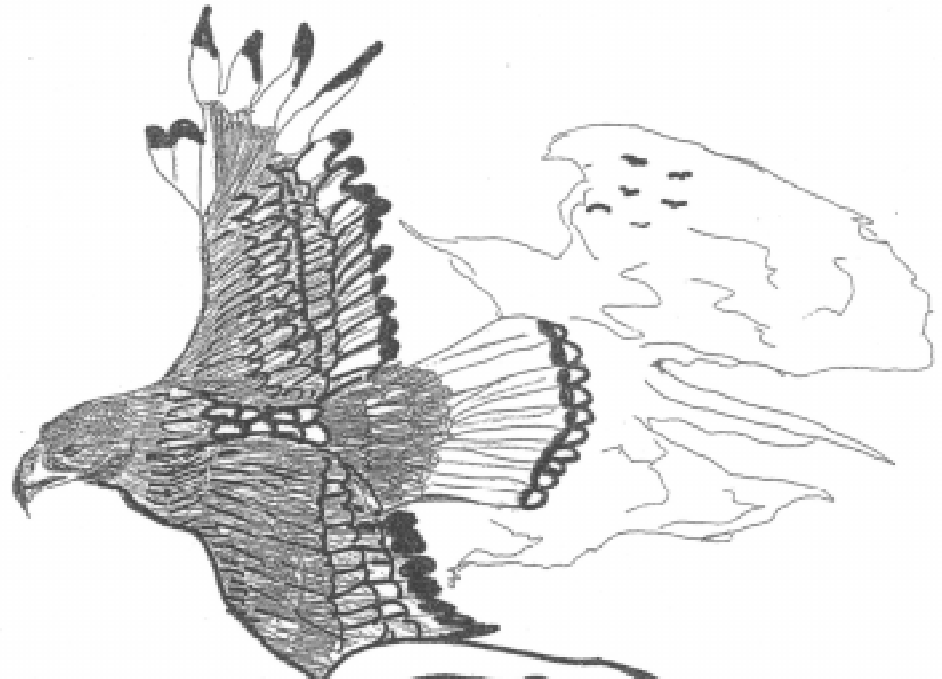


PROFESSIONAL

R O F I L E S

*Putting a spotlight on 14 distinguished members of
The University of North Carolina at Pembroke*



Jason D. Clug
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From Power Funk to Politics

By Tyler E. Collins

Someone with a Ph.D. in political science conjures up an image of a stern looking man in a shirt and tie and a serious attitude. But Dr. William Albrecht is no stuffed shirt. Casually dressed in a sweater and jeans with Mardi Gras beads dangling from his neck, he does not look like someone who would deliver a lecture on polling trends or municipal government. He reminds you of someone else — a musician, perhaps?

His office is spartan and offers little clue to his past. No bigger than a janitor closet it has only a few pictures and diplomas hanging on the wall. His office gives little clue to the colorful person with a laid back style who inhabits it.

While at Western Carolina University studying for his master's degree, he became sidetracked by his love for music. Strumming his guitar, he won numerous microphone competitions. Eventually he started up his own band. Desperate for a drummer he called on his brother and convinced him to quit his job and join a group that was to become known as "Toe Jam." For the next couple years the band lived in a barn where they would eat and sleep the music of "Power Funk." This musical genre was fairly new to the mountains of North Carolina, but soon the sounds from the barn would be heard from every bar and nightclub in that region.

They appeared in clubs throughout Maggie Valley, Waynesville and Asheville and even won Western Carolina's Battle Of The Bands. Later "Toe Jam" would open for The Connells at the Ramsey Regional Center in Cullowhee. The band appeared destined for success. It went on to cut six songs at a Washington D.C. recording

studio where The Dave Mathews Band got it start. Meanwhile "Toe Jam" songs were being played regularly on Western Carolina radio and a station in Asheville. One of their songs, "The Promise," was voted number one on The Hot Nine on a radio station in Mississippi.

However, Toe Jam's dreams of a contract from a major record company and the life style of a rock star slowly faded to a fond memory. Reminiscing of times with the band with a grin, Albrecht says, "It was a long shot but it was worth it."

From his studies at the business school at Western Carolina a passion for something other than music emerged — teaching. "The Western Carolina experience was a positive one and I knew thereafter that I wanted to be a college



'I knew thereafter that I wanted to be a college professor.'

professor," he says. The M.B.S. degree wasn't enough. In 1998 he headed back to the classroom, this time to Southern University at Baton Rouge to get his Ph.D.

When the time came for picking a place to teach, he chose the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. "I learned about it from a magazine article," he says. "Its future is bright. The school is small and I like the interaction with students. So far this has been a great experience, teaching students from all different cultures." Another plus is the opportunity to travel. In December 2003, he will get the opportunity to teach public budget and management in China. Until then he continues his duties here at UNCP as an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration.

Albrecht's career as a rock musician may have burned out, but it led him to a bright future in teaching. ■

The Write Stuff

By Shana Gray

Dr. Mohammad Ashraf spends a lot of time in his office. The economics professor usually has almost a dozen academic papers in various stages of completion at once on top of his normal teaching schedule.

“All I do is work; that’s all I do,” he says. “I just go home just to sleep. It’s not just me; everyone else does the same thing.”

Ashraf, 40, specializes in monetary policy and theory, which is where he does most of his research. Translated for the non-business minded, that means “basically how the actions of the central bank of the U.S. will affect the growth rate of the economy,” says Ashraf.

