The Department of English is pleased to welcome Dr. Sandra Jordan as USCA’s fourth Chancellor. With a change in our top leadership comes an opportunity to redefine our campus identity. In fact, Dr. Sandra Jordan initiated this fall what she terms a visioning process, whereby USCA will assess its current status and chart its future path.

This is also a good time for the Department to think ahead, and we have already taken some significant steps in that direction. At our August retreat, for example, the English faculty redesigned the two writing minors—we offer both creative writing and professional writing—to make those programs more flexible. The writing courses, in general, are enjoying an upsurge in enrollment, and we want students pursuing these increasingly popular options to confront fewer impediments as they matriculate through either program.

Our student recruitment efforts have shifted to a higher gear. Last year, for example, we registered the largest number of majors in our department’s history. To maintain that momentum, we created a special faculty committee charged with reaching out to prospective majors; that group redesigned the brochure on the career options for English majors and also decided to increase the departmental presence at community-based showcases.

The English faculty are reaching new heights of productivity. Three of our junior members—Drs. Katie Kalpin Smith, Drew Geyer, and Doug Higbee—were all recognized as Scholars of the Month by the USC Office of Research this past year, and Dr. Geyer was also selected as a USC System Rising Star. I am pleased that so many of our faculty are reaffirming their status as scholar teachers.

Undergraduate research is fast becoming a trademark of the Department. In the last five years, eight of our majors have been named Magellan Scholars. In the last year alone (2012-2013), twenty-two of our majors engaged in significant research projects under the guidance of English faculty mentors; all twenty-two of these students defended their research before internal or external review panels.

Finally, English faculty members are working hard to offer more internship opportunities for our students; in this regard, Karl Fornes has been particularly successful. It is my hope that we will continue to expand our internship program in order to give students interested in entering the workplace upon graduation a chance to test their skills prior to graduation.

I’m looking forward to a bright future for our students and our department!

Tom Mack, Chair
Department of English
Dr. Mack has been very busy in 2012. He finished one book, made substantial progress on a second, and signed a contract for a third.

The book that Dr. Mack worked on most of the summer is the second that he has written for The History Press (Charleston, SC and London, UK). Entitled *Hidden History of Aiken County*, the volume contains twenty eight chapters, each one focused on a particular event or personality in local history, beginning with Hernando de Soto’s crossing the Savannah River in 1540 and concluding with the purchase of Joye Cottage by authors Steven Naifeh and Greg Smith in 1989. Each of the chapters can be read as an independent narrative; some contain completely original material while others are twice-told—this second time through the lens of modern scholarship. The book is now available in stores and through major online merchants.

The second book is a short story anthology co-edited with Dr. Drew Geyer. To be published this spring by Lamar University Press, *A Shared Voice* is a first-of-its-kind collection by writers from Texas and the Carolinas. It contains twelve anchor tales—six by writers from Texas and six by writers from the Carolinas—and twelve original works of fiction written in response to the anchor narratives. Each tale is linked to another by at least one literary element such as character or setting or theme.

The third book is a project of USC Press. One of a series of guides inspired by *The South Carolina Encyclopedia* published in 2006, *The South Carolina Encyclopedia Guide to South Carolina Writers* will contain around 130 essays on those writers, past and present, who have made significant contributions to our state’s literary heritage. The series editor is Dr. Walter Edgar; the editor for this particular guide is Dr. Mack.

In addition to these three big projects, Dr. Mack presented a paper on assessing writing in literature classes at the International Writing Across the Curriculum Conference in Savannah in June; served as master of ceremonies at the 2012 induction ceremony of the South Carolina Academy of Authors at Coastal Carolina University in April—he is the current chair of the Board of Governors of that statewide organization; edited the fourteenth volume of *The Oswald Review*; and continued to write his popular column “Arts and Humanities,” which appears each Friday in *The Aiken Standard*.

Dr. Lynne Rhodes presented as part of a panel (with Dr. Mack and Dr. Miller) at the International Writing Across the Curriculum conference in Savannah, GA in May 2012. She directed the Aiken Writing Project’s annual summer institute in July 2012. She currently serves as President-Elect for the Carolinas Writing Program Administrators, and in that role, she has helped to coordinate two conferences: the annual Wildacres Carolinas WPA conference in September 2012 and the Meeting in the Middle conference in February 2012. She also presented at the South Atlantic MLA in Durham, NC (Nov. 2012). Furthermore, Dr. Rhodes is working with the SC Course Alignment Project, and she will be presenting on that project at the annual CCCC convention in Las Vegas, in March 2013.

Additionally, Dr. Rhodes currently holds an endowed chair (the GL Toole Chair #2), and she has submitted several manuscripts for review. She hopes one day to attend the prestigious Iowa Writers Festival!
Dr. Matthew Miller
Associate Professor

Dr. Miller has had the opportunity to teach courses in African and African American Literature. He also taught the second half of the American literature survey, an online version of Writing in the University, and a course on the graphic novel.

In research, he submitted an essay on Chang-rae Lee’s *Native Speaker* to the *South Atlantic Review*. He presented a paper on Pauline Hopkins’ *Of One Blood* and Dinaw Mengestu’s *How to Read the Air* in April 2012 for the CLA Convention. He also presented the department’s findings on our world studies assessment at the International Writing Across the Curriculum conference in June 2012. For the SAMLA conference in November 2012, he presented a paper on the graphic novel *Vietnamerica* by BG Tran, a book which explores the transnational identity of writers in America who write about their place of origin.

This year Dr. Miller is serving as chair of the Courses and Curriculum Committee. Personally, Dr. Miller’s oldest son began fifth grade and his twins started first grade. All are learning and growing with ease. His wife and he are excited about the changes that are taking place. They enjoyed a vacation for the first time in two years to Myrtle Beach.

