

# KINGFISHER // 2015-2016

*a publication of The University of Utah College of Humanities*





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*Dean*

# DIANNE HARRIS

As Dean Dianne Harris wraps up her first school year with the University of Utah's College of Humanities, we want to introduce you to the woman at the helm in a unique, new way. Using questions adapted and selected from the famed "Proust Questionnaire," you will get to know her in her own words.

**What is your idea of perfect happiness?**

The very best thing would be world peace. Barring that:

Skiing on a bluebird day in perfect snow conditions with the people I love, and being with my family, including our dog Bailey. Also, those moments when I'm writing and it's going so well that I entirely forget where I am, and what time it is.

**What is your greatest extravagance?**

Skiing

**What is your greatest fear?**

That our society will move towards STEM-only education and that we'll end up living deprived existences bereft of a deep understanding of history, culture, the nuances of difference, and without the ability to comprehend and value the complexities, beauties, and challenges of life on this amazing and fragile planet. And of course, climate change worries me enormously. I'm convinced that the only way forward is to make sure we have a populace that is well-educated with a strong grounding in the humanities.

**Which historical figure do you most identify with?**

No one person in particular, but anyone who has worked hard, struggled to achieve a goal and to make the world a better place while working against various odds, stumbled, and kept on trying. Anyone who stays in the struggle interests me. One of the challenges of being a historian is that it's always rather more difficult to find out about these ordinary people who make such a difference, but about whom records are seldom kept. One of the things I love about the humanities is they help illuminate not just the brilliance of particular and singular lives, but the significance of the aggregate of human endeavor across time and space.

**Which talent would you most like to have?**

Complete fluency in many languages.

**What is your current state of mind?**

Surprisingly optimistic.

**What do you most value in your friends?**

Loyalty and humor.

**What do you consider your greatest achievement?**

My daughter. Although strictly speaking, she is her own achievement and I'm just lucky enough to be a bystander, watching her grow.

**If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?**

I would worry less.

**What is your most treasured possession?**

The books in my personal library. And if it can be considered a "possession," my sense of humor, which I am convinced is absolutely key to daily survival.

**If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?**

A raptor.

**If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?**

A raptor, preferably a bald eagle. Hopefully, I'd also then be okay with their diet, which seems entirely unappealing to my human self.

**Which living person do you most admire?**

Right now, it's all the ordinary people struggling for justice in the Black Lives Matter movement. They are leading us through a 21st-century version of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Their courage is a model for us all.

**What is your favorite journey?**

Literally: Driving on California Highway 395 along the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada because it's one of the most beautiful landscapes on earth.

Metaphorically: The one I'm on right now, helping to make the humanities strong at the University of Utah and wherever else I can make a positive difference.

**Who are your favorite writers?**

It's an eclectic group: Richard Powers (because his brilliant interweaving of various knowledge realms always amazes me); Flannery O'Connor (because she never flinched); Toni Morrison (because she opens up worlds of truth); Isabelle Allende (because she renders cities and places as vibrantly as she does her characters); and a recent addition, Ta-Nehisi Coates (who brought tears to my eyes and made me wish again for an acceleration in the pace of positive change in our world). Two recently read favorites: Amitov Gosh's *Sea of Poppies*, and Kamila Shamsie's *Kartography*.

**Who are your heroes in real life?**

Anyone who demonstrates selfless kindness and generosity. I don't have that many 'famous' heroes. The people who amaze me live quiet lives of service every day and carry their achievements lightly. They are all around us. Many of them are on the faculty at the University of Utah in the College of Humanities.

**What is your motto?**

"It will be okay." I'm not really sure this is my motto, but it's the phrase I catch myself saying a lot. Most of the time, it's true.



# Research Profiles



# Christie Toth



(left to right) Sandra Salazar-Hernandez, Nathan Overturf-Lacy, Davor Simunovic, Christie Toth, Nic Contreras, Justin Whitney, and Shauna Edson.

## Writing and Rhetoric Studies

Christie Toth, assistant professor in Writing and Rhetoric Studies, researches, works with and cares deeply about the success of transfer students. “I think if you care about underrepresented student populations – if you care about diverse students, if you’re committed to the idea of access to higher education – you have to care about community colleges and transfer students,” she emphasized. Toth has spearheaded a collaborative research effort to better understand the writing experiences of students

transferring to the U and how to support their successful transitions. With grant funding from both the Dee Council and the Transformative Excellence in the Humanities initiative, she recruited five undergraduate and two graduate students to design and conduct interviews and focus groups with transfer students from a variety of educational pathways. All of the student researchers had been transfer students themselves, which gave the team valuable insight into the diverse experiences of transfer students.

“Transfer students are structurally locked out of a number of opportunities at the U, so we need to do whatever we can do to make our programs accessible to transfer students and facilitate their success,” Toth explained. “There have been mounting concerns that students aren’t explicitly prepared to transfer what they’ve learned to do as writers in the classroom into other spaces. How do we teach for transfer? It’s a huge conversation in the field, but it has almost entirely left out students who are transferring between institutions.” To remedy this, the research team performed 47 interviews with transfer students, three-quarters of whom attended Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) or another two-year college prior to enrolling at the U. The research team also plans to conduct several focus groups with SLCC students, both pre- and post-transfer, this spring.

Toth’s previous research at the University of Michigan shows one of the big jumps for transfer students can be the nature and volume of what they’re reading, as well as juggling multiple large writing projects at the same time. “We asked lots of questions trying to get at students’ prior reading and writing experiences – in work, religious participation, activism, etc. How are they transferring that knowledge and those practices into the university and into their careers and lives outside of school? We’re finding that students are transferring an enormous amount of knowledge,” Toth explained. “We’re seeing that many students who transfer between institutions seem to have gained valuable experiences with knowledge transfer that other students might not necessarily have.”

Toth and the research team are analyzing the data from interviews and focus groups and have been developing two upper-division writing courses based on their findings. The first course, for transfer students in any discipline, will be offered at the U in Fall 2016 and at SLCC in Spring 2017. The course will introduce students to the university’s infrastructure, such as the



research library, and provide guided experience reading published academic journal articles and researching writing practices and conventions in their disciplines. The course will also include guidance for applying for U scholarships, which transfer students often miss out on. The second course, designed specifically for prospective Writing and Rhetoric Studies majors, will be offered at SLCC in Spring 2017.

“We need to get away from talking about transfer students using deficit language, and instead think about the resources they bring, their experiences with transferring and successfully transitioning to a new environment,” Toth said. “We need to think about what we can do, as teachers and as an institution, to enable them to adapt those resources successfully.”



# W. Paul Reeve

## History



W. Paul Reeve, Associate Professor of History, published a new book that generated nationwide discussion, titled, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness* (Oxford University Press, 2015). Reeve calls the research in this latest book “a microcosm of the history of race in America.” In it, he explores how America's Protestant white majority characterized Mormons as racial outsiders in the 19th century, often as a means to discriminate against them. Protestants were convinced that members of the country's newest religion were not merely a theological departure from the mainstream, they were also racially and physically different. Medical doctors even supported the claim, which he details in the book.

