MUM Screenwriting Guest Lecturer Wins Two Academy Awards

The 2019 Academy Awards had an unusual connection to MUM, with screenwriting guest lecturer Peter Farrelly winning Best Picture and Best Original Screenplay for his film *Green Book* and Joanna Plafsky, a founder of MUM’s David Lynch Graduate School of Cinematic Arts, being an executive producer on the film *Skin*, which won an Oscar for Best Live Action Short.

Mr. Farrelly was a founding adviser for the David Lynch MFA in Screenwriting, MUM’s low-residency program in which the students take courses online, work with a mentor, and come to campus each semester for a 10-day residency.

“We are so fortunate to have had such a talented filmmaker as Peter Farrelly share his expertise with our students,” said Dorothy Rompalske, program creator and director. “He came to Fairfield for the first MFA in Screenwriting residency in February of 2017 and helped us launch the program. Pete was just starting pre-production of *Green Book* at the time. He spoke a lot about writing the film, generously allowed students to read the screenplay, then later Skyped with them during a break in the filming.”

Those same students met with the director again this past December during their final residency in Los Angeles to discuss the completed movie.

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Nakisha Hobbs to Deliver 2019 Commencement Address

Nakisha Hobbs, who cofounded and directs the Village Leadership Academy in Chicago, has been selected to give the 2019 commencement address Saturday, June 22, at 1:00 p.m. in the Maharishi Patanjali Golden Dome.

The Village Leadership Academy is a kindergarten through 8th-grade school with 700 students, whose focus is “to transform urban youth into global leaders” and which incorporates the Transcendental Meditation® technique throughout.

During MUM’s Changemakers Conference last spring, Ms. Hobbs shared a moving and inspiring story about what she learned from being the child of struggling teen parents and going on to found a school to empower children with backgrounds like hers.

Other innovative features of her school include a practical approach to leadership development, a world studies and social justice curriculum, and access to global travel through the World Scholars Program.

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FROM THE FOUNDER

“I was most moved by her at the event,” said Jeffrey Abramson, chair of the MUM Board of Trustees. “She was articulate and authentic. She described how being a child of a teenage mom and the 12 schools she attended by the time she started college taught her the need to change education and create her own place of learning. She is indeed a changemaker and represents the next generation of leaders in education who see education more like Maharishi envisioned it.”

Ms. Hobbs is a fourth-generation educator. She holds an undergraduate degree from University of Illinois at Chicago and a master’s in early childhood education from Roosevelt University.

Prior to the Village Leadership Academy, Ms. Hobbs cofounded It Takes A Village Early Learning Centers, which provide early childhood education.

Her MUM presentation can be viewed on YouTube at bit.ly/2VnzstD.

Students Again Selling Veggie Subscriptions

For the second year, students studying regenerative organic agriculture are offering a membership program that delivers a weekly box of fresh vegetables to subscribers.

Referred to as community-supported agriculture, the program entails pre-purchasing a share of the produce that the farm will grow during the 2019 season.

A membership will offer 18 weekly boxes of produce for $380 beginning June 11 and continuing through October 8. To sign up, email sustainableliving@mum.edu or phone (641) 472-1164.

Only 30 customers will be accommodated this year, so those interested are asked to sign up by April 1 to secure their membership.

Receive The Review via Email

Send an email to jkarpen@mum.edu to be added to the list.

Master’s in Software Development Open to Those Changing Careers

Those looking to change careers can now enroll in a new master’s degree program in software development that’s open to anyone with a bachelor’s degree in any field and an aptitude for coding. No previous experience is required.

Plus, the 12-month program is so certain that they’ll be able to teach the requisite skills that they’re making an unusual guarantee: students can join the program without paying any tuition upfront. They’ll only be obligated to pay once they get a job.

The requirement of a coding aptitude can be satisfied by taking an assessment offered by the MUM computer science faculty.

The program, which will begin this fall, will focus on in-demand coding skills in areas such as JavaScript, web and mobile applications, and cloud computing.

The courses will be taught by the faculty in the renowned Computer ProfessionalsSM program, which has trained over 2,000 graduates.

Students will not only learn essential skills, they’ll also receive extensive coaching in career strategies, including company searching, resume writing, interview skills, and evaluating job offers.

“For people interested in a career move into the robust industry of software development, this is a great opportunity,” said Luke Hillis, program administrator.

The new program is being offered by The Cambridge Center for Software Development, which is a division within Maharishi University of Management focusing strictly on software development.

Tuition and fees for the program are $33,530. For those who choose to live on campus, the cost is an additional $9,080 for housing and meals.

Students have the option of using low-interest federal student loans to cover tuition, housing, and meals, plus cash for expenses.

Those taking advantage of deferred tuition will take out a bank loan once they have a position as a software developer and will pay a percentage of their income each month for a period of typically three to four years. The university will help the students arrange the loan.

For more details on the program, see msd.mum.edu.
New Book Explores Secret of World-Class Performers

A new book coauthored by former MUM professor Harald Harung of Oslo Metropolitan University and professor Fred Travis offers an easy-to-read account of the defining characteristic of world-class performers – an integrated brain – and how one can develop it.

Titled, *World-Class Brain*, the 130-page book begins by outlining the results of three studies: on Olympic athletes, top managers, and symphony orchestra musicians. These top performers were found to have high levels of brain integration according to EEG measurements.

