

Volume 25, Issue 5

O Fortuna!: the Undergraduate Issue

In this unusual spring, it gives me great pleasure to mark the end of the academic year with the familiar ritual of recognizing undergraduate student achievements in English. The English Department's undergraduate programs owe their excellence to fantastic students and a dedicated faculty and staff who work year-round on curriculum and event planning, teaching and research, departmental administration, building maintenance, and technological support.

This spring I especially wish to recognize the work of two Directors of Undergraduate Studies: **Matt Brown** served in the DUS position through fall and oversaw the programs through an impactful period, culminating with the graduation of the first cohort of English & Creative Writing majors in spring 2019. This semester, incoming Director of Undergraduate Studies **Adam Hooks** jumped into the position with both feet--and then continued to direct the programs with a broken knee. Working from home via laptop before it was even a thing, Adam's heartening messages to students about how Shakespeare endured the plague have made me appreciate that an Early Modernist is just the right professor to help us navigate a pandemic. Matt, Adam, and some 900 English and English & Creative Writing majors have been supported each day by superstars: Undergraduate Advisors **Kate Torno** and **Allison Wanger**; English administrative staff **Rebecca Isaacs**, **Hannah Sorrell**, and **Corey Campbell**; and faculty administrators including Honors Program Director **Kathleen Diffley**, English & Creative Writing Director **Ed Folsom**, and Chair of the Undergraduate Awards and Scholarships committee **Lori Branch**.

I would also like to thank this year's English front desk staff, consisting of four wonderful and capable student employees, **Abby Asher**, **Cassandra Chia**, **John Lyons**, and **Cailyn Snodgrass**. Working online simply cannot substitute for your warm greetings upon entering the English Department main office! Thanks go as well to the spirited corps of Undergraduate Ambassadors who represent the English Department at public events and assist with prospective student recruitment: **Katherine Fitzgerald**, **Amelia Johnson**, **Elizabeth Johnson**, **Grace Oeth**, **Madeline Berner**, **Cassandra Birk**, **Alexandra Chasteen**, **Allison Paltzer**, and **Rachel Zingg**. Thank you also to the caring EPB custodial staff who disinfected our building and have been reassigned to UIHC and other areas of essential need on campus.

Finally, a few words to the graduates of the Class of 2020: Wherever you are residing now, I hope that you are safe, healthy, and supported by friends and family. Although this is not the graduation you expected when you enrolled at the University of Iowa, please know that in the minds of English faculty, graduate

students, and staff your class is one of the most memorable to have passed through the halls of EPB. You are not only members of the largest class in UI history, but your educational experience has also been impacted by a singular event that is still unfolding. Having shared these post-Spring Break weeks with you, I know it will be difficult to emerge from the pandemic untouched. I expect, however, that you will become among the greatest interpreters of this period's significance for future generations.

The English Department defines the outcomes of its undergraduate degree programs as producing reflective readers, critical thinkers, effective speakers, compelling writers, and engaged world citizens. Graduates of 2020, I hope that your education in English serves you well as you embark on your respective journeys and that you marshal all of your creativity and insight to make a better world. And to returning English and English & Creative Writing majors: we cannot wait to see you again in the fall and continue our work together!

From the Director of Undergraduate Studies

The dedication and resilience of our amazing undergraduate majors reminds me of my favorite Shakespeare quotation: "NO! I did not write King Lear in quarantine, so please just relax!" Or, perhaps this bit from Loves Labors Lost, in which the isolated court of the King is described as "a little academe, still and contemplative in living art." We have all been still and contemplative recently — as we all search for synonyms for "unprecedented" and "global pandemic" — but in the English department we continue to engage with and learn from "living art." Our students — English and English & Creative majors, those on the Publishing track, our Honors students, and the future teachers in English Education — maintain their commitment doing the important work of the humanities in this, the most troubling of times. It is, after all, what makes us human. As a community of readers and writers — people of the book — we are thriving, as the accomplishments of our students this year so amply demonstrate. So, let us take a moment to commend the truly "living art" embodied by our students, and by all of those — teachers, mentors, advisors — who enable this fantastic work.

Adam Hooks

Director of Undergraduate Studies

Undergraduate Matters

Kaydee Eckeron earned the Hancher-Finkbine Student Medallion for 2020.

