

# Millersville University

COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES  
& SOCIAL SCIENCES

---

*Department of English & World Languages*

SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

# NEWSLETTER STAFF

Hayley Billet: Editor-in-Chief, Graduate Assistant  
English MA, '22. English BA, '19.

Jordan Traut: Lead Graduate Assistant  
English MA, '22. English BA, '20.

## Contributing Faculty Editors

Dr. Nicole Pfannenstiel, Graduate Coordinator

Dr. Justin Mando, Department Assistant Chair

# A WELCOME FROM THE ASSISTANT CHAIR



I'm grateful for this opportunity to share with you my enthusiasm for our department and my pride for the accomplishments of our students, staff, and faculty. This year marks our first full year as the Department of English & World Languages, an accomplishment in and of itself. We have come together by our shared interest in language: the words we write and read, the ideas we think and speak. We are fascinated by the many languages, discourses, voices, literary forms, and rhetorics we use to connect, identify, argue, and relate. We as a faculty are truly fortunate to have engaged students who join us as together we seek to

shape our worlds with words.

This newsletter is in a way a report on the vision we share as a collected department of faculty, students, and staff. Inside, you will find many reasons to celebrate our department. We certainly have challenges ahead as a department in offering classes that best merge our students' goals and faculty expertise, in keeping our classes at healthy sizes, and in continuing to connect with each other in meaningful ways. Our outlook remains positive. We thank you all for a great year and we look forward to the next! As was a motto at my alma mater: "My heart is in the work."

# A WELCOME FROM THE LACS COORDINATOR



as well as critical thinking skills and public speaking skills. Additionally, both disciplines seek to promote cultural enrichment and social responsibility.

The recent administrative decision to recommend that the department of Language and Culture Studies merge with the English Department can be summed up as « L'union fait la force » (loosely translated as there is strength in numbers). The current state of foreign language education in the United States is indeed alarming. According to the Modern Language Association, « one 7.5 foreign language enrollments per 100 students enrolled in American colleges is 2016. » It would make sense that those two departments join forces as we all focus on strengthening language skills,

On behalf of my former and current colleagues who have taught and/or are currently teaching Classical Mythology, French, German, Humanities, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Greek, Russian, Spanish, I would like to express our sincere gratitude for the warm welcome we have received from our English colleagues, and we look forward to a fruitful and lengthy collaboration.

# MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I'm not only grateful for the opportunity to share the first issue of the English and World Languages department newsletter with everyone, but I'm also grateful that I had a hand in creating it. With the help of Dr. Pfannenstiel, I have tried my best to set this newsletter apart from other department newsletters by including quotes from our graduating students, student accomplishments and recognitions, and faculty projects. In this issue, we also have articles from undergraduate students in the department, and I want to thank them again for their great contributions. We also have articles on retiring English and World Languages faculty, a faculty spotlight of Professor Toba-Rotunno, and advice from graduate students to undergraduate students. I could not be more proud of this issue and the work everyone has done on it.

# ENGLISH & WORLD LANGUAGES GRADUATING STUDENTS

SPRING 2022 & SUMMER 2022

## GRADUATE

Madeleine Bair, M.A.  
Hayley Billet, M.A.  
Teresa Bonds, M.A.  
Lindsay Hartman, M.A.  
Katherine Ingaglio, M.Ed.  
Eugene Kobielnick, M.A.  
Shannon Reid, M.Ed.  
Kara Travis, M.A.  
Jordan Traut, M.A.  
Rachel Wisnom, M.A.

## UNDERGRADUATE

Allegra Banks, B.A.  
Samantha Bechtel, B.S.E.  
Natalia Bedoya, B.S.E.  
Emily Bishop, B.S.E.  
Hermenegildo Blanco, B.A.  
Thea Buckwalter, B.A.  
Erin Cavanagh, B.A.  
Jenna Coleman, B.A.  
Cameron DiSanto, B.A.  
Elizabeth Duchesneau, B.A.  
Sydney Gant, B.A.  
Delvys Garcia-Martinez, B.A.  
Hannah Gehman, B.S.E.

Madelyn-Jo Goslee, B.S.E.

Christa Gumbavich, B.A.

Brook Harris, B.A.

Morgan Higgins, B.A.

Hannah Jackson, B.S.E.

Victoria Jester, B.A.

Julia Keiser, B.S.E.

