DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING & VETERANS ORAL HISTORY AT ECSU
Professor Jeff Whelan & Graphic Design majors: Jasmine Simmons (boom mic) & Keven Fitzgerald, Jr. (camera)
# Table of Contents

- A Message from Dr. Ward 3
- Botany + Molecular Biology: Targeted Infusion Project 6
- ECSU’s Accredited Sport Management Program 8
- Documentary Filmmaking & Veterans Oral History 10
- ECSU Viking Battalion Equipment Procurement Program 14

## FACULTY & STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

- Dr. Kimberly Fitchett-Bazemore
- Mr. Kelly Ford
- Mr. Clarence Goss, Jr.
- Dr. Debjani Kanjilal
- Ms. Brande McCleese
- Dr. Dexter Purnell
- Dr. Tarsha Rogers
- Mr. Raynard Townsel

## OTHER CONTRIBUTORS:

- LTC Robert Freeman
- MSG Keith Nile
- Mr. Jeffrey Whelan
A Message from Dr. Ward

There is a little-known fact about me. As Provost, at the beginning of every semester, I choose a word that allows me to focus on a specific priority. I share this word with the Deans Council and the Associate Vice Chancellors as I expect them to remind me of my direction and hold me accountable throughout the year.

In previous semesters, I’ve chosen such words as “FOCUS” and “DETERMINATION” but for Spring 2021, my chosen word is “BALANCE”.

No one could have ever prepared for the drastic disruption to everyday life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While we all tried to maintain the normal function of work it was impossible to ignore the effects the pandemic had on our lives. As Provost, my objective for ECSU was clear: to figure out a way to continue to educate students through the Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 semesters while keeping students, faculty and staff safe. Looking back, I relied heavily on my previous words, focus and determination, and I am truly thankful for the hard work and dedication of the AVCs, deans, chairs, faculty senate executive committee, Academic Reintegration Committee, faculty and staff.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects on so many people’s lives during the last year, it has also presented opportunities for us to think differently and bring things into balance by:

- Holding on to the foundation of what makes ECSU great while continuing to innovate to meet the needs of faculty, staff and students
- Ensuring students get the theoretical knowledge to master (understand) fundamental concepts while exposing them to hands-on experiences that allow them to put the theory into practice
- Investing time in seeing ECSU grow to its fullest potential while still making sure that we allocate time for our personal lives
- Investing in faculty and staff while still being good stewards of our financial resources
- Using technology to improve manual processes, while recognizing that we still need the human component to ensure that we are properly addressing issues.

As I re-imagine this newsletter, I want it to better reflect Academic Affairs as a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and collaborative space that highlights our academic programming and embraces our faculty, staff and students, but with this re-imagination comes a need for proper balance. My favorite writer and motivational speaker, John Maxwell once stated, “If we are growing, we are always going to be outside our comfort zone.”
As a mathematician, I am often data-driven, since numbers have always been second nature to me, but I have recently begun to recognize the importance of balancing data with storytelling. While I believe numbers and data do have a role in telling the story of Academic Affairs, I realize that we have not done enough to bring attention to the amazing programs and projects that our faculty, staff, and students enjoy doing.

This semester, you will notice a better balance between the important information that I need to share with you and those stories and experiences that make me so proud to serve in this role as your Provost. As we have embarked upon yet another semester during the COVID-19 pandemic, together we will find the balance we need to progress through, triumphantly. I hope you enjoy this newsletter as much as I have enjoyed pulling it all together to share with you.

Viking Pride…Vikings Forward

Farrah Ward
From The Desk of Provost
As I walked up the central stairs of the Jenkins Science Center, I anticipated the meeting that I was headed into. I had just entered the building. The weather outside was a bit chillier than normal for North Carolina, but far colder than the tropical fields of Jamaica where the woman I was going to meet did her field work as a young undergraduate student in Biology. I was on my way to meet Dr. Margaret Young who is the PI (Principal Investigator) of the Targeted Infusion Project at ECSU. Elizabeth City State University seeks to strengthen the plant science curriculum by integrating Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) into two courses required by all biology majors. The courses are General Botany and Molecular Biology. One of Dr. Young’s primary goals for the Targeted Infusion Project is to expose and establish a pathway for our students to enter plant science careers.

