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*ESFL faculty and grad students gathered at the 2019 Pioneering Spirit awards in April. Front row (L-R): Dr. Katie McWain, Dr. Genevieve West, Shannon Baughman, Kathleen Irwin, Salena Parker, Dr. Gretchen Busl. (Back row, L-R): Dr. Brian Fehler, Mike Fraley, Amanda Oswald, Jackie Kliman, Justin Cook, and Dr. Stephen Souris.*

## Welcome to the ESFL newsletter!

Every year, we celebrate the accomplishments of our faculty, alumni, and students. This newsletter highlights those achievements.

It also introduces everyone to our newest faculty and helps us all get to know each other. For example, who would like to throw paper airplanes from his office window? Which graduate student designed a comic-book character named Weathervane? And which department was, for the second time in four years, recognized as the best for grad students? (ESFL, of course). Read on!

— Newsletter Editor: Margaret Williams

## Good works: ESFL wins Graduate Student Council's Pioneering Spirit award (again)



**Dr. Genevieve West, chair of ESFL, says, “The students in our department are at the center of what we do.” (pictured above, right, with PhD candidate Amanda Oswalt, left; photo courtesy of TWU)**

At the April 2019 Pioneering Spirit award ceremony, the Graduate Student Council presented ESFL with the Distinguished Department award, the department's second win in the past four years.

Dr. **Katie McWain**, the department's 2018-2019 First-Year Composition director, remarked, “Because I was so recently a [Graduate Teaching Assistant], I would say that the variety of assistantship opportunities – teaching FYC [and] upper-division courses, administrative roles, and research work with faculty – are a bonus.”

Beyond such professional support, says PhD candidate **Amanda Oswalt**, the department won the award because its faculty also help graduate students at a personal level. She says, “Knowing you can count on the members of your department gives much needed comfort to a vulnerable population.”

Doctoral student **Veronica Popp** also emphasizes ESFL faculty's support of grad students, combined with flexibility. **Meredith Pasahow**, who earned her MA in English at TWU before continuing as a doctoral student, says, “I double down on those descriptions! [The department] supports us and creates a sense of community.”

**Margaret Williams**, PhD student and president of ERGO-RSA, the department's grad-student organization, emphasizes collegiality and collaboration in ESFL – characteristics lacking at some institutions. She says, “The department isn't so big that graduate students become an afterthought. All my professors are accessible and easy to talk to.”

Dr. **Liam Lanigan** adds, “There's an active commitment to professional development [for graduate students in ESFL]. We do a good job of helping them approach the job market, and we have a real commitment to them.”

The department's administrative assistant, **Lisa Grimaldo**, witnesses that commitment every day. She says, "The ESFL faculty are very good at working together to help students."

Dr. **Brian Fehler**, associate professor and Graduate Program Advisor, says, "Compared to other departments I've been part of, either as a student or a teacher, in ESFL we tend to take the pulse of our students more often when making policy and course decisions." One example, he says, was ESFL's shift in course and exam requirements, which offers graduate students more flexibility in developing their research specialties and, as they enter the job market, a better chance at "establishing their scholarly identities." Fehler adds that graduate faculty are "encouraged to work with students as full collaborators at local, regional, and national conferences."

Dr. **Gray Scott** says that the grad students themselves make ESFL a good place for those on the path to MAs in English and PhDs in Rhetoric. He says the department's grad students are "sharp, engaged, moved to do what Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, and Damon call 'good work,' which is to say work that is both good in quality and good in impact—things that might make the world a better place."

Dr. **Genevieve West**, professor and department chair, attributes ESFL's latest award to an "ethic of care" in which ESFL faculty take a "village" approach to mentoring graduate students. "The students in ESFL are really at the center of what we do – in the classroom and outside of it. Faculty all have their unique strengths, and we're willing to share those, even with students who are not 'ours.'"

PhD student **Salena Parker** echoes a sentiment expressed by many in ESFL: "The department is a close-knit, adaptable group that allows its students to excel and move forward. ... We depend on one another and help each other constantly." She adds, "ESFL feels less like a 'department' and more like a family."



*Dr. Brian Fehler, Graduate Program Advisor, led a group of current and former ESFL graduate students to the 2019 Conference on College Composition and Communication. Pictured (L-R): Justin Cook, Liz Cozby, Cody Jackson, Angela Johnson, Dr. Brian Fehler, and Erika Johnson. (photo courtesy of B. Fehler)*

## Student achievements in ESFL



*Dr. Will Benner, assistant professor of Spanish, presented PhD student Daehyun Won (MA) with a scholarship award at ESFL's annual recognition of students. (photo courtesy of ESFL)*

### PhD

Doctoral candidate **Kim Allison** and PhD student **Salena Parker** attended the June 2019 AP Reading/Rating workshop in Tampa, Florida. Allison and Parker report that they gained a deeper understanding of the construction and implementation of the AP English Language and Composition exam while networking with faculty and students from across the country. Allison, winner of the Bruce Family Memorial Scholarship, also accepted a dual-credit English position through Garland ISD at Lakeview Centennial High School. She will teach in their Collegiate Academy, which partners with Eastfield College.

Doctoral candidate **Justin Cook** co-published a book review for *The Qualitative Report* (with Dr. Dundee Lackey, Kathleen Irwin, Aida Mehanovic, and Jacqui Haynes); and an online article for the Digital Rhetoric Collaborative (with TWU alum Cody Jackson) titled “(Re)Animating Queer Life(after?)Death: Queer/ing Multimodality and/as Practicing Mourning.” Cook also has a book chapter forthcoming for WAC Clearinghouse’s *Keywords & Concepts in Making + Design Thinking*. Cook presented work at the Computers and Writing Conference, the Conference on College Composition & Communication (for which he was awarded the Professional Equity Project Grant), the Trends in Teaching Composition Conference at Collin College, and SmartTalks at TWU. Cook served as a writing judge for the Ready Writing Contest through the University Interscholastic League, and he joined the TWU FYC Curriculum Revision Committee. Awarded the Autry Nell Wiley and the John J. Dawson Scholarship for the 2018/19 academic year, Cook was selected as a TWU Experiential Student Scholar for a project on digital literacies in the composition classroom. Cook was also nominated for TWU’s annual Doctoral Student Award of Excellence.



## Congratulations to ESFL's newest PhDs in Rhetoric!

**Wendy Commons:** “Hold on to Yourself: Bowie, Burke, and the Rhetoric of Stage Persona”

**Nimmy Nair:** “Gender, Economic Agency, and Social Class: A Rhetorical Analysis of Pearl Buck’s *The House of Earth* Trilogy Through the Dramatistic Pentad of Kenneth Burke”

**Natalie Malin:** “Efficacy of Incorporating Text-To-Speech in the Composition Classroom”

Doctoral candidate **Liz Cozby** presented her research project, “Synapses of a Different System: How Hurricane Harvey Created Multiple Rhetorical Neurotransmitters and Crafted Diverse Modes of Community Action” at both the Conference on College Composition & Communication and ESFL’s SmartTalks. At Trends in Teaching College Composition, Cozby also presented “(Re)Purposeful Rhetoric: Using Material Sources to Build Ethos in the Narrative Genre” (a collaboration with Justin Cook) and “A Multiplicity of Media: Several Ideas on Harmonizing Technology and Composition Practices.”



TWU doctoral candidate Melanie Haas (right) poses with collaborator N.A. Pierce (left) at the Library of Congress. (photo courtesy of M. Haas)

Doctoral candidate **Melanie Haas** started a new position as full-time professor at South East Arkansas College. She also presented “The Monster Within: Murder and Toxic Masculinity in *The Girl on the Train*” (at the Conference of the Society for Comparative Literature and the Arts), “A Handmaid by Any Other Name: Issues of Naming and Identity in *The Handmaid’s Tale*” (South West Popular/American Culture Association), and “The Other’s Hero: Olivia Pope’s and Annalise Keating’s Importance as Black Female Antiheroes” (PCA).

Haas also launched a book project with N.A. Pierce of Old Dominion University. The working title is *Bitch or Badass: Anti-Heroines of Contemporary Literary Media, Television, and Cinema*. Haas says the idea evolved from preparing for the PCA conference: “Pierce [had] seen [the movie] *Widows* with Viola Davis. We were talking about [its] anti-heroine aspect, and Pierce jokingly said we should compile an edited book about modern anti-heroines. We ended up running with it. The book connects to the work I’ve done at TWU, my research [and my] interests in pop culture, feminist narratives, and rhetoric.”



