

Dr. Rob McCormick (associate professor of history) published an article in April 2008 titled "The United States Response to Genocide in the Independent State of Croatia, 1941-1945" in *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, the journal of the International Association of Genocide Scholars.

Dr. Trevor Rubenzer (assistant professor of political science) is mentoring two students, Chris Weidensee and Seth Rubenstein, in preparation for their research presentations at the Fourth Annual USC Upstate Research Symposium.

Dr. Paul Grady (assistant professor of history) presented a paper at the South Carolina Historical Association annual meeting entitled "The Forgotten Neighbor: Spanish Influences on the Exploration and Settlement of Early Carolina."

Dr. Jim Brown (professor of history, associate dean of Arts & Sciences) arranged for USC Upstate to host the spring meeting of the Southeastern Regional Seminar in African Studies (SERSAS) Feb. 20-21. Dr. Brown will also be retiring, after over 35 years, as Treasurer of that organization.

Dr. Andy Myers (associate professor of American studies) arranged for USC Upstate to host the March, 2009 annual meeting of the South Carolina Historical Association. At that meeting Dr. Myers was elected the president of that organization for the upcoming year.

Dr. Carol Loar (assistant professor of history) had her article, "Under Felt Hats and Worsted Stockings": the Uses of Conscience in Early Modern English Coroners' Inquests" accepted for publication in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*. Dr. Loar also published her review of John Sugg, *Murder After Death: Literature and Anatomy in Early Modern England* on the H-Albion Listserv for historians and scholars of British history worldwide.

Dr. Qiliang He (assistant professor of history) presented his paper "Between Business and Bureaucrats: Pingtan Storytelling in Maoist China" at the 2009 annual meeting of Association for Asian Studies in Chicago.

Dr. Carmen Harris (associate professor of history) completed her second three-year term as a member of the board of the South Carolina Humanities Council in October 2008. Also in 2008, Dr. Harris wrote two encyclopedia entries and co-authored a third for the Oxford University Press *Encyclopedia of African American History* and she reviewed three books. Dr. Harris has just begun a two-year appointment on the Organization of American Historians' EBSCOhost America: History and Life Award Committee.

The Department is graduating 49 students during the 2008-2009 academic year. Those graduating are:

Spring 2009 Graduates

History

Joshua Aboul-Nasr
Jaime Baty
Justin Bradley
David Edwards
Austin Hubbard

Political Science

Yazan Atra
Gabor Boros
Chandler Boyer
Benjamin Cooper
Rosina Fankhauser
Lashaunda Grant
Kenneth Ledford

Nonprofit

Kerry Alsheimer
Chastity Bobo
Timothy Bowers
Haley Grau
Jacquelyn Green
Christina Guyton
Stephanie Kehn

Fall 2008 Graduates

History

Jennifer Bunn
Medea Darden
Tracy Garcia

Political Science

Nicole Aiken
Gerald Jones
Stuart Mize

Jennifer Jones
Robert Lee
Debby Menge
Jeffrey Ridings
Amanda Robbins

Jacob Long
Jovana Lubura
Terri Reynolds
Seth Rubenstein
Megan Stewart
Christopher Weidensee
Christina Woods

Kristine Milner
Lauren Reader
Andrea Roberts
Brittney Speed
Karmen Spiller
Currie Spoon
Stephanie Vaughn

LeJeta Proctor
Kristin Sizemore

Shynekia Riley
Robert Sanborn
Dawn Schneider



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We encourage all of our alumni to keep us apprised of your successes and endeavors so we can share them in our next issue. Just go to www.uscupstate.edu to find the Department of History, Political Science, Philosophy & American Studies Web site. Click on the HPPA Newsletter Update Form.

Bringing History to Life: USC Upstate Students Learn About Life and Culture of Catawba Indians

Brent Burgin, a USC upstate alum and archivist for the Catawba Studies Collection at USC Lancaster, was on campus this spring to deliver a presentation on the Catawba Indians and their role, past and present, in South Carolina history and society.



University of South Carolina Upstate History Professor Paul Grady says that he invited Burgin to speak and that he hopes the event sparks an interest on this campus in the history and culture of the Catawba as well as for the study of Native American history.



The Catawba Indian Nation lived along the banks of the Catawba River in what is now York and Lancaster Counties. They built their homes along the creek and river highlands and survived by hunting, farming and fishing. They are also known for their pottery tradition which has been handed down through the generations for 4,500 years. The Catawba Nation live on a 640-acre reservation eight miles southeast of Rock Hill, S.C.

USC Lancaster recently announced the opening of its new Native American Archive, located in the USCL Medford Library. Burgin has been working with noted Catawba scholar Thomas Blumer and local Native American communities to acquire and build the archive, now containing over 8,000 artifacts, interviews, documents, photos and other materials.