Dr. Young shared, “The pandemic may have interrupted the flow of the grant that started in 2019, but the labs are run safely face to face. Most students enter the department as Pre-Med. This project exposes students to another area of Biology.” CURE is an acronym for ‘Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience’. It is a novel form of classroom-based courses that offer students hands-on experience doing original research and offer faculty the opportunity to generate new information within their discipline.

The General Botany course presently has 15 students enrolled
this semester, and the Molecular Biology students are transforming tomato var. Florida Lanai, with two genes. This tomato variety is important for studying viruses. It has never been transformed. The General Botany students are working on Cleome, potential C4 model system. They are trying to develop a new tissue culture method for this plant. C4 plants evolve to withstand higher temperatures. C4 plants are adapted to hot, dry environments, and include the important human food crops such as corn, and sugar cane. “Climate change has affected many crops. We need to double agricultural production by 2050. One of the limiting steps in breeding and introducing new genes into crop plants is plant tissue culture/transformation. Our students are learning how to do these important steps. The students actually assist in designing the experiments,” Dr. Young stated.

Presently Dr. Young’s research lab consists of 5 students: 2 seniors, and 3 sophomores. The part time lab tech for the project just graduated from ECSU and was a Targeted Infusion research student. Dr. Young explained that, “I love to take students in their freshmen and sophomore years. This way by their junior year they will only need moderate supervision in the lab due to their research experiences.”

The National Science Foundation Targeted Infusion Projects support the development, implementation, and study of evidence-based innovative models and approaches for improving the preparation and success of HBCU undergraduate students so that they may pursue STEM graduate programs and/or careers. Furthermore, Dr. Young explained, “The US is not producing enough people that are interested in careers in plants. Another goal of the grant is to get our students and others to notice the importance of plants. We do not focus on them sufficiently.” The Targeted Infusion Project allows visiting scientist to share their experiences with the cohorts in order to encourage them and promote plant science. The first visiting scientist was Dr. Benjamin Graham, an ECSU graduate, who received his PhD in plant biology from NC State University. Dr. Young was his mentor. That’s Targeted.

Dr. Young spreads the plant science message via Instagram and Twitter.

Instagram @revealingplants
Twitter @revealplants
The Department of Business, Accounting, and Sport Management (DBASM) at Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) was accredited by AACSB for the first time in 2010, and the accreditation was reaffirmed in 2015. AACSB International (AACSB) is the premier business school accreditation agency in the world. Only five percent of business schools around the world have earned this level of recognition. Elizabeth City State University is one of only 22 of the 101 HBCUs to hold an AACSB accreditation and is also the only HBCU in the nation to have an AACSB-accredited undergraduate Sport Management program.

The Business Administration and Accounting programs were part of the first two accreditation cycles. However, in the recent reaffirmation cycle, Sport Management which is a new program in the department was also seeking the accreditation. DBASM successfully completed the reaffirmation process for the 2020-2025 cycle for all three programs: Business Administration, Accounting, and Sport Management. The faculty, staff, and students worked relentlessly to ensure a successful accreditation process. The Continuous Improvement Review (CIR) report was drafted using inputs from all faculty members, current students, and former students. Each faculty member contributed in multiple ways to the accreditation process for Sport Management, and the reaffirmation of accreditation for the Business Administration and Accounting programs.