The Alpha of Iowa chapter is pleased to announce that the following English and English and Creative Writing students have been invited to accept membership in [Phi Beta Kappa](#): **Lauren Arzbaecher, Grace Barker, Madeline Berner, Cassandra Bertolini, Kailani Biehl, Jay Biggs, Luke Bonner, Anne Borelli, Christopher Borro, Michael Borro, Sarah Bridgeport, Logan Capesius, Tyler Chalfant, Alexandra Chasteen, Lauren Chesire, Cassandra Qi Qi Chia, Julia Comer, Maya Dasmalchi, Ajla Dizdarevic, Faith Ellington, Taylor Geldermann, Emily Jane Yin Gumal, Natalie Holmes, John Howard, Amelia Johnson, Kyler Johnson, Nathan Kouri, Megan Lilly, Kathleen Lohnes, Kelly Lynch, Brigid Martin, Taylor McNitt, Zoe McRae, Amanda Miano, Alia Mnayer, Kylie Moss, Danielle Oberman, Alexa Oleson, Rachel Poppen, Hannah Schillinger, Rose Simonson, Julia Small, Cailyn Snodgrass, Jacqueline Spiegel, Paige Stevens, Bridget Sullivan, Benjamin Sulzberger, Mia Ugalde, Mary Walz, Emily Ward, Sarah Weeks, Clara Wertzberger, Oliver Willham, Celia Wiseman, Caitlin Yeggy, Angela Zheng, Elizabeth Zupancic, Ian Zwaschka.**

[A record 21 University of Iowa students and alumni have been chosen to receive Fulbright awards in 2020-2021.](#) Congratulations to the FOUR English or English & Creative Writing majors to receive the prestigious award:

[Cassandra Bertolini](#), of Green Bay, Wisconsin, will graduate from the UI in 2020 with a BA in German, a BA in English and creative writing, and a minor in translation for global literacy. With her Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Award to Germany, Bertolini will teach English at a secondary school, leading exercises focused on promoting intercultural exchange and understanding.

[Tess Van Den Hurk-Moran](#), of Emmetsburg, Iowa, graduated from the UI in 2019 with a BA in English and minors in Spanish and psychology. With her Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Award to Argentina, Van Den Hurk-Moran will teach English at a teacher training college in Argentina and plans to organize a creative writing and translation workshop for students and community members.

[Neha Haque](#), of LeClaire, Iowa, will graduate from the UI in 2020 with a BA in English and creative writing. With her Fulbright Teaching Assistantship Award to Mexico, Haque will teach English, research herbal dental treatments, and engage the community with a Bollywood fusion dance group for local elementary students.

[Ajla Dizdarevic](#), of Waterloo, Iowa, will graduate from the UI in 2020 with a BA in English and creative writing and a minor in French. With her Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Award to Croatia, Dizdarevic will teach English, organize weekly creative writing workshops, and facilitate a pen pal program to encourage cultural exchange between Croatians and UI students.

Creative Writing Matters

Ed Folsom writes:

The undergraduate major in English & Creative Writing celebrates another successful year of creative endeavors and community-building, made all the stronger this year by the addition to our permanent faculty of the distinguished writers **Louisa Hall** and **Bennett Sims**, and by the work of four outstanding Provost's Visiting Writing Fellows—**Andy King** in poetry, **Nina Morrison** in playwriting, **Julie Kedzie** in nonfiction, and **Natalia Reyes** in fiction. Everyone, including our wonderfully talented group of TAs who taught our Foundations of Creative Writing courses, worked a lot of overtime this semester as we figured out together how to best transfer writing workshops into viable online experiences. We wish all the best to our graduating creative writers; may your open mindset take you far in your creative writing, and into fulfilling creative lives.

Honors Program Matters

Kathleen Diffley writes:

It is a pleasure to announce this year's EHP seniors, who have completed the new requirements for graduating with departmental honors. Fully a third of them arranged capstone projects with faculty advisors who were intrigued, and all of them filled honors seminars that have been vigorous, engaging, and astute.

*Seniors Graduating with Honors in English, 2019-2020
(including students with capstone projects and advisors)*

Ryan Chaglasian

Jessica Davis

Kelly Lynch

Willow Miller, "Select 'New Woman' Novels Explored with Python" (adv. Florence Boos)

Sanjana Sivakumar

Rachel Zingg

*Seniors Graduating with Honors in English and Creative Writing, 2019-2020
(including students with capstone projects and advisors)*

Jen Anne Becker

Jay Biggs, "Cloud Walker" (adv. Lori Branch)

Cassandra Birk

Sarah Bridgeport, "île flottante" (adv. Jeff Porter)

Emily Buttolph

Rebecca Carey, "Carlos Iturra, Crime and Pardon" (adv. Claire Fox)

Alexandra Chasteen, "In Every House I've Ever Lived: Three Stories on the Pseudo-Autobiographical Literary Domestic Space" (adv. Louisa Hall)

