

# The Write News

SSU STUDENT, FACULTY & STAFF  
THE WRITE ATTITUDE ONLINE NEWSLETTER  
FALL 2014/Issue 3

So much  
more  
inside!



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# The Write News

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**The Write News** is a means of keeping students, faculty and staff aware of important information and events related to writing, demonstrating how strong writing skills are necessary in the professions, and showcasing our SSU authors.

**The Write News** is an online newsletter brought to you each semester.

**The Write News** is part of **The Write Attitude**, the **Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at Savannah State University**, a campus-wide initiative to enhance student learning by improving attitudes about writing.

**Please share your articles, essays, poems, and other enlightening writing samples and experiences with us.**

**Visit us:**  
[qep.savannahstate.edu](http://qep.savannahstate.edu)  
**Contact us:**  
[qep@savannahstate.edu](mailto:qep@savannahstate.edu)

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# *The Importance of Writing in Social Work*

*By Rita Reid,  
Master of Social Work Student at  
Savannah State University*



My summer semester courses emphasized the importance of professional writing in social work. Because social workers must write assessments, clinical notes, letters, and other reports that will assist clients in receiving services, writing is an essential skill for the field. A social worker needs to be able to write well-developed reports, rich narratives of clients, persuasive letters, legislative briefs, and perhaps press releases to advocate for their clients.

The ability to write about the lives and conditions of beleaguered clients can put a human face on social issues.

Professional writing skills contribute to the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment plans that maximize client outcomes.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that documentation of services is required by law and third party payers.

On June 27th, 2014, Master of Social Work (MSW) students had the opportunity to participate in a full day workshop on Data Assessment Plan (DAP) writing. The workshop was excellent. It exposed us to the importance of a clinical assessment and how to effectively write one. It included an activity where students in groups wrote an assessment and the presenter, Edward Parks, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, graded and critiqued the written assignment. This immediate and pertinent feedback loop provided a complete learning experience. This workshop was a wonderful opportunity for the MSW students to learn and practice clinical writing. In addition to writing reports and materials for clients, writing is essential for social workers looking for funds for their programs and projects. Professional writing skills are needed to write grants, and fill out paperwork for compliance and funding.



*Master of Social Work Students participate in a writing activity during a Writing in the Professions Workshop, developed in partnership with SSU Quality Enhancement Plan.*

## *The Importance of Writing in Social Work (cont.)*

The MSW program's Crisis Intervention class is an excellent introduction into our clinical concentration. There students learn about strategies used for crisis counseling and the theories and models associated with crisis intervention.

According to MSW Professor Dr. Shinaz Jindani, poverty is the biggest crisis of our times. To learn more, students had to research and write about projects in ten separate countries. This was an excellent activity for MSW students to learn about international social work. We live in a global economy and it is imperative that social workers understand the best practices that sustain services for any given

community in their own context. This has stimulated interest among students to consider international social work as a career path.

***Professional writing skills contribute to the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment plans that maximize client outcomes.***

In addition, students were required to research and write a paper on alternative therapies, such as Art, Animal Therapy, Dancing, Exercise, Hypnosis, Horticulture, Meditation and Relaxation, and Yoga.

Students presented their alternative therapy to the class which enabled the whole class to learn about many different kinds of therapies used today to supplement cognitive behavior therapy. This stimulated our interest in alternative therapy and how it can enhance our career development. Social workers must be able to communicate verbally and in writing, and through a wide range of writing activities. Writing is important for direct client practice, team communication, influencing policy and for writing empirical articles for social work journals. Social work standards in a number of countries require that social work graduates be proficient in writing case notes and professional reports. It may have been hard work this summer, but I am pleased to have been challenged in my classes to write well.



