

Of Note

Recent Highlights from
UMBC's Language, Literacy & Culture Doctoral Program
Spring 2021

Dear LLC Community,

Turning the corner toward open waters?

Sometimes our burdens in a doctoral program and in our everyday lives have seemed overwhelming and our responses inadequate. A recent meme caught my attention; it is a photograph of the huge Ever Given ship stuck in the Suez Canal and a comparatively miniscule excavator trying to dig it out. The large caption over the ship reads in all caps, "ACADEMIC BURNOUT," and the small caption over the digging machine, "Mindfulness seminar." Without trivializing the overwhelming demands on all of you, and the lack of commensurate solutions for over a year, there is hope on the horizon, and much good news to report.

LLC has 66 active students this spring of 2021, and LLC has awarded 10 PhDs in 2020 in the midst of the pandemic, and maybe 5 more in May or over the summer. That would be impressive in any year, but thinking of the excellent research and work that these doctoral students were able to accomplish in spite of the overwhelming obstacles deserves special recognition and congratulations. To honor those that did earn the doctorate degree, please plan to attend virtually our **graduation celebration on May 20th starting at 11:30am** [we will send the link later this month].

UMBC plans to open with 90% of classes face-to-face in the fall of 2021. We plan to have study spaces available for our students, and we will also survey you about your preferred method of instruction (f2f or hybrid) as we get closer to the fall semester. We all look forward to having more choices and safe spaces.

We also may have new opportunities for Graduate Assistantships (both in 10 and 20 hours a week of work) next academic year. If you are interested, then please contact me.

Although mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, LLC's Dr. Ramon Goings just published on February 1st of 2021 the useful guide to *14 Secrets to a Done Dissertation: A Guide to Navigating the Dissertation Process and Finishing in Record Time*. And, I wanted to mention it here as another way LLC's faculty seeks to move everyone, especially in these times, toward completing the requirements for a Ph.D. with excellent research and writing.

LLC's Dr. Kimberly Moffitt will continue as the interim-Dean of our College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Science next academic year, and will thankfully continue to mentor many of our students and remain an active scholar and editor in the interdisciplinary fields associated with our program. Also, LLC's Dr. Christine Mallinson will continue to serve as the Director of the Center for Social Science Scholarship (CS3) as well as continue to mentor many LLC students. With Dr. Moffitt's work as the Dean and Dr. Mallinson's work at CS3, we desperately needed more faculty at least on an interim or visiting basis.

We were very fortunate to be able to hire **Dr. Rebeca Gamez as a Visiting Lecturer**. We are pleased that one of her Fall 2021 courses will focus on ethnographic approaches to research (LLC 650), and thrilled that Dr. Gamez will strengthen and extend our faculty's research and expertise in the study of educational inequality, and specifically in her research on how minoritized and immigrant youth navigate their schooling, learning, and

identities. As an interdisciplinary educational scholar, Dr. Gamez's research lies at the intersection of cultural sociology, anthropology, and critical race and ethnic studies. Join me in welcoming Dr. Gamez to our community.

We held our **Inaugural Cedric Herring Symposium**, with nearly 200 people attending virtually listening to our guest of honor, Dr. Patricia Hill Collins, interact and engage with our brilliant panelists of current doctoral students in LLC, Chelsea Mays-Williams, Katie Morris, Elaine MacDougall, and Alyse Minter as well as two LLC alumnae, Dr. Emerald Christopher, an Assistant Professor at the University of Delaware, and Dr. Emek Ergun, Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina—Charlotte. Dr. Ergun co-edited the 5th Edition of *Feminist Theory Reader*, in 2020, with one of LLC's founding affiliate faculty members, Dr. Carol McCann. Dr. Moffitt and Dr. Henderson also spoke inspiring words about Dr. Hill Collins' importance and Cedric Herring's legacy.

