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Fall 2023

## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our Fall 2023 issue of the English Department newsletter, which highlights the work of our amazing undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and alumni. We encourage you to share your accomplishments with us so we can include them in our next newsletter.

**Christopher Schedler**, Professor and Chair

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



**Sasha Mitchell** (BA Language & Literature) writes:

The main highlight of being an English major has been the professors. Their compassion and encouragement supported my learning, and they teach in a way that students find interesting and engaging. I love the variety of courses and compelling books I have read, such as *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, *Good Talk* by Mira Jacob, and *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. I studied the history of literature and integrated that research in my own writing. On campus, I have engaged in nonprofit work while being a student athlete.

I served as an intern at the Wildcat Pantry for two years and supported the growth of the food pantry, where I learned more about the basic needs of others and how I can better serve my community. I've played on the softball team for four years, which taught me the importance of teamwork and resilience. In Spring 2023, I was appointed as the student representative on the CWU Board of Trustees to represent students like myself and help make decisions for future Wildcats. Given my experience on campus, basic needs security and diversity are two issues that resonated with me when applying for the position. I am grateful for the opportunities that the English department and CWU have provided me, and I will use these skills to help me succeed in my future career.

**Diana Braskich** (BA Professional & Creative Writing) has applied for a Fulbright Fellowship to complete a creative project on "Memoir as Advocacy: Creative Nonfiction and North American Rape Culture" in the MFA Creative Writing program at University of British Columbia.



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## GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

**Mariah Sebastiani** is a second-year student in the MA Literary Studies & Teaching program and teaches English 101 as a graduate assistant. Her graduate studies focus on composition pedagogy, poetry, and multimodal creative writing and rhetoric. In Spring 2023, Mariah introduced visiting poet Ross Gay and shared her poem, “Song of the Cherry Tree,” for the NEA Big Read program on campus. Mariah attended the 2023 AWP conference and presented her pedagogical findings at CWU’s SOURCE symposium. During the summer, Mariah organized *Woodsong Creative Festival*, a fundraiser for Skookum Kids. Mariah attended the TYCA conference in Yakima this Fall, and she will present at the 2024 CCCC conference with Professor Dan Martin. Mariah is president of the Graduate Student Association, which strives to create meaningful community connections throughout CWU’s diverse graduate programs. She is currently working on a literary journalism profile of her great aunt Naoye, a WWII Japanese internment survivor. Her master’s project will collect and analyze data on student skills transfer to create a multimodal, practical, and theoretical reflection on teaching English 101. She collaborates with Ellensburg Poet Laureate Marie Marchand to organize monthly poetry open mic nights for the community. After graduating, Mariah plans to apply to English teaching jobs at community colleges throughout Washington State.



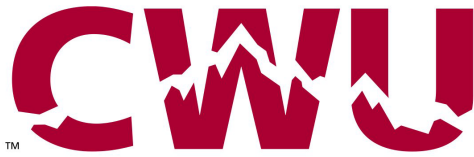
**Amber Dukes** (MA Professional & Creative Writing) had her essay “A Hairstory” accepted for publication in [Cool Beans Lit](#).

**Samantha Ludlow** (MA Literary Studies & Teaching) had four poems accepted for publication in January by [Litbreak Magazine](#).

## FACULTY NEWS

Welcome to our new English faculty members, who are also CWU alums: **Madison Flint** (MA Professional & Creative Writing), **Austin Fricke** (MA Professional & Creative Writing), **Brittney Poston** (BA Professional & Creative Writing), and **Sara June Treadwell** (MA Literature). **Anne Cubilie** has returned to the department from her administrative position in the Honors College.

**Katharine Whitcomb** had her poem “Sleepless Ode” published in the Summer/Fall issue of [Poetry Northwest](#) and her poem “After Reading Basho, I Remember the Rain” published in the November/December issue of [On the Seawall](#). Both poems are from her poetry collection *Habitats*, forthcoming from Poetry Northwest Editions.



