

# UNDERGRADUATE

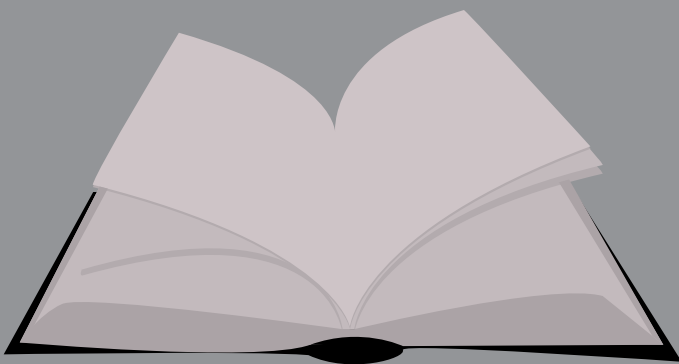
Research & Creative Activity

# NEWSLETTER



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Volume No. 2



# Highlights

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A professor and undergraduate student dive into MTV's *16 and Pregnant* and *Teen Mom* in an analytical way.

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The Learning Assistants of KSU present their research to AT&T executives and KSU faculty.

## PRESIDENT'S EMERGING GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM pg. 7

Danielle Ereddia, Melissa Kramschuster and Leslie Brown share their experiences from the President's Emerging Global Scholars Program.

# RESEARCH LEADS TO PUBLISHED BOOK

Interview with an Undergraduate Researcher (Kimberly Wallace Stewart) and her Faculty mentor (Dr. Guglielmo)

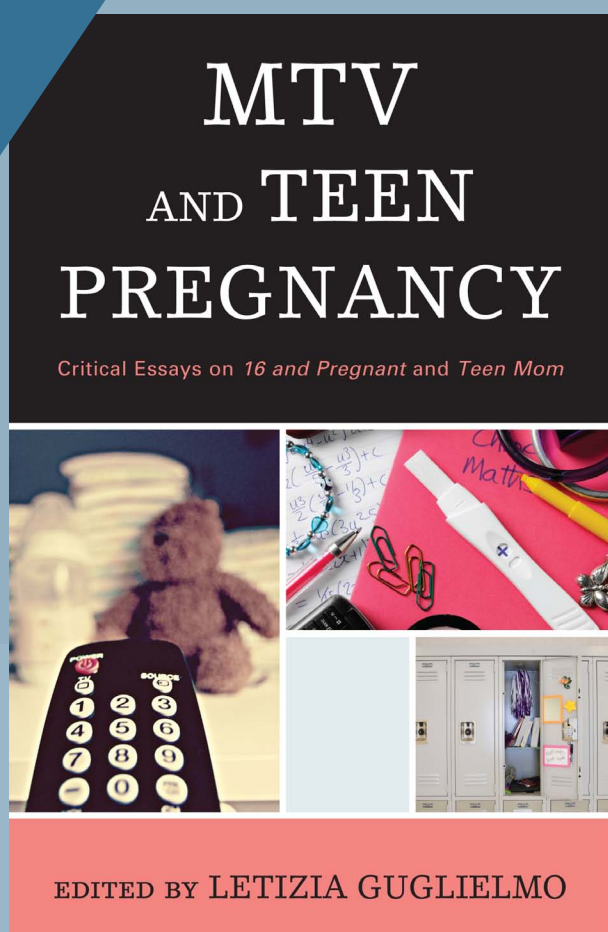
Dr. Letizia Guglielmo, Associate Professor of English, taught an undergraduate course titled “Women Writing the Web”

during the fall of 2010. As a result of taking this course, undergraduate student Kimberly Wallace Stewart approached Dr. Guglielmo seeking a research opportunity. The pair decided on the topic of teen pregnancy and particularly how popular MTV programs *16 and Pregnant* and *Teen Mom* depict the subject. Their research led to presentations at two national conferences and eventually a published book. CETL was able to interview the two women for more details.

