Letter from Director

Yo dawg, I heard you like English? Or as The Onion once put it, “what’s totally fresh about Shakespeare is that he ... had the tightest flow in the history of the English language. His iambic pentameter couldn’t be touched by the other MCs, although player-haters think he sampled heavily from Ben Jonson.” That’s how we like to think of this newsletter—meticulously compiled, as always, by Coleen Hoover—part of the flow that keeps all of you in the mix. Enjoy, and think of it as the annual Christmas letter from your extended Creative Writing Family.

Visiting Writers 2009 - 2010

Have we EVER had so many readings?! If we give a reading, and another, and another, yet one more, will they come? 21 readings (plus 11 Lula’s totals 33) for the academic year! Over half of the readings were given in the Hammes Bookstore, which continues to promote the fruits of our labors.

The fall 2009 began with a September Alicia Ostriker reading from For the Love of God. She is an American poet with twelve volumes of poetry, and as a critic the author of two pathbreaking volumes on women’s poetry. She has also published three books on the Bible. Amen, to that.

Ostriker was followed in October by Junot Díaz who hopped off the plane and went directly to a pizza party with the MFA students. He or his reputation filled the Decio Mainstage Theatre in DPAC later the same evening. Díaz’s reading from The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao was much anticipated and the students were not disappointed with his intellect, engagement, performance and attitude. Yo, brother.

David Marriott came in mid-October to lecture and read from his first book of poetry Incognegro. He currently teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

The month ended with Paul Muldoon reading from his poetry collection The End of the Poem at McKenna Hall and performing with his band of merry men AKA Rackett at Legends. He offered people pleasing song-like poems according to one student reviewer. Muldoon has lived in the United States since 1987, where he is now Howard G. B. Clark ’21 Professor at Princeton University and Chair of the Peter B. Lewis Center for the Arts.

David Matlin opened the month of November reading from It Might Do Well With Strawberries, an unwavering account of the collision of violence and imagination in the American culture gone awry. He is a professor at San Diego State University and teaches in the MFA Creative Writing Program.

The semester closed with poets Christine Hume and Jeff Clark. Hume’s work has been translated into German, Dutch, and Slovenian. She has lived in sixteen different states and countries and currently teaches in the interdisciplinary Creative Writing Program at Eastern Michigan University. Clark’s first book, The Little Door Slides Back, won the National Poetry Series Award, and his second collection Music and Suicide received the James Laughlin Award from the Academy of American Poets. They were a dynamic duo with daughter Juna contributing to the family ambiance.

Then spring 2010 sprung. Opening the semester was poet and English professor Henry Weinfield reading from his most recent collection of poetry Without Mythologies: New and Selected Poems and Translations.

One month later poet and English professor Jacque Brogan read. She is the author of several collections of poetry, including her latest work talking eyes, a book-length experimental poem.

The 2009 Sparks Prize winner Mike Valente cleared his throat and dusted off his prize winning “Pinto Bean” story in mid-February.

Orlando Menes closed the month reading from his new book of translations, My Heart Flooded with Water: Selected Poems by Alfonso Storni. Bien hecho, professor.

The 2009 Richard Sullivan Prize winner, Joan Frank, began the month of March. She read from her prize winning collection of short stories In Envy Country. Ooo la la! That woman was BORN to read, a wonderful voice. Every April is designated as National Poetry Month. Where’s the prose? Well, have no fear: Prose was given official recognition with a Prose Tag Team reading in the bookstore in mid-March consisting of MFA student
volunteers: Emily DiFilippo, R. Jess LaVolette, Lindsay Starck, Elijah Park, and alumnus Kristen Eliason. The readers displayed a wide variety of approaches to writing from traditional narrative to experimental prose.


Columbian born poet Maurice Kilwein Guevara read from his body of poetry, fiction and plays in mid-April. He is Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, where he teaches in the MA and PhD Programs in Creative Writing as well as in the Latino Studies Program. He was captivating. The official April National Poetry month of reading poems was celebrated by emeritus Sonia Gernes along with current students: Ailbe Darcy, Iris Law, C.J. Waterman, Monica Mody, Jennifer Stockdale, Kimberly Koga and alumnus Kristen Eliason. We called it a Poetry tag team. There was plenty of bloodless action.

Professors Joyelle McSweeney and Johannes Göransson hosted a panel on the legacy of modernism on small press publishing on April 23. The panel also included: Matvey Yankelevish, founder of Ugly Duckling Press and translator and editor of Today I Wrote Nothing: The Selected Writings of Danil Kharm, and co-translator of Oberiu: An Anthology of Russian Absurdism; and Sandra Doller, co-founder of 1913 press, author of Oriflamme, and professor at Cal State San Marcos. The editors discussed the dynamic legacy of Italian and Russian Futurist publishing, print making, typography, and design on contemporary small press publishing in America. The invited presses reflected divergent yet complementary takes on Futurist models since they publish in a wide range of formats and materials, from letterpress broadsides to artists’ books and chapbooks to glossy journals, perfect-bound volumes and online magazines.

