


September 29, 2021

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Lloyd A. Blanchard   
Interim Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

RE: Annual Report of the Endowed Chair Program Entitled "Aetna Chair of Writing"

RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with statute, the Board of Trustees directs the submittal of the annual report prepared by the University Administration to the Office of Higher Education concerning the endowed chair expenditures for the Endowed Chair Program entitled "Aetna Chair of Writing".

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees acknowledges receipt of the annual report concerning the endowed chair expenditures for the Endowed Chair Program entitled "Aetna Chair of Writing"; and directs the submittal of these annual reports to the Office of Higher Education."

BACKGROUND:

The Aetna Chair of Writing is under the direction of Professor Brenda Jo Brueggemann and is funded jointly by the UConn Foundation and the Office of Higher Education Investment Fund. It was established during the 1988-89 fiscal year as authorized by C.G.S. Section 10a-20a. Subsection (f) of the statute states that "the Board of Trustees shall submit annual reports to the Office of Higher Education concerning the endowed chair expenditures."

The 2021 annual report consists of a financial report and a narrative report by Professor Brueggemann.

Attachments



Office of the Associate Vice President of Financial Operations and Controller  
Patricia Casey  
Associate Vice President  
of Financial Operations and Controller

DATE: August 31, 2021

TO: Lloyd Blanchard

Interim Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

FROM: Trish Casey

Associate Vice President, Financial Operations and Controller

RE: Aetna Chair of Writing

Enclosed is a financial report for the Aetna Chair of Writing program, under the direction of Professor Brueggemann, for fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. The report provides the separate financial operations of the program managed by the University and the UConn Foundation, along with the combined total. The expenditures for fiscal year 2021 totaled \$45,657.47.

Professor Brueggemann has provided a narrative of the writing program's operation for fiscal year 2021, which is also enclosed. Section 10a-20a (f) of the Connecticut General Statutes requires an annual report approved by the University's Board of Trustees to be submitted to the Office of Higher Education (OHE) for the Endowed Chair of Writing.

Additional notes are provided on the financial report disclosing the year-end balances of the Foundation and OHE endowment funds.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. If you should have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Patricia Casey, Associate Vice President, Financial Operations and Controller

Enclosures

c: B. Brueggemann

R. Hasenfratz

University of Connecticut and  
University of Connecticut Foundation  
Aetna Chair of Writing  
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2021

	University	Foundation	Combined Total
Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2020	\$26,162.77	\$36,440.07	\$62,602.84
<u>Revenue</u>			
Transferred From Office of Higher Ed	19,509.63	0.00	19,509.63
Pooled Endowment Income Allocation	0.00	34,369.85	34,369.85
Transferred From UConn Foundation	22,511.50	(22,511.50)	0.00
TOTAL REVENUES (EXPENDITURES)	42,021.13	11,858.35	53,879.48
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Salary and Fringe Benefits	10,746.01	0.00	10,746.01
Printing and Binding	7,258.71	0.00	7,258.71
Conferences and Meetings	6,200.00	0.00	6,200.00
TOTAL Contractual Services	13,458.71	0.00	13,458.71
Office Supplies	267.75	0.00	267.75
TOTAL Commodities	267.75	0.00	267.75
Research Incentives	1,065.00	0.00	1,065.00
Awards and Fellowships	20,120.00	0.00	20,120.00
TOTAL Sundry Charges	21,185.00	0.00	21,185.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	45,657.47	0.00	45,657.47
Ending Balance as of June 30, 2021	\$22,526.43	\$48,298.42	\$70,824.85

This endowed chair is not supported by any University funds, but the University maintains accounts which receive revenue from the Foundation and the Office of Higher Education (OHE). These University accounts disburse the funds in support of the program including all funds transferred from the Foundation and the OHE. There were transfers from the OHE totaling \$19,509.63 in fiscal year 2021. The first column above summarizes the University's revenue and expenditure activity for this chair. The Foundation also disburses certain expenses directly to third parties on behalf of the University as included above in the second column in fiscal year 2021, although there were no expenses in fiscal year 2021.

The Aetna Chair of Writing has funds held at the Foundation and the OHE. The Foundation endowed fund was established with a gift of \$506,989 (amount permanently restricted) in 1986 and was valued at \$1,007,897.43 at June 30, 2021, which included accumulated gains/losses on the original gift. The spendable portion of the Foundation endowed fund was \$48,298.42 as of June 30, 2021. The OHE endowed fund was established with \$500,000 of state funds and is invested in the Endowed Chair Investment Fund (managed by the State Treasurer). The interest earned on this fund supports the Aetna Chair of Writing. The value of this fund was \$500,426.96 at June 30, 2021, including principal of \$500,000 and interest of \$426.96.

# Annual Report, 2020-2021

## Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing

[writing.uconn.edu](http://writing.uconn.edu)

**Background:** In 1986 the Aetna Foundation gave UConn a half million dollars to support the Connecticut Writing Project and related writing activities. This money was deposited in a well-managed UConn Foundation account. The State of Connecticut matched Aetna's half million dollar donation and those funds are invested in the Short-Term Investment Fund at the State of Connecticut.

