

# By Our WTS

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Edited by Sophie Bird and Chris Mura



## WTS Retreat Brings New Insights

by Jennifer Lopatin

Saturday at 10:00 am is not the usual time one might expect to see a good number of the WTS staff gathered together, but the morning of April 6 featured just such a sight. The occasion: the second annual WTS Retreat.

While last year's inaugural retreat focused on continuing training for helping multilingual tutees, this year's explored knowledge and strategies that could be pulled from a few different data sources concerning tutors and tutees.

Graduate tutors, peer tutors, and tutors-in-training all filed into the Maple Room at the IMU, picking a colored piece of paper from a bowl to determine which table to join. The result was a nice mix of each type of tutor per table.

Jo Ann started off the day with her usual cheery "Woo hoo!" and a warm-up activity of writing down favorite tutoring strategies on a piece of paper and passing them around the table to be added to. Next, graduate tutor Charmian Lam took over, leading a majority of the event with a workshop based on her study of WTS tutoring methods using discourse analysis last semester.

Adapting from her Work-

ing Group on the same topic, Charmian adeptly walked the room through different aspects of power and privilege in tutorials from an analysis of selected dialogues from her study, giving different tasks to each table.

Tables were asked to identify moments of particular challenge or opportunity with tutor resiliency and tutee perseverance and brainstorm ways to work with such moments. Because each table had a diversity of tutoring experience, discussions were productive in a variety of ways and often went over the time allotted. Charmian then tied the contributions from everyone in the room back into the study and had everyone reflect on what we could take from these discussions into our tutorials.

Then, after a robust boxed lunch, Campus Writing Program Graduate Assistant and Dissertation Writing Group (DWG) Coordinator Samantha Demmerle took the floor to help us think about ourselves as writers. Samantha began by asking everyone to reflect on personal challenges with the writing process and compiled a list from around the room. She then went through the list

and asked for a show of hands of who felt comfortable tutoring on that topic, making the point that WTS is a resource for our own writing that we as tutors perhaps under-utilize.

She then shared some strategies on the writing process based on principles from DWG, including writing for a period of time every day and prioritizing self-care.

Campus Writing Program Director John Paul Kanwit closed out the retreat with a report on statistics from WConline, which WTS began using in the summer of 2018. He expertly walked the room through the numbers and their implications and fielded a number of questions about the data collection, analysis, and conclusions. Tutors (and Jo Ann) volunteered ideas for how to better advertise WTS as well as further ideas for what kinds of statistics WTS should collect.

At 2pm, WTSers departed into the warm sunshine of the Saturday afternoon, invigorated with camaraderie and new strategies.

*With thanks to Charmian Lam for consultation.*



# Prioritizing the Magical: Reflections on a Sustained Tutor-Tutee Relationship

by Sarah Fischer

“Wow, you are like magic.”

While this is the kind of positive feedback any of us would love to hear as a writing tutor, when L\*, a graduate visual arts student I had been working with all semester, said these words to me, I felt especially joyful.

L and I had nearly ten appointments together this semester. When we began working together in January, she was extremely concerned with the grammar of her prose, especially since English is not her native language. As the sessions progressed, however, and we moved away from grammatical concerns and took on a content-oriented approach, I was able to see her semester-long projects develop, her ideas coalesce into (literal) art, and—most importantly—her confidence flourish.

During one of our final tutorials together near the end of the semester, L and I were working on a particularly challenging sentence for the both of us. She and I knew the wording felt off, but neither of us felt immediately confident about how

to fix it. Adopting one of the popular strategies from the WTS Spring Retreat, I asked her to verbally tell me what she was trying to say. As she spoke, I directly transcribed her words onto paper—refraining from changing the construction. Then, I read them back to her, and she whispered, “Wow, you are like magic.” Though I was initially proud of myself, I quickly responded by reminding L that these words were exactly what she told me and that I merely wrote them down for her. After hearing this, L paused, looked down at her paper, and smiled a soft but accomplished smile. She and I were both proud of how far she’d come.

While reminding L that the magic belonged not to me but to her might seem like a small act, I believe the potential effects of it are immense. Through her appointments at WTS, L learned that her words have value, and by extension, she learned that she has value. This magical agential empowerment has the capacity

to transfer out beyond WTS and beyond the university. L might now recognize herself as the important, valuable, and magical person that she has always been – even before she came to WTS in January. At the end of our last session together, L confidently invited me to her end-of-the-year art showcase where she will display her art and the value she has learned to find in herself and her work.