Doctoral student **Angela Johnson** presented her work at the 2019 Conference on College Composition and Communication. (photo courtesy of B. Fehler)

Doctoral candidate **Angela Johnson** presented a paper at the 2019 Conference on College Composition & Communication, was awarded TWU ESFL’s Dr. Helen Benjamin scholarship in April 2019, and received an MLA Bibliography Fellowship. Her “4Cs” paper, “Black Populism,” resulted from a research interest in early African American feminist rhetoricians. Johnson, a public librarian, plans to expand the paper into a journal article about African American women speaking (and writing) during the late 1800s and early 1900s. For the fellowship, Johnson will submit citations to the MLA International Bibliography while receiving a stipend and conference registration. She also published a creative project, *Don’t Look Behind You: Book One*, part of the Nightfall Rhapsody Series.

Doctoral student **Giribala Joshi** attended two North Texas Writing Centers Association conferences (Fall 2018 and Spring 2019) with TWU Write Site Director Dr. Jennifer Phillips-Denny and other tutors. Joshi also presented a paper, “Newton’s Use of Rhetoric in The Principia,” at the Feb. 2019 South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference.

PhD student **Salena Parker** was named a graduate-student representative on the 2019-2020 Bedford/St. Martin’s Advisory Board, working with fellow board members to discuss teaching challenges; review new research in composition, rhetoric, and English; network with publishing representatives; and provide feedback on new projects and books. Parker also joined the English department of Collin College for the 2019-2020 academic year in McKinney, Texas as a full-time assistant professor.



Grad students **Kim Allison** and **Salena Parker** pose in Tampa, Florida, where they attended the 2019 AP Reading/Rating workshop. (photo courtesy of S. Parker)

PhD student and MA alumna **Meredith Pasahow** designed a new comic book character – Stormy Perkins (aka “Weathervane”) – for the *Adventures of Aviore* series. Weathervane appeared in the August 2019 issue. As part of the promotion for the comic, Pasahow attended the 2019 San Diego Comic-Con. Pasahow also presented “Teaching with Disabilities” at ESFL’s SmartTalks.

PhD candidate **Amanda Oswalt** won the John L. Dawson Endowed Scholarship.

PhD student **Margaret Williams** worked with the FYC Essay Contest committee for the 2018-2019 year and presented her research, “Witches and Bitches, Y’all: A Brief History of Women’s Political Narratives (2019 Edition),” at ESFL’s SmartTalks. She also won the Leslie R. Kreps Endowed Scholarship.

## The newest doctoral candidates in ESFL:

**Kimberly Allison, Justin Cook, Elizabeth Cozby, Mike Fraley, Melanie Haas, Kathleen Irwin, Leanne Lentschke, and Jason Parker** passed their comprehensive exams and were welcomed into PhD candidacy in ESFL’s Rhetoric program.



## On *Hamlet* and 50 years at TWU: Dr. Vivian Casper

*ESFL’s Dr. Vivian Casper (pictured here) joined the TWU faculty in 1969. Former students, friends, and TWU staff celebrated her achievement at a tree-planting ceremony at CFO. (photo courtesy of TWU)*

Every year, dozens of TWU faculty reach their 10-year marks; half as many can count 25 years of service to the university. None had ever reached 50 years, until ESFL’s very own Dr. Vivian Casper passed the milestone in 2019.

A native of Kansas and a graduate of Rice University, Dr. Casper arrived in Denton in 1969 and taught a variety of literature courses. During a June 2019 conversation, the ever-modest Dr. Casper kept turning the conversation back to her students and the joy she gets from teaching.

**You just celebrated 50 years at TWU this year, with the planting of a live oak tree next to CFO.** When I came here, my specialty was English literature, generally—19<sup>th</sup> century especially—but then I got into drama, and I taught ... the Victorian and Romantic poets. They’re all different and speak to you in different ways. I can’t even tell you what my favorite anything is, poet or dramatist, or my favorite Shakespeare play. They’re all just wonderful and interesting.

**Like *Hamlet*? To be or not to be, whether tis nobler to suffer the slings and arrows ... Of outrageous fortune!**

**Did you ever see Kenneth Branagh’s film adaptation, with everyone dressed in Victorian-era costumes? We’ll call that a “concept.”**

**Is there a wrong or right way to do *Hamlet*?** There’s room for ambiguity, and different interpretations, but you can’t go completely off the wall. You can’t say that *anything* is OK, when it’s not. You can’t say that Hamlet, for example, has a mental illness. ... He does not. He’s calculating! The only thing Hamlet doesn’t do, he doesn’t get a plan. He’s kind of at the mercy of other people’s plans. It’s not that he’s a procrastinator, he ... gets distracted.

And of course, if Hamlet didn’t get distracted, you wouldn’t have a play. He goes to England, he goes there, he does that, he gets into a duel, he loses track of what he’s supposed to do, which is to get rid of his uncle. Hamlet just doesn’t have a plan.

**These days, you work most often 20<sup>th</sup> century drama, though?** I like all kinds of drama. ... I’ll be teaching a survey [course] this year, starting with the Greeks, with *Oedipus*. It’s not so much a survey as [looking] to see what’s in the area, what’s playing in the area, so [my students and I] can go see a play.

**That’s a great way to experience drama and to teach it. What advice would you give to new teachers?** Do what you want to do. You can do it. However, you have to save for retirement. I remember the first year I was here [in 1969], I sat next to an older faculty member, [at a meeting] about retirement, and she turned to me and said, “You’re not much interested in that, are you?” And I said, “No.” I wasn’t, but I should have been!

But I have a suggestion. Write about yourself. I really mean it. You can start with our discussion today. For example, we’ve talked about Thomas Wolfe’s novel *Look Homeward, Angel*, and that’s fascinating.

**Indeed! You noted that he had a good editor, otherwise his meandering prose might have made his books even longer. [We laugh together. Dr. Casper, for those who haven’t met her, has a lovely, sparkling laugh.]** I like teaching. A lot of people, when they retire, they’re ready to give up [what they’re doing]. I’m not ready to give it up.

*This excerpt, drawn from a longer conversation between Dr. Casper and doctoral student Margaret Williams, has been edited for clarity and length.*

## Want to help ESFL fund scholarships and programs?

The English, Speech, & Foreign Languages Department has been successful throughout the years thanks to generous support from its alumni and friends. To continue that support, we welcome contributions in the form of gifts for scholarships in the name of the donor as well as other donations.

ESFL works TWU’s Office of University Advancement to arrange and process donations. Visit <https://pof.twu.edu> for more information or contact the ESFL department chair, Dr. Genevieve West, at 940.898.2341 or [GWest@twu.edu](mailto:GWest@twu.edu), or POB 425829, Denton, TX 76201.



## Excellence in Teaching: James “Mike” Fraley

*This past academic year, Mike Fraley received double recognition for his work: the J. Dean Bishop Excellence in Teaching Award (given by FYC) and the Graduate Teaching Assistant Award of Excellence (given by TWU's Graduate Student Council).*

My experience as a writing center tutor, graduate teaching assistant, and FYC instructor continually informs an ongoing search for strategies that can address the needs of a new generation of digital learner. My research background in composition and digital literacies informs a developing pedagogy aimed at assisting today's digital natives as they transition from the digital discourse they know to the more traditional assignments that many first-year composition programs offer.

During my first experiences as a teacher (as both a writing center tutor and new FYC instructor), I realized that students seemed to struggle when asked to respond to purely textual assignments. My dissertation examines how FYC programs are transitioning to the more multimodal discourse of a multiliteracy curriculum and looks at how composition programs are incorporating this work into their more alphacentric discourse. Because of this background, my teaching philosophy in FYC relies heavily on digital literacies and foundational, rhetorical concepts. In fact, this informs my overall pedagogy when building curricula for the classes I teach.

For the last two semesters, I was the Digital Composition Lab (DCL) Manager and taught all my 1013 and 1023 classes in the DCL. For example, in my ENG 1013 composition classroom, I explored the hyper-textual nature of digital texts to illustrate the function of the traditional textual materials that college students must analyze today. Here, students were asked to create a multimodal project, a short film, as one of their major writing assignments (Reporting Information). The collaborative classroom setting allowed students to work together on projects such as the Video Report, in which they learned to employ rhetorical strategies through video editing software. I was surprised by the level of work my freshman students were able to complete, and I continue to revise this video project to make it more streamlined.

If I were to offer any advice to new instructors, it would be to always continue to learn from your students and to be flexible in your approach. At TWU, we have diverse classroom populations that can often have very different personalities from one class to the next. Also, don't feel you have to know everything and always be willing to ask for help. Another tip would be to build “writing” time into your courses, because this offers a few benefits: first, it gives an instructor a chance to work individually with students; second, students can often



*PhD candidate and FYC Program Assistant Mike Fraley poses with Dr. Katie McWain, 2018-2019 director of the FYC program, at the 2019 Pioneering Spirit Awards. (photo courtesy of TWU)*

get work done in class that they might not do on their own; and third, first-time teachers often feel they lack the material to fill an 80-minute class, so this provides a built-in lab of sorts, that keeps them from ending class too early. – *contributed by James “Mike” Fraley, PhD candidate and FYC program assistant*

## More student achievements: MA

ESFL Masters students **Madison Gravens, Shannon Baughman, and Taylor Fitzgerald** presented a group project at the Feb. 2019 South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference. The students curated a traveling exhibit of 18th-century cookbooks from the TWU Woman’s Collection and presented on their work, “The Queen’s Closet Reopened: Eighteenth-Century Cookbooks from the TWU Special Collections.”

