In this issue, learn about Anja Hemesath's internship, look back the Halloween Homecoming Social; check out events and happenings; meet Distinguished Alumni Board Member Matthew Sams; read our news about Elea Abisamra, James Dubinsky, Katrina Powell, and Challen Walker and Ari Corradi; listen to two new podcasts about publishing; enjoy some moments from a visiting lecturer; catch up with our Words & Pictures Instagram Takeovers; celebrate our English community accomplishments; and see an M.F.A. poetry workshop in action.



November 15, 2024

Honing skills and giving back

Anja Hemesath's internship



Anja Hemesath. Photo by Sarah Leberknight for Virginia Tech.

By Sarah Leberknight, Words & Pictures Correspondent

Among triple English major **Anja Hemesath's** internships was a bridge experience with Richmond magazine that allowed her the opportunities to write stories that matter to her hometown. Read her story.

A look back at the Halloween Homecoming Social 2024













Students and faculty enjoyed pumpkin painting, pizza, and, well...Dr. Pepper. Photos by Kelly Barker for Virginia Tech.

Photos by Kelly Barker, Words & Pictures Correspondent

We had so much fun at our annual Halloween Homecoming Social! Students and faculty celebrated with pizza, pumpkin painting, and of course, lots of candy. To see more more, check out our <u>Instagram</u> or <u>Facebook</u> posts.

End of the Semester Happenings

Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Writing Info Session

When: Nov. 21 at 6 p.m. & Dec. 9 at 12 p.m.

Where: Zoom

Register: For Nov. 21 & Dec. 9
Contact: Carolyn Commer

What: The Rhetoric and Writing Ph.D. program is hosting two virtual

information sessions for prospective students. Our virtual information sessions will feature a short presentation about our program and tips for applying, followed by time for questions and answers from faculty members and current Ph.D. students. We

invite prospective students to join us for these sessions!

College Alumni Hall of Honor Awards Nominations Sought

Nominations Due: Dec. 1

Who: Alumni

What: The College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences invites you to submit your alumni nominations to a new Hall of Honor. There are several awards that alumni can receive in order to be inducted into the Hall of Honor, and there will be an awards ceremony in April. Click here for more information.

Ed Falco's Sci-Fi Audio Series

When: New episodes drop on Monday and Fridays

Where: Ed Falco On the Air

What: Retired faculty member and New York Times bestselling author Ed Falco ("The Family Corleone") invites you to enjoy his new, free sci-fi audio series, "The Strangers." Follow the gripping story in 19 episodes, released every Monday and Friday—perfect for some immersive storytelling enjoyment over Thanksgiving break!

If you are an individual with a disability and desire an accommodation, please email the contact listed at least 10 business days prior to the event you plan to attend.

Distinguished Alumni Board Spotlight: Matthew Sams



Matthew Sams. Photo courtesy of Sams.

Degrees: B.A. English, 2007; M.A., English, 2009 from Virginia Tech

Current Role: Executive Director, The Hokie Way

How his degree in English helped him succeed

The ability to distill information and communicate effectively has proven paramount to my career. People often ask how I got into marketing and branding with an English background. Simply put, the art of persuasion comes down to the rhetorical situation; and my career path has largely been defined by the study of rhetoric at Virginia Tech.

Advice for current students

Students in the Department of English need to understand that their studies and degree open up broad possibilities. There is no playbook or stair-step methodology to creating a career. The ability to confidently analyze, write, and communicate will enable them to carve their own path in a variety of industries.

News

Elea Abisamra receives Aspire! Award



Elea Abisamra. Photo Courtesy of VT Aspire! Awards.

For sharing her deep passion through the power of community and her work with Kids Can Write, **Elea Abisamara** received a Virginia Tech Self-understanding and Integrity Aspire! Award. She is majoring in cognitive and behavioral neuroscience and minoring in creative writing, as well as entrepreneurship. Read more about her and the award.

James Dubinsky featured on 'Life in the Heart Land'



Still from the video courtesy of Virginia Public Media.

Jim Dubinsky, associate professor, participated in episode six of "Life in the Heart Land" on PBS. In the episode, he is featured as a veteran and for the meaningful work he does to support veterans in finding and sharing their stories. He also took part in a panel celebrating the premiere of "Life in the Heart Land's" second season at the Wayne Theater in Staunton, Virginia, hosted by Virginia Public Media and Deep Structure. Watch the video here.





Donation drop-off center. Photo by Christina Franusich for Virginia Tech.

The Everyday Ut Prosim series celebrates how Hokies live out the spirit of service on campus and off — a spirit that ignited after Hurricane Helene hit the area on Sept. 27. Since then, students, staff, and faculty have mobilized to provide service to affected communities in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. **Katrina Powell**, professor and director of the Center for Refugee, Migrant, and Displacement Studies, was one such faculty member. Read the story.

Challen Waller receives Aspire! Award, nominators include Ari Corradi

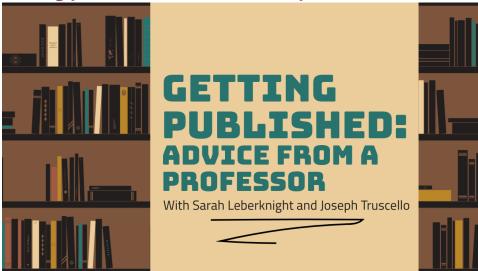


Ari Corradi and Challen Waller. Photo courtesy of Corradi.