Kiera Kirchner, B.A.

David Krak, B.A.

Brittney Love, B.S.E.

Sean McClain, B.A.

Joshua Mixon, B.A.

Rachael Newcomer, B.S.E.

Noelle Piscitello, B.S.E.

Matthew Pleger, B.S.E.

Morgan Slough, B.A.

Allysa Snedeker, B.S.E.

Hannah Stroble, B.S.E.

Sarah Sweda, B.S.E.

Phoebe Tanis, B.S.E.

Heather Verani, B.A.

Gillian Wismer, B.S.E.

Fei Yu, B.S.E.

## APPLAUSE AND CONGRATULATIONS

### ENGLISH AWARDS

Natalie Flory: *Dorothy J. Patterson English Scholarship*

Jackson Fogel: *Dilworth McCollough English Award*

Jenna Dumbrowsky: *William S. Trout Memorial Award for English Education*

Cameron DiSanto: *Class of 1910*

Odette Wakefield: *Frank R. Heavner Memorial Award*

Mandy Flickinger: *Class of 1917*

Hannah Stroble: *Class of 1922*

Christa Gumbavich: *Eileen Carew Promising Writers Scholarship*

Natalie Bedoya: *Alice R. Fox Memorial Award*

### LANGUAGE & CULTURE STUDIES AWARDS

Shane O'Shea: *Sophomore of the Year Award*

Hunter Davis: *Jean-Paul Levy Memorial Endowment*

David Krak: *Michael Kovach Scholarship*

Morgan Higgins: *MU Foreign Language Xenophile*

*Theodore H. Rupp Award Endowment and The Louis and Margarete Koppel Awards in European History and German Literature*

Delvys Garcia-Martinez: *MU For Lang Dept-Spanish Steven A. Walker Mem Award Endow*

Katie Pheysey: *The Prof Charles Richard Beam Memorial German Scholarship*

Rory Jester: *MU Foreign Language Irene Seadle German Section Award*

Gabriella Rodriquez: *The Lina Ruiz y Ruiz Memorial Award*

Kaitlyn Fischer: *Ralph J. Hyson Memorial Award Endowment*

Jordan Huebschman: *Jacqueline Long French Scholarship Endowment*

# ADVICE TO UNDERGRADUATES FROM GRADUATES

By: Jordan Traut and Hayley Billet

**Jordan:**



I chose to stay at Millersville and continue my education with the English Department despite the university not offering my specific field of literature studies when other institutions – though few – did offer it in their graduate programs. The reason for this is because I knew English faculty believe in their students and accordingly will support their dreams and initiatives. I recognized my educational experience would be more valuable here, even if I had to self-study, because English faculty had as much determination for me to succeed as I had for myself.

When I asked to center my thesis in Native American literature, Dr. Jakubiak obtained permission from the Assistant Provost to secure a Professor of Native American Studies from another university for my committee. This addition ensured I had access to contemporary resources from a scholar in my field of studies. When I needed a way to represent my talent in grant writing on my resume, Dr. Pfannenstiel designed an individualized instruction course to create a digital portfolio of my work. This resource will serve me in my professional life well beyond my time in the graduate program. When I asked to replace the English-language linguistics requirement with a Native American curriculum, Dr. Corkery assisted me in the design of a revolutionary online independent study focused on learning the Anishinaabe/Ojibway language. Very few students at larger institutions can create their own curriculum and have it approved by their department. When I was inspired by the Indigenous representation I saw on my research trip to Vancouver Island, Canada, Dr. Mondello helped me find the funding to host a national call for Native American artwork and create a permanent red dress art installation on campus to honor Missing

and Murdered Indigenous Women. The experiential learning from that project provided me with skillset development I could never learn in any classroom.

Each personal example illustrates my best advice to undergraduate students considering graduate school: find a place where the faculty believes in you as a student and is willing to invest their resources and time into helping you pursue your dreams to their fullest extent. Sometimes a smaller university – where professors have more time to get to know their students on a personal level – is more valuable than a larger, more acclaimed institution. Be aware that it is hardly a conducive learning environment when student ideas and initiatives are belittled. Instead, faculty should encourage everyone to actively and creatively problem-solve, offering support by way of offering ways around obstacles facing their students. The network you surround yourself with in higher education should propel you to success by encouraging you to be inventive in your educational and professional development. So, go for it – whatever “it” is to you as a budding scholar and fledgling professional. No dream is too large. No idea is too crazy. And, of course, remember to be highly accountable once your faculty offers their support.

