

The Newsletter of the



Spring 2011/Issue 1

April 11, 2011

Cheryl Carithers, Editor

Greetings, Everyone! At this time in the semester, when we have too much to do, when our students have too much to do, and when we have no time, I am reminded of something Randy Popken, my mentor and friend, used to say: "Teaching writing is a noble pursuit." It is good to remind ourselves that what we do has merit and is important. Too often, our students don't really understand why they need to write well or at all, really. How many times have you heard, "Why do have to learn to write? I'm going to be a _____ and they don't have to write!"? And how many times do you explain to students how they very likely do not know for sure what path their lives will take and how they also very likely need to be proficient writers "just in case..."? It seems Writing Center tutors are in the business of reinforcing this need for effective writing abilities, regardless of what task the students face, irrespective of how students sometimes do not use their time wisely, and in spite of convoluted conversations about what the assignment is actually asking of the writer.

Taking all of these things, and more, into consideration, people of lesser mettle would simply walk away, shaking their heads, muttering under their breath. But we stay. We work. We encourage. We discuss. We teach. We are Writing Center professionals, all of us—directors, assistant directors, professional tutors, graduate tutors,

undergraduate tutors—who are different from each other, who are in institutions that differ from other institutions, who face different student populations, but who have a single goal in mind...to teach writing, for it is, indeed, a "noble pursuit."

Our work as writing center professionals also celebrates scholarship and research. We are fortunate in our organization to have academicians who are committed not only to their own research, but also to helping tutors develop their scholarly pursuits. Each year at this time, the members are treated to scholars who are dedicated to their craft. This spring, the Mary Nell Kivikko Excellence in Scholarship Award winner is Amy Sentementes, a peer tutor at TCU's William L. Adams Center for Writing. Amy, our keynote speaker, will examine the similarities between running a government and working as a writing center tutor. In addition, Skye Solmonson from the University of Texas at Arlington and Rebecca Allen, also from TCU, will present their research as will the winner of the Outstanding Tutor Award, Mike Fraley, a graduate tutor in the TSU Writing Center.

Congratulations to all of these young professionals who represent themselves and their institutions so well!

Alice Newsome
President

Online, Face-to-Face...What Space?

Spring 2011 Conference
Hosted by
Tarleton State University at the Langdon Center
Granbury, Texas
April 15, 2011

Program Schedule

11:30-12:00	Arrival and Registration The Concert Hall, Langdon Center
12:00-12:45	Lunch and Welcome
12:45-1:00	Business Meeting
1:00-1:45	<i>Winner of the Mary Nell Kivikko Excellence in Scholarship Award</i> “Bipartisanship in the Writing Center: The Tutoring Philosophy of a Political Science Major” Amy Sentementes, Texas Christian University
1:45-2:00	Break
2:00	<i>Outstanding Tutor Award</i> Mike Fraley, Tarleton State University
2:00-3:30	<i>Tutor Presentations</i> “Online Submissions: Avoiding an Assembly-Line Mentality” Rebecca Allen, Texas Christian University “The Rhetoric of the Writing Center” Mike Fraley, Tarleton State University “Separation Leads to More Connection: The Importance of Distinct Spaces in a Writing Center” Skye Solmonson, University of Texas at Arlington

Parking

Parking is available in the Stockton Street parking lot or in the lot between the Concert Hall and the Rock House.

Our Keynote Speaker



Amy Sentementes, this year's Mary Nell Kivikko Excellence in Scholarship Award winner, is a sophomore political science major and economics minor at Texas Christian University. Intrigued by the structure of the American government, Amy hopes to attend graduate school in pursuit of a doctoral degree in American politics. She hopes to someday become a professor of American politics, specializing in elections and political behavior. Amy extends her passion for politics outside of the academic realm, as she frequently enjoys discussing current events and analyzing the causes and effects of recent election results. A first-year tutor at the Texas Christian University Center for Writing, Amy has always possessed a passion for the English language, enjoying writing, reading, and grammar. Assisting students with their writing has been an incredibly rewarding process, resulting in the development of friendships and mentorships with students. While not studying at TCU or working at the Center for Writing, Amy enjoys spending time with friends and participating in events on campus and at her church. Originally from Coppell, Texas, Amy also greatly treasures her close proximity to her amazing family, both immediate and extended, who currently reside in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

Excerpt from Amy's winning proposal titled "Bipartisanship in the Writing Center: The Tutoring Philosophy of a Political Science Major"

"James Madison, one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, evaluates the strengths of a republican government in his essay *Federalist Number 10*. Madison addresses the concerns of factions within a government, the ability for one interest group to suppress the interests of a less powerful group. A republican government, Madison argues, will allow multiple factions to coexist and prevent the majority faction from assuming a tyrannical role in society. In a center for writing, multiple tutoring theories exist, with active, hands-on theories assuming the role of liberal faction and minimalist theories assuming the role of a conservative faction. A center for writing should resemble a republican government, allowing tutors to utilize an array of approaches during a tutorial. Because each individual student who participates in a tutorial possesses diverse strengths and weaknesses, tutors should not govern their tutorials according to a sole tutoring approach. Like Madison's ideal republican government, where conflicting political ideologies can peacefully coexist, conflicting tutoring ideologies should exist in the writing center, allowing tutors to develop a philosophy independent of partisan affiliation and reference to a single approach only."