“Outsiders suggested that Mormons were physically different and racially more similar to marginalized groups than they were to white people,” Reeve writes. “Mormons were conflated with nearly every other ‘problem’ group in the nineteenth century — blacks, Indians, immigrants, and Chinese — a way to color them less white by association.”

The cover of *Religion of a Different Color* displays a political cartoon by C.J. Rudd that ran in *LIFE* magazine in 1904, titled, “Mormon Elder Berry -- out with his six year olds, who take after their mothers.” Reeve says this was a caricature of Mormon Prophet Joseph F. Smith, and “the suggestion was that Mormon polygamy was not just destroying the traditional family, it was destroying the white race. The cartoon was a parting shot that demonstrates the way Mormons were racialized at that

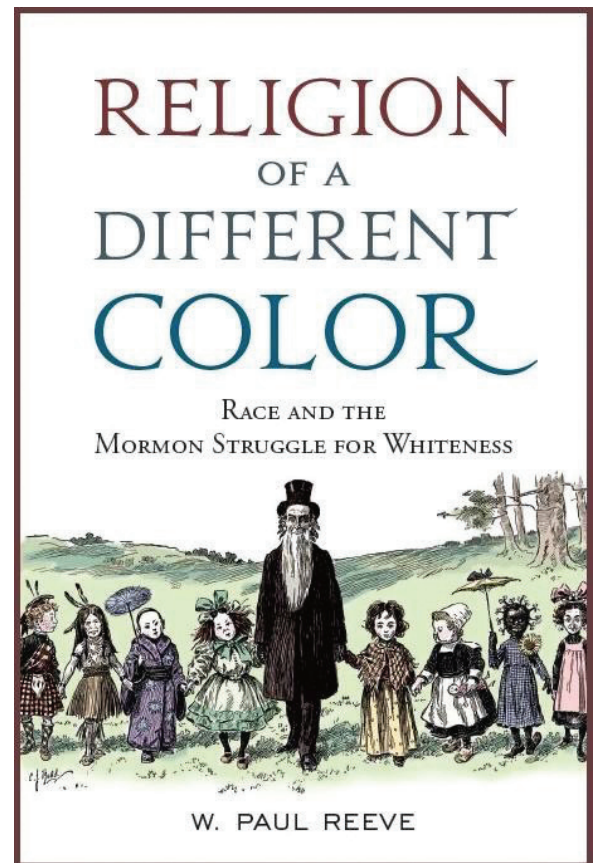
time.” He says the image represented the country saying, “Can we trust that Mormons have Americanized?”

Reeve sees the *LIFE* cartoon as but one example of a decades-long Mormon struggle to be accepted as white in the United States — a struggle that stretched from at least the mid-19th century to the early 20th. Critics of the Mormons began to speak of a “Mormon race” as early as the 1840s. One famous example was a report submitted to the U.S. Senate in the 1860s by military doctor Roberts Bartholow after he visited Utah. In his report, Bartholow cited physical traits of Mormons he met such as a “striking uniformity in facial expression” — which was supposedly the effect of plural marriage — as evidence that their population constituted a new, inferior race.

Reeve says the LDS church responded to those attacks with what he described as “aspirations for whiteness.” This was a period of transition where Mormon leaders were shifting from isolation to integration and a critical part of that transition

was to convince the rest of the U. S. that they were white. He says the church ultimately achieved those aspirations and became generally accepted as white or “racially pure.” A February 2016 ThinkProgress.org piece titled, “What A 19th Century Campaign to Declare Mormons ‘Non-White’ Tells Us about Modern Islamophobia” relied on Reeve’s research. The author, Jack Jenkins, stated of the book’s title and premise, “Taken out of context, the characterization seems odd, if not downright confusing, to modern eyes.” Reeve says many are surprised to hear that Mormons ever had a “struggle for whiteness,” since most people think of the church as one that grew from purely white, American origins.

This contemporary understanding of race and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints creates a lot of curiosity about Reeve’s research. As a professor, he integrates his research into courses on Utah history, Mormon history, and the history of the U.S. West. A popular and award-winning teacher, he is the recipient of the U’s Early Career Teaching Award and of the College of Humanities’ Ramona W. Cannon Award for Teaching Excellence in the Humanities. Reeve, who earned his Ph.D. from the U’s History Department in 2002, also serves as director of graduate studies for the department.



# Karin Baumgartner



Karin Baumgartner teaching a class on fairy tales to middle school students from the American International School of Utah.

## Languages and Literature

Karin Baumgartner, Associate Professor of Languages and Literature, sparks students’ imaginations with fairy tales while simultaneously teaching critical thinking skills. With a focus on literary and cultural transfer, particularly French-to-German transfer, Baumgartner teaches in the Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies (CLCS) program housed in the Languages and Literature department. There, she equips students with skills to compare literary traditions, motifs, plots, etc., from different cultures. “By comparing cultural or literary practices, we learn more about each culture than just looking at one culture with the same tools,” she described. “Comparison allows us to leave the familiar behind and focus on what is different.”

Baumgartner focuses on German literature from the late 18th Century to around 1830, which makes her a Romanticist. “The Romantics rediscovered fairy tales as a literary genre,” Baumgartner noted. “They wrote their own fairy tales before the Grimm Brothers began collecting what they thought were folk tales. I became interested in fairy tales because they cross national borders and the motifs travel from culture to culture and get adapted to each culture’s specific needs.”

One of Baumgartner’s classes is tailored for a fairy tale emphasis, titled “From Grimm to Disney.” The course examines fairy tales in literature and film from the 17th to the 21st Century with particular focus on the tradition of “rewriting” folk tales — the Grimms’ rewriting of older French and Italian folk tales and Disney’s rewriting of the Grimms’ fairy tales. As part

of the Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies program, the course compares French, Italian, German, and American fairy tale traditions and investigates the resurgence of fairy tale motifs in Hollywood blockbusters. The recent trend toward reinvented fairy tale themes in popular media piques students' interest, since movies like "Tangled" and TV shows like "Once Upon a Time" and "Grimm" are part of the curriculum.

"In my course, I try to do two things," Baumgartner emphasized. "First, students read tales and retell them in class. We do a lot of storytelling and reworking fairy tale motifs. Second, we look at the fairy tale tradition with a critical eye to how national cultures influence how tales are reconceptualized. This is particularly interesting as the tales travel from Germany – Grimm – to the U.S. – Disney. We investigate how Disney Americanized French and German tales to fit them to his particular vision of American life. The students' final projects very often involve rewriting tales to fit their own cultural frame."

"I think students enjoy seeing modern phenomena, like popular TV shows, and trace how these shows originated in other cultures and other time periods," Baumgartner explained. "It shows them that we are connected across time and continents and that the human search for a happy end is universal. Fairy tales are so optimistic – the little guy always wins – and students want to look at the future with an optimistic eye. Fairy tales reassure us that things will be OK, but that struggles are involved."

To expand an understanding of cultural differences through the lens of popular fairy tales, the Languages and Literature Department presented an outreach event for middle school students from the American International School of Utah on Nov. 18, 2015. The children were able to visit the Marriott Library and learn from Professor Baumgartner.

