

WORDHORD

Spring 2018

Northwestern College
English Department Newsletter

Volume 16, No. 2

Dr. Martin Wins National Competition



by Jayde Logemann

Dr. Samuel Martin's short story "Syringe-Fed Ferrets" was selected out of more than 1,400 submissions to win ScreenCraft's Cinematic Short Story Contest this March. In addition to publication on ScreenCraft's website, Dr. Martin received a cash prize, a consultation with a ScreenCraft mentor, and contact with Scott Carr, a Hollywood literary manager.

Dr. Martin's story was inspired by an article pulled up on a friend's phone about syringe-feeding ferrets and a fake news story about a woman who trained squirrels to attack her ex-boyfriend. He thought that both stories were so strange that they needed a story written about them. The narrative that resulted follows a boy named Corbit who lives in eastern Ontario and uses fifteen ferrets to exact serendipitous revenge against the police officer who abused his mother.

The story was originally used as part of Dr. Martin's tenure project, but he then submitted a modified version to the competition. Although the story was not written with the cinema in mind, Dr. Martin thinks it fits the genre very well. *(Continued on page 2)*

CONTENTS

3-8

Senior Profiles

Each spring our graduating seniors reflect on highlights of their Northwestern College experience and on what they plan to do next.

9

Festival of Faith & Writing

NWC students and professors attended this spring celebration of literature & belief.

10-11

Department News

Here's the scoop on what has been happening in the English department this semester.

12-13

Alumni News

Updates on what English alums are doing.

14

Alumni Profile

NWC alumna Emily (Muilenburg) Rasmussen muses on how her English Major propelled her toward launching a new business.



Martin Wins Competition *(Continued from page 1)*

"It has a lot of action-heavy scenes, kind of a Cohen brothers' atmosphere and humor."

Dr. Martin says he was pleasantly surprised to see his story continue to advance in and eventually win the contest. In his conversation with Carr, the literary manager said the story is not yet long enough to make a full movie, but the action and plot of the story have potential for further development. Dr. Martin also hopes that his connection with the contest may lead to his story being published on other platforms.

The story is currently being copyrighted and will soon be published on ScreenCraft's blog.

 ScreenCraft blog link: <https://screencraft.org/screenwriting/>

ScreenCraft announces the 2017 Short Story Contest Winners!

Syringe-Fed Ferrets by Samuel Martin
has been selected as the Grand Prize Winner!

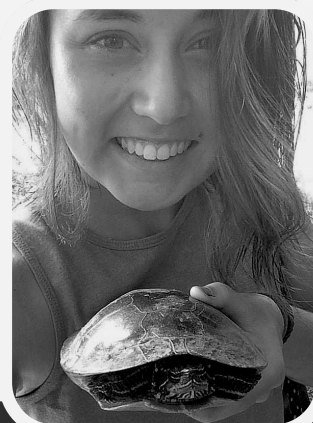


Dr. Martin's story about a punk kid getting revenge on a dirty copy using 15 ferrets and a druggie's syringe has won this contest! Dr. Martin's story was picked out of over 1,400 entries by judges from Tin House, Random House, and Harper's.

SENIOR PROFILES

Carissa Tavary *English Teaching*

As a graduating senior looking back on her experience, I can honestly say some of my favorite memories came from the English department. From class with Dr. Kensak and his ever-engaging presentations to deep conversation about God and truth with Dr. Westerholm, I have been blessed by every interaction. I will forever carry that distinct smell of Kepp Hall, the enthusiasm of Dr. Lundberg teaching about feminism, and the humble and endearing Canadian accent of Dr. Martin with me wherever I go, because it is these experiences, the conversations over coffee and books, that have changed the course of my life. It is crazy to think I once started as a nerdy chemistry major, but it is even crazier to believe I ended up in Kepp with such a dichotomous group of English students and professors! Looking back, it seems near impossible that I am now following a completely different track of life pursuing English, literature, and thought. But the delight and fascination of literature and world affairs caught my attention and ransacked my soul, leaving me with a deeper meaning for life and learning than I could have ever thought possible. I owe a lot to the peers and professors who dealt with the impulsive and anxious traits of my character, the ones who stood by my side as I cried over papers and slept through classes (often the results of crying over papers all night—thank you Marie Jeppesen for understanding). Thank you for pushing me in my thinking, shoving me onto the bus for the Festival, and sometimes dragging me through my own self-consciousness as I search for answers and meaning. If you wanted to change the world in this life, you can cross that off the list because, against all odds, you have changed mine.



