One of the most exciting things for me these last three years as Director of the CWP has been finding ways to collaborate with the other writing programs in the English Department. Many Teacher-Consultants are aware of the work we have done collaboratively with the Writing Center to establish secondary writing centers. The high school tutors are trained by graduate students and undergraduate tutors from the University Writing Center, but then are supervised by Writing Project Teacher-Consultants in those schools. We also offer a fall conference for participating and interested teachers, funded in part by the Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing. We now have writing centers at E.O. Smith High School, Bolton High School, East Hartford High School, Griswold High School, and Windham Middle School, and hope to expand into one or two new schools this coming year.

Other TCs are familiar with the work we have done with the Creative Writing Program, such as the Teacher-Consultant Writing Contest held in the fall, or the recent Open Mic night held at the New England Writing Projects Annual Retreat, or the many writing workshops run by Creative Writing faculty and graduate students for each summer’s new teachers. These collaborations have been natural fits that have proven successful and productive for both programs. This May we also did a lot of collaborative work with the Freshman English program. The Freshman English program is the largest within the university’s Early College Experience (ECE) program, which offers first year UConn courses in high schools and which just received national accreditation. National accreditation is a wonderful honor but has presented FE Director Tom Recchio with the logistical challenge of conducting mandatory site visits to all participating high schools. For the Freshman English program, that’s seventy schools, many of which have more than one certified teacher to be observed. So to help with this challenge, I agreed to conduct several site visits, and have spent the month of May driving all over Eastern Connecticut visiting ECE teachers (several of whom are CWP TCs) in a dozen schools. I have been to Windham, Griswold, Montville, RHAM, Bacon, Coventry, Glastonbury, Weaver, Hartford Public, Lyman Hall, Manchester, and East Hartford. Oftentimes the teachers express trepidation at the prospect of being observed, but for me it has been a series of exciting visits where I have witnessed wonderful and even inspiring teaching. The quality of teaching I have observed belies so many popular myths about teaching that have been pervasive in the media lately as we see our profession under siege. The most pernicious is the notion that teachers are a bunch of lazy, overpaid professionals protected by tenure and who lack the sense of urgency to adequately do their job. Think this notion isn’t out there, then try to explain the rationale behind eliminating tenure, reducing pay, and tying both job security and merit pay to student performance on standardized tests. The other belied myth is that quality teaching doesn’t occur in urban schools. Almost half the teachers I observed were in urban districts, and without fail I observed good teaching. I wish more people, teachers as well as politicians and the public, had the opportunity I do to visit so many teachers in so many different schools. I suspect there’d be a lot more respect and a lot less vitriol.

Enjoy reading the other articles in the newsletter, and please consider submitting a piece to us for the Fall issue.

Jason Courtmanche, Director, Connecticut Writing Project—Storrs
Welcome New TCs!

Let us give a warm welcome to our new CWP-Storrs Teacher-Consultants who were chosen to participate in our upcoming 2010 Summer Institute.

Karen Adrián, ELL, East Hartford Middle School
Laureen Anthony, English, Griswold High School
Daniel Blanchard, Social Studies, New Britain High School
Dara Bowling, Reading/English, Windham High School
Erin Caouette, Language Arts, Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School
Erin Haddad-Null, English, UConn
Della Hennelly, State Depts of Public Health, Mental Health, and Addiction Services
Eleisha LeMay, English, East Windsor High School
Janet Lussier, Writing, Ashford School
Mark Mishriky, Social Studies, Bolton High School
Joan Muller, Art, Eastford Elementary School
Tiffany Smith, English/Language Arts, Parish Hill High School
Melanie Tokarz, English, Hartford Public High School Nursing Academy
Kisha Tracy, English, UConn
Emily Wojcik, English, UConn

CSW Reading Day — Reflections

The Connecticut Student Writers Magazine Reading Day was held on Saturday February 27, 2010. The twelve teachers who read were kindergarten through third, fifth, and sixth grade classroom, art, and literacy teachers, high school English teachers from all four grade levels, and a college Freshman English instructor.

"While we may all make observations about the quality of some of the work submitted (I'll admit that at times I question why a teacher would even send in some selections) the highlight for me occurs when a piece elicits a spontaneous outburst—you know—a laugh, moan, groan or a sigh that implies a moment of understanding. Granted, most of the time is spent placing work in the rejection pile (of course, having been rejected many times myself, being in this position of power is somewhat awkward) but it seems that just when I begin to question my perceptions, that little thing we call "voice" breaks above the surface of a page, as if in demand of a response. It is enjoyable to share these moments with fellow readers, and I always head home with mental images that are a direct result of reading these youthful expressions. I return to read each year not only to help but to be inspired as well."

- Evangeline Abbott, Tolland Intermediate School

"The Connecticut Student Writers Reading Day was without a doubt one of my favorite Saturdays of the semester. This year I've had a wonderful experience working as the Graduate Assistant Director of the CWP. I've learned about innovative work teachers at all levels are doing in their schools, performed numerous administrative and editing projects, and guest taught a couple of upper-level classes. However, I've spent very little time working with student writing, which I've missed. There was, of course, a wide range of writing ability represented among the submissions. But there were a few brilliant pieces that literally made me laugh out loud or succumb to tears. Sitting down with a room full of teachers and several stacks of folders, just experiencing this wonderful student writing, reminded me why I love teaching. It was exciting to see what students are producing and rewarding to know that this magazine will give them recognition for their efforts."

- Shawna Lesseur, Graduate Assistant Director CWP-Storrs

Published Winners and Honorable Mention student-writers were commemorated at the Connecticut Student Writers Magazine Recognition Night on Tuesday May 18, 2010 at UConn Storrs. See page 19 for coverage of the event and pages 10-13 for the full list of published winners and honorable mentions.
Writing for Recognition

Shawna Lesseur, Graduate Assistant Director CWP-Storrs

This year, in my free moments between finishing my Masters degree and working at the CWP-Storrs, I’ve volunteered as the first ever External Media Public Relations Specialist for the University of Connecticut’s Office of Community Outreach (CO). CO is the office within the University of Connecticut (UConn) Student Affairs Department that directs the majority of the student-led service-learning and community service efforts. In this role I’ve had the opportunity to develop my journalistic writing skills by writing press releases and speeches, writing and editing newsletter articles, and preparing the university’s first application for the Corporation for National and Community Service’s President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. These efforts have led to national media recognition of the valuable work UConn student volunteers do every day and official government recognition of the University of Connecticut as a President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll member.