"The archive is designed to promote a better understanding of local and state Native American history and culture and will support the new USCL Native American Studies program," says Burgin. The Native

American Studies program, according to Grady, has been recognized on the local, state and national levels for its efforts.

Burgin continues to seek documents dealing with Native American tribes such as the Catawba, Pee Dee, Waccamaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Santee, Edisto and Cheraw.

"Our collective focus is on South Carolina/North Carolina and the greater southeastern area," says Burgin. "I want to collect the histories of these people and make contact with them. I'd like our archive to grow."

Grady hopes to organize a Native American Studies series of events on USC Upstate's campus this fall where students and faculty could meet tribal leaders, witness dances, attend pottery demonstrations, see presentations from the archives, and participate in a variety of educational workshops.

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Department News

Phone: 864-503-5795
www.uscupstate.edu

University of South Carolina Upstate
Department of History, Political Science,
Philosophy & American Studies
800 University Way
Spartanburg, SC 29303



McNair Scholar Pursues Dream of Practicing International Law

By Tammy Whaley

Donna Randolph dreams of a career in international law. The political science major earned a place in the prestigious Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement program this summer and moved one step closer to realizing her dream.

"I have always immersed myself in different cultures, I love learning about the fundamentals of other countries, and I value the legal system," said Donna, who is a member of the Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society and Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society. "Combining those three interests is why I want to study international law."

The McNair program is highly competitive and accepts only 25 students from South Carolina each year. It is designed to prepare participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities and strives to increase the attainment of the Ph.D. by students from underrepresented segments of society. USC's McNair Program works closely with scholars in completing their undergraduate requirements, encouraging and supporting their entrance into graduate programs, and tracking their progress to successful completion of advanced degrees.

As a McNair Scholar, Donna spent nearly six weeks on the Columbia campus studying liberal arts and doing individual research. Along with the other Scholars, she took a philosophy class and was coached on how to prepare for applying to graduate schools, given tips on how to write an excellent essay and personal statement, and advised on crafting her curriculum vitae.

"We had to write personal statements as if we were actually applying to graduate or professional school and that really helped me tremendously," said Donna, who is a junior from Georgetown, S.C. "I learned that I should be persuasive and passionate when explaining why I want to be a lawyer and convincing them that I am cut out for that career."

She will put all of this advice to good use when she applies to George Washington University, University of Maryland and University of Georgia. During this spring semester, Donna will be doing research with Dr. Allison Cooper.

While participating in the McNair Scholars is certainly helping Donna attain her goals of attending law school, she is quick to praise the faculty at USC Upstate and their contributions to her college experience.

"The faculty here are great," she said. "They challenge me and are available to talk one-on-one, which is important to me."

She especially credits Dr. Dwight Lambert, chair of the Department of History, Political Science, Philosophy and American Studies, with encouraging her dreams of going to graduate school. He also wrote her letter of recommendation for the McNair Program.

"Dr. Lambert is always encouraging and supportive and he makes me feel good about myself. He shows great guidance, interest and encouragement to all his students. He cares and that's what I like most."

Allison Clark Joins Political Science Faculty

By Claire Sachse

Allison Clark's main area of interest is American politics, with a focus on the presidency, campaigns and elections. An assistant professor of political science who teaches American national government, political behavior, and senior seminar, Clark joined USC Upstate at a time when the nation was in full-swing of election campaigning during the fall semester 2008.

"Obama energized the country, particularly the younger generation, during a time of economic downturn," says Clark who adds that the 2008 election was the first time many of her students really paid attention to politics. She says that their interest "was largely due to Obama's enthusiasm."

A third-generation native of Florida, Clark obtained her undergraduate degree in political science from the University of South Florida in Tampa and her MA and PhD, also in political science, from the University of Florida in Gainesville. "This makes me a huge Gator fan," says Clark, who is expecting her first child in June.



Allison Clark, Assistant Professor of Political Science

Damrel's Global Religious Teachings Benefit USC Upstate Students

By Tammy Whaley

This past fall Dr. David Damrel, assistant professor of religion, returned to the classroom at USC Upstate after having spent seven months in Indonesia, the most populous Muslim nation in the world. There he taught never-before-offered courses in Comparative Religion, a unique and challenging experience in a country that officially recognizes only five religions – Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Catholicism, and Protestantism.

A prestigious Fulbright Award enabled Damrel, a specialist in Islam, to teach and help develop a Comparative Religion program at Muhammadiyah University, an institution with more than 18,000 students located in the city of Malang, in the province of East Java.

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries, the Fulbright Scholar Program continues to be regarded by many as one of our country's best foreign diplomacy policies.

