

By Our WTS

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Edited by Gillian Paxton, Mel Fronczek, & Matthew Pollock



Our Second Virtual Tutor Retreat

by Cody St. Clair

On Saturday April 17th, the WTS tutors gathered on Zoom for our second Virtual Tutor Retreat. This year, our primary focus was disability in higher education, namely university practices and policies for accommodating students with physical and cognitive disabilities. The core question that drove our discussion was: given both the successes and failures of the university to advocate for students with disabilities, how can WTS adapt its writing center pedagogy and administration to reduce disability stigma and promote a more nurturing learning environment for all students, whether they have a temporary or permanent, documented or undocumented disability? To help us answer this question and to facilitate discussion among the tutors, we invited Dr. Rachel Graddy (she/her), Director of Disability Services at Fitch-

burg State University, and Dr. Jess Waggoner (they/them), a noted disability studies scholar and Assistant Professor of Women and Gender Studies and English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

A longtime friend and colleague of our Graduate Assistant Director, Mary Helen Truglia, Dr. Graddy provided our tutors a detailed look into varying definitions and classifications of disability, the history of disability legislation in the U.S.—such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990—and the accommodation practices and resources that universities have used to “level the playing field” in academia. An IU alumnus who frequently availed themselves of WTS while writing their dissertation, Dr. Waggoner spoke to the tutors about “justice-informed approaches” to disability in higher education, arguing

that disability justice: 1) is intersectional and must be informed by gender, economic, and racial justice; 2)

“The core question that drove our discussion was...How can WTS adapt its writing center pedagogy and administration to reduce disability stigma and promote a more nurturing learning environment for all students?”

espouses an understanding of disability not solely as a medical condition but further as a socially-constructed and relational identity



Virtual Tutor Retreat: Continued

through which communities and cultures are cultivated; and 3) responds to the oppressions embedded in institutional structures by assessing how teaching practices can either cement or challenge these uneven power dynamics. Both Dr. Graddy and Dr. Waggoner prompted the tutors to reflect on past tutorials when they were successful in their ability to provide students access conducive to their physical and/or learning needs. Through their reflection and discussion, tutors identified shared strengths at and avenues for fostering a disability-inclusive writing pedagogy at WTS.

In addition to Dr. Graddy's and Dr. Waggoner's presentations, Dr. Michelle Cox—Director of the English Language Support Office at Cornell University—spoke to our tutors about the compounding stresses that multilingual students face in the writing classroom and at the writing center, providing various resources

and recommendations for how tutors can become more cognizant of and sensitive to the pressures these students face at U.S. universities. And finally, Dr. Samantha Demmerle, one of our outgoing Graduate

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Assistants, led a mindfulness and meditation activity to help the tutors reflect on the current anxieties and difficulties they're experiencing in their academic, professional, and personal lives and to use active breathing techniques to help alleviate some of their stress.

While we do not know if our Spring 2022 retreat will be in-person or online, I guarantee that we will continue to have thought-provoking discussions with our tutors about the topics and issues that most impact their work at WTS.



A Tribute to WTS Director Jo Ann Vogt

by WTS Staff

Goodbye to Our Wonderful WTS Director of 13 years

*John Paul Kanwit,
Director, Campus Writing
Program*

Tutor Jo Minnich opened the December 2007 edition of *By Our WTS* with the following: “Twenty inches of snow fell that night in Missouri. Luckily, Jo Ann Vogt couldn’t sleep, because she received a phone call. It was an old friend, Raymond Smith, Executive Director of the Campus Writing Program, informing her about a potential job opening at the writing program at IU.” That potential job opening turned into the WTS directorship, a position that Jo Ann would hold so capably for the next thirteen years.

Nothing better encapsulates Jo Ann’s legacy at WTS than her careful hiring and training of our wonderful WTS tutors. As Jo Ann remarked in 2007, “Tutors are a peculiar kind

of individual. They are interested in many things. They play with ideas across disciplines and are people who like to help other people make progress.” Curiosity and a “friendly and helpful” attitude are some of the main qualities that Jo Ann looked for in interviewing potential tutors, and these traits in her hires fueled the success of WTS. Nobody was better than Jo Ann at hiring people with the skills to help students.

While helping students, Jo Ann’s tutors valued their experiences working at WTS with Jo Ann. Former tutor Sophie Bird (2019),

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wrote, “Working for WTS remains one of the defining decisions of both my personal and professional lives—thank you! I’m so

grateful to have had the opportunity to work with so many intelligent, talented, and compassionate human beings during my time as a tutor, and that experience was made so much more special by the opportunity to work for you. Thank you for being such an incredible force of encouragement and empowerment in my life.” At the time of Jo Ann’s retirement, many of her former tutors wrote to say similar things about Jo Ann’s influence on them.