Candice Howell *English Teaching*



As a senior, it is crazy to think about how fast the time has flown by these past four years. Interestingly, the English department has affected me the most in my time here. At first, I never thought I would connect with the English department. I was different than most in the department—being involved in athletics as well English—and I never dreamed I would meet some of the most inspiring and caring professors and students in my time here. I am so thankful for the times that professors have welcomed me into their homes and prayed for me during both the good and the bad. I have also met some of my best friends in this department. Due to spending many hours a day together, it is almost impossible not to connect in some way. Next fall, I will be the 8th grade Language Arts teacher at the Sioux Center Community Schools. As I reach out to my students, I know I will draw on lessons I learned from each class and from the wisdom I took to heart from my professors. Northwestern has shaped me and broadened my horizons, and I know that I will be used in a wonderful way in my next adventure!

SENIOR PROFILES

Brianna Mullaney

Writing & Rhetoric Major

In 7th grade, I received a D- in my advanced English class. I'm not really sure what changed between middle school and high school, but I became certain I wanted to be an English teacher.

After finishing my generals at a community college, I transferred to Northwestern as an English Teaching major, which I soon realized wasn't for me—at least at the secondary level. My love of words was nudging me stronger than ever before. I wanted to understand words and how to use them as best as I could. Despite my parents' insistence that the only "practical" major in English involved teaching, I switched to Writing & Rhetoric, eventually adding Literature as a second major.

My time at Northwestern has been one of education, of course, but more importantly, of growth. Through my English peers, professors, and pages of readings, I have been changed for the better. I have an endless amount of love for you all. You've taught me to find God, love, and beauty in everything, something I used to have a very hard time doing. You've also encouraged me to pursue my dreams, to never stop writing. Thank you for that.

Among many things I have learned, some of the most important are as follows: words will always fail you, but do not let that discourage you. Don't give up, everything takes time and revisions (lots and lots of revisions). Talk to your professors—they *want* you to succeed. Enjoy the coffee, but more importantly, enjoy the conversation that happens over coffee. Finally, enjoy every second in Kepp Hall; your time there won't last nearly as long as you want.

What's next? Well, I wish I knew. As of right now, I'm working and saving money as well as applying for full-time jobs that utilize my degree. I'm also looking at doctorate programs so that I can eventually become a professor. Our professors make it seem too good of a job to pass up. I've also been writing quite a bit too, exploring different styles and figuring out what I enjoy most. Throughout everything, however, I manage to stay sarcastic—I guess some things never change.



SENIOR PROFILES

Abbey Slattery

Writing & Rhetoric

Well, I don't have a ton to say about myself. I think in my senior year I'm realizing that I am a lot more confident about knowing a lot less. I think one of the most important lessons I learned was to challenge myself to step outside of my comfort zone—which is a pretty small area anyway. My classes in the English department—predominantly my rhetoric classes—gave me confidence and curiosity to branch out to other areas, like taking classes and participating in activities from which I would normally shy away.



In the end, everything you learn has a funny way of connecting, and one of the coolest aspects of my time at Northwestern was seeing the ways that so many seemingly different concentrations could overlap in interesting ways.

I have also learned to always challenge what you hear and read, even if some super smart dead guy wrote it. Don't be afraid to talk more than the boys in the class do. Try not to put tasks off until the last minute, although that last one just does not seem to stick most of the time.