Dr. Andrew Geyer
Associate Professor

Dr. Andrew Geyer has finished his fourth year at the University of South Carolina Aiken and is enjoying the beginning of his fifth. It’s been a busy but rewarding time, and a lot has happened. In August, Dr. Geyer was named Coordinator of the Critical Inquiry Program at USCA. He has taken on these new responsibilities while continuing with his teaching, writing, and scholarly activities.

It has been a fortunate year in many ways. Dr. Geyer was promoted to Associate Professor and granted tenure at USCA in 2012. This is a big step for Dr. Geyer, and he is grateful to all the good folks in the Department of English, on the Promotion and Tenure Committee, and in the Administration who helped make it possible. In addition to receiving promotion and tenure, Dr. Geyer was named a *Breakthrough* Rising Star by the University of South Carolina system. This designation is reserved for promising faculty who are engaged in innovative research or creative pursuits that will likely propel them to the top of their fields. Dr. Geyer was featured in the Spring 2012 issue of *Breakthrough Magazine* along with eleven other professors from various USC system campuses. And finally, Dr. Geyer was inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters in April. The Texas Institute of Letters was organized in 1936 to promote interest in Texas literature and to recognize literary and cultural achievement. Membership is offered to persons associated with Texas who have been nominated by a member, approved by the council, and elected by the active members. Election is permanent. Members of TIL are novelists, poets, essayists, historians, journalists, playwrights, and other writers, but the emphasis for membership has always been on authorship of quality.

As for creative and scholarly work, Dr. Geyer is co-editing an anthology of short fiction by writers from Texas and the Carolinas with Dr. Tom Mack. *A Shared Voice: A Tapestry of Tales* features a total of twenty-four short stories—twelve by writers from Texas and twelve by writers from the Carolinas—each linked to another by at least one literary element such as character or setting or theme. Lamar University Press will publish the anthology in 2013. Dr. Geyer also published one new short story of his own this year and took over the Fiction Editor position at *Concho River Review*. He has managed to find time to get writing done as well. He made a great deal of headway on his story cycle in progress, *Lesser Mountains*, and is currently at work on the sixteenth and final story in the collection.

An avid canoeist and distance-runner, Dr. Geyer also made some time to get outdoors. In May, he spent three days canoeing a thirty-mile stretch of the Buffalo River in Arkansas.
In 2012, Dr. Katie Kalpin Smith earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. She is grateful to her colleagues for all of the support that they offered her in her first years here. This fall she taught classes in the English Renaissance, British literature (survey), and composition. She enjoyed travelling to Boston last spring in order to participate in the Shakespeare Association of America’s conference, where she presented a paper on teaching Shakespeare intertextually. Last spring, she had an essay published in the edited collection *Who Hears? Onstage and Offstage Audiences in Shakespeare*, and her edition of Shakespeare’s *All’s Well* finally hit the bookshelves. This summer she and her family travelled through California, Montana, and Idaho. In a short period of time they covered a lot of ground, hitting such sites as Alcatraz, Muir Woods, Yosemite, Mono Lake, Lake Tahoe, and Glacier National Park.

In 2012 has seen a lot of action for Dr. Carlson. He presented papers at the International Medieval Congress in May and the Mid-Atlantic Popular and American Culture conference in November. The latter paper, titled “Grendel as Novelistic Outlaw-Hero: A Girardian Reading,” will also appear in an expanded version as a chapter in a forthcoming volume of essays on medieval literature to be published by the Medieval Institute Press. He also has an article, “Mutable Desires: Two-Object Rivalries in *Beowulf*,” forthcoming in the *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*.

While most of his teaching schedule for the year was uneventful, 2012 also saw Dr. Carlson teach online classes for the first time. This has been a challenging educational format for a professor who happily refers to himself as a “technological dinosaur” and lauds the pencil as the paragon of word processing technology, but he has nonetheless risen to the challenge and has not felt the urge to smash the computer with a hammer.

Finally, home life is a continuing typhoon of activity for Dr. Carlson. In addition to his many on-the-job obligations, his son James is now a happy, laughing, hard-charging toddler of a year and a half. Given that his wife Ali is a full-time student in the nursing program, Dr. Carlson now spends—joyfully—a great deal of time with the boy. Together they enjoy the endless reading of books and visits from the “belly-eating monster.”
In Spring 2012 Prof. Higbee presented a paper on Brian Turner’s Iraq War poetry at the annual literature conference in Louisville, KY. He also has been co-writing a book about Aiken-Augusta area World War II veterans, for which he and his co-writer received a grant from the USC Aiken Vice Chancellor’s Office and the Porter Fleming Foundation. He is also co-editing a book for the Modern Language Association on teaching First World War literature.

Prof. Higbee continues his teaching in 20th century British literature. In spring 2012 he taught Modern British Literature, and in Fall 2012 he taught the second half of the British literature survey. Prof. Higbee also hopes that by the time this is being read there will be, due to the efforts of himself and his mentor on all things outdoors, 2-3 fewer deer in Edgefield County.

Prof. Law continues to carry a heavy teaching load. In the fall, the English Dept. initiated a new course, AEGL 101L. The “L” stands for Lab and represents the fact that many entering college freshmen have little confidence in themselves as writers and, in far too many instances, very poor writing skills. Grammar and style issues that baby boomers were taught in their grade school years and mastered by senior high are sorely lacking. Hence, the English Department’s AEGL 101L initiative. Basically, it is a one credit course taken concurrently with AEGL 101. The curriculum includes an intensive review of grammar and style issues as applied to the paragraph. Hopefully, students who have elected to take this course will complete it with renewed confidence in themselves as writers and, therefore, students.

