

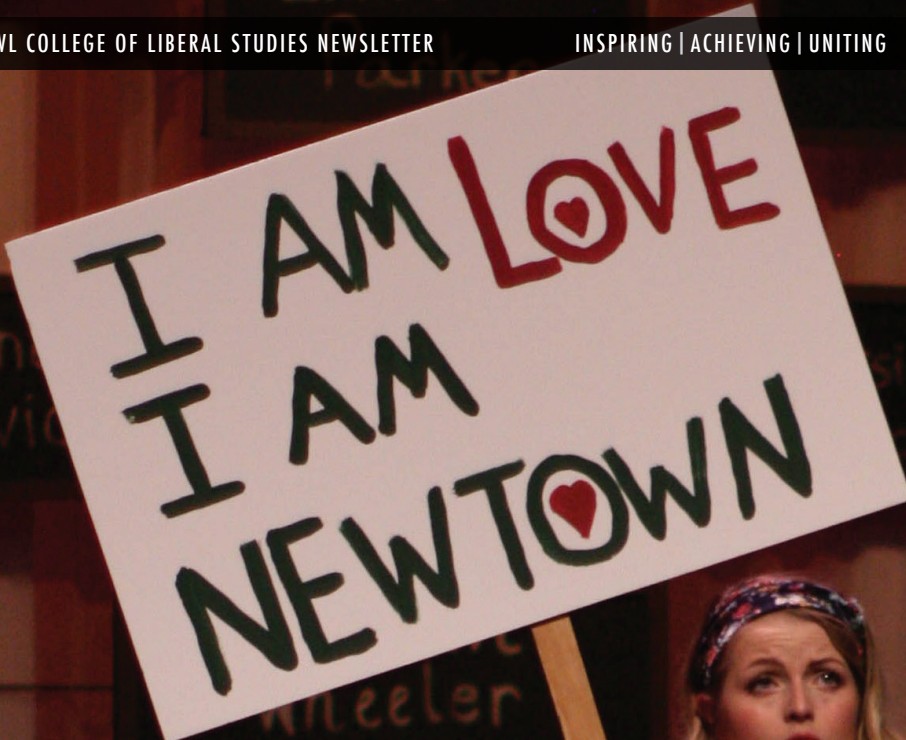


# CAPSTONE

UWL COLLEGE OF LIBERAL STUDIES NEWSLETTER

INSPIRING | ACHIEVING | UNITING

SPRING 2017



## A Spotlight on Newtown

Play honors voices from a mass tragedy, inspires local conversations

PAGE 5 »

# FROM THE DEAN: **JULIA JOHNSON**



## Thinking Critically

### Typesetting, speech forged career path

I started college at 18 after dropping out of high school. Attending college seemed inevitable. From my earliest memories, I can recall my mother talking to me about completing a degree.

And so I started community college in 1985 with no idea what I wanted to study and no idea of a major or career. I meandered through general education courses and, along the way, was guided by peers and faculty into opportunities that would change my relationship to schooling and set me up with opportunities I had never imagined.

Two events were transformative in providing me critical thinking and communication skills: I was hired as a typesetter for the college newspaper (which led to my learning how to write as a journalist) and I was recruited to join the speech team.

The typesetting job taught me how to use a computer (it was 1985 and computers were relatively new to folks like me) and how to create visually impactful messaging. It

also opened doors for professional opportunities in public and external relations. I began working on writing projects and PR activities for offices across campus and learned how to interact with professional leaders.

Joining the speech team was utterly transformative. I learned how to research, organize and present my ideas to diverse audiences. My teachers, many in the process of earning their doctoral degrees, were coaches. They taught me how higher education worked, including how to write academic resumes and interact with faculty. I traveled to competitions across the U.S. and even to China.

Each weekend, I would receive evaluations of my skills in thinking, speaking and professional conduct, which pushed me to constantly improve. My grades improved dramatically — I learned to think through ideas more complexly and build arguments based on reason, evidence and audience analysis. Because I could present ideas well, I began getting jobs that paid more and opened more doors professionally. I also learned

to reflect on people's motivations and beliefs, including my own.

These two experiences were vehicles for teaching me how higher education helps students learn to think deeply and communicate effectively. Of course, I had many other transformative experiences in classrooms, through all I was asked to read and consider. Each and every faculty member who invested in me taught me something new about how to think independently and how to consider the best interests of others. I learned ethics, social justice, leadership, how to listen and how to collaborate.

In this issue, we explore critical thinking as an integral component of our work in higher education. As you read the stories consider how important these skills are for living a meaningful life, building community in relationship with others, and creating a world in which all can thrive.

**Julia Johnson,**  
Dean of the College of Liberal Studies

## CLS VISION STATEMENT

Championing the enduring values of the liberal arts and positioning them as key to transforming people, ideas and the world.

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**GIVE TO CLS**



## Take the Stage

Much thought goes into theatrical selections

Choosing a theatre season is always a daunting task. We try very hard within the Department of Theatre Arts to choose a season that will challenge, enlighten and expose audiences to new works, as well as entertain.

When I read Eric Ulloa's new play "26 Pebbles," I felt two emotions almost simultaneously — fear and compulsion to produce the play. The subject matter was still too raw for me and for many in the department who read the script. But that, coupled with continued news stories, really drove what I felt was an obligation to produce this play.

If we, as a university, don't bring stories like this to our students and the public to provide an opportunity for discussion and growth, then we are failing what is part of our mission to the university, the La Crosse community and region. This would be the first time the play would be produced beyond a staged reading, so we were the world premier.

Ulloa's script calls us back to that horrible day in December 2012 when 26 six- and seven-year-old children, teachers and administrators were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School at

the hands of a lone gunman. Former President Obama described the event as "indescribable violence" and "unconscionable evil."

It struck a chord with me, having two children myself. I remember thinking "Now things will have to change after something so horrible." And yet, we continue to be flooded with these tragedies. According to one study, there have been 894 mass shootings in the U.S. since the Sandy Hook tragedy five years ago.

We were afforded the phenomenal opportunity to bring Ulloa to campus to work with our students. This proved invaluable to everyone. I am so proud of our students who took on roles of people still living and maintained the utmost respect, care and thoughtfulness.

Under the gentle guidance of their director, Mary Leonard, they were able to achieve and portray a truthfulness and honesty for these characters, which astonished even the playwright who knew these people personally. These young actors had to allow themselves to be extremely vulnerable. They did so with grace and maturity beyond their years.

In watching the audience during the performances, I was struck with how totally engaged they were. In fact, they were visually and audibly moved. I remember a collective gasp one night after one of the actors referred to the number of dead, "We've topped Columbine."

My hope is that we raised awareness — that we pushed the envelope of comfort. It is our obligation as artists and teachers to expose our students and community to a variety of viewpoints and voices.

It is not our job to tell you what to think or even to change your mind. But, it is our obligation to challenge what you think and why you think — and to present another perspective. Artists have a long history of using their art to effect change.

As I tell my students, "We are a people who live in hope."

**Joe Anderson,**  
Chair, Department of Theatre Arts

# A Spotlight on Newtown

Play honors voices from a mass tragedy, inspires local conversations



**T**he first rehearsal was stiff, emotionless, uneasy.

UWL theatre students cast in “26 Pebbles” sat around tables in a small rehearsal room reading their lines. It was word-for-word what community members in Newtown, Connecticut, said after experiencing the third deadliest mass shooting by a single person in U.S. history.

