Meet the New TAs
By Steven Accardi, Assistant Director of Writing Programs

A new school year for ASU Writing Programs usually means stacks of photocopied syllabi in the office, a warm smirk from Demetria, and a new group of writing teachers. Below are the brief biographies of our new teaching associates and teaching assistants. Enjoy.

Katie Berta is a poetry MFA from Indiana. She hopes to teach writing classes once she graduates, influencing other students of writing to undergo her strict regimen of mild mental breakdowns and frantic scribbles.

Ben Blickle is a first-year graduate student in the MFA program, studying Fiction. He grew up in Akron, Ohio, then he went to college at Northwestern University, and then he received his Master’s degree in the Humanities from New York University. If he could be anything when he grows up (besides a permanent graduate student), he would want to be a marine biologist or an architect or sitcom writer.

Allyson Boggess is an MFA student in poetry. She is most recently from Boston but originally from Rochester, NY. One day Allyson hopes to be a creative writing professor at a college or university in the vicinity of a large coastal city with good bookstores and coffee shops and seasons.

Jason Bryant is a first-year PhD student in Literature, specializing in twentieth-century and contemporary American literature with a focus in queer studies and Chicana/o-Latina/o literary and cultural studies. He is from north-central Texas, Wichita Falls, to be precise. If I could be anything other than a graduate student at ASU, he’d be gardening since that’s one of his favorite hobbies.

Nathaniel Bump is from upstate New York, around the Adirondack Park area and is a PhD student in medieval literature. If Nate was not in graduate school he would be an ill-defined something else closer in proximity to his mother’s basement.

Berkeley Carnine grew up in Eugene, Oregon and managed to live for a number of years in Berkeley California where she went to school and made up a number of outlandish stories as to why she lived inside her own name. Most believable stories include ”It is my treesitting name” and “My parents conceived me in the Camponelli (clock tower on campus)” and “I change my name every time I move.” She’s an MFAer with a focus on fiction. If she was to write herself into fictional future it might entail nomadic living with goats and mules, teaching creative writing in Northwest community colleges or prisons, participating in movements for social change, and writing.

Cheng (Becky) Chen came to the U.S. from China to do a Ph.D in literature. Once being quite interested in writing in Chinese, she has discovered a new enthusiasm for writing in English. After reading several books written by over-
I hope you had a fruitful Fall semester. I feel privileged to be addressing all of you as the Interim Director of Writing Programs at ASU Tempe Campus. With more than 200 enthusiastic writing teachers on staff and offering over 500 sections of writing courses per semester, we are probably the largest college writing program in the whole country—which would also mean the largest program in the whole world!

Directing a program of this size is not an easy task, but it is still possible because of the ongoing support provided by outstanding staff members in the Writing Programs Office. I would like to thank Jackie Wheeler, Steve Accardi, Demetria Baker, Ruth Johnston and our student workers for their hard work.

At the beginning of the semester, I was only half joking when I said that my modest goal for this year is to meet everyone in the program. I have had the chance to get to know many of you quite well, but after an extremely busy semester, I still haven’t had the chance to meet everyone. If you see me in the Writing Programs Office, in the hallway, or in the elevator, please feel free to talk to me. If you have any questions or concerns about the Writing Programs, please do let me know. I will try to listen and, if there is anything I can do during the remainder of my term, will do my best to address them.

As you may know, the Writing Programs does not have a budget of its own; it depends on the good will of the English Department and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and other external sponsors to provide funds to hire people and to fund programs and events. What we do have, however, is you—and all the positive energy, experience and expertise that you bring to the classroom and our community.

In February 2009, we will have a chance to witness the power of our most valuable resources at the second annual ASU Composition Conference. (For more information, see page 4.) I would like to thank Wendy King and the group of Instructors who are spearheading this effort. I participated in the Conference last year and was blown away by the amount of energy it generated. I hope all Writing Programs teachers from all ranks will make concerted efforts to participate in this important event to make it even more successful.

This Spring, there will be additional professional development opportunities, including two invited presentations—one by Mike Markel, the author of Technical Communication, and another by Martha Kolln, the author of Rhetorical Grammar. I have also asked Natalie Martinez to organize a workshop on grading—to achieve some consistency in our grading practices. In addition, the Writing Center will be hosting the State of Arizona Writing Center Symposium on February 7. I hope many of you will take advantage of these opportunities. Additional professional-development opportunities are being planned as we speak. Stay tuned!

