This academic year marks a significant milestone for the department and for me personally. After twenty-five years as English Department Chair, Dr. Tom Mack retired this past summer. I was selected by the faculty to take on a three-year commitment as Chair, to try and carry on Dr. Mack’s most excellent work as best I can. I am relying heavily on the incredibly talented and dedicated faculty of the English Department, and on the heroic efforts of our admin Carol McKay, to help me with the very steep learning curve that comes with the position.

With that in mind, I would like to highlight the many accomplishments over this past year of our distinguished English faculty, beginning with scholarship: two books, six ongoing book projects, two journal articles, five creative pieces (poems and short stories), two columns (one appearing weekly in a newspaper and one appearing twice a year in a journal), two editing projects (both journals), and twenty-one conference presentations. One English faculty member won system-wide recognition for scholarship last year: Doug Higbee won a RISE grant.

Our faculty also won a number of awards. One of the most important ways that USCA recognizes outstanding faculty is by awarding Endowed Chairs. The Department of English currently holds four. I continue to hold an Endowed Chair. And three other English faculty were awarded Endowed Chairs with terms beginning this year: Matthew Miller, Katie Kalpin Smith, and Doug Higbee. Tom Mack, who held an Endowed Chair, retired. In addition, Katie Kalpin Smith was awarded Sabbatical Leave for Fall 2015. And Vicki Collins won the University Service Award, one of the five USCA annual awards announced at the annual spring academic convocation.

The composite story anthology Texas 5X5 (co-written by myself and four other Texas writers, and published by Stephen F. Austin University Press) was named a Foreword Magazine Book of the Year Award finalist. One of my short stories from this collection, “Fingers,” won the Spur Award from the Western Writers of America for Best Short Story published in 2014; the story was also a finalist for the Kay Cattarulla Award from the Texas Institute of Letters. For his years as a creative artist and champion of arts and letters in South Carolina, Tom Mack won the 2014 Governor’s Award in the Humanities.

Members of the English faculty also provided active campus and community service, including membership on fifteen Faculty Assembly committees and nineteen ad hoc campus committees. Three faculty administrated programs; four advised student organizations. In the community, our faculty members serve on boards, judge local writing contests, and make presentations to civic groups and to students in area public schools.

I am justifiably proud of everything that the English faculty has been able to accomplish this past year. I feel sure that our department can face the future with confidence, trusting in the positive and progressive momentum imparted by my most impressive colleagues.

— Dr. Drew Geyer, Chair
Department of English
Dr. Drew Geyer — Professor

Dr. Geyer has finished up his seventh year at the University of South Carolina Aiken and is enjoying the beginning of his eighth. It has been a good but busy year as he was promoted to the rank of Professor and selected by his colleagues to become Chair of the Department of English.

In the scholarly activity department, the composite story anthology *Texas 5X5* (co-written by Dr. Geyer and four other Texas writers, and published by Stephen F. Austin University Press) was named a *Foreword Magazine* Book of the Year Award finalist. One of Geyer’s short stories from this collection, “Fingers,” won the Spur Award from the Western Writers of America for Best Short Story published in 2014; the story was also a finalist for the Kay Cattarulla Award from the Texas Institute of Letters. Another of his stories was performed at the Dallas Museum of Art as a part of the Arts & Letters Live initiative. Dr. Geyer continues to serve as Fiction Editor at *Concho River Review*.

As far as current individually authored book projects, he is revising a story cycle entitled *Lesser Mountains* and working on a new novel called *Easy Keepers*. Dr. Geyer is also hard at work on another composite story anthology with two other Texas writers. The collection is tentatively titled *Tres Hombres*.

Dr. Lynne Rhodes — Professor

I began teaching at USCA in 1980, so this year is my 35th year of teaching at this wonderful campus. I still enjoy the challenges that come with teaching ENGL 101. I’ve taught Technical/Business writing, Advanced Comp, Literacy and Media, and Composition Studies this past year, along with holding the annual Aiken Writing Project Summer Institute. I’ve presented papers at the GA International Conference on Informational Literacy and at the International Student Success in Writing Conference (both in Savannah), and I’ve assisted the USCA General Education Committee with a workshop on writing across the curriculum. I’m working with Dr. Kari Weaver on a manuscript / book chapter that compares the NCTE Frameworks for Success in Post-Secondary Writing with the American Library Association’s Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, and I’m also serving as a representative to Francis Marion’s Center for Career and College Readiness. I’m also chairing the university’s Academic Assessment Committee.
In the fall of 2015, Dr. Katie Kalpin Smith was on sabbatical leave; she used the hiatus from teaching to focus on her scholarly projects. In particular, she is at work on a manuscript that examines the relationships between early modern women speakers and their represented audiences. She has also been proud to mentor English major Sarah Chatelain in a Magellan project. Dr. Smith is co-sponsor, along with Dr. Geyer, of Ms. Chatelain’s project on Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*.

In the summer of 2015, she participated in the Attending to Early Modern Women Conference, held at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. There she ran a seminar on early modern marriage and participated in a number of other sessions. Since the retirement of Dr. Tom Mack, Dr. Smith is now the sponsor of the English Department’s Honors Society, Sigma Tau Delta. She is looking forward to this spring, when she and the current officers initiate new members.

