NOVA Film Professor and Fulbright Scholar Inspires Students

When Lucy Gebre-Egziabher learned she would be teaching film studies in her home country of Ethiopia as a Fulbright Scholar, she referred to the opportunity as a double blessing.

Gebre-Egziabher, assistant professor in NOVA’s Communication Studies and Theater Department, taught film studies and conducted a “From Script to Screen” seminar at Rift Valley University, the largest private university in Ethiopia. She also assisted the university’s Communication and Journalism Department in developing a film curriculum.

Before arriving, Gebre-Egziabher asked the admissions department to encourage women to enroll. Students flocked to the course.

Fulbright Scholar Lucy Gebre-Egziabher teaches film studies to students at Rift Valley University in Ethiopia.

“I asked them to limit the creative class to 20 so I can work with students individually,” Gebre-Egziabher said. “When they called back, they said more than 150 students enrolled. I thought to myself, ‘These kids are thirsty for this information and opportunity. Who am I to say no?’”

Because of high demand, Gebre-Egziabher taught 52 students in the day – including 12 women – and 75 at night from October 26 to December 6. Giving back to her country was an enlightening and emotional experience. When it was time to return home, she felt such appreciation for her students, knowing she had gained just as much from them.

“When I arrived to class the first day, there was a projector but no screen. So I went to talk to the administrators. By the time I returned, the students had set up two chairs with a white board sitting on it and that was our screen,” Gebre-Egziabher said. “These students did amazing work without the same resources we have here. They blew my mind and touched my heart.”

Lucy Gebre-Egziabher (front row center) taught film studies to more than 120 students at Rift Valley University in Ethiopia.
After completing her Fulbright program, Gebre-Egziabher was asked by the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa to conduct a screenwriting workshop for Ethiopian women journalists and filmmakers. This was part of the U.S. Embassy’s campaign to raise awareness on gender-based violence (GBV). Participants explored the various forms of GBV and each took a theme to use in their scripts. Upon completion, participants came out of the workshop with a five-minute script. The top three were selected to be produced into a short film.

“My students’ enthusiasm and determination inspired me as a human being and as a teacher. Having taught in the U.S. and now in Ethiopia, I feel my students in the U.S., who have everything at their fingertips, from resources, to information, to education, could learn a lot from my students in Ethiopia, who made things happen in spite of the obstacles,” she said. “I learned that I can be an even better teacher. It was one of the most valuable experiences I have had not only as a teacher but also as a human being.”

Gebre-Egziabher will give a presentation on her Fulbright journey in Ethiopia at 2:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 1 at the Alexandria Campus in the Bisdorf Building, Room 158. For a full report on Gebre-Egziabher’s Fulbright experience and to view her students’ documentary about her lectures and their experience, visit her NOVA faculty blog.

Alexandria Faculty Receives Brooks Award

On February 12, Professor Laura Franklin (AL) received the Brooks Award for Outstanding Leadership in the Profession at the Northeast Conference for Teachers of Foreign Languages (NECTFL) in New York. Franklin was commended for her service to NECTFL and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), which “resulted in extraordinary and positive change for both organizations and their professional development offerings.”

Franklin was also lauded for her “professional integrity and unflagging dedication” and for serving as “a model for future leaders.” Her dedication and passion were evident in the remarks she made upon accepting the Brooks Award, describing teaching French at NOVA as a privilege, not work.

Several of Franklin’s proud NOVA World Languages colleagues as well as her daughter, Angela, attended the NECTFL Annual Awards Ceremony to support her achievement.