Ajla Dizdarevic

Faith Ellington
Hannah Frame, "(RE)UNITED" (adv. Lisa Schlesinger)
Sarah Goedken
Hannah Gulick
Amy Jones, "Legends Never Die" (adv. Brooks Landon)
Nicole Klostermann
Kathleen K. Lohnes, "One Moment Event Horizon" (adv. Harilaos Stecopoulos)
Brigid Martin
Zoe McRae
Gabrielle Meis
Ashleigh Monaco
Tyler Nestvedt
Theresa Patterson
Owen Rehling
Cara Seravalli, "Burial and Belonging: Post-human Ecology in Poe" (adv. Matt Brown)
Paige Stevens
Laura Timm, "The Deep Rest of Simple Places" (adv. Phil Round)
Mary Walz, "Surrounded by Glass" (adv. Brooks Landon)
Emily Ward
Sarah Weeks

English Society Matters

Congratulations to these students for a job well done leading the English Society this year: Co-President **Madeline Berner**, Co-President **Rose Simonson**, Treasurer **Cailyn Snodgrass**, Publicist **Scott Magnuson**, Education Chair **John Lyons**, Event Manager **Cailyn Snodgrass**, Marketing and Outreach Chair **Bruce Tanlim**, Social Media Chair **Kate Struckman-Johnson**. We're grateful for their contributions to the department's vibrant undergraduate culture!

ATI Honors Society Matters

Anne Stapleton writes:

Following a busy fall, Alpha Tau Iota began the spring semester with seven members being invited to present their critical essays or creative writing at the Sigma Tau Delta convention. By February, their travel arrangements were set for events to be held March 25-28, thanks to **Amanda McAllister's** outstanding scheduling skills. Alas, the convention was cancelled due to COVID-19. The following students deserve recognition for their fine achievement, despite not having had the opportunity to present their work: **Jennifer Becker**, **Emily Buttolph**, **Alexandra**

Chasteen, John Lyons, Theresa Patterson, Carla Seravalli, and Sarah Weeks. This would have been the largest group of UI students yet to attend the prestigious conference celebrating literature, language, and writing.

Local events this year included Jeopardy-style literary trivia nights, informational meetings covering topics from literary kiosks to opportunities offered by Sigma Tau Delta, inductions (dinner in the fall and Molly's Cupcakes in the spring), literary-themed holiday events, a food drive for the Free Lunch Program of Iowa City, a write-in for final projects, and a book exchange. The chapter was also delighted to welcome fifteen new members in 2019-2020: **April Bannister, Jen Becker, Wendy Black-Parsons, Lauren Chesire, Julia Devalk, Molly Hill, Shalini Jasti, John Lyons, Molly Manion, Theresa Patterson, Maria Pearson, Cassidy Pekarek, Rachel Poppen, Carla Seravalli, and Lauren Whitney.**

Finally, congratulations to all graduating seniors! ATI's officers also deserve recognition for their leadership during this challenging year: **Emily Buttolph** (President), **Megan Lilly** (Vice President and Membership Officer), **Sarah Weeks** (Publicist), **Alex Chasteen** (Secretary), and **Cassandra Bertolini** (Treasurer and Historian). We will miss you and wish you well in the coming years.

Award Matters

The Louise P. Herring Scholarship

Established in honor of Louise P. Herring, who earned her master's degree from the University of Iowa in 1930 and her doctorate in 1932. It recognizes excellent students with a commitment to English studies as a preparation for life.

Shalini Jasti

Darwin T. Turner Award

Established in honor of Dr. Darwin T. Turner, chair of the African-American World Studies Program and Professor in the Department of English. The award recognizes outstanding students of color who best combine Dr. Turner's devotion to literature and scholarship with his exemplary qualities as teacher and leader.

Sydney Mayes

Helen K. Fairall Scholarships

For Iowa born and educated juniors or seniors with preference to students interested in literature from 1900 to the present. The English Department has nominated the following students:

Caroline Brown, Grace Culbertson, Brittany Hunt, Megan Lilly, Kinsey Phipps, Matteson Quint, Megan Shafer

Ruth Gulden Holsteen and Charles Sophus Holsteen Memorial Scholarship

Established by Jon Holsteen and Nancy Holsteen Lerner in honor of their parents,

Charles Sophus and Ruth Gulden Holsteen, natives of Burlington, Iowa. Mrs. Holsteen graduated with a degree in English and this award honors students who share her commitment to excellence in the field.

Caroline Meek, Katelyn Peters

Helen Aicher and Kenneth Ward Nelson Scholarship

This award is for individuals who intend to teach at the high school level following completion of their studies.

