

2022 CURIO SYMPOSIUM STUDENTS



A.J. ABAD

- My name is AJ Abad, and I am from Dublin, GA. I'm currently studying Writing and Linguistics, and my minors are Japanese and International Studies. I am queer, so I often focus my projects how being queer/LGBTQ+ affects someone. I plan to be a ESOL teacher when I graduate.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- Dr. Schreiber had us do a final project in our Writing in the Workplace class about anything we wanted pertaining to the course. I often focus when I can about inclusion and this project gave me the chance to extend my knowledge. It took me a while to actually write the piece, due to its extensive nature, but I enjoyed it regardless.



Alexandria Shearer



- Savannah-native Honors student Alexandria Shearer will graduate this semester with two degrees, one for Spanish, and the other for Exercise Science. Over the course of her undergraduate experience, she has studied abroad in Madrid, España, worked as a Resident Advisor for Global Crossroads, participated in various intramural sports, and served in the Honors College as their Social Media Coordinator. This summer, she will begin her graduate studies abroad in Sevilla, España with Georgia Southern University's M.A.T Spanish program. The presentation she has created for today highlights her love for volunteering and being a part of the community.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

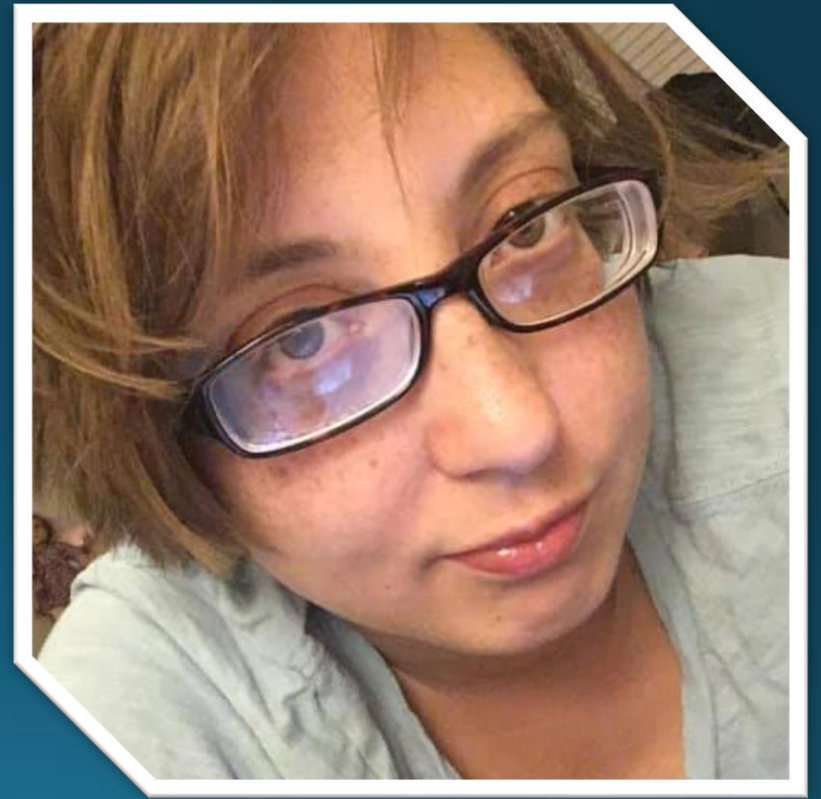
- Last semester, Alexandria was enrolled in Dr. Gearhart's Advanced Spanish for the Professions. She enjoyed being an active participant in this hybrid class and learning about how to develop her professional portfolio and presence in Spanish. Dr. Gearhart's care for student success allowed for them to complete the semester with experience in creating a resume, cover letter, curriculum vitae, thank you note, and personal statement entirely in Spanish. At the end of the semester, Dr. Gearhart shared an exciting opportunity with Alexandria to participate in a pilot program for learning through hands-on community engagement. Throughout this current semester, Dr. Gearhart has supported Alexandria and her classmate by checking in for weekly meetings, facilitating meaningful discussions regarding their volunteering sites and the assigned text, and provided feedback on the students' weekly written reflections to help them improve their Spanish while growing as individuals ingrained in the community.