The President’s Honor Roll is the premier government recognition for community engagement in higher education. Since its inception in 2006, the President’s Honor Roll designation has been awarded annually to institutions of higher learning that demonstrate a significant commitment to civic engagement. The application for this honor required a substantial amount of research and analysis. In order to collect the necessary data, I collaborated with twenty-two faculty and staff members and fifty-nine undergraduate leaders of student organizations. Based on their responses, I determined that during the 2008 – 2009 academic year 6,479 UConn students performed a total of 202,111 service hours. Of those students, 688 students engaged in academic service-learning, service work directly related to their college studies, and 1,944 of the students individually volunteered at least twenty hours over the course of a semester.

In addition to presenting this quantitative data, I wrote three supplemental essays spotlighting innovative UConn service projects: Social Entrepreneur Corps Study Abroad in Guatemala, Husky Outreach for Leadership Development, Understanding and Pride (HOLDUP), and Collegiate Health Service Corps. Student interns who studied abroad with Social Entrepreneur Corps worked with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on economic development in rural areas of Guatemala and Ecuador. HOLDUP undergraduate volunteers directed and staffed a program to mentor “at-risk” youth in local high schools. And students who worked with Collegiate Health Service Corps, a project of the Eastern Area Health Center (AHEC), provided preventative health care education and health screenings to approximately 250 individuals, mostly homeless and ethnic minorities, in the Willimantic area.

This was an extremely rewarding experience. I enjoyed the opportunity to practice writing and researching outside of academia. And I was able to use my skills to collaborate with, and bring recognition to, a wonderful, engaged student population. As I prepare to graduate, I look forward to contributing to UConn in similar ways throughout my Ph.D. career.
New Writing Centers at Bolton High School and Windham Middle School

Kaylee Czajka, UConn Writing Center Graduate Assistant and Outreach Coordinator

With the generous support of the Aetna chair of writing, the University of Connecticut’s Writing Center and the Connecticut Writing Project are happy to announce the opening of two new writing centers!

The Bolton High School Writing Center is directed by English teacher Hannah Magnan and staffed with students representing the sophomore, junior, and senior classes. The tutors began training in September and attended UConn’s Second Annual Conference for Secondary Writing Centers. The training continued during after-school sessions that were led by UConn’s outreach coordinator and writing center tutors twice a week. The sessions focused on tutoring strategies, team building activities, and developing the students’ confidence as writers and tutors. The writing center officially opened its doors in December and continues to advertise and recruit students to benefit from their services. Now that the center is officially open, tutors are available during every class period and after school.

Last October, Kaylee Czajka and undergraduate tutor Caitlin Garzi partnered with CWP Teacher Consultant Jane Cook and teacher Sydney Wilbey to create a writing center at Windham Middle School. Students from 6th to 8th grade participated in an intense two-day orientation, similar to the training process for UConn writing center tutors. The WMS Writing Center officially opened in November and is staffed during each period of the school day. Thanks to a private grant, the writing center is equipped with laptops, a color printer, and plenty of writing supplies!

The UConn tutors and outreach coordinator continue to visit Bolton High School and Windham Middle School for weekly staff meetings to provide professional development for the student tutors and support for the new writing centers. We look forward to their attendance at UConn’s Third Annual Conference for Secondary Writing Centers in the fall.

Kaylee Czajka is a Graduate Assistant working with the University of Connecticut’s Writing Center. This is Kaylee’s second year in the UConn Writing Center and her first year coordinating high school writing centers.

For more information about the UConn Writing Center and upcoming events, please visit their website: http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/.

Calendar of Events: Summer, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June 25-27 &amp; 29-30</th>
<th>Academy for Young Writers</th>
<th>Saint Joseph College, West Hartford, McDonough Hall</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 28 to July 23</td>
<td>CWP Summer Institute</td>
<td>University of Connecticut, Storrs Campus, CLAS Building</td>
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For additional CWP event information, please visit the CWP website: http://www.cwp.uconn.edu/.
The Early History Project: A Newly Proposed Initiative

Benjamin Miller, Writing & Publications Intern CWP-Storrs

The Work of an Intern

I began my undergraduate internship with the CWP-Storrs in the fall semester of 2009. When I first sat down with Jason to discuss the projects I would be responsible for (including the continued revival of this very newsletter), he mentioned something called the Early History Project. Jason learned about a new study being conducted by the NWP from colleague Sarah Hall who works at the national office at the University of California, Berkeley. Although the project was only being implemented at the national level, Ms. Hall encouraged Jason to conduct our own site-specific data collection for NWP and CWP use. However, Jason said the project would have to wait until the spring semester, as I would be (and was) quite busy with various other publications. It was not until January that we returned to the topic.

What is the NWP Early History Project?

“The NWP is conducting a study of the first twenty years of the writing project. What was going on in the teaching of writing in your classroom and in classrooms of your colleagues in those years? This session invites teachers who became involved with NWP in the years spanning 1974 through 1991 to share their defining moments. The session also models a thinking and writing process—centered on defining moments—that is useful beyond the study itself, particularly in classrooms or in professional development workshops. The session will be audiotaped for the NWP Early History Study.”

(Excerpt from www.nwp.org)

A Change in Plans

To be honest, I was quite excited to be directly responsible for the CWP’s Early History Project. I, a mere intern, would be working with qualitative data in the form of interview/survey responses that could potentially be used at a national level. I felt a surge of pride knowing that my work could be used for something with much larger implications like for national lobbying efforts for the renewal of federal funding. But after work in January commenced, those plans changed.

The plan was simple: track down various CWP Teacher-Consultants who participated between the years of 1982 to 1991; formally request their participation; forward each individual the questionnaire Ms. Hall provided Jason; and then document the responses. I spent a good deal of time preparing everything, even before the first e-mail was sent out. This was largely because most of the TCs I planned on contacting have long since retired from teaching, and their contact information wasn’t updated in our records. Moreover, I had general questions for Ms. Hall concerning various aspects of the project such as how the NWP conducts each survey, general guidelines and expectations I should adhere to, and how data is being organized. But I never received a reply. It was only days later that Jason said he had good news and bad news.

Here is the gist of what he found out from Sarah Hall at the NWP. Basically, the NWP does not want site-specific data for their Early History Project. The project was not designed as a nation-wide initiative for each writing project to participate. But our tenacious CWP director didn’t take no for an answer. Jason knew I had been working hard to set everything in place to conduct these interviews. So Jason said to go ahead with the interviews because my efforts wouldn’t be wasted, even if the NWP wouldn’t want the data. He suggested that we could use the Early History Project data in other areas, such as in the CWP-Storrs thirty-year anniversary in 2012. Jason, in the meantime, would continue discussing alternative methods with Ms. Hall to find a use for site-specific data at the national level.

Where We Stand Today

As the spring semester progressed and I had sent out roughly five TC interviews and even recruited the help of former CWP-Storrs Director Mary Mackley, Jason had an update from Sarah. Both Jason and Sarah, among many other NWP and site-specific writing project representatives, spent a week in Washington D.C. meeting with and speaking to various politicians concerning educational funding.