Conferences

There were three conferences over the academic year. Two occurred in March and one in April. The first was a third, i.e. the Women Writers Festival III which featured Lorrie Moore, Lolita Hernandez and Frances Hwang. Lorrie Moore, author of, most recently, A Gate at the Stairs, which was named one of 2009’s five best works of fiction by the New York Times Book Review read the opening night to a completely packed auditorium. Lolita Hernandez, author of Autopsy of an Engine and Other Stories From the Cadillac Plant, which won a 2005 PEN Beyond Margins Award and fiction writer Frances Hwang, author of Transparency, which received the American Academy of Arts and Letters’ Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction and a PEN/Beyond Margins Award read together on the second night. Once again, judging by attendance, the University and local community demonstrated enthusiastically wide support in recognizing the guest authors. The following week the second conference was the first conference ever organized to recognize Notre Dame’s own family of poets: The Open Light: A Celebration of Notre Dame’s own family of poets: The Open Light: A Celebration of Notre Dame Poets. The family included: Francisco Aragón, author of, Puerta del Sol and editor of The Wind Shifts: New Latino Poetry; Robert Archambeau, author of Laureates and Heretics; Kimberly Blaeser, author of Stories Migrating Home; Jenny Boully, author of The Book of Beginnings and Endings; Jacque Brogan, author of Damage, Cornelius Eady, author of seven books of poetry including Brutal Imagination; Beth Ann Fennelly, author of Great with Child: Letters to a Young Mother; Mary Hawley who has been a part of Chicago’s poetry community for the past twenty years. She is the author of one book of poetry, Double Tongues and co-translated a bilingual poetry anthology, Astillas de Luz/Shards of Light; Joyelle McSweeney, author of Nylund, the Sarcographer and Flet; Orlando Menes, author of Furia; Henry Weinfield, author of Without Mythologies: New and Selected Poems and Translations; and John Wilkinson, author of Effigies Against the Light and Contrivances. We only offer a peek at the many publications all of the above writers have generated.

The last conference of the academic year was called: Black Nature: 400 Years of African American Nature Poetry. The conference featured Cave Canem poets in an afternoon panel presentation and an evening reading at Legends. The poets included: Ruth Ellen Kocher, Gregory Pardlo, Evie Shockley, E. Ethelbert Miller, and Cornelius Eady.
Local Readings
The current MFA student body continues to leave standing room only at the Wednesday night readings in Lula’s Café. Do we credit the intros or the readings or perhaps both for the record crowds? The class of 2010 certainly had a way with words. As is our custom, second-year students who read in the fall semester, in order of appearance, included: Daniel Citro, Ryan Downey, Monica Mody, Jen Penkethman, Donny Cowan, Melanie Page, Emily DiFilippo, Iris Law, Tasha Matsumoto, Lindsay Starck, Elijah Park, and Sami Schalk. The spring semester, in order of appearance, offered: Ruth Martini, Courtney McDermott, Ailbhe Darcy, Eddie Joe Cherbon, Kimberly Koga, Jen Stockdale, C.J. Waterman, Elizabeth Franklin, Levi Sanchez, Ryan Sanford Smith, R. Jess Lavollette and Amy Marie Thomas.

Not only do the students rock the house, they rock the local reading community with their connections and efforts in keeping in touch/tuned with outstanding writers. In late-ish September 2010, Tasha Matsumoto hosted poets Kate Greenstreet and Carrie Olivia Adams who gave a Sunday Salon-style reading at her loft in downtown South Bend. Then in November Matsumoto hosted a prose reading by MFA alumnus, Lily Hoang. Additionally in November, Tasha Matsumoto and Lindsay Starck moderated a Notre Dame Literary Festival panel that featured Frank Delaney, Tom Coyne, and Emily Giffin.

First year students C.J. Waterman and Kimberly Koga organized and hosted two poetry readings and receptions in late April. They brought Matvei Yankelevich, Sandra Doller, and Ben Doller to Waterman’s apartment for an informal intimate reading. They followed this party by organizing a poetry reading featuring Zachary Schomburg and Johannes Göransson on campus. Amazing efforts, eh? The writing community humbly sez, “thanks!”

MFA Final Thesis Reading
April 30th featured a brief writing selection from each member of the graduating class of 2010 including: Daniel Citro, Donald Cowan, Emily DiFilippo, Ryan Downey, Iris Law, Tasha Matsumoto, Monica Mody, Melanie Page, Elijah Park, Jennifer Penkethman, Samantha Schalk, and Lindsay Starck. The event was held in the LaFortune Ballroom with a capacity crowd of students (graduates and undergraduates), faculty, family and friends who came to listen and congratulate one of Notre Dame’s finest. Love and miss you all.

Activities
We proudly announce further impressive student involvement in the local community. Almost half of the currently enrolled MFA graduate candidates participated as volunteers in the Creative Writing Program’s ongoing writing workshop at the South Bend Center for the Homeless, which met weekly at the Homeless Center. Student organizers (Ryan Downey and Sami Schalk, fall; Jennifer Stockdale, spring) organized the rotating workshop leader position, which gives MFA students practical, hands-on experience in teaching a community workshop and the opportunity to consider different theoretical approaches to teaching creative writing and partnership with the poor. The MFA students attended an initial training session and then met with residents on a weekly basis, writing the same exercises as their homeless partners and they facilitated a reading of all the work produced. Again this year, residents of the center came to campus to perform at the fourth annual reading by residents of the CFH. Stockdale, with input from Downey, organized the second publication of writing from the group entitled, Words from the Center. Valerie Sayers continues to serve as the faculty adviser, offering the students an opportunity to discuss their planned exercises in advance and to provide feedback on their leadership of the sessions. This writing group is a powerful affirmation of Notre Dame’s commitment to the community and a good opportunity for the graduate students to experience alternative teaching possibilities.

