UNDERGRADUATE EMILY ADAMS WINS JOHN FRASER RAMSEY AWARD

Emily Adams, a junior double-majoring in History and International Studies, is the 2019 John Frasier Ramsey Award recipient. Named after a long-time member of our department, the Ramsey is one of the university’s Premier Awards, honoring students who embody the goals of a liberal education. Awardees receive a $7,000 cash prize and a “Great Ideas Tour” of Europe, modeled after Dr. Ramsey’s popular Great Ideas of Western Civilization course.

The Edmond, Oklahoma native has been involved in multiple research projects in the History Department, including comparative studies of Alexander the Great and the ways in which nations have addressed controversial public monuments. Currently, Adams is researching how US intrusions into Cold-War Cuba’s state sovereignty have affected relations among the US, Cuba, and Russia. For her Great Ideas Tour, she plans to visit Greece and Italy and, perhaps, England and Scotland.

After graduation, Adams hopes to pursue a dual degree in law and global policy or security studies. She believes that her travels will make her a “more culturally competent person” and prepare her for a career in government work. Adams describes the History Department as her “home away from home,” where supportive professors have taught her to not only be a good researcher but to “think about hot button issues in really interesting and critical ways,” too.

UNDERGRADUATES LAUNCH CRIMSON HISTORICAL REVIEW

History majors have launched the Crimson Historical Review (CHR), an undergraduate research journal. The idea for the journal started in Dr. Margaret Peacock’s undergraduate research seminar, where students reviewed one of the few undergraduate historical research journals in the U.S. and concluded that they could do better. Peacock and students Jodi Vadinsky and Warren Martin formed an editorial review board, creating the CHR, the second undergraduate research journal in the SEC. The CHR offers undergraduate authors the opportunity to publish original, peer-reviewed research covering any historical topic.

Students serving on the CHR’s review board practice peer-editing and critical thinking, gaining experience with the publishing process, layout design, and journal production. They also learned copy editing and other post-production skills through workshops conducted by UA Press. The review board is open to all majors.

The CHR’s goal is to gain a national profile for the undergraduate history research conducted not only at UA but nationwide. Starting next year, the CHR will open to national submissions. Submission details can be found at https://crimsonhistorical.ua.edu/ or by emailing crimsonhistorical@ua.edu.
2018-2019 AWARD-WINNING GRADUATE STUDENTS

Colonial Dames of America Essay Award

Jessica Brodt

Albert Burton Moore Memorial Award for Outstanding Graduate Student in European, Latin American, or Asian History.

Tanja Bacani

Chihperston G. Swindle Teaching Award
Awarded to the most outstanding graduate student teacher in the department.

JC Riggs

Frank Lawrence Owsley Memorial Scholarship for Superior Competency in American History

Aaron M. Phillips

Masters Student Teaching Award
Awarded to the most outstanding M.A. student teacher in the department.

Liam Adkison

Albert Burton Moor Memorial Award for outstanding Graduate Student in European, Latin American, or Asian History.

Tanja Bacani

Christopher G. Swindle Teaching Award
Awarded to the most outstanding graduate student teacher in the department.

Gary B. Mills

DOCTORAL STUDENT ASHLEY OBEIDIYI WINS MEDIEVAL ESSAY CONTEST

Last October, doctoral student Ashley Obediyi answered an essay submissions call from the Society of Medieval Feminists (SMF). The contest parameters were fairly open: the paper had to cover a topic relating to women, gender, and/or sexuality in the Middle Ages, and be fewer than 8,000 words. Obediyi’s submission, which began as a seminar paper under the guidance of Dr. Lesley Gordon, won first prize. This honor earned her a five-year SMF membership, as well as the article’s publication in the *Medieval Feminist Forum*'s winter 2019 issue.

SMF assigned Obediyi a society mentor, Dr. Jessica Barr of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, to assist with revisions. Barr is a literary scholar who researches mystical literature in the 12th – 14th centuries.

Obediyi’s paper analyzes the mystical writings of three medieval female philosophers - Mechthild of Magdeburg, Hadewijch of Brabant, and Marguerite Porete - who used discourses of courtly love and theology to reinforce and to subvert prescribed gender norms.

Obediyi’s biggest take away from this experience is the importance of perseverance. “No matter how many times your applications for grants and fellowships or your submissions for conferences and journals get denied, keep trying,” she says. “Do not give up and definitely do not despair. Keep working and keep submitting.”