She continues to travel with her family when school is not in session. They are all pictured here at the beach—her youngest loves the idea of selfies, as introduced by his big sister, so this is essentially what all of their family photos look like right now. This summer took them to California, Oregon, and Washington.

Dr. Matt Miller has had a very productive year. Not only did he present two papers on transnational American writers at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association conference, his first book, *Class, Please Open Your Comics*, was published in June 2015. The book is starting to garner a number of favorable reviews. Another accomplishment for Dr. Miller was earning an Endowed Chair for 2015-2018. The John and Mary Grew Chair in American Studies, back in the English department for the first time in many years, is designed to offer faculty to continue scholarship in American literature and to enhance teaching in American literature.

In terms of teaching, Dr. Miller taught his Modern American Writers, Contemporary American Literature, Survey of African American Literature, Survey of American Literature, Writing in the University, and Global Film and Literature. He has had a lot of fun developing these courses and meeting new students. He is in the process of developing a new course in Caribbean Literature to be offered online in the Summer.

Dr. Miller still serves as the University’s Writing Assessment Director, which means managing the Writing Proficiency Portfolio requirement. This work is very rewarding, and he enjoys working with faculty and students to improve writing across the campus. He also is the chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, a very important committee that offers unique challenges and successes.

Dr. Miller regrets that his family did not have a full vacation this past year. Still, the family had several “daily” respites to quite a few movies all summer. The kids traded their sandy feet for bellies full of candy.
Dr. Eric Carlson — Associate Professor

Since the last thrilling installment of *Words, Words, Words*, Dr. Carlson has kept busy on all fronts, and he is pleased to announce that the war against unproductivity is winnable!

Dr. Carlson kept up a more-than-full teaching load this past year, maintaining his normal onus for the English Department as well as teaching classes for the Interdisciplinary Studies program, the Honors program, and the Academy of Lifelong Learning.

In the scholarly theater, Dr. Carlson presented his paper “The Rhetoric of Combat in *The Battle of Maldon*” at the annual Southeastern Medieval Association conference in November 2014. In May 2015 he presented his paper “Grendel’s Eucharist: An Outlaw’s Last Supper” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, and as these words go to press he will be preparing a roundtable presentation, in conjunction with Prof. Natalia Bowdoin, for the American Interdisciplinary Association conference. Additionally, he has been working on an article on trauma in the Knight’s Tale to be included in a volume on trauma and injury in the Middle Ages to be published by Brill.

On the home front, the Carlsons reluctantly sent their beloved mongrel Grendel to the Great Beyond last November, but in most other facets the Carlson family continues to blossom. Dr. Carlson’s wife Ali has become a highly respected and valued member of the nursing staff at the Aiken Regional Medical Center, and young James—now a hurricane trapped in a four-year-old’s body—continues to grow and prosper in all ways, especially in his knowledge and application of The Force. And at long, long, long last, they may soon move into that ramshackular house which you may remember, dear readers, they acquired two years whence! Yay, Carlsons!

Dr. Douglas Higbee — Associate Professor

In Spring 2015 Dr. Higbee taught a new Major Authors course on the homoerotic lyrics of British soldier Wilfred Owen, and is teaching Introduction to Literary Criticism in Fall 2015. In regard to the latter course, Dr. Higbee hopes at least to partly fill Tom Mack’s elegant footwear. He continues his teaching in twentieth-century British literature, and composition, while keeping an eye out for the triumph of the split infinitive.

Dr. Higbee’s article on Iraq War poet Brian Turner was accepted for publication in *The South Atlantic Review*. He continues to make progress on various book projects, for one of which, a co-edited collection of essays on teaching First World War literature, he received a RISE grant for summer 2015. Additionally, he has assumed the editorship of the English Department’s journal of undergraduate literary criticism, *The Oswald Review*. He was recently named the Anonymous Endowed Chair in the Humanities. Dr. Higbee wishes to thank the patron of this award, and is now up to the letter F in the phonebook.
Dr. Julie Wise — Assistant Professor

Dr. Julie Wise has enjoyed a satisfying year in the classroom, with highlights including a Victorian literature course and a special-topics course on the Pre-Raphaelite movement. In addition, she taught a Fall 2015 course for the Academy of Lifelong Learning on George Eliot’s *Middlemarch.*

Outside of the classroom, Dr. Wise continues to develop scholarly work on Victorian poetry, including an article on the fin-de-siècle poet Alice Meynell and her use of lyric form. During this past year, Dr. Wise has presented this work at the Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies conference and the Midwest Victorian Studies Association meeting. Finally, she also gave a paper at the 2015 Victorians Institute conference, comparing Robert Browning’s long poem *The Ring and the Book* with the podcast *Serial,* identifying in these two texts a genealogy of storytelling.

Away from campus, Dr. Wise continues to do her best to keep up with her two young sons. This year, family travels have taken them from the sandy beaches of the Carolinas to the snowy hills of the upper Midwest, to the eclectic streets of Brooklyn, where her boys declared New York pizza to be quite delicious.