Though tensions often abound with tutees between what they think we do and what we actually do, between what they want to work on and what we want to work on, between their words and ours, I believe there is transferable power in honoring the students’ agency—power with the potential to help students navigate their lives as empowered and magical writers, thinkers, makers, dreamers, and doers.

*\*Name shortened for student privacy.*

# Farewells

## 12 WTS Tutors Graduate, Move On

### Matthew Waterman

Matthew Waterman is a musician, theatre artist, writer, and Bloomington native. A student of IU's Jacobs School of Music, Matthew is graduating with a bachelor's in jazz studies and theatre. At IU, he played trombone in the Latin Jazz Ensemble, big bands, and jazz combos. On the theatre side, Matthew has acted for IU Theatre, Bloomington Playwrights Project, Cardinal Stage, and Jewish Theatre of Bloomington. He directed a production of Will Eno's *The Open House* last September. He is the former theatre reviewer for *The Herald-Times* and a columnist for the *Indiana Daily Student*. He is currently playing Pozzo in *Waiting for Godot*, directed by Professor Dale McFadden. This fall, he will begin a master's degree in composition at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, Norway. Three memorable years at WTS have taught Matthew that writing isn't about following rules, but rather about meeting the unique goals of each piece.

### Chris Anthony



Chris Anthony is a senior studying Economic Consulting, Business Analytics, and Computer Science at

Indiana University. Chris came to IU with varied interests ranging from neuroscience to graphic design to literature. After experiences in designing apparel, studying journalism, becoming a radio personality, and working in marketing in Milan, Italy, he finally decided to dedicate himself to consulting and learning the fields of analytics and computer science. This decision led him to work with IU's Crimson Consulting to help a business in Greece get a foothold in the United States, and to

become a member of the Commercial Real Estate Workshop. In his free time, Chris enjoys reading, playing poker, and cooking. After graduation, he will be moving to Chicago, Illinois to begin working as an analytics consultant.

### Luma Khabbaz



Luma Khabbaz is a senior, graduating with degrees in International Studies and Journalism. While at IU, Luma

self-published her first poetry book, *Revolution Girl*. This summer Luma will be at the United Nations Population Fund advocating for global reproductive rights. After her gap year, she plans to attend law school and pursue a career in human rights law. Being a WTS tutor has made her an infinitely better writer and has made her very hopeful about her generation of writers and scholars.

### Kristen Whitaker



Kristen Whitaker is a senior studying English and Spanish at Indiana University. Over the past summer, she decided to

pursue a career in healthcare, and now plans to go into nursing school after graduation to pursue a path toward being a nurse practitioner. She will carry the communication skills and professionalism



she's learned in the Writing Center into a hospital or clinic setting, and has learned through tutoring that she wants a hands-on, people-oriented job. In her free time, Kristen loves to write stories that inevitably (and unintentionally) revolve around cats, make fajitas in her favorite cast iron skillet, and commit to too many reading groups. She has just submitted her Creative Thesis with the English Honors Program and is currently looking into nursing programs in Baltimore, Maryland.

## Luke Uhl

Luke Uhl is a senior at Indiana University. He will be graduating in May 2019 with a Biology B.S., an English B.A., and a Chemistry minor. Luke went through the tutor training class during the spring semester of his freshman year and has been tutoring at WTS ever since. Luke has thoroughly enjoyed his time helping students become better writers, but also appreciates the ways in which WTS has helped him develop, too. In particular, he feels that serving as an audience for so many writers has aided him in internalizing an audience while working on his own writing. Additionally, working at WTS has taught Luke how to ask more thoughtful questions. After graduation, Luke hopes to find a job in Bloomington and to see what exciting opportunities the future holds. In his free time, Luke loves to read a good book, to spend time in the great outdoors, and to serve in his church.

## Sophie Bird



Sophie Bird will graduate in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and minors in religious studies and Spanish. Since

deciding to become a journalist at age eight, she has been published in *Kiwanis Magazine*, *Millennial Magazine*, and regional

publication *Bloom Magazine*, where she served as Editorial Assistant for nearly 4 years. In 2018, she worked as Editor of *812 Magazine*, where she wrote a feature story on Bloomington's founding families, and as Guest Editor for Universal Media in Dublin, Ireland, where she wrote a feature on Ireland's National Development Plan. Upon graduation, Sophie – a Bloomington native – will remain in town for a few years to spend time with her family, enjoy beloved Bloomington traditions, and contribute meaningfully to telling the story of her community and its residents.