Amy Turenne

- I've lived in Georgia for most of my life and moved to south Georgia five years ago. My interests and hobbies have always focused on writing and language so when I made the choice to go back to school at age 35 I immediately chose Writing and Linguistics as my major. I added Literature as my second major to fully round out my education and further my eventual professional pursuits. I like to call myself a "word nerd!"

Mentor-Mentee snapshot

- Dr. Edenfield first introduced me to Breece D'J Pancake in her American Short Stories class. I was immediately drawn to the descriptive imagery Pancake used in his stories. He described people and places that I knew and understood. Dr. Edenfield's patient guidance and teaching skills have changed the way I read, write, and think about reading and writing. Her guidance has given me the courage to continue moving forward in my education.



Ariel Harvell



- Hi my name is Ariel Sky Harvell. I am from a small town called Saint Simons Island. I am a Chinese Major with a minor in Public Relations at the Statesboro campus of Georgia Southern University. I am learning about things like international studies and mass communication law. I grew up bilingual and love to learn new things and meet new people. I do not have any specific plans after graduation, I am the type of person to take life one thing and day at a time. I am excited to see where this career path is going to take me, and what this program is all about!

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

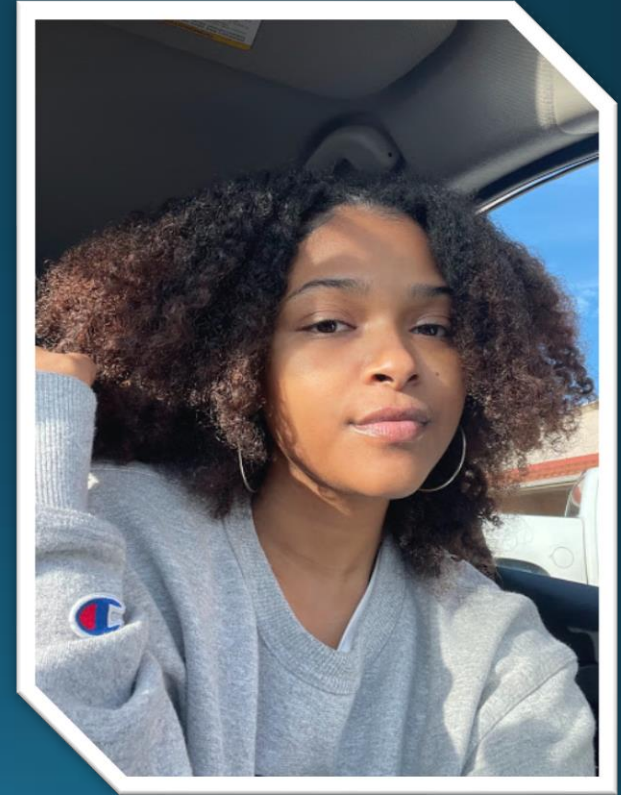
- I have been with Professor Zhang since 2019, and it has been a pleasure learning with him. His teaching skills are more than amazing, and he makes learning about things like Foreign Languages and Cultures so much fun. This application was shared to me through him, and I read about it on the Georgia Southern website. What really caught my eye was how this program guides in leadership. I would love to deepen my knowledge on researching and creative activities!