**Hayley:**



I decided to stay at Millersville and continue my studies to receive an advanced degree because I always appreciated how welcoming and supportive the English department was. Being an introvert and rather shy student, I felt as though I found a place where I belonged and surrounded myself with professors, faculty, and friends who wanted to help and watch me succeed. I wanted to keep building upon my skills and continue developing relationships with the English faculty. Because of this, I was able to come out of my shell. I cannot stress enough how important it is that you get to know your professors. Not only can they help you and guide you in your

professional career, but keep in mind you are also going to need professors to serve on your thesis committee. You will need professors that are familiar with you and your work, and establishing these relationships now will help you later.

During my undergraduate studies at Millersville, I was not involved in any activities, groups, or jobs on campus. Once I started graduate school, I became a graduate assistant for the English department, not knowing at the time how much it would help me continue to grow and develop my skills as both a driven and dedicated worker and scholar. I have taken on many projects that have helped me realize what I would like to do after graduate school and have also given me the necessary experience I need to succeed in my future career. My second piece of advice is to get involved in things that interest you, whether that be taking part in events on campus or getting an on-campus job. If there is nothing available that interests you, talk to one of your professors and they can help you design an independent study, campus event or project, or anything else that will provide you a more personalized experience to prepare you for your future endeavors. The experiences you gain will not only benefit you but your resume as well.

I pushed myself to apply for graduate school, go after a graduate assistantship, and take on new things that at the time scared me. My last piece of advice is to challenge yourself to try new things, even if they scare you, because they will pay off. Surround yourself with people who want to help you succeed, and do not belittle your goals and dreams. This will provide you with the push and support you need to keep going. Try things you never thought you would be doing; you may find that you like it. Ask for help when you need it, your professors and your peers are always willing to help. Take it from someone who never thought she would be able to speak up and wanted to work for the department but did not know where to begin. If I hadn't started speaking to new people and forming the connections that have helped me many times over, I do not know where I would be right now.

---

## FROM OUR GRADUATING STUDENTS

“I came to Millersville for the Education program and the gorgeous campus, but when I switched to a BA in English, I stayed because the professors are so caring, and the small class sizes in the English department made me feel seen by my peers and professors. I also found that my favorite part of my time here was my involvement in our newspaper, *the Snapper*. It helped me uncover my love for journalism and joining clubs like *the Snapper* is a great way to meet new and likeminded people.” – Sean McClain, '22.

“I’ll miss the student grant opportunities (excluding the reimbursement process). During my five years at Millersville, I was able to fund my MAPACA and Association on American Indian Affairs conferences, a summer program in Poland, a trip to Spain Morocco and Portugal, research at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh and the Royal British Columbia Museum in Canada, as well as, my travel to see the World Premiere of the all-Native musical “Distant Thunder” at the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City and my MMIWGT2S red dress project. After all of these completely educational and not-at-all-for-fun experiences, getting a real job seems somehow less exciting...” – Jordan Traut, '22.

# SPOTLIGHT OF FACULTY PROJECTS

## Dr. Baldys

Dr. Baldys is currently working on a collaborative project with Dr. Jessica Hughes, assistant professor of Digital Communication Cultural Studies, and Dr. Timothy Mahoney, chair of the Department of Educational Foundations. Their project is titled "Impact of an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Program on Campus Culture of Inclusion at Millersville University." Their project will examine the discourse surrounding inclusion on Millersville's campus. They are most interested in how the Integrated Studies program influences the way in which faculty, staff, and students talk about inclusion and how their perceptions of inclusion may have shifted. Their purpose is to "... document the impacts of Integrated Studies and identify strategies for increasing inclusion at MU."

## Dr. Mondello

Dr. Mondello is currently working on revisions to an article about Pedagogy in the Environmental Humanities through the lens of Romanticism. The article will be published in Romantic Circles: Pedagogy Commons. The article is based on a class she taught in 2017 that she then presented at a conference in 2018. The journal will be coming out in the Fall of 2022. Dr. Mondello is also working on a book proposal based on her dissertation for Lexington books. The title of her book is "Toward a Posthuman Ecology: Evolutionary Aesthetics in Transatlantic Romanticism."