At the Juvenile Justice Center: Samantha Schalk, C.J. Waterman, and Ryan Downey were the facilitators/coordinators for 2009/2010 writing workshops. They worked with 16 different young men in classes throughout the year. They collected the resident’s work in an anthology, Words of the Forgotten Writing from the Inside, and hosted the residents on-campus for a public reading of their work. The anthology was generously funded by a grant from ISLA. Their efforts were documented by television station WNDU and by the Community Connections a newsletter from the Office of Public Affairs and Communications. This bridging of the town and gown serves as a catalyst for positive exchange for all involved. In addition to the Center for the Homeless and the Juvenile Correctional Facility, Downey, Matsumoto, and Schalk contributed to the South Bend and Notre Dame community in other ways, too. They helped several other MFA students to facilitate the first annual Violence Prevention Initiative writing workshop in conjunction with the Gender Relations Center, which was open to faculty, staff, students and community members. Additional praise goes to Sami Schalk, Tasha Matsumoto, and Lindsay Starck in recognition of leading a summer writing workshop series at Saint Margaret’s House in downtown South Bend for women in poverty. Schalk also performed at the Violence Prevention Initiative Speak-Out and organized an on campus “Love Your Body Day”
open mic (also for the Gender Relations Center) during the 2008/2009 school year. In March, 2010 Matsumoto led the Violence Prevention Initiative’s “A Time to Write” Workshop where participants discussed readings, wrote, and shared their work. **Ryan Downey, Elijah Park, Jen Stockdale, C.J. Waterman, Levi Sanchez, Elizabeth Franklin, Iris Law, Sami Schalk, Monica Mody, and Courtney McDermott** helped facilitate various small groups. The program continues to support an MFA presence at Riley High School in the English writing classes of **Linda Antonazzi**. All four grade levels from the high school participated in readings, question and answer sessions and writing exercises for three one day class meetings with our students: **Iris Law, Ruth Martini, Courtney McDermott, Jennifer Stockdale, R. Jess Lavolette and Monica Mody**.

**The Bend number 7** came out in late April thanks to the moxie of coeditors: **Kim Koga, C.J.Waterman, EddieJoe Cherbony** and **Levi Sanchez**. Other current contributors to the edition in design, layout and editing included: **Donald Cowan, Elijah Park, Tasha Matsumoto, and Jen Penkethman**. Other current and alumni contributors were: **Cyni VanderVen, Desmond Kon, Emily DiFilippo, Jessica English, Stephanie White, Jeanne deVita, Cyndy Searfoss, Jessica Maich, Jen Stockdale, Donal Gordon, Melanie Page, Sami Schalk, Francisco Aragón, Shannon Doyne, Danna Ephland, Corey Madsen, R. Jess Lavolette, William McGee Jr., Jared Randall, Renée D’Aoust, Grant Osborn, Lisa De Niscia, Sheheryar Sheikh, Sarah Bowman, Amy De Betta, Elizabeth Smith-Meyer, Alicia Guarracino, Iris Law and Donald Cowan**. It was truly a prize winning look and work of art. Copies of this edition are available via the program website. Hopefully dear readers, you’ll consider sending in a submission next year and thanks to all who contributed.

**Re:Visions** also arrived in late April with thanks and appreciation for the timely efforts and success of the editorial board including: **Courtney McDermott, Jen Stockdale, C.J.Waterman and Kim Koga** along with assistant undergraduate editors **Chris Antonacci, Stephanie Lee** and **Alex Kilpatrick**. The **Re:Visions** New Series 8 Spring 2010 is also available to read on the program’s website.

**Our busy students**


**EddieJoe Cherbony** had a short story, “The Sound of String,” accepted at The End? Graduate Student Conference at Indiana University. He presented his paper on March 27, 2010. An excerpt from *Boats and Barrow* was published in the *Violence Prevention Initiative Journal* and he read at Speak Out during the Violence Prevention Initiative Festival on April 28, 2010.


**Intellectual Life Committee**

**Monica Mody** read an excerpt from her thesis “Kala Pani” called “Unsustainability as a Mandate for Aesthetics/Genre/Form/Language/Media/Performance/Audience: A Gentle Reading,” for the Intellectual Life Committee panel on ecocriticism in February. She was the sole MFA participant this past year.

**Awards**

Mitchell Award for Outstanding Achievement: **Tasha Matsumoto**

Kaneb Center’s Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award for Excellence in Teaching: **Jennifer Penkethman**

Sparks Post-Graduate Fellowship: **Monica Mody**, judged by Shelley Jackson

Sparks Summer Internships: **Ruth Martini** (Park Literary Group)

Levi Sanchez (Hachette Book Group)

Hammon Africana Studies Book Award for Community Spirit and Service: **Samantha Schalk** [for the second year in a row!]

**Our busy students**

Our busy students cont...

Poetry Marathon in South Bend.

Emily DiFilippo published a short fiction piece in the spring 2010 issue of Natural Bridge. She kept busy at Notre Dame by teaching Beginning Spanish II, 2008-2010, worked as a Writing Center tutor, 2008-2010 and she tutored with ND Upward Bound in the summer of 2009.

Ryan Downey has a chapbook entitled This is the Fall Line due out from Mud Luscious Press in November 2010. He has recently concluded his term(s) as co-coordinator/facilitator of writing workshops at the South Bend Juvenile Correctional Facility and at the South Bend Center for the Homeless. He has delivered papers and presented on panels at the 2010 Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference, Post Moot: a 2nd Convocation of Unorthodox Cultural and Poetic Practices, Gender Place and Space: An Interdisciplinary Conference, and The Open Light: a Celebration of Notre Dame Poets. He has also received co-nominations for the 2010 Distinguished Graduate Student Award and the John W. Gardner Student Leadership Award at the University. He has a review of Lisa Samuels’ Tomorrowland forthcoming in Jacket. In his second year at Notre Dame, Downey was the managing editor of Community Connections, the newsletter from the Office of Public Affairs and Communication of the University of Notre Dame. His work has been published in Lamination Colony, Kulture Venture, elimae, Sawbuck and in the anthology 30 under 30. An e-chap, Poems From a News Ticker, was published by Scantily Clad Press in 2009.


