves on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee, the Staff Issues Human Resources Concerns committee, and was the staff representative on the UK Strategic Plan team focused on putting students first. Within the department, she is the staff representative on the English DEI committee. She also served as the staff representative on the A&S Dean Search committee where she brought her unique perspective to questions of fairness and equity in the search process. Outside the UK community, she is involved with Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) and volunteered in a campaign assisting people to ascertain their voting rights.



Kristen Pickett

Faculty Retirements

[Walter Foreman](#) has retired after teaching at the University of Kentucky for 50 years. He was a graduate of Harvard and the University of Washington, where he completed his Ph.D. At UK, he specialized in Shakespeare and other early modern authors (for which he had been prepared), in Film Studies (for which he had not been prepared but into which he was drafted by the Department at the birth of its Film Program when another instructor was needed quickly), and in Interdisciplinary Studies (including the Modern Studies Curriculum and several evolutions of the Honors Program and College). He previously won the William Ward Faculty Prize for Service and the Provost Outstanding Teaching Award (2007). He was the inaugural Director of Advising, several times Director or Acting Director of Undergraduate Studies, and Associate Chair for three terms of varying length. His publications include *The Music of the Close: The Final Scenes of Shakespeare's Tragedies* (1978). He is a member of Lexington Camera Club, and he hopes to spend more time on his photography and walking his dog, Valerie. Walt will be missed, and we wish him well in his retirement.



Walter Foreman and Armando Prats

[Armando J. Prats](#) has retired after teaching at the University of Kentucky for 47 years. He was a graduate of University of Miami and University of Florida, where he completed his Ph.D. in 1975 before coming to Kentucky. He specialized throughout his career in Film, and his publications include *The Autonomous Image: Cinematic Narration and Humanism* (1981), and *Invisible Natives: Myth and Identity in the American Western* (Cornell UP, 2002.) He served the English Department as Director of Graduate Studies, Director of Undergraduate Studies, and as Associate Chair. He won the William Ward Faculty Prize for Service and the UK Alumni Association Great Teacher Award, and three times was named “Teacher Who Made a Difference” by the UK College of Education. We wish him well in his retirement. Armando wanted to have the last word, and so he has sent us this message: “Armando José Prats expresses his gratitude to UK and its English Department. Forty-seven years ago, they took on an unfledged, and all too implausible Cuban youth (far more hopeful than accomplished) questing quixotically for such wisdom as was to be had — and shared — in film and literature. May the ghosts of those who took a chance on him be ever at peace — at least on that account.”

[Gurney Norman](#) has retired after teaching at the University of Kentucky for 43 years. A graduate of University of Kentucky and Stanford University, where he was a Wallace Stegner Fellow, Gurney was formerly Poet Laureate of Kentucky and was inducted to the Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame and to [UK's College of Arts & Sciences Hall of Fame](#). His many publications include the legendary novel *Divine Rights Trip*, the book of short stories *Kinfolks*, and more recently, *Allegiance* (Old Cove Press and Ohio University Press). He is currently completing another book, *The Finley County Record*. Gurney received an unusual honor earlier this year when an affordable-housing development near Hazard, Kentucky was named after him, “Gurney’s Bend.” Gurney will be missed, and we wish him well in his retirement.

Alumni Profiles

Anne Deaton (BA '67)

Anne Deaton (BA '67) was an English major and graduated from UK with Phi Beta Kappa honors and a teaching certificate. She earned an M.A. in Adult Education at the University of Tennessee and an Ed.D. in Adult Education and Aging at Virginia Tech. Her career focused on the socio-economic, health, and public policy issues related to seniors and led to a faculty appointment at the University of Missouri, service as deputy director of Missouri's Division of Aging and director of the Missouri Division of Developmental Disabilities. Anne was inducted into the [Arts & Sciences Hall of Fame](#) in 2019.



Anne Deaton

Gena Henry (MA '04)

Gena Henry (MA '04) is currently serving as the Associate Dean for Advancement for the College of Engineering at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh. Her office oversees fundraising and alumni relations efforts for Engineering, the largest and oldest college at Carnegie Mellon. She recalls working at the Collaboratory for Research in Computing for Humanities in the William T. Young Library: “My time spent there, and in Kevin Kiernan’s classes, ignited my love of the blending of cutting-edge technology and humanities, which influenced my decision to join Carnegie Mellon, an institution that prides itself on exploring the intersection of science and technology with the arts and humanities. My time at UK taught me to embrace technology as an important tool to interpret literature and gave me the confidence to be curious about how we might push the edges of interpretation using new tools and technologies. My UK degree has benefited me in unexpected ways that I couldn’t imagine at the time. There are some obvious advantages the MA provided me with that are useful to me in my current role: Fundraising, at its core, is about effective storytelling and presenting a compelling case for support. However, principal gift fundraising involves a much more nuanced approach than simply ‘making the ask’ and is fundamentally about the partnership that develops between the donor and the institution. To understand what motivates donors, how their personal narrative might intertwine with the narrative of the organization, and how to navigate sensitive philanthropic negotiations, it is essential to be able to understand another person’s point of view. All those years I spent studying literature — and putting myself in a character’s (or author’s) point of view — has influenced how I interact with people to begin primarily from a point of curiosity and empathy. Conversations with donors — learning about their dreams and goals, and how they hope to change the world with a gift of their assets — are very natural and are very rewarding.”



