

Alfred University

April 2021

Out of the Classroom

A newsletter of faculty activities and accomplishments



Assistant Professor Jean Ellefson and Janu Patel, Graduate Assistant, in the College of Business, hosted a virtual social event focused on family business. George Mickle of The Rosebush in Alfred and a group of students with family business interest discussed the trials, tribulations, and rewards of family business.

Assistant Professor James Hansen has been selected by the College Art Association (CAA) Annual Conference Committee to serve on their Council of Readers. The Council of Readers is a group of 50 to 75 CAA members from professional committees, affiliated societies, and general membership overseen by the annual conference chair. Hansen will serve on the Council for three years, helping shape the annual conference session content by reading submitted proposals and serving a crucial role in the review process.

Assistant Professor Mallory Szymanski recently presented a paper at the Far West Popular Culture Association Conference entitled “The Curative Power of Intimacy: Manhood and Medicine in the Fiction of S. Weir Mitchell.”

Two new episodes of *Sexing History* have been recently released: “The Pickup Artist” and “The Stained Glass Closet.” Dr. Szymanski serves as assistant producer for the podcast team.

Dr. Marissel Hernández Romero received a grant from Plataforma Eje to complete her book project, *De coco y anís: Un proyecto de amor para Rafael Cortijo*. This interdisciplinary text explores the cultural and intellectual contributions of Black Puerto Ricans through the works of the musician, composer, and orchestra leader Rafael Cortijo. For over 40 years, Cortijo collaborated with Black communities to celebrate Afro-Caribbean plena music, and became well-known across Latin America during the 20th century. Readers will find references for children and Black people in Puerto Rico, and will be

encouraged to question their position within their society as they witness his incredible journey and legacy.

Visiting Assistant Professor Mojca Kuplen, has had a paper published in *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* titled, "Therapeutic Self-knowledge in Narrative Art," University of Illinois Press, Volume 55, number 1, Spring 2021, pp. 56-71. This paper addresses the how and the why of the effects art has on cultivating self-knowledge and self-development. The gist of the argument is that narrative art provides a unique opportunity to adopt a dual (first- and third-personal) perspective on the self. Recently psychologists and philosophers of mind have argued that this dual perspective is necessary for obtaining the kind of self-knowledge that leads to self-development and self-change; that is, therapeutic self-knowledge.



Visiting Assistant Professor Rachel Lynett Spurgers' play, *Apologies to Lorraine Hansberry (You too August Wilson)* will have its world premiere this summer at Fonseca Theatre. The play's title references two honored Black playwrights that theaters often program to achieve diversity explains playwright Rachel Lynett. By focusing on only these two playwrights, audiences get a monolithic idea of Black experiences.

The play itself is set in the aftermath of a fictional second Civil War. Bronx Bay, an all-Black state and neighborhood is founded as a utopia to protect "Blackness." But defining Blackness in the utopia isn't easy. Lynett explores the construction of the concept and the identities and complexities behind it.

Professor Mary McInnes is giving a talk at the virtual international conference for Glass Art Society titled "Thinking Through Glass Digitally." Her video lecture will address the theory and practice of artist website production. She will introduce some of the key issues of viewing glass art digitally and then offer a pragmatic guide to website construction. In the initial section, she will draw on recent scholarship in the emerging and lively field of photography and sculpture. Further, she will showcase current writing on digital culture and ways artists may broaden how we look at images on their websites. In the subsequent section, she will offer a tutorial on website construction, setting up a series of design and writing parameters that will help artists build and manage their digital presence. "Thinking Through Glass Digitally" will offer both a critical framework and specific criteria for glass artists to become stronger online advocates of their studio practice.

Kevin Curtin, Associate Professor of Counseling, had an original research article published in *The Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs*. The article, "Investigating Resiliency among Students with Emotional Disturbance Living in Underserved Urban Communities," extends the literature on resilience for students with special needs growing up in poverty. Kevin and co-investigator Elizabeth Benedict (MSEd, 2019) utilized a grounded theory approach by extracting data from key informant interviews. Analysis revealed unique factors pertaining to the constructs of risk, positive social conditions, positive behavior, and positive personal qualities. The authors recommend several strength-based interventions that school professionals can use to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors.