"I find community outreach extremely important for the Humanities. However, I don't see that much outreach for literature in general, and that is a shame, because who doesn't like stories? This is the reason why I was enthusiastic when I received a request to teach these middle school kids," Baumgartner said. "In general, this generation doesn't read much anymore, and they lack the skills to look at stories in depth. Fairy tales are a great way to bring them in and have them look at various stories, which they might know from their childhood, in a more critical way."

"Literature lets us experience the world through the eyes of somebody who is very different from us – culturally, temporally, gender-wise and racially, etc.," she emphasized. "It gives us a glimpse into another life that is always personal and specific. It teaches empathy and helps readers develop a full range of emotion. I think reading makes us human."



"[Literature] teaches empathy and helps readers develop a full range of emotion. I think reading makes us human."

# NEW FACULTY

**The College of Humanities is pleased to welcome three talented and dedicated new faculty members to our growing college.**



## JONATHAN STONE

Jonathan Stone joined the University of Utah as an Assistant Professor in the Writing and Rhetoric Studies department. Jon has a B.A. in Communication from University of Arizona, a B.A.E. in Secondary Education in English, a B.A. in English from Arizona State University, an M.A. in English from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a Ph.D. in English from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Jon's current work focuses on the rhetoric of U.S. vernacular music in the 1930s.



## JULIE AULT

Julie Ault joined the University of Utah as an Assistant Professor in the History department. Julie completed a B.A. in History and German Language and Literature at Grinnell College in Iowa, an M.A. in History, and a Ph.D. in History from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her work focuses on Eastern Europe, Europe, Germany, and Poland. Julie is fluent in both German and Polish.



## DAVID ROH

David Roh joined the University of Utah as an Assistant Professor in the English department. David completed a B.A. in English at University of California, Los Angeles; an Ed.M. in Technology in Education at Harvard Graduate School of Education; and both an M.A. in English Literature and a Ph.D. in English Literature from University of California, Santa Barbara. David's research interests include Digital Humanities, Twentieth & Twenty-First Century American Literature, Intellectual Property Law & Literature, and Transitional Asian American Literature.



# umni



Juel Iverson  
English



Maria Houtchens  
Languages & Literature



Steven T. John  
Philosophy



J. Paul Smith  
Communication

# Maria Houtchens

BS (1994), Science, University of Utah

BA (1995), Languages & Literature, University of Utah

MD (1999), University of Utah



Maria Houtchens, MD, wears many hats in her successful neurology career in Boston, Mass. She currently serves in three positions: Assistant Professor in the Department of Neurology at Harvard Medical School, Associate Neurologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and Director of the Women's Health Program at the Partners Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Center in Boston. As the principal investigator of many research projects focusing on multiple sclerosis, she has received numerous grants to study MS. Her research focus has been on cognitive impairment and on women's health matters in patients with MS. Recognized for her hard work and dedication to her research, she was awarded the Best Neurology Abstract Award from the Massachusetts General Hospital, and was the recipient of a Fellowship Award from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dr. Houtchens credits some of that success to her educational foundations in the College of Humanities at the U. As a young student and recent transplant from Russia, Maria's undergraduate education in Humanities started as a way to simply pursue an interest she might not have time for once she was accepted to medical school. "I always loved Russian literature and poetry. I thought it would be amazing to study it in the U.S., in English, from a very different perspective than what I had studied in Russia."

She's grateful she made that decision. "I don't think I'd have been quite as effective a clinician as I am without my humanities training, she said. "It is as important as coursework in biology and chemistry on the path to medicine. The former teaches one how to relate to each

other emotionally and cognitively, while the latter teaches about the physical composition of our bodies and our world."

Working with patients who have diseases that are incurable requires one to be an effective communicator. She says her education in Languages and Literature put her in a very good position to be able to look at a problem from many angles, and to find just the right words to deliver the news to a patient, to discuss appropriate treatments and to be able to relate to patients from all walks of life. She is also using her training to pose the right questions and try to answer them in her clinical research work.

"I work in the field of neurology with diseases that are incurable, and I manage patients quite well, but I can't fix them. Immunology and psychiatry are two fields where communication is very important to be an effective provider. My education put me in a very good position to be able to ask the right questions in clinical work. The ability to look at a problem, find areas to be addressed, and the ability to see unconventionally – all of that comes from humanities training."

While working in medical school admissions at the U, Maria said, "I remember thinking very positively about candidates with backgrounds not just in biology, but with other experiences. I was very interested in people who had some diversity to their background. They might've had a degree in History and then did their prerequisites and spent a year in Africa volunteering. The more diversity in the early background for a person, the better doctor they're going to make."

Because of the benefits she has seen in her own career and others', Maria encourages anyone in any field to study humanities, including languages and literature. "Reading, learning people's stories and the ability to relate to the human condition, to misery, the ability to be empathetic and sympathetic — all of that comes through training and coursework in humanities," she said. "How do I talk to this person with a very different background? How do I make them feel better even if I can't completely fix their problem? All of that comes from reading, writing, thinking, and having experiences with the humanities."



# Steven J. John

BA (1996), Philosophy, University of Utah  
JD, University of California Hastings College of Law

Steve John is Principal and Founder of Steven John & Associates, LLC, an attorney executive search firm. Prior to starting his own search practice, Steve was a Principal in the Legal and Technology Practices at Korn/Ferry International in San Francisco, the world's largest executive recruitment firm and leadership consultancy. Before joining Korn Ferry, Steve was a managing director in the in-house counsel search practice at Major, Lindsey & Africa.

As a lawyer by training, recruiting attorneys comes naturally to Steve, and he has placed a number of general counsel as well as senior intellectual property counsel in many technology companies, including Google, CBS Interactive, Dolby Laboratories, Rovi Corporation, and BioMarin Pharmaceuticals. Steve says his favorite part of his career is the counseling work he does with clients and candidates who look to him for professional guidance. "When I'm recruiting general counsel for corporations, these are high achievers – really at the top of their game," he explained. "But when they are involved in a search, starting to get traction as a candidate, a lot of that melts away and insecurities and self-doubt are exposed, as well as the naiveté of not knowing what others are doing because you're in your own head and your own job and not looking around. I'm sort of that reality check for them and the person who can help them compartmentalize the emotional stuff and put it aside. I love that. These are people that really drive the success or failure of companies and I get to be part of that equation."

Before attending law school, Steve attended the U, with an intention to study accounting. However, early in his education, he discovered philosophy in the College of Humanities and was hooked. By the time he graduated in Philosophy, he was also two classes shy of a political science degree and one class short of a degree in economics. Needless to say, Steve is an intellectually curious man. He believes the study of Philosophy, in particular, is valuable because it is at the highest reaches of many disciplines – from law and math to science and art. In the Department of Philosophy, he says he learned who he was as a student. "Philosophy stretched me," he recalls. "It invites you to think. It's hard, deep, and really pushed me to think in a new way."

