

## NEW NEWSLETTER UNVEILED

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the CLS newsletter! Today you hold the newsletter in your hands. In the future you will be able to access it through your computer, iPad, iPod or another electronic device. It is an incredibly fast-moving communications world in which we live.



Capstone captures the essence of many of the college's 2011-12 goals. One is the pursuit of "Inclusive Excellence," focusing on "fostering greater diversity, equity, inclusion and accountability at every level of university life." Other goals are greater opportunities for students and faculty to engage in international studies, undergraduate and graduate research with faculty, and providing students with greater access to a diverse, high-quality education. You will see these themes throughout the articles.

I also want to introduce you to the newest member of the CLS Dean's Office: Dr. Julia Johnson, Associate Dean and Director of the School of Arts & Communication.

Julia comes from California by way of Rhode Island and Texas. Professionally, she has always balanced the roles of teacher-scholar-administrator. In addition to teaching undergraduate and graduate students, she has directed large general education courses, developed and implemented faculty development programs for graduate instructors, and chaired an academic department. Her primary areas of responsibility in CLS include grants administration, fundraising, marketing and public relations, facilities management and planning, alumni relations, and faculty-led study abroad programs.

We're excited about Julia joining our office leadership and you may hear from her soon. We look forward to providing you future updates about the college. Stay tuned for some exciting information!

Sincerely,

*Ruthann E. Benson*

Ruthann Benson, Dean, UW-L College of Liberal Studies

# A shot at something new

## Nels Johnson, '10, donates photography equipment to the UW-L art department

Photography projects for students are coming into clearer focus thanks to a gracious alum.

By the time Nels Johnson graduated in spring 2010, the art major's interest had transformed to metal sculpture. He didn't want his photography equipment to go unused so he donated it to the university's Department of Art.

Among the equipment: various formats of cameras and lenses; tripods; flash units; film and print development supplies; print washer; darkroom trays; beakers; timers; an Omega enlarger; a UV Exposure Unit; various alternative process tools; photography books; and camera bags.

"There is a much greater need for equipment in the photography department

than what my gift would ever begin to fulfill," admits Johnson. But, he knew his equipment would replace worn pieces and add to the department's inventory. And he hoped it would allow students to explore additional forms of photography equipment while creating their artwork.

That's what has happened. Art Photography Assistant Professor Linda Levinson says some of the medium format cameras were new to the students. And, the UV light box provided students with equipment they would not have experienced had it not been for Johnson's donation.

"The UV Exposure Unit has been an invaluable tool in teaching "Ex-

perimental Photography" this fall," notes Levinson. "Students used it to make Cyanotype prints, Van Dyke Brown prints and even Chlorophyll prints that are developed under UV light."

Levinson says the generous donation hasn't gone

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Zach Iler, a photography minor, uses the Omega 5500 Dichroic Enlarger donated by alumnus Nels Johnson.



# Probing the world of digital media

We take our cell phones for granted. And, we enjoy the easy access Facebook, Twitter and other social mediums give us to friends and family.

But, what impact is today's digital media actually having on society? English Assistant Professor Rob Wilkie tackles that question in his book, *The Digital Condition: Class and Culture in the Information Network*.

**Q:** How did you get interested in cultural and digital studies?

**A:** My interest in cultural and digital studies is the result of courses I was able to take as an undergraduate. I was fortunate enough to have teachers who were excited about ideas and introduced me to some of the central classic and contemporary thinkers in literature, arts and philosophy.

In particular, encountering the work of writers from Plato to Jacques Derrida and Laurence Sterne to the graphic novelist "Los. Bros. Hernandez" challenged me to think more deeply about the world. Along with appreciating culture, they taught me to start thinking about how literary and cultural texts interpreted the world and shaped our perceptions of it.

The study of digital culture is an extension of the foundations established by my undergraduate teachers and I try to bring the same excitement and interest in ideas to the courses I teach. This is why I believe strong humanities programs are

so important. Through the study of literature, history, arts and languages, the humanities provides students with the increasingly rare opportunity to think about the past, present, and future in all of its depth and complexity.

**Q:** How has social media changed our lives?

**A:** One of the issues I talk about in the book is that understanding technological developments requires one to think not just in terms of the immediate impact of new technologies, but also in terms of the social and historical factors which shape their development and use. Too often it appears as if technological advances arrive without a history, if not being presented as the driving force of history itself. However, in my book I argue that it is society that drives technology, not technology that drives society. In this sense, I propose that we have to focus on the "social" in the concept of "social media." Social media is shaped by the same contradictions that we see in society.

On the one hand, the

development of social media is driven by the need to find new ways of communicating and exchanging ideas in an increasingly global world. On the other hand, the promotion of social media most often focuses on the spontaneity and brevity of the exchange, which can limit what people imagine is possible in terms of new technologies.

For example, through technological advances the costs of providing access to all of the world's information are continually being lowered and new online communities are emerging all the time. This is often done at the expense of the health and wellbeing of the people who put together the technologies, write the code, ship the packages ... and new barriers are being put into place all the time to restrict access to knowledge.

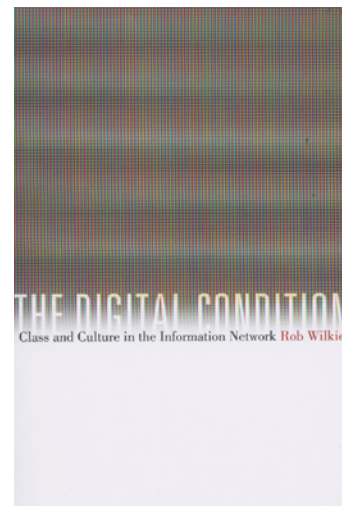
**Q:** What kind of impact has the increased use of cell phones and messaging had?

**A:** Cell phones and (text and instant) messaging are driven by the same historical forces as social media. In the same ways that

social media reflects the contradictions of society, so does the growth of cell phones. For instance, we often hear about people dropping "landlines" for cell phones as if the options were simply a matter of consumer choice, but there are still rural areas in the U.S., not to speak of areas in the global South, which have limited to almost no access to landlines. Thus, while cell phones offer an opportunity to provide people with access to the global information network, at the same time this "access" is determined by cost and thus is shaped by issues of social class, which means that even as the technology becomes available, there are whole areas of the world who will still be left behind.

**Q:** Are we at the beginning, middle or end of massive changes in society because of digital communication?

**A:** I think that we are only at the beginning of dramatic changes in society, but whether for the better or worse will be up to us and future generations.



