

# RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENT & ALUMNI

Noting Activities & Accomplishments Compiled Since the Previous Board Report

MAY 21, 2015



**Elizabeth Powell** (Writing & Literature) has been invited to teach at the New Young Writers' Conference at Breadloaf/Middlebury College. This mid-May writing conference is for the best of the best creative writers in their junior and senior years of high school.

**Jensen Beach** (Writing & Literature) was the Vermont Studio Center's visiting writer during "Vermont Week" at the Studio Center in Johnson. As part of his appointment, Jensen gave a reading on April 28.

The first VPR commentary by **Russ Weis** (Writing & Literature) is part of a compilation of environmental writings put out in magazine form by Green Writers Press at <http://mkt.com/green-writers-press/greenzine>.

**Kathleen Brinegar** (Education) had two recent publications. The first, a book chapter titled "Preservice Teachers Using Digital Storytelling to Reflect on Personal Narratives," was published in *Research on Teaching and Learning with the Literacies of Young Adolescents (Information Age)*. The chapter was co-authored by Cynthia Reyes from the University of Vermont. Kathleen's second piece was published this April in the *Middle Grades Review*. This article is titled "A Content Analysis of Four Peer-Reviewed Middle Grades Publications: Are We Really Paying Attention to Every Young Adolescent?" Jennifer McDonald, a recent graduate of JSC's M.A. in Education program, assisted Dr. Brinegar with the data analysis as part of her coursework.

Kathleen also was recently elected to serve as Council Member on the Middle Level Education Research Board, a special interest group of the American Educational Research Association. The Board represents the largest group of international researchers devoted to the improvement and dissemination of research focused on young adolescents and middle schools.

Kathleen Brinegar and **Dan Regan** (Academic Dean), in conjunction with the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, worked with faculty and staff across campus to host a large group of 10th graders from Lamoille Union High School April 15. The day was sponsored by the VSAC "LEAP" grant, which focuses on increasing the post-secondary aspirations of high school students in Lamoille County. Students spent the day exploring JSC's campus, engaging in a variety of workshops with JSC faculty, and beginning their

work on Personalized Learning Plans. VSC Chancellor Job Spaulding attended part of the day's activities.

**Gina Mireault** (Behavioral Sciences) has accepted invitations to be the lead author for an entry about social referencing for the SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods and to write a 100-page monograph on infant humor for Springer Publishing.

The Department of Fine & Performing Arts presented "Grease" April 22-25. The musical was directed by JSC alum and part-time faculty member **Patrick Sawyer-Houle** and featured a cast of **JSC student actors and musicians** and choreography by graduating senior **Vanessa Cousins**. Following the Wednesday matinee on April 22, the College hosted an ice cream social in honor of retiring theater professor **Russell Longtin** and his 28 years of service. Several theater students spoke personally and from the heart about the enormous influence Russ has had on their lives and upcoming careers, many adding that they had found their "home" in the Dibden Center.

**Bethany Plissey** (Fine & Performing Arts) continues to serve as the Collegiate Repertoire and Standards Chair for the Vermont Board of the American Choral Directors Association. She is currently serving as part of the organizing team for the Gather at The River Choral Conference to be held in June at Dartmouth College. She also will present a session titled "Choral Singer and Audience Engagement through Theatrical Practices."

A lengthy article by Caitlin Schmid in the March 26 edition of *NewMusicBox*, part of a series on experimental music festivals of the 1960s and 1970s, featured a discussion of **Dennis Bathory-Kitsz's** (Fine & Performing Arts) involvement in the annual New York Avant Garde Festival.

Work by **Joe Salerno** (Fine & Performing Arts) appears through June in a four-person exhibition at Burlington City Arts's Vermont Metro Gallery on Church Street. The exhibit, "Back to Nature," celebrates the beauty of Vermont's ever-changing landscape.

An article by **David Plazek** (Humanities), "Realist or Liberal? Canadian Foreign Policy in the 1960s," will be published in the *New England Journal of Political Science* later this year. He presented the 1970s version of that topic at the New

England Political Science Association's annual meeting in New Haven, Conn., in April.