Noting the Philosophy Department produces lots of future lawyers, Steve emphasized that it really is a

perfect platform for law study. "Philosophy offers people an invitation to think critically and not presume what you're reading or hearing is, in fact, reality. The fact that there are things that we may not consciously be processing that stand in the way of critical reasoning and analysis is laid bare in philosophy education." He also stressed the excellence of the U's faculty, saying, "I knew even then that the U's Philosophy Department was a world-class one. I also think it's so intellectually rigorous that there are more than one or two levels of analysis in picking things apart, and I've retained some of that."

Steve's husband, Jason, whom he met at the U, studied Film and English and shares his intellectual curiosity. "That means, for the last 23 years, we have never found a moment when we have not been able to sit down at the table and have dinner and have something interesting to talk about," Steve said. "Studying in Humanities and a love of learning has enriched our relationship, making it one of constantly exploring ideas together, enjoying them together, and not being afraid to go down new educational paths."

"I'm so grateful for my education at the U and so proud of it," Steve said. "I work with lots of people – MBAs from Wharton, Stanford, Yale, Harvard, and they're all great and fabulous, but they are no smarter than I am. I know I got an extraordinary education at the U and a bargain. I will be grateful to the end for that."



"I'm so grateful for my education at the U and so proud of it."



# J. Paul Smith

BS (1966), Communication, University of Utah  
MS (1967), Journalism, Northwestern University

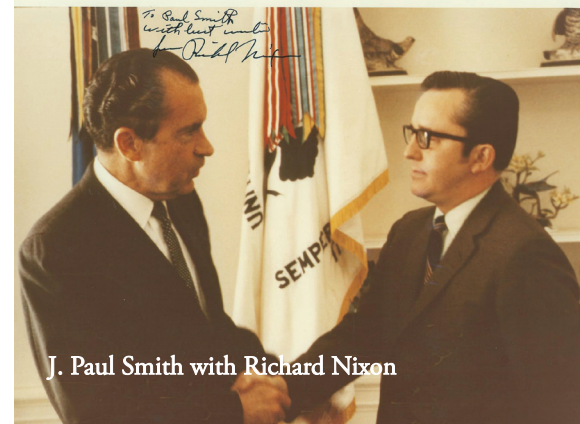
Paul has had a long and illustrious career in communication that started as a journalism student in the U's Department of Communication in the early '60s. After passing an exam in 1951 for an FCC license – the youngest in the country to do so at that time – he worked at a local radio and TV station. Paul said he realized he needed to have something more than funny jokes to share on air and decided to go to the U to learn to be a reporter. During school, he wrote a weekly column for the *Utah Chronicle* and later worked as news director at KUER on campus, where he remembers broadcasting from the basement of Kingsbury Hall. During a stint in the Army, stationed in Italy, he was assigned to Armed Forces Radio-TV Service. Following the military, Paul returned to the U and worked his way through school, first as a DJ at KALL and then in the news department at KDYL-KTVX, under news director Roy Gibson, who would later teach journalism at the U. Following Paul's graduation, one of his favorite professors, Parry D. Sorensen, persuaded him to go to Northwestern University to earn a master's in journalism. "Northwestern was great, but I got my real training at Utah," Paul said. "We had some terrific professors at Northwestern and they made you work hard, but if I hadn't learned what I did in the Communication Department at Utah, I wouldn't have been able to succeed at graduate school and pursue a journalism profession."

Paul returned to Utah, where he was hired by KSL as a political reporter. His love for politics provided another career-changer as he was persuaded to move to Washington, D.C., to work as press secretary for a Utah congressman. "I understood what reporters wanted, their deadlines, and I was able to be a source for their stories," he said. "The fun part of the job was meeting interesting people, even President Nixon." Paul's career then took him

to Denver to work as a documentary director for two years before coming back to KSL as a political reporter. He interviewed every politician who came to town, including Orrin Hatch, when no one yet knew who he was. "He just came out of the woodwork. No one thought he would win [the Senate election]," Paul emphasized. Not long after, he said, "I got a call in the middle of the night from his campaign people saying they have a special guy coming to town who supports Hatch, and you can interview him if you want to." Paul agreed and showed up at the hotel they specified, but was shocked to see Ronald Reagan, who at the time was a movie star and former governor of California. Reagan came to Utah to support Hatch and Paul interviewed him for KSL, soon after, Hatch invited Paul to be his press secretary and communication director. Paul spent the next 20 years in DC in that capacity, which he called "just fantastic."

"Not only was the work hard and fulfilling, but I met the reporters I'd only known by their by-line," he said. "I was liaison between the journalists and the senator. People like ABC's Sam Donaldson and Bob Woodward of the *Washington Post* would call wanting to either interview Hatch or wanting to know what he thought about a particular subject. You had to be prepared. I can't tell you how much my education at the U did for my career. I learned to write. I learned to go after subjects. If I hadn't had great instruction and professors, I wouldn't have been able to go back to Washington, write press releases and speeches and handle the press. In one year, I handled more than 2,600 press requests, including all the Sunday network shows."

After leaving DC, Paul and his wife Johanna moved back to Utah. Paul has since worked as an adjunct instructor at Utah Valley University, teaching communication, public speaking and radio production part-time.



# Juel Iverson

BA (2011), English, University of Utah  
MBA (2014), University of Utah

Named one of *Utah Business* magazine's "20 in Their 20s" in 2015, Juel is a standout among the college's young alumni. She graduated with her bachelor's degree in English in just three years, working three jobs along the way, and soon returning for her MBA while continuing her career. After working for Sinclair during her undergraduate years as a marketing coordinator, she was promoted to sales manager, which included developing and designing marketing pieces for the lubrication division. Next, Juel landed a job at Allen Communication Learning Services, a major instructional design firm located in Salt Lake City. As director of learning solutions, Juel consults with numerous Fortune 500 corporations like Cisco, Redbull, Dominos and many more to produce multimedia learning solutions for the corporations' training needs.



Juel chose English for her bachelor's degree because of a desire to utilize and sharpen her writing skills, though she wasn't sure where her career path would end up. The most valuable aspect of her undergraduate education was one she hadn't considered when starting in her major. "I always tell people that English was harder than I expected it to be. I feel like an English degree from the U is really heavy on philosophy and critical thinking," she said. "I learned how to take a position, look at it from multiple perspectives, and gather evidence to support my case. Critical thinking paired with writing are excellent skills that are valuable in any career."

Juel says she welcomes challenges in life and work. "I'm looking forward to the challenge of constantly pushing myself, obtaining new knowledge, meeting new people, and archiving a lifetime of adventures and career success," she said. "I think what has helped to make me successful is pairing my education with work experience," she said. Juel is a strong advocate for studying the humanities. She offers advice to students to look for internships and jobs that can help them attain significant work experience during and after their schooling. "Humanities degrees are misunderstood, so come in armed with a story," she emphasized. "Be able to say, 'Here's why I'm good with critical thinking. I was trained in this, but I also executed that training here.'"



Take a look at our new Alumni Connections website:  
[alumni.humanities.utah.edu](http://alumni.humanities.utah.edu)



# STUDENTS

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Asia Campus



Myke Brinkerhoff



John R. Park Debate Society



Humanities House



Shaun Daniel

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# ASIA CAMPUS COMMUNICATION

Five U of U Asia Campus (UAC) Communication students are working on recording stories about the Korean War after each of them were selected to receive funding from the U of U's Undergraduate Research Opportunities program (UROP). The UAC students' project, titled "Longbridge," seeks a connecting link between Koreans and other foreigners that may not have been formed if not for the Korean War. It also seeks to unite generations by disseminating the stories to internet-connected younger audiences.

