



# PARTNERS

Center for Community-Based Partnerships

Volume 3, No. 1, Spring 2010

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## Capturing Our Culture



**JCES Making Plans for Three Issues Per Year, p. 11**

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**WVUA: Getting the Jump on the Competition, p. 20**

**Man from New Orleans, p. 32**



***Annual Awards  
Luncheon and Poster  
Presentation,  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.,  
April 23, 2010,  
Hotel Capstone***

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**NOMINATE A COLLEAGUE OR YOURSELF**

Students, faculty, staff and community partners are invited to nominate winning projects and to propose posters.

Go to [www.ccbp.ua.edu](http://www.ccbp.ua.edu) to download nomination forms and to find instructions for poster presentations.

Recognition is given for best projects initiated by faculty, students, community partners and separate awards for distinguished achievement campus and community.

Dr. Michael W. Parker of the School of Social Work points to his associates after winning a faculty-initiated award at the 2009 Awards Luncheon. Presenting the award are Executive Vice President and Provost Dr. Judy Bonner and Vice President for Community Affairs Dr. Samory T. Pruitt.





By Dr. Samory T. Pruitt

Vice President for Community Affairs

Pardon our pride as we reflect on the amazing progress in community-engaged scholarship since we began to organize these activities in 2007.

I overcame the impulse to call our progress “steady,” because, truthfully, that wouldn’t do justice to what is happening and will be happening as we gather with others around the common table of outreach and community engagement.

First, I want to thank President Robert E. Witt for his constant support and encouragement. Despite his unbelievable schedule, he reviews and comments on our work regularly. Next, we appreciate Executive Vice President and Provost Judy Bonner so very much for her support, from our awards program to our successful efforts to obtain Carnegie Foundation community engagement status for the campus. And finally I thank Vice President for Research Joe Benson and Dean of the Graduate School David Francko for their support of faculty and graduate students in helping us with visibility at national conferences.

Because so much of the campus has rallied to our cause, we are converting more and more of our key activities into the research and creativity that will contribute to Alabama’s growth as the people of Alabama share in our discoveries and lessons learned.

Some of our projects are being prominently staged or exhibited, presented at major conferences, or are making their way into the journals, including our own, the *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*. JCES is one of two journals recognized by the National Outreach Scholarship Conference (NOSC), a partnership made up of leading universities across the country. The other is the University of Georgia’s *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*.

Proof of the “legs” of community-engaged scholarship is that when UA was invited to join in 2007, it was the seventh overall and first non-land-grant institution member. Today there are 15 members. In addition to UA, they are Auburn University, University of Colorado at Boulder, Colorado State University, East Carolina University, University of Georgia, University of Kentucky, Michigan State University, North Carolina State University, Ohio State University, Oregon State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University, Texas Tech University, and the University of Wisconsin–Extension.

At least a dozen other major universities are in the application stage, and a national committee that includes our own Dr. Ed Mullins is drafting new bylaws to address growth and year-round operational issues. Their proposal will go to the Steering Committee on which I serve as UA’s representative.



Dr. Art Dunning, left, who holds three degrees from The University of Alabama, and Dr. Samory Pruitt, who also holds three degrees from the University, stand with Dr. Ed Mullins. Pruitt credits Dunning with “many great ideas and advice” that have helped UA move into national prominence in community-engaged scholarship.

As we prepare for the 11<sup>th</sup> annual national meeting of the conference at N.C. State University in October, let’s review some of the tangible steps we have taken leading to the 13<sup>th</sup> NOSC right here in Tuscaloosa in 2012:

■ Creation of the Center for Community-Based Partnerships and a discipline-rich CCBP Council that provides leadership not only in projects but also in forming new partnerships with

thriving communities.

■ Publication of two highly acclaimed issues of JCES with a third in press, moving us this year to three issues per year of the best engaged scholarship worldwide. At the same time, we have redesigned the JCES website, inviting authors to submit photo galleries and video supporting their research and inviting readers to engage in a lively discussion of issues raised in the journal articles.

■ The growing number of curriculum and research projects in disciplines across the campus. These include the numerous high-profile and award-winning local, state and international projects under Stephen Black in the Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility – from service-learning courses in film to Moral Forum debates and SaveFirst, which helps the poor, who are sometimes exploited by commercial agencies, get the tax refunds they’re due.

■ Another of many deserving programs carried out primarily by students is LITE (Literacy Is the Edge), in which students recruit volunteers to teach reading in cooperation with the local chamber of commerce.

This is just a drop in the bucket, but the editors of PARTNERS limited me to one page. The rest of this issue is replete with similar examples. I invite you to read it from cover to cover.

I cannot close without welcoming back to Tuscaloosa one of our most helpful mentors, Dr. Art Dunning, a native of Marengo County in Alabama’s Black Belt, who directed a national champion public service and outreach program at the University of Georgia. Art is returning to Alabama to help this campus and others in the UA System continue this important work, with special attention to international programs. Dunning chaired last year’s annual meeting of NOSC in Athens. For Alabama, his homecoming is great news to all who love The University of Alabama and what it means to this state.



## Center for Community-Based Partnerships

### PUBLISHER

Dr. Samory T. Pruitt  
Vice President for  
Community Affairs  
samory.pruitt@ua.edu

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Dr. Edward Mullins, editor  
emullins@bama.ua.edu  
Jack Batchelor, graphics  
Meredith Hawkins, layout  
Andrea Mabry, photography

### ADDRESS

CCBP, The University of Alabama  
Box 870372  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
Phone: (205) 348-7392  
Fax: (205) 348-7366

### Other contributors:

Dr. Beverly Hawk  
Brice Miller  
Brett Bralley  
Chris Dunham  
Lindsey Holland  
Daniel Hollander  
Amethyst Holmes  
Sydney Holtzclaw  
Elliot Knight  
Jessica Averitt Taylor

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## President

Samory T. Pruitt, Vice President for Community Affairs and CCBP executive director

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Talitha Bailey, Law School  
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**Council Responsibilities:** The CCBP Council is charged with documenting program progress; proposing new partnerships; encouraging and coordinating cross-disciplinary projects that contribute to teaching, research and engagement; recognizing and promoting outstanding engagement efforts; and advising Community Affairs on awarding seed funds for research projects.

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 Mary Jolley, Community Volunteer  
 Felecia Jones, Black Belt Community Foundation, Selma, Ala.  
 Stephen G. Katsinas, Education Policy Center/College of Education  
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 Karen Starks, School of Social Work

Tommie Syx, Center for Community-Based Partnerships  
 Joanne J. Terrell, School of Social Work  
 Valerie Thorington, Child Development Resources/Human Environmental Sciences  
 Annette Jones Watters, Alabama Entrepreneurship Institute/C&BA  
 Haley Wells, Community Partner  
 Muriel Wells, Student  
 John Ross Wheat, Community and Rural Medicine/College of Community Health Sciences  
 Kevin A. Whitaker, Dean's Office/College of Engineering  
 Thomas L. Wolfe, Dean's Office/College of Arts and Sciences  
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**Members:** Jim Hall, chair; Joe Benson, Stephen Black, Carolyn Dahl, Sally Edwards, Daniel Fonseca, Beverly Hawk, Lisa Hooper, Pauline Johnson, Stephen Katsinas, Hank Lazer, Lisa Scherff, Joyce Stallworth, John Wheat. **Responsibilities:** Tenure and Promotion Document, Carnegie Classification Team, Outreach Scholarship Implementation Team.

### Communications and Marketing Committee

Ed Mullins, chair; Janet Griffith, Brice Miller, Heather Pleasants, Cassandra Simon. **Responsibilities:** Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship, other publications, websites, CCBP Annual Awards Program

### Proposal Development and Support

Annette Watters, chair; David Ford, Yun Fu, John Higginbotham, Mary Jolley, Nisa Miranda, Pamela Payne-Foster, Jo Pryce, Margaret Purcell, Chris Spencer, Karen Starks. **Responsibilities:** Distribution of CCBP Seed Funds, Promotion of Opportunities for Funding/Collaborations, Project Management System



# Culture

By Ed Mullins  
Editor

Look in any old dictionary – say, a pre-1960 Webster’s – and you’ll find culture defined in terms of the cultivation of soil and the raising, improvement or development of some plant, animal or product.

This meaning goes back to the ancient Latin *cultura*, meaning cultivation or tending. About the time this definition was written, another was taking hold: the training, development and refinement of mind, taste and manners. In even less time, though, that definition yielded to what most people think of today when they hear the word: behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, mores, institutions, products of human work and thought, and, especially, “pop-culture,” and the transmission thereof.

Today a major aspect of culture is the very fascination we have with the term itself. There are the negative references, like “culture warriors” and “liberal scum,” favorites of the right. So far the left hasn’t been as creative in coming up with pejoratives, rarely getting beyond “right wingers” or the “religious right.”

Diversity is stimulating and enriching, and cultural literacy is something people need if they are to navigate today’s diverse social climate.

People are constantly inventing, refining and embellishing their cultures through contact with and borrowing from others – we have to if we are to live together – and many observers believe a global cultural ethic is arising to embrace today’s multicultural, multilingual society.

Somehow I think today’s young people will do much better navigating these waters than my generation did. Among my youthful acquaintances, homophobia and racism were

rampant. While neither has been eradicated, there is less of both among today’s youth.

So let’s try to define culture. Nobody in his or her right (or left) mind would attempt a Cliff Notes definition of the term, but here’s a shot anyway: Culture is learned. It’s not transmitted genetically. As a body of learned behaviors common to a given human society or subgroup, culture serves as a template for making choices, for evaluating, judging and taking action. Its forms and content are reasonably predictable from generation to generation but change over longer periods of time.

This notion of a template and body of learned behaviors may be further broken down as follows:

- Cultures influence systems of meaning, of which language and communication are primary.
- Cultures influence the organization of society, from groups to states to nations to multi-nation systems.
- Cultures give rise to values, norms and beliefs – including religious beliefs – in groups of all sizes.

Because understanding culture is important, we have devoted a significant portion of our annual edition of *PARTNERS* magazine to the topic. UA students and other writers address aspects of the cultures they influence and are influenced by.

One of the motivating factors in this undertaking is that education about cultural issues has become a larger part of a university’s responsibilities in a time when conflicts dominating government and communication media are often fueled by cultural differences and misunderstandings. For example, would President Bush have taken us to war on the basis of weapons of



Ed Mullins with Brice Miller, assistant director, Crossroads Community Center, and student assistant Jazmine Warren, at a planning session.

mass destruction if he had paid more attention to the blow-hard personality of Saddam Hussein consistent with his cultural background?

Most experts saw in the dictator something of a poseur and exaggerator, acting out the cultural trappings of the warrior culture into which he was born.

Of course, Texan Bush was no stranger to that same blow-hard culture himself – a very American style. When Bush trotted out his famous playground tough-guy pronouncements “mission accomplished” and “bring it on,” he was simply endorsing cultural norms in the absence of hard facts, a practice also known as wishful thinking.

Perhaps our examination of culture will encourage more skepticism about and tolerance for the multitude of cultural differences around us.

Another reason for exploring this topic is that the University is looking toward being the host for an important cultural diversity institute in 2011, and in 2012 UA will be the site for the 13th annual National Outreach Scholarship Conference, an organization that emphasizes engaged scholarship in multicultural communities.

Lessons learned from both of these culture-rich events should prove invaluable.



# From Farm Worker in China to the Capstone

By Brett Bralley  
CCBP Graduate Assistant

Four decades have passed since Yun Fu spent her days on a riverbank in the Chinese countryside of Jiangxi (pronounced Jee-YUNG-shi).

Fifteen-year-old Fu hoisted two 40-pound buckets of mud onto her blistered shoulders, the long bamboo pole that connected them cutting into her 110-pound body under the weight. Her bloodied, blistered hands stung as she gripped the pole and staggered up to the top of a levy and emptied the buckets at the top as a cold winter wind tore through her clothes. She did it again and again, until she lost count.

In 1968, as a member of the Lost Generation from the Cultural Revolution under Mao Zedong, Fu had not imagined the physical labor she would endure. When she first heard Chairman Mao's order that one person from each family be sent to the countryside to be "re-educated" by peasants and farmers, she eagerly welcomed the change of scenery from household chores and tending to her three younger siblings.

"I just didn't know what was waiting for me," she recalled. "You had to work really hard to survive."

Instead of the friendly halls of a school or college, Fu, along with millions of others, labored for years on farms run by peasants during a disgraceful 10-year period in China's history.

Driven by her experience, Fu has dedicated her life to teaching English-as-a-second-language (ESL), learning and educating others about different cultures, and working in the new field of community engagement scholarship.

As program assistant at the Center for Community-Based Partnerships, an organization that unites UA faculty and students with area communities in

research-based projects, Fu is often the face of the organization, acting as the principal liaison between UA offices and community partners.

After years of working as an ESL teacher and administrator, Fu found herself in Tuscaloosa with her husband, Dilin Liu, a faculty member in the UA English department. They are very proud of their son, Kan Liu, an MIT graduate who works for Google in San Francisco.

While Fu is proud to call Alabama her home today, her journey to Tuscaloosa began as a Chinese farmhand and that influence is palpable in her work ethic and appreciation of her adoptive country.

*She expects, and gets, hard work and discipline from CCBP's student assistants.*

For six years, except for 12 days of annual vacation when she could visit her family, Fu worked in the countryside. She earned a few dollars a month and ate three small meals a day, usually consisting of whatever vegetables were in season.

When she noticed a group of older girls swapping books, which were banned at the camp, she was inspired to continue her education, though schools had been closed two years before she went to the countryside. Risking jail, Fu got her hands on books that were categorized as the "Four Olds: Old Thoughts, Old Culture, Old Customs, and Old Habits."

After long days of hiking to the top of levies with pounds of mud from the river or bending over in fields, sweat pouring from her body as the sun beat down, she crawled into bed close to midnight, covered her head with her blanket and read by the glow of a gas lamp until whistles awoke the rest of



the sleeping camp at 3 a.m. Other nights, she huddled over a small radio, listening to English lessons transmitted from the next province.

Schools reopened in 1972, though it was three more years before she passed her entrance exam and enrolled in Jiangxi University, where she majored in English. She and her friends studied hard together and entered the university at the same time, though others were not so lucky.

"I would say 90 percent of my classmates didn't go back to school, because the competition was really tough," she recalled. "You had to study a long time, and you had to have your relatives and family support you."

Fu's support came from her parents. Her father was a school principal, so education was a must. Her mother worked as an attendant at a train station.

After about 10 years, beginning in secrecy under the refuge of a blanket in the winter or a mosquito net in the summer, Fu earned her a degree.

Fu met her husband while at the university. They married in 1979 and in 1980, Fu gave birth to her only son.

She worked at Jiangxi University as an English professor for several more years until the opportunity arose for Fu and her husband to move to the United States. In 1985, Fu's husband left for Oklahoma City, and she followed four **(continued on p. 8)**





**Dr. Heather Pleasants**

# PLEASANTS SEES GROWTH IN ENGAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP

Parent Leadership Academy Is Example of Program that Delivers Sustainable Results for Campus and Community

**By Daniel Hollander**  
CCBP Intern

The new director of community education at the Center for Community-Based Partnerships (CCBP), Dr. Heather Pleasants, was brought on board to strengthen the University's growing area of community-partnered research, according to Dr. Samory T. Pruitt, vice president for Community Affairs.



He said, "Dr. Pleasants possesses the commitment, creativity and credentials that fulfill the letter and spirit of 'Engaging Communities and Changing Lives,' CCBP's motto."

Pleasants holds a Ph.D. from Michigan State University in educational psychology. Before moving over to CCBP, she was an assistant professor in the College of Education at the University for four years specializing in qualitative research methods.

At CCBP, "she has hit the ground running," says Dr. Ed Mullins, CCBP director of research and communication. "The projects she directs are improving the University and the communities with which she works, while advancing our reputation nationally in community-engaged scholarship."

In addition to serving as director of community education, Pleasants is also a member of the CCBP Communications Committee that oversees publication of the new Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship published at UA, and serves as book review editor of the journal.

Pleasants' main project has been the continued development of the Parent Leadership Academy (PLA), a UA-developed program supported by the Office of Community Affairs, UA academic units and Title I funds awarded to Tuscaloosa city and county school districts. PLA's purpose is to improve parental involvement in their children's education.

"PLA uniquely exemplifies the mission and values of the Office of Community Affairs," Pleasants said. "I expect this program to expand to other counties, particularly given its ability to connect parents from all schools in a district. We have received inquiries outside of the current service area and are standardizing the PLA curriculum to be used to establish partnerships between these schools and colleges/universities in their areas," she said.

Pleasants also works with CCBP Director of Community Development Christopher H. Spencer in the HEROES (Helping Embrace Real Opportunities in Everyday Situations) program. HEROES connects teachers and university students in after-school assistance, especially in reading improvement.

Another key project Pleasants works with is the Black Belt 100 Lenses program, founded by graduate student Elliot Knight and co-directed by Whitney Green of the Black Belt Community Foundation, one of CCBP's main partners from the beginning.

"I am also working to increase opportunities for individuals in community organizations to 'tell their





Members of the 2009 class of the Tuscaloosa Parent Leadership Academy take notes from their classmates' lists of leadership characteristics at the meeting on Sept. 17. Caroline Fulmer, an assistant professor of consumer sciences at the University of Alabama, spoke about leadership and how to develop leadership skills. The PLA is an organization that works with parents to facilitate student achievement and increase the capacity of schools by making parents educational leaders and supporters in their community.

story' using new media tools, and in this effort CCBP is currently partnering with the Tuscaloosa Housing Authority to create new media learning opportunities for individuals within and around the McKenzie Court Community Center," Pleasants said.

Pleasants' research focuses on the intersections between voice, identity, social justice and literacy incorporating traditional and nontraditional approaches to reading, writing and speaking.

"For example, our everyday 'talk' with others is usually made up of conversations that take place through email, texting and social networking mediums, as well as face-to-face contexts. In what ways do our multiple literacies help us navigate our various worlds socially, civically, educationally, professionally? How do these literacies enable us to take action? These questions are at the heart of my research."

Pleasants sees a bright future for community-engaged research. "We have arrived at a moment in time when colleges and universities are increasingly engaging in research *with* communities, rather than research *on* communities," she said.

"In this moment, I believe we have the potential to prepare a wide range of people within and outside of the university to not only be leaders in their area of expertise, but to also be able to communicate that expertise to others and use their knowledge to create important, sustainable change," she said.

"For me, there is no higher goal to which

we should aspire. As universities redefine not just how we think about teaching, research and service, but also how we construct relationships between communities and the university, I look forward to helping CCBP become a strong leader in developing equitable relationships between communities and academia."

## PLA SCHEDULE

### SIX SESSIONS MAKE UP THE PARENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

- September: Parents as Leaders
- October: Helping Your Child Achieve Academic Success
- November: Discipline and the Child
- February: Supporting Your Child's School
- March: Understanding the School and Board of Education Relations
- April: Health and Welfare

PLA modules are held monthly from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Child Development Research Center on the campus of The University of Alabama.

Parents who complete the academy are formally recognized by community leaders and university, district and school administrators at the PLA Graduation Dinner held in the spring..



## *It was tough leaving son behind. Today, he's an MIT graduate working for Google.*



Yun Fu talks with graduate assistant Brett Bralley. Fu was born in China and Bralley is of Hispanic descent from California.

**(continued from p. 5)** months later. This meant leaving behind 5-year-old Kan with Fu's parents. Fu said goodbye to him and did not see him again until he was 7.

Fu worked wherever and whenever possible while getting her master's degree at Oklahoma City University. She often worked 40 hours a week – as a babysitter, a housekeeper, house painter, or server at the university cafeteria, all while taking three classes.

Despite her years of studying and her degree in English, the speech she heard all around her still made no sense. She shied away from picking up the telephone and talking to native speakers, though, with time, it became easier.

"What's up?" American students in her classes asked during the first few days of attending the university. "Whenever I heard that, I would look it up (in the dictionary) to try to figure out what they were talking about," she said with a laugh. With time her ability to understand improved, and after finishing her master's she and her husband finally had enough money to send for their son.

Despite economic struggles and a language barrier, the United States has been good to her and her husband, Fu said.

"Before we came, we didn't know America was such a good country," she said. "We were kind of brainwashed. We just didn't know the truth outside of China."

Fu's husband decided to pursue a Ph.D. in American

Literature, and Fu decided to teach English. She started teaching ESL at Northwest Classen High School in Oklahoma City. While she still struggled with pronunciation and idiomatic expressions, she offered extra credit to students to investigate the meanings of certain phrases for her, like what it meant to "touch base" with someone.

For 10 years, Fu taught at Northwest Classen High but then decided to move into ESL administration. For a few years, she worked for the Oklahoma City Public Schools District as an ESL area resource specialist. "It was a good opportunity for me to further understand that America is a country with people from all over the world that can melt together," she smiled.

"I don't believe there is anywhere else in the world where you can work so harmoniously like we all do here. We try to put ourselves in other people's shoes. That's something I'm so impressed with, you know? Americans have always tried to put themselves in other people's shoes, to understand their culture. That is a good thing. It made me love [the U.S.] a lot more."