Going forward, I plan to use what I have learned during my time at Northwestern to pursue a career in journalism, sharing whatever I decide to write with whomever will decide to read it. I anticipate that I may end up missing Northwestern a little bit, too.

Liz Meier ***English Teaching***



Admittedly, I didn't find my place in the English department right away my first year at Northwestern. I was much more easily sucked into the wonderful but schedule-consuming theatre department, which created some confusion about my major. Oops! It really wasn't until the trial-by-fire that was my sophomore year that I felt like I'd been finally initiated into the title of ENGLISH MAJOR.

Since then, I don't know what my college experience would have been like without those late nights in Kepp Hall while studying for Linguistics or eating delicious baked goodies every week during the semesters I had Dr. Westerholm for night class. I'm student teaching this final semester in both drama and English (and *loving* it), and now I see why feeling pulled in these multiple directions was necessary.

I came into my freshman year thinking I was okay at this whole writing thing but not expecting how *much* I would grow in my abilities and self-confidence in the next four years. I've met incredible friends (students and professors) that share my love of language and expect excellence. I've wanted to be a teacher since 3rd grade and an English teacher since 7th. Northwestern has helped me realize that dream in all its multi-faceted capacities.

All that said, I am glad I finally found my home in the English department, and I could not be more thankful.

SENIOR PROFILES

Victor Mena

English Teaching



The summer of 2016 changed my life for the better. It was a difficult time for me that summer because I was trying to figure out where I would go to college for my last two years. When I stepped foot on campus for my Northwestern visit, the first person I met was Professor Van Es. She was remarkable and captured my mind when I met her; she ultimately played an important role in my decision to continue my education at Northwestern. It was the perfect fit. I was able to continue to play baseball and also further my education at a magnificent place.

The Victor that stepped foot on campus for the first time that summer is completely different than the Victor who is writing today. I have to admit, I never truly loved English as my major, but I went with it because I thought it was interesting. Now, I can honestly say that I thoroughly enjoy English. I went through a lot of struggles to get to the point where I am today. When I took American Literature with Dr. Lundberg, I was challenged mentally and physically in that class in ways that I have never been pushed. I'm a better person because of Dr. Lundberg's drive to challenge me. When I took Art of the Essay with Professor Fynaardt, I thoroughly enjoyed writing, but I did not fully understand what it took to construct a comprehensive essay. Professor Fynaardt pushed the right buttons in order for me to grow as a writer. When I took Grammar in the Classroom with Professor Van Es, I was humbled by my knowledge of grammar. Every professor I have had at Northwestern has challenged me, shown compassion, and most importantly, portrayed their love. I feel incredibly blessed to have experienced everything I went through at my time at Northwestern.

(Continued on page 8)

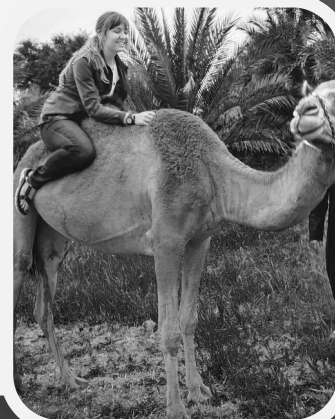
Mallory Bjork

English Teaching

Four years ago, little freshman me was sitting quietly in class, unsure if teaching was really something for me. Now I'm about to start my second student teaching placement, and I know without a doubt that I want to invest my passions in the teaching profession.

If I have learned one thing at all in college, it's to do the things that scare me. In my four years at Northwestern, some pretty incredible opportunities were put before me, and even though they scared me, I took them. Why? Because the English department's multicultural emphasis taught me that this world is so much bigger than

(Continued on page 7)



Mallory Bjork

(Continued from page 6)

myself. There's always another analysis to investigate, another culture to explore, another book to read, and another story to tell. I was unsatisfied with the limited perspective I had of the world, and through Northwestern I was able to do something about it. Studying abroad in Greece and Oman rocked my world. I truly experienced something phenomenal when I dove into these cultures, or as I learned in Dr. Westerholm's aesthetic experience class, a "saturated phenomenon." This world is too incredible for me not to do what I can to see more of it.