Throughout 2015, Jin Ho Choi, Kuno Lee, Si Hyun Park, Sharon Yoo, and Dahee Yun – all majoring in Communication at the South Korea campus – are working to recruit, record, archive and publish stories about the unique personal relationships between Koreans and Americans formed as a result of the Korean War.

The project is under the supervision of Communication Professor Paul Rose and is made possible by funding the students individually applied for and were awarded through UROP. Each of the applicants generated their own proposals and worked with Dr. Rose through several revisions in the competitive process to receive the highly sought-after funding.

"Having five undergraduates receive funding for the same research project through UROP is highly unusual and demonstrates the importance of Project Longbridge," said Kent Ono, chair of the Communication Department. "The bilingual students, UAC international campus, and media program uniquely situates the Department of Communication to tackle this important project," said Dr. Rose, director of the UAC Undergraduate Communication Program. "It is also an endeavor made more urgent by an aging population that experienced the Korean War. There are compelling stories that need to be documented and told before they are lost forever."

A forthcoming website, [longbridge.org](http://longbridge.org), will be established as the stories are ready for publishing.



## MYKE BRINKERHOFF LINGUISTICS

Myke says his interest in Linguistics was sparked by his love of languages as a child. After studying Hebrew and Latin during his younger years, Myke served a two-year church mission in Germany, which enhanced his awareness of the different cultures throughout the world and their linguistic characteristics. While taking general classes, Myke was always interested in Linguistics. He loved the syntax aspect of the introductory class, saying that it looked like fun parsing sentences and drawing trees. His favorite class so far has been phonology, and he plans to continue with this focus and possibly experiment with language documentation. He would like to explore Ladin, a Rhaeto-Romance language spoken by about 30,000 people in Italy, but notes there are simply not enough linguistic resources available. Something Myke has noticed during his time at the U is how interconnected Linguistics is with other fields and disciplines. "I wasn't expecting to learn so much about neurology, philosophy, psychology and computers," he said, noting he's been grateful for the diversity it has offered his studies. Myke says Linguistics has helped him to be more tolerant toward the differences we face as a world full of varying cultures, both linguistic and social.



# JOHN R. PARK DEBATE SOCIETY



2014-2015 Department of  
Communication Awards Banquet

One of the College of Humanities' most outstanding undergraduate experiences is the John R. Park Debate Society, housed in the Department of Communication. In addition to having the honor of being one of the oldest student programs at the University of Utah, the Debate Society has, over the last several years, re-established itself as one of the most successful undergraduate activities on campus.

This year, the Debate Society, which features 20 undergraduate students from several majors on campus, is currently ranked 10th in the U.S. by the National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA). This success follows a 6th place finish for the 2014-2015 competitive season. Leading the way, the debate partnership of Jesse Hedin, a junior majoring in Film & Media Arts; and Skyler Hektner, a freshman majoring in Entertainment Arts & Engineering, are currently ranked 9th out of 641 teams by the National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence (NPTE). In 2014-2015, the Debate Society's best finish at the NPTE was 6th.

The Debate Society's director, Michael Middleton, who also serves as an assistant professor of Communication, noted that over the last six years, the Debate Society has improved its national debate ranking from 127th to 6th. He attributes this success to the increasingly high-quality undergraduate students attracted to the program. One significant facet of the team's stellar record is that these competitive successes in both debate and individual events have been shared by more than half the students of the Debate Society. This demonstrates the overall excellence of the undergraduate students who comprise the program.



First-year students Maria DeMarco and Morgan VanderVeen have already distinguished themselves by winning the Western Wyoming Community College Invitational and securing an invitation to the prestigious 2016 Pt. Loma Nazarene University Round Robin in San Diego, CA.

“A big part of this success and the ability to attract excellent students has been strong support from the College of Humanities and the Department of Communication, as well as the university more broadly,” Middleton said. “We also rely on the support of alumni. For example, last year alumnae Sofia Lingos established an endowed scholarship that has already helped attract excellent undergraduate students and competitors. Growing this type of support is critical to maintaining the U’s remarkable rise in the national rankings.”

Founded in 1869, the John R. Park Debate Society is one of the U’s oldest student organizations. Each year, the Society complements its competitive efforts with a public debate series and substantial amounts of outreach in the local high school speech and debate community. In 2015-2016, the Debate Society has hosted the British and Japanese National Debate Teams for public debates. In addition, the Debate Society hosts the Beehive Bonanza, which is the largest high school speech and debate tournament in Utah; the Beehive Forensics Institute, which is the largest high school summer debate workshop in Utah; the Utah Tournament of Excellence, a round robin high school tournament that features the state champions in Utah high school debating; and provides hundreds of hours of volunteer coaching and judging at local high schools.



“A big part of this success and the ability to attract excellent students has been strong support from the College of Humanities and the Department of Communication, as well as the University more broadly...”

To learn more about the team, visit: [www.debate.utah.edu](http://www.debate.utah.edu), or contact the Director of the John R. Park Debate Society, Michael Middleton ([m.middleton@utah.edu](mailto:m.middleton@utah.edu)/801-581-6454).

# THE O.C. TANNER HUMANITIES HOUSE

Each year, 12 undergraduate students from the College of Humanities are selected to live in the O.C. Tanner Humanities House in historic Fort Douglas.

The O.C. Tanner Humanities House opened for residents in Fall 2001, just prior to the 2002 Winter Olympics, when it was transformed into Mail Services, Information Kiosk, and Ticket Office for the Athlete's Village.

Originally built as officer's quarters in the late 19th Century as part of Fort Douglas, the houses in Officer's Circle were later donated to the university, and with the generous support of donors such as the O.C. Tanner family, were refurbished to provide our students unique living and learning community housing.

While the house offers all the charm and history of an Ivy League school, it is more than just a great place to live. As part of this community, we emphasize the educational and social aspect of students' experience in the house. The Humanities House emphasizes the transformative power of communal living; people learn to live together by living together.

Students who live in the Humanities House often experience discovery, connection, and sometimes discomfort as they are pressed to grow beyond familiar boundaries. The house's resident advisor serves as a mentor and a leader as students explore what it means to be part of a diverse community.

Students in the house also have unique opportunities to connect with College of Humanities faculty and leadership at events including Faculty Fireside Teas, House Dialogues, and many college lectures featuring outstanding speakers.





