

The Evening Weekend News

A Newsletter for Montgomery College Part-Time Faculty

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Focus on Part-Time Faculty

Dorothy Phaire, English

By Charlotte Jacobsen

Dr. Dorothy Phaire, English, has lived the meaning of perseverance! After 4 years of study and research, she graduated with distinction from Capella University in January 2013. Throughout her graduate studies, Dorothy continued to teach English online at Montgomery College while teaching her full-time course load at the University of the District of Columbia.



Dorothy Phaire

Dorothy admits that the journey has been challenging but well worth the effort. As a published novelist in the mystery/romance genre, Dorothy knew the importance of perseverance, determination and the need to stay focused and found that she needed these

same qualities to write her Ph. D dissertation. Dorothy said, "Remaining positive was the glue that kept everything in perspective and helped me to stay on track. Some days it felt as if I were mountaineering. I feel great having reached the summit."

The premise for Dorothy's study was that young people are increasingly receiving socialization influences from films that are impacting their attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. In the abstract for her dissertation, entitled *Linking Character Strengths and Learning with Films: a Content Analysis of Films for Adolescents*, Dorothy wrote, "...educators bear a responsibility to harness this potential resource [films] in helping students deal with moral and ethical dilemmas as a useful component of an obligation to help strengthen their character development and intellectual growth. Film pedagogy offers an opportunity to effectively engage students in learning while building character strengths as well as promoting critical and creative thinking" (Phaire, 2013).

Dorothy stated that in the 21st century it is even more important for students to be able to apply knowledge both critically and creatively. Teachers can use film pedagogy to enhance students' ability to identify creative solutions to problems, learn how to ask meaningful questions, challenge assumptions and adapt to change. She has identified an instructional aid to help with these learning outcomes.

When asked, what's next? Dorothy says her new goals are two-fold. They include both scholarship and creative writing projects. Her post doctorate scholarship projects will include:

- Conducting workshops on Fostering Character Strengths and Virtues Using Films,
- Writing articles for research journals that look for innovative teaching or teaching with media,
- Conducting further research to refine the film selection taxonomy instructional aid that emerged from her analysis of the data.
- Presenting papers on research.

In keeping with this intention to maintain scholarship, Dorothy will be presenting a paper sponsored by the *College English Association-Middle Atlantic Group (CEA-MAG)* at the Rockville Campus on March 9, 2013. Her talk will be based on the results from her dissertation research.

She will also resume creative writing projects. Her novels, plays, and short story writing were put on hold during the past two years while writing her dissertation. In accordance with this second love for creative writing, Dorothy has resumed writing a historical novel on the Tuskegee Airman. On February 14, 2013 Dorothy read the first two chapters from this next novel, *Flying to Freedom* at Ballou Senior High School in Washington, DC in recognition of Black History Month and to encourage young people to read.

Dorothy insists that despite all these new scholarly and creative writing projects her teaching commitment to students will never take a backseat. As a teacher-scholar, she will continue to look for new ways to engage students in their learning, to serve as a mentor to students and to develop lifelong learners whenever possible.