

# Alumni Spotlight

“Double-Duke” Elizabeth Keene received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from James Madison University. As if all those years studying at JMU were not enough, Keene then signed her letter of intent to stay and teach at JMU within weeks of graduating from the WRTC master’s program.

Keene describes the experience of being a college professor as “a childhood dream come true.” She began teaching as a graduate assistant for GWRTC 103 during her second year in the WRTC master’s program, and she quickly grew to love being in the classroom.

“It was especially rewarding to see my very first students go from high schoolers to self-sufficient college students over the span of 16 weeks,” says Keene, “I taught at 8AM, so I was their very first teacher of their very first college course at JMU. We both learned a lot as we worked together throughout the semester.”

Keene received two bachelor’s degrees from JMU, one in WRTC with a concentration in TSC and the other in Music with a concentration in Instrumental Music Education where her applied instrument was the trumpet.

Before teaching, during her first year as a graduate assistant, Keene used her music education experience to work with the JMU Band Program. She found that her background in WRTC greatly contributed to her work with the MRD’s.

“Through my position with the MRD’s, I do a lot of document design as I prepare an assortment of printed materials, “explains Keene. “Things like posters, informational fliers, letters, and itineraries. I also do a lot of design work in Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign.”

Keene explained that her degree in WRTC is one of the most useful and versatile degrees. Other fields like music education still benefit from the knowledge of WRTC.

“Regardless of what you might do professionally, you will be writing and communicating information to other people. Through learning more about writing and rhetoric, I have become a much more effective communicator,” says Keene.

Keene also offered advice to undergraduate students thinking about pursuing higher education.

“I would recommend that students really take some time to consider why they are pursuing a graduate degree,” says Keene, “I think some people today, mostly because

of the job market, are pursuing higher education just because.”

Keene worries that many students are choosing graduate school for the wrong reasons. She explains to EmD@sh, “I’ve seen several of my friends from grad school get turned down for jobs because they have too much education and not enough work-related experience. Most of these people weren’t sure what they wanted to do once they finished their undergraduate degrees. They looked for jobs, and were turned down, and therefore decided to stay in school.”

Keene admits that while she is very proud of her decision to go straight to graduate school, she had to take the time to figure out her career and future life goals. Only then could she make a decision about graduate school when she realized teaching was one of her callings.

Elizabeth Keene continues her teaching for two sections of GWRTC 103 as well as her work with the MRD’s. She hopes to benefit the lives of other students through what she has learned as a JMU Duke.

by Mackenzie Kelley

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# EMD@SH

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## Digital Stories, Real Impact

What is digital storytelling? According to Dr. Seán McCarthy, a Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication instructor here at JMU, it’s just what it sounds like.

“The concept is really simple,” he says. “It’s telling stories using multiple media. So it can be video, it can be photo slideshows with an audio track over them, it can be any kind of combination of media that tells a story. That’s fundamentally what digital storytelling is. Because it’s that simple, it’s kind of difficult to get a grasp on it and to say it is this or it’s one particular thing. It’s a range of approaches to telling stories.”

Though traditional writing skills are still the emphasis of many WRTC classes and remain critical for the workplace, it is evident that we are moving toward becoming a more digitally involved society. College graduates are expected to be literate in a variety of technologies, and this is why digital storytelling is an important element of undergraduate learning.

Dr. McCarthy believes digital storytelling is important for a number of reasons. “First of all, the way that we consume stories today is inherently multimedia, whether it’s through social media streams or online newspapers or through video sharing sites,

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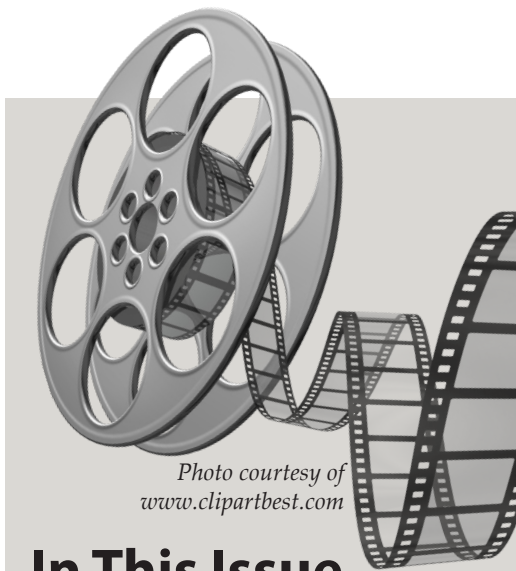


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## In This Issue

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Professor Sean McCarthy explains digital storytelling and how his students are using it to impact their community in **Digital Stories, Real Impact**.

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JMU STC President Kelly Roden looks back on a semester in STC while discussing plans for upcoming spring semester. **Digital Stories, Real Impact** continues.

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All of the wonderful benefits that come with STC membership are explained in **JMU STC Can Benefit You!**

### Page 4

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# Digital Stories...