(continued on page 6)
Early History Project: The NWP Proposal

(continued from page 5)

In between their busy schedule, Jason and Sarah found time to discuss the standing of the Early History Project. She happily reported that a panel discussion at the 2010 NWP Annual Meeting was in the process of being finalized. If planning is successful, the panel will include NWP, CWP-Storrs, and other writing project representatives who are currently conducting their own Early History data collection. The goal is twofold: to encourage other writing projects to establish their own Early History Projects and to gain NWP support by proving that site-specific data collection is useful at the national level. These new initiatives in the NWP are important and essential to a growing organization.

What does this mean for me? Although I have officially graduated from UConn, Jason has invited me to participate in the panel discussion (that is, if the panel is secured for the conference). That would mean that I, a mere ex-intern, would be among those speaking at the 2010 NWP Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida! With fingers crossed, I continue my work on the CWP Early History Project knowing that whether the panel discussion is secured for the upcoming conference or not, my work as an intern has been has been valuable. Interns usually suffer from a bad reputation as the inexperienced paper-pushers responsible for office grunt work, but not at the CWP-Storrs. I owe many thanks to Jason Courtmanche for entrusting me not only with his confidence in the Early History Project but also with an enormous amount of freedom over my writing and office publications.

For updates on the Early History Project, look for the next edition of TWR to be released the Fall 2010 semester.

CWP-Storrs to Participate in NWP Community College Study

Benjamin Miller, Writing & Publications Intern CWP-Storrs

CWP-Storrs Director Jason Courtmanche was recently invited to participate in a new study, conducted by Inverness Research, that aims to evaluate the NWP’s opportunities to grow and strengthen at the community college level. NWP Executive Director Sharon J. Washington had this to say:

“The NWP has always included the community colleges in our vision of K-16 service: there are several NWP sites and satellites located at community colleges, and community college faculty number among NWP teacher-consultants and participants. At the same time, we think there is both need and opportunity to expand our relationships for the benefit of both the community colleges and the NWP. The Inverness study will provide us with data and feedback about the needs of community colleges and also help us identify and learn from existing NWP-CC partnerships and programs.”

The NWP is interested in Jason’s participation because, as Ms. Washington said, “of [the CWP’s] considerable track record of working with community colleges as documented in Site Profile data and annual Continuing Funding Applications.” Through the Inverness study, our site can demonstrate how essential and valuable community colleges are to an even more successful and enriching educational organization such as the NWP.
Margie’s Story

This remembrance was written by Shirley Bostrom for her daughter Margaret Bostrom. It is memorialized on a wall at the South Eastern Connecticut Women’s Center.

Margaret (Margie) E. Bostrom, Ph.D.
11/06/64–08/16/96

We wish you could have known our Margie—could have known what type of daughter, sister, and aunt Margie was and how she touched the lives of those who knew her well. She was the youngest of three sisters; a happy toddler with big brown eyes that were often full of innocent mischief. As a teenager she was shy but knew what she wanted to do with her life, so she studied hard. Margie enjoyed spending time with her family no matter what we were doing—camping, riding horses, watching cartoons, or shopping—but she really loved being together for Christmas. These visits became even more cherished when her sister Ruth’s children, Abby and Jacob, were born; being Aunt Margie was special. Margie was also an animal lover. As an adult she had her very own golden retriever Calie, and a tabby cat named Sebastian.

We wish you could have known Margaret, the dedicated and determined student working to earn her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, as one of her professors did: "She was so unassuming and modest about her own accomplishments and abilities, which contrast markedly with her actual level of clinical competence." Or the one who wrote, "Margaret, you are so beautiful—inside and out…. You are showing yourself that there is so much inside of you. So much that is wise."

We wish you could have known Margaret, the care giver, the way her co-worker at Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary did: "I often had the opportunity to walk in with her. Seeing her smile was a great way to begin the day." At her funeral the same man told us, "She chose to be a caregiver, which is a rare commodity in today’s world. She didn’t walk away from the problems of our society. She worked to be part of the solution. Now she is gone, and we have all lost." Margie was thirty-one years old and had been a psychologist at the penitentiary for ten months when she was murdered.

We wish we all could have known Margie at forty, fifty, and sixty. Could have known which direction her career would have taken, shared her joy when she became a mother, had her to depend on as we grew older.

Mitch, her estranged husband, took all that away from us when he waited for her to finish taking a shower, then stabbed her 16 times in the chest with a butcher knife. If he couldn’t have her no one would. He took ultimate control of her—her right to live. Denied us all the pleasure of her presence. Then he blamed her—she made him do it.

After Margie became a victim of intimate partner homicide, we, her parents, needed a reason to go on living and a way to keep her memory alive. We decided that warning others about domestic violence would honor her and continue her work as a caregiver. We give PowerPoint presentations weaving our story and research together. Shirley wrote the book Funny—He Doesn’t Look Like A Murderer: But Margie Is Dead in hopes of keeping other families from having a similar experience. If we prevent one intimate partner homicide, Margie’s death will have meaning.

Mitch tried to ruin Margie’s reputation with his lies, but he can never destroy our memory of our beautiful, loving daughter, sister, aunt, friend, or co-worker. To quote an epitaph on a Vermont gravestone: "To live in the hearts of those left behind is not to die." Margie lives.
Margie’s Story Lives On

Shirley Pierce Bostrom (SI ’90)—Author Biography

Shirley Pierce Bostrom retired from teaching in 1996. That summer Shirley’s son-in-law, the husband of her youngest daughter, murdered his wife. Shirley wrote, through her tears, a non-fiction book *Funny – He Doesn’t Look Like A Murderer: But Margie Is Dead*. David Kaczynski ended his introduction to the book with, “Shirley Bostrom has given shape to Margaret’s legacy, and probably saved some lives as well.” Wally Lamb wrote, “Your writing is vivid, honest, and frank.”

Since 1998, Shirley and her husband Larry have worked to learn about and prevent domestic violence. They combined that knowledge with their story to develop a PowerPoint presentation with the same title as the book. They speak at national conferences, colleges, schools, prisons, and to victim’s groups.

Shirley uses the knowledge she obtained while attending the CWP Summer Institute to demonstrate how writing can be used to address grief and loss. “Pain—Pen—Pad: Writing as a Tool for Healing” is a powerful and rewarding workshop. Shirley recalls the CWP’s influence on her writing:

“In August of 1996, I was actively involved with the Connecticut Writing Project and had a presentation scheduled. I left this message on the CWP answering machine, ‘I won’t be able to do the writing workshop for the teachers in East Windsor on Wednesday, August twenty-seventh. My daughter was murdered.’ I did feel a moment of sympathy for whoever first heard my terse message. Then I giggled at the absurdity of it all—‘Bet no one has used that excuse before.’