Their presentation and exhibit were an extension of a group project created for the Blagg-Huey Library as part of a recent ESFL graduate course, Bibliography and Research Methods. Fellow contributors to the project included **Audrey Hernandez, Christie Sledge, Cody Jackson, Daehyun Won, and Rachel Gunter**. The presentation, which kicked off the conference, was attended by over 40 people. Dr. Ashley Bender reports that their presentation “was very, very well received. They were a highlight of the weekend!”

Baughman was also the recipient of the Henry H. and Evelyn M. Blagg Scholarship.



*MA students Madison Gravens, Shannon Baughman, and Taylor Fitzgerald presented a group project at the 2019 South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference. (Photo by Dr. Gretchen Busl)*

**Natalie Julian** presented her paper, “‘And then, I was a slave’: Female Subjugation and Desired Will in Aphra Behn’s *The Rover*,” at the Feb. 2019 South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference.

**Alexis Kopp** presented “Seeing, Hearing, Empathizing: The Need for Narrative Intimate Partner Violence Programs” at ESFL’s May 2019 SmartTalks event.

**Emily Ramser** presented “Coming Out in Verse: Queer Poets and the Conflation of Author and Speaker” at ESFL’s May 2019 SmartTalks event.

**Shannon Simmons** presented “How Much Did Your Baby Cost? Countering the Adoption Fairytale” at ESFL’s SmartTalks.

## New MA graduates!

Maria Dach, Taylor Fitzgerald, Rachel Green, Jennifer McMillin, Elizabeth Jendrzey, and Kimberly Merenda earned their MA degrees during the 2018-2019 academic year.

## From TWU to the World: Carolyn Swen

What can you do with a BA in English from TWU? **Caroline Swen**, a native of Liberia who came to the U.S. when she was 11 years old, exemplifies the global possibilities. During Summer 2019, Swen interned at SUNY's office of Global Affairs for the Jewish Foundation for Education of Women (JFEW) Leadership Program. Before that gig, she joined the Peace Corps, working in Ethiopia with high-school girls.

What's next? Here are a few highlights of Swen's work, her future, and her time in TWU's ESFL department.

**What brought you to TWU?** I liked that it was small and predominantly female. Being born and raised in Africa, my idea of feminism was very different. I was always getting in trouble for speaking out. Then I went to TWU and heard that everyone should be equal. That's how I've always believed!

**You tried nursing first, in part because your mother is a nurse.** It wasn't for me. I tried some English classes.

I loved the critical thinking and connecting things to the real world and our politics and social history.

**You double-majored in Psychology?** Yes, and I was thinking about graduate school after finishing. Dr. Bender mentioned the Peace Corps, and I was accepted [for a program] in Ethiopia. [My experience] made me realize I wanted to do international work in education.

**Instead of continuing with English or Psychology?** I've been accepted into the Teachers College, Columbia University, program for a Master's in International Education Development. My ultimate goal has always been to work with the United Nations.

**The U.N. helped your family come to the U.S. during the civil war in Liberia.** Yes. I look at the U.N. as a lifeline to people, a saving grace. We were able to have a whole new life. It is possible to come from poverty and be successful. It's about doing something for yourself. I want to help educate girls, to help them understand that they have agency. Use your brain. Improve your life.

**Did you learn these lessons at TWU?** The English department, because it is small, allowed me access to the professors and to improve my writing and teaching. For Dr. [Vivian] Casper's grammar class, we had to write an autobiography, using grammar to structure and tell our stories. With Dr. [Russell] Greer, we had a mutual interest in Thomas Hardy, who critiqued Victorian society.

**That's part of the critical thinking you mentioned!** Being an English major helped with my communication, editing, planning, and writing skills. I am able to help students analyze social issues and reflect on them. Also, I am able to be a critical thinker and help others do the same because of the [ESFL faculty]. The more years between me now and my time at TWU, the more I love it. I learned so much that I'm applying in the real world—as a woman, as a teacher, as a social worker.

*This excerpt, drawn from telephone conversation between Caroline Swen and doctoral student Margaret Williams, has been edited for clarity and length.*



*TWU alumna Caroline Swen has taken her BA in English from the Peace Corp to Columbia's Teachers College. (photo courtesy of C. Swen)*



## BA students

**Emily Bauman's** poem, "Warriors," was published in the 2018-2019 edition of TWU's *Off the Quill* journal of Honors research and creative arts.

**Amber Gaudet's** research essay, "'Fifty cents for her love': Autobiographical Fiction and the Reflection of White Patronage in Hurston's 'The Gilded Six-Bits,'" was published in the 2018-2019 edition of TWU's *Off the Quill* journal. Gaudet also won the Laverne Harrell Clark Endowment Scholarship.

**Krista Simpson** served as copy editor for TWU's *Off the Quill* journal.



**Alyssa Walker** won 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the April 2019 North Texas Book Festival for "The Violet Theory," which she wrote at the age of 17 under the pseudonym Elodie Iver. (Photo courtesy of A. Walker).

**Alyssa Walker** won 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the April 2019 North Texas Book Festival for "The Violet Theory," which she wrote at the age of 17 under the pseudonym Elodie Iver.



**Dr. Ashley Bender** (second from left) led a group of ESFL student to the Collin College Undergraduate Student Research Conference. Pictured (L-R): Shannon Simmons, Dr. Ashley Bender, AJ Dvorak, Scarlett Brou, Hannah Diaz, Abbie Beard, Tatyanna Bryant, Sarah Smith, Justin Nathan, Plamedie Ifasso, Ch'nell Amos, and Elizabeth Hancock. (photo courtesy of A. Bender)



## Alumni achievements

Distinguished alumna **Dr. Helen Benjamin** received the Lifetime Achievement Award for service to community colleges in April 2019. Dr. Benjamin was also called out of retirement to accept the presidency of Santa Barbara Community College on an interim basis.

**Marcella Clinard** (MA 2018), a doctoral student in TWU's Multicultural Women's and Gender Studies program, presented "Teaching the Intersections of Race and Religion in Women's and Gender Studies" at UNC-Charlotte's Religion, Racism, and Religious Racism: The Color of Faith Discrimination symposium; "Using Intersectionality to Teach Religion in the Women's and Gender Studies Classroom" at the Southwest Commission on Religion Studies Conference; "Toward an Anzaldúan Reading of Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*" at the Conference of College Teachers of English; and "Epistemology and Social Justice in a Postsecular Women's and Gender Studies" at the National Women's Studies Association conference. Clinard was named TWU Experiential Student Scholar (2018-2019) to support her dissertation research. She also won the American Literature Award for the "Toward an Anzaldúan Reading" paper, which will be published in *CCTE Studies*.

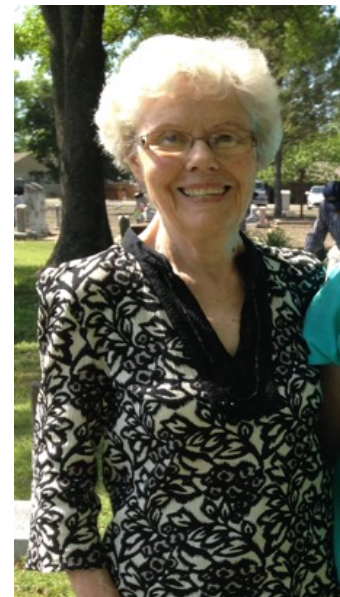


*Maria Cano was accepted into TWU's graduate program for Library Science. (photo courtesy of M. Cano)*

**Maria Cano** (BA 2018) was accepted into TWU's Master's of Library Science program. Cano says she plans to serve her community by "assisting them in finding them the information and sources they need — just like the librarians I met at a young age helped me. I also hope to one day set up my own traveling library and help communities in rural areas around the globe." Cano notes ESFL's "emphasis on a whole spectrum of texts, including those of women of color, [as] the aspect that interested me the most and the texts I enjoyed the greatest."

**Ghita Brockway Carter** (BA 1950) established a new scholarship for TWU English majors. Carter, a longtime librarian whose family has been in Texas since the 1870s, says, "Coming from my humble background, I feel extremely fortunate to have been able to get an education at TWU. Now I want to leave a small legacy in setting up these scholarships for English and Library Science majors to help students studying in these fields. My husband and I made modest salaries and have lived a modest lifestyle, but we began investing and working many years ago with Carla, a trusted financial advisor, which has enabled us to provide a generous inheritance for our children and to donate to worthwhile causes. We are thankful."

