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Fall 2025

## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our Fall 2025 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



**Hondo Acosta-Vega** writes:

I am an Instructional Foundations major and Creative Writing minor. I have held multiple positions in student government at CWU: Election Commission member, Election Commission chair, Senator, Senate Speaker, and ASCWU President. At SOURCE last Spring, I presented a selection from my novel manuscript with the working title “The Pendragon Chronicles” and discussed how other fantasy authors inspired my writing. I run my own Dungeons & Dragons radio show with my friends and was given the DJ of the year award. I was also selected for the Marji Morgan Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award in the College of Arts &

Humanities. I currently serve as the representative for EQUAL in the ESC and am a member of the Wadaiko Club on campus. My goal is to continue my education and become a higher education administrator to inspire and work with the next generation of student government leaders and support underrepresented groups in the educational field.



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## GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

**Jordan Cagle** (MA Professional & Creative Writing) is currently a graduate teaching assistant and managing editor of *Manastash* student literary journal. His academic interests lie in rhetorical theory, psychoanalytic theory, critical theory, and creative writing. During his time at CWU, he has worked as an accommodation assistant, published his creative work in *Manastash*, presented at Lion Rock student readings, attended the GetLit! writing festival in Spokane, and received a residency at the Centrum Port Townsend Writers Conference. His short story "Bonding" was accepted for publication in *MSU Roadrunner Review* and his paper "The Fate of the Simulacrum in the *Blade Runner* Universe" was accepted for presentation at the Popular Culture Association conference. At SOURCE, Jordan presented his research on misinformation and read his story "Iron and Earth," which earned him the department's outstanding graduate student creative writing award. After graduation, Jordan hopes to pursue a Ph.D to continue studying how disinformation operates in multimodal spaces and influences political discourse.



**Korie Cedre** (MA Professional & Creative Writing) had her poem "A Robot's Anxiety" accepted for publication in *MSU Roadrunner Review*.

**Savannah Cottingham** (MA Professional & Creative Writing) had her essay "The \$10,000 Cookie" accepted for publication in *Table/Feast* journal.

## FACULTY NEWS

Welcome to our newest English faculty member, **Candace Walsh**, hired as an Assistant Professor in Creative Writing. She had an essay published in [The Ekphrastic Review](#) and presented her work from the short story anthology *Santa Fe Noir* published by [Akashic Books](#) at the inaugural Santa Fe Noir Fest. She also serves as judge of the creative nonfiction contest for *Totem* student literary journal at Gannon University and judge of the Barbara Thompson award for short fiction at Hiram College.

**M. Eliatamby-O'Brien** organized the second TransRural Elders Conference as part of their [TransRural Lives](#) project, with over 60 attendees from across the Pacific Northwest. The event included storytelling at the INK, the first TransRural film festival, and collaging/zine-making at Gallery One. They were also appointed to the Washington State LGBTQ Commission.

**Joseph Powell** (Emeritus) published his eighth poetry collection *Motion Against Our Moorings* with [MoonPath Press](#), and he edited the collected poems of **Judy Kleck**, *The Shapes That Shelter Takes*, published by [Finishing Line Press](#).

**John Ribó** published a chapter on "Haiti in the Latinx Literary Imaginary" in *Latinx Literature in Transition: 1992-2020* from [Cambridge University Press](#), and his co-edited collection *The Power or*



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*the Story: Writing Disasters in Haiti and the Circum-Caribbean* is now out in paperback from [Berghahn Books](#).

**Sarah Sillin's** essay on "Cross-Dressing as Familial Care: Revising Gender in 'Theresa' and 'Lucy Nelson'" was published in the [Journal of American Studies](#).

**Katharine Whitcomb** had two poems published in [Ecotone](#), a poem published in [Tahoma Literary Review](#), and a poem published in [Sweet](#) literary review. She was awarded an International Artist-in-Residence Fellowship in Schwandorf, Germany, and serves on the selection jury for Poetry Fellowships at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown.

**Maya Jewell Zeller's** lyric introduction to fungi phenomena *The Wonder of Mushrooms* was published in Fall by [AdventureKEEN](#) and her memoir-in-essays *Raised by Ferns* is forthcoming from [Porphyry Press](#). Maya's poems appeared in [Out There Outdoors](#), [Copper Nickel](#), and [Mid-American Review](#), a craft essay in [Cincinnati Review](#), and her short story "Milk Island" was just published in *Denver Quarterly*. Maya presented her work at the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association annual conference, as well as several bookstores around the Pacific Northwest. In spring, you can see her on book tour with an ASLE spotlight, at the AWP Conference, or at GetLit!

Katharine and Maya also have poems in the new anthology *Birdbrains: A Lyrical Guide to Washington State Birds* published by [Raven Chronicles Press](#), which features 107 species of birds described in the words of 98 poets and writers from Washington State and other regions of the US.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Weston Morrow** (BA/MA English) was selected as one of the winners of this year's National Poetry Series, and his poetry collection *Cloud Builder* will be published by University of Georgia Press. You can read more about Wes in this [CWU news story](#).

