

The Write News

THE WRITE ATTITUDE NEWSLETTER
FOR SSU STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF
SPRING 2016/Issue 6

Bobby Seale Addresses SSU

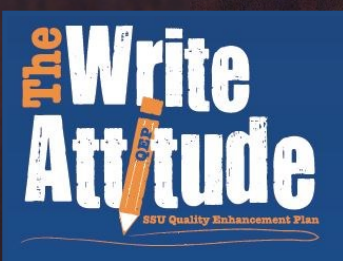
Write and Speak Out
Against Sexual Violence

Interview with former
White House Press
Secretary and author
Dana Perino

GPC Poets Visit SSU

You Can Win Rapture!

SSU Volunteers with
Deep Center



*Photo: Jason Miccolo Johnson, Instructor in the
Department of Journalism and Mass Communications*

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The Write News keeps students, faculty, and staff aware of important information and events related to writing, demonstrates how strong writing skills are necessary in the professions, and showcases our SSU authors.

The Write News is the newsletter 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 writing samples and experiences with us.

Visit us:
qep.savannahstate.edu
Contact us:
qep@savannahstate.edu

Bobby Seale: An American Icon

By Dr. Gary Guillory, Director of Student Support Services

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Science (CLASS), Office of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), and Office of Student Support Services (SSS) collaborated to bring Mr. Bobby Seale to Savannah State University (SSU) in February 2016. Recognized as the original 1966 founding Chairman and National Organizer of the Black Panther Party (BPP), Mr. Seale has been a political and social activist for over fifty years.

In the weeks and days leading up to Mr. Seale's SSU visit, a noticeable heightened sense of excitement and anticipation persisted throughout the campus, due in large part to various campus units working in concert to plan for his arrival. While QEP and SSS-sponsored activities and faculty-facilitated discussions contributed to prepping our campus community for Mr. Seale's visit, five activities during his three-day stay enabled hundreds of students, faculty, staff and local community members to interact with him in different learning settings.

Mr. Seale moved from Dallas, Texas, to Oakland, California, with his parents and two siblings when he was a young boy. He was in his mid-twenties when he began his political and social activism, which was shortly after seeing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., deliver a speech that called for, among other things, a boycott of Wonder Bread and other bread companies that refused to hire people of color. In 1962, Dr. King spoke at the Oakland Auditorium where, according to Mr. Seale, each of the seven thousand seats was filled. He recalled that when Dr. King stated "We're going to boycott them so consistently and so profoundly, we're going to make Wonder Bread wonder where the

money went," the crowd erupted in cheers, and his enthusiasm for civil rights involvement was born.

The Ten-Point Program of the Black Panther Party, drafted by Mr. Bobby Seale and Mr. Huey Newton, defined the organization's direction and goals. Influenced by the Bill of Rights and Declaration of Independence, the manifesto was intended to address systemic concerns that denied African-Americans certain unalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Based on Mr. Seale's personal accounts, The Black Panther Party (originally called the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense) was "invented" out of necessity. Police brutality against African-Americans residing in Oakland, California, was common. After educating themselves on local, state, and federal laws, Mr. Seale and other BPP members began a campaign of monitoring police activity in African-American neighborhoods, hoping that their presence would discourage the police from committing civil rights violations. Party membership did not exceed fifty members prior to April 4, 1968, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. Within a few months following Dr. King's death,

membership increased to approximately five thousand, which allowed the BPP to expand its Free Breakfast for Children program and health clinics nationwide.

Engaging conversations with Mr. Bobby Seale revealed a stark parallel between his formal educational experiences and those of most students today. Absent in their formal educational experiences is historical knowledge that provides a comprehensive and accurate account of the contributions of all peoples who have labored to establish, defend, and advance the territories and economic, educational, political, and social institutions that define these United States of America. We are all participants in this American democratic experiment and global society; consequently, our lives are intrinsically connected.