In a piece for *Education Week: Teacher*, **Dr. Jocelyn Chadwick** (PhD) honored her teacher, the author Toni Morrison, who died in 2019: "I Knew Toni Morrison. She Was a Gifted Teacher." Chadwick's reflection on her bond with Morrison can be found at <http://bit.ly/2Mezlhe>.



*TWU alumna Ghita Brockway Carter established a new scholarship for TWU English majors this year. (photo courtesy of G.B. Carter)*

**Dr. Elaine Cho** (MA, PhD) was an invited speaker for the Korean Oral History Association Conference in Seoul at Chung-Ang University. Her presentation was titled *Digital Bojagi: Unwrapping Korean American Culture*. Cho is also the chair of the Asian American section of the Southwest American Culture Association.

**Hannah Diaz** (BA) started a DFW-area apprenticeship with FOCUS, the Fellowship of Christian University Students.

**Cheri Edwards** (MA), **Karen Hixson** (BA), and **Leanne Lentschke** (BA, MA, doctoral candidate) formed a panel on William Faulkner for the Oct. 2019 South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference.

**Saffyre Falkenberg** (BA 2016) accepted a graduate assistantship in Texas Christian University's PhD program in English. She also has a forthcoming publication, "'Wherever the Flame Was Brightest': Identity and Assimilation in Rick Riordan's Greek Mythological Adaptations for Young Adults" in *Young Adult Novels: Critically Engaging Past and Present*.

Travel writer and recent retiree **Bettye Fox** (MA) published two books, *The Privilege of Man Is to Dream: Mark Twain's Visit to Hawaii* and *The Metamorphosis of a Woman*. Her article, "My Soldier Boy," also appeared in *The National Enquirer's* "True Love" series.

**Madison Hurd** will start the graduate program at the Mayborn School of Journalism at the University of North Texas.

**Dr. Maureen Johnson** (PhD) became director of composition and assistant professor of English at Northeastern State University. She also co-authored a department textbook, *Discovering Your Vision and Voice*, for which she received a Fountainhead Press grant. Johnson also has an upcoming interchapter in the edited collection, *Our Body of Work*. She presented research at the 2018 Cultural Rhetorics, the 2019 Feminism and Rhetorics, and 2019 South Central Modern Language Association conferences.

**Déborah Makuma** (formerly **Kabwang**) (BA 2011) earned her masters and works as writer/editor for The Boeing Company in Mesa, Arizona.

**Kellie Matherly** (MA, PhD) has been appointed chair of the Department of Humanities at Grayson College. She will also chair the Folklore Section of SCMLA in Little Rock in October.

**Tawnda Maxwell** published the novella, *The Rooster and the Snake*, a story of voodoo and vampires.

**Dr. Helen McCourt** (MLS and PhD in Rhetoric) is chair of the Folklore Section for the Southwest American Culture Association. She led the program in Albuquerque in February 2019. McCourt will also present a paper in the Southern Literature Section at South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies in Little Rock.

**Haley Anjelica Mowdy** (MA) accepted a position as a litigation associate at Locke Lord LLP's Dallas office.

Associate Professor at Texas A&M International University (Laredo) **Dr. Bernice Sanchez** (BA, MA) has signed a book contract for the publication of *Transforming Secondary Schools into Learning Schools: Professional Learning Communities in Action*.

**Shannon Simmons** (BA) was accepted into ESFL's MA program.

**Sandy Sook** (PhD) coached the Southlake Odyssey of the Mind team to the state championship of Texas. The team then went to the national finals at Michigan State University and won international honors of seventh place in the world. Sook is also an invited

speaker for the Dec. 2019 Talented and Gifted conference. Her presentation is titled "Differentiation through Creativity."

**Dr. Raquel Schmitz (MA)** and her husband Eric have donated \$250,000 for the construction of a new food bank in Denton. They will continue to support the food bank once the center is built.

**Traci Treadway-Burt (BA 2001)**, who received Denton ISD's District Teacher of the Year designation in 2016, taught AP junior and senior English at Ryan High School for 18 years. Says Treadway-Burt, "Each year, I often share lessons, experiences, and stories from my TWU years. I treasure TWU's mission and am proud to be a small part of it."

Dr. Christina Wagner gave the keynote address at ESFL's Annual Honors and Awards Program: "I Think I Might Know Somebody": Lessons from (Accidentally) Networking into Research and Career Opportunities."

**Bethany Weston (BA)** completed her Master of Library Science degree at TWU.

**Emily Yowell** accepted a teaching position at Sanger Middle School.



Traci Treadway-Burt (right) has taught at Ryan High School for 18 years. The students pictured here are members of the UIL Spelling Team – the self-named "Word Nerds." (Pictured L-R: Alexis Barton, Faith Carlin, Faith Carlin, and Traci Treadway-Burt). (photo courtesy of T. Treadway-Burt)

Dream jobs & paper airplanes:  
Dr. Jamie Barker



You've just completed your first year as faculty in ESFL. Your wife, Amber Barker, is TWU's new softball coach. Her mom and family are from Irving and thereabouts? Yes, she want[ed] to come home... When she got offered [the job] we talked about me staying in Georgia and her being out here and me trying to make it work [for a while], but she thought about that and said, "We're not going to do that!"

[TWU] is a unique place. They really and truly care about the people who work for them. I just happened to stumble into this department that had a need and I was able to fill it. ... We both became very happy very quickly. Although I may have been the trailing spouse, I

plan to make my own ripples. ... At least, that's the plan. [On the window behind Barker, he has written an outline of that book/project plan in dry-erase markers on his office window.]

**That's the plan, written on the window behind you?** Yes, I'm getting ready to start on a second book. ... Book two has to be done in a year and a half. That's when I start the third book.

**What's the first book about?** It's called *Unmuted Verse*. It's an examination of trauma in 20<sup>th</sup> century multicultural American poetry. ... One chapter is devoted to the African American Black Arts movement poetry, people like Amiri Baraka. Another chapter covers Japanese American poetry from the [1930s] internment camps and after. Another chapter looks at Native American poetry from the 1960s to the present.

**How'd you get into trauma theory and literature?** In grad school, I was an associate editor for an international psychology journal with three offices, one in London, one in Tel Aviv, and [ours]. I read so much vanguard trauma [theory]. I'd come from grad classes, reading so much lit, and sit down to read so much trauma. The [topics] had to bleed over.

**On another subject, what are you teaching now?** The grammar class was a lot of fun. I had many Education majors in that class, so I pushed them to teach different aspects of each chapter on grammar to the rest of the class, and man, did that work well. They all wanted to make sure that everybody understood [the material.] ... They would do sentence diagrams and all kinds of fun stuff. A lot of them said they thought the class would be boring, but it wasn't. And grammar [classes] often are boring, no matter what you do.

Introduction to English Studies, that's been a fun course, too. ... I had a discussion with a couple of colleagues about the class and how it could be improved. ... I divided the course straight down the middle – 8 weeks of comp and rhet and 8 weeks of lit crit. [And] one of the books that we read is [Tommy Lemire's] *I'm an English Major: Now What?*

**I should have read that one. What advice would you give to new teachers and grad students?** You've got to be willing to work hard, whether it's your first [teaching] job or grad school or your middle years, professionally – I don't know what the late years are! But you've got to remember not to burn out.

**Your grad-school experience was very competitive?** I read everything twice, because it was pretty clear that it was going to be cutthroat and you were trying not to be the dumbest person in the room. ... It wasn't the type of cohort that I think is wonderful here at TWU. But even though we were competing, we would all go out one night a week and blow off some steam, knowing that the rest of the time we were going to be bunkered in, reading, and writing and doing what we do. You've got remember to breathe. I didn't do that enough.

**Your alma mater, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, has a great composition program; you mentioned taking as many of those courses as you could.** I knew that one day I'd be teaching freshman comp. I took a whole bunch of Rhet/Comp classes, and I'm really glad that I did. I really use a lot of that info in the classroom. And I always wanted to teach freshman comp. Even if I had 100 years of experience, I'd want to teach freshman comp. It's fun.

**It can be! You said you were going to be tougher this year in FYC.** I learned something in grad school that helped me as I started teaching: your education is only as good as the effort that you put into it. ... That's something I've tried to work with a great deal: [how] to motivate students.



You were teaching on overload at your prior institution—six classes or more per semester. What’s your dream job in academia? If you’d asked me that a few years ago, I would have said, “Teach less!” I’m living that dream now. ... I live my dream every day. I love what I teach. That’s the thing.

