

## The Newsletter of the



Spring 2009/Issue 1

April 8, 2009

Cheryl Carithers, Editor

As we look forward to the spring conference, I can't help but be reminded of how we come to this profession. Through a confluence of events and happenstances, so it seems, we often land exactly where we need to be. As an undergraduate, I knew I wanted to teach, probably in junior high or high school, which I did for several years. I did not have any idea I would wind up in a college setting, much less as the director of a writing center. I expect most of you have had similar paths, where you are in the right place at the right time and where, most importantly, you find mentors who can see something in you that you can't see yourself. How fortunate it is that we have these opportunities in life.

Over the years, I have come to appreciate so many of you and the spirit with which you go about your work in your writing centers. Additionally, my hope for all of us is that our colleges and universities recognize and respect the contributions our writing centers make. Though our main focus is the students we serve, many of our writing centers offer opportunities for peer tutors and graduate tutors to gain valuable experience which can benefit them in their academic and career pursuits. It is important, then, that our writing centers are known as places of professionalism, collegiality, and commitment. I urge all of you to let your administrators know of your hard work,

your dedication to the students you serve, and your contributions to your college or university.

And, as members of this organization, we are in the unique position to promote scholarship both for the students we serve and for the tutors and consultants who work with us. Carrie Hamilton, an undergraduate tutor at Dallas Baptist University, is this year's recipient of the Mary Nell Kivikko Excellence in Scholarship award. Carrie's presentation, "We're All in This Together... Write On!" examines how writing centers are part of a larger community that values academics and scholarship. Also, Aileen Blum, an undergraduate tutor from Tarleton State University is the recipient of the Outstanding Tutor Award. Aileen has worked in Tarleton's writing center for two years and has been an extraordinary member of the tutorial staff. Aileen's presentation will offer a look back, a reflection, of her time working in the writing center.

In closing, let me say that I am proud to be part of this organization. I hope you finish the semester with high energy and in good spirits. Have a wonderful spring and summer!

Alice Newsome  
President  
North Texas Writing Centers Association

# Connections and Reflections

2009 Spring Conference hosted by  
Tarleton State University at  
the Langdon Center  
Granbury, Texas  
April 17, 2009

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## Program Schedule

- 11:30-12:00      Arrival and Registration  
                         The Concert Hall, Langdon Center
- 12:00-12:45      Lunch and Welcome  
                         Joel Back, Program Specialist, Langdon Center  
                         Lunch provided by the TSU Writing Center and  
                         catered by The Coffee Grinder in Granbury
- 12:45-1:30        Winner of the Mary Nell Kivikko Excellence in Scholarship Award  
                         Carrie Hamilton, Dallas Baptist University

### **"We're All in This Together... Write On!"**

- 1:30-1:45        Break
- 1:45-2:00        Business Meeting
- 2:00-3:00        Outstanding Tutor Award and Presentation  
                         Aileen Blum, Tarleton State University

### **"Casualties in the Tutoring Field"**

- Faculty Presentation  
Michael Dooley, Tarleton State University

### **"Let Students Speak: The Use of the Oral Prospectus in Written Composition"**

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

Dora Lee Langdon Cultural and Educational Center Website  
<http://www.tarleton.edu/~langdoncenter/#top>

Map  
<http://www.tarleton.edu/~langdoncenter/Map.pdf>

## *About Our Presenters*



**Carrie Hamilton**, the 2009 Mary Nell Kivikko Award winner, is a graduating senior at Dallas Baptist University. She is an English major and hopes to someday teach either secondary or college-level English. The beauty of language has always entranced this 22 year-old from Arlington, Texas; even before she could read herself, Carrie took great delight from hearing others read to her. She would pick up a book, carry it to the nearest adult, and sit expectantly as the story carried away her imagination. As she grew older, she was inspired to study English even further. This interest is what brought her to the

University Writing Center at DBU in the fall of 2006. She had heard about the UWC in passing, and this tiny corner of the campus soon became like a second home to Carrie. As a writing consultant, she learns more each day and is amazed at all the experiences she has had in the UWC. She feels she is blessed by the great staff members with whom she works.

When she is not studying or working with English, Carrie keeps a busy schedule. She is involved in a ministry called Young Life, which reaches out to high school students in Arlington. As a volunteer leader at Arlington High School, Carrie has shared her love of life and her Lord with many students. Carrie is also a substitute teacher in Arlington, where she has been exposed to many teaching situations that keep her on her toes, while giving her some great (and sometimes challenging) experiences. When she is not out and about with these activities, Carrie loves spending time with her family. Music abounds in the Hamilton household, from the lively twang of a banjo to the melodic strum of a mountain dulcimer. Her parents and siblings all love to spend time playing music, talking, and joking together. And when the busyness finally settles down and nothing else is going on, Carrie loves to sit and watch her three cats romp around the house, getting into all sorts of mischief, as she quietly reads a book.

Carrie intends to continue her research in English, with plans of graduate school in the future, hoping for more opportunities to join the writing community in academic dialogue.



**Aileen Blum**, this year's Outstanding Tutor Award winner, is a Presidential Honors scholar who will graduate this spring from Tarleton State University (TSU) with a Bachelor's in English and Minors in History and Psychology. Along with being voted the Outstanding Tutor of the North Texas Writing Centers Association, she has been voted the Outstanding Graduate of the English Department at TSU for this spring semester. In addition, she has been a dedicated tutor of the TSU Writing Center for the past two years.

During this time, she has taken on the role of supervisor of the Writing Center and has greatly promoted campus awareness of the Writing Center in the past year with fliers catering towards both students and instructors. She is excited to be a prospective student of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and will be moving there this coming fall.

