

### A Tribute to Dr. Linda A. Bennett on Retirement

Ruthbeth Finerman, Ph.D., Professor and Chair

The world knows Linda as an internationally acclaimed scholar. To drive the point home, her current CV runs 33 pages – single spaced - and includes nearly 100 peer reviewed publications, 75 reports and commentaries, and over 150 major presentations. Linda was elected President of three different applied anthropology organizations, has chaired numerous other committees on applied anthropology, and contributed editorial support for 10 top-tier journals. She has received 26 major honors, among these decoration by the government of former Yugoslavia, awards from Sigma Xi and the Family



Therapy Association, the SfAA Sol Tax Award, the AAA President's Award, and the University of Memphis Eminent Faculty Award. Through all of this, Linda has retained great personal humility.

Linda left a prestigious research professorship at The George Washington University Medical Center to help grow our Masters' program, and she is largely responsible for establishing our department's national and international reputation. She's taught all of our graduate core courses at some point, thereby training every MA candidate for the last 28 years. The practitioners she's shaped have gone on to improve life in Memphis and beyond, and her work will continue to inspire generations of anthropologists.

Linda's service to the department and university is almost unparalleled. She has been a wise and caring mentor to faculty across campus, and helped build interdisciplinary programs including the Certificate in Museum Studies, the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, the Department of Earth Sciences, and the School of Public Health. Her outreach has similarly stressed collaboration, including partnerships with UTHSC and service on the boards of two major adoption agencies. Fortunately, Linda remains active post-retirement and plans to focus on outreach to our alumni.

Linda's mantra is to create relationships and she has retained the devotion of her colleagues and former students.



### Dr. Ruthbeth Finerman wins the Distinguished Research Award in the Social Sciences

Dr. Finerman's 2014 honor recognizes her research in applied medical anthropology involving underserved groups in Central and South America and the US, and the impact of her research on healthcare and family health in Memphis and abroad. External evaluator Dr. Linda Whiteford (University of South Florida) called Dr. Finerman's work "a remarkable production of high quality and high impact research." She has authored 28 articles and chapters, helped produce 5 books, and written more than 27 research reports for institutions such as the World Health Organization and U.S. Agency for International Development. Her work contributes to better understanding cultural variables that shape women's health. Her collaborative work, particularly with colleagues at the Center for Research on Women, drew more than one million dollars in funding.



### Dr. Lambert-Pennington wins 2014 University of Memphis Award for Excellence in Engaged Scholarship.

Dr. Katherine Lambert-Pennington's scholarly contributions stress community collaboration and reciprocity. Her strengths in urban development, community building, and participatory action research advance community-university partnerships. Described as "an exceptional model for how universities can promote engaged scholarship," Dr. Lambert-Pennington collaborates with community partners in the design and application of research. She currently co-chairs the University Engaged Scholarship Faculty Committee. Among her projects are the South Memphis Revitalization Project, the Vance Avenue Collaborative, the South Memphis Farmers Market Evaluation Project, and the Strengthening Communities Initiative. Her work has generated more than \$750,000 in funding that has enhanced communities and created service-learning experiences for students.

Dr. Stan Hyland was elected to inaugural membership in The Academy of Community Engagement Scholarship (ACES), at a ceremony in October 2014. Dr. Hyland was honored for practicing and modelling excellence in collaboration with communities and the university while addressing critical issues of mutual benefit. He is among the inaugural members honored for work on policy issues. His community engagement scholarship efforts inform university and community partners, who implement best practices of scholarly engagement, community engagement, and service or civic engagement.



## Reflections on Retirement

Linda A. Bennett, Professor Emeritus, Department of Anthropology

The festivities have taken place already, but the wonderful vibes and memories will stay vividly with me for many years to come. Yes, officially I am retired, but oddly enough I feel as though I am still in transition. Realistically I think I just need to accept that liminal state for the time being.

My retirement was warmly celebrated, and my accomplishments were recognized so phenomenally generously I cannot imagine a better retirement "send off." In fact, I don't feel sent off in part because I have emeritus status and in part because the department has provided me with a very nicely stocked office for occasional work there. And I do I intend to remain active in the department and, to some extent, in the college and university.



