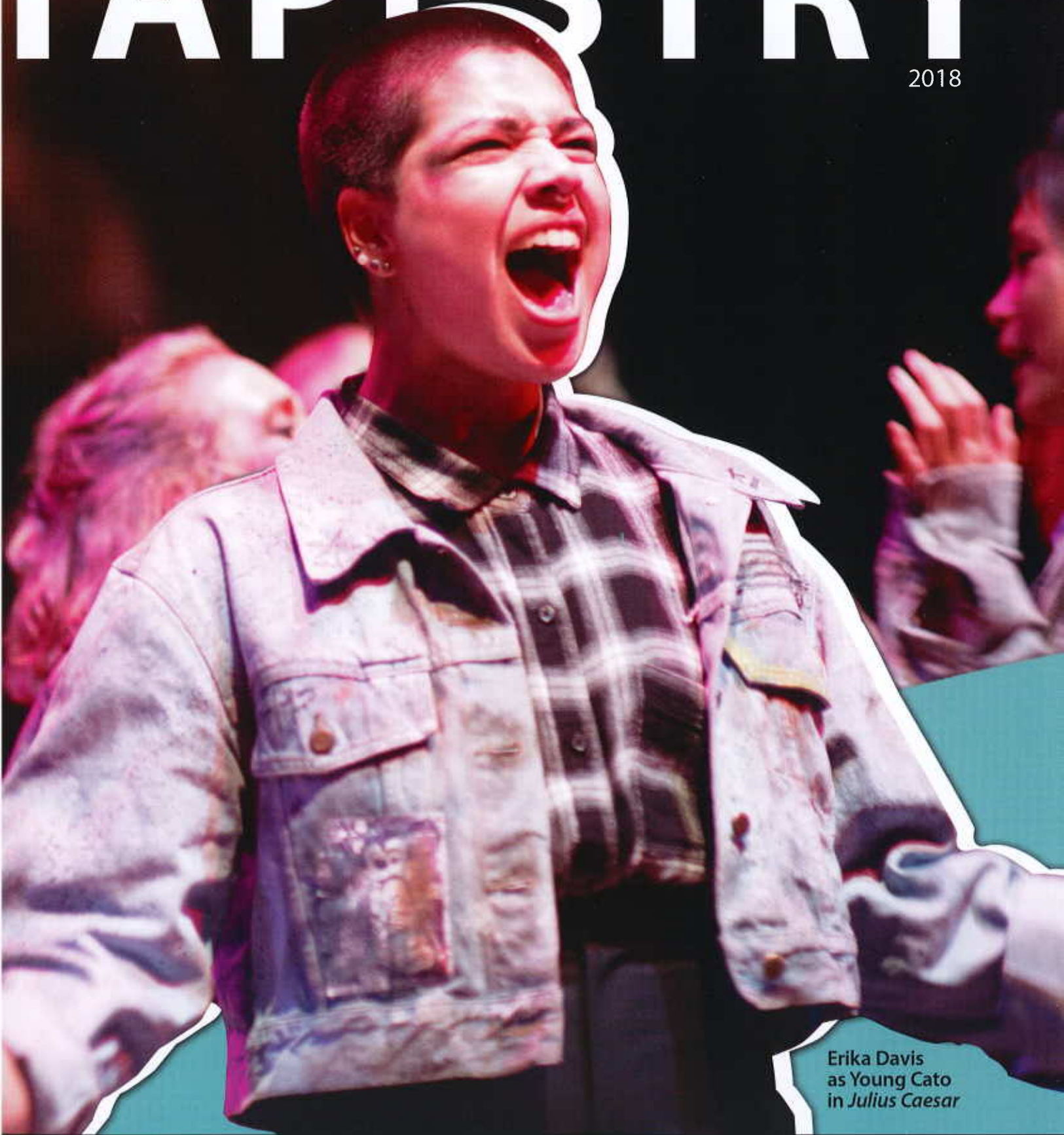


Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts at Coastal Carolina University

TAPESTRY

2018



Erika Davis
as Young Cato
in *Julius Caesar*

Transforming the classroom
with hands-on learning

Fulbright Scholar brings
Algeria to CCU

Award-winning poet Nikky Finney
returns to her roots

LETTER FROM THE DEAN



Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 2018 issue of *Tapestry*, the magazine of the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts at Coastal Carolina University. As I read this issue, I was struck with how wide the Edwards College world has become.