Therefore, we have but one choice: to work together to maximize our ability as a nation, world community, and human people, or to continue down our current path to total destruction.



Dr. Cheryl Dozier, President of Savannah State University, asks the first question to Mr. Bobby Seale during his lecture at SSU, Monday, Feb. 8, 2016.

ACTIVIST & AUTHOR: BOBBY SEALE

Learning with Bobby Seale

“Thanks to the Quality Enhancement Plan, I had the honor of meeting the founding chairman and national organizer of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, Mr. Bobby Seale. I recall how anxious and nervous I was prior to meeting him for a small dinner with other students, faculty, and staff members. My brother tried to help me relax by discussing Mr. Seale’s accomplishments and contributions to society, while my father strongly recommend I bring a recorder, based on the amount of knowledge he recalled Mr. Seale sharing with him when he met him in school. I am extremely happy that hearing and meeting Mr. Seale not only exceeded my expectations, but taught me more than I could have ever researched on my own. I admire and appreciate his respect for the military at large as well as applying both his training and knowledge of the service for the improvement of humanity.”

Quortnee Jones,
SSU Student, QEP Student Outreach Intern, & MIDN 1/C N.R.O.T.C.U. Public Affairs Officer

More about Bobby Seale and his books:
www.bobbyseale.com



Faculty luncheon with Bobby Seale at SSU.



Dr. Gary Guillory, Director of Student Support Services, and Ms. Kiara Lewis, QEP Student Outreach Coordinator, interview Bobby Seale at SSU.



Bobby Seale and SSU student Quortnee Jones.



More than 400 people, including SSU administrators, faculty, staff, students, journalists, and local community members, attend Bobby Seale’s lecture at SSU, an event free to the public.



Bobby Seale signs his books after his public lecture at SSU.



Classroom discussion with Bobby Seale at Asa H. Gordon Library.

Former White House Press Secretary Dana Perino Visits SSU

By Kai C. Walker, Assistant Professor in the Journalism and Mass Communications Department

Being the first public Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Georgia, Savannah State University (SSU) has been host to many “firsts” in its 125-year history. On Friday, February 12, 2016, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) hosted former White House Press Secretary, Dana Perino, the first Republican woman to hold that post. Perino is also a co-host of *The Five* television program on the FOX News Channel and the author of the *New York Times* best seller *And the Good News Is ... Lessons and Advice from the Bright Side*. The book, which might best be described as a collection of her professional experiences and advice, was featured at the 2016 edition of the Savannah Book Festival.



Kai Walker, Assistant Professor in the Journalism and Mass Communications Department, interviews Dana Perino, author and former White House Press Secretary.

What made you want to write this *New York Times* best seller?

When I was a little kid I wanted to be an author, but ... I didn't think I was a long form writer. I could write really good press statements and I'm a great tweeter. I like to play with language that way and to narrow it down, so [writing a full length book] was a little more daunting for me. That's a lot of words!

“I think what helped me with the writing is that I love to read. If you want to be a better writer, you have to read a lot.”

I knew the kind of book that I wanted to write, which was not going to be political. There are plenty of political books that people can write when they leave Washington. Mine was more of a memoir and about giving advice, but I also felt that there was a missing part of a historical record about President Bush. So many people have written political books about him, books about his policies,

and judging the decisions he made, and they can do that for the rest of time, but there were very few people who could write a book like I did which was the behind the scenes look at what he was like to work with.

What is the most challenging aspect of working in television?

One of the things that I love about it is that it pulls together everything that I've loved to do or trained to do. I love to read, I like the news, I like to play with language and if you think about our show, with five people, and let's say a segment is ten minutes long – really you only have about a minute and 20 seconds in an entire segment. You have to be able to make a good point very quickly. That part I love. The challenging part is, in a way, you're never off. In live television there is so much energy ... it takes me a while to come down from an adrenaline rush of a show. I think one of the harder things that I am getting better at dealing with is the constant online criticism. It's really tough. It gave me a new appreciation for what parents are going through when their children are the victims of online bullying.

