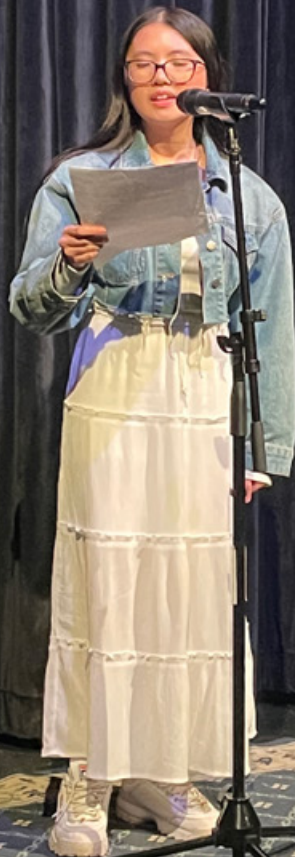




The University of Connecticut Humanities Institute



Fall 2025



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



As I reflect on this past year, I'm struck by both the challenges we've faced and by the remarkable resilience of our community. Our work has never felt more vital or urgent. Our focus on "Connections and Disconnections" has proven prescient as we explore how we maintain meaningful human bonds in an increasingly fragmented world. The humanities offer essential wisdom for these challenges—teaching us to think critically, to understand context, and to center human flourishing in our responses to change.

I'm particularly proud of two initiatives that embody this mission. UConn Story Slam brought together undergraduates from diverse disciplines to craft and share stories of transformative moments in their lives. Watching these young scholars discover the power of narrative was an exhilarating reminder of why the humanities are key to the work of finding our way in the world. Moving from time-tested forms of storytelling to the cutting edge of technology, our "AI and the Human" collaborative brings together historians, literature scholars, philosophers, computer scientists, and engineers to explore how humanistic inquiry and values can—and should—guide technological development. Our success with international partnerships and grant awards is a welcome indicator that this approach will grow more valuable in the years to come.

These projects reflect UCHI's broader commitment to fostering collaboration and community among researchers and students. When we work together—across disciplines, across departments, across the traditional boundaries of academic life—we create something stronger and more meaningful than any of us could achieve alone. The humanities don't just interpret the world; they help us navigate it with wisdom, empathy, and hope.

As we look toward the year ahead, I'm energized by the connections we're building and the conversations we're fostering. The challenges we're facing are real, but so is our capacity to meet them with creativity and collaboration.

Anna Mae Duane

Professor, English

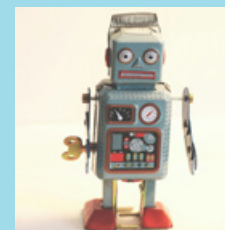
Director, UConn Humanities Institute

The Institute signed on to the **National Humanities Alliance Statement on Threats to the NEH**, issued in response to news that the Department of Government Efficiency had targeted the NEH for dramatic cuts to its staff and funding, affecting communities in every state.



Undergraduate fellow Evan Wolfgang wrote and directed ***Going to the Lordy***, a play exploring the life of Charles Guiteau, the man who assassinated President James Garfield. The play uses Charles' sister Frances as the narrator, and parallels Charles' experiences with Garfield's.

In the inaugural **UConn Story Slam**, six students performed personal stories reflecting on social isolation and shared their unique perspectives on what it means to find connection. The students worked with coaches Jonathan Adler and Gillian Epstein to craft their stories into a performance, held at the Ballard black box theater.



UCHI was awarded two grants to support research on **AI and the human**, one from CLAS to build capacity for collaborative grants, and one from CHCI and the Mellon Foundation to explore the language of AI with our partners at the Université Internationale de Rabat.

2024–2025 HIGHLIGHTS



UCHI BY THE NUMBERS

\$8,925,000+ in grants

raised since the institute's founding, including from the **John Templeton Foundation**, the **Mellon Foundation**, and the **National Endowment for the Humanities**.

325 fellowships

granted to UConn faculty, UConn graduate students, UConn undergraduates, and external scholars since the Institute was founded in 2001.

11 major initiatives

launched since 2001, including the Environmental Humanities Initiative, the Faculty of Color Working Group, the Student Success Initiative, the AI and the Human Initiative, and the Faculty Success Initiative.

24 disciplines

represented by our fellows and their research interests across 24 classes of fellows.

150 programs

sponsored or funded at UConn from 2018 to 2025, including invited speakers, conferences, colloquia, symposia, publications, and performances.