Arria McGinty

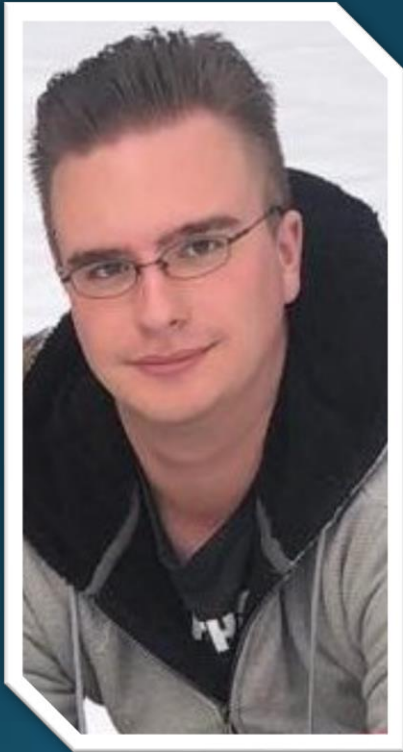
- I was born in Knoxville, Tennessee and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. When I turned seven my life, world view, and perspective when I moved to Turkey, and would remain for the next three years. I would make Okinawa, Japan my home as I lived there for seven years. I was exposed to a variety of cultures, people, languages, food, religion, and architecture at a very young age. My interest in literature grew with my empathy, as I learned the value in connection with fellow humankind and the world around us. Now, I study English with a minor in public relations with plans to continue to communicate and connect with the people around me.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I was enrolled in two of Dr. Mary Villeponteaux's courses for the Fall semester of 2021, and one of those courses was Shakespeare. I began to admire Shakespeare's brilliance after reading and analyzing "Midsummer's Night Dream" in high school AP Literature and Composition- however, he became my favorite playwright after analyzing, re-writing, and performing "As You Like It" for a drama class in high school. I wanted to take Dr.Villeponteaux's Shakespeare course because I was genuinely interested to read more and learn more. She proved to be a brilliant instructor, who continues to show an interest in my writing that I appreciate on a personal level. For the final paper of the course, we had to chose one aspect of the course to analyze and I chose the homoerotic themes in Shakespeare's sonnets and two plays. It was a very interesting paper to write, and Dr.Villeponteaux has been such an encouragement to submit my paper to CURIO.



Austin Gasiecki



- My name is Austin Gasiecki. I am from Buffalo, NY, but have spent most of my life in and around Statesboro. I study Mandarin Chinese and have previous experience studying Anthropology. I have had a lifelong interest in Chinese culture and was excited to learn of the opportunity to study Mandarin at Georgia Southern. I started working with a tutor and then began taking classes. Studying the language and using it has shown me many interesting and enlightening facets of Chinese culture. After graduating I plan on going to graduate school to pursue a career in Mandarin linguistics.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I became interested in doing a research project about Mandarin because my experience learning Mandarin has shown me it is not as difficult a language as believed by many. Dr. Zhang, my faculty advisor, also believes this, and we are interested in “demystifying” the Chinese language, particularly how to learn vocabulary, to show that the Chinese language is much more approachable than it might at first seem. Dr. Zhang introduced me to this project idea after seeing my progress learning Mandarin, desiring to combine his and my experiences as teacher and student to further explore the question of how to best approach learning Chinese vocabulary.

Anna Trull

- My name is Anna Trull, and I am a sophomore here at Georgia Southern's Statesboro campus. I am originally from Atlanta, Georgia but was raised in Annapolis, Maryland. I am currently working towards my bachelor's degree in History with a minor in Criminal Justice and plan to attend law school after graduation. I would like to pursue a career in either corporate or constitutional law but will see where the road takes me. An interesting detail about myself is that I've had the opportunity to tour the White House, Capitol Building, the Supreme Court, and the Secret Service training facility.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I was originally interested in my topic because it got me out of my historical comfort zone while also examining a historical figure, I was already familiar with. I choose the Marquis de Lafayette as my topic because I wanted to look at a figure, I was familiar with but in a new light. What started this was my mentor giving me an assignment of going global, this forced me to look out of my U.S. history purview. Professor Batchelor and I have been learning about Lafayette together because through my research we are both learning details of his life that we were not aware of. This has been an entertaining topic of study for both myself and my mentor.



Allison Noonan



- I am originally from Fayetteville, Georgia and have lived in Statesboro for the past four years. I am a Senior at Georgia Southern University and double major in English and Writing & Linguistics. Following graduation, I plan to continue on the path of academia and hope to eventually earn a doctoral degree in English. After being awarded my PhD, I hope to continue my research in American Literature and become a Professor of English. Some of my favorite kinds of works to read include literary realism, existentialism, and nihilism; especially in the form of the short story.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I had never read any of J.D. Salinger's work prior to Dr. Edenfield's class, but immediately fell in love with *Nine Stories*. Because I was nearing the end of my undergraduate career, I had begun to consider what I would focus on for the next phase in academia. Dr. Edenfield's method of teaching Salinger not only got me interested in him as an author, but also cemented my stance on wanting to continue in American Literature as a whole. Dr. Edenfield is a wonderful mentor and has helped me immensely in my research, as well as in preparing me for the next phase of my education.

Amir Alexander

- Amir Alexander is currently a junior at Georgia Southern University. He studies Writing and Linguistics as well as Communication Arts. He is also a reporter at the George Anne: Inkwell Edition. Outside of school he enjoys photography, animation, and language exchange. Post-graduation, he hopes to continue publishing new material and going on more ventures around the world!