For my own part, I have never worked with a better colleague. Every day in both words and deeds, Jo Ann demonstrated that her primary concern was helping students, including our tutors. This care extended to the hundreds of letters of recommendation that Jo Ann wrote for tutors. Many of these letters extended to several pages, and each was based on the careful notes that Jo Ann took during interviews and observations of tutorials. Jo Ann will be sorely missed at WTS!



Tribute to Jo Ann Vogt: continued...

Friendly and Helpful *Jennifer Lopatin, Former WTS Graduate Tutor*

Woo hoo! Okay, you guys! Let's talk about Jo Ann Vogt! That sequence of introductory phrases is among the many wonderful things JAV has taught me. There are so many things I can say about Jo Ann: she is the best boss I've ever had; she endlessly inspires me as a manager, educator, and person; her endless patience and good humor have consistently been a bright spot for me. If I can be even halfway like Jo Ann, I will consider my life a success. WTS owes so much to her: the tutor training process and course, the motto of "friendly and helpful," and so much more. Jo Ann's successor truly has big shoes to fill.

"There are so many things I can say about Jo Ann"

There are hundreds of small stories I could share about Jo Ann, but I'll share the one that is probably the most widely relatable: my interview with Jo Ann was the kindest series of heart attacks I've experienced. She met me with her characteristic upbeat energy, which set some nerves at ease. Then, each of my answers was met, with her cheerfulness belying the words, "well, Jennifer"—usually a red flag—"that was actually a trap." At each point I would almost stop breathing, positive I had failed the interview. Then Jo Ann would continue, still cheerful, "but you weren't tricked"/"but you didn't fall into the trap!" It was the nicest whiplash I could have asked for. Even if I had gotten an answer wrong, I came to realize, Jo Ann would have continued to be cheerful as she turned it into a genuine learning opportunity. As ever with first impressions, this experience was borne out and magnified across my years

working at WTS. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to work under the guidance of the upbeat, red-wearing, forever kind and supportive Jo Ann Vogt.

Modelling Leadership *Elizabeth "Izzy" Maffetone, Former WTS Graduate Tutor*

Jo Ann would often say that her great talent was "picking great people" to work at Writing Tutorial Services. I think of this comment as quintessentially Jo Ann—even when she brags, she manages to make it about other people. However, Jo Ann's comment undersells the deliberateness of the communities that she worked to build at WTS.

Jo Ann excels at creating spaces—both formal and informal—where community flourishes. Jo Ann would frequently emphasize the importance of the bullpen, an informal space where tutors could



Tribute to Jo Ann Vogt: continued...

gather, talk shop, debrief, and learn from each other. Whether we were in the corner of the library or on the second floor with CITL or in the Leaning Commons, Jo Ann always made sure that tutors had a corner of their own (or, at least, a bench or two). She noted once that she felt that the bullpen was where her tutors could consult with one another, swap stories, add tools to our toolkits, and become better at our jobs. It's no surprise then, that (as I'm sure Jo Ann anticipated) many working groups emerged out of conversations that began in the bullpen.

The Working Group model, as well, is indicative of Jo Ann's ability to create community spaces. She would often joke that these were tutor-led because "no one wanted to hear her talk for an hour." This is obviously not true; I think I can speak for all WTS tutors when I say that I never tire of hearing Jo Ann's insights, observations, and cat sto-

ries. However, this was also strategic as these groups gave tutors ways to connect with each other and to share their strengths and challenges. In addition, it provided an opportunity for each of us to practice the kind of leadership that Jo Ann espoused—to use our own expertise and experience in service to the collective.

Jo Ann helped me see that leaders don't always have to stand in the spotlight. That some of the best leaders know how (and when) to step back and create space for other people to shine. WTS is where I learned how to build community and become a member of one; it's where I have met some of my best friends and collaborators; it's where I learned how to be a collaborator. Many of the tutors who I have worked with have similar stories about how their work at WTS has shaped them and successes after WTS. Jo Ann would probably say it's because she "picks

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great people,” but I think it's because Jo Ann inspires people to be great.

Thank you
WTS Staff

From all of us at Writing Tutorial Services, we want to thank you, Jo Ann, from the bottom of our hearts for all that you did for WTS, for us, and for the students of Indiana University.