Dr. Todd Hagstette — Assistant Professor

Dr. Todd Hagstette spent the majority of the spring and summer of 2015 sitting in his USC Columbia office gazing longingly westward toward Aiken. This was an especially uncomfortable time for his colleagues because his office did not have a window.

In between staring fits, Todd managed to successfully establish the omnibus digital humanities project the *Digital U.S. South* initiative as part of the Institute for Southern Studies and then completed the academic year by participating in the committee that hired his successor. At that point he moved officially to the Advisory Board of the project and began to make his long-awaited move to USC Aiken.

This summer, Todd served his first term on the Bradford Dissertation Prize committee for the St. George Tucker Society as well as continued his role as ex officio board member for the William Gilmore Simms Society. In that time, he completed and submitted manuscripts for two edited collections: “The Field of Honor: Essays on Southern Character & American Identity,” which is now in production with USC Press, and “Reading Simms: Essays of Introduction to the Author’s Canon,” now under review. In addition, the summer saw the appearance of four novels in the USC Press Simms Initiatives edition of the Selected Works of William Gilmore Simms, for which Todd wrote the critical introductions: *Martin Faber, Beauchampe, Charlemont,* and *Confession.*

In his first semester at USCA, Todd has been teaching three sections of English 102 and a surprisingly packed 8 a.m. section of English 284. He has enjoyed the move from a research-heavy position in Columbia to the kind of teaching-focused job he had always coveted. This fall, the twenty-second volume of the peer-reviewed academic journal *The Simms Review* was published, marking the fifth issue of that publication produced under Todd’s editorship. He has also been organizing panel proposals for spring conferences, including a Simms panel for the Society for the Study of Southern Literature conference in Boston and two honor panels and a book roundtable for the Maple Leaf & Eagle conference in Helsinki.

On the family front, Todd and Elise’s thunderous seven-year-old Davis is thriving in second grade, becoming quite the maestro at the piano even if not exactly a savant on the basketball court. Travels this summer stayed pretty local and simple in anticipation of the change in positions, but they managed trips to Atlanta for the annual running of the Peachtree Road Race (12th in a row!), Charleston to escape (howsoever briefly) the racket of the aforementioned progeny, and the beach at Garden City for the usual beach purposes.
Vicki Collins — Senior Instructor

Professor Collins devoted a second summer to writing her book about Appalachian literature. In July, she and her husband David traveled to England, Scotland, and Wales. The highlights were visiting Cambridge University and the Holy Trinity Church, spending the night in a Welsh castle, and eating haggis (NOT!). At the end of the tour, which required many hours on a motor coach, Professor Collins wrote a poem for fellow travelers called “The Coach-a-bury Tales.”

Her Appalachian poem “Mountain Tunes” was published in The Southern Poetry Anthology: North Carolina, poems “Rolling” and “The Porch” in the journal The Way the Light Slants, and creative nonfiction “Unreachable” in Moonshine Review. For the 2015 USC Aiken Magazine, she helped with proofreading and wrote two articles, one about an English alumnus and another about the newly-formed Sign Language Club, for which she is the advisor.

Professor Collins was awarded the 2015 University Service Award. Her favorite areas of service have been as chair of the SS&P Committee and the English Department liaison to the Writing Room. Professor Collins presented “Music as a Character in Appalachian Literature” at the Appalachian Studies Conference in Johnson City, Tennessee. In November she and Dr. Bruzina will co-present “Tutoring International Students in Writing Centers” at the Carolina TESOL Conference.

The most gratifying class of Professor’s fall semester was teaching a course on the canonical works of Tennessee Williams. The fall semester was also the inception of English 110 ESOL: Speaking and Listening, a course which she designed for mastery of conversational English. For the Academy of Lifelong Learning, she enjoyed teaching “Creative and Critical Thinking.”

Karl Fornes — Senior Instructor

After earning Procedures Writing certification in the summer of 2014, Fornes developed and now regularly teaches a new course, Writing in the Workplace. The course serves as a “gateway” course to the reconfigured professional writing minor. Fornes has also been working to expand the department’s internship program by securing several external internships specifically for English majors and writing minors.

Among Fornes’s many accolades, the most important was his recent enshrinement into the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame. For a brief time, Fornes secretly moonlighted as a professional wrestler under the name of The Grand Grammarian. The evil Grand Grammarian pompously noted every single one of each opponents’ grammar errors while pummeling him into a bloody heap with a steel folding chair—“and this is for confusing their and there!” Bam!

The photo shows Fornes about to complete his infamous Comma Clutch to win his championship match against Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson. Once engaged, the Comma Clutch twists the opponent’s colon such that it creates a severe case of the run-ons. In professional wrestling lore, this match is known as the night when everyone had to “smell what the Rock’s got cookin’.” Fornes’s wrestling career was brief. He retired from the ring after several fits of rage associated with the daily ingestion copious amounts of steroids, a rage he tried to blame on reading English 101 essays.
Roy Seeger — Senior Instructor

Last Maymester (THIS Maymester?), “The Grapes in Orvieto,” Professor Roy Seeger’s first song collaboration with USCA Music Professor Richard Maltz, was performed by the USCA choir in at least two cathedrals throughout Italy. The song is acapella since Italian Cathedrals sometimes get fussy over their ancient priceless organs.