The morning of the shooting — Dec. 14, 2012 — 26 people were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Twenty of them were kids ages 5-10 years old. After the initial blast, students and teachers hid under desks and closed themselves in closets. One heroic teacher crammed all of her first graders into a

single bathroom stall. She told them she loved them as another classroom was massacred on the other side of the wall.

Her story and others are heard in “26 Pebbles,” a script based on interviews with community residents who lived the aftermath of those horrific events. The performance at UWL’s Toland Theatre in October 2016 was the collegiate premiere — and the play’s first fully-staged production anywhere.

“I think for all of us it was daunting to know that not only were these real people we were representing, but that we were the first official production to share their stories,” says UWL Senior Kelsey Norton, the dramaturge for the production.

**ABOVE:** The play “26 Pebbles” had its world premiere Oct. 14 at UWL’s Toland Theatre. The cast portrayed residents from the Newtown, Connecticut, community after one of the deadliest school shootings in U.S. history. Pictured above are UWL students Kelsey Norton and Olivia Dubiel during a performance. Students spent a lot of time reflecting on the feelings and viewpoints of the real people they portrayed in the play.

**ON THE COVER:** UWL student Olivia Dubiel takes the stage in “26 Pebbles.”

Coming to grips with that responsibility was hard. Theater Director Mary Leonard describes that first rehearsal as “a horrific dirge.” She went home that night wondering if she had made a mistake in choosing this script. Was the death of young children too much for her cast to handle emotionally? Can the aftermath of violence be portrayed? Did it create too much fear about a shooter coming to UWL?

“Doing this play makes you think and worry about it more,” says Leonard. “I didn’t want to bring students down a path that is not healthy or good for them.”

But Leonard says her students have always been hungry for knowledge and experiences that push them out of their comfort zone. And this production would be that.

“This kind of work doesn’t always come their way. It is new, thought-provoking and important,” she says. “If we don’t face our fears, sometimes we’ll never grow and learn. We’ll just stay.”

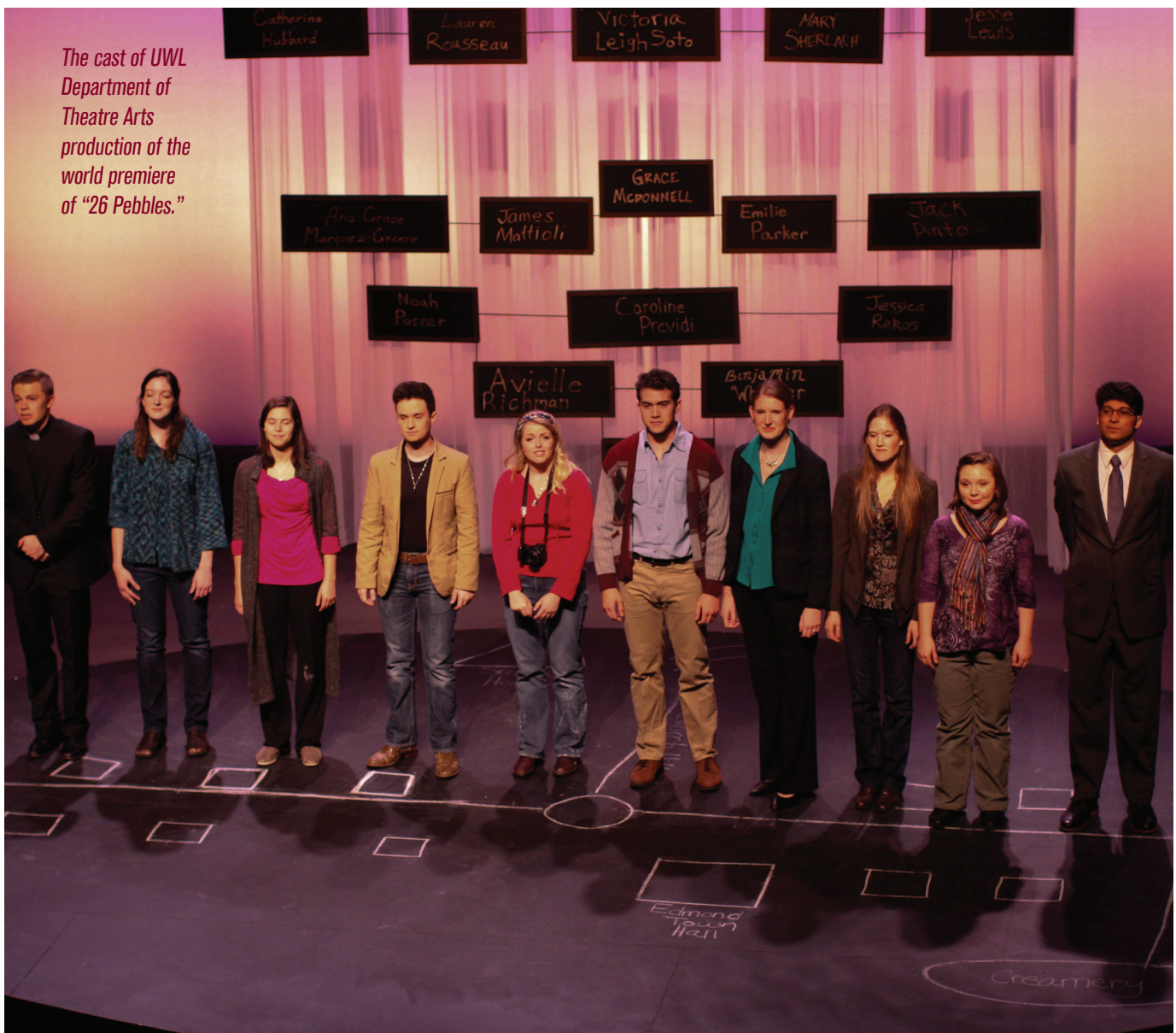
### FINDING THEIR WAY TO NEWTOWN

From the second rehearsal on, Leonard and her students were committed to honoring those voices from the small

community in central Connecticut.

The Playwright Eric Ulloa had traveled to town six months after the shooting and asked people how they were dealing with the aftermath of the tragedy. He didn’t expect many people to talk to him, but more than 60 eventually did. The voices of shopkeepers, city council members, town workers, and parents of students who had survived were documented in thousands of pages of transcripts and then pieced together like a puzzle. Overwhelmingly, their message was one of hope.

“This town refused to be defined by this horrible act of violence,” says Joe



*UWL student Elissa Wolf performs in "26 Pebbles."*



## **A PRESTIGIOUS RESTAGING**

The Department of Theatre Arts was selected to perform "26 Pebbles" at the prestigious Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival competition Jan. 10 in Indianapolis. The production was one of only five shows chosen from 24 Midwest college and university productions submitted by institutions — many with graduate theatre programs. This is the third time since 2003 UWL had a production selected for the Kennedy Center/ACT Festival.

Anderson, chair of UWL Theatre Arts. "Instead, they made it clear they will be defined by love, getting up and moving on."

The greatest fear for student actors was that their portrayals of these citizens would come across as caricatures, says Norton. "There had to be a part of ourselves in each of these people to keep it from being fake."