MEC Professor Joins NBRC Board of Trustees

MEC Professor Joins NBRC Board of Trustees Dr. James P. Lamberti, associate professor and medical director of the Respiratory Therapy Assistant (RTA) Program at the Medical Education Campus (MEC), has joined the National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc. (NBRC) Board of Trustees, the certifying organization for respiratory therapists.
The primary mission of the NBRC and its 31-member Board of Trustees is to provide high-quality voluntary credentialing examinations for respiratory therapists and pulmonary function technologists, establish standards to credential practitioners to work under medical direction, issue certificates and prepare a directory of credentialed individuals, advance medicine by promoting use of respiratory care in treating human ailments, support ethical and educational standards of respiratory care, and cooperate with accrediting agencies to support respiratory care education.

Since its inception, the NBRC has issued over 350,000 professional credentials to more than 209,000 individuals and currently tests nearly 40,000 candidates annually. One of the respiratory therapy examinations is the standard for licensure in the 49 states that regulate the profession.

“As a clinician and educator, I am honored to be asked to join the governing body of respiratory care practitioners,” Lamberti said. “My hope is to assist NBRC to stay clinically relevant in the coming years.”

Lamberti has been in clinical practice in Northern Virginia since 1985 and is a founding member of Northern Virginia Pulmonary and Critical Care Associates. He has served as medical director of respiratory care services at Inova Fairfax Hospital since 1997 where he directs a staff of 120 respiratory therapists. Lamberti is also the secretary/treasurer of the Board of Directors of National Association for Medical Direction of Respiratory Care (NAMDRC) and is the recipient of the 2015 Outstanding Clinician Award from American Thoracic Society. He first began teaching and serving as the medical director of the RTA Program at the Annandale Campus in 1999, prior to the Medical Education Campus opening its doors in 2003.

Invitation to VCCS Regional Workshop

The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) has announced five upcoming regional workshops focused on search committees, recruitment and diversity for hiring managers. The System Office Human Resources staff will be offering these one-day workshops focused on streamlining and improving the search committee process, proactive recruitment techniques, and diversity support activities. The program is designed for academic program heads, deans, directors and all hiring managers. Participants can expect to gain an understanding of the following:

- How to better manage and support a search committee
- Expanding our recruiting, networking and social media approaches to find the best candidates
- How diversity and inclusion directly support our mission and Complete 2021
- The chancellor’s current initiatives for diversity
How the VCCS Diversity Office can support each college’s recruitment efforts and initiatives

The program is designed with a roundtable format to allow interactive discussions that will help participants brainstorm ways of improving each college’s way of recruiting and selecting the best and most diverse faculty and staff possible. Presenters will also discuss how to incorporate diversity and inclusion principles into the selection process.

Presenters:

Dr. Chris Lee, associate vice chancellor, Human Resource Services and author of “Search Committees: A Comprehensive Guide to Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches”

Ms. Kate Haselhorst, VCCS Diversity Officer

Who should attend:

Deans, program heads, hiring managers, diversity liaisons, college Diversity and Inclusion Council members and human resources professionals

The remaining workshop date and location is:

Date: March 1
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Location: John Tyler College, Midlothian Campus H 109
To register: http://doodle.com/poll/fqgwkztu8puzws8m

Money Management and Free Tax Prep Workshops

NOVA’s Financial Literacy Program will be holding Money Management Workshops throughout February and March to discuss strategies college students can use to improve their financial situation. Topics to be covered include budgeting, saving, emergency funds, credit cards, compound interest, credit reports, responsible borrowing, financial aid, student loans and financial coaching.

A few of the Money Management Workshops are scheduled to begin right after some of NOVA’s Free Tax Preparation Workshops end so that students may receive assistance from IRS-certified volunteers with preparing their 2015 tax returns and then stick around to learn about managing their finances.

Please encourage students to take advantage of these events! Faculty and staff are also welcome to attend. More details are available on NOVA’s Financial Literacy Blog at http://blogs.nvcc.edu/financial-literacy/upcoming-events/.
Second Annandale STEMfair on April 14

Following a successful first effort last year, the Annandale Campus Mathematics, Science, and Engineering (MSE) Division will host STEMfair 2016 in the Ernst Community Cultural Center on Monday, April 14.