*This excerpt, drawn from a longer conversation between Dr. Barker and doctoral student Margaret Williams, has been edited for clarity and length.*

## Awarded tenure:

Dr. Matthew Brown (left) and Dr. Dundee Lackey (right) were both promoted to Associate Professor and awarded tenure. ESFL Chair Dr. Genevieve West says, “I am so pleased to see our newer faculty reach this important milestone in their careers. Both have established excellent records and contributed to our mission in significant ways.”



*Dr. Matthew Brown (left) and Dr. Dundee Lackey (right) were awarded tenure this year. (photos by Margaret Williams)*

## Faculty achievements

Dr. Ashley Bender chaired the session, “Perspectives on Eighteenth-Century Theater and Performance, Part 2,” at the Feb. 2019 South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference. Bender also collaborated with Dr. Gretchen Busl on a new project funded by the NEH. Bender says, “We wrapped up our first series of workshops, which included seven profs from seven departments: Rosemary Candelario, Claire Sahlin, Liz Kim, Clare Brock, Mahmoud Sadri, Will Benner, and Rick Jones. We have begun work on a database to make it easier for our faculty to find partners for experiential education opportunities with a global focus. So far, we have around 500 entities in the spreadsheet. This work was completed with the help of [ESFL graduate students] Shannon Simmons and Rachel Arnquist, our current research assistant. We presented a poster session at the AAC&U Global Engagement and Spaces of Practice Conference, and we held roundtable presentations at the NSEE conference (both fall 2018).

**Dr. Will Benner**, a faculty fellow for the NEH project and TWU assistant professor of Spanish, was selected to present at the upcoming AAC&U Global Citizenship for Campus, Community, and Careers conference. Outside of the recent growth in curriculum within the Spanish program, Benner also gave a talk at the Latin American Studies Association's Annual Convocation in Boston. He will present at a variety of conferences on literature, film, and medical interpreting pedagogy this academic year. Benner also awaits publication of his book chapter "Marooned Testimony: Memory Politics in Sebastian Silva's *Magic Magic* (2013)," which looks at how filmed landscape can move to the fore, inviting the spectator to contemplate its meaning outside of diegesis. He is also revising an article on the hybridity of the term local expertise in transnational activist networking and working on a book project on the artistic productions by human rights activists in the in Argentina, Chile, and Brazil.

**Dr. Phyllis Bridges**, Cornaro Professor of English, has been appointed to the board of directors for the Texas Folklore Society. She presented "The Abernathy Brothers: Young Folk Heroes from Coast to Coast" at the Southwest American Culture Conference. Bridges has also been invited to present her research on Herb Jeffries at the SCMLA meeting. She was the speaker for the faculty at the dedication of the Don Edwards Computer Center. Her University service included serving as Chair of the TWU Publications Board, which oversees student publications; serving on the Alonzo and Elisabeth Jamison Lectureship Endowment steering committee, which arranged the visit of Congresswomen Kay Granger of Fort Worth and Sylvia Garcia (TWU alumna) of Houston to the TWU campus; serving on the working group to establish a partnership between TWU and Sanskrit University in Kolkata, India, which culminated in the signing of a memorandum of understanding; and serving as faculty advisor to the TWU English Chapter of the TWU Alumni Association, which raised \$3,900. Dr. Bridges also facilitated funding for writing awards for First-Year Composition students at TWU. Generous funding was provided by Drs. Sue Bancroft and Diane Dwight and an anonymous donor. An endowment is being established with pledges sufficient to support the awards in perpetuity.

**Dr. Gretchen Busl** gave a paper ("Decolonial Unnatural Narratology") and a pedagogy presentation ("Narrative Theory and Public Audiences: Pop Scholarship Assignments in the Graduate Classroom") at the International Society for the Study of Narrative conference in Pamplona, Spain, and presented a paper ("Digital Storytelling in the Global Social Context") at the International Conference on Contemporary Narratives in Zaragoza, Spain. She was selected to take part in the Summer Institute for Narrative Studies hosted by Aarhus University in Sønderborg, Denmark. Busl also hosted a professional development session for graduate students, "'Tell Us about Your Research': Writing and Talking about What You Do for Multiple Audiences," at the South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference. She also presented "Unique Narrators in Literature" for the Professor's Corner series.

ESFL's **Michael Cerliano**, **Esther Houghtaling**, **Sarah Ishii**, **Katie McWain**, **Stephen Souris**, and **Christopher Works** were featured by STAR.—Students for Teaching & Assignment Recognition. Every year, STAR "recognize[s] effective teaching and ... give[s] students a voice in the teaching and learning community at TWU. Students ... attend the STAR Symposium where they can watch their faculty model master poster presenting and will vote for 'Best Assignment' and 'Best Poster Presentation.'"

ESFL FYC adjunct instructor **Michael Cerliano** received the Adjunct Faculty Excellence Award for Excellence in Teaching. He also chaired a conference panel titled "Romantic Perspectives on the 18th Century" and presented a paper, "Mesmerism and Psychogeography

in De Quincey and Poe," at the South Central Society for Eighteenth Century Studies convention in Dallas. His presentation examined "the ways in which De Quincey and Poe adapted mesmeric language and ideas in their writings and used them as an intellectual framework for their explorations of the external and internal universes in their writings, and for their engagement with the rich occult heritage of the 18th century."

**Dr. Brian Fehler** presented "(Dis)locating and Provincializing Victorian Power: Travel, Immigration, Class-Caste and Gender Mobility, Refugee Identity, and Exile" at the annual meeting of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association; chaired the panel "Fortune's Favorites: Politics, Prophecy, and the Gothic" at the Society for the Study of Eighteenth-Century Studies; organized and chaired the panel "Performing Protest: Resistance Rhetorics and the Minoritarian Response" at CCCC; presented two works ("Tame a Tongue, Detain a Toddler: Rhetorics of Denigration and Migrant Policies at the US/Mexico Border" and "European Masters in Migration and Inter-cultural Relations") at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg. His chapter, "'Put it in the Papers': Rhetorical Ecologies, Labor Rhetorics, and the Newsboys' Strike of 1899," has been accepted for publication in *Not Light but Fire! Nineteenth-Century US Activist Rhetorics*, edited by Patricia Bizzell and Lisa Zimmerelli. Fehler also won a Graduate Research Associate Award for "Legitimizing the Past: Edna Gladney and the Rhetoricity of Birth Certificates," a collaborative project with MA student Shannon Simmons. Dr. Fehler also led efforts to establish a Memorandum of Understanding between TWU and Sanskrit College and University, Kolkata, India. The MOU was signed in 2018 with Dr. Paula Banerjee, vice-chancellor of Sanskrit.

**Dr. Stephen Souris** presented "Live Entering, Creative Understanding, and Aesthetic Consummation in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*: A Bakhtinian Reading" and served on a job-search panel at the SCMLA conference. For the Langdon Review Weekend in Granbury (an annual gathering of Texas poets), Souris organized a panel that featured two students from his Summer 2018 course on Texas Poets Laureate (Stephen Perkins and Trista Aten). His essay on Bo Carpelan's *Urwind* will comprise the first chapter of a collection of essays on the Finnish writer. Souris also gave a presentation at the Fall 2018 Teaching and Learning with Technology Symposium titled "What I'm Giving Up: How I've Maxed Out in Blackboard and Will Trim Down for Canvas."

**Dr. Genevieve West**, professor and ESFL chair, presented her research on Marita Bonner's treatment of storefront preachers at the Society for the Study of American Women Writers in November. Her essay "Sin and Salvation: Marita Bonner's Early Explorations of Christian Theology" is forthcoming in the *Journal of Religion and Literature*. She won a 2018 Creative Arts and Humanities Research Grant from TWU to support a research assistant for a forthcoming volume of Zora Neale Hurston's Harlem Renaissance short stories, which includes eight "lost" stories that have been restored to her corpus. Her work on Hurston continues with a forthcoming essay on Hurston's interrogations of Boasian anthropology and a volume of her essays, which is in the planning stages, as well as a second Creative Arts and Humanities Research Grant for 2019-20.

**Sara Zimmerman**, a dual-credit instructor in the department's FYC program, published her first book, *Cliff Jumpers*. Zimmerman (Master's of Education) has been teaching as an adjunct professor for TWU, teaching Dual Credit composition as well as Intro to Literature classes for three years.

## Tunnels, statues, and singing cowboys: Dr. Phyllis Bridges

If you want to know the history of TWU, spend a little time talking to Dr. Phyllis Bridges. She came to the university in the early 1970s, teaching American and British literature, devoting time to various administrative positions across campus, and studying all manner of folklore. In other words, she likes to tell stories. Her recent scholarship includes work on the Abernathy brothers, ages 6 and 10, who rode from Oklahoma to New York on horseback in 1910, and research into the long life of musician/producer Herb Jeffries, who said he was proudest of his films as the black singing cowboy in the 1930s.

