The Update, November-December 2016

University of Northern Iowa. College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences.

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COMPUTER SCIENCE

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

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NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW

On October 1, The North American Review Press published a book on John Burroughs, Manifold Nature: John Burroughs and the North American Review. UNI Professor Jeremy Schraffenberger, who edited the book, and graduate student Kathryn Wohlpart, who worked as research assistant, spoke to a crowd gathered at the Slabside Conference in West Park, New York, on Burroughs’ process, editing and publishing. Douglas Brinkley, says of the collection, “John Burroughs wrote about the natural world with keen eyes, poetic elegance, and indefatigable goodwill. His essays on the wonders of the Catskills and Hudson River Valley launched the modern environmental movement. Like Walt Whitman—his idol—Burroughs was an American saint.” This book is available at NorthAmericanReview.com

SPEECH MOM

Communication Sciences and Disorders alumn Andrea Boerigter has recently started a blog, “The Speech Mom,” and she is picking up a big following. Boerigter recently did a segment on her local news about picky eaters and Thanksgiving. She explained how to help kids transition from foods they’re familiar with to foods that are similar, but possibly out of their comfort zone. You can find her blog at https://thespeechmom.com.

COMMUNICATION STUDIES AWARDS

This fall a number of Communication Studies faculty have received recognition for their work: Melissa Beall, professor of Communication Studies, received the Donald H. Eckroyd Award for Outstanding Teaching in Higher Education at the National Communication Association conference in Philadelphia in November. This award recognizes faculty in the discipline of Communication Studies that have created sustained careers of excellence in higher education. It is one of the organization’s major awards.

Joyce Chen, a retired associate professor in Communication Studies, received the Outstanding Service Award from the Ethnography Interest group at the National Communication Association conference in Philadelphia in November, recognizing her teaching, scholarship, and service in Ethnography.

Danielle Dick McGeough, assistant professor in Communication Studies and Artistic Director of the UNI Interpreters Theatre, was elected a Member at Large, serving on the Executive Committee of the Performance Studies Interest Group at the National Communication Association conference in Philadelphia in November.
Derek Miller graduated in 2014 with a BA in Biology: Ecology and Evolution and also a BA in Graphic Design. He currently is pursuing a PhD in Biomimicry at the University of Akron in Ohio. Since joining UNI, Miller has done a variety of things. These include joining AmeriCorps with the Iowa DNR Trail Crew, where he maintained trails in Iowa state parks for the summer. He has also worked as a barista and managed a movie theatre while also pursuing some design commissions.

During his time at UNI, Miller had a positive experience with the Biology department. The faculty and staff were supportive, and he still keeps in contact with the friends he made in the department. His most memorable experiences at UNI were in Dr. Tamplin’s turtle research lab, and all of the trips taken in Dr. Demastes’ field zoology class. Miller also enjoyed his time spent in the art building, and really enjoyed his time spent with Roy Behrens, who he believes is a great and fun mentor to balance both his design and biology passions.

Miller's current field of study, Biomimicry, deals with biologically inspired design and innovation. He finds it amazing that he is able to be in a field that allows him to get deeper into his interests of biology and design in a creatively liberating way. Miller has even given a TED talk about biomimicry at the University of Akron’s TEDx event earlier this year. Later in his schooling career, Miller plans on doing a dissertation topic that would be a practice-based design on how biological morphology informs visual communication and user interaction. He hopes to complete his doctorate in Biomimicry within three and a half years.

When not doing things for school, Miller enjoys drawing and practicing digital imagery. Some of his digital illustrations will be featured in an upcoming issue of Zygote Quarterly, an online magazine about Biomimicry. Miller also enjoys playing guitar and experimenting with 3D modeling software.

In the future, Miller hopes to finalize his dissertation and start to publish his research. After receiving his doctorate, he’d love to go on to bring biomimicry further into the design world through being an art director, or having some other creative position to balance both his design and biology passions.

In addition to teaching communication courses Barfield spends about nine hours a week directly coaching students Monday through Thursday, not including time spent on editing speeches. Most weekends she will spend her time traveling to tournaments with students and judging students from other schools in competition.

As a co-coach of the UNI Individual Events team Barfield helps students with event construction including writing, editing, and performing. She also oversees a graduate student coach helping him learn the events and develop his own coaching. Barfield has been responsible for planning the team’s travel schedule and traveling with them to tournaments across the country, but mainly in the Midwest.

Barfield looks forward to being able to assist students surpass their goals. Watching students grow and develop, not just as speakers, but as people. “It’s amazing how developing speaking skills increase confidence, school performance, and community engagement.”