Our LLC colleague, Dr. Bev Bickel, offered a profound note of praise to the panelists and to LLC's Shenita Denson, the host of the event, that illuminated the significance of the symposium: "We've been imagining and longing for this event for over two years, and in the midst of these tough times, you made it into a powerful and inspirational moment for the many people who were there. I imagine that all of us were riveted by the discussion the entire time which is a testament to Dr. Hill Collins as well as the thoughtful design and iterative preparation, the wise panelists and skillful moderation, the careful attention to the details and technological demands, and the collaborative efforts of you all. I was deeply moved by this tribute to Cedric Herring as it echoed and advanced much of what he offered us and expected of us—to be better than we thought we could be; to ask good questions from our lived experiences; to collaborate and challenge each other; to insist on equity and understand the history and conditions from which it must be designed; to always attend to cultural contexts in order to have the difficult and essential

dialogical engagements Dr. Hill Collins calls for; to speak truth forcefully and from love; to mentor generously and assure there is more equitable space for those coming along, and to lead with that unique combination of gentle humor and fierce conviction which Dr. Herring embodied. He would have been over the moon proud of the alumni and student panelists and deeply honored by the attendance and the ongoing efforts of so many people dedicated to work that was the purpose of his life. It was a simultaneously joyful and sorrowful moment for which I am deeply grateful to you all." Thanks Dr. Bickel for your moving tribute.

We read two citations of recognition and celebration from the Maryland Delegate Harry Bhandari, who is completing his dissertation in LLC, and from the Baltimore County Council. Those citations of recognition honoring Dr. Herring's legacy will eventually appear in the LLC seminar room. President Freeman Hrabowski welcomed everyone to our symposium at UMBC, and he urged everyone to contribute to the Cedric Herring research fund so that we can continue to hold these symposia in the future and create other innovative research opportunities for our doctoral students. In that regard, I want to mention Vice-President for Institutional Advancement, Greg Simmons, who is also a doctoral student in our program; Simmons makes sure that programs like the Herring Symposium get the donors' funding they need. It was a wonderful event. Of course, we could not have done it without our program manager, Liz Steenrod.

With our collective efforts in LLC, our community is looking forward to continuing to build research infrastructure for the humanities and social sciences that rests on the foundation of doctoral education.

Onward and in solidarity!

Craig Saper
Interim Director



LLC Program Highlights and Milestones

Ph.D. Graduates Honored in December



Mary Gallagher

(cohort 18)

left

"What am I Supposed to Look Like?" STEM Identity Narratives of Women of Color Pursuing a Computing Degree through Vertical Transfer

Mentors:

Beverly Bickel (LLC) and Sarah Jewett (Provost Office)

Jaclyn Stone

(cohort 18)

right

Receive, Respond, Report: Faculty Experiences with Students' Disclosures of Sexual Assault

Mentors:

Bambi Chapin (SAPH) and Christine Mallinson (LLC)



2021 Inaugural Cedric Herring Symposium

Critical Conversations: An Intersectional Perspective to Ignite Social Change

On March 24, 2021, the LLC Program held its **Inaugural Cedric Herring Symposium** online. This powerful and inspirational event was attended by nearly 200 people, making it possibly the largest event ever held by the Program.

This annual event aims to extend the legacy of **Dr. Cedric Herring**, past director and professor of the Language, Literacy & Culture Program, who researched and published extensively on the issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion. He was a generous mentor to doctoral students and Black faculty.



Dr. Cedric Herring



Dr. Patricia Hill Collins

The Symposium's keynote speaker was **Dr. Patricia Hill Collins**, Distinguished University Professor Emerita of Sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park. Dr. Hill Collins is a social theorist whose research and scholarship have examined issues of race, gender, social class, sexuality and nation. Two of her many published works include the books, *Black Feminist Thought* and *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory*. She was joined in conversation with a panel comprised of current LLC students and alumnae, noted below, and moderated by **Dr. Ramon Goings**, Assistant Professor of LLC. In keeping with its graduate student orientation, the event was coordinated and hosted by **Shenita Denson** (cohort 22).

Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, UMBC President, and **Dr. Loren Henderson** (SAPH) led off the event contextualizing Dr. Herring's legacy, followed by Interim Dean of CAHSS, **Dr. Kimberly Moffitt**, who highlighted the scholarly career and relevance of Dr. Hill Collins for our Symposium.

What followed was a dynamic, dialogical engagement between Dr. Hill Collins and the panel that expressed much of what Dr. Herring offered and expected of us—to be better than we thought we could be; to ask good questions from our lived experiences; to collaborate and challenge each other; to insist on equity and understand the history and conditions from which it must be designed; to always attend to cultural contexts; to speak truth forcefully and from love; to mentor generously and assure there is more equitable space for those coming along, and to lead with that unique combination of gentle humor and fierce conviction which Dr. Herring embodied.



Panelists (L-R): Dr. Emerald Christopher-Byrd (LLC '15), Assistant Professor, Women & Gender Studies, University of Delaware, **Dr. Emek Ergun** (LLC '15), Assistant Professor, Women and Gender Studies & Global Studies at UNC Charlotte, **Elaine MacDougall** (cohort 22), Director, UMBC Writing Center, **Chelsea Mays-Williams** (cohort 23), **Alyse Minter** (cohort 20), Research Librarian, Congressional Research Service, and **Katie Morris** (cohort 18), Program Director, Social Work Program, UMBC-Shady Grove.

Sharing our Good News

Sherella Cupid (LLC '20) received the 2021 Hope Richardson Dissertation Award from the [International Mentoring Association](#). She is also co-hosting a new podcast, [Lirae Journey](#), to discuss the journeys of Black women in various contexts. This podcast serves as a digital sister circle, to create community and conversation.



Shenita Denson (cohort 22) was hired as a consultant by the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Homeless Services to give public speaking workshops to young adults who have experienced or are currently experiencing homelessness. Shenita was also selected to serve as the 2021-2022 Secretary of the Interpersonal Communication Division of the National Communication Association.

Shani Fleming (cohort 14) is the [2020–2021 PAEA Faculty-Generated Research Grant](#) awardee. Her project is *Building a Regional Center of Excellence for Optimizing Clinical Education: A Randomized-Controlled Crossover Study of an Innovative Telehealth Model for PA Programs (The BRITE Study)*. Shani will serve as the project's PI.



Montia Gardner (cohort 19) accepted the Vice President of Education position with the [Northside Achievement Zone](#) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Montia plans to defend her dissertation before moving there in early June.

Ramon Goings (LLC) received a UMBC Summer Research Faculty Fellowship (SURFF) Award for 2021.

Irina Golubeva (MLLI), together with her colleagues, organized the first virtual "[MLLI Research Day](#)" on November 13, 2020. The conference program included presentations by MLLI undergraduate Honors students, graduate students and faculty.



Romy Hübler (LLC '15) has been selected as the winner of the [2020-2021 Jakubik Family Endowment Staff Award](#), a UMBC award honoring someone who makes exceptional contributions to student success.

Mary Laurents (LLC '18) gave a virtual book talk in March on her 2020 book, [British Identity in World War I: The Lost Boys](#), hosted by the LLC Program and the History Department. **Dan Ritschel** (HIST) and **Bev Bickel** (LLC), who were Mary's dissertation mentors, facilitated the discussion.

Elaine MacDougall (cohort 22) was awarded a Humanities Teaching Lab Course Transformation grant for "Telling our (Counter) Stories: A Collaboration between Baltimore City College and University of Maryland, Baltimore County Writing Students." The shared assignment will take place in the Spring 2022 semester.

Christine Mallinson (LLC) along with **Felipe Filomeno** (POLI) and **Maria Sanchez** (COEIT), and Helena Mentis (IS) and Woodrow Winchester III (COEIT) received a [Fall 2020 Hrabowski Innovation Fund Implementation and Research award](#), entitled "Identifying an Interdisciplinary Path to Social Responsibility Education across the COEIT Curriculum." **Kara Seidel** (cohort 23) is working on the project as a graduate assistant. Results from the project will speak to opportunities to improve academic persistence, engagement,

and workforce participation for COEIT students, and greater interfacing across COEIT and the social sciences/CAHSS.



