



Kate Santos/staff photographer

Zach Samuels reads a selection of his work to family members, faculty and his peers at the literature department's final presentation.

# Literature students showcase work at reading

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Imagine writing a prequel to one of the classic works of Western literature. Then imagine doing it in one semester.

Eight graduating seniors read selections from their work to an audience of family members, faculty and UNC Asheville students on Nov. 21. For some writers, such as **Christina Ayers, a 31-year-old literature student with a concentration in creative writing**, using personal topics in their work is therapeutic.

"Although I sometimes feel vulnerable about exposing my emotions, that's how I function as a poet," she said. "I have always been a bit of an exhibitionist with my emotions."

This is not to say the readings were not without moments of levity or works that were less personal, such as Zach Samuels' drama about the interrelationships between three roommates. Three UNCA students, John Coggin, Sydney Hubbard and Thor Thobaissen staged and acted out the piece. The state's poet laureate, Cathy Smith Bowers, inspired Sally Parish's piece, and her work was grounded in a nature-centric setting and accompanied by music.

McCarter is a Miami native and literature student with a concentration in creative writing. Her prequel to Milton's epic poem was based on a thematic element in *Paradise Lost*, encapsulated by the angel Raphael's assertion that Adam be "lowly wise" and stop asking questions.

Curiosity and Eve's disobedience were the starting point for McCarter, who said her work was "an attempt to satiate that curiosity."

Her use of free form poetry, as opposed to the metered verse style Milton used, was based on the fact that her work was a prequel to *Paradise Lost*.

"Milton and his contemporaries believed that metered verse reflected the order and harmony of God's universe. Because a number of my poems take place before God and his little universe had been created, as well as outside of the literary Christian paradigm of God's character, an organic free form makes more sense to my narrative," she said.

McCarter argued the gender inequality and the archaic views of women represented in literature originating around the time of *Paradise Lost* are issues with which Milton struggled. She chose, in her work, to portray Eve in a positive light, dismissing the an-

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# Faculty members donate paychecks to charities

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Despite a tough economy and state-wide budget cuts, **Chris Miller** said he hopes UNC Asheville employees continue to participate in the State Employees Combined Campaign, which gives employees the opportunity to donate to charities straight out of their paychecks.

"Last year's goal was based on a monetary amount," said Miller, chair of the SECC. "With the economy the way it is, we decided this year to focus less on monetary donations and emphasize general participation more."

The SECC started in 1986, and since



Chris Miller

that time, North Carolina state employees have raised more than \$70 million in donations. Last year, UNCA raised almost \$40,000 in the campaign.

This number was 4 percent lower than the amount donated

in 2008 and represents a larger trend across the state university system, according to the SECC.

UNCA was one of 12 state institutions that saw a drop in donations from 2008 to 2009. Of the remaining five state schools, only two saw increases in donations of more than 6 percent.



Chrissy Wise

**Brenda McKinney, director of business services, finance and operations**, said although the program focused on full-time employees, any donation is welcome.

"Since the program involves monthly

payroll deduction as the means of donating, it's primarily aimed at full-time faculty and staff, but if a temporary employee wanted to come in and write a check, we certainly wouldn't refuse it," she said.

The SECC gives employees the option to allot a set amount to be taken

out of their paycheck every month. The campaign requires a minimum paycheck deduction of \$5 per month, and all donations are tax-deductible.

**Chrissy Wise, office assistant for the education department**, said there are also several other ways to contribute to the program.

"If you can't do the monthly payroll deductions, there are other options," she said. "You can do either a cash donation or check. We also except credit card payments, so there are plenty of ways people can get involved," Wise said.

Apart from donation options, Miller said with more than 1,000 charities to choose from, employees were sure to

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