Because of these great experiences, the idea of being a global citizen has turned into a mindset that I want to develop. I wish to think of the world as an emerging community that we're all a part of, and in order to contribute to this global community, I need to experience something bigger than myself. This is why I have chosen to accept a middle school English position at Brent International School Subic in the Philippines, which I will be starting at the end of July. I couldn't be more excited about the opportunity God has given me to live and work while being on a big adventure, and I have my English department family to thank for directing me to this crazy exciting path.

SENIOR PROFILES

Marie Jeppesen

English Teaching



I've found a home, a voice, and a family in the English department. It is a loaded claim with way too much evidence to unpack in a few short paragraphs, but I will do my best.

Maybe I took the home thing a little too literally, but Kepp Hall has been my space for a lot of years now, first in the dining room and now on the little couch in the suite area. It smells somewhat funky, the light switches are weird, and the bathroom is a little too close to the classroom, but, as Fynaardt has mentioned a few times, this place has shaped me. The spot is only up for grabs after graduation, mind you.

Strangled cats, Google Earth, *The Riverside Shakespeare*, Westerholm-strength coffee, and a hundred lost pens are only some of the tools my English major gave me to find a voice. I had opinions and ideas before signing up for classes here, but the round-table discussions in 204 and beyond were what gave me the words to speak my truths and discover more of them along the way. Of all the things I will miss, discussing these texts with the rigor and compassion that we have all grown so accustomed to will be what I miss the most.

I know that I have found family here, too, because of the almost puzzling level of comfortability after knowing you all for four short years. Before NWC, people would roll their eyes at me for forcing way too much meaning into the sometimes-trivial moments in life and literature. You all are my people because you do the same exact thing every single day. We've shared meals, road trips, laughter, tears, failures, and successes. I've babysat Liam and Micah, swapped recipes with Dr. Lundberg, and accidentally signed an advisee email to Prof Nonhof with "love, Marie." I don't know how much more family this can get.

To all my English people, I have no idea what this next phase in life will hold for me, but I do know that I'll always have a place and a tribe to come back to.

SENIOR PROFILES

Victoria Horn

Writing & Rhetoric, Literature

When I came to Northwestern in 2013, I thought I knew what I was getting myself into. I was going to get an incredible education, make lifelong friends, get engaged, land a book deal, and start my real life. These daydreams quickly darkened with struggles of loneliness, homesickness, anxiety, and depression. In January 2015, I left Northwestern to sort through all the mental and emotional baggage I had somehow collected in a year and a half.



When I returned to Northwestern in the spring of 2016, my heart matched the weather: thawing, bursting, and blooming. For the first time in my life, I was ready to share myself wholly and invest myself wholeheartedly in a community. God had answered the prayer Hopkins and I had prayed together: “[S]end my roots rain.” Over the past two and a half years, that rain watered me in the form of friends, roommates, and professors who have truly become family.

As my time at Northwestern draws to a close, I find myself overcome by the littlest, but most precious, moments: working in comfortable silence with my roommate Mallory after she comes home from student teaching; bouncing around poetic insights and talking spirituality with Dr. Martin; and sitting in Dr. Westerholm’s office working through Marion articles, reading poetry and shouldering each other’s burdens.

My Northwestern journey started out with a wholly inward-turned view and ends with an outward-turned view of the world as a place I just might be able to heal. And I have come to this view of the world and my place in it because that is the world I have found in the English department: a world utterly full of hope and courage and love.

As far as post-graduation plans, I will be studying abroad in England for three weeks with the Northwestern theatre department, which is a trip I have been aching to make since my mother studied in England at my age. Beyond becoming an honorary Brit, I plan to continue writing poetry, short fiction and novels with the hopes of publishing in the future.