Organized this year in a collaborative manner by a 14-member interdisciplinary advisory committee chaired by Chemistry Associate Professor Ritu Kansal, information about STEMfair 2016 can be found online.

Last year, the event drew 42 official entries, with over 120 participating students and more than 180 attendees. STEMfair 2015 photos are available online.

“I encourage faculty throughout the college to inform their students about this great opportunity for them to network with each other and share their work with other students, faculty, and industry representatives,” said MSE Dean Abbas Eftekhari.

Students may present their work as either an oral presentation or a poster presentation. And there are three categories of entries:

- Physical Sciences (PHY, CHM, GOL)
- Biological and Environmental Sciences
- Engineering, Computer Science, and Mathematics

The entries will be judged on the following areas:

- Originality and Creativity
- Scientific Method
- Analysis of Data and Conclusion
- Communication of Results

Awards and recognition include trophies and certificates for each category and there will be cash awards for select projects. Internships and research opportunities are also possible.

You can access the flyer in this edition of the Intercom. For questions, contact Ritu Kansal at rkansal@nvcc.edu.
Changes Coming to Purchase of Prior Service (PPS)

Beginning January 1, 2017, purchase of prior service provisions will change, simplifying the purchase process and ensuring that the purchase cost more closely reflects the actual cost of providing the additional benefit in retirement. What does that mean for you?

- Purchasing service now may save you money.
- Changes may increase the cost of purchasing service credit for some types of service.
- There will be limits on the number of months eligible for purchase of some types of service.

If you decide to purchase service before January 1, 2017, keep in mind:

- VRS recommends that you apply to purchase your service no later than October 1, 2016.
- If you purchase through a salary-reduction agreement, you must have deductions taken for the month of December 2016 or earlier.
- If you use a lump-sum payment method, the full payment must arrive at VRS no later than December 30, 2016.

Prior service credit counts toward the years needed to become vested, eligibility for retirement and the health insurance credit.

Use the Refunded Service Comparison Estimator in your myVRS account to compare the cost of purchasing refunded service before December 30, 2016, versus after January 1, 2017, when the provisions change.

To register for myVRS or for more information on the Purchase of Prior Service, go online.

Time for Faculty of the Year Nominations

Each year, the Alumni Federation honors faculty at NOVA for their achievements in the classroom. Nominations are being accepted through March 15.

Faculty are nominated by students and alumni for making a difference in the lives of students. Awards are handed out each April to each nominee and an overall winner is selected for each campus and an adjunct faculty. The Alumni Federation Awards Committee will select one full-time teaching faculty member from each campus and one adjunct faculty member from the College.

Only NOVA alumni and students may nominate faculty for the awards. Nominations will not be accepted for faculty members who have received the award within the past three years. Only teaching faculty and adjunct faculty are eligible.
Nominations can be submitted online. For more information, please visit the Alumni Federation webpage. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Announcements

1. Bulk Mail – Saving Money on Large Mailings
   Contact NOVA Printing Services
   703.323.3292 or printingservices@nvcc.edu

2. Study abroad – Brussels, Belgium
   PLS 295 Conflict and Cooperation in Europe
   June 5-19, 3 credits
   Contact Kara Heitz at kheitz@nvcc.edu, or Melissa Beaudoin at mbeaudoin@nvcc.edu for more information

3. Get Your Taxes Done For Free
   http://turbotax.intuit.com/taxfreedom/index.jsp?vitaSiteID=S16091503

4. This Spring, join TILT
   Fridays at 10 a.m. via WebEx
   To register, go to https://goo.gl/C9Igwz

5. STEMfair 2016
   April 14, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
   AN Campus, CE Forum
   Visit blogs.nvcc.edu/stemfair for more info

6. HR OL&D Workshop Schedule – Spring 2016

7. Ready, Set, Brand!
   Leadership Conference
   Loudoun HEC, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.