2024–2025

Undergraduate Research Fellows

Kathryn Andronowitz

“The Tradwife Cultural Economy: A Comparative Case Study of Self-Branded Housewife Influencers on Social Media”
Project advisor: Bhoomi K. Thakore

Kanny Salike

“The Evolution of African American English (AAE) and Black American Sign Language (BASL) in the United States”
Project advisor: Diane Lillo-Martin

Evan Wolfgang

“I Am Going to the Lordy: A Dramatic Parable about the Life and Death of Charles Julius Guiteau”
Project advisor: Gary M. English

Visiting Residential Fellows

Sara Matthiesen (History & Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, George Washington University)

“‘Free Abortion on Demand’ after Roe: A Reproductive Justice History of Abortion Organizing in the United States”

Jesse Olsavsky (American Studies & History, Duke Kunshan University)

“In The Tradition: The Abolitionist Tradition and the Roots of Pan-Africanism, 1830–1945”

Heather Ostman (English, SUNY Westchester Community College)

“Nineteenth-Century American Literature, Religion, and the Search for Grace”

UConn Faculty Fellows

César Abadía-Barrero (Anthropology)
“Too Sick to Labor: Disease and Profit as the end of Capitalism”

Daniel Hershenzon (Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)
“The Maghrib in Spain: Enslavement, Citizenship, and Belonging in the Early Modern Spanish Mediterranean”

Yohei Igarashi (English)
Faculty Success Fellow
“Word Count: Literary Study and Data Analysis, 1875–1965”

Hana Maruyama (History)
“Entangled Remains: Indigenous Relationalities & Caretaking in Japanese American Incarceration”

Gregory Pierrot (English)
“It Was Nation Time: Fictions of African American Revolution (Le Temps d’une nation noire: fictions révolutionnaires du Black Power)”

Janet Pritchard (Art and Art History)
“Abiding River: Connecticut River Views & Stories”

Fumilayo Showers (Sociology)
Faculty of Color Working Group Fellow
“Learning to Leave: Health Professions Education, the Afropolitan Imaginary, and Migration Aspirations in a Migrant

Sending Nation”

Peter Zarrow (History)
“A History of the ‘Museumification’ of the Forbidden City, Beijing, from 1900 to Today”

Dissertation Research Scholars

Joscha Jelitzki (Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)
Richard Brown Dissertation Fellow
“The Anti-Jewish ‘Lust Libel’ and its Deconstruction by Jewish Writers in Modern Vienna”

Yusuf Mansoor (History)
Draper Dissertation Fellow
“Native Americans in Tangier: Slavery in the Early Modern Atlantic World”

Danielle Pieratti (English)
“Unoriginal: Transvocal works from Dante’s *Purgatorio*”

Julia Wold (English)
“Adapting Choice: Shakespeare, Video Games, and Early Modern Thought”



FELLOWS



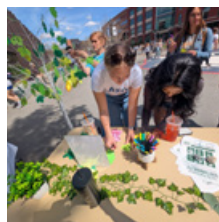
EVENTS

Each year, UCHI hosts scholarly events and professional development workshops for the UConn community and beyond. In 2024–2025 alone we hosted 33 events. Each of our fellows gave a research talk on their project, in dialogue with another fellow. As part of our theme on Connections and Disconnections we hosted events on loneliness, storytelling, and more. We held workshops in support of both faculty success and student

success, providing support and advice for aspiring fellowship applicants, graduate school hopefuls, and experts looking to build an online presence. We also celebrated the work of our undergraduate fellows' faculty advisors with a series of faculty talks. Across those events, we welcomed over 1,300 attendees who asked questions, shared comments, and helped sustain the vibrant scholarly community that is the Humanities Institute.

2024–2025 Event Highlights

The Institute launched its new environmental humanities initiative with **Earth Day: Leaves of Change**, an outdoor event where attendees decorated leaves for a community tree art project and were given tips on how to live more sustainably. Free wildflower seeds and bookmarks were also made available.



“The humanities give us a way back to understanding and knowing what is truth, what is real.”

—Joyce Scott
UCHI Supporter

The **Picturing the Pandemic Exhibit** made its Storrs debut at Homer Babbidge Library, marking five years since the start of the pandemic.



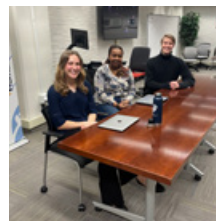
Dramatic arts professor **Gary English**, in his talk “Theatre as Dialectics: Justice, Reconciliation, and Peace,” discussed how theatre in post-conflict environments reveals the tensions between reconciliation on the one hand and retributive justice on the other.



Classics professor **Sara Johnson** explored the long afterlife of scaphism, a form of torture reportedly practiced by the Persians, from its origins in Ctesias and Plutarch, through the 12th-century historian Zonaras, by way of nineteenth-century encyclopedias of torture, to its present-day vogue on the internet and in the death metal music community.



In his fellow's talk, Anthropology professor **César Abadía-Barrero** taught us what sugar and capitalist sugary industries are doing to our bodies. Distilling biological science for a non-specialist audience, César's presentation combined history, medical anthropology, and economics to demonstrate that capitalist profit seeking creates adverse health outcomes.



In the undergraduate fellows research colloquium **Kathryn Andronowitz**, **Kanny Salike**, and **Evan Wolfgang** shared insights into the world of homemaker influencers on Instagram, the development of Black American Sign Language and African American English, and the creative process involved in turning a complicated piece of American history into a play, respectively.

& PROGRAMMING

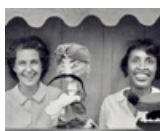
SPONSORED

Each year, UCHI helps to fund conferences, colloquia, invited speakers, and working groups across campus.