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**Maya Jewell Zeller** was featured this fall on NPR [in conversation with Loren Korn of The Write Question](#) and [Spokane Public Radio's Artist Market](#), for her new poetry collection [out takes/ glove box](#) published by New American Press. During her sabbatical leave, Maya has been on tour for her book, traveling to present at universities, indie bookstores, community centers, libraries, and arts centers across the Midwest and PNW (pictured with BA PCW alums **Janelle Serio** and **Theresa Daigle** in Portland). Her manuscript, "Tori Amos Nursing the Pig," was a finalist in the Akron Poetry Prize, and her individual new poems appeared in *Copper Nickel*, [Electric Lit](#), and [Terrain.org](#). Vivian Gornick selected Maya's essay, "Scavenger Panorama," as a Notable in *Best American Essays 2023*. Her co-authored textbook, *Advanced Poetry: A Writer's Guide and Anthology* is forthcoming from [Bloomsbury](#).

**Seanse Ducken** had her poem "Dairy Queen" published in the Fall issue of [Meniscus](#) literary journal.

**Xavier Cavazos** and **Katharine Whitcomb** served as teaching faculty at LitFuse UNITE! Poetry Workshop in Tieton WA in September.

**Josh Aubol** received the Provost Achievement Award for his work as English liaison to College in the High School, assisting high school teachers with course design and professional development.

**Dan Martin** will present on "Archival Research and Uncovering an Abundance of Composition History at the Washington State Normal School at the Turn of the Twentieth Century" and will co-present with **Madison Flint**, **Austin Fricke**, and **Mariah Sebastiani** on "Mocking It up: Preparing GTAs to Teach First-Year Writing" at the 2024 CCCC conference in Spokane WA in April.

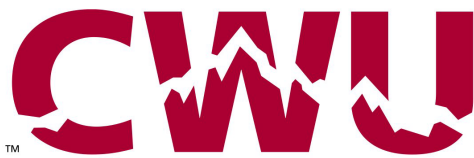
**James Seth** will present on "Staging the Sea: Literal and Metaphoric Naumachia in Early Modern Anglo-Iberian Culture" at the 2024 RSA conference in Chicago IL in March and "The Rhetoric of 'Strange Fish': Caliban, Kalicho, and the Language of Indigenous Selfhood" at the 2024 SSA conference in Portland OR in April.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Heather Askew** (BA Language & Literature) received her MA in Child Advocacy and Policy from Montclair State University. She co-founded and is the director of the non-profit [Jojo's Sanctuary](#) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, which provides scholarships for underprivileged students to continue their education through university.

**Saida Guzman** (BA Language & Literature) was accepted to the MA Journalism program at the University of Oregon.

**Luis Moreno** (BA Language & Literature) is pursuing a PhD in English at the Ohio State University and was featured for a story in the Fall issue of CWU's alumni magazine [Crimson and Black](#).



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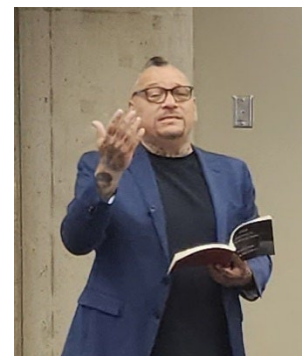
**Brittney Poston** (BA Professional & Creative Writing) received her MA in Rhetoric & Technical Communication from Eastern Washington University.

**Cassie Holcomb** (MA Literary Studies & Teaching) teaches at Centralia College and published an article on “The Horror of Serenity” in the [Journal of Anime and Manga Studies](#).

## LION ROCK VISITING WRITERS SERIES

In Fall, Lion Rock hosted craft talks, author readings, student readings, and virtual visits where gifted authors, writers, and editors shared invaluable insights about poetry, publishing, and genre writing.