Iris Law published the following poems: “Rachel Carson,” A Face to Meet the Faces, forthcoming Anthology; “Periodicity,” in LUMINA (Vol. IX); “Maria Mitchell,” “Field Notes: Lichen Morphology,” The Bend; “Bones,” “Spare the Air Day,” “Airport, T-Minus Four Hours,” Writers Connect; “Walking Home with Groceries,” “on being far away in January,” Asia Writes; “Stoichiometry” in Kartika Review (Issue 6 - Fall 2009). She presented her paper “Reflections on Francisco Aragón’s Madrid: The Postcolonial Subject as American Expatriate” at The Open Light: A Celebration of Notre Dame Poets Conference (Notre Dame, March 29, 2010). She was nominated for Best New Poets 2010 by the creative writing program. She was awarded Best of the Net Anthology 2009 for “Circumnavigation,” which originally appeared in Cha: An Asian Literary Journal. Additional honors include the “Editor Spotlight: Iris Law,” April 19, 2010, interview at Harriet, the Poetry Foundation Blog and she was a finalist for the Milton Postgraduate Fellowship at IMAGE & Seattle Pacific University. She is the editor of Lantern Review: A Journal of Asian American Poetry.

Ruth Martini taught Introduction to College Writing at Ivy Tech in Elkhart.

Tasha Matsumoto published a creative non-fiction essay “Obachan” in the Spring/Summer 2010 issue of the Kartika Review. Her creative non-fiction essay “Emma Bee” is forthcoming in the Spring 2010 issue of Ninth Letter. She has flash fiction forthcoming in the Spring/Summer 2010 issue of Quarterly West and in the 2011 issue of Pank. Her short story “Portmaneu” is forthcoming in Volume 5 of Marginalia. She received a fellowship to attend the University of Utah’s PhD program in creative writing.

Courtney McDermott was a Finalist for the Orlando Prize for Short Fiction, A Room of Her Own Foundation, May 2010. She published a children’s story, “The Worth of a Chicken,” in Highlights Magazine, 2010. She was awarded the Striving for Excellence in Teaching Award from Kaneb Center, Spring 2010, and the Library Liaison Grant by ISLA, Spring 2010. She was nominated for Iron Horse Discovered Voices 2010 Awards in nonfiction and for the AWP Intro to Journals Project 2010 in fiction by the program. She taught Introduction to Fiction Writing, University Notre Dame, Spring 2010 and English Composition I, Ivy Tech Community College, Spring 2010.

Monica Mody had work published in LIES/ISLE, Cannot Exist, Wasafiri, Pratilipi, and was featured in the Poetry with Prakriti Anthology. She delivered papers and presented on panels at post _moot: a 2nd convocation of unorthodox cultural and poetic practices, and The End?, Indiana University Annual Graduate Conference. She is the recipient of the 2010 Nicholas Sparks Prize.

Melanie Page’s publications included “To Fake a Marriage,” in The Bend, April 2010; “Tiny Poet Artist,” in Danse Macabre, November 2009; “Sliced Holiday,” in Glossolalia, August 2009; “Read w/Feat: The Story of Romi & Girls’s Armies,” Leaf Garden Press May 2009; and “Grandpa,” in Squid Quarterly, Volume 1/Issue 1, Summer 2009. She presented an excerpt from “Let the Cat Drive” at the 2009 &NOW festival. While an MFA student she taught two sections of Basic Writing at Indiana University at South Bend and three sections of introduction to literature at Saint Mary’s College. Post-graduation she will continue to teach at both institutions.

Samantha Schalk presented “Villainous Victims and Victimized Villains: Disability in Wuthering Heights” as part of the Notre Dame Disability Studies Forum Visiting Lecture Series in September 2009; “Female in the City: A Working Feminist Poetics of Embodied Female Experience” as part of the Notre Dame Gender Studies Program Research Forum in Novem-
ber 2009; “Taking Feminine Practices into Masculine Space: Creative Writing in a Boys’ Juvenile Correctional Facility” with Ryan Downey at the Gender, Place and Space Conference in March 2010; “Writing on the Margins: Community Outreach in Shelters and Correctional Facilities” as part of a panel at the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference in Denver, CO., April 2010; and “bell hooks’ Loving Politics in Relation to Disability and Self-Love” at the Society for Disability Studies Conference in Philadelphia, PA., June 2010. She will attend Indiana University for a PhD in Gender Studies on a Graduate Scholars Fellowship.

**Jen Penkethman** presented a paper, “First-Person Science,” at the &NOW festival of experimental literature at SUNY Buffalo, October 2009.

**Faculty news**

**Cornelius Eady** had poetry readings at the following locations in 2010: Drew University, Vanderbilt University, Valparaiso University, Woodstock Writers Festival, Notre Dame Poetry Festival, KGB Bar, New York City, AWP in Denver, Geffen Center, LA, and the Chicago Public Library. He was featured at the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference in Denver on a panel on Memoir and Correctional Facilities. He also organized and hosted a panel at the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference in Rochester, Rochester, NY in May 2010. He planned a conference held on campus March 29-31, 2010.