Doaa Rashed (LLC '17) launched the [Language and Social Justice Initiative](#) through the Language Engagement Project, where she is Director at Rutgers University. This initiative aims to promote, develop, and support a well-structured dialogue in a wide range of topics: linguistic and cultural diversity, raciolinguistic ideology, language education and equity, among others. Ideas and collaborators are welcome.

Antione Tomlin (cohort 19) received the Vernon C. Polite Black Boys & Men Research Award from Bowie State University Center for Research and Mentoring of Black Male Students and Teachers.

Brandy Wallace (SAPH) received funding from the Oregon Community Foundation for the proposal: "Understanding Trauma-Informed Care Implementation in Nursing Homes and its Impacts on Direct Care Workers and Residents" (Role: Co-PI). She is also on the Editorial Board of [The Gerontologist](#).



Kevin Wisniewski (LLC '18) as part of the journal, *Textshop Experiments*, co-founded with Felix Burgos (LLC '18), Kevin has founded the new book series [Textshop Editions](#). In February, he published the first title: *Defense Mechanism* by experimental Polish poet Krzysztof Siwczyk and translated by Piotr Florczyk.

On a personal note, Kevin and his wife, Molly, welcomed the birth of their first child, Jacob, on January 22.

Hot off the Press

Erin Berry-McCrea (LLC '18) collaborated with **Christine Mallinson** (LLC) and two others on the book chapter, "[Empowering African-American Student Voices in College](#)" for the book, *Reconceptualizing the Role of Critical Dialogue in American Classrooms Promoting Equity through Dialogic Education*. Routledge, 2020.

Maria Céleri (GWST) published, "From La Virgen del Panecillo to La Virgen del Legrado: (Trans)national Feminist Struggles for Reproductive Rights in the Andes" in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* (Fall 2020).



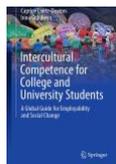
May Chung (cohort 17) published the chapter, "I Lost My Language But Your Child Doesn't Have To" in the book, [Critical Storytelling: Multilingual Immigrants in the United States](#). Brill Publishers, 2020.

Steven Dashiell (LLC '20) published, "[Hooligans at the Table: The Concept of Male Preserves in Tabletop Role-playing Games](#)" in the *International Journal of Role Playing*, Issue 10.

International Journal of
Role-Playing

Landry Digeon (LLC '20) co-published, "Transnational TV Series Adaptations: What artificial intelligence can tell us about gender inequality in France and the US," in [Media Literacy and Academic Research Journal](#), April 2021.

Ramon Goings (LLC) published the book, [*14 Secrets to a Done Dissertation: A Guide to Navigating the Dissertation Process and Finishing in Record Time*](#) in February 2021. He also published the article, [“Introducing the Black Male Adult Learner Success Theory”](#) in *Adult Education Quarterly* in September 2020. This paper is the first theory to focus exclusively on Black male adult learners in higher education.



Irina Golubeva (MLLI) co-published the book, [*Intercultural Competence for College and University Students: A Global Guide for Employability and Social Change*](#). Springer, 2020.

Marjoleine Kar's (HIST) book, [*Blood on the River*](#), about the 1763 slave rebellion in Berbice, came out in a Dutch translation with Atlas Contact in Amsterdam in January 2021.

Ana Oskoz (MLLI) co-authored the book, [*Digital L2 Writing Literacies. Directions for Classroom Practice*](#). London: Equinox, 2020. It offers an up-to-date overview of digital writing in L2 contexts and illustrates how digital media have expanded the options for research and teaching language and writing.



Craig Saper (LLC) published the chapter, “Data to the Nth Degree: Zooming in on *The Smart Set*,” in [*Big Data - a New Medium?*](#). Routledge, 2021. Craig also published the chapter, “‘Hand & Soul’: The Fin de Siècle Sociopoetics of Way & Williams and the Auvergne Press,” in [*The Contemporary Small Press: Making Publishing Visible*](#). Palgrave MacMillan, 2020.