The first Fall event on October 17 featured poet **Xavier Cavazos**, CWU professor, senior poetry editor for *Poetry Northwest*, performance artist, grand slam champion of the NuYoRican Poets Café in NYC, and author of three award-winning poetry collections: *Barbarian at the Gate*, *Diamond Grove Slave Tree*, and *The Devil’s Workshop*. In his craft talk, introduced by BA English alum **Karla Maravilla**, Xavier gave radical revision advice to all up-and-coming poets, answering the pivotal question, “How does a poem become interesting?” At the evening public reading, PCW major **Alexus Mendoza** offered an introduction and powerful reading of her own poetry. Afterwards, Cavazos took the stage and delivered a stunning poetic reading performance accompanied by a musical performance from a trio that included his son.



On November 1 and 2, Lion Rock hosted two separate panels on traditional and non-traditional publishing, with authors, publishers, and agents who answered questions and discussed the professional side of writing and publishing. **Zoe-Aline Howard** and **Elaina Ellis** spoke on editing and traditional publishing, while **T.J. Tranchell** (BA/MA English alum), **Elise Forier Edie**, and **Knox Gardner** (pictured below) presented on genre writing, non-traditional publication, and self-publishing.





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Lion Rock provides students with an opportunity to shine a spotlight on their new creative work every quarter. Reading creative work in front of an audience can be challenging, but for those who aim to one day share their written work with the world, there is nothing more encouraging than taking part in a student reading event. The **Lion Rock Student Reading** on November 16 featured nine student readers presenting for both online and in-person attendees. Participant student readers who shared their electrifying work this quarter included Tyler Dahl, Claire Cook, Noalani Deonarine, Zane DeYoung, Saige Johnson, Jackie Martuscelli, Janelle Serio, Jeff Aldrich, and Tonya McMillan.

As part of the new **Virtual Visits** initiative, Professor Whitcomb hosted poet, writer, and academic **Mark Wunderlich** in her ENG 585: Publishing Strategies and Practice class. During his virtual visit, Wunderlich discussed writers and social media, securing an agent, book proposals, how to prioritize creative work, publishing, and many other topics.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support these wonderful Lion Rock events!

## MANASTASH

### Manastash 2024 is open for submissions!

This year, [Manastash](#) is seeking poetry, prose, and visual artwork around the theme **Humanity vs. Machine (AI)**. Please email your submission to [Manastash@cwu.edu](mailto:Manastash@cwu.edu). **Deadline: February 2, 2024**

#### Guidelines:

- Prose includes fiction, creative non-fiction, and flash fiction. Please keep submissions under 2,000 words.
- You can submit up to 5 entries per genre (poetry, prose, visual arts). Please submit each piece as a separate file. If you are submitting more than one poem, please send one file containing all your poems.
- Poetry, prose, and mixed media entries accepted in these file formats: .pdf, .doc, or .docx.
- Do not write your name or any identifying information inside the file. Submissions will be read blindly. Include your name only in the file name.
- Visual art entries must be submitted at publication-quality with at least 1920×1080 resolution and 300 dpi. Visual artwork is only accepted in these file formats: .jpeg, .png, or .tiff.
- All submissions should include a 50-word maximum biography, author/artist name, and title of work. Please inform us if the piece is titled “untitled.”

If you have any questions about the journal or your submission, contact [Manastash@cwu.edu](mailto:Manastash@cwu.edu).



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## OPPORTUNITES

**Keely Murphy Pickerel** (BA Language & Literature alum) planted a poetry pole at Wippel Park, the small park in West Ellensburg with a community garden. The poetry pole is a cedar post carved with the word POETRY on the east and west sides where people can pin poems and read poems left by others. You can learn more about the pole at <https://www.wordsonthewind.org/>

*Prairie Margins*, the national undergraduate literary magazine at Bowling Green State University, is currently accepting submissions through March for the 2023-24 issue. There is no fee to submit, and they accept fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and art pieces from undergraduate students across the country. Submission guidelines can be found on their website: <https://prairiemargins.com/>

## MAKE A DONATION

To make a donation to the [English Department](#), use the **Give to English** button on any of the department webpages. You can donate to our general department Fund for Excellence, Scholarship Endowment, DEI Scholarship, Lion Rock Support Fund, or Manastash Student Literary Journal.

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