**Jake Lane** (BA Professional & Creative Writing) is an MFA candidate at Augsburg University, and his poetry chapbook *We Can't Program the Sun* was recently published by [Bottlecap Press](#).

**Joceline Eickert** (MA Professional & Creative Writing) had her short story "Untethered" published in [The Writing Disorder](#).

**Heather Johnson** (MA English) was accepted to the DA in English Pedagogy program at Murray State University

**Kelly Wilbanks** (MA Professional & Creative Writing) was accepted to the MFA program at Whitworth University.

**Mariah Sebastiani** (MA Literary Studies & Teaching) is an adjunct instructor at Bellingham Technical College.

**Austin Fricke** (MA Professional & Creative Writing) was hired as a literacy instructor at the Sinpaqcheen School of the Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations, after teaching for two years as a Lecturer in English at CWU.

**Samantha Ludlow** (MA Literary Studies & Teaching) is an academic advisor/recruiter for STEM Teaching and Lecturer in English at CWU.

**Josué Stoutamyer** (BA English/MA TESOL) is an academic advisor for IT Management and Lecturer in English at CWU.

**Reem Albattah** (BA Language & Literature) is a teacher at Sharifa Al-Awadhi High School for Girls under the Ministry of Education in Kuwait.

**Patrick Carpenter** (BA Language & Literature) is a teacher at Bellevue High School and served on an Education Abroad alumni panel for the CWU Global Forum in Fall.

## LION ROCK VISITING WRITERS SERIES

In Fall, [Lion Rock Visiting Writers Series](#) hosted a faculty craft talk/presentation and student reading.



On November 6th, **Candace Walsh** offered an afternoon craft talk titled "Reflect, Reuse, Regenerate: Metaphor, Cento, and Ekphrasis," sharing valuable insights on transforming life experiences into compelling nonfiction, fiction, and poetry. Her craft lessons were supported by examples of her published writing, work in progress, and personal experience. Craft techniques included the cento (reusing words, phrases, or lines from other works to compose a new poem) and ekphrasis (writing in response to visual art).

The evening presentation by Dr. Walsh at Brooks Library was hosted by undergraduate student **Noah Lux**, with a heartfelt reading by graduate student **Emily Kirpach**, and warm introduction by **Anne Cubilié**. Dr. Walsh delivered a captivating reading, including her powerful poem-essay "Reasons to Stay Alive," an excerpt from her novel in progress, and passages from her essay "The Light Within." The night ended with a lively Q&A and book signing of Dr. Walsh's poetry collection, *Iridescent Pigeons*.

On November 19, Dr. Walsh and Lion Rock intern **Justin Kumar** hosted the quarterly student reading, with Justin serving as charismatic and enthusiastic emcee. Given the strength of submitted work, fourteen graduate and undergraduate students were selected, with twelve participating in two sessions of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction readings. Attendees included faculty and students, as well as family and friends of the readers. With many first-time performers, the program included the following student readers: **Marina Sanchez, Adam Dean, Savannah Cottingham, Christian Bauer, Viktor Volkov, Matthew Everette, Robyn Brough, Nicole Martinez, Louis Stay, Nyele Preston, Solar McClellan, Tonya McMillian, Jordan Cagle, and Noah Lux**.



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## MANASTASH

### Manastash 2026 is open for submissions!

This year, [Manastash](#) is seeking poetry, prose, and visual artwork around the theme of **Rebirth**. Please email your submission to [Manastash@cwu.edu](mailto:Manastash@cwu.edu). **Deadline: February 6, 2025**

Submissions might address physical rebirth, in the sense of reincarnation or the transformation from winter to spring, or symbolic rebirth in the changing of minds or bodies, the recovery of endangered species, the saving of an ecosystem, or the revival of a community. It can even be as simple as the idea that we are never exactly the same person from one day to the next. Anyone or anything reborn is fair game.

#### Submission Guidelines:

- Prose includes fiction, creative non-fiction, and flash fiction. Please keep submissions under 2,000 words.
- All submissions must be original and not published elsewhere, including personal blogs and collections.
- You can submit up to 5 entries per genre (poetry, prose, visual arts). Please submit each piece as a separate file. If submitting more than one poem, please send one file containing all your poems.
- Poetry, prose, and mixed media entries accepted in these file formats: .doc or .docx. **No PDFs allowed.**
- **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).

## STUDENT CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

[Inklings](#) is Central Washington University’s very own student-run writing club! In Inklings meetings, students complete writing activities, writing sprints, and workshops both online and in person. This club is the best place on campus for writers to get together and talk about what they love most: writing! Inklings has taken trips to Bellevue for the Seattle Writers Conference, a valuable experience for any writer. Join a community of writers, make writing friends, and feel inspired to take the next step in your writing journey with Inklings.



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## 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, Scholarships, Lion Rock Support Fund, or *Manastash* Student Literary Journal.

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