## robert wilkie file

- > Assistant Professor of English
- > Three years at UW-L
- > Bachelor's: Hofstra University, 1996
- > Doctorate: University at Albany, SUNY, 2008
- > Find Wilkie's book *The Digital Condition: Class and Culture in the Information Network* at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or go to <http://bit.ly/yXk3jJ> for excerpts from the book.

## STUDENT PROFILE: JIMMY JEWSON FRESHMAN, MUSIC EDUCATION

**Q:** What do you see as the biggest challenge of being a first-year student?

**A:** It was making new friends. I was one of very few students from Fond du Lac and I missed my high school friends. It took me longer than I anticipated to make friends who were more than just “acquaintances.”

**Q:** Have you found resources to overcome these challenges?



**A:** Getting involved in activities around campus like Jazz Ensemble and Wind Ensemble really helped me connect with other students. I was surrounded by people with similar interests. Once I

felt comfortable enough to open up to my fellow music students (especially the trumpets), I was able to easily make a number of really awesome friends.

**Q:** What activities do you participate in on campus and in the community?

**A:** I am involved in Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble I, Jazz Combo and Hmong Pre-College Tutoring.

**Q:** Have you had any major moments of self-discovery at UW-L?

**A:** The realization that I really love playing the trumpet. Playing an hour a day used to be more than enough for me, but now if I only practice an hour I feel like a slacker. The mentality with which I approach the trumpet is totally different from how I approached it prior to college. I am more professional and methodical, and my short-tempered

practice habits are a thing of the past. I owe this to Dr. Tom Seddon.

**Q:** What are your goals after graduation?

**A:** Graduate school for my master’s and doctorate in trumpet performance. I will pursue a career as a professional trumpet player and/or collegiate trumpet teacher. My dream job would be to tour with a professional jazz ensemble or to play with a professional orchestra.

## A look at urban culture

How does city life affect culture?  
A UW-La Crosse faculty member  
Kim DeFazio explores that question.

**Q:** Why write the book?

**A:** We live at an unprecedented moment in urban history. Globally speaking, more people now live in the city than in the country (a tipping point reached only in the past few years) and thus urban space is now the dominant space of human habitation worldwide. The city is an ancient form of human habitat, reaching back to the earliest urban centers of Mesopotamia. Today, when urban life is characterized by complex cultural differences and social inequalities that often seem to defy all patterns, I think studying the depiction of the city in literature and culture is particularly instructive.

**Q:** What is the main argument?

**A:** The city has always been the space of difference — differ-

ent foods, classes, races, lifestyles, modes of leisure and work, etc. This is especially the case in an increasingly global world. But one of the main arguments in literary and cultural theory is that because of the proliferation of urban differences and their complexity, the city has become virtually “unreadable.”

Unlike the medieval city or even the industrial city, in which differences were tied to identifiable patterns and clear structures of inequality, today’s city is chaotic, fluid and unpredictable, the dominant argument goes. It is a “patchwork” space, as one urban theorist puts it; and in the absence of any apparent patterns or clear, definable structures, we lack conceptual tools to understand the city.

My argument is that the city is a space where the human senses are constantly refashioned by

the city’s daily rhythm of social relations. Urban experience (both what and how one senses in the city) is profoundly shaped by the material relations of the city.

**Q:** What in your research for the book surprised you the most?

**A:** While many significant changes have taken place between the modern industrial and the “postmodern,” “postindustrial” city of today, some very similar social divisions can be found just below the surface of culture. The city is often represented as the space of the new—new ways of working, living, shopping and so on. As a result, we might imagine images of past cities, such as the London of Wordsworth’s *The Prelude*, have little to do with the present. But when one begins studying the connection of urban

culture and material conditions, one begins to see familiar patterns emerge. Similar class divisions of Wordsworth’s London can be found in 21st century representations of Los Angeles.

These patterns are not always visible. We often see only their effects. This is why we need conceptual/theoretical knowledge that helps make connections between the sensory and cultural effects of social dynamics and the underlying relations bringing them about.

In an increasingly global era it is important to develop a dialectical understanding of the senses, of the way they both shape what we experience and are themselves shaped by larger forces outside the reach of the senses.

### CITY OF THE SENSES

Urban Culture and Urban Space

Kimberly DeFazio

#### kim defazio file

- > Assistant Professor of English, specialization in British Romanticism
- > 1-1/2 years at UW-L
- > Bachelor’s: Syracuse University
- > Master’s: Binghamton University
- > Doctorate: Stony Brook University
- > Find DeFazio’s book at [www.palgrave.com](http://www.palgrave.com)



Charles Lee



# Have you heard?

The Oral History Program is going digital. Discs are replacing reel-to-reel tapes in UW-L's Oral History collection. The switch not only saves space, but time for historians collecting the inspiring stories and the researchers trying to find them.

With reel-to-reel tapes, oral interviews had to be transcribed, word-for-word. Researchers had to read entire documents to find specific historical references in the lengthy interviews. With digital indexing, researchers can simply click on words or phrases indexed from the interviews and instantly hear what they're researching.

"That instant access has considerable value over transcriptions that were never indexed," explains History Professor Charles Lee. "The digitizing of the interviews allows us to be more true to the source of the history."

More than 3,000 hours of interviews are recorded on tapes in Murphy Library's Special Collections. Most will stay that way. Some topical collections —

**History Professor Charles Lee says the project has the longest record of active interviewing in Wisconsin.**

like remembrances of 100 UW-L alums and 50 Mississippi River "rats" (lifetime residents) — are being converted to CDs. All future interviews will be recorded digitally.

Lee says by digitalizing interviews, eventually researchers will be able to make cross-references among collection topics. "That's a big step," he notes.

Oral historians plan to add interviews of Gays Mills residents relocating the flood-prone town on the Kickapoo River. Also, interviews conducted in Tanzania last summer and ones set for Egypt this summer will give the program its first worldly sounds.

"It's really history outside the book," says Lee.

## UW-L'S ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

was founded in the mid-1970s by History Department faculty member Howard Fredricks, who anchored WKBT TV-8's nightly newscast. The 3,000+ hour collection archived in Murphy Library's Special Collections includes Hmong refugee experiences; European ethnic groups; turn-of-the-century small city life; rural Midwestern life and culture; '70s and '80s local high school garage bands; local womens' history; 100 interviews with UW-L alumni; and environmental history of western Wisconsin.

## Top prof



Greg Wegner

"This award, in the end, belongs to them," said History Professor Greg Wegner, the state's top educator, referring to his students. "I wouldn't be here without them. My ability to teach, research, write and publish is refreshed and renewed through teaching students."