**CETL:** *Dr. Guglielmo, What advice would you give to undergraduate researchers with similar goals?*

**LG:** “Be persistent and aim high; you never know where your work will get accepted. Think about topics that are timely and are relevant. Ours was a current topic on MTV,

so it had that public appeal. I recommend that students reach out to faculty with whom they are interested in working, even if they do not have a specific project in mind initially.” ▶



**CETL:** *What was the most exciting part about really seeing your research come to life?*

LG: “Kim is an excellent student and researcher, and that made the project truly enjoyable. The publication of the book also moved quickly, which can be uncommon with these projects. I think that’s partially because we enjoyed the work, but also because it needed to move quickly to keep up with the conversations that were taking place publicly with *Teen Mom* and *16 and Pregnant*. We both dove in, and Kim was just as committed as I was. There was a level of mentoring that took place, but she really held up her end of the project.”



**From Left:** Enid Schatz, Anastasia Todd, Letizia Guglielmo, Jennifer Fallas, Clare Daniel

**CETL:** *Why would you encourage more students and faculty to work together on research projects like yours? How did the partnership benefit you and Kimberly?*

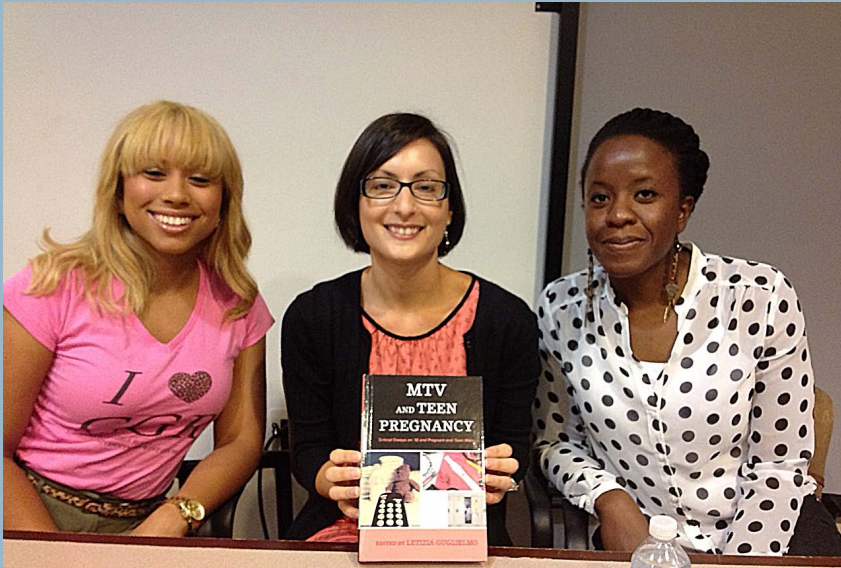
LG: “I think for a lot of faculty teaching in graduate programs, collaborating with students is a natural outgrowth of that teaching. Working with undergraduate students in a research setting is still less common, but these collaborations can be just as fruitful and exciting. It’s great preparation for students who are planning for graduate school and another way for students to carve out an area of specialized expertise that they may not get from their classes.”

“Be persistent and aim high; you never know where your work will get accepted. Think about topics that are timely and relevant.”

-Dr. Letizia Guglielmo

**CETL:** *Do you think that there might be a place for future publications on furthering the research? Do you have any more presentation plans?*

LG: “Actually, we did one presentation for the Gender and Women’s Studies program at KSU last semester, and we talked about the project and how it came about. Kim shared her experience as an undergraduate researcher and what that experience was like for her. She is now in graduate school close by, so we definitely have the opportunity to keep working together. I’m currently working on another book now which Kim is contributing to.” ▶



*From Left:* Macey Shonyo, Letizia Guglielmo, Kimberly Wallace Stewart

**CETL:** *Ms. Wallace Stewart, where are you currently going to school?*

KWS: "I'm going to Georgia State University for a Master's degree in Mental Health Counseling, but I graduated from Kennesaw with a Bachelor in Psychology and minor in Applied Statistics and Data Mining"

**CETL:** *How did you become interested in the research?*

KWS: "I was taking a course with Dr. Guglielmo in gender studies, which was a really interesting class. She had mentioned getting involved in research as an undergraduate student, and I spoke with her about any open projects. Dr. Guglielmo offered to do a new project with me. We both had interests in teen pregnancy, sexuality education, and MTV's *16 and Pregnant*, and decided it would be a good place to start."