After 20 years in Oklahoma, Fu's husband got a job teaching at The University of Alabama in 2006, and they moved to the Southeast.

Ed Mullins, director of community research and communication for CCBP, works day in and day out with Fu. She expects hard work and discipline from work-study students, undergraduate and graduate assistants, he said.

"They are lucky to have someone enforcing the rules they will face on the job when they graduate," Mullins said. "Sometimes they cringe under her lash, but they also know she will go to bat for them when they need help."

Fu spends every Saturday in her kitchen cooking traditional Chinese food for the week for herself and her husband. She often shares her leftovers of wonton soup and sautéed vegetables with brown rice with the CCBP staff. Fu says she feels she contributes something valuable to the CCBP.

Mullins described her willingness to get the job done this way: "She never asks for someone to do something she wouldn't do herself," he said, "whether it's cleaning up after our basement flooded or preparing the Excel document for a mass mailing. She's just a great team member and enjoys being part of a team. She never complains when I ask for the second mile and usually sees the need before I do and doesn't hesitate to take action to make things work smoothly."

Tuscaloosa residents learning English often visit CCBP to use the language lab's Rosetta Stone software. Fu oversees their progress and keeps up the lab. She says her experience in ESL allows her to serve in a satisfying way, because learning English on a daily basis is something she loves.

"I knew that only by mastering the English language would I be able to realize the American dream, to find a job that I love and to provide my son the best education, something unavailable anywhere else, especially not in China," she said.





Dr. Lisa Hooper, assistant professor of counselor education, presented her research, "A Successful School-University Partnership: The Family System and Adolescent Health" at NOSC in Athens, Sept. 28-30, 2009.



Graduate student Elliot Knight talks with Kevin Bott of Syracuse University at the 10th Imagining America Conference in New Orleans on Oct. 2. Knight presented his Black Belt 100 Lenses research.

## UA Engagement Scholars Having National Impact

**By Daniel Hollander**  
CCBP Intern

With dozens of delegates attending and playing key roles in important community-based conferences in 2009, Dr. Samory T. Pruitt, vice president for Community Affairs, said UA is rapidly becoming a major engagement scholarship institution.

UA sent 36 delegates from across the faculty, staff and student disciplinary spectrum to the National Outreach Scholarship Conference (NOSC) in Athens, Ga., Sept. 27-30, which had its largest attendance in history; sent three to the Imagining America (IA) Conference in New Orleans, Oct. 1-3; and sent five to the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) Conference in Ottawa, Canada, Oct. 9-12.

UA faculty, staff and students are already taking strides to assure they have the same kind of impact on the major engagement scholarship conferences in 2010, Pruitt said.

Imagining America 2010 will be in Seattle, Wash., Sept. 23-25, and the next IARSLCE conference will be held in Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 28-31. NOSC, of which UA has been a member since 2007, will be held in Raleigh, N.C.,

Oct. 4-6, with North Carolina State University as host. The 2011 NOSC will be held in East Lansing, Mich., with Michigan State as host; and NOSC 2012 will come to Tuscaloosa with The University of Alabama as host.

"UA faculty, staff, students and their partners in the community have embraced the engagement scholarship concept – which focuses campus and community resources on critical social problems – with great enthusiasm, raising our profile among our peers," said Pruitt, "all of which is going to help prepare us for when we host the NOSC in 2012."

Here are some other engagement scholarship highlights for the University in 2009.

- Pruitt continues as a member of the NOSC Steering Committee, which sets policy and provides leadership for the future of the conference.

- Dr. Cassandra Simon, associate professor of social work and editor of JCES, made presentations about JCES at both the Athens and Ottawa conferences.

- Dr. Edward Mullins, CCBP director of community research and communication, continues as a member of the NOSC implementation committee and its transition committee helping NOSC with its growing pains.

As of January 20, there were 15

members institutions with about a dozen more under consideration. Mullins also presented a poster about JCES – designed and produced by CCBP interns – at the New Orleans, Athens and Ottawa conferences. "Once again, the demand for JCES was greater than our supply," Mullins said of the three conferences. "Now, as we move to paid subscriptions for the hardcopy and online versions of JCES, we'll see how it goes."

"Response to JCES at these three conferences shows that it is filling a need," Simon said. "I want to thank our outstanding local production team and the best editorial board in the nation for their hard work."

Local JCES team members are Mullins and students Jessica Averitt Taylor, assistant to the editor; Brett Bralley, copy editor; Antonio Rogers, designer; and Andrea Mabry, photographer and JCES website producer. The editorial board consists of 52 persons representing more than 30 disciplines.

"We are now receiving manuscripts from outside the United States and will be adding board members from other countries," Simon said.

Elliot Knight, Dr. Hank Lazer and Mullins represented UA at the Imagining America Conference. Knight was named an **(continued on p. 10)**



(continued from p. 9) Imagining America Graduate Scholar. He presented a poster on the Black Belt 100 Lenses project he is conducting in partnership with the Black Belt Community Foundation. Mullins presented a poster detailing the development of JCES. UA delegates to the Ottawa conference were Simon, Pruitt, Mullins, Dr. Jane Newman and April Coleman. The first three conducted a session on JCES and the latter two presented their research on the impact of service-learning on traditional learning.

At Athens, UA had four poster presentations and co-administered a panel about UA's and UGA's commercial television operations. Dr. George Daniels, UA associate professor of journalism, summarized his presentation by saying, "WVUA-TV is about teaching logistics, theory, research and online media, not just broadcast journalism and production."

On the panel with Daniels was station manager Roy Clem. Joining them was Dr. Culpepper Clark, former dean of UA's College of Communication and Information Sciences and now dean of the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia.

Dr. Laurie Bonnici, UA assistant professor in the School of Library and Information Studies, presented a poster on her work with Project FIT 4 Retirement and FOCUS on Senior Citizens. Muriel Wells and Jackie Brodsky, UA graduate students, worked with Bonnici and presented at the conference.

"Our goal was not only to teach senior citizens how to be computer literate," said Brodsky, "but also to get them to become more technologically fluent, which allows them to become self-directed rather than dependent on one-track instruction."

At the *Journal of Communication Engagement and Scholarship* (JCES) displays in Athens and New Orleans more than 500 copies and related brochures were distributed. Copies were also mailed to IARSLCE attendees. Copies of *PARTNERS*, a feature magazine published by CCBP, and brochures of UA's engagement activities from several programs and submission guidelines for JCES were also distributed at all three conferences.



Dr. George Daniels, associate professor of journalism, stands in the WVUA studio. Daniels is a strong proponent of using commercial TV to help educate future broadcast professionals with special attention to bringing more minorities into the profession. Daniels is faculty adviser to UA's Emerging Engagement Scholars Interest Group. He made presentations at NOSC in Athens, Ga., in September 2009 and at the 23rd annual National Association of Graduate-Professional Students in Lincoln, Neb., in November 2009.

The National Communication Association (NCA) meeting in Chicago also had a UA presence in Dan Waterman of the University of Alabama Press, which handles subscriptions for JCES and for the online version. "You can expect a good number of submissions from this group for scholars for whom engagement scholarship is a very good fit," said Waterman.

NOSC recognizes JCES as a partner publication. UA is represented on the NOSC Steering Committee, the Implementation Committee and the Reorganization Committee, which is reworking the organization's structure, under the guidance of the Steering Committee, to accommodate many new partners.

With many others under consideration, the current membership is University of Alabama, Auburn University, University of Colorado at Boulder, Colorado State University, East Carolina University, University of Georgia, University of Kentucky, Michigan State University, North Carolina State University, Ohio State University, Oregon State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University, Texas Tech University and the University of Wisconsin-Extension.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about NOSC, go to <http://www.ncsu.edu/project/OPDWebSpace/2010OSC/win-a-free-registration-to-nosc-2011.html>.

For more on Imagining America, see <http://www.imagingamerica.org/index.html>. For more on IARSLC, go to [http://www.servicelearning.org/events\\_jobs/slconf\\_events/index.php?action=detailed&event=1148](http://www.servicelearning.org/events_jobs/slconf_events/index.php?action=detailed&event=1148).

For NCA information, see <http://www.natcom.org/index.asp?bid=14306>.



Graduate student Jackie Brodsky stands before a poster prepared by Dr. Laurie Bonnici's research team that also included Muriel Wells. Bonnici is an assistant professor in the School of Library and Information Studies. The student service-learning/research project teaches older citizens how to improve their technology literacy.

# JCES PREPARES FOR MORE ISSUES

## Website Redesigned, Opened to Blogs and Commentary

By Jessica Averitt Taylor  
JCES Assistant to the Editor

Although still an upstart, the *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship* (JCES) is filling a void and gaining acceptance in the field of engagement scholarship. “We

are very pleased with JCES’ progress and its reception across the nation and internationally,” said Community Affairs Vice President and JCES publisher Dr. Samory T. Pruitt. “As we enter our third year, and our first year of multiple issues, JCES is bridging the gap between campus and community by grounding our publication in issues important to both.”

JCES editor Dr. Cassandra E. Simon echoed Pruitt’s words: “We are excited and proud to announce that Vol. 3, No.1, to be published spring semester 2010, will feature an e-version available through our marketing agent, the University of Alabama Press. We will have two more issues this year, one in late summer and one in late fall.”

Dan Waterman, editor-in-chief for acquisitions at UA Press, explained: “Past and future issues of JCES will be available as an e-book from our website, [www.uapress.ua.edu](http://www.uapress.ua.edu). We are also considering other e-formats, most likely the Adobe Digital Editions format.”

The price of electronic issues will be \$24 each. For hardcopy editions see <http://jces.ua.edu/about/subscribe.html>. The hardcopy price is \$30 for individuals, \$50 for institutions and \$10 for students.

JCES has also updated its website, [www.jces.ua.edu](http://www.jces.ua.edu). Along with a variety of new presentations, photos and reports on research from conferences, the website will begin to reach out to the public via multimedia including blogs and photo and video galleries.

Andrea Mabry, JCES website coordinator and journalist in residence, explained: “A key goal of the redesigned website is to open up engagement research to the public, providing auxiliary arts that will help us assemble an audience of hardcopy and e-book subscribers and a broader audience that may be less well-versed in formal research. That makes our online component extremely important, since most nonprofessionals are not likely to have a subscription. Keeping that in mind, this is different from much web development work because we are constantly trying to come up with ways to get crossover readers and, through submitted blogs, contributions to an ongoing discussion of engagement scholarship. To that end, we encourage members of our audience to submit ideas and blogs to [jces@ua.edu](mailto:jces@ua.edu).”

Simon explained further: “To meet our creative goal of publishing a ‘new kind of research journal,’ it is important that we reach ordinary citizens who care about issues of social justice and quality of life, not just professional scholars. We want an environment that encourages the individuality and uniqueness that will appeal to general audiences.”

JCES took its “new kind of research journal” campaign on the road in 2009, attending national conferences in Chicago, New Orleans, Athens, Ga., and Ottawa, Canada.

“The receptions we received were gratifying,” said production editor Dr. Ed Mullins. “We took copies of the first two issues to four national/international conferences and delegates grabbed them up like rare coins.”

The number attending JCES poster and other presentations were modest, he said, “but those attending created a buzz picked up by conferees and our free copies flew off our tables. More than 1,000 copies were distributed at the National Outreach Scholarship Conference, the Imagining America Conference, the International Association of Research in Social-Learning Conference, and the National Communication Association Conference. The main comment I heard was ‘I hope you will be able to keep it going.’”

As for sustainability, Pruitt said: “We began this project on a wing and a prayer, (**continued on p. 14**)



Vol. 1, No. 1



Vol. 2, No. 1



# AWARDS LUNCHEON SPEAKER ANNOUNCED



Dr. Christine J. Quinn, provost and vice chancellor, University of Wisconsin-Extension, will be the luncheon speaker for the 2010 CCBP Awards Program on April 23 at the Capstone Sheraton Hotel.

Her background is in business and University teaching, research, and administration.

**There is no charge, but attendees must register by e-mailing [yun.fu@ua.edu](mailto:yun.fu@ua.edu) by April 16.**

As provost and vice chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Dr. Christine Quinn is both chief academic officer and chief operations officer, and plays a leadership role in the ongoing integration of the administrative offices of UW colleges and UW-Extension.

She oversees the educational programming in the institution's four divisions: Broadcasting and Media Innovations; Continuing Education, Outreach and E-Learning; Cooperative Extension; and Entrepreneurship and Economic Development. In addition, she is responsible for building and supporting collaborative programs among divisions of UW-Extension and

with other UW System institutions — especially UW-colleges — and other key partners of UW-Extension.

Quinn has more than 20 years of experience in public higher education, including administration, teaching, research, grants writing, and outreach and extension. She came to Wisconsin from Winona State University in Minnesota, where she was associate vice president for Academic Affairs from 2000 until her appointment as UW-Extension provost and vice chancellor on Oct. 1, 2008.

At Winona State she provided leadership for the Rochester campus and outreach and continuing education. She also served as dean of the library and director of the Center for Integrated Health Science Education and Practice. Previously she was a faculty member and department chair at UW-Stout, where she was instrumental in launching a multi-institutional master's degree in global hospitality management. At New Mexico State University, she held a teaching and extension appointment where her specialization was community and tourism development.

Quinn also has private-sector experience as a developer/owner of motels and, as head of her own consulting firm, has advised motel operators on finances, marketing, training and quality control.

Quinn earned her doctorate from the University of Minnesota and her master's and bachelor's degrees from UW-Madison.

# CCBP Seeking Nominations for Awards Program And Poster Presentations Scheduled for April 23

The CCBP Awards Committee has announced the date for its annual awards program and is seeking your nominations. The program will be Friday, April 23, at the Hotel Capstone from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Awards in student-initiated, faculty-staff initiated, community-partner initiated, distinguished achievement-community, and distinguished achievement-campus will be presented. To nominate someone for an award, download the form from [ccbp.ua.edu](http://ccbp.ua.edu). Deliver or mail the nomination to Janet Griffith, chairman of the awards committee, 254 Rose Administration Building.

In addition to the presentation of awards, this year's event will also include poster presentation of dynamic partnership efforts involving faculty, staff, students and community partners.

The presentation area will open at



Annette Watters, left, and Adelaide Wood display the certificates and a poster about AERN's award-winning partnership with the city of Marion in Perry County in 2009. CCBP is seeking nominations for awards and proposals for posters for this year's awards program.

10 a.m. with the awards luncheon to follow. Poster proposals of 250 words or less should describe an engagement project that involves campus, community and students. Posters that have been previously displayed at other events are eligible. Tommie Syx, a member of the awards committee, will coordinate the poster session. To propose a poster send an e-mail to [tsyx@cba.ua.edu](mailto:tsyx@cba.ua.edu) of 250 words or less describing the purpose and contents

of the poster. You will be responsible for your own mounting but a table will be provided. Deadlines for proposing a poster and for nominating someone for an award are the same: 5 p.m., Wednesday, March 31. Award winners and poster displayers will be notified by Friday, April 2. Dr. Christine J. Quinn, provost and vice chancellor, University of Wisconsin-Extension, will be the keynote speaker at the awards luncheon. **(See her bio on p. 12)**

## Finding My Own Heart

**(continued from p. 39)** here are friendly. They'll help you out in a bind. They'll call you 'baby' even when they don't know your name and they'll always ask you how you're doin' and at least pretend like they care.

"There are so many good things about the South and about Alabama," he continued. "People just don't look for them."

After returning from buying another round, I found Allen absorbed in conversation with the man who'd been sitting caddy-corner to our table. I wondered if they were kin until they asked each other's names.

There may be other ways of doing it, but it took me until my 22nd year to feel comfortable in my own culture. I had been stuck somewhere between desiring the city life of Boston or the exotic life of a rainforest hut, wishing for one extreme or the other, but now I am proud of where I come from, proud to be from Alabama, the South, the United States.

Where did this comfort level for home come from? Maybe it came from experiencing other cultures and other



Andrea and Mom at home in Birmingham

parts of my own country, actually living in them, not just reading about or visiting them, my way of finding home by leaving it.



# New Signs to Point Way to Alabama's Rural Beauty

The University Center for Economic Development (UCED) in partnership with several agencies will unveil a series of signs highlighting Alabama's natural rural beauty in a four-county area along the Cahaba River. Facts about 10 historic/nature and outdoor recreation sites, rare birds, mussels and butterflies are included on the signs.

The signs serve as a guide for rural tourism, said Nisa Miranda, UCED director. "Whether you want to connect with the Civil War or the Civil Rights movement, watch the birds, bicycle, camp or browse through a museum, there is plenty to discover along the lower Cahaba River." Unveiling ceremonies were held in Moundville, Brent and Marion.

Bibb, Hale, Dallas and Perry counties were targeted by the team. The Cahaba and Black Warrior rivers,

national forests, state lands and a host of other historic sites are featured.

After a lengthy period of study, interpretative signage was identified as one of the foremost needs in the four-county area.

The [www.lowercahaba.com](http://www.lowercahaba.com) website has been created to focus on west central Alabama and includes neighboring hospitality outlets such as restaurants, lodging/camping, historical sites and other points of interest for tourists.

Other sites selected are West Blocton Historic Beehive Coke Ovens Park, Tannehill Ironworks Historical Park, and Brierfield Ironworks Historical Park, for a total of 10 signs.

The project coincides with the Alabama Tourism Department's focus of supporting and organizing Black Belt counties to achieve National Heritage Area status.



## Gaskins and Payne-Foster Receive Grant to Study Effects of Disclosing Having AIDs

Capstone College of Nursing professor Dr. Susan Gaskins and Deputy Director of the Institute for Rural Health Research Dr. Pamela Payne-Foster have received a \$100,000 grant to study what happens when infected African-American men disclose their condition. Gaskins is the principal investigator.

The two-year study is funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research at the National Institutes of Health. Researchers will interview 40 HIV-positive African-American men

from rural AIDS service organizations and clinics. Participants who have been diagnosed for at least six months will be interviewed about their disclosure decisions.

Gaskins and Foster want to learn to whom the participants disclosed their diagnosis, what motivated them to do so, the messages they used, and the consequences of disclosure.

Findings will provide essential information for guiding future patients in telling others about their condition, Gaskins said.

African-Americans account for 49 percent of Americans with the disease, although they represent only 13 percent of the U.S. population.

In the rural south, African-Americans account for 56 percent of all AIDS cases with men having the highest rate of HIV infection, according to the National Center for Disease Control.

Living in rural areas compounds the problems of living with HIV/AIDS because of lack of resources and norms that result in stigmatization.

(continued from p. 11) but now have methodically developed a business plan. If we continue to produce a valued product, and I believe we will, JCES will be around for years. "Our determination to develop a dependable publication schedule, the bane of too many academic journals, and our partnership with the University of Alabama Press make sustainability a viable prospect."

Waterman's experience in Chicago reinforces Pruitt's point: "At the National Communication Association meeting, five panels featured community engagement and service-learning. Word of JCES spread rapidly, with a deluge of attendees visiting our booth to view, subscribe

and learn more. Interest in JCES was kind of overwhelming, suggesting a real hunger for a quality place to publish and read about scholarship in those fields."

Still, there are concerns. While social science manuscripts have been forthcoming, other disciplines have been slower to submit.

In particular, the journal needs better representation from the arts and humanities, said editor Simon. Another need is more sources of funding, she said.

But the transformation in just two years from idea to "hot commodity," at least in academic circles, gives us hope for the future.

## Rural Medical Scholars

# These Doctors Must Also Be Leaders

**By Brett Bralley**  
CCBP Graduate Assistant

**R**ussell Allinder isn't like most UA students preparing to be doctors. That's because he's one of about 150 Rural Medical Scholars. Allinder is from Mount Olive, Ala., a small area in northern Jefferson County – an area with no real established health care system. “Most of our residents generally see a physician in a neighboring city,” he said.

What makes Allinder's and other Rural Medical Scholars' route to practicing medicine unique is that they've decided, upon completing medical school, to commit themselves to practicing in a rural area much like Allinder's hometown.

“Because of my strong ties, I plan on practicing in Northern Jefferson County,” he said.

The Rural Medical Scholars Program is designed to produce homegrown doctors, said Dr. John Wheat, director of the program.

The goal is to give rural Alabama more physicians to ultimately improve the healthcare in those regions, Wheat said.

“We're producing physicians for rural Alabama who are leaders for developing healthy communities,” Wheat said. “And if we're doing that, we've got to do more than teach them how to be medical doctors. We've got to be teaching them how to be leaders.”

Those who qualify for the program must have lived in a rural area for at least eight years and plan to practice in a rural area. Undergraduate seniors or graduate students who plan to go to medical school and practice in a rural area are welcome to apply to the program. Ten students are chosen each year.

Not only are these students chosen to be doctors in their community, but they are also trained to be leaders, Wheat said. A key part of the program is that it lasts five years, instead of a four-year traditional medical program.

“Don't rush them through medical school,” Wheat said. “They'll get out there and they won't know what is going to walk through their door. They need to have broad experience in all kinds of issues.”

Because rural patients might have a wide range of problems and because most of the time rural doctors cannot simply transfer them to a nearby unit or another hospital if they're not familiar with how to tackle their issue, rural doctors need to prepare themselves for a wide range of situations.

These are often situations that city doctors might never encounter.