Wegner accepted the 2011 Wisconsin Professor of the Year award in Washington, D.C., in November. He was selected from college educators across the U.S. for the award from The Carnegie

Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Wegner, a UW-L graduate, has been teaching at his alma mater since 1989 and has conducted research on the Holocaust for more than 40 years.

He says questions are what 'make a university tick' and a good teacher respects the power of the question.

Wegner started asking his own questions about society and

history as a child growing up in Bangor. He would check out books at Murphy library, start up conversations with college students and ask local WWII veterans about their war experience — particularly what happened in concentration camps. When he came to college in 1968, teachers like the late history professor Bill Vettes inspired him to continue to dig into history.

"It goes to show you how a good teacher can impact another person's life," he says.

unnoticed by the students. "They were so impressed with the donated UV Exposure Unit and the alternative process tools that they want to rename what is currently the Special Projects Room to the Nels Johnson Special Projects Room."

Levinson says students will submit their work with prints created by some of the donated equipment for their minor. "Ultimately, this experience may contribute to their viability in the photographic profession," she notes.

Essentially, all the photography courses utilize the

equipment Johnson donated – just as he had hoped.

During his classes, Johnson met many other students who were just as excited and devoted to their learning of the world of art as he was. "Their passion and courage in exploring themselves and expressing what they found in their art was often an inspiration to me, and helped me in turn explore myself," he says. "Great art is after all, in my view, an expression of the self."

With that excitement, Johnson also saw the impact of a shrinking university budget from the state. That's

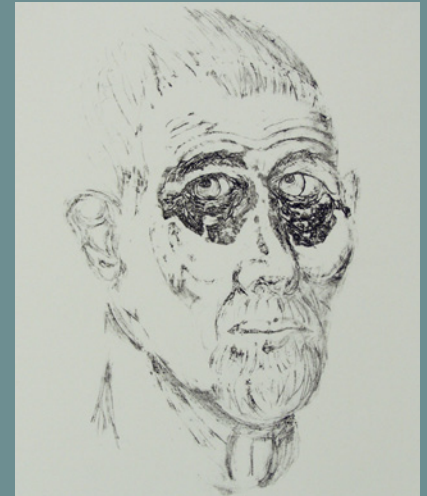
why he donated his photography equipment and encourages others to think about how they could help too.

"There is without a doubt a great need for resources the university is unable to provide," he explains. "Any help would be greatly appreciated and is needed by the students and instructors."

Johnson commends Art faculty for providing students a quality experience to help them discover themselves and their talents. "The faculty and staff in the Department of Art are a very dedicated bunch," he notes.

## WHO IS NELS JOHNSON?

When Nels Johnson began attending UW-L it was only to take a few photography classes. He developed an interest in photography while stationed in Japan as a U.S. Navy enlistee. He had planned to attend photography classes after being discharged, but a waiting job with the CB&Q Railroad took him down that track.



As Johnson's career with the railroad began to end and retirement approached, he decided it was time to rekindle his interest in photography. He began taking photo classes at UW-L and quickly rediscovered his enjoyment with photography. He realized photography could be an art form rather than just capturing scenes.

His love in photography is with film. But, digital photography was becoming popular. "I could see that film photography was soon to be relegated to the archives containing the previous types of photography some of which film replaced," Johnson says.

Upset that film, his love, was being replaced, he began exploring other art mediums to fulfill his art degree requirements.

"Photography is part of the two-dimensional forms of art," he notes. "I stayed in the 2-D world for awhile through the medium of printmaking which quickly became my next love."

Talking with other students, he discovered the world of 3-D art. "But that was unfamiliar and I labeled it "the dark side,"" he explains.

That was until he took a foundations course in 3-D. "Wow, what an epiphany," he recalls. "There was a whole new dimension that could be explored and played with."

He plunged into ceramics, metalsmithing, and sculpture and found a new medium to love.

That's what led him to generously donate his photography equipment following graduation in 2010 and eventual move to 3-D.

## CLS CALENDAR: FOR DETAILS AND MORE EVENTS GO TO WWW.UWLAX.EDU/LS

### FEBRUARY

**16:** MVAC 2011 Awards & Lecture | CC

**18:** Jazz Ensembles - Big Band Cabaret | CC

**24-26:** Toland Theatre: The Drowsy Chaperone | CFA

**27:** Inclusive Excellence Film Series: The Help | CH

**29:** Theatre Fundraising Gala: The Drowsy Chaperone | CFA

### MARCH

**1-4:** Toland Theatre: The Drowsy Chaperone | CFA

**3:** MVAC Artifact Show | Valley View Mall

**5:** Women's Chorus/ Chamber Choir Winter Concert | CFA

**6:** Inclusive Excellence Film Series: War Zone | CC

**6:** Concert Choir/ Männerchor Winter Concert | CFA

**7:** Wind Ensemble | CC

**8:** Symphonic Band | CC

**23-April 14:** All-Student Juried Exhibition" | CFA

**26:** Inclusive Excellence Film Series: Thunderheart | CH

**31:** Give a Mouse a Cookie | MH

### APRIL

**5:** Archaeology Lecture | CC

**11:** CLS Evening of Excellence | CFA

**14:** Honors Recital | CFA

**15:** Jazz Ensembles: Spring Jazz Concert | CC

**20-22 & 26-29:** Toland Theatre: Antigone | CFA

**20-May 4:** Senior Art Exhibition | CFA

**22:** Orchestra | CC

**24:** Korean Percussion Ensemble | CFA

**29:** Symphonic Band | CC

**29:** Wind Ensemble | CC

### MAY

**1:** Concert Choir Spring Concert | CFA

**5-6:** MVAC: Field Survey Opportunity

# They mean it

A husband and wife teaching team in Communication Studies was asked to bring their message back to their alma mater last October. Linda and Scott Dickmeyer returned to Minnesota State University as Andreas Scholars.



Linda and Scott Dickmeyer have been honored by their alma mater, Minnesota State University, Mankato.

The Andreas Scholar is awarded annually by the Minnesota State University, Mankato, College of Arts and Humanities. The Dickmeyers were nominated based on Linda's national reputation for expertise in undergraduate research and Scott's promotion of organizational communication scholarship through training and development, and workplace consulting.

As part of the honor, the Dickmeyers lectured in several classes, shared teaching and research experiences with graduate students and faculty, and gave a public presentation to around 250 people. The honor included a cash award.