A group of the 2015-2016 Humanities House students pictured with Anders Fogh Rasmussen, former Secretary General of NATO & Prime Minister of Denmark

## Humanities House 2015-2016 Events

### Faculty Fireside Teas

Randall Stewart, Classics

MUSE book talk with Mark Matheson, MUSE Director

David Derezotes, Peace & Conflict Studies

Dinner with Dean Harris

House Dialogues with David Derezotes

Dustin Stokes, Philosophy

Kevin Coe: Communication | Andrew Franta, English | ShawnaKim Lowey-Ball, History

Faculty Mocktail Party

### Fall 2015

World Leaders Lecture Dinner with Anders Fogh Rasmussen, former Secretary General of NATO & Prime Minister of Denmark

Electra at Red Butte Gardens

LGBT Gay-La Dinner & Silent Auction

MUSE Lecture on Community with United States Congressman John Lewis

### Spring 2016

House Dialogues with Dr. David Derezotes

MUSE Night Out with Jane England, Theater Department to Suzan Lori-Parks

# SHAUN DANIEL

## ENVIRONMENTAL HUMANITIES MASTERS PROGRAM



Shaun Daniel, who graduated in fall 2015 with his master's in Environmental Humanities, is a familiar face at the university's Taft-Nicholson Center (T-NC), located in the Centennial Valley of Montana. As an associate instructor at the T-NC in summer 2015, Shaun coordinated the creation of the center's first small food production garden and first composting system – a vermicomposting bin that makes use of worms and mites for food breakdown. “It's still a learning process with both, but it felt good to help the center take the next step, actualizing some of the ideas presented in earlier research by grad students at the center,” Shaun said.

His master's project also focuses on the T-NC, titled, “Toward Abundance: An Ecological Design to Enhance the Resilience of Shambow Creek and

the Taft-Nicholson Center.” Having been involved in social and environmental change work for much of his life, Shaun's focus turned from writing as a career to seeking out graduate programs with an environmental focus. “The Environmental Humanities program at the University of Utah came onto my radar, in part, because the mix of art and science and politics intrigued me. I was also impressed that this program, set in such a stunning and sometimes challenging landscape, had been the first Environmental Humanities master's program in the nation.”

Shaun says he chose the U's EH program over a fully funded opportunity at another school because of the support the program provides to students through interaction with top faculty, as well as unique opportunities for hands-on study and experience through the T-NC.

“It is uncommon for humanities programs to have a field station, so the Center is a unique and tremendous asset for the Environmental Humanities program and the university as a whole – not to mention for regional academic and community partners who have an opportunity to use it as well,” he said. “The humanities can sometimes seem abstract and amorphous. Having a place where research and creative projects can be applied is invaluable to the learning process and achieving the goal of interdisciplinary scholarship – or, better yet, transdisciplinary work that transcends the boundaries of academia and addresses real problems and issues in the world. That's where some of the most exciting opportunities lie.”

Shaun's opportunity to teach at the T-NC presented a chance to focus his research and engage in solving real-world conservation issues. “I was able to extend my study of the Centennial Valley and how we can be better stewards, and it gave me the opportunity to help others engage with the greater Yellowstone ecosystem,” he said. “I delved into areas rather new to me, like hydrology, fisheries conservation, pond and stream ecology, water rights law, resilience theory, system dynamics, and applied climate modeling. And in exploring the feedback relationships between design of the built environment, human culture, and the functioning of ecological systems, I actually came away with a much deeper understanding of and appreciation for the humanities. I agree with others that the environmental crisis is largely a crisis of



Garden beds Shaun built at T-NC

culture and design. In his book *Earth in Mind*, David Orr refers to a need for 'ecological design intelligence,' calling for a redirection of education. That is a call I would say the Taft-Nicholson Center and the Environmental Humanities program are heeding well."

Shaun's graduate work also led to him presenting a session on rainwater harvesting at the 2015 Salt Lake County Watershed Symposium, which is an interest that developed from his master's project. His present endeavors include working as a part-time research assistant with the Global Change and Sustainability Center as well as laying the groundwork to start his own ecological design business, which he hopes to do in the next year. "Like the transition we're undergoing as humans on this earth, I'm keeping an eye out for opportunities, while taking steps, bit by bit, to honor my relationships with others and play a part in creating something more durable, beautiful, and fair for us all," he said.



Class at T-NC. Photos courtesy of Shaun Daniel.

"It is uncommon for humanities programs to have a field station, so the Center is a unique and tremendous asset for the Environmental Humanities program and the university as a whole."

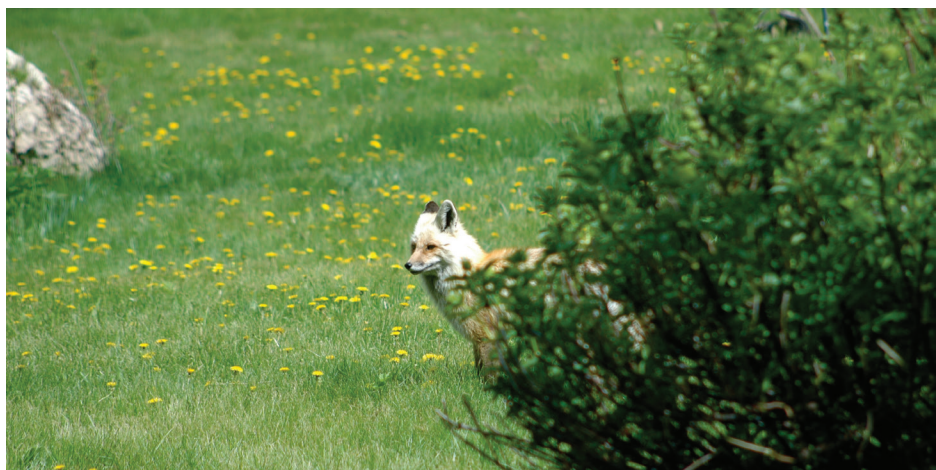


Shambow Creek

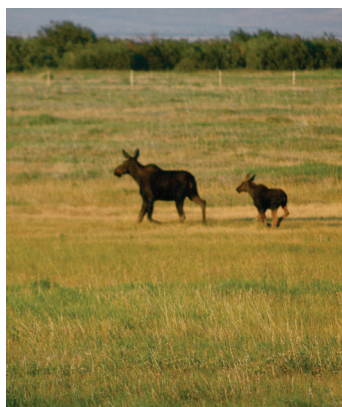
# The Taft-Nicholson Center

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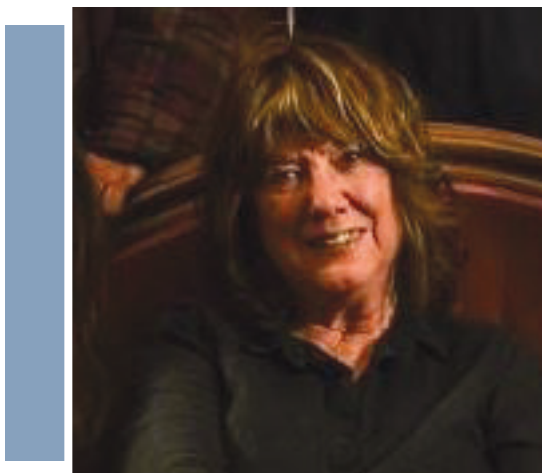
The University of Utah's Taft-Nicholson Center in Centennial Valley, Montana, is a unique education destination focused on engaging the humanities to deepen and enliven environmental study. Offering powerful educational opportunities and experiences, the Environmental Humanities Education Center has been called “the crown jewel” of the University of Utah. The Center was made possible by the generous and visionary work of John and Melody Taft and Bill and Sandi Nicholson, who invested their time and resources to purchase Lakeview and lovingly restore its historic buildings. Accommodations include charming and elegant guest cabins, a student dormitory, a large conference room and a dining hall, which are put to use by hundreds of students for dozens of classes and programs each year. The College of Humanities is currently raising funds to support the Center so more students can experience the life-changing work of studying environmental humanities in the Centennial Valley.