“You'll get people that come in with chainsaw cuts, people who were rolled over by tractors, people who have been exposed to pesticides,” Wheat said. “You don't learn all that in medical school,” he emphasized. “So we need to teach them.”

Susan Guin, associate director of the program, said a principal way the program benefits rural communities is simply by giving them more doctors.

“For the student,” Guin said, “it's about fostering the development of a peer network that continues after medical school and residency. It's about providing support and encouragement through the medical



Remona Peterson, whose student-initiated rural health leadership project won an award in 2009, talks with Dr. John Wheat, left, and Dr. Samory T. Pruitt.

education process.” The fieldwork the scholars do involves tours of rural business areas and farms to help the scholars understand health and safety issues that face rural communities, Guin said. “We are working in rural communities one day per week and, as opportunities arise and with community service projects such as blood pressure screenings, health fairs, CPR classes and health education projects.”

Brittney Anderson, in her first year of the program, said the field work and traveling opportunities to Ghana and Montego Bay have increased her desire to practice medicine in a rural area.

“All of the exposures I have had to different aspects of health care have solidified my desire to practice medicine in an underserved community, particularly in Alabama,” she said.

Anderson grew up on a small family farm a few miles outside of Prattville, Ala. in Autauga County. “It's a town with a very strong sense of community,” she said. Anderson plans to practice medicine in a Black Belt community in Alabama similar to her hometown.

For more information about the program, visit the website at <http://cchs.ua.edu/crm/rural-health-programs/rms>.



# Prestigious McNair Scholars Program At



Front row (l-r): Taylor Monson, Jennifer Barnett, Kristi Aguirre, Awuri Asuru; second row (l-r) James Allen, Corinth Young, Kimika Jackson; third row (l-r) Cory Hayes, Courtney Stone, Jessica Mitchell; back row (l-r): Katie Sandlin, Bailey Sanders

**By Amethyst Holmes**  
CCBP Intern

**D**r. Nancy Campbell sits at her desk grinning from ear to ear while thinking back on her six years as director of the McNair Scholars Program. She vividly remembers one of her student's inspiring stories, that of a young African-American man who grew up in Alabama's Black Belt.

After facing adversity and feeling discouraged and unworthy, he considered dropping out of school and giving up. But she encouraged him, saying, "You have a fine mind." He persisted, graduating as a McNair Scholar. "He is the epitome of what this program is about,"

The McNair Scholars Program, offered by 181 universities across the country, is named after Ronald E. McNair, an astronaut who died aboard the Challenger space shuttle in January 1986. The federally funded program helps needy first generation college students from underrepresented groups gain admission to doctoral programs.

"I don't ever want to retire because it's so fun working with them," Campbell said.

Each year, 600-700 letters of interest are sent out about the program. Roughly 60 students from UA and Stillman College apply, and from 25 finalists, 12 are chosen.

During the year, Scholars take three courses that help them design and conduct their own original research in hopes

that it will be presented at UA's Annual McNair Conference and scholarly conferences all over the country. From this year's submissions, conferences at Penn State University and Georgia State University have invited UA McNair Scholars to present their research. "That's very impressive to admission committees," Campbell said. "In the ten years that the program has been at the University, the research that the Scholars have done is becoming progressively more sophisticated."

But the Scholars aren't alone in their scholarly investigations. Faculty members act as dedicated mentors throughout the research process by giving advice, reviewing manuscripts, and cheering on their Scholars.

The McNair Program caters to talented, dedicated, hard-working students who take full benefit of what the program offers, including assistance with building curriculum vitae, a



Ronald E. McNair, Ph.D., died aboard Challenger in 1986.

# tracts Talented, Hard-Working Students

unique experience and a helping hand at every corner.

The program includes a funded internship in the form of a \$2,800 stipend and a \$1,100 housing allowance. But that's just a fraction of what the program really offers. It's a collective effort to give young scholars the necessary tools they need for advanced graduate study.

To contribute to the effort of successfully getting McNair Scholars into top graduate programs, the Center for Teaching and Learning has teamed up with Kaplan, Inc., to provide McNair scholars with GRE preparation courses for mere pennies compared to their retail costs.

Students share their research with McNair Scholars at the University and all across the country. "The students learn from each other," Campbell said. "It's a different kind of social network."

That's something McNair Scholar Cory Hayes knows all about. At the 10th Annual McNair Conference, he presented his research entitled "Improving LSI-Based Bug Localization Using Historical Patch Data." Eleven other scholars presented research that ranged from an in-depth analysis of professorial political views to an exploration of creativity in preschool children.

"I didn't know undergraduates could do research," Hayes said, pleasantly surprised. "I figured research would be the best way to get more experience for graduate school."

Hayes said his parents instilled in him the importance of a good education. He wasn't accepted in his first attempt to join the program, but it didn't shake Hayes' interest in the program.

"I knew it was very selective," Hayes said. "I wasn't really disappointed. It taught me that I shouldn't ever give up because there's always another opportunity." Campbell referred him to a summer research program in Georgia to build skills. On his second attempt, he was named as a 2009 McNair Scholar.

## **Class of 2010 and Their Majors**

Jasmin Bush, biological sciences  
Cassidy Cisneros, psychology  
Patricia Davis, studio art  
Lisa Elizondo, American studies,  
New College  
Maggie Espino, English  
Matthew Hicks, biological sciences  
Caroline James, communication  
studies, psychology  
Emberly Jay, psychology  
Aerial Murphy, metallurgical and  
material engineering  
Thomas Potter, anthropology  
Amber-Leigh Rush, nursing  
Jerrod Seaton, political science

"Every day I learned something new," Hayes said. For eight weeks, he spent five hours a day doing research, putting in 300 hours altogether. "I liked the environment. It wasn't stressful, but it was serious," Hayes said.

His faculty mentor, Computer Science Assistant Professor Nicholas Kraft, guided him in his research. "He encouraged learning and he wanted you to do the work," Hayes said.

With the working relationship developed over a year, Hayes and Kraft have maintained their bond as Hayes progressed in his research. "I learned both about computer science and graduate school," Hayes said.

"If it wasn't for the McNair Program, I wouldn't have known about research," he said, which will be essential as he pursues his doctoral degree.

Currently, his mother is pursuing her degree in nursing and his father has graduated from junior college and owns an information technology company.

Campbell says that most of the McNair scholars come from culturally disadvantaged homes where talents simply weren't supported or where financial setbacks hindered students from getting introduced to higher education.

"We want to let them realize not only are they deserving, but capable,"

Campbell said. Dr. Jimmy Williams, a UA criminal justice professor who focuses on diversity, says the McNair Scholars Program is wiping the slate clean of any misconceptions about minorities in graduate study.

"The McNair Scholars Program is an excellent example of encouraging undergraduates to become involved in research," Williams said. "It's playing a key role in diversifying higher education. It is instrumental in getting these students to engage in deep thinking and critical thought and to understand complex issues."

To date, 89 percent of UA McNair Program alumni have pursued post-baccalaureate study. "McNair Scholars enter graduate studies with the research skills and aptitude necessary to succeed," Williams said.

Campbell sees no slowing down of the program, describing its success succinctly: "People simply pay a lot of attention to McNair Scholars. They appreciate what we're doing and respond to it."

The 2010 cohort of McNair Scholars emerged from a "highly competitive applicant pool and many more than the twelve selected would make excellent Scholars," Campbell said.

"Since at least two-thirds must qualify as first-generation college/low income students, the competition was especially keen among applicants applying for the few spaces available on the basis of membership in groups historically underrepresented in graduate study," she said.

The 2010 McNair Scholars Faculty Fellows, she said, are Dr. Lisa Hooper, assistant professor of counselor education and school psychology, and Dr. Carolyn Handa, professor of English.

They will teach the McNair Scholars Seminar, Dr. Hooper in the spring, Dr. Handa in the fall. They will also serve as program consultants throughout 2010.

For more on the program, see <http://graduate.ua.edu/mcnair>.



# Students Target Alabama Illiteracy

By **Daniel Hollander**  
CCBP Intern

Literacy is the Edge (LITE) was started in 2008 by 22 graduate students in the master's program in advertising and public relations (APR). In the first year, 200 volunteers composed of UA students, staff and community members were recruited by LITE to tutor both children and adults who struggle with functional literacy. Over 700 volunteers have now been recruited.

The Community Affairs awards committee was so impressed with the project it gave LITE an award for Distinguished Student-Initiated Engagement Effort in 2009.

These staggering statistics were uncovered by the APR team during their research:

- One in four Alabamians 18 or older are functionally illiterate, and 65% of children of illiterate parents become illiterate.

- Four in 10 Alabama fourth graders can't read at grade level.

- Four in 10 Alabama fourth graders won't graduate from high school.

- Seven in 10 Alabama prisoners are functionally illiterate.

- Not being able to read is the No. 1 cause of dropping out of school.

In an impressive brochure, the team hammers home these and other facts to the volunteers they recruit to help with the project.

"We became aware of the new Literacy Council at the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce in September," said Dr. Bruce Berger, teacher of the course, former APR chair and former senior industry



Left, Dr. Bruce Berger describes the students' work. Center, Louise Crow and her APR master's class present their findings. Below, Johnnie Aycock, president of the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce, visited the class's presentation and outlined the future of the Literacy Council.



executive. "We invited chamber president Johnnie Aycock to speak with us about the issue.

Afterward, the students decided to redesign the class to put our study of theories into practice – to make it a service-learning experience at the same time. The students have embraced the cause and carried out many activities to increase awareness on campus and to recruit student volunteers."

Volunteers are asked to provide just a single hour a week to help combat Alabama's illiteracy.

The 17 graduate students in the second class who have worked on the program held a luncheon recently to discuss their progress.

They passionately told their story about making a difference in the community, demonstrating why their instructor said he "would hire them in a minute" if he were still working in the industry.

"We aren't just learning about persuasive advertising, we are making a difference in the state of Alabama," said Louise Crow, one of the project leaders.

"I don't know what our class will end up doing in life, but I do know we will be advocates for literacy wherever we go."

The West Alabama Chamber of Commerce Literacy Council has taken note of the students' work, and cooperative work between the two groups is likely. The Council recently **(continued on p. 19)**



# Research Focuses on Value of Service-Learning

Science in Action is one of three innovative programs nationwide funded by a three-year Learn and Serve grant of more than \$675,000. It was awarded to The University of Alabama by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

"Service-learning is a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities," said Dr. Jane Newman, a UA education professor overseeing the Science in Action program. "We are testing to see if the project will result in improvement in grades and higher order thinking skills, i.e., creative thinking, creative problem solving, decision making, planning, forecasting and communication."

According to Newman, 21 low-income middle schools in Alabama and Georgia have each received \$20,000 sub-grants to work with students in creating authentic, service based projects in the content areas of science and technology, as part of the national Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Initiative (STEM).

"We are working with 67 science teachers, 9,181 middle school students and 91 community partners to help



Dr. Jane Newman, center, Tripp Marshall, left, assistant principal at Brookwood Middle School, and April Coleman, UA doctoral student, stand in front of a greenhouse under construction at Brookwood. Through a grant overseen by Newman, associate professor in the College of Education, UA is providing professional development to 21 schools in two states while measuring the impact of service-learning on traditional learning.

students learn to solve science-based community problems through inquiry based service-learning," said Newman. "Teachers will work with colleagues and experts in developing their pedagogical knowledge base and ability to facilitate science-related service-learning projects to address real problems in their communities."

In addition to Science in Action, the UA College of Engineering has established a five-year program in Sumter County schools focusing on incorporating engineering applications into existing science and math courses. Materials and resources are created under the direction of eight UA

graduate fellows who help middle and high school students understand how engineering theories are grounded in math and science through experiential learning.

"The impact of the graduate fellows has been very positive," said Grace King, the school improvement specialist for Sumter County Schools. "They view learning as an active process, and having them in the classroom helps our teachers to learn to teach beyond the textbook. It is just what our students need – the opportunity to see that learning has meaning. It is a wonderful partnership."

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**(continued from p. 18)** elected members of its 2010 leadership team: Jackie Hurt, chair; Berger, vice chair of communications and marketing; Sandra Ray, vice chair of projects and programs; Julie Sittason, vice chair of service providers exchange; Janet Griffith, secretary; Chuck Turner, treasurer; and Aycock, immediate past chair and interim director.

The 30-member board has approved a management and financial structure for the coming year and a staff and

full-time literacy council office.

Other strategies and goals for 2010 include the development and expansion of communications and marketing; development of a new website; expanded volunteer recruitment and tutor training; establishment of a literacy service providers exchange; and other programs and initiatives.

The goal is to harness the power of literacy to improve lives and communities.





Roy Clem, left, general manager of WVUA-TV, and George Daniels, associate professor of journalism, talk with Kim Garner, right, and Parrish Alleman, students in the College of Communication and Information Sciences who are getting a head start in their journalism careers because of the campus TV station. More than 50 students each semester work side by side with professionals.

# WVUA Finds Its Niche in West Alabama

**By Amethyst Holmes**  
CCBP Intern

**T**ucked into the lower reaches of Reese Phifer Hall on the campus of The University of Alabama, WVUA is not an obvious find, but seeking out this treasure is well worth the hunt. Just ask the many students whose careers have been launched there, or the thousands of viewers who otherwise wouldn't have local television.

The vision of former College of Communication & Information Sciences Dean Culpepper Clark, television station WVUA, was purchased by The University of Alabama in 2001 and became the second commercial television station to be run by a major university. What started out as a low power station is now a full power station with the No. 1 rated newscast in West Alabama.

Along with broadcasting to the West Alabama community, WVUA serves as a laboratory for communication students to apply theories learned in their classrooms on the upper levels of the "Old Union Building," as it was called by earlier generations of students.

"For The University of Alabama to own a commercial television station is such an opportunity for students, and it really set UA apart from the rest. Assistant News Director and Anchor Terri Brewer said. "In many ways, we are doing something at WVUA that no

other television station has really done before."

Since June 2005, Brewer has enjoyed her time at the station, being able to give a voice to citizens of small towns who wouldn't have one if it weren't for WVUA.

"It's gratifying every day to know that I can have an impact on our viewers, as well as the students working alongside me." Brewer said. "I have met some amazing people through the stories we report."

On the WVUA show "First at Four," people from surrounding counties get to chime in during live interviews and talk about what's going on in their communities, giving them an opportunity to promote events.

"Without us, many of these areas would seldom or never get local television news coverage," Brewer said.

General Manager Roy Clem makes it a mission to cover The University of Alabama, Alabama athletics and Tuscaloosa better than any other TV outlet.

"Our news efforts are concentrated on Tuscaloosa and West Alabama because that's our niche," Clem said.

"It's never going to be an ABC 33/40, CBS 42, NBC 13, or Fox 6. We know that. We fill a unique niche that will attract viewers."

WVUA now connects with over 3,000,000 viewers in West Alabama, Central Alabama, areas south of

Huntsville, north of Montgomery, and across state lines in Mississippi and Georgia.

"It's not just a station that broadcasts to the dorm next door," Clem said. "This is a real television station with real responsibilities."

Serving West Alabama's communities is part of WVUA's focus. This station serves as an outreach service provider for AIDS outreach, the Alabama Scholastic Press Association, the American Red Cross, the Multicultural Journalism Workshop, and Literacy is the Edge (LITE), a student organization that fights illiteracy.

The responsibility of teaching positive ethical decision-making, good news judgment and good storytelling to the next generation of news professionals is another of the station's goals. "The students are the backbone of this operation," Clem said.

Interns at WVUA get the chance to gain experience in web, news, technical production, tape editing and writing. Clem tells his interns they should leave the station knowing that it was the most challenging job they've had.

"That puts you in a different league when you're going after a particular job. You're able to answer questions that many students coming out of college aren't able to but you've also developed a better understanding and sense of how the business works," Clem said.

Student intern (continued on p. 31)



Lynn Brooks, News Director/Anchor, WVUA-TV

**By Lindsey Holland**  
CCBP Intern

From covering forest fires to tornadoes, Lynn Brooks, news director of WVUA-TV since 2003, has worked her way up to the top news position at her alma mater's owned and operated television station, one of only three in the nation owned by academic programs. The other two are at the University of Georgia and the University of Missouri.

According to Brooks, UA students are the heart of her team. They act as on-air talent, production staff and sales assistants. "Our professionals invest time into coaching students every minute of every day," she says. "Every aspect of our operation involves students in some way, and we reward high performing students with amazing opportunities."

Putting a major emphasis on the student mission as part of the college's preparation of future professional journalists makes WVUA-TV unique among campus stations. It puts the station right in the middle of the curriculum, according to station manager Roy Clem.

"During any given semester we have as many as 50 students putting into practice the instruction and other information they acquire from classroom, labs and lectures. In many ways WVUA-TV is the ultimate laboratory for broadcast news, sales, production and process," he said.

Although it's rare for students to have the opportunity to cover what Brooks considers "real" news, at WVUA it's the standard. Brooks got her start in college working with a documentary crew for another unit in UA's sprawling College of Communication and Information Sciences—the Center for Public Television and Radio. After college, she took a job working as producer and co-anchor for a show called, "Inside Tuscaloosa City Schools."

## Directing the Ultimate News Laboratory

The then news director of WVUA asked Brooks if she would be interested in a full-time reporter position and she accepted. It was there, as a night shift reporter, that she covered the gamut from fires to cops to weather disasters.

Even today, after reaching the top of an award-winning news operation, she says she still misses reporting and makes time to do special reports whenever possible.

The University of Alabama students bring a unique perspective into the news product. Student interns from all over the country work in every department at the station.

One of the strengths of the station is that the professional staff works hard to engage everyone, letting them know their ideas are valued.

"It's important for my team to focus on the things that make us unique," she says. "For us, we celebrate our down home stories, we allow our anchors to let their personalities come through, and we pay special attention to West Alabama, which is an underserved area as far as television news is concerned." The audience really relates to this approach, she says.

Mindful of the station's special obligation to cover West Alabama and the Black Belt region, Associate Professor Dr. George Daniels, at the National Outreach Scholarship Conference last fall in Athens, Ga., summarized this obligation, saying, "WVUA-TV is about teaching logistics, theory, research and online media, not just broadcast journalism and production, and it is especially important that its programming address an oft-neglected area, Alabama's Black Belt. News and other programming at the local community level increases self-confidence and connections to the larger state, national and international community."

The station traces its roots to 1998 as WJRD on Channel 49, bringing local news coverage to West Alabama for the first time since the previous local station moved to Birmingham. A \$1 million gift from the family of the late Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant allowed the University to acquire WJRD in 2001.

After moving its operations onto the University campus, the station adopted the call sign WVUA in January 2002. In addition to repeaters in Greensboro, WDVZ-CA Channel 3, and Demopolis, WJMY-CA Channel 25 and WJMY-LD Channel 22, WVUA's signal is carried by cable operators on Channels 3 and 17. In November 2004, Channel 23 LLC filed an application with the FCC to donate its full-power station, WLDM, to the University.

Today WVUA-TV broadcasts on digital Channel 23 from atop Red Mountain and covers the entire Birmingham designated market area.



## UA-Assisted Black Belt Treasures Promotes Regional Artists

For three years, the nonprofit organization Black Belt Treasures has helped the region promote its artists and craftsmen.

The organization formed to provide artists with a venue to sell their products started in 2005, bringing together more than 350 painters, sculptors, potters, basket-weavers, quilters, woodworkers and others.

"We had 75 artists when we first started," said Black Belt Treasures Executive Director Sulynn Creswell. "We continue to find new people."

When first opened, Black Belt Treasures had to recruit artists but today artists come to them.

Creswell said Belt Treasures increases tourism in the Black Belt region while continuing to provide a successful outlet for the work of artists of all kinds from the novice to the best sellers.

The project not only draws art lovers; it also serves to introduce visitors to important chapters in Alabama's history, from the Civil War to Civil Rights.

Black Belt Treasures thinks of itself as a "wheel from which people go on to places like Selma or Demopolis or Monroeville. They will then go on to do other things within the region as a result of having gotten off the Interstate to come to Black Belt Treasures," Creswell said.

Lifelong potter Sam Williams from Monroeville has been with Black Belt Treasures since the organization's beginning. Williams never considered making pottery his full-time work until he retired. He said Black Belt Treasures really helped publicize his pottery.

Black Belt Treasures represents artists who had no channel for distributing or publicizing their work, Williams said.

Tyree McCloud, a stained-glass artist who is also band director at Wilcox County High School, is grateful for the exposure he's received through the organization.

For one of the organization's first major projects, McCloud was asked to paint a series of roadside murals for the



Gee's Bend Quilt Trail. After growing up with Gee's Bend quilters, McCloud was considered the ideal person to help preserve the Gee's Bend legacy. Upon completion, his murals will cover a 17-mile quilt trail. "This is helping to honor my family," he said.

*The website familiarizes the rest of the world with the richness of the writers and artists in the region.*

In addition to the shop in Camden, artists' work is also for sale on the Black Belt Treasures website, [www.blackbelttreasures.com/](http://www.blackbelttreasures.com/).

The University of Alabama Management Information System Capstone Experience team helped launch the organization's online site, which has helped push sales above \$500,000.

What the website does is help familiarize the rest of the world with the "richness of the writers and artists" working in the region, said Nisa Miranda, director of UA's Center for Economic Development, a partner and consultant in the project.

