

# Newsroom

March 22, 2013

Georgia Southern University

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# Creative Writing Students Win Awards

MARCH 22, 2013

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The Department of Writing and Linguistics at Georgia Southern University announces the winners of this year's Roy F. Powell Awards for creative writing.

In poetry, Jared Sharpe won for his poems "To Grow," "Sleep Them Off" and "What Dream he Gave." Jackson Sharpe and Kyera Swint received honorable mentions. In the category of fiction, Efadul Huq won for his story "Ghosts." Honorable mentions went to Matt Lane and Anna Hathaway. For creative nonfiction writing, Taylor Tyson received the top honor for "3.5 Pounds." Evin Hughes and Cady Ennis received honorable mentions.

The winning manuscripts were chosen from several highly competitive submissions, according to faculty judges Emma Bolden, poetry; Laura Valeri, fiction; and Theresa Welford, creative nonfiction.

Sharpe, a senior from Vidalia, Ga., is a double-major in writing and linguistics and Spanish and has been influenced by many writers, including Gregory Maguire. "They inspired me to be brave in my imagination," said Sharpe. He added J.K. Rowling and Suzanne Collins made him believe writing can change the world dramatically. "My Aunt Gwen encourages me through her writings to be honest and vulnerable." One judge praised Sharpe's poetry. "It stood out because of the dexterity of language and the gorgeous leaps that beautifully convey a psychological landscape," said Bolden.

Huq, from Dhaka, Bangladesh, is a senior civil engineering major minoring in mathematics and writing, and credits Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Krishnamurti and Gabriel Garcia Marquez as his literary influences. "I step over the edge and fall, until I disappear into a playfulness of symbols, meanings and connotations making up human possibilities," said Huq as he explained his writing. "The thoughtful and poetic voice of this narrator swept me into a world full of wonders and passions and was so deeply and sweetly immersed in it that I did not want to come out," added Valeri.

Tyson, a sophomore writing and linguistics major from Loganville, Ga., cites Douglas Adams and Terry Pratchett among his literary influences. "It takes a lot — pressure, emotional pain, etc. — to actually start me writing," said Tyson. "I must be at a precipice within my own life for it to organically happen." Welford noted the strong voice, the vivid descriptions and the startling yet oddly plausible leaps of the imagination made this essay stand out.

Winners of the Roy F. Powell Awards receive \$100, a framed award certificate and recognition at the University's Honors Day ceremonies on April 3. Their work will also be published in *Miscellany*, the campus literary arts magazine.

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# Irish Scholar to Speak at Georgia Southern

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Georgia Southern University's Multicultural Student Center and the Center for Irish Studies will present a free lecture by internationally renowned historian Christine Kinealy, Ph.D., at 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 2 in the Williams Center Multipurpose Room.

Kinealy, professor of history at Caspersen Graduate School at Drew University in New Jersey, will present "Daniel O'Connell, Frederick Douglass and American Slavery," as part of the Distinguished Scholar Lecture Series.

"After the 1847 death of the Irish statesman, Daniel O'Connell, the sometime British Prime Minister William Gladstone described him as 'the greatest popular leader the world has ever seen.'" said Howard Keeley, Ph.D., director of the Center for Irish Studies. "Known as 'The Great Emancipator' and 'The Liberator,' O'Connell developed popular mass politics

through his 'Monster Meetings,' and he pioneered nonviolent political activism. O'Connell's example inspired both Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, among others. He was a role model for Frederick Douglass, who sailed to Ireland to meet his hero."

In her signature lecture during a multi-day visit to campus, Kinealy will explore O'Connell's efforts to end slavery in the context of his larger program of human rights advocacy, which also included his native Ireland, Canada and New Zealand. Kinealy will also highlight O'Connell's relationship with Frederick Douglass.

"By contrast with many other anti-slavery activists, O'Connell opposed the policy known as gradualism: the step-by-step dismantling of the slave system," explained Keeley. "He demanded an immediate and absolute end to 'the slavery of men of color in the United States of America,' which he called 'the most hideous crime that has ever stained humanity.'"

Kinealy received her doctorate in history from the University of Dublin-Trinity College, has authored more than a dozen books and numerous peer-reviewed articles and is considered among the foremost historians of nineteenth-century Ireland and Europe.

During her lecture, Kinealy will draw from her most recent book, *The Saddest People the Sun Sees: Daniel O'Connell and Anti-Slavery*. She will also visit students in three classes and discuss Ireland's Great Famine of the 1840s. For more information, email Keeley at [irish@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:irish@georgiasouthern.edu).

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