**William O’Rourke** During the 2009-2010 school year, William O’Rourke continued to post his weekly opinion column for NUVO, Indianapolis’s alternate weekly newspaper, at http://www.nuvo.net/AuthorArchives?author=1178323, and he was a contributor to the American Book Review’s “Top 40 Bad Books” feature, Jan/Feb ’10, with the selection, “Ending Badly,” on An American Tragedy. He is currently working on the sequel to his 1981 novel, Idle Hands, titled The Devil’s Workshop.

**Valerie Sayers**, professor of English, signed a contract with Northwestern University for the release of uniform softcover editions of her five novels: Due East, How I Got Him Back, Who Do You Love, The Distance Between Us, and Brain Fever. New short stories appeared in Commonweal and Booth, and she published several reviews in The Washington Post and Commonweal. Her essay on Simon Dinnerstein’s painting, “The Fulbright Triptych,” is forthcoming in a collection, also called The Fulbright Triptych, from Milkweed Editions. She conducted a week-long fiction seminar at the Glen Workshop, St. John’s College, Santa Fe, where she also presented a lecture to the MFA students of Seattle Pacific University, in summer residence at St. John’s. She coordinated the 2010 Women Writers Festival, featuring Lorrie Moore, Frances Hwang, and Lolita Hernandez, and continued to serve as faculty advisor and member of the Creative Writing Program’s weekly writing group at the South Bend Center for the Homeless.

**Steve Tomasula** published the following books: VAS: An Opera in Flatland, the Cyborg Edition (book and audio
Faculty news cont...
CD); and The &NOW Awards: The Best Innovative Writing, Introduction
and editor with Robert Archambeau and Davis Schneiderman. He published

John Wilkinson was awarded a PhD by the University of Cambridge for his published work. He published poems in The Cambridge Literary Review and Penumbra and in the web journal Spine. He published critical work in Textual Practice, Chicago Review, Critical Inquiry, Glossator and The Salt Companion to John James. This summer Salt will reissue his 1994 Flung Clear with an introduction by Keston Sutherland.

Emeriti faculty news
Sonia Gernes is still: a) working on her novel, b) doing volunteer teaching and legal aid work, c) reading voraciously, including work by former students, and d) traveling when she can afford it. One of her poems, “Golden” was read by Garrison Keillor on the Writer’s Almanac in October 2009.


Jackson Bliss (’07) married the lovely Erica Borbor in May and honeymooned in Japan. Jackson is a PhD student in Literature and Creative Writing at USC, working with TC Boyle and Aimee Bender. His writing blog has moved to: www.bluemosaicme.blogspot.com. He published But, the really big news is waving good bye and sending best wishes to Cornelius Eady who will now be a professor of English and Miller Family Endowed Chair at the University of Missouri, Columbia, and to John Wilkinson and his lovely wife Maud Ellman who will also take up a new residence. They move to the University of Chicago. FYI: John’s new title: Professor of Practice of the Arts in The Committee on Creative Writing, the Department of English, and the College gives him broad license to practice great abandon. Our program will miss their many talents, including their humor and wit.

Alumni reports pubs & personal...
Matthew Apple (’97) officially joined the Kongozen Sohanzan Shorinji Sokai at the rank of Sho-doshi. In other words, he is now registered as a Japanese zen monk.

Robert Archambeau (’96) writes that his new book of literary criticism, Laureates and Heretics, has a big chapter on John Matthias.

Shannon Berry (’05) has just completed the course work for her PhD in Systematic Theology at The Catholic University of America, and is preparing for her exams and beginning preliminary work on her dissertation. Meanwhile, she teaches a course on environmentalism and religion in the university writing program at George Washington University and an introductory theology course at CUA. She has also been collaborating with two composers, John Maggi and Sarah Horrick. Her lyrics have appeared in Mr. Maggi’s musical, This is Not My Life, which was performed in the Capital Fringe Festival in July 2009. Ms. Horrick has set two of Shannon’s poems, “Ephethetha, That is to be Opened” and “Solitude” as art songs, both of which premiered in spring 2010.
most recently in Notre Dame Review, ZYZZYVA, Fiction and Quarterly West.

Sarah Bowman (’00) and Mark Matson (’98) announced the birth of Rose Marie (Rosie) Bowman-Matson born on August 11, 2009. She joins big brother, Niall, who is 4 years old and doggies Jack and Rocky (12). Mark writes, “In December 2009, Sarah resigned from the City Colleges of Chicago Department of English and joined Dan and Lys Burden to Co-Found the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute- a non profit training center in Port Townsend, WA, focused on helping cities and towns become more walkable, bicycle friendly, sustainable, socially engaging and welcoming places by improving the built form, http://www.sfu.ca/lidcvan/web/flash/city_apr21_10/. Although Sarah loved being tenured and teaching English and Writing at the City Colleges, the Urban Design/Planning field provides greater teaching opportunities, plus the green lifestyle of the Pacific NW is a great match! Mark is a stay-at-home-dad to the kiddies and one of these days, he and Sarah will begin writing poetry again. In the meantime, life is fully wonderful! Wishing everyone else the best as well.”

Brenna Casey (’08) writes that she is “currently the director of communications and marketing for a student travel company, called Putney student travel (www.goputney.com). I travel frequently, focusing on programming in South America, plan the creative writing curricula for our summer trip (which includes National Geographic student expeditions (www.ngstudent-expeditions.com)), and because I now live in rural Vermont, snowshoe on my lunch hour. I continue to write on the side and had a piece of nonfiction in Post Road in the spring."