Ashraf travels to four or five conferences a year, in cities ranging from Las Vegas, where he presented a paper in February, to Washington, D.C., where he presented a paper in January at the American Economic Association. Ashraf says that he usually has about 10 papers in the works at one time.

“The chances of running dry are way too high” to only concentrate on one paper at a time, he says. “Sometimes what happens is you have an idea, and if you get stuck, you leave it for a little while, and come back to it and it usually works.”

In the four years that Ashraf has been at UNCP, he has had around 29 “intellectual contributions,” which he says includes published papers, conference presentations, case studies and books. He has been nominated for the Dial Award for Research/Creative Works the past two years. One of his papers was recently accepted to the European Applied and Business Research Conference in Italy, where he will present a paper in June. The paper will be published in the conference proceedings.

His research on the economy has been published with “The Journal of Business and Behavioral Sciences” for 2003, the February 2003 issue of “The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge” and the February 2003 issue of “The Journal of Business and Economics Research.”

“You try to write about topics that do not die so quickly, that have a relatively longer shelf life, that do not become outdated so quickly,” Ashraf says.

Ashraf, an assistant professor in the School of Business Administration, is known as “Mitu” to colleagues and students. He received his Ph.D. in economics from Northern Illinois University and his dissertation dealt with the impact of monetary shocks on the

economy. He taught at his alma mater for several years before coming to UNCP. He teaches a variety of topics from economics to statistics.

A native of Pakistan, Ashraf came to the U.S. for his education. “Most of the modern research is being conducted in the U.S.,” he says of his college choice.

Soft spoken, Ashraf speaks with a slight accent. Taught to read and write English growing up in Pakistan, he had very little chance to practice speaking it before moving to the U.S. He has been in the U.S. for 11 or 12 years and says he still finds words that he occasionally isn’t familiar with, though you’d never know it from a conversation with him. He has a brother and two sisters that live in Pakistan and a sister in New Jersey.

Ashraf says that he enjoys many things about the university, from the research facilities to the cafeteria where he eats two meals a day and describes the food as the best cafeteria food he’s ever eaten. But he says that what

‘I have a wonderful response from students; they are the main things here.’



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The Man Behind the Screens

By Alyson Bernava

The sound of a woman's voice permeates the room while reporting the national news on a television set that only is turned off when Michael DeCinti is done for the day. Lining the walls are New York Yankee pennants and memorabilia that catch the eye of anyone who walks into his office. Japanese characters on parchment hang freely, and a Homer Simpson statue stands proud.

DeCinti discovered his passion for teaching while in a class during his undergraduate studies. He found a way to teach his classmates the information they didn't understand from the professor.

"I like being in academia," he says. "I want to be an administrator of a college." So far, nothing seems to be too big for DeCinti to tackle.

DeCinti is originally from the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. He earned a B.A. in Mass Communications with a concentration in Journalism from Lock Haven University. He received his M.S. in Mass Communications from Clarion University, and started work on his Ph.D. at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

DeCinti has been teaching at the college level for eight years. Most of his time is spent teaching mass communication courses, in particular in the broadcast concentration. He also spends time working with students at the UNCP cable station WNCP TV-6 where he oversees webcasting of particular events and sporting activities, such as basketball games and guest speakers who visit the campus.

Despite his busy schedule, DeCinti does find time to do the other things he really enjoys. "I enjoy black and white photography, especially headshots," he says. This past summer he did some freelance work with the Department of Defense.

"I like doing other things...it keeps me fresh and new. The last thing I want to be is a stale teacher," he says.

"I have always wanted to own a bar/restaurant,"

DeCinti says. For right now he is satisfied with teaching here at UNCP. This is DeCinti's first year teaching here and he seems to be enjoying it. "College towns are great, especially here in Pembroke, where it is a community inside of a community," he says.

DeCinti has accomplished many

things as an Instructor in the Department of Mass Communications, even though he has been here a short time.

One of the things he has done is help produce new shows at the cable station for students and faculty. DeCinti is one out of four people certified in North Carolina as a media 100 non-linear specialist. This means that he has been trained in one of the best editing programs called media 100 version 8.

"I think the mass communications department should be a crown jewel of the school," he says. He wants to expand and upgrade the department to where it is a showpiece of the university. "The tours for this school should stop here," DeCinti says. ■



'I like doing other things...it keeps me fresh and new. The last thing I want to be is a stale teacher.'

Following Her Heart

By Brandon Baytops

“I’ve always wanted to teach,” says Dr. Janet Fortune. Seems simple enough, right? She thinks so. Fortune is an Associate Professor of Education here at UNCP.

“I feel through my teaching I am doing my part in maintaining this democracy,” says Fortune. By that she means teaching people the ability to think critically, rather than just accept what has been set in stone. Educating people and giving them the ability to make life decisions is very important to her. She is very adamant about class room participation and feels that participation teaches students to be active and not be afraid to speak out. Fortune’s classes often have student-led discussions.

Fortune feels that student voices aren’t heard enough and that is because they aren’t taught how to be heard. “It has always been taught that voting is the way to ‘speak out,’ but the real changes come from writing to your local government and local politicians,” says Fortune. She, herself, was involved in protests and marches when she was in college. Her advice and suggestions are most likely to persuade students because she has been in the “trenches.”

Fortune’s father was chancellor at the University of Mississippi. She says that in spite of what her father did for a living, she never felt any added pressure to perform academically. Fortune attended UNC-Chapel Hill for her undergraduate work and earned her doctorate from UNC Greensboro.