## Dr. Farkas

Dr. Farkas has been working on the publication of the first issue of the *Engage for Change Journal* that focuses on environmental justice. She says "The aim of the journal is to contribute to public knowledge and public engagement on important social, political, and economic issues affecting the community. We published the first issue, and it includes eleven articles written by students, faculty, and community members." They have also begun to spread the word about the next issue, which will focus on gender justice. The deadline for this issue is October 18th, 2022. To view the first issue and the call for papers for the second issue, see the link below:

<https://blogs.millersville.edu/engageforchangejournal/>

# UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATION



By: Hunter Davis  
BA French Teacher Education, '23

I am honored to be able to present at the 2022 American Association of Teachers of French conference in New Orleans with Dr. Gaudry from the English and World Languages department. Our presentation will primarily be an exploration of the current system of education in France through film, notably, the movie "*La Vie Scolaire*", (published as "*School Life*" for anglophone audiences) which came out in 2019.

Directed by Mehdi Idir and Grand Corps Malade, this comedic and current film presents a lot of problems to unpack with regards to the French school system, from social dilemmas to administrative questions. Over the course of our presentation we will cover exactly that, all the while offering materials and resources for French teachers to use in their classrooms. This approach to studying French through cinema is one previously implemented by Dr. Gaudry in a course of French 361, and it involves the creation of a 'dossier' of class materials for use in lessons. An examination of background information and vocabulary from the movie is presented, followed by analyses of both character and scene, and a series of essay questions. Our presentation aims to paint a portrait of education in France today through film, and provide a connection of that content to the classroom.

# WHY MILLERSVILLE GRADUATE PROGRAMS?



By Dr. A Nicole Pfannenstiel,  
Graduate Coordinator

With the speed of information sharing, the depth of information shared, and the need for strong analysis skills, graduate school has become an important step in the path to meeting life goals. Graduate school, especially Humanities programs like our English MA and M.Ed., invites students into a community of passionate and curious scholars. Graduate school invites students to study topics of interest, build analysis and synthesis skills bringing together multiple sources and points of view, read deeply within current scholarship to add to ongoing conversations. Our educational approaches are grounded in social justice and inclusivity, offering classes

in digital rhetoric, environmental criticism, disability studies, and so much more to enhance contemporary research and activism surrounding these very needed conversations. Many of our graduate students travel and present their research with Millersville faculty at regional and national conferences, doing the social justice and inclusive work as part of their work as students. Finally, our graduate programs offer enhanced credentials with a Master of Arts, Master of Education, and Graduate Certificate in Writing. I invite you to explore our programs to see if enhancing your research and writing skills is the right path for you.



# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: PROFESSOR NAOKO TOBA ROTUNNO



By Jordan Traut

English and World Languages recognizes Instructor Naoko Rotunno, or as her students know her: "Toba-sensei," for her contributions to developing diverse coursework within the department. Rotunno studied Aesthetics and Art History in Japan before attending Slippery Rock University, where she simultaneously lectured and obtained her master's degree in English. She currently teaches Japanese language and culture classes at both Millersville University and West Chester University.

Since her time teaching at Millersville, eight students have successfully declared and completed the Japanese Culture Studies minor. Additionally, Professor Rotunno has supported nine students in their semester-long study abroad programs in Japan. I have personally experienced Toba-sensei's guidance inside and outside of the classroom, having completed both the Japanese minor and study abroad program under her mentorship. To highlight the extraordinary language skills taught by Professor Rotunno in her courses, she has translated her spotlight interview into Japanese. The English and World Languages Department is grateful to Professor Rotunno for sharing her beautiful language with students and faculty.

**Q: Do you have a favorite activity in your classroom to help new students learn Japanese?**

**初心者に日本語を教えるにあたって、留意していること**

A: Since I focus on spoken language in class, I make it a habit to give my students equal opportunity to speak Japanese, giving them cues, creating authentic contexts with audio-visual aids, and making a pair for conversation practices. I believe my random calls on them in class work well for keeping them from being distracted. I keep an eye on their reading/writing skills by giving them feedback about the mistakes found in their assignments so they can review their work later. I also make use of my office hours to provide those who are in need of help with in-person instructions. I try to make my class enjoyable by incorporating cultural context/episode into language instruction.