Likewise, Professor Law continues to meet the challenges of teaching Classical Mythology. Having spent several years at Villanova University studying classics, but also as a teaching assistant for Dr. John McEnerny, Chair of the Classics Dept., and six years as a high school Latin teacher, she desires to fill the literary, historical, and even linguistic void for post-modern students who haven’t had the opportunity to study things Greek and Latin. And besides, the study of myth and its origins and influences is fun. Who doesn’t like stories? Lastly, Prof. Law is keeping alive two significant and fascinating courses initiated by retired English Prof. Don Blount: Great Books of the Western World I and II, AEGL-390 and 391. These courses include works that are much loved but also intellectually significant in the development of Western literature: The Odyssey, The Lysistrata, The Confessions of St. Augustine, Don Quixote, Madame Bovary, Death in Venice, The Plague, and, this semester, Lolita.

Otherwise, Professor Law was involved with the “Dickens’ Bicentennial at the Aiken Library”—a celebration featuring a number of “Dickens’ events,” including a live performance, films, and speakers. This series began in August and ended in October. Most notably, Professor Law presented a “book talk” on Dickens’ Great Expectations.

In August 2012, a dear friend and fellow composition teacher dedicated her new book Beyond the Five Paragraph Essay to Prof. Law (complete with her picture and a many generous comments noting her commitment to the teaching of composition and her mentorship of the author). For years, they have worked together developing strategies for teaching homeschooled students the arts of analysis, critical thinking, and writing.
The past year was especially heroic for Karl Fornes. He was gratified and humbled to sweep the Nobel prizes and especially surprised to receive the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. He was almost certain that the prize would go to Dan Schectman for his work describing how quasicrystals perform according to specific principles outlined by the Penrose Tilting. However, the Nobel Committee favored Fornes for his kitchen work, especially his chorizo empanadas and grilled pizza.

Fornes finished a disappointing second in his first Ironman Triathlon. After establishing a huge lead after the 2.5 mile swim and 100 mile bike leg, Fornes was halfway through the marathon when he spotted what appeared to be a structure fire. He left the course to pull seventeen children from the burning orphanage. He resumed the race with three of the more seriously injured children strapped to his body with a makeshift bamboo knapsack he fashioned using native materials. He was within striking distance of the lead when one of the children, biting the bamboo strap to distract from the pain of her broken femur, gnawed through and ended any hope of a comeback.

On the lighter side, Fornes is especially proud of his budding friendship with the Mars rover Curiosity, and the two spent much of the summer exploring the surface of the red planet. They discovered that, despite what NASA officials will have us believe, Mars is actually made of frozen strawberry daiquiri. Behold the photo that the government doesn’t want you to see (see page 10). He also read a whole bunch of student papers, trudged through committee work, and played with some of his own writing.

Every semester, Professor Collins teaches English 111 (English as a Second or Other Language), a course designed for international students. Recently, she has primarily taught English 102; however, for the first time this past fall she taught two sections of the Critical Inquiry course. She advises both undeclared and English majors and is a Faculty Facilitator during Freshman Orientation. Each summer Professor Collins teaches the Young Writers Camp offered for middle school students through USCA’s Kids in College program.

In her new role as the director of the Aiken County Language Arts Festival, Professor Collins has been busy making plans for this event which welcomes middle and high school students across the county to USCA. She continues to serve on the First-Year Experience, New Faculty Orientation, Academic Services, and Scholastic Standing & Petition committees. She also is a Judicial Procedures Advisor and a board member of both the Pacer Athletic Club and the South Carolina Council of Teachers of English. For USCA’s International Education Week, Professor Collins coordinated. The International Literary Reading, an ICE event. Community service includes volunteering to teach English to Hispanics in the CSRA through the Learn English for Living Foundation and providing clothing and school supplies to indigent children through Seeds of Hope.

Scholarship activities for Professor Collins include presenting “Teaching Spanish to Pre-Schoolers” at the Aiken County Young Child Conference, attending The Hub City Press Writing Conference at Wofford College, and having poems published in two literary journals. She continues to be an active member of both The Authors Club of Augusta and The Augusta Poetry Group.
Although he is still tinkering with it, Roy Seeger finally began submitting his latest poetry manuscript, *The Distance of the Stage*, to various manuscript contests. He has, however, begun work on a series of found poems based on articles from a 1980’s sociology textbook entitled *Marriage and Family*.

Academically, Prof. Seeger has been taking several classes from CTE and the Sloan consortium to assist him in the development of his online courses, especially his hybrid course on Poetic Forms, which he taught for the first time in the fall of 2012. USCA granted him a course release to develop this hybrid class. As the faculty advisor to The Guild of Poetic Intent, USCA’s very own poetry club, Seeger helped organize various events including a reading by prose-poet Jamie Iredell at the Aiken Center for the Arts, regular open-mic night at a local Cuban restaurant, Café Rio Blanco, and a spring book sale to raise funds for the First Book charity, which works to bring children’s books to disadvantaged families. Seeger also presented an academic paper at the 2012 SAMLAC conference on “The Gay Chaps at the Bar,” a sonnet series by Gwendolyn Brooks.

As is his routine, Prof. Seeger also spent a week in Louisville, KY with one thousand other English teachers to read AP exams. He is both amazed and slightly mortified when he realized how many friends he now has there.