Although my checklist of things to do in college is far from complete, I know I am leaving this place miles closer to the woman I am meant to be. I may not have a fiancé or a book deal or a job, but I have something so much better: a home and a family in Kepp I will call mine forever.

Victor Mena *(Continued from page 6)*

My plans for the future are to get a job teaching English and to coach high school baseball. My ultimate goal is to earn my Master’s degree in Education Administration to become a principal. I also met my life-long partner last year at Northwestern, and I plan to make some big changes in my life within the next year with her (if you know what I mean). I am incredibly blessed for the life Northwestern has provided for me, and I will be forever grateful.



April 12-14, 2018

The Festival of Faith & Writing
a three-day celebration of literature
and belief in Grand Rapids, Michigan



Faith and Writing

Calvin Festival provided diverse stories that inspired,
bonding students and professors **by Lucas Sander**

Top photo above: Writer and producer Dorothy Fortenberry (*The Handmaid's Tale*) poses with Ashley Olson, Kim Van Es, Alexis Karsjens, and Kiley Meeder after a sectional about women in Hollywood.

Bottom photo above: Up in the balcony seats, Dr. Joel Westerholm, Meghan Vermeer, Mallory Bjork, and Marie Jeppesen anticipate hearing from Dr. Kate Bowler, author of *Everything Happens for a Reason (and other lies I've loved)*.

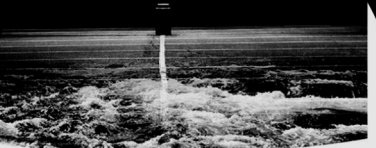
You never quite realize how diverse – and maybe downright weird – writers can be . . . until you voluntarily drive 12 hours to surround yourself with thousands of readers and writers from around the world. The 2018 Festival of Faith and Writing at Calvin College showed me how much of my own story I have to tell, but also demonstrated how many stories there are that I don't hear. I listened to a woman with cancer and optimism that were both incurable, a Buddhist who had learned to find meaning in the moment, and even a guy who shared the fascinating story of a 20th century monk who had a connection with the music of Bob Dylan.

Sometimes it feels like you can't get enough of those stories. Amidst all the powerful speakers, freshman English teaching major Schuyler Sterk found it necessary to read more about them. "I bought four books at the festival, and I've added two more to my cart on Amazon," she said. Several other English teaching majors were part of Northwestern's caravan to the festival, and many of them found experiences that were unexpectedly nourishing to their teaching careers. "It made me realize that I can be a teacher and a writer at the same time," said senior Mallory Bjork.


The festival was also a great bonding experience for members of the department. It was my first opportunity to be a part of a real English department excursion, and getting to know freshmen, seniors, and professors alike as we drove together, laughed together, and explored writing together was an unforgettable part of the weekend.



Winter weather in April did not stop the Northwestern English Department from taking two vanloads to the Festival of Faith and Writing in Grand Rapids, MI. Attending were the following: (first row) Ashley Olson, Shannon Teske, Schuyler Sterk, Lucas Sander, Mallory Bjork, Meghan Vermeer; (second row) Briley Weidner, Alexis Karsjens, Marie Jeppesen, Professor Kim Van Es; (third row) Kiley Meeder, Emily Wikner; (not pictured) Dr. Sam Martin, Professor Chris Nonhof, Jerry Van Es, Dr. Joel Westerholm.



Learning
to love
a river



**DEEP SONG:
READING &
CONCERT**

**MICHAEL
MINOR**
Canadian Poet
and Folksinger
Town Square
Tuesday, April 17
7 p.m.

Canadian poet reads from his work at Deep Song

Canadian poet and folk musician Michael Minor read from his debut poetry collection, *Learning to Love a River*, and performed his own songs during a Northwestern College Deep Song Reading Series event on Tuesday, April 17 at the Town Square Coffee House.