私の授業はスピーキング・リスニング重視の為、とにかくクラスでは日本語を話す機会を学生に均等に与えるよう努めています。ターゲットとなる文法を使って会話ができるよう、背景をセッティング、絵や動画を駆使して、なるべく実生活に役立つ日本語の学習を目指しています。順番通りに当てて行くと緊張感が薄れるので、わざと不規則にして学生の注意を持続させるようにしています。読み書きについては宿題を採点してフィードバックを与え自己学習の機会を設けています。指導が必要な学生に対しては、オフィスアワーに個別に対応しています。役立つ情報や面白い逸話などを紹介することで、日本の文化やマナーが日本語を学習しながら楽しく学べるようにしています。

**Q: I know you use the same Japanese Language textbook as Millersville's sister school in Japan, Kansai Gaidai University. Can you explain why you chose to align your coursework with the coursework at Kansai?**

**関西外大との交換留学制度について**

A: It seems that my Japanese courses have

contributed to the study abroad program in Millersville University according to the fact that nine of my students so far have participated in the exchange program with Kansai-Gaidai University in Japan. Two more students are planning to study abroad at Kansai-Gaidai in the future, so I do hope the exchange program will resume sometime soon. It is fortunate being able to align my coursework with the coursework at Kansai-Gaidai as we happen to employ the same textbooks, which are commonly used for Japanese language courses at the college level in the world.

ミラズビル大学で日本語コースが設立されて以来（それ以前はフランクリン・マーシャル大学に委託）、関西外大との交換留学制度を利用して日本に留学する学生が増えました。現在まで留学した学生は9人に上り、今後二人が留学予定です。コロナ禍で現時点では日本への留学は休止していますが、関西外大からミラズビル大学への留学は再開している模様です。日本政府の留学生の受け入れが早期に再開されることを望みます。

**Q: Do you have a favorite memory from your courses at Millersville?**

**ミラズビル大学での特記すべき思い出**

A: I am grateful that some of my former students keep in touch with me via SNS. During these ten years of my service, two of my best students ended up living in Japan with full-time job. In addition, two other students had stayed in Japan for several years teaching English there. Currently another student who graduated in 2019 is teaching English in Japan. Several students have told me that their experience of learning Japanese changed their life, which is quite encouraging to me. I have been helping those who seek employment such as teaching position in Japan (including JET Program) with reference and guidance. I am also thankful that a Japanese restaurant named Issei

(located near the Ware Center) has successfully been hiring MU students who took my courses.

教え子が卒業後もSNSを通じて連絡してくれることが一番嬉しいです。ミラズビル大学での10年間で、日本で結婚・就職した教え子が二人います。どちらも非常に優秀な学生でした。さらに、日本に滞在して英語を教えたことのある卒業生も二人、現在日本に滞在中の2019年の卒業生も一人います。ミラズビル大学で日本語を履修したことと人生が変わったと言ってくれた卒業生もあり、教師冥利につきます。日本での留学や職探しを希望している学生や卒業生には、推薦状や助言などで、できるだけ希望に添えるよう対応しています。ウェアセンター近くにある日本料理店「一世」では、代々日本語コースを履修した学生をアルバイトに雇ってくれており、歴代の学生間での交流が見られます。

## NOTES FROM OUR GRADUATES

"The Millersville University English department has helped me to foster and grow my passion for English, and to turn it into something I can use for the rest of my life. I am so grateful for the support I've had from faculty, including my adviser and professors, who made it possible for me to graduate this semester with a degree I can't wait to use." – Elizabeth Duchesneau '22.

FIND US ON THE WEB  
[millersville.edu/enwl/](https://millersville.edu/enwl/)

# ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENTS ATTEND WORLD PREMIERE OF *DISTANT THUNDER* AT FIRST AMERICANS MUSEUM IN OKLAHOMA CITY

by Jordan Traut

Over two years ago, just prior to the pandemic and global shutdown, I read an article from a small newspaper based in Oklahoma about an all-Native musical set to perform at the historic Lyric Theatre in Oklahoma City. This was the summer before my first semester as a graduate student and I was working with faculty to develop a shadow program in Native American Literary Studies. I had some experience applying for grants in undergrad, but never anything as involved as planning a trip across the country with a group of multidisciplinary English students, however, I thought to go for it because the influence of contemporary "fight back, creative" cultural pieces (to borrow from Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o's terminology for Indigenous performing arts), like *Distant Thunder*, might open me up to being a more informed, better scholar-activist in my field of studies.

