

IMAGINE



WCU HONORS COLLEGE MAGAZINE 2016

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY



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It has been my incredible privilege this year to serve The Honors College as its Dean. It was just about a year ago that I was introduced to *Imagine* magazine. In preparation for my interview, I was reading everything I could find on the web about WCU and its impressive Honors College, when I ran across the archived issues of *Imagine*. My first impression might well be described as gobsmacked when I discovered that the magazine was written by first-year Honors College students and designed by Honors College students as well! *Imagine* brought me into the WCU family by introducing me to its wonderful students and talented faculty. It seems nearly impossible that here, today, I am reviewing the proofs and designs of the student staff of this year's edition, as production on the 2016 issue comes to an end.

Imagine magazine plays an important role in our Honors College. It serves (as it did for me!) as a way to introduce newcomers to Western Carolina University and to our diverse and productive Honors College — while also serving as an important vehicle within our community for updates on student interests, achievements, and activities. With engaging photos and stories that were born from the students' vantage points, *Imagine* looks and feels authentic — because it is authentic. You will hear the students' voices in the writing and will understand their unique perspectives as you follow their stories. The students are advised and mentored by Assistant Professor Jeremy Jones (Department of English) and Rubae Schoen, Western's Director of Brand Experience (University Marketing), two people that I have been honored to get to know and work with this year.

Imagine magazine is just one of a myriad of ways in which The Honors College engages students in academic pursuits and provides opportunities for students to take their learning beyond the boundaries of the regular classroom. Meeting the criteria of the National Collegiate Honors Council for a "fully developed honors college," our Honors College is characterized by best practices and is centered on student engagement. I invite you, if *Imagine* is your first introduction to The Honors College at Western Carolina, to get to know us better through the news on our website (honors.wcu.edu) or a visit to our beautiful campus in Cullowhee. Or, if you are an alumnus or friend of The Honors College and *Imagine* is your portal into today's program, I encourage you to renew your relationship and be in touch. We would love to have a chance to share news with you about some of our exciting, gobsmacking programming including our new Summer Undergraduate Research Program, study abroad opportunities, Honors Board activities, our Spring Break Trip to New York City, student scholarship initiatives, and so much more.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Jill Nelson Granger
Dean, The Honors College

April 11, 2016

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FINDING THE BALANCE

By Rebecca Chisholm



She steadily transfers her weight with ease, her stance balanced as she settles into each movement. Hairspray and costumes and anxiety surround her on the black-framed stage. Nothing has yet managed to recreate the almost indescribable feeling that day in Daytona, Florida when Rachel Shinskie had only one desire: to dance.

Rachel's whole life is about balance. In addition to being an electrical engineering major, she balances her commitments as president of the Women in Engineering club and as a second year veteran on Western's dance team. Attending meetings, labs and practices creates one strenuous schedule, yet Rachel doesn't fail to apply herself to every task.

Rachel sits in the Belk building awaiting the next Women in Engineering club meeting. As president, she's thinking about potential next steps for the program. The club currently focuses on developing competitive females in the field of engineering, as well as incorporating more community outreach programs. "Most young girls aren't striving to become engineers, scientists or mathematicians," Rachel says. "They don't realize that it's a realistic goal. I want them to know that they can do it." When Rachel is not promoting science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) career choices to K-12 students or stressing the importance of women's leadership, she spends her time in the dance studio.

Usually with pom-poms in hand, her balancing act continues as the Western Carolina University dance team performs at all home football and basketball games. In addition, the team also spends around 10 hours a week practicing. In the spring, they have the privilege of traveling to the SoCon tournament with the men's and women's basketball teams. However, in order to participate in these events, the team must fundraise and find sponsors that will help support them during their season. From car washes to dance clinics, Rachel knows that the team earns every dollar.



"Most young girls aren't striving to become engineers, scientists or mathematicians. I want them to know that they can do it."

She balances on one foot in the test position as a physical therapy student records Rachel's progress. After completing a 9-week core workout program, uniquely designed by the Western Carolina physical therapy department, she hopes to have improved. Rachel and her fellow dance team members volunteered their time to participate in this research study conducted by the physical therapy department, testing core strength and how it affects a dancer's balance.

Throughout the year, Rachel and other members of the team participate in various community outreach events. For example, the team volunteers for the Cullowhee Valley School Fall Festival, where they get a chance to interact with the children in the area, as well as help out at the Valley of the Lilies Half Marathon in the spring.

Rachel also dedicates her time to one of the most daunting, but rewarding tasks as a member of the Dance Team: preparing for their national dance competition. The National Dance Alliance holds its annual dance competition in Daytona,

Florida, which Western's dance team has been attending for the past four years. "Competing at nationals is like nothing I've ever experienced before," Rachel says. "We spend six months preparing for this one-time chance to compete against tons of other universities." The dance team members perfect their choreography until the date of the competition, when they will show the judges what they have to offer.

Once Rachel gets backstage, she feels the perfect amount of pressure. She is nervous because she knows they have one chance to prove they deserve a spot in the finals. But she is also calm because regardless of the results, she knows her team will do their best. "Yes, it is about the competition and earning a rank," Rachel says, "but to me, it is more about the hard work." The flashing of the lights, the ringing of boisterous music and the roar of the audience are all she can remember from that moment. Still, as she balances her responsibilities back on campus, this performance gives her chills every time the memory resurfaces.



Student-Run

By Madison Freeman

As the sun rises over the Great Smoky Mountains, the racers line up and prepare to begin. The sound of a gunshot resonates through the fog surrounding them as their feet begin to pound the pavement. It looks like your typical 5K road race, but it is so much more.

Tucked away in Catamount Gap, Mountain Heritage Day is celebrated. Thousands of people come together on this day to celebrate the unique traditions and cultures of those who live around the Western Carolina University campus. It is a day filled with squash and corn, tribal dances, folk music and Native American crafts such as dreamcatchers and other hand-carved items.

The catch? This race is completely organized by students. The Mountain Heritage Day 5K Road Race features

“It looks like your typical 5K road race, but it is so much more.”



nearly eighty adults and is followed by a children’s “fun run.” This race features runners of every skill level, from experienced marathon runners to those who have never run long distance before. Now in its seventh year, the race raises money for the Sports Management Association scholarship.

With the guidance of their professor, Dr. Charlie Parrish, students enrolled in the course Sport Event Management and Sponsorship are in charge of everything involved in planning the race, from budgeting and advertising, to risk

management and overall logistics. The intense planning is accomplished by forming close relationships with people on campus and in the community. Because of this involvement in the community, the class is designated a service learning course. While there is a lot of work involved, the students are appreciative of the real-world experiences gained in the process of planning the event.

Next year, the student-run 5K Road Race will take place on September 24 and will take runners on a lap in and around Western Carolina University’s campus.

COVERING A TRAGEDY

By Justin Earp



Dusk had fallen upon Charleston, S.C. on June 17, 2015. As Wednesday evening wound down, an egregious act of hatred shook the nation. Gunshots reverberated through the hundred-year-old walls of Emanuel AME Church as nine were left dead. The nation stood still. The media frenzied. Connor Kick was there.

“Hello?” Connor Kick answered his phone. On the other end was the manager of WCBD news station, where Connor served as an intern: “Nine people have been shot at Emanuel AME, seven of them are already dead and two are in critical condition, we want you to come in and help.”

Years prior, during his senior year of high school, Connor wouldn’t have imagined himself reporting in the midst of a tragedy. He was on the fast track to a career in music education due to his love for and involvement in band. His college application process was in full force when he tried out for and received a position doing morning announcements at his high school. “I was on camera in front of the whole school,” Connor recalls. “And that’s when I first got the itch to do broadcasting. I was like, ‘I don’t think music is going to be my thing.’” However, Connor managed

to join his two interests at Western. As a communication major and a member of the Pride of the Mountains marching band, Connor served as the band’s chief of publicity and the host of the behind-the-scenes web series “Inside the Pride.”