Tim Chilcote (’07) and Colby Davis (’07) send a news update via Tim who wrote, “Colby is an AdWords Account Strategist at Google. I am a Web Content Administrator at the University of Michigan. We both serve as adjunct composition instructors at Adrian college. I also do pro-bono work for Jarrett’s [Haley] magazine [BULL: Fiction for Thinking Men], and Colby has been focused on publishing her poems in a variety of journals. She recently received an honorable mention in Current Magazine’s 2010 poetry contest.”

Michael Collins (’91) Weidenfield & Nicolson published Collins’ latest novel, Midnight in a Perfect Life, April 2010. He is now a professor at Southwestern Michigan Community College, Dowagiac, MI.

Dawn Comer (’98) Over the past year, Dawn Comer had her video essay “Walking the Lane” published online at Vellum Relic, and her short story “Raised in a Corn Palace” published in MidAmerica. She won the 2009 Paul Somers Prize for Creative Writing at the City Colleges, the Urban Design/Planning field provides greater teaching opportunities, plus the green lifestyle of the Pacific NW is a great match! Mark is a stay-at-home-dad to the kiddies and one of these days, he and Sarah will begin writing poetry again. In the meantime, life is fully wonderful! Wishing everyone else the best as well.”

Beth Couture (’07) instructs at Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania after receiving her PhD from the University of Southern Mississippi. Yay Dr. B.

Robert Thomas Coyne (’99) introduces his newest addition, Margaret Frances Coyne who was born on Christmas Eve to make for a very merry day. “She’s great, healthy and well, and red headed like her father.” He just got back from Paris where “I was finishing up this marathon book, 26.1 to Go, due out in 2011 from Penguin/Gotham books. The whole family got stuck there (wonderfully so) for ten extra days because of the volcano. I was a guest at this year’s ND Lit festival, which was a thrill—many years ago, I was on the planning committee when I was a sophomore at ND, and my wife was the chairperson (that’s how we met), so it was an honor to be reading.” His work was a $400 question on Jeopardy in February. In the Nonfiction category the question/answer was “the title of Tom Coyne’s golf Memoir Paper pays homage to George Plimpton’s...” Paper Lion. Tom normally views the program but happened to miss that episode, but said, “I didn’t see it when it aired, which was too bad since I’m a pretty regular watcher. But my phone started going, it was a fun night.”
Alumni reports pubs & personal cont...

Renée D’Aoust (’06) and Daniele Puccinelli (2005 goalie of Tom Miller’s MFA water polo team) eloped on 22 July 2009. They were last spotted on top of a Swiss mountain, supposedly not far from their abode. They have a palm tree in their back yard. Recent essay publications include “The Air Must Circulate” in The Collagist, Issue 9, April 2010, and “Twine,” which was nominated for a Pushcart, in Squid Quarterly, Vol. 1, Issue 2, Fall 2009. D’Aoust received a “Notable Essay” listing in Best American Essays 2009. She continues to write reviews for Culture Vulture, Explore Dance, and Brooklyn Rail and a garden column for Idaho Farm Bureau Quarterly Magazine. A critical essay about Swiss choreographer and dancer Anna Huber is forthcoming in On Stage Alone.

Amy Faith DeBetta (’98) writes that she recently left New Mexico in order to relocate for employment. She has published her short stories in 10 magazines under her male pen name as the same submissions were denied with a female name and, given the content of her fiction, was certain she’d lose corporate jobs using her true name! She is currently writing a novel and will finally be using her true name! When 47 pages were lost after lightning actually struck her home drying her zip drive and destroying her computer beyond all repair she thought it was a major set back, only to later realize, it was nothing but a blantant sign to revamp, rethink and do a better job!

Kevin di Camillo (’95) returned his degree to Notre Dame president Rev. John I. Jenkins, CSC, to protest the awarding of an honorary doctorate to president Obama in 2009.

Mary Dixon (’06) published a poem in Heavy Bear, “Planting Tubers,” February 2010.

Stephane Dunn (’00) published an opinion piece, “Pssst! Morehouse men—pull your pants up!” in ajc, November 11, 2009, and a tribute in the Elkhart Truth for Genai Coleman. She’s also proud to present Nadir Muse Anuua Muhammad born July 23, 2010.

Jacqueline Dwyer (’09) published her fiction “Rules” in the Spring 2010 Wisconsin Review.

Kristen Eliason (’08) published the poems “Incheon, July 15, 2006” and “No-jiriko” in Squid Quarterly Volume 1, Issue 1 (Summer 2009).

Jessica Martinez English (’09) after graduation moved back home to Savannah, Georgia and was married in June. She works for Savannah College of Art and Design in academic advising—technically, as a student success adviser. She writes that “I currently work as the student success adviser for illustration, painting, and sequential art students. I have the largest caseload in the office; I advise over five hundred students. As an adviser, I also teach a course called First Year Experience, which is required of all freshmen and is a requisite for graduation. I taught six sections of FYE in the fall, and I am currently teaching one this winter as well.” She had a sequence of eleven poems and five photographs published in MIND, a charity anthology in the United Kingdom.

Danna Ephland (’06) was awarded a one week Yeager Foundation Teacher Residency at Gilchrist where she will continue work on her Bodysongs: Moving to Write manuscript, a handbook for classroom teachers. She writes, “My modern dance years and my creative writing years meet in the classroom (or community center) with exercises that combine basic movement and writing to generate new work (including performance) and awareness of bodily/kinesthetic connections to “composition” of many kinds. Also, after a brief hiatus not teaching, I returned with relish to the community college where I delight in the nuts & bolts of the writing process with a very diverse student body here in the state at the top of the unemployment list. I’ve met some amazing colleagues for support & inspiration in this work. And!! my son Sam is graduated from Kalamazoo Central High School on June 7th, where President Barack Obama addressed the graduates. When Sam was not crossing the stage, he was on drums in the pit. Celebrations all around.”