Current students serve on the Student Advisory Board with alumni and local business leaders making up the Business Advisory Board. Both these boards share invaluable insights into the needs of the various program stakeholders. The programs interact with the stakeholders directly as well. For example, former students visit
is excited to be the first HBCU Sport Management program to be accredited by AACSB. AACSB is the gold standard that all business schools strive to achieve, and it is a great honor to accomplish this goal. It has required tremendous support from all the staff and faculty within the Business, Accounting and Sport Management Department along with a strong commitment from Elizabeth City State University. Achieving AACSB means that the sport management students at Elizabeth City State University will receive the highest standards in sport business education and will increase the level of expectation placed upon our students. This will give our students a leg-up as they go forth into the sport industry and can say they have attended an AACSB-accredited school and sport management program.”
Documentary Filmmaking and Veterans Oral History at ECSU

Graphic Design and Digital Media Students on the Rise

CONTRIBUTORS: JEFF WHELAN AND CLARENCE GOSS, JR.
In the Spring 2019, Sharon D. Raynor, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences assembled, what she called at the time the, “ECSU Documentary Team,” because she had been asked by Provost Ward and Chancellor Dixon to collaborate with the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NCDMVA) to document the first-ever North Carolina Veterans Lineage Day to be held at the North Carolina Museum of History during Black History Month. Dean Raynor, given her background collecting oral history narratives and documenting the experiences of war veterans in North Carolina, knew this had to be a collaborative and multidisciplinary team effort. Dean Raynor stated, “I first contacted Prof. Jeff Whelan, Associate Professor of Graphic Design and Clarence Goss, Academic Communication Specialist and Graphic Designer, because I was familiar with their work. Once they agreed to be a part of this endeavor, the team began to grow. We then asked professors and students from the graphic design, history, digital media and military science programs to join us and so the collaboration began.”

The collaboration with Assistant Secretary, Ariel Aponte and Inter-Agency Coordinator, Greg Bethea of the NCDMVA also involved working closely with the NC Museum of History and the NC State Archives to record and document the experiences of African American World War II Veterans living in North Carolina. After several pre-production meetings, the ECSU Documentary Team packed up all equipment and traveled to Raleigh to spend the day documenting living history. Dean Raynor commented, “It was important to the team that students were able to get hands-on experience during this time, from managing the set operations and setting up equipment to actually filming parts of the veterans’ stories. We wanted them to learn the methodology of such ethnographic fieldwork as they prepare for future careers.” The students’ played such a pivotal role in the production during the day’s events that it was noticed by our partners as well as the war veterans that we were interviewing. To be able to witness the bridging of generations from our students to the WWII veterans in their mid-90’s was a special part of the day’s events. The students, Jasmine Simmons, Hailey Ryan and Keven Fitzgerald, were very instrumental in this documentary process. Prof. Jeff Whelan commented “it was wonderful to see our students take what they had learned in our film classes and function just like a professional film crew. They helped set the tone for the interviews, making everyone feel at home in spite of all the lights and equipment. It was also great to have them meet these real-life heroes and hear their stories first-hand.” Whelan and Goss as well as the other faculty team members, Master Sergeant Keith Nile (Military Science and History), Army Veteran Latif Tarik (History) and Army Veteran Kelly Ford (Digital Media and Sound Recording) work so closely with our students epitomizes ECSU’s commitment to student success and our determination to provide that necessary guidance.

The ECSU Documentary Team produced the first film (in a proposed...
As we continued this collaboration with the NCDMVA, we partnered on a grant with North Carolina Humanities so we could continue to tell the stories of North Carolina’s African American war veterans. Since the beginning of this project, both Henri LeGendre and Elizabeth Johnson passed away, which further stressed the importance of documenting our history and having ECSU students and faculty as a part of such a monumental collaboration which is an exciting innovative endeavor for the university.

series) from the event, “In the Face of Adversity The Service and Legacy of African American Veterans of WWII,” featuring Henri A. LeGendre of the 9th Cavalry (Buffalo Soldiers), Charles Stevens of the “Triple Nickle” Battalion, Corporal John R. Thompson of the Montford Point Marines and Elizabeth B. Johnson of the 6888th Postal Battalion, is available for viewing at

https://youtu.be/Ki3ArT3o5Lw
Throughout the year the ECSU Senior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (SROTC) took advantage of the COVID-19 Pandemic and did not slow its work to improve the program by addressing the equipment and supply needs for the Cadets enrolled in the program. The origin of the Viking Battalion Equipment Procurement Program is derived from the Battalion’s commitment to excellence, professionalism, and optimal performance. The Professor of Military Science (PMS), Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Freeman Jr., whose recent assignments include, Director of Logistics (J4) for Special Operations Command South and Group Logistics Officer (S4) for the Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG), assumed his position in July of 2020 and after a thorough inspection of the equipment and supplies, he identified shortfalls and developed a strategy to address the shortages.