Students watched videos, read articles and sat down with their scripts for hours at a time to find themselves within these people, explains Norton.



*The play's name, "26 Pebbles," relates to the 26 deaths in the Newtown tragedy and how those deaths, like pebbles thrown in a pond, create ripples that have reached the nation. The names of those who died were honored during the performance.*

"I could never work on this play without having first developed my own thoughts and opinions on the matter," she says. "Critical thinking came into play when we each had to make a decision as to whether or not the person we were representing reflected similar opinions."

Norton's research for the play focused a great deal on the killer, Adam Lanza, and the lack of treatment he received for his diagnosed mental illnesses. "I formed my own opinions on the matter in terms of Adam himself being a kind of victim. My character, Carole, has a son who suffers from Schizophrenia," she says. "Because of this, I believe we probably share this uncommon viewpoint, and I chose to show that in my delivery of her words. Any issues we came across all dealt with this idea of keeping these stories honest."

Norton says beyond the challenge of finding herself in Carole, the play brought her attention to a tragedy and an issue she knew little about.

"In the past, gun violence had always just seemed like that topic that high school students themed their research papers on when they couldn't think of something more creative," she says. "Working on this show opened my eyes to not only gun violence, but research on mental illnesses, grieving, and what is being done — or sadly, not done — in our nation in response to the tragedy."

The hardest day working on this script came on June 12, 2016, when the worst mass shooting in the history of the U.S. occurred at an Orlando nightclub, recalls Norton.

"I had to come to the realization that the issues of this play are more relevant now than ever," she says. "These stories shook and inspired me, our production, and our audiences at a time in our nation when we should be having discussions about these topics and what is being done to prevent tragedies like Sandy Hook from ever occurring again."

## REALITY-BASED PLAY INSPIRES A REAL RESPONSE

The production inspired conversations on a local level, including people who respond in school shootings such as law enforcement, school psychologists, student life staff and others.

UWL Associate Professor of Psychology Rob Dixon, a Wisconsin delegate for the National Association of School Psychologists, helped coordinate a panel of school psychologists to be part of a talk back after a production. He also coordinated another panel of UWL campus staff from law enforcement to the counseling center to talk about what would happen if a shooting occurred at UWL.

Dixon, who was director of the UWL's school psychology program during the play's run, says the play was an opportunity to let people know about resources available. The talk backs could also help them process large-scale tragedy such as a school shooting.





## A BIG THANK YOU

Some of the members of the Newtown community who students represent in the play sent them a video thanking them for doing the performance and sharing their stories.

“I think it is a powerful play and it digs at a lot of emotions,” says Dixon. “My intent was to have people talk about some of those feelings.”

He congratulates students, Leonard and the playwright on a phenomenal job of capturing the range of emotions in the aftermath of a tragedy like this.

The first rehearsal may have been rough, but Leonard is glad they stuck with it.

“Throughout the years I’ve directed a lot of shows here. This one has a very special place. It reminds me of the importance of the arts,” she says. “Especially now in our time — We have to keep using our talents, discovering and shedding a light.”

*TOP LEFT: Playwright Eric Ulloa pieced together the script for “26 Pebbles” after about 60 interviews with Newtown residents.*

*ABOVE: UWL student Avital Maltinski during a performance.*



*UWL Associate Professor Tim Dale, right, provided political commentary Monday nights during elections last fall on WXOW News 19 La Crosse.*

# Brain Buster

Political science prof takes love of critical thinking to locals via trivia, TV

**R**aucous laughter and shouting come from a crowded downtown café. About 70 people are huddled around tiny tables trying to come up with names of Denzel Washington movies, presidential quotes and cat breeds.

The Root Note on Monday night is the spot to be in downtown La Crosse. UWL Associate Professor Tim Dale is running the show.

He sits on his couch the night before — just him and Google — coming up with the hardest possible questions to please his audience. Dale, who's also frequently featured

as a political commentator in local news, says he's now become better known as “the trivia guy.”

Dale started trivia at The Root Note in 2013. Its popularity has grown since. The evening attracts groups from college professors and local ministers to high school quiz bowlers. He's continued it because it's good community building and good fun.



*Tim Dale*

## LIKE TRIVIA?

Trivia Night at [The Root Note](#) is from 8-10 p.m. Mondays. Anyone is welcome.

“I've found the right location and the right crowd — with people as nerdy as I am,” he jokes.

## TEACH-IN HELPS AWKWARD POLITICAL TALK

Having trouble talking politics in today's polarized society? Associate Professor Tim Dale helped the campus community dissect current issues by participating in a teach-in on civil discourse in October 2016, just before the presidential election.

One of the main questions was how do you disagree with someone politically, and still be kind and approachable in a conversation? Dale has researched democracy's requirements for a civil society — a community of citizens linked by common interests and collective activity. Dale says the conversation was an important one: "I believe our democracy is better when we talk to each other."

## ON THE AIR TOO

Along with doling out questions, Dale has played a big role answering them. He regularly provides political commentary for local reporters, and was featured Mondays at 5 p.m. on WXOW News 19 during last fall's elections.

Dale says even though he's trained as a political scientist, he wanted to be a political journalist. Although he found his passion in political philosophy, there's always been a part of him that still loves journalism. "So, during elec-

tion time, I get to live out this career path that never was," he explains.

Dale helps dissect questions such as how influential political parties are in elections, or why they elect an insider vs. outsider candidate.

Along the way, Dale says he's also learning. Journalists do a lot of legwork to investigate and collect the facts. Dale expands on those details to explain why things happen the way they do. Dale says the outreach benefits him because he gets as much out of the conversation as he puts in. It's also a professional responsibility, he adds.

## POP QUIZ!

Here are some of Tim Dale's hardest questions. The answer to each clue is an anagram of the other.

**Q** A four-letter word meaning "to be done poorly."  
A four-letter word meaning "a bell-shaped flower."

**A** lly and Lilly

**Q** A four-letter word meaning "an object in space."  
A four-letter word meaning "a Russian ruler."

**A** Star and Tsar

**Q** A four-letter word meaning "energy and enthusiasm."  
A four-letter word meaning "to bend from a vertical position."

**A** Elean and Lean

# TEDxUWLa Crosse OPENS DOORS

YouTube videos lead to speaking engagements around U.S., overseas



YouTube videos of two UWL Psychology Department faculty members explaining implications of their research have collectively garnered about 330,000 YouTube views at the end of 2016.

The videos, created at TEDx UWLaCrosse events, have led to speaking engagements nationwide and overseas.

They've helped the presenting faculty communicate the relevance of their research to everyday people with questions from high school students and Madison Avenue ad agents to European businesses leaders.