Before writing about a focus my time on as Emeritus Anthropologist, I want to highlight the extraordinary celebration of my retirement that took place between early May and early September 2014. Both the Dean's office and the Department of Anthropology pulled out all the stops in the two receptions that were held in my

recognition. Among those who made very generous remarks include Tom Nenon, Ruthbeth Finerman, Stan Hyland, Keri Brondo, Henry Kurtz, Karen Weddle-West, and Rosie Phillips Bingham. I thank everyone who came to the university reception in the alumni center in May and everyone who participated in the department reception at Ruthbeth Finerman's and Ross Sackett's home in September. Special thanks to Sharon Harber, Debra Turner, Ann Dwyer, Kathryn Hicks, and others, for all the photo contributions. Also special thanks to the planning committee of Keri Brondo, Melissa Buchner, Ann Dwyer, and Ruthbeth Finerman for the department reception.

The "memory book" that Keri Brondo created from letters and photographs sent from dozens of colleagues from around the world and alumni will always hold a special place in my heart. The gorgeous glass piece of art that Ruthbeth and other faculty members helped create is spectacular. It includes Sir Raymond Firth's statement from his Malinowski address at the Society for Applied Anthropology meetings in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1981: "Applied anthropologists must be engaged with the problem, must think it worthwhile, nontrivial in social terms, and not just an intellectual game....at the back of their minds must always be the old question: Cui Bono?--for whose good is the research ultimately being conducted?"



In my remarks at the department reception, I acknowledged that I was both overwhelmed and touched by the occasion. The presence of so many friends whom I knew either as university colleagues, as alumni from our program, or through a combination of ties was extremely meaningful to me. I noted that when I was interviewing for my faculty position back in the mid-1980s there were two main "selling points" about the position at Memphis State University for me: the mission of the department to educate masters students to become applied anthropologists and the real life evidence that that was happening through early students such as Ron Register, Margaret Craddock, and Tim Bolding. This was clear proof to me that the model was working...our anthropology alumni were making a meaningful and positive impact on the life of people in the Memphis Mid-South community.

In my emeritus role, anthropology alumni are the ones I wish to focus on. We have an unusually good and rich history of alumni ties. We could not deliver either our undergraduate or graduate programs without the strong and enthusiastic contributions of our alumni. I plan to help build on that impressive history. And I am open to ideas from the alumni community! Please feel free to be in touch.



When I think about my professional career, only one notable regret comes to my mind: I never became an announcer for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

### More Accolades!

**Alum Amy Santee** (MA 2011) co-edited a new edition of *Practicing Anthropology* on "Practicing Anthropology in the Private Sector." The issue features articles by Amy and alum Allison Hennie (MA 2011): [http://sfaa.metapress.com/content/kp0kt55053p1/?p=037853f52f284\\_bfb9d138cd8de6b8817&pi=0](http://sfaa.metapress.com/content/kp0kt55053p1/?p=037853f52f284_bfb9d138cd8de6b8817&pi=0)

**Congratulations to Dr. Keri Brondo**, who was elected to a seat on the Executive Board of the American Anthropological Association. This highly prestigious 3-year position begins in December 2014.

**Congratulations to Dr. Robert Connolly** who published a chapter with former AmericCorps Team leader Ana Rea on "Making African American History Relevant through Co-Creation and Community Service Learning." In *Interpreting African American History and Culture* edited by Max Balgooy. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

**Congratulations to Dr. Michael Duke**, who received a CAS Travel Enrichment Award for summer 2014 research on health risks of Marshall Islands immigrant workers in Arkansas.

**Congratulations to Dr. Kathryn Hicks** on tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. She has also published two papers this fall in *Current Anthropology* and in *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*.

**Congratulations to Dr. Micah Trapp**, who won a College of Arts & Sciences Learn and Serve award to integrate service learning into her new spring 2015 course on Culture, Food, and Power.

**Congratulations to our 2013-14 Masters' graduates** Lisa Dale, Sarah Rich Donovan, Anna Gattuso, Stephanie Harrison, Sarah Hoover, Kenny Latta, LaKenya Smith, and April Steele.