“As weeks, months, and years passed, my writing group listened to my excerpts and helped me finish my non-fiction account of the murder. More recently, they helped me with my teen dating novel and teaching guide. Thanks to Kathy, Sheila, Jenny, and Kay.

“The November and March writing retreats, now held at Wisdom House, provide a safe place and supportive peers. I found that I could deal best with my grief through ‘poetry,’ and I am not a poet. At that first read-around after the murder, I knew I couldn’t read. Pat Korol read my poems. I can count on my CWP friends for more than their suggestions about my writing. Writing is a tool for healing as the workshop ‘Pain—Pen—Pad’ demonstrates.”

When Shirley and Larry spoke to young people, teen dating abuse surfaced as a focal point. So in 2009, Shirley wrote a young adult novel entitled *Abby’s Dilemma: My Best Friend Is Being Abused*. Then she created a teaching guide to accompany the novel. Now she is working to familiarize teachers with these resources, which deal openly with dating violence as a social problem—not something to be hidden and denied. Shirley’s goal is to offer these materials to every school in Connecticut. Let’s get the word out there.

Shirley is also working on a chapter book about her life growing up on an Indian reservation—many chapters, with simple alterations, stand alone as short stories. Meanwhile, in a complete departure from previous writing, she is taking a humorous look at obnoxious drivers. Shirley and her husband have an apartment in their daughter Ruth and son-in-law Rich’s home, which keeps them involved with their grandchildren: Abby, Jacob, and Bogart, a golden retriever. Yes, one of their grandkids is a dog.

*Funny – He Doesn’t Look Like A Murderer: But Margie Is Dead, Abby’s Dilemma: My Best Friend Is Being Abused,* and the Teaching Guide are all available at a discount following the Bostroms’ presentations or at Calie Books by e-mail: spbostrom@aol.com. Amazon.com also sells them at full price.
**Pen, Paper ... and Paintbrush?**

**Workshop at the Benton Unites Visual Art and Writing**

*Donna Ozga, Facilitator of Teacher as Researcher CWP-Storrs*

On March 6, I presented a CWP-sponsored workshop at The William Benton Museum on the UConn Storrs campus entitled “Norman Rockwell and Norman Mailer: Connecting Art and Writing.” Teachers viewed artwork during a docent-led tour in hopes of individually making an art-writing connection. After viewing works pertaining to the seven elements of art and the principles of design, participants wrote a nonfiction piece which was shared with the group. Participants then wrote a fiction piece inspired by and modeled after a work of art.

From my perspective as presenter, I created the workshop to give content teachers from all disciplines an opportunity to use the visual rather than the written as a basis for generating writing. For art teachers, the opposite is true. They often have a greater comfort level with the visual rather than with the written.

Joanne Peluso (SI ’07), one of the participants at the art-writing workshop, has written a number of observations:

“As teachers, we are always trying to guide our students toward making connections between the disciplines. There are so many ways to connect literature and art, but because we deal primarily with words, we don’t always take advantage of the visual resources that are available to us. Attending the workshop helped me to see ways in which I could use art to help students become more skilled in interpretation and analysis.

“The workshop helped me to remember what many of my students experience in an English classroom; it took me out of my comfort zone—stories—and challenged me to look at a painting to see what made it ‘work,’ just as we ask students to do with literature.

“When Donna asked us to write a nonfiction piece about a picture, I struggled, because some of the terms and techniques used in the art world are unfamiliar to me. It was a slow process. However, when we were assigned to write a fiction piece about a painting, I found it easy to get into the character’s voice. As teachers we need to keep challenging ourselves to try things that might be unfamiliar, because we ask our students to do that every day.

“The seminar will help me in my classroom as we continue our study of Holocaust literature and poetry. An essential question that my students are considering is, how are the concerns of a culture reflected in the literature, art, film, and music of that culture? The art-writing workshop lends itself perfectly to an examination of how artists and writers work within various media to explore life’s big questions.”

Special thanks go to Tracy Lawlor from the Benton who helped with arrangements and to Kathy James-Stebbins (SI ’96), a Benton docent who led a brief tour of the museum’s works.

*Donna Ozga was a classroom English teacher for many years. In 1996 she retired from Bristol Eastern High School where she was the English Department Head and Literacy Coach. She has been a Co-Director, Leadership Council Member, and Teacher Consultant for the Connecticut Writing Project since then. Recently, she completed docent training at the New Britain Museum of American Art.*
Connecticut Student Writers 2010 Contest Results

Poetry Published Writers

Ayanna Barreto-Vasco, Grade K  
Annie E. Vinton Elementary School

Sergei Moscardelli, Grade K  
Annie E. Vinton Elementary School

Harrison Moss, Grade K  
Annie E. Vinton Elementary School

Shannon O’Charek, Grade 1  
Frank M. Kearns Primary School

Caroline Vlach, Grade 1  
Latimer Lane Elementary School

Kathryn Damato, Grade 1  
Anna M. Reynolds Elementary School

Jalah Cooper, Grade 2  
Clover Street School

Bart Codd, Grade 2  
South School

Sophie Duplock, Grade 2  
South School

Elliott Moberly-LaChance, Grade 3  
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Aidan DeBrincat, Grade 3  
Annie E. Vinton Elementary School

Sophia Meyers, Grade 3  
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Alexis Klimaszewski, Grade 4  
Elizabeth Shelton Elementary School

Rebecca McCord, Grade 4  
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Shermeen Khan, Grade 4  
West District Elementary School

Emma Sammons, Grade 5  
Regional Multicultural Magnet School

Rachylle Hart, Grade 5  
Washington Montessori School

Juliana Pestretto, Grade 5  
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Natalie Paiano, Grade 6  
West Woods Upper Elementary School

Celine LaTona, Grade 6  
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Ambria Capson, Grade 6  
Memorial Middle School

Matthew DelMastro, Grade 7  
Smith Middle School

Serena Lotreck, Grade 7  
Tolland Middle School

Christian SantaMaria, Grade 7  
Memorial Middle School

Hannah Hudson, Grade 8  
Rochambeau Middle School

Kathryn Shafer, Grade 8  
Irving A. Robbins Middle School

Andre Caldwell, Grade 8  
Windham Middle School

Victoria Bilcik, Grade 9  
Brookfield High School

Sarah Jacinto, Grade 9  
Arts at the Capitol Theater

Maddi Nicholson, Grade 9  
Simsbury High School

Hailey Aguero, Grade 10  
Newington High School

Thomas Hart, Grade 10  
The Gunnery School

Laura Salvatore, Grade 10  
Bacon Academy

Lily Fleisher, Grade 11  
Granby Memorial High School

Cara Dorris, Grade 11  
Glastonbury High School

Nakia Jones, Grade 11  
Cooperative Arts & Humanities Magnet High School

Victoria Chen, Grade 12  
E.O. Smith High School

Annie Settle, Grade 12  
Watertown High School

Nicole Hill, Grade 12  
E.O. Smith High School
## Connecticut Student Writers 2010 Contest Results