*Edward Parks, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, delivers a Writing in the Professions Workshop for Master of Social Work Students at Savannah State University.*

*Find more information about the Master of Social Work program at Savannah State University here: <http://savannahstate.edu/prospective-student/degrees-grad-sw.shtml>*



### Critically Acclaimed Authors Visit Savannah State University at Free Events Open to the Community

Through its Quality Enhancement Plan, **The Write Attitude**, Savannah State University works to enhance student learning by improving attitudes about writing. Besides managing a writing-related student, faculty, and staff development program, **The Write Attitude** offers workshops, contests, and events open to University members and to the community at large.

As part of this program, Savannah State University hosts a series of writing-related lectures by acclaimed authors. Our first visitor this past semester was **Lawrence Hill**, who visited Savannah State University on October 16th, 2014. We also welcomed **Tina McElroy Ansa**, on November 6th, 2014.

Both shared their knowledge and experience with students, faculty, staff, and community members in events that were free and open to the public. After the lectures, the authors answered questions, signed books, and took pictures with the audience members.



*Lawrence Hill reads from his The Book of Negroes at Savannah State University, on October 16th, 2014.*



*Tina McElroy Ansa presents a lecture at Savannah State University, on November 6th, 2014.*

## Lawrence Hill's Visit to Savannah State University

Renowned Canadian author Lawrence Hill has written nine books and won several prizes for his writing. In his lecture on October 16th, 2014, at Savannah State University, Hill discussed the 400 years of African-Canadian history that is woven through his award-winning books. He also explained the writing process of adapting his 2007 novel, *The Book of Negroes*, into a six part TV miniseries.

The television miniseries, starring Louis Gosset, Jr. and Cuba Gooding, Jr., will air on BET in February.

*The Book of Negroes* was selected by The Oprah Magazine as a 2010 top Summer Read and has sold close to a million copies worldwide.

Additionally, while on campus Hill served as the Southern Association for Canadian Studies (SACS) Conference

keynote speaker. The SACS conference was held on October 17 and 18, 2014. The goal of the conference was to expand comparative discussions on the current knowledge of the African Diaspora in North America and to consider innovative ways of strengthening the field through cross disciplinary and varied theoretical models.



To learn more about  
Lawrence Hill:  
[lawrencehill.com](http://lawrencehill.com)



## Tina McElroy Ansa's Visit to Savannah State University

Tina McElroy Ansa is a novelist, publisher, filmmaker, teacher and journalist. Ansa is the author of five celebrated novels. During her address on November 6th, 2014, at Savannah State University, Ansa discussed her personal writing process, provided advice to aspiring authors, and emphasized the importance of sharing and receiving

feedback on creative works-in-progress. Additionally, Ansa led the **Sea Island Writers Retreat** workshop at Savannah State University. This popular program for writers was created by the author in 2004. Through it, Ansa is committed to providing help to emerging authors by teaching them how to improve and publish their work.

The on-campus workshop ran for two full days on November 7th and 8th, 2014. The participants were chosen based on the strength of their writing samples. Aspiring writers Ashleigh Montford, Covena White, Tom Bennett, and Zakiya Blackwell were able to benefit from the mentoring they received in the writer's retreat.



*To learn more about  
Tina McElroy Ansa:  
[tinamcelroyansa.com](http://tinamcelroyansa.com)*

### The Write Attitude Faculty Present at the 21st Annual HBCU Faculty Development Network Conference

Faculty working closely with Savannah State University's QEP were chosen to participate in a panel presentation at the 21st Annual HBCU Faculty Development Network Conference, held in Raleigh, North Carolina, on October 16-18th, 2014. In this venue, they were able to display their innovative pedagogical techniques and impactful results to a national audience. "At Savannah State University we are experimenting with new approaches to teaching, using writing. We aim to improve



*Dr. Samuel Dolo, Professor of Mathematics, presents at the 21st Annual HBCU Faculty Development Network Conference.*

attitudes about writing by engaging students in the practice of writing more frequently across the curriculum—for example, writing that is exploratory, writing that is low-stakes, writing that is incremental and scaffolded. We believe that if we can improve student attitudes and confidence with writing by providing opportunities for different kinds of writing and different kinds of feedback on writing, we will see improvement," explains Dr. Lisa Yount, QEP Director.