What parting lesson would you like to leave our audience with?

Well, there is so much good advice in the book. There's career advice, life advice, and little quick things you can do in the office to make sure your professional life is really good, but my favorite piece of advice in the book is that choosing to be loved is not a career-limiting decision. I met my husband on an airplane eighteen years ago. It was a big leap of faith and I really think that it is what has allowed me to grow and have as much professional success as I've had. I mentor a lot of young people and they don't want to get married yet because they are working on their career. I think it can work together. If you choose to be loved and to enjoy that part of life, ... then you'll do even better in your career.

More about:

Dana Perino: danaperino.com

Savannah Book Festival:

www.savannahbookfestival.org

JJ Maxwell, a Media and Fashion Industry Guru, Shares his Experience with SSU Students

By Sierra Walton, SSU Student and QEP Communications Intern

On November 19th, 2015, JJ Maxwell, J2 Media Founder, was the guest speaker of a Lunch & Learn where he shared his expertise in the world of digital media, art, and fashion. He has experience in media strategy, branding, creative direction, and publicity. Also he has a Master's of Science Degree in Media Management from The New School (in New York City), and a Bachelor of Science from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism at Arizona State University.

“The future of writing in the fashion industry is all digital and social.”

Maxwell has had the pleasure of working with media clients such as Viacom, Hypebeast, The Cools, and Raleigh Denim, among others.

Maxwell's experience in media and fashion related positions have allowed him to work in e-commerce, to pioneer digital start ups and fashion lines as a media director, and to start a media company of his own, J2 Media. Currently he also serves as the Fashion and Art Director for a new Netflix TV series called *Forward*.

After his Lunch & Learn lecture, I was able to get a glimpse inside Maxwell's professional life and discover how writing has contributed to his growing success.

“I write every day,” Maxwell says. He explained how his goal is to always create a “clear message that tells a great story.” The J2 Media Founder shared that no matter if a person decides to go into media, art, fashion or marketing, all of these fields will require writing. For those who write well, they will more than likely to make it far. Maxwell's main

writing consists of developing press releases, sending emails to maintain healthy relationships with clients, and brand bios and stories that will make consumers attached to the product or brand.

Maxwell added that it is important to “have an exclusive idea and an awesome tagline” when a professional writes for digital media. He also explained that “the future of writing in the fashion industry is all digital and social.” Most fashion magazines are going digital, which means that writing for them is all based on being short, clear, concise, and consumer friendly with a “great and unique voice.”

“Always write all ideas down and do your research.”

For Public Relations professionals and students interested in the media industry, Maxwell had some critical advice: “Always write all ideas down and do your research.” The importance of researching in the media sector is vital, and it can either make or break you. “Take one hour out of your day to research.” According to Maxwell, to be successful in the media industry, it is important to research and to stay on top of industry news and trends. He suggested that students and professionals read their favorite websites, articles about the industries that interest them, and online newspapers. Maxwell stressed that constant research and reading will help media professionals to merge and mold creative ideas and strategies and to develop a unique approach to their clients.



SSU Students lunch and learn with JJ Maxwell, J2 Media Founder and Fashion and Art Director of *Forward*, a new Netflix TV series.

Krystal Hart, Public Relations Specialist, Presents “Writing For Likes: The Principles and Pitfalls of Social Media Communication”

By Sierra Walton, SSU Student and QEP Communications Intern



Krystal Hart, founder of Sparrow Communications, shares her experience in the Public Relations and Social Communications field at SSU, Thursday, Jan. 21, 2016.

On January 21, 2016, students and faculty attended a QEP Lunch & Learn featuring public relations specialist and entrepreneur Krystal Hart entitled, “Writing For Likes: The Principles and Pitfalls of Social Media Communication.” More than fifty people came prepared to hear the Sparrow Communications creator give her insight into the world of Public Relations (PR) and social media communications.