"Michael Minor's poetry is marked by the same clear-eyed grace and honesty glimpsed in the best of Gordon Lightfoot," says Dr. Sam Martin, assistant professor of English. "But his music and lyricism are uniquely his own—an original voice from the north shore of Lake Superior."

Navigating through tragedy with sincere inquiry, Minor's *Learning to Love a River* explores unlikely existences in a small northern Ontario city that is rife with stereotype and misconception. With its insider's perspective, this collection offers a

(Continued on page 11)

Departmental

Friends, Readers, and Writers!

The editors of ***Spectrum***,
NWC's student-run literary journal,
invite you to participate
in the Launch Party
(see details at right)

Come for free refreshments.
Stay to hear new published work
by NWC writers!

Hope to see you there!



SPECTRUM
SHARE YOUR COLORS
LAUNCH PARTY

When: Thursday, May 3rd at 7pm
Where: Te Paske Gallery
**Snacks with Town Square
coffee provided**

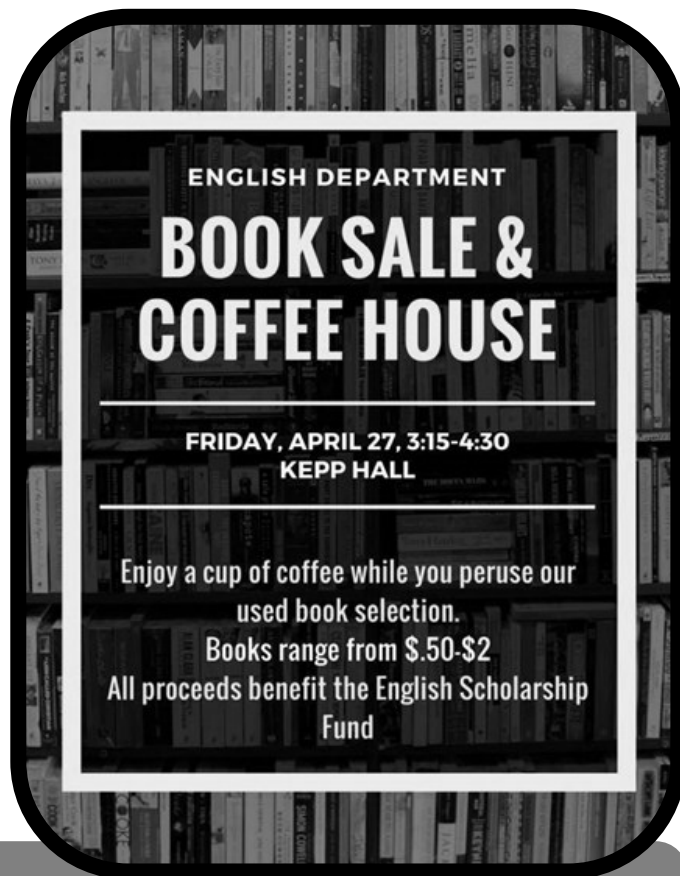
Canadian poet (Continued from page 10)

sympathetic but frank account of these misconceptions, while challenging assumptions about race and class.

Originally from Thunder Bay, Ontario, Minor is a settler scholar who teaches and studies decolonization through indigenous literature. He teaches academic writing in the Inner City Social Work Program at the University of Manitoba, the institution from which he earned a doctorate in English literature. His poetry has been published in *The Antigonish Review* and *CV2*.

While on campus, he also spoke about indigenous storytelling and poetry in Dr. Martin's Literary Contexts class. Minor has also agreed to be our 2018 *Spectrum* judge.

The Deep Song Reading Series seeks to enable students and community members to listen to new and established authors speak about their works and share some of their writing experiences.