While at Muhammadiyah University, Damrel's courses included World Religions, Modern Islam, Islam and International Relations, and a graduate seminar entitled, Topics in Comparative Religion.



A temple tower in Bali, Indonesia

Nonprofit Major Launches JC Stroble Glaucoma Awareness Foundation

By Claire Sachse

Many in the Spartanburg community know JC Stroble as the man who calls the orders out and tells you to "move on down the line" at the Beacon Restaurant in downtown Spartanburg. Legally blind as a result of glaucoma, he has been a fixture of the restaurant for 50 years. They may not know his daughter, Jekeithlyn Stroble Ross, a former optician and nonprofit administration major at the University of South Carolina Upstate, who has formed a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating people about glaucoma and other eye diseases.

"The key is early detection, keeping regular eye exams, and to maintain a medication regimen," Ross says, adding that the disease can rob your eyesight with no signs or symptoms.

Ross watched her father go blind at the age of 36, his vision robbed by glaucoma, which she refers to as a "silent, highly misdiagnosed disease." She emphasizes that the disease affects all races, but black Americans are being diagnosed in higher numbers. Glaucoma affects peripheral vision when fluid pressure builds up within the eye, gradually causing eyesight to narrow to tunnel vision, and finally causes objects in front to be blurry, and fade.

Her father's disease affected Ross' career path, and she became an optician. After marriage, four children and life as a military wife, she decided to return to school to get a degree in nonprofit administration, so she could bring her dream of helping and educating the community about glaucoma into focus.

"I know a lot about the disease," she says, "but to effectively manage the foundation, I decided to return to school to get my degree." In 2008 during her first year of USC Upstate's Nonprofit Administration program, she formed an official 501(c)3 organization, under the umbrella of the Spartanburg County Foundation, called the JC Stroble Glaucoma Awareness Foundation.

One of Ross' instructors, Professor John Long who teaches at USC Upstate's Center for Nonprofit Leadership, says that "the major will support Jekeithlyn in fine-tuning her leadership and planning skills and will be immediately applicable to her JC Stroble Glaucoma Awareness Foundation efforts." He adds that the networking opportunities with students, faculty and community leaders



Jekeithlyn with her father, JC Stroble

though the academic curriculum and the Center for Nonprofit Leadership will provide a solid foundation in incorporating and managing her own nonprofit.

As a result of her career connections within the optometrist and ophthalmologist communities, she has support for many programs and fundraisers she plans to launch, and she is positive that her organization will be instrumental in glaucoma research, diagnosis and finding a cure. The foundation's office is located at 137 Kennedy St. in Spartanburg. Jekeithlyn can be reached at jstroble@uscupstate.edu.

"Their goal is to develop classes that teach about religions instead of how to be religious," said Damrel.

"All of my undergraduate level classes were full and my graduate level classes reached 15 students," said Damrel. "The students became connected with the classes, and we had very good dialogue and exchange. I learned a lot from them, and I hope they learned something from me."



David Damrel and one of his classes in Malang, Indonesia

Now that Damrel is back on the USC Upstate campus, the students here are benefiting from his teaching experience in Southeast Asia and are hearing first-hand accounts of the Muslim shrines and Buddhist and Hindu temples that Damrel visited.

"There is such an interesting and profound connection between religion and culture, and I enjoy sharing that with my students," said Damrel, who researches shrines and the practice of visitation to the graves of Muslim holy men and holy women. "In Indonesia almost every city has a grave of a holy person that people visit for comfort or to ask for miracles. Nine times out of ten of the 'saints' were Muslims, but the shrines attract people of all faiths."

Damrel, a native Texan, says, "I was lucky enough to get to travel all over Iran and spend some significant time in Afghanistan just

before both the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Because of my experiences in Iran and Afghanistan, when I returned to the University of Texas I finished my journalism degree plus a bachelor's and master's degree in Middle Eastern Studies. I was especially interested in the way that religious ideas affect culture and history, as well as how culture and history affect religious ideas."

Following graduation from UT Austin, Damrel earned a Ph.D. in the history of religions at Duke University. He studied the history of 'popular' Islam in South Asia, with a focus on mysticism and Muslim 'saints' in Kashmir. He and his wife made several research trips to India, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan and Tajikistan. When he finished at Duke they moved to Oxford, UK, where he was a research fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.

"We lived in England for just over two years where I was part of a team working on an atlas of Muslim life and thought in South Asia," said Damrel. "When we came back to the U.S. we moved to Arizona, where I taught for 10 years in the Department of Religious Studies at Arizona State University in Tempe. When USC Upstate began the initiative to expand their offerings in Comparative Religion, I was delighted by the opportunity to come here and get to be part of building something special."



Bee on Buddha, Borobudur in Yogyakarta, Java