Three years of college confirmed to Connor that his life was headed in the right direction, but there was still another step he needed to take. During the summer of 2015, Connor embarked on a life-changing journey as a broadcasting intern in Charleston, S.C. An internship at an NBC news station is clearly a wonderful career development for an aspiring broadcaster, but not even Connor himself could have predicted how much his internship at WCBD News 2 would change his life and shape his future. The day-to-day duties began mundanely enough with assignments to spend the day with a certain reporter covering one or several stories. Every now and then, however, events occur that throw routine and regulation out the window.

Connor’s heart raced as he began to come to terms with the situation he was in. His boss continued, “Connor, do you want to help with the biggest story you’ll probably cover in the next twenty years?” A shocking surprise, no doubt, but his willingness

never wavered: “Of course I had to say yes.”

The ensuing hours were a rush of emotions. During a span of time where he stayed awake for 46 hours straight, Connor was bombarded with a crash course in gun safety training, grieving families, and – worst of all – the deaths of the two remaining victims. In a moment both solemn and chaotic, the devastating news was broken to the victims’ families with Connor and the WCBD News team watching anxiously. “That was my first huge exposure to death,” Connor says. “It hit me like a freight train.” For the first time, Connor was feeling the sights and sounds of true American news media. The bittersweet taste left him in an unusual position where he gained knowledge, experience and insight from a tragedy wracked in hatred, violence and death. “It was definitely an eye-opener on what could be the rest of my life.”

In ten years, Connor hopes to work for a top-50 TV market. “I would not be where I am now without my internship,” Connor says as a smile swipes across his face. Behind his warm smile is an inferno of determination that is fueled by the unlikely inspiration he found in a world of tragedy.

“I WOULD NOT BE WHERE I AM NOW WITHOUT MY INTERNSHIP.”

CAN YOU DIG IT?

BY MICHELLE CORN

Lauren Stogner, a sophomore with a quirky personality and warm smile, majors in forensic anthropology at WCU. As part of her studies, she completed an internship at her hometown's coroner's office and is also currently working on an extensive research project. We discussed the Forensic Anthropology program, and what makes it different. WCU is one of very few schools in the country to offer forensic anthropology as a major and is also home to the first new-generation decomposition research facility, which opened in 2006. Students at WCU have state-of-the-art resources, which enable them to do amazing things.



Q: What are some misconceptions that you had about forensic anthropology when you came in?

A: Probably about how easy it is to do a biological profile. I did my first last year and it was anything but easy. On TV, and even the shows based on real cases, it feels like they took a look at a bone one time and they know what it is. That is not the case at all. I had no idea how much a bone varies person to person.

Q: What made you choose Western?

A: They had the decomposition facility and one of the only undergraduate programs for Forensic Anthropology, so when I heard WCU had it I was like "heck yeah."

Q: What are some unique experiences you've had while at Western?

A: At the end of last year I did my first recovery – I only found one phalange but it was really interesting. Doing research in the lab there's no telling what's going to happen. I watched a bone split open because it had dried too fast.

Q: What is something you've done at WCU you couldn't other places?

A: Two other schools I looked at didn't have the decomposition facilities and they didn't have as many hands-on experiences – they were bigger schools so I would've had to wait until my junior or senior year to do things like actually handle skeletons, not just the professionally cleaned and bleached ones or fake ones, I mean. We have donor skeletons. We can actually look at variation.

Q: What did you do during your internship?

A: I did all the things that the guy who worked there didn't want to do: emptied specimens from the OR, disposed of biohazard, got rid of amputations and put them in biohazard, cleaned out the fridge and helped with external autopsies – which was my favorite part of it – and I went on a crime scene.

Q: Tell me about your undergraduate research.

A: It is on what happens when you freeze bones and the implications that has. We have a lot of research on what

happens when you burn them but not a lot on what happens when they're frozen. I have a hypothesis that they crack, and in a certain way. If I can demonstrate that, you could tell in a forensic case if a bone was frozen based on cracking. It's a four-year research project.

Q: What are different types of careers you can have with a degree in forensic anthropology?

A: You can teach, join different organizations, identify victims of genocide, put names on civil war vets that still haven't been identified and excavate mass grave sites. You can work the criminal aspect of homicide cases. You can also work in a morgue.

Q: What is some advice that you would give other forensic anthropology majors?

A: You need to be in the lab a lot. Three weeks before a test, I am in there every single day especially for osteology – it's hard and there's a lot to memorize. Also, talk to the professors and get to know them. They will help you, and they will do anything to help you.



Teaching Togetherness

By Bailey Cave

Close your eyes. You're back in a kindergarten classroom, surrounded by other students, but you, you are different. All the students around you — the line leader in the front, the guy with the highest reading level in the back — they all get to stay in this class, but you're pulled out. Watch everyone's eyes drift toward you as you rise to leave; you clearly hear the whispers. You hate this part of every day. Now open your eyes.

Today, education interns like Emily Flemming are working to change this stigma that follows special education students. Her kindergarten classroom at Cullowhee Valley School accepts all students. The children help one another and don't miss a beat when Liam, who is autistic, or Ryan, who has Down syndrome, act out. Right now, one of the students is trying to assist Emily in getting their attention to pose for a picture.

The children all know that Liam and Ryan have disabilities; however, they don't get upset when the two boys have different assignments. "You know how you can grip your pencil really tight?" Emily explains to a little girl asking why she doesn't get to paint. "Ryan can't always grip it as well as he can the bigger paintbrush."

Western Carolina's College of Education and Allied Professions has created a new program where undergraduate students learn to teach in a classroom where the needs of all students can be met with a team of general and special education teachers. The Inclusive Education Program was created at Western in January of 2013 and this year's cohort of students is the largest yet. With this new major that encompasses both elementary and special education curriculum, the graduates will leave Western with a degree that allows them to license in K-6 general and K-12 special education.

Emily was originally in the Special Education program before the switch to Inclusive Education and, at first, was confused as to what it was and why she was changed without knowing. Now she says, "I love the program. It is everything I could've hoped for in a major." Students in the program start interning during their sophomore year and get more hands-on teaching experience than in a traditional program. "I just feel so prepared," Emily says about the prospect of moving in her own classroom after graduation. "I've gotten so used to lesson planning and teaching that I feel ready."

The different teaching styles taught within this program are not implemented widely. Therefore, it is up to the students within the program to spread the knowledge that they have gained and begin to pass along this cutting-edge teaching style to everyone else. "We are the front runners trying to change education for the benefit of all students," Emily says, "And we are ready, thanks to the program."

"We are the front runners trying to change education for the benefit of all students."



Journey to Peru

By Lindsay Burleson

"Clothing protector? Check. Goggles? Check. Gloves? Check. Sara was prepped and ready for the surgery to begin."

Walking into the room, she couldn't peel her eyes from the woman lying on the operating table. The doctor began to open up the woman's abdomen to begin the caesarean section. Blood spread across the floor from the gauze used to dab the excess. Soon, the mess was worth it when Sara saw that beautiful face of the newborn. After the surgery, the doctor left the baby alone on the table. Sara noticed the baby's blue pigment and quickly picked it up. In that moment she knew what field she wanted to work in as a physician's assistant: obstetrics.

This delivery was one of the highlights that Sara Clark experienced during her trip to Trujillo, Peru this past summer. Sara decided this trip would be an amazing way to earn her clinical hours after hearing from one of her friends about a visit to Peru.

