

CLA

College of Liberal Arts

Fall 2016 ■ vol. 5, no. 1



Global Studies and Cultural Geography

Liberal Arts students change the world for the better

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Fall 2016 ■ vol. 5, no. 1

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Mexico



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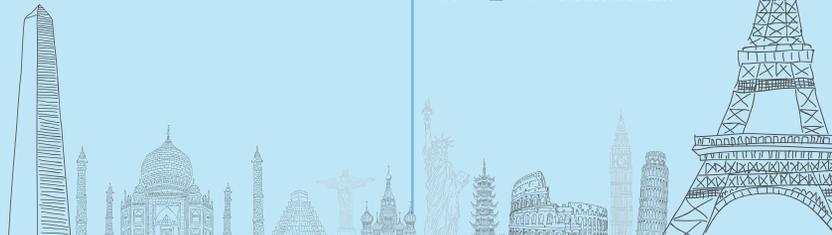




photo: J. Intintoli

Change is the only constant.

In May 2016, College of Liberal Arts Dean Mark Byrnes accepted the position of interim provost and asked me to serve as interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts. It is an honor to serve the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of the college. I look forward to an exciting and productive year. As usual, there were other changes in the college. H. Stephen Smith, professor of Voice in the School of Music, was appointed interim associate dean. We welcomed a new department chair in Communication Studies and Organizational Communication, Heather Hundley, who joined us from California State University–San Bernardino. Brandon Wallace won a national search and was appointed chair of Sociology and Anthropology. Michael Baggerly (Art) and Susan Myers-Shirk (History) agreed to serve as interim chairs this year. Many thanks to Marisa Recchia (Art) and Sharon Smith (Communication Studies and Organizational Communication) for their service as interim chairs. Vicky Maclean (Sociology and Anthropology) was appointed director of Women's and Gender Studies. Finally, we said farewell to graduation analyst Kathy Jones, who retired after 25 years of service to MTSU.

Liberal Arts, like the rest of the University, is participating in the transition from a state governing board (Tennessee Board of Regents) to an independent governing board as mandated by the FOCUS Act of 2016. This transition brings with it a complete review of University policies and procedures and a great deal of uncertainty. I encourage our alumni to be active participants in public discussions about higher

education in Tennessee. More than ever before, we need your support. Talk to your representatives about the importance of your Liberal Arts education—help us tell our story.

The college continues to embrace the Quest for Student Success initiative at MTSU. Our advising staff, under the leadership of Lucy Langworthy, worked tirelessly in 2015–16 to help students through transition periods, to advise them effectively, and to keep them on track to graduation. I commend the caring atmosphere that she and her staff created in the advising center and look forward to another year of excellent work on behalf of our students.

In this issue of the *CLA Magazine*, we highlight our program in Global Studies and Cultural Geography (GSCG). Students in GSCG explore our world from Nashville to Japan and many places in between. CLA leads the University in student and faculty participation in study abroad, and GSCG students exemplify the curiosity and passion for exploration we try to instill in our students. I hope you enjoy reading about the program. If you have any questions about GSCG, please contact Doug Heffington (Doug.Heffington@mtsu.edu; 615-898-7744). As always, we love to host alumni on campus. Contact us at cla@mtsu.edu to arrange a visit. ■

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Friends of the Liberal Arts Board **Member Profile:** *Roscoe L. “Rocky” Strickland III*

Strickland family members have been investing their talents and support in MTSU for more than 60 years. Rocky Strickland, son of former MTSU professors Roscoe and Lucy Strickland, was born and raised in Murfreesboro. He remains an active member of the Friends of the Liberal Arts Board, and although he hasn't lived in Murfreesboro in decades, he still thinks of it as home and enjoys visiting and keeping up with all the news of MTSU.

The Strickland family's legacies are represented by several scholarships spanning various College of Liberal Arts departments and MTSU Financial Aid. The family created the Strickland Visiting Scholar Program in memory of Strickland's father Roscoe, who taught history at the University for 23 years. The Lucy Durham Strickland Memorial Scholarship honors Strickland's mother through annual awards to Music majors. Two of Strickland's sisters who died at young ages are remembered each year through the Alice Strickland and Tracy Strickland Memorial Leadership Performance Scholarships.

Rocky Strickland went to Campus School and Central High School, then attended Baylor University and enjoyed a successful career in manufacturing. He lives in Raleigh, North Carolina, retiring in 2015 after selling his company. He continues to champion MTSU.



photo: Andy Heirat

Left top: Roscoe and Lucy Strickland (Rocky's parents); Left bottom: Rocky Strickland and sisters (Alice and Tracy); Above: Roscoe L. “Rocky” Strickland III

Can you share your family's history and involvement with MTSU?

My parents, Roscoe L. Strickland Jr. and Lucy D. Strickland, met while they were both in graduate school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill after World War II. They were married in 1947, and Daddy got a job teaching history at Middle Tennessee State College in 1949. At that time, History was still part of the Social Sciences Department. Mother taught in the Mathematics Department in the early 1960s.

In 1972, my parents moved to Virginia, where Daddy was the president of a small junior college for women. They eventually moved back to Murfreesboro in 1988 and once again became involved in MTSU and the community. Daddy died in 1997, and Mother died in 2008.

What are some of your fondest memories of MTSU as a child? What was the campus and Murfreesboro like then compared to today?

MTSU was very much a part of our daily lives. I attended Campus School and frequently visited the campus where I had music lessons and played cello in the MTSU Community Orchestra. My family attended numerous performing arts and sporting events. I was

instructed in lifesaving at the swimming pool there, and my first summer job during high school was in the History Department, performing various secretarial duties.

Over the years, MTSU's growth has been exceptional, and the old, familiar campus that I knew as a child is now just a small part of a much larger university area. It is still nice to see some of the old, familiar places amongst the newer, more modern, and larger buildings.

What do you think your parents would say about the growth and progress MTSU has made?

My mother used to say that when they first moved to Murfreesboro, all of the faculty at MTSU could fit in one room for a party, and back then the rooms were not that large. I know they would both be pleased with the continuing growth of the University and likely surprised at just how large it has become, now having the largest undergraduate university enrollment in the state.

What have you learned about MTSU and the college by serving on the Friends of Liberal Arts Board?

The board meetings are always informative. We are updated on what is going on at the

College of Liberal Arts in general and about some specific programs in greater detail. I have been impressed with the students who sometimes make presentations, and one of my favorite topics from last year was a discussion of the collecting and archiving of old political jingles.

Why do you feel it is important to stay connected with the College of Liberal Arts and MTSU?

For me, growing up with MTSU as such a major part of my family's life, it is only natural to remain interested and desire to stay connected with the University. Serving on the Friends of the Liberal Arts Board helps me stay informed about what is going on at the University, and it is a nice way for me to honor the memory of my parents.

What would you tell someone if they were interested in reconnecting with the College of Liberal Arts and giving back through their time and financially?

The education of our youth is so very important for the future of our country, and anything a person can do to help pay for an education for a student who might not otherwise be able to go to MTSU will reap rewards for society. ■



Coordinator's Note

We are kicking off Fall 2016 with new lectures, new faculty, an interim dean, and an interim associate dean, plus many new and engaged students. While our magazine will cover events and accomplishments on the last academic year and summer of 2016, we will also showcase some of our MTSU Arts programs for you. If you aren't currently a patron for the MTSU Arts, we hope you will join and receive the benefits of the different levels of stewardship. Our students and faculty are top-notch and continue to amaze us with their talents. You will see in this issue a story highlighting one of our Theatre alums and his career achievement in Las Vegas. We will cover a new area of study in Liberal Arts—Global Studies and Cultural Geography—where our students are hitting the road to study around the world. Our faculty don't just teach in the classroom; they take our students to places where history is made. And, speaking of history, Kent Syler will carry us back to the 1960 election with his Gore Center letters about JFK's religious affiliation.

This is just a quick glance at our Fall 2016 issue of the College of Liberal Arts, so enjoy a review of our year, and come back to campus to join us in the hundreds of events that we have to offer. ■

*Connie Huddleston, Coordinator
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Land of the Indigenous

A New Mexico field trip gives geography students a look at the locales and lives of Native Americans

Each May, several MTSU students pile into a van and trek to New Mexico, “the Land of Enchantment,” to explore Native American sites and see how others also made their way in the West. They learn firsthand how people migrated and lived in relationship to the land, all as part of the Geography of Indigenous Peoples class. Along the way, they view the changing landscape of American culture, eat roadside meals and sleep on floors, and enjoy adventures like visiting an abandoned mine or crossing a shaky bridge over a gorge.

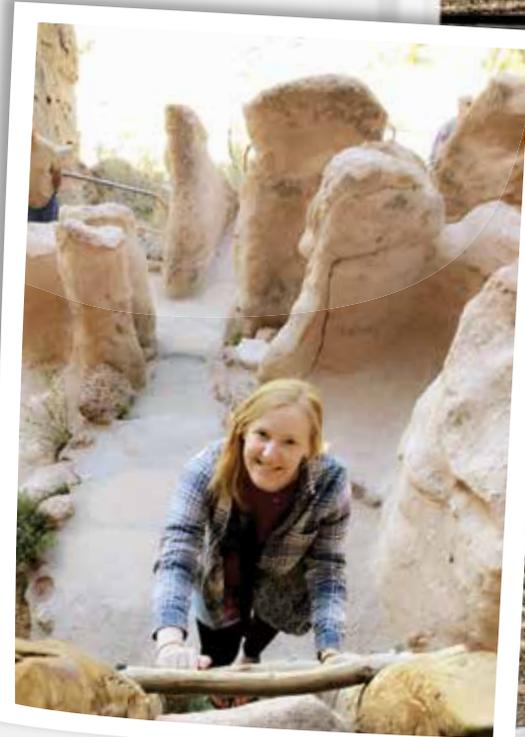
Professor Doug Heffington has taken this trip yearly since 1993, after doing his dissertation in New Mexico and working for the Museum of New Mexico’s Office of Archaeological Studies. Seven students made this year’s journey and then developed research papers for the May–August class (GEOG/HIST 4540)—Rebecca Cooksey, Rachael Hicks, Moriah Laprise, Derrick Mobley, Joanna Paz, Chelsey Winton, and Zachary Zeis.

Bandelier National Monument, an Ancestral Pueblo site, is particularly popular with students because it “fits” the five fundamental geographic themes so well: geography (location), place, relationships within places (human/land relationships), movement, and region. Students also visit Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Jemez Pueblo, Posi-Ouinge Pueblo, Pecos National Historical Park, and Taos Pueblo.

At Bandelier, the Ancestral Pueblos flourished in the volcanic environment of Frijoles Canyon from about BCE 600 to CE 1600 when they migrated toward the Rio Grande. Cooksey, a Global Studies major, shares her observations from Bandelier and excerpts from her journal on the following pages. ■

See Bandelier National Monument: Pueblos and canyon walls on page 8 for more of the story.

Right: Global Studies major Rebecca Cooksey climbing the Ancient Pueblo canyon wall at Bandelier National Monument.



Exploring the pueblos and canyon walls at Bandelier National Monument

by Rebecca Cooksey

The five themes of geography are essential to understanding people and see how they lived. All five themes were visible at all of the Native American sites that we visited, and it is through these themes that we are able to learn and discover their ways of life.

Location: Bandelier National Monument is located in northwest New Mexico. Why would people choose to settle in the Frijoles Canyon? There is an abundance of natural resources in this area, and the people that lived here were very agriculturally based. There is water, which is a huge draw to a location since it is vital to the continuation of a society.

Place: What are the human characteristics, and what are the natural physical characteristics? Geographically, the Pajarito Plateau was formed by the eruptions of the Jemez Volcano, which created the rocks of the canyon wall, tuff, and the rocks that were traded within the pueblos, obsidian and basalt. There are very few places on the plateau where there is year-round water, and the El Rito de los Frijoles creek is a permanent stream.

Region: When you look at a region, you look at the similarities throughout a larger area than just the site itself. You can see the movement and transfer of ideas throughout a region. You also find similarities within a region, which shows the linkages between different groups of people. Within this region there were lots of similar pueblos that were in contact with each other.

Movement: You look at how people, things, and ideas not only move into an area, but also out of it. At Bandelier National Monument, there is a macaw petroglyph on the canyon wall. This is a representation of the

movement of animals from Mexico. With this transfer of the macaws, you can also expect the transfer of ideas, people, languages, and many other aspects of daily life. Movement was not always so extensive. There is evidence of lots of trade just within the region. The trading of obsidian and basalt from the Jemez Mountains that is evident in the Frijoles Canyon is an example of this.

Human environment interaction: Bandelier National Monument is an extreme example of how the land influences the people and how people influence the land. The people lived in the walls of the canyon and on the southside for a very specific reason, according to the Bandelier National Monument: “[i]n the winter, that side gets the afternoon sun and is much warmer than the north-facing wall.”