Events

OutWord Bound

A feature connecting the English Major to the job market

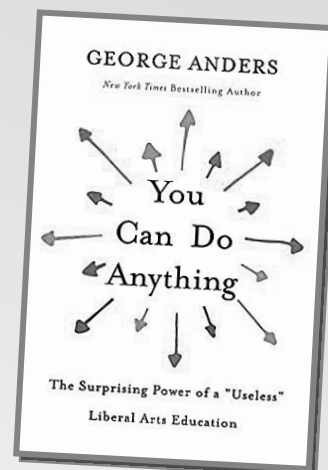
English Teaching Major Kaylee Henn reviews and reflects on *You Can Do Anything: The Surprising Power of a "Useless" Liberal Arts Education* (2017)

As an English major, I have a deep appreciation for language, creative thinking, and literature. But I chose English Education because I've been told the only way to pursue these passions in the "real world" is through teaching. But how accurate is that assumption?

In his book *You Can Do Anything*, George Anders shatters the stigma surrounding the liberal arts education. Anders, a world-renowned speaker and writer for *The Wall Street Journal* and *Forbes*, says that the 21st century job market values what liberal arts graduates have to offer. By settling for a "stable," "moneymaking" major and casting English aside, Anders suggests, you might be cheating yourself out of those highly marketable traits that will be the catalyst for your success.

Many companies are looking for individuals with strong critical thinking skills. All those literary analysis assignments were not just busy work; they were a crucible which formed those "well-honed analytic methods

BOOK REVIEW



(Continued on page 13)

ALUM NEWS

STAYING CONNECTED



David Elder '05 wins Walker Award

November, 2017

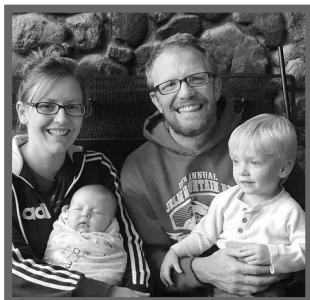
SIOUX CITY– Morningside College awarded one of its three 2017 Sharon Walker Faculty Excellence Awards to David Elder, associate professor of writing and rhetoric.

David was selected from a field of applicants by a panel of three outside evaluators. Criteria for selection included teaching excellence, effective advising, scholarship and service to Morningside College. The award was based upon the accomplishments and activities of the faculty member during his previous academic year. David received a \$10,000 honorarium and \$2,000 to use for faculty development. Elder started teaching at Morningside in 2010. He has a bachelor's degree from Northwestern College and a doctoral degree from Texas Christian University.



David Elder

David Bray '07 speaks in chapel at NWC on January 12, 2018



David began his address expressing gratitude for the skills he learned as a student. Most importantly, they gave him a foundation to know Christ deeply. David regularly reminds his first-year students at the University of Wyoming, "you will get much more out of the skills you develop while in college than from the things you accomplish during your college career." David then challenged the Northwestern students to acquire the skills he garnered ten years ago as a student that continue to help him grow in relationship to Christ. He considers these the most important pieces of his NWC legacy:

Most Valued Skills

- Ask good (and hard) questions.
- Read critically and analyze carefully
- Apply academic skills to your faith
- Know Jesus in community with other people

Takeaways

- This ability compels me to pursue Christ rather than to fixate on my own righteous accomplishments.
- Today I'm a better student of scripture. Clearly, my understanding of the Bible has developed appreciably.
- This competency has given me the appreciation of the beautiful complexity and tension that exist in the teachings of Jesus.
- Being intentional to live and learn in diverse communities has deepened my relationship with Jesus.

2004 English alum Nathanael Tagg's first book, a collection of poems entitled *Animal Virtue*, was published by WordTech Editions, an imprint of WordTech Communications, in March 2018. His poetry uses animal imagery, humor, biblical allusions, literary references, and various poetic forms to explore the challenges of living well in times of personal, political, existential, and environmental troubles. Among his influences are the poets Emily Dickinson, Thomas Lux, Carl Dennis, and Sherman Alexie.