Alec Glisson, Emily Jan Yin Gumal, Kate Struckman-Johnson

Margaret Leuz and Fred Einspahr Scholarship

Established by John Einspahr in honor of his parents Margaret Leuz and Fred Einspahr. Margaret graduated from Iowa in 1912 with high honors in English, and this award recognizes excellent students who plan to pursue a career in teaching.

Katie Hedegaard, Molly Hill

The Scott A. Anderson Memorial Scholarship

Scott Anderson received his B.A. in English with highest distinction from the University of Iowa in 1984. He was an honors student, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, a winner of the Hancher-Finkbine Medallion, and, after graduation, he worked as a writer for the UI Foundation and in the television industry in New York and Los Angeles. This scholarship honors students who share his love of writing.

Molly Allen, John Cacioppo, Madison Coleman, Natalia Cruz-Aguayo, Vicent Filipipini, Taylor Geldermann, Katie McCarver, Mishma Stefni Nixon, Jeffrey Piekarz, Nichole Shaw

Sherry Simmons Loring Memorial Scholarship

Established by Eric Loring, in honor of his late wife, Sherry Simmons Loring, who earned her BA in English at Iowa in 1970. The award recognizes students who, like the Lorings, have demonstrated their commitment to and pleasure in the life of the mind at the University of Iowa.

Jennifer Eikre

Sean Wu Memorial Scholarship

This award was established by Dave Wu and Una Yang in honor of Sean Wu and is used to support a freshman English and Creative Writing major who shows promise in this area.

Sydney Mayes

Emily Wagner Scholarship

This award honors Emily Wagner, who received her B.A. in English from the University of Iowa in 2002. After graduating, Emily pursued her love of reading and writing by joining the Teach for America Corps, and continued her career as an inspiring English teacher, challenging and engaging middle-school students until her death in 2010. This scholarship supports an English major who shares Emily's love

of literature, demonstrates academic excellence, and is a graduate of an Iowa high school.

Natalie Holmes, Elizabeth Zupancic

Miriam Gilbert Award for Shakespeare Studies

This award is given each year for the best essay on Shakespeare, renaissance literature, or drama and performance, in honor of Professor Gilbert, who taught Shakespeare at Iowa until 2013.

Mishma Stefni Nixon

Dietz Essay Prize

The Dietz Essay Prize is awarded annually, on alternating years, for the best essay on poetry written by an undergraduate and a graduate student.

Elizabeth Zupancic

John C. McGalliard Medieval Essay Prize

This award is given each year for the best essay on a topic from medieval literature, in honor of Professor McGalliard, who taught and wrote on Anglo Saxon poetry and literature until 1975.

Benjamin Yusen

Advising Matters

COVID-19 has brought many changes to our campus and department in the spring of 2020. Advising has always been a face-to-face process and has moved along with the class instruction to an online presence instead. Advisors **Kate Torno** and **Allison Wanger** have been utilizing Zoom software to meet with their students virtually for meetings about scheduling and adapting to life online. When students do not have good access to technology the advisors have reached them via the phone. Students show up in the virtual "waiting room" as eager as ever to share their ideas and get advice. Students are slightly nervous about summer jobs and internships but overall seem content to be doing their work from home.

Faculty Matters

Eric Gidal's article, "Teaching Global Romanticisms: Romanticism and the Logic of Culture" appears in the most recent *Romantic Circles Pedagogies, Teaching Global Romanticism*, edited by Wendy C. Nielsen: <http://www.romantic-circles.org/pedagogies/commons/global/pedagogies.commons.2020.global.gidal.html>

Congratulations to **Louisa Hall**, who successfully nominated novelist and nonfiction writer Karen Olsson as an Ida Cordelia Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor at The

University of Iowa during the 2020-2021 academic year. Olsson's visit is co-sponsored by English, Mathematics, and Journalism and Mass Communication. **Professor Brooks Landon** is this year's recipient of the John C. Gerber Undergraduate Teaching Award, given to a English faculty member who excels in undergraduate teaching. Brooks continually helps English instructors to be better teachers through conducting course observations, demonstrating commitment to writing pedagogy, and supporting graduate teaching assistants. Thank you, Brooks, for all you do in the service of English undergraduate programs!

Staff Matters

Congratulations to **Kate Conlow**, who received a Certificate of Distinction in the 2019-20 Student Supervisor of the Year award, given by the Pomerantz Career Center.

Congratulations to **Lynne Nugent**, who was recognized as the [Jean Jew Women's Rights Award](#) winner this year. Lynne was also nominated as an Outstanding Student Supervisor.