As you probably have heard, one of our beloved colleagues, Barbara Rasnick, passed away on Friday, December 5, 2008. On behalf of the members of the Writing Programs community, I would like to offer her family and her loved ones my deepest regrets and to thank Barbara for her many years of excellent service to the Writing Programs, to the English Department, and to her students at ASU. Thank you, Barbara, and may you rest in peace.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sarah Fedirka, Kate Frost, Stella Hadjistassou, and Shillana Sanchez, who promptly volunteered to take over the classes Barbara had been teaching. I am also grateful to Dana Taith, who coordinated these substitute teachers and offered her help with grading. Thank you all for showing your community spirit at a difficult time for all of us.

Have a restful winter break and 來年もよろしくお願いします!
be a full-time hermit trekking in whatever backcountry she could find or an outdoor adventure athlete competing in off-road races.

Dotty Dye is in the PhD Literature program and is interested in Irish and African literature. She received her Masters in French Literature from ASU and this is her first year in the English department. Dotty grew up in Wyoming and then quickly found her way to the shores of France where she taught English and eventually met her husband Jean-Patrick. After dragging him back to the States (remember these were the Bush years) they settled down in Arizona. She is currently incubating an alien life form due to land May 11. She hopes to become a professor of literature either in the USA or in France and if that does not work out will become a spy.

Patrick E. Gabbard is a MFA student in poetry. He graduated from the University of Utah in 2005 with a BA in History. If he could be anything besides a Graduate Student he would love to be an ideologically promiscuous freelance terrorist.

Chris Gleim, a linguistics PhD student, hails from the cold northern semi-arid tundra of Maine, and more recently from the semi-arid desert of Tempe by way of his undergraduate degree in English from Nebraska Wesleyan University. If Chris could be in any profession that he wanted, aside from a graduate student in Linguistics, he would probably be a Jeopardy guru because well, he knows a lot of worthless trivia that (hopefully) will make him lots of money.

Ryan Holden is a first-year MFA (poetry) student. He is from the Phoenix/Tempe area. If he was not a graduate student, he would be wandering the desert as food for vultures. Ryan also does not like to have his photo taken and becomes increasingly hostile if pressed. He is also not as bitter or depressing as this bio makes it seem.

Jeremy Hurley is a PhD student focusing on early American literature. He received his B.A. and M.A. from Texas A&M University-Commerce and soon thereafter began working on his PhD at the University of Alabama (Roll Tide!!). After a year there, he transferred to Arizona State so that he could perfect his teaching skills and increase his knowledge of various TA "boot camp" programs (ASU is his third). If he could do anything else, besides be a grad student, he would probably be a professional dog walker and karaoke specialist, primarily because neither of these require seminar papers.

Meredith Moss is a new student in the doctoral program in Rhetoric, Composition, and Linguistics. She has a degree in English and Psychology from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. Born and raised in Denver, Colorado, she loves the mountains and the snow. Luckily, life has a way of making sure people cannot remain stuck in their ways. Here in Arizona, she is enjoying reading under the shade of a skinny palm tree and swimming – a lot. When asked what profession she would join if she were not a linguist, she thought carefully and responded that she would probably train in anthropology, investigating language use and language change in indigenous societies… there’s no getting away from being a linguist. It is written in the cactus spines.

Paul Ocampo is working on a MFA in fiction. Paul is from Los Angeles but didn’t have a choice. After living in San Francisco for four years, he wishes he could claim San Francisco as his hometown. But no, he came from smoggy, traffic-static Los Angeles. If Paul wasn’t a student he would be a looter of art works and don the crimson trench coat and fedora with a wide brim. Or he’d just be a balding Ron Howard and direct the film version of Carmen San Diego starring Catherine Zeta-Jones.

Helen (Olena) Oliynyk is a PhD student in Linguistics; Sociolinguistics, Humor Studies; Discourse Analysis. Her hometown is Chernigov, Ukraine, received her Master’s from Western Illinois University, thinks being a travel agent would be a dream job.

Christian Perticone is a MFA student in fiction. He is originally from Madrid, Spain, and if he could be anything it would be the Mesonero Mayor de Castilla, specializing in a succulent Cochinchillo. This makes sense because he loves to eat suckling animals and would like to live in Spain once again.

Bonnie Pless-Quinn is enrolled in the TESOL program. Before completing her undergraduate degree in Linguistics, Bonnie studied computer programming for two years. She now seeks to combine the two disciplines by focusing her research on identifying and developing effective language acquisition methods that utilize modern technology in an innovative way. Intrigued by new communities and cultures, Bonnie has lived in or visited over 25 different states and especially enjoys traveling internationally. If she were not immersed in her graduate studies, Bonnie’s ultimate dream job would be writing travel guides for the budget- and environmentally-conscious traveler.