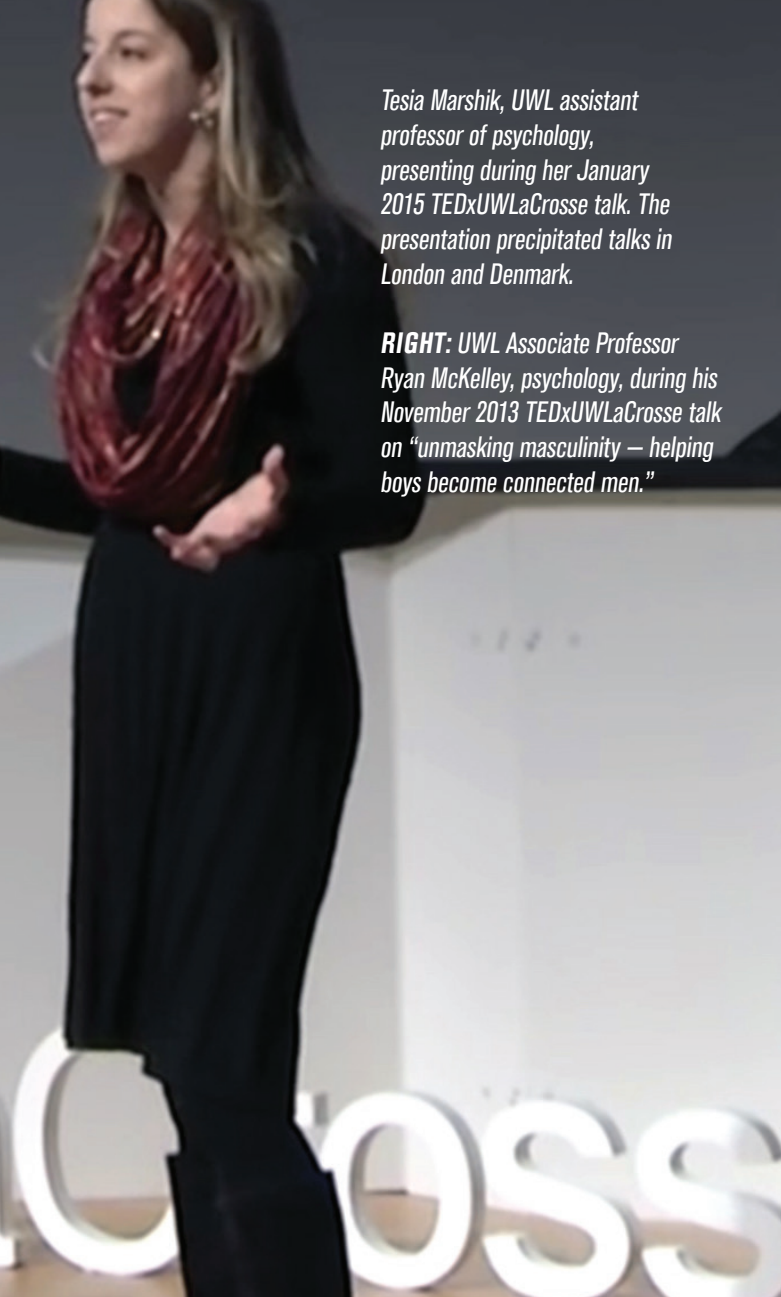
The videos were recorded during TEDxUWLaCrosse events on campus in 2013 and 2015. Many are familiar with TED Talks, an award-winning video site affiliated with the TED non-profit organization. TEDx events are independently coordinated to give communities, organizations and individuals the opportunity to stimulate dialogue through TED-like experiences locally.

In a November 2013 TEDx event, Ryan McKelley, UWL associate professor and chair of Psychology, gave a talk on "Unmasking Masculinity — Helping Boys Become Connected Men." In January 2015,

UWL Assistant Professor of Psychology Tesia Marshik shared the myth of learning styles and need for critical self reflection. The two have been pleasantly surprised by the response.

"If I publish a research article, about 12 people read it — and 10 are graduate students," says McKelley. "To have the opportunity to talk about something important in a more public forum, and in a way that people can access and use it is very exciting."

Since the videos were published online, the two have continued to hear from strangers about once a

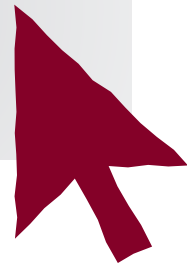


*Tesia Marshik, UWL assistant professor of psychology, presenting during her January 2015 TEDxUWLaCrosse talk. The presentation precipitated talks in London and Denmark.*

**RIGHT:** *UWL Associate Professor Ryan McKelley, psychology, during his November 2013 TEDxUWLaCrosse talk on “unmasking masculinity – helping boys become connected men.”*



**LEARN MORE  
AND WATCH THE  
VIDEOS »**



month. Some have personal questions related to the issues, while others are professionals wanting to know more. Those connections have led to speaking engagements worldwide.

Marshik has taken her findings to London and Denmark. She spoke on critical thinking and recognizing implicit bias at a learning skills and technology conference in London. That led to another talk for a crowd of 500 at a consulting company in Denmark.

“It’s an incredible feeling to communicate psychological findings

with audiences not used to hearing those, and helping them see why it is interesting and important in their lives outside of a traditional academic setting,” says Marshik.

McKelley’s talks have ranged from presenting about boys and social connectedness at a Silicon Valley School District to facilitating discussion at a New York City Madison Avenue ad agency on how masculinity is changing. He’s also crossed country lines, speaking at the “Eating Disorders in Men” conference in Quebec, Canada, and was interviewed for Upworthy, a website for viral content.

McKelley calls the responses “validating,” but also an opportunity to reflect on his own messaging. He’s thinking more these days about how he, as an educator, can continue to talk about important information in ways that connect with more people to make them critically think.



# GRAND FINALE

Gary Walth retiring at the end of the school year

**G**ary Walth hasn't had time to think about his final bow as a UWL music professor. After 24 years leading the vocal music program, Walth is retiring at the end of the school year, but not before going out with a bang.

In June, Walth will lead a choir of current students and alumni, along with other musicians from other schools, in one of the country's premiere concert venues: Carnegie Hall. It's part of a four-day director residency in the hall.

"It's going to be incredible to work with this group," says Walth.

"It's going to be great to see some familiar faces."

Many of those faces will come from Walth's efforts to build up the university's choral program, one of the first tasks he was given when he came to campus. He did that by creating relationships with students. "This is one of the most diverse choirs we've ever had," says Walth.

He also credits his best friend and mentor, the late Tony Molina — a UWL emeritus music professor — for teaching Walth about the UW System "and more about life than anything," says Walth. Since begin-

ning at UWL, Walth has watched his students go on to great musical opportunities — singing off-Broadway, performing on cruise ships, and sharing their gift of music with others through teaching.

Nick Bailey, who graduated in music theatre in '10, recalls being impressed with Walth's choirs when arriving on campus. Bailey eventually fell in love with singing, joining numerous campus choirs and even Walth's church choir. Baily attributes his current career to Walth's influence. "I sing a cappella around the Midwest with a group from here in

“If there’s  
a way to  
‘go out,’  
this is it.”

GARY WALTH



*Director of Choral Studies Gary Walth will retire at the end of the academic year. His last performance is aptly in New York City’s famous Carnegie Hall.*

the Twin Cities and I’m loving it,” says Bailey.

Beyond relationships with students, Walth also made a distinct effort to connect with departments and organizations on campus. One of the best relationships is with the Athletics Department. “I’ve always had a passion for sports, especially baseball,” Walth says.

That connection with athletics meant opportunities for his students to perform the national anthem at events. It also introduced Walth to a recruitment platform software typically used for sports that he was able

to use for choirs.

“The company said we were the first choir in the nation to use the software,” says Walth. It’s meant less paperwork for Walth and more time for what he loves doing — building relationships.

The sports area was also an easy way for Walth to build connections with the community. He has volunteered for the past three years for the La Crosse Loggers and even wrote the team a fight song.