### Prose Published Writers

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Alexander Semenza</td>
<td>Annie E. Vinton Elementary School</td>
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<td>K</td>
<td>Brendan Raynor</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Priyanka Sapkota</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Natalie Williams</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Alexander Viar</td>
<td>Philip R. Smith Elementary School</td>
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<td>Amanda Rodrigues</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>William Zawilinski</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>John Targowski</td>
<td>Tashua Elementary School</td>
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<td>Daniel Schenk</td>
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<td>Collin Sitz</td>
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<td>Alyssa Grimaldi</td>
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<td>Hannah Beilinson</td>
<td>Roachambeau Middle School</td>
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<td>Michael Doyle</td>
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<td>Savanna Higgins</td>
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<td>Brett Fox</td>
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<td>Tatiana Varanko</td>
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<td>Jessica Lipponen</td>
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<td>Emily Barger</td>
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<td>Hayley Kolding</td>
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<td>Sarah Wiegert</td>
<td>Bristol Eastern High School</td>
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<td>Willem Dorff</td>
<td>Griswold High School</td>
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<td>Aminah Muhammad</td>
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<td>Zoryana Bilohan</td>
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<td>Indira Jiménez</td>
<td>Conard High School</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Rob Dei Dolori</td>
<td>Granby Memorial High School</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Lauren Dundon</td>
<td>Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Meg O'Connor</td>
<td>Miss Porter's School</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Lindsey Pellino</td>
<td>Rockville High School</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Evangeline Vournazos</td>
<td>Griswold High School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Connecticut Student Writers 2010 Contest Results

Poetry Honorable Mentions

Max Drzewiecki, Grade K
Annie E. Vinton Elementary School

Brendan Raynor, Grade K
Annie E. Vinton Elementary School

Alexander Semenza, Grade K
Annie E. Vinton Elementary School

Jack Marlor, Grade 1
Frank M. Kearns Primary School

Morgan Yeager, Grade 1
Frank M. Kearns Primary School

Shea Devanney, Grade 2
Anna M. Reynolds Elementary School

Elise D’Addio, Grade 3
Clover Street School

Theresa Marciano, Grade 3
South Elementary School

Emmalee Richards, Grade 3
Tootin’ Hills Elementary School

Radu Costache, Grade 4
Squadron Lime School

Eliza Douglas, Grade 4
West District Elementary School

Katie Somosky, Grade 4
Eastbury School

Thad Allen, Grade 5
Regional Multicultural Magnet School

Sage Connors, Grade 5
Regional Multicultural Magnet School

Paul Saraceno, Grade 5
Louise Duffy Elementary School

Leiah Cutkomp, Grade 6
Samuel B. Webb Elementary School

Catherine Ingersoll, Grade 6
Reed Intermediate School

Lizzie Schorsch, Grade 6
Memorial Middle School

Marina Barrus, Grade 7
Two Rivers Magnet Middle School

Kyra Norlund, Grade 7
Smith Middle School

Kristen Onorato, Grade 7
Coleytown Middle School

Elizabeth Alonzo, Grade 8
Henry James Middle School

Sandra Carpenter, Grade 8
Scotts Ridge Middle School

Michael Mei, Grade 8
Scotts Ridge Middle School

Jacqueline Bickley, Grade 9
Chase Collegiate High School

Hallie Smith, Grade 9
Simsbury High School

Leticia Rosario, Grade 9
Windham High School

Alyssa Hamilton, Grade 10
Pomperaug Regional High School

Caitsin Meuser, Grade 10
Simsbury High School

Lizzi Ta, Grade 10
Rockville High School

Ashley Veilleux-Bonneau, Grade 10

Louis Bousquet, Grade 11
Killingly High School

Audrey Gidman, Grade 11
Arts at the Capitol Theater

Howell Cheney Technical School

Jennifer Johnson, Grade 12
Rockville High School

Nathan Lannan, Grade 12
Rockville High School

Stephanie Schloss, Grade 11
Farmington High School

Elizabeth Nutt, Grade 12
Rockville High School
Connecticut Student Writers 2010 Contest Results

Prose Honorable Mentions

Claire Greene, Grade K
Annie E. Vinton
Elementary School

Lucy Lyttle, Grade 1
Tootin’ Hills Elementary School

Ashley Cohen, Grade 2
Tootin’ Hills Elementary School

Varsha Irvathraya, Grade 3
Anna M. Reynolds
Elementary School

Jackie Grimaldi, Grade 4
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Abigail McMillan, Grade 5
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Leiah Cutkomp, Grade 6
Samuel B. Webb
Elementary School

Emily Betterton, Grade 7
Granby Memorial Middle School

Shauna Clifford, Grade 8
Woodbury Middle School

Kristin Giorgio, Grade 9
Simsbury High School

Kaylee Cifone, Grade 10
Bristol Eastern High School

Giulia Caterini, Grade 11
Greenwich Academy

Sophie Hart, Grade K
Annie E. Vinton
Elementary School

Chase McGee, Grade 1
Frank M. Kearns Primary School

Ashley Dearborn, Grade 2
North Street School

Katelyn Sparks, Grade 3
South Elementary School

Saige Tapper-Young, Grade 4
Kelly Lane Intermediate School

Julia Meehan, Grade 5
West Woods Upper Elementary School

Kathleen Ferrie, Grade 6
Juliet W. Long School

Suki Hyman, Grade 7
Coleytown Middle School

Tara Debek, Grade 8
Fairfield Woods Middle School

Benjamin Hoff, Grade 9
Arts at the Capitol Theater

Estelle Franck, Grade 10
Bristol Eastern High School

Kyle Provost, Grade 11
Rockville High School

Michelle Scanlon, Grade 12
St. Joseph High School

Sergei Moscardelli, Grade K
Annie E. Vinton
Elementary School

William Pagliaro, Grade 1
Frank M. Kearns Primary School

Jalil Rincon, Grade 2
Anna M. Reynolds
Elementary School

Brigid Stoll, Grade 3
Roaring Brook School

Kate Werle, Grade 4
Tootin’ Hills Elementary School

Adrienne Parkinson, Grade 5
Coleytown Elementary School

Walter Manuel, Grade 6
Memorial Middle School

Olivia Montesi, Grade 7
Elizabeth C. Adams Middle School

Melinda Sonido, Grade 8
Memorial Middle School

Kelly Salina, Grade 9
Simsbury High School

Gabrielle Rosa, Grade 10
Canton High School

Chelsea Melanson, Grade 12
The Morgan School
Maxine Hairston in *College Composition and Communication* quotes Thomas Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (it’s always best to use prime source material!) about the paradigm shift. When the established conceptual model or paradigm cannot explain anomalies, contradictions, and inconsistencies, then a new paradigm is developed and the shift occurs. Key to this shift is that it is disruptive in various ways.