Fortune says that one day she would like to build a home that uses solar energy and other things in nature to function. This home would be self-sustaining and also would lend itself to being a metaphor for how she lives her life. She wants and tries to convey to her students the power they have. Part of that power is the knowledge that they do have control over their own destiny and they can be very successful, self-sustaining adults. Fortune is a rabid environmentalist and regularly celebrates Earth Day.

Fortune spends her free time working at animal shelters. This type of work, she says, “can be hard, but it’s worth it. I would like to buy some land one day and let animals just run wild on it,” she says about animals. She has a dog and five cats of her own and

would someday like horses as well.

This is only her first year here so she is still getting used to the area and the campus. She says she enjoys it here and looks forward to being here for a long time. The Blue Grass state native says that she is accustomed to mountains and hills, but out here the long areas of flat straight roads confuse her. “I still get lost at times, but it’s getting better,” says Fortune of commuting to campus from Fayetteville where she lives now.

Fortune is a lady of smaller stature, but has a heart the size of her native state Kentucky for her students and her causes. It is teachers like Janet Fortune who inspire by her actions and mold young minds. ■

‘I feel through my teaching I am doing my part in maintaining this democracy’



Learning Is a Catch!

By Cheyenne Hazlitt

The academic world is where Dr. Nicholas Giannatasio thrives. Dr. G, as students call him, has taught at UNCP for the past five years. According to him, teaching at UNCP has made his career complete.

A New Jersey native, it only made sense that Giannatasio began working in public administration at the Marlboro Psychiatric Hospital. As Assistant Chief Executive Officer, his job was to create solutions to any daily crisis. Giannatasio says the hardest part was “to incorporate a hospital-wide view that was globally beneficial.” Anyone in the public administration field will say that it is the most difficult goal to achieve.

The experience at Marlboro led him to the New Jersey State Hospital where he was the Department of Human Resources Director of Research. During his time working at the hospital a great opportunity fell in his lap. Instead of service work in public administration, Giannatasio was offered a job in the academic realm of public administration.

The University of North Dakota recruited him to be an Assistant Professor in the Political Science and Public Administration Department. Giannatasio thought a move to North Dakota, or the “prairie land” as he calls it, was a huge decision, not only for him, but his whole family. In order to take the job, he had to uproot his family from New Jersey and move to the Midwest. He went because he wanted to expand his experiences in the public administration field and to build a career in the academic world.

“I am an East Coast guy, so I began looking for another job out of the Midwest,” he says. He wanted to remain in the academic area of public administration, and he found UNCP.

Two years ago, Giannatasio became the Director of the Master of Science program in Public Management. As director, he not only teaches classes but is expanding the public administration graduate program internationally.

Just take a look around his office and it’s clear that Giannatasio has been to Asia. The walls are decorated with dragons with Chinese lettering and soda cans covered in Chinese script,

gifts given to him from students in China. “I taught in Xuzhou, China this past Christmas break,” he explains, “to set up our graduate program.”

Last semester Dr. G and others in the Political Science and Public Administration Department helped finalize three graduate

programs in China. A Master’s Program for Public Administration was opened in Xuzhou, China, in December. Giannatasio went to arrange a curriculum and introduce course work in Xuzhou. In September 2003, two more programs will open, one in Beijing, the other in Macku.

Giannatasio was definitely the best choice to go to China and teach. This is a man with a reputation on campus as being a hands-on professor. One student who had Dr. G in a political science course described a lesson in class. The class was learning about the roles of local, state and federal government. In order to fully demonstrate the relationship of the three levels of government, a Wiffle ball was used. Three students stood in a line; each represented one of the three types of government. Local was first in line and last was federal. Of course, the local government student was closer to the target and hit it easily as opposed to the federal government stu-



‘I am an East Coast guy.’

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A Hands-On Approach

By Chris Nicolini

Dr. Robert Guffey enjoys teaching today as much as when he first began his career. Before his business policy class begins, he checks for any student chewing gum, eyeing each one, then counts with his finger the number of students in attendance. He mostly stands during his lectures, using many hand gestures to emphasize important key points. “Relating to students and getting them to actually use the information” is what Guffey says he strives for with each class lesson.

Students in Guffey’s MGT-466 class learn business techniques by an interesting computer-run simulation. The semester-long business company project allows the students to create their own faux shoe company. The Business Strategy Game is a class project that teaches

students to predict business trends and to understand fiscal risk in a hands-on approach. “If you stay too conservative you’ll usually lose, both in this (business) simulation and in life,” says Guffey of certain choices made by groups participating in the class project.

“I treat students like they are—special adults,” says Guffey, associate professor of management for the School of Business Administration at UNCP. “I don’t hold hands.” It is possible that this ideology stems from Guffey’s undergraduate days at N.C. State in Raleigh during the late 1950’s, where the professor says he had to “work part-time jobs not for pocket money, but so that I could eat.”

Like so many others from his generation, Guffey chose to pursue a college education so that he could better his standing in life. “I basically went to college so that I could better my socioeconomic level,” he says.

Guffey served in the U.S. Army for seven years before graduating from his hometown school in 1971, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a M.S.B.A. in management. While in the Army, Guffey served as an armor officer for two years in a tank battalion,

handled assignments for Logistical Command for five years and completed a one-year tour-of-duty in what he calls the “unpleasant environment” of Vietnam.