**Current Aetna Chair:** In August 2016, Professor Brenda Jo Brueggemann arrived at the University of Connecticut to begin a new term as the Aetna Chair of Writing. Professor Brueggemann is a scholar of international reputation who works at the intersections of writing, rhetoric, disability studies, and creative nonfiction. She has edited major journals, led international scholarly associations, coordinated innovative interdisciplinary projects, received major grants, and written or edited nine books. At her previous academic institutions—most recently the University of Louisville (3 years) and before that The Ohio State University (21 years)—she won teaching awards, mentored many graduate students into successful academic careers, and founded nationally lauded programs in writing, diversity, disability, and public engagement. Professor Brueggemann is also the current co-editor of [Disability Studies Quarterly](#).

### 2020-2021 Aetna Advisory Board Members (18):

Pam Bedore, Writing Program Coordinator, Avery Point campus  
Lisa Blansett, Associate Director, First-Year Writing Program, Storrs campus  
Julia Brush, English PhD student  
Scott Campbell, Writing Program Coordinator, Hartford campus  
Ellen Carillo, Writing Program Coordinator, Waterbury campus  
Jason Courtmanche, Director, Connecticut Writing Project  
Tom Deans, Director, University Writing Center  
Hannah Dostal, Neag School of Education, Deaf literacy  
Sean Forbes, Director, Creative Writing Program  
Serkan Gorkemli, Writing Program Coordinator, Stamford campus  
Sara Harrington, Associate Director, UConn Libraries  
Wei-Hao Huang, English PhD student  
Yohei Igarashi, English Department, UCHI/DHMS Director  
Blair T. Johnson, Psychology  
Douglas Kaufman, Neag School of Education  
Kathy Knapp, English Department  
Bob Hasenfratz, English Department (Head)  
Melanie Hepburn, Business Manager, English Department  
Victoria Ford Smith, English Department, Director of Graduate Studies

Events and activities focused on writing that are sponsored by the Aetna endowment touch a wide range of departments across UConn, and some extend well beyond campus to enrich the teaching of writing across the State of Connecticut. The annual report that follows is divided into two major sections:

1. New Initiatives and Events supported in the 2020-2021 annual academic year
2. 2020-2021 Reports to the Aetna Chair from those who received funding

## I. NEW INITIATIVES AND EVENTS IN 2020-2021

- \$1000 to Prof. Sarah Willen, [Pandemic Journaling Project](#) (discretionary funds)
- \$500 to [Racism in the Margins](#) initiative (discretionary funds)
- Hosted Social Justice Write-In on November 20, 2020
  - Kiedra Taylor (also working with Connecticut Writing Project then) helped organize the event
  - Kiedra's guest blogpost about the event is here: [There's no 'business as usual' and our community is struggling to breathe.](#)
  - Brenda's blogpost about the event is here: [You are as able as you are valuable.](#)
- Diverted \$3500 from the Graduate Travel & Research Funds (\$5000) into the Graduate Pandemic Narrative Project.
  - Call for the Project is here: <https://writing.uconn.edu/2021/04/18/uconn-graduate-student-pandemic-narrative-project/>
  - "The purpose of this project is to understand and highlight the experiences of graduate students during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic on UConn's campus"
  - Project is underway. Brueggemann + 3 UConn graduate students as principal investigators. We have 31 narratives/responses to date.
  - Follow-up focus groups and interviews took place in August 2021.
  - Plans to present at several conferences in 2021-2022 and to develop an article for submission to journals/forums in higher education, graduation education.
- Brueggemann's service/awards/research for 2020-2021:
  - **Service** as a team or board member on three writing/teacher initiatives for national-reach secondary school educators:
    - [Erase the Space](#) ("fostering public discourse across difference")
    - [The Bread Loaf Teacher Network \(BLTN\)](#)
    - [The BLTN NextGen Leadership Network](#) (funded by the Ford Foundation)
    - Modern Language Association (MLA) Delegate at-large for the field of Rhetoric & Composition
    - Co-Editor, [Disability Studies Quarterly](#)
  - **Teaching/Mentoring**
    - 9 credit hours of writing/editorial internship provided to 3 UConn undergraduates, all working as editorial interns for Disability Studies Quarterly
    - Faculty advisor for [Holster Scholar, Elisa Shaholli](#): 2 funded research projects on Disability Studies-Literature-Writing.
  - **Awards**

- [Terra Foundation for American Art](#), collaborative curation project for *Shaped by the American Dream: Deaf History through Deaf Art*, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY (\$50,000). see: <https://www.rit.edu/news/ntids-dyer-arts-center-earns-grant-expand-knowledge-deaf-communitys-place-history>
- 2020 [Senior Scholar Award, Society for Disability Studies](#).
- 2021-2022 UConn Office of Diversity & Inclusion (ODI) Faculty Affiliate Fellowship for “Access @UConn” project

### COVID-19 (continued) closures and disruption.

Unfortunately, there is not much to report for this academic year due to the continued COVID-19 campus closure of UConn which put an end to the many big writing events that always take place annually and that are funded, in full or part, by the Aetna Chair of Writing endowment:

- The annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing (usually in early April)
- The annual Aetna Celebration of Student Writing and Awards Ceremony (usually at the end of April).