#### ABOUT THE PANEL PRESENTATION

"Enhancing Student Learning through the 'Write Attitude'" showcased Savannah State University's unique approach to promoting student success in writing by improving attitudes about writing across the campus. Faculty members shared their experiences from their participation in the 8-week QEP Faculty Development Seminar, led by Dr. Lisa Yount.

In this intensive course, faculty produce a variety of low-stakes writing assignments, rubrics, and student exercises that model the tenets of the "writing to learn" movement, and implement and assess the new interventions in their classes. Panelists analyzed the effectiveness of improving their own attitudes about increasing the amount

of writing opportunities in their classrooms, as well as the effectiveness of the new pedagogies for improving their students' learning and attitudes about writing.

#### **Panel Participants:**

Dr. Geoffrey Bowden, Political Science  
Dr. Samuel Dolo, Mathematics  
Dr. Linda Samuel, Social Work  
Dr. Rebecca Setliff, Management  
Prof. Darryl Thompson, Theater  
Dr. Lisa Yount, QEP



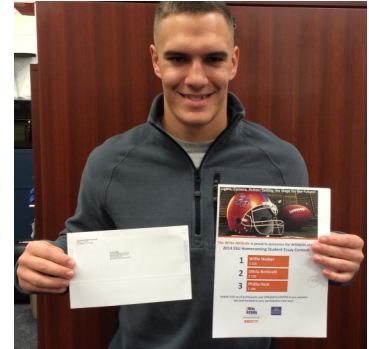
## Congratulations to our 2014 Fall Contest Winners

### 2014 SSU Homecoming Student Essay Contest



1 Willie Walker

2 Olivia Botticelli



3 Phillip Neal

### Estuary and The Write Attitude Student Essay Contest

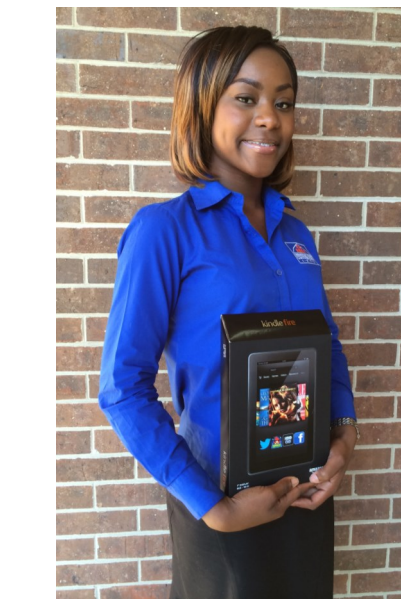
1 Tom Bennett, Jr.



2 Shayanna Bonner



### 2014 QEP Facebook and Twitter Student Writing Competition



1 Sarah Dillard

Follow The Write Attitude on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook



## ODE TO LEFTOVER LOVE

*By Xavier Lampley,  
SSU Student*

Ode to a love that was once burning with fire.  
To a love that was beautiful to look at, but you  
knew it was dangerous.  
A love that was so strong it lit up the night's sky.

It was a pure love, you could even say it was or-  
ganic.

Growing from the earth's stomach providing the  
nutrients that's good for your health.

This is a healthy love. It loved you for you.

It didn't make you feel low or belittled.  
It allowed you to bloom between the cracks of  
asphalt.

And lifting your spirit so high that the feeling  
was immeasurable.

But this love also knows its worth. Never  
settling for anything less than it deserves.

It's a proud love. Sometimes mistaken for stub-  
born, but even babies are selfish.

This love was once alive.

So alive it made the earth quake, shaking up the  
gravel until its bones crushed.

This love had hands that grabbed you and  
pulled you in because it missed you over the  
weekend.

Ode to this once wondrous love.

It was like a mother looking at her newborn ba-  
by for the first time.

But this love is now lost.