The design of the dwellings is also evidence of human-land interaction. Using the exposed soft rock of the canyon walls to create their homes, the people enlarged natural openings that were created by the elements. You can see indentions and small caves littered across the sides, as well as the grooves where the vigas would go in order to support the dwelling structures. Another example is the alcove house, a ceremonial kiva 140 feet above the canyon floor, reached by climbing four ladders. The people used the land in a way that was good for them and not completely destructive to the natural environment. They used what was given to them and made it work. ■





May 10: Started our journey at 2 a.m.! Our first stop was the Cadron Settlement in Arkansas. Block house: used for protection against invading Native Americans (Osage). In between: lots of Native Americans trading with the French and English (bison from great plains, furs from south). Doug's mom brought us doughnuts. Stopped for lunch along Route 66. Made our way to Shamrock, Texas, home of the largest St. Patrick's Day celebration and the Conoco Café. Once you cross the 100th meridian, everything changes geographically. To the west, have to have irrigation; not needed in the east. In order to farm the West, you need three things: steel plow, steel windmill, and barbed wire. Stopped for the night in Amarillo, Texas. We ate at the Big Texan, home of the 72-ounce steak. It was a long and eventful day. Very excited to go to bed, even though our hotel looks like it is in some sort of war zone!

May 11: Left Amarillo to continue on our westward journey. Made our way to Adrian, a dying town in Texas, pop. 166. Very agricultural-based. Almost pumped the Ogallala aquifer dry, so there is no water = no jobs. Finally made it to New Mexico. Our first stop was Tucumcari, an old Route 66 town and home of the Blue Swallow Motel, drive-in style. Stopped by a Catholic prayer site on the side of the road, showed the mixing of Catholic and native religion. Drove through Las Vegas. Made our way to Pecos: Borrowed agriculture methods from Mexico. This allowed them to stop being hunter-gatherers. Lots of trade. 1540 Spaniards arrived. 1680 Pueblos revolted. Pecos declined because trade with Plains Indians went down because of Spanish presence.

Made it to Truchas. We are staying at the home of Isabro Ortega, casa de las nubes. This house is incredible. Most of it isn't finished, but the carvings that Isabro has done are "enchanting." This man is insanely talented. Everywhere you look, there is another carving or detail that you have missed. Sleeping on the concrete floor is going to be interesting.

May 12: 6 a.m., left Isabro's house and headed to Bandelier National Monument. Quick lunch at Bandelier. Back on the road to Santa Fe: Follows the Law of the Indies. Lots of Spanish influence. Strict rules to how buildings can be, either adobe or government style, and they can only be so tall. We ate lunch and walked around Santa Fe. It was a cute place. I bought some turquoise from Native Americans on the square. Just a chill night at Isabro's. Met "Ratatouille," the little mouse that lives downstairs.

May 15: Stopped by Bode's, an old-style general store. Drove through Abiquiu: One of the epicenters of the southwest art movement (Georgia O'Keefe). Started to follow the Turquoise Trail: where things were traded to the Pacific coast and all the way to Mexico. Doug wanted to show us an old mine, so we went on a little adventure. This was an example of human-land relationship: You could see how when new groups came in, they would mine deeper and deeper. The heaviest mining/production was only about four years. Cerrillos: Mining town, prehistoric mining, Spanish.

May 16: Continued our journey home. Stopped at Washita Battlefield: Sacred space not only for the Native Americans, but also for us. Today there was lots of riding and not much doing. We stopped for our last road-side lunch today. I think I am going to miss these. Arrived at Doug's sister's house in Arkansas. It was nice to have a home-cooked meal after all of our cooler and gas station food. We all camped out in the living room—fun little slumber party.

Bob Dylan reminds us that, “The times they are a-changin’.” Indeed, during the current stage of accelerated globalization, such lyrics ring truer than ever before. And, as an educator and faculty member of the Global Studies and Cultural Geography program at Middle Tennessee State University, the changing times of our ever-globalizing world are a central tenant in the courses I teach.

Trained as a Latin Americanist geographer, my academic interests lie south of the U.S. border; I feel no other country captures the shifting geopolitical and economic aspects between the 20th and 21st centuries more so than the small island nation of Cuba.

Roughly the same size as Tennessee, Cuba is currently in a state of flux as its government looks for ways to politically survive in a global economy centered on capitalist ideals while trying to maintain the socioeconomic gains it argues it achieved during its socialist revolution.

Thus, following the recent thawing in U.S. policy toward Cuba and the easing of travel restrictions, political scientist colleague Steve Morris and I decided the time was right to take students to the island to experience firsthand a country in transition. This was a co-taught course between Global Studies and Political Science and is representative of the 32 MTSU Signature Education Abroad programs available to students this year.

Until recently, Cuba was practically off limits to most U.S. citizens. For that reason, Cuba possesses an almost taboo draw—something its government and everyday citizens have learned to exploit with impressive success. Yet, travel to Cuba is anything but new. The island’s mystique has long stoked the imaginary fires of adventurers, inquisitive travelers, and fortune seekers. This appeal has been both a blessing and a curse for Cubans.

By the first half of the 20th century, Cuba’s tropical and exotic allure transformed Havana into a pleasure-seeking destination for affluent North Americans—particularly during Prohibition. This prompted incredible development across urbane Havana, while much of the rest of the island’s population languished in poverty.

By the 1950s, Havana had become an adult playground, much of which was run by organized crime syndicates and often fashioned around gambling and prostitution. However, the decades-long party came to an abrupt end following the 1959 revolution, as the new socialist government perceived the island’s then-tourist industry

Destination CUBA

Educational excursion unveils the dichotomy of this exotic island

by James P. Chaney



“Instead of staying in exclusive hotels, we housed students in private homes . . . to get to know Cuban families on a personal level.”



“Simply put, our students were transforming into engaged and informed global citizens..”

as a bourgeois, hedonistic activity that was counter to the ideological direction Fidel Castro wished to lead the island.

Yet, 50 years later, Cuba has reemerged as an enticing destination for travelers from richer, more-developed countries. Although Cuba's communist party still tightly controls the island and continues touting the triumph of the revolution, the government now aggressively promotes leisure and heritage tourism, often based on nostalgic images of those carefree, rollicking times before 1959. In fact, tourism is now one of Cuba's main sources of revenue. Perhaps most ironic, though, is Cuba's desire to lure North American tourists to its shores once again. Around a half-million U.S. citizens now visit the island annually.

On the surface, such an inconsistency between the Marxist-Leninist goals of the Cuban Revolution and the current state of tourism may seem like a blatant contradiction. But, to Cubans and those familiar with Cuban society, contradictions abound between the original revolutionary aims of the communist party and how it presently governs.

To put this into perspective, consider the following. In a quest for an egalitarian society, Castro's government initially did away with private property, nationalized all sectors of the economy, strove to be financially and agriculturally self-sufficient, and sought to systematically eliminate both class structure and the racism that underpinned it. Today, in contrast, Cubans can buy and sell residential property, and the government encourages certain kinds of entrepreneurship and private employment. As far as being self-sufficient, the island nation imports most of its food. Finally, a dualistic economy created by a two-currency system (one for the tourist industry and the other for the communist system), along with the substantial amount of dollars sent to the island by Cuban families abroad, have again created distinct social classes. Sadly, these classes loosely follow racial lines.

Yet, these contradictions are what make Cuba so fascinating! More importantly, they provide an invaluable learning experience for university students by allowing them to witness firsthand how members of less-developed societies grapple with difficult conditions brought about by both national and international forces. This develops a caliber of critical thinking and reflection in students about geopolitics, the disparity between the richer and poorer nations, and the ethical dilemmas of globalization in ways that can never be achieved without leaving the U.S.

A principal goal of any education abroad trip is to interact directly with a host culture and learn about other lifestyles and perspectives directly from those who make up that culture. Therefore, instead of staying in exclusive hotels, we housed students in private homes, giving them the opportunity to get to know Cuban families on a personal level. Likewise, our

students made friends with Cubans their own ages, hanging out with them during their free time.

These casual encounters enabled students to compare and contrast the information they learned about in textbooks, news media, or propaganda, and came to their own conclusions. Not long after the trip began, my colleague and I delightedly observed how our students' opinions on a range of topics, such as U.S. foreign policies, capitalism, socialism, poverty, and many long-held stereotypes about Latin America and Cuba began to change.

Watching such an experience unfold is very rewarding for an educator. Before our trip, my colleague and I met with our students on several occasions. The pre-departure topics of conversation among students focused on simple tourist activities, such as learning salsa or hanging out on the beach. Indeed, we had the opportunity to engage in these activities. However, after leading our group on a variety of educational excursions, including a visit to the U.S. embassy, volunteer work at an impoverished intercity public school, and dinner with families in dilapidated, overcrowded Soviet-style housing complexes, the depth and breadth of conversations students were having about Cuba changed dramatically. Within a week, one could hear students discussing over breakfast topics like the ethical and political dilemmas of the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, Cuba's effective preventative medical care, or the importance of sustainable development. Simply put, our students were transforming into engaged and informed global citizens.

Returning home to the U.S., each student looked at Cuba in a different way; more importantly, each held a new, genuine interest in the island. I argue that an education abroad trip is successful when participants return with more questions than answers. In the case of our students, many wanted answers as to why the 1960 trade embargo is still deemed important in Washington, D.C.

Such revelations only prompted more questions among our group about the successes and failures of the Cuban Revolution as well as the many unforeseen consequences of the U.S. trade embargo for everyday Cubans. Rather than answering all the different questions students posed during our trip abroad, I encouraged them to seek out their own conclusions. ■

Dr. James P. Chaney is a lecturer in the Global Studies and Cultural Geography program and co-director of the MTSU Signature Program in Cuba. Email James.Chaney@mtsu.edu. For information on MTSU's Education Abroad Program, go to mtsu.studioabroad.com.





A Global Studies and Cultural Geography class shares immigrants' stories and joins hands with Art students for exhibit

Diversity and



A first-ever exhibit to honor the vibrant cultural diversity in middle Tennessee took place at the Heritage Center in downtown Murfreesboro in April 2016. Entitled "Migration with Dignity in Middle Tennessee," this exhibit was the culmination of a student-led class project by the MTSU Global Studies and Cultural Geography program to understand the global dimensions of contemporary migration at the local level.

The exhibit centered around approximately 17 testimonies of individuals who have migrated from different countries and who all now call Middle Tennessee their home. I was honored to serve as the class instructor and advisor for this community-based project.

Several dynamic pieces of student artwork from Professor Sisavanh Houghton's painting class in the MTSU Department of Art also contributed to the content, all created around this concept of migration with dignity.

"The most meaningful part to me was seeing the diverse people who attended, especially those who were being honored in the exhibit. It was powerful just to witness," said Heather Allen, a student participant in the project.

The True Blue spirit was in full force during the April 17 opening celebration for the exhibit, when more than 100 people attended and completely filled the Heritage Center, a community partner in this project. Those who were present included persons being represented in the exhibit and their respective families. Each were recognized during the ceremony and presented with individual gifts of appreciation on behalf of our class and MTSU.

During the opening reception, several of the exhibit honorees and their families thanked us personally for including their stories in our small project. At one point, one of the people being honored in our project approached me directly and just held my hand, with tears starting to slowly come down her face. Filled with emotion, she then cried quietly on my shoulder.

Student participant Beth Gobble reflected how our project added a more human dimension to this issue, one that is rarely seen. "This truly opened my eyes to the reality that there are so many people just trying to make it—and they are our neighbors," Gobble said. "They just want a safe place to call home, food on the table, and a hot shower—and the hope that their loved ones can join them in the future."

This was also the case for student participant Andrew Atkinson. "Some immigrants put in so much work to migrate to the United States, only to be put down when they get here or even deported back into the system. I partially now know how tough some of these people have it, and I want to help them in any way that I can," he said.

When first beginning this process, there were two goals in mind. The first was to contribute to the ongoing public conversation around immigration by uplifting personal stories of migrants who live in middle Tennessee and who directly contribute to the social, cultural, and economic fabric in our local community. Consistent with the MTSU commitment to foster active student learning, community engagement, and global citizenship, a second goal was to provide a meaningful way for students to directly engage with this continued pressing global issue.

The Migration with Dignity project itself consisted of four central components.

First, our class visited the Nashville Public Library, another community partner in this endeavor, to learn about the value of oral history and their continued work with collecting and preserving the diverse voices of experience in middle Tennessee. The students then selected and listened to oral history interviews from the Nashville library and wrote individual biographies that will be part of their permanent collection.

Second, students learned skills in oral history methodologies and conducted informal conversations with friends, neighbors, and loved ones who have also migrated from different countries of origin.

Third, students spent evenings and weekends in small groups by visiting and speaking with individuals from different cultural backgrounds in Murfreesboro and Nashville. These

mini-conversations in various public venues revolved around one central question: What does migration with dignity mean to you?