The UNI Speech team is one of the oldest organizations on campus and has been very successful as they have been nationally ranked for decades and produced many successful professionals. If people are curious about the Speech Team check out their spring showcase in late March or come watch the tournament hosted on campus January 21 and 22, 2017.
WOMEN’S AND GENDER STUDIES
CLOTHESLINE PROJECT

BY MARIA YEPEZ

The UNI Women’s and Gender Studies Program (WGS) recently hosted a Clothesline Project on campus the week of October 15-21.

The Clothesline Project is a nation-wide, week-long project founded in 1990 in Cape Cod Massachusetts. The project is intended to raise awareness against marginalized communities, specifically women affected by violence. Those affected by violence have the opportunity to decorate a shirt to express their emotions. Those shirts are hung up on a clothesline to be viewed by others. Several organizations and college campuses across the United States use this project to raise awareness not only for women, but also for minority groups.

WGS decided to bring the Clothesline Project to campus to support women, specifically women who are oppressed in some way. During the week-long project, t-shirts were decorated then hung up on a clothesline in the Maucker Union on Thursday and Friday of that week. Anna Blaho, WGS Graduate Assistant, explained that there were several strong reactions at the t-shirt decoration stations. “A lot of people want to believe these things happen only on T.V. and the media, but they happen in real life,” said Blaho. “People were able to see a different perspective and the media, but they happen in real life,” said Blaho. “People were able to see a different perspective.

Blaho hopes to see more men involved in projects in the future. “We want the Women and Gender Studies Program to represent the gender part as well.” Blaho explained that each time there is a new inclusive person at an event, they like to see that person stepping out of their comfort zone and willing to make a difference. According to Blaho, just coming to the event is a step forward. She says that these events help raise a certain amount of awareness for sexual violence around campus, but there is still so much more to be done to make sure the problem is reduced. The Clothesline Project was co-sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and the Student Wellness Services.

COMPUTER SCIENCE
SARAH DIESBURG

BY MARIA YEPEZ

Sarah Diesburg, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, has been named the Technology Association of Iowa (TIA) Iowa Women of Innovation Overall Winner in the Academic Innovation and Leadership category. Diesburg began working at UNI during the fall semester of 2013. Diesburg explained that she has been quite busy at UNI, and believes she is starting to hit her stride. She has a passion for teaching introductory computer classes that are accessible to all students, expanding the participation of women and minorities in computer science, as well as doing quality research in computer security and education with undergraduates at UNI.

Diesburg is involved in several organizations on campus. She formed the student group Women in Computing, which has the goal of getting more women into the field of computer science through scholarship, service, and recruiting efforts. The club has sent several women to the annual Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computer Conference, the largest technical conference for women in computing. Women in Computing has also hosted speakers and several other computer science related events such as their recent “take apart a computer” workshop. Another organization Diesburg is involved with is the UNI STEM Summer Camps, serving as a faculty camp counselor. Diesburg participated in an Introduction to Robotics workshop for girls and also worked with the Expanding Your Horizons group in the local Cedar Valley area by helping with robotics and programming workshops for middle school girls.

Not only did Diesburg found the Women in Computing organization, but in 2014 she created the Laboratory of Security and Storage Technology (LOST). LOST’s purpose is to research computer privacy issues that involve data and storage by the members of LOST. Diesburg’s research focused on computer privacy issues that involve data and storage by the members of LOST. Currently, Diesburg is also involved in another research initiative as well with Dr. Adam Feldhaus, Assistant Professor in Math Education.

The purpose of the research project is to develop software for cutting-edge technology that uses inexpensive components to convert any wall surface into a giant touchscreen for educational purposes. According to Diesburg, the research project has received two internal grants from the UNI CET. The grant will be used to create software to produce interactive elementary mathematics through virtual manipulatives to be used in a classroom. The grant will also provide funds to employ undergraduate students in the research process. The students involved in the research process are Cole Boudreau, Cored Oswald, and Beau Brown. Diesburg explained that the research project has completed the development phase and the software is moving into the classroom research phase.

While working at UNI, Diesburg has also won two other awards, the UNI Center for Educational Transformation (CET) Research Fellow and was also the recipient of the Engage CSEngage Engagement Excellence Award in 2015.