What would it be like to envision a paradigm shift in a particular institution, UConn, for example, within the English Department, and specifically in that one course required of every student, English 105? From intense scientific observation this summer, it was seen that two steps into the paradigm shift have already occurred. It is commonplace on campus that many students who pass English 105 still do not know how to write. And teaching assistants, who are themselves student writers, often find the course outline and procedure for writing stifling. Furthermore, two wedges have been driven into the old paradigm. Over one hundred of the teachers of 105 are not on campus. They are high school teachers in the Program (the Storrs campus) once a year (more frequently if we are suspect) and this May we were asked to drink from the waters of the Connecticut Writing Project. Secondly, a number of campus TAs of 105 have participated in CWP Summer Institutes—a definite infiltration.

To make a paradigm shift, however, requires outward and visible signs, not just inward changes while appearances remain the same. It is these outward signs which I would like to address, particularly because disruption accompanies them. I feel that disruption can be encouraged.

It’s always good to come back to the campus where twelve years of my life were spent and be able to feel at home, to know I belong. I knew there was something comfortable about the phrase “English 105.” It had more than a familiar ring, and then the transcript proved it. Twenty-seven years ago, as a freshman, I had taken English 105 in a classroom on the third floor of the Wilbur Cross Library. Stability is one thing; stagnation is another. While there have no doubt been evolutionary changes in course content and emphasis, methinks for a course to have had the same number for twenty-seven years definitely smells of a dead fish, a very dead fish. I propose, therefore, that the course every freshman be required to take be re-numbered.

This re-numbering would get at the heart of the matter. The computer would have to be changed. And the course catalog. And all those little cards on faculty doors. But its real importance goes deeper than just to the heart. It is a change that truly is meaningless. While there may be distinctions of import between 100 and 200 courses, the distinction between 105 and a new number, 106, for example, is a change signifying nothing—and therefore, is perfect. It is the irritant that allows the venom to be vented when there is nothing to kill. Change, by its nature, has to be fought. Those energies have to be expended. It is of the utmost importance that those destructive energies be directed away from the change that matters so it can be allowed to occur.

A second instigated disruption which I propose is that the word “Composition” be dropped from the name of the now re-numbered course. Composition evokes memories of booklets with sewn bindings from which no page could be torn and in which one wrote only with ink (permanent blue-black). Neither could one make a mistake—ink-erasers, scratchers, and ink-eradicator, each left too much of a mark. Compositions were those pieces of writing that were dutifully copied over in best penmanship which guaranteed that all life had been drained out of them. Never again being able to refer to “Freshman Comp” is a little disruptive, but more of an assist is needed. I therefore propose that the new course be called “The Writing Process.” This has the advantage of being the truth, to begin with, but it is already another irritant. It’s a phrase that doesn’t match the adage of the standard textbooks, and therefore, cuts the life source for the old paradigm. A new book would have to be read, and new lecture notes written—or maybe, if the right books were read, the lecturing would cease. A disreputable course title, a change in the colloquialism, a new book order for the bookstore, and the burning of all those plywood lecterns—a glorious disruption, but one that needs a final touch.

(continued on page 15)
The sequel to The Writing Process is the Literature course? No way! That provides too much security for all those English majors who wanted to read sexy books and get credit for it. The sequel to The Writing Process is simply The Writing Process II, and literature would be used as a source and inspiration for writing in both courses. Comp and Lit are only artificially separated anyway, and time is needed to establish the peer writing groups, to experience pre-writing, and to allow the process to flow. If the fact that we have emotions and that emotional response is both valid and needs to be expressed before other responses can be examined; if the fact that one does not know everything one is going to write when one starts, but content is generated in process; if the fact that writing is not linear, but recursive; if these are facts (as I have just said they are), then two semesters are both needed and well spent in the writing process. Recognizing emotions and feelings, acknowledging one doesn’t know everything and claiming the messiness of recursiveness are delightfully disruptive factors.

The paradigm shift is complete when the established leadership adapts or changes. Just think what the consequences would be when it is realized that “anyone” can’t teach that one required course. What do you mean teaching writing is a specialty? Writing is what you do so you don’t perish! Or so it used to be.

Writing isn’t the spin-off; it is the substance. It is the organizer of thinking. It is what will have been steadily (although recursively) promoted while the battles have been fought over the course number change, title change, and change in teacher attitudes. This paradigm shift won’t be just a revolution contained within one department. As students (and faculty) become involved in the writing process, the right side of the brain becomes engaged, and the direction of the “education process” is turned around. Instead of the mastered body of knowledge having to be imparted in diluted fashion to incoming students, those incoming student and faculty members who specialize in the writing process will open their minds, dare to explore, see new relationships, and risk new thoughts. And it is in the resurgence of thinking that the new paradigm lives.

Paradigm Shift - Now (2010)

A Challenge Passed On
Barbara A. Campbell, Ph.D. (SI ’84)

A challenge is healthy and Ben Miller challenged me. In asking about the early days of CWP, he asked, “What did you write?” That was 26 years and two moves ago, but I found it! “Premeditated Tempest,” I called it, and I looked to the future. Then Ben challenged me again. “Write a short response to your work and discuss it in respect to today.” These CWP interns! The nerve!

So since he asked, I played with the question, “Will what I write today have relevance tomorrow?” We assume a positive answer as we teach Mark Twain’s “The War Prayer” and expect students to enjoy “tell the truth but tell it slant.” When we teach contemporary authors, their language is accessible, but the borders we cross are cultural, as when I teach Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s Purple Hibiscus or Paul Rusesabagina’s tale of the 100-day Rwandan genocide. At times when we ourselves write, we don’t know how long words or phrases will live. Having lived in Alabama “the year after the governor stood in the school house door,” I know that can only refer to Governor George Wallace standing in the Field House door at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, as he tried (and failed) to keep Black students from entering and registering for classes. Do other readers know that?

The Summer Institutes of CWP-Storrs have always challenged us to apply what we were learning, to analyze it, to be creative with it. My connection to English 105 and 109 started fifty-three years ago when Wilbur Cross was still the library and English classes were on the third floor. I wrote about English 105 and 109 at the Summer Institute in 1984, and today I teach the successors to those courses at UConn Greater Hartford.