As for TWU's history, Bridges remarked, "I can go all over campus and tell the stories." She can brag about students designing the pond and the chapel, and she knows where TWU's second-oldest structure (the greenhouse) was *first* located. As Bridges says, "I know where the tunnels are. I've walked through them."

Unfortunately for the explorers among us, TWU's tunnel system has long been closed off (we asked!). Here's another story that Bridges shared one hot July day at TWU.

**How did TWU get a replica of the famous Greek statue from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., the Nike of Samothrace?** The one you saw [at Old Main] came from the Louvre Museum in Paris. [TWU] had a small one, previously, that was given by the [class of 1929] but it was outdoors, subject to wind and storms and rain and ... vandals. It was looking kind of shabby. I was on vacation in Paris, when the [TWU president asked me to] check on getting us another Winged Victory from the Louvre. I said, "Well, I can go to the Louvre and ask."



*A collaborative group, which included TWU's Dr. Brian Fehler (ESFL), Dr. Barbara Lerner, Dr. Annie Phillips, General Mary Saunders, Dr. Claire Sahlin, Dr. Abigail Tilton, and Dr. Phyllis Bridges (ESFL), worked for two years to craft an agreement between TWU and Sanskrit University in India. The agreement will allow an exchange of students between the two universities as well as future collaborations. In 2019, Chancellor Carine Feyten (left) welcomed Sanskrit Vice Chancellor Dr. Paula Banerjee (center) to the campus. Dr. Bridges (right) remarks that the project's success demonstrates that "people in ESFL work across campus and across the world." (Photo courtesy of TWU)*

**You're talking about the early 1980s. What did you do?** I went over there, and I did not speak French and they did not speak English, but we found a nun who could speak Spanish and I could speak Spanish. ... She took me to talk to the artists [at the Louvre], and they agreed to make one for us and ship it. ... They had me sign for it. I didn't know if I was going to have come back and raise money to pay for it, but I signed for it.



**I won't ask you how much it cost! The story is, a TWU alumna donated the funds. And several months later, the Winged Victory came.**

**You seem to have a knack for making things happen, like planting a live oak tree in honor of Dr. Vivian Casper's 50 years at TWU recently. It's a very rare achievement. I don't expect we'll ever see it again. ... Some people give their lives to [TWU], and they should be recognized. This isn't the end of Dr. Casper's career. This is just the 50-year mark.**

**Speaking of many years at TWU, you've talked today about your students, the success of our programs in ESFL, which was one of the university's original departments, and the joy you get from teaching and sharing knowledge. What about retirement? Today, you're working. I'm working. I can retire any time I want to. When I suggested I might retire, I was told that would not be accepted. As long as I can teach and teach well, I'll hang around.**

*This excerpt, drawn from a longer conversation between Dr. Bridges and doctoral student Margaret Williams, has been edited for clarity and length.*

## On retirement and fearlessness: Dr. Russell Greer



**When did you begin teaching at TWU? How was the university different then? My first semester at TWU was fall 1996, and TWU was much smaller 22 years ago. I think we had about 7,000 students then and now we have more than double that number now. Parking was seldom a problem 22 years ago!**

**How have you seen ESFL change over the years you have taught here? I have seen many fine faculty members, administrators, and students come and go during my time at TWU. Probably the greatest changes include the increased use of adjunct professors now to teach our classes. We absolutely need them now to complete our mission, but they were used only occasionally in 1996.**

**What were some of your favorite classes to teach or administrative roles to take on? I think back fondly on several graduate seminars on Victorian novelists and some senior-level undergraduate courses on significant writers in 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century England. I remember feeling very challenged as the departmental undergraduate advisor for five years in a time when every student had to be advised every semester. For the year I worked as the director of our first-year writing program, I enjoyed working with many fine graduate students. But the two times I served as temporary ESFL department chair made me feel that I was being particularly useful to my colleagues, to the department, and to the college.**

**What were some of your proudest moments at TWU?** I have always felt very proud watching my students graduate and become successful. I have followed many of their careers with pride. I am especially proud of the eight graduate students who wrote their dissertations under my direction: Donna Souder, Kristen Garrison, Janet Johnson, Lei Zhang, Courtney Patrick Weber, Jonathan Evans, Elizabeth Hamm, and Jamie Jones. Their accomplishments, both at TWU and after, have been extremely gratifying to me.

**What advice would you give to incoming students on how to be successful here at TWU?** I would urge students not to be afraid to fail. So many times I see people held back by their own doubts and fears and lack of confidence.

**What advice would you give to incoming faculty on how to be successful here at TWU?** I would recommend finding mentors both in the department and outside it. And I would suggest that the new faculty remember, clearly define, and pursue a research agenda so that he or she does not become sidetracked by the many demands of a growing university.

**Any other reflections/advice/wisdom you would like to share?** I understand TWU's special mission even better today than I did in 1996 because I have seen the political battle scars of those who have given so much to make TWU survive and thrive. It takes dedication and sacrifice to give these women and men the education they deserve. It has been an honor to part of that process.

*This profile was compiled by doctoral candidate Justin Cook. It has been edited for length and clarity.*

On retirement,  
with no meetings:  
Dr. Lou Thompson



**When did you begin teaching at TWU? How was the university different then?** I started July 16, 1992. Dr. [Stephen] Souris and I were hired the same year, but I like to remind him I have six weeks seniority. The university is twice the size in student enrollment now, yet our department has remained roughly the same size.

**What were some of your favorite classes to teach or administrative roles to take on?** For many years, when I taught more undergraduate classes, my favorite class was [ENG] 2143, Fiction. I used a book that was truly global (especially for the time), so even I was discovering writers from places I didn't imagine had writers. I'm always happiest when I'm learning. Disability Rhetoric [may be] the most important class I teach. I've seen it change

people, change their perception of themselves and others. Visual Rhetoric was a natural for me, [as] a lover of visual arts and especially film. It's a natural precursor to our newer courses on digital media.

I don't like administrative work. That is no secret. The last thing I've ever wanted was to go to more meetings. I did take on the role of interim chair for one semester [and] the FYC job one year. That was better, but ... did I mention I hate meetings?

**What were some of your proudest moments at TWU?** My proudest moments, though, really have been when our students exhibit their humanity. The tent city and the protest that followed the policy of admitting men to all programs made me proud. They were my heroes that year. Back to my favorite class. ... There was a student who was extremely pregnant [in one course]. We didn't know if she would make it through the five weeks. At that time there were no requirements [for] an accessible chair, and there was no way she could fit in the desks, but she [sat in a regular chair] and always sat in the middle of the room. [Then] I discovered that every day ... if there wasn't a chair in the room, they searched the other classrooms until they found one. To me that's what is special about TWU students, their compassion and decency.

**What advice would you give to incoming students?** To be successful anywhere, be true to yourself, be open to new ideas, realize it's not all about you. Be courteous to your instructors and to staff, no matter how upset you may be. Read the syllabus, handbook, and/or catalog. Follow the rules, even if they seem silly or pointless. Ask questions. Ask for help when you need it. When you screw up (we all do), apologize. Embrace the possibility that you are here not just for a degree, but for learning! A degree can open the door for you, but it's your knowledge that allows you to enter the room and know what to do.

**What advice would you give to incoming faculty on how to be successful here at TWU?** I got a lot of advice. I made a lot of mistakes. It's natural to think one mistake will destroy your career, but in reality, that is rarely the case. Most of the time everyone wants you to do well. Learn the culture and traditions of the university and department; make your mark but be careful not to step on too many toes; set boundaries early and protect them with all your might. Go to the stupid meetings.

**Any other reflections, advice, or wisdom to share?** I'll always be grateful to TWU for hiring me and helping me come home. Every year I have grown more passionate about our mission. I have learned so much I can't believe how smart I've become! TWU doesn't just enable students to grow, you know.

*This profile was compiled by doctoral candidate Justin Cook. It has been edited for length and clarity.*

## Program and organization updates

### BA in English Program

The 2018-2019 academic year was busy for faculty, students, and alumni. Never satisfied with good, the Undergraduate Studies committee continued to revise and make improvements to the BA

curriculum. With the help of Drs. Katie McWain, Jackie Hoermann-Elliott, and Gray Scott, we have improved two of the upper-division writing courses for the major, Advanced Expository Writing and Professional Writing. Drs. McWain and Elliott also created a new Technical Writing course, which many students have requested over the years. These three courses will give all students, especially those on the Writing and Rhetoric track, opportunities to hone their skills in a variety of genres and media.