Finally, small excerpts of oral histories and photographs were shared with Houghton's painting class at MTSU, which were then used as inspiration for the varied pieces of student artwork included in the exhibit.

by Antonio Vásquez

Dignity

Thanks to a small faculty grant offered through the MTSU Experiential Learning Scholars Program, the dream of coordinating this community-based project became a reality.

Students were as equally impacted through this experience as the people they interviewed. "I have to say that I felt rather intimidated on the very first day of class when we began to discuss this project because of all the socializing we would have to do with people who we did not know, or even know how they would react," student participant Ashley McFarland said. "My view of migration radically transformed, however, from a topic that I rarely thought about to a life-changing experience that I have come to respect. Also, we had a great turnout of people!"

Likewise, according to Will Oakes, "I really learned how important it was to do this project for our community. Our small work was more than just a project; it was a gift that we would be giving to the world."

The theme of migration with dignity resonated on a more personal level with student participant Mia Kozul, whose own family migrated to the United States as refugees from Bosnia Herzegovina. "My perceptions have changed so much about the foreign community in middle Tennessee," Kozul said. "I never realized how much of a beautiful variety we have all around us. This class has made me more open and has made me more comfortable sharing my story and listening to others." ■

*Antonio Vásquez is a faculty lecturer in Global Studies.
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“There are so many people just trying to make it—and they are our neighbors.”

—Student Beth Gobble





MTSU Cultural Geography students dive in to Cultural Ecology headfirst

make Costa Rica a popular tourist destination for global travelers. It is no surprise, then, that Costa Rica is an avid actor in the conservation of its majestic natural environment.

While studying there King commented, "Costa Rica, which aims to be carbon-neutral by 2021, has an excellent infrastructure. In a sign of how committed Costa Rica is to renewables, the government has decided not to exploit rich oil deposits—discovered along the country's Caribbean coast—for environmental reasons." According to Independent's website, the entire country can be powered by electricity provided only using hydroelectric means during periods of heavy rainfall. It is a shining example of the viability of renewable energy and the perfect setting for MTSU students to learn about sustainability.

According to the Costa Rican Tourism Board, "Considered one of the most bio-diverse regions in the world, Costa Rica is divided into 20 natural parks, eight biological reserves, and a series of protected areas that captivate ecotourism lovers." Students were blown away by how the wildlife interacted with the people. After one lecture, they stopped by an ice cream place called The Crazy

Iguana, which owed its name to the many iguanas that lounge about as customers enjoy their frozen treats. King ate dinner at another establishment with about a dozen wild monkeys milling about.

One might think of a Costa Rican vacation as lounging on a beautiful beach. However, while these and a variety of activities, including horseback riding, hiking mountainous paths in the cloud forests, and guided bird-watching tours are available, increasingly Costa Rica is becoming a destination for thrill-seekers. MTSU geography students braved the many attractions and learned how Costa Rica is adapting the tourism industry to draw travelers while conserving the country's natural beauty of the flora and fauna, preserving their culture, and caring for the land.

Mountains

For the more adventurous travelers, a multitude of attractions are found throughout the mountains of Costa Rica. One set of mountains, the Tilarán Mountains, contains the country's most active volcano, Volcán Arenal, which erupts in some measure almost every day. One of the greatest thrill-seeking experiences near the Arenal Volcano is zip lining. Not only does it provide a rush of adrenaline, but also an incredible view of the Arenal Volcano and Lake that the MTSU student group had the opportunity to experience first hand.

The course catalog for Doug Heffington's Cultural Ecology class reads, "Course has required off-campus activities." That is a serious understatement. During the Spring 2016 semester, Cultural Geography students including Jon King and Chelsy Winton traveled to Costa Rica as part of the class during Spring Break to explore the relationship between humans and their environment. From piñas to community owned waterfalls, to grass roots recycling at a women's co-op, to developmental research at TicoFruts, MTSU students received a firsthand education in sustainable development in a country that is increasingly building a reputation for sustainable ecotourism.

Costa Rica is well known for its breathtaking scenery, unique fauna and flora, and tropical beaches along its Atlantic and Pacific coastlines. In combination, these natural features



Forests

Throughout Costa Rica, a variety of forests can be explored. Winton pointed to one company, Desafio Adventure Company, which promotes Extremo bungee jumping, "On this unique tour you travel on a short tram and cable system to reach a high platform," Winton wrote.

From this platform of 143 meters—which for reference would be like standing atop the AT&T building in Nashville—you take a deep breath and jump into space." Desafio has managed to create industry without damaging the natural surroundings.

Rivers and Oceans

Whitewater rafting is just one of the tourist activities utilizing the river systems in Costa Rica and a great way to bring a steady flow of tourism into the area. Aside from the natural beauty, students observed that the ocean brings in many jobs renting equipment and offering lessons for surfing and scuba diving. Both of these things can be found in and around the multitude of beaches in Costa Rica.

An article in *USA Today* speaks highly of Cocos Island as one of the best diving locations in the world. "Cocos Island, 300 miles off Costa Rica's mainland, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The area possesses a rich undersea diversity and supports more than 25 endemic fish species."

Costa Rica proved to be a rich classroom to explore working models of sustainable development through ecotourism. More than just a fun vacation, students will carry these experiences with them into their careers where they will be able to make a positive impact on the world. ■



Jon King and Chelsy Winton contributed field reports from their research in Costa Rica

Ecotourism TIES

According to The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), ecotourism offers long-term solutions to both national and local markets by providing economic incentives for conserving and enhancing bio-cultural diversity. Additionally, ecotourism helps protect natural and cultural heritages of spaces; empowers local communities to combat poverty and achieve sustainable development by increasing local capacity building and employment opportunities; and promotes a heightened understanding, and appreciation for nature, local society, and culture with an emphasis on enriching personal experiences and environmental awareness through interpretation. According to TIES, the principles of ecotourism are as follows:

Minimize physical, social, behavioral, and psychological impacts.

Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect.

Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts.

Provide direct financial benefits for conservation.

Generate financial benefits for both local people and private industry.

Deliver memorable interpretive experiences to visitors that help raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climates.

Design, construct, and operate low-impact facilities.

Recognize the rights and spiritual beliefs of the indigenous people in a community and work in partnership with them to create empowerment.

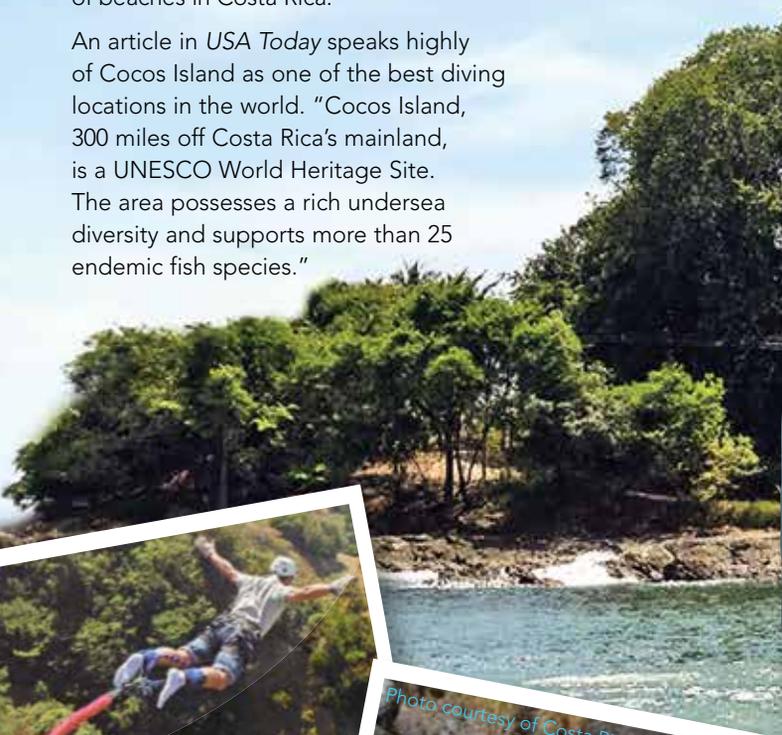


Photo courtesy of Extremo Park

Photo courtesy of Costa Rica Experts



CIRQUE DU SPRING BREAK

Theatre and Dance and other CLA majors get a magical look behind the scenes at grand Vegas shows



The MTSU study trip took in *KÀ* by Cirque du Soleil at the MGM Grand as part of a behind-the-scenes class study trip to Las Vegas.

A Las Vegas spring break trip wasn't all fun and games for a group of MTSU students, who got an inside look at what it takes to put on the behemoth Cirque du Soleil theatrical productions.

Production and company managers, as well as MTSU alumnus and *Michael Jackson One* audio engineer John Kessler, hosted backstage tours of *KÀ*, *Mystere*, *The Beatles Love*, and *Jackson* for the eight students.

The students from the special topics Design and Technology of Cirque Du Soleil course also saw show performances of *Ka* at MGM Grand, *Mystere* at Treasure Island, and *The Beatles Love* at the Mirage during the March 7–11 study trip.

"This Cirque class was a great idea. There's something in it for everyone whether you're into lighting, audio, projection, automation, costumes, or even performance," student Kelsey Blackwell said. "Cirque is everything great about theater. It's hugely collaborative.



MTSU alumnus John Kessler led a Cirque du Soleil backstage tour of *Michael Jackson One* for MTSU students and faculty.

"Now I have this newfound appreciation for an excellent performance company. Along the way I think I've made some cool connections, and I went to Vegas for the first time. This trip was unlike any other: total entertainment and performance immersion. It felt like an alternate universe—in the best possible way."

Students also experienced a guest lecture by Jane Child, head of the Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas; attended networking events with faculty and hosts; and visited additional shows and attractions on their own.

Theatre professor Virginia Donnell and assistant professor Darren E. Levin organized the trip along with Recording Industry professor Christian Haseleu. Students spanned multiple departments and colleges at MTSU, with several representing the Department of Theatre and Dance and the College of Liberal Arts.

Students are already benefitting from the contacts made on the tour, including one who landed an internship with a Cirque du Soleil production in Las Vegas this past summer.

"This trip has been one of the most educational and beneficial experiences that I have had in college," Michelle Saintey said. "I learned a lot about the organization that I hope to one day work for, and I got to have a fantastic spring break with my classmates and professors.

"The shows that we saw were spectacular, and I gained an even greater appreciation for everything that goes into creating a fantastic theatrical production."

Beatles company manager Kim Scott and other heads of departments hosted that backstage tour, and students were Scott's invited guests for a performance. *Mystere* production manager Jeff Wilson also provided a backstage tour and helped make the trip a reality. The MTSU administration and Theatre and Dance staff helped with logistics.

"From the awe-inspiring *KÀ* to the absolute joy of *(Beatles) Love*, I was absolutely blown away," John Underwood said. "Getting the opportunity to watch the shows and then tour those same shows and have such an exclusive look into Cirque has . . . changed the way I see live entertainment.

"It has given me an insight into this amazing company, and how possible it is for each and every one of us to make it in this business." ■

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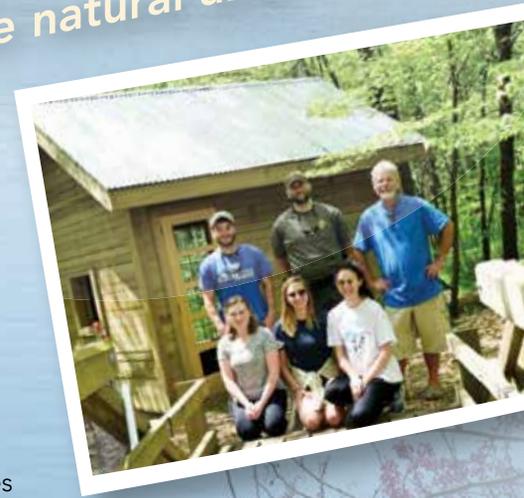
RADNOR LAKE

FROM RAILS TO TRAILS

Geography students help dig up cultural history and interpret sites at the Radnor Lake natural area

Radnor Lake State Natural Area has long been heralded as one of Tennessee's best kept secrets. Located south of downtown Nashville in Davidson County, the park is nestled in the rolling Overton Hills and was Tennessee's first designated natural area. Radnor provides a recreational outlet for city-weary folks with hiking trails, outdoor and interpretive programs, a new aviary, and tremendous varieties of flora and fauna—some rare for middle Tennessee.

With all this natural beauty, it is no wonder the cultural history and cultural landscapes of the natural area often go unnoticed by the casual hiker. Since 2002, MTSU's cultural and historical geography program has taken steps to document, preserve, and interpret the rich cultural mosaics that comprise Radnor—human activities, past and present, that are symbiotic with the park's natural environment. Work by MTSU students has included assisting in gathering information on the local "sense of place" through interviews, determining historic settlement patterns of early Radnor occupants, and developing a better understanding of the railroad in the development of the region. All of this is played out on 1,300 acres of second-growth forest anchored to a human-made lake in a state "natural" area.