Hart set the tone for the workshop by saying that people must “have the write attitude about writing.” Writing is often misconstrued as an intimidating and tedious task, when really it is the key to effective communication. “Those who can write and love to write will never be without a job,” stated the speaker. In addition to having worked as the Public Relations Manager of the City of Hinesville, Hart has had an array of writing jobs and opportunities, such as writing, editing, designing, training, developing policies, planning events, and managing social media accounts for the public and private sectors.

To give the audience a better understanding of her writing technique, Hart compares social communications and writing to a boxing match and Floyd Mayweather, who dances around the ring ducking and dodging just to give his fans a show. The PR professional says, “I don’t give them the knockout right away; instead, I give them a show or little bits of information at a time.” She calls the little bits of information “breadcrumbs,” something she says she gives just enough of so that people want to come back to her clients or figure out what she is talking about. Because if the person writes in a way that there is no suspense all the way up to the “knockout,” then more than likely, people won’t come back to see what’s next. Hart explains, “You have to build up to it and give them things that they would want, that would interest them to get the knockout.”

As the QEP Student Communications and Outreach Intern, I had the pleasure of sitting down with Hart after the workshop to ask her more about writing in the world of PR,

personal techniques and writing skills, and student concerns regarding writing. “I write every day,” shares Hart. “My goal is to write a thousand words a day and try different styles of writing.” She smiles in between responses and carefully orders her words to make sure she doesn’t miss a beat, allowing her to share as much insight as she can. Hart explains how it is so easy to get stuck in just writing press releases or website copies becoming rusty in other areas. That’s why it is so important that people make it a part of their everyday schedule to at least write something. “You can always find a time to write, the real question is: is it a priority?” she asks. Sometimes we may find ourselves making excuses as to why we do not have time to write, when in all actuality, we make time for things that we want to do. Practicing writing is just like practicing for a sport, or perhaps boxing; the only way a person can strengthen their skills is by getting in the ring every day.

The key principles of social communication, according to Krystal Hart.

- ⇒ Be Social
- ⇒ Be Conversational
- ⇒ Be Authentic
- ⇒ Be Consistent
- ⇒ Know your audience
- ⇒ Each platform has a different style of writing
- ⇒ Quantity and quality are equally important

More about Krystal Hart:
mysparrowcommunications.com

LUNCH & LEARN: JORDAN OGDEN

STUDENT OPINION

“On Thursday, February 18, 2016, I had the pleasure of being part of a QEP Lunch & Learn. The speaker for that afternoon was Mrs. Jordan Ogden, SSU Career Development Specialist, SSU Alumna, and Entrepreneur. She gave a presentation titled “The Write Attitude’ in Business.”

During the presentation she explained how to correctly format a résumé, why templates should not be used, and how gaining experience can build your résumé. She also discussed the importance of a cover letter. She explained the purpose of the cover letter and how it highlights points that could not be put in the résumé. The presentation was very informational, and I enjoyed it. I got a better understanding on how to correctly create my résumé. A big problem for me was when to include a list of references, and she helped me understand when and when not to use it. I learned that if an application requests references I should attach them. If they fit on the last page of the résumé, I could put them on there, but usually companies prefer to receive them on a separate document. Mrs. Ogden also added that if the application does not request references, I could mention on my cover letter that I can provide references upon request.

Towards the end of her presentation, she talked about her new business, Impressum School of Social Graces, focused on young ladies. The program is designed to empower young women to make positive choices and develop confidence that will aid them in their success and move them closer to their goals. It is really nice that Mrs. Ogden works on the development of young ladies at an early age. I am sure it will definitely be beneficial for them during all phases of their lives.”

**Kadeshia Ready,
SSU Student and
QEP Student Ambassador**

Jordan Ogden, Career Services Professional and Entrepreneur, Discusses “The Write Attitude” in Business



Jordan Ogden, SSU Career Development Specialist and founder of Impressum School of Social Graces, answers a student's questions after her presentation at the QEP Lunch & Learn.