For five years running, Dr. Gretchen Busl and Dr. Ashley Bender have taken a group of students to the Collin College Undergraduate Student Research Conference (UISRC). This year's group included ten majors and two minors, including **Scarlett Brou, Hannah Diaz, Sarah Smith, Abigail Beard, Tatyana Bryant, Plamedie Ifasso, Ch'nell Amos, Shannon Simmons, A. J. Dvorak, Elizabeth Hancock, and Justin Nathan**. These students presented on four diverse topics representing the range of coursework they have had in their undergraduate training, including trauma literature, eighteenth-century female playwrights, re-envisioning the past, and literary representations of racial tensions. This group should be especially proud: out of more than 600 applications, only about 150 students were selected to present. English minor **Drew Vandeventer** was also selected to present at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research, making this the second year in a row an ESFL has been chosen for this prestigious conference.

ESFL continues its long connection with TWU's student newspaper, *The Lasso*, with a number of English majors serving in leadership roles and as staff writers. **Amber Gaudet** is editor-in-chief, **Plamedie Ifasso** is copy editor, **Alyssa Walker** is engagement editor, and **Gakenia Njenga** is a reporter.

### BA in English graduates:

Rachel Arnquist, Lupita Alvarez, Chelsea Burton, Jo Batson, Autumn Bush, Hannah Diaz, Janae Sayffer, Shannon Simmons, Calitia Williams, Emily Yowell, Madison Hurd, Kelsey Smith, Charice Williams, Ch'Nell Tocarra Amos, Nikki Autry, Sam Cross, Cara Davis, Naomi Flores, Meagan Milstead, Stephanie Vaughn, and Emily Williams

ESFL held its second annual Career Day in November. Thirty-four students from the BA and grad programs, as well as the Spanish program, participated in the event, which included our first Skype interviews. Students who attended the event said they gained valuable practice talking with employers.

Finally, we would like to congratulate our graduates for the 2018-2019 academic year: We are so proud of your accomplishments, and we are grateful to have had the pleasure of working and learning with you! —  
*contributed by Dr. Ashley Bender,  
Undergraduate Program Coordinator*



## The Digital Composition Lab (DCL)

The 2018-19 school year marked our second full year in the Digital Composition Lab (CFO 104), a space that continues to make a tremendous impact on life and learning in the Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages.

After two rounds of Higher Education Funds, the Digital Composition Lab is now stocked with nearly \$250,000 of furnishings, hardware, and software, all carefully chosen to support multimodal teaching, learning, and writing. One of the most useful items of technology in the room has turned out to be our Solstice pods, a technology for screen sharing and wireless presentations. We initially installed two. They made such a difference in our classrooms (particularly in peer review and other collaborative practices) that we spent part of this year seeking funding to install four more in Summer 2019, allowing for smaller and more efficient group work. Higher Education Funds received this year also enabled installation of a digital video camera and a wireless microphone system, which allows us to easily host virtual guests and capture high-quality audio and video of lectures and other events taking place in the room. Finally, we purchased an inventory-control system that will allow us to check out materials to work in the field or from home.

We have also found the room to be a wonderful place for community events. In November 2018, AAUW Denton (under the leadership of Drs. Gretchen Busl and Ashley Bender) hosted a workshop for Girls in the Game, a nonprofit geared towards helping young women develop confidence and leadership skills. Participants focused their minds and bodies through a yoga workshop, led by FYC's Dr. Jackie Hoermann-Elliott, then worked one-on-one with volunteers (including many of our faculty and graduate students) to brainstorm college application essays. We also host an ongoing craft circle (generally the third Friday of each month in the academic year), hosted by PhD student Kathleen Irwin and Dr. Dundee Lackey. (We hope you'll join us!) – *contributed by Dr. Dundee Lackey, Digital Composition Lab Manager*

## TWU's English Chapter of the Alumni Association

The chapter raised \$3,900 in donations in the fall. Members donated \$500 for the TWU children's holiday gift program and continue to fund scholarships for graduate and undergraduate students in ESFL. The chapter is grateful for the continuing support of TWU. *contributed by Dr. Phyllis Bridges, chapter advisor*



ESFL alumni raised almost \$4,000 this academic year. Pictured (L-R): First row: Dr. Helen McCourt, Dean Abigail Tilton, Sarah Sprinkle, Georgia Helton, Dr. Nimmy Nair, Mary Pullolil, Juanita Duenez Lazo; Second row: Dr. Phyllis Bridges, Dr. Pat Edwards, Dr. Don Edwards, Dr. Elizabeth Edwards, Diana Williams (photo courtesy of the English Chapter)

## ERGO-RSA

The English and Rhetoric Graduate Organization - Rhetoric Society of America serves students in ESFL's MA in English and PhD in Rhetoric programs at Texas Woman's University. Run by graduate students who are elected by their peers each academic year, ERGO-RSA provides opportunities for educational and professional development. It also helps build camaraderie among ESFL grad students, many of whom are commuters and work away from campus (some ESFL grad students live and work as far away as Midlands, Texas!).

This past academic year, ERGO-RSA held monthly Commuter Coffee events before evening classes, hosted a night of bowling, and organized Mock Conferences for TWU students. Many thanks to the board members who made these events possible and who welcomed new graduate students. 2018-2019 board members included **Liz "Coach" Cozby**, **Justin Cook**, **Jason Parker**, and **Kathleen Irwin**.

New board members for 2019-2020 are **Margaret Williams** (president), **Salena Parker** (vice president), **Jason Parker** (workshop coordinator), and **Kathleen Irwin** (treasurer).

So far this year, ERGO-RSA has expanded the Commuter Coffee & Tea events, received a \$250 grant from TWU for new T-shirts (designed by **Salena Parker**, PhD student), and co-sponsored a 20<sup>th</sup>-century rhetorics teleconference series with Dr. **Brian Fehler**.

— *Contributed by Margaret Williams, 2019-2020 president*

## First-Year Composition (FYC)

The FYC Leadership team has been hard at work this past year as the new administrative team came aboard and settled into their positions at TWU! Director Dr. Katie McWain and Assistant Director Dr. Jackie Hoermann-Elliott have enjoyed getting to know many amazing FYC students and instructors while also integrating into Denton and the life of the department. We'd like to thank Amanda Oswald, last year's graduate program assistant, and Jackie Kliman, the outgoing senior secretary, for making our transition such a smooth one, and our ESFL colleagues for their warm welcome.

Our goal for this year was primarily to learn: about our students, teachers, program, and curriculum; about how TWU works; and about what we can do to set writers up for success, in college and in their professional and personal lives. We formed several committees and task forces to help us in this endeavor, including an Assessment Fellows Program and Curriculum Revision Committee. As we prepare to revise our courses, the input of teachers and students has been invaluable. We appreciate everyone who participated in the FYC learning process this year, whether by taking or distributing a survey, attending a focus group, or even just sharing your thoughts in the hallway.

We also enjoyed partnering with the Write Site to offer Supplemental Instruction to FYC students, and with the Center for Faculty Excellence to offer pedagogical development to instructors. We were additionally able to offer several new honors for first-year writers, including the TWU Alumni Writing Awards and Emerging Writer Awards, and the winning submissions will be published in next year's *FYC Reader*. We'd like to thank everyone involved for their help with these initiatives.

Finally, we found some time to have fun! The FYC program hosted several community-building events, including FYCheer, Board Games and Blooms, and a spring happy hour, along with celebrating many life and academic milestones with our team members.

We look forward to another year of productive change, growth, and—as always—lots of writing! We appreciate all of our colleagues in ESFL for continuing to support our work with students. — *Contributed by Dr. Katie McWain, 2018-2019 FYC program administrator*

## Graduate Programs (MA / PhD)

Some years ago, when I was a graduate student, in the days before I professed, professionally, I began a paper with a classmate. The paper had a fanciful, before-the-colon quotation-title: “Tom Paine in Petticoats.”

Every once in a while, I pull out this never-finished, always-a-work-in-progress paper, the Sagrada Familia Cathedral of papers, as it were. The paper reminds me of a story, an old family one about my great-grandparents building a house (with their own hands!), of a new, tall house with grand porches, of drinking lemonade and swinging on the first-floor porch—and pretending to give orations to invisible audiences from the second-floor porch.

That collaborative paper, and that house, remind me of graduate school. Our labors, our time spent thrown together with each other and books and ideas, do build something:

relationships. We value those relationships as much as any second-story porch looking out over, and orating before, an imaginary crowd of thousands.

So, without further *adieu* (this is how Dr. Fehler tells a “short” story!), here are a few highlights of our labors—our achievements, forged of books, ideas, and relationships—over this past year:

ESFL welcomed new and talented graduate students into both the MA and PhD programs. Joining us for the master’s degree this past year were **Nicole Chinn, Rachel Gunter, Allyson Hibdon, Alexis Kopp, Kathleen Mueller, Emily Ramser, and Shannon Simmons**. New students joining us for the doctoral program were **Elizabeth Headrick, Natalie Julian, Meredith Martin, Salena Parker, Margaret Williams, and Giribala Joshi**, who completed her MA in the department last year. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you’ll find mention of students who completed their comprehensive exams and were welcomed into candidacy for their PhDs. You’ll also find a list of those graduate students who, having completed their MAs and PhDs, are moving on.