Speakers, Conferences, & Colloquia



New Perspectives on Haitian Literature with Kaiama Glover; Raphael Koenig (LCL)



A symposium for the Ballard Museum's exhibition "Wonderland Puppet Theater: Visions of the Beloved Community"; John Bell (Dramatic Arts)



Jerusalem's Sacred Art and Spaces Conference including speakers Heba Mostafa, Megan Boomer and Nisa Ari; Kathryn Moore (Art and Art History)



"What is what is said?" with Mark Jary, a talk in the ECOM speaker series; Dorit Bar-On (Philosophy)



Designer Omari Souza on his research, design and creative practice; Chris Sancomb (Art & Art History)



A five-year commemoration hosted by the Pandemic Journaling Project; Sara Willen (Anthropology)



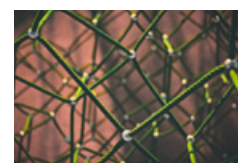
Nicolo Russo on health inequality and disparities by race, ethnicity, and gender; Kai Zhao (Economics)

Working Groups



The **Political Theory Workshop** (Jane Gordon and Benjamin Stumpf) offers

space for political theorists based at and beyond UConn to present and receive feedback on works-in-progress or recently published writing. The workshop also aims to contribute to the professional development of UConn graduate students specializing in political theory and philosophy.



The **Humanistic AI Working Group** (Nasya Al-Saidy), brings together faculty from across

campus, and across disciplines, to share research, resources, and funding opportunities, and to collaborate on this vital area of research.



The **Waterbury Research Colloquium in the Humanities** (Sam Sommers

and Melisa Argañaraz Gomez) is an interdisciplinary research group that seeks to promote humanities scholarship and activism at UConn's Waterbury campus. They bring together faculty, undergraduate students,

staff, and community members to collaborate and creatively connect original research and programming with communities and the public. This year, they spearheaded a Humanities Activism Community Engagement Research (HACER) Lab.



The **Intersectional Indigeneity, Race, Ethnicity, and Politics Working Group**

(Fred Lee) is dedicated to research and teaching on indigeneity, race, ethnicity, and politics from an intersectional perspective. Bringing together faculty and graduate students across several disciplines, they host workshops for recent publications and works-in-progress and held a one-day graduate conference in Spring 2025.



The **Early Modern Studies Working Group** (Lyn Tribble) is a close-knit, interdisciplinary,

and ever-growing community, sharing a passion for learning about the art, culture, and history of our early modern forebears. The Early Modern period practically begs us to explore the relevance of their lives to our own, encompassing as it does so many of the crucial historical influences on who we moderns are.



PROGRAMS



SUPPORTING

UCHI supports several awards and fellowship opportunities that reward creative thinking and scholarship. These include annual residential fellowships for UConn faculty, UConn graduate students, UConn undergraduates, and external fellows, a book award, and awards for faculty fellows.

Sharon Harris Book Award

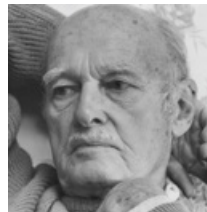
Since 2017, the annual Sharon Harris Book Award has been given for a book published by UConn tenured, tenure-track, emeritus, or in-residence faculty that demonstrates scholarly depth and intellectual acuity and highlights the importance of humanities scholarship.

2025 Winners



Mary Burke (English)
Race, Politics, and Irish America: A Gothic History (Oxford University Press, 2023)

“A fascinating, engaging read, that masterfully brings a new angle on a well-trodden subject . . . [with] value to the academy and beyond.”



Frank Costigliola (History)
Kennan: A Life between Worlds (Princeton University Press, 2023)

“An engaging and richly researched exploration of the life of one of the leading figures in America’s Cold War with the Soviet Union.”

KENNAN
A Life between Worlds
FRANK COSTIGLIOLA

Felberbaum Awards

Since 2003, the generosity of the Felberbaum Family Foundation has enabled UCHI to offer a limited number of Felberbaum Family Faculty Awards to University of Connecticut faculty completing their UCHI fellowship year. These competitive awards are offered to provide financial support for additional expenditures related to fellows’ projects. The awards are for UConn faculty fellows only and suggest “the individual receiving the Award will be a recognized researcher, scholar, and teacher and will have made significant contributions to the Institute.”

2025 Recipients



César Abadía-Barrero,
Anthropology



Daniel Herschenzon,
LCL



Yohei Igarashi,
English



Peter Zarrow,
History

“My fellowship year allowed me to be even more intentional with regards to how I engaged with others in the UConn community. I had a much-needed chance to connect with other scholars.”

—Allison Horrocks
Dissertation Research Scholar (2015–2016)



SCHOLARSHIP

CONNECTIONS

In a moment increasingly defined by proliferating connections to technology and a growing sense of disconnection from one another, we know that the humanities provide invaluable insights into how we relate to each other, how we create community, and how to find and follow meaning our lives. By exploring the theme of Connections and Disconnections, UCHI draws on the insights of the humanities to bring

people together around art, storytelling, and scholarship to better understand what we find meaningful, and how we might forge community around shared appreciation for that meaning. This year, we hosted our inaugural Story Slam, supported by Olin College's Story Lab, collaborated with the Well-Being Collective on a post-election popup event, and examined the loneliness epidemic on campus.