"It was a great experience to present at our alma mater in front of current faculty, staff, administrators and students," says Linda. "The

best part, though, was having family and friends in the audience. Now we do not have to explain to them what we do for a living!"

The Dickmeyers discussed how communication is powerful and, unfortunately, how it can also be used as a weapon. "We have relationships that have been enhanced by effective

**"We used lots of personal examples and self-deprecating humor to make our points."**

Scott Dickmeyer

communication and those that have been destroyed by ineffective communication," notes Linda.

Their message was heard and the Dickmeyers received favorable feedback. "We used lots of personal examples and self-deprecating humor to make our points," explains Scott.

Their favorite part of being Andreas Scholars? — meeting with students. "The highlight of our visit was sharing war stories with the graduate students and providing strategies to survive and thrive in an academic environment," says Linda. "The students were engaged and full of questions. The energy of young scholars is infectious."

Despite being married for 20 years, this was their first speaking "gig" together. Scott presents regularly to audiences as a consultant, and as a training and development facilitator; Linda focuses on her classes and role as department chair.

"The experience was great and we look forward to future opportunities for tag-team presentations," says Scott.

Communication Studies Professor Ronda Leahy is leading a class that aims to get feedback from alumni on how to connect them more with the College of Liberal Studies.



## GET CONNECTED

You'll be hearing more from the College of Liberal Studies. A communication studies interviewing class is talking with CLS alums this winter to find out ways to improve their connection to their alma mater.

"I believe this project will help current students and alumni think about the college as part of their educational experience and hopefully they'll want to stay connected," explains Communication Studies Professor Ronda Leahy.

The new effort — a CLS initiative — kicked off a January term class. Students called alums to ask about their campus experiences and how they've stayed in touch.

Leahy says the project will allow students to conduct professional interviews, along with helping the college reconnect. "The ultimate goal is to build alumni relationships," she notes.

Leahy hopes students, too, make a connection with an alum they otherwise would not have known. She expects to expand the effort in fall.

"We'll take what we learned from the winter intersession course and try to make more connections with CLS alumni," she says.

Stay connected. See how on page 9, or contact Julia Johnson at [jjohnson2@uwlax.edu](mailto:jjohnson2@uwlax.edu).

# RECOMMENDED READING

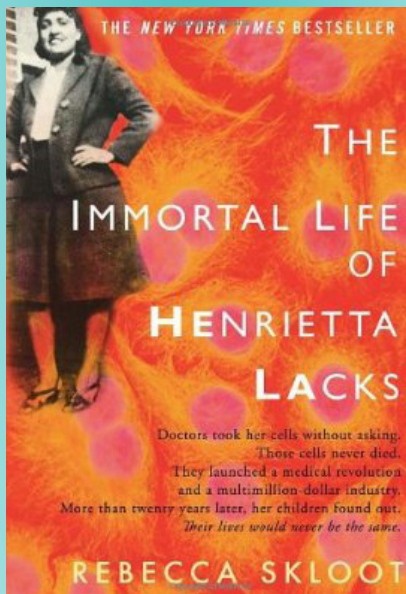
CLS faculty and staff are being encouraged to grab a book that they may not otherwise think to read.

This spring, they're invited to read *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* with the Inclusive Excellence Reading Group. CLS Associate Dean Julia Johnson will lead the discussion.

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* follows the story of Lacks, a poor, African American tobacco farmer whose cells were taken for science in 1951 without her permission. Her cells were the first human cells successfully grown outside the human body.

Although Lacks died 60 years ago, her cells, commonly referred to as HeLa Cells, continue to be used today and have led to developments such as the polio vaccine and cancer discoveries. The book uncovers questions about medical ethics, racism, sexism and more.

"The program is designed to bring us together so that we are developing our understanding of what oppression and discrimination do in our daily lives and how we can address it in higher education," says Johnson. "I hope this filters into what we are doing in classrooms — to be more mindful in our interaction with students and with each other."



This group of CLS faculty and students took time in their study tour to visit Stonehenge.

## Worldwide study

Shakespeare's words and the spectacle of Stonehenge are fantastic to study in books. But this spring break, UW-L students will explore these and other topics in-depth — in context — in England.

The College of Liberal Studies London Study Program is a one-week tour of museums, ruins, historic cities and other sites in the London area. UW-L faculty lead the study abroad experience, which is linked to a three-credit course they teach or a directed study.

"I can talk until I'm blue in the face, students can read and look at pictures — it's not the same thing as being there," explains Joe Tiffany, Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center director who leads students on the program. "It's really a remarkable experience."

The London study program is one of many study-abroad programs in the CLS.

Tiffany will teach an ancient Britain and Ireland course in London. Students will learn in context as they visit remnants of a Roman theater, tour museums and view historic treasures such as the Magna Carta and Stonehenge.

Natalie Eschenbaum, assistant professor of English, will also lead her English literature students through the London Study Program.

"It's an opportunity to bring Shakespeare to life for students as well as the other writers we are studying," says Eschenbaum.

Students will tour Shakespeare's Globe theatre, see original texts from the period and tour Stratford-Upon-Avon, the birthplace of Shakespeare, among other trips.

"You get to go deeper than a tourist," she notes. "It deepens their appreciation for the literature and the specific city and country that produced it."

Students will also see how Shakespeare continues to live on in popular culture. From Shakespeare quotes on T-shirts in gift shops to the Lion King musical they'll see on stage — a modern adaption of Shakespeare's Hamlet.

In spring, two faculty members, Christine Hippert and Peter Stovall, will lead an alternative spring break trip to the Dominican Republic. Students will work on organic farms, tour coffee and sugar plantations, and work on re-foresting projects while learning about the social, cultural, environmental, and economic changes to life in the Dominican Republic.

This summer, faculty in Communication Studies will take students to Seville, Spain, where they will learn about international journalism and intercultural communication.

Tours are coordinated with the Office of International Education.

### CLS LONDON STUDY PROGRAM:

Any CLS faculty member can apply to take students on the CLS London Study Program. Once approved, faculty can designate which of their spring courses students can enroll and have the option of going on the London spring break trip. Faculty work with the CLS Dean's Office to determine appropriate activities. Get more info at [www.uwlax.edu/ls/facultystaff/facdev.html](http://www.uwlax.edu/ls/facultystaff/facdev.html).



# A new perspective

Associate Professor of Art John Ready sees his artwork differently now thanks to a sabbatical during the 2010-11 academic year. But the year away from teaching and administrative work was anything but a vacation.