This Spring Seeger was invited to speak about poetry for the Sunrise Rotary Club; he discussed ethics in poetry/art and read from his own poems. It was a rousing success, despite the early hour, and directly caused the lowering of gas prices in the region. This, however, did not directly lead to his promotion to Senior Instructor. His students, however, still call him Dr. Seeger.

In other breaking news, Seeger has stepped down as faculty advisor for the Guild of Poetic Intent and stepped up (in?) as advisor for Broken Ink. So far peace has been maintained between both groups.

The thing, however, that has taken up most of Roy Seeger’s time this summer was the purchase of his first house, which is nearly 100 years old. Seeger and his wife, Dr. Amanda Warren, have searched and searched, but have yet to find a ghost. Regardless, this summer Seeger did little traveling. Everything was all about the house.

Dr. David Bruzina — Instructor

In 2015, Dr. Bruzina continued to develop English courses for USCA’s international students and for students in the new Pacer Pathways program. He led a four-day interdisciplinary seminar on stories under the auspices of USCA’s Academy for Lifelong Learning, and his poetry appeared in Green Mountains Review.

In his free time, Dr. Bruzina purchased his first house and has been building furniture and a chicken coop.
Jim Saine — Adjunct Professor

The literary and horizon-broadening highlight of Jim Saine’s summer was a three-week tour of Merry Old England and northern Wales. Putting over 1600 miles—without an accident and that, only by the grace of God—on the rental car, Jim and his wife visited Bath, Glastonbury, Asbury, Stonehenge, the Cotswolds, Stratford-on-Avon, Ironbridge Gorge, Conwy and the Snowdonia region in Wales, the northern Lake District (Keswick and vicinity), Hadrian’s Wall, Durham, the Yorkshire Moors, York, Cambridge, Dover, and London. Following the “gospel according to Rick Steves,” they stayed primarily at backroad B & Bs and made lots of new friends. In addition, Jim read countless books over the summer and wrote several pieces of non-fiction and even some fiction for his grandchildren. His six hundred square foot vegetable garden, planted in early April, has yielded plentifully over the last three and a half months and continues to yield. Jim is teaching three sections of English 101 and one section of English 102 this fall semester, and although he read The Pregnancy Project is not teaching any CI classes.

Jason Walter — Adjunct Professor

This past year has been filled with many changes and monumental moments for Professor Jason Walter. His music career flourished with the release of his new record B.Y.O.C. as well as ten animated music videos. In literary news, Crab Fat Magazine published his poem “A Poem for Sylvia Sanza,” which made their “best of” list. He also published an essay titled “The Rock and Roll Mentality: Existentialism’s Punk Rock Nihilistic Notions” for the website The Artist Unleashed. Professor Walter recently completed his graphic novel Hand Claps. The graphic novel is sixty-six pages long with sixteen panels on each page and uniquely ends with a music video Walter created himself, which helps to merge technology and literature. During the fall semester, Jason Walter taught four English 101 classes and was excited to see students learning and making progress in their own writing. He looks forward to a full semester again in the spring and the opportunity to teach more English 101 students about the beauty and practicality of the English language. Walter’s personal life has also been full of excitement this year. In July 2015, Walter proposed to his fiancée, Heather Warren. They are currently planning to be married in May 2016 and are excited to begin a new life together.
Mrs. Kathryn Hauer, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate, received a B.A. and an M.A. from the College of William and Mary. Mrs. Hauer taught as an adjunct professor at the College of Charleston and USCA in the 1980s and 1990s. She spent 25 years in a full-time career as an editor, writer, and business development manager at the Savannah River Site. In 2004, Mrs. Hauer earned an M.B.A. from the University of South Carolina - Columbia, earned designations as a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and Registered Investment Advisor, and subsequently founded the financial advisory firm Wilson David Investment Advisors. She continues to enjoy teaching English and Business Communications at USCA and giving seminars to the community on financial literacy. Mrs. Hauer recently published a children’s novel, *Redcliffe: The Adventures of Two Southern Girls*. She writes articles and blogs about financial planning topics.

This year has been a year of great changes for Dr. Amanda Warren. She bought her first house, a nearly 100-year-old two-story home with a huge porch, and she returned to her second home in USCA’s Department of English. Her year abroad at that other school across the river taught her many things about teaching, colleagues, and what it is like to have a giant empty office no one ever visits. She is glad to be back at USCA with familiar faces who liven up the day sharing ideas, conversations, and camaraderie. In the past year, while she was away, she taught several courses on Media Literacy and Digital Writing, got involved in campus life at a whole new school, and did make several new friends she will cherish. Dr. Warren, although, as always, woefully busy, also made time to write and research. She has been working as often as she can in her spare time (what’s that?) on her creative and academic projects. In the past year, Dr. Warren has had work published by *Appalachian Heritage*, *Blood and Thunder* (Oklahoma College of Medicine’s journal on arts and medicine), and *The Reverie*, and she may be secretly publishing reviews of bad horror movies somewhere on the Internet. In the coming year she looks forward to unpacking boxes, painting rooms, writing, submitting work, teaching English and Critical Inquiry courses, and attending conferences. In November she will be joining her fellow teachers Vicki Collins and David Bruzina in attending the Carolina Teachers of English to Speakers of Foreign Languages conference, and in March she hopes to attend the Appalachian Studies Association Conference as a presenter and session leader.
Craig Gibbs — Adjunct Instructor