2024–2025 Event Highlights



A Conversation on the Loneliness Epidemic

In partnership with the CT Collaborative to End Loneliness (a nonprofit founded by two UConn alumni), UCHI hosted a panel of professors, alumni, and students to discuss the vital health impacts of social isolation on our mental and physical well-being.



“Stories stick with us. In a world where we are more disconnected from each other than ever, stories can help us see new perspectives and share ideas, building identity and community.”



Heather Cassano
Assistant Director of Digital Media & the Arts



Pick Up the Thread: A Post-Election Connection

In collaboration with the Well-Being Collective, UCHI hosted “Pick Up the Thread,” creating an inclusive space where students, faculty, and staff came together for collective art-making and meaningful dialogue with faculty experts the day after Election Day.



Story Slam

From finding connection in the boxing ring to understanding identity through language, six students shared their unique perspectives on what it means to find connection. Story Slam coaches Jon Adler and Gillian Epstein helped students craft their stories into a performance.



Earth Day: Leaves of Change

Leaves of Change was an interactive art event focusing on community and sustainability. Held in the center of campus, UConn community members were invited to decorate leaves to fill our community tree and learn tips for living more sustainably.

& DISCONNECTIONS

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

UCHI is committed to fostering collaboration, research, and conversation on artificial intelligence (AI) and the human. As artificial intelligence technologies, including large language model text generators like ChatGPT, become increasingly common and commercially available, we need scholars from all disciplines to help us make sense of the role they play in our world and to understand

their values and pitfalls. In 2024–2025 we produced podcast episodes funded by an NEH grant investigating conversational AI and the legacies of slavery, began the Humanistic AI Working Group, forged a collaboration with scholars at the Université Internationale de Rabat in Morocco, and received grant funding for this work from both CLAS and the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes.

2024–2025 Highlights

The Institute created the **Humanistic AI Working Group**, which brings together faculty from across disciplines to share research, resources, and funding opportunities. With the support of a

grant from CLAS, the working group advances AI research that integrates humanistic and social scientific approaches. The grant allows the group to build capacity for applications for external collaborative grants.



“The Humanities Institute is a truly interdisciplinary place. So, as fellows, we learn how to talk to people from different disciplines about what we do.”

—Serkan Gorkemli
Faculty Fellow (2023–2024)



UCHI began a partnership with the Université Internationale de Rabat (UIR; pictured top right) in Morocco to create an **international working group on AI and the human**. This international

working group hosted a symposium on interdisciplinary AI in January 2025. Over 60 participants joined for talks and discussion on topics ranging from the impact of AI on human language, its influence on the social and human relationships, and on the challenges facing international collaboration on AI research.



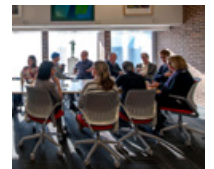
UCHI, along with our partners at UIR, was **awarded a grant by the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes** for the project “Reading Between the Lines: An Interdisciplinary Glossary for Human-Centered AI,” which will create a shared reference tool that interrogates the meaning of key AI concepts. As part of this project, UCHI will be hosting an international workshop on AI in October 2025.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

As part of a project funded by the **National Endowment for the Humanities** the Institute published two podcast episodes about how legacies of slavery are shaping the perception and reception of conversational artificial intelligence.

Aided by the support of CLAS seed grant funding, members of UCHI's **Human Centered AI team**, have begun several exciting projects, including one on fostering plurality in large language model design. They have also presented their research at conferences and published their work in a number of outlets, including the *Hartford Courant* and *The Conversation*.



& THE HUMAN

FACULTY

The Faculty Success Initiative seeks to support faculty members at every stage of their careers, with particular emphasis on supporting faculty at the Associate Professor rank as they move forward in their work as scholars and leaders. As of 2024, one faculty fellowship each year will be designated for a faculty member at the Associate Professor rank so that

they can complete their next research project. Additionally, the initiative funds one book manuscript workshop for Associate Professors and offers a host of supportive programming on career self-assessment, time management, and publication strategies. This year, we hosted a collaborative grant incubator and a workshop on applying for fellowships.

2024–2025 Highlights

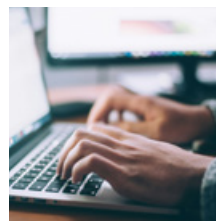


In collaboration with Greenhouse Studies, the Institute hosted a one-day workshop on **turning grant ideas into action**, teaching attendees how to work across organizations and disciplines to generate ideas for collaboration and then plan the immediate next steps in the grant proposal process. This workshop was part of our grant incubator series, designed to help UConn faculty and colleagues conceptualize, develop, and implement large collaborative grants across disciplines and organizations.

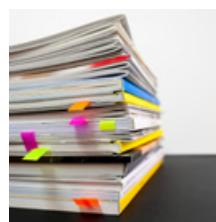


“UCHI is committed to supporting all humanities faculty as scholars, as creators, and as members of the community. This initiative provides opportunities for collaboration, coaching, and camaraderie for faculty at every stage of their career.”

—Anna Mae Duane
Director



Three past and present UCHI fellows—Yohei Igarashi, Laura Mauldin, and Anna Ziering—who have all been successful in writing fellowship and grant proposals, hosted a panel discussion on best practices for **successfully applying for fellowships** and grants. Attendees were given the opportunity to sign up for a **fellowship application peer review group**.