Before deciding to resume his educational career, Guffey worked at various private sector jobs such as Vicks Chemicals,

Lorillard Cigarette Company and AT&T. In 1987 at the age of 49 Guffey decided to leave his job at AT&T in New Jersey and pursue his doctorate at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, where he majored in strategic management and minored in finance.

Guffey came to the UNCP School of Business Administration two years ago, when he left his role as the Dean of Business at Elon College in North Carolina. “Students here are more motivated to learn to succeed than any students I’ve dealt with so far,” Guffey says with a smile as he arranges and staples the necessary handouts for his next class period. ■

‘Students here are more motivated to learn to succeed than any students I’ve dealt with so far.’



Poetry: A Whole New World

By Jenni Wood

Six plywood shelves line the entire back wall of Dr. Karen Helgeson's office. Each shelf is filled with books ranging from textbooks and works of literature to volumes of poetry. A large, framed poster of the book cover from *A Virtuous Woman* by Kaye Gibbons adorns another wall. Miscellaneous books are scattered on her desk and filing cabinet. Her office is a testimony to her love of reading.

Helgeson has loved reading, especially poetry, for as long as she can remember.

"I was always really lucky to have great English teachers when I was younger and in college, who responded to my love of literature," she says. "They helped me see things in reading that I would not have seen without their help."

Helgeson's favorite subject is modern poetry and her favorite poet is Wallace Stevens.

"Wallace Stevens shows me a new world," she says. "He helps me see more in the world than I would otherwise see. If you can change the way people see, you can change the world."

In fact, she is such a fan of Stevens' work that five of her seven journal publications, several presentations and her dissertation were all about Stevens. Helgeson is even a member of the Wallace Stevens Society.

"I like his language, his verbal play and the depth of his thoughts," Helgeson says. "His poems are like puzzles. You really have to work at them. I like that."

She wanted to share that love of poetry with others. So, in 1997 Helgeson arrived at UNCP ready to help students learn to love the puzzles of poetry and literature.

"Wallace Stevens said that the great poets make poets out of all of us, and that is very true," she says. "I try to make students realize that potential in themselves."

As an assistant professor in the Department of English, Theatre and Languages, Helgeson gets to spend every day teaching students her true passion. She teaches classes such as Composition I and II, Contemporary Poetry, Introduction to Literature, Creative Writing I and II and Modern Poetry.

However, she didn't start out as a teacher.

A native of Charlotte, Helgeson moved around a great deal when she was younger, and her family ended up in Birmingham, Ala., during her high school years. After high school, she decided to attend Kenyon Col-

lege in Gambier, Ohio, because of its reputation for having a strong English department. She graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in English.

After graduation, Helgeson moved to Chicago to work as an editorial assistant for a publishing company called The Swallow Press. She chose to go into publishing because it was such a large part of her field. Since the company was small, she was able to participate in a large variety of tasks that an editorial assistant normally would not do.

"It was an ideal job," Helgeson says. "An editorial assistant is an entry-level position, but we were so small that I even got to read manuscripts. It was a lot of fun."

After about two years, Helgeson decided that publishing wasn't fulfilling enough for her and decided to make a change. "I just really wanted to write more of my own things instead of reading other people's work," she says.



'I just really wanted to write more of my own things instead of reading other people's work.'

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One Woman's Vision Takes Form

By Charles Etheridge

Canvases spread with hues of warm, glowing colors of red and yellow hang from and lean against the walls of Janette Hopper's office, giving it the appearance of an art studio.

Paperwork and files cover the desk and cabinets. She is on the phone discussing details about an upcoming trip to Italy. The office is warm and pleasant. The imagery of the paintings invites interpretation, relaxing the mind into a daydream. She hangs the phone up and smiles gently. It is 9:04 in the morning.

Hopper, art department chair and associate professor of painting, design, drawing and art history, was born in the state of Washington. She remembers as a child making murals out of old newsprint her mother would

bring home. "I had become keenly interested in art around this time," she says. Hopper describes herself as a painter of nature, of "the natural world" and of "human nature," which are all "bound up in the images and landscapes of my works."

She earned a B.F.A in painting and drawing from Boise State University in 1980. Two years later, Hopper received her master's degree in secondary art education from the same university.

Hopper taught at Columbia Basin College in Washington from 1985 to 2000, becoming department head in 1998. Her next teaching position took her to Central Michigan University, where she was assistant professor of drawing and painting from 2000 to 2002. Hopper came to UNCP in 2002. She likes that the campus is not too big, not too little, somewhere "between cozy and demanding." Another reason she enjoys UNCP is her colleagues. She is quick to give praise and respect to the art depart-

ment faculty, summing them up by calling them "great practicing artists." This summer she plans on collaborating with other faculty on campus to start a performance-painting program.

Hopper lives in a "quaint, little house" in Red Springs. She rises at five in the morning and does yoga and step aerobics. Before getting ready for work, she winds down with some painting.

In her personal time, Hopper is an avid reader. She enjoys bike rides, dancing and setting off on long nature walks where she finds comfort and inspiration.

"There is such a prolonged cold in Michigan," she says. "That's one reason why I decided to come to this region. I am delighted by the

landscape around here, especially the swamps. I find much inspiration for my work in the swamps."

Hopper's regional works on display are predominately paintings. But she works in all media. "Variety is truly the spice of being an artist," she says smilingly. "I am passionate about life, and art is life," she continues, "so, I suppose, I could say I am passionate about my art. All these different media: watercolor, pastel, clay, oil painting, each medium is as different as the very feelings I try to convey in that piece of art in which the medium is used."

