CommArtsTalk

February 1, 2012, Number 12

Georgia Southern University

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Communication Arts Student Wins Prestigious Award

By Brock D. Vickers

Senior Theatre and Spanish major Austin Bolay won the Region IV LMDA/KCACTF Student Dramaturgy Award for his research and development on The Tempest by William Shakespeare, directed by Professor Lisa Abbott, and for his work at the festival with the New Play Program. “I’m still trying to process it. I’ve never won anything this big. This being my first time as a dramaturg, I didn’t think I would win this competition. I’m excited because winning the award was great, but what impressed me more was that I have the entire [Theatre] program behind me,” said Bolay.

The award is designed to recognize contributions by student dramaturgs to the conception, development and production of theatre within their colleges and universities, or for educational projects in dramaturgy. It is the role of the dramaturg to research and develop a play while working as a mediator with the playwright and director.

Regional fellowship recipients will receive membership in LMDA, an all-expense paid residency at the National Festival at the Kennedy Center in April, and multi-day workshops with leading artists in both production and new play dramaturgy. “Austin [Bolay] worked for this and deserves this recognition. He is an amazingly talented young man and I fully expect to see him doing amazing things in the world of theatre in his future; this is just the beginning,” said Abbott.

Also honored at the festival was junior stage manager Zoe Campell who won a new award named in her honor, and Julianne Norkus and her scene partner Greg Hernandez who made it to round two of the Irene Ryan acting competition.

Professor Lisa Abbott also received two faculty awards for distinction in directing for The Tempest and Big Love.

“Fuenteovejuna” to Debut February 29 in the Black Box Theatre

“Fuenteovejuna” will make its debut February 29 and will run until March 7. Written by Lope De Vega, this play is based on a historical event that took place in 1476 in the village of Fuenteovejuna where angry and abused villagers overtook the commander and killed him. When the incident was investigated, the villagers responded “Fuenteovejuna did it.” The play has been adapted to take place in the early 1900s during the Spanish Civil War.

Shows will be in the Black Box Theatre and begin at 7:30 p.m., except on Sunday when the show begins at 2 p.m.

Tickets may be reserved by calling (912) 478-5379.
Visiting Professor, David Thompson Shares Experiences

An alumnus of Georgia Southern, David Thompson received his degree in Journalism and is now the publications manager and editor for Georgia Southern magazine. He has worked as a reporter for the Statesboro Herald and has gained much experience with newspapers and magazines over the years. This is Thompson’s second spring semester teaching and Introduction to Journalism class in Communication Arts.

“Teaching is not something I ever pictured myself doing, but I’ve done a lot of things and I realized it’s something I could do to share the experiences I’ve had,” said Thompson.

Thompson has worked in the field for over thirty years, and his unique perspective and hands-on experience with journalism and Public Relations sets him apart from many other professors.

“I enjoy being able to share what I’ve learned over the years. My longevity is what makes me stand out. I’m trying to give students some insight into how the process works.”

Thompson also appreciates the opportunity to teach students who share his passion. Helping students find that “ah-ha!” moment has given him motivation as a professor. His goal is to send students into the profession with knowledge and objectivity.

“I’m increasingly concerned about the state of journalism. I see more and more open bias in reporting and far too many reporters who take on jobs as political operatives and then return to work in journalism. The profession has never been perfect and never will be in terms of objectivity, but we can do much better. I hope I can impart to the students the importance of objectivity in reporting and that they’ll renew that commitment to the practice of reporting.”

Sanford to be the new home of Communication Arts

The Communication Arts Department now is looking toward a permanent home with the anticipated renovation of Sanford Hall. Communication Arts recently received word from the CLASS Dean that the Board of Regents has approved renovation of Sanford, and with that renovation, students will once again have a common area to meet with classmates and build a sense of community.

“We are thrilled and hope that everything works out for us. We’ve really missed seeing our students meeting and working together in the lobby,” said Dr. Pam Bourland-Davis, department chair. While the renovation has been approved, it has not been said whether the entire building will belong to Communication Arts.

“There is hope that Sanford will be able to house our classrooms, labs, and offices,” said Bourland-Davis.

“We will be working with architects in the near future to identify how the space can be adapted for a variety of our needs. I have been told classrooms without columns are possible.”