## john ready file

- > Chair, Department of Art, and Director of University Art Gallery
- > 12 Years at UW-L
- > BS Art Education, 1980, UW-La Crosse
- > MA Craft Design, Metalsmithing, 1983, Iowa State University
- > MFA Sculpture, 1990, Stony Brook (N.Y.) University
- > From La Crescent, Minn.
- > View Ready's artwork in the University Art Gallery, CFA, from Feb. 3 – March 3, 2012.

Ready completed an installation project at the John Davis Gallery in Hudson, N.Y., as well as a solo exhibition at the Aylward Gallery at UW-Fox Valley in Menasha.

He traveled twice to New York City and upstate New York to do visual research at the Metropolitan Museum. He studied 18th and 19th century American landscape paintings and headed to upstate New York to locations geographically related to the paintings at the Met.

From reading and research, Ready became interested in the iconographic history and objectification of American landscape. He turned from sculpture to creating two-dimensional collages based on history and American landscape.

“You can see the collages look to be assembled, which is intentional,” Ready explains. “Collage is, in itself, a process that relies on the use of illusion — as in a constructed image — and reality — as in the use of materials from the real world.”

Ready was inspired by paintings in the American Wing at the Met. “This collection documents American space, historical language, the fluidity of history and documentation, and the process of making art in relationship to contemporary identity,” he explains. “Getting reacquainted with the paintings of Albert Pinkham Ryder was a pivotal experience.”

Ready says the sabbatical is helping him work with students.

## WHAT IS A SABBATICAL?

“Sabbatical leaves are provided to maintain the high level of academic excellence necessary to meet the mission of the university,” says CLS Associate Dean Charles Martin-Stanley. “The primary purpose of a sabbatical leave is to enable faculty to be engaged in intensive study, research, or creative endeavor in order to become more effective teachers and scholars and to enhance their service to the university.”

# The write stuff

English Department Associate Professor Virginia Crank is helping freshmen transition into collegiate composition classes and other writing they'll do in college.

Crank spent spring 2011 on sabbatical looking for ideas to help those coming from high school with their writing. “I was researching the transition from high school writing to college writing, looking for ways that college writing instructors could better understand what new freshmen understand and know about writing so that the transition could be more productive,” Crank explains.

This is something Crank and other composition scholars have been working on for years. “My research

actually became a synthesis of all the previous research studies done on writing in high school and college,” she explains. “Doing that comprehensive synthesis allowed me to identify a set of key ideas or terms that college teachers can use to help students make that transition to writing for college.”

“I teach freshmen writing classes, so I will be using the key terms and ideas that I found to talk to my freshmen about the kinds of writing they will be doing in college,” she says. “I also teach a 400-level class

on teaching writing for secondary English education majors, and I can use this research to talk to them about what they can do to be effective writing teachers.”

Other faculty will benefit too, says Crank. “Everyone who teaches writing to freshmen or who asks freshmen to write can benefit from understanding how very different the cognitive and disciplinary processes are in that transition between high school and college,” she notes.



## virginia crank file

- > Associate Professor of English
- > 11 Years at UW-L
- > B.A., English, Oakland City College, 1988
- > M.A., English, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, 1992
- > Ph.D., English, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, 1995
- > From Cape Girardeau, Mo.



# Death education

The way people view death is changing. Prior to the emergence of death education in the 1950s, people didn't talk about death. They "buried their heads in the sand," says Michael Brennan, director of the Center for Death Education and Bioethics at UW-L.

Brennan is glad to see more people today embracing death as an inevitable part of life. That's what the center for death education on the third floor of Wimberly Hall is all about.

The center is a resource for academic materials dealing with issues of death, dying, bereavement and end-of-life care. Brennan also organizes films and discussions on death and dying topics on campus. He speaks publically about death issues to schools, hospice centers and to the media.

The center, with UW-L Continuing Education and Extension, organizes an annual international conference on death, grief and bereavement. It sponsors an academic journal, "Illness Crisis & Loss," which is published four times a year.

The center's resources are available to the campus and wider La Crosse community.

"Death affects 100 percent of us," notes Brennan. "We need to know how to deal with it."

Brennan, originally from the United Kingdom, became director of the center in 2008, following former directors Bob Bendiksen and Gerry Cox. He specializes in the sociology of death and dying and teaches several social science classes at UW-L, including Death, Grief and Bereavement (SOC 422). His book, "Mourning and Disaster," focused on the massive public mourning for Princess Diana after her death in 1997.

Some tell Brennan his work in the field of death sounds depressing. "But learning about the end of life makes people appreciate it more," he explains.



Michael Brennan, director of the Center for Death Education and Bioethics at UW-L, has helped people deal head-on with end-of-life issues.

## the center

The Center for Death Education and Bioethics is in room 337 Wimberly Hall and is open by appointment only. Contact the center at 608.785.6784, through the Department of Sociology & Archaeology at 608.785.8457 or [cdeb@uwlax.edu](mailto:cdeb@uwlax.edu).

## the conference

The International Death, Grief and Bereavement Conference runs June 4-6, 2012, at the Cartwright Center. The theme is Hospice and Palliative Care. Speakers include Colin Murray Parkes, a consultant to St. Christopher's Hospice in Sydenham, London. More at: [www.uwlax.edu/conted/dgb/register.html](http://www.uwlax.edu/conted/dgb/register.html)

## hear more

... from Brennan on this National Public Radio feature, The Way We Die at [bit.ly/w3RXb8](http://bit.ly/w3RXb8).

# Pay it forward

Most have a college experience that changed their life. But UW-L alums Lisa Butterfield and Ron Stadler have not only pinpointed a specific program or person, they're helping to pay it forward.

Their memories have led to the establishment of the UW-L Alumni Band Scholarship Fund and the Joseph P. Heim Graduate Scholarship Fund.

## A MEMORIAL TO MARCHING

Butterfield, '83, and other members of the UW-L Alumni Band pass around a bucket each year to collect money to go to one dedicated member of the Screaming Eagles Marching Band.

Butterfield recalls playing with the Marching Chiefs in the '80s — and how hard it was to stay in band. They practiced every day and she didn't have time for a part-time job.

"The hope is that with these funds students are able to stay in band and the band becomes stronger, bigger and mightier," says Butterfield.

The scholarship is dedicated in memory of John Alexander, the

marching band's long-time director. Through band students feel an immediate sense of campus inclusion, and they become well rounded, she notes. It also benefits the community and campus as the band plays at many campus and community events, says Butterfield.

"The band is one of the best promoters of UW-L," she notes.

Butterfield met her husband, Dave, a tuba player, in marching band. Music continues to be a big part of their life.