On a personal note, this summer Seeger traveled across the United States from San Francisco back to Aiken with his wife, Dr Amanda Warren. He rode shot-gun the whole way, not once staying in a chain hotel. Seeger learned, in a diner in Reno, that Elvis Presley’s nickname for his father was “slot machine.” He is still trying to work that into a poem. Three days later he was watching buffalo all day at Yellowstone National Park and later that night ate a bison burger. Although it was a dry burger, Seeger found this a gratifying experience. He is working on a creative nonfiction piece on this trip and how various landscapes and food cultures affect local identity.

Prior to joining the English faculty as visiting instructor of nineteenth-century British literature, Melissa Makala organized and co-moderated a panel and presented a paper on the ghost stories of Alice Perrin at the MLA Convention in Seattle. Makala, along with a colleague who teaches in Taiwan, also co-edited a collection based on their MLA panel, titled “Haunted Travel Writings.” In February, she was a Featured Scholar for the University of South Carolina Office of Research. Makala also serves as a Board Member for the Carolina Emerging Scholars Conference and recently accepted an invitation to be the plenary speaker for the 2013 conference, to be held on the USC-Lancaster campus. This November, Makala moderated two panels and read a paper at the SAMLAC Convention and chaired a student panel on *Oliver Twist* for the Charles Dickens Symposium held at USC-Columbia’s Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. She also co-curated an exhibition celebrating the 200th anniversary of Dickens’s birth, organized in conjunction with the symposium. Over the last few months, Makala finished final revisions for her book, *Women’s Ghost Literature in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, forthcoming in 2013. She recently completed a chapter on the Anglo-Indian ghost stories of Bithia Mary Croker and Alice Perrin in the collection, *White Women and British India*, forthcoming in 2013, and is currently working on a project which examines mixed-race relationships in the novels of Alice Perrin.
It has been a year of writing for Dr. Amanda Warren who has been working diligently on her poetry, non-fiction, and academic writing. For several years Dr. Warren has been working slowly on a non-fiction manuscript centering around cars, roads, and American identity. This spring Dr. Warren successfully created a kickstarter.com, crowd-sourced fundraiser to secure money for a 28-day cross-country research trip. With the help of kickstarter supporters, the Aiken Partnership Grant for Research and Travel, Professor Emerita Phebe Davidson, and the USCA Department of English, Dr. Warren travelled from Aiken to Oakland, California with numerous stops across the southern United States. After a brief stay in Oakland, Roy Seeger flew out to join Dr. Warren on the return trip across the northern United States. Dr. Warren returned from her 8,000 mile trip with over 3,000 photographs and an entire book of notes which she is currently organizing and revising into a series of essays and poems. You can follow her progress on her blog, Divination Road.

Elsewhere online even bigger things were afoot. On April 26th, in honor of National Poem in Your Pocket Day, sponsored by the Academy of American Poets in celebration of National Poetry month, Dr. Warren created and helped to organize an international poetry initiative on Google Plus called “PocketPoem.” On April 26, thousands of poets and poetry fans world-wide participated in the event by sharing their favorite poems on Google Plus. The virtual celebration of poetry was such a success that the term “PocketPoem” was one of the most used and searched terms on Google for over 6 hours (beating out “Justin Beiber” at its highest point). Due to the overwhelming success, Dr. Warren and other members of the Google Plus community decided to start a collection of these “PocketPoems” and continue the celebration with a dedicated page serving to curate, or collect, the poems shared throughout the year.

In a less digital and more localized scenario, Dr. Warren was invited by the Aiken Kiwanis club to give a lecture on local nineteenth century poet and inventor James Mathews Legare and continues to be involved in the Guild of Poetic Intent: The Savannah River Poets of USCA as they schedule readings on and off campus and work to spread a love of poetry. This fall she was invited to submit articles on South Carolina writers Louise Jones Dubose and Jack Bass to The South Carolina Encyclopedia Guide to South Carolina Writers, edited by Dr. Tom Mack and set to be published by USC Press in 2013; and she joined her colleagues Dr. David Bruzina and Roy Seeger in presenting a panel entitled “Poetic Excursions into the 21st Century” at the 2012 South Atlantic Modern Language Associations conference in North Carolina.

Jim Saine taught two AEGL102 sections and an AEGL201 course during the Spring 2012 semester. This fall, he taught two AEGL101 and two AEGL102 sections. He also taught at Aiken's Christ Central GED Institute (free) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Monday and Wednesday afternoons, he audited Dr. Linda Wang’s AGRY 198A course (Intro to Chinese Cultural Studies). He is a member of the Aiken chapter of the South Carolina's Writer's Workshop, and one of his short stories and a poem were recently selected for inclusion in the workshop's annual anthology, The Petigru Review. In addition, one of his non-fiction articles was selected for publication in The Christian Quarterly. Currently, he's working on a fantasy story for a new anthology about the life-size, fiberglass horses scattered around Aiken coming alive for a night. Look for the sale of that anthology at Aiken’s Triple Crown events in March 2013.
Dr. David Bruzina, Lecturer

David Bruzina continues to teach English 101 and 201 courses at USCA, helping his students appreciate and meet the unique rhetorical demands of reading and writing in a university setting.

In 2012, he served as a judge for the Lambda Delta Phi Mu Mr. USCA pageant and as a preliminary judge for the Randall Jarrell Poetry Competition sponsored by the North Carolina Writers’ Network. He also participated in the USCA Faculty 10x10 reading.

This past summer, he visited Vicki Collin’s Young Writers Camp to talk to middle school students about ghost stories.

Recently, Bruzina has been working on a paper that analyzes the critical audience for contemporary American war poetry. The paper was presented at the 2012 SAMLA conference as part of a panel that included USCA faculty members Amanda Warren and Roy Seeger.

Bruzina’s poem “Hum” is forthcoming from the South Carolina literary journal *Waccamaw*.

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Dr. Stan Rich, Distinguished Professor Emeritus

This past year I have continued to read voraciously in literary fiction, biography, and literary detective fiction.