We are still based here on the main CCU campus and Conway, S.C., but more and more our academic lives are characterized by comings and goings, by delightful visitors and fulfilling visits. The Edwards College, as the following pages reveal, is a global college, and Coastal Carolina University has become an international institution.

The most literal manifestation of our globalization has been the rapid expansion of our international travel. From Belgium to Ghana, Germany to Costa Rica, almost 200 Edwards College students and faculty crossed borders and visited other countries. Whether it was performing steel pan music in Trinidad or learning about international communication in Italy, we made the world our classroom.

But not all students can travel, and our faculty and staff made special efforts to bring the world to campus. We hosted our first Fulbright scholar for a yearlong residency, learned firsthand from a Holocaust survivor and chatted in real time with Russian cosmonauts aboard the International Space Station. In true Edwards fashion, our faculty employed innovative methods for maximizing students' direct contact with people and ideas, and thus, the Edwards College became a crossroads for international scholars, artists and teachers.

Lastly, we did not forget the journeys one can take in the mind. From history simulations to philosophical debates, some the most transformative passages our student experienced this year consisted of intellectual and artistic expeditions. Our students created worlds on the stage and on the page, and they crossed metaphorical borders that had very real consequences.

I hope you enjoy learning about our wanderings in the pages that follow.

Regards,

Dan Ennis, Dean

Editor: Sara Sobota



Sara Sobota is publications editor for the Edwards College and senior lecturer in the Department of English. In addition to her work on *Tapestry*, Sara teaches business English, coordinates media outreach, and writes/edits press releases, the cultural arts calendar and departmental publications. As a freelance writer, Sara is a regular contributor to *Grand Strand Magazine*, and her work has appeared in national publications including *US Airways Magazine*, *The Huffington Post* and *Agent at Home*.

Assistant Editor



Mike Kane is a recent graduate of the Master of Arts in Writing (MAW) program at CCU. During his time in the MAW program, he was a graduate teaching assistant for English 101 and 201 courses and co-executive of the Coastal Writer's Society. When not in the classroom, he could be found on stage both assisting in acting and stage management roles in various theater venues across the Grand Strand. He plans to continue his pursuit of writing post-academia.

Art Director: Abby Sink



Abby Sink is graphic designer for the Edwards College. Prior to CCU, Abby worked as an art director for Brandon Advertising, where she designed local and regional advertising campaigns as well as *Golf Holiday* magazine. Abby also worked as art director for *The Sun News*, designing the *Surge* and magazines for Sun Publishing as well as designing layout for special sections of the newspaper.

Assistant Editor



Benjamin Counts is a recent graduate of the Master of Arts in Writing (MAW) program at CCU. While in the MAW program, Ben served as graduate assistant to Dean Dan Ennis and worked on *Waccamaw*, CCU's national online literary magazine. In addition to freelancing, Ben will be attending George Mason University's Master of Fine Arts in fiction program in the fall.

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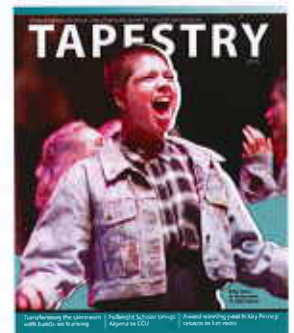


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ON THE COVER

Erika Davis, sophomore physical theatre major, as Young Cato in the CCU Department of Theatre's all-female production of *Julius Caesar* (see pp. 30-31).

Photo by CCU Photography





AND ROBIN V. EDWARDS

Mimouna Zitouni.
Photo by Jackie DiGiorgio.

Voices of experience



Each semester, Edwards College faculty members invite experts and professionals to campus to share their perspectives and talents with students and the CCU community. Interacting with these individuals leaves a memorable and sometimes life-changing impression on students as they not only understand but experience the world from an alternate point of view.



Left, Tripti Pillai presenting a lecture at CCU; above, Zitouni teaching a class. Courtesy photos.