Every day was a unique, yet fascinating journey. Her day would begin at 6 o'clock so she could make it to the hospital by 8 to begin treating patients. Her tasks included giving simple vaccinations, teaching children how to wash their hands properly, sharing the importance of wearing shoes in the community and observing gall

bladder surgeries (and actually holding the organ), C-sections and even the removal of a uterus. From working in clinics, hospitals and in the community, Sara realized how much she was helping her patients.

The main concern in the community where Sara worked was the contraction of parasites. In order to prevent that, she became a part of the "parasite project." She worked with mothers in the community to help lower the risk of their families contracting parasites. She helped to test children for parasites and to teach mothers how to purify water.

Sara, who is a chemistry and Spanish tutor at the Writing and Learning Commons at WCU, took this trip to help her prepare for her future as a physician's assistant. As being able to speak Spanish is a huge bonus in the medical field, she was drawn to Peru, where she could practice Spanish every day.

More than gaining language skills, Sara's time working with the locals helped her realize her desire to help people. Taking a holistic approach and asking what is going on in the patient's life gave her a different perspective for treatment. Now, as she approaches graduation in May 2016, she knows her Peruvian clinical journey has prepared her for her future as a physician's assistant.



YOU ME & U.P.

BY CHEYANNE HELMS

It's Wednesday evening. Purple, orange and pink illuminate the sky as the campus settles down for the night. But upstairs in the Campus Recreation Center, people are gearing up for another Recreational Therapy Night.

Rec Therapy Night is only one small aspect of the University Participant program. Since the program's birth in 2007, the UP has gifted 20 students with disabilities the opportunity to attend college. The UP program aims to make everyone aware that these students are just like every other student at WCU: they go to class, live in dorms, play sports, go Greek, study abroad, and attend graduation. And they play basketball.

At first, when I stand with Gretchen, a Rec Therapy Night coordinator, on a Wednesday night and overlook the gym, I only see a normal game of basketball. Soon, I realize that to the UP students, this basketball game is a victory. They are finally included in their community and accepted as normal people.

"I don't want to say they're inspirational because they are just normal people," Gretchen says, "but it's great to have this perspective of 'I love to be here.'" At Rec Therapy Night, UP students and rec therapy majors join together for an hour of fun and stress relief. Volunteers introduce themselves through icebreakers and games such as kickball, ultimate frisbee and whiffle ball, laying the foundation for new and unique friendships.

But the night isn't solely field experience for rec therapy majors; it's life experience for the UP students as well. Students take the skills they learn and use them to do the things everyone says they can't do: get a job, live on their own, and have a normal life. "I wasn't nervous when I came here," says Ali, a UP student. "I was ready to get out of my parent's house — for me to live independently — because I want that time to live my life."

Rec therapy and UP prove that people with disabilities are capable of living on their own — as long as someone gives them the chance. The UP program aims to give everybody the chance to go to college and explore university life. As Gretchen says, "inclusion is not just people with disabilities — it's people who look different, like different things, act different. It's everybody."

"I don't want to say they're inspirational because they are just normal people, but it's great to have this perspective of 'I love to be here.'"



BEHIND THE PRIDE

By Kalynn Cunha and Daniel Grither

"Hey, Band, what time is it?" "SHOWTIME! HUT!"

The hundreds of thundering feet move in unison onto the field of Lucas Oil Stadium. It is finally here. Bands of America Grand Nationals—or the last day of the 2015 marching season. This performance will be the last time this show will ever be performed. For some members, this will be the last time they ever march in a show on a football field ever again. All of the blood, sweat and tears that have accumulated over the season have led to this one moment. For the audience, it will be a spectacular collegiate marching band show that has never been seen before. But for the members, it is a bittersweet ending to a season that will never be forgotten.

"Marching band is unlike any other activity because it involves everything," says the cymbal line section leader Seaton Carter. "It's physical, it's mental, it's artistic; it's just hard to find too many sports that include all three of those things in one exciting, ten minute activity." Each individual marcher has to execute each set, each note and each visual perfectly every single run. It's the ultimate test of musical multitasking.

But it takes time for each individual marcher to achieve this level of

excellence. A lot of time. Over 450 people sacrificing seven required hours of practice a week, aside from practicing on their own. Giving up class time, summer and fall breaks to work with the band day in and day out. It's impossible to place a number on the dedication the members devote to the activity.

Members of the band spend much of their time together during the fall semester. Beka Harmon, a freshman trumpet player, is a member of the brass ensemble within the show. "I practiced like every day that week, even before rehearsal, which kills your lip," she says.

This intense practicing is no doubt taxing, but with it comes the growing sense of family within the band. Each member is a part of a section, and all freshmen are assigned mentors who they can go to if they are ever in need of something. "I enjoy being a part of something bigger than I am," Beka says. This support of a family setting pushes the members of the band to pursue their best.

The show concept for the band's 2015 season is "That's What's Up." It focuses on the band's potential to soar high in

excellence and be the best in whatever they do, capturing the determined spirit and driving passion of the organization.

For some, the band represents a core piece of Western Carolina. To others, it's just a group full of college students blasting music on Saturday nights. But to the band members, Pride of the Mountains holds a much higher meaning. It represents the undeniable passion for performing, the relentless determination to achieve excellence and, most of all, having a lifelong family. The students marching under those bright lights during halftime aren't just playing a bunch of notes from a sheet of music. They're playing with their hearts and minds crescendoing with every single run.

The roar of 450 students echoes through the tunnel of Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis. Everyone looks around with nervous anticipation. Jokes and wishes of good luck fill the large tunnel that the members have lined up in. Then, the countdown begins. The color guard sprints, setting up their flags and rifles; other members briskly make their way to their opening spots after warm-up. Only seconds now.

The music begins. "Hey Band, what time is it?" "SHOWTIME! HUT!"

TEACHING THE WORLD

By Abigail Powell, Kalynn Cunha and Makayla Profit



As one might imagine, a typical school day in the United States varies greatly from an average school day in other parts of the world. In order to allow some of Western Carolina University's prospective teachers to experience education in a brand new way, Dr. Russell Binkley traveled to Kenya with a group of seven young women who were eager to learn about the differences between education systems.

The students were first exposed to a private school located near Nairobi, Kenya. In this school, the class sizes were small and not entirely different from schools here in the US, so the students accompanying Dr. Binkley didn't experience much of a culture shock when they worked with the kids there.

However, the real shock came when the seven students were taken to a public school just outside of Nairobi. The school stood just across the street from the massive city dump that many

people scour to find their next meal or an item to sell. Inside the school, a large number of very poor students spend nearly ten hours a day packed into small classrooms trying their best to learn despite the lack of educational tools and the fact that most of these children will not see a morsel of food or a speck of water the entire time. Alice Bovender, one of the WCU students who participated in the trip, said that "education is key." The opportunity to learn will, despite all of the hardship and struggling, keep the students and community members optimistic.

The experience opened the eyes and touched the hearts of those who participated. It was sobering. One of the aspects that stood out to the future teachers about the children in Kenya was how they handled all of the hardships that they were dealt. "Everyone has a bad day," Alice Bovender said. "It's how they handle it that shows who they really are."

Another WCU student, Victoria Blount, said that, despite having to struggle with things that most people couldn't imagine dealing with on a daily basis, the children "were so happy and resilient and hopeful."

These education majors know that the experience in Kenya has helped push them into the next stages of their careers, providing them with a wider representation of the world and what it has to offer. "I honestly think that international travel is something that everyone should add into their curriculum," Victoria Blount said. "You learn so much more from actually doing things out in the field than you ever could in a classroom."

LEFT: Alice Bovender with a group of students at Ngong Township Primary school.