I have offered a short course on W. H. Auden’s poetry for a Lenten Meditation Series at my Episcopal church. Currently, I am conducting a ten-week course in Birmingham at one of the nation’s largest Presbyterian churches on "Judeo-Christian Concepts of Peace and Nonviolence." This course springs from the USCA course, "Introduction to Peace Studies," which I team-taught for fifteen years. In the spring of 2013, I plan to conduct, at the same church, a two-month course on "Reading Poetry through the Lens of Robert Coles’ Concept of "The Moral Imagination.""

I regularly do lap swimming, and I frequently see serious "art" films. Travel this past year has taken me to New York, Boston, Toronto, and to the Interlochen Summer Arts Festival in Interlochen, Michigan. I continue to enjoy singing in Birmingham's Magic City Choral Society.

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Dr. Phebe Davidson, Distinguished Professor Emerita

Writing this, I feel a bit like an over-the-hill comic trying to breathe life into an old good news/bad news joke.

The backstory: For the past year, I’ve been working on a Selected Poems that I hoped would capture some sense of living with and loving someone not expected to live past year’s end. The result is *Waking to Light*.

The bad news: After a lengthy illness, my husband died in June, 2012.

The good news: The life of the mind and the life of words are still vital, heartening things.
Faculty Travel Photos

Professor Fornes on Mars!

Dr. Claxon visited the Colorado Rocky Mountains last summer.

Professor Seeger vacationed in Yellowstone National Park.

English Department Faculty 2012-2013
Stephen Graham Jones grew up in Texas, never planning to be a writer in his youth. However, his plans changed after some encouragement and financial support from his mother. He received his bachelor’s degree in English and philosophy from Texas Tech University. He furthered his education by earning his MA in English from the University of North Texas and his PhD from Florida State University. For the past four years, he has been teaching creative writing at the University of Colorado in Boulder. As of this date, Jones has written over a hundred short stories and twenty novels, ranging from science fiction to detective to horror. In the fall semester of 2012, Stephen Graham Jones visited the USCA campus as a part of the Oswald Writers’ Series. During his time here, he generously participated in the following interview:

**Whatley:** You have said before that you draw a lot of inspiration from West Texas, the environment in which you were raised. Exactly how much of your writing is autobiographical?

**SGJ:** Demon Theory, I think that is probably my most autobiographical novel, even though it is set in Indiana, if I remember correctly, or Illinois. For me, for something to be autobiographical, it’s not about place, it’s about the people in it and the story happening. So Demon Theory to me feels like a story that happened to me, even though the novel Demon Theory has monsters and demons and crazy killing stuff going on. But really I could write about Martians living in the year 3025, and it’s still going to be describing the only emotional landscape that I know, which really is West Texas. I think you really can never escape the place where you grew up, and I think that’s good.

**Whatley:** Which of your published works do you think people should read?

**SGJ:** I’m all over the board, that’s the trick. If they like horror, I would say start with Demon Theory or Last Final Girl. I’d give you every title if you let me. But, I would say Grooving Up Dead in Texas, it’s probably going to be the most accessible to the most people, I think.

**Whatley:** And why is that?

**SGJ:** Because it’s a story about growing up, and we’ve all grown up, I think, to some degree or another. People want to read it as a memoir of my life, but for me it’s a memoir of childhood and growing up. I mean, its not a memoir, but if it were a memoir, that’s what it would be a memoir of.

**Whatley:** Do you have a favorite story in the collection entitled The Ones that Got Away?

**SGJ:** Yeah, I think it’s the last one, “Crawlspace.” Everyone’s favorite story from that one is always “Father, Son, Holy Rabbit.” I like that story a lot, but I like “Crawlspace” better because it surprises me when I read it still. I don’t expect the things that happen to be happening. “Crawlspace,” I think it’s a 10 or 12,000 word story, and I whittled it down from 20 or 25,000 words, and I like what is left. I like it a lot better.

**Whatley:** Is there anything from that particular story that you want your readers to get?

**SGJ:** I think it’s the same thing the very first story in that collection proposes, “Father, Son, Holy Rabbit.” It’s the bond, the love, between a father and a son, which really is what the stories in that collection are about. That’s what I hope for people to take away.

**Whatley:** As you have mentioned on your website, you’re constantly writing. What are you currently working on?

**SGJ:** It’s an anthropological thriller set in Boulder. Surprise, surprise. It’s set in Boulder because one of my students came to my office, and he said he had another professor tell him to never set a novel in the place you live or where you are. And I couldn’t figure out why that would be, so I figured I would try it. I’m probably 110-120 pages in, but it’s screwed up right now. I have to go back and re-write it. I got so excited talking about early hominid behavior stuff, which is one of the things I love to read about, that I forgot to have a bad guy. He didn’t come on page until 120, which is way too late, you know?

**Whatley:** Do you have any particular work habits or writing schedule?

**SGJ:** I don’t. I wish I did, but at the same time I’m scared to entertain that. I’d love to have time to set aside, like I wake up at 6 and write until 10, which is what a lot of writers do. They find they’re most productive in the mornings. When I wake up in the morning, I want to run and bike and play and do stuff. My best time for writing is after lunch, so on semesters when my schedule allows it, I try to save from 1:00 to 3:00 every day to write. But the reason I resist having an actual schedule is because I don’t want writing to ever become a chore, like it’s time to do dishes, it’s time to mow the lawn, it’s time to write. For me writing is an escape; it’s not a chore.

**Whatley:** What do you find to be the most challenging aspect of writing?

**SGJ:** Probably, the business side of it. Luckily I have an agent, and she handles most of it, but still I get caught up in it, of course. It would be wonderful if I could just write a story and somehow transmit it to the heads of all the readers. All the middle stages are difficult to traverse, I think.