## *Writing Center News*

**Alice Newsome**, assistant professor from Tarleton, visited Dallas Baptist University in February. Her presentation, “The Writing Center and Composition Theory: Best Practices,” centered on how Writing Centers can effectively use composition theories to improve tutorials. Alice was the guest of Ka Riley and the Dallas Baptist University Writing Center.

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On April 3, **Dr. Steve Sherwood**, director of the TCU Center for Writing, presented a paper titled “Seven Ways to Survive Tough Tutorials (and Last Long Enough to Enjoy Your Work)” at the South Central Writing Centers Association Conference in Georgetown, Texas. With Pam Childers, he presented “Comedy Night in the Writing Center” to the International Writing Centers Association Conference in Las Vegas (October 30, 2008). His other presentations included “Novel Writing 101” and “Kick-ass Opening Lines, Beads, and Packages of Experience” to Writing Down the Brazos (Granbury, Texas, February 27-28), “Theories of Tutoring” and “Packages of Experience as an Approach to Creative and Academic Writing” the Pendulum Writer’s Group (Texas Women’s University, Denton, Texas, October 21), and “The Role of Research in the Novel” to the Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers (San Angelo, Texas, September 27).

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**Cynthia Shearer**, a writing specialist with the TCU Center for Writing and a two-time novelist, will be the keynote speaker at the North Central Texas College creative writing day in Gainesville on April 24. She will talk about the changing landscape for fiction writing caused by technological developments and the poor economy. Her article “Janice Joplin: Looking for her in Port Arthur, Texas” recently appeared in the *Oxford American Book of Great Music Writing* (2008).

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**Cheryl Carithers**, professional writing consultant in the Texas Christian University William L. Adams Center for Writing, will co-present at the upcoming National Popular Culture & American Culture Associations Conference in New Orleans. The presentation is titled “Male Nurse Stereotypes in Popular Culture: When Will the Paradigm Shift?”

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Be sure to check out these upcoming writing center publications!

*Outside In: Writing To and From the Center* by Lee Herrick, et al.  
Prentice Hall, July 11, 2009

*The Idea of a Writing Laboratory* by Neal Leaner, Ed. D  
Southern Illinois University Press, July 15, 2009

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.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## ***NTWCA Officers***

**President:** Alice Newsome, Tarleton State University

**Vice-President:** Ben Sword, Tarleton State University

**Secretary:** Angela Pettit, Texas Women's University

**Treasurer:** Elizabeth Parrish, TCC-Northeast

**Newsletter Editor:** Cheryl Carithers, Texas Christian University

**Web-Spinner:** Rochelle Gregory, Texas Women's University

**Archivist:** Cynthia Shearer, Texas Christian University

**Past President:** Cheryl Carithers, Texas Christian University

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**Alice Newsome**, assistant professor of English, has a B.S. in Counseling and English from Texas A&M University-Commerce and holds an M.Ed. from Tarleton State University, with specialized courses taken post-Master's in rhetoric, composition, and literature. She co-directs the Writing Center and the Basic Writing Program at Tarleton., and she teaches basic writing, composition courses, and literature. In recent years, she has presented at NTWCA, CCTE, and SCWCA conferences. Her research interests include the examination of the psychology of the basic writer and the application of writing center theory to the composition classroom (individualized instruction in the classroom). For a number of years, she has helped select and train graduate assistants who work with the basic writers and in the writing center.

**Ben Sword** is the Vice President of the NTWCA. Before serving in the capacity of Vice President, Ben held the office of Treasurer for 2 years. He is an instructor at Tarleton State University and Co-Director of the Writing Center, along with Alice Newsome. Ben is enrolled in the Ph. D. program at Texas Women's University.

**Angela Pettit** is a graduate student at Texas Women's University. She is currently working on her Ph D. there.

**Elizabeth Parrish** holds a B.A. in English from the University of North Texas. She spent many years working in fields unrelated to education until she accepted a short term position teaching English in China. Returning after six months abroad, her renewed interests in the teaching field lead her to pursue a teaching certificate. She accepted the position of Instructional Associate at the Northeast campus of Tarrant County College where she directs the Writing Center. Elizabeth recently completed the notable TCC Leadership

program. She is coordinating the addition of a workshop and lecture series to her Writing Center.

**Cynthia Shearer** holds an M.A. in English from the University of Mississippi and is the author of two works of fiction, *The Wonder Book of the Air* (Pantheon /Vintage 1996) and *The Celestial Jukebox* (Shoemaker &Hoard/Avalon, 2005). Her work has appeared in such publications as *Tri-Quarterly*, *The Missouri Review*, *The Quarterly*, *The Oxford American*, *The Hungry Mind Review* (now *Ruminator*), and *Speakeasy*. Awards for her short fiction include Honorable Mention in Best American Short Stories, and inclusion in various anthologies such as *Beyond O'Connor* (University of Georgia Press, 2003) and *The Best of the Oxford American*. Her first novel won the 1996 prize for fiction from the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters. She was the recipient of a fiction fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2000. In October of 2005, her *Speakeasy* essay, based on her six years of experience as the curator of the William Faulkner home Rowan Oak, appeared in the thirtieth anniversary issue of the *Pushcart Prize Anthology*.

**Cheryl Carithers** earned a B.A. in English and history from Tarleton State University. Specializing in rhetoric and composition, she also received her M.A. in English from Tarleton. In addition to teaching, Ms. Carithers has worked as a professional editor. Her research interests include the history of composition, feminist studies in composition and literature as well as writing center and developmental writing center theory. She is currently a Writing Consultant in the William L. Adams Center for Writing and an instructor in the TCU English Department.

**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.