TOP RIGHT: Hannah Whitehead, Victoria Blount, Amy Bennett, and Alice Bovender

BOTTOM LEFT: Victoria Blount enjoying time with a group of local children.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Victoria Blount and Taylor Hunter pose for a photo with students.

AROUND THE WORLD IN ONE SEMESTER

By Kristin Morris and Rashanelle Sumerall



SVEA MARIA

As a Psychology major from Stuttgart in Southern Germany, 22-year-old Svea Maria brings with her a love of horses, hiking, and the Kardashians.

Why did you choose to come to America?

It seemed valuable to me; I've never been abroad for a long period of time.

Why Western?

I wanted to go to a place where I could do outdoor sports and see some of the landscape. I also hoped that people in the South at a smaller university would be nicer. So far, people are very nice and friendly.

Before coming here, what did you think America would be like?

As far as landscape, it's what I expected. But I was surprised by the relationship between students and professors. In Germany you see more of an authority distance, whereas here students and professors are more equal.

What are your initial impressions, both in and outside of the classroom?

If I were to stay longer, I would definitely get a car so I can be more free. It's difficult to get around without a vehicle.

Was it difficult for you to leave home?

Yes, it was a challenge emotionally to leave friends, family and pets like my horse. But now that I am here, I don't feel the impact anymore.

How are you hoping to grow as a person during your time at Western?

I'm hoping to get a new perspective on my life and to take the perspective back to Germany. It's important to spend time in another country to help you gain new perspectives and step outside your comfort zone.



ALEXEY RYBAKOV

21-year-old Alexey Rybakov was born in Siberia but moved to Moscow as a child. He spent two years studying in France before coming to WCU to study public relations.

What was life like back at home?

More people, more noise, and everyone was always in a hurry.

How does Western compare to your previous university?

There are more things to do here. It's not boring compared to my previous university, which was just a small building where you study, then you go home and have nothing to do. Here you can go to the gym, go swimming, or go anywhere.

How do you hope to grow during your time here?

Improve my language skills and learn new things about [American] culture.

What do you think of American food?

McDonalds here is better than France. The burgers are also grosser than other countries – except McDonald's, I like their burgers.

List three words describing America.

Interesting, delightful and wonderful.

What's the biggest difference between your home country and the U.S.?

People are more friendly in America. Everyone says "hello," and says "sorry." If you bump into a person and say "sorry" in Russia they'll look at you like you are insane.



FELI ZHANG

With a passion for studying abroad, a craving for new experiences and a strong sense of self, 21-year-old Feli Zhang from Chongqing, China is in her third year at WCU.

What is your specific area of study here at WCU?

It's English, but here I'm also taking history classes.

How much does America differ from China?

First, people speak a different language, so it makes it harder for me to get around sometimes. Second, people have different ways of thinking and different habits. Like a different culture, basically. Third, the whole education system is very very different from what I have in China. There, we have the same classmates all the time. Here, I have different ones.

Do you like the university? The campus?

I like this place in general because it's so beautiful. The trees and mountains are just fantastic for me.

Was it hard to leave your home and come here?

Not really. I miss my family and friends, but I enjoy being here. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity so I should really cherish it.

Have you had any experiences that were a culture shock to you since you've been here? What were they?

Yeah. People here are very casual in class. [In China] you wouldn't see a student chewing gum or eating breakfast in class. And you wouldn't see them slouching.

Let's Dance

By Nicole Taylor and Haylee Wilkie

You walk through the doors into a large dance room. Mirrors line the walls from floor to ceiling and hardwood floors cover every square inch. A group of people stand talking and laughing, but one girl drifts out of the group. She presses a few buttons on the stereo, and classical music begins to play. Within seconds everyone spreads out, grabs a partner and begins to dance. Some move slowly while others speed around the room in an elegant manner. You concentrate on watching their steps and then try yourself. As you begin, someone grabs your hand and pulls you to the middle of the room. Awkward movements turn into smooth transitions, and you spin around the room with ease.

This is the ballroom dance club: A club sport created and run by students at Western Carolina University. Jessica Flowers, president of the club, held the club together when she was only a new member. Along with Josh Rickard, the club's vice president, Jessica took full responsibility in maintaining the club and helping it flourish by recruiting new members and working with professional dancers. Members describe the leaders of the ballroom dance club as quirky and amazing. Jessica and Josh go to great lengths to create an environment where everyone can feel welcome.

Each year the ballroom dance club travels to show off their moves and compete with other universities. "Last year was the first time we competed. It was a big deal for us," Jessica recalls. In preparation for the competition, she created

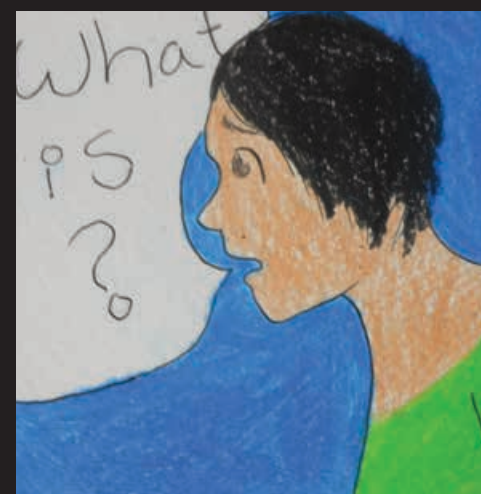
connections at UNC-Charlotte in order to practice in a new environment. Having started from interest but lacking in dancing knowledge, the group was delighted to work with a professional instructor in Charlotte. After learning proper moves and etiquette, the club was ready to compete. "We were all really nervous," Jessica says smiling, "but when we realized the objective was to have fun, we relaxed and learned a lot." The Ballroom Dance club is currently planning a trip with competitions at both UNC-Charlotte and NC State University.

When you leave the club you feel invigorated, reminiscing on what it was like to feel the rush of warmth from the bright laughter and the sense of accomplishment for nailing the first moves you were taught. You know one thing is for certain: you will be looking forward to the next meeting.





No Moe Waiting



The F-Word



The Space Race



SPONGE FRACTAL

By Makayla Profitt

Dr. Sloan Despeaux and her freshman seminar class, Fractals: Geometry of Nature, took on a massive project in fall 2015: to build a Menger sponge fractal entirely from business cards. A Menger sponge fractal is a 3-D model that, in theory, has zero volume, infinite surface area and infinite amounts of infinitely small cubes that have been hollowed out. Intriguing and confusing as it is, it wasn't started out of sheer boredom; it was part of a global project to build the world's largest Menger sponge fractal. That project was started by Matt Parker, comedian/mathematician from London, and Laura Taalman, professor of mathematics at James Madison University in Virginia.

The global goal of a 20-foot-tall level 4 fractal has been met, but that hasn't stopped Dr. Despeaux's students. They have made their own challenge. Their current goal? A 6-foot-tall, level 3 fractal made from 48,000 business cards, or 8,000 cubes. They have been storing the fractals in the bottom floor of the Hunter Library under the stairs during the building process, where the fractals will stay until the students finish construction. When they finally finish, they plan to burn the entire fractal with the help of Chancellor Belcher.



3D0634



DETERMINATION, DISCIPLINE, COMPASSION

By Melanie Vick

Tattoos covering his thick, muscular arms and legs, Elijah Ingraham walks with shoulders squared into the classroom. He speaks, his voice echoing throughout the room, and despite his intimidating stature, he wears a broad, genuine smile. Before him sits a group of disabled students awaiting their self-defense class. He is their teacher. As a veteran of both the Army and the Navy, Elijah seems to have done it all. So what motivates a man to serve in two branches of the military and then come to WCU to pursue a degree in philosophy and teach self-defense to disabled students? For Elijah, the road between philosophy and service is a twisted one.