Never did I anticipate, through all the setbacks and the years in between when I first read that article in 2020, how deeply profound the experience of attending this premiere on location would be in a semi-post-pandemic world of 2022. It has informed nearly every aspect of my graduate experience at every level of my studies and has opened professional and academic doors I never considered. I am grateful to the Ware Center's *Wickersham-Burrowes Fund for Excellence in the Arts* as well as the *Noonan Endowment* for funding this creative project at over \$4,500.00. Also important, I was able to share the experience with two highly intelligent English graduate students – my friends – whose own fields of study were touched by the trip. *Distant Thunder* illuminates how critical learning experiences outside of the traditional classroom setting are for Arts Humanities and Social Sciences students. Our scholarship needs to be informed by the modern discourses and given purpose through advocacy in our personal

work.

As a result of the pandemic, *Distant Thunder* was unable to perform at their original venue, and instead, kicked off at the First Americans Museum during its first calendar year of full operation, making the show a once-in-a-lifetime cultural and artistic event. The Native American Cultural and Educational Authority (NACEA), which was established to create the museum in 1994 and eventually included participation from all thirty-nine tribal communities in the state, needed thirteen years to heal the land before construction commenced. According to a placard at the museum, the land, at one time, contained fifty-seven oil wells and was polluted with the remnants of the petroleum industry ("Site Remediation" n.p.). *Distant Thunder* performed there, in the outdoor festival space March 23rd-27th, 2022.

Hayley Billet, Jadon Barnett, and I were there, representing Millersville University and the English and World Languages Department. Being a part of this historic experience – as an audience member in the sacred performance space, hearing the words and the songs as the first cast spoke them intentionally, eating the traditional Native American foods at the pre-show dinner, meeting the cast at the post-show talkback, and knowing the significance of the "now" for Indigenous grassroots activism and scholarship – I am not sure if I have yet fully grasped the profoundness of having participated in the moment.

Jadon Barnett, a first-semester graduate student interested in game-based learning and Spanish linguistics, described to me how, beyond the play itself, the performance location was "one of the most enriching museums I have ever visited. I learned so much about the cruel history of our country, things that I was never taught in school." The all-encompassing experience, he says, inspired him to "apply for more grants to further my

education outside the classroom."

The show was written by Lynne Taylor-Corbett and her son, Shaun Taylor-Corbett, who also starred in the production as the protagonist, Darrell Waters. Darrell, whose father is Blackfeet American Indian and mother European American, returns to his reservation as an adult. Inwardly struggling with the traumas of his childhood, he re-identifies with his Native roots and distant father. He ultimately answers the call to help preserve the Blackfeet language and history in Browning, Montana, illuminating a way forward for the youngest generation of Indigenous youth on the reservation who are also searching for their identities.

"Travelling to the First Americans Museum and seeing *Distant Thunder* really showed me how important experiential learning is," Hayley Billet echoes mine and Jadon's thoughts on the impact of non-traditional and creative educational environments. As a graduating student with plenty of insight in Victorian and gothic literature, she expressed how "being at the museum and hearing the experiences and hardships of Indigenous Americans first-hand struck me more than it ever has in the classroom."

I believe *Distant Thunder* will be recognized as one of the great American theater productions, continuing to be performed long after its debut at First Americans Museum. Speaking with Shaun Taylor-Corbett after the performance on Friday night, the show became somehow more moving. We learned its title – *Distant Thunder* – is in fact his name, *l'pyooktsitsikoom*, in the Blackfeet language. The essence of restoring and celebrating Native languages in the United States to empower authentic Indigenous identity construction is incredibly involved at every level of the show. *Distant Thunder's* form and message will change the world, illuminating a decolonial way forward for our nation to honor its First People and their ever-evolving contributions

to American culture through both traditional and artistic methods rooted in the sacred oral practice of the land.

For this reason, I have worked closely with the Ware Center and am extremely pleased to share with English and World Languages that the university has agreed to fund *Distant Thunder's* travel and production in Pennsylvania. Of course, securing the show is work-in-progress. However, I have a sense of accomplishment graduating in May with the knowledge my university is committed more and more to supporting the incorporation of Native American literature and art on campus, including with the AHSS Dean's Office agreeing to permanently display the final red dress exhibit from my Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Girls Trans and 2 Spirit (MMIWGT2S) project in MComsey Hall indefinitely. I hope both the installation and *Distant Thunder's* presence on campus may inspire and inform other students as it has inspired and informed me.

