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Our valiant Hesperides team enjoying Volubilis, Morocco, during a weekend site trip. From left to right: Caroline Pope, Katie Tardio, James Nesbitt-Prosser, Katelin McCullough, Landon Bryan (UT), Zoe Mehr, Mike McCann (UT), Natalie Marud, Sara Myran, and Tony Caldwell (UT). Photo S. Collins-Elliott.
MESSAGE FROM THE
DEPARTMENT HEAD

Back With a Bounce

With the pandemic shutdown becoming a dim memory, our department is rebouncing. Last year, we hired a new Greek historian, Sam Blankenship, who is expanding our view to the East, as she is a specialist on Chinese culture. She is working on a comparison of interactions. New assistant professors Salvador Bartera and Jessica Westerhold have thrown themselves into recruitment, visiting all Latin high-school programs in the region and reconnecting with teachers. Salvador also runs a Latin club in Fulton HS, which has a very diverse student body. Given the current shortage of Latin teachers in Tennessee, we want to streamline teacher training together with the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences we have designed a double major in Education and Latin that makes it possible for students to obtain their teaching license in four years instead of five.

As UT keeps growing, we are designing new courses to serve growing student interest. Stephen Collins-Elliott has created Business and Trade in the Ancient World. Lorenzo Del Monte is reviving Susan Martin's Roman Law, and Tristan Barnes plans to offer Ancient Astronomy next year to serve growing student interest. Stephen Collins-Elliott has four years instead of five.

ALUMNI NEWS

Meagan Ayers ('04; MA Mediterranean Archaeology O6; PhD Buffalo) stopped by to tell us that she and husband Paul are relocating from Knoxville back to Cleveland, where Paul was offered a new job. Meagan continues her work as an editor for the Dickinson College Commentaries, where she edited the collection Alleen and Greenough’s New Latin Grammar, which we use in our classes. She also is a freelance copy editor for NYU’s Institute for the Study of the Ancient World. We are so grateful to Meagan and Paul go but will be sure to remain in touch.

Abigail Braddock Simone ('02) of Germantown HS in Memphis was elected to the cursus honors that will make her president of TWLTA in 2025-26, the first classicist president of this group in 15 years. This is a wonderful recognition of your considerable talents and drive, Abigail!

Brian Byerly ('22), sought Bettye Beaumont ('74)’s help with his application materials for graduate school. Thanks to her excellent advice, he has been accepted to study classics at the University of Georgia and Kansas; he chose Kansas and received full funding. Happy trails, Brian!

It was wonderful to catch up with Izzy Dusek ('22), who came to our Majors’ Meet & Greet on August 23. She is continuing the Master’s program in public policy and administration at UTK, and plans to graduate this spring. We can’t wait to hear what comes next.

David Guffey ('17) was accepted into the Master’s program in Social Work at UTK and he is loving every minute of it. Anyone who sees the glow in his eyes knows that he has found his calling in life. We are so happy for you, David, and we know that you will be an exceptionally caring social worker.

Andrew Montgomery ('22) stopped by to report that he has been offered the position of graduate teaching assistant at UT. He has finished his M.A. degree in Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh with a thesis focusing on the continuity of cult from the Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age in the Aegean. He is now exploring paths to pursuing a PhD in Classical Archaeology. We are thumping for you, Andrew!

Juhi Patel ('19), who received a Master’s degree in the history of medicine from the University of Newcastle while on a Fulbright year there, is now in her second year at the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in South Carolina. This school trains globally-minded physicians to meet the needs of rural and medically underserved populations. Juhi just returned from the Dominican Republic, where she and her fellow students provided medical care to over 500 patients. We are so proud of you, Juhi!

Meera Patel ('18) graduated last December with a Master’s degree in Data Science from American University, specializing in Statistics and Artificial Intelligence. She taught an introductory undergraduate class in statistics at AU, and is working on projects that involve algorithms and archaeological data. Meera, you and Stephen Collins-Elliott need to talk!

Walt Price ('23) is pursuing an MA degree in Ancient Mediterranean Studies at the University of Missouri with full funding. Walt, please say hi for us to fellow alumnus Jacob Brakebill ('17).

Zoe Smith ('22) reached out to Bettye Beaumont ('74) for advice, and she is now working for an archaeology firm in Cincinnati, where she is gaining valuable excavation and lab experience. Fiancé Tristan, an opera singer, is receiving job offers in Europe, so Zoe is looking for graduate programs in Classical Archaeology overseas where she can specialize in Aegean Prehistory and learn more about the Mycenaen and Hittites. We wish her the best of luck.

Kaitlyn Stiles (PhD Mediterranean Archaeology ’19) married Chris Jazwa, an associate professor of Anthropology at UN Reno and Stephen Collins-Elliott’s collaborator in Morocco—archaeology is a small world! Kaitlyn moved to Reno, where she is continuing her research on the Mycenaen skeletons from Golemi, central Greece, which were the focus of her dissertation. She and Chris presented a poster at the annual AIA meeting in New Orleans last January on new strontium isotope analyses and 14C datings on samples from Golemi.

We were delighted to reconnect with Ryan Vinson (’11) who, as co-chair of the Tennessee Junior Classical League, helped to organize its 2023 convention in Knoxville. Ryan thoroughly enjoys his position. We are looking forward to seeing him more as we prepare to participate in the convention of the National Junior Classical League in Knoxville, in July 2024, which Ryan is chairing.

Cyrus Yoshimoto ('22) was awarded a prestigious Schwarzman Scholarship to study leadership and global affairs at Tsinghua University in Beijing in 2023-2024 before going to medical school. This is a highly competitive scholarship with a 3-4% acceptance rate. Awardees come from top universities in the U.S. and abroad. Cyrus credits his Classical studies and the support of his mentor with helping him reach this success. We appreciate you, Cyrus, and we wish you a fascinating year in China!