In May of 2003, Hopper and a select group of her students plan to go to Italy to study the art of the Renaissance. "I am greatly looking forward to the trip," she says, "to see the student's reaction, and contemplation and study of such an important period of the visual arts."

She has exhibited her work in France, Germany, and Denmark. "I want more of my works to be placed in

'Variety is truly the spice of being an artist. I am passionate about life, and art is life.'



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UNCP Softball Coach Is All Business

By Nathan Walls

UNCP softball coach Steve Johnson is all business as he prepares practice plans in his office. He has to be. Johnson, clean-shaven with short brown hair and a slender build, has a tremendous challenge ahead of him this season in his first year as a head coach at a university.

The task of turning around a program that has won 18 conference games in its last 10 seasons and averaged over 30 losses a season the past four years falls on Johnson's shoulders. An average season is about 45-50 games long.

"Our goal is to turn this program into a winner," Johnson says. "My job is to put the kids in the best possible position to be successful."

Johnson believes he is on the right track so far.

"We've created a high level of enthusiasm and excitement for the program," he says. "We've set our expectations higher than they have ever been set before and the kids believe in themselves, they believe in their teammates and they believe in what we are trying to do here. They believe they can go out and win games and they are excited about that. That's about the biggest step."

The coaching position is only one facet of Johnson's job, however. Off the field, he has classroom responsibilities as a teacher in the Health and Physical Education Department.

"This semester I'm teaching Elementary Physical Education," he says. "Next year I'll be setup in Sports Psychology."

Though Johnson's load seems heavy, he is no stranger to a full plate.

Johnson graduated cum laude with a B.A. degree in U.S. History and Secondary Education from Wartburg

College in Waverly, Iowa in 1997, where he was a student assistant coach for the school's softball team.

Shortly before Johnson graduated, he landed his first head-coaching job at Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Johnson led the Kennedy softball team to three consecutive district championships from 1998-2000.

He entered graduate school at South Dakota State University in 2000. While there, Johnson gained experience in all aspects of coaching as a graduate assistant.

He developed the team's budget and non-conference schedule for the 2002 and 2003 seasons, became a certified recruiter at the NCAA Division II level, recorded and reported adherence to NCAA compliance rules and coordinated the first

annual South Dakota State University softball clinic.

Johnson hopes that his experiences at South Dakota State will help him in his current job.

"We had a lot of the same things," he says. "The program had been bad, not as bad as we have been, but it was near the bottom of the conference."

Johnson says that he wants to use the same tactics that were used at South Dakota State to improve UNCP's softball team.

"That's what we set out doing last year; it was the very same thing," he says. "Changing the attitude into a winner, making the kids feel good about themselves and so I have been through this before last year."

UNCP softball graduate assistant coach Jill Munchik assists Johnson during practice and games. She played softball at UNCP for four years, under the two previous coaches, before graduating in 1999.

"Everything he does, he has a purpose," Munchik



'My job is to put the kids in the best possible position to be successful.'

Continued on page 18

Kreger Reaches Out to the Underdog

By Brian Sasser

Rooting for the underdog is part of the American spirit. This spirit led Dr. Robert Kreger into a career in special education.

It takes only a few minutes with Kreger to discover his love of teaching, and his wife shares that passion with him. They both earned their doctorates in education and psychology together at the University of Michigan in 1980.

Kreger specializes in special education, which he views as the best medium to help children improve in all aspects of their lives. “When you’re in the classroom, you’re a therapist for those kids,” says Kreger. “I really do care about kids, and making their lives better.”

Kreger, an associate professor in the School of Education, spent years in secondary education to try to make the lives of the emotionally distressed, mentally handicapped, or learning-disabled children better directly through special education. Now he is training the next generation of special education teachers. By teaching the future educators, he may have a more powerful effect on the lives of those who need special attention.

The goal in his special education courses, according to Kreger, is to teach the future teachers of America how to reach the children that need the most help. By teaching the best ways of utilizing the medium of teaching, he hopes to better the lives of challenged students.

The Michigan native’s career has moved him around considerably, as he has taught at Eastern Michigan, where he received his undergraduate degree, Northeastern University in Boston, as well as West Virginia College of Graduate Studies in Institute, W. Va., along with various secondary schools throughout the country.

But Kreger believes he has found a home at UNCP, where he is just finishing his first year.

“I love it here,” says Kreger. “I like the students, I find them enthusiastic, they’re excited about learning. It’s a nice place to be.”

Kreger also enjoys the unique opportunity to experience the small town life of Pembroke as well as the beach, since half his week is spent with his family in Wilmington, where his wife teaches, and his daughter attends UNC-Wilmington.

Two words can sum up the first reason Kreger found his way to Southeastern North Carolina, “No snow,” he says with a chuckle. Some of his favorite stories about his move south involve selling off snow shovels at a moving

sale.

However, weather was only one of many reasons why Kreger chose North Carolina to be his new home.

Kreger first found the Tar Heel state while vacationing here with his family several years ago. When it came time for his daughter to attend college, the family moved to North Carolina so she could attend UNC-Wilmington’s film school. But while his wife, a teacher at UNCW, and his daughter went to Wilmington, Kreger found his way to UNC-Pembroke, which he calls just the right fit.