It begins with a long list of martial arts: Judo, Muay Thai and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, among others. Learning these skills helped Elijah when he joined the Navy in 2000. Two years later, he joined the Army as a paratrooper. Typically, the Army and Navy have an

unspoken rivalry between members. This didn't stop Elijah from joining both. He leapt out of planes and enjoyed his job – the only problem was his knee. He was forced to leave on medical discharge due to (as cruel fate would have it) an injury that was exacerbated by the very martial arts that were his passion.

After his years of military service, Elijah found that he wanted to further himself through education. Thus, this complicated road led him to WCU. He came in search of the opportunity to earn his bachelor's degree in religion. He enjoys studying religion and philosophy and likes to think deeper. Ultimately, his goal is to complete his degree within the next year.

One common factor in this complex road trip that is his life is his love of helping people. After coming to WCU, he took a class with Dr. John Whitmire, head of the philosophy and religion department. This course was driven by two questions: what is wrong with the

world and how do we fix it? "He didn't take the pre-approved route," Dr. Whitmire said about Elijah's service learning project. Instead of choosing a task that was already created by the professor, Elijah devised his own elaborate plan: create a course with the University Participant program designed to help mentally and physically disabled students to protect themselves through martial arts. "There's a sort of duty and obligation to pass on to people the ability to feel safe and confident," Elijah says about his course.

The twisted road of life can be a complex one. Sometimes there are obstacles in our way: fallen trees, frayed power lines, car crashes. But regardless of what Elijah has come across, he keeps driving. He drives through life with care and discretion and a plan. Where the road leads him after he graduates is a mystery best left to the navigator.



HONORS COLLEGE ALUMNI UPDATES

AARON BENTON | *by Kalynn Cunha*

Aaron Benton graduated in May 2015 with a B.F.A. in film & television production, including a concentration in screenwriting and production design. He is currently pursuing a second B.F.A. at the Art Institute of Raleigh-Durham, with possible intentions of gaining a master's in screenwriting. In his free time, he enjoys doing "anything creative or that feeds [his] creativity." Aside from drawing, designing and writing, Aaron likes to watch musicals and has been very interested in *Hamilton*, a relatively new play that came off Broadway in February, 2015.

If you could be any animal, what would you be? "Probably a dog. Life would be so easy. I'd also want to still be able to hang out and live with all my loved ones, and between a dog and a cat I would always choose a dog."

BAYLEIGH JANUSIK | *by Rebecca Chisholm*

Bayleigh Janusik graduated in May 2015 with a B.F.A. in motion picture and television production. She is now furthering her education as an online graduate student at Kent State University, pursuing an M.S. in library information science with a concentration in museum studies. Bayleigh is currently a member of the AmeriCorps VISTA service program at the Housing Assistance Corporation in Hendersonville, North Carolina. When she is not specifically working with the Home Repair and Fall Prevention programs, she is creating a documentary for the corporation or making PSAs for the website. From her trips to Guatemala, Cambodia and even within Jackson and Henderson counties, she views helping those in need as her most important accomplishment.

If you could be any animal, what would you be? "A red panda. Those things are just the cutest."

ELIZABETH LITTLEFIELD | *by Melanie Vick*

Elizabeth Littlefield graduated summa cum laude in May 2015 with a bachelor's degree in social work. In April 2015, she was accepted into WCU's Advanced Standing Master of Social Work program and will be completing her degree in about a year. She looks forward to earning her Licensed Clinical Social Worker certification to become a child therapist. Her hobbies include cooking, exploring national parks, watching Netflix and jamming out to her favorite songs. Her favorite thing about WCU is its caring faculty.

If you could be any animal, what would it be? "I would be an elephant because I aspire to be wise and deliberate with my actions."

JAMES HENDLEY | *by Daniel Grither*

James Hendley graduated from WCU in May 2015 with a B.F.A. in musical theater, and a minor in dance. He currently lives in Abingdon, Virginia, where he is a Barter Player at the Abingdon Barter Theater, Virginia's state theater. James loves his job because it gives him the chance to use his love for acting to give back to people in need. In his free time, he enjoys reading and hiking on the Appalachian Trail. James misses hanging out with his friends on the grass by the Catafount during the springtime. "If you ask more of yourself," he advises WCU students, "you will always find more."

If you could be any animal, what would you be? "I've been told mine is a fox. That feels about right."

JEFFREY LUCAS | *by Sandra Anne Kernodle*

Jeffery Lucas graduated in May of 2015 with a bachelor's degree in construction management and a minor in business administration. Jeffrey is now employed with Kiewit Infrastructure Southeast in Virginia Beach, Va., where he is working as an engineer on the Midtown Tunnel MLK Extension Project. While at Western, he played football for 3 years in addition to enjoying hiking, fishing, skeet shooting and rafting. "My greatest college memory," Jeffrey says, "would be when I first met my future wife the first weekend of freshman year."

If you could be any animal, what would you be? "A dog because a dog is strong enough to pull sleds and find bombs, yet gentle enough to love babies and lead the blind."

KELLY KINNEAR | *by Abigail Powell*

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in recreational therapy and a minor in Spanish, Kelly Kinnear ventured to the Caribbean for a six-month mission trip. Kelly then returned to Cullowhee after missing the mountains and took a job at a local pharmacy to save for graduate school, where she plans to study speech and language pathology. When she's not working, Kelly enjoys hiking, cooking, reading and browsing Pinterest. Kinnear's advice for current and future students is to take advantage of every opportunity that they have to get involved.

If you could be any animal, what would it be? "I would be a toucan because they get to fly and see the beauty of the world every day of their lives."

MAKENSEY CAMPBELL | *by Bailey Cave*

Makensey Campbell graduated in 2015 with degrees in biology and environmental health. She played on the women's basketball team for all four years and still enjoys playing sports with her friends and family in her free time. She is currently a first-year dental student at West Virginia University, but she misses "the beautiful campus as well as the family atmosphere" at WCU. "Get involved on campus and enjoy every second you have," she tells prospective students. "Your four years will fly by, so enjoy it while you have the chance."

If you could be any animal what would it be? "A dog, preferably a Goldendoodle. They are extremely loyal to the ones they love, and they always appear to have a positive outlook no matter the circumstances."

MIRANDA WELGOS | *by Nicole Taylor*

"Study abroad!" says Miranda Welgos when asked what advice she would give to freshmen at Western Carolina. "You really learn so much that you can't learn in a general classroom setting." Miranda graduated in May of 2015 with a double major in business administration and Spanish. During her time in college, she studied abroad in five different countries: Spain, Costa Rica, Cuba, Peru and Chile. As a Spanish tutor at Western, Miranda enjoyed being able to inspire students to study abroad. After graduating, Miranda immediately began as an account manager at Lab Support, a company that places science and engineering professionals into job positions. After work, Miranda loves to relax and destress by reading a book or playing soccer with friends.

If you could be any animal, what would you be? A bird so that she can fly everywhere.

OLIVIA LOCHNER | *by Wesley Collins*

Olivia Lochner graduated in May 2015 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Since then, she has been attending the University of Kentucky, pursuing a Ph.D. in school psychology. Olivia says the thing she liked most about Western was the faculty "because they are always willing to help you meet your goals." Olivia advises incoming freshmen to always keep your professors aware of what's going on with you; otherwise, it is hard for them to help you if you are having trouble with anything.

If you could be any animal what would you be? "A dog because they are smart, loyal and happy."

SAMANTHA MUNGRO | *by Rashanelle Sumerall*

Samantha Mungro received bachelor's degrees in both political science and criminal justice from Western Carolina University, and now attends Elon University School of Law: "I use much of what I learned as an undergraduate at Western Carolina University as a law student [now]." Even though she misses the carefree nature of campus and the movies that were put on by Last Minute Productions, she takes the skills that Dr. Collins and Dr. Briggs taught her to "develop values that I will use not only in law school, but as a practicing attorney."