About Our Presenters

Rebecca Allen is an English and strategic communications double-major at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. She is originally from New Braunfels, Texas, and after early graduation Rebecca hopes to pursue a graduate degree. In addition to English literature and writing, she is passionate about Biblical studies, dance, and design.



This is Rebecca's second year working in the William L. Adams Center for Writing under Dr. Steve Sherwood. She considers working in the writing center to be both a blessing and a learning experience, and she knows she will carry many of the lessons she's learned with her into her personal and professional futures.



Mike Fraley is the recipient of this year's Outstanding Tutor Award. Mike recently received his Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Tarleton State University. Throughout his studies, he worked as an undergraduate tutor in the Tarleton State University Writing Center. Mike's focus is in rhetoric and creative writing, and he received the Outstanding Contributor Award for his submissions to the Tarleton *Anthology*. He is also the current president of Tarleton's Creative Writing Club. Following graduation, Mike accepted a Graduate Assistantship with the English department, and he now works in a supervisory capacity for the Tarleton State University Writing Center. Upon completion

of his Master's Degree, he plans to pursue a career as a writing center administrator, educator, and writer.

Skye Solmonson has worked at the University of Texas Arlington Writing Center for almost 3 years now. She recently presented at the South Central Writing Center Association conference in February, which was her first conference. Skye is an English graduate student working on a master's degree. Her areas of study are posthumanism, animal studies, and environmental studies.



News from the Region

The **DBU Writing Center** has added a Twitter account to its Facebook online presence. The Center's intention is to share a writing tip or quote daily through Twitter, and one can find interesting articles, words, and photos on the Facebook page. Find them on Facebook as "The DBU Writing Center" or on Twitter as "DBU UWC." Friend or follow them there!

Three of **Texas Christian University W.L. Adams Center for Writing** peer tutors were awarded 11 advanced creative writing honors on March 29, 2011, in the annual university competition.

Grace Palmer won the C.S. Lewis Prize for Christian Literature and the Nancy Evans Memorial Award for Texas Writing.

Kellie Trapnell won the David John Ball Memorial Prize for a writing portfolio, the Kurt Lee Honbeck Award for Poetry, and the Amon Carter Museum of American Art 50th Anniversary Creative Writing Award. Kellie placed second in the Bob Fry Satire Award competition, as well as the Nancy Evans Memorial competition.

Travis Freeman won the Bill Camfield Memorial Award for Humor and Satire, the Mortar Board Award in Literary Criticism, placing third in the Harry Opperman Short Story Award competition. In the Amon Carter Museum's creative writing competition, Travis received an honorable mention.

Kellie and **Travis** are both "ELF" scholars, recipients of the English Department's prestigious "Excellence in Literary Fiction" scholarships funded by novelist and TCU alum Sandra Brown.

In February, **Dr. Dave Kuhne**, Associate Director of the William L. Adams Center for Writing, read a story titled "Ridin' My Thumb to Mexico" at the Angelo State literary festival in honor of Elmer Kelton. The story has been accepted for publication in an anthology titled *Texas Soundtrack* to be released by Ink Brush Press late this year. In March, at the CCTE conference in Stephenville, Dave read a paper titled "Chaos, Community, and Law in American Post Apocalyptic Novels."

Dr. Steve Sherwood, Director of the William L. Adams Center for Writing, presented papers at four conferences this winter and spring:

"A Career in the Writing Center: Entering Academe through the Back Door." South Central Writing Centers Association. Houston, TX. 19 February 2011.

"Intersections of Wit and Rhetoric: Humor as a Rhetorical Enterprise." North East Texas Humor Association. Dallas, TX. 28 January 2010

“Field Guide.” (personal essay). College Conference of Teachers of English. Stephenville, TX. 5 March 2011.

“The Sophistic Writing Consultant: Learning from Pre-Socratic and Postmodern Rhetoricians.” International Writing Centers Association Conference. 5 November 2010. Baltimore, MD.