Now with retirement on the horizon, Walth will continue to feed his passion for sports. “Golf is definitely

in my future,” joked Walth. “I want to be somewhere where I can play a lot of golf.”

That will be fulfilled if Walth follows his plans and spends the colder months in Tampa, Florida. The second benefit to that location — his favorite baseball team, the New York Yankees, hosts spring training there.

But before spring training, he’ll get a chance to see his Yankees in action while on his last hurrah at Carnegie Hall.

“If there’s a way to ‘go out,’ this is it,” says Walth.



# Helping History

CLS has assisted area students with learning history for years

*UWL students helped area teachers, librarians and archivists with the launch of a new website, the “NHD in Wisconsin Friendly Finding Aid.” The site, which features UWL student work and unveiled in October, was funded by a \$10,000 Wisconsin Humanities Council grant.*

For nearly two decades, the UWL History Department has been helping area middle and high school students think like historians. Faculty and students have helped teachers, librarians and archivists assist students with National History Day. In fact, they’ve helped two local high school students become national champions: Aditya Ailiani, Onalaska, in 2016 and Cody Haro, Holmen, in 2007.

“Every year we get new students and districts participating in our nine-county region,” says National History Day Coordinator Patricia Stovey, a UWL assistant professor of history. “But even for those who don’t become national champions, National History Day does so much for so many. For example, for many area youth, this is their first interaction with higher education and UWL.”

It’s common for UWL faculty to work with National History Day competitors leading up to spring competition. Many UWL students also serve as mentors for younger students and judge at local and regional competitions.

Assistant History Professor Tiffany Trimmer was featured in last year’s winning documentary by Ailiani. She connected early in his project to help him find more sources and focus his arguments.

“It’s the kind of partnership in the community we get excited about,” says Trimmer. “[Ailiani] is a student who had an idea, did some research and wanted some extra guidance.”

Stovey says working with local schools and their students is the Wisconsin Idea at work. “School districts and students are tapping into our expertise and we’re helping develop the kind of skills that they will need in college and in the workplace,” explains Stovey.

Those skills are key. Not all of the participants become historians. “It’s not about that,” Stovey says. “It’s more about teaching transferable skills, like analytical thinking, clear writing and communication, recognizing context and persevering in work that they can apply throughout their lives.”



# HISTORIC DONATION

## UWL student uncovers diverse perspective, builds historic archive

A collection of newsletters for lesbians living in the La Crosse area for nearly 30 years was added to UWL's Murphy Library Special Collections thanks to the foresight of a UWL student.

Student researcher Cristian Noriega initially recognized the value of "Leaping La Crosse News," a series of monthly newsletter from 1979-2007, after interviewing La Crosse resident Mary O'Sullivan for a class project. O'Sullivan had the historic collection at her home. Noriega helped bridge the gap between O'Sullivan and UWL's Special Collections. The collection is now accessible through Murphy Library directly and digitally.

The addition helps make Special Collections more representative of the diverse people and groups who make up La Crosse history, says Laura Godden, '07, Special Collections historian. People outside majority groups are underrepresented in historic archives because what is recorded by newspapers, government agencies and other organizations at any moment in time is based on society's inclusion and acceptance level, she explains.

If those stories are not otherwise preserved in archives, Godden says the words, actions and perspectives of minority groups can get left out of the larger historical narrative because researchers



*UWL student researcher Cristian Noriega, a psychology major, helped bridge the gap between a local resident holding a historic collection and UWL's Special Collections. Noriega, left, shares "The Leaping La Crosse News" issues with Laura Godden, '07, Special Collections historian. "The Leaping La Crosse News" provided information for lesbians living in the La Crosse area for nearly 30 years.*



can't access them.

Knowing the history of La Crosse's LGBTQ population goes beyond a class project for Noriega, who identifies with the LGBTQ community. "I feel very happy about this because she [Mary] has made it so much easier for people like me to continue all of our work that helps the LGBTQ movement," he says.

Read past issues  
of "The Leaping  
La Crosse News" »





*Linda Levinson's class donned boxes to understand photography better.*

# PINPOINTING AN IDEA

Simple activity demonstrates basics of photography

Imagine the students' faces when Linda Levinson told them they would walk around campus with boxes on their heads.

The activity aimed to show students the basics of creating photographs. "The students need to know that photographs can be created without cameras," says Levinson, associate professor of art.

The process, called 'camera obscura,' is created whenever a darkroom (or a box) has an opening to let in light. The light casts an image of whatever is outside the pinhole onto the rear interior wall of the room or box.

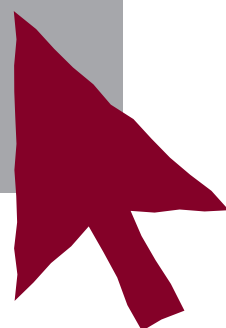
"The human eye is a much more complex and subtle machine for seeing than the camera," explains Levinson. "The starting point for the

understanding of photography must be a recognition of the limitations and the powers of the essential tool."

After turning her students into walking cameras, Levinson helped them understand photosensitive paper. They created photograms by placing small objects onto photographic paper in the dark and then briefly flashed a light on them. Developed, the paper shows the outline of the object.

"When they comprehend these two processes, they are equipped to begin to understand the art of photography," says Levinson.

See the  
boxes »



# Artist's Work Selected for Prestigious Collection

## Linda Levinson

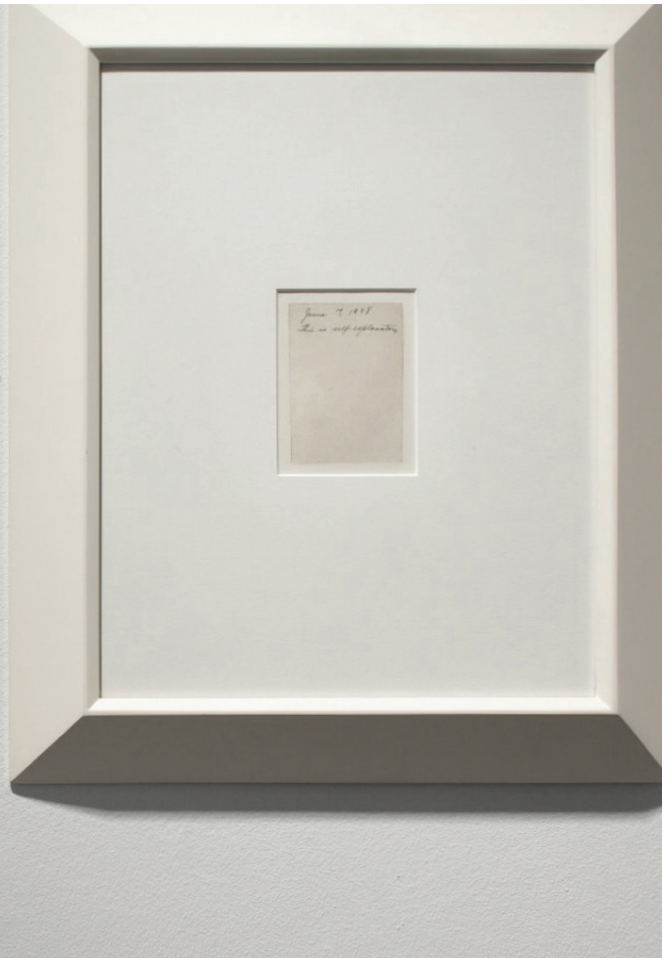
American, date not known

June 7, 1928, *This is self explanatory*, 1997

Platinum / Palladium Print

Gift of Peter Norton, M.2015.17.26

Often working from found and discarded photographs, Linda Levinson explores the transient and evolutionary nature of the photographic process. June 7, 1928, *This is self explanatory* features only the writing on the back of a found snapshot, inviting a meditation on that which might be present on the other side, but is permanently hidden from view. The crux of her project lies in the dissonance between what the eye is actually able to see, and how the mind fills in the missing image.