According to Diesburg, the most gratifying part of teaching at UNI is the focus on the students, and the acknowledgment of the hard work of the faculty and staff. “Here we [the faculty and staff] are recognized for all the effort we put forth in teaching, research and service to improve the student experience,” she stated. “I wouldn’t want to work at any other place that didn’t have this focus.” Diesburg plans to continue to make improvements in the Computer Science Department. “My goals are to continue to innovate my courses to better match how students learn, involve students in cutting-edge systems and security research, and continue to work to broaden participation of women and minorities in computer science and other STEM disciplines,” Diesburg concluded.
Heather Hamilton is the new Director of the Community Music School (CMS) and Clarinet Studio Instructor at the University of Northern Iowa. As the director of CMS, she manages the UNI Children’s Choir, the New Horizons Band, as well as other organizations and events in the CMS. Hamilton is originally from Moline, Illinois and recently moved to the Waterloo area from Lexington, Kentucky. In past years, she has worked in music retail, has managed various music studios, and taught clarinet for several years. Hamilton has also performed professionally with various music groups, such as with Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, the Quad City Opera Company, and the Quad City Symphony. Hamilton decided to pursue music education due to her love for music. “Music has always been a passion of mine,” she said, “with two parents that worked as musicians and educators, I could not help but follow in their footsteps!”

One of the organizations at CMS is the UNI New Horizons Band directed by Diana Blake, a retired band director. The band is made up of adults that are 50 years of age or “better”. Hamilton explained that New Horizons’ philosophy is that “every person has the musical potential that can be developed to a level that will be personally rewarding”. The band is made up of nearly 80 members today. According to Hamilton, the Horizons Band is hoping to expand its membership size, and form more groups within the band. “We are also hoping to add more members, create a second group strictly for adult musicians who are at the very beginning stages of learning their instrument, and form a UNI New Horizons Jazz Band,” she said.

The UNI Children’s Choir (UNICC), another organization part of the CMS, is directed by Michelle Swanson. UNICC has performed with several musical groups, such as the UNI Chamber Orchestra. The UNICC has upcoming performances at a Black Hawks Game, and the Midwest Children’s Choir Festival. Hamilton says UNICC hopes to grow in membership size, travel to and perform as a national conference, as well as host a singing festival on campus.

The New Horizons band, and the UNI Children’s Choir hosted fall concerts: UNICC performed their winter concert on Friday, December 9 at 7:00 pm in the Bengston Auditorium in Russell Hall. New Horizons presented their concert on Monday, October 12 at 7:30 P.M. in the Great Hall at Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center.

A vital part of CMS is its private lessons to students taught by studio teachers and UNI music students. CMS currently teaches a variety of instruments such as piano, woodwind, brass, and percussion to approximately 180 students each week. New students are accepted throughout the year, as well as during the summer. Hamilton stated that more information about CMS can be found at the website www.uni.edu/music/communitymusic-school

Hamilton is excited to continue work at UNI, and looks forward to all the events happening at the Community Music School. “I am excited to be a part of the UNI Faculty … and look forward to all the exciting things we have happening at CMS!” Hamilton concluded.
Amanda Chan is a UNI alumna who graduated in 2007 with a BFA in Graphic Design. She is currently a Senior User Experience and User Interface Designer at Lincoln Center in New York, New York. As design is involved with people and differing perspectives, it is important to Chan that she explores other cultures. Since graduating UNI, Chan worked abroad in Southern China for a year, traveled to one or more new countries each year, and expanded her world view by exploring multiple continents.

During her time at UNI, Chan’s art professors contributed to helping her become successful as a designer and helped her see the world in completely new ways. The art critiques that she experienced in school were one of the most enduring aspects of her education, and she has incorporated that into her professional life. During her time at UNI, Chan learned that designers too often want the first version of their work to be their final version, but with out revision, the artwork will never improve. Through the art critiques she experienced at UNI, Chan has learned to balance her personal vision and external perspectives to become a strong graphic designer.

In combination with her art classes, Chan was also involved as a member of Art Official. She would meet weekly with others to discuss various theories and concepts of art, as well as participate in a number of art performances led by Apryl Piiper. These performances included ‘Reflective Pie Eating’, which included viewing oneself through a hand-held mirror while consuming a slice of pie at Perkins. Another performance that Chan participated in was ‘Handy Pastry’, where she suspended a white cloth with a fishing line and let it trail behind her while walking in Chicago. Chan loved doing these performance activities, and misses participating in them.

In her current position as a Senior User Experience and User Interface Designer, Chan works on a number of user flow diagrams, which entails better understanding of where and when people make decisions within an app or a website. This ranges from a small or a large task, such as sharing a photo or buying a ticket to signing up for an annual membership that is worth thousands of dollars. After diagramming, Chan creates the interface design to focus on color, type, and small animations. She loves being able to see both the big-picture view and small details.