If you could be any animal, what would it be? "A turtle because as the saying goes, 'slow and steady wins the race.' I have learned that law school is a marathon, not a sprint."

SARAH GILLELAND | *by Lindsay Burleson*

After graduating with a B.S. in athletic training in 2015, Sarah Gilleland chose to continue her studies at the University of South Carolina, working towards her master's degree in advanced athletic training. As a certified athletic trainer, she is employed at USC as an Athletic Training Graduate Assistant and as an Assistant Athletic Trainer at Hammond Private School in Columbia, S.C. Her current vocational responsibilities – such as diagnosing, treating and rehabilitating athletes with orthopedic injuries – are preparing her for her future plan to attend medical school and become an orthopedist. "Make sure to work hard and stay focused on your goals," she says to incoming freshmen. "However, it is important to take time for a little bit of fun and relaxation."

If you could be any animal, what would you be? "A dolphin because dolphins are social, fun-loving animals but are also intelligent and athletic. I consider them to be well-rounded animals."

SYNDEY TROXLER | *by Haylee Wilkie*

Sydney Troxler graduated with a bachelor's degree in musical theater. Since then, her life has been a busy motion of pursuing singing, acting and dancing across the country. She has worked at a theme park and in regional theaters, moving all across the country. Currently, Sydney is moving to New York City. While she would love to find work on Broadway, Sydney loves traveling and hopes to become part of a national tour. Sydney's favorite activities include exercising, focusing on being healthy and being surrounded by nature. Her advice to undergraduates is to cherish every moment in college because college is about learning and growing.

If you could be any animal, what would you be? "I would be a dog, preferably my dog. He gets pampered and loved on. He is quite spoiled, so I would like that a lot."

TORI LANDOLF | *by Cheyanne Helms*

Tori Landolf graduated in Spring 2015 with a B.A. in English and a B.S. in education. Immediately following her graduation, Tori moved to Leicester, NC to teach 7th grade English. In her rare free time as a teacher, she likes to play video games, cook, read books and listen to music. Though she adores the ups and downs of teaching, Tori misses the atmosphere of WCU. A former member of the Honors College and club tennis team, Tori longs for the sense of community and belonging on campus. She advises current students to "take advantage of the time you have at WCU. If you don't engage in other opportunities that are out there, how will you have any adventure or sense of the world?"

If you could be any animal, what would it be? "Well, my favorite animal has always been the elephant because they are supposed to be wise creatures, but I don't think I would enjoy getting poached for my ivory tusks...so I guess I would be some sort of domesticated animal. Let's go with a cat, since I'm more of an independent person."

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Below are the projects accepted, titles, student presenters and their sponsors for NCUR30. Funding for travel to NCUR30 was made possible by local tuition funds earmarked for support of the Quality Enhancement Plan and undergraduate research in particular.

ANTHROPOLOGY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Bone Cracking in High Humidity/High Temperature Environment
Lauren Stogner, presenter | John A. Williams, sponsor

The Ease of Observation of Saw Cut Marks on Atypical Bones
Madeline Ormand, presenter | John A. Williams, sponsor

ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN

Textile Weaving in Appalachia
Cassandra Smith, presenter | Betty Torrell, sponsor

The History of Gourd Art
Tuyen Tram, presenter | Betty Torrell, sponsor

ASTRONOMY

Jbilet Winselwan: Understanding the Composition and History of C-Type Asteroids
Michael Cato, presenter | Amy L. Fagan, sponsor

BIOCHEMISTRY

Validation of the Alpha-Glycerophosphate Oxidase Catalytic Mechanism Via Site-Directed Mutagenesis
*Alma Plaza-Rodriguez, Aric Butler, presenters
Jamie R. Wallen, sponsor*

Investigation of Amino Acid Residues in the C-Terminal Tail of Bacteriophage T7 Single-Stranded DNA Binding Protein Predicted to Bind DNA Polymerase
Jenny Collins, Brittni Foster, presenters | Jamie R. Wallen, sponsor

BIOLOGY

The Discovery and Comparison of Two Temperate Bacteriophages and Their Repressors
Erin Cafferty, Sandra Anne Kernodle, presenters | Megan Eckhardt, Jamie R. Wallen, Maria D. Gainey, sponsors

Examining the Feeding Preferences of Dermestes Maculatus on a Variety of Different Animal Soft Tissue
Emily Ashe, presenter | Sean O'Connell, sponsor

CELL & MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

Discovery and Classification of 2 Temperate Bacteriophages via Viral Immunity Testing
ReLiza McGinnis, Brooke Burns, presenters | Maria D. Gainey, Jamie R. Wallen, Megan Eckhardt, sponsors

Localization of DNA Polymerase Gamma in the Pathogenic Yeast, Cryptococcus Neoformans
Merab Mushfiq, presenter | Indrani Bose, sponsor

Are KRAS Mutations Found in Zebrafish Tumors?
Jannah Plaster, presenter | Jessica L. Moore, sponsor

Using RNA Interference to Identify Virulence Related Genes in the Basidiomycetous Yeast, Cryptococcus Neoformans
Rebecca Sargent, presenter | Indrani Bose, sponsor

Localization of Tps1 and Tps2 Proteins Involved in Trehalose Biosynthesis in the Pathogenic Yeast, Cryptococcus Neoformans
Breana Steele, presenter | Indrani Bose, sponsor

CHEMISTRY

Development of Europium-doped Gadolinium Fluoride Nanoparticles for Potential Biomedical Imaging
Laney Browder, presenter | Channa R. De Silva, sponsor

Subsistent Effects on Europium Metal-Centered Luminescence
Rachel Downing, Alexander Lillie, Christian Jensen, Joseph Lee, presenters | Brian Dinklemeyer, Channa R. De Silva, sponsors

Adsorption of Cu(II) to Unmodified and Modified Peanut Hulls
Melissa Glatte, presenter | Carmen Huffman, sponsor

Synthesis, Characterization, and Luminescent Studies of Europium-Doped Zinc Oxide Nanoparticles for Potential Biomedical Applications
Joseph Lee, Nicole Dragan, Rachel Downing, presenters | Channa R. De Silva, sponsor

Surface-Functionalization of Magnetite Nanoparticles for potential Biomedical Applications
Aaron Lipchak, presenter | Channa R. De Silva, sponsor

Synthesis, Characterization, and Luminescent Properties of Lanthanide Dipyrrophenazine Functionalized Complexes for Potential Bio-imaging Applications
Alexander Lillie, Jeremy Beasley, presenters | Channa R. De Silva, Brian D. Dinkelmeyer, sponsors

Oxidation of Peanut Hulls Via Alkaline Peroxide Bleaching
Holly Truluck, presenter | Carmen Huffman, sponsor

Stability Studies of a Mutated Protein Causing Cystic Fibrosis
Kenneth Nilsson, presenter | Brittany Lott, sponsor

Selective Mono-Reduction of Conjugated Ester Functional Groups Using Lithium Borohydride
Walter Rice, Lauren Miller, presenters | William R. Kwochka, sponsor

Optimization of the Fabrication Parameters for SERS-active Forensic Evidence Swabs Used in the Serological Screening of Human Bodily Fluids
Katarina Ruehl, Matthew Bursleson, presenters | David D. Evanoff, sponsor

Synthesis, Characterization, and Cytotoxicity Studies of Zinc Oxide Nanoparticles
Jordan Spell, Joseph Lee, Nicole Dragan, presenters | Heather Coan, Channa R. De Silva, sponsors

Catalytic Dihydroxylation of Alkenes by Means of Recoverable Osmium Catalyst for Use in Assembling Covalent Organic Frameworks
Nancy Wiebelhaus, presenter | William R. Kwochka, sponsor