**CETL:** *What are your future goals with the research?*

KWS: "Nothing is set right now, although I think that there is definitely a lot left to explore in that topic."

**CETL:** *How was the research conducted?*

KWS: "We looked into the program in a very analytical way. Our time consisted of exploring many available resources with the program, watching several episodes, and gathering research in the area of teen pregnancy and gender."

**CETL:** *What was your biggest accomplishment?*

KWS: "The entire process was a success and everything that came out of it was amazing, especially being able to distribute the information we gathered in many academic venues. Working with Dr. Guglielmo was wonderful; she is just such a generous person." ■

“The entire process was a success and everything that came out of it was amazing.”

-Kimberly Wallace Stewart

# KENNESAW MOUNTAIN UNDERGRADUATE MATHEMATICS CONFERENCE



For more info  
on the Kennesaw  
Mountain Undergraduate  
Mathematics Conference, contact  
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The third annual Kennesaw Mountain Undergraduate Mathematics Conference took place on November 8th and 9th last fall at Kennesaw State University.

The conference allowed undergraduate students to present their research to peers and well-known mathematicians, and provided an opportunity for networking in the mathematical community.

KSU students exhibited seven poster presentations, and over twenty five 15-minute student talks took place over the two-day conference. 176 total participants, representing 22 universities, attended the KMUMC.

Keynote speakers included Robert Beeler from East Tennessee State University, Martin Golubitsky from Ohio State University, and Tatyana Sorokina from Towson University.

Students were also exposed to information about graduate school and career opportunities in a panel featuring experts in the industry. Speakers came from Bank of America, Link Analytics, Wellpoint, Lockheed Martin, Home Depot, and Cardlytics to hear inspiring talks on how their companies depend on mathematics. ■

# LEARNING ASSISTANTS PRESENT TO KSU FACULTY AND AT&T

For more information, please contact Nancy Burney at [nburney@kennesaw.edu](mailto:nburney@kennesaw.edu)



Core Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) classes like Calculus and Precalculus have historically high DFW (drop, fail, withdrawl) rates. The K-CLUE (Kennesaw Community Learning for Undergraduate Engagement) program, launched by the Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics in the fall of 2013, addresses this issue in two ways.

The first is Study Buddy, a smartphone app created by KSU Information Systems Professor Solomon Negash, which provides a convenient means of inviting students to study groups. The other component is the Learning Assistant program. Learning Assistants (LAs) support students in high DFW classes through group study

sessions both during class and outside of class.

In these sessions, Learning Assistants implement teaching techniques learned through a course entitled *Introduction to Mathematics Teaching and Learning*. Nancy Burney, the coordinator of the Learning Assistant program stated that “the goals for this class were to teach the LAs different pedagogies and how to implement them, culminating in a poster presentation based on pedagogical research performed by each LA. Some titles of the presentations included “The Impact of Learning Assistants in the Classroom”, “Student Study Networks: Does Size Matter”,

and “Teaching Beyond the Classroom: Supplemental Video Study”.

On December 3rd, 2013 AT&T executives, who funded the K-CLUE program, were invited to attend the poster presentation along with KSU Faculty. Faculty attendees commented by saying “each student expressed to me that it was a great experience and they learned so much during the semester,” and , “it was a very impressive event and well-attended. All of the LAs that I talked to told me that it has been a very positive experience for them.” The Learning Assistants will continue their research and present once again at the upcoming 18th Annual Symposium of Student Scholars. ■

# PRESIDENT'S EMERGING GLOBAL SCHOLARS

Students in KSU's President's Emerging Global Scholars (PEGS) program, a leadership program for honors students, are conducting innovative research projects that span continents.