Citations & Additional Information:

"Site Remediation." *Community Gallery*. First Americans Museum, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 2021. Visited and photographed by Jordan Traut 25 March 2022.

Wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. "The Language of African Literature." James Currey Ltd, London, 1986.

Learn more about AAUW & Jordan Traut's MMIWGT2S project on the ENWL website: <https://www.millersville.edu/enwl/grants/reddressproject.php>.

*\*\*Excerpts from this post will appear in the Ware Center's annual report with permission by the author and Director of Office of Visual and Performing Arts\*\*\**

## FROM OUR GRADUATES

"The MA in English at Millersville has afforded me numerous benefits: growth of my understanding of rhetoric and literature; betterment of analysis practices; and examples of strong pedagogy for transference to the classroom. I am so glad to be a graduate from this program!" – Maddie Bair '22.

# RETIRING FACULTY

DR. SUSANNE  
NIMMRICHTER



By: Jadon Barnett  
English MA, '23

The department of English and World Languages bids a heartfelt farewell to Dr. Susanne Nimmrichter. Dr. Nimmrichter studied German literature and linguistics in Germany before traveling to the University of Arizona for her master's degree in English as a Second Language. After completing her Ph.D in Educational Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania, she joined Millersville University as a professor of German in 2000. Her topics of interest include syntax, teaching world languages, and second language acquisition.

Dr. Nimmrichter has been a strong advocate for students' active participation. She believes that students best learn second languages by using them, and so she has implemented this idea in all of her German courses, ranging notably from composition to German history and linguistics. Dr. Nimmrichter has also taught the Teaching World Languages course to student teachers of German, French, and Spanish. Outside the classroom, Dr. Nimmrichter served as the German club advisor for many years and participated in the graduate language immersion summer programs.

Dr. Nimmrichter served two terms as the chair of the department of Language and Culture Studies from 2014 to 2020. During this time, she oversaw the departmental name change from "Foreign Languages" in order to emphasize the importance of learning about world languages in the context of their diverse cultures. Covering topics like the usage of digital German dictionaries, she has also presented numerous times at language teaching conferences such as PSMLA, ACTFL, and AATG. Dr. Nimmrichter was named PSMLA's Educator of the Year in 2007 and is a recipient of NECTFL's Nelson H. Brooks Award for Outstanding Leadership. Her proudest achievement, though, is being able to observe current and former students as they continue teaching world languages to younger generations.

After retirement, Dr. Nimmrichter plans to continue her language learning journey by studying Chinese. She also plans to catch up on German literature, travel with her husband, and play tennis. While she will be missed, the faculty and students of the department wish Dr. Nimmrichter well as she prepares for a well-deserved retirement.

DR. JUDITH HALDEN-  
SULLIVAN



By: Hayley Billet

The department of English and World Languages bids a heartfelt farewell to Dr. Judy Halden-Sullivan. Dr. Halden-Sullivan received her B.A. in English with a minor in Russian language, literature, and history from Millersville University in 1976. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the Pennsylvania State University in 1979 and 1984 respectively. She became a professor of English at Millersville in 1999. Her topics of interest include creative writing, poetry, and rhetoric and composition studies.

Dr. Halden-Sullivan has been dedicated to the success of her students and hopes that she has inspired them to find their own forms of poetic innovation and expression, which has been one of her many passions. She has taught many classes over the years at Millersville, including, Creative Writing, Genres in Poetry Writing, Seminar in Composition Studies and Rhetoric, Business Writing, Advanced Composition, and a Graduate Seminar in Contemporary American Poetry and Poetics.

She served as a reviewer and book review editor of numerous journals, including *Transatlantica: American Studies Journal* and the *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*. She has numerous publications and has also contributed to, and held membership in, many journals, conferences, scholarly associations, and areas of study over the years.

Dr. Halden-Sullivan served as the appointed member of the Academic Outcomes and Assessment Committee from 2013-2015. She served as the appointed member of the APSCUF Scholarship Committee from 2015-2020 and as the appointed coordinator and judge of the Academy of American Poets Student Poetry Contest from 2014-present. She has also served as the chair (2005-07, 2008-10) and co-chair (2010-17) of the Writing Studies Committee and as a member of the English Department Graduate Committee from 2003-2020.