**Paul Silver** (Humanities) served as a judge at Vermont History Day for the Vermont Historical Society in March.

**Joe Farara** (Willey Library) participated in a focus group to help chart the future course of the Vermont State Department of Libraries. He emphasized the importance of continuing the strong collaborative relationship between the department and the VSC libraries.

## STUDENT & ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

Sophomore **Heather Murphy**, junior **Shayna Bennett** and graduating senior **Erika English** won an "Outstanding Undergraduate Poster" award at the Geological Society of America Northeastern Section meeting in March. Only nine students — the top 5% of 192 undergraduate poster presentations — were selected by 46 judges for an award. JSC bested the presentation from Middlebury College, which was the only other Vermont institution to receive an award. The faculty advisor for the group effort (for which Heather served as lead author) was Dr. Liz Dolci. The students' poster was titled "Bacterial Adaptation to an Anthropogenically Altered, Serpentine-Rich Aquatic Environment."

Juniors **Steven Lamonde** and **Shayna Bennett** have been inducted into Sigma Xi, the prestigious scientific research society for undergraduates who show promise by the research conducted early in their careers. Einstein, Crick and Watson, and our own Liz Dolci and Les Kanat have been members of this elite group.

Graduating senior **Daniel Hill** is one of 240 college students nationwide selected to travel to NASA's Johnson Space Center as part of the five-week NASA College Aerospace Scholars project (NCAS). While at NASA, students interact with NASA engineers and establish fictional companies that develop and test a prototype Mars rover, establish a company infrastructure, manage a budget and develop communications plans.

Sophomore men's lacrosse goalkeeper **Jay Palmisano**, an art education major, concluded the 2014-15 season ranked No. 2 nationally in NCAA Division III for saves per game and No. 11 in goals-against average. His outstanding performance this year also earned him a spot on the North Atlantic Conference's second team all-conference squad.

On Saturday, May 2, members of the **JSC Dance Club**, advised by **Maris Wolff** (Fine & Performing Arts), hosted a free dance workshop at JSC for 6- to 12-year olds.

In April **Abby Maurice** (Musical Theater, 2013) played Pilar in Lyric Theatre's production of *Legally Blonde: The Musical* on the Flynn Center MainStage. This was her third Lyric show. She made her debut as Fantine in *Les Mis* and most recently appeared in *The Producers*.

The Johnson State College **Chamber Singers**, under the direction of **Bethany Plissey** and with the accompaniment of **Tim Saeed** (both Fine & Performing Arts), performed a concert on April 12 at St. John's in the Mountains Episcopal Church in Stowe. The well-received concert was the culmination of the group's spring 2015 tour. One of the venues on the tour was a church community in Brockport, Mass., whose minister wrote us, "Last night the church that I serve, Christ Congregational Church, UCC, in Brockton Massachusetts had the pleasure of hosting a concert with the Johnson State College Chamber Singers. What a delight!! They are such great ambassadors for your school, and their director, Bethany, was outstanding not only in pulling a great sound and musicianship from her choir but also in how she treated and honored their personhood."

Technical Theater students were well-represented at February's Broadway tours of *Beauty and the Beast*, *Sister Act* and *Sesame Street*, at the Flynn Theater in Burlington and the HOP at Dartmouth. In addition to **Pete Curtis** (2003), **Sarah Wessel** (2006), and **Bonnie Cleverly** (2012), 10 current students will be working as permit workers for Burlington Local 919 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees: **Nicholas Ray**, **Mike Brokowski**, **Ben Cousino**, **Ethan McGovern**, **Josh Poland**, **Andrew Tascarella**, **Laurel Hubbert-Severance**, **Ben Steele**, **Zane Richard-Watkins** and **Tim Melville**. Ethan, Mike and Bonnie are enrolled as apprentices with the local. Ethan has accepted a position as lighting technician at Dark Star Lighting and Production in Hinesburg and will begin full time after he graduates in May. Bonnie is teaching stagecraft at Lyndon State, while Sarah is the resident lighting designer for Higher Ground in Burlington.

Graduating senior **Erika McCormick** (Studio Arts) won a contest organized by faculty member Jensen Beach to design the cover for the new issue of *Pamplemousse*, formerly known as the *Gihon River Review*.