In the program's first semester, students learn about global issues in an honors first-year seminar course. This course is unique because students conduct research projects with partners at UNIFACS University in Salvador, Brazil. KSU students and UNIFACS students study the same globally-focused curriculum and are paired into groups to research a specific international



Pelourinho Square, Salvador, Brazil

issue. American and Brazilian students work together throughout the year through email and video-chat software, and at the end of the year, KSU students take a capstone trip to Salvador to meet with their research partners and learn more about these global issues in action.

Leslie Brown, Danielle Ereddia, and Melissa Kramschuster conducted one study on the ethics of genetic

engineering. Their survey covered perspectives on the ethics of biotechnology, specifically whether individuals viewed genetic engineering as ethical or unethical. Questions varied based on organism to be modified and purpose of modification, asking if each specific instance of using this technology was ethical or unethical.

Their data showed that most students were



wary of using the biological technology and unsure of whether or not it is ethical. In general, Brazilian students leaned towards believing it was ethical when used for medical purposes, but American students remained unsure. Demographic data showed that religious beliefs had strong influences over students' responses.

The researchers presented these data at Kennesaw's Symposium of Student Scholars and the American Democracy Project National Meeting in Denver, Colorado.

This experience impacted their college careers by helping students recognize their full potential as global scholars. It exposed them to the research process as first-year students, and encouraged them to begin conducting research in their majors. Melissa Kramschuster comments,

"The skills I gained from the program will be beneficial to my success in future endeavors in research. I am looking forward to begin research in the next year within my major of nursing."

This cross cultural research project, while logistically difficult, proves to be eye-opening. Research brought the two cultures together, helping students gain new perspectives on diversity and intercultural relationships. ■

“The one-on-one discussion with our Brazilian colleagues was amazing. It validated all the work that we had done and gave us completely different perspectives that we had never anticipated.”

- Leslie Brown



From Left: Melissa Kramschuster, Danielle Ereddia



The PEGS first-year students and faculty

# RESEARCH ACROSS CAMPUS

"Working in the lab has been an amazing experience because I'm gaining knowledge and skills that will be invaluable for my future career. The people I've met doing research are great and I know I'll keep in contact with them long after graduation."

*--Jahan Saeed, Biology*

"'You can make a difference' is what I told myself when I decided to take lead on this project. I wanted to prove to people that anyone can make a difference. When you truly focus on helping others with a genuine heart, lives are changed."

*--Kizmat Tention, Psychology*



"I believe research conducted by those in the nursing field can significantly impact the profession. My specific research question for this project explores how cross-cultural experiences impact student nurses and aid them in delivering domestic care in an increasingly globalized environment."

*--Katherine Street, Nursing*

# CHECK IT OUT!



## IMPORTANT DATES

**Symposium  
Proposals Due March 27th**

Forms should be submitted no later than **Thursday March 27, 2014 at 5:00 pm**. This form must be completed by the faculty mentor and not the undergraduate researcher. Proposals can be sent to <http://web.kennesaw.edu/cetl/node/add/ur-projects>

**Symposium of  
Student Scholars April 17th**

A reception will be held on **Thursday April 17, 2014 at 4:00 pm**. The Symposium of Student Scholars will take place from **5:00pm to 8:00 pm**. The event is free and open to the public. More information can be found at <http://cetl.kennesaw.edu/conference/18th-annual-symposium-student-scholars-undergraduate-research-reception>

**KJUR  
Submission Deadline November  
18th**

Submissions for the Kennesaw Journal of Undergraduate Research can be made at <http://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/kjur/>

## EDITOR'S CORNER

### Newsletter Submissions

Do you have research that you believe should be highlighted? Do you have a story to share or advice to offer regarding undergraduate research? Your submission could be featured in an upcoming issue of the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Newsletter. All inquiries should be made as soon as possible. Email [cetl4ur@kennesaw.edu](mailto:cetl4ur@kennesaw.edu) or call CETL at (770) 423-6410 to submit ideas.

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*Photos were provided by CETL and those featured in this newsletter.*

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