We wish Dr. Halden-Sullivan the best, and a safe and relaxing retirement.



# GET OUTSIDE: HOW SPENDING TIME IN NATURE CAN HELP ELEVATE OUR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING SKILLS

By: Laura Berry  
BA Science Writing, '22.



With the weather warming again, I, like so many others, am excited to spend more time outdoors. Every time I walk to class and the weather is above 50 degrees, the college students of my apartment complex are outside sunning, in hammocks, playing street hockey or riding scooters. It is this time of year when we shed the cold, gray landscape in favor of greens and yellows. Sunlight bathes the budding flowers on the cherry blossom trees across campus and you can just begin to smell their sweet, natural perfume. There is also a promise of new life, when we start seeing baby white-tailed deer, eastern cottontails, and especially birds. When the robins return, the promise of spring follows. Those baby blue eggshells are a recognizable sight to all – even those who do not enjoy going out into nature can admit to finding the fragmented eggshells at least once in their life. Bird's nests feel like a secret world, with the promise of so much life to come, and something that we as writers should take the time to notice. Spending time outside, to notice all the life and goings on around us, can help us become better writers, but even if you can't get outside, there are options that allow us to get close to nature without even leaving our homes and workplaces.

With all the life that spring brings, taking a walk in your neighborhood with a notebook or cell phone camera may inspire more detail in our writing. All of these descriptions are observations of campus-living that I have brought to life using language that invokes visual imagery. Being conscious of the way I describe things in my writing helps to better capture my readers' attention and gives me control of what they see in their mind's eye. I took a class with Dr. Mando my sophomore year at Millersville called Environmental Advocacy Writing and we reflected on how observing nature makes us better descriptive writers. One of the exercises we completed in class, inspired by Annie Dillard's *Seeing*, involved going out into nature and writing about things that we observed. We were told to go to the same place, about once a month, and sit for a period of time and write about what we saw, heard, felt, even smelled. Noticing all the little things happening around me encouraged me to observe more, which reflected in the more descriptive writing pieces I created thereafter. By paying close attention to detail, we can notice and explain things others may miss, ultimately making our writing more interesting to readers.

But not everyone has the same opportunities to get outside. With restrictive jobs and an increase of required screen-time, human beings are more disconnected from nature than ever before. This problem introduces a new solution: nature livestreams. Livestream cameras have become more normalized in educational settings as well as just for fun in our free time. I have recently become enamored with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's great horned owl nest livestream, which has been following a mated pair of owls raising a single chick in Skidaway Island, Georgia. Not only is it interesting to watch the owls interact with one another, but it

presents an opportunity for me to learn as well. Camera projects like this go beyond just observing nature: they give us a peek into the natural world like none other, allowing viewers to get close to wildlife without disturbing the animals and putting lives at risk. Utilizing this technology gives greater opportunity to experience nature and makes these encounters more accessible for everyone.

We as writers have the responsibility of seeing things in a way others don't. By bringing new and exciting concepts to our readers, we can ensure that we hold their attention. As a Science Writing major, I am required to do this while adapting scientific research and concepts in a way that the public can comprehend. I decided to create my own livestream for an independent study project: a bird's nest camera that will follow the life cycle of a native Pennsylvanian songbird. When people connect to the livestream, they connect to the birds' lives and, in turn, find themselves more enthusiastic about the conservation of nature. Science Writing can communicate the need for more native plants to be established in a neighborhood, or why it is important not to let your pet cats roam freely outdoors, but without establishing the connection to these issues, it can be hard to get people to care. Giving people the opportunity to see nature in a different way, whether it be through a nature livestream camera or through vivid descriptions in writing, is incredibly important in making sure the public supports restoration and conservation projects to continue. Even if your writing purpose isn't rooted in conservation, taking time to observe the world around you will only help better your descriptive writing skills.

---

## English & World Languages Department blog

Stay connected to friends, colleagues, and peers who are currently active and alumni of the English and World Languages programs through our blog.

<https://blogs.millersville.edu/englishnewsletter/>

## English Graduate blog

Follow for up-to-date information on our graduate program and the successes of our students.

<https://blogs.millersville.edu/englishgrad/>



Millersville University

COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES  
& SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of English & World Languages