Computational Studies of Terbium β -diketonate Complexes: Evaluating the Substituent Effects on the Luminescent Properties
Joshua Rickard, presenter | Channa R. De Silva, sponsor

CRIMINOLOGY

Assessment of a Telecommunications Company's Compliance with Best Practices for Emergency Preparedness for a Small Community
Cadle Warren, presenter | Thomas C. Johnson, sponsor

ECOLOGY & ORGANISMAL BIOLOGY

Investigating the Effects of Urbanization on Bird Song
Sarah Bennett, presenter | Barbara Ballentine, sponsor

"Establishing the Distribution of Desmognathus Folkertsii in the North Carolina Segment of the Chattooga River Drainage"
Olivia Arnold, presenter | Karen Kandl, sponsor

Differences in Surface Activity Behaviors in Two Terrestrial Salamanders
Joseph Kennedy, presenter | Joseph Pechmann, sponsor

EDUCATION

Creating Self-Directed Learners Through Writing Workshops
Cecilia Anderson, presenter | Kelly Tracy, sponsor

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

Effects of Fiber End Debris on Bit Error Rate Testing
Milton Canupp, Jacob Spurling, presenter | Ian Timmins, Weiguo (Bill) Yang, sponsors

Structured Illumination Method Matlab Model
William McCray, presenter | Weiguo (Bill) Yang, sponsor

MEID/IMEI Extraction as an Alternative Mobile Phone Tracing Method for Law Enforcement Officers
Jacob Spurling, Zachary Frizzell, presenters | Yanjun Yan, sponsor

Human Robot Interaction with Image Based Controls
Nicolas Neal, presenter | Paul Yanik, sponsor

ENGINEERING/ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Optimal Radius for Slider Crank Wave Energy Converter
Daniel Wallace, presenter | Hayrettin Karayaka, sponsor



Gait Compensation for Instability Caused by Backpacks
Arlynn Baker, John Gilliam, presenters | Martin Tanaka, Dave Hudson, sponsors

Fabrication and Characterization of Ionic Wind Propulsion Devices
Dustin Burgess, Marshall Murphy, presenters | Michael S. June, sponsor

A Student Team's Research and Development of an Autonomous Navigation System
Kenyatta Fortune, Kyle Johnson, Chase Weddle, Taylor Parks, Wesley Dixon, presenters | Peter Tay, sponsor

Bolted Connection Testing of Pultruded Fiber Reinforced Polymers
Blake Thomas, presenter | Robert Steffen, sponsor

The Differences Between Polyphenylene Oxide and Machinable Ceramic
Darien Hewett, Amia Jones, presenters | Sudhir Kaul, sponsor

ENGLISH

From Aristotle to Contemporary Philanthropy: Analyzing the Rhetoric of Nonprofit Grant Proposals
Lauren Stepp, presenter | Brent Kinser, sponsor

The Bastards: Illegitimacy in William Faulkner's "Light In August" and Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God"
Hannah Wade, presenter | Mae Miller Claxton, sponsor

"Moving On": The Character of Jo as Social Critique in Charles Dickens's Bleak House
Teryn Worsham, presenter | Brent Kinser, sponsor

A Caged Singer: the Social Construction of Disability in the Heart Is a Lonely Hunter by Carson McCullers
Crystal Plemmons, presenter | Annette Debo, sponsor

Clearing Away the Ashes: A Feminist reading of Anne Sexton's "Cinderella"
Crystal Plemmons, presenter | Annette Debo, sponsor

The Masses, Media, and Recession of Meaning in Don DeLillo's White Noise
Tom Rogers, presenter | Annette Debo, sponsor

"The Wanderer": Questions in Consolation
Makayla Smith, presenter | Mimi Fenton, sponsor

"Heaps O' Folkses Be Varmints": Animal and Human Identity in Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's Cross Creek
Savannah Bateman, presenter | Brent Kinser, sponsor

Feminism and the Identity of Women in Angela Carter's "The Company of Wolves"
Audrey Constantino, presenter | Brent Kinser, sponsor

Change in Language and How Workplace Language Changes Identity
Taylor Sledge, presenter | Drew Virtue, sponsor

The Influences of Corrupt Puritan Marriage Laws on Literature: A Presentist Look at 17th Century English Laws and Their Influence on Fictional Vienna in Shakespeare's Comedy, Measure for Measure
Tess Cordevant, presenter | Mary Adams, sponsor

Deterioration of the American Dream: Economic Determinism in James Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues"
Jacqueline Colecio, presenter | Annette Debo, sponsor

Appalachian Identity: Stereotypes, Traditional Storytelling, and Racial History
Audrey Constantino, presenter | Brent Kinser, sponsor

Cultural Minorities in the Professional Environment
Jacob Frost, presenter | Drew Virtue, sponsor

LGBT Identity in the Workplace
Christian Henderson, presenter | Drew Virtue, sponsor

Deterioration of Ecology: Battle of the Binaries in Ron Rash's "Serena"
Michelle Colecio, presenter | Annette Debo, sponsor

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES & SCIENCES

A Hazard Analysis of the Handheld 3D Printing Pen
Abigail Tighe, presenter | Tracy Zontek, sponsor

Visual Assessment of Cullowhee Creek and Richland Creek to Assess Habitat Quality
Wayne Ryan, Arthur Bien, Andy Myers, Taylor Payne, presenters | Thomas Martin, sponsor

Biofuels or Food Sources: Can We Have Both?
Loriann Tedder, presenter | Melissa Birkhofer, sponsor

GEOGRAPHY & EARTH SCIENCES

Identification of a Low-Ti Basalt Clast in Lunar Meteorite NWA 8783
Eliza Hurst, Elizabeth Erwin, Raine Howard, Lachlan Kernz, Lindsay Locklear, Andrew Ross, Justin Winter, presenters | Amy L. Fagan, sponsor

Troctolite from Outer Space: NWA 8687 From a Lunar Place
Veasey Maxwell, Holly Hurding-Jones, Mitchell Peeler, Elijah Shields, Bryce Vascik, Matthew Rudziewicz, presenters | Amy L. Fagan, sponsor

Field and Geochemical Constraints on the Origin of the Panthertown Valley Felsic Igneous Complex: Western, NC
Michael Keever, presenter | Cheryl Waters, sponsor

Temporal and Spatial Variation of Drillhole Frequency Within the Miocene St. Mary's Formation, Maryland
Leslie Montoya, presenter | Frank Forcino, Emily Stafford, sponsors

Utilization of Specific Ultraviolet Absorbance to Classify Variable Quality of Dissolved Organic Carbon
Laura Dodgin, presenter | JP Gannon, Trip Krenz, sponsors

HEALTH SCIENCES & PUBLIC HEALTH

Emission of Ultrafine Particles from Various Base Metals in TIG Welding
Rebecca Williams, presenter | Tracy Zontek, sponsor

Hazard Analysis of Consumer Grade 3D Printers
Shelby Clark, presenter | Tracy Zontek, sponsor

Do It for the Kids: Potential Safety Hazards of the Crayola® Marker Airbrush
Sophia Calhoun, Scott Hollenbeck, John Jankovic, presenters | Tracy Zontek, Burton Ogle, sponsors

The Effects of C7-T1 Mobilization on Pain, Pain-Pressure Threshold and Shoulder Strength
Whitney Correll, presenter | James R. Scifers, sponsor

Scapular Fracture in a Collegiate Football Player
Whitney Correll, presenter | James R. Scifers, sponsor

Carry-Over Effects of Continuous Shortwave Diathermy and Stretching in Developing Hamstring Flexibility
Erin Grimsley, Kelcey Holcomb, presenter | James R. Scifers, sponsor