Visiting Assistant Professor Peter Von Stackelberg will be presenting at the virtual Beyond Games conference in May. This conference focuses on the future of games, transmedia, digital entertainment, and the creative industries. The focus of this conference is an indicator of the growing significance of transmedia's role in digital entertainment, communication, and the creative industries. The "metaverse" is a new but increasingly important concept in the communication and entertainment industries. Von Stackelberg's presentation will focus on *Into the Metaverse: What does it mean for Creatives?*

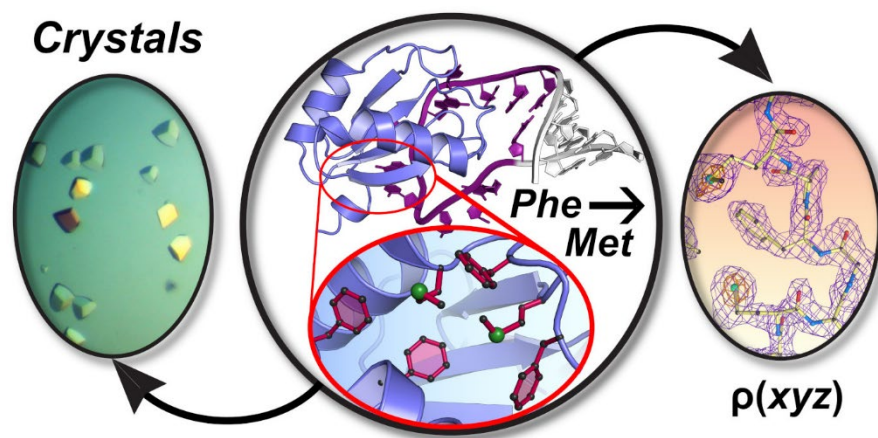
Dr. Bradford Daly, Assistant Professor of School Psychology, along with doctoral students Heidi Stevens, Nina Mostowfi, Kelly Gardner, Jenna Martuscello and Barbara Wascher, presented at the National Association of School Psychologists conference in February regarding the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the wellbeing of school psychology trainees. Graduate students nationwide represent a group that had six times the incidents of depression and anxiety prior to the pandemic, and recent evidence suggests how training programs can help to meet the needs of students.

Dr. Mina Sedaghat Jou, Assistant Professor Education, **Dr. Tim Nichols**, Associate Professor Education, and Dr. Sheree Rodney (Simon Fraser University, Canada) hosted the fourth Global Educational Perspectives (GEP) webinar on March 5th. The invited international speaker--Dr. Sally Wai-Yan Wan--is a professional consultant at the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Dr. Wan explained the K-12 educational system in her nation and "developing curriculum leadership in Hong Kong".



Professor Coral Lambert, along with 16 Alfred faculty and alumni, have work featured in "[Collective Memory](#)" an online exhibition. This virtual exhibition organized by the Alzheimer's Glass and Iron Project and curated by Rosemarie Oakman examines personal and semantic memories. The exhibition's mission is to raise awareness about Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia through the broader theme of memory.

Dr. Andy Shome, Assistant Professor Marketing, chaired a conference proceeding at the 56th annual conference of MBAA International last week where the theme was navigating big challenges and big changes. His position paper was accepted for presentation and the paper was titled *Can artificial intelligence enhanced robotic teaching assistant be a game changer in enhancing classroom engagement and learning among undergraduate students in our higher education institutes?* In the paper, Andy argues that AI enabled robotic teaching assistants can help students avail 24 x 7 x 365 support to enhance engagement and learning in our classrooms. Andy also shared his research plan and invited the audience to share their thoughts and advice. The conference was virtual and conducted over digital platforms.



Assistant Professor Geoff Lipa has recently published an article, with the University of Rochester Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics, in the journal *Crystals*. The article is part of a larger special issue focusing on nucleic acid crystallography. The title of the article is “Affinity and Structural Analysis of the U1A RNA Recognition Motif with Engineered Methionines to Improve Experimental Phasing” by authors Yoshita Srivastava, Rachel Bonn-Breach, Sai Shashank Chavali, Geoffrey M. Lipa, Jermaine L. Jenkins, and Joseph E. Wedekind.