Darin Graber (’08) published in the first issue of Squid Quarterly, summer 2009, “Stacking Wood.” He writes, “I am still working away at my MA/PhD program in Comparative Literature at the University of Colorado and living in Boulder. As far as creative things go, my band, The Longest Day of the Year, released a live demo CD from a radio show we played and also an EP called “Coffee Stains.” You can listen to all that at www.mulewax.bandcamp.com, and we have pages on Facebook, Myspace, Reverbnation—and even some videos on YouTube, I believe. We mostly play around the Boulder and Denver area and have some shows lined up through the summer as of now.”

Stephanie Guerra (’04) is teaching children’s literature and YA fiction at Seattle University as well as creative writing to the women of King County Jail. She has been doing research on using urban fiction to teach incarcerated teens. She reports that she sold her YA novel, Ruby and Stella. It will come out in early 2012 and is “pretty excited!” She presents her babies below.
Rebecca Hazelton Stafford ('05) [to the best of this editor’s tracking AKA paying attention skills] has published most recently in FIELD, The Southeast Review, Nimrod, and Web Conjunctions. Becky won a one year fellowship, the Jay C. and Ruth Halls Poetry Fellow, to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Yay you!

HINT HINT
Keep in touch everyone. Let us know where you are, what you are doing, publications, whatever. Don’t make this editor beg. For shame!

Lily Hoang’s ('06) novel The Evolutionary Revolution came out in May from Les Figues Press. Her short novel Changing received a 2009 PEN/Beyond Margins Award. Her short story collection, Unfinished, was accepted for publication, due out next fall, and her novel Invisible Women is slated for publication in early 2011. This year, she’s published short fiction in PEN/America, Black Warrior Review, Collagist, Make Magazine, MudLuscious, Eleven Eleven, Pear Noir!, Dogzplot, and Wigleaf. She has a podcast of her reading from The Evolutionary Revolution at Apostrophe Cast. She’s given readings and lectures at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Lake Forest College, Medaille College, and the University of Vermont. She quit her cushy professor job in December and moved to Canada with her wonderful husband Karl. She’ll be starting a PhD program in Geography in September at Queen’s University.
She writes, “I have stories that are or will be published in: My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me: Contemporary Fairy Tales, Haunted Legends, and Best of the Web 2010. I also became Associate Editor at Starcherone Books and Editor at Tarpaulin Sky. I blog for HTML Giant.”

Brian Lysholm ('08) married Roberta Schmidt on January 16, 2010 and they moved to South Korea where he teaches middle school. He plans to join a friend in Seoul who is an editor of a Korean/English newspaper and write travel columns starting in June.

Corey Madsen ('04) will be married June 24th, 2010 in Redstone, Colorado. He continues to reside in the Rockies, where he plays music locally and is at work on a novel about retail. His 2009 novel An Evensong for Father Bob is available at Alibris.com.


Jayne Marek ('05) has been promoted to full professor last year at Franklin College. She writes, “I’ve read my poetry a few times at Bookmama’s in Indianapolis and contributed to poetry-and-art exhibits in Indianapolis and Muncie. I had a poem in a recent Tipton Poetry Journal. I’ve started doing endurance events. Even those of us “in the club” can participate in runs and triathlons! Yikes!”

David Mayer ('01) continues to work as the Creative Concept Director for New Product Concepts at American Greetings.

Tom Miller ('06) After a brief eight-year courtship, Tom Miller and Abby Carlin are getting married this summer in July. Tom will start medical school in August at Cornell in NYC. His story “The Death of Maccabbee du Lac” was published in issue 1 of Cavalier.

Gwendolyn Oxenham ('06) continues to pursue distribution for her film Pelada—the Brazilian term for pickup soccer—it follows two former college undergraduate standouts (Duke’s Gwendolyn Oxenham and Notre Dame’s Luke Boughen) as they visit 25 countries in search of pickup soccer games and the stories of the people who play them. The film was in the South by Southwest Film Festival and others. A DVD copy is available at www.pelada-movie.com The film and stars both received great write-ups in Sports Illustrated, February 16 and in The New York Times, April 19, 2010. Luke and Gwendolyn commit to holy matrimony in June of this year.

Rumit Pancholi ('08) is working as a journal production editor with Lippincott Williams & Wilkins and as a copyeditor for Taylor & Francis.

Justin Perry ('09) received a Stegner Fellowship and continues his fiction writing at Stanford beginning in the fall of this year for the next two years. Wow/Congrats!

Krista (Peterson) Quinby ('03) says, “I’m still writing scripts for Sierra Media during my daughter’s all too brief naps.

Susan Ramsey ('08) was hosted by David Lehman to mark the release of the Best American Poetry of 2009 at the New School in NYC last September. She conducted an interview with Bonnie Joe Campbell on Maudnewton.com.

Jared Randall ('09) writes, “My major activities over the past year: Apocryphal Road Code (poetry book) coming out from Salt Publishing in December; poems published online at Bull: Men’s Fiction and SubtleTea.com; teaching activities: substitute taught in area schools and became an adjunct instructor for Kellogg Community College in Battle Creek in January (courses: Encounter with the Arts, Writing Skills, and Freshman Comp.); started a blog: http://Wandering-
Alumni reports pubs & personal cont...
Stiff.com/mainstem'; did freelance work for various clients (web copy, editing/proofreading); and editorial assistant for scholarly journal RM. That's about it. No new kids or anything like that!