Craig Gibbs has spent the last four years teaching in Columbia even though he lives in nearby North Augusta. Needless to say, he jumped at the chance to become an adjunct instructor at USCA. Now that he spends less time commuting, Craig has more time to work on his dissertation, tentatively titled “The Reemergence of the Frontier/Wilderness in Postmodern American Literature.” His project discusses how postmodern writers have coopted and reinvented the frontier aesthetic in new and imaginative ways. Featuring chapters on science fiction, the “New Western,” and post-apocalyptic literature, the study spans approximately 50 years of American literature. Craig hopes (really hopes) to complete his project in the spring.

When he’s not busy writing about frontier literature, Craig likes to spend time with his two children. His son Conner and daughter Reagan are heavily involved in sports. Many of their games are played in Columbia and Atlanta, so he still spends plenty of time enjoying scenic I-20.

Dr. Tom Mack — Distinguished Professor Emeritus

Since July of this year (2015), I have been busy redefining the term "retirement." The general public—and this includes most students—have an incomplete understanding of what professors do; they think that we are just teachers. However, the work of a typical professor encompasses three categories of performance: teaching, scholarship, and service. When I retired this past summer, my days as a classroom performer came to an end; but I still devote a great deal of time to scholarship and service.

In the scholarly arena, I am happy to announce the publication of my fifth book, HIDDEN HISTORY OF AUGusta. This particular volume contains twenty chapters focused on colorful figures and pivotal events in the history of the city just across the river from us. To launch the new book, Arcadia Publishing/The History Press has lined up a number of author appearances for me, including a panel presentation as part of the Georgia Literary Festival in November and a book signing at the Woodrow Wilson House (Historic Augusta) in December.

I also have an ongoing relationship with three mass media publications. I write a weekly column entitled “Arts and Humanities” for the AIKEN STANDARD; I write monthly museum and gallery reviews for the independent news weekly in Columbia (FREE TIMES); I have also just accepted a request to begin writing articles for the magazine AIKEN HOMES AND LIFESTYLES.

In the category of service, I devote time and energy to the work of three boards, two on the state level and one local. The Board of Governors of the South Carolina Academy of Authors revised its bylaws this September so that I could serve an unprecedented third consecutive term as board chair; this is the organization responsible for managing the state’s literary hall of fame: www.scacademyofauthors.org. I am also on the board of SC Humanities, the state sub-granting arm of the National Endowment for the Humanities; for that organization, I serve on the programming committee, and I pre-screen and score grant applications before they go to the full board. Finally, I am also a member of the board of the Historic Aiken Foundation, which is dedicated to historic preservation in our fair city; I currently edit the newsletter of that group.

Thus, "retirement" for a professor may mean the end of his days in the classroom, but there are other activities that are worthy outlets of his expertise and talent. My days continue to be full.
Additional Faculty

Dr. Jill Hampton
Associate Professor

Dr. Bill Claxon
Associate Professor

English Department Faculty Group Photo 2015-2016
Almost every week I hear the words: “on average it takes a victim seven times to leave before staying away for good.” Since leaving my abusive partner of two years last spring, this has become a mantra in my head in and out of support groups. In USCA’s English program I studied how violence palpitated Latin American cultures giving birth to an idea of escape through the belief in magic and in turn the genre magical realism; in USCA’s Honors Program my senior research centered around how any form of writing can be therapeutic. I also completed a Magellan project, in which a partner and I created a middle school curriculum, became a copy editor of Broken Ink as well as a member of the Guild of Poetic Intent. These are the tools which helped me build my own future since deciding to leave for the final time. I am currently employed full-time as a Special Education Aide with Aiken County Public Schools and part-time as a nanny. Every day I write paragraphs of fiction or lines of poetry; in fact, I completed my first chapbook recently centered around mentalities of victims and survivors of abuse. My next goals include: 1. Getting my own creative writing website up and running this December/January, 2. Applying to Master’s in Special Education programs for Fall of 2016, and 3. Being an advocate and voice for survivors of abuse always.

Since receiving my English certification from USCA in 2004, I have been teaching English at Aiken High School. Currently, I am the head of the English Department and teach Advanced Placement Language and Composition, English IV Honors, Yearbook and Newspaper. I have remained connected to USCA through the USCA Language Arts Festival, the Aiken Writing Project, and by doing work with a variety of USCA faculty. I have also been a participant in the South Carolina Course Alignment Project partnering with Dr. Lynne Rhodes in aligning high school and college English classes. This endeavor creates a better transition across the state for graduating seniors entering their freshmen year of either two- or four-year colleges. At AHS, I have taken eight overseas trips with students including travel to Italy, Ireland, England, Wales, France, Spain, Morocco, and this spring break we will be going to Belize.