## Annette Cotant



Annette Cotant is a third-year graduate studying English with a concentration in Public and Professional

Writing at Indiana University. As an avid reader and writer whose love for all things literature began as early as elementary school, she has worked as a Book Acquisitions Intern with Indiana University Press, as a Peer Tutor with Writing Tutorial Services, and as a Transcript Editor and Accuracy Checker with Indiana University's Office of the Bicentennial. With the ultimate aspiration to publish her own creative writing, she occupies her time as a student with helping others reach their own short- and long-term writing goals at WTS. As she moves out west and pursues a career in editing and publishing, she will remember how WTS taught her the art of patience and communication, as well as how it provided her with the incomparable camaraderie of her peers.

## Mason Walther



Mason Walther is a graduating senior who is hoping to parlay his experience as a tutor into a legal profession.

He is majoring in Law and Public Policy through the O'Neill School for Public and Environmental Affairs, but has supplemented this experience with minors in Sociology and Economics. He has served in the Residence Hall Association for four years, and will soon be retiring as its President. Outside of classes and obligations, Mason seeks joy in learning. If you have a unique story or a novel fact, he can personally guarantee he'd love to hear it.

## Other Departing Tutors

Chloe Nelson

Zahra Bhoy

Gabby Hollman

## Amanda Li



Originally from Hong Kong, Amanda Li spent the past five years pursuing her Doctorate in Music (Voice) at

Indiana University. Amanda resided in the UK for six years and fell in love with all things Scottish before deciding to hop over to have a taste of the American life. Although nothing is ever going to surpass a dram of smoky single malt Scotch—try a neat pour of Caol Ila, your whole being will thank you—she finds many of the Bourbons here at least agreeable if not also delectable. An experienced voice teacher, Amanda welcomed the different challenges posed by her work at WTS, where she learned so much in the process of helping students develop their communication skills, which, after all, are not so different from those of singers.



# New Faces

## 12 Students Join WTS Staff After Spring Training

### Alyssa P. Miller



Alyssa P. Miller is a rising junior studying political science, history, and information systems at Indiana University. In

2016, she interned in the Constituent Office of Congressman Chris Van Hollen. At IU, she has served as a teaching assistant for political science courses and completed training for Writing Tutorial Services this spring. She is a two-time Founder's Scholar, and the Spring 2019 recipient of the Ford P. Hall Scholarship in Political Science. In the fall of 2019, she will be studying abroad in London and doing research for her honors thesis. When not neck-deep in academia, she enjoys sailing, taking naps with her dog, and getting lost in her hometown of Chicago.

### Mel Fronczek

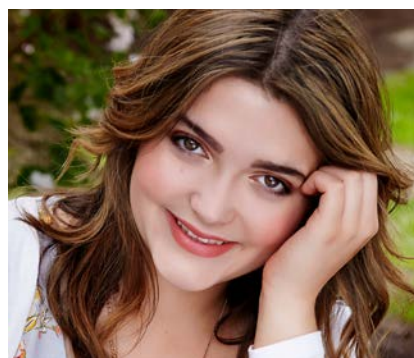


Mel Fronczek is a rising junior studying journalism and Spanish. She's always had a passion for sharing her experiences

with the hope of helping others. So far, she's accomplished this through being a residence hall tour guide, a new member trainer for the service fraternity Alpha Phi Omega, and now a peer tutor trainee for Writing Tutorial Services. During her time at IU, Mel has also maintained a 3.96 cumulative GPA. This summer, she plans on going on a Media School-sponsored trip to report on national parks, as well as

living in Alcalá for six weeks to better her understanding of the Spanish language and culture. When she has time to take a breather, Mel enjoys sipping tea, doodling in her bullet journal, and catching up on the news. Mel appreciates the WTS staff and resources available to her, and she is excited to be friendly and helpful as a full-fledged undergraduate tutor in the fall.