A love that is so lost it doesn't know its own  
reflection.

So lost because it once had a home.

A home that made it feel. It was a free love,  
like a plastic bag dancing in the wind.

This love is now roaming the streets sad

And sometimes enters the body of strangers  
seeking for its home.

Which is why we sometimes feel sad out of  
the blue.

This love is like leftovers from Sunday night's  
dinner.

Ode to leftover love.

Xavier Lampley is an English Major at Savannah State University. *Ode to Leftover Love* was written and first presented by Lampley during the 2014 SSU Hispanic Heritage Week poetry event. The poem was selected to be featured on **The Write Attitude Radio Show's Poetry in the Air series**, produced in partnership with the SSU Radio Station, WHCJ (90.3 FM).

*Would you like to be considered  
for the next  
POETRY IN THE AIR  
radio show?*

*Send your name, poems, and  
contact information to  
[qep@savannahstate.edu](mailto:qep@savannahstate.edu)*



## A TORN KIND OF LIFE

*By Ujjvala Bagal,  
Professor of  
Chemistry at  
Savannah State  
University*

It's a torn kind of life, in chemistry and poetry,  
like having two lovers or two babies,  
clutching both poetry and chemistry,  
like two handbags, two blouses – damn it, I want  
them both!

The greed of pleasure, the pleasure of greed,  
the science of poetry – and the poetry of chemis-  
try?

Ah, what about that?

Here we have this green powder.

We ask it, “What are you? Why are you?”

(Doesn't that sound like poetry?)

We poke at it with tweezers and microscope.

We dissolve it, inject it into

a gas-chromatograph-FTIR-mass-spec.

We change it into another material:

what it becomes tells us more about what it is.

Take a thought or a feeling,

and scribble it out, or pretend it's an animal.

Write a list about it, leave hints about it,

Write a raging villanelle like Dylan Thomas.

What happens if you write the negative of it?

What would it do if it belonged to someone else?

Synthetic chemistry makes it, analytical  
chemistry breaks it.

Synthetic chemistry explains the present  
with the past,

walking backward from compound  
to components.

Analytical chemistry muses on the sample's  
mysterious identity.

Both like poetry, I'd say.

And sometimes we're shocked,

like Rutherford when the alpha particle shot  
back like a bullet,

like Angelou when she understood why the  
caged bird sings.

And then we try again with a little powder,  
and then a lot,

run more tests, repeat the same tests, change it  
up yet again,

until we know what will happen whatever we do,

and we know what the powder is,

like we write draft after draft, rearrange lines,

take out these words, put in others,

till the poem is clean and good and true,

because practice is key to chemistry and poetry,

because we need to try new things and  
see differently,

and there are ways to find out what anything is,

and there are ways to write a poem  
about anything.

Professor Ujjvala Bagal has published a book of  
poems entitled *Red Silk Sari* and participated  
in the 2014 Decatur Book Festival. Some of her  
poems will be featured on **The Write Attitude  
Radio Show, Poetry in the Air.**



## Poetry in the Air

*A radio show spotlighting Students, Faculty, and Staff poetry*

The Office of the Quality Enhancement Plan is **selecting original poems written by Students, Faculty and Staff to be recorded and broadcasted by the SSU Radio Station.**

Selected poems will be featured on *Poetry in the Air*, one of **The Write Attitude's** radio shows produced in partnership with WHCJ (90.3 FM), the voice of Savannah State University.

*Would you like to be part of the next POETRY IN THE AIR?*

*Send your name, poems, and best contact information to [qep@savannahstate.edu](mailto:qep@savannahstate.edu)*

## On-campus Writing Resources:

**Asa H. Gordon Library**

**Career Services**

*Student Union, Room 115*

**Center for Academic Success**

*Whiting Hall, Room 253*

**Smarthinking.com**

**SSU Writing Center**

*Payne Hall, Room 201*

## FOLLOW US!

**Follow us** to get instant updates on **The Write Attitude workshops, events, and contests!**



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