“It’s small enough that you get to know people, but large enough that you have some anonymity,” Kreger says. “I’ve been around enough to know this is just the right size.”

When Kreger finds the time to take a break from academia, he finds his way to the coast and the beaches of North and South Carolina. He describes himself as an avid golfer with a passion for fishing.

‘I really do care about kids, and making their lives better.’



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Pursue What You Love

By Lauren Newsome

Temekia Morton is in the middle of a whirlwind. She is a slender woman wearing her basketball gear; she's surrounded by basketballs and jump ropes. Players' shoes are scattered everywhere. The phone rings constantly and players stop by to say "Hey, coach!" Temekia Morton is the women's assistant basketball coach and she is *not* your typical coach.

Morton is a native of Creedmoor, N.C. with an undergraduate degree in Public Health from UNC-Chapel Hill and a master's degree in Exercise and Sports Science from Augusta State University in Georgia. Surprisingly, she didn't play basketball in college. "One of my main regrets is that I did not play in college," Morton says.

After earning her undergraduate degree, Morton went on to become a resource officer. Unhappy with her job, she returned to school to work on her master's degree at Augusta State. After moving so far away from home, Morton says, "I was able to grow as a person, spiritually, emotionally, and professionally. I learned so much more by moving." She was the assistant coach there for two years. She did everything from washing jerseys to filming and more. "I appreciate everyone that I work with because I was there once," says Morton. "I learned what it was to move up."

Morton says that she loves it here at UNCP. "I like the one-on-one environment. I try to get to know the students." Also, a great bond of friendship has formed between her and the head coach Sandi Mitchell. "I feel like I have known her all my life even though we have just met," Morton says.

Here, Morton is mainly the recruiter. With a personality like hers, players seem to feel comfortable talking to her. She tries to get to know each one as a person. "Coach-

ing and recruiting is all about understanding the person. I like to know about their grades, home life, activities, background, etc." She does a lot of traveling, networking and talking to coaches to find potential players.

Even though Morton has been coaching for roughly nine years, it is secondary to recruiting. Even though this soft-spoken woman is a pretty down-to-earth person, she says, "I can be firm when I need to be firm." Freshman

team member Marlena Savage says, "She's a real laid back and an overall cool spiritual person, but she knows when to get down to business." Outside of coaching, players go to her for things other than basketball. Morton says, "Players can come to me about problems, and I like them to know that I

am there. If I had to change careers, I would sing or be in counseling. I feel like I have been given the gift of advice."

In addition to her coaching duties, Morton is also a teacher in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. She teaches computer applications, rhythms and dance, and wellness and fitness. In a typical day she prepares for class, does her administrative duties, works on schedules, prepares for practice and meets with Coach Mitchell.

With this extremely hectic schedule, somehow Morton still finds a way to maintain a personal life. The 29 year old is engaged to a man from her hometown. He is a cytologist who studies cancer cells for a living. They live separately in Lumberton, and the wedding is in May of this year. "You just know," says Morton about how she knew he was the one for her. According to her, the two are busy with building their lives together, but in a



'If I weren't being paid for this job, I would still come to work and do it voluntarily. It's because I love it.'

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Providing a Wealth of Experience

By Alex Hall

China, Mexico, Canada and Egypt—these are some of the areas of the globe Dr. John Parnell has visited in his career. No, Parnell is not a secret agent. He is a 38-year-old Greenville, N.C., native who is a professor and the William Henry Belk Distinguished Professor in Management in UNCP's School of Business Administration.

Parnell is no typical business professor, though. His time is divided between research and teaching his two upper-level courses. He travels to different areas of the country and the world to make presentations on his research. Presenting papers around the globe in front of many different crowds of people would shake even the most extroverted person, but not

Parnell. "When I present research, I provide a brief overview of what others have done in the field, I discuss the data I collected (often surveys), how I analyzed it, and why it is important," says Parnell.

Much of his research and teaching involves strategic management, which is the subject of his new book to be published this year. "Strategic management concerns top-level (i.e., CEOs, etc.), long-term decisions that affect the survival and profitability of an organization," says Parnell. Also, "strategic managers are constantly looking for ways to take advantage of opportunities that exist for the company, while minimizing the effect of threats that may also exist," Parnell says.

Research is always being done at universities, but the approach is varied. Parnell says that he often looks at "situations that are counterintuitive," expecting to see one thing and actually seeing something else. Parnell also says that he likes to work with colleagues because "mul-

multiple perspectives on any issue seems to improve the quality of the research."

If Parnell isn't doing research, he is likely teaching one of two upper level courses, Management 466 or his graduate 575 course. For many people, it would seem as if Parnell is absorbed, almost sucked in by his profession, but don't be misled, he knows where to draw the line. "I enjoy my work," Parnell says as he cocks his

head to the side and displays an honest expression, "but you don't want to spend your whole life doing your work."

Parnell lives in Southern Pines with his wife of 16 years, Denise, and their two children Alan, 8 and Emily, 5. While doing graduate work at East Carolina University, Parnell and his

brother worked in the direct mail business for three years. The catalogs they distributed specialized in police scanners. Parnell worked on another hobby of his and also gave back to the community by coaching a JV basketball squad. "I haven't gotten to play much here yet, but I heard that there is some good competition. I look forward to getting on the court," he says.