Tips from Jordan Ogden

Résumé:

Your résumé is your professional reputation on paper. Everyone needs a résumé. This should include your heading (name, mailing address, email and phone number), educational information, work experience, any skills you've acquired along the way as well as extracurricular or community involvement. These sections can definitely have different names depending on your major or the career you are aspiring for.

Cover Letter:

The cover letter is a writing sample. It basically explains anything that you could not give enough detail about in your résumé. Be sure to keep it brief. Here, you are communicating to the employer just why you'd be the best for the position they are trying to fill.

More information:

**SSU Career Services
(912) 358-3146
ogdenj@savannahstate.edu**

**Impressum School of Social Graces,
etiquette and talent school
(912) 398-7972
impressumSSG@gmail.com**

SSU Tigers Volunteer as Deep Center Writing Fellows

Megan Ave'Lallement, Deep Programs Director, sits down with SSU student Shaniqua Brown, faculty members Dr. Kameelah Martin and Dr. Dustin Michael, and staff member Nikki Rech.

Why did you join Deep? What appealed to you?

Shaniqua Brown: *I was actually just looking for community service or volunteer work to put on my résumé. So this was something that just was like 'oh I want to gain experience with kids and writing,' especially since I want to be a future teacher. Then I met Megan, and learned more of what Deep was about and I just felt like, 'man I wish something I had back in South Carolina growing up. Just somebody who saw my writing and say "Oh, you're good!"' I thought this was something great.*

What were you like in middle school?

Kameelah Martin: *I think I can be described as an extroverted introvert. I as outgoing, I had friends. I was a tomboy, you know, it was the TLC era, baggy jeans, hat to the back. I was coming into this feminist ideology, 'anything a boy can do, I can do and probably better.' I was just very tough, but part of that toughness was about trying to navigate kind of this world that I was living in. I grew up in a military family, so we moved often. I had to make friends and kind of fit in where I was. I was living in Little Rock at the time, and it was the height of gang violence. It was a very volatile situation so a lot of that toughness was just trying to survive in the environment that I was in. On the inside, I had a lot of friends who were killed or had these really horrific experiences and I found myself often writing about and thinking about all of those things*

and being really kind of introspective. I didn't talk about those things, but I would write about those things.

Can you think of a particular student writer that changed during the workshop?

Nikki Rech: *There was one young man who obviously wrote non-stop. He was quiet, he was very introverted. He really didn't speak a lot to the others, even within Deep, but he was always writing something. He didn't necessarily like to follow any of the prompts we gave, he just wrote. I remember at one point, he walked over and just quietly handed me his journal, which just about melted me on the spot because this was obviously his writing that he didn't share, that personal writing. That he trusted me to hand me that at the end of the workshop showed he changed a lot.*

Could you talk about ways that you helped struggling writers get their stories out?

Dustin Michael: *I remember... the youngest guy in our workshop... a real young sixth grader. He liked military history and was the only one who wanted to write about World War II; but he was writing about WWII in this sort of macro-narrative. It was like a history channel special. It was like descriptions of planes, but no story. So we tried to get him to make this something that people care about, who don't automatically like tanks and planes. We said develop a character. Maybe it's you doing the*

fighting. What happens to you? That was the thing we tried with him. We tried to get him to zoom in a little bit. Descriptions of planes are cool and all, and it's awesome when things blow up, but what does it feel like? What is actually happening? How do you really help a person navigate this landscape?

What is one little nugget that you hope your Deep authors carry with them from your time together?

Shaniqua Brown: *Continue to be fearless. When you grow up sometimes you get selfish—sometimes we become a selfish writer—where it is all about me, me, me, me, me. It is important when you get older to create a balance. And a part of having that balance is to be fearless in whatever situation you're going into. Try to keep an open mind and write about any and everything.*



www.deepkids.com

Listen to this interview and an entire radio show focused on the Deep Center at qep.savannahstate.edu/About-QEP/Radio-Shows.aspx

Georgia Poetry Circuit Poets Andrea Hollander & Jeffrey Harrison Visit Savannah State University

On February 12, 2016, SSU students, faculty, and staff attended a Writer's Talk with poet Andrea Hollander. And, on April 15, 2016, poet Jeffrey Harrison gave a poetry lecture at SSU.