## HONORING HEIM

Stadler, '86, remembers a phone call from UW-L Political Science Professor Heim in 1983 during semester break his sophomore year. Heim told him about an open seat on the La Crosse City Council in the district that included the campus. He encouraged Stadler to run.

With Heim's

guidance, Stadler was elected and re-elected in 1985. Heim also made him aware of a national scholarship, the Harry S. Truman Scholarship, awarded annually to one student from each state. Stadler received the scholarship, which paid for his last two years at



Joe Heim

UW-L and two years of law school.

"Joe Heim was very supportive of me in school," explains Stadler. "But I wasn't the only one. Joe went out of his way to help every student he met. He saw good qualities and potential in everyone he worked with and went out of his way to

help them achieve."

That's why Stadler, of the Milwaukee area, teamed up with John Dickert, '86, to establish the Joseph P. Heim Graduate Scholarship Fund in 2001. It's awarded annually to a graduating senior planning to attend graduate school in political science, public administration or law.

It's one of 300 funds in the UW-L Foundation. The scholarship not only benefits students, it honors Heim for all he has done, notes Stadler.

Stadler is now an attorney with Gonzalez, Saggio & Harlan in Milwaukee. His city council experience gave him exposure to how municipalities operate — something he continues to use today primarily representing municipalities on labor and employment issues.



Marching band alumni have established the UW-L Alumni Band Scholarship Fund to help today's marching band members attend college.

## To start a scholarship fund ...

- > Visit the UW-L Foundation [www.foundation.uwlax.edu](http://www.foundation.uwlax.edu)
- > Click on 'Scholarship Program'
- > Click on 'Establish a Fund'

## Or to start a fund or contribute ...

- > Dean Ruthann Benson at [rbenson@uwlax.edu](mailto:rbenson@uwlax.edu) 608.785.8113
- > Jeff Meyer, Development Officer, [jmeyer@uwlax.edu](mailto:jmeyer@uwlax.edu) or 608.785.8502

## Finding scholarships at UW-L ...

Search and apply for scholarships at [uwlax.academicworks.com](http://uwlax.academicworks.com). During 2011-12 the UW-L Foundation gave 400 awards totaling more than \$600,000.

## STUDENT PROFILE: MELANIE STEBBINS, FIRST-YEAR STUDENT, DOUBLE MAJOR IN SOCIOLOGY AND WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

**Q:** What do you see as the biggest challenge of being a first-year student?

**A:** Because I am 37, going back to school was a little foreign. My kids



are 16 and 13 — some of my classmates are almost the same age as my children. Finding the time to study, be a mom and go to work are the biggest challenges.

**Q:** Why did you decide to go back to school?

**A:** I have MS (Multiple Sclerosis) and someone I really respected said 'What will you do if you end up in a wheelchair in the next 10 years?' I was

providing daycare and there was no retirement and no benefits. I thought maybe I'd go back to school. I started in fall 2011.

**Q:** Have you had any major moments of self-discovery since you started attending UW-L?

**A:** The one thing that I was so extremely happy about was the amount of diversity at UW-L

because I'm a lesbian and I'm out and open with it. That can make things harder sometimes. I think everything that Will Van Roosenbeek (director of Pride Center) and Abby Novak (graduate assistant at the Pride Center) do for Rainbow Unity is a wonderful thing. They've given me a lot of guidance. Also, a couple of my professors have been marvelous.

**Q:** What are your future goals after graduation?

**A:** I want to go on to get my master's degree. My ultimate goal is to be a therapist specializing in LGBT issues and/or women's issues. I can change what life has handed me and that's exactly what I'm doing. I don't have to become a statistic for the state of Wisconsin. I have more to offer than that.

## HOW IS CLS "BRIDGING DIFFERENCES?"

The College of Liberal Studies is awarding grants to its faculty, which allows them to promote inclusive excellence in classrooms and throughout campus.

Inclusive Excellence is a university and college initiative to "bridge differences with understanding and respect so all can thrive." Several CLS faculty members received funds this academic year to bring guest speakers to campus and conduct research related to issues such as identity and inclusion and exclusion.

"One of the ways to try to promote Inclusive Excellence in the college is by supporting our faculty and departments in initiatives designed to create more inclusive environments in our classrooms and throughout the university," explains Julia Johnson, CLS associate dean.

Among the inclusive excellence grants given this year:

- **Susan Crutchfield and Matt Cashion, English**, brought Jim Ferris, a disabilities scholar, poet, and performance artist, to campus. Ferris, from the Ability Center of Greater Toledo Endowed Chair in Disability Studies, performed "Scars: A Love Story" in November 2011.
- **Rob Dixon, School Psychology**, will bring Samuel Ortiz, Associate Professor of Psychology and former Director of the School Psychology Program at St. John's University, Queens, N.Y., to speak at the annual School Psychology Roundtable this spring.
- **Yuko Iwaj, Educational Studies**, will conduct research about assisting educators in developing their literacy skills for culturally and linguistically diverse students and present the research at the 2012 Wisconsin State Reading Association Convention in Milwaukee.

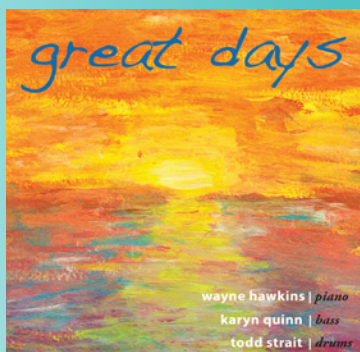
## Encore!

Select stories from the Alumni Association's monthly online news brief, *Lantern*. To receive monthly news about UW-L, update your address at: [www.uwlax.edu/whatsnew.htm](http://www.uwlax.edu/whatsnew.htm)



### Alum starring in 'Hairspray:'

Therese Walth is brave, bold — and she has big hair. Walth, '06, is playing the lead role of Tracy Turnblad in the Chanhassen Dinner Theatres' production of "Hairspray," the Broadway musical, through May 26, 2012. More at: <http://lantern.uwlax.edu/uw-l-alum-stars-in-hairspray/>



**A 'great day' for a CD:** A decade-long summer jazz workshop led by UW-L music faculty and alum Karyn Quinn, '84, and two other university musicians has reached a crescendo of a CD. Quinn, a long-time Coulee Region jazz bassist, teamed up with Kansas City Pianist Wayne Hawkins and Portland Drummer Todd Strait to record "Great Days." A CLS grant helped Hawkins and Strait come to La Crosse in October 2010 to record the CD, teach classes and perform. More at: <http://lantern.uwlax.edu/uw-l-faculty-member-cuts-cd/>

# TOP teachers



Brad Markhardt, '01



Katy Smith, '03

Alumni from UW-L's learning community master's program have taken top 2011 teaching honors in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Black River Falls High School Agriculture Teacher Brad Markhardt, '01, is Wisconsin Teacher of the Year while Winona elementary educator Katy Smith, '03, was named Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

While some teachers dread the "Why are we doing this?" question, Markhardt loves it. He sees it as an opportunity to help students make connections between their lives and what they learn in school. "I get a lot of 'aha' moments from students," he notes.