—Ellice Whatley
Now in its fourteenth year, *The Oswald Review* has reached a significant milestone. In 2012, the journal entered into a contractual relationship with EBSCO Publishing whereby all issues would be digitalized and made available via EBSCO databases in public and institutional libraries worldwide.

“This is significant recognition,” asserts Dr. Tom Mack, the founding editor, “of the niche that the publication has carved out in the category of undergraduate research. When *TOR* was first published, it was the only refereed, intercollegiate undergraduate journal of criticism and research in the discipline of English. Today other publications have entered the market, but *The Oswald Review* still sets the standard.”

Drs. Mack and Geyer pose behind a painting by Austin, Texas artist Eric Beverly; the circular image is the central feature of the cover design for their new short story anthology entitled *A Shared Voice* to be published by Lamar University Press in 2013. The book includes twenty-four paired tales by prominent writers in Texas and the Carolinas.
Justin Price  
Class of 2010

If anybody would have asked me what I would be doing after University, I never would have predicted that I would be living and working in the Czech Republic. Since my 2010 graduation with a BA in English, I have moved abroad and obtained a TEFL certification (Teachers of English as a Foreign Language). I have now been away from home for nearly a year, and I have taught in Prague and even in Slovakia. My most recent employment is with a private, state-run primary school teaching students eleven through nineteen years old. I absolutely adore my new students, who range from A1 (elementary proficiency) to C1 (advanced proficiency) levels. I am also still employed by two language schools, teaching for a wide range of companies and English language learners alike. I prepare students for Cambridge standardized tests like the FCE (First Certificate of English), the BEC (Business English Certificate), and the CAE (Certificate of Advanced English). I teach everything from the very basics of vocabulary and pronunciation to fundamental speaking and listening skills, practice reading and writing, and all of the grammar structures essential to language fluency. I attribute my understanding of the language and capacity to teach it to my studies at USCA and my training at TEFL Worldwide Prague. Particularly, my studies at USCA gave me the comprehension and preparation necessary for the hard work involved in being a teacher. I have found that as a teacher I am still very much akin to a student. I have to study and consider the intricacies of the language now more than ever before, and I am reminded daily of the care and effort my own educators put into my learning. Because of those educators, I am now happily living out a dream, and I am sincerely grateful to the university and its English department which helped and inspired me to get where I am today.

Gatlin Massey  
Class of 2011

Since graduating from USCA in May 2011 with a B.A. in English, I've lived up north for almost a year - in New York City. Currently I'm back here in South Carolina getting certified as a paralegal at Midlands Technical College.

An English degree has been beneficial in regards to the amount of research one does as a paralegal. In fact, the head of the Paralegal program at Midlands told me English majors are the ones who do best in the program. I have an internship at the Richland County Public Defenders Office where I often research defendants' prison records on several databases and keep track of relevant information. Writing research papers certainly prepared me for gathering and compiling pertinent information related to whatever topic I am researching.

For me, the most important aspect of being an English major is the analyzing and discussion of literature which can cross over into any profession really because thinking and being able to prove your thesis with relevant sources helps you to become more informed about what you're writing and talking about. You choose your words carefully and you're a much more open-minded person, gaining the ability to see things from more than one angle. At least, this has been my experience.

In regards to literature and reading, I've missed the structure of reading and discussing certain periods of literature and their respective writers so I started mini-projects on my own such as reading the oeuvre of Ira Levin (okay, I know he might not be one of the "greats" but I think he's pretty darned good) and blogging about reading a biography of every Presidential First Lady at Wordpress: everyfirstlady.wordpress.com. I'm planning to read up to former First Lady Laura Bush.
JESSICA BOYETTE HOFFMAN
CLASS OF 2010

When I graduated last year, I really thought I had my life all worked out from there. I was going to spend a year in the “real world” before pursuing a graduate degree and eventually teach at an awesome university (USC). But things don’t always turn out like we plan, and sometimes that’s not so bad. Two months to the day after graduation, I started a job with Morris Communications’ travel arm, Morris Visitor Publications, editing and writing for travel magazines from sparkling cities I’d never seen. Morris was making the sometimes difficult move to digital-focused, and I soon found myself Digital Editorial Coordinator. Admittedly no one really knew what my job description was, and still there are some grey areas, but it’s steadily coming into focus. I’m still at Morris, still a digital editor, but now on the eMedia Team, a group of web-focused professionals helping to make Morris a front-line competitor in web-based travel groups. We’ve launched a travel blog with contributions from our editors around the world, and I am slowly taking over responsibility for it. I schedule contributors, insert links and images into posts, write the SEO keywords (Search Engine Optimization – so Google can find us more easily) and oversee content editing. I occasionally write for the blog, on topics from Top 5 Beaches to National Spa Week. I also have the luxury of helping with social media, so I spend a good bit of my day posting our links to Facebook, Twitter, and, yes, even Pinterest. I get paid to Pin. So I may not be teaching (yet) and I may not have “Ph.D.” behind my name (yet), but I am helping a business reinvent itself for the 21st century, and while that is very often wildly stressful, it is nothing short of interesting.

ELIZABETH FONTE
CLASS OF 2012

During one of my job interviews, I was told the position I was applying for required the perfect fit to be a geek.

“Would you consider yourself a ‘geek’?” the interviewer asked, his eyebrows slightly furrowing in a slight wince for asking such a question.

