

## Editor's Introduction

Since 1989, *Prized Writing* has proudly presented the most extensive showcase for undergraduate student writing across the disciplines here at UC Davis. No other forum provides a more representative, wide-ranging, and engaging experience of what our students are learning, thinking and *writing* about in classrooms throughout the campus. Curated by the University Writing Program, this annual project honors and presents work by students majoring in practically every department and program on campus. Along with other campus-wide projects, *Prized Writing* also helps maintain the sense of connection that makes UC Davis, despite its size, a cohesive community.

Year after year, the student essays in *Prized Writing* have been used as teaching tools by instructors both here and outside UC Davis. Instructors have discovered in the *Prized Writing* online archive of essays a repository of inspiring models.

As you are about to discover, each of this year's student essays is a worthy addition to the *Prized Writing* canon. Once again we received over 400 submissions, the vast majority of which were already superb responses to rigorous classroom assignments.

The topics of this volume's 24 selections include American mosques, avian respiration, *Star Wars*, slavery-era Jamaica, horticultural therapy, HIV legislation, music education, passcode technology, climate change policy, tropical ecology, fire management, and romance in Australia. Readers will also encounter a multitude of genres: biography, technical writing, grant proposals, archival history, intersectional analysis, critical theory, journalism, scientific literature review, medical case study, and pop culture analysis, to name but a few.

**This volume of *Prized Writing*** was made possible by the terrific work of assistant editor Marissa Trujillo, whose independence and attention to detail I have so very much appreciated throughout the academic year and into the summer. Congratulations, Marissa, on graduating: may your gap year lead to all that you deserve.

As *Prized Writing* begins its 30<sup>th</sup> year, strong institutional support remains an absolute must. I gratefully acknowledge Gary May (Chancellor), Ralph Hexter (Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor), Carolyn Thomas (Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education),

Ari Kelman (Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Planning), and Elizabeth Spiller (Dean, College of Letters and Science) for their support.

Thank you to the entire University Writing Program, above all to the diverse, demanding, opinionated (and how!), and immensely talented judges who helped shape the contents of this volume. A special thank you to Carl Whithaus, UWP Chair during the production of the last several volumes, including this one. Advanced thanks to Dana Ferris, Carl's superlative successor. I also want to thank Anita Rodriguez, Darla Tafoya, Vicki Higby Sweeney, Melissa Lovejoy, Mary White, Kevin Bryant and Ron Ottman. Elliott Pollard, meanwhile, continues to maintain our website (<http://prizedwriting.ucdavis.edu>) and to provide crucial assistance to the editorial staff.

I also wish to thank Tina Pfeiffer of Reprographics for overseeing the bound book and Morgan Liu of the UC Davis Bookstore for his patience and flexibility.

A special acknowledgment here to Flor Carolina Barillas, who designed the striking cover for this year's volume.

Finally, thank you to *all* of the students who submitted. Your work—whether found in these pages or not—inspires the entire UC Davis community.

Meanwhile, submission guidelines for Volume 30 can be found at the end of this book.

Greg Miller  
Continuing Lecturer, University Writing Program