As part of the faculty success initiative, we offer funding for **book manuscript workshops**. This year, the award funded a workshop for Assistant Professor of Political Science Salih Emre Gerçek’s book manuscript, “Equalizing Conditions: Democracy and the Social Question in Nineteenth Century France.” The book argues that democracy became a prevalent idea in nineteenth-century France because it offered responses to another emerging debate in the era, namely, the “social question.”



Team members from University Communications conducted workshop for faculty on **how best to publicize their research**. Tom Breen, Stephanie Reitz, and Emily Zangari shared best practices for engaging with the press, for dealing with trolls on social media, and for navigating the ever changing media and political landscape. They answered questions on topics from when to start promoting a research project to how to build an online following as an expert in your field.

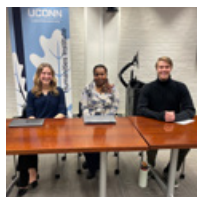
SUCCESS



STUDENT

The Student Success Initiative seeks to support undergraduate student research in the humanities and social sciences and to build a vibrant community of humanities student-scholars at UConn. In conjunction with CLAS, UCHI offers year-long fellowships that allow exceptional undergraduate humanities scholars to pursue a project of their choosing under the supervision of a UConn faculty member. The initiative also offers supportive programming on careers, graduate work, and more. The success of the initiative is made possible through the work of our undergraduate advisory council, a group of dedicated volunteers who provide insight into undergraduate students needs and interests and work to promote and develop humanities- and social science-related programming and community across campus. This year, our advisory council launched UConn's first humanities involvement fair to promote humanities-related student groups across campus.

2024–2025 Highlights



The **Undergraduate Fellowship Program** completed its third year. This year, we had three fellows—Kathryn Andronowitz, Kanny Salike, and Evan Wolfgang—who produced innovative scholarship on topics ranging from homemaker influencers on Instagram to Black American Sign Language. They wrote papers, wrote and directed plays, and gave talks on their projects. They supported each other's work, offering feedback and advice in bi-weekly meetings. They were all profiled in UConn Today and in spotlight videos made by Digital Media and Design students.



Our **undergraduate advisory council** provides invaluable support for our Student Success Initiative, ensuring that the Institute is responsive to student needs and interests. The 2024–25 advisory council—Adelaide Bearer, Nicholas Borgesi, Breanna Bonner, Tehreem Fatima, Kai Febus, Lily Grady, Lukas Heil, Aeryn Northway, and Avery Lipkin—suggested programming for an undergraduate audience, including a humanities involvement fair, offered feedback on new initiatives, brainstormed communication strategies, and helped to spread the word about UCHI.



In March 2025, UConn hosted its fourth annual student-run **Humanities Undergraduate Research Symposium**, organized by UConn students Breanna Bonner, Nicholas Borgesi, Tehreem Fatima, Lukas Heil, and Avery Lipkin. Students presented on their creative processes as playwrights and artists and on topics from the origin of language to Reconstruction politics. Attendees also participated in a roundtable discussion about the state of the humanities in higher ed. As always, this event served as a reminder of the high quality humanities research being conducted by UConn students.



We hosted a number of informational events, including a panel on **applying to graduate school**, and a presentation on **applying for fellowships**.



Graduation Spotlight

Congratulations to the undergraduate fellows who graduated in the class of 2025!

Anabelle Bergstrom, 2023–24 fellow
Brent Freed, 2023–24 fellow
Karen Lau, 2022–23 fellow
Evan Wolfgang, 2024–25 fellow

SUCCESS

FORMER FELLOWS

Through its annual residential fellowships, the Humanities Institute provides an interdisciplinary environment in which scholars from around the world come together to think, collaborate, and write. The

impact of this opportunity not only shapes the creative minds of our fellows during their residency, but also informs their scholastic contributions long **#afterUCHI**. Here are some past fellows' recent successes.

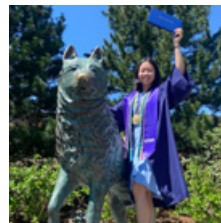


2019–2020 visiting fellow **Kornel Chang**'s book, *A Fractured Liberation: Korea under US Occupation* (Harvard University Press), has been longlisted for the 2025 Cundill History Prize. Chang explores how ordinary people worked toward building a unified Korea after WWII but found an obstacle in the United States and its growing conflict with the Soviet Union.

"UCHI's talks and activities stimulate my own thinking [and] UCHI's consistent co-sponsorship of ... programs safeguards the integrity of humanistic study."

—Melina Pappademos
History & Africana Studies

2022–2023 undergraduate research fellow **Karen Lau**—who graduated this spring as a member of



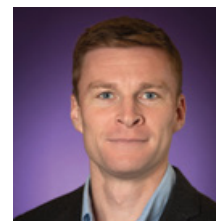
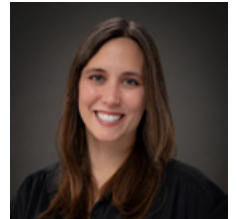
the Honors Program with majors in economics, Asian-American studies, and history—has been named a finalist of the Fulbright US Student Program. For her Fulbright, she will work as an English teaching assistant in Taiwan.