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The 2009 Arizona State University Composition Conference will be held this year on February 20-21 on the Tempe campus. Last year’s one-day conference was an outstanding success and this year’s conference promises to be even better. We invite Writing Programs faculty of all ranks to attend.

This year the conference will expand in three significant ways. First, we have invited noted author Dr. Edward M. White to address us as a keynote speaker on Friday evening. He will also conduct workshops for us on Saturday on the topic of evaluating student writing. His Saturday workshops will be available by pre-registration only and on a first come, first served basis. You can pre-register on our conference website as listed below.

Second, we have invited participation from a wider group of faculty, including from all the ASU campuses, and we anticipate double the attendance from last year. Sixty faculty from all four campuses will present on topics about which faculty have expressed an interest. We have also invited a few faculty from other Arizona colleges and universities to attend as well with the goal of showcasing the expertise of ASU faculty.

Finally, we have expanded the conference to include new hands-on workshops on Friday afternoon, including Setting Up an ASU Homepage, Tricks to Efficient Use of Blackboard in Classes, and Developing a CV and Teaching Philosophy. You will receive actual hands on help with your own work in these sessions.

On Saturday, our workshops will cover topics related to pedagogy, technology, and professional development. The conference website offers a comprehensive list of sessions. However, a few of our sessions will be Effective Peer Reviews, Online Discussions, Creative Writing Techniques, and Effective Assignment Design.

Just like last year, we will serve a complimentary breakfast and lunch at the conference, and we will have an open mic in one room during lunch. This year we will also have book fair there with all of our publishers represented. The conference will be followed again by a free show at the ASU planetarium, which will be especially designed for English faculty.

We hope that all ASU composition faculty from the various campuses will join us for a very fun, professional event in which we will learn much and develop connections with our peers. For more information and to register for meals and for Dr. White’s workshops, please visit our conference website at http://writing.asu.edu/conference/. Registration will become available at the beginning of spring semester.
Tanita Saenkhum is a second-year doctoral student in Rhetoric, Composition and Linguistics with a specialization in second language writing. Originally from a city of angles, Bangkok, Thailand, Tanita used to work as a reporter for an English newspaper for three years. She wrote feature stories, focusing on popular culture, lifestyles, and entertainment. Her most favorite interviewee is Angelina Jolie. Tanita taught first-year writing to international students and writing-tutored in a Writing Center while working on her M.A. in TESOL at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. In addition to her love of writing, Tanita enjoys teaching and working with students. She hopes to teach writing and conducts research related to second language writing upon completion of her degree.

Her government name is Tessa Stevens and she is a first-year MFA student in fiction. She is a white kid from the Boston ‘burbs who grew up idolizing 2Pac Shakur, much to her parents’ dismay. She still disappoints them proudly on a daily basis. If she could have another life, she would want to be Paul Ocampo because he looks better in tight jeans than she does and a little known fact is that Paul Ocampo was the inspiration for Justin Timberlake’s song "Sexy Back". Paul's sexy is the type of sexy that never really leaves. And also like the song, you can remix Mr. Ocampo's particular brand of sexy.

Erin Vonnahme is a doctoral student in Literature, thinking about contemporary American lit/feminism/violence-poverty-socioeconomics, but it will probably shift before she’s through here. She’s from Illinois, St. Louis Metro-east area / Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (She did her BA and my MA at SIUE). If she wasn’t a graduate students she would be a librarian. Erin worked at a public library before coming to ASU and loved the diversity of the days. She had the chance to interact with a bigger range of people than a university allowed and had fun making use of different skill sets that she’d let slip to the side during graduate school (like doing PR for events she organized and working with arts and crafts in the children’s section...rarely did her thesis necessitate glitter pens or yarn).

Laura Walsh is a second year doctoral student in English Education. She is currently on sabbatical from Mesa Public Schools where she has served as the Secondary Language Arts Specialist for four years. Prior to that, she taught high school English for ten years and college English for four years. After graduation, she is hoping to work with aspiring English teachers in developing ways to make English more relevant in the community and find ways to bring Writing Workshop to the elderly.

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Geoff Way is a first year PhD in Literature student. His previous research up to this point has focused on Shakespeare in Film, and he hopes to continue working in that area during his time at ASU. Geoff is originally from Virginia, having done his undergrad work at Virginia Tech, but most recently comes from South Carolina, where he completed his Masters in English at Clemson University and taught for a year at Greenville Technical College in Greenville, SC. If Geoff could be in any other profession, he would want to be an archaeologist, so that he could travel the world and lose himself in the history of it all. And be like Indiana Jones.