The Black Belt region is important to UA's outreach mission, Miranda said. "Our students gain real-world

experience, and they're part of an effort to improve the economic conditions in our state through the project."

Linda Vice, director of the Southwest Alabama Office of Tourism and Film and a consultant for the UA Center of Economic Development, said Black Belt Treasures brings international attention to the Black Belt region. In addition to receiving a federal grant to help transform U.S. Highway 80 into a scenic byway, Black Belt preservationists have also been working to get a federal designation for 19 Alabama counties as a national heritage area. Such a designation would help Black Belt Treasures become one of the major players showcasing the region's heritage, she said.

"What we've done [at Black Belt Treasures] is encapsulate our culture," Vice said. "As we started looking around at our artists, we learned that they are tradition-bearers in that their interests are based on what they know."

Black Belt Treasures takes the art, culture and heritage and captures it in one location, she said. She added that in the midst of an economic recession and budget cuts, arts programs are usually the first thing to be cut. Designation as a national heritage area would provide up to a million dollars in funding for historic preservation and arts education in the region.

# Getting “Fit for Retirement” in the Age of Technology

By Amethyst Holmes  
CCBP Intern

Trying to stay in touch with family members but being out-of-touch with technology can be frustrating for senior citizens. Now, thanks to a community project named “FIT 4 Retirement,” that is not the case for a group of seniors in Tuscaloosa.

Assisted by her graduate students, Dr. Laurie Bonnici, assistant professor in the School of Library and Information Studies, spearheads the project that teaches information technology literacy to seniors.

FIT 4 Retirement’s partners are the Tuscaloosa Public Library and Focus on Senior Citizens of Tuscaloosa County Inc. Preliminary analysis of the data is already showing positive results.

Bonnici and two of her partners presented the results of the project at the National Outreach Scholarship Conference at the University of Georgia in 2009. The two students are Jackie Brodsky, a doctoral student in the College of Communication and Information Sciences, and project manager Muriel K. Wells, a librarian with the National Children’s Advocacy Center.

They are now looking forward to writing grant proposals to national agencies to get additional support for their program.

“We’re really preparing them [baby-boomers] for retirement,” Bonnici said. “The program we created gives them needed attention they weren’t receiving.”

The project meets an unmet need in the community, Wells added. “The senior population is exploding and they’re kind of getting left out in the cold.”

The Center for Community Based Partnerships recognized their efforts in 2008 with an Outstanding Faculty/Staff-Initiated Engagement Effort Award and \$5,000 in financial support.

“It’s wonderful that CCBP has invested in us,” Bonnici said.

Many computer courses are fast



paced and tailored to young adults. They tend to leave retirees in the dark, the investigators said. Seniors are full partners in the creative control of the course. “We asked them what they want to learn,” Wells said. “There’s no reason to teach them how to write a resume because they’re retired. They have needs and interests that younger people don’t have. We cater to those needs and interests in the course.”

Because she has a background teaching first-graders, Wells was able to see similarities in learning comprehension patterns between young children and senior citizens.

“I could understand how they were processing and the need for repetition and delivering information in smaller chunks of content,” Wells said.

Each semester, two classes were held for 10 senior citizens at Focus on Senior Citizens of Tuscaloosa County Inc. With laptops provided to them, they learned how to open attachments, view pictures, send and receive e-mail efficiently and search the Internet for retirement related issues. Communicating with family and maintaining contact with grandchildren and loved ones was a key skill that they all wanted to learn as well.

“They’re so eager and so excited to learn. Their exuberance for the courses made it more exciting for us as well,” Wells said.

Participants at Focus on Senior Citizens in Tuscaloosa (seated) sharpen their computer skills with the support of UA graduate students (standing) led by their instructor, Dr. Laurie Bonnici (far right).

Brodsky enjoyed working with the seniors. “I gained the perspective of teaching information technology skills to a population that I would not otherwise have encountered in the library school setting or during my library assistantship,” she said.

Interactions between students and seniors made seniors feel like kids again, the instructors said.

“They really appreciated my using familiar analogies to explain technical concepts to them,” Brodsky said. “The seniors were very grateful for anything we taught them.”

Wells added, “We fed off one another. They acted like they were young as well. Observing the interaction between the student instructors and the seniors was quite fascinating.”

What they observed, Bonnici said, gives her students and her something to look forward to when they get to be seasoned citizens. “It gives us a perspective on aging.”

Because the course was in such high demand, seniors were calling Focus to find out when the next class was or if it was full so they could register. “That’s kind of fun for them. You can just see their faces light up,” Bonnici said.

As the program blossoms, the researchers hope to reach out to seniors in rural areas. “We’ve got to go to them,” Wells said.



# Jan Pruitt Leads Kentuck

The new executive director of Kentuck, Jan Pruitt, is no stranger to Tuscaloosa. The Gadsden native received her B.A. and M.A. degrees from The University of Alabama. "I think that it's a very exciting time to be a part of Kentuck," Pruitt said. "The festival is a wonderful part of the cultural life of the area."



Jan Pruitt is former UA director of marketing communications

Pruitt is working to increase the ongoing programming. The program manager and assistant program manager at the Kentuck Museum Association are together coming up with new programming for the third Saturday of each month. There will be artist demonstrations, as well as activities for children and adults.

"Kentuck is not just about the leadership of one person; it's about what we accomplish when we all come together," Pruitt said. "It's about the people who were already here and working hard, and were willing to stay on. When you look at the festival artists and see the wonderful contributions they make to the culture of life in this area, it's an amazing thing."

Pruitt brings a wealth of communications and management experience to Kentuck. Since retiring from the University as associate director of University Relations, Pruitt has worked as a freelance writer and editor and consultant.

After a month under new leadership, the Kentuck Museum Association has begun reshaping its physical assets and community programming.

Emily Leigh will be assistant director and Lisa Blewitt, a longtime Kentuck fan, will be assistant program manager.

# KENTUCK: 40-YEAR CU

By Lindsey Holland  
CCBP Intern

*The annual Kentuck Festival of the Arts is the best-attended cultural event in West Alabama. It reflects creativity from people from all walks of life and all areas of art, making it one of the most important events on the area's cultural calendar.*

Her mother sewed and quilted. Her father made baskets and chair seats from natural materials such as corn shucks. And she's been creating art and artifacts for more than 40 years, maybe longer

Bessie Johnson, a Mississippi native known for her pine needle basket weaving and matchstick folk art, traces her artistic edge to her African- American ancestors, she told me at the 2009 festival.

Kentuck, recognized for its quality and variety, hosts more than 30,000 visitors each year at the end of October. The festival features the work of more than 300 artists from around the U.S., as well as live music and a variety of Southern and ethnic foods.

Johnson attends the festival, showcasing her work at the festival rated

in the top 10 in the state by several media and tourism organizations.

Kathryn Tucker Windham, award-winning storyteller, author, journalist, photographer and historian, has attended Kentuck as an artist for many years.

"People come to Kentuck and similar festivals to have a pleasant, relaxed time as they seek out art they like and meet the artists who created it," she said.

But seeing the art and the artists who created it is only part of the festival. Rooted in the Southern soil of Northport, Ala., Kentuck is more than art. It's a way of living, it's a life lived and it's a history of the South. It's those Southern roots that make this annual festival more than a paintbrush and canvas, more than "found" art and fiddle music.

We all have our own story, whether we are obvious about it in our art or not, said artist Kristin Diener. "My work tells about travels and politics and love and heartbreak and hope and history, to name a few." Diener uses metal smithing techniques to create her bold jewelry artwork.

Windham believes no one really listens today. And that's a shame. Just listening to Windham on one of her CDs or every Friday on Alabama Public Radio



Rebecca Grace Nasser, 8, right, is aided by her mother Jennifer Nasser while she hammers nails into a ber of the Woodworkers Association of West Alabama.



# CULTURAL BLOCKBUSTER

is a treat many would hate to have to do without. She said the storytellers have died and their stories with them. But if you look close enough, you can find embedded in the baskets, pottery and paint a story to retell.

Diener said being part of the Kentuck festival lets her 'come home' to one of her many homes. She also said she thinks the Deep South has had a great result on herself as a person.

The artistic styles of the festival include everything from traditional crafts to folk and contemporary. Johnson's work can be classified as folk. She uses pine needles, gourds, corn shucks and other natural materials to make her craft. For the contemporary side, Kentuck hosts artists such as Charlie Lucas and Sam McMillan.

Charlie "The Tin Man" Lucas makes sculpture from wire. Originally from Prattville, Ala., but now living in Tuscaloosa, this artist rummages through junkyards, finds old scrap metal and creates his own new masterpiece.

Sam "The Dot Man" McMillan, from Winston Salem, N.C., is a self-taught artist who uses non-traditional material and bold colors when painting his art. He realized his calling later in his life, and now finds

joy in painting dots on rocking chairs, rain boots and even trash cans.

Northport's Centennial Celebration birthed the Kentuck festival. The first Kentuck festival was in 1971. The Northport Centennial decked the town out with folks in pioneer dress demonstrating crafts from the period, and several artists exhibited their work in an empty storefront. It was then decided to make it an annual event.

The first settlements in Northport were known as Kentuck. One theory is that at the time of the settlers, the word Kentuck meant paradise. The name for the annual festival was chosen to celebrate the Kentuck, or "Paradise," community's heritage and history.

Jerry Brown, an artist who attends the festival, is full of heritage and history both. Still using a mule to power their clay mill, the Browns have been in the stoneware pottery business for nine generations. Jerry Brown learned this craft before he was old enough to attend school. When he was 22, his father gave the business to him and his brothers.

At the time of the early festivals, the big focus was on southern tradition. This included basket making, quilting, shingle making, churning and weaving, Georgine Clarke, founder of Kentuck, said. "So the festival took that direction."

Diener said she remembers the southern tradition of the first festivals. Diener was attending elementary school in Northport at the time. "I remember it as the small festival with the smoky fires, clogging and biscuits," she said. Those biscuits that Diener remembers can still be found at Kentuck today, along with some ribs, gyros, Cajun and more.

There's also another addition to the festival besides good food, good craft and good history. There's music, too. Legendary blues, bluegrass, folk, country, gospel, classical and alternative rock can be heard from different stages. The executive director chooses the bands.

"We usually hear who we want through the grapevine," said Valerie Piette, program manager for Kentuck. In 2009 there were eight bands for the weekend.

Bluegrass singer and banjoist Ralph Stanley, 82, the voice behind "Oh,



Top: Butch Anthony of Seale, Ala., creates animals out of whatever material he can find. Bottom: Moly Elliott, 7, inspects the cake tester brooms at the George's Broom Closet booth.



birdhouse with the help of Carl Clements, a mem-

Brother, Where Art Thou?," has performed on more than 170 albums and CDs and counts Kentuck as one of his venues. The Dexateens, a local hometown rock 'n' roll band, was a recent headliner. Their loud, southern bang singing and lyrics are reflections of Elliott McPherson's life as a band member, a cabinetmaker and a family man. "I love it so much here in Tuscaloosa that I shout, 'Roll Tide' to my audiences, no matter what state or country I'm playing in," he said. "I had a whole audience in Gijon, Spain chanting 'Roll Tide' which was (continued on p. 26)



The "Tin Man," Charles Lucas, has been a frequent exhibitor at Kentuck. This is his work entitled "The Family."



(continued from p. 25) awesome. My music has nothing do with sports. I just like to represent my home no matter where I go."

"Kentuck is the grandmother of all the festivals," said Georgine Clarke, who says the festival's artistic and geographical scope has expanded with national support and attention from a wider range of artists.

Others have commented on the intimate setting near the Black Warrior River under the pine trees between downtown Northport and the airport as another reason for its popularity.

Exhibiting at Kentuck since 1987, Jerry Hymel, says he's seen the festival grow in size and attendance. "Northport and the surrounding communities should be congratulated for providing

volunteers and support to a festival that is very well run and gives those who attend a wide variety of quality fine art and crafts to purchase," he said.

Jill Thompson agrees. Thompson, whose first Kentuck experience was in 2008, said she was very impressed with the amazing quality of work and variety of the artists presented.

"I will continue to support Kentuck because of the wonderful variety of artwork represented," she said. "I come from a rural community and depend on the Internet and magazines mostly for artistic inspiration."

The festival allows me to see in person work by artists whose art I have admired in publication, but also to discover new artists I would otherwise never have found."

From basket weavers to painters, from jewelry makers to potters, Kentuck has artists of all kinds. Hymel is a flat glass, stained-glass artist, and the only one at Kentuck in 2009.

In the past, Hymel worked and constructed traditional and contemporary window hangings for the home or office.

Now, he is using his stained glass to construct "Picasso-like" faces that are then shadow boxed so that they can be hung on the wall of homes or offices, with no windows being required.

Selection of artists is organized and rigorous. Artists are chosen by an annual online application, says Valerie Piette, though if an artist is chosen three consecutive years in a row, they automatically get to showcase their work the next year.

"The artists are asked to post three digital images of their work," she said. "The work is then judged by four jurors beginning in June. Based on the scores, the artists are chosen. About 150 get invited consecutively and the others are selected online, with about 300 artists total."

Clarke, who now works for the Alabama Council of the Arts in

Montgomery, said Kentuck is her true love. "People from across the country attend the Kentuck festival," she said. The realization of the cross-country attendees came when Clarke received a phone call the weekend of the 2008 festival.

"A lady called me and said she was flying in on a private plane to attend," she said. "That's when I realized how many people from across America come."

It is definitely a unique festival, Piette said. According to Piette, *American Style* magazine has chosen Kentuck as a top 10 art fair and festival in the United States. "This was exciting because Kentuck was the only festival on the list from the South," she said.

Kentuck has also been recognized as one of the top 20 events for the Southeast Tourism Society.

Neville Bhada, vice president of communication and public relations for the Southeast Tourism Society, said being chosen as a top 20 event is a huge honor.

"We judge on creativity and originality," he said. "We also judge on the uniqueness of the event, as well as how Southern it is."

When talking about organizing the festival, Piette said that stress really happens the week before the festival. "We have an excellent group of volunteers who are really the ones who pull the festival together."

The volunteers, the workers, the artists, the attendees and the creations themselves all come to life on that October weekend. After the artists have their craft set up, the stories tell themselves. All everyone else has to do it just listen.

Kentuck is more than the festival. There is also the Kentuck Museum in Northport, home to the Kentuck Museum of Art, the Gallery at Kentuck and Kentuck Studio Artists. The Gallery at Kentuck showcases the work of up-and-comers, while the Kentuck Museum of Art has bimonthly exhibits of nationally known and established artists.

Every year the exhibits for the Museum are planned out for each month. The chosen artist for the month will be presented on art night.



# Students Learn About the Art of the Tin Man

Charlie Lucas, Ben Windham, Chip Cooper and Michele Myatt Quinn visited Maxwell Hall recently to introduce their new book, *Tin Man: Charlie Lucas*.

The event, sponsored by Creative Campus and the University of Alabama Press, included a book signing, a discussion with the artists, a reception and an interactive art demonstration that allowed guests to express themselves through a simple form of art.

Lucas, a self-taught Alabama artist, presents his work in the book through stories of his own childhood. He tells of an accident that occurred in 1984 that made him decide to seriously express himself through art. His motivating story shares the personal satisfaction he has received through his artwork, his love of family and his role in teaching children.

"In society, we are afraid to work together," he said. "I finally allowed myself to open up and share my arts because I feel like the world needs to see this."

Lucas resides in Pink Lily, just outside Tuscaloosa, where he has created a workshop filled with sculptures, objects, paintings and much more. His art is created from old materials that would usually be labeled trash, such as bicycle wheels, wire, gears, shovels and car mufflers.

Through his artwork, Lucas is known all over the world as a talented innovator in the field of American folk art.

Cooper, the photographer for the book, displayed many of his original prints from the book. Cooper included over



Charlie Lucas at work at his shop near Tuscaloosa.

200 color photographs of Lucas' works in progress and finished creations in the book.

"It is a truly spectacular book," said Colin Whitworth, an intern for Creative Campus. "Alabama has an incredibly rich culture and art scene, and it's great that all of the artwork came from our area."

The book features quotes that were compiled by the interviewer Ben Windham, son of Kathryn Tucker Windham, a storyteller, author and photographer. Guests agreed the event was enlightening and successful.

"Charlie Lucas is visionary," said sophomore Alexandra Tucci. "He's a magical person, and it was a cool opportunity that we all got to interact with him and everyone that worked on the book."

## Collaborama Encourages Group Inspiration

Inspired by a class taught by creative writing program director Robin Behn, UA students are exploring collaboration methods to find inspiration as a group.

Their effort culminated in "Collaborama," a performance bringing music, dance, visual art and film together at Morgan Auditorium on Dec. 3, 2009.

While collaboration is popular among musicians and performance artists, collaboration between media is still a developing concept in the world of art.

Looking to bridge this gap, Behn's creative writing students teamed up with students majoring in dance and visual arts.

Students surveyed a history of writers collaborating with other writers as well as with other kinds of artists, adding to the tradition.

The Morgan Auditorium performance featured 15 different pieces by students in Behn's graduate level creative writing class, assistant dance professor Sarah Barry's choreography class and assistant art professor Sarah



Robin Behn  
Creative Writing  
Program Director

Marshall's printmaking class. With text as the foundation for each performance piece, dance students choreographed their movements to the spoken words. Barry said her dancers choreographed moves that creative writing students could also participate in for a more interactive experience.

The students drew on a diverse array of things as sources of inspiration. For the creative writing piece "Word by Word," created by Jesse DeLong and Curtis Rutherford, the students delivered an impromptu performance in which they asked the audience for different themes and words to use in a live performance.

For "Diving Really Really Deep Into Boris Yeltsin's Memoir," a performance piece by graduate creative writing student Curtis Rutherford, students read from thoughts Rutherford jotted down about a visit to Russia and a reading of Yeltsin's memoirs. The process encourages students to think outside the bounds of usual art forms, Behn said, to become "creative works of art that aren't the brainchild of one person." Collaborama is in its second year.



## Hamner to Lead Panel at WATCH 2010 Meeting



Dr. Karl Hamner, director of Scholarly Affairs for The University of Alabama's Capstone College of Nursing, is heading a panel discussion on the Walker Area Transformational

Coalition for Health (WATCH 2010) at the Gulf-South Summit on Service Learning and Civic Engagement in Athens, Ga, March 3-5.

WATCH 2010 is an innovative cross-sector community-academic partnership in rural Alabama linking health care, social services, businesses and education to reduce the burden of chronic illness and promote wellness among underserved residents.

Partners for WATCH 2010 were recruited to maximize the benefits of collaboration between local, regional and state agencies, both public and private.

Consisting of four direct care providers, two community foundations, the Chamber of Commerce, a family support service agency, the local office of the Department of Human Resources, and two academic institutions, Watch 2010 provides a unique solution to health challenges in rural America by linking primary health care providers, social services, businesses and educational institutions into a cohesive network that drives efforts to reduce the burden of chronic illness.

Co-presenters on the panel include: Paul Kennedy, director of the Walker Area Community Foundation; Don Goetz, director of WATCH 2010; and Haley Wells, an Americorp Vista worker for WATCH 2010.

The panel will discuss WATCH 2010 results, origins, mission, challenges and solutions to forming and implementing the collaborative.

## Payne-Foster Named to Diabetes, Mental Health Committees



Dr. Pamela Payne-Foster, deputy director of the Rural Health Institute and assistant professor in Community Rural Medicine in the College of Community Health Sciences, has recently been named to two statewide health committees. Payne-Foster was elected vice president for 2009-2010 of the Alabama Diabetes Network, a network of clinicians, health department employees, institutions

and voluntary, nonprofit and community-based organizations dedicated to decreasing diabetes and its complications in Alabama. She was also appointed to the State Mental Health Prevention Advisory Board for the state. The board is made up of governmental, academic, business and mental health advocate leaders throughout the state.

## Award Given to Increase Awareness of How Healthy Relationships Make Healthier Families



Child Development Resources, a community service initiative of the College of Human Environmental Sciences, has received an award of \$100,000 from the Wal-Mart Foundation for Parenting Assistance Line (PAL).

PAL is a statewide phone line that provides free information, support and tools to parents across Alabama to make parenting more manageable. The service is free, anonymous, and confidential.

PAL began with Mrs. Patsy Riley, Alabama's First Lady. Her vision was to provide parents the support they need to become more confident and successful. The goal is to help stressed-out parents "talk it out" instead of "taking it out" on their children.

PAL is a collaborative effort of The University of Alabama, the Children's Trust Fund of Alabama, the Alabama Department of Human Resources, the Alabama Department of Mental Health, and the Walmart Foundation. Since March 2007, PAL has received over 8,000 calls from Alabama and 25 other states and from 122 countries on six continents.

The award will be used to increase public awareness of the importance of healthy relationships in producing healthier families, according to Valerie A. Thorington, assistant director, Child Development Resources.

## Six Black Belt Schools Receive Books in SLIS's Annual Program

The University of Alabama's School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) awards some \$6,000 in free books annually to elementary and high school library media centers in the Black Belt region of the state through the SLIS Book Bonanza for the Black Belt Program.

Black Belt schools apply for the program in mid-November.