Best wishes to all these fine people, and to their friends, family, and relationships who helped make these achievements possible.

And now, a final word about “Tom Paine in Petticoats”: It comes from marginal notes made by Samuel Coleridge on a draft of the Joan of Arc epic he had begun writing, decades before he put down his marginalia, with Robert Southey. Southey and Coleridge had been the best of friends; they had hoped to bring their so-called Patisocracy to, of all places, rural Pennsylvania.

But, as Frost tells us, “way leads on to way.” Southey and Coleridge’s plan fizzled, the friendship foundered. Even all those years later, however, books and ideas, and plans and relationships, held the two men together, just as books and ideas and relationships hold us together, centuries later, at TWU.

Here’s to books read, ideas hatched, projects and porches built, and relationships formed. Best wishes to you all. — *Contributed by Dr. Brian Fehler, Graduate Program Advisor*

## Professor’s Corner

As part of a long-running literary-discussion group co-sponsored by through the Denton Public Library, TWU faculty from ESFL, Theatre, Honors, and Multicultural Women’s & Gender Studies gave presentations literary discussion group

called “Professor’s Corner” during the 2018-2019 season. Professor’s Corner provides high quality presentations on literary topics aimed at the general public. Sessions are held in the evening at the South Branch Library on the second Monday of each month during fall and spring.



The 2018-2019 season included these presentations: “The Accessibility of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*” (Dr. Liam Lanigan), “Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America*” (Dr. Carl Smeller), “The Spiritual and Psychological Wilderness of Mary Rowlandson’s Captivity Narrative” (Dr. Guy Litton), “Victim of the Afterlife in the Works of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps and Mark Twain” (Dr. Brian Fehler), “Unique Narrators in Literature” (Dr. Gretchen Busl), “The Early Poetry of Jorge Luis Borges” (Dr. William Benner), “Social Protest Poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries” (Dr. AnaLouise Keating,” and “Gender Bias and Colorism in Harlem Renaissance Stories by Marita Bonner and Rudolf Fisher” (Dr. Genevieve West).

Professor’s Corner began in 1999 as a way to offer high-quality, 90-minute presentations on literary topics aimed at the general public. Sessions are held not in a TWU lecture hall but at the local library. Attendees get to know TWU faculty and the work they do.

With Fred Kamman at the Denton South Branch Library as the coordinator and Dr. Stephen Souris as producer, Professor’s Corner gets great support from the staff at the South Branch Library and the Denton Public Library administration.  
 – *Contributed by Dr. Stephen Souris*



To view the Professor's Corner archive, go to: <https://bit.ly/2mLjVEC>.

## Spanish

The Spanish Program would like to acknowledge the excellent teaching of **Katie Mickel** as she finishes her first year as an instructor at TWU. **Angela Mooney** will defend her dissertation this fall 2019. Furthermore, as of spring 2019, the Spanish program has grown from 57 minors in fall 2017 to over 100! Overall, enrollment is up from 348 (2016-2017) to 361 this past academic year (2018-2019).

This fall the Spanish program will collaborate with the TWU-Dallas simulation center to conduct live medical interpreting simulations with Spanish 3173 students. This program will provide valuable opportunities for students to practice interpreting while working with a team of nursing students. Spanish students will have the choice to participate in person, over the phone, or via webcam. Additionally, the Spanish program will collaborate with the ESFL and the Career Connections Center to offer Spanish interviews to students in Intermediate and Advanced-level Spanish courses. Professionals from a variety of industries will visit the TWU-Denton campus to offer students a chance to interview for a job in Spanish. – *Contributed by Dr. William Benner, Spanish Minor Coordinator*

## Sigma Tau Delta

The 2018-2019 academic year was a time of change for TWU's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, as the English honor society welcomed some new faces and said goodbye to a longtime friend.

The organization held an induction ceremony welcoming new members in September. Sigma adviser Dr. Ashley Bender facilitated the event, which featured an informal Q & A session with ESFL's very own Dr. Jamie Barker.

Sigma's secretary, **Shannon Simmons**, was published in the first issue of *Gaillardia*, a new literary journal published by the Southwestern Region of Sigma Tau Delta. Incoming president **Amber Gaudet** was also selected for publication in the forthcoming 2019-2020 issue of the *Sigma Tau Delta Review*, the critical journal of Sigma Tau Delta. Congratulations, Shannon and Amber!

Sigma also said goodbye to longtime officer **Madyson Plummer**, who served as the organization's president for two years. Plummer has decided to focus on her studies as a graduate student in Sociology and her job as senior secretary in the Teacher Education department. Madyson was instrumental in Sigma regaining its university charter in spring and in the design of Sigma's new promotional material, including our first-ever banner.

Though we at Sigma will miss her, we wish her all the best in her future endeavors and thank her for her dedication to the organization.

As for the future, Sigma officers are excited to begin enhancing the organization's presence on campus through events like OrgFest. Sigma hopes to extend the many benefits of membership not only to students within the ESFL department, but English lovers across the Denton campus. — *Contributed by Amber Gaudet, Sigma Tau Delta president*

*To learn more about what Sigma has to offer, visit [English.org](http://English.org) or email the president at [agaudet@twu.edu](mailto:agaudet@twu.edu).*

## The Write Site

The Write Site, which is celebrating its second year in TWU's Blagg-Huey Library, held its third annual Summer Writing Camp in July 2019. This week-long camp was designed for middle and high school students to explore the writing

process in a nurturing and inclusive environment. English department faculty, staff, graduate assistants, and writing consultants led workshops and activities to encourage confidence within the young writers.

Doctoral candidate **Kathleen Irwin** was selected as program graduate assistant for the 2019-2020 year. — *Contributed by Dr. Jennifer Phillips-Denny, Tutor Coordinator*

## Closing words: Dr. Genevieve West, ESFL chair

A warm hello to all of our students, alumni, emeritus faculty and supporters! The 2018-19 academic year was another dynamic one for the Department of English, Speech, and Foreign Languages with good work and awards aplenty.

For the second time in four years, the department won the Graduate Student Council award for Outstanding Department in Support of Graduate Students. Two of our doctoral students, Amanda Oswald and Salena Parker, submitted individual nominations. Because we had won recently, I was not expecting to receive the award. Happily, I was surprised! You can see from the picture on the front page that it was a very exciting night for us, particularly since our doctoral student Mike Fraley also took home the award for Outstanding Doctoral Student! Mike was nominated by Dr. Katie McWain (see their photo in the first sections of this newsletter).

The awards reflect our commitment to doing more than supporting students in the classroom. The award for Mike Fraley and the opportunity Salena Parker had to work with the Bedford-St. Martin's advisory board reflects our determination to nominate students for a wide array of opportunities and awards, on campus and beyond. We are committed to creating a positive work environment, providing professional development for our first-year composition faculty, expanding teaching opportunities for doctoral students, presenting collaboratively with students, developing faculty and student panels for conferences, supporting students through individual and group mentoring activities (such as our Professional Development Committee's job search workshops), observing teaching demonstrations for students on the job market, and even supporting students after they have graduated. Once a Pioneer, always a Pioneer!

The year saw two faculty reach the important occasion of retirement. Both Dr. Greer and Dr. Thompson have moved into a phased retirement with both teaching part-time. Dr. Greer and Dr. Thompson have been pillars of the department. Both have served as department chair at various points, taught too many classes to count, and directed many theses and dissertations. Like so many faculty members in ESFL, they have straddled the boundaries between literary and rhetorical studies. Their generosity of spirit, *esprit de corps*, institutional knowledge, and disciplinary expertise will be missed. Dr. Thompson will teach her last graduate course in the spring of 2020 on Disability Rhetoric, as she ends her phased her retirement. Dr. Greer will continue with us into the 2020-21 academic year. While we miss seeing our colleagues on a daily basis, we celebrate with them as they move into this happy phase of life.

On a personal note, it was also the year that I walked my first 5k as a cancer fundraiser for CancerCare.org, a worthy organization that assists survivors with the many, many needs that are not covered by insurance. Liam Lanigan, our visiting Assistant Professor pictured with me above, and Lisa Grimaldo, our stellar Administrative Assistant who was behind the camera, walked, too. On a very cold day, we circled the TWU campus, inspired by those who ran ahead and warmed by good companionship as we moved more slowly. In many ways, the day is symbolic for me of the work we do at TWU. We were multiple generations braving the

biting winds to move forward in common purpose: to support others on their life-changing journeys. TWU is just that kind of place.

Thank you so much for your valuable time and support. I look forward to seeing you here next year!



*ESFL Chair Dr. Genevieve West (left) and Dr. Liam Lanigan represented the department at the annual March for a Cure, which supports cancer patients. \*(photo courtesy of L. Grimaldo)*