MTSU research students at historic valve house during April 23, 2016 final class session.

Photo courtesy of Steve Ward

Below Left: A section of cast iron pipe from the original underground water system. Middle: Mayche home in the 1930s that was built by Robert Alford, ca. 1860. It is now the present-day ranger residence. Right: A wrench found at the bottom of the Radnor Lake valve house.

photo: Andy Heidt



photo: Friends of Radnor Lake



photo: Andy Heidt



Topophilia

Radnor's environmental topics and issues have been studied for decades, but the cultural story was not. In 2002, geography classes from MTSU began to aid the park's management and staff, as well as the Friends of Radnor Lake, in capturing, preserving, and telling the rich story of the natural area's geography and history.

As geographers, one of the first things we wanted to examine was the sense of place people had developed with Radnor. When discussing the park, people invariably would talk about it being a special place. No two people saw the natural area the same; they had over time and over varying means and methods developed what geographer Yi Fu Tuan calls topophilia—or the bond between people, place, and setting. For us geographers, it is the inextricable bond between humans and Radnor based on their experiential perspective—an experience derived from sensation and perception at Radnor. We decided to use the term oral geographies for the interviews. These were not oral history but, instead, aimed at understanding how people perceived their place and their connection to it, temporally and spatially. MTSU geography students have assisted in collecting almost 50 oral geographies dealing with people's sense of place and Radnor.

“Geography students from MTSU were instrumental in interpreting these sites to better understand the early days of Radnor and its rail history.”

Tracts and Tracks

Radnor Lake Natural Area was founded in the 1970s and included a little over 700 acres. Since that time, it has nearly doubled in size. With every new land acquisition, MTSU geography students have carefully surveyed the land for any traces of historic usage or occupation with the intent of documenting settlement of people on the land. So far, almost a dozen historic sites have been recorded within the park boundaries. Most date to the late 1800s and are farmsteads. Others date to the early 1900s and are associated with the purchase of the property by the Louisville & Nashville Railroad.

Much of the land that was purchased in the early 1900s by the L&N Railroad was for the primary purpose of providing water for their steam engines. Up to a million gallons of water a day was piped to Radnor Yards, a rail hub roughly four miles from Radnor Lake. Impounded water was released by valve and gravity-flowed to the yards where it was used, according to some of our collected oral geographies, for everything at the yards except drinking. So, all water used for the steam engines, watering cattle, cleaning equipment, and showering came from Radnor Lake.

Finding a Key Piece of the Puzzle

Two vivid examples come to mind linking MTSU student work to interpretation of the natural area. One was the oral geography of Al Ganier Jr., whose father was a civil engineer for the L&N Railroad, the person who selected the Otter Creek site for the future Radnor Lake, oversaw dam construction, and filled the lake. His son was witness to some of these events as a small child and had his father as a primary source of information about the area as a young man.

The younger Ganier's memories of Radnor were connected to his father. Ganier died months after his interview but left behind valuable information, which MTSU students used in making sense of one of the more unique historic sites on the property. One Radnor dig had proved puzzling during fieldwork at a site listed in archeological site files as a brick foundation. Artifacts from the site contained no domestic items or fragments of window glass—only wire nails and small burned pieces of tin (roofing). If it was not a house, then what was it?

While discussing his connectedness to Radnor, Ganier said matter-of-factly that his dad's crews used dynamite to blow up the stumps in what was then the dammed Otter Creek flood plain that would eventually become the bottom of Radnor Lake. Although not a definitive answer to what the structure was, based on research by MTSU Cultural Geography students, it does seem likely the structure was a powder house for storage of explosives. Geographers were able to find another powder house located at the old Burra Burra copper

mine in southeast Tennessee, a structure that temporally fits the Radnor powder house and has almost exactly the same dimensions as Radnor's collapsed structure.

This interpretation is further supported by the remains of a very small structure located about 100 meters from the powder house at Radnor. Types of artifacts found here indicate the structure was more ephemeral than a habitation. Earlier archeological interpretation labeled the structure as a house or cabin. With the small size (not much bigger in dimensions than the powder house), minimal domestic or utilitarian artifacts found, and number of liquor bottle fragments, it is now interpreted by MTSU geographers as a guard house and built not for permanent occupation but for temporary use while safeguarding the contents of the powder house. Geography students from MTSU were instrumental in interpreting these sites to better understand the early days of Radnor and its rail history.

Restoration After the 2010 Flood

One of the most recent examples of MTSU geography student engagement at Radnor deals with the Historic Valve House Trail. Starting in 2010, geography students began research on an historic area in what is now known as an early industrial complex site at the park, which consists of the lake, dam, spillway, caretaker house, and valve house. Students researched the structures and the L&N Railroad connection to the site, contributed to interpretive panels for the

site, and lastly, participated in the reconstruction of the valve house and the construction of the newest interpretive trail (and first historic trail) at Radnor Lake State Natural Area.

Using oral geographies with the last caretaker for the lake, Carrie McElyea (aka Mrs. Mac), students began to understand the important role the lake, its water, and the valve house played in the early transportation and industrialization of Nashville. The lake was essential to the operation of the locomotives and the watering of cattle going to Midwestern markets. The valve was the "heart" of this operation releasing a steady source of water. While the valve house itself was a small unassuming structure, below its floor lay the large valve that was manually turned on daily by Mrs. Mac to allow water to course through underground pipes to the railyards. The valve house was already in poor condition, but the Nashville flood of 2010 destroyed what was left. Our geography students gathered information not only to rebuild the structure but to lay the hiking trail and provide interpretive displays. Recently, the new Valve House Trail was opened at the park, and even more recently the building was reconstructed. It is testament to experiential learning and the dedication of our students to the preservation and interpretation of the park.

Connecting the Past to the Future

MTSU geography students will continue research with this industrial complex site



MTSU class at Radnor Lake on January 30, 2016. photo: Steve Ward

and with the restoration of the caretaker house—its original four-room frame construction. This will include additional interpretive work in the form of literature and information kiosks.

Radnor and MTSU geography have been key contributors to the South Central Historical Archeology Conference (SCHAC) held annually, and the students' work has been displayed through posters and presentations. SCHAC has requested in the past that Radnor host the conference, which was made possible by the contributions of MTSU students. SCHAC provides a platform for students to showcase their involvement in the reconstruction, interpretation, and preservation of the park—real-time and real-world experience.

The relationship between Radnor Lake State Natural Area and MTSU's Cultural Geography program is a symbiotic one—a relationship that gives our students applied and practical knowledge to carry them into the workforce upon graduation or for entering graduate school. ■

Radnor Area Across the Years

1914–17 Construction of an earthen dam on Otter Creek forming Radnor Lake is completed by the Louisville & Nashville Railroad.

1919 The first water from Radnor Lake is diverted to Radnor Yard.

1954 Water is no longer needed for use by the railroad with a shift to

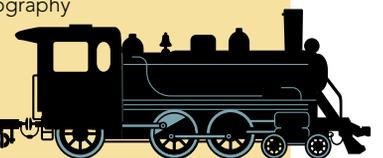
diesel engines—the reason for Radnor lake's creation is no longer its reason for existence.

1962 The L&N sells the lake and surrounding property to a private developer for residential development.

1972 Fundraising efforts are organized to meet the \$3 million price tag for the

property; Friends of Radnor Lake is formed and becomes instrumental in the purchase and preservation; Radnor becomes the state's first designated natural area.

2002–present MTSU Cultural Geography students conduct research on the property



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Celebrating Southern

MTSU's first turn to host the Southern Literary Festival was a real page-turner.

The festival, which started in 1937 to promote Southern literature among undergraduates, saw a record number of schools register for the March 2016 event. English Department lecturer Jennifer Wachtel Kates served as SLF president for 2015–16, planned this year's festival, and oversaw the 2015 SLF Undergraduate Writing Contest.

MTSU's first time hosting also made a permanent impact on the organization. Alexandra Duross, a junior Writing minor who contributed as an SLF writing intern, compiled a digital history of the Southern Literary Festival and helped establish a permanent system of archiving.

"Now, every SLF host institution will have its own Alex," said Beth Spencer, the festival's executive director.

MTSU brought together undergraduates and faculty from 25 member institutions for three days of readings, master classes, and workshops.

Ann Patchett, Nashville author and Parnassus bookstore owner, gave the Friday keynote for the highlight of the festival. Patchett inspired the audience with her five motivations for writing, beginning with "revenge."

Also featured Friday evening was a special performance in Tucker Theatre from Minton Sparks, the "love child of Hank Williams and Flannery O'Connor," who enthralled the intimate audience with her honky-tonk spoken word mashup.

Involving Faculty Campus-Wide

The Patchett and Sparks events were free and open to the public, thanks to the Distinguished Lectures Fund, Peck Fund, and departments of Recording Industry and Women's and Gender Studies.

"MTSU's SLF was an interdisciplinary effort, including contributions from seven departments within four colleges," Kates said.

English M.A. student Starshield Lortie served as secretary and treasurer for the festival, which rotates annual hosting duties. Kates worked with student and alumni volunteers, many of whom had participated in past festivals.

Nineteen presenters and authors addressed topics ranging from the standard fiction, poetry, and playwriting to songwriting, bookmaking, and writing as civic engagement.

Faculty from the departments of English, Art, and Electronic Mass Communication led hands-on sessions, like Claudia



Kevin A. Brown



Claudia Barnett



Nathan Bell photo: Buddy Mesker



Dana Chamblee Carpenter



Matthew Leavitt Brown



Gaylord Brewer



Lynda Bouchard



Minton Sparks photo: Gina Binkley





MTSU leaves a good first impression after hosting historic festival and encouraging emerging writers

Barnett's playwriting class entitled "What if He Sold Her Arm" or Gaylord Brewer's impromptu collaboration with esteemed songwriter Nathan Bell on the intersection of poetry and songwriting.

Thursday afternoon included a moving reading from Matthew Brown's Writers Corps participants. Other MTSU faculty presenters from the College of Liberal Arts were Kevin Brown, Karen Alea Ford, Meena Khalili, David Lumpkin, Randy Mackin, Kathleen O'Connell, and Candie Moonshower.

Finding the Writing Muse

The heart of the festival was undergraduate writing. SLF was founded as a way for schools to connect their writing communities, and its focus has always been on empowering new writers. Contest winners read their work aloud each day; both students and faculty shared the open mic.

"The conference provided me with enough tools to not only improve my writing skills, but to also have confidence in myself as a writer," senior English major Chelsey Dugger said.

"Past Festivals have been transformative for my student writers," Kates said. "They have come away from Oxford, Mississippi, or Dahlonega, Georgia, with newly drafted poems and stories and

newly formed perceptions of themselves as writers. "I hope I was able to do the same for this group."

Next year's festival will be held at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, and Kates plans to take another group of young writers along on a quest for literary empowerment. ■



Jennifer Kates



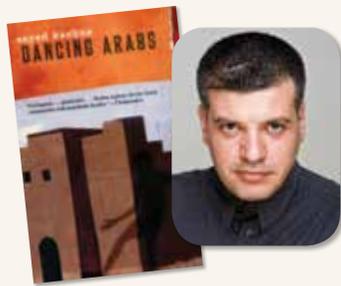
Ann Patchett

Timely Topics

Speaker series addresses writers' works and current events, from race and religion to sports and science

Writer **Sayed Kashua**, a Palestinian citizen of Israel who writes in Hebrew, shared his unique perspective on Arab-Israeli relations with an audience at MTSU on March 22, 2016. Kashua, who recently migrated to the U.S., is a well-known public figure in Israel, particularly for his humorous columns in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* and as the writer and creator of the hit television programs *Arab Labor* and *The Writer* in Israel. He is hailed by the *New York Times* as “a master of subtle nuance in dealing with both Arab and Jewish society.”

His first novel, *Dancing Arabs*, was adapted into a feature film, *A Borrowed Identity*, that premiered at the 2014 Telluride Film Festival. Subsequent works published in the U.S.—*Let It Be Morning*, *Second Person Singular*, and most recently *Native: Dispatches from an Israeli-Palestinian Life*—have solidified his international reputation as a significant literary voice. With sharp wit and humor, he deals with problems faced by Arabs in Israel, caught between two worlds.



Kashua's lecture, a free event open to the public, was made possible by the MTSU Middle East Center and the Distinguished Lecture Fund. He is currently a clinical professor in the Israel Studies program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. ■

Author **Denise Kiernan** discussed the amazing stories of the women who helped build Oak Ridge, Tennessee—and the atomic bomb—at an MTSU lecture on Sept. 21, 2015. Her book *The Girls of Atomic City* is a *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and NPR bestseller and was named as one of Amazon's Top 100 Best Books of 2013.