In 2009, six schools were selected to each receive over \$1,000 worth of new books for children or teens. The winning schools were Gordo High School (Pickens County), ABC Elementary School (Wilcox County), J.E. Terry Elementary School (Dallas County), Shiloh Elementary School (Dallas County), Chisholm Elementary School (Montgomery County), and Robert C. Hatch High School (Perry County).

# Capstone Entrepreneurship Camp Scheduled for June 20-25



Chad Smith, inventor of the Option Knob, shows how to use the device June 21-25, 2009, at the Capstone Entrepreneurship Camp. The knob attaches to a guitar allowing performers to adjust the pedals with their feet. Smith was taught by Dr. Sue Parker, seated left, emeritus faculty. Listening are Parker Morrow, Michael Harris, Matt Roberts, Jose Lopez and Luis Lopez. Smith said he was proof that anyone can develop a viable business plan. Tommie Syx organizes the camp along with David Ford of the College of Business. The 2010 camp will be June 20-25.

## Culture Fest 2010



## Ford, Syx Reach Teachers Via Webinar



David Ford, clinical management professor, and Tommie Syx of AlabamaREAL and the Center for Community-Based Partnerships teamed up to conduct a webinar on entrepreneurship for the Alabama Department of Education, Career and Technical Teachers on January 12, 2010. The program's purpose was to motivate interest in entrepreneurship, provide teaching materials and promote National Entrepreneurship Week. The 35 teachers attending received professional development credit.



### "HERO-ic" Readers

Third-year law student Muhammad Abdullah (right) helps fifth-grader Stanley Tinker with a reading exercise at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School. Abdullah is one of more than a dozen volunteer mentors and tutors in the HEROES (Helping Embrace Real Opportunities in Everyday Situations) reading program. Christopher H. Spencer, program director, says follow-up evaluations show that all pupils who attend the after-school program regularly have improved reading scores on national tests, better attitudes toward reading and better skill in word meaning, punctuation, enunciation and spelling.



With great weather after an earlier rain-out, Culture Fest II, in Northport on Nov. 1, 2009, drew another big crowd (bottom left) for the community celebration. A wide variety of performers were on hand, and Crossroads Community Center organizers pronounced it a success, especially in light of the student and community response. Lachell Rice, 9, (top left) dismounts from the blowup slide. Brian Jones of the Pielab in Greensboro (center left) looks over his design.



# Emerging Scholars Interest Group Developing Rapidly

The Emerging Engagement Scholars Interest Group (EESIG), now with some 25 members, has a goal of building a scholarship of engagement community at The University of Alabama. Students from the Graduate Student Association, the Black Law Student Association, and the African American and Hispanic Student Associations make up the membership in its first year.

"We want scholars to look at multiple conferences as opportunities to present their work, but they need to plan nine or more months ahead of time for project proposals, which are already developed with abstracts, and for poster presentation panels," said Dr. George Daniels, associate professor of journalism.

EESIG meets throughout the semester to discuss research projects, upcoming conferences and events, and opportunities for collaboration with members from both the community and the university. The group is modeled after the Emerging Engagement Scholars Workshop held annually at the National Outreach Scholarship Conference (NOSC).

"The conference provided many examples of projects and methods possible for community-based participatory research," said Dwight Washington, a doctoral student at Michigan State University, whose dissertation research explores how college athletics can promote environmental sustainability in local communities. "The

workshop extended my imagination to a host of possibilities available for engaged research and scholarship to generate meaningful change."

EESIG members Tiarney Ritchwood and Jackie Brodsky were the first UA graduate students to be accepted to attend the 2009 Emerging Scholars Workshop, which is held annually in conjunction with the National Outreach



Scholarship Conference. Brodsky, a doctoral student in Communication and Information Sciences, did not attend the workshop, but did attend the conference and presented a poster alongside Dr. Laurie Bonnici, assistant professor in the School of Library and Information Studies, for her work on project FIT 4 Retirement.

Ritchwood, a doctoral student in clinical psychology, now plans to incorporate community focus groups into her dissertation on the relationship between risky sexual behavior and substance abuse in adolescents.

"Engagement scholarship wasn't something I was really familiar with before attending the workshop, but the conference generated a lot of ideas on how to combine research and community partnerships under the academic umbrella, which doesn't

always provide incentives for working in the community," she said.

Daniels initiated the EESIG and also acts as one of many faculty advisors for the group drawn from across UA disciplines. "Doing human research requires four to six week approval before you can even start, so a lot of planning and preparation needs to be taken by these scholars," he said.

"Our role as faculty advisors is to provide opportunities and resources for students within professional contexts. One opportunity will allow EESIG members to be a part of the review process for student submissions in the Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship (JCES)," said Dr. Heather Pleasants, director of community education at the Center for Community-Based Partnerships and EESIG faculty advisor. "It's extremely beneficial to have an understanding of what's involved with the submission process so the students can be better prepared when they write their own proposals and research articles."

EESIG members will be able to gain experience in their proposal writing techniques and will present their engagement scholarship work with other institutions during the Center for Community-Based Partnerships' Annual Engagement Awards Luncheon in April, where a mini-conference is planned that will include colleges from across Alabama, built around presentations and research that features engagement work.

## International Documenting Justice Screening Big Success

The International Documenting Justice Inaugural Film Screening drew an enthusiastic crowd at the Ferguson Theater Nov. 23, 2009, featuring "Young People Anywhere," by Lindsey Mullen, "Kiwi," by Paul Hanninen, "Damming in Progress," by Nicole Ortega, and "The Story of Beth and Mercy," by Linn Groft and Lindsey Mullen.

The International Documenting Justice program, established in 2005, teaches students how to use film to document and analyze dimensions of justice at the

international level. This interdisciplinary course for nonfilm majors traces the ways in which documentary filmmakers represent culture and the relationship between the individual and society.

Students devote two on-campus semesters and a study-abroad term to the course, which involves study in the ethics of cinematic nonfiction and the creation of the original films that premiered at the screening.

The IDJ is sponsored by the Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility.

# Daniels, Knight Make Presentations at NAGPS Conference

Dr. George Daniels, associate professor of journalism, and Elliot Knight, a doctoral student in interdisciplinary studies, presented papers at the 23rd annual National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) conference at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in November.

Their presentations emphasized graduate students' meaningful collaboration with community partners while managing their graduate studies. The Black Belt 100 Lenses program and the Multicultural Journalism Workshop were used as examples for graduate student outreach and engagement scholarship. UA's Emerging Engagement Scholars Interest Group (EESIG) was also highlighted.

Knight founded Black Belt 100 Lenses in 2007. It is a partnership between the UA Center for Community-Based Partnerships, the Black Belt Community Foundation, and Black Belt junior and senior high schools.

The program's primary goal is to give youth a voice and a forum to

address issues that affect them and their communities.

The Multicultural Journalism Workshop, first held in 1984, is an annual event that introduces talented high school students to the essentials of a career in journalism through an intensive workshop on The University of Alabama campus.

Daniels founded the Emerging Engagement Scholars Interest Group (EESIG) as a companion to the Emerging Engagement Scholars Workshop held annually in conjunction with the National Outreach Scholarship Conference, of which UA is a member.

EESIG provides students from the Graduate Student Association, the African-American Graduate Students Association, and the Black Law Student Association at the University a forum for building professional relationships through mentoring and working with community partners and each other in engagement research projects.

## EESIG Holds Planning Meeting

The group met on January 27 at the Child Development Center. Attendees

were Jennifer Patterson, Gerald Franks, Nancy Graves, Tiarnay Ritchwood, Dr. George Daniels and Dr. Heather Pleasants. The latter two are co-advisers.

Pleasants explained her role as director of Community Education at the Center for Community-Based Partnerships and described her newly formed Community-Oriented Researchers in Education, a subgroup to assist her as director of community education.

She invited EESIG members interested in education research to come sit in on their meetings.

Pleasants also said she would be happy to visit faculty groups to promote engagement scholarship, especially ways to involve graduate students in engagement research.

The group discussed plans to submit a panel proposal to the National Outreach Scholarship Conference that takes places Oct. 5-7, 2010 at North Carolina State University.

Two additional meetings were planned for the semester to discuss IRB procedures and qualitative approaches to community-based research.



Roy Clem speaks in Athens, Ga., on the role of students in campus television.

**(continued from p. 20)** Tyler Morton has been at the station since he was a senior in high school and has almost five years of experience in a professional newsroom. "I have learned so much while at the station. I've learned how to be a reporter, news and sports producer, tape editor, web producer and fill-in

anchor," Morton said.

Morton says that as a student, he has the normal job of a professional journalist and won't have any problems getting comfortable in any newsroom that hires him. WVUA has made all the difference, he said.

"If there was no WVUA, I don't think I would be as prepared going into a job at a local television station in a different market. If you intern at other TV stations you don't get as much hands-on experience," Morton said.

Clem says that unlike other television stations that jealously guard their talent, WVUA's goal is to turn students out to get jobs at local TV stations or to get jobs in even bigger television markets.

Because of WVUA's ability to create professionals out of students, Brewer says that the demand to become an intern at the station is at its highest level yet. Brewer said, "It's

rare for students to work in such a close relationship with professional journalists. WVUA students have the chance to perform the same tasks as our professionals."

The University of Missouri and the University of Georgia are the only two schools that have full-power television stations that offer hands-on experience to students.

"It's amazing to see someone come through our doors knowing very little about journalism or the television news business and leave as a young professional," Brewer said.

WVUA looks to the future with a possible move into Bryant-Denny Stadium, allowing room for growth.

Until that move is made, WVUA continues to point students in the right direction and perfect its niche.

"It really feels like the hard work and vision of so many people is paying off," Brewer said.





# Brice Miller: New Orleans

Culture Is Understanding  
Yourself and Others

By Brice Miller

Assistant Director, Crossroads Community Center

I shall never forget the first time I saw the Mardi Gras Indians – ordinary everyday African-American men, women and children transformed into mythological figures clad in beautiful, brightly colored suits made of jeweled sequins, ostrich feathers and head-pieces so big the wearer sometimes needed help just to hold them in place.

The sights and sounds of their supporters ... “Indian gangs” chanting foreign words and beating tambourines ... the backbeat of the big bass drum and hundreds of people swaying and bouncing to the rhythmic chants ... always that one Indian running amuck from corner-to-corner, peaking as if to discover some unknown enemy heading toward them. Spy-Boy.

Then there’s that seemingly paranoid character, yelling, jumping, hollering. Wild-Man.

Now to most, this scene may look and sound like something from a piece of fiction. Not to me. It is but one glimpse into my culture. Furthermore, as a kid I thought everyone enjoyed these same exhilarating images in their cities, towns and neighborhoods. But as I began traveling the country with my dad, Dwight Miller, I realized they didn’t. These scenes I have described were not to be found anywhere else. They were vintage New Orleans. Uniquely New Orleans. Other cities may have a Mardi Gras, but not like New Orleans.

So what is culture? Why is it important to understand your culture? Well, because your culture is you. In its most basic form, culture is the shared beliefs, norms and characteristics of a group. But that’s generic and who wants generic if you can have the real deal. Culture is so much more, and the more we are able to understand who we are, culturally, and appreciate the depths of our culture, the more we can embrace, celebrate and share not only our own culture, but also develop a fonder and more respectful appreciation for other cultures. Understanding culture starts with understanding our own. Deeply. Appreciatively. Regularly.

I was fortunate to be born, raised and immersed in the cultural experiences of New Orleans. Moreover, I was the son of a jazz musician, giving me an extra dose of New Orleans, and American, culture. Many believe that jazz is America’s No. 1, and most original, contribution to the world’s music. It’s a mixture of musical styles. Doesn’t “mixture” define America as well as any single word can?

Why do I say I was fortunate to have been born and, to use the academic word, “socialized” in New Orleans? I was fortunate because the social and cultural fabric of New Orleans defines who I am. I am New Orleans through and through. Not just because I was born there, but it has culturally defined me: the way I talk, the way I play, the way I work, interact, dress, eat ... the music I enjoy, the arts I appreciate, the reason I hold the door open for a woman and call women “darling.” I am all of these things because of the “general” cultural interaction I was and still am immersed in. In large measure, each of us is who we are because of where we come from. I call it “our cultural box,” all the things that combine to make us the person we are at this moment, on this day. The communities we are raised in. The personal, religious and social philosophies taught and/or displayed to us in our youth. The people we did, or did not interact with, and the reasons why and why not. Our exposure to the arts, diverse social interactions. The schools and religious houses we attended.

These elements compose the dimensions of our cultural box and our daily cultural “practice.” Think for a moment. What do you have to offer the world? Not your talent or job, but you as a whole being. What elements of you separate you from the mass population of the world and make you more than just one more human being among billions.



Take a moment to think deeply about this. Don't just skim the surface, get low! Only you can truly conduct this inventory.

What are the qualities that make you unique and where did those qualities come from? Now don't say, "I'm just me," because scholars tell us we have limited control in how we turn out. You may be able to control who you are in the world of work, but you have much less control over who you are.

Our personalities seem to be about equal measures of nature and nurture, with nurture, according to several new studies gaining, even in the controversial area of intelligence. Thus, unless you grew up without interaction, an impossibility, the influence of others has helped define who and what you are culturally.

Whenever I mention I'm from New Orleans, no matter where I am, people's eyes just light up and everyone wants to share a story or experience



St. Louis Cathedral in the French Quarter, a familiar sight to the "man from New Orleans."

And the same process applies to human personality and our own environment.

How, or, more importantly why, is cultural understanding relevant here at The University of Alabama? It's because UA is an important player in today's global society. Our students are all colors. They are from all ethnic and religious groups. They come from scores of countries. The great majority of our students are, if not world travelers, widely traveled.

experienced global socialization early on and became a cultural treasure for the world to enjoy, this University can do the same. Imagine for a moment the possibilities of UA becoming the New Orleans of academia, well, at least for the greater South. No, not in the sense of Bourbon Street, a New Orleans stereotype, by the way, or even in the

sense of the world's best food (sorry about that Paris) but in a manner in which our campus embraces not only the intercultural influences that willy-nilly come its way, but also the influences we recruit and attract because this University is a place where anyone can find a home and feel at home.

Just pipe-dreaming? I don't think so. If we committed to sharing, examining and experiencing each others' cultures – both formally and

## "Imagine UA Becoming the New Orleans of Academia"

about the Big Easy. Why? Not only is New Orleans the epitome of culture, it is also the greatest example of the outcomes from shared and embraced cultural exchange. It wasn't a particular dominant cultural relevance that created the cultural maps of the Crescent City; it was the sharing, decoding and adaptation from other cultures that created this treasured collection. For example, it was the West-African rhythms, European instrumental intonation, agony of slavery, Caribbean influence of festive social engagement, and more that created the general culture of New Orleans as well as the special artistic gumbo we know as jazz. If this cultural interaction had not taken place, the world would have no jazz.

Imagine ... no jazz. No thank you.

They have their own accents and local cultures but take on the accents and cultures of others, like chameleons crawling across mosaic tile. Our campus communities share representation from the four corners of the globe.

UA stopped being a finishing school for upper- and middle-class white males nearly a century ago. The GI bill brought in thousands of lower- and middle-class students who had fought in World War II. The campus population doubled. Women began to come and today are almost 60 percent of the campus population.

It took way too many years, but in the 1960s African-Americans came. Then Asian-Americans came to UA to contribute their cultural wealth to our campus.

Like New Orleans, which

informally – it could happen.

Yes, The University of Alabama could become the New Orleans of academia, but not overnight. It will take some luck and even more good programming.

Crossroads Community Center, where I work, will be a major player in this cultural growth. While cultural competency and awareness cannot be fully "programmed," CCC will continue to do its part to make Alabama students more culturally knowledgeable and sensitive and, we believe, better equipped to work and thrive in today's world. Come join us.

*Crossroads Community Center provides campus leadership in cultural programming and intercultural education. He can be reached at 205-348-6930 and [brice.miller@ua.edu](mailto:brice.miller@ua.edu)*



By Brett Bralley  
CCBP Graduate Assistant

As a stainless steel deep frying pan full of *chiles rellenos* sizzled over flames, I watched as my mother poured salsa over the stuffed chiles. My sister Brynn guarded a pot of pinto beans, mashing them as they softened and adding cheese and milk for flavor. We were having *chile relleno* burritos for dinner. “I have to write a culture sketch for my assistantship,” I mentioned to my mom as she set the lid on top of the chiles.

“Oh,” she said excitedly. “Well, be sure to mention that your mother is a fifth-generation Los Angelina.”

The history of my mother’s family starts on Olvera Street – a historical street of Los Angeles. My great-great-grandmother’s house, La Casa de Sepulveda, prominently stands in the middle of the Mexican market that smells of mouthwatering food and leather purses. This is just another claim to my Mexican heritage. A reminder to all that, despite my light brown hair, blue eyes and pale skin, Brett Bralley is Mexican.

Yet for the better part of my college career, I avoided mentioning my Mexican roots to most people, not sure if one-fourth of an ethnicity was enough to claim. After my first day wandering the Capstone, I sat in the pristine office of the scholarships director learning the specifics of the National Hispanic Scholarship I had been offered. I pondered whether or not she was confused by my not-so-Hispanic appearance. I half expected her to ask for a family history along with my application.

“You’re Mexican?” many asked with surprise, as I apologetically explained that yes, my mother is half Mexican; yes, my scholarship is the Hispanic scholarship. Whether it was a lack of self-confidence or a lack of pride in my roots, I did what I could to avoid the topic.

I had not decided on a major when I started at UA, so when it came to deciding what classes to take, I stuck with what I knew. I was not raised speaking Spanish – my Grandpa decided not to teach his children the language – apart from a few phrases my mother taught us.

“*Con su permiso, perdoname por favor*,” my sisters and I used to ask our mother when we were little girls after dinner when we wanted to be excused from the table. Perhaps those phrases made me comfortable with Spanish. It was a subject I consistently made A’s in throughout high school.

But it wasn’t until a Spanish conversation class at UA, taught



My sister Brass, right, and I at a Mexican restaurant in California over the Christmas break. Below, *chile relleno* burritos prepared by our mother, Dylann Bralley.



by Dr. Jose Cano, that I realized I truly loved everything about the language. Chills fluttered through my body when I could finally understand lyrics to songs in Spanish and I started to hear full phrases without having to chew on each individual word. I could learn this language for real, I thought. This romantic song that flows swiftly and poetically off of Spanish-speaking tongues was actually a small part of me. I was a part of a people who thought, lived and breathed this language.

So to get really good, I went to Chile for a semester.

I spent five months navigating my way through Valparaíso and Viña del Mar, learning to conquer the rapid Chilean Spanish and augmenting my vocabulary. Now, I practice my Spanish twice a week by translating for two middle school students in Tuscaloosa.

Over the summer, my Grandpa came to our house for dinner. My mother eagerly urged me to speak Spanish for him. For a minute I was nervous, it had been at least a month since I’d had a conversation in Spanish. But he started the dialogue by asking me if I could read and write well.

I said yes, that I was translating enough so that I could keep practicing even though I wasn’t taking any more Spanish classes.

“Well, I think you’re the only one,” he nodded in approval with a smile.

“The only one what?” I asked.

“The only one who speaks it, other than me and my brothers and sisters,” he said.

Whether I’ve grown up and overcome insecurities or simply learned to love who I am, I proclaim with pride when people doubt my ethnicity that my mother is Mexican. My grandpa, I say, was born in Douglas, Arizona, just beyond the Mexican border. And, we eat Mexican at least twice a week in the Bralley household. In fact, the easy, stress-free meals I cook after a long day of studying and writing are burritos, tostadas, quesadillas, Spanish rice and frijoles. I sometimes throw in to Los Angeles natives that the Sepulveda House belongs to my family.

At Christmas, I tell them, nearly 100 relatives gather at my Grandpa’s house, and we feast on steaming pots of tamales and strong smelling *menudo* soup topped with a bit of cilantro, onions and a squeeze of lemon.

I may not look like it, but I am Mexican. No doubt.

**By Lindsey Holland**  
CCBP Graduate Assistant

Fresh air accompanies the sound of birds in the morning, the hum of the tractor in the afternoon, and the harmony of crickets at night. A clothesline and a garden, a cotton field, a playground consisting of an imagination and a rapidly flowing cool creek, unlocked doors and a Sunday service, followed by dinner at grandmother's. And no cable TV. The parking lot was never full. Waste of land, if you asked my parents. But the Piggly Wiggly and the Dollar Store came in handy when you realized you were out of milk, or needed a last minute birthday card. Another perk of this parking lot was when the pizza man would come from Athens (the closest town with a Walmart) on Tuesday nights and sit in his truck in the parking lot with pizza for sale.

One of my college friends shrieked in shock when I told her I grew up with a garden in my back yard. I wondered how people ever lived any other way. "So, you have groceries in your back yard?" She asked. I rolled my eyes and tried to imagine someone who never knew the peace of the country.

Daddy had a garden that was always full. When I was little, I would help him plant the garden. There were cucumbers, snow peas, snap peas, tomatoes, potatoes, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, corn, zucchini, squash, asparagus, apples and okra. I still love to eat the asparagus, tomatoes and peas right out of the garden.