“Advanced Writing Students and Writing Emphasis: Creating and Teaching Mini-courses in the Disciplines.” International Writing Centers Association Conference. 4 November 2010. Baltimore, MD. With **Cheryl Carithers** and **Amy Hermanson**.

Steve was elected a Councilor by the membership of CCTE. The position carries a three-year term on CCTE’s executive board. Steve also ran for vice president of IWCA, but was defeated in a run-off election.

The **TCC NE Writing and Skills Centers** are hosting a series of informative talks on the use of rhetoric in everyday life. Members of the English faculty present topics designed to demonstrate the use of rhetoric outside the English essay. Lectures topics include Understanding Stories, Facebook and Twitter, Popular Culture, Poetry, Media, and Forbidden Grammar. The series will conclude at the end of April.

Current NTWCA Officers

President: Alice Newsome, Tarleton State University

Vice-President: Ben Sword, Tarleton State University

Secretary: Ka Riley, Dallas Baptist University

Treasurer: Elizabeth Parrish, TCC-Northeast

Newsletter Editor: Cheryl Carithers, Texas Christian University

Web-Spinner: Elizabeth Parrish and Angela Petitt, TCC-Northeast

Archivist: Angela Petitt, TCC-Northeast

Invitation to Join the North Texas Writing Centers Association

The North Texas Writing Centers Association serves writing centers of the region as a clearinghouse for exchanging information, as a forum for discussing important writing center issues, and as a means of promoting the professional status of writing center personnel.

Membership in the NTWCA includes directors and staff of writing centers and persons interested in writing centers. Membership can be either institutional (\$50 for a single campus institution, \$25 for each campus in a multiple campus institution), or individual (\$10). Institutional memberships include writing center staff and tutors at the institution.

Name: _____

Individual Membership: _____ Institutional Membership: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Institutional Address: _____

Please indicate your profile:

____ I am a Writing Center Director.

____ I am a Writing Center Staff Member (professional consultant, graduate tutor, or undergraduate peer tutor).

____ I am interested in Writing Centers (past director, faculty member, student ...).

____ Other: _____

**Please Send Dues To: TCC NE English Department
 Attn: Elizabeth Parrish
 828 W. Harwood Rd.
 Hurst, Texas 76054**

CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTH TEXAS WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION
(REVISED SPRING 2007)

- I. The North Texas Writing Centers Association serves writing centers of the region as a clearinghouse for exchanging information, as a forum for discussing important writing center issues, and as a means of promoting the professional status of writing center personnel.
- II. Membership in the NTWCA includes directors and staff of writing centers and persons interested in writing centers. Membership can be multiple-campus institutions (\$25 per campus), single-campus institutions (\$50), or individual (\$10). Institutional memberships include writing center staff and tutors at the institution.
- III. NTWCA assesses dues annually at the fall meeting. Memberships run from September through August. Monies collected are used for communication, publication, and conference expenses.
- IV. The right to vote and to hold office extends to all individual and institutional members.
- V. The following elected officers serve a two-year term and may be elected for multiple, two-year terms:
 - a. President: The president chairs all meetings, facilitates the operations of the association, and serves as co-chair of the Membership Committee.
 - b. Vice-President: The vice-president functions as program chair and assumes the duties of the president in the president's absence.
 - c. Newsletter Editor: The newsletter editor gathers information, edits articles, publishes the newsletter, and handles mailings.
 - d. Secretary: The secretary takes minutes at meetings and reports at executive board meetings and conferences.
 - e. Treasurer: The treasurer collects dues, records memberships, reports finances and memberships at meetings, and serves as co-chair of the Membership Committee.
 - f. Immediate Past President: The immediate past president serves as an advisor and assists other officers in discharging their duties.
- VI. The president appoints the following officers for two-year terms:
 - a. Web Spinner: The web spinner maintains the NTWCA website page.
 - b. Archivist: The archivist serves as custodian of the organization's records.
- VII. The Membership Committee is co- chaired by the president and treasurer and consists of three volunteers from the organization membership. The membership committee promotes involvement by serving as the NTWCA's outreach liaisons, contacting potential members at colleges, universities, and secondary schools in the area, and conducting an annual membership drive.
- VIII. The Executive Board, consisting of the six elected officers and two appointees, meets at least twice per calendar year to plan meetings and conferences. When officers and

appointees are selected at the spring meeting, they immediately assume their duties and plan the schedule of events for the following year.

- IX. If an officer resigns, the Executive Board will appoint an interim officer to serve out the officer's term. If the resigning officer's term has more than one year remaining, the association will elect a new officer at the next regular meeting to serve out the remainder of the term.
- X. The NTWCA sponsors two conferences per calendar year.
- XI. This constitution may be amended or replaced by a majority vote of the executive board and membership at any business meeting.