My experience with the USCA English Department was and continues to be exceptional. I often encourage my students to consider USCA as a college option especially those considering an English major. Though I was in my 40’s when I changed careers and entered USCA, the university immediately made me feel a part of something special. I received tremendous support from my professors. Their mentorship during my time as a student and now as a professional has been invaluable.
William Wright is author or editor of twenty editions. His most recent poetry collections are *Tree Heresies* (Mercer University Press, 2015) and *Night Field Anecdote* (Louisiana Literature, 2011). Wright's recent editions include seven volumes of *The Southern Poetry Anthology*, the forthcoming *Hard Lines: Rough South Poetry* (University of South Carolina Press), and two forthcoming volumes centered on the work of Gerard Manley Hopkins (Clemson University Press and Liverpool University Press). His work has recently appeared or is forthcoming in *Kenyon Review*, *Antioch Review*, *Oxford American*, *Southern Poetry Review*, and many other journals. In spring of 2016, Wright will serve as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

**The Oswald Review**

by Hannah Tucker

*The Oswald Review* internship was an enriching experience that continues to affect my daily life. When the opportunity was offered to me my thoughts ran rather selfishly to how this might look on a resume or an application to grad school. While this may still be true, I've taken my experience and put it towards bettering my own writing process and my professional communication skills.

As an English Major, writing is a large part of my life in and out of the classroom. My essays, of which there are many, were acceptable in that they met all of the qualifications of the assignments; but now I have the ability to go beyond that. With the guidance of a published editor, I was able to learn what made a paper worthy of publication when others had fallen short. It is impossible to have the perfect paper on the first few tries, which is where the cooperation between editor and writer is a must. The writer, above all, must approve of each editing decision because the changes that are made are for the betterment of the work. While working on papers outside of the publication sphere, students must be their own editor which is what I have brought with me in my everyday assignments. That step away from seeing a paper as your own work is what makes editing easier. With practice, the flaws in someone else’s works can be spotted, whether it is phrasing, formatting, or punctuation errors. The difficulties arise when you have been staring at a paper (yours or not) for so long that everything seems to run together. It is useful to have another set of eyes when this happens, and I was proud to be that extra set of eyes for The Oswald Review.
Broken Ink
by Meredith Hawcroft

Broken Ink, USCA’s student-produced literary and visual arts magazine, has represented the many creative individuals on campus since 1971. The magazine allows students a chance to publish art of many forms including poetry, prose, short stories, photography, comics, and original music.

There have recently been multiple changes within Broken Ink. In 2015 Roy Seeger became the advisor for the group, a position that was previously held by Karl Fornes. There are also more options for submissions to the magazine this year. For the first time there will be no word limit for literary submissions. Broken Ink will also be accepting novel excerpts and short video submissions.

At the closing of each academic year, a new issue of Broken Ink is reviewed by the Associated College Press and can win awards for various categories.

Every year, the USCA Department of English and Broken Ink collaborate to host a writer for a reading. During the spring semester, Broken Ink will be hosting USCA Professor (and most amazing poet and author of creative nonfiction) Amanda Warren.
Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* seemed to be a pretty simple play until I took Survey of British Literature. The story follows the plight of a set of twins as they are separated in a shipwreck and traverse through a series of humorous encounters in the beautiful land of Illyria. A character named Malvolio, a pompous, uptight manservant (think Tim Curry in *Clue*), becomes the butt of a terrible joke and ends his part in the story storming out and vowing revenge. As we learned about the play in class, the illustrious Dr. Carlson pointed out the possibility that Shakespeare denied Malvolio a happy conclusion because the steward was not a noble; a subversive message to highlight class tensions at the time.

Malvolio became a more complicated, sympathetic character when viewed through this lens. After all that, he really deserves the chance to get his revenge, I thought, but how would he do it? I began to plan a sequel that would turn everything on its head, allowing Malvolio to carry out his promise. Unfortunately, it soon became clear that I did not have the time or the resources to adequately research my ideas and tell his story.

Enter Dr. Smith, who suggested the Magellan Scholar Program as a means to bring my project to fruition. My idea—to research the possibility of class warfare in the play and write a response novella—fit perfectly with the program’s mission to “enrich the academic experience of USC’s undergraduates with research opportunities.” Selected student projects from any USC campus are awarded with up to $3000 for qualifying expenses and the opportunity to work with a mentor for valuable guidance. To be awarded the scholarship, I worked with Dr. Smith and Dr. Geyer to write a research proposal describing my topic, my research process, and my objectives.

After many revisions on my proposal, I was awarded a scholarship in the spring of 2015. I spent the summer researching various topics related to my project, ranging from sumptuary laws, to class tension, to physical details of life in Elizabethan London. While I knew better than to try and write a response in iambic pentameter, I still wanted my novella to have accurate physical details, such as the characters’ clothing and their accommodations. Finally at the beginning of the fall semester I got to work on writing my book, tentatively titled *A Man Most Abused: Malvolio’s Revenge*. I met with Dr. Geyer to discuss revisions as I completed each chapter. Ultimately, I will have a completed manuscript that I can begin submitting for publication.