Growing up, we never had cable TV. We had maybe seven channels to watch. So going to Grandma's was a real treat because she had cable. The dryer never got much use in the summer. My parents still hang their clothes on the line, bringing the smell of outside inside. We used the wood stove in the basement to help heat the house in the winter. I would always help by putting in sweet gum balls. Down in the basement, Daddy kept an extensive record collection. He would play songs for us and we would dance.

The side yard was ready-to-pick white cotton in the fall. Though personally I never had to pick cotton, my father did when he was growing up. The joy I received came when all the cotton was picked. They would then put it into bales and leave them in our back yard. My sister and I ran from one bale to the next, pouncing up and down as if they were feather beds. We would jump up and down, collapse on them, and run to the next.

Daddy and I would walk around the cotton field and find pottery from long ago. After it had rained, or after the tractor had



plowed the field, we'd search and search. We had pigs and goats and I had a rabbit, once. The goats mostly ate the kudzu that had taken over. We named them all.

On Sunday we attended church at Elkmont Methodist Church. Guys would bring pictures of the deer they killed that weekend and everyone wanted to see. The boys who hunted displayed their hunting pride with a Mossy Oak or Browning logo on their truck.

We went to Sunday school, went to preachin', and then headed to Nana's for lunch. Nana was the best cook ever. I always got excited when she made banana pudding. We would eat lunch, but not before we thanked the Lord. Sure, everyone loved when Nana cooked. But I

have to admit; it's also was a great day when the family decided to get Whitt's for lunch. It's the best barbecue around.

Everyone knew each other. My Nana went to Elkmont High School, my dad and aunts went to Elkmont High School, and my sister and I went to Elkmont High School.

On a Saturday night, hidden by nature's abundant life, you could find a group of high schoolers gathered around a fire. Some were drinkin', some were dippin', some were smokin', and the girls were usually gossipin'.

The town over, Ardmore, was our big rival, and some people would ride over there for fun. They would ride up and down the strip and stop and talk to one another. When I was in school, Elkmont won 13 years in a row, and we didn't let them forget that, either.

In the summer, we would put on our swimsuits, cover up with jeans and a T-shirt and hike to the creek in our tennis shoes. After it rained the water was the coldest and highest. We would try to catch the crawdads. There was a patch of wild watercress up the creek a little ways that sometimes we would pick and take home to put on our sandwiches. It tasted like lettuce.

I value my Southern roots, and I wouldn't have grown up any other way. But the downside of the charmed life of the small town is that it can limit the opportunity spectrum. There is a world out there waiting for me and it's time for me to greet it. I am bound by the sunset to the country, but the stars lead me to the city.





# MY CULTURE: Our Differences Can Bring Us Together

By **Daniel Hollander**  
CCBP Intern

I didn't know what to expect. Would she be hard to manage? Would my gut reaction to her be negative? Would I actually be able to teach her anything? All kinds of assumptions sprang to mind, much as I tried to push them away. Like countless others in countless situations, I feared the unknown. Ignorance dominated my feelings and expectations. Then I met her.

Mary Ruth Arensdorf utilized Systems Unlimited, a nonprofit organization formed in 1971 and located in Iowa City, Iowa. They serve children, adults and families with disabilities and other challenges to achieve their maximum potential and quality of life. Part of their mission states: "All children and adults with disabilities have the right to live in the community despite their physical or cognitive challenges."

Everyone has the right to live in the community. That Systems Unlimited has to remind us of what should be a given is disheartening. It is also very telling. Intolerance still runs rampant across the world, and the American South, where I have chosen to move for my education, is no exception. It comes in all shapes, sizes, colors and creeds.

The African-American Community, the Church Community, the LGBT Community, and on and on, even the way we define "each other," or ourselves, separates us. In many ways, we want those distinctions, we are proud of them (and should be), but we have to remember that simple tolerance is not enough.

Fostering relationships, reaching out to people who are in need, and learning about cultures other than one's own are all a part of contributing to the community as a whole. The more we can learn from each other, the easier it will be to live in harmony.

And music loves harmony.

Mary Ruth greeted me with one of her infectious smiles and a genuine hello as soon as I entered Musician's Pro Shop. Our first guitar lesson went great. I taught her Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star. She loved it. I loved it. All of my initial fears, assumptions and ignorant feelings vanished with the sounds of music, laughter and newfound understanding.

Mary Ruth rapidly became one of my favorite students, an incredibly bright spot to every Thursday at 11:30 a.m., a lesson time she missed only to partake in the Special Olympics or go on camping retreats. Mary Ruth loved to tell jokes, partake in playful teasing, and she could turn on the charm like a pro. She gave compliments as unabashedly as she received them, but never to a fault.

In early August, Mary Ruth informed me that her choir was going to perform a Christmas concert. She reminded me every week leading up to the December date. Her enthusiasm, persistence



and the occasional preview sung in our lesson studio fueled my own excitement – I wouldn't have missed it for anything.

Active events in the community such as Mary Ruth's concert are a primary goal for Eagles Wings of Tuscaloosa (EWOT), a nonprofit organization that provides day habilitation services for adults in the greater Tuscaloosa area with mild, moderate and severe intellectual and physical disabilities, including those who are medically fragile.

"Our clients do Meals on Wheels, recycle and package ink toners, and recycle paper and aluminum cans. They love crushing cans. Green's the key - go green with Eagle's Wings," said Jerry Pike, president of Eagle's Wings. "We try to put a huge focus on community involvement and the response back has been great. A lot of organizations come to us with opportunities to get involved."

Across the state of Alabama, over 2,000 special needs adults are on waiting lists to be added to EWOT or a similar program. "Once they exit the public school system, there simply isn't an infrastructure in place to support the number of adults with developmental disabilities in Alabama. This puts the burden on the shoulders of the parents, who still have to find ways of supporting their families," said Pike.

EWOT is currently planning to build a vocational center and residential community where entire families can live on-site in order to further serve adults with developmental disabilities. Eagles Wings of Tuscaloosa holds meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. that are open to the public, and volunteer opportunities are available.

Four years after my first lesson with Mary Ruth, I decided to return to school to obtain a degree from The University of Alabama. Leaving all of my students behind was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. I always tried to make an impact on the students I taught. My goal was not just to teach them a new song or learn how to improvise; I wanted to get them excited about music, excited about life. I never dreamed Mary Ruth would have that exact effect on me.

At the Christmas concert, Mary Ruth wore a pair of antlers and a shiny red nose, very appropriate for the occasion, especially when the choir sang everyone's favorite reindeer song.

As I sat and enjoyed the festivities among the packed-in crowd, I understood what community meant. We all come from diverse backgrounds. We have different religious, political and ideological views. We fight over them. We argue, yell, cry, even kill. But that night we became one with the music and each other. That's community: the power to bring us together, not because of our similarities, but in spite of our differences.

## MY CULTURE: It's All in the Family

By **Sydney Holtzclaw**  
CCBP Intern

One—California. Two—Mississippi. Three—California. Four—Alabama. Four moves, that's all I have to claim as a military brat during my dad's 20 years of service to our country as a Marine. I'm one of the lucky ones. However, I wouldn't say they came without sacrifice. As anyone from a military family can tell you, I know a little about sacrifice.

I was born in May of 1990 in Jonesboro, Ark., to a young couple fresh off a station rotation from Okinawa, Japan. Within months of my birth my dad found himself back overseas serving in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm — what would collectively become known as the first Gulf War.

After that conflict in the Middle East was resolved, my family was reunited and we enjoyed our time together. When I turned 3, we moved to Tupelo, Miss., where my dad was sentenced to recruiting duty. Once again, he became absent in our home for the good of the Marines.

My memories as a young child mainly consist of time with my mom. But I do have memories of Saturdays spent digging up icky worms in our front flowerbeds and driving to the local park to fish with my daddy. In my memories there are many such Saturdays; however, I am told there were really only two during our three-year stay in Tupelo.

By May 1996, the contents of our little townhouse were packed and headed west to California. Daddy had been selected into the officer program and I found out I was finally going to get that little sister I had been wanting. The remaining seven years my dad spent as an active duty Marine were full of love and family time. There was still the occasional field training or school to attend but for the most part we were together.



That's me at 18 months with my daddy, Marine Staff Sergeant Bill Holtzclaw in Twentynine Palms, Calif., days before his deployment to Mogadishu, Somalia, with the First Marine Division.

On February 14, 2003 my father took off his uniform for the last time after serving 20 years to the day in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Seven years later my dad and my family are once again making sacrifices for our country. In September of last year my dad formally announced his candidacy for a state government office. Currently we are campaigning non-stop. Because of the Hatch Act my dad had to quit his job at NASA and is currently unemployed, or, as he refers to it, a full time candidate. Along with the normal duties of a mother, my mom now has the added pressure of being the main source of income for our family and the additional duty of late nights stuffing envelopes. My now 13-year-old sister has relinquished her baby-of-the-family and center-of-attention title, passing her reign on to my dad and the campaign.

For the spring semester of my sophomore year at UA, I decided to enroll in online classes and came home to help my family in any way needed. That's what families do: Join in the sacrifice as well as the fun. They can even turn out to be the same thing, if you're lucky, because sacrifice can have its rewards.

My father's service to his country has helped my family become very close-knit. We would do anything for each other and we genuinely love and respect one another. It's what keeps us together through the ups and downs.

With love comes sacrifice and with sacrifice comes love. That is my culture and my life — I wouldn't have it any other way.

## MY CULTURE: Plan B

By **Jack Batchelor**  
CCBP Intern

Everyone has a special talent or gift. Many count on these gifts to be successful or just to feel pride in themselves. But what happens if you lose that gift? Is it that simple to just replace it with another?

This is my account of how my focus

in life changed from being all about football to focusing on other things, one of which was a direct substitute, more or less, and others were less direct.

The summer before my senior year in high school I had just gone on a trip to Disney World with my family and all I had to worry about the rest of the summer was football. The day after we got home from our trip I went to the gym for a quick workout. I set the military press to begin a shoulder workout. After warmups I eased into

heavier weights. On my last set I loaded about 245 pounds. I had the strength to press it but at 17 my body was still not filled out and my frame could not handle the stress of the weight.

I had done maybe two reps when my lower back shifted and I felt a knifing sensation. I re-racked the bar and went home not thinking much of it, just thinking it was a strain or pulled muscle.

Days later I went to my orthopedic surgeon and he **(continued on p. 38)**



By Chris Dunham  
CCBP Intern

Brick by brick, the mortar fails the foundation. Green like grass and black like soil, the mold grows steadily, a disease the wall can catch. Slowly the home dies from the inside; however, it's not a home, it's the projects.

The sweet somberness of nature shakes the mind. Kah! A bullet cuts the air, I can sleep now. That's life for me every time I go home; this is the life my friends live.

Birmingham calls her children home. Rapper Lupe Fiasco raps, "Streets are on fire tonight." Truth is that down in the Magic City the streets are on fire all the time.

My friend speaks the truth, "Birmingham ain't dangerous until you slip; the thing is there are so many ways to slip."

Born into rust, my life is not unique but I was lucky. I grew up with three older siblings and their lives were a lot tougher than I can imagine. One of my brothers and my sister went to West End High School in the early nineties. Back then, the school and the area was known as Crip Central and they would often beef with other gangs on the "set."

Often the battleground was at West End. There is no telling how many people got mugged during that period; that was when Birmingham was No. 1 in homicides, a sense of pride to many hoods.

When I went to Green Acres Middle School, my friends formed our own gang unofficially and unknowingly. We were the Neutrals, a gang-less gang. Even when playing football, I was unknowingly running with a gang, a gang that was different than a normal clique.

We were representatives of the school, a beacon of hope for those in the western area of Birmingham; we were beyond good.

Every Saturday that we put on those Jaguar jerseys and got on the bus on the way to Fair Park or Lawson Field yelling "what, what, G-A" while hitting our thigh pads and clapping, we were not project kids or hood dwellers; we were



the order of the United Gladiators of the Green Acres Mighty Jaguar.

After football, we were back to our normal selves, a bunch of kids hustlin' our way through life. Fortunately for me, I didn't suffer the fate of staying in a dead-end school system like my siblings. Breaking the tradition of going from Green Acres to West End that served my siblings proudly, my parents "forced" me to go to John Carroll Catholic High School.

Although I went to middle school with a white kid, this was the first time that I've been around white kids en masse and I was not prepared whatsoever. I aligned myself with black friends that I met during football practice. Even the white friend I hung out with, was black (he was from the western area of the city and was broke like us, therefore he was black).

Eventually I came out of my shell and became friends with all races. That's one of few things I can appreciate that arose from my three years at John Carroll (I left my senior year and went to Central Park Christian School which was a few blocks from my house), but I could never completely escape the dead end, and that's a reality that I still live with.

Most people looking from the outside would say that coming from the hood is a horrible disadvantage; I actually look at it as a plus. For all the things that I've been through, I've been given a gift; my own personal red badge of courage.

Even though death lies behind life's door, I am neither worried nor scared; death is inevitable, but I go through life expecting to be who I am no matter what anybody says or does. This is the "magic" the city gives to many of her children. Normally it means that the hood would take you under, but for me, the magic will put me over.

My brother's way out was the Army Special Forces, my sister's an apartment in Greensprings. Now for my brother and me of the clan, it will be the film industry.

Fred R. Barnard was half right when he said "a picture is worth a thousand words," but for every picture, an action, a climax sits on the side.

(continued from p. 37) discovered a fracture in the lowest bar region of my spine. The pain gradually got worse and I was unable to play football or train. I was devastated. I lost football, something I'd worked at for a long time, and the possibility of a scholarship.

Senior year went on and my back healed but not enough to take full contact. I knew football was over but as I began putting more effort into weightlifting, I began to have an obsession for it. Something I had been doing as a means to an end now became

an end in itself. The weight-lifting culture has some of the same elements as football: goal setting and the mental and physical changes that arise when you succeed, but I found more in weightlifting to hold my interest than I ever did with football.

Mentally, it helped me overcome the regret of having to give up football, because it made me feel as if I were still training for it.

But more than that, weight training has helped me in life more than football ever did, and unlike football, it is

something I can continue throughout life.

The dedication and willpower I developed in the gym has begun to spill over into the classroom, work world and anything else I approach in life. I would like to compete in some form of strength sports at some time in my life, possibly after I am out of school, and while football still sticks in the back of my mind when I am working out or watch it on television, I know I have found a replacement that will stick with me much longer.

By Andrea Mabry

CCBP Journalist in Residence

"But you don't have a Southern accent. You're really from Alabama?" My Spanish class partner cocked his head and squinted his eyes in disbelief.

If only he had known that my father eats fried okra and tater tots and shoots squirrels with a BB gun when they try to eat from his bird feeders, he would believe I am from Alabama. If only he could have heard my grandmother yell from across the kitchen, "Gra-yub tha-yat big set-uh silvuhwa-yuh from the top draw-uh of the cabnit," he would know.

As kids my sister and I went to Sunday school. Once I wore pants to church and the next week the preacher followed with a sermon about appropriate dress for church – and in this church, pants didn't cut it.

I haven't always appreciated my family's banter about conservative politics and sermons about proper attire, but Sunday dinner at Grandmother's house provokes a reverent gratitude in me for Southern cooking. After the women in the house finally round up the men and children, everyone expectantly surrounds the countertop peninsula where our feast awaits.

Uncle Mike resolutely thanks the Lord for our meal and the time we have to spend with our family. With head still bowed, I sneak a glance around the kitchen, filled with food and closed eyes. My family forms a semicircle around a spread of cornbread, Popeye's fried chicken, mashed potatoes, collards and macaroni and cheese.

If only embracing my Southern heritage were as easy as discovering my love for elbow noodles baked in milk and sharp cheddar cheese! Maybe it's because I never developed a Southern accent, the most obvious giveaway. But I've never wanted to go huntin' or muddin', and the thought of watchin' football all day on autumn Saturdays makes me cringe. I'm not a Southern belle by any means. By most observable measurements, I am an outsider in my own element.

I yearned to get away from the sterile South, where I refused to return frat boys' cries of "ROLL TIDE," especially during football season. How could I support Bryant-Denny Stadium's role as No. 1 on the campus map? No 1 at an institution of learning should be the library, not the football stadium.

I was tired of judgmental looks from people who might think I was going to hell because the curvature of my breasts was readily seen through my shirt and not the foam cups of a Wonderbra.

So I left. Instead of limiting myself within the bounds of Alabama interstates, I flew north to Boston, west to Washington, south to Chile and east to Europe.

My tiny Nena, who has shrunk so much she's now a whole head shorter than me, delights in the antics of her three children. It doesn't take them much to convince her to



spend a few hours making a lakror, a traditional Albanian spinach pie. She is the only person left in the United States who makes lakror the right way, or so my mom says. Nena has been making the dish for decades and my family treats it like gold.

I, on the other hand, am still trying to condition myself to like the stuff. No matter how zealously I try, I can't manage to eat a whole piece. Something about the creamy, soft filling throws me off every time.

But perfectly browned and bigger than an extra large pizza, a lakror is truly a beautiful thing.

My 15-year-old self thought that somehow, if I could convince myself to enjoy eating lakror, my Albanian half would develop and I would no longer be behind the curve of my Boston cousins, who were much more steeped in that culture. There is no Albanian population in Alabama, so my sister and I are more or less stuck with what little our mom tells us about her heritage.

I made a pact with myself that if the opportunity arose for me to go someplace new, especially someplace international, I would take it. In the three years since I turned 20, I've traveled to six foreign countries and a handful of U.S. cities. Pieces of my heart are scattered globally, as I fell in love with certain aspects of each place.

In the northwest corner of the Northwest, Bellingham, Washington, I walked to school through a temperate rainforest for three months. Rounding a corner of the path, I'd come to a certain area where I liked to think fairies lived. Tiny bright green leaves surrounded the place, their spidery branches extending into the path where my fingers reached out toward them, gently brushing dew off them in the morning mist. The seemingly omnipresent clouds overcast the sun and made every shade of green more vibrant.

The amount of art in Valparaíso, Chile, is staggering. It is clear that Valpo is a city of creators, no matter where you look. An example is Ex-Cárcel, once a prison that witnessed a 20th-century dictatorship and is now a haven of paintings and sculptures. Ideas akin to the one that created the Ex-Cárcel fill the soul of Valparaíso like the vagabundos – the homeless – fill the bellies of stray dogs with the food they acquire.

"You know, I can't believe you just said that," I whispered, cocking my head to the side a bit.

"Well, it's true. The United States is the best country in the world," Allen repeated. Four years ago he had chosen to attend college in Canada because he was so frustrated with what he saw happening in the U.S. Now, sitting in a Birmingham bar, I stared at him incredulously through cans and glasses of beer.

"I'm tired of Vancouver," he went on. "The people are flaky and the just don't have the same substance. I'm ready to move back to the South. People (continued on p. 13)





**By Amethyst Holmes**  
CCBP Intern

Making the decision to become a Crimson Tide athlete was one I wavered with for a long time. I kept questioning if I was willing and capable of competing collegially because I knew my perception of being a student-athlete would be changed forever by signing. The first day of practice defined the rest of my college career. I learned quickly I would be doing workouts bringing me to tears and some worthy of cuss words. Most importantly, I learned that this wasn't high school anymore. Practice is where nicknames are born, where memories are made and where all the dirty work gets done.

All of my practice clothes bear a reddish tint from practicing on the track that will never fade. I learned that throwing four implements – discus, shot put, hammer throw and the weight – can be fun, yet time consuming. As a thrower, I've come to accept that I'll be first to practice and often the last to leave. From sunrise to sundown, anyone can find me on the field across from the railroad tracks on Hackberry Lane.

Practice is also preparation for performance. I know that with every bench-press, leg squat, and every drop of sweat, I'm getting better each day. The backaches, ice baths, and rehab appointments are a part of the process. All of what I do in practice is for me to let loose inside a seven-foot circle.

When competing against some of the best athletes in the country, I've learned that I can't worry about my competition, but only focus on what kind of performance I'm going to have. It's only me, the ring, and the implement I'm throwing. Setting a personal best is all I can ask for. As soon as I step in the circle, my chest pumps so loudly that I can feel it reverberate through my ears because I know that when I come out, I won't be the same.

Sometimes it seems as if being an athlete comes before being a student. As backwards as it sounds, I spend more time on the track than I do in the classroom. I average 20 hours a week practicing. I take 15 credit hours per semester, which doesn't leave me with a lot of time to spare.

Unfortunately, that doesn't leave me time to be active in any organizations or clubs, or go to many events on campus because it conflicts with practice. During the competing



season, it's hard to keep up with classes. Studying on the road can seem like an insurmountable challenge for me since I only get to go to class three days out of the week when I'm scheduled to travel for a weekend track meet.

Overall, being an athlete, time management is a given. I'll get up at 7 a.m., in class by 9, out of class by 11, grab lunch at noon, and get ready for practice, which is from 2-6 p.m. Being a student-

athlete is a full time job that requires me to be on the clock at all times, a job I don't see myself quitting any time soon. As a walk-on athlete, I knew initially that I had to prove myself worthy of being on the team. I made it my mission to be an asset on the team instead of dead weight. I love being a walk-on. I'm no less of an athlete. I think of being a walk-on as being the most intense internship anyone could ever sign-up for. I work just as hard as the scholarship athletes do without a price tag to my name and without the pressure of performing a certain way. I don't get paid monetarily, but I get reimbursed by being able to do what I love.