Part of Markhardt's teaching strategy involves taking students out into industry to see it. Students in his agriculture classes regularly go to dairy farms, animal shelters and other community sites to see agriculture in action. "I see myself as a facilitator of experiences," he explains.

Smith is not a typical teacher; her students at Goodview School in Winona are primarily grownups. As an Early Childhood Family Education/parent

teacher, Smith helps parents struggling to understand why their seventh-grader screams at them or their two-year-old cries for no reason. She helps adults maneuver on the bumpy road of parenting.

"What I hope all students do is stop, slow down a bit and understand the inner workings of their children — how they are wired, learn best and what motivates them," Smith explains. "We need to invest in these early childhood years because it really does pay off in the long run."

Smith is the first early childhood teacher to win the prestigious award in its 47-year history.

## UW-L'S ME-PD PROGRAM BECOMES INSTITUTE ...

The 14-year-old Master of Education-Professional Development Program (ME-PD) Learning Community Program officially became The Institute for Professional Studies in Education (IPSE) July 1, 2011. Previously, the ME-PD Learning Community Program was a single graduate degree program. Now it's part of IPSE, which will expand to meet the academic and professional needs of educators and other professionals. The institute's mission is to build a Master Teachers Community dedicated to improving the craft of teaching to help all students reach their highest potential. For more information go to [www.masterteacherscommunity.org](http://www.masterteacherscommunity.org).



Brad Markhardt, '01, agriculture education teacher at Black River Falls High School, discusses hydroponic systems with high school students in the high school greenhouse. From left are Nick Hagenbrock, Michaela Custodio, Cesar Moreno, Zachary Severson and Markhardt.

## THE ME-PD LEARNING COMMUNITY PROGRAM ...

is a two-year comprehensive program that allows students to complete their graduate degree in face-to-face classes, online or through a combination of traditional classes and online instruction.

# And the honorary degree goes to ...

... Bill Miller!

Three-time Grammy award winner Bill Miller received the university's second honorary bachelor's degree at the Annual Mid-Winter Commencement Dec. 19, 2010.

"Bill is a musician, composer, world-class accomplished flute player, social activist, artist, public speaker and workshop facilitator," says Communication Studies Associate Professor Scott Dickmeyer. "He exemplifies what most of us at UW-L advocate. I, like so many faculty and staff members, hope our students use their talents to promote positive social change. Bill has shared his unique

message of hope and reconciliation to audiences around the world."

Sandra Lee, host of the Food Network's "Semi-homemade with Sandra Lee," received the university's first honorary degree in May 2009.

Miller studied art in the CLS, while Lee studied in the College of Business Administration.



## UW-L'S HONORARY DEGREE ...

is available to highly deserving individuals who merit special recognition for exceptional achievement and distinction in a field or activity supporting the mission of the university. See more at [www.uwlalumni.org](http://www.uwlalumni.org).

## STUDENT PROFILE: MAI DER VANG FRESHMAN, POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR

**Q:** What's the biggest challenge of being a first-year student?

**A:** Adapting to a new environment and getting used to everything. I'm from Eau Claire and a lot of my friends don't go here. And I went from having a room of my own to sharing it with other people.

**Q:** Have you found resources to overcome these challenges?

**A:** Yes. The resident assistant talked to everyone in our cube when we came. She was so helpful and is always updating us about events going on. We do a lot of group stuff like going to performances and to dinner. Recently, we played "The Newlywed Game" with our roommates. The



Office of Multicultural Student Services is also so great. Being part of a group here makes you feel like it is more of a home because you feel more comfortable.

**Q:** What activities do you participate in the community and on campus in addition to going to class?

**A:** I'm in Asian Latina African Native American Women (ALANA) on campus. I was just voted treasurer. It's a great experience. I'm also with Students Today Leaders Forever and I'm part of the marketing team for the Invisible Children club on campus. In high school I was really busy with work, so I wanted to get more involved in college. I wanted to get to know more people. I'm trying to look for leadership opportunities because I'm going to be a political science major. It's kind of a way to kick off my career.

**Q:** Have you had any major moments of self-discovery since you started attending UW-L?

**A:** A lot of the stuff I've learned in political science challenges my beliefs. You discover a little more about yourself every time you challenge your beliefs. For example, I've always been a Democrat and growing up I always thought Republicans were always wrong. My roommate's family is really Republican and my roommate will always say her opinion when we watch CNN. I try to be really respectful when she says her opinion. I'm trying to look more at both views instead of siding with the idea that the "Democrats are always right." If you say you're a Democrat or Republican, it doesn't mean you're always going to lean to the left or the right.

**Q:** What do you predict will happen in your future years at UW-L?

**A:** There is a lot of stuff I want to do in college. I met Bee Lo (UW-L associate lecturer in modern languages) at a conference and told him I was interested in political science. He gave me all these ideas. He said you should try to get on the Student Senate. I thought that would be a great experience. He then said what would really be awesome is if I were president of it. I went back to dorm room and I thought 'that's so silly,' but then I thought, 'maybe that's not so silly.' I don't know if I could be president, but next year I'll hold the senate seat for ALANA.

## FACULTY PROFILE: J. THOMAS SEDDON IV, MUSIC

**Q:** How did you become interested in teaching?

**A:** My interest in teaching started in high school when I began to help other people in Boy Scouts, music, track and field, and at church. My family has a tradition of service and teaching. My father served in the U.S. Air Force and now is a college professor; my mother was a classroom teacher and then became a priest in the Episcopal Church. Serving, helping and teaching people were a central part of my life first through my parents, and then through coaches and teachers to professors. Now I have the



privilege of serving as a teacher.

**Q:** What's your favorite class to teach and why?

**A:** I love directing the Orchestra and Wind Ensemble. It gives me

a chance to challenge students while we are recreating a work of art. The interaction between each person in the room is essential to understanding and bringing to life the music. Each concert cycle thus becomes a move from teacher/conductor to sharing artist/conductor. There is no better feeling than to bring students to a moment of sharing the music with the audience.