*From the piece's description: Often working from found and discarded photographs, Linda Levinson explores the transient and evolutionary nature of the photographic process. June 7, 1928, "This is self-explanatory" features only the writing on the back of the found snapshot, inviting a meditation on that which might be present on the other side, but is permanently hidden from view. The crux of her projections in the dissonance between what the eye is actually able to see and how the mind fills in the missing image.*

One of Associate Professor Linda Levinson's photographs from her "Annotations" series has been purchased by the Peter Norton Art Collection and



Linda Levinson

donated to the William College Museum of Art. The collection is one of the largest of modern and contemporary art in the U.S.

Her work appeared at the Williams College Museum of Art in Williamstown, Massachusetts, in an

exhibition last fall. It included artists using photography for conceptual rather than documentary, pictorial or narrative ends.

"The history of photography and the re-examination of its archaic processes has always been an inspiration for my creative work," says Levinson. Her "Annotations" is a series of text-images found on the back of photographs that she re-photographed using platinum and palladium early photographic emulsions.

# KQ, MUSIC WOMAN

Karyn Quinn eyes more time for music upon retirement

Zak Kaszynski will always remember Karyn Quinn, or “KQ” as he likes to call her. She was one of the first instructors he ever met for the course he was most excited for — music theory.

“Immediately, I could sense the passion and drive she had for both the inner workings of music and for helping her students explore and learn,” recalls the 2012 graduate.

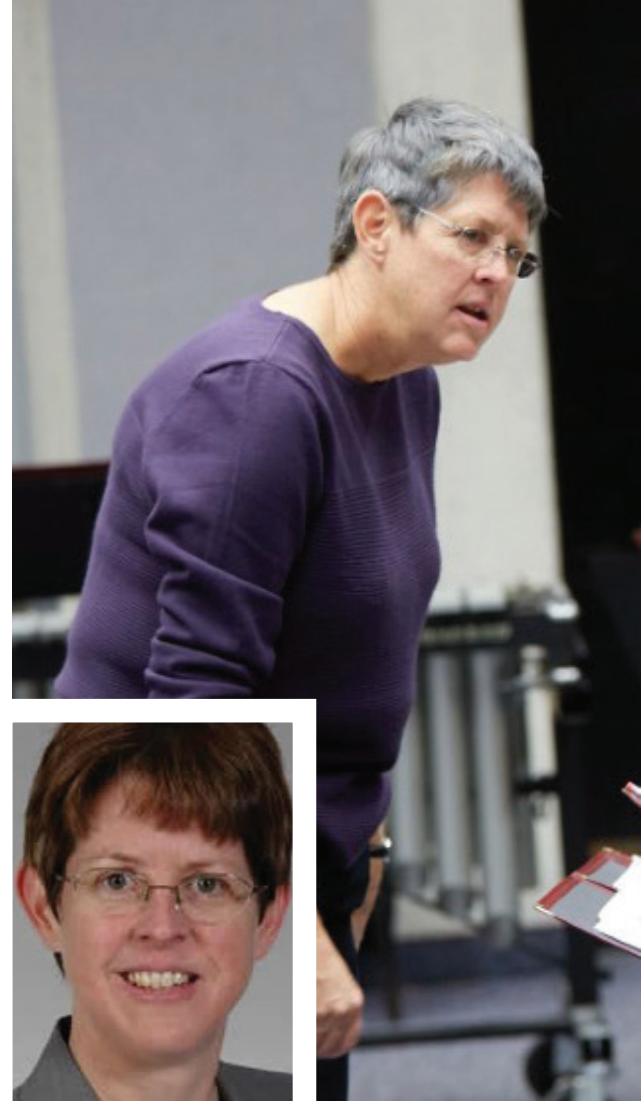
For 27 years, Quinn has been giving other UWL students, particularly those in jazz, that same experience. But starting next fall,

someone else will be at the helm. Quinn is retiring and plans to start a new business, “my business,” says Quinn, who is also a 1985 music education alumna.

“Seriously though, I’m planning to enjoy playing music. I want to be more creative, practice more, dig in and get better.”

There may also be some time for teaching and private lessons too. “I’ll definitely miss it,” she says.

One of the things Quinn has appreciated most about her career is watching how far her students, like Kaszynski, make it



“I’m planning to enjoy playing music. I want to be more creative, practice more, dig in and get better.”

KARYN QUINN

*Karyn Quinn, '85, plans to retire this spring after 27 years of making music at UWL.*



“She was constantly supportive, even of me playing in a less-than-stellar ska band. She was a treat to talk with, inspiring in her manners and I only regret not knowing her better.”

ZAK KASZYNSKI

in the music world. Her former students are sound mixers for NBC’s “Saturday Night Live,” premiere on-call bassists in London, and several are following in her footsteps and teaching music.

“KQ was integral to keeping me at UWL through and after my first year,” says Kaszynski. “It was in her jazz ensemble that I realized I had made the right decision to pursue the study of music.”

The program has seen plenty of growth since Quinn started. Under the leadership of retired professor Greg Balfany, music students have seen an increased

opportunity for rehearsal and performance, including an increase from about one concert a semester to a handful, says Quinn.

Another point of pride is knowing the Music Department is able to help so many students financially. “In the jazz area alone, we offer scholarships for students in any walk of life to play in our jazz bands,” she says. “What’s amazing is almost all of our students have some sort of scholarship. It may not be significant, but every little bit helps.”

And that care is seen and felt by the students.

“KQ was straight up cool and a shining example of what dedication to your craft can bring you,” says Kaszynski. “She was constantly supportive, even of me playing in a less-than-stellar ska band. She was a treat to talk with, inspiring in her manners and I only regret not knowing her better.”

Keep groovin’, KQ, music woman.

# ALUMNI HONORED

*Three UWL College of Liberal Studies alums receive recognition*



## **RON SISSEL, '95**

*RADA DISTINGUISHED  
ALUMNUS AWARD*

The award recognizes alums who have graduated within the last 20 years, achieved professional distinction and taken part in humanitarian activities.

- » Exceptional public administrator and member of the Senior Executive Service.
- » Current deputy associate administrator of budget at the National Nuclear Security Administration, providing leadership for a \$12.5 billion budget.
- » Prior comptroller at the U.S. Employee & Training Administration.
- » Coordinator for Community Thanksgiving Day Dinner with his church.
- » Master's in public administration from University of Texas at El Paso.
- » Bachelor's in public administration.



## **CHRISTOPHER WERNER, '99**

*BURT AND NORMA ALTMAN  
TEACHER EDUCATION AWARD*

The award recognizes outstanding educators and their contributions to children and communities. Due to illness, Werner could not attend the September ceremony; he died of cancer Dec. 8, 2016.