The College of Humanities is currently raising funds to support the Center's mission to provide scholarship and research opportunities to more students and community members. If you are interested in supporting the Taft-Nicholson Center or to join our mailing list for updates on the Center's work and events, please go to [taft-nicholson.utah.edu](http://taft-nicholson.utah.edu).



## MARY TULL



As Mary Tull retires from her position as the Taft-Nicholson Center's first director, we cannot underestimate her vast contributions. Mary brought the Center from its earliest phases as a start-up project to its current life as a vital center for environmental humanities education and research. Under her leadership, this unique center for teaching and research has grown tremendously and hundreds of students and community members each year get to have unparalleled opportunities to explore, study and create in a singular wilderness area with diverse ecosystems. Thank you, Mary, for your leadership during these formative years of the Taft-Nicholson Center!

## MARK BERGSTROM

Professor Mark Bergstrom has been selected as the next director for the Taft-Nicholson Environmental Humanities Education Center. As an accomplished scholar and teacher in the Department of Communication with extensive administrative experience at the U as a former associate dean and acting dean in Humanities, he knows and appreciates the Center and its profound purpose. Mark is a passionate environmentalist who has a deep understanding of the landscape of the American West and Montana. Congratulations to Prof. Bergstrom on this exciting new endeavor!



# COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES highlights



### Department of English

Equality Utah honored **Kathryn Bond Stockton** with a 2015 Allies Award. As a distinguished professor of English at the University of Utah, she inspires her students to reclaim the word “queer” – a word that previously was used to harm LGBTQ people. Her groundbreaking lectures on queer theory resulted in her winning the prestigious Rosenblatt Prize in 2013.



**Jeff Metcalf**, associate professor of English, won the 2015 Salt Lake City Mayor's Artist Award for Literary Arts. The award was presented at the 2015 Utah Arts Festival for Metcalf's memoir *Requiem for the Living* (University of Utah Press, 2014). The book grew out of a personal challenge after years of battling cancer and defeating prognoses.

Three English students were awarded Fulbright Awards in 2015. **Lindsey Appell**, MA in British and American

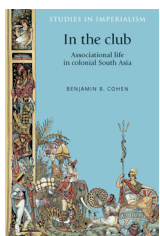
Literature, went to Romania on an English Teaching Assistantship. **Lyuba Basin**, BA in English, went to Argentina on an English Teaching Assistantship. **Adam Giannelli**, Ph.D. in Literature and Creative Writing, went to Uruguay on a research grant. **Meg Day**, Creative Writing Ph.D. candidate in English, has been awarded the prestigious Amy Lowell Travelling Poetry Scholarship, which enables the recipient to spend one year outside of North America for research and writing and submit at least three poems on their return.

### Department of History

In October, the History Department hosted the extremely successful Black Atlantic Symposium that brought together scholars working on the history of the Atlantic, including papers on slavery, religion, trade, and cultural practice in Jamaica, Brazil, Liberia, Santo Domingo, and Santiago de Cuba. The conference featured keynote speaker Professor James Walvin (University of York), a renowned authority on the history of slavery in western culture.

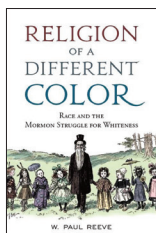


**ShawnaKim Lowey-Ball**, a new faculty member in the History department, was awarded two prizes for her dissertation: the John Addison Porter Prize, Yale University's top academic prize honoring the year's best dissertation in any subject; and Yale's Arthur and Mary Wright Prize for outstanding dissertation in the field of history outside the United States and Europe.



Associate Professor **Benjamin Cohen** published *In the Club: Associational life in colonial South Asia* (Manchester University Press, 2015). Using government records, personal memoirs, private club records, and club histories themselves, the book thematically explores colonial club life.

Associate Professor **W. Paul Reeve** published *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness* (Oxford University Press, 2015), which “explores the ways in which Nineteenth Century Protestant white America made outsiders out of an inside religious group [Mormons].”



The 2015-'16 O. Meredith Wilson Lecture in History was presented by Professor Stuart Schwartz (Yale University) on “Hurricanes, Memory and Welfare States in the Greater Caribbean.” The 2016-'17 speaker is Professor Gary Y. Okihiro (Columbia University) presenting “The Self: dance and history.”

### **Middle East Center**

Associate Professor **Ewa Wasilewska** of the Middle East Center gave a lecture at the Forum for Questioning Minds in November, titled, “ISIS vs Isis: Does the past matter?” She was also a panelist in December on “Art and Belief” at the Springville Museum of Art, which was part of the 30th Annual Spiritual and Religious Art of Utah exhibition.

Assistant Professor **Nathan Paul Devir** (Department of Languages and Literature) received three significant grants for his work relating to the Middle East Center in 2015: a Faculty Research Grant for a project on Holocaust commemoration in Sub-Saharan Africa, a Reed Foundation grant for research on



Judaizing movements in Ivory Coast, and a grant from the American Academy for Jewish Research Special Initiatives grant (co-authored with **Maeera Shreiber** of Religious Studies) for hosting a workshop on “Teaching Jewish Studies across the Curriculum in Utah.”

### **American West Center**

The American West Center has continued and expanded its work with the National Park Service. In addition to the continuing project at Pipe Spring National Monument to collect Navajo oral histories, the Center has just launched a three-year project to research and write an administrative history of Zion National Park.

This year, Center Director **Greg Smoak** completed a history of tribal water use and rights for the Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians, which will be part of the community's efforts to assert a water rights claim with California.

The Center has partnered with the Sorenson Unity Center to launch the “West Side Storytelling Project,” an effort to collect the stories of Salt Lake City's diverse and often overlooked west side neighborhoods. The Center is also a partner in the HIV-AIDS in Utah Oral History Project.

The Utah Vietnam War Oral History Project expands upon the Center's long-standing work with veterans' oral histories by documenting the diverse impacts of the war on Utah and the nation. In addition to veterans interviews, the project focuses on the Vietnamese community in Utah.

### **Department of Communication**

Communication Associate Professor **Jake Jensen** was awarded a \$2.2 million NIH New Innovator Grant for his research to improve skin cancer control. He was also awarded the Golden Monograph Award for the top article in the field of communication by the National Communication Association.



Communication Associate Professor **Kim Mangun** won the 2015 Eugene Asher Award for Distinguished Teaching from the American Historical

Association for her outstanding postsecondary history teaching.