## II. 2020-2021 REPORTS to the Aetna Chair

Programs receiving Aetna Chair support/funds in 2020-2021 include the following:

1. [The Connecticut Writing Project](#)
2. [The Creative Writing Program](#)
3. [The First-Year Writing Program](#)
4. UConn Regional Campus Writing Programs
  - a. Avery Point campus --no request/report
  - b. [Hartford campus](#)
  - c. Stamford campus --no request/report
  - d. [Waterbury campus](#)
5. [University Writing Center](#)
6. Writing Internship Program
7. Graduate Student Awards

### **Samadrita Kuiti**

is the winner of this year's graduate critical writing award, sponsored by the Aetna Chair of Writing, for the essay: "Decolonizing the Feminist Utopia: Interfaith Sisterhood and Anticolonial Feminist Resistance in Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's *Sultana's Dream* and *Padmarag*." She will receive a \$500 award and a spotlight about her work on the Aetna Chair of Writing website.

**Anna Ziering** receives an Honorable Mention as well for the essay:

"A Hand on Clare's Bare Arm': Mobile Disorientations of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Nella Larsen's *Passing*."

**Julia Brush** is the winner of the 2021 Aetna Graduate Teaching of Writing Award. She will receive a \$500 award and a spotlight on the Aetna Chair of Writing website.

An honorable mention goes to: **Anna Ziering.**

## 8. Writing Prizes

### The Aetna Prize for Creative Writing for Children & Young Adults

**Kate Luongo**, for “Sophie Spiraling”

(Honorable Mentions: Tolonda Henderson, for “In Search of Myself”; Roxanne Gentry Henderson, for “Autumn Witch” & “Winter Witch”; Victoria Sun, for “a Queen Bows for One”)

### Aetna Creative Nonfiction Awards

Undergraduate: **Maureen Mason**, for “Under the Birch Tree”

Graduate: **Michael James Hegarty**, for “Song of the North”

(Honorable Mentions: Rachel Bernard, for “Blue Fire”; Whitney Hanna, for “Independence Day”)

### The Aetna Translation Prize

**Aarushi Nohria**, for “A Strange Tale”

(Honorable Mentions: Katarzyna Paszek, for “Writer’s Block”)

## Aetna Writing in the Disciplines Awards 2020-21

### Humanities

Winner: Elizabeth Doemland, “*Land & Terror: A Manifestly American Identity*” Professor: Gregory Doukas, Political Science

Honorable Mention:

~ Jessica Gallagher, *The Stigmatized Character: How Scholars Have Responded to Criticism of “The Catcher in the Rye”* Professor: Emily Cormier, English

~ Ashley Kane, “*Crazy Rich Asians as a Cultural Movement*” Professor: Ruth Yuste-Alonso, Literatures, Cultures and Languages and Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies

~ Lucie Turkel, “*Race’s Role in Rap: How to be Authentically White in the Black World of Hip Hop*” Professor: Jeffrey Ogbar, History

### Social Sciences

Winner: Isabella Otoka, “*Panic Disorder and Parent Child Communication*” Professor: Edna Brown, Human Development & Family Studies

Honorable Mention:

~ Shanelle Jones, “*Sexual Violence among First Nations in the USA: Boarding School Rape, Sexual Exploitation, and Child Trafficking*” Professor: Francoise Dussart, Anthropology

~ Joyce Nieh, “*The Effects of Hippocampal Damage on Spatial Memory in Water Maze and Fear Conditioning in Rats*” Professor: Etan Markus, Psychological Sciences

~ Nikaash Pasnoori, “*Learning to Love my Indian-ness*” Professor: Noga Shemer, Anthropology

Science and Engineering

Co-Winners:

Sophia Arruda, "*Applications of the Evolutionary Mismatch Hypothesis to Anxiety Disorders*"

Professor: Daniel Bolnick, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Rebha Raviraj, "*The Potential Benefits of Marine Chemical Defense on Humankind*"

Professor: Craig Tobias, Marine Sciences

Honorable Mention:

~ Marisa Karasik, "*Convergent evolution of complex cognition in parrots, corvids, and primates*" Professor: Bernard Goffinet, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

~ Emily Kasmar-LaForest, "*An Evaluation of the Safety and Effectiveness of Medication-Assisted Therapy with Buprenorphine and Methadone for Mothers with Opioid Use Disorder and their Infants: A Literature Review*" Professor: Deborah Chyun, Nursing

~ Alexandra Porczak, "*Wrapped up in DNA: does epigenetics explain the expression of genes related to Autism Spectrum Disorder?*" Professor: Sarah Knutie, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

~ Avin Sapowadia, "*Cartilage Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine?*" Professor: Yupeng Chen, Biomedical Engineering

Respectfully submitted,



**Brenda Jo Brueggemann**

Professor, Department of English

Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing

Director, First-Year Writing Program

August 25, 2021