Jon Readey ('02) continues as an English PhD candidate at the University of Virginia.

Michael G. Richards ('02) was involved in the Roger Smith Shorts and wrote a film that was screened June 10th at the Brooklyn International Film Festival. The film is titled The End and was produced by Panman Productions.

Cyndy Searfoss ('95) writes that she is “the Director of Advancement at Stanley Clark School in South Bend. Still writing - working on my second novel and will have two short stories to send out soon. My kids are older and life has settled down (kinda).”

Sheheryar Sheikh ('07) reports that he manages a team of CV writers and analysts, who prepare CVs for executives and senior job seekers. He works for TheLadders.co.uk.

Don Schindler ('99) became the New AgencyND director at Notre Dame. He oversees the operations of ND’s integrated marketing communications agency when not fighting Indiana motorcycle handlebar height regulations. Varooooooooooom.

Mike Smith ('01) writes, “I’m living in Raleigh, N.C., not working, but looking, and armed with a new book of poetry, Multiverse, out from BlazeVOX Books. Virginia is finishing up 2nd grade with flying colors and Langston has started potty training (with colors that only occasionally get airborne.)” TMI?!

Marcela Sulak ('92) has accepted a new post: She is now Director of the Shaindy Rudoff Graduate Program in Creative Writing at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat-Gan, Israel, where she is an assistant professor of English. Her poetry collection, Immigrant was published in March with Black Lawrence Press. Her poem “Coffee” won the “Moving Words” competition for the DC Metro area, which means that metro busses in Northern Virginia and Washington DC will be covered in Marcela’s “Coffee” from April - June 2010. Her translation of Czech poet Karel Hynek Macha’s book-length poem, May has gone into second printing this summer.

Daniel Casey Sumrall ('03) continues to run Gently Read Literature as well as getting published most recently in The Smoking Poet, The Wild Goose Poetry Review, and Ouroboros Review.

James Wilson ('05) is an assistant professor in the Humanities Department at Villanova. This year, his daughter Livia turned three and his first son, James Augustine, was born. He continues to publish essays every couple weeks in First Principles and Front Porch Republic, and had a chapbook of poems appear this Spring, Four Verse Letters (some of which ND MFAs were involved in criticizing some years back). He gave invited lectures this year at Patrick Henry College and Virginia Tech, and his dissertation-book Catholic Modernism is under contract with a university press. The most surprising professional news this year was his series of essays, “Art and Beauty against the Politicized Aesthetic,” gained a wide audience, resulting in an interview with Mars Hill Audio and discussions in The Public Discourse and The Weekly Standard. One real thrill was bringing the family back to Notre Dame last November for the Ethics and Culture Conference, at which Front Porch Republic held a panel discussion. It is always a pleasure to come home and to indoctrinate the children in the Irish way.

Incidental news:  
The 2010 Notre Dame valedictorian, Katie Washington, was interviewed by English major, Josh Flynt for ND Today. He asked, “What was your favorite class while at Notre Dame? Washington said, “Fiction Writing during the fall of this year. I’d never considered myself a very good writer, so this was something completely outside of my own interests. It was so rewarding to be able to learn how to express myself in a new way.” Who enriched this student’s undergraduate educational experience? What professor deserves a teaching award (or 2-3 of them)? The answer is found by reviewing the faculty news section. The name, highlighted in red, we’re proud to distinguish as the kind of teacher who is at his best with the brightest.

The Graduate School funded a musical treat for interested graduate students last fall 2009. R. Jess Lavolette, Courtney McDermott, Ruth Martini, EddieJoe Cherbonny and Amy White said YES to and had the exquisite pleasure of listening to the Tokyo String Quartet perform at DPAC.

Reader Series  
There are few givens in life. We can presume a final thesis reading on April 29th and the IVth Women Writers Festival will happen March 28-30, 2011. Women headliners and additional readers can be found by viewing the new website. We also can be sure of the AWP in Washington D.C. February 2-5. Otherwise, get thee to a computer to see who’s coming to read and to keep abreast of everything but your mother’s recipe for chicken soup.

Late arrival update  
Nathan Gunsch ('06) writes that he “still toeing the line between yuppie-dom and edgy street poet: he’s marrying Kathryn Wysocki on August 14, 2010, at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in New York City, and he’s moved from Brooklyn to the Upper East Side of Manhattan; however, he still manages to spit mad verse when he’s not ironing his collared shirts. This past spring he was commissioned to write a new work for Poetic People Power http://www.poeticpeoplepower.org, performing it along with older pieces at their 8th annual show, Price Check: How We Became A Culture of Consumption, on May 19th at the Grand Theater of The Producers Club in NYC. Go Irish!”

The Creative Writing Program welcomes the class of 2012.

Matriculation

Prose
Bryant Davis  
Allegheny College, BA
Katherine Cornwell  
Smith College, BA
Lindsay Herko  
SUNY at Buffalo, BA
Sara Leitenberger  
Pennsylvania State University, BA  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, JD
Edward Trefts  
Columbia University, BA

Poetry
Patricia Connolly  
Dominican University, BA  
Loyola University Chicago, MA
Carina Finn  
Sweet Briar College, BA
Jiyoon Lee  
Austin College, BA
Seth Oelbaum  
Columbia College, BA
Amanda Utzman  
Southern Utah State College, BA