The book focused on the young women—many from middle Tennessee—who went to Oak Ridge, created in 1942 as one of the Manhattan Project's “secret cities,” for work, adventure, and fun but found themselves smack in the middle of history. Some of these women, known as “Calutron Girls,” adjusted dials that controlled the workings of the 1,152 calutrons used to separate isotopes of U-235 from uranium. The work fueled “Little Boy,” the first nuclear bomb used in warfare.

Her visit for the free public event at MTSU was sponsored by CLA. Kiernan, who lives in Asheville, North Carolina, has been published in various national publications, has worked in TV, and authored or co-authored several history titles, including *Signing Their Lives Away: The Fame and Misfortune of the Men Who Signed the Declaration of Independence* with her husband, Joseph D'Agnese. ■



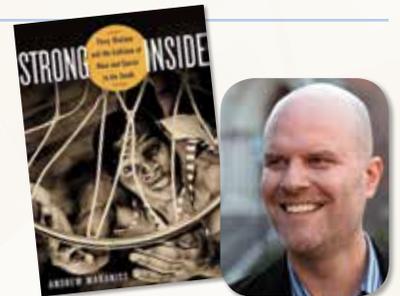
Playwright and novelist **Kia Corthron**, whose debut novel *The Castle Cross the Magnet Carter* earned praise in a *New York Times* Sunday Book Review, read from her works in a free public event at MTSU on Feb. 17, 2016. Corthron's many plays have been

produced nationally and internationally, and her work focuses on sociopolitical issues such as homelessness, race, and violence.

Her first novel looks at two sets of brothers, one pair white and one black, growing up in small-town Alabama and Maryland, respectively. The narrative “sweeps forward (and then back) between World War II and the first decade of the new millennium, touching on the civil rights movement, AIDS, deaf culture, lynching, love, and sexuality,” 2012 guest lecturer Leonard Pitts Jr. wrote in the *Times* book review. “. . . And we watch all four lives collide in a moment of stunning horror that changes them inalterably and stains everything that comes after.”

Corthron has garnered the Windham Campbell Prize for Drama, the Simon Great Plains Playwright Award, the United States Artists Jane Addams Fellowship, the Lee Reynolds Award, and the Otto Award. She has written episodes for *The Wire* and *The Jury*, winning a Writers Guild Award and an Edgar Award. The MTSU Virginia Peck Trust Fund and CLA made Corthron's visit possible. ■

Nashville writer **Andrew Maraniss** spoke at MTSU about his book *Strong Inside: Perry Wallace and the Collision of Race and Sports in the South* on Nov. 9, 2015. The biography chronicles former Vanderbilt University basketball star Perry Wallace's 1967–70 breakthrough as the first varsity African-American scholarship athlete in any sport in the Southeastern Conference.



Wallace would see the team's schedule before the season and “look at the road trips he was about to take with the deepest sense of dread,” Maraniss said in a WMOT radio interview. “He would imagine . . . the worst thing that could happen on one of these trips. In his mind, it was to get shot and killed out on the court during a game or around town before or after a game.”

Maraniss worked in media relations for Vanderbilt and the Tampa Bay Devil Rays major league baseball before joining the public relations firm of McNeely Pigott & Fox. The author, who has now embarked on a full-time writing career, was a recipient of the Fred Russell-Grantland Rice sportswriting scholarship at Vanderbilt. ■

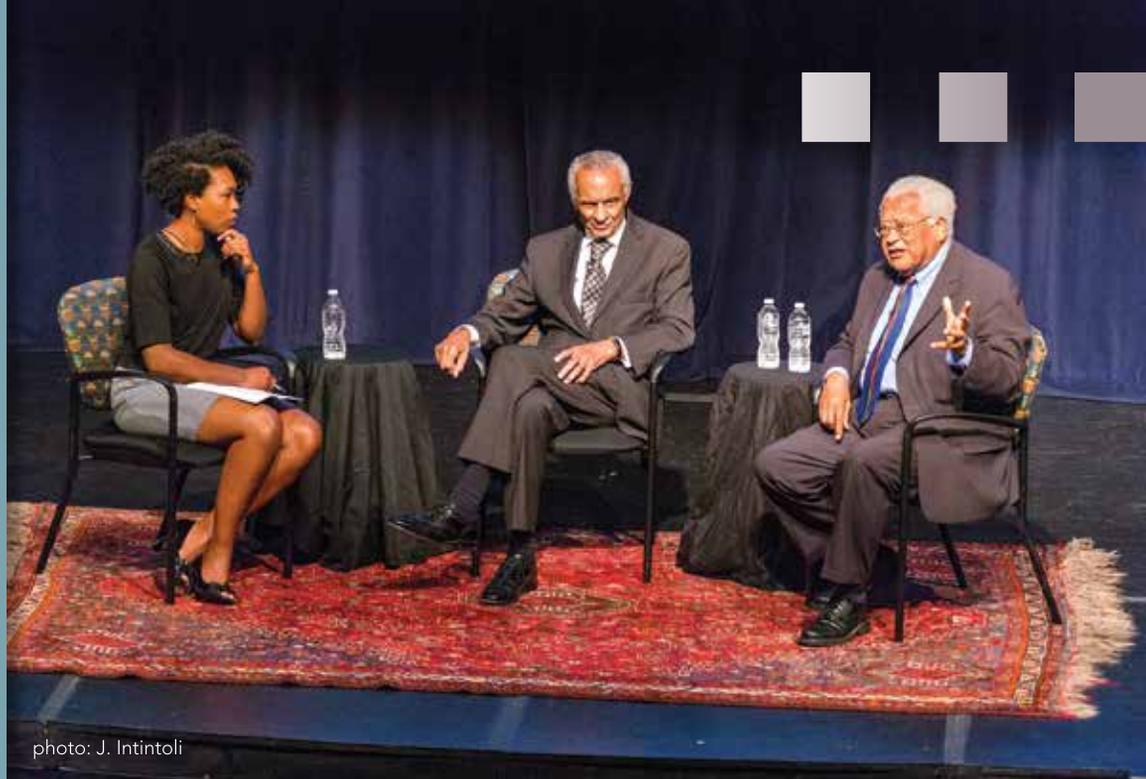


photo: J. Intintoli

Two titans of the Civil Rights Movement, the Rev. C.T. Vivian, and the Rev. James Lawson discussing present-day civil rights challenges as part of the annual Constitution Day events moderated by Aleia Brown.

by Gina K. Logue

Two founding fathers of the modern civil rights movement hold nothing back during their visit to the MTSU campus

"To know nothing of what happened before you were born is to forever remain a child." These prescient words by the ancient Roman philosopher Cicero are as true today as they ever were. His insights on public affairs inspired 18th-century Enlightenment thinkers, such as John Locke, whose philosophy formed much of the basis of our American democracy.

A standing-room-only crowd of nearly 1,000 people, many of them MTSU students, packed Tucker Theatre on Constitution Day, Sept. 17, 2015, to hear a ringing endorsement of democracy and a call to its preservation. The Revs. C.T. Vivian and James Lawson Jr., two of the founding fathers of the modern civil rights movement, made what happened before some of us were born come alive.

The event was billed as "No Voice, No Choice: The Voting Rights Act at 50," but the discussion—moderated by Public History doctoral student Aleia Brown—encompassed a whole host of related subjects. The veteran activists held forth on everything from the unfulfilled promise of the U.S. Constitution to the impact of income inequality on today's social justice movements.

The Flash Point

The conversation turned to Black Lives Matter, formed after a series of African-American men were killed by police under questionable circumstances in various locations across America. Black Lives Matter participants have been accused of being disruptive, even by people largely believed to be sympathetic to their interests, if not their tactics.

Lawson, a mentor to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in the 1960s, observed that disruption is a legitimate tactic. However, he cautioned that it works best when it is part of an overall strategic plan.

"We have too much activism in the United States and too little visionary, strategic thinking," Lawson said.

As a result, Lawson predicted, Black Lives Matter may sputter and lose momentum without a more comprehensive vision.

"They will be co-opted by the Democratic Party," he said. "They will be given jobs to run the presidential campaign in 2016 so that the evolution or emergence of Black Lives Matter as an effective movement of change will be temporarily halted."

Lawson's experience informs his perspective. The 86-year-old minister organized the Nashville lunch counter sit-ins of 1960 during his divinity studies at Vanderbilt University. He also took part in the Freedom Rides to desegregate interstate bus transportation and the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery voting-rights marches.

Both Lawson and Vivian detailed the gritty, boring, repetitive rehearsals that prepared them for the demonstrations they hoped would enlighten the nation. And both of them bemoaned

Americans' lack of risk-taking today compared with their contemporaries, who knew they would be jailed, beaten, and, in many cases, murdered.

Vivian, 91, participated in his first civil rights sit-in in 1947 in Peoria, Illinois. He helped the

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. create the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and also was a veteran of the Freedom Rides.

Vivian observed that, after all that effort and terrible cost, most eligible Americans don't even exercise their right to vote.

"Having the ticket in your pocket won't get it if you don't use it," he said.

Both men agreed that income inequality is at the root of this reluctance to take the risks associated with participatory democracy. Vivian attacked the chasm between the economic elite and the rest of the country.

"My fear right now is that the billionaires of this nation . . . are going to make it seem as though we have a democracy where, in fact, that is in doubt," Vivian said.

A Broader View

Lawson and Vivian's critiques were not aimed at any particular group or generation, but, rather, at a group of conditions that they believe have fostered a sort of political malaise. Lawson referred to them collectively as "spiritual wickedness" and individually as "racism, sexism, violence, and plantation capitalism."

"My fear right now is that the billionaires of this nation . . . are going to make it seem as though we have a democracy where, in fact, that is in doubt."

—C.T. Vivian



photo: J. Intintoli



“Our constitution ... is the most daring document ever written in human history because it was written in the midst of a world system that was largely top-down.”

—James M. Lawson



photo: J. Intintoli

Their presence in an academic environment did not inhibit their criticism of the intellectual community either. Lawson faulted academia for failing to create a climate that would foster more progressive social change. College campuses were incubators of student activism in the 1960s.

For all their acknowledgments of continuing inequities, Lawson and Vivian reaffirmed their commitment to the U.S. Constitution, the bedrock manifesto on which the hope of democratic fulfillment is based.

“Our constitution . . . is the most daring document ever written in human history because it was written in the midst of a world system that was largely top-down,” Lawson said.

The forum was the conclusion of two days of public readings of segments of the U.S. Constitution around campus. But Mary Evins, research professor for the Center for Historic Preservation and coordinator of the American Democracy Project at MTSU, asserted that involvement in a democratic society should not be limited to special annual events.

“Thinking about and practicing the best we are and the best we can be and the best we should be—that should be an everyday action in our daily lives,” Evins said. “It shouldn’t be singular. It shouldn’t be unique. It should be just commonplace.” ■



“No Voice, No Choice” was sponsored by MTSU’s American Democracy Project, the Center for Historic Preservation, the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Media and Entertainment, the John Seigenthaler Chair of Excellence in First Amendment Studies, the University Honors College, the Jennings A. Jones Chair of Excellence in Free Enterprise, the Office of the University Provost, and the League of Women Voters of Murfreesboro/Rutherford County.



Left: Nashville Mayor Ben West greets C.T. Vivian (center) and activist Diane Nash on the steps of the Metro Courthouse in announcing that the city’s lunch counters should be desegregated, April 19, 1960.

Right: James M. Lawson is arrested for his role in student sit-ins, March 30, 1960.

Photos courtesy of Nashville Public Library, Special Collections.



John F. Kennedy

35th President

Religious Affiliation:
Roman Catholic

Party affiliation:
Democratic

Elected 1960
Opponent:
Richard Nixon

Took office
Jan. 20, 1961
Assassinated
Nov. 22, 1963

Vice president:
Lyndon B. Johnson

Electoral College:
303 JFK; 219 Nixon

States carried:
23 JFK; 26 Nixon

Popular vote margin:
34,220,984 (49.72%) JFK;
34,108,157 (49.55%) Nixon

Education: Harvard

Born: May 29, 1917,
Brookline, Massachusetts

Prior positions in government:
U.S. Senator, 1953–61;
U.S. Representative,
1947–53

Military service:
U.S. Navy, 1941–45
(WWII)

First Lady:
Jacqueline Kennedy

*Above photo courtesy of
Library of Congress*

Church and State



Gore Center papers show how religious concerns “dealt death blow” to JFK’s 1960 campaign in Tennessee

by Kent Syler

After the 2016 Iowa caucuses, U.S. senators and presidential candidates Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz professed their faith. Rubio, a Roman Catholic, said “I thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and I thank God for allowing me the opportunity to come this far with each of you.” Cruz, a Southern Baptist, declared, “God bless the state of Iowa. Let me first say, to God be the glory.”

With Catholic and Protestant candidates talking so openly about their faiths, it’s hard to believe that just a few decades ago many Protestant voters in Tennessee feared the Pope’s influence on American politics if they elected a Catholic President.