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we're increasingly moving away from pure print toward a mixture of print, image, video, and audio," he explains, "So understanding how those elements can be combined is really a core literacy for students today. If we can't work in multiple media then we're not really using the tools of communication or storytelling to their most effective potential."

Dr. McCarthy is one of many professors who are beginning to incorporate digital storytelling into the class curriculum. Unlike other professors, though, he takes a different approach.

He says that "A lot of people think about digital storytelling as a way to do personal narratives. I try and think about it in a slightly different way, as a way of creating spaces for public engagement where we can tell interesting stories that have a broad audience and we're telling

stories that our audiences can interact with and maybe even contribute to."

"So, for example," he continues, "I use digital storytelling techniques in my Writing for Nonprofits class where we create compelling media for nonprofit websites, or this semester we're working with the JMU libraries where we're using digital storytelling techniques to create exciting, interactive exhibits around pieces in their Special Collections which, unless you go seek them out, are very difficult to interact with. So we're trying to create a more accessible way to interact with these special collections materials other than going into Carrier and setting up an appointment."

Dr. McCarthy believes that digital storytelling can be used as more than just a classroom learning tool—it is a modern way of engaging the public with meaningful and impactful narratives that extend beyond the university community.

by Lindsey Campbell

# Making Digital Masterpieces through Carrier's New MADLab

We all tell stories every day—to our friends, our family, on social media, by word of mouth. But have you thought about digital storytelling? Maybe you have, but lack the equipment or software to do so. The MADdLab, part of the Media Resources center at JMU, is here to help! There, a wide variety of equipment is available for check out. From camcorders to tripods to projectors and screens, students have access to technology that allows the ability to create high-quality projects for class as well as for temporary personal use.

Video production can be tough, but with the MADLab's help, it doesn't have to be so hard. Multiple types of microphones are available, such as a shotgun microphone, handheld microphone, and lapel microphones; with these, telling your story digitally should be easy. If you are adventurous, GoPro camcorders can also be rented.

Not only does the MADLab offer the necessary equipment for a multimedia project but also it offers free assistance on how to use equipment, how to shoot interviews, how to select the correct tools for your project, and more. Any media-related questions can be answered by the highly qualified workers in the lab, or you can feel free to register for one of the many helpful workshops held at the MADLab such as how to make videos using iMovie, or how to use a Canon DSL camera.

The check-out process is quite simple and convenient: students can either walk in to the on-campus location in the basement of Carrier Library, give a quick call to Deborah Pugh at (540) 568-6803 to schedule an equipment reservation, or complete an online reservation request form at [https://www.lib.jmu.edu/forms/mr\\_equipment/](https://www.lib.jmu.edu/forms/mr_equipment/). Just be sure to make a reservation well before your assignment is due; the equipment is a hot commodity!

by Susanna Corey

## Follow STC Social Media

Follow JMU STC on social media for updates and chapter news. Don't forget to check out our website too!

**TWITTER:**

@JMU\_STC

**FACEBOOK:**

facebook.com/JMUSTC

**WEBSITE:**

jmustc.wordpress.com

## A Message from the President

I would like to thank everyone who has been coming to our meetings this past semester! I hope everyone has learned something academically or professionally beneficial. So far we've had WRTC CAP liaison Marcus Anderson come speak about résumés and Media Support Coordinator Deborah Pugh present on the new JMU MADLab. We also had Dr. Jacovitch hold a Photoshop and Illustrator workshop where we learned the differences between the two, how to use the eraser and the spot healing brush in Photoshop, turn photos black and white, and resize pictures.

We also had a proceeds night on November 5th at El Charro on Port Republic, and I would like to thank everyone who came out for it! Next semester will feature a variety of career-oriented workshops and meetings, including

a salary and benefits negotiation workshop. If you have any questions about JMU STC, or have any meeting suggestions, please contact me at [rodenka@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:rodenka@dukes.jmu.edu). I look forward to seeing everyone at our remaining meetings! Lastly, our next EmD@ash edition will be exploring topics on intercultural communication. If you are interested in being a part of our next publication, feel free to contact me as well! I hope you all have a safe and happy Thanksgiving and relaxing semester break.



Kelly Roden  
JMU STC President

## Top 10 Advantages of Digital Storytelling

1. Create projects that are more engaging and interesting for your audience.
2. Choose from a wide array of digital storytelling tools that can ease the process of assembling your project.
3. Tell people what you have to say with an individualized and unique project that stands out among the rest.
4. Show your story with a short film, as opposed to the typical essay or PowerPoint presentation.
5. Craft your message for the audience so that they can understand and connect with it.
6. Explore ideas from a new perspective through the digital lens.
7. Bring your creativity to a completely new level by using new and alternative mediums.
8. Enhance your communicative skills and boost your resume with additional computer qualifications.
9. Reach a broader audience by uploading your project to a number of media-sharing websites with ease.
10. Acquire abilities that you may use for years and years to come, in school, in the workplace, or even for personal reasons.

by Sydnie Long