- » Innovative music educator and performer.
- » Assistant professor of music and director of bands, Lakeland College in Sheboygan, Wisconsin; music teacher and department chair, La Crosse Central High School.
- » President and vice president of two state music associations.
- » Master's of music, UW-Milwaukee, 2002; doctorate, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2005.
- » Bachelor's in music education, instrumental emphasis.



## **ANNA (MEYER) GRAHAM, '02**

*UWL INTERCOLLEGIATE  
ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME*

One of seven inducted into the UWL Wall of Fame in October, which recognizes outstanding athletic accomplishments.

- » Achieved four letters in swimming, 1998-2002.
- » Earned nine career NCAA III All-America honors.
- » Placed fourth nationally in the 100-yard backstroke in 2002; finished fifth in 2000, seventh in 1999.
- » Earned six All-America accolades in relays.
- » Won four individual conference titles.
- » Earned bachelor's in art and anthropology.

# A SEARCH FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

New course examines how economic actions impact worldwide poverty



**A** 10-year-old Bolivian boy leaves school in 4th grade. He needs to begin work in the mines to support his family that lives in a small, mud hut in a rural community. They have little food, no clean drinking water and throw their trash in a nearby river.

What the family needs isn't a one-time handout of food or clothes. They don't need to be educated about preserving their river. What the family needs is an economic system that compensates them fairly for the work they do so they can get out of poverty, explains Christine Hippert, UWL associate professor of anthropology.

The story of the boy is just one that Hippert shares with students in a new, multi-disciplinary UWL general education course "Search for Economic Justice." In the class, Hippert shares many more stories from her travels to some of the poorest communities in Central and South America and the Caribbean where she has lived and researched community development and food security.



*In poor communities in South and Central America where Associate Professor Hippert has conducted research, children are often kept out of school to work support their families. This 14-year-old Bolivian miner left school in 4th grade. This photo, and others from Hippert's travels, were featured in a photo exhibition of economic injustice in fall 2016 to generate interest in the new course.*

"I want students to see the human side of the suffering of our economic system," she explains. "I'm putting faces and names to the people who make your clothes, your food ..."

**ABOVE:** Associate Professor of Anthropology Christine Hippert is one of the first two instructors to teach "Search for Economic Justice" that critically examines economic justice worldwide through numerous academic disciplines. The first two courses are being taught by Hippert, a cultural anthropologist, and Nabamita Dutta, an economist.



*These Haitian migrant women work for cash by washing other people's clothes. They don't have washing machines due to lack of running water, so they wash clothes in the nearby river. The resulting river pollution is a by-product of a survival strategy. To conserve environments, they don't need education about conservation, they need to be able to meet their basic needs.*

# 17 ALUMNI RETURN TO EXHIBIT AT UWL ART GALLERY

*Seventeen alumni exhibited in an early spring semester art exhibition in the UWL Art Gallery. They presented a cross section of graduate interests, professional accomplishments and contributions to the field. The show included photography, metalwork, prints, paintings and ceramics. Artists participating in the exhibition included:*

**DEVON BROWNING, '09**, San Diego, California

**CARISSA BRUDOS, '95**, De Soto

**MATT DUCKETT, '09**, Chicago

**MAI CHAO DUDDECK, '05**, Onalaska

**SARAH DUDGEON, '96**, Eastman

**PAUL FINCH**, last attended in '76, Prescott, Arizona

**LISA LENARZ, '07**, La Crosse

**BECKY MCDONAH, '95**, Millersville, Pennsylvania

**TEDD R. MCDONAH, '96**, Millersville, Pennsylvania

**ANDREW MEYER, '11**, Coon Valley

**ANDREW MUSIL, '14**, La Crosse

**AMANDA STRUVER, '14**, La Crosse

**KIM VAN SOMEREN, '02**, Seattle

**RYAN VARLEY, '99**, Minneapolis

**DALE WEDIG, '97**, Gwinn, Michigan

**IAN WRIGHT, '15**, Madison

**TIM ZNIDARSICH, '11**, Baraboo



Teapot by Sarah Dudgeon, '96



Ian Wright, '15, Madison



# ART

Lisa Lenarz, '07, La Crosse

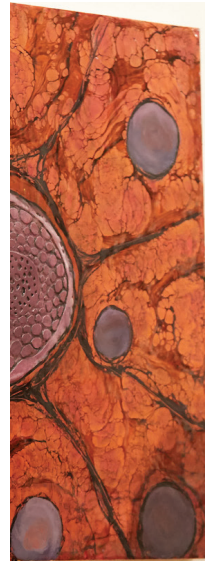


"El Hombre Muertos" by Tedd McDonah, '96



Dale Wedig, '97, Gwinn, Michigan

Paul Finch, last attended UWL in 1976, Prescott, Arizona



Carissa Brudos, '95, De Soto



# PSYCHED FOR GRAD SCHOOL

## UWL Psychology Department excels in prepping students for grad school

The UWL Psychology Department continues to be popular — especially among those planning to head to graduate school.

The department with 26 faculty spans sub-disciplines such as clinical/counseling, cognitive, cross-cultural, developmental, educational, experimental, health, school and social psychology. Currently, the department serves approximately 650 majors, 400 minors, many students from other disciplines, and 24 graduate students in school psychology.

The numbers alone show the department faculty have kept themselves busy — and their students. Psychology is the largest major in the CLS. Over the past 15 years, almost 40 percent of graduates in the department have gone directly to graduate school after commencement. A 2015 alumni survey found that

65 percent of respondents had attained a master's in psychology. Clearly, the department is doing something right — 98 percent of those graduates articulated they were prepared for graduate school.

One of those students heading to graduate school is Jessi Reidy, a senior psychology major with a professional writing minor. The McNair Scholar and first-generation student credits department faculty for their mentoring.

“The best part is most definitely the faculty members who you get to learn from and work with,” Reidy explains. “They are some of the most brilliant and caring people, and it is obvious that they have a passion both for the field they are working in, and for sharing their knowledge with students. They really strive to prepare their students for a future career in psychology. Thanks to them, I feel prepared to take that next step.”

Reidy has been accepted into several graduate programs. She is currently deciding which offer to accept. It's not surprising that the support and push of the professors is at the forefront of Reidy's mind. Looking at departmental productivity from the last six years alone is enough to exhaust anyone. (See sidebar.)

Not only are the faculty productive scholars and teachers, but they also undertake service and go above and beyond to make sure their students have the necessary skills and knowledge to be

## BY THE NUMBERS

The 26 department faculty are busy:

- » **87** peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, or books published in their areas of expertise, including **10** in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL);
- » **247** professional presentations given locally, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- » **\$401,930** received in grant funding, with **\$46,209** related to SoTL projects;
- » **74** Psychology honors students supervised, totaling **45** projects (all but three received undergraduate research funding); over **150** undergraduate individual research projects; **200** undergraduate research assistants on faculty projects; **18** McNair Scholars projects, and **63** school psychology research/capstone projects;
- » **53** nominations received for awards related to teaching, research or service. **Twelve** of **32** teaching-related nominations resulted in awards.