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- My mentor assigned the readings and videos that would fuel this project. It was through her guidance that I began to evaluate the steps of a creative process. The one that I had never considered was vulnerability. My mentor provided me with a new perspective that has forever altered the way I approach my work.



Caroline Boykin



- I am a senior, majoring in public relations from Savannah, Georgia. I currently work as a public relations and marketing student assistant for Campus Recreation and Intramurals. I have developed a particular interest in researching communication tactics utilized by corporations when engaging with target publics on social media.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

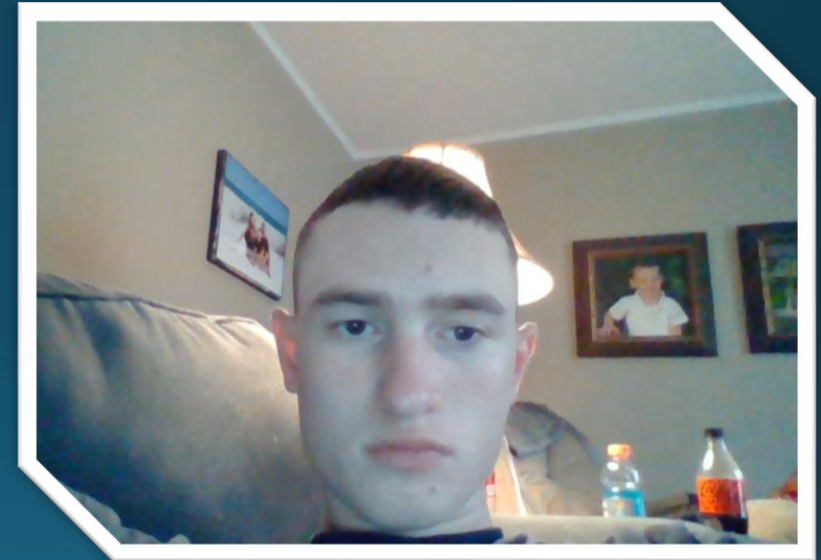
- With the growing level of media saturation, I found great interest in the communication tactics used by corporations to create robust brand identities on social media when appealing to target publics. This study focused on two athletic brands with similar target publics and the strategic communication tactics utilized by each brand. Dr. Bayliss was of wonderful support to me in this research endeavor. She consistently provided encouragement, thorough feedback and inspiration for further research avenues. The breadth of her knowledge in the public relations field served as an intangible resource as I developed this research. Her collaboration on this study strengthened my knowledge of theory and its relevant applications in the public relations field.

Jack Palmer

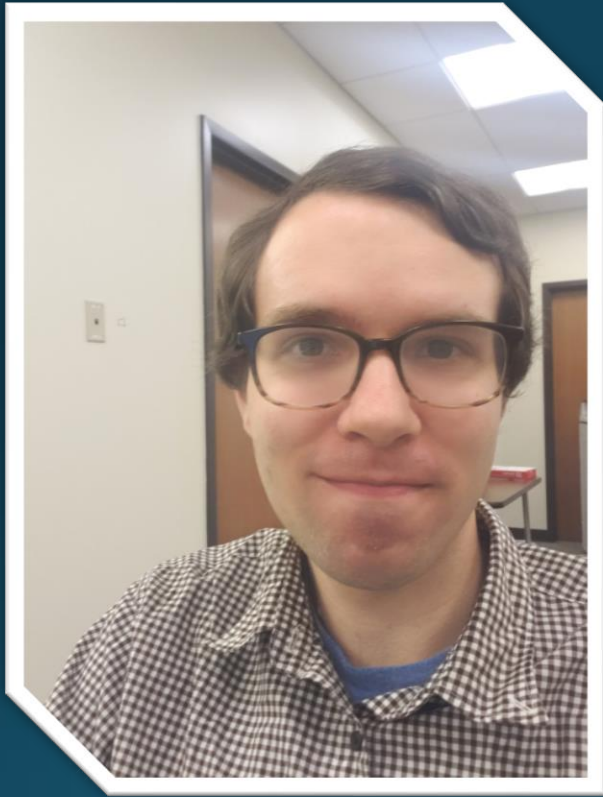
- My name is Jack Palmer, and I am from Vidalia, Georgia. I am 20 years old but will be 21 years old at the time of the symposium. I am currently a Junior at Georgia Southern University, and I am studying History. I previously earned my Associates of Arts in History from East Georgia State College. I enjoy running, boxing, and hunting. I am very interested in the history of The United States Marine Corps and United States Military history in general. After graduation, I am seriously considering joining the Marine Corps. I am also planning to pursue an MLS.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I have always loved history, and I always will. I am doing this project as part as an assignment, but I truly believe that it will make me more confident in the academic realm. My faculty mentor is Dr. Robert Batchelor. Dr. Batchelor is the professor of my Historical Methods class. Being that this the first time that I have ever attempted anything remotely similar, I am quite nervous. Having Dr. Batchelor in my corner, however, takes away some of the anxiety. I knew I was going to write about Adam Smith the second I saw his name in an unrelated assignment.