This isn't the first time he has been with us either. Parnell first taught at UNCP from 1987 to 1990 while also studying and receiving his Ed.D. from Campbell University. "Pembroke has always been a friendly, student-oriented institution, but there is more energy now aimed at making significant enhancements to the university," says Parnell. Parnell left in 1990 to study full-time at the University of Memphis where he earned his Ph.D. in Business Administration. Parnell completed his Ph.D. in 1992 and then took a job at Middle Tennessee State University where he taught until 1994.

'Pembroke has always been a friendly, student oriented institution.'



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Live Performance

By Chris Harris

In the not too distant past, on a stage in a club in Holden Beach S.C., an integrated band called Willie T and the Imperials played the sensual music of the Blues.

“We were one of the first salt-n-pepper bands in the South,” says the lead guitarist of the Imperials, a slender, brown-haired Michael Spivey.

That was then; now that slender, brown-haired young man is the slightly heavier Assistant Professor of Sociology Dr. Michael Spivey.

“Being a musician was my first occupation,” Spivey says.

A native of McColl, S.C., Spivey began playing the guitar at age 12. His love for music, which began as a hobby, eventually grew in importance later in life. “Playing in bands

helped pay my way through school,” he says.

Spivey started his college studies at Frances Marion University, where he befriended a sociologist who got him interested in sociology. How does a musician become a sociologist? “Many sociologists came from musicians,” he says. “For example, Howard Becker, he was a Jazz musician.”

After a brief stint in Tennessee, Spivey moved to Michigan with his wife where he earned his B.S. and M.A. from Central Michigan University.

Because of his desire to do his doctoral studies in a multicultural city, Spivey moved his family to Toronto, Canada, while he attended York University and earned his Ph.D.

“A colleague of mine from Central Michigan suggested York. I applied, I got accepted, end of story,” Spivey says.

Spivey recently had a book published titled *Native Americans in the Carolina Borderlands: A Critical Ethnography*, which was originally written as his dissertation, about the Pee Dee Tribe of South Carolina. Mentioned in his book is James K. Brayboy, a native of Pem-

broke, who started an Indian school in Dillion, S.C. Former UNCP Chancellor Dr. English Jones was a student of Brayboy’s. The book was first used in a sociology course at Oberlin College in Ohio, and it is now being used in an anthropology course at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.



‘I enjoy teaching because it allows me to make the connection with the audience.’

“My interest in the Native Americans grew as I went to school with them. The year I spent researching them and interacting with them made me begin to internalize with them, empathize with those who are considered different,” Spivey explains.

Spivey teaches honors courses in Pop Culture, Introduction to Sociology and diversity courses. He enjoys teaching here at UNCP because he is impressed with the school’s growth, the community and, most favorably, the student body.

“I enjoy teaching,” he says, “because it allows me to make the connection with the audience—hooking the students just like I did when I was playing in the band.”

Even now, he’s still performing. ■

Big Dreams for Musical Theatre

By Troy Mitchell

Broadway posters, musical theatre books, a piano and a karaoke machine share the space in Travis Stockley's office. It's clear that music and theatre are his world. Stockley, the coordinator of the new musical theatre program, is a busy man who is very cheerful with an uplifting and positive spirit.

Stockley says he follows this quote from Geo Kauffman for inspiration: "The secret of success and good direction is to choose good actors and a good script and you will become a good director." Stockley thinks this quote is essential to actors and directors everywhere because this quote is the key to becoming successful. This is his first year as an Assistant Professor in the Music Department at UNCP, and he hopes to expand the musical theatre program even further while he is here.

Stockley holds a B.F.A. degree from Illinois Wesleyan University and a M.F.A. degree from Northwestern University. He has taught musical theatre at East Carolina University and other major universities in the United States keeping him pretty occupied with his time.

"A director's life is time consuming," says Stockley who has experience in all aspects of musical theatre. Stockley is a very accomplished, award-winning director of over 100 professional productions in the United States, Europe and Mexico. He has received the Joseph Jefferson Award for Best Musical Director for "Sweeney Todd." He has had three shorts in the Sundance Film festival and he was also a finalist in the Sundance Theatre Lab his first year. He has also directed many productions such as "West Side Story," "Grease," "Phantom of the Opera," and "The Music Man." He is a man

of many awards and many accomplishments and he will be even more accomplished in the future.

Ever since Stockley was a little boy, he knew that he wanted to be a director. "Producing and directing has always been something I have been passionate about," he says. When he was 6 or 7 years old, he used to direct his own plays and church pageants. It has always been something he has dreamed about doing.

Off Broadway he was the director for many productions, and he says that it was a great experience to work on Broadway. He gained knowledge and professional experience and it was something that he really enjoyed. Although working on Broadway is great, he says, it is really difficult to get new productions produced.

Broadway productions are never produced by one producer but by a joint venture because no single producer would want to take a chance on losing so much money. Many productions lose money because the production has too many people in it.

Stockley also produced and directed in Chicago, where he says the talent is just as good as the talent in New York, maybe even better. He says that there are many good actors and actresses waiting to be discovered. Stockley's experience in musical theatre should help develop the musical theatre program at UNCP.

An experienced and worldly person because of all his achievements and professional experience, Stockley came to UNCP because he likes the small school size and the music program was smaller than other universities where he has taught. He is happy with his decision about coming to UNCP.

Among all his achievements and work experience,

'Producing and directing has always been something I have been passionate about.'



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he enjoys the most are the people.

“They are just wonderful, wonderful people, very supportive,” Ashraf says of his colleagues. “I have a wonderful response from students; they are the main things here. If I don’t get a good response from them, I wouldn’t be able to stay.”