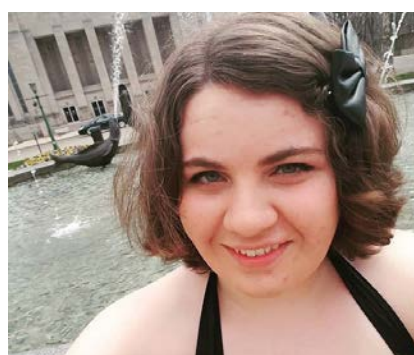
### Delaney Wenos



Delaney Wenos is a rising junior studying political science and criminal justice at Indiana University. In high school,

she worked as an editor for her school's award-winning yearbook in Carmel, Indiana – the largest in the state. Through this experience, Delaney found enjoyment working one-on-one with students editing and revising their journalistic pieces. In addition to these experiences, she has a breadth of academic experience in political science and plans to conduct research in the field. Her career goals include health and disability law. Outside of tutoring and academia, her passions include advocacy for those with disabilities and rare diseases, politics, painting, and all activities including her dog, Sadie.

### Gillian Paxton



Gillian Paxton is a rising junior studying journalism, creative writing, and music.

Writing has always been her life, from stapled construction-paper picture books at age six to her weekly media blog, *Absoludicrous*, which has posted every Sunday since January 2017. She is a member of WIUX, IU's campus radio station, where she hosts her own radio show, and during Fall 2018, she interned at Bloomington radio station B97 Hoosier Country. In her free time, she enjoys painting, playing video games, and knitting scarves for family and friends. This summer, she will be travelling to London with the Ernie Pyle Scholars to complete an internship at *The Quietus*, an online media and music blog.

is also a part of the Indiana University Journal of Undergraduate Research staff on the natural sciences student editorial board, acting as a peer reviewer for journal submissions. Outside of these academic pursuits, Rachel enjoys cycling as a member of an independent women's Little 500 team and the Indiana Cycling Club, as well as representing IU at events across the Midwest with the Scholarship Advisory Committee. She is currently in training with Writing Tutorial Services to become a peer tutor.

## Kiley Gardner



Kiley Gardner is a rising sophomore studying English, linguistics and French at Indiana University. She is a writer and an activist from

Indianapolis who enjoys playing the Sims 4, volunteering for Middle Way House and being involved in the LGBT community. She worked at the Carmel High School Media Center for two years and is currently employed with RPS Libraries. In 2017, she studied abroad in Brest, France and earned an Award of Excellence for her academic achievements. She is now proficient in French, and is also trying to learn Spanish and ASL. During the Fall 2019 semester, Kiley will be a tutor for WTS and an RA at Collins Living-Learning Center.

## Rachel Kalbfell

Rachel Kalbfell is a sophomore studying biochemistry, Spanish, and public advocacy at Indiana University. On a premedical studies track, Rachel has been involved in various biomedical research labs since her junior year of high school. She continues that work now as a member of a clinical neurotrauma lab on campus. Rachel

## Emma Smith



Emma Smith is a rising junior at Indiana University studying English Literature and Informatics. In addition

to tutoring for WTS, Emma has experience interning for the St. Joseph County Public Library in South Bend, Indiana, and for multiple theatres in her hometown of Crown Point, Indiana. She has had poetry published in *CANVAS Arts Magazine* and enjoys writing creatively in her free time. When she's not in class, you can find Emma on campus with her most prized possessions: her noise-cancelling headphones and her latest library book. Currently, she is preparing to begin working for both the Indiana University Press and the Wylie House Museum this coming summer.

## Robert Robinson

Robert Robinson is a rising sophomore studying philosophy and history at Indiana University. Although he has few other formal accomplishments to his name, he is the recipient of the 2019 Dan H. Eikenberry Scholarship and will be interning at Farm Sanctuary in Watkins Glen, New York over the summer. When not tutoring or doing schoolwork, Robert avidly plays the piano.

He's good enough to sound impressive, but not good enough to actually call himself a piano player. Similarly, although he often rock climbs at Hoosier Heights in Bloomington, he is not yet good enough to call himself a rock climber.

## Katy Foster



Katy Foster is a rising junior studying English, Italian, and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other

Languages). Outside of academics, she enjoys music and has played the clarinet for more than 10 years. Currently, she plays clarinet in the Marching Hundred. She is also the president of Tau Beta Sigma, a music-focused service sorority on campus. At WTS, she is excited to improve many skills such as communication, helping speakers of other languages, and developing better writing techniques.

## Other New Tutors

Tyler Burdon

Tanner Hovis-Johnson

Courtney Jewell