During ECSU Senior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (SROTC) classroom instruction, leadership labs, physical training, and field training exercises, Cadets employ various equipment sets that are essential to negotiating challenging training requirements. In order to improve the training experience, performance of Cadets, and to modernize current equipment inventories, LTC Freeman, MSG Keith Nile, the Senior Military Instructor, Viking Battalion Cadre, Staff, and Senior Cadets identified outdated, unserviceable, inoperable, and obsolete equipment, which was not consistent with the PMS’ vision and intent for Viking Battalion.

After this assessment, LTC Freeman, who is a U.S. Army Logistics Officer with a strong logistics background and network, who is a HBCU graduate himself, used his military community networks and reached out to several Army organizations, in order to modernize Viking Battalion’s equipment inventories. He contacted the talented logisticians of AWG and they were excited and eager to assist. The collaborative efforts enabled Viking Battalion to go from an under-supplied SROTC program, to one of the best. The collaboration is ongoing with more equipment scheduled to arrive in the following weeks.

The Viking Battalion Equipment
Procurement Program has played a pivotal role in enabling Cadets to perform at their best. The new equipment has renewed the Cadets’ sense of pride and bolstered confidence. The procurement program is a continual process that will endure in order to keep the Cadets of Viking Battalion supplied with the best tools available, growing the reputation of the university in the production of the highest quality future leaders in service to their Nation. Resources are an essential aspect in performance in higher education, as well as the professional world. MSG Nile shared, “Like any profession, the tools provided can make the difference between failure or success, especially in the United States Army. A SROTC program can outperform competing universities in the areas of classroom engagement, organizational pride, and technological skill-sets. With equipment and supplies arriving nearly weekly, the Department of Military Science is growing and expanding in the areas of enrollment and retention, making it a fully competitive and desirable option for those seeking service in the Armed Forces in the northeast North Carolina region.”
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This newsletter is the beginning of many communications as the Viking ship continues to sail into the future. Faculty members who shared their teaching, research and service endeavors made this edition possible. This volume by no means encompasses all of the student and faculty members’ accomplishments. There is much to report. Thus, we encourage your ongoing participation in future publications.

ACCREDITATIONS
Elizabeth City State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award degrees at the baccalaureate and master’s levels.

Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4501 for questions about the accreditation of ECSU.

STRATEGIC PLAN
Elizabeth City State University’s plan for 2020-2025, Forging Our Future, focuses on how to best utilize our strengths to serve our students in providing access to high-quality, affordable education at North Carolina’s premier institution.

ECSU is where leaders are created. Leaders who are courageous, resilient, and empowered. Our strategic plan is built with integrity and compassion, supporting our students, faculty and staff as we develop the innovators, entrepreneurs, pioneers, and creators of tomorrow.

Our 2020-2025 plan was intentionally developed with a vision for our collective future. Our high-quality academic programs align with community demands, meet employer needs, enhance our region and state, and drive economic development to guarantee the future success and sustainability of ECSU.

We live to serve our students. Viking Pride is not just about the institution - it is about the people. People who serve humanity with a passion for life-long learning and strive for excellence as the standard. This plan supports your purpose in life.

We are a proud family, and together, we will continue our legacy of success!

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:
Dr. Sharon Raynor, News Editor
Ms. Ella Holley, News Manager
Mr. Clarence Goss, Jr., Media Director
Ms. Courtney Hancock, Digital Media Intern
Ms. Shanese Jones, Graphic Design Intern

1704 MEDIA PRODUCTIONS
1704 Weeksville Road
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
252.335.2342 | www.ecsu.edu

ECSU is a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina System.