MTSU’s Albert Gore Research Center holds the official papers of Sen. Albert Gore Sr. These letters and documents detail how John F. Kennedy’s Catholicism and a fictitious Knights of Columbus Oath put Gore and other Tennessee Democrats on the defensive and played a key role in Richard Nixon’s victory in this largely Protestant state.

After two near misses by a combined total of only 8,218 votes in the 1952 and 1956 presidential elections, Tennessee’s Democratic leadership was excited about Kennedy’s chances.

However, his campaign committee, “composed of three Baptists, a Presbyterian, and a Methodist,” understood Kennedy’s religious affiliation posed a liability.

From his 17th-floor law office in Nashville’s Life and Casualty Tower, Tennessee Campaign Committee member and “eighth-generation” Baptist, Harry Phillips wrote a letter to Kennedy entitled “Should I Vote for a Catholic for the President of United States?”

Phillips had no problem with Kennedy’s religious affiliation, but told the senator he was “being asked questions concerning your position on the issues of separation of church and state.” History shows Phillips was wise to anticipate questions.

Pastor Clyde Martin of Columbia’s First Baptist Church wrote Gore at the request of a church member who had received what was purported to be the “Oath of The Knights of Columbus,” which read:



"I do promise and declare that I will, when opportunity presents, make and wage relentless war, secretly and openly, against all heretics, Protestants and Masons, as I am directed to do, to extirpate them from the face of the whole earth; and that I will spare neither age, sex, nor condition, and that I will hang, burn, waste, boil, flay, strangle, and bury alive those infamous heretics; rip up the stomachs and wombs of their women, and crush their infants' heads against the walls in order to annihilate their execrable race . . ."

The pastor also wanted to know if it was true the oath was published in the Congressional Record.

Gore responded:

"This question arises quite often and the Library of Congress has prepared a fact sheet on it, a copy of which is enclosed.

"The oath does appear in the Congressional Record, but as an exhibit in connection with an investigation which condemned the oath as 'false,' 'libelous,' and 'spurious.' In much the same way, we find the words of Satan quoted in the Scriptures."

The oath was false, but the letters kept coming and Gore had to keep defending his support for Kennedy. Evangelist O. D. Johns of the Main Street Church of Christ in Milan wrote:

"A very powerful force has influenced you to turn on your church leaders and many of your faithful supporters. What could you gain in Memphis Wednesday by saying that anyone who speaks or writes against the Roman Catholics is inspired by communism? What has Kennedy offered you that you can afford to make such a false statement about so many true Americans in the state of Tennessee and in your Baptist Church?"

Gore responded quickly:

"I cannot imagine how you understood that I said that 'anyone who speaks or writes against the Roman Catholics is inspired by communism.' I have had no such thoughts as this. I will appreciate it if you will let me know by what means you obtained such an impression."

Not all Tennesseans had a problem with Kennedy's religious affiliation. W. D. Smith of Memphis wrote Gore:

"I prefer a Catholic Democrat to a pacifist Quaker Republican during critical times such as these."

But, in the end, Kennedy's Catholicism forced the campaign to spend too much time playing, defense and Nixon won Tennessee by 75,000 votes. Nixon ran up large margins in traditionally Republican East Tennessee, while Kennedy underperformed in traditionally Democratic rural areas in the middle and western parts of the state.

Harry Phillips wrote Robert Kennedy telling him: "There's no question that the religious issue cut down the normal Democratic majority in the state."

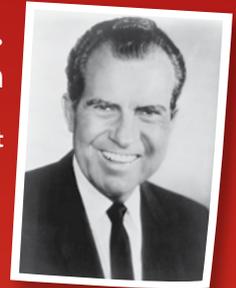
Gore was even stronger in his analysis: "The religious factor surely dealt us a death blow as far as the state is concerned." ■

Kent Syler is the special projects coordinator for MTSU's Albert Gore Research Center and an instructor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations. Email Kent.Syler@mtsu.edu.



Richard M. Nixon

47th President



Religious Affiliation: Quaker

Party affiliation: Republican

1960 opponent: John F. Kennedy

VP candidate:

Henry Cabot Lodge Jr.

Elected 1968, '72

Took office Jan. 20, 1969

Resigned Aug. 9, 1974

Vice presidents: Spiro Agnew; Gerald Ford

Education: Whittier; Duke School of Law

Born: Jan. 9, 1913, Yorba Linda, California

Prior positions in government:

Vice President, 1953-61;

U.S. Senator, 1951-53;

U.S. Representative, 1947-51; Attorney for U.S. Office of Emergency Mangement, 1942

Military service:

U.S. Navy Reserve, active duty 1942-46 (WWII); inactive duty 1946-66

First Lady: Pat Nixon

Above photo courtesy of Library of Congress

Breaking Bread Together

by Mary A. Evins

The American Democracy Project and CLA sponsor interfaith dialogue to help community colleges enrich students' experiences

Five prayers of humility and generosity of spirit welcomed Tennesseans to an interfaith luncheon at the start of the new year to show how people of faith—how Americans—can come together with open hearts and grace to learn from, share with, and support one another.

The meal had no formal program. Faculty and community members engaged in open and deeply personal conversations about religious diversity—all in an effort to model interfaith dialogue for Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) faculty.

People in brilliant saffron robes, soft silk saris, and modest head scarfs sat down together and broke communication barriers with those wearing clerical collars, crosses, and yarmulkes. We began with prayers by religious leaders and then pointedly asked each attendee to sit down with two people he or she had never previously met. Starter questions were provided, allowing people to open up about personally meaningful parts of their own faith. Conversion was not the aspiration—only listening and learning.

The inspiring luncheon, which took place in mid-January at the Wat Amphawan Buddhist temple in Murfreesboro, showcased the work and principles of the MTSU College of Liberal Arts. The event was developed by the American Democracy Project (ADP) as part of the Bridging Cultures at

Community Colleges grant program in partnership with Jackson State and Cleveland State community colleges.

Many Tennessee college students will now begin higher education locally in their home communities through Tennessee Promise. The program is important financially for students and their families, yet one of its outcomes is that public higher education is ever

more isolated geographically and, therefore, culturally. Going away to college carries with it the excitement of being exposed to new settings, cohorts, ideas, and experiences. Staying closer to home for school may mean that our state's college students receive fewer exposures beyond their regular familial networks.

For this very reason, intentionally creating opportunities to expose students to difference—bringing the outside in, to their campuses—is critical for their education.

Multiculturalism in coursework

The core of civic learning is engagement—reciprocal, egalitarian, democratic engagement—toward building community, loving one's neighbor, forming together a more perfect union.

MTSU, under the application for the National Endowment for the Humanities program, will provide TBR community college faculty with the sorts of experiences that professors are asked to develop in their classrooms through the Bridging Cultures grant. The pilot project with Cleveland State in east Tennessee and Jackson State in west Tennessee has the potential to impact students across perhaps 17 Tennessee counties, given the two community colleges' main campuses, satellite sites, and their dual enrollment courses with area high schools. Interfaith programs and exchanges are typically focused in Tennessee's main cities, where we are

“Intentionally creating opportunities to expose students to difference—bringing the outside in, to their campuses—is critical for their education.”



often “preaching to the choir.” However, Tennessee has 95 counties, most of which are rural. Although some counties may be without multicultural opportunities, schools may overlook or fail to personally connect to the multicultural opportunities that already exist in their hometown areas.

The January luncheon offered an example of how important it is for us as professors, human beings, and neighbors to get out into the community, sit down peacefully with fellow Americans who are different than ourselves, get to know our wider community members with whom we rarely personally engage, and experience the connection of our shared humanity. In addition to Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and the Catholic church, the Sikh faith and many Protestant Christian denominations were represented at the lunch. Immigrant Americans and native-born Americans of multiple ethnicities, cultures, languages, regions, races, sexual orientations, and genders prayed, ate, and talked together.

“Things like this make me more aware of culture and more aware that I need to put more emphasis on people from different backgrounds,” said Nigel Bradley, an adjunct professor of literature at both Jackson State and the University of Tennessee-Martin.

Diversity and democracy

Nationwide, the NEH-funded grant gives stipends to community college faculty for changing General Education courses. The aim is to include enriched and refreshed pedagogies, experiences, and activities that will infuse classes with community learning, civic education, intercultural exposures, and ideas to help students move toward open, inquisitive, and inquiring mindsets. The Association of American Colleges and Universities reiterates that all college students should have educational experiences that teach them about people from different backgrounds and cultures and have collaborative opportunities with others “for the sake of students, the economy, and civil society.”

MTSU hosted an initial five-day workshop in July 2015 for the grant program that included rich opportunities for participating faculty to meet new people, visit houses of worship to which most had never been, engage in valuable discussions across difference, and undertake new experiences outside of the repetitive boxes



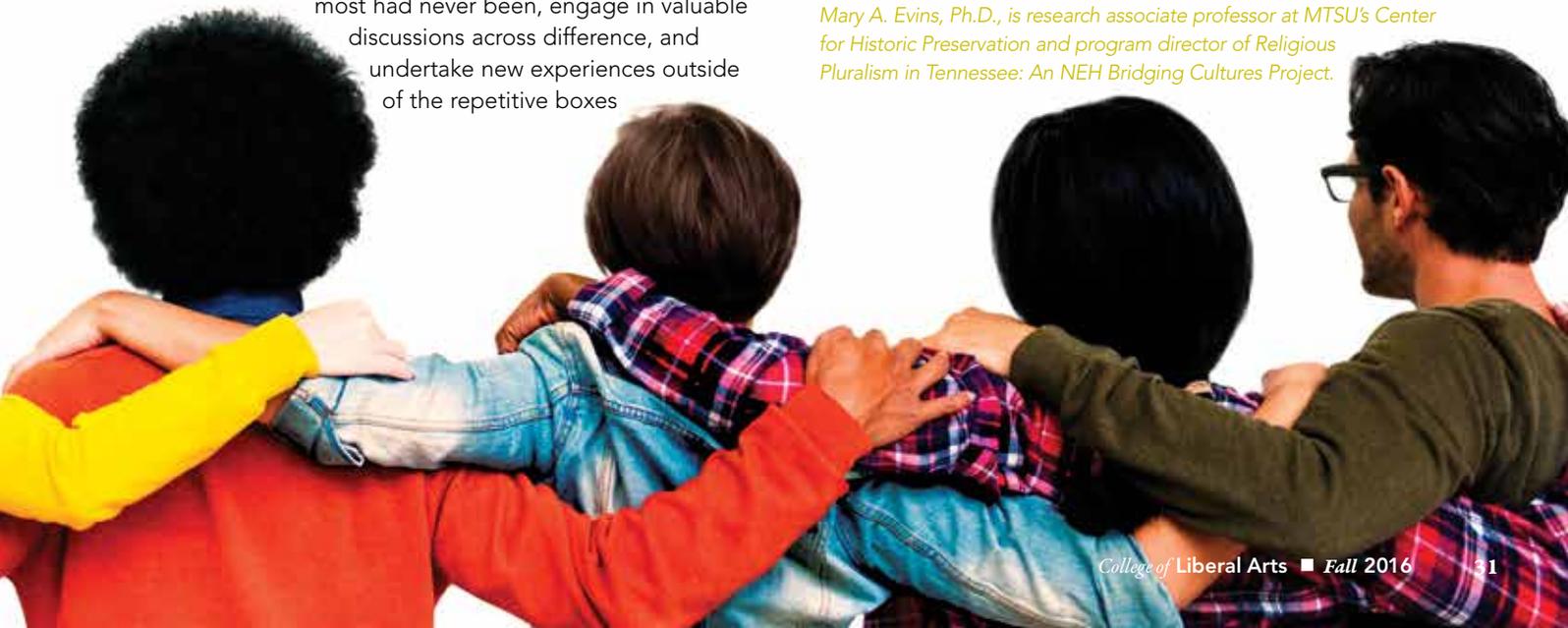
The Rev. Joe Pat Breen, a retired Catholic priest, delivers a Christian blessing prior to the interfaith luncheon at Wat Amphawan Buddhist Temple January 15, 2015.

of daily life. Community college faculty engaged with fellow Tennesseans of many ethnic and religious backgrounds and learned about resources throughout Tennessee. The workshop and luncheon in January continued the engagement.

Faculty learning communities on cultural diversity education also took place at Jackson State and Cleveland State throughout the 2015–16 academic year. The JSCC and CSCC faculty then presented their course change redevelopment initiatives to the TBR in July 2016 at a statewide summit at the Islamic Center of Tennessee and the Ba’hai Center in Nashville. Religious, community, and civic education leaders joined others to discuss diversity as pedagogy for civic learning in higher education.