Both poets were part of the Georgia Poetry Circuit (GPC), which is a network of ten colleges and universities working together to bring poets of national and international acclaim to the state.

Besides presenting to our internal audience, both poets gave a poetry reading at a local bookstore, The Book Lady, located in downtown Savannah. All events were free and open to the public.

Estuary, CLASS, and The Write Attitude partnered to host the GPC on campus this year.



Writer's Talk with Poet Andrea Hollander at SSU.



Poet Jeffrey Harrison reads to SSU students, faculty, and staff members.

MORE ABOUT:

Georgia Poetry Circuit: www.berry.edu/gpc/
Andrea Hollander: www.andreahollander.net
Jeffrey Harrison: www.jeffreyharrisonpoet.com

Ex

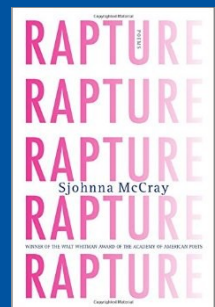
BY ANDREA HOLLANDER

Long after I married you, I found myself in his city and heard him call my name. Each of us amazed, we headed to the café we used to haunt in our days together. We sat by a window across the paneled room from the table that had witnessed hours of our clipped voices and sharp silences. Instead of coffee, my old habit in those days, I ordered hot chocolate, your drink, dark and dense the way you take it, without the swirl of frothy cream I like. He told me of his troubled marriage, his two difficult daughters, their spiteful mother, how she'd tricked him and turned into someone he didn't really know. I listened and listened, glad all over again to be rid of him, and sipped the thick, brown sweetness slowly as I could, licking my lips, making it last.

"Ex" is from the book *Landscape with Female Figure new and selected poems, 1982-2012*.

Rapture is a poetry collection written by SSU faculty member **Sjohnna McCray** and published by Graywolf Press in April 2016. *Rapture* was selected as the winner of the 2015 Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets.

You can listen to Sjohnna McCray read poems and discuss his craft in an interview conducted by Dr. Chad Faries, SSU Assistant Professor of Creative Writing, at qep.savannahstate.edu/About-QEP/Radio-Shows.aspx



You can win **RAPTURE!**

SSU Poets: send your poems, name, and preferred contact information to qep@savannahstate.edu. The authors of the 3 best poems will be awarded *Rapture*, an award-winning poetry book, by Sjohnna McCray.

More about Sjohnna McCray: www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/sjohnna-mccray

SSU Faculty Members Present at the 27th International Conference on College Teaching and Learning

On April 6, 2016, six faculty members traveled to Jacksonville, Florida, to present at the 27th International Conference on College Teaching and Learning. Their panel was entitled, "Developing the 'Write Attitude' to Enhance Student Learning Across the Curriculum."

The participants are all certified QEP Teaching Fellows, having graduated from an 8-week QEP faculty development seminar. The seminar teaches best practices in pedagogy and writing instruction across the curriculum. At this conference, the QEP Teaching Fellows shared the findings of the research they conducted around "writing to learn" exercises they developed for their courses.



From left to right: Dr. Samuel Dolo, Associate Professor of Mathematics, COST; Dr. Rebecca Setliff, Senior Lecturer of Management, COBA; Dr. Geoffrey Bowden, Lecturer and Program Coordinator of Political Science, CLASS; Dr. Lisa Yount, QEP Director and Associate Professor of Philosophy, CLASS; Mr. Darryl Thompson, Assistant Professor of Theatre and Speech, CLASS; and Dr. Susanne Toney, Assistant Professor of Economics, COBA.