Constrictive Pericarditis in a Collegiate Football Player
Jackson Roper, Marco Giuliani, presenters | Melissa Snyder, sponsor

Parameniscal Cyst Rupture in a Collegiate Football Player
Hannah Bolin, presenter | Melissa Snyder, sponsor

Comparison of Four Common Taping Procedures
Lauren Harris, Sarah Corn, presenters | Melissa Snyder, sponsor

Effectiveness of Pre-Participation Physical Exams in Screening for Female Athlete Triad in Secondary School Athletes
Kelcey Holcomb, presenter | James R. Scifers, sponsor

The Effect of the Thermostim Probe on Triceps Surae Flexibility
Dalton Greer, Levi Cales, Greylin Cleary, presenters | James R. Scifers, sponsor

HISTORY

The Importance and Unimportance of Authenticity: How Films That Center on the American Civil War Play into Societal Understandings of the War Itself
Hannah Wade, presenter | Richard Starnes, sponsor

Betty Ford: Becoming a Controversial First Lady
Marian Hough, presenter | Gael Graham, sponsor

Ironing, Curlers, and the Sears Big Book: A Look into the Life of Carrie Adelaide Coffey Cook, an Appalachian Farm Woman
Anna Killian, presenter | Mary Ella Engel, sponsor

Comparing Bracero Work Camps to Japanese Internment Camps
Savannah Marino, presenter | Gael Graham, sponsor

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

An Ethnography of the Sexual Promiscuity of Students at Western Carolina University Through Yik Yak: Have You ‘Herd’?
Fiona Buchanan, presenter | Philip Coyle, Colin Townsend, sponsors

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Lack of Action in the Global Food Crisis
Anna Ferretiz, presenter | Melissa Birkhofer, sponsor

LINGUISTICS & WORLD LANGUAGES

Dropping the Bomb: Eminem’s Usage of the Word “Fuck”
Sara Lamm, presenter | Erin Callahan, sponsor

LITERATURE

Seeing Red: the Non-Western Aesthetics of Yahgulanaa’s Haida Manga
Sara Lamm, presenter | Paul M. Worley, sponsor

Deconstructing the Unconstructed: Difference of Diction in Gertrude Stein’s Tender Buttons
Anna Oates, presenter | Annette Debo, sponsor

Women Forcing Lesbian Women Into the Nuclear Family Mold in Dorothy Allison’s “Don’t Tell Me You Don’t Know”
Sandra Nikula, presenter | Annette Debo, sponsor

Abandonment in Charles Dickens’s Bleak House: Immobility and Identity
Anna Oates, presenter | Brent Kinser, sponsor

“Chronicling Crackerdom: Problems with Narrator Identity, Otherness, and Cultural Appropriation in Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings’s Cross Creek”
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The Use of Animal Imagery in Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing
Kelsie Engle, presenter | Mary Adams, sponsor

MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY

Elucidating the Microbial Diversity in Two Commercial Brands of Kombucha
Chequita Brooks, presenter | Sean O’Connell, sponsor

Classification of 21 Novel Mycobacteriophages Isolated at Western Carolina University
Aaron Stevens, Mary Edwards, presenters | Megan Eckardt, Jamie R. Wallen, Maria D. Gainey, sponsors

MUSIC

Teaching Music on the Spectrum: A New Level of Inclusion
Katelyn Johnson, presenter | Christina Reitz, sponsor

The Influence of Haydn on Beethoven
Meredith Offerjost, presenter | Christina Reitz, sponsor

NUTRITION

Association Between Access to Transportation and Household Food Insecurity in the Senior Population of Jackson County, NC
Julia Harrill, Katie Austin, presenters | Elizabeth Wall-Bassett, sponsor

College Students Cooking Skills and Nutritious Food Choices
Fabiola Jimenez, presenter | Beth Wall-Bassett, sponsor

PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

Justice and Human Nature: Comparing Plato and Thucydides
Kaitlyn Wright, presenter | Daryl Hale, sponsor

The Fate of the Damned: The Role of Predetermination in Augustine’s Model of the Good Life
Breana Steele, presenter | John Whitmire, sponsor

A Dedication to Finding and Crossing the Bridge: Journey of the Übermensch
Kevin Bryson, presenter | John F. Whitmire, sponsor

Academic Artifice: The Relevance of Pragmatic Thought in Education Reform
James Parr, presenter | David G. Henderson, sponsor

Don Quixote and Santayana’s Aesthetics of Beauty
Anthony Collins, presenter | David Henderson, sponsor

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Military Bases and Ideology: Spatial Theory and Media
Craig Daughtrey Mejia, presenter | Michael McDonald, sponsor

Cursing’s Correlation with Political Violence
Sarah Kepley, presenter | Michael McDonald, sponsor

PSYCHOLOGY

Slut Shaming in Women
Savannah Marino, presenter | W. David Scales, sponsor

Predictors of Hooking Up in a Rural University Setting
Gianna White, presenter | W. David Scales, sponsor

Hostility and Aggression at the Endpoint of a Dating Relationship
Sydney Newton, presenter | W. David Scales, sponsor

Knowledge on Asexuality
Alexis Austin, Aidan Carey, Taylor Wootten, Ashley Holland, Kristen Metcalf, presenters | Mickey Randolph, Candace Boan-Lenzo, sponsors

Perceptions of Asexuality
Kristen Metcalf, Alexis Austin, Aidan Carey, Taylor Wootten, Ashley Holland, presenters | Mickey Randolph, Candace Boan-Lenzo, sponsors

Personality Factors and Electronic Cigarette Use
Kayla Byrd, presenter | David McCord, sponsor

In the Mood for a Movie: Does an Individual’s Mood Have an Effect on Their Movie Genre Choices?
Ashley Dillard, presenter | David McCord, sponsor

The Restoration of Attention
Krisy Gaskell, presenter | Windy Gordon, sponsor

Children on the Home Front: The Effects Deployment Has on Military Children
Jennifer Miller, presenter | Bruce Henderson, sponsor

Assessment of Knowledge of School Psychology Among Undergraduates
Tiffani Parrish, presenter | Ethan Schilling, sponsor

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Environmental Activism in The Lord of the Rings
Lia Plankenhorn, presenter | John Whitmire, sponsor

Irenaeus and Redempt
Anthony Collins, presenter | John Whitmire, sponsor

Authoritative/Authoritarian Beliefs and the LGBT+ Community: A Qualitative Analysis of Attitudes towards Exposure to Same-Sex Scenarios
Garrett Godwin, presenter | W. David Scales, sponsor

Relationships Between Androgyny, Perceived Stress, and Neuroticism
Garrett Godwin, presenter | Kia Asberg, sponsor

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability Audit of Highlands Biological Station
Zack Waldroup, Katherine Eddings, Jessica Floyd, Tanner Stamey, presenters | Laura DeWald, sponsor

FACULTY-AMINISTRATOR NETWORK (FAN) SESSIONS

Course Redesign for Student Engagement
April Tallant, John Williams, Stephen LeBeau, presenters

OVERHEARD IN CULLOWHEE

I’m a sucker for couplets.
- Girl in Coulter

I knew it was you - no one else has hair that’s so unloved that it’s loved.
- Guy in parking lot

It means that heaven is located within her arms.
- Girl in Balsam

You’re all up in my Kool-Aid and you don’t even know what flavor it is.
- Chemistry professor

I was being wholesome.
- Girl in Scott

I’m not wearing pants today.
- Guy outside of Scott

It’s like chocolate-flavored battery acid.
- Person in Starbucks

It’s like auto-correct for my face.
- Person in Starbucks about make-up

Doesn’t MRI stand for some thing-rectum-something?
- Girl studying for psych exam



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