Special Feature: Stephanie McCarter

Stephanie McCarter (’00) graduated summa cum laude with undergraduate degrees in classics and English before going on to earn her PhD in classics from the University of Virginia in 2007. She was a first-year graduate student when she was asked to consider the translation of Ovid’s Metamorphoses, published by Penguin Classics in 2022. Another book titled Women in Power: Classical Myths and Stories from the Amazons to Cleopatra is in press, and McCarter is now preparing a translation of the poems of Catullus.

McCarter is the first female classicist to have translated all of Horace’s poems and the first woman in 60 years to have translated Ovid’s Metamorphoses. Importantly, McCarter is sensitive to the female perspective in Horace’s love poems and Ovid’s stories of divine rapes of female characters. Whereas previous male translators often “romanticized” sexual assault or made light of it, even suggesting female consent, McCarter’s choice of words makes the violence explicit and invites discussion of power and gender relations in Roman times as well as in the present. Thus her unflinching translations demonstrate the continuing relevance of the classics to today’s world.

McCarter’s work has received rave reviews in international journals such as Cambridge’s Classical Review, Spain’s Exemplaria Classicae, and Bryn Mawr Classical Reviews. Her translation of Ovid’s Metamorphoses, one of The New Yorker’s best books of 2022, this year received the Harold Mortan Landau Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets. In one glowing review of that work, Richard Tarrant, Pope Professor of Latin at Harvard, notes that “As a vehicle for serious engagement with Ovid’s poem in English, McCarter has no rival.”

continued on page 4.
Her works also have received major media coverage and she has presented invited seminars around the world. It is no exaggeration to state that Stephanie McCarter has become one of the world’s leading translators of Latin poetry.

“Classics professors nurtured my intellectual development, while also helping build my confidence in ways both big and small,” McCarter said. “My classics professors continue to be a guiding beacon as demonstrated by my presence here tonight, made possible because they thought me deserving of this award. I am deeply touched that my work and impact on the discipline were recognized. It is an honor and a privilege to be counted among the 10 leaders in the field.”

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Excavating a Roman Villa at Vacone, Italy  by Vakaris Paulauskas

In spring 2023, I was fortunate to take a class with Professor Bloy, when he brought to my attention the archaeological excavation that he is co-directing in Italy. The Vacone project, run by Rutgers University since 2012, is uncovering two superimposed ancient Roman structures: a Republican era building that had been built over by an Imperial era Villa. The site is located ca. 30 km north of Rome. Thanks to my Haines-Morris travel scholarship from the Department of Classics, I was able to participate in this excavation. During the four weeks of excavation, we had three free weekends that allowed us to travel throughout Italy. I went every weekend to the Citta Eterna, or, as most know it, the city of Rome. Not only was I able to experience traveling around my favorite city, but every week when I came back I was able to learn more about the “hands on” part of history that had eluded me while studying in class. The excavation was hard, but once the ruins had been uncovered it was very rewarding.

Studying Classics at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece:
Time seems to work differently in Greece. The material remains of Antiquity and the Middle Ages are juxtaposed with modern architectural and artistic attempts to redefine or reinterpret the much honored past. Thousands of years of prehistory and history can be seen with the naked eye, even from the classroom windows of the unique campus of the University of Athens, a school following in an academic tradition tracing itself back to Socrates and Plato.

This is an environment tailored for the enthusiastic student: the English-language classics program has approximately 80 students from many different countries dedicating up to four years of their lives to study in the land of the ancient Greeks. Committing to the program for even a semester or a year, as we are doing, is enough to transform one’s understanding of the ancient world, and even the modern world! Classes may be held in a lecture hall or an ancient odeon, in a conference room or the fifth-century BCE remains of a Periclean building project.

Field trips take you from the National Archaeological Museum to archaeological sites on the island of Crete. Athens itself provides an endless list of activities: museums, lovely Byzantine churches, archaeological sites both known and unknown, markets, restaurants, and lots of souvlaki and loukoumades stands! This study-abroad program and its staff makes finding friends and navigating Greek city life easy and enjoyable. However, the program also requires commitment. It is not a vacation, but an immersion in the philosophical life. Reading, discussing, and—yes—working on Greek grammar—are still required. But as we have learned in just two weeks of classes, the returns—intellectual, social, cosmopolitan—are worth every minute.

We are so grateful to be able to enjoy these amazing experiences thanks to scholarships from our Classics department: Cynthia received a Susan Martin Excellence Travel Scholarship, an Albert Rapp Memorial Scholarship, and a Haines-Morris Award; and Ethan an Athena Travel Scholarship as well as the inaugural Robert McDow Scholarship. We are so excited about our invaluable experiences and cannot wait to see what the rest of our time in Athens has in store for us!
Classics Funds

Generous friends and benefactors have established a variety of funds to help our students and faculty in their work. With the establishment of our exciting new study-abroad program at the University of Athens, we expect that more students will need funds to take advantage of this opportunity to broaden their horizons, both intellectually and culturally. We hope that you will consider supporting us by donating to one of our scholarship funds (Athena Travel Fund, Classics Diversity Fund, Christopher Craig and Ann Robinson-Craig Fund, Susan Martin Fund, Mediterranean Archaeology Fellowship, Moser Fund, Rapp Fund, Rutledge Memorial Fund), faculty support funds (Classics Enrichment, Gesell Fund, Henbest Fund) or archaeological excavations (Hesperides, Kavousi, Mitrou).

Information on how to contribute to these and other classics funds can be found on the envelope enclosed in this newsletter. Information and online giving portals are also available on our classics website classics.utk.edu.

Maximas gratias vobis agimus!