"The Write Attitude" Faculty Development Seminar

is led by Dr. Lisa Yount, QEP Director and Associate Professor of Philosophy.

Candidates are chosen based on their support of QEP initiatives and willingness to enhance student learning through writing. Up to six participants representing various academic units on campus are selected.

Participants take part in surveys, implement additional writing in their classrooms, give a brief presentation on their teaching experiences, and assess activities over three semesters.

Along with the skills and pedagogical knowledge afforded by the seminar, participants also receive an honorarium for their efforts.

The next QEP faculty development seminar will be offered during Fall 2016.

Interested faculty should learn more and apply here:

qep.savannahstate.edu/Faculty-Staff/Faculty-Development-Seminar.aspx

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Lisa Yount at yountL@savannahstate.edu or 358-3151.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS WEEK AT SSU

Write and Speak Out Against Sexual Violence!

As part of a national campaign to prevent sexual assault on campuses in the country, the QEP, Counseling Center, Rape Crisis Center, Inc., Residence Life, Campus Safety, Title IX, the Athletics Department, and various students organizations joined forces to develop a week of academic and social activities for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and our local community. From April 3 to April 7, 2016, the campaign *Write and Speak Out Against Sexual Violence: Sexual Assault Awareness Week at SSU* included eight on- and off-campus events, such as lectures, discussions, trainings, and writing activities to inform and bring awareness about how to prevent and respond to sexual violence.



Thirty t-shirts, created by SSU Social Work students, on display in King Frazier.



Ellori White, SSU Resident Director.



Kevin Powell gives a lecture, free and open to the public, on violence against women.



Activist and author Kevin Powell discusses gendered relations with residence hall students at Savannah State University.



Students and staff members at the self-defense training session with a Pooler karate instructor.



A "Man to Man" discussion session: Kevin Powell, SSU student leaders, and staff members.



Rape Crisis Center, Inc. at SSU:
 (912) 429-8152 to text and talk
 (912) 358-7222 to schedule an appointment

Writing a Script for a The Write Attitude TV Commercial

By Sierra Walton, SSU Student and QEP Communications Intern

Though I am a Mass Communications major with a concentration in public relations, writing for television was never something that crossed my mind. The Office of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) presented me with the assignment, and I took on the challenge.

Just like anything that involves writing, there is a process involved. First we had to have a meeting to determine the goals and the audience of the commercial, and what we wanted to showcase. We desired to share the mission of SSU's QEP, The Write Attitude, and to show all that the QEP had to offer: writing-related events and contests, writing resources on campus, writing tutoring, and writing workshops.

The most important part of the planning and brainstorming stage was figuring out what the plot of the commercial would be. The challenge at hand was deciding what would capture the attention of students. I thought of the idea of making the commercial into a love-interest story. QEP Director Dr. Lisa Yount loved the idea and encouraged me to develop it to also incorporate our office's elements into the commercial.

I still remember that feeling while sitting with pen in hand and two to three sheets of paper before me. This was the first time I actually felt like I was in control of a story that was to be told. At heart, I was natural born writer, but I never challenged myself to do something as far as creating a script. Soon, creating this script became a personal and professional challenge for myself. I started off just by writing down what came to my mind first.

Pre-writing can either be extremely stressful or very freeing. If a person has no idea what direction they want to start in, the pre-writing phase can be intimidating and unbearable. Fortunately, the best way to start the pre-writing stage is to simply just write. That is exactly what I decided to do.

Transitioning into writing the first draft is where it began to get a little difficult. I realized that scriptwriting was completely different from regular free-writing. I had to determine the movements of the actors and in what scenes the actors would do certain things. In order to keep everything organized, I decided to make a two column chart.

One side was for the dialogue and actions of the actors/actresses and the other column was for settings, music selections, and what words would be shown on the screen. After two reviews, all I had to do was to run the script by everyone at our staff meeting. I pitched it like it was a story—which it was—just in this case, the story was being shown and not told. Everyone really liked the plot of the commercial and I brought it to life when I described the locations where we would shoot each scene. After pitching the commercial idea, we had to decide who our actor and actress would be, and how we were going to arrange and schedule for each of these scenes to be shot. By this point, the script was ready to be edited one last time and then printed.