In the spring I will share my research results and novella at USCA’s Research Day and USC’s Discovery Day through a presentation and short reading. Nearly 415 years later, Malvolio will finally have his vengeance.
The Guild of Poetic Intent
by Meredith Hawcroft

The Guild of Poetic Intent is a student-run organization that focuses on the creation of poetry, prose, and short-stories. Some of the students who are involved in the Guild this year include Vice-President Sarah Marie Williamson, Treasurer Ajay Krishna-Kumar, James Paisley, Olivia Burbage, and Brent Blackmon.

Professor Roy Seeger, who served as the Guild’s advisor since its inception in 2010, resigned from his position in the fall of 2015. Seeger, however, still remains extremely active in the group, much to the delight of all of the Guild members who have promised to be less obnoxious if he stays. The Guild was happy to welcome reference librarian Brandy Horne as their enthusiastic new advisor. She successfully planned multiple events for the organization during the fall 2015 semester and is helping the Guild expand to reach a broader audience.

During the past year, members of the Guild came together to participate in monthly off-campus open mic events at various local restaurants including Sliders Bar and Grill, Magnolia, and Mi Rancho. The events are open to anyone who wishes to share their poetry or listen to the work of others.

The Guild also hosted their annual Read N’ Feed on September 17th in the Gregg Graniteville Library. The event was pot-luck style and featured dishes provided by Guild members. It was open mic and many students read their original poetry or the work of their favorite authors. Perspective Guild members often come to Read N’ Feed events to simply gorge themselves on the free food but then become enthralled with the beauty of poetry and the spoken word.

At the end of the fall and spring semesters, the Guild of Poetic Intent hosted a used book sale on the SAC patio to raise money for organization events, primarily the Spring Emerging Poet Series. The book sale was a great success thanks to all of the professors who donated books and then proceeded to buy more.

Every spring, the Guild brings an emerging poet (i.e. a poet who has no more than two full-length collections) to the Aiken Center of the Arts to give a public reading of his or her work and participate in discussions with the audience. This spring the guest poet will be Julie Funderburk, who serves as poetry editor of storySouth and teaches creative writing courses at Queens University of Charlotte.
On Tuesday, October 13th, USCA welcomed renowned author Richard Blanco for the fall reading of the 2015-2016 Oswald Writers Series.

Richard Blanco, whose parents are Cuban, was born in Madrid but moved to New York City when he was only a few weeks old and then later settled in Miami with his family. This conglomeration of cultures has impacted Blanco as a writer and prompted him to explore issues of community and self-identity throughout his writing.

A graduate of Florida International University, Blanco received his civil engineering degree in 1991 and then earned a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing in 1997. He experienced dual success as both a civil engineer and a poet.

Richard Blanco quickly earned unparalleled success and global prestige for his poetry in 2012 when President Barack Obama selected him to serve as the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. history. This honor made Blanco the youngest, first Latino, first immigrant, and first openly gay person to serve in that capacity.

Since then, the literary world has been greatly impacted by both Blanco’s poetry and his non-fiction writing, which have earned him numerous awards. His poetry collection *City of a Hundred Fires* (1998) won the prestigious Agnes Starrett Poetry Prize, while *Directions to the Beach of the Dead* (2005) is the winner of the PEN/American Beyond Margins Award. His 2012 poetry collection *Looking for the Gulf Motel* received the Tom Gunn Award, the Maine Literary Award, and the Paterson Prize. Blanco’s other honors include honorary doctorates from Macalester College, Colby College, and the University of Rhode Island, a Florida Artist Fellowship, the Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellowship, and a Bread Loaf Fellowship.

Since reading at the inauguration, Blanco has continued writing and stayed busy as he travels across the country for speaking engagements. In 2015, the Academy of American Poets named him its first Education Ambassador. Out of Blanco’s many honors, serving as the Education Ambassador is one of the most meaningful to him. He hopes to help connect students and teachers to poetry by demonstrating its relevance in everyday life. Blanco believes that if most people give poetry a chance they will experience a genuine connection. His most recent projects include his memoir *The Prince of Los Cocuyos: A Miami Childhood* (2014), which received the 2015 Maine Literary Award for Memoir and the 2015 Lambda Literary Award for Gay Memoir. Blanco also recently published an illustrated children’s book version of his presidential inaugural poem, “One Today.”

I had the immense honor of introducing Richard Blanco at the Writers Series presentation on October 13th, and while speaking with him I found him relatable and humble despite his illustrious career and the fact that he has met Beyoncé. His easy-going style was present throughout his reading. Blanco mingled personal stories and family photos amongst his poetry to give a summary of his life experiences and hopes for the future that put his poetry into context. He read his poem “One Today,” which offers a glimmering overview of America from sunrise to sunset. Blanco also read “Mother Country,” which is one of the three poems he wrote for the inauguration. His poems were deeply personal and made the audience contemplate the meaning of home and family. Blanco is a natural speaker, and the audience quickly became consumed by his stories and poems.