Offering experiential opportunities to faculty empowers them to provide the same for their students, inside and outside of the classroom. Faculty wrote reviews about how much the program opened their eyes to the multicultural richness of Tennessee. We absolutely advocate for study abroad and global travel, but we also know that intimate opportunities to grow in understanding the diversity right here at home must be made available to all students. Coming to know our neighbors through warm human interaction is essential to working together for the common good and building a more perfect union. ■

Mary A. Evins, Ph.D., is research associate professor at MTSU’s Center for Historic Preservation and program director of Religious Pluralism in Tennessee: An NEH Bridging Cultures Project.



John McDaniel Room Dedication by Gina K. Logue



The family of the late **Dr. John N. McDaniel**, former dean of the College of Liberal Arts, came together with the University to dedicate a plaque to his memory in Peck Hall on April 15, 2016.

The Shakespeare scholar served as a faculty member and chair of the English Department before becoming Liberal Arts dean for a quarter of a century.

Dr. McDaniel died in 2010, but the memory of his wit and his dedication to students will continue with the plaque placed outside the graduate study room/classroom 301. He influenced thousands of students and hundreds of faculty during his nearly 40-year tenure at the University.

"He was renowned for his wisdom, wit, and ability to deal with all kinds of people," said Interim Provost Mark Byrnes, McDaniel's successor as dean.

Two of his relatives continue his legacy in academia at MTSU. Son Scott McDaniel is a mathematics professor in University Studies, while nephew Robb McDaniel is a professor of Political Science.

"He was a teacher first," Scott McDaniel said. "In fact, when he was dean, he would teach a Shakespeare class pro bono."

Robb McDaniel recalled his uncle's humor, noting he passed out coal miners' hats at the next deans' meeting after one dean referred to his own college as "diamond mining" and said all the other colleges were "coal mining."

"He learned how to navigate craziness to the point where nothing seemed to surprise him," his nephew said, "and so, because of that, he was able to handle a lot of the craziness that deans have to handle with a degree of humorous detachment." ■

STUDENT ADDY® Awards add up for Art students

THE FUTURE OF ADVERTISING



MTSU design students celebrate their impressive haul at the recent 2016 Nashville Student ADDY Awards. Photo courtesy of American Advertising Federation Nashville

MTSU students' creativity earned them top honors from nearly 300 entries among seven midstate universities at the March 2016 Nashville Student ADDY Awards in what organizers called one of the nation's largest student competitions.

Students from MTSU won top honors in 15 out of the competition's 26 categories, as well as a Best of Show, two Judge's Choice, and Rising Star awards.

Twenty-three MTSU students received honors, including eight with multiple awards, courtesy of the American Advertising Federation Nashville.

Erica Belletete, Aly Booker, Alexa Games, Sarah Growden, Jackee LaFever, Katie Stephens, Caitlin Parker, and Matt Roberts all earned multiple honors. Other winners were Rachel Carlson, Hannah Cole, Matthew Eason, Aubrey Griggs, Amber Iacopelli, LaKeva Lewis, Aaron McMillian, Anahi Miranda, Haley Overby, Justin Morales, LaRon Stewart, Ariel Tyndell, Damarea Watts, Danny Weddle Jr., and Della Wheeler. ■

Friends of the Liberal Arts Board

New Member: *Libby Green*

Retired banker **Libby Lemieux Green** ('78, '92), who earned both her bachelor's and master's in History from MTSU, is a new member of the Friends of the Liberal Arts Board. A native and lifelong resident of Murfreesboro, Green retired in 2002 as vice president of human resources at Cavalry Banking (now Pinnacle Financial Partners) after 24 years of service.

She is a staunch believer in the value of a liberal arts education, knowing firsthand that one can successfully take the skills and knowledge that this curriculum provides into the business world. Green also has taught as an adjunct instructor in the History Department at MTSU and at Motlow State Community College.

Green enjoys volunteering in the community and is in her third term as trustee of the Oaklands Association, where she also served as president and secretary. She is a member of the Craddock Study Club and will serve as its president for 2016–17. Green, a member of First Baptist Church, additionally has volunteered with Habitat for Humanity. In August 2016,

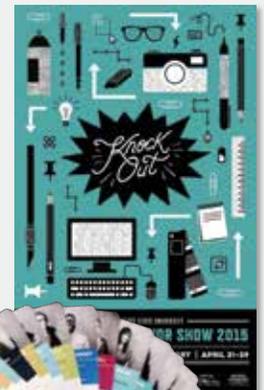
she and husband Gary had the great honor to work in Memphis on the Habitat for Humanity Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project.

Green is the 2016 recipient of the MTSU Alumni Association's True Blue Citation of Distinction—Service to Community Award. She is proud to say she is a product of the Murfreesboro City and Rutherford County school systems. Libby and Gary celebrated their 39th anniversary in 2016, and their daughter Rebecca is a college senior at Belmont University. ■



1 MTSU 2016 ADDYs Best of Show

These three design pieces advertising MTSU's spring 2015 Graphic Design Senior Show are the Best of Show winners for Alexa Games of Antioch, Katie Stephens of Soddy-Daisy, and senior Caitlin Parker of Franklin.



2 MTSU 2016 ADDYs Pet Peeve

MTSU senior Aly Booker's campaign illustration *30 Ways to Be a Pet Peeve: The Cat's Ultimate Guide to Owner Persuasion* was a Judge's Choice award winner. Booker, a Graphic Design major from Morristown, also won Gold ADDY awards for her poster *Poison* and for her book design for *The Silent Type*.



3 MTSU 2016 ADDYs Tech Packaging

MTSU senior Graphic Design major Sarah Growden's *Betula Tech Packaging* was a Judge's Choice award winner. Growden, a Rockvale resident, brought home an armload of ADDY awards, including a Gold ADDY for *Betula Tech Packaging* design, a second gold packaging award for her *High Tea* design, and a Silver ADDY for her *Olfactory Scent Lab* outdoor and transit advertising campaign.



4 MTSU 2016 ADDYs NOLA Band

This photo of New Orleans street musicians, *NOLA Band*, is a Rising Star Award and a Gold ADDY winner for MTSU student Jackee LaFever. LaFever, a senior Graphic Design major from Christiana, also received a Silver ADDY in the direct marketing competition for her *Music Unites Perpetual Calendar*.





“Triple Johnny,” Jim Sherraden



Faculty News

Carroll Van West (History), director of the Center for Historic Preservation, received the Career Achievement Award at the MTSU Foundation faculty awards in 2015–16. **Derek Frisby** (Global Studies) was awarded the True Blue Citation: Achievement in Education. **Mark E. Doyle** (History), **Adam L. McInturff** (English), and **Jason L. Pettigrew** (Foreign Languages and Literatures) were all named Outstanding Teachers. Distinguished Research Awards went to **Nancy Sloan Goldberg** (Foreign Languages and Literatures) and **Philip Edward Phillips** (English). **Mary F. Magada-Ward** (Philosophy) received Outstanding Teaching in General Education honors, while **Marsha D. Barsky** (Theatre and Dance) was given the Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award. **Aleka Akoyunoglou Blackwell** (English) won the Outstanding Public Service Award. **Jeff Gibson** (Theatre and Dance), **Jack Purcell** (Philosophy), **Antonio Vasquez** (Global Studies and Cultural Geography), and **Clyde Willis** (Political Science and International Relations) all were named Outstanding Advisors.

Pippa Holloway (History) took home the Faculty Research Award at the College of Liberal Arts faculty and staff annual awards ceremony. **Janet McCormick** (Communication Studies and Organizational Communication) received the Faculty Teaching Award. **Julie Barger** (English) won the Faculty Student Success Award, and **Billie Jean Brown** (History) was given the Staff Student Success Award.



Student News

Dalton Lauderback, a 2015 graduate with a double major in Global Studies and Political Science, became MTSU’s 14th Fulbright recipient in the last seven years. Lauderback marks the ninth College of Liberal Arts student receiving the award. He is serving as an English teaching assistant in Sachsen, Germany, for 2016–17. Studying abroad, learning new languages, and volunteering with refugees

helped convince him of the importance of being a “globally engaged citizen.” Lauderback has minors in Psychology and German. He chose to apply for the Fulbright teaching position in Germany in part because his grandparents emigrated from the area in the 19th century. Lauderback hopes to later serve in Southeast Asia with the Peace Corps, then pursue his master’s, and eventually work for the nonprofit Mercy Corps.

Art News

An international exhibit visited Todd Art Gallery in November–December 2015. Seventy artists from around the world, including Art Department interim chair **Marisa Recchia**, presented their handcrafted Chawan—a bowl used in traditional Eastern tea ceremonies. It was only the second Chawan Expo exhibit in the U.S. Master-potter Masakazu Kusakabe, who guided construction of MTSU’s smokeless kiln, returned to participate in activities.

Todd Art Gallery showcased one of the most iconic advertising formats in the music industry with the “Hatch Show Print: A Retrospective” exhibit in February–March 2016. The display featured work by Hatch manager Celene Aubry; MTSU professor emeritus **Christie Nuell**; and two of Nuell’s

printing students, Hatch master printer **Jim Sherraden** (’83), one of Nuell’s first students at MTSU, and Hatch artist **Heather Moulder** (’11), a student during Nuell’s final teaching semester. Hatch’s printing firm, founded by C.R. and H.H. Hatch in 1879 in Nashville, produces 500 to 600 letterpress posters each year with the same Hatch brothers’ techniques, using hand-carved blocks laid out in reverse on plates, inked, and run through antique letterpress machines by hand.

Global Studies and Cultural Geography News

Graduate **Lisa Mayo**, now a professor of Geography and Earth Science at Motlow State Community College, will bring students to Radnor Lake to work with MTSU’s program and also separately on her research. She helps transition students from the two-year college to the MTSU four-year program.



Doug Heffington (second from left), Global Studies and Cultural Geography program director, receives the Blue Heron Award at the 2016 Radnor Lake Environmental Awards and Park of the Year Award Celebration. (See related article on page 24).

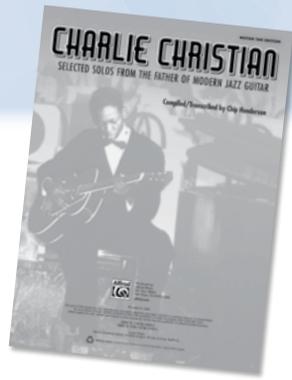
Music News

Brad Baumgardner was the recipient of the National Academic Advising Association’s Region 3 Excellence in Advising—New Advisor award for the state of Tennessee. He was presented with a plaque at the NACADA regional conference in Chattanooga in April 2016.

Music professor **Cedric Dent**’s (pictured right with son, Cedric Dent Jr.) new work, “I Hear the Drum,” had a world premiere by the Nashville Symphony and Chorus at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day “Let Freedom Sing” concert Jan. 17, 2016 at the Schermerhorn Center. Because the work was jointly commissioned by the NSO and Choral Arts Link, which provides choral experiences to grade school children particularly in Metro-Nashville, it has also led to recruiting opportunities for vocal jazz studies in MTSU’s School of Music. Dent also is giving a talk and will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at the University of Michigan’s School of Music, Theatre, and Dance Alumni Society awards ceremony in October 2016.



Ryan Frost and Andy Smith, former percussion graduate teaching assistants while earning their Master of Music degrees in Performance at MTSU, have earned their doctorates and were named directors of percussion studies at universities. Frost accepted his position at Northern Iowa University, and Smith was hired at the University of Texas–El Paso.



Adjunct professor **Chip Henderson** has compiled and transcribed a book of Charlie Christian solos for Alfred Music. The volume, entitled *Charlie Christian: Selected Solos from the Father of Modern Jazz Guitar*, includes 10 songs in a guitar tab edition, discusses Christian's approach to improvisation, lists other guitarists' thoughts on Christian, and talks about equipment used by the guitarist. Henderson conducts the jazz guitar ensemble and teaches jazz guitar at MTSU, performs in a variety of groups and orchestras, and is a freelance arranger.



Music Performance and Music Industry major **Alyssa Baranski** (pictured) won the South Carolina Flute Societies Collegiate Artist Competition, Kentucky Flute Festivals Collegiate Artist Competition, and the Mid-South Flute Festival Collegiate Masterclass Competition in 2016. She also placed second in the LaGrange Symphony Young Artist

Competition and was a finalist in the 2015 North Carolina Flute Festivals Young Artist Competition. **Megan McKinney** finished runner-up at the Kentucky competition to Baranski, while **Eric Luminais** took third in the Beethoven Club Competition in Memphis.

Rebecca Hovan, who earned her music degree at MTSU in 1983, is a flutist in the orchestra for the domestic tour of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. She had been teaching for many years but decided to follow her dream of performing after her children were grown.

Alumnus and adjunct professor **Matthew Lund**, who earned both a bachelor's and master's at MTSU, released the self-titled *The Lund McVey Group* album with his jazz quintet in November 2015.

Director **Michael Parkinson** recognized the Distinguished Alumni award recipients at the 2016 School of Music Honors Assembly: **Erik Warren**, founder of Innovation Percussion, and **Angela Tipps**, Nashville Chamber Singers conductor and MTSU lecturer.