Gina Henry

Ashleigh Lovelace (BA '13)

Ashleigh Lovelace (BA '13) is currently living in the Catskills, where she works as sponsored content editor for Chronogram, a regional magazine publisher focused on the Hudson Valley. She is also a beginning farmer and the co-founder of a small organic vegetable farm in Phoenicia, New York. She writes: "I entered the UK English department with a focus on creative writing, so I got to spend my time learning the craft of writing and cultivating a deep appreciation for Kentucky's voices from incredibly talented faculty members such as Gurney Norman, Ed McClanahan, Erik Reece, and Dan Howell. I worked with the group of students who founded *Shale*, and as editor-in-chief was lucky to be immersed in the creative works of my fellow undergraduates. I was beyond fortunate to receive mentorship from my professors, Marion Rust and Pearl James, who provided me with inspiring role models of successful women in academia, helped me grow my critical writing abilities, and were instrumental in encouraging my pursuit of a career in publishing."



Ashleigh Lovelace

Josh Reid (MA '04, MA Art History '12, PhD '13)

Josh Reid (MA '04, MA Art History '12, Ph.D. '13) is Associate Professor of English and Assistant Chair for Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Literature and Language at East Tennessee State University: "I have so many wonderful memories of UK English — a close-knit community of graduate students who remain friends, colleagues, and collaborators today. Once-in-a-lifetime experiences, like meeting Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney; Research opportunities, such as a consortium course on Emblems I took at the Newberry Library in Chicago; leadership opportunities, such as EGSO and graduate coordinator for the Writing Center. Most of all, extraordinary classes, and mentorship from the faculty, including Film with Armando Prats, Ecocriticism with Randall Roorda, Irish Literature with Jonathan Allison, and Renaissance Drama courses with Joyce MacDonald, who in particular helped shape me into the Early Modern English scholar that I am today." He adds: "Studying English informs everything I do, whether it is researching and writing an article on Early Modern English translation or teaching John Milton's *Paradise Lost* in the classroom. I rely continually on the communication, analytical, and critical-thinking skills I developed through studying English."



Josh Reid

Quentin Johnson (BA '16, Master's degree-MIC '18)

Quentin Johnson (BA '16, Master's degree-MIC '18) teaches English at Tates Creek High School, Lexington: "I would recommend the English major or minor because it is one of the best ways to learn how to interpret society. Close reading and analysis are the main skills I learned during my time as an English major, and those critical thinking skills can be used beyond the classroom. As an English teacher, there's value in being able to bring a story to life for your students. In my classroom, I try to replicate such passion and energy when discussing literature. I encourage English students to think about the different career paths that spring from the major. I became a teacher, but English majors become speech writers, lawyers, and editors. There are plenty of career opportunities English provides. Two classes at UK had a huge impact on me: Text and Context: 1984, and American Literature. Being introduced to George Orwell is what I value most about my time in English. There's also value in building friendships and networking within the English department; former classmates are now my colleagues. I reminisce with my colleagues about our experiences at UK — it really was 'the best of times.'"



Quentin Johnson

Nathan Petrie (BA '17, MA '20)

Nathan Petrie (BA '17, MA '20) is Promotions Manager at the University of Chicago Press, where he oversees marketing and publicity for Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Rhetoric and Communication. He also represents the University of British Columbia Press and the University of Wales Press: "The English Department at UK made working with books something I could imagine for myself. They invited guest lecturers onto campus and into the classroom to talk about the work of making books. They reworked my schedule so I could edit our literary journal, manage our satirical newspaper, teach in the writing center, and intern at our university press. And they provided funding. I needed someone to ground and nurture my vague, half-formed interests, and the English Department did that for me until a life in books became something I knew how to grasp. I'm thankful for all the typical intangibles of a humanistic education. Most importantly, studying English taught me to 'find my own way in' to anything at hand. While I certainly did learn to think critically and write clearly, I also developed a relationship to work that I hope will define my professional life."



Nathan Petrie

In Memoriam

John G. Cawelti died May 30, 2022, in Louisville. He was a graduate of Oberlin, completed his Ph.D. at University of Iowa, and taught at University of Kentucky, 1980-2000 (A&S Distinguished Professor, 1994).

John Clubbe died Feb. 24, 2022 in Santa Fe, N.M. He did his graduate work at Columbia University and the Sorbonne, and taught at University of Kentucky 1976-99, having previously taught at Columbia, CUNY, Duke, and University of Munster (Germany).

John L. Greenway died Feb. 14, 2021. He taught at the University of Kentucky for 30 years in the Department of English and the Honors Program.

Read more [here](#).

Visiting Writers Series

The [Visiting Writers Series](#) brings nationally renowned poets and writers to campus to perform, teach, and interact with students. All events are free and open to the public, adding to the vibrant literary culture of Lexington. In spring 2022 we featured several readings by poet Joy Priest (Donald Hall Poetry Prize Winner), UK MFA alumni Austyn Gaffney and Bernard Clay, and an evening with Megan Pillow and Erika Davis. The series continues in the fall. For more information and to register for upcoming events as they are announced, please visit [here](#).

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of English fosters intellectual creativity and prepares students to be critical decision-makers and life-long leaders. Integrating award-winning teaching with research into the issues that most animate our world, our faculty in Literature, Creative Writing, and Film work side by side with students as they develop into articulate and empathetic citizens of an increasingly complex world.

Your gift to the **English Development Fund** or the **MFA Visiting Writers Series Fund** will provide critical resources to respond to student needs, attract world-class faculty, and support innovative opportunities for growth. Your contribution is an investment in the future of the department and the next generation of students. You can also make your gift in honor of or in memory of a friend, relative, or faculty member.

A gift to other funds the English Department can be made online at www.as.uky.edu/givetoas. Please use the search box in the upper right corner of the screen and type the name of the fund. By mail, please send to:

UK Philanthropy
P.O. Box 23552
Lexington, KY 40523

For assistance, please contact philanthropy officer **Teresa Gotthardt** at 859-218-5551 or teresawg@uky.edu.



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