Congrats to **Challen Waller**, a senior in biological systems engineering, for winning the Virginia Tech Curiosity Aspire Award! He was nominated by **Ari Corradi**, instructor, among others, for his insatiable drive to understand living systems and to help them improve our world. She nominated him for his work in her 1106 course. Read more about Waller and the award.

Two new episodes of the English Podcast

Getting published: Advice from a professor



Joseph Truscello, advanced instructor, sits down with Words & Pictures correspondent Sarah Leberknight to give his advice to student writers on getting their stories published. Tune into this podcast episode to get help with navigating the tricky world of publishing and see how the publishing process looks from both the writer's and editor's perspectives. Click here to listen to the episode.

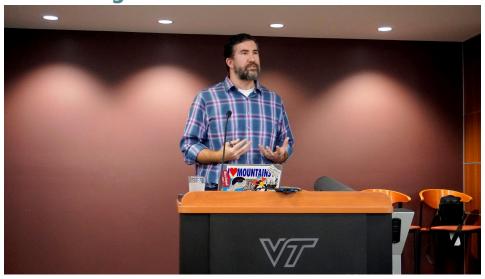
Self-Publishing as an English student



Do you want to know what it's like to self-publish as an English undergraduate? In this podcast episode, **Somros Chang**, Words & Pictures correspondent, interviewed **Aidan Mason**, a creative writing

major from the Department of English at Virginia Tech, about his self-published novels. <u>Click here to listen to the episode</u>.

Exploring language and place: Paul Reed's visit to Virginia Tech









Dr. Reed spoke to a full house on Oct. 23. Photos by Somros Chang.

By Somros Chang, Words & Pictures Correspondent

In Newman Library, Paul Reed, from the University of Alabama, gave a guest lecture titled "Rootedness and Language: Big and Small Places and Their Impact on Language Variation." There, he engaged with a packed house about how language is affected by location, citing his own exciting research and conclusions. The language sciences program hosted this event.

Looking back at Words & Pictures Instagram Takeovers

Samros Chang covered Glossolalia. Photo by Phoebe Hayashi.

Somros Chang from Oct. 19

Take a look into how a professional and technical writing major spent his Saturday, from reporting from Glossolalia, the student-run literary festival, to keeping up with the American League Championship Series. See the highlights.



Sarah Leberknight covered the Halloween Homecoming Social. Photo by Kelly Barker.

Sara Leberknight from Oct. 25

What does a day in the life of a triple major in English, creative writing, and professional and technical writing look like? For one, it includes pumpkin painting at the department's Halloween Homecoming Social, which she covered for Words & Pictures. See the highlights.



Chloe Ziegler shared her day. Photo by Ellie Colonna.

Chloe Ziegler from Oct. 30

Students minoring in our programs bring a rich diversity of experiences to the department. Take **Chloe Ziegler**, a psychology major with minors in professional and technical writing and adaptive brain and behavior. When Chloe took over our account, she planned to cover a guest lecturer—but when that was



Ellie Colonna covered the Visiting Writers Series. Photo by Chloe Ziegler.

postponed, here's how she spent her day. See the highlights.

Ellie Colonna from Nov. 14

The department's popular Visiting Writers Series, hosted by the M.F.A. program, recently featured poet Nawal Nader-French for the second event of the 2024-25 season. English literature major and women and gender studies minor Ellie Colonna was there to cover the inspiring craft talk. See the highlights.

Kudos

Congratulations to our Ph.D. students who passed their preliminary exams: **Sarah Cozort**, **Patrick Greene**, **Andre Jones**, and **Temitope Ojedele**!

Julie Gerdes, assistant professor, is a member of the faculty participating in the Humanities Connections grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the project "Human Dimensions of Infectious Disease." The project goal is to expand the role of the humanities in the undergraduate curriculum. The project partners CLAHS faculty with colleagues in the College of Science and the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine to develop courses that will likely be offered next fall across departments. The courses will focus on a range of issues related to infectious diseases and will reflect the expertise of the faculty, which includes health communication, health and medicine rhetoric, biomedical ethics, history of medicine, global international health issues, biology, and infectious disease modeling.

Patrick Greene, doctoral student, was the keynote speaker at the 2024 TuColla Conference, a writing center conference affiliated with the Southern Writing Centers Association and Old Dominion University. His presentation was titled "Promises of Equity: An Analysis of Writing Center Website Content."

Abby Walker, associate professor and director of the Language Sciences Program, served as a judge for the recent <u>Virginia Tech's Nutshell Games</u>.

"The Routledge Handbook of Rhetoric and Power," edited by Nathan Crick, includes a collaborative chapter by **Jenna Zan**, called, 'Collective Rewor(I)ding in the Wreckage of Hauntings and Haunting Situations.' Zan is an instructor and associate director of the University Writing Program. The other authors are **Romeo Garcia**, **Muath Qadous**, **Mitzi Ceballos**, **Keith L. McDonald**, and **Sabit Bastakotia**.

Scenes from a classroom: Poetry Workshop An M.F.A. course





Photos by Ellie Colonna, Words & Pictures Correspondent

By Ellie Colonna

A look into Associate Professor **Janine Joseph's** poetry workshop where graduate students take the lead in discussing "Virgin" by **Analicia Sotelo**. The M.F.A. students discuss everything in the text — from poem form and language choice to themes, motifs, and characters before diving into student work. See more on our Instagram or Facebook page.

Stay tuned for next month's issue when we continue looking at our graduate program courses.



Just a Minute or Two is a monthly email newsletter brought to you by the Virginia Tech Department of English

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