*Ryan McKelley chairs the 26-member faculty of the Psychology Department, which serves approximately 650 majors. Over the past 15 years, almost 40 percent of graduates in the department have gone directly to graduate school after commencement.*

**“Psychology should be a science of use where we take what we discover and help people put it into practice to improve the lives of everyone.”**

RYAN MCKELLEY

successful in whatever path they choose. “I have been blessed to have some incredible real-world experiences because of my major, and the faculty members that I have worked with,” explains Reidy. “I was able to intern at Gundersen for two years, working with a psychologist in the assessment and diagnostic processes of out-patient mental health treatment.” That experience solidified for Reidy her ability to pursue graduate work and uncovered her passion for working in mental health.

Ryan McKelley, chair of the department, is not surprised Reidy had that experience. “We are in the unique position of getting to focus on data (the social science part of the equation) and narrative (the human experience) at the same time,” he says. “Data helps us understand the big picture about how people interact

with each other and the world around them, and narrative helps us attach lived experiences to those phenomena. Psychology should be a science of use where we take what we discover and help people put it into practice to improve the lives of everyone.”

With 10 new faculty members since fall 2012, CLS colleagues are excited to see where the future takes the department. With productive faculty and students like Reidy, it’s clear the Psychology Department continues to make a difference in their student’s lives and in the lives of the people their students work with post-graduation.

# Addressing Is

Work group brings speaker, comedian to take on issue from multiple angles

Two events on campus in 2016 focused on the rise of Islamophobia in the U.S., attracting about 1,000 people.

Corey Saylor, director of the Department to Monitor and Combat Islamophobia with the Council on American-Islamic Relations in Washington D.C., discussed the impact of religious bigotry and racism on the lives of Muslims in the U.S. on UWL's campus last April.



*Corey Saylor*



*Azhar Usman*

Then, in November, Azhar Usman — a nationally-acclaimed American Muslim comedian — presented “ULTRA-AMERICAN: A Patriot Act.” Through humor, he challenged the audience to re-think their assumptions about religion, race and culture in America.

While Islamophobia in the U.S. isn't new, the anti-Muslim rhetoric during the U.S. presidential election, as well as the recent anti-refugee/immigrant ban, has exacerbated the discrimination that Muslims face and alienated Muslims around the world, says Mahruq Khan, UWL associate professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

The demonization of Muslims is nothing new, says Khan. Hollywood, mainstream news outlets, and Orientalist literature, at large, have historically perpetuated notions of Muslim men as barbaric, terrorists, and criminals, says Khan. Muslim women are characterized as oppressed, yet exotic victims of unbridled patriarchy.

Immediately following 9-11, anti-Muslim fervor led to the FBI profiling

“We hope that further education and discussion on this topic will lead to greater understanding of Muslims at UWL, in the U.S., and around the world.”

MAHRUQ KHAN

of innocent Muslims, vandalized mosques and homes, hate crimes, indefinite detentions of Muslim men, anti-Muslim legislation, employment discrimination, xenophobic rhetoric, and more, says Khan.

Today hate crimes against Muslims have spiked to a level five times higher than the time immediately following Sept. 11, 2001, according to the FBI.

Although some of the experiences of Muslim populations are touched on in UWL courses, overall there is

# Islamophobia

a dearth of formal academic course offerings on Islam or Muslims on campus, says Khan.

Khan, who is also part of the Anti-Islamophobia work group on campus, says addressing Islamophobia requires a multi-pronged, ongoing effort. Saylor's event provided the audience with a basic overview of how the demonization of Muslims is systemic

in the U.S. The comedy show aimed to help humanize Muslim Americans to the La Crosse community, knowing that comedy can help shatter many barriers between groups in ways that formal lectures often cannot, explains Khan.

Organizers feel they succeeded in providing a current snapshot of U.S.-based Islamophobia, as well as one

Muslim's personal struggles navigating life as an American, she says.

Organizers will continue to organize events to combat Islamophobia from multiple angles.

"We hope that further education and discussion on this topic will lead to greater understanding of Muslims at UWL, in the U.S., and around the world," says Khan.

## ORGANIZERS

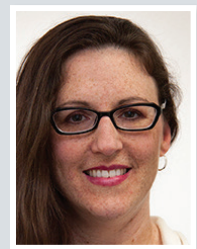
An anti-Islamophobia working group made up of UWL faculty, staff and students organized both Saylor's talk and Usman's comedy show with the support/sponsorship of many offices, departments, and organizations on campus. In addition to Mahruq Khan, other CLS faculty members in the work group include Heidi Morrison, History; and Audrey Elegbede, Ethnic and Racial Studies. The group also constructed the "Statement of Solidarity with Muslims" and worked to have it endorsed by all four UWL governance groups.



*Mahruq Khan, UWL associate professor, Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies*



*Heidi Morrison, UWL associate professor, Department of History*



*Audrey Elegbede, UWL senior lecturer, Department of Ethnic and Racial Studies*



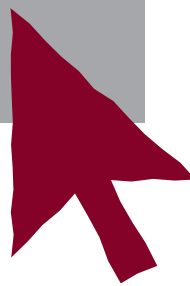
## Wind Ensemble earns national recognition

The College Band Director's National Association honored UWL's Wind Ensemble as one of 10 programs among 100 participating in its "Small Program Band" competition. Wind Ensemble Director Tom Seddon compares it to an athletic team winning a national championship. He traveled

to the CBDNA conference in March for recognition.

Senior Anton Lenertz believes the recognition exhibits Seddon's ability to push the students beyond their abilities. "To see where this program has come since my freshman year — it's been great," he says.

**Watch UWL Wind Ensemble students react to winning**



## Heard statewide

After winning a national honor, the History Department's "Hear, Hear" project that relays first-person historical stories of downtown La Crosse got an airing of its own. Wisconsin Public TV aired the special in October.

**View the episode!**



The project is heading into its second phase. Professors Ariel Beaujot, History, and William Stobb, English, are seeking poetry. "Poetry, history and sense of place can intersect in ways that really energize each other," says Stobb. "We're excited to see those connections come alive."

Selected entries will join the "Hear, Here" audio archive, be published in UWL's literary journal "Steam Ticket," and presented at the 2017 Artspire in La Crosse.

# JAZZING IT UP



*Michael Rodriguez, of the Grammy-nominated jazz band Rodriguez Brothers, leads a master class with UWL students on Oct. 22, 2016.*

The Grammy-nominated Rodriguez Brothers shared Latin Jazz with students and others during the Music Department's 2nd annual Jazz Residency in October. Trumpeter Michael Rodriguez and pianist Robert Rodriguez are virtuoso storytellers on their respective instruments, incorporating traditional and modern Afro Cuban, Brazilian, bolero and hardcore jazz flavors. Along with master classes, the duo worked with students in rehearsals and improv workshops. They also performed concerts and jam sessions with the UWL Jazz Bands, providing unique opportunities to network and learn from pros.

## The Joy of Sax

He's backed Dave Grusin, Doc Severinsen, Bob Hope, Mel Torme, Rosemary Clooney and other greats. In September he came back for students.

University of Colorado at Boulder Associate Professor of Saxophone Tom Myer, '81, headlined the 2016 UWL Department of Music Scholarship Gala. The annual fundraiser features prominent alumni musicians.

Along with working with students on diverse classical and jazz-influenced pieces, Myer was featured in a concert. The soprano saxophonist and founding member of the Colorado Saxophone Quartet recently released "12 Preludes and Fugues by Michael Pagan."



# SNAP

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