His poems and reviews are published or forthcoming in *Barrow Street*, *Colorado Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Confrontation*, *The Pleiades Book Review*, *The Journal*, *Chariton Review*, *Evansville Review*, *Terrain*, *Sonora Review*, *Unsplendid*, *Arts & Letters*, *The Pinch*, *The Review Review*, *Inertia*, *The Midwest Quarterly*, *Hawk & Handsaw: Journal of Creative Sustainability*, *Cold Mountain Review*, *The Raintown Review*, and other magazines.

Nathanael Tagg has a BA from Northwestern in English and an MFA from Rutgers, where he was a Truman Capote Literary Trust fellow.

Nathanael Tagg

Published Poet

A full-time associate professor of English at Cecil College in Maryland, he teaches Composition, Introduction to Literature, World Literature, and Creative Writing. He has taught at Rutgers and the University of Nebraska and has lived in Webster City, IA, his hometown; Jersey City, NJ; and Iowa City, IA. He now lives with his wife in downtown Lancaster, PA.



“The charm of Nathanael Tagg’s *Animal Virtue* comes from its confident, unpretentious expression of curiosity about language and nature, its insights into everyday coincidences and encounters, and the daring to navigate the rocky waters between science and religion. His poems speak eloquently—and humorously—about the human impulse to search for greater meaning and connection. An exceptional debut!”

—Rigoberto González

OutWord Bound

(Continued from page 11)

that make you good at Finding Insights” (33). These are the strengths that the job market is looking for, and guess who has them? You do.

Anders laments that there are thousands of liberal arts graduates who face the job market with timidity, and perhaps even terror. However, a liberal arts education builds “curiosity, discernment, adaptability, and a prepared-for-everything gusto that can turn chaos into triumph” (80-81). The beauty of an education in the arts is that you are prepared to meet the needs that companies don’t even know they have.

The most powerful tool any of us have is the story of our own lives, and Anders corroborates this exuberantly: “the invitation to tell your story is an unparalleled time to shine” (272). The job market is not looking for a resume with achievements—it is looking for vibrant people who know the power of our experiences and stories.

More importantly, as a Christian English major, the push to tell my story gives my pursuit of a liberal arts career *purpose*. So, if you are a wandering English major with doubts that you will be able to successfully pursue Christ’s redemptive work in the world, or even find a job at all, pick up a copy of Anders’s book because you’ll quickly learn the truth: You Can do Anything.

Alumna messages her English Professors

The Next Step in my Career

Hello there, I'm Emily and I love words. All of them. I'm a born and raised communicator – I specialize in wine, but I have an indiscriminate love of telling the world about the people, places and ideas I believe in. I love doing things well, particularly creating captivating content and exceptional hospitality experiences.



Emily (Muilenburg) '11 and Cody Rasmussen

Dear English professors,



It's Emily Rasmussen here. I am ecstatic to share that Cody and I have officially launched our new wine brand, Desire Lines Wine Co. <http://desirelineswines.com/>
We plan to release two wines this spring.

I'm pretty overwhelmed at this moment with joy and thankfulness. This is the second new business Cody and I have started in the last few years— in July of 2016, I soft-launched Emily Rasmussen Communications, my own consultancy business for wine industry communications and marketing. I resigned from my full-time marketing role to do multi-client work, everything from freelance writing to social media marketing, email marketing, and business strategy/brand development for wineries. I'm up to five clients now, including being the CEO (Chief Everything-Besides-Winemaking Officer) for Desire Lines.

Cody and I have truly been blessed beyond measure out here in California, including our house being saved (within about 24 inches) from the wildfires last fall. Every time Cody and I find ourselves countering success in this world—whether corporate or relational—I think back to everything I learned as an English major at Northwestern. A few days ago someone complimented me on my communication skills, and I thought back to lessons from you all about speaking and writing concisely and graciously. I can't thank you enough for all you do. The impact is vast and immeasurable.

I guess what I'm trying to say is, I love being an English major. I firmly believe we run the world. :)

All my love to the English department,

Emily

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Northwestern College English Department
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