DEPARTMENT HOSTS PROSPECTIVE GRADUATE STUDENTS

The University of Alabama Department of History hosted a visit day for prospective graduate students on Friday, March 1. Students began the day with a warm welcome from Dr. Daniel Riches, Director of Graduate Students, and then met with faculty during their open office hours. They spoke one-on-one with faculty members and socialized with current graduate students over lunch.

Later in the day, they toured campus, the W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, and the Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library. There was a symposium of current graduate students and faculty, followed by a dinner with current students.

The Department of History spent the day connecting with the prospective students, learning about their interests, and their goals for the future. It was a successful day which highlighted both the scholarly focus and strong sense of community which are central to the strength of the department.

Thanks to all of the prospective graduate students who visited The University of Alabama. The Department of History looks forward to welcoming many of them this fall. Thanks as well to the faculty and current graduate students that spent the day welcoming the prospective students and making this a wonderful visit for all. Roll Tide!

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TWO STUDENTS WIN RANDALL OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD

History Major Molly Buffington has won not one, but two 2019 Randall Outstanding Undergraduate Research Awards for research projects conducted in the departments of History and Modern Languages and Classics.

Her honors thesis in History, titled “A Faith That Sings: Liturgy as a Theological Tool in the Reformation,” completed under Dr. James Mixson’s supervision, examined the crafting and refining of a Lutheran liturgy that was intended to teach complex theological concepts, facilitate conversion, and even insult non-Lutherans.

She also wrote an article with Dr. Kirk Summers of Modern Languages and Classics, titled “Hyperphysicism and Mystery in the Sacramentarian Dispute of the 1570s.” Their essay, which will be published in an upcoming collection of essays on Calvinist theologian Theodore Beza, examines the intense theological debate between Lutherans and Calvinists over the translation of a specific passage of the Bible, and differing interpretations of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Margaret Lawson won a 2019 Randall Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award for a research project conducted under Dr. John Giggie’s supervision.

The project, titled “History of Us: Empowering High School Students to Confront the Legacy of Lynching,” helped guide students at Central High School to conduct research on lynchings in Tuscaloosa. Using both historical newspapers and genealogical databases, students studied both the circumstances of the victims’ deaths and the details of their lives. They examined how the white supremacy culture that lay at the heart of lynching had far-reaching social implications in the Tuscaloosa community, including modern patterns of segregation, judicial inequality, and mass incarceration.

Working with the Tuscaloosa Civil Rights Task Force, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the Equal Justice Initiative, the students will dedicate a monument to local lynching victims in May 2020.

PEER MENTORS VOLUNTEER TO HELP THEIR FELLOW STUDENTS SUCCEED

The Peer Mentors is a group of remarkable undergraduates who excelled in History survey courses and want to share their knowledge of how to succeed in these classes. They help teach critical skills to students enrolled in 100-level classes, including how to take notes effectively, how to study for exams, and how to write historically-focused essays.

These tireless volunteers have helped many first-year and seasoned students perform at the peak of their ability.

2018-2019 Peer Mentors:

- Allie Thatcher
- Allisen Lowrance
- Bridgette Davis
- Bryce Ledbetter
- Caitlyn White
- Camryn Walker
- Elise Helton
- Harlyn Cowart
- Jana Venable
- Jodi Vadinsky
- Katelyn Adams
- Kendall Wilson
- Lauren Morris
- Lauren Van Fleet
- Lucie Derikx
- Margaret Lawson
- Mason Blanke
- Matthew Culver
- Molly Steiner
- Pariss Bettis
- Tatiana Sousa
SUPPORTING THE DEPARTMENT

The extent and quality of the activities sponsored by the Department of History depends in large measure on our available funds and the generous support of donors. Endowments or significant targeted donations will enable us to increase our national visibility, expand our production of nationally-recognized scholarship, and to grow History programming and events. Naming opportunities are possible in conjunction with such gifts.

For more information about any of the opportunities to support The University of Alabama Department of History, please contact our Department Office Manager, Marla Scott, at scott076@ua.edu or 205.348.7104.

To make a general donation online, please visit https://history.ua.edu/giving/.

*Your support enables the Department to:*

- Fund endowed scholarships and awards for outstanding current and prospective students.
- Support the research travel and professional development of both faculty and graduate students.
- Fund student organizations such as Phi Alpha Theta and the Graduate History Association.
- Fund student publications, such as the department’s award-winning *Southern Historian* journal.