After practicing law in California for thirteen years, Kathleen Winter quit her job in July to enter ASU’s Creative Writing MFA program as a poet. Before law school Kat got an MA in literature and worked in a bookstore in Boston with other writerly types, so now it looks like the lawyer phrase was just a spectacularly long detour. For the last ten years, Kat and her husband Greg lived in the country outside Santa Rosa, California. If she could choose another profession, she’d choose two. First, she’d like to be an acquisitions editor for a small literary press because she could read good writing for a living, work with others who value literature, and get to know lots of writers. Second, Kat would like to be a cancer research doctor at a non-commercial institution because she has seen the value of new cancer medicines during the ten years her father’s been fighting lymphoma, and because she has never been able to learn science or cope stalwartly with blood and guts, so this could happen only in fantasy.
“Kudos To!”


Karen Chang presented at the following conferences:


Paul Cook published his novel Karma Kommandos with Arc Manor Publishers (2008), and had his novels, The Engines of Dawn and Fortress on the Sun reissued by Phoenix Pick (2008). Paul also was the editor of the anthology The Phoenix Pick Anthology of Classic Science Fiction for Phoenix Pick (2008) and the editor for American Literature from the Colonies to the Civil War for Kendall/Hunt Publishing (2008), in addition to writing the afterword to The Time Machine by H.G. Wells (2008).

Peter Goggin has conducted field and local archive research for his sabbatical project (Islands of Sustainability: Rhetorical Constructions of Environmental Stewardship) in Bermuda and the Isles of Scilly, UK in September and November 2008. He has also presented papers at the following conferences:


Maureen Goggin presented “Marking Time: Janie Terrero’s 1912 Embroidered English Suffrage Signature Handkerchief” and “Elizabeth Parker’s Story and circa 1830 Sampler Through the Eye of a Needle,” both as an invited keynote speaker, at the Attic Needlework’s Second Spectacular Sampler Symposium in Mesa, Arizona on November 14 and 15, 2008. She also presented “A Stitch in Time: Janie Terrero’s 1912 Embroidered English Suffrage Signature Handkerchief” as an invited lecture at the Rhetoric Society of America at ASU, Tempe, Arizona on October 3, 2008. And on October 24, 2008, Maureen presented “Marking Time: Material Rhetoric and Identity Performance in Needle and Thread” at the Western States Rhetoric and Literacy Conference in Bozeman, Montana.

Brad Gyori has designed two new classes for Film and Media Studies that he will be teaching in the Spring and next Fall: Broadcast Comedy Writing and Reality TV Rituals. Brad has also put the finishing touches on an experimental narrative called "Eclipse of the Moon, Act I: Prodigy."

Rossana Lhota worked last summer with the Center for Learning and Teaching Excellence to develop two interactive critical thinking/critical writing modules for their Teaching Toolbox, aimed particularly at faculty outside of Writing Programs who may be looking for ways to encourage critical thinking through writing assignments.

Adrienne Leavy had her poem “After the Monsoons” appear in the Spring 2008 issue of Crannog. Her poem “Saturation Point” will be published in the December issue of Lucid Rhythms, an online American poetry magazine. And Adrienne’s poem “Eclipse” is forthcoming in the Spring 2009 issue of Boyne Berries.

“Kudos To!” Continued on Page Eight
Paul Kei Matsuda will be a featured colloquium presenter at CCCC 2008 in San Francisco, where he will also be a plenary speaker for the Research Network Forum. In addition, he has recently published the following articles and book chapters:


Claire McQuerry was a finalist in the Black Lawrence Press poetry chapbook competition, and her essay, “Crossing the Threshold,” was published in the Fall 2008 issue of Creative Nonfiction.

Keith Miller served as a guest speaker in Prof. Keith Gilyard’s graduate course in African American Rhetoric at Penn State University in Feb. 2008 and delivered the following papers on King’s rhetoric at the following conferences:


Nina Sabolik was awarded the George and Collice Portnoff Endowed Fellowship in Comparative Literature by ASU’s English Department.

Call for Submissions—Writing Notes next issue

Writing Notes is looking for contributors for the Spring edition. We invite book reviews of 500-1000 words on pedagogical texts of interest to the Writing Programs. Also, we ask for 150 word submissions on “Classroom Strategies that Work,” a segment that we started a few years back and hope to continue. If you are considering proposing a new textbook for a Writing Programs class, we would all appreciate it if you shared a review of that text with us. Do you want to discuss the experience that you had working with a librarian or the library’s online resources? Do you have a favorite paper assignment? Have you been working at the new Downtown campus? We would like to hear from you. Share with us. Finally, if you have any good news to share, email me at steven.accardi@asu.edu and you will be included in the “Kudos To” section. If there is something that we have not mentioned that you would like covered in Writing Notes. Let us know. Thanks and have a happy holiday!