2024–2025 faculty fellow **Yohei Igarashi** was invited to give a series of lectures at universities and scholarly organizations in Japan, including at the Japan Association of English Romanticism. He also delivered a keynote lecture at the sixth Edinburgh-Meiji Intermedia Symposium at Meiji University. His talk was entitled "Paper, Digital: Artisanal Intermediality in Early Literary Computing."



2023–2024 undergraduate research fellow **Breanna Bonner** was named a BOLD Women's Leadership Network scholar. Her BOLD project, "Beyond Survival: Art and Policy-Based Approaches to Gun Violence in Urban Cities," aims to create art- and policy-based interventions in communities impacted by gun violence.

2017–2018 dissertation research scholar **Sarah Berry** published *Staging the Lyric: Modern and Contemporary Experiments with Verse Drama* (Bloomsbury), which draws on plays from throughout the English-speaking world, including the US, UK, Ireland, and the Caribbean, to explain the 21st-century resurgence of Anglophone verse drama.



2022–2023 visiting fellow **Joseph Darda** published his most recent book, *Gift and Grit: Race, Sports, and the Construction of Social Debt* (Cambridge). This monograph explores how the sports industry has incubated racial ideas about advantage and social debt since the civil rights era by sorting athletes into two broad categories: the gifted and the gritty.

2020–2021 faculty fellow **Elizabeth Athens** published her book *William Bartram's Visual Wonders: The Drawings of an American Naturalist* (Pittsburgh), which explores Bartram's drawing practice as central to his understanding of the natural world. The book received the Athenaeum of Philadelphia 2024 Literary Award for Nonfiction.



SPOTLIGHT

COLLABORATIONS



The **New England Humanities Consortium** (NEHC), a network of colleges and universities across New England, promotes and strengthens intellectual collaboration, interdisciplinary exchange, and innovative educational, intercultural, and curricular programming among New England humanities centers and institutes. The programming and activities of the NEHC, including seed grants for collaborative humanities projects, are made

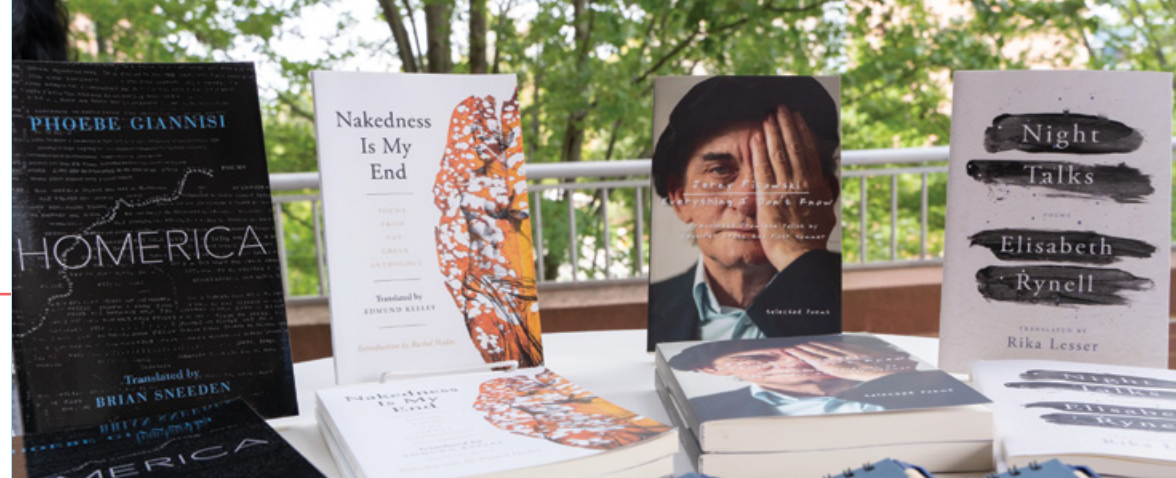
possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the participating institutions. UCHI founded NEHC in 2018 and served as its first administrative hub through June 2021.

In 2014 UConn became a Consortium member of the prestigious **Folger Institute**, a center for advanced study and collections-focused research in the humanities. By virtue of UConn's membership, our students, staff, and faculty have access to the Folger's tremendous range of research, educational, and artistic offerings.



In 2024 UCHI began an international, interdisciplinary collaboration with scholars at the **Université Internationale de Rabat** exploring questions surrounding AI and the human. The group held a virtual symposium on interdisciplinary AI in January 2025 and received a grant from the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI) to create an interdisciplinary glossary that interrogates the meaning of key AI concepts. UCHI will host the group for a day-long symposium in October 2025.

Beginning in 2023, UCHI was chosen to be an affiliate partner with the **Yale Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance and Abolition**. UCHI Director Anna Mae Duane co-directed a two-year seminar convening an international group of leading scholars of the history of slavery. The group is publishing an edited collection exploring how technological and climate change will shape the future of labor and the definition of freedom.