Jake Quinn



- I moved to Savannah in 2015 after being a frequent visitor all my life and began studying English at Georgia Southern as an undergraduate in the Fall of 2019. My main interest in terms of research is in pushing the boundaries of genre and classification in English literature and questioning the present structures that rule the field. For example, my Honors Thesis concerns an examination of fanfiction as a contemporary literary mode. After graduation, I intend to pursue a Master's Degree in English and continue my research through post-graduate work.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I became interested in *Midnight's Children* after first reading it in Dr. Erney's post-colonial literature class, mostly due to its ambitious breadth of themes and ideas and the intense character development that defines these breathless explorations. Every chapter of Rushdie's novel could produce countless essays, owing to the richness of the characterizations in symphony with the meticulously charted plot. Dr. Erney's eagerness to traverse uncommon avenues of thought has inspired me endlessly in the three courses I have had with him. I believe we share a common passion to turn over untouched stones in search of literary discoveries. He has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to accept my wildest ideas, as long as I can support them textually, but equally he does not hesitate to tell me when I have lost my way. There is little more that you could ask for in a faculty mentor.

Khadir Curry

- I am a senior undergraduate student from Decatur, Georgia, double majoring in Public Relations and Sports Management. My interest in this topic stems from my own interest in music and hip-hop culture and it's influence on the youth. After graduation I will be pursuing a career in music business.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- My mentor Lauren Bayliss interested me in this subject over the course of the semester in her Theories of Communications class. Learning the theories from her helped me think of my personal interest and how the theories taught could be applied. Her class and teachings provided me a different outlook on things I never thought much about and helped me focus on the broader picture.



Lauren Humble



- Lauren Humble, a second semester sophomore from Pooler, Ga, attends Georgia Southern University in Statesboro. She is currently in a B.S. in Psychology program, in addition to having a minor in neuroscience. She is aspiring to write and illustrate fiction and nonfiction books in addition to becoming a Clinical Neuropsychologist after attending graduate school to get a M.S. and a P.h.D or Psy.D.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- This semester, the Creativity for Writers class (taught by Laura Valeri) and the Art in Life class (taught by Nicole James) have really inspired and encouraged me to write again and draw again and these courses have helped me feel more confident and secure in doing so.

Ainsley Sprayberry

- I am Ainsley Sprayberry. I am from Harris County, Georgia and I am a History major and English minor. An interesting detail about myself is that I have traveled to Ireland when I was younger with my Dad who was teaching study abroad. This trip helped shape my love for History.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I discovered my interest in the captivity of Mary Rowlandson when my Father recommended, I study her for my research paper for Historical Methods. Mary Rowlandson's captivity told an interesting story about her life and her religion in the seventeenth-century. My mentor, Robert Batchelor, helped me with my project by constant editing and recommending new sources and ideas.