Ashraf has traveled extensively within North Carolina and in the U.S., and says he likes to hike the Blue Ridge Parkway in the mountains of North Carolina.

“If I find time, I go golfing, and I love to work out, religiously,” he says. But the majority of his travel is to wherever his research takes him.

“The notion of vacation is not there right now,” he jokes about his many hours of teaching and research, “but everyone does it.” ■

dent. The activity clearly demonstrated to students that local government is closer to the individual citizens than state or federal.

Dr. G is more than dedicated to his field and students. What else could he possibly accomplish? “I plan to write a book about an on-going debate: Is public administration an art or science?” As he explained the topic, if public administration is an art, then the talent comes naturally or if it is a science then everyone must be taught. Dr. G is still researching the debate, but believes he will continue to teach public administration at UNCP for years to come. ■

She returned to school, this time in her native state of North Carolina. Helgeson received an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. After graduating from the master’s program, she went straight to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she received a Ph.D. in English with a major in Twentieth-Century Literature.

The following year, she came to Pembroke to teach. She was originally attracted to the area because of the Native American culture surrounding Robeson County. Throughout the years, Helgeson has fallen in love with Pembroke.

“It’s like this little jewel that people don’t know about,” Helgeson says. “I felt like I had just stumbled across this marvelous little secret.”

With a passion for poetry and literature and a desire to share her love with students, UNCP has found its own jewel in Dr. Karen Helgeson. ■

collections,” she says. “Through the exhibitions of these collections I feel I will leave my contribution to modern art.”

Among her many grants and awards are the Fulbright Scholarship, the Faculty International Development Grant, the Artist Trust Gap Grant and the Crosscurrents Visual Arts Award.

“Getting the recognition is nice,” she says, “but the real satisfaction comes from creating the art. The significance of being an artist comes from how profound an effect the piece of art has on who is viewing it, not from receiving awards.” ■

says after a team practice. “He does it in a positive manner.”

Munchik has already noticed results in Johnson’s coaching methods.

“Their (the team’s) mindset has completely changed,” she says. “They believe they can win.”

Freshman Cyndi Carnaghi is one of the believers.

“He tries to drill into us our potential to be great,” Carnaghi says while icing down her right hand after a practice. “My high school coach treated our program like a college program and was successful. Coach Johnson takes a lot of the same principles that he did, like discipline and hard work, and uses them.”

Johnson’s coaching and teaching load leaves little time for relaxation. When he gets the chance, though, he would like to go to his wife’s cabin in northern Minnesota.

“I like to go water-skiing and fishing,” Johnson says. “There’s not much to do up there.”

Johnson will probably not get the chance until this summer, however. He still has business to take care of. ■

In the near future, he wants to add surfing to that list.

As good as these outdoor activities are, college sports are an even better diversion for Kreger. He describes his favorite college football teams as “Michigan, and whoever is playing Notre Dame,” reflecting his years as both a teacher and a student at Eastern Michigan, which is only miles from where he received his Ph.D. at the University of Michigan.

Now that he is in the heart of the ACC, he gives a similar response.

“When it comes to ACC basketball, I like N.C. State, Carolina, and whoever is playing Duke,” he says with a broad smile across his face.

He attributes this attitude to the American tradition of pulling for the underdog. He rooted for the Red Sox while in Boston and in Michigan, he cheered on the “lovable loser” Chicago Cubs.

Pulling for the underdog comes naturally to this special education teacher, who has made his entire career trying to help the educational underdog. He hopes his students one day will share his passion for teaching, and pulling for the underdog. ■

few years, a family might be in the picture.

Temekia Morton is an encourager, motivator, problem-solver and a friend. “If I weren’t being paid for this job,” she says, “I would still come to work everyday and do it voluntarily. It’s because I love it.” The one saying that sticks with her when she considered a career for herself or offers advice is something that her pastor once said. These are the lasting words that linger: “Pursue what you love.” ■

Parnell says the personal relationship and bond of professor and student that UNCP creates is one of his reasons for wanting to be here. “UNCP has a growing campus and a positive morale, I think it’s exciting to be at a place where the students know why you’re here,” he says.

He has also taught at North Carolina Central University, McKendree College and Pitt Community College. He has lectured in China at the University of Geosciences,

where he taught the first exchange course in a partnership with Texas A&M University.

Parnell has a knack for accomplishment and is very charismatic. His attitude is to never rest, always push personal limits. “I’ve always had a competitive nature,” he says. “I always want to out-duel someone.” ■

Stockley still has dreams of his own that he wants to accomplish someday. A big dream is to open his own academy for writers and students of all ages interested in musical theatre. They’ll have the opportunity to learn from the best. ■

PROVOST’S NOTE

In this 22nd edition of *Professional Profiles*, we are pleased to feature fourteen members of the UNCP family. These individuals from across the University campus all are dedicated to ensuring student success and represent the best this University has to offer.



Professional Profiles provides an opportunity to highlight the quality of faculty and staff that is the hallmark of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke’s personal approach to education. *Profiles* allows us a window into the professional activities of our colleagues. We learn of their career aspirations as well as their personal goals and ambitions.

After reviewing these Profiles, I have a deeper knowledge of and have a better appreciation for these outstanding members of the UNCP family. I’m sure you will also find this edition enlightening and entertaining.

Special thanks and appreciation are given to Dr. Judy Curtis and Ms. Sara Oswald and their students who have worked so diligently to produce this publication. ■



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