**Q:** What's the most difficult part of teaching today?

**A:** Getting students to understand that they must take initiative and be fully and completely

prepared. I have found that students are too quick to stop and wait for someone else to make the decision or plow the ground for planting. I like having them come to an understanding of what it takes to truly be prepared for rehearsals and classes. In essence, work is the most difficult aspect of teaching.

**Q:** In what ways do students challenge you in your teaching?

**A:** They push me to lead not merely convey information or knowledge. Leading is the biggest challenge for a professor — to get

the students to become independent thinkers and doers.

**Q:** Anything else you'd like to share?

**A:** The best part of doing this type of work is helping people achieve and reach goals. They need to be empowered to do it themselves but with the proper guidance and self-motivation can reach a level of proficiency that is required to enter adulthood. When others achieve we all move forward and can then use the knowledge gained from that interaction to further another student's aspirations.

# Students earn state broadcasting awards

Communication Studies students continue to bring home honors from the annual Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Student Awards for Excellence. The Excellence in Broadcasting Awards program began recognizing outstanding achievement by Wisconsin radio and TV students in 2004. Students compete with others from the state's colleges, universities and technical colleges.

Communication Studies Assistant Professor Pat Turner says UW-L's success shows the department has dedicated, talented, and creative students in the broadcast and digital media emphasis.

"Our students are able to compete on a statewide level creating professional productions that are recognized by their peers and broadcast professionals," Turner notes. "Plus, our program has the support of the community and stations in La Crosse and surrounding areas with which it has formed a strong partnership over the years."

Turner says local stations

provide internships and employ students part-time while they are in college. Even more importantly, they hire students when they graduate.

A panel of broadcast professional judges the 150 productions submitted each year. Winners from UW-L in the past three years include:

### 2011

**NEWS SERIES/DOCUMENTARY (TV)**  
Sean Mobley "Francis Scott Key and the Battle of Fort McHenry"

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS (TV)**  
Sean Mobley "Goodbye, Julia" University Memorial Service Video

**PROMO/PSA/COMMERCIAL (TV)**  
Sean Mobley and James Bushman "Great Ideas - Hero of Alexandria"

### 2010

**PROMO/PSA/COMMERCIAL (TV)**  
(2) Sean Mobley "Great Ideas" and "Your Campus, Your Channel"

### 2009

**WEBSITE (RADIO OR TV)**  
Tiffany Hock WMCM-TV website

### 2011 WISCONSIN BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

James Bushman, who graduated in May 2011, was named the Morgan Murphy Scholar and received a \$2,000 scholarship from the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Foundation. Bushman is the morning news producer at WKBT-TV 8 in La Crosse.

The Morgan Murphy Scholarship is endowed by WISC-TV, Madison, to honor the late Morgan Murphy, who founded the Superior Evening Telegram, owner of WISC-TV. The foundation awards only two \$2,000 scholarships and two \$1,000 scholarships annually to students at four-year public or private colleges and universities, and two-year Wisconsin technical colleges.



**TOP:** Communication Studies student Sean Mobley has won numerous awards for broadcasting.

**ABOVE:** Communication Studies students continue to receive recognition in the Excellence in Broadcasting Awards program sponsored by the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association since 2004.

# Findings go national

UW-L School Psychology student research will be featured at a national spring conference. The research will provide insight to help teachers control classrooms, teen moms to be parents, and dads to become more involved in elementary school education.

## School Psychology Graduate Program faculty:

- > Betty DeBoer
- > Robert J. Dixon
- > Joci Newton
- > Russell Vaden

Learn more about the program at

[www.uwlax.edu/schoolpsych/](http://www.uwlax.edu/schoolpsych/)



**FAR LEFT:** Ten students in the UW-L School Psychology program will present research at this spring's National Association of School Psychology annual conference in Philadelphia.

**LEFT:** UW-L student Angelica Wegman, left, (pictured with Robert Dixon, program director) will present her research at a national conference.

Ten students in the School Psychology Graduate Program will present on these topics and others at the National Association of School Psychology annual conference in Feb. 21-24, in Philadelphia. The students were selected to be among the 6,000 conference participants, including students, faculty and practitioners.

"Students are able to look around and realize they fit into the larger community of school psychologists," says Rob Dixon, director of UW-L's School Psychology program. "They are making a meaningful contribution to that body of knowledge."

Graduate student Kevin Lewandowski surveyed area dads about how involved they are in their child's schooling and what schools can do to get them more involved. Past research has shown the majority of people who go to school functions are moms and boy's behavioral problems come in part from a lack of male role models, he says.

"Aside from presenting the results, I hope to bring them to whatever school I end up working at and increase the involvement of dads," says Lewandowski.

Sarah Payne says past research has shown the more parents know about childhood development, the more likely they are to have a better parenting style. Her research hypothesis predicts that teen parents will have comparatively less childhood development knowledge than adult parents, which leads to a parenting style that's not

as effective. If she finds teen moms don't have a lot of child development knowledge, it may be a reason to provide more programming for teen moms in schools, she says.

Megan Pulvermacher's research will

compare general education teachers' perceived and actual knowledge about two disorders — Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Reactive Attachment Disorder. Both are behavioral in nature and can be disruptive to a class. So it's important to understand what teachers know or need to know and ultimately help them to run their classes more smoothly, she notes.

"I know we can work more efficiently either to educate teachers or build off of what teachers are already learning," says Pulvermacher.

The students look forward to not only presenting, but also seeing other research, learning and making connections.

"As a faculty member, I feel like I'm a coach at the Super Bowl," says Dixon. "They're excited — and I'm excited to see them take that step forward in the research setting. It's neat to see them perform."

**"As a faculty member, I feel like I'm a coach at the Super Bowl."**

Robert J. Dixon

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# snap!

Snapshots from talented UW-L students

**Emily King, Photography Minor**  
*Archival Pigment Print | Experimental Photography, Fall 2011 | Self-Directed Final Project*



Inspired by Vortography and its characteristic of fractured planes and complex space, King constructed a mirror through which to shoot her photographs. It is intriguing to note that these photographs have not been digitally manipulated.

**Katie Holman, Photography Minor**  
*Archival Pigment Print | Documentary Strategies in Photography, Spring 2011 | Mapping La Crosse Through Photographs*



The students of UWL's Documentary Strategies in Photography class were called upon to document a region of their own choice. Holman chose to document the Pettibone Boat Club during the off-season of winter.



[www.uwlax.edu/lis](http://www.uwlax.edu/lis)

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