So to take up Ben’s challenge, “What’s my response to that ancient writing? Does it have relevance today?”

I encouraged a paradigm shift in the required Freshman Comp and Lit courses and, yes, there has been one.
The Connecticut Writing Project

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Benjamin Miller, Writing & Publications Intern

Teacher, Writer, Researcher Editor-In-Chief:

Benjamin Miller

NOW ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS FOR THE Fall 2010 EDITION OF TWR!
PLEASE CONTACT JESSICA MIHALEAS WITH ARTICLES OR IDEAS!
jessica.mihaleas@uconn.edu
I proposed a re-numbering, and English 105 and 109 are now English 1010 and 1011—a computer change, catalog change, and change of those little cards on faculty doors.

As proposed, “Composition” has been dropped from the course name. My course is now a Seminar (not a class!) in Academic Writing Through (not about) Literature, and, in my case, African Literature. Several changes have been instigated. The reality of a seminar opened the discussion, changed the power dynamic, and, yes, got rid of the plywood lecterns.

My seminar does Community Action Research to create data for one of the major papers, and it’s a version of Service Learning—getting the students out of the classroom and into face-to-face contact with the African community in Greater Hartford. New contact zones to explore, new accents, an informed and enlarged world view.

Having been challenged, I now challenge CWP-Storrs. The world of academic writing is rapidly changing: languages other than English are translated, or not, to support meaning (Anzaldúa); genres are combined, narrative included (Romano); even entire academic essays are in poetic form (Eady). We need to take seriously our tweets and twitters as these are forming novels. The writing process has changed. “First draft” is becoming an anomaly as a more continual flow of revision is practiced. The survival of journalism is in question. This has to affect the professional journals, the sites of major academic conversations.

Therefore we can’t wait another fifty years before we review the paradigm shifts in teaching and practicing writing. Document the status of writing now and in five years, CWP-Storrs, review what has changed and what of significance we learn of those changes.

In five years, will what we are doing now have become the “diagramming sentences” of yesterday? What has become of the black and white mottled “composition” book of the past? What will become of the feeling of release, satisfaction, and accomplishment of moments fully engaged in the writing process?

You are on next, CWP-Storrs!

New England Writing Projects Assemble

Benjamin Miller, Writing & Publications Intern CWP-Storrs

The 2010 New England Writing Projects (NEWP) Annual Meeting was hosted by the CWP-Storrs and held at the Nathan Hale Inn & Conference Center at the UConn-Storrs campus. The event took place during the weekend of April 9-10 and included eleven participating Projects: Boston WP, Buzzards Bay WP, Western Mass WP, Maine WP, Southern Maine WP, Plymouth WP, NWP in Vermont, Rhode Island WP, Central CWP, CWP-Fairfield, and CWP-Storrs. Entitled “Building Capacity Using Technology for Recruiting, Continuity, and Leadership,” the meeting focused on the importance of incorporating web-based technology in the writing projects, specifically that of websites and internet social networking.

After attendees finished trickling into campus from all corners of New England, Friday’s session properly began with a welcoming meeting followed by dinner. Afterwards, Jane Cook and Jason Courtmanche gave their presentation, “If You Build It They Will Come: Building a Web Presence and Promoting Technology.” The highlight of the evening was the Open Mic Night, which featured readings from undergraduate students from UConn’s Creative Writing Program, high school students from Denise Abercrombie’s Creative Writing Class at E. O. Smith High School, and the many teachers from the participating writing project sites. While commenting on the success of the poetry reading, Jason Courtmanche added that “people were spilling out the doors.”

Saturday’s presentation entitled “The Pedagogy of the Socially Networked” was delivered by Paul Oh from the National Writing Project and included a videoconference with Andrea Zellner from Red Cedar Writing Project, MI.

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Technology: an asset to NEWP success

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It was a terrific idea to integrate potential applications of technology into their presentation about integrating technology. The discussion was supplemented with a PowerPoint presentation and various opportunities for conference attendees to interrupt and comment on the material.

The presentation was an inquiry into social networking: What constitutes a social network? How can we locate teachers in social networks such as Facebook? (Paul Oh asked how many people in the room had a Facebook account, and all but a handful raised their hands.) Considering the questionable literacy of adolescents online, what moral responsibility do teachers have to provide their students with correct and safe practices online? And finally, with the amount of text being viewed daily by individuals at record highs in the twenty-first century, how do we categorize new writing languages, techniques, styles, and applications online?

Catherine Lamb of the NWP in Vermont said that “Our experience at NEWP helped us to think more concretely about what our website might offer for teacher consultants in the field and how it might help us in the day-to-day operations of our site.”

The NEWP meeting ended with Site and Cross-Site Planning, a writing exercise, and looking towards next year’s event.
A Celebration of Outstanding Student Writing

2010 CSW Recognition Night

Shawna Lesseur, Graduate Assistant Director CWP-Storrs

On the evening of May eighteenth, nearly five hundred teachers, writers, friends, and family members came together at the University of Connecticut’s von der Mehden Recital Hall to celebrate the release of the 2010 Connecticut Student Writers Magazine (CSW). Out of over eleven hundred submissions, seventy-eight pieces were chosen for publication and seventy-four were awarded honorable mentions.

Keynote speaker Stacy DeKeyser, award-winning Connecticut children’s and young adult writer, gave an interactive, encouraging speech about the power of writing to influence the world and the necessity of perseverance in the face of rejection throughout a writing career. After the ceremony, she met the student-writers and autographed copies of her latest novel, Jump the Cracks, which tells the story of a fifteen-year-old girl who vows to protect an abandoned child from his abusive father, then finds herself fleeing across the country as an accused kidnapper in order to keep her promise.

Before CSW Editor Nadine Keane, Connecticut Writing Project (CWP) Director Jason Courtmanche, and CWP Technology Liaison Jane Cook presented the awards, twelve published student writers shared their work with the audience. Brendan Raynor, a kindergartener at Annie E. Vinton Elementary, began the evening with a reading of his imaginative poem “If You Eat a Color.” And Evangeline Vournazos, a graduating senior from Griswold High School, rounded out the readings with her powerful and compelling untitled prose. Published writers Alexander Viar (grade one), Tiago Frazao (grade two), Olivia LaRosa (grade three), Taalia Morgan (grade four), Emma Sammons (grade five), Natalie Paiano (grade six), Matthew DelMastro (grade seven), Hannah Hudson (grade eight), Victoria Bilec (grade nine), and Hailey Aguero (grade ten) also read for the event.

Despite unexpected construction in the von der Mehden courtyard, the event was a great success. Special thanks go to the event caterers, Taking Care of Tummies, and the von der Mehden Hall staff for making this an evening to remember.