Farewells

16 WTS Tutors Graduate, Move On

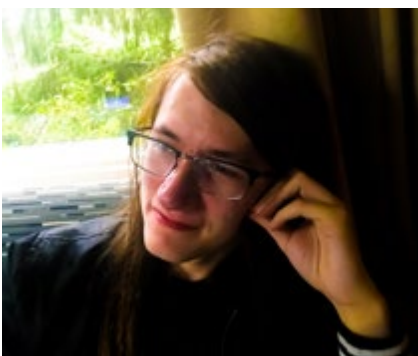
Tyler Burdon



Tyler is a graduating senior studying law and public policy and computer science. His internship at Indiana Legal Services

and involvement in IU's pre-law fraternity chapter solidified his interest in the legal field. Next year, Tyler will attend law school at the University of Houston Law Center with hopes to specialize in patent prosecution, marrying his passions of law and computer science. Tyler said his experiences working at WTS will prove invaluable to him, not only through law school, but through the rest of his career.

Tanner Fox Hovis-Johnson



Tanner is a graduating senior majoring in game design. He has been a WTS tutor since the spring of 2019 and has made

lifelong friends in the years since then. Tanner's favorite moments with WTS were hanging out with other tutors at the ASCs and in the bullpen, and he is proud to have been included in their ranks at WTS. He is moving to Madison, Wisconsin in June to finally leave his hometown of Bloomington and to join the game industry. Maybe one day he'll make a game about WTS.

Katy Foster



Katy is a graduating senior studying English with a concentration in public and professional writing. She also has

minors in business and Italian. She has loved working at WTS for the past two years and has learned so much about the writing process and working with students of all majors and backgrounds. During her time at IU, she played clarinet in the Marching Hundred and spent two years as chapter president of Tau Beta Sigma, a band service sorority. After graduation, Katy will be staying in Bloomington to start her master's degree in information systems through the Kelley School of Business.

Delaney Wenos



I am graduating with a degree in political science and criminal justice. In my time at IU, I discovered

my passion for aiding marginalized groups by being a founding member of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee in the Department of Political Science. In the fall I am headed to IU Robert H. McKinney School of Law to pursue my passion for advocacy and health law.

Chithra Vedantam



Chithra Vedantam is a graduating senior studying Linguistics and French. In her time here at IU

she has worked as a teaching assistant, interned with the Language Conservancy doing field work with the Crow language, and studied abroad in the south of France. Chithra has found her work as a tutor and Wrangler here at WTS to be the most rewarding experience she's had in college and is grateful to have worked with such an amazing organization. After graduation she hopes to follow her love of language and books by pursuing a career in publishing.

Emma Smith



Emma is a graduating senior studying English, studio art, and human-computer interaction. She completed

her honors thesis in creative nonfiction, and it included original illustrations. Emma dreams of being a writer or racecar driver sometime after graduation. In addition to WTS, she's worked at IU Libraries' Wylie House Museum and served as a humanities editor for the IU Journal of Undergraduate Research. She has worked at WTS for two years, and her favorite memories come from her "baby tute" days when she was under the guidance of one of her favorite people, Jo Ann Vogt.

Mel Fronczek



Mel is a graduating senior, majoring in journalism and minoring in Spanish. She did her training

semester during the spring of 2019 and has loved WTS ever since. Being a WTS tutor has taught her so much about empathy in student learning. Mel also worked in various reporting and editing positions at the Indiana Daily Student, IU's award winning student newspaper. She also got to intern in the news departments at WFIU/WTIU, the local NPR and PBS affiliate stations, and was admitted to this year's New York Times Student Journalism Institute class. After graduation, she will finish her training with the New York Times and then intern at USA Today.

Dayanara Leija



Dayanara is a graduating senior, majoring in public management and minoring in urban planning

and community development. She began her time with WTS in the spring of 2020 and values how much WTS has helped her with her own writing. Dayanara also tutors for the D. Ames Shuel Academic Center and works at the Wright Center Desk. She's also served in two director positions for the Omega Phi Beta sorority throughout her time at IU. After graduation, Dayanara plans to go home and spend some time with loved ones.

Alexandra Schrader-Dobris



After four wonderful years, my time at WTS has come to an end. Working for Jo Ann has been

an absolute pleasure. Her guidance has taught me so much about the writing and teaching process. I enjoyed working in such a supportive and friendly work environment. This spring I am graduating with a major in History and minors in Urban Planning and Development; Sociology; and Gender Studies. Among many incredible and formative experiences at IU I had the opportunity to intern for the Office of the Bicentennial and the Center of Excellence for Women & Technology, volunteer for the Indiana University Journal of Undergraduate Research, and work for IU's History Department. Upon graduation, I will attend law school. I plan to make use of all the beneficial skills I learned at WTS as I continue my education.