I found that Blanco’s writing style was extremely personal yet relevant to the broader human experience. His poetry provides a small glimpse of the beauty to be found in humanity. Although Blanco discussed some serious topics at the reading, like his struggle with his identity and disapproving family members, he remained lighthearted and kept the audience constantly entertained. After the reading, Blanco spent some time in the lobby to meet guests and sign copies of his poetry collections and memoir that were available for purchase.

For more information on Richard Blanco, visit his website: richard-blanco.com/
PRAISE FOR WHERE ALL LIGHT TENDS TO GO

“Remarkable...This isn't your ordinary coming-of-age novel, but with his bone-cutting insights into these men and the region that bred them, Joy makes it an extraordinarily intimate experience.”

—The New York Times Book Review

“If Breaking Bad and Winter's Bone mated, you'd end up with something resembling this novel from David Joy.” —Penthouse Magazine

“Bound to draw comparisons to Daniel Woodrell's 'Winter's Bone'...[Joy's] moments of poetic cognizance are the stuff of fine fiction, lyrical sweets that will keep readers turning pages...'Where All Light Tends To Go' is a book that discloses itself gradually, like a sunrise peeking over a distant mountain range...”

—Atlanta Journal-Constitution

“At the heart of darkness rests David Joy's accomplished debut... This beautiful, brutal book begins with Jacob despairing he's 'let what [he] was born into control what [he'd] become,' a realization that circumstances and love eventually force him to defy.” —Minneapolis Star Tribune

“[Joy] has studied his forebears in Southern gothic: Where All Light Tends to Go mixes Flannery O'Connor's twisted religion with Cormac McCarthy's mythopoetic violence...Readers turn through pages of darkness hoping that, against the odds, Jacob can find his way to the light.”—Memphis Commercial-Appeal

“Joy can turn bleakness into a song...and the ending is nothing but a dream of lyricism, a coming together of key images and symbols, where the 'grit' of the protagonist manifests itself in an act of bravery...The story may not leave the reader with a radiant glow of good cheer, but the writing and pacing of Joy's novel will compel every reader toward that point where all light tends to go.”—Kirkus Reviews (online)


“Joy's first novel is an uncompromising noir, its downward thrust pulling like quicksand on both the characters and the reader. And, yet, there is poetry here, too, as there is in Daniel Woodrell's novels, the kind of poetry that draws its power from a doomed character's grit in the face of disaster...This is the start of a very promising fiction-writing career.”—Booklist

David Joy is the author of the novels Where All Light Tends To Go (Putnam 2015), The Weight Of This World (Putnam 2017), and The Line That Held Us (Putnam TBD), as well as the memoir Growing Gills: A Fly Fisherman's Journey (Bright Mountain Books 2011).

Joy is the recipient of an artist fellowship from the North Carolina Arts Council. His writing has appeared in numerous magazines and journals, and has been nominated for awards such as the Pushcart Prize. His latest short stories and essays have appeared in The Good Men Project, Still: The Journal, and The Pisgah Review.
As a junior English major, the President of the Guild of Poetic Intent, a supplemental English instructor for the Pacer Pathways Program, and an English tutor for the First PACE program, USC Aiken’s English department is truly like my second home and is a great source of pride for me. When Dr. Geyer offered me the chance to create the English Department’s annual newsletter, I eagerly accepted the opportunity and dedicated myself to creating a product that would be a reflection of our wonderful department.

Editing Words, Words, Words challenged me as a student and a writer, but it also allowed me to make meaningful connections within the English Department. I would like to thank all of the teachers, students, and graduates who contributed to this year’s newsletter. I am indebted to all of you for your assistance with the newsletter as well as your priceless friendship and mentorship throughout my college career. It was a pleasure to work with all of you, and I immensely enjoyed creating further bonds with the inspirational English faculty and dedicated students who make our department an outstanding place to learn. I would especially like to thank Dr. Geyer for allowing me this opportunity and patiently advising me during the compilation of the newsletter. He is a constant source of wisdom in my life, and I am certain the English department will continue to flourish under his leadership.

I believe my experience with this internship has provided me with practical skills and taught me lessons that could not have been learned in an ordinary classroom setting. My internship for Words, Words, Words has given me the confidence to accept opportunities no matter how daunting they may seem at first and has helped prepare me for life after I graduate from USCA in the spring of 2017.
New Book: Dr. Tom Mack

Situated along the Georgia border, Augusta is known for its golf, beautiful private gardens and southern culture. But its history is also brimming with strange stories yet to be told. A beleaguered German princess gave the city its name. A haunted pillar survived a tornado that destroyed the area in 1878. The famous Wright brothers opened a branch of their flying school here in 1911. Author and historian Tom Mack uncovers and celebrates these gems hidden in Augusta’s rich and teeming history.

Writing Awards: Dr. Drew Geyer

The composite story anthology Texas 5X5 (co-written by Dr. Geyer and four other Texas writers, and published by Stephen F. Austin University Press) was named a Foreword Magazine Book of the Year Award finalist for 2015. One of Geyer’s short stories from this collection, “Fingers,” won the Spur Award from the Western Writers of America for Best Short Story published in 2014; the story was also a finalist for the Kay Cattarulla Award from the Texas Institute of Letters.