Without noticing it, I had achieved my goal. I successfully wrote a TV commercial script. Of course I wasn't the next Shonda Rhimes, but it was definitely a start to developing my talents. Developing a script and transitioning through all of the stages of the writing process was important for my academic and professional development, but it was all the more rewarding to actually watch it on the big screen.

The Write Attitude TV Commercial

Written by Sierra Walton

Directed by Sierra Walton and Tydel Mosley

Editor Tydel Mosley

Produced by SSU Tiger's Roar TV

Cast

Sierra Walton

Joshua Cliatt

SSU Students & Faculty

SSU Writing Center Staff

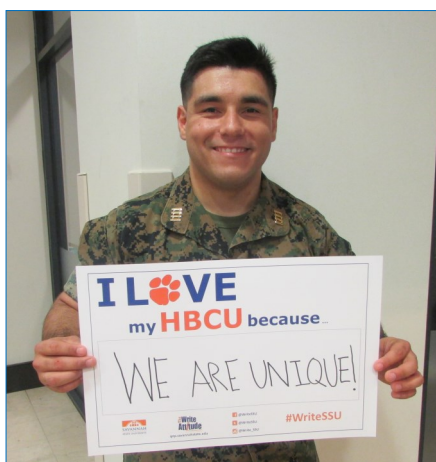


Watch
The Write Attitude
TV Commercial
on the
QEP Website
qep.savannahstate.edu.

The link to the video is on
our home page.

I LOVE MY HBCU BECAUSE...

The month of March is “I Love My HBCU Month.” The nationwide campaign was launched in 2012 by the Thurgood Marshall College Fund to increase awareness and appreciation of historically black colleges and universities in the country. At SSU, the QEP Student Ambassadors organized a 2-day event to invite students, faculty, and staff members to think and write some of the reasons they appreciate their HBCU. Almost 100 people participated! *Please, see more pictures on The Write Attitude Facebook Page @WriteSSU*



THE WRITE ATTITUDE SPRING CONTESTS

Congratulations to our 2016 Spring Writing Contest Winners!

FOUNDER'S DAY



1 Chantel White

BOBBY SEALE & THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY (in partnership with SSU SSS)



1 Travis Nixon

SSU GLOBAL CITIZEN (in partnership with SSU IEC)



1 Shaniqua Brown

PAINT CHIP POETRY CONTEST (in partnership with Asa H. Gordon Library)

Student Category

- 1 Shaniqua Brown**
- 2 Simone Rolle**

Faculty & Staff Category

- 1 Meghan Gerard, University Advancement Department**

MATH AWARENESS WEEK: QEP ESSAY CONTEST

- 1 E'Lona Levett**
- 2 Brandon Bacon**

*Thank you to students, faculty, and staff members for participating!
Please, check the QEP website qep.savannahstate.edu to view our upcoming contests and events.*

THE WRITE ATTITUDE: ALL ABOUT YOU

CALLING ALL POETS!

Would you like to participate in Poetry in the Air, a Write Attitude Radio Show?

Send your name, poems, and preferred contact information to qep@savannahstate.edu

Participate in the QEP writing workshops, events, and contests!

You will learn, may earn extra credit, and could win cash or other prizes!

Listen to **The Write Attitude Radio Shows** at qep.savannahstate.edu/About-QEP/Radio-Shows.aspx and watch our videos on **The Write Attitude TV** at qep.savannahstate.edu/About-QEP/The-Write-Attitude-TV.aspx

The Write Attitude & The QEP

The Write Attitude is SSU's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), a campus-wide initiative to enhance student learning by **improving attitudes about writing.**

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!

Get instant updates on **The Write Attitude workshops, events, and contests!**



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... and **CONTACT US!**

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