Theatre and Dance News

Students from the Special Topics in Dance course performed alongside the professional Company Rose group for the premier of professor **Marsha Barsky's** *That You Have* original choreography. The evening-length contemporary dance took place at Nashville's Frist Center for Visual Arts on Jan. 29, 2016. The piece, sponsored in part by Barsky's MTSU Faculty Research and Creativity Award, explored central themes and images conjured up by the Frist exhibition, "Phantom Bodies: The Human Aura in Art."

English News

The English Department hosted the Linguistics Olympiad for the 10th year, with more than 100 students from public and private schools throughout the region participating in the April 2016 event. This annual competition in linguistics is an excellent opportunity for middle and high school students with an interest in language or logic to shine. For more information, visit mtsu.edu/linguisticsolympiad.



MTSU professor **Will Brantley** and Ph.D. graduate **Nancy Roche**, now a Vanderbilt faculty member, have co-edited a volume to be released this year in the University Press of Mississippi's "Conversations" series: *Conversations with Edmund White*.

Communication Studies and Organizational Communication News

Junior **Abigail M. Barnes**, a double major in English and in Communication Studies and Organizational Communications, worked at the Metro-Nashville Public Schools Exploration Career Fair at the Music City Convention Center.



Professor **Janet McCormick** joined Canada's Sue Heuman in being selected as 2016 Rae Hamlin Award winners by the International Association of Business Communicators. The award recognizes IABC volunteers for their work and impact at the grassroots level in advancing certification in their chapter, region, or workplace. McCormick, who began IABC's student chapter at MTSU in 2004, was inaugural chair of the IABC's new Global Communication Certification Council in 2015.

Foreign Languages and Literature News

Daniel Wann, a 2011 graduate in Spanish, finished medical school in 2015 at East Tennessee State University and was accepted by his first choice of Harvard for his residency in oncology. He said Harvard's interview committee was most interested in his majoring in both Spanish and biology at MTSU and his month-long backpacking trip in Spain for his post-college honeymoon.

Caleb Morris took third in Level 1, **Collin Fowler** won Level 2, and **DeAngelica Rose** placed second at Level 3 in the Tennessee Area Japanese Speech Contest.

Political Science and International Relations News

Darin Gordon, a 1985 Political Science graduate, was the longest serving director of TennCare until retiring in 2016 to return to the private sector. Gov. Bill Haslam said that Gordon brought stability to TennCare, Tennessee's \$10.5 billion Medicaid program for low-income Tennesseans.

The Humanity in Action Fellowship (HIA) programs in Europe and the U.S. provide yet another global educational opportunity for MTSU students.

Joseph David Thompson, a recent Political Science graduate who landed an international Fulbright Award in 2015, became the University's first recipient of a HIA Fellowship in 2016. Thompson participated in HIA's new John

Lewis Fellowship, an intensive program on diversity and civil rights in Atlanta.

Kent Syler (second from left), assistant professor and Gore Center special projects coordinator, joined Tom Coomes, Janita Hendricks, and Tuman Jones on the *Truman Jones Show* on WGNS radio to promote the Presidential Pre-Game Show in 2016.

The Art of Many Colors

Music faculty help create *Inspirations from Tennessee* new pieces based on Dolly Parton's work

Professor Deanna Little's brainchild, *Inspirations from Tennessee*, an arts-inclusive project funded by an MTSU Faculty Research and Creative Project grant, is releasing a musical CD in January 2017 with seven newly commissioned works inspired by Dolly Parton's repertoire. "I wanted to connect different elements of the arts based on Tennessee culture," Little said of how the project first developed.

Songwriters, artists, composers, and musicians from Tennessee have been the building blocks towards creating musical works drawing inspiration from other Tennessee artists. Dubbed "the Dolly project," the initiative first premiered in October 2015.

Composers on this project include School of Music faculty and/or graduates Cedric Dent, Bruce Dudley, Paul Osterfield, Jamey Simmons, Andy Smith, and Kristy Sullivan, plus Recording Industry faculty member Joseph Akins. Some of the performers include Akins and Music faculty and/or graduates Todd Waldecker, Christine Kim, Windell Little, Celine Thackston, and Rebecca Murphy. Recording Industry faculty member John Hill recorded the new works this past summer.

Six of the pieces use Parton's "Coat of Many Colors," as their inspiration. The other piece, at Osterfield's request, draws from her children's book *I Am a Rainbow*.

Little's idea is to link different forms of art through all types of Tennessee artists. The joining of the creative and performing arts, as well as the creation of art inspired from people that are immersed in Tennessee's culture, will not only contribute to the enrichment of music-making, but also will show how art of all kinds are connected to the lives we live and that one is not separate from the other. ■

sandbox: Let's Create by Adam McInturff

New club connects creators from different fields and wins a literary festival award for its e-magazine

A sandbox. It's a simple image that conjures childhood memories. As children, we played in sandboxes because we wanted to create. We wanted the joy that came from exploring our own imaginations. In many ways, a liberal arts education embodies those ideas, and a new creators' club here at Middle Tennessee State University is fostering connections that extend beyond the classroom.

Sandbox exists because Adam McInturff, Easton Horton, and Devin Sharpe value these connections. McInturff, a faculty member in the English Department, is a creative writer and award-winning instructor. Horton is a Political Science major who will soon be pursuing his master's. Devin Sharpe now holds a degree in Psychology with a minor in Marketing and aspires to work in the entertainment industry. They had different skillsets but wanted to unite to form stronger connections across campus and between their fields.

They formed an organization called Sandbox.

McInturff used his talents as a writer and his links to faculty in various departments.

Horton used his political science background to lead group meetings and take care of the legwork involved in starting a student organization.

Sharpe used his marketing background to create promotional materials and solve logistical issues within the club. They have connected illustrators to writers, linked writers to filmmakers, and fostered conversations between poets and songwriters.

So far, student response and success have been tremendous. With 109 members after less than a year, Sandbox is one of the largest and fastest-growing clubs on campus. After just one semester of being active, Sandbox submitted an electronic



magazine to the Southern Literary Festival. Artists, poets, fiction writers, and computer designers worked together to produce a single work of art. This website experimented with narrative, point of view, and various artistic styles, and it won first prize at the festival. This same team is already at work on next year's submission.

As Sandbox continues to grow, the question to MTSU's student body remains the same. What do you create? The answer is Sandbox's motto: Let's Create. If you are interested in getting involved, email Adam.Mcinturff@mtsu.edu. Sandbox's WordPress group page is sandboxmtsu.wordpress.com. ■

College of Liberal Arts

We hope you've enjoyed this edition of the *CLA Magazine* and are as excited as we are about the accomplishments of the College of Liberal Arts students, alumni, and faculty. Please consider a tax-deductible gift to support one of the programs highlighted in this issue—your generosity makes innovative learning in and out of the classroom possible.

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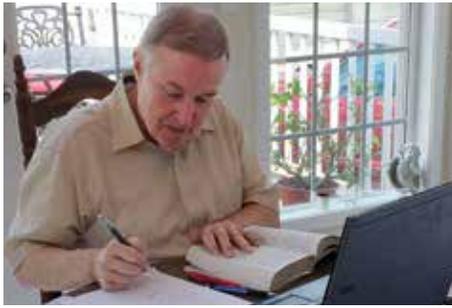
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OFF TO A GREAT START

After just one year, the new M.A. in Liberal Arts program enrolled over 30 this fall and will have its first graduates in 2016–17. Students vary in backgrounds and range in age from traditional graduate students to retirees. Don Enss (pictured), named the program's 2015–16 Distinguished Student, had not attended college in three decades and previously focused on biology and accounting. Foundations courses this year will look at identity and human migration, while a Topics archaeology course examines Civilizations and the Biosphere.

mtsunews.com/liberal-arts-masters-degree



DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Diane Nash is using her history-changing work for civil rights to advise and encourage those today who want to help America ensure freedom and justice for all. Nash talked about those frightening but uplifting days of the 1960s during MTSU's Constitution Day on Sept. 14, which also included the daylong reading of the historic document across campus.

Above: Diane Nash (second from right) and other students eat lunch at the previously segregated counter of the Post House Restaurant in the Greyhound bus terminal March 16, 1960.

Photo courtesy of Jack Corn, *The Tennessean*

www.mtsunews.com/constitution-day-2016



CIVIL RIGHTS SERVICE

Faculty members Sekou Franklin (Political Science and International Relations) and Amy Sayward (History) were appointed to four-year terms on the Tennessee Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights this fall. The 16 members conduct reviews and produce reports and recommendations on state and local civil rights issues—including justice, voting, discrimination, housing, and education. The bipartisan U.S. commission advises the President and Congress on civil rights matters and issues a federal civil rights report.

mtsunews.com/wayward-franklin-civil-rights-commission



FROM WAR REFUGEE TO ARTIST

Art professor Sisavanh Phouthavong-Houghton, who barely escaped war-ravaged Laos as a young girl, was featured in Nashville Public Television's *Next Door Neighbors: Becoming American* documentary series in summer 2016. In her latest art show, Phouthavong-Houghton explored the commonality of hummingbirds to human behaviors in her *Refueling* exhibit at Nashville's Tinney Contemporary gallery. A multimedia artist, she teaches advanced-level painting courses and won a MTSU Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award in 2014.

mtsunews.com/art-professor-student-vet-npt



FINGER-SNAPPING SHOWDOWN

West Side Story, in spring 2016, was the largest musical production by the Department of Theatre and Dance Department since *Les Miserables* in 2013. Director Kristi Shamburger and musical director Raphael Bundage led a cast of 38 with full orchestra, while Marsha Barsky assisted with choreography. *Peter Pan* is next (this year's lineup on page 17).

Above: Don and Hanna Witherspoon, alumni and major University donors, attend a pre-show MTSU Arts Patron Society reception.

mtsunews.com/west-side-story-2016



LATINO CULTURE AND THE BIG EASY

A new book co-authored by MTSU lecturer James Chaney (Global Studies and Cultural Geography) examines the Hispanic influence on New Orleans, which is best known for its French culture. *Hispanic and Latino New Orleans: Immigration and Identity Since the Eighteenth Century*, co-written by Chaney with Andrew Sluyter, Case Watkins, and Annie Gibson. Chaney discusses the impact of Spain's 40-year control over the beloved American city in his MTSU On the Record radio interview.

mtsunews.com/chaney-on-the-record-mar2016



Dr. Craig Carter

William Craig Carter, a graduate program director and professor in Sociology and Anthropology, died from cancer at Alive Hospice in Nashville on March 26, 2016, at age 58. His students praised him for his lively and entertaining presentation ability, intellectual and scholarly approach, fairness, and his willingness to meet students outside of class for assistance. He made a difference in his students' lives and was committed to their success. In addition, he was a talented musician and a loving father. Dr. Carter will be sorely missed by his family, friends, students, and colleagues. ■

Dr. Mario Perez-Reilly

Retired Political Science professor Mario Perez-Reilly passed away peacefully on July 6, 2016, following an extended illness at age 79. Dr. Perez-Reilly came to the United States from Puerto Rico at age 19 to attend the University of Tennessee, then pursued graduate study at the University of Kansas. There he met Elizabeth, who was also a graduate student. The two were married in March 1962 and moved to Knoxville the following September, so that he could work toward a Ph.D. in Political Science at UT. After completing his doctoral coursework, he began teaching Political Science at MTSU, where he enjoyed a long and distinguished career. Upon retiring this past May, he was awarded the title of professor emeritus. He had a positive influence on the lives of many students for nearly five decades. ■



Dr. Russell Church

Russell Church, former MTSU debate coach and professor, devoted his efforts to a lifelong pursuit of education for himself and his students. From 1998 to 2006, Dr. Church served as chair of the Speech and Theatre Department. After experiencing two strokes and the development of Alzheimer's, Dr. Church quietly passed away on July 6, 2016. For those wishing to honor his memory and support his love of debate, we request that tax-deductible donations be sent to the General Debate Fund, so that a scholarship for debaters can be established in his memory. Information can be found at mtsu.edu/debate/giving.php. ■

Dr. David Lavery

David L. Lavery, professor of English and director of the department's Graduate Studies, died Aug. 30, 2016, at the age of 67. Dr. Lavery's career trajectory took a surprising detour out of the realm of the canon of literature and into the uncharted waters of popular culture, particularly television studies. He was author, co-author, editor, or co-editor of over 20 books and had lectured around the world. He was considered an expert on the TV series *Lost*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and *The Sopranos* and had planned to teach a class on *Game of Thrones*. Dr. Lavery had a profound impact on students and colleagues and will be greatly missed by the University community. Memorials may be made to the MTSU Foundation. ■



For full In Memoriam text, please visit:
mtpress.mtsu.edu/magazine/2016/08/16/in-memoriam/

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