Saying yes in this case helped me land my first job in the publishing industry. As the research assistant for SC Biz News, I organize data and compose listings and directories of businesses by category for all published material. Essentially, I am one of the main administrators of the company’s database, where I check company records for accuracy and contact business owners and managers who need to update. Additionally, I investigate new companies and growing industry segments spanning the state of South Carolina. With my own independent research, I help brainstorm story ideas and new products for the company’s business journals in Charleston, Columbia, and Greenville.

The deep analytical skills I learned from USC Aiken’s English program have given me an advantage when approaching my assignments at SC Biz News, especially when developing new ideas for list categories and ways to use data in our products. I also interact with customers and business leaders on a daily basis, where I apply the communication skills I learned from the English program, especially through my experience tutoring in the Writing Room. In an urgent deadline-based environment, my job also exercises the multi-tasking and project management skills I used as an English major when dealing with reading assignments and papers.

The balance of creativity and a high level of accuracy in the data I encounter every day may be the prime makeup of my “geek” personality, but I believe a different factor plays in the grand scheme of my job. The English faculty’s support and excellence in teaching helped me acquire key skills I apply in my line of work as I continue to “think deep (ly)” each day.
My graphic design colleague and best friend recently told me that she believes writers are the most tormented of all artists, wild haired and boarded up in a room strewn with crumpled paper balls. I laughed, immediately recounting the nights of crossed out paragraphs that were re-written and slashed again. Oh, the angst over a single word! Somehow the madness is worth it and in the end everything is connected. That’s one of the biggest takeaways from the USCA English program—the ability to find those connections such that words, whether I’ve written or spoken them, have meaning to someone else. To help me unearth the didactic gems nestled in textual crevices or approach composition from a new angle, my professors challenged me to analyze, consider, question, research and, ultimately, take a stance and create.

An English program might conjure images of towering medieval books that are poured over in an unending silence. While there are stacks of books, there isn’t as much solitude as you’d think. My classes were interactive and engaging (like Dr. Rhodes’s technical writing course, the late Dr. Gardener’s creative writing workshop, and linguistics with Dr. Rich). We shared lively discourse, critiquing each other’s work, debating over the metaphorical (and somehow even the literal), and tapping the imagination. The classroom paradigm of the USCA English program shows that the journey toward meaning is connective in and of itself.

No doubt—without a B.A. in English, I would not be where I am now. My career is a hybrid, one that combines some traditional 9 to 5 work and 21st-century telecommuting. A part-time status as a technical publication specialist on the MOX Project allows me to spend the rest of the week freelancing for Aiken Homes and Lifestyles magazine and Augusta Magazine, and running a freelance editorial/design firm, StudioSashay (www.studiosashay.com). Each piece of this dynamic schedule stretches my brain in different ways and connects me with people in various arenas. Writing—it’s “tormenting” processes and exhilarating rewards—is part of my daily living and being, and it’s a journey I hope to be on for a long time.

Since graduating, I have had ample opportunity to see with my own eyes just how useful a B.A. in English and experience as a Writing Consultant at USC Aiken can be on the job market. It says to recruiters that you are detail-oriented, research-driven, good with people, and unafraid to speak your mind and ask questions. These traits in particular make it perfect for my current job as a Legal Assistant at Weston Adams Law Firm. Daily, I am required to pay extraordinary attention to detail when drafting court pleadings and correspondence to the parties involved. One mistake in wording, and you have thrown off an entire case. The intense proofreading and numerous drafts the English program at USC Aiken enforces truly prepared me for such important tasks. Additionally, working at a law firm requires one to be particularly timely when sending out hearing notices for court dates to clients, and every English major knows that meeting deadlines is of upmost importance if you want to be taken seriously amongst your coworkers and superiors. The Writing Room tendered my career skills greatly, as dealing with students and learning styles of every kind has enhanced my communication skills in an office setting where group harmony and cooperation are a must. Overall, I am immensely grateful for my experiences in the English program at USC Aiken and could not have asked for more preparation as I progress with my legal career.
The Slave Potter, David Drake

Under the mentorship of Dr. Tom Mack, Jennifer Gilmore and Brianna Arnone are working together on a Magellan Scholarship project examining the life of David Drake. David Drake was an African American slave, who lived in Edgefield, South Carolina. He is best known for the size of his vessels and for the fact that he often signed his work or inscribed the surface of his pots with poetic couplets. This was at a time when it was illegal to teach the enslaved population to read and write. In essence, Jennifer and Brianna are dissecting his accomplishments and reforming the information into an eighth grade curriculum unit. The unit is divided into four parts: language arts, science, social studies, and visual arts. Brianna is working on the science and language arts sections, and Jennifer is working on the history and visual arts sections.

“As a native of Aiken, who lives in close proximity to the Savannah River Site, I was extremely enthralled to hear that a piece of history, in the form of David Drake’s pottery, was unearthed there. It absolutely astounded me that someone who was given so little flourished so much, especially in the fields of poetry and pottery.”

—Jennifer Gilmore

“I find this project to be interesting because it has allowed me to learn about the significant achievements of one man, a slave, while also applying knowledge that I have and combining the two to help middle-school teachers and students. In short, the result of our project is both informational and practical.”

—Brianna Arnone

The Poet and Inventor, James Matthews Legare

Under the mentorship of Dr. Tom Mack, Tayler Rodgers is working on a Magellan project. In essence, Tayler is creating both a language arts and science lesson plan for sixth-grade students. The topic, James Matthews Legare, was a 19th-century poet, inventor, and a citizen of Aiken. Legare’s profession was an inventor, but his health caused him to be unsuccessful in commercializing his inventions. In the language arts lesson plan, students will be learning to define and recognize poetic terms. In the science lesson plan, students will study the structure of plants, learn to identify simple machines, and learn the history of cotton. While the focus of the language arts lesson plan is Legare’s poems, which touch upon the flora and fauna in this area, the focus of the science lesson plan is Legare as an inventor. His invention of plastic cotton was a direct response to the excess cotton production made possible by the invention of Eli Whitney's cotton gin.