The book then explains in simple terms what brain integration means and presents various ways to increase it, such as playing a musical instrument, exercising, and meditation.

The authors then discuss the research on the Transcendental Meditation technique showing that it is the most effective way to develop high levels of brain integration.

The book goes into detail about peak experiences associated with brain integration in the several groups of subjects. It then discusses research on long-term practitioners of Transcendental Meditation who are experiencing higher states of consciousness and describes the defining characteristics of these higher states.

The final two chapters explain the research showing that brain integration can affect organizations and all of society.

The book is available on Amazon.

Study Shows Benefit for Nurses

The Transcendental Meditation technique helped to reduce “compassion fatigue” and burnout in a group of 27 nurses while also improving resilience according to a study recently published in *Journal for Nurses in Professional Development*.

Standardized assessments showed a significant improvement after four months of practice.

“For years I watched nurses struggle to care for their patients and themselves,” said lead author Jennifer Bonamer, PhD, RN–BC, Nursing Professional Development Specialist at Sarasota Memorial Health Care System in Sarasota, Florida. “Working with people who are suffering trauma eventually takes a toll and produces what’s come to be called compassion fatigue.”

Dr. Bonamer searched the literature for self-care methods that could help nurses cope with burnout and hypothesized that the Transcendental Meditation technique would help relieve compassion fatigue in nurses and improve their ability to bounce back from the challenges of work.

Most of the 27 nurses in the study were Registered Nurses working directly with patients.

The researchers used the Professional Quality of Life Scale, which measures compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue. After four months of practicing Transcendental Meditation, the nurses experienced a 9.2% increase in compassion satisfaction and 18% reduction in burnout.

Resilience was measured via the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale. Again after four months, the nurses experienced a 16.9% increase in resilience.

“These surveys are widely used with demonstrated validity and reliability,” Dr. Bonamer said. “They demonstrated quantitatively what the nurses reported: they felt better and enjoyed their work more.”

President Hagelin to Speak at TMC Celebration

MUM President John Hagelin will be a key speaker at the 50th anniversary webcast celebration of TMC (Transcendental Meditation Center, Inc.) on Sunday, March 17, at 1:00 p.m.

TMC was founded to bring inner peace and enlightenment to communities of color, and has introduced the Transcendental Meditation technique to underserved communities throughout the U.S. and internationally.

The free, 90-minute event will include entertainment and inspiring talks on the impact of TMC throughout the U.S. and beyond, as well as the role of TMC as a model for community outreach today.

Speakers and performers will include educator Rena Boone, principal George Rutherford, actor Bill Duke, and singer/songwriter Sheree Brown.

A viewing party will be held at the Fairfield Public Library. It will begin with a group meditation at 12:45 p.m., and the celebration will begin at 1:00 p.m.

See www.tmclegacyandbeyond.com. Or email TMC.50th.anniversary@gmail.com.
MUM’s second ChangeMakers event, held last month, inspired the students to play a significant role and make positive change for themselves and their environment.

The event was titled “Is College Bad for Your Brain: How an Epidemic of Stress is Overwhelming Students – and What You Can Do About It.”

To complement the main stage event in Dalby Hall, student organizers came up with the idea of a Love ThySelf Week. This challenge week was based on the idea that the best antidote to stress is actions of self-care and self-love.

Students were inspired to post their successes with new behaviors of good food, meditation, rest, and exercise as a proactive strategy to create integration and balance.

The students’ week kicked off with an open mic on the theme of self-love and culminated with a post-event open mic celebration.

Students used the new “vision board” in the student lounge, created by Luna Pinder, to share their artwork, inspirations, and quotes celebrating these themes. Prizes were awarded to those who were most active in their postings.

In addition, event organizer Michael Sternfeld worked with a group of five student leaders to participate in the main event in Dalby Hall. These students – Kirby Shields, Chevonne Height, Emily Mauntel, Kent Kachejian, and Chris Baluja – spoke about their experiences during a student panel and also appeared in a video that underscored the effect of stress and their solutions for college students.

Former Student Government President Chevonne Height gave the opening welcome in Dalby Hall, appeared on the student panel, and then was the subject of Professor Fred Travis’s live EEG demonstration.

In addition, Haley Spitzfaden conducted one of the interview panels with experiential education expert Steve Langerud. And graduate student Danny Hitchings conducted the interview with fellow veteran Dave Zobeck, who heads a meditation program at Norwich University, the nation’s oldest military academy.

Finally, Dylene Cymraes led an ever-popular World Cafe on Saturday afternoon after the event, in which students had a chance to interact on a more intimate level with the presenters from the Friday event. The World Cafe is a dynamic experiential format in which a particular question is explored. The question for this event was, How do we take full responsibility for creating a more balanced, centered life for ourselves and our greater community?

Videos from “Is College Bad for Your Brain” can be viewed at www.mum.edu/changemakers-event-2019.

Chandre Morales to Offer Piano Concert

Mum’s 2016 graduate of Maharishi School who has been composing music since the age of eight, will offer a piano concert on Friday, March 15, at 7:30 p.m. in Dalby Hall.

He studied piano for seven years with Patricia Crim, a former professional opera singer and accomplished pianist who has trained many young Fairfield musicians.

His compositions range from pieces inspired by the simple rhythms and dances of Latin America to music for the soul.