World Poetry Books (WPB) is committed to publishing exceptional translations of poetry from a broad range of languages and traditions, bringing the work of modern masters, emerging voices, and pioneering innovators from around the world to English-language readers in affordable trade editions. Our titles are reviewed and excerpted widely—in *The New York Review of Books*, *The Paris Review*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *Lit Hub*, *Circumference*, and *World Literature Today*, among others—and several have received awards, including the 2022 PEN Award for Poetry in Translation. Founded in 2017, World Poetry Books is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and charitable organization based in New York City and at the University of Connecticut Humanities Institute where we offer publishing internships and sponsor student translation awards.

Meet the WPB Team



Peter Constantine
Publisher



Matvei Yankelevich
Editor

WORLD POETRY BOOKS

WHAT'S

For 2025–2026, we are excited to continue supporting humanities research across UConn and beyond, while also working to develop new projects and initiatives. As part of our ongoing theme, “Connections and Disconnections,” we will be investing in collaboration and conversations designed to explore how we can connect as scholars and students in an increasingly technological age. We

will be continuing our investigation of AI and the human, in collaboration with the Humanistic AI Working Group, and with our partners at the Université Internationale de Rabat. We will also be continuing our series of incubators for collaborative humanities research—working to connect scholars across disciplines—under the leadership of Associate Director of Collaborative Research, Clarissa Ceglio.

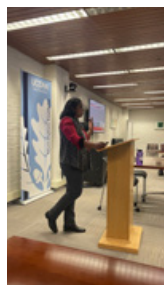
Upcoming Events and Opportunities



We will be piloting a **humanities mentorship program** that will connect current UConn undergraduates with UConn alums who majored in the humanities and social sciences. Mentors will be able to provide their mentees with guidance about navigating their undergraduate careers and their post-graduate plans.

We will host a conference in October, bringing together UConn humanities scholars and Université Internationale de Rabat engineers and social scientists to launch an interdisciplinary, international collaboration on **AI and the human**.

The project advisors for our 2025–26 undergraduate fellows will give talks on their own research as part of our **Faculty Talks** program.



In the fall, all four dissertation research scholars,

our visiting fellow, and two faculty fellows will give their **fellow's talks**. Most UConn faculty fellows and our undergraduate fellows will present in the spring.



The fifth annual **Humanities Undergraduate Research Symposium** will take place in the UCHI conference room in April 2026. This student-led initiative allows UConn undergraduates share their humanities research projects with their peers and mentors.

Incubators for collaborative humanities research will help faculty in the humanities and humanistic social sciences to conceptualize, develop, and implement large collaborative projects in conversation with colleagues from the community.

The **Environmental Humanities Working Group** will begin meeting this fall, forging collaboration between scholars of the environmental humanities across disciplines.

As part of our “**Connections and Disconnections**” theme we will once again be hosting **Story Slam**, where undergraduate students share personal, carefully crafted stories with a live audience.



In collaboration with Mary Burke (English) and in conjunction with America250, UCHI will host a one-day symposium on **Ireland and the Making of America**.

We will host a series of workshops on **professional development** for students and scholars covering topics from applying to graduate school to publicizing your research.



“UCHI has provided immense mentorship, relationship-building with other fellows, and has allowed me to expand my worldview.”

—Rylee Thomas
Undergraduate Fellow (2022–2023)

“The Humanities Institute is a small patch of paradise that immeasurably enriches intellectual life at UConn.”

—Scott Wallace
Faculty Fellow (2020–2021)

NEXT?

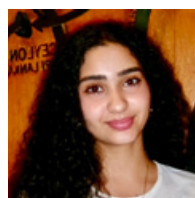


2025–2026

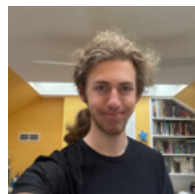
Undergraduate Research Fellows



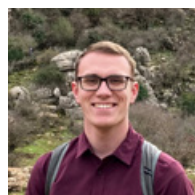
Josephine Burke
“Higher Education in Prison: Censorship, the Carceral State, and the Neoliberal University”
Project advisor: Sandy Grande



Suleen Kareem
“Gendered Resistance in Genocide: Women’s Histories of Survival and Activism in the Middle East”
Project advisor: Brendan Kane & Nana Amos



Autumn Scott
“Trinities in World Mythology: How and Why Geographically Separate Cultures Construct the Same Cosmology”
Project advisor: Robert Hasenfratz



Bryce Turner
“The Unseen Impact: Community Perceptions and Responses to Rural Maternal Healthcare Challenges in Willimantic, CT”
Project advisor: Sarah Williams

Visiting Residential Fellows



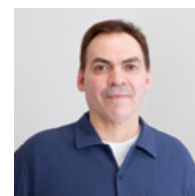
Jennifer Cazenave
(Romance Studies—French, Boston University)
“Lessons in Seeing: Disability in the Film and Media Archive”

UConn Faculty Fellows



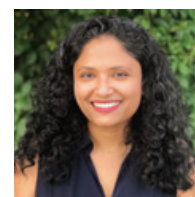
April Anson
(English & Social and Critical Inquiry)
JER Fellow
“Unfenceable: American

Ecofascism, Literary Genre, and Native American Environmental Justice”



Peter Constantine
(Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)
“Indigenous Language Reclamation:

Reviving Extinct Languages”



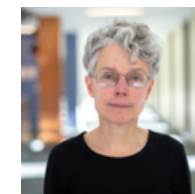
Najnin Islam
(English)
“Recasting the Coolie: Racial Capitalism, Caste, and Indian

Indentureship in the Caribbean”



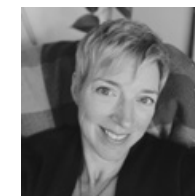
Julia Smachylo
(Landscape Architecture & Plant Science)
“Silvic Stewardship: Incentivizing

Environmental Care in the Northeast”



Fiona Somerset
(Social and Critical Inquiry & Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)
“Silence is Consent:

The Idea of Complicity in the Middle Ages”



Kathleen Tonry
(English)
Faculty Success Fellow
“Time, Work, and

Texts in Late-Medieval England”



Harry van der Hulst
(Linguistics & Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)
“Why Sign Languages Are Real

Languages”



Christopher Vials
(English & American Studies)
“Authoritarian Agency: The Far Right in US Culture”



FELLOWS

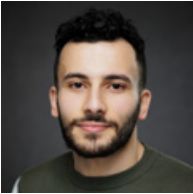
Dissertation Research Scholars



Asmita Aasaavari

(Sociology)

“Who Will Take Care of Me? Aging and Care in Northeast Connecticut”



Ahmed AboHamad

(Philosophy)

“Reconceptualizing Virtue and Flourishing Under Structural Oppression”

“I’ve never had so much support as I have through [UCHI] for my own projects and research. The fact that I have a place that could support me and give me time and resources and attention to help build my research... I couldn’t ask for a better experience.”

—Evan Wolfgang

Undergraduate Research Fellow (2024–2025)



Catalina Alvarado-Cañuta

(Anthropology)

Richard Brown Dissertation Fellow

“Mapuche Art as a Means of Healing Historical Traumas”



Ashmita Mukherjee

(Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)

Draper Dissertation Fellow

“Textual Pleasures: Literature of Amusement in Post/colonial India (1850–1950)”





Give

As UConn's premier institute for research in the humanities, fellowships are highly competitive and awarded only to outstanding projects. Private support helps sustain excellence across the humanities.

A gift to the Humanities Institute will provide critical resources to UConn faculty, students, and external fellows to pursue a full range of humanistic inquiry and enrich our understanding of the human condition. Gifts help fund fellowships, student research, study groups, conferences, special initiatives, and more.

For more information or to give, please visit s.uconn.edu/donate or contact the UConn Foundation at (800) 269-9965 or (860) 486-5000.

Visit

Our bright, beautiful office suite, located on the fourth floor of Homer Babbidge Library, offers a collaborative space for scholars to meet and talk, as well as office space for our fellows and staff. Our conference room, complete with state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment that supports livestreaming, is available for booking by contacting our team. Visitors will find a bookshelf filled with the scholarship of past fellows, past book award winners, and other friends of the Institute. Our walls showcase bits of our history—including posters and banners from past events and a celebration of fellows past—as well as art on loan from UConn's Benton Museum.



Connect

Keep up with all future events and programming by following us on social media, subscribing to our newsletter, or visiting our website.



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Assistant Professor in Residence, History

Clarissa Ceglio

Associate Director of Collaborative Research
Associate Professor, Digital Media and Design

Heather Cassano

Assistant Director of Digital Humanities & Media Arts
Assistant Professor, Digital Media and Design

Nasya Al-Saidy

Managing Director

Shana Bartlett

Program Coordinator

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Shardé M. Davis; Communication

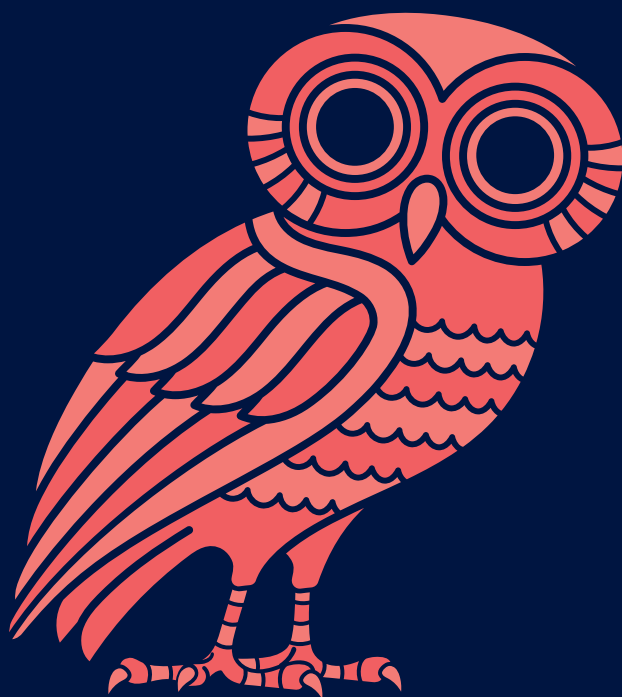
Serkan Görkemli; English

Evelyn Simien; Africana Studies & Political Science

Nu-Anh Tran; History

Rob Walsh; Library

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