حقبه جديدة للتواصل العالمي

(The transformative power of global engagement)

When Mimouna Zitouni arrived at Coastal Carolina University from Algeria in August 2017, she brought a new global perspective to share with students, faculty and the community. Zitouni's 10-month stay as CCU's first Fulbright scholar also brought new opportunity to the institution. With her visit, CCU has achieved a new level of academic prestige that paves the way for additional scholars and, potentially, a new program of study.

The Fulbright program, founded by U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright in 1946, is a competitive American scholarship program that allows for educational international exchange among students, scholars, teachers and scientists and is designed to enhance cultural understanding between Americans and individuals in countries throughout the world.

“The experience involved a transfer of culture, of a way of living.”

Tripthi Pillai, associate professor in the Department of English and coordinator of the Arts and Humanities Global Experience Program, was the central facilitator for the Fulbright experience and Zitouni’s residency. Pillai said the Fulbright scholarship was both the first step in a larger strategic plan for the University and a lengthy process that involved an interview and evaluation to determine CCU’s commitment to the program.

“CCU actively wanted our environment to diversify by having more international scholars come and stay for longer periods of time,” said Pillai. “For the Fulbright committee, we drew up an entire plan of what we are hoping to achieve with the scholarship experience and how this is going to transform the academic landscape of Coastal Carolina University.”

Transformation was central to Zitouni’s experience at CCU. On a campus of 12,000 students, faculty and staff, she was the only person wearing hijab. For many of her students, Zitouni’s entrance to the classroom was their first personal encounter with an individual wearing a veil. The progression of her classes involved not only the traditional patterns of teaching and learning, but also equally critical daily exchanges of honest, open dialogue.

“The experience involved a transfer of culture, of a way of living,” said Zitouni. “They would ask me about stereotypes, and I could answer the why and the what and the how. These stereotypes were about my country and North Africa in general; I shared my knowledge about politics in the region, media and religion, particularly as someone who wears the veil.”

An associate professor of sociolinguistics, computer-mediated discourse, and English for Specific Purposes at the University of Oran, Algeria, Zitouni’s appointment at CCU involved teaching two classes in Fall 2017: Introduction to Arabic (Arabic 110) and Literature across Cultures (English 277). In Spring 2018, she taught Beginning Arabic II (Arabic 120). Blending academic material and general cultural information elicited interest from her students.

“She told me about people my age from Algeria – their interests, their lives,” said Joshua Parsons, a student in Zitouni’s English course. “She’s always open to questions. In the beginning, a lot of students were very timid; they didn’t really know how to react, and they were expecting her to be very religious and very strict. But she kept it light and fun. She taught us stuff students can think of in their lives outside academia.”

Pillai noticed initially that students were interested in the subject matter of Zitouni’s courses, but as the fall semester progressed, she realized the extent of learning taking place both inside and outside the classroom.

“This is the first Arabic offering we’ve had, and the classes were full – overfull, if anything,” said Pillai. “Students were really curious about the language, and they sustained their interest throughout. Mouna

fostered that curiosity, and her office hours became teaching environments where she talked with students not simply about their work but about aspects of their curiosity. She’s really embraced her responsibility as a cultural ambassador for her country and for the language that she’s here to teach and the culture that she represents.”

In addition to teaching, Zitouni presented at CCU classes across disciplines and traveled to Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., and Bluefield State College in Bluefield, W.Va., to give presentations on her language and culture. She also attended academic conferences in Miami, Las Vegas, Tampa and Washington, D.C. She credited CCU administrators Dan Ennis, dean of the Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and Darla Domke-Damonte, associate provost for Global Initiatives, with broadening her opportunities and Suheir Daoud, associate professor of politics, and numerous other faculty members with making her feel at home.

“This has been a very good experience for me,” said Zitouni. “I am very grateful to CCU. It is an excellent academic institution because of its people.”

Plans are underway for CCU to continue involvement with Fulbright programs and to develop a program with a focus in Arabic, in large part due to the success of this year’s residency.

“The way my students saw me for the first time in class and now, it’s totally different,” said Zitouni. “One hundred percent. And that’s the goal of international exchange: to be able to see through the eyes of the other.” 🌳



Courtesy photos.