For more information, a full list of 2010 published writers and honorable mention award recipients, and an electronic version of the magazine go to http://cwp.uconn.edu/publications/csw.php.
The Next Step: My Reflections on the Connecticut Writing Project

Benjamin Miller, Writing & Publications Intern CWP-Storrs

The CWP-Storrs undergraduate intern position is offered through the UConn English Department’s Writing Internship Program, responsible for the placement of students into various fields such as journalism, advertising and marketing, and public relations, to name a few. Each student intern is required to compile a portfolio of the various projects completed at work as well as a professional journal. The journal isn’t just a list of what the intern did that day; it’s a forum where the intern reflects on achievements and voices concerns. Now that I have graduated from UConn and my internship has come to a close, I’d like to share with you some of my personal reflections on the CWP-Storrs. And what better way to do that than straight from my journal entries I kept throughout the internship?

August 31, 2009
Today was the first day of my third internship through the Writing Internship Program in UConn’s English Department. This semester I will be working with the Connecticut Writing Project (CWP), a branch of the National Writing Project (NWP). This organization facilitates opportunities for learning, research, and publication for public educators. I am anticipating a successful employment mainly because this internship blends elements of my past two internships. I am using the editing skills from my first internship at the UConn School of Agriculture and Natural Resources and combining it with the field of English, which I studied in depth during my research at the Dodd Center, UConn’s archives.

October 16, 2009
I was recommended by Jason to two members of the Creative Writing Program to write an article for their upcoming newsletter. The article pertains to a reading that will be given in two weeks by a visiting Irish writer. It is of no surprise, given my interest in Irish literature (and, well anything concerning Ireland!) that I quickly responded to the offer. I expressed my desire to take the job by outlining how I have a concentration in Irish literature, have studied abroad in Ireland, and live in Ireland when I am not in Storrs. I just received a response from the Creative Writing editor stating, “After reading your compelling e-mail I was impressed by the thoughtfulness of your response. How could I say no? You’re obviously the student for the job.” I am extremely excited by the good news and am anticipating a great experience with the Irish writer, Geraldine Mills.

While this does not pertain directly to my current projects, I thought it worth mentioning that Jason flattered and humbled me by nominating me for the Leadership Legacy Experience. Professors are prompted to “nominate outstanding undergraduates who have demonstrated academic commitment, exceptional character, contribution to the community, and an overall level of extraordinary personal achievement.” I must say this came extremely unexpected as I have only worked with Jason for half a semester in the CWP office and in his American Literature course. It is times like these that reassure me that I am on the right track in my education, making use of internship experience, and developing a sense of personal achievement in academia. During this transition period into my graduate work, I desperately need proof that I am ready for what lies ahead and these instances not only encourage me but bolster my confidence.

October 26, 2009
The dinner following Geraldine Mills’ reading was absolutely wonderful. This was a rare opportunity for me as an undergrad, and I spoke to this point with Jason the day before. In Academia it is very difficult to break into the ranks of very respectable but sometimes elitist faculty, especially as an undergrad. However, Jason makes it a point to create opportunities for his undergrads to join these circles of professionals of the field, to make valuable acquaintances, and learn from those who have gone through the system before. And lean I did.

October 29, 2009
Tonight I attended the Twentieth Annual Aetna Critical Writing Prize Program as a representative reporter for the CWP-Storrs. Before the program commenced, I met with Jason and the 2009 Summer Institute participants for a pizza-gathering. After walking through the doors into the crowded room, Jason approached me and handed me the final copy of the Chapbook I was responsible for creating. It was an absolute success! While the Chapbook’s true content was through the efforts of the creative writers, I was simply proud to have been a part of their hard work by organizing and designing a memorable collection that, hopefully, won’t gather dust on their bookshelves.

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Editor’s Note (cont.)

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December 11, 2009
Considering my past internships, right about now in the final journal entry I recapitulate about my experiences throughout the entire semester. However, this semester is different for the simple reason that I will be continuing my internship through my final semester at UConn in the spring. Not only am I flattered that Jason asked me to continue as writing intern, but I truly enjoy my position here in the CWP office. I enjoy the people, considering we have relatively few problems. I enjoy the work, despite the fact that internship responsibilities and deadlines often compete with my undergrad work load. But ultimately, I value the experience working in such a successful, respected, and vital organization. The work that goes on in the CWP (and respectively in the NWP) really promotes a richer educational experience for students by developing the skills of professional educators. And I am glad to be a part of such a proactive organization that is dedicated to the love and art of teaching and writing.

April 10, 2010
Today I played reporter and photographer for the Saturday session of the New England Writing Projects Annual Meeting, hosted this year here at UConn by the CWP. It was nice to see our work come to fruition today. I recall advertising for the event last semester without any real scope of the timeline. But as the months drew closer, I continued working alongside Jason as the planning continued—the hotel accommodations, catering, and finally compiling the packet of materials and setting up the conference this week. I’ve always taken this very seriously, that is, seeing your work through till completion. Undergraduate students can lose sight of that if they are only concerned with a percentage or a letter-grade. But when I looked at my transcripts before sending them to grad schools, I just absorbed the sheer amount of work I have done here at UConn. I have the same feeling in my internship work. To have a real notion of how your work and contribution fits into the big picture not only motivates you to get work done, but improves the overall quality.

April 30, 2010
Today was my last official shift at the Connecticut Writing Project. Although I tend to react sentimentally to these types of transitions, I know that my affiliation with Jason and the organization did not end with my last clock-out today. [...] I have a feeling this is simply “see you later” rather than “good-bye.”

* * * * *

I believe that these excerpts from my experiences as the CWP-Storrs intern demonstrate how valuable the opportunity was for me. If the pairing is right (as, without a doubt, it was for me) then both the intern and the employer benefit. As evident from the amount of trust Jason had in me as an intern, it’s safe to say I was an asset to the office. And because of the amount of opportunities he provided me, the full academic year as CWP-Storrs undergraduate intern has already greatly impacted my career. Thanks to Jason’s assistance with my graduate school applications, I was offered placements into both University College Dublin (M.A. American Lit.) and Trinity College Dublin (M.Phil. Irish Lit.). I have met and worked alongside academics and talented writers. And I might even be participating in a panel discussion at the NWP Fall Conference! I am confident that Jessica Mihaleas will be a great replacement as the next undergraduate writing intern. Her initiative and engagement will make her experience a successful one.

Finally, I’d like to thank Jason, couldn’t have asked for a better boss and friend; Shawna Lesseur, my trusty partner in editing-crime; Sharlene Smith, the office smile and laugh; and, of course, the rest of the CWP-Storrs affiliates I have met and worked with along the way who have made this a truly memorable experience.