The faculty and graduate students left the 2015 National Communication Association convention with many of the highest honors awarded for the year. Professor and Chair **Kent A. Ono**: Distinguished Scholar Award (Critical and Cultural Studies), the Teaching Award and Distinguished Scholar (Rhetoric and Communication Theory). Professor **Danielle Endres**: Christine L. Oravec Award (Environmental Communication). Professor **Robin Jensen**: Karl R. Wallace Memorial Award, New Investigator Award (Rhetoric and Communication Theory), Distinguished Book Award (Health Communication) and Top Paper Award (Association for the Study of Rhetoric, Science, and Technology). Associate Instructor **Megan McFarlane**: Outstanding Dissertation (Critical and Cultural Studies), Top Student Paper and Top Paper Overall (Organizational Communication). Ph.D. student **Ana Gomez Parga**: Top Student Paper (Latino/a Studies and La Raza Caucus). Ph.D. student **Ian Summers**: Top Student Paper (Visual Communication).



Two Communication faculty, Associate Professor **Sean Lawson** and Professor **Avery Holton**, were awarded an H2

Professorship to teach an innovative series of courses about drones. The professorship offered students a unique, integrated approach to the ethical, legal and social implications of drones while simultaneously gaining hands-on experience building and flying them.

Communication doctoral candidate **Rich Stowell** received the U's Student Veteran of the Year award for his efforts to promote a greater level of understanding of veterans on campus.



### *Environmental Humanities*

The Environmental Humanities graduate program met in Centennial Valley, Montana, for its Environmental Leadership Seminar. They also went to the university's Rio Mesa field station for **Jeff McCarthy's** "Toxic Sublime" course, and pursued service projects like building fences for

food justice in South Salt Lake, and saving sage grouse.

In September, EH hosted the national symposium "The Future of the Environmental Humanities," which welcomed leading scholars from across the U.S. for three days of conversation about this emerging field, its place in the academy and in the environmental struggles that surround us.

Thanks to a generous donor, EH students **Carissa Beckwith** and **Jack Stauss** received EH Summer Engagement grants to support work with environmental non-profits. Carissa worked at the Aldo Leopold Nature Center in Monona, Wisconsin. Jack worked for Utah's own Save Our Canyons.



Professor **Jeff McCarthy's** book *Green Modernism: Nature and the English Novel, 1900 to 1930* (Palgrave Macmillan U.S., 2015) was published in the series titled: *Literatures, Cultures, and the Environment*.

### *Languages & Literature*

Languages and Literature Professor **Richard Chi** is retiring after almost 30 years at the U. He is a nationally and internationally renowned expert on Chinese advanced placement. He is a beloved professor, winning the 2013 ASUU Student Choice Teaching Award. He will be greatly missed!

The Languages and Literature Department is changing its name to the *Department of World Languages and Culture* as of Spring 2016. The department provides instruction in more than 20 different languages and, while keeping their commitment to teaching literature, they now include culture in a much broader sense into their classes and research. The new title aligns the department prominently with the University's advances in global learning.

### *International Studies*

Recent International Studies graduate **Tianna Tu** was endorsed by the U and selected as a national Rhodes Scholar Finalist for 2016. She was also a national Marshall Scholar 2016 finalist.

# DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI 2015

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Each year, the College of Humanities recognizes alumni who have excelled in their fields and made a difference in the world. This past spring, the College was greatly honored to claim Humanities Partnership Board members Anthon Cannon, Jr., and Joan Smith as our own, and honor them both with honorary 2015 Distinguished Alumni Awards.



### *Joan Wasson Smith*

*BA (1963), Sociology, University of Utah*

*MSW (1966), Social Work, University of Utah*

*DSW (1990), Social Work, University of Utah*

Joan has worked tirelessly for peace and justice, and against bias, bigotry, and racism in Utah. She received a B.A. in sociology from the University of Utah, with a concentration in political science. She went on to earn a M.S.W. and D.S.W. from the U's Graduate School of Social Work. Professionally, she worked in private practice as a licensed psychotherapist until she accepted the position of executive director of the National Conference for Community and Justice, Utah Region, from which she recently retired.

Joan has served on community boards, including: the Salt Lake YWCA, Valley Mental Health, Women Concerned About Nuclear War, Utahns United Against the Nuclear Arms Race, and many more. She has traveled all over the world promoting peace and non-violence. Dr. Smith has remained active with the University of Utah as a member of the College of Humanities Partnership Board, by working with students in field education and by visiting as a guest speaker on issues related to diversity and advocacy.

### *Antho S. Cannon, Jr.*

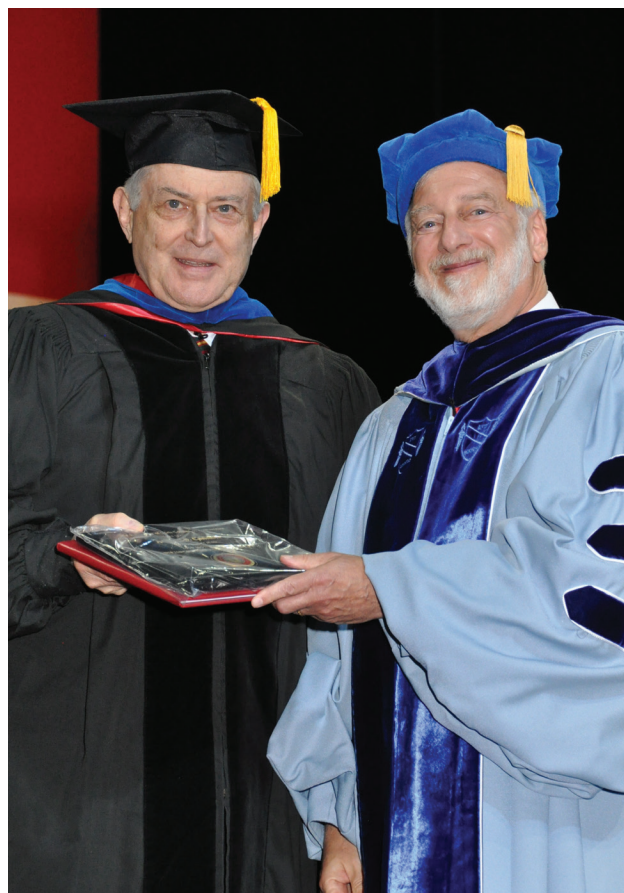
*BS (1962), Political Science, University of Utah*

*JD (1965), Harvard University*

*ML (1971), New York University School of Law*

As a partner with Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, Tony handles federal and state income tax matters, including California unitary tax issues, intercompany pricing and other tax litigation matters, tax problems of banking institutions, tax planning for corporate mergers and acquisitions, tax planning for foreign individuals and corporations doing business in the U.S., corporate and tax problems concerning charitable foundations and other nonprofit organizations, charitable giving and individual tax planning.

Tony has long been active in various Los Angeles charitable and educational organizations, and currently is a director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, chairman of the Philharmonic's Community Engagement Committee and programs, active with respect to programs and policies of the Hollywood Bowl, and is past president of the National Advisory Council, University of Utah. He is currently a member of the University of Utah College of Humanities Partnership Board. He was appointed by the governor as a member of two State of California trade and investment missions to Japan and has been an adjunct professor at Loyola Law School, where he taught the advanced corporate tax course.



# Thank you

## *Thank you to our 2015 partnership board*

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