Sometimes I think about how different my college career would be if I hadn't signed the dotted line. Thinking about what I'd be gaining by being a normal student is always in the back of my mind, but thinking about what I'd lose consumes my thoughts, too. I don't get my books, tuition, or room and board paid for, but I get so much in return. Being a part of the women's track and field team is like being a part of a sorority within an athletic society of elite performance and a long-standing tradition of excellence.

I've gotten to form a bond with athletes that I will consider some of my best friends. I would say that's one of the perks that comes with being an athlete at UA. Getting to go to different parts of the country, getting priority academic advisement and getting in football home games for free is nice too.

Being an athlete requires passion, grit, patience, intensity, self-control and endurance. People have a skewed perception about athletes and can't see past the gear we wear and the backpacks we carry. It's more than royal regalia. I wear the script "A" as a badge of honor and as a reminder of the commitment I made to myself and to The University.

For me, being an athlete means more than recognition and status; it means getting dirt under my nails and in the curve of my neck from placing my shot put there; it means getting mud all over my hands from digging my implements out of soggy grass; it means not being able to feel my hands while throwing in the freezing cold; it means being able to be aggressive without losing my femininity.

It means not being able to keep a hairdo for more than two straight weeks, falling face first and getting back up again. It's the decision I made that first day of practice. It means love.

# Crossroads Invites Students to Prepare for Global Culture

**By Dr. Beverly Hawk**

Director, Crossroads Community Center

Alabama students yearn to learn about one another's cultures to inform their global careers and enrich their lives. Crossroads meets the student desire to learn about cultures and faiths through innovative and engaging initiatives. These skills and this experience will make the Alabama student competitive in the global economy and appreciative of the wealth of cultures right here in Alabama. Through these programs, our students engage in the rich discussions that make a university great.

Housed at the heart of the campus, in the Ferguson Center, Crossroads is a friend to students, especially those new to campus. Students themselves are the reason for the success of Crossroads, now in its fourth year. Students connect across cultures in three popular Crossroads programs: First Wednesdays, REALTALK and Sustained Dialogue.

Many students discover Crossroads through First Wednesdays @ Crossroads, a lunchtime social mixer hosted each month in the Ferguson Center. This informal meet-and-greet invites students, faculty and staff to connect with one another and with some of the most exciting programs on campus in a relaxed atmosphere.

REALTALK draws students from around the campus to join in creative, honest, and open discussion of community issues in a safe and supportive atmosphere. Topics have included: Hispanics at UA, African Americans at UA, Caucasians at UA, Muslims at UA, Students with Disabilities at UA, Faith and Community, and Sharing Family Legacies. The mediated conversation of REALTALK about current topics chosen by students is always lively and unpredictable. REALTALK serves as a place for students and staff to



discuss the campus environment and as a suggestion platform to address the needs of our campus community. Crossroads cosponsors REALTALK with the Blackburn Institute and Housing and Residential Communities and REALTALK is convened in a different dormitory each month in an effort to engage first year students. Students love it because personal testimonies are a great way for us to get connected and build relationships.

Students often choose to extend their discussion opportunities by joining a Sustained Dialogue group that meets twice a month. This student-led initiative is part of the National Sustained Dialogue Campus Network founded by Ambassador Hal Saunders. The University of Alabama was the first university in the South to join this network that brings together students from many backgrounds to learn about facilitating difficult dialogue.

Sustained Dialogue is a program that helps students discuss important social issues and understand the different perspectives of individuals they may not otherwise meet. The secret to the success of Sustained Dialogue is a dedicated group of moderators chosen from among University of Alabama undergraduates. Moderators receive national training with Sustained Dialogue Campus Network to give them the facilitation skills to lead their twice-monthly meetings. Each discussion group has two moderators representing different cultures. The interactive dialogue sessions are not debates to establish who is right, they are conversations

Beverly Hawk enjoys the chance to work with student leaders like Jo Greene who takes a full course load, works at Publix, yet finds time to volunteer at Crossroads. Student leadership is the key to the success of Crossroads.

that allow students to grow and to understand their peers. Sustained Dialogue addresses issues in an unmistakably interesting way.

Interfaith Initiatives and Cultural Conversations at Crossroads Community Center are many. The conversation may be a discussion about the role of community service in different faiths with participation from campus ministries and interfaith student groups. Programs sometimes simply provide a welcome for students of all faiths in activities with their peers. These discussions of faith have brought together people from the many faiths that grace the Capstone to share their personal stories of the role of faith in their lives. Participants in our initiatives have commented on event evaluations that our programs create a welcoming community on campus. Students, Faculty, and Staff from around the world engage in powerful discussions about the faiths we cherish and their place in the communities we shape.

A theme unites our eclectic work: "We host the conversations that build community." We invite our most interesting neighbors to converse with the campus community in a non-academic setting. Conversations about Culture and Faith are held in the Crossroads Lounge of 232 Ferguson and include community conversations about ethics and many religions and cultures. Students with a passion for the Crossroads mission often apply to be Crossroads Interns. These dedicated students assist in designing and implementing the growing array of programs created at Crossroads.

For more about Crossroads and to get involved, check our website, [crossroads.ua.edu](http://crossroads.ua.edu), and pay us a visit.



# MY CULTURE: In Korea, the First Birthday Party Has Special Meaning

**By Jungin Suh**

Crossroads Community Center Intern

The definition of culture is “The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.” Without culture, we do not have mind or tradition. In other words, without culture we do not, for all practical purposes, exist.

I will introduce a tradition about a child’s first birthday party in Korea as a means of explaining my culture, at least partially. I think this custom exists only in Korea.

In our country, most parents prepare a large-scale birthday party for their child’s very first birthday. We call this birthday party Tol. In the past, the death rate for children was extremely high. Many children died before their first birthday. Therefore, when a child became one year old, the parents were very pleased and held a celebration. That was the origin of Tol.

First of all, I want to talk about the clothes worn for Tol. They are very colorful and dressy. Boys’ clothes consist of a jacket, pants and a vest. Their colors are usually gold or silver. Boys also wear a black hat with a long tail (Korean ribbon), traditional socks and a belt. Girls’ clothes consist of a jacket, a skirt, a hat and traditional socks. The jacket is usually striped with many colors. And girls have a traditional round pouch. These girls and boys are so cute that many people gathered in this celebration heave a sigh of admiration.

The parents prepare a special Tol table to celebrate the child’s birthday. The main food includes rice cakes and fruit. Over 12 different kinds of rice cakes are prepared. These are all traditional foods. The next part of the ceremony is praying at a specially prepared praying table.

To prepare the praying table (the Korean ancestors used to pray to a mountain god and a birth god), the parents place a bowl of steamed white rice, sea mustard soup, and a bowl of pure water on the table. Next to the table, they place



a layered red bean rice cake. This rice cake is not shared outside the family because people believe that sharing this particular item with people outside the family might bring bad luck to the child.

Along with food, other items are needed for an event called Toljabee. Toljabee is an event in which a child picks an item from a table. Items such as a large bundle of thread, a brush, a

Korean calligraphy set, a pencil or a book, rice or money (only paper money), and a bow and an arrow (a needle, scissors, and a ruler for girls) are arranged on the table to predict the child’s future. For example, if a child picks up the money or the rice, he’s going to be rich. If a child picks up the needle and thread, it means that he or she will live long. In my case, I am told that I picked up a pencil. It meant that I would be a successful scholar. Anyway, Toljabee is a highlight of the Tol celebration.

After Toljabee, the parents share most of the Tol food with the guests and relatives. It is a Korean custom that, when the guests and neighbors receive the food, they say kind words and wish for the child’s longevity and good fortune. They also

give presents such as a gold ring, clothes or toys.

Actually, a gold ring is the most cherished gift. From old times, the Korean people have thought that gold brings good luck and health. Also, the parents use the gold rings that they receive for any expense that the child needs in his or her upbringing.

I believe that Tol is important because it is a time of bringing the family close together. By celebrating and sharing happiness, the members of the family become united.

Tol is a beautiful custom in our country.



Jungin Suh, from Yeungnam University, South Korea, with Brice Miller and Beverly Hawk of Crossroads Community Center.



# University Fellows Learn While Teaching in Alabama's Black Belt



Top left: University Fellows get background briefing before setting out on a ghost tour in Livingston.

Top right: Matt Wilson, a junior in finance from Houston, Sarah Patterson, a junior in psychology and Spanish from Decatur, and Meg McCrummen, a junior from Mobile majoring in history and French, interview famed story teller Kathryn Tucker Windham.

Middle left: Jill Hoover, a junior majoring in mechanical engineering from Dallas; DJ Outlaw, a junior majoring in chemical engineering from Birmingham; and Tyler Valeska, a junior majoring in English and political science, help students at Francis Marion High School prepare for the SAT and ACT.

Middle right: Inmates from the local prison welcomed the opportunity to help University Fellows raise a tent for a fly-in at Vaiden Field in Perry County.

Right: Dr. Thomas Wilson, a member of the biology faculty at Judson College, takes a birding tour with Meg McCrummen, a junior majoring in history and French from Mobile, Amber Goodwin, a junior majoring in marketing from Germantown, Tenn., and Grant Luiken, a junior majoring in international relations and Spanish from Memphis.



*University Fellows is one of several prestige programs at the University combining rigorous academics with opportunities for outreach teaching and learning. See <http://honors.cbhp.ua.edu/index.php?page=ufo> for more about the programs.*





- Above, Denny Chimes
- Above right, Reese Phifer Hall and exhibit in Museum of Natural History
- Right, art student Patrick O'Sullivan hangs his most recent piece in Woods Hall.



- Above right, Foster Auditorium
- Below, a member of the UA Honor Band plays the flute at the final concert Feb. 7, 2010
- Above far right, freshman Lizzie Beale finds a quiet place in the museum to work.
- Middle right, Coach Bryant
- Below right, Student Media Building



A sampling of UA's cultural i





cons as seen through the camera of CCBP's journalist-in-residence Andrea Mabry.



# Dr. Purcell, Partners Design Winning Grants Game Plan



Alabama State Rep. Yusuf Salaam (center in black suit) worked through the Office of Community Affairs to have a grants workshop for community workers in Selma on January 8. Dr. Margaret Purcell (to the right of Salaam) taught the workshop designed to increase funds for local community services. Also attending and helping to organize the workshop was Christopher Spencer, CCBP director of community development (fifth from left).

## By Dr. Margaret Purcell

Manager, Financial Affairs Grants

In 2009, as government and nonprofit leaders throughout the country began applying for funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), there was unexpected inactivity in many small communities and rural areas of Alabama. Even when monies were legislatively allotted for a specific jurisdiction, applications were few.

In phone conversations and water cooler chats people wondered aloud, “Why aren’t proposals being submitted?”

I thought I might know the answer: People just didn’t know what to do. To address this, I suggested a community-based education program called “The Grants Game.”

In summer 2009, I began collaborating with Jean Rosene at the West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC) about providing free grant training to community members. Based on our conversations I came to believe that people lacked two necessary and basic skills. They needed to know:

- How to locate potential funding sources.
- How to design successful funding proposals.

With the support of Bob Lake, executive director of the West Alabama Regional Planning Commission, and UA Treasurer and Vice President for

Financial Affairs Lynda Gilbert, we decided to offer grant-training programs for government and elected officials and for nonprofit leaders in the seven WARC counties.

Initial challenges included funding and meeting space. We determined that WARC would advertise the event and UA would provide the training materials and employee release time for the course instructor, registration and evaluation. We scheduled the first training program in September, and the response was immediate. Three sessions were held in fall 2009.

As more community partners joined us, some limits had to be placed on participation. Shelton State Community College and the UA Center for Community-Based Partnerships collaborated with us, and each provided training sites free of charge. Because demand was so high, and to ensure broad participation, we had to limit registration to one person per agency or organization.

It was clear that in order to be successful in a challenging economic period the program must be free of charge and relatively short in duration so as not to take people away from their jobs for extended periods.

Thus, we decided on a three-hour program that included an overview of the grant-seeking process, basic definitions, and an evaluation template that a proposer could adapt to meet

funders’ requirements.

In the final portion of the training session, participants were shown where to look for funding announcements and how to determine if their project and organization were a good fit. Participants accessed websites that provided announcements of funding opportunities and were assisted in conducting actual grant searches for funding opportunities that met their agency’s needs. Our decision to direct our instruction to the novice grant seeker proved fortuitous as some participants lacked the computer skills essential to today’s grant seeking.

Initial responses to the program have been very good. A sample of participants was given a “survey of goals” before the session designed to gauge what participants wanted to get from the training. Every goal listed had at least a 77% participant response of agree or strongly agree as to what they expected. An “assessment of course” was given at the conclusion of the class. It was designed to measure participant perceptions of learning. All but one question had an 88% participant response of agree or strongly with learning the stated course objective.

A “survey of goals for future training options” designed to indicate interest in future training programs was given to this sample group. All but one proposed training topic had an 82% or higher response (**continued on p. 47**)



Jean Rosene  
West Alabama Regional  
Commission

## Partnership Will Help Communities Secure Grants, Avoid Duplication

**By Jean Rosene**

Community & Economic Development Director

West Alabama Regional Commission

The University of Alabama, Shelton State Community College, and West Alabama Regional Commission have formed a partnership for the common goal of providing training to organizations in West Alabama in writing grant proposals.

Grant writing skill has become a widespread necessity in education, health, telecommunications, transportation, law enforcement and many other disciplines, well beyond the usual community and economic development arena.

The training is one method of building the capacity of individuals to be proactive in the growth and development of the local governments and non-profits that make up their communities. The training in turn gives the communities the ability to compete for public and private dollars that can enhance their quality of life.

The first workshop was held in September 2009 on the Shelton State Community College campus. The second workshop was held on The University of Alabama campus in October. The third workshop was held in November on the Shelton State campus.

The location for the workshop alternates between The University of Alabama campus and the Shelton State Community College campus in an effort to capture as many interested individuals as possible.

The classrooms are computer labs with Internet access so that the workshop can be a truly hands-on experience

for attendees. The class size is limited to between 15 and 18 so that individual instruction and group discussion can be maximized. Each class is representative of the diversity of the targeted local governments and organizations in Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens and Tuscaloosa counties.

The free, three-hour workshop is entitled "The Grants Game: An Introduction to Finding Funders and Writing Grant Proposals." Attendees explore funding options, learn the mechanics of grant writing, and initiate a funder search via the Internet.

The workshops are announced through mailed fliers and emails that target municipal and county elected officials and personnel, fire and police department personnel, governmental utility board personnel, hospital personnel, local recreation board members, industrial development board members, college faculty and staff, public school system personnel, community-based non-profits and others in the seven-county region.

The first series of workshops has been an introduction to grant writing. Course evaluations by attendees have been very positive. Plans are to continue the workshops at the introductory level and explore opportunities for advanced training for individuals who have mastered the basics.

Flourishing communities encourage their citizens to engage in activities that build capacity. The university, the community college, and the regional commission have joined together to provide one means to that end.

**(continued from p. 46)** rate (agree or strongly agree).

Given the positive responses and the requests to offer more training programs in grant writing and management, our team concluded that a comprehensive governmental/non-profit training program might be well received in this community.

What began as a response to what seemed like a one-time need prompted by the passage of ARRA, may be the harbinger of a developing community dialogue about needs assessments, collaboration, leveraging and sharing resources and working together to meet

shared goals and objectives.

Formerly disjointed learners, researchers, government officials and service providers are experiencing a revival of community spirit, and university students are volunteering to participate in community research and service.

Organizations are seeing that cooperative efforts can yield mutually beneficial results and that a single, strong application by a group can be much more successful than multiple disparate and competing requests for duplicate services.

More and more organizations are

requesting our workshop. Our most recent was offered on February 6, in Selma, and others will be offered as time allows.

The eagerness and commitment of the participants has been extremely gratifying. The workshops have brought people together and spurred a sense of shared purpose.

We still have a lot of ground to cover, but work is a lot more fun when you know you are part of a great team.

By working together, sharing resources, and combining strengths we can all be winners in "The Grants Game."





# black belt 100 lenses



Left, Elliot Knight and Whitney Green, co-directors of 100 lenses, along with Felecia Jones, right, observe as students present their photos. Below, Wilcox County students sing with Gee's Bend quilters. Photos arrayed at top and at right are representative of those exhibited throughout the Black Belt. To view hundreds of pictures from the project go to <http://www.black-belt100lenses.org/>.



The following 100 Lenses exhibits were or will be on display for a minimum of one month, the dates listed are for the opening reception

**Sumter County Exhibit.** University of West Alabama, Livingston, January 17, 2008

**Greene County Exhibit.** William McKinley Branch Courthouse, Eutaw, July 17, 2008

**Hale County Exhibit.** Hale County Courthouse, Greensboro, March 9, 2009

**Macon County Exhibit.** Tuskegee Airmen Museum, Tuskegee, April 28, 2009

**Perry County Exhibit.** Old Marion Depot, Marion, May 12, 2009

**Five County Retrospective Exhibit.** Bryan W. Whitfield Memorial Hospital, Demopolis, Summer 2009

**Bullock County Exhibit.** Josephine Cultural Arts Center, Union Springs, January 26, 2010

**Wilcox County Exhibit.** Wilcox County Courthouse Annex, March 2, 2010

**Six-County Retrospective Exhibit.** Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, on display until March 21, reception March 11, 2010, from 6 to 7 p.m.

**Hale County Revisited Exhibit.** PieLab, Greensboro- on display March 6-27, 2010, opening reception March 6 from 5 to 8 p.m.





**By Elliot Knight**  
CCBP Graduate Assistant  
and 100 Lenses Co-Director

It has been close to a year since an update in Partners, and there is much to report as the Black Belt 100 Lenses project continues to evolve and expand in counties around the state. The project, which is a partnership between the Black Belt Community Foundation, The Center for Community-Based Partnerships and public and private schools across a twelve-county service area, was founded in 2007.

Since then, the project has been implemented in Sumter, Greene, Hale, Macon, Perry, Bullock and Wilcox counties where cameras have been loaned to high school students who have produced 3,688 photographs depicting the culture of the Black Belt region in Alabama.

A major development for the project is the introduction of a Black Belt 100 Lenses summer camp, which will debut in summer 2010 and will invite students from Choctaw, Dallas, Lowndes, Marengo and Pickens counties to the Capstone from June 6-11. All of the students will take two rolls of photographs in their home counties before attending the camp and will have a week to share and discuss their work with peers from other counties in addition to writing about their work and hearing from speakers.

The camp will also feature day trips into Black Belt communities that are near Tuscaloosa, such as Gordo, Greensboro and Eutaw, where the students will have the opportunity to talk with civic and arts leaders and active community members. After the summer 2010 camp, the 100 Lenses program will have been conducted with students from all 12 counties of the Black Belt Community Foundation's

service area. After the pilot camp this summer, future camps beginning in summer 2011 will be open to students from each of the twelve counties.

In addition to focusing on building lasting relationships with community partners, we are redesigning the website and developing strategies to effectively deliver content generated by the student participants.

Glynnis Ritchie, a senior in New College, is heading up the website redesign and helping to make sure the ideas and photographs of Alabama's youth are reaching an audience here in Alabama and around the world. Glynnis and I designed a book in November 2009 that showcases the photography and writing of the students and promotes the project was published in a limited printing of 50 copies in December 2009. All of the printed materials from the project are now available online through the Black Belt 100 Lenses Facebook page, where you can become a fan, receive updates on upcoming events, and view the students' work.

We are continuing to increase the audience of the student's work by hosting exhibitions around the state. Exhibitions for spring 2010 include Hale County, Bullock County, Wilcox County, and a six-county retrospective exhibit at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts. Plans are in the works for a comprehensive exhibit of photographs from 12 Alabama Black Belt counties at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art in Auburn for fall 2010.

It continues to be a challenging but incredibly rewarding experience to work



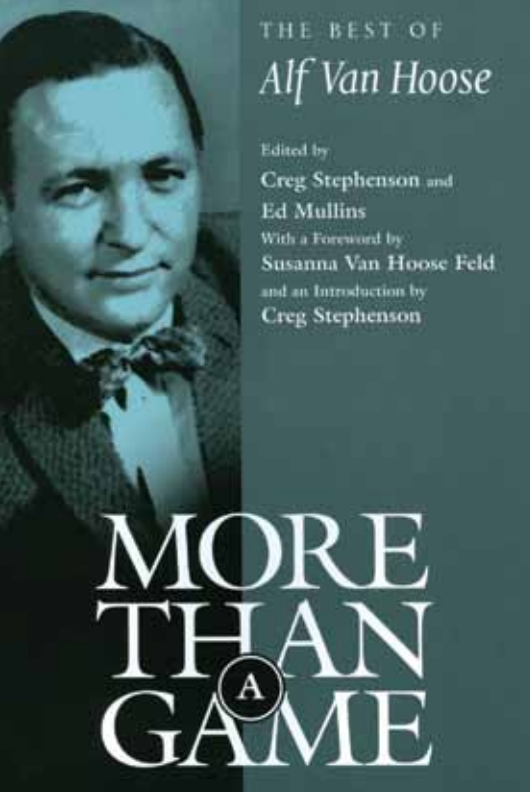
with young folks from around the state, many of whom have never used a film camera or been asked for their opinion regarding what is important in their communities or own lives. Seeing a spark of empowerment, the discovery of self knowledge and the recognition that they are incredibly valuable assets to the state of Alabama and their communities are all things that motivate me daily to continue the work we are doing.