Gillian Paxton

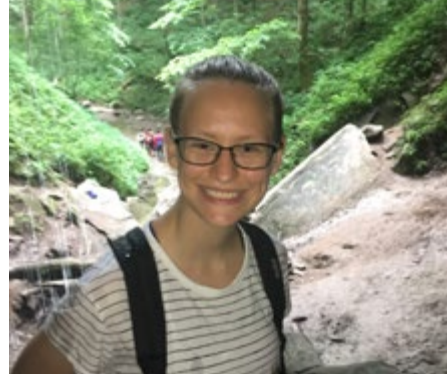


Gillian is a graduating senior from Carmel, IN with a major in journalism and minors in creative writing and

music. Her four years as an undergrad at IU was filled with wonderful experiences - travelling to London in Summer 2019 and interning for a music blog there, DJing a radio show for WIUX, and making lifelong friends, and of course, working for WTS. WTS was one of the most rewarding experiences of her college career, and made her realize a love for educating others

that she hopes to make into a career. Next year, she will stay in Bloomington in the IU School of Education's Transition to Teaching Program, where she will earn her Indiana teaching certificate. From there, she hopes to return to the Media School for a Masters.

Grace McDougall



Grace is a graduating senior, majoring in secondary English language arts education with

a license addition in English as a new language and a minor in French. In 2019, Grace published a paper in IU Journal of Undergraduate Research examining the connection between homosociality and chivalry in two of Marie de France's lais. Working at WTS has been one of the best parts of her undergraduate experience, and Grace will miss her wonderful co-workers. After completing her student teaching at Martinsville High School and Jackson Creek Middle School, Grace plans to find a high school teaching position in Indiana.

Other Departing Tutors

Mariah Villaroman

Ellen Bergan

Emma Cail

Mira Matthew

Lyssa Miller

New Faces

10 Students Join WTS Staff After Spring Training

Maddy Hildreth



Maddy is a freshman from Fort Wayne, Indiana, majoring in management and minoring in

education policy and French. This year, she's enjoyed trying different restaurants in Bloomington, joining the Women in Business organization at the Kelley School of Business, and hiking at Griffy Lake. Maddy said she's excited to work for WTS because she loves sharing her passion for writing with others and wants to give students more confidence in their writing abilities. In the future, she wants to get her master's degree in education and work as a school administrator.

Morgen Herndon



Morgen is a sophomore studying economic consulting and business analytics with a minor in apparel merchandising.

When she's not in class, she can be found making clothes or grabbing coffee. She's excited to tutor at WTS because she enjoys helping others feel more confident in their writing. In the future, Morgen hopes to work in the retail industry.

Ellie Harrison



Ellie is a sophomore studying art history and anthropology. Along with working for WTS, Ellie is involved in

the IU Journal of Undergraduate Research and the Indiana Daily Student. She is also a research assistant for a Ph.D. student in the informatics department. After college, Ellie is considering pursuing a graduate degree in curatorship or art history. In her spare time, Ellie enjoys reading, hiking, and watching movies.

Lena Babiker



I am Lena Babiker, a freshman at Indiana university majoring in psychology and biology. Originally from Sudan

and moved to the United States about 6 years ago. I speak Arabic fluently and am currently learning spanish. I am glad to have the opportunity to be a part of the Writing Tutorial Services at IU as it fulfills my passion for writing. I have a strong passion for writing poems, stories, and analytical papers. I look forward to exploring this passion with students across our campus.

Betty Fall



Betty is sophomore from Zionsville studying English with a focusing on creative writing and media and

specializing in film and cinema. In her free time, Betty can be found reading, making art, practicing bass, or discussing media under a critical lens with her friends. Through her peer tutor position at WTS, she hopes her passion for writing, both creative and academic, will help her help other students reach their goals.

Jessica Morris



Jessica is a junior majoring in international studies, linguistics, and Spanish and minoring

in educational studies. She has served as a representative in the IU Student Government Student Body Congress. In addition to working as a full-fledged peer tutor with WTS next year, she will also serve as co-president of Independent Council for Women and as an external director for the Hoosier Scholar Ambassadors. This summer, Jessica hopes to study abroad in Alcalá de Henares, Spain.

Mary Streett



Mary is double majoring in international studies and Arabic. She is part of the Hamilton Lugar

School, as well as the Hutton Honors College and the Arabic Flagship Program. She loves to travel and learn about new cultures. Mary plans to use her degree and her language abilities to one day live and work abroad. She's excited about working at WTS because she wants to help students improve and see the value in their writing.

Brianna Kishel

Brianna Kishel is an ambitious freshman in the Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences department at Indiana University. She has a passion for research and language, and is an advocate for disability rights and awareness in medicine. Brianna has previously worked as a camp counselor for Scouts BSA and as a teacher at a preschool. She finds enjoyment in the company of others, and will often express her excitement for learning more about the people around her. The only thing that makes her happier than learning from her peers is her loving cat, Velcro.

Other New Tutors

Emily Guse

Daniel Theus