In her free time, Chan loves to play punk rock on her guitar, sing karaoke, eat pizza and exercise with power yoga. Some of Chan’s hobbies can be traced back to her UNI days, as she remembers doing karaoke on the Hill at Pour Richards. Chan says she wouldn’t mind studying sociology or psychology since design involves how people perceive things around them. Chan also hopes in the future to experiment more with graphic design through virtual reality or other immersive mediums.

A graduate from May of 2015, Kelly Bahl, a major in Ecology and Systematics, landed a Horticulturist position at W tile Disney World in the Golden Oak Resort at Disney. Bahl provides fresh herbs and produce for the menu of the Markhams restaurant. She grows what they want to use, as well as provides some uncommon options for the restaurant as well. Bahl also gets to help out over at the Land at Epcot in the living laboratory greenhouses, aiding in general maintenance and upkeep of the hydroponic facilities, helping with projects, and giving tours of the facilities.

Bahl enjoys much about her current position, in being able to get her hands dirty with all of the hands-on work. She loves to see the progress of the crops being grown, or being able to re-plant something in the garden so that it looks the best. However, her favorite thing about working at the Golden Oak Resort is getting to share her passion of horticulture with others, such as when people walk through her garden or when she gives tours to guests in the greenhouses at Epcot. She loves to have opportunities that can further her knowledge in not just the field of horticulture, but with anything and being able to connect with others.

Bahl says the Biology department at UNI is what got her to where she is today. When she first started UNI as a freshman, she had no idea what she wanted to major in. However, being able to explore gave her the opportunity to major in Ecology and Systematics. According to Bahl, the professors in the Biology department go to great lengths in order to help their students succeed. She also feels she found a second family through the UNI Botanical Center, where she volunteered for a year before receiving a job there. The people that she worked with at the Botanical Center helped her improve her care of plants, and they pushed her to get the position that she currently has.

Along with working at the Botanical Center, Bahl was a member of the Student Nature Society on campus. Through this, she was able to experience camping trips, river clean ups, meeting guest speakers, and bringing together a group of people who like nature as much as she does. She was also a part of the Black Hawk County Rehabilitation Project, where she got to work with a huge diversity of Iowa wildlife. This ranged from feeding baby raccoons at all hours of the day, getting a coyote to eat properly, or even working with owls to do educational programs.

Since leaving UNI, Bahl has completed two six month internships through the Agricultural Science Department of Epcot in Walt Disney World, with the second internship being a continuation of the first. The internship included taking care of her own hydroponic greenhouse where she grew tropical food crops from all over the world without soil. She also had the opportunity to educate visitors from around the globe on what was being grown and how they were growing it. After that internship, she headed back to Iowa where she worked as an animal keeper in the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque. But after only a few months, she was offered a job to return to Disney and assist at the Golden Oak Resort where she currently works.

In her free time, Bahl likes to go to the parks at Disney World and talk to the guests. When not doing things at Disney, she likes practicing cooking skills, hiking, geocaching, going on walks and star gazing. In the future, Bahl just wants to be able to grow and learn from her job, along with being proud of what she does. She is happy with what she does now, and believes that it wouldn’t have been possible without the help of experiences she had at UNI. She is looking forward to new experiences that she gains from her career.
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<th>Event Name</th>
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<td><strong>Uncommon Sense</strong></td>
<td>January 21, 7:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Postmodern Jukebox</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Crow Forum: “Teaching While Black - Oh, And A Woman”</strong></td>
<td>February 6, 12:00 pm, Room 287, Rod Library</td>
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<td><strong>Northern Festival of Bands</strong></td>
<td>February 9 – 11, Great Hall, GBPAC</td>
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<td><strong>Palette of Possibility</strong></td>
<td>February 11, 10:30 am – 2:00 pm, February 12, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, Strayer-Wood Theatre</td>
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<td><strong>Tallcorn Jazz Festival and Sinfonian Dimensions in Jazz Concerts</strong></td>
<td>February 17 – 18, Bengtson Auditorium, Russell Hall</td>
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<td><strong>Spotlight Series: Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra with Guests</strong></td>
<td>February 23, 7:30 pm, Great Hall, GBPAC</td>
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<td><strong>Mamma Mia!</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Crow Forum: “Parades, Pickets, and Prison: Embodied Arguments for Woman Suffrage, 1913-1919”</strong></td>
<td>March 6, 12:00 pm, Room 287, Rod Library</td>
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<td><strong>Uni Opera Showcase</strong></td>
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