"My travelling trunk serves as a means to educate local students to the art of James Matthews Legare, an otherwise obscure poet and inventor. Creating lesson plans that teach 6th grade students about poetic forms and simple machines while also spreading knowledge of an unfortunately under-recognized man is quite rewarding."

—Tayler Rodgers
The Writing Room

USCA’s Writing Room provides students with the opportunity to receive help in writing from other students who are trained tutors. Whether a student has a revised version of his/her paper or if he/she needs help brainstorming, the Writing Room tutors are able to help with all stages of the writing process. From citations to grammar, the tutors are always enthusiastic about working with fellow students, helping them improve their writing.

Through a recent collaboration with the Gregg-Graniteville Library, Writing Room tutors and librarians have expanded their services to further assist students. Now Writing Room tutors are also available in the Library to aid students who are working on their papers, and librarians are available in the Writing Room to aid students with research. Because of this expansion, seeking additional help has become easier for students.

Both the Writing Room and library staff also conduct workshops. These workshops are held frequently throughout the semester and focus on specific topics that many students may find of interest, such as how to cite MLA and how to write a literary analysis. Such services give students the opportunity to seek additional help and gain additional knowledge outside of class.

As the Writing Room lead tutor, I encourage all students to come to the Writing Room, especially students who may be struggling with English. The Writing Room is located in H&SS 112 and is open Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Our additional library hours are Monday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday, 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. A tutor can be found in room 205 on the second floor of the library during these hours.

-Ellice Whatley
The staff of Broken Ink consists entirely of USCA students, all of whom play an important role. Some of the editorial positions include Editor-in-Chief, Literary Editor, Layout Editor, Online editor, Visual Editor, and Public Relations Coordinator. Maria Larocca, a senior, is the Editor-in-Chief, and her role in the magazine is to coordinate the staff, set goals, and delegate tasks.

“To me Broken Ink represents the voice of the unheard and unrecognized talents of the students on our campus. It is a home for the artists, writers, and now musicians of USC Aiken. The magazine really provides a way for students to be recognized for their creativity among their peers and the artistic community that surrounds them. I'm very attached to our small student organization.”—Maria Larocca, Editor-in-Chief

Leah Stanley, senior English major, participated in the 2012 Research Day at the University of South Carolina Aiken. Her presentation was entitled “Packaging Poe.” She presented her research from her Magellan scholarship on the topic of Edgar Allan Poe and literary tourism. In essence, Leah unveiled Poe’s connections to South Carolina. She found out that Poe served at Fort Moultrie on Sullivan’s Island when he was in the army and that his stay in South Carolina inspired several of his works. With this knowledge, Leah visited Sullivan’s Island and explored the different ways that Poe is commemorated there.

Under the mentorship of Dr. Tom Mack, Leah successfully won the Bronze Award in the category of oral presentation. The data that she collected during her field trip she shared with the National Park Service to help the staff at Fort Moultrie better exploit that site’s connection to Poe to take advantage of the lucrative patronage of literary tourists.
Ellen Lott Smith Scholarship Award Winner

John Elliott won the Ellen Lott Smith Scholarship for 2012-2013. Dr. Ellen Lott Smith established this scholarship competition in 2006 to provide financial aid to a student majoring in English or English Education. The requirements for applying for the scholarship entail submitting a one-page essay explaining the advantages of studying the humanities and how studying the humanities has shaped the student. All submitted essays are then judged by a panel of professors. In John’s essay, “On the Importance of Humanities,” he illuminates the difference between his experience of being in the military and his experience majoring in English. Furthermore, John explains that the most important skills he has received from the humanities are analysis and communication. John concludes his essay by emphasizing his passion for the humanities.

“If I can make such progress now, in this short period of my life, I marvel at the broad scheme of things I may yet learn and learn to use; I cringe when I think of everything I could have accomplished had I learned them earlier; and I dread what will happen if no one else learns these same skills.”

—John Elliott

From the Editor

During advisement for the fall 2012 semester, I was offered the chance to create the English Department’s annual newsletter. Of course, I was eager to accept this opportunity, in spite of the fact that the work it entailed seemed, at the time, somewhat daunting. However, over the course of the semester, the work was evenly spread out, making it a much easier task than it initially appeared to be. Essentially, the newsletter required me to utilize my English skills in a different way. I learned how to organize information into a publication format; I additionally had the pleasure of communicating with the faculty members and students in the department. Also, because of the newsletter, I conducted my first formal interview, which was with Stephen Graham Jones. I am very grateful for the opportunity to edit the newsletter because I ultimately was able to find out more about the English department.

I am sincerely appreciative to everyone who has helped me create this newsletter. Most importantly, I am thankful to Dr. Mack for providing me with this opportunity and guiding me through the process. What I learned in creating this newsletter is another bullet point on the extensive list of knowledge he has already taught me.

—Ellice Whatley
**Recent English Department Publications**

**Hidden History of Aiken County**

Tom Mack

Rediscover Aiken County, South Carolina

Tom Mack explores the colorful history behind the city's landmarks and the people who have shaped it. The book includes photographs and maps, making it a must-read for anyone interested in Aiken County's past.

**Waking to Light**

by Phoebe Davidson

Phoebe Davidson is a careful observer of both the natural world and the human heart, and she reflects on these themes in her poetry. Her poems are deeply rooted in nature, and she has a talent for capturing the beauty andexpressiveness of the natural world. The poems in this collection are a testament to her skill as a poet.

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