Providing an environment where students from public and private schools can come together and learn about each other and the strengths and challenges in their communities has been a strength of the project that we plan to build on and extend as we move into the next decade.

One student from Wilcox county said, "I loved seeing other people's pictures because I got a different point of view. It showed how different and unique each one of us is and how when we combine those together it shows how beautiful and wonderful the Black Belt is."

Another student commented, "The best part of the project is getting to know each other and becoming family. This project brings ya together so that you can get to know people in your community."





Alf Van Hoose. *More Than a Game: The Best of Alf Van Hoose*. Creg Stephenson and Ed Mullins, eds., Tuscaloosa, Ala., and London: The University of Alabama Press, 2009, 156 pp., paper.

Stephenson writes for ESPN online. His mentor at the University, where he received B.A. and M.A. degrees in journalism, was co-editor Dr. Ed Mullins, director of research and communication at the Center for Community-Based Partnerships and retired dean of the College of Communication and Information Sciences. Book sales support the Multicultural Journalism Program at the University.

**By Jack Batchelor**  
CCBP Intern

Alf Van Hoose may not be a familiar name to today's college students, but if you are a UA student, you should know that name. Van Hoose gave his unique perspective to some of the greatest

moments in Alabama sports history.

It was Van Hoose above all other writers, sports or otherwise, who helped create the Alabama football culture, a unique blend of regional pride, fan idiosyncrasies, and near idolatrous worship of the football programs at Alabama and Auburn (see *Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer: A Trip to the Heart of Fan Mania*, by Warren St. John). "Hoose," as he was called by colleagues, worked for *The Birmingham News* for 43 years and was sports editor for 21 of those years. In assessing Van Hoose's influence, *More Than a Game* covers not only his work as the leading Alabama sports journalist of his time; it also examines the period in which he was a World War II combat officer and foreign correspondent.

Van Hoose grew up wanting to play professional baseball. An infielder with good hands and a strong arm but lacking big-league bat speed, he was offered a contract to play for the St. Louis browns but declined because his father wanted him to become a lawyer. During his time as a journalism major at the University, the war broke out. Drafted after graduation, Van Hoose quickly became a captain in George S. Patton's Third Army, earning a Silver Star at the Battle of the Bulge.

After the war he found a job at The News, advancing from sports writer to assistant sports editor then to sports editor after the death of Benny Marshall. In 43 years he left sports briefly three times: to write a daily column titled "Vulcan," to cover the Vietnam War, and to return on the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II to Europe.

For 30 years, he wrote a sports column at least three times a week. His style was known for neologisms and Southern colloquialisms. His writing would often read as if it were a telegram and, in some instances, poetry,

## BOOK REVIEWS

Stephenson writes. Van Hoose, himself, did not consider his writing style flashy. He wanted to inform his readers simply and tersely. He would mention himself in his stories only if absolutely necessary.

Van Hoose reported heavily on University of Alabama football because of Paul "Bear" Bryant and the team's popularity. He had close ties with Bryant and the university being an alumnus himself. Some accused him of bias toward the Crimson Tide because of his close connection, but many of his readers would rather have it that way.

For himself, according to those close to him, he believed it was important to be neutral within his columns. In the last column he wrote, he mentioned he had written an estimated 7,587 articles. No one really knows if this is accurate but anything close is still astonishing, and his use of the sports-ese term "estimated" followed by a precise number, not a round number, suggests a wink of the eye and a sly smile.

The book contains 90 of his most famous columns. Most of them have great importance in the history of sports in the state. These columns follow the Birmingham Black Barons to the Crimson Tide and the Auburn Tigers. Inside are stories about Bryant, Willie Mays, and Hank Aaron. Also inside are his pieces during the Vietnam coverage and his World War II commemoration special.

The book's foreword is by Van Hoose's daughter, Susanna Van Hoose Feld, an accomplished writer in her own right and happy tag-along to so many of her father's sports adventures.

David R. Morse. *Multicultural Intelligence*, Paramount Market Publishing, Inc. Ithica, NY., 2009, 244 pp., hardback.

**By Sydney Holtzclaw**  
CCBP Intern

Recently my travels took me to the Arkansas Mississippi River Delta. While in the area I stopped in Elaine, Ark., home to 885 people who are mostly rice and cotton farmers. Elaine's

downtown district once thrived due to the O. Deomoret and Son general store. Now the store serves as a museum housing antique merchandise dating as far back as the 1800s, including cans of fruits, vegetables and tobacco bearing the brand name "N\_\_\_\_\_ Head." Walking into the

store was like walking back in time. No longer do our advertising agencies rely on revenue from Americans' intolerance of diversity. Instead today they promote our American melting pot.

According to David R. Morse, author of this **(continued on p. 52)**

James Agee and Walker Evans. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941, hardcover.

**By Elliot A. Knight**  
CCBP Graduate Assistant

*Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* is as groundbreaking in style and method as it is in enlightening us about the rural poor in Alabama during the Great Depression. In 1936 James Agee and photographer Walker Evans set out in search of the stories of white tenant farmers for a *Fortune* magazine article. They ended up in Hale County, Ala., and happened upon their subjects while sitting in front of the county courthouse in Greensboro. For the next several weeks, Agee and Evans spent time with three tenant families. Agee actually lived with the families during his time there.

*Fortune* decided not to publish Agee's writing or Evans' photographs, perhaps because of Agee's unorthodox "new journalism" style, which sought to capture the emotional as well as factual reality of its subjects and their environment.

*Fortune's* bad judgment became American literature's good fortune, as Agee turned the manuscript into a book and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* was published by Houghton Mifflin 1941. When first published, it was not a commercial success, but readers rediscovered the book years later and it became a classic American nonfiction text.

Agee and Evans spent July and August of 1936 mostly in Hale County. From the beginning, Agee had serious reservations about the nature of the project, calling it "curious, obscene, terrifying and unfathomably mysterious." The Harvard-educated journalist and his barely literate tenant-farmer subjects felt the deep chasm between them, and there is no shortage of attention paid to these dynamics within the text. Agee speaks of himself and Evans as spies among the tenant families and viewed the methods he used as partly evolved by the subjects and partly forced on them.

Agee approached the subject of rural poverty from a multifaceted perspective,



A Walker Evans photograph from the Alabama depression-era project, Greensboro, Ala.

including journalism, anthropology, art and sociology, and, unlike contemporary researchers, did not have a guidebook of how to conduct his fieldwork. He spends 18 pages in exploring the origins, methods and importance. Example: "Nominal subject is North American cotton tenantry as examined in the daily living of three representative white families. ... More essentially, this is an independent inquiry into certain normal predicaments of human divinity."

Agee was interested in much more than the cotton-tenantry economic systems *Fortune* originally sent him to explore, and he was grasping for a way to capture the essence of actual experienced life for the tenant families he lived and worked among.

He explicitly states that the text is meant to be the beginning of a larger piece of work and yet to stand independent of any such further work.

Writers and artists have responded to Agee's call for the creation of a larger body of work in the years since the publication of the book and Agee's influence can be seen in the work of artist William Christenberry as well as journalists Dale Maharidge and photographer Michael Williamson. Hale county native Christenberry has publicly stated that *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* had a dramatic impact on his work and life, which can be seen especially in his sculptures of rural

structures built by incorporating found materials and often displayed on a bed of red Alabama dirt. *And Their Children After Them: The Legacy of Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* in 1989, by Maharidge and Williamson went on to win a Pulitzer Prize. Agee also posthumously received the Pulitzer for *A Death in the Family* in 1958, which contributed to a resurgence of popular interest in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Many others have been influenced by Agee's work and a new generation continues to be inspired by the text and incorporate Agee's ideas and style into their own work.

Agee creates dynamic tension by treating poverty, hopelessness and bondage in a flowing avant-garde literary style. *Famous Men* is arranged in the form of a musical composition and contains excerpts from various sources, including children's textbooks Agee found while doing fieldwork. Portions of the textbooks are quoted in block quotes and are juxtaposed within the book to point out the high ironies and injustice of the economic, social and educational systems that tenant families face.

Agee writes, "If I could do it, I'd do no writing at all here. It would be photographs; the rest would be fragments of cloth, bits of cotton, lumps of earth, records of speech, pieces of wood and iron, phials of odors, plates of food and (continued on p. 52)



(continued from p. 51) excrement.” Nevertheless, the author transforms the montage he projects into word-form, and the pages exude the plight of the families in a way more evocative than words alone could achieve.

The opening section of the book contains photographs of the families and their environs, but the photographs are not captioned to identify particular persons or situations, existing simultaneously and mutually connected to the text but separated by design and structure. Agee was torn and deeply disturbed about the work he was engaged in, and that internal

struggle appears in the pages. He questions the purpose of the book and what actions the reader may take in response to the material presented. Agee not only questions the reader’s motivation in reading the book; he also questions himself in writing the book.

This attention and effort to engage the reader and provoke thought and action in addressing, at the least acknowledging, the struggles of the oppressed within society have made *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* a classic text as relevant today as when it was written.

E.D. Hirsch Jr., Joseph F. Kett, and James Trefil. *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002, 647 pp. (hardback).

**By Ed Mullins**

PARTNERS editor

When University of Virginia professor E.D. Hirsch Jr. wrote his best-selling *Cultural Literacy* in 1987, his warning that Americans were such ignoramus about their own culture received so much attention from the elite and popular media Hirsch was in danger of contradicting the book’s premise.

Since then he has published a new book or new edition on the topic nearly every year and sold so many books he could easily give up his day job. But he keeps teaching and writing while reigning as the nation’s No. 1 judge of “what every American needs to know.”

I always thought it was something of a conceit for anyone to think he

knew what everyone else should know. I still do; yet the book has real value, if nothing else for its noble attempt.

For example, I’m a journalist by training and a journalism professor by education and experience. I wondered how far his dictionary would go in identifying the essentials of the culture of one profession, journalism. So I looked through the book to see if some names and concepts that leaped randomly to my mind were included: Joseph Pulitzer, Ralph McGill, Frederick Douglass, objectivity, freedom of information, The New York Times, Marshall McLuhan, Internet, the Associated Press and its famous stylebook, Mark Twain (the journalist), Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite, Katie Couric, Ernie Pyle, Walter Lippmann, Damon Runyun and Grantland Rice.

Knowledge of this handful of journalists and concepts wouldn’t be enough to get you a pass on a master’s oral, but, still, if Hirsch had anything to

say about even a few of them, I could say his book might earn that subtitle “what every American needs to know” about the culture of journalism.

So how did he do. Well, Pulitzer was there, as well as the prizes named for him, but McGill was not. Douglass was there, but objectivity and freedom of information were not, though “new journalism” and “freedom of the press” were. McLuhan, the Internet, World Wide Web – all included, as were Murrow, Twain (though as writer and humorist, not journalist) and Lippmann, but not Cronkite, Couric, Pyle, Runyun, Rice or The Times.

From the standpoint of including relevant entries from just one area of American life, I give him a B, and register my amazement for what the book does include.

But not a word on the Associated Press or its stylebook, which, depending on your viewpoint, has streamlined American prose or butchered it as no other book has.

(continued from p. 50) excellent summary of cultural intelligence as it applies to buying and selling, America is browning. Due to the aging white population and the explosive immigration from Latin America and Asia, advertising agencies must shift their focus to the discrete, underlying cultures of America if they want to survive.

“It is expected that by the year 2042, white non-Hispanics will drop to less than half the population,” Morse says. With such a change in demographics one can only expect a shift in economics to follow. According to Morse, in 2007 Hispanics, Asians and African-Americans made up \$2.2 trillion in purchasing power.

Adding the buying power of LGBTs and the total goes up to \$2.9 trillion. To put this into perspective, Morse says the multicultural purchasing power of America, that \$2.9 trillion, falls just below the gross domestic product of China,

Japan, India and the United States. The main problem for marketers today is that they don’t know what makes the new American tick and ultimately what makes the multifaceted population of America line up to swipe their credit cards.

In *Multicultural Intelligence*, he reviews the history and facts of past marketing campaigns focused on blacks, Hispanics, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender adults.

He then equips his reader with eight simple yet insightful rules for marketers to support and nurture the new American.

*Multicultural Intelligence* is a must-read for any professional or student in the advertising, marketing and business realm.

Companies caught solely marketing to white America will end up with their products sitting on a shelf in a museum housed in an old Walmart warehouse.



Veterans returning from active duty in war zones or from other assignments often face unusual problems moving smoothly back into civilian life. These problems relate to health, finances and unfamiliarity with university rules, often after many years living under the highly structured discipline of the military.

At left, Marine Lance Corporal Eddie Hardin, talks with Tyrone Travis, financial aid assistant, about financial aid opportunities for veterans who attend the University. UA's VETS program brings together many support services for veterans under one umbrella.



## UA Unveils Comprehensive Plans for Veterans Transitioning to College

**By Brett Bralley**  
CCBP Graduate Assistant

Starting this spring, veterans attending The University of Alabama have a new resource to guide them through the process of re-entry into civilian life and college attendance.

The Veterans Education and Transition Support (VETS) program has been created to help veterans adjust to everyday student life after sometimes traumatic combat experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.

VETS will provide support to students by designating a resource person within several different departments of the University – financial aid, undergraduate admissions, and in each college – to be responsible for veteran-related issues, said Gwendolyn Hood, equal opportunity programs director and compliance officer.

VETS will help them with the simple and complex problems student veterans often face that discourage them from applying to the University in the first place or cause them to drop out. Some of these challenges to re-entry and adjustment may be simply due to being away from classes for so long.

Others might be unresolved problems related to combat, such as PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder).

“Many veterans come back from combat with physical, psychological and emotional disabilities that must be dealt with,” Hood said. “Others may have family issues as a result of their deployments that may affect their academic success.”

Many, she said, might not be aware of the financial benefits veterans receive, and the program helps them with that as well. “These programs are needed to ease transition from soldier, sailor, Air Force or marine to student and to provide academic and personal support that will strengthen the student’s resolve, not only to stay in school through graduation, but also to get the most from being a college student, one of the greatest opportunities any society can provide its citizens,” she said.

A program administrator, a student veteran intern, and other necessary staff and students will staff the VETS initiative office, Hood said. Programs under the VETS umbrella include veterans orientation classes; academic support and personal and family support; veteran to veteran and veteran to faculty/staff mentorships; veterans

benefits/financial aid facilitation and referrals; veterans family resources and support; and membership in the UA Veterans Association.

“Providing these resources to our fellow citizens who have done so much to protect our freedoms will be of great benefit to them and to the University,” said Dr. Samory T. Pruitt, vice president for community affairs. “University practices and policies can be difficult for anyone, but especially for someone coming to campus directly from military duty, where rules are precise and laid out for you. Establishing the VETS initiative will go a long way toward making this transition easier, make our University especially attractive for returning veterans, and invigorate our student body. Because of their maturity and level of motivation, returning veterans are among the highest achievers within student cohorts.”

Hood said work is under way to streamline communication and information about the program by creating a one-stop VETS Web site. Until then, she said, the place to start is <http://financialaid.ua.edu/other/va.html>, or to call 205-348-6770, or visit Veterans Services at 106 Student Services Center.





# Center for ETHICS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY at THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

## Military Praises Film by University Students about Returning Veterans

By Ashley Boyd

The Tuscaloosa News  
(used by permission)

As part of the University of Alabama's Documenting Justice course, students Elizabeth Jones and Dick Powers produced the film "Searching for Normal," which has gone on to receive recognition and praise from the U.S. military community.

The film is about the trouble some military veterans have readjusting to civilian life.

"It struck a chord in the military community regarding an issue that gets far less attention than it deserves," said Stephen Black, director of the University of Alabama Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility. "The goal is to personalize issues that affect other human beings and affect them in ways that not everyone knows about. This is a huge challenge for tens of

thousands of families of returning vets that doesn't just go away."

The Documenting Justice course is the only interdisciplinary course in documentary filmmaking in Alabama that teaches students how to film and analyze an issue of justice.

The idea for the film was inspired by Powers, an Iraq veteran. Powers, who served in Iraq from 2001 to 2006, signed up for the course in 2007 while enrolled in law school at UA.

"I knew there was a story here that I wanted to tell, and I thought this would be a great medium for telling the story," Powers said.

Jones, now a senior economics major, went into the project without much knowledge or firsthand experience of the military. Their different perspectives made for a better film, Jones said.

"I think in a lot of ways, our differences allowed us to hit the message on the head because we represented the two extremes: people who know what it's like, and then people like me who know nothing about it," Jones said.

In the 10-minute documentary, Jones and Powers interview veterans about their combat experiences and the challenges they've faced since returning home. The pair interviewed veterans at the Tuscaloosa Veterans Affairs Medical Center and a friend of Powers' who is a military vet. The goal, Jones said, was to start a dialogue.

"We wanted to help people heal. On the opposite side for people like me with no concept, you can have a better understanding after watching the film," she said.

The film was screened at the Bama Theatre, the 2008 Sidewalk Film Festival in Birmingham and recently received attention from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

Powers, who received a Truman National Security Fellowship in January, spoke with the VA's new media director, Brandon Freidman, at a conference in Washington, D.C., on the film. Freidman posted about the film on the Department of Veterans Affairs' Facebook page, and the film then received positive response from veterans and their supporters.

"As a mother who has a son and a daughter in law in the Air Force, this video means a lot to me," Sherry Paul wrote in her Facebook comment. "Sadly it took someone close to me joining for me to understand the sacrifices made. I will never look at a veteran the same again."

Powers and Jones are still receiving praise for the film, two years after it was finished. Powers is now an attorney in Atlanta, and Jones was one of two UA students selected to participate in the Teach for America program in Alabama.

"I've gotten feedback from so many people who have seen the film, For us and for me, that's exactly what we're hoping for. We did something that resonates with veterans and educates the general populace," Powers said.

"I think it dramatically increases their sense of obligation towards communicating important stories that need addressing in the country," Black said. "That's part of effective citizenship – being an advocate on behalf of issues that need addressing, and one shape that can take is as a filmmaker.



Shown here at International Get on Board Day at Crossroads Community Center are Debra Flax, Whitney Jones, Shakieya Faide and Jungin Suh.



AERN added two more counties to its growing group of rural entrepreneurial partners. Here, Adelaide Wood, far right, and Paavo Hanninen, next to Wood, join with public officials and others at the Greenville Area Chamber of Commerce to bring Butler County into the network. The poster in the background was designed by CCBP graduate assistant Tony Rogers.



Above, Christopher H. Spencer, CCBP director of Community Development, talks with high school student journalist Kiami Nichols at Kinterbish School in Sumter County, where Engineers Without Borders constructed a baseball field. At right is Amanda Peterson, editor of *The Chrimson White*, which helped Spencer with the field trip for the Multicultural Journalism Program, an outreach program of UA's journalism department. At right, Nichols and Valerie Hoover, interview Rita Ertha, the principal of Kinderbush.



At left, Dr. George Daniels and Dr. Ed Mullins, upper left corner, and Dr. Bill Evans, fifth from left, meet with UA's Emerging Scholars Interest Group.







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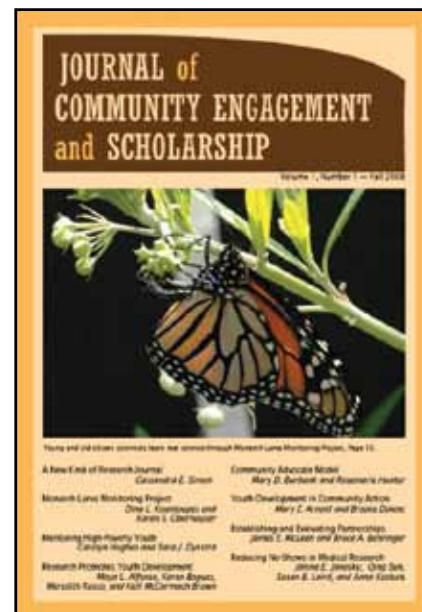
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## Bama's delegation second in size only to host Georgia



Thirty-five faculty, staff, students and community partners attended the 10th National Outreach Scholarship Conference in Athens, Ga., Sept. 28-30, 2009. Back row (2): Brice Miller, Chris Spencer. Middle row (12): Daniel Hollander, David Ford, Ed Mullins, Wellon Bridgers, Annette Watters, Michael Wynn, Erin Kane, Tommie Syx, Laurie Bonnici, Samory Pruitt, Jacqueline Morgan, Rick Houser. Front Row (11): George Daniels, Jessica Averitt Taylor, Muriel Wells, Jackie Brodsky, Heather Pleasants, Kathryn Merritt, Janet Griffith, Beverly Hawk, Jennifer Patterson, Felecia Jones, Cassandra Simon. Not shown: Carolyn Dahl, Matt Demondrun, Bill Evans, Karl Hamner, Lisa Hooper, Natalie Latta, Will McCracken, Tiarney Ritchwood, Joyce Stallworth and Andrea Mabry, who took this photo.

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