Shannon Sauro (EDUC) co-published the chapter, [“Pedagogically mediating engagement in the wild: Trajectories of fandom-based curricular innovation”](#) in the book, *Pop culture in language education* (pp.228-241). Taylor & Francis, 2020. She also co-published the article, [“There’s always an option: Collaborative writing of multilingual interactive fanfiction in a foreign language class.”](#) *CALICO Journal*, 38(1), 17-42, 2021.

Antione Tomlin (cohort 19) co-published, [“Thriving Despite the Challenges: Tips for HBCU Students and Faculty,”](#) in Interfolio.com’s Resources section, March 11, 2021.

Fan Yang (MCS) published an article, [“Learning from Lana: Netflix’s Too Hot to Handle, COVID-19, and the human-nonhuman entanglement in contemporary technoculture,”](#) in a special issue of *Cultural Studies*, March 2021.

Talk, Talk, Talk

David Balosa (LLC '20) presented, “Foundations in Existential Sociolinguistics” at the annual [Conference of the International Association for the Integrational Study of Language and Communication](#) (IAISLC), which featured an international roster of presenters from Brazil, the US, Africa and the UK in March 2021.

Erin Berry-McCrea (LLC '18) presented on a [Freedom School 2.0](#) panel titled, "Advocating for Black Children within Education Contexts." Dr. Berry-McCrea's presentation was titled Black Hair Policies and Politics. This event was hosted by the Auburn Avenue Research Library in collaboration with Georgia State University’s Department of African American Studies.





Landry Digeon (LLC '20) and Anjal Amin presented “[TV Series Adaptations: An AI Toolkit For Success](#)” at the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management 2020 (IEEEEM). The presentation describes their pioneering approach to studying TV series using the artificial intelligence software they have created.

David Hoffman (LLC '13) and **Romy Hübler** (LLC '15) led the national webinar, “Putting the CLDE Theory of Change into Practice,” at the first gathering of new NASPA LEAD institutions and NASPA LEAD advisors for the 2020-2021 academic year. NASPA LEAD is the civic engagement leadership development initiative for NASPA, a national professional organization for student affairs personnel. The [CLDE Theory of Change](#) is a set of ideas about the future of civic learning and democratic engagement developed by David and Romy in collaboration with other national higher education leaders.

Romy and David also organized and facilitated a (virtual) Civic Empowerment Symposium for delegations from UMBC, Grand Valley State University, and Kent State University. The Symposium was the culmination of a two year project, funded by a [Bringing Theory to Practice](#) Multi-Institutional Innovation Grant, to develop tools for students' civic empowerment.

LLC in the Media



Erin Berry-McCrea (LLC '18) was featured in a January 21, 2021 [EdNC article](#) following her participation in The Public School Forum of North Carolina’s Dudley Flood Center for Educational Equity and Opportunity's first webinar titled, “What does culturally responsive curriculum mean to our students?” The webinar discussed culturally responsive curriculum as a part of educational equity.

Michael Hunt (cohort 21) and Antoinette Newsome presented, "Holistic Critical Mentoring for First-Gen Undergraduate Scholars," at the NASPA national conference in March. Their talk was highlighted in the article, “[Conference Highlights Improvements to Student Affairs Practices on Campuses](#),” in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, March 24, 2021.



Nana Gyesie’s (LLC MA '19) advising role at Baltimore City Community College was highlighted in the article, “[‘Queen’s Gambit’ actor Moses Ingram’s unrelenting journey from West Baltimore to Hollywood](#),” The Washington Post, February 25, 2021.

Joby Taylor (SHRIVER) and Sally Scott wrote the OpEd, “[Re-Imagining Baltimore’s Inner Harbor as a place for residents rather than tourists](#),” in The Baltimore Sun, May 17, 2021.



Thank you for your contributions to this edition of our newsletter!
We love hearing from you.

Virtual copies of all *Of Note* editions can be found at <https://llc.umbc.edu/of-note-llc-newsletter/>.