Brooke Neal



- My name is Brooke Neal and I consider myself quite a native of Statesboro after living here for twenty years. After homeschooling for most of my childhood, I came to Georgia Southern to study English with a minor in Writing. I expect to graduate this upcoming May before proceeding to graduate school for an MA in Literature before moving on to a Ph.D. program to become an English teacher. In addition to presenting this scholarship at CURIO, I am also traveling to Chicago to give the same presentation at the 33rd Annual Conference of the American Literature Association.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- When embarking on the composition process for this essay as my midterm paper for Dr. Edenfield's American Literature class, I was extremely doubtful about my overall idea for the project and asked her if I should pursue the idea or simply scratch it and move on to a different topic. To my delight, she absolutely loved the concept and even went so far as to suggest I travel to Chicago to present the essay. With her enthusiasm and encouragement through the research process, my interest in this topic only grew, as further study of the text proves that examining the liminal spaces encountered by Nick Adams in this short-story-cycle assists readers in better understanding and valuing the overall message of *In Our Time*.

Brenna Salverson

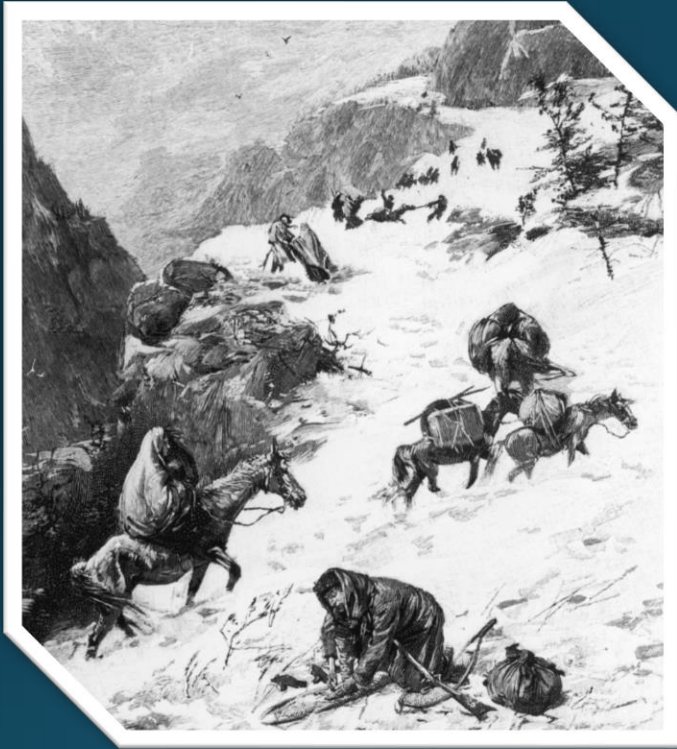
- Brenna Salverson is from Peoria, Illinois. She is pursuing a double major in Philosophy & Religious Studies and Writing & Linguistics and a minor in Graphic Design. After graduation, she plans to pursue a master's program in biblical studies.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- Looking at religious stories from an evolutionary perspective pulls together my interests in religion and creative writing. I have been able to analyze why we humans have stories today, even if they seem useless for survival. Dr. Jason Slone introduced me to this subject in his Science and Religion class. He mixed together evolutionary and cognitive sciences with religious aspects to demonstrate how to two inform each other. Through his teaching, I became fascinated with how science can explain some religious practices.



Sydney Rigdon



- Hello, my name is Sydney Rigdon. I have lived in Georgia all of my life but am looking forward to hopefully moving abroad in the future. I am studying for a degree in History. After hearing many overly exaggerated stories about the Donner-Reed party and their passage through the Oregon Trail and the unfortunate Hastings Cutoff, I wanted to expand my knowledge of this captivating tale in American Western history. After I graduate, I plan to work in the field of Public History, which has been known to take individuals into many fascinating divisions of employment and I cannot wait to see where it takes me.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- While working in the Historical Methods course I knew that I wanted to research the Donner-Reed party and their infamous passage through the Oregon Trail. While the facts of what exactly happened to the members of the party have been researched, discussed, and written about hundreds of times, scholars seem to ignore the cultural impact publications on the event have had on society and how the story was kept alive to eventually grow into such a significant story. While researching, Dr. Batchelor brought a program by Google to my attention called Google Ngram which has become crucial in my work.

Tiffany Wells

- Tiffany Wells is a senior Writing and Linguistics major who loves all forms of writing and research. She plans to keep writing in the future and share LGBTQ+ stories. She can often be found writing or talking about her cat, Sprout.

Mentor-Mentee Snapshot

- I was always interested in LGBTQ+ research and grew even more interested as shows started to have more representation. I wanted to research representation and see how it has changed. Dr. Costello helped advise me on the project and helped narrow down topics.

