

**From:** [Office of the Provost](#)  
**To:** [STAFF-CLASSIFIED-AA-L@LISTSERV.JMU.EDU](mailto:STAFF-CLASSIFIED-AA-L@LISTSERV.JMU.EDU)  
**Subject:** Notes from the Provost  
**Date:** Thursday, February 15, 2024 8:35:53 AM

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Dear Colleagues,

I hope you had a Happy Valentine's Day! No matter how you celebrated the day, love is in the air, especially in the Office of Admissions. We received [over 40,000 undergraduate applications](#) by the January deadline, which is a testament to how well JMU's strengths - faculty mentorship, multi-faceted experiential education, close-knit community - are being conveyed to prospective students. What's especially exciting is that we're seeing strong growth in applications from students of color and students from rural, first-generation families. Our commitment to student-centered development will help us welcome the class of 2028, which has the potential to be JMU's most diverse incoming class ever. As we wait for our new Dukes to arrive, learn more about your colleagues' exciting passion projects:

- If you enjoy understanding the literary hallmarks of a particular historical period, you can pick up [Annette Federico's Reading the Victorian Novel](#) on Feb. 19. Published by Rutledge, the book provides an in-depth sociocultural examination of five key conventions commonly used by Victorian novelists, delving into both formative historic contexts and reader responses. Given the radical transformation of the literary landscape during this era, Annette's analysis will be helpful for readers who enjoy the period's novels.
- [Collections as Data: Part to Whole](#), funded by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, recently published its [final report](#). This team, including JMU Libraries' Director of Scholarly Communications [Yasmeen Shorish](#), investigated the responsible development and computational use of institutional [collections as data](#). The group's next steps include actively exploring international partnerships to advance collections-as-data community development.
- Last month, [Steve Reich](#) in History and [AAAD](#) received a [competitive 12-month fellowship](#) from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the 2024-25 academic year. Steve's \$60,000 award will support his project, *Buzzards Over Texas: A Story of Race, Violence and the Search for Justice in the Jim Crow South*. An earlier NEH grant supported the book's initial research. Check out the College of Arts and Letters' [interview with Steve here](#).
- [Stephen Marrin](#), director and professor in JMU's [Intelligence Analysis program](#), received the [ISA Intelligence Studies Section Distinguished Scholar Award](#) last month. Only nine others have received this award over the past 40 years! Find out more about his [significant impact on the field here](#).

- [Kimberly DuVall](#) ('83, '88M), senior lecturer and academic advisor in Psychology, has helped craft "[The Market-Ready Psychology Major.](#)" a collection of resources designed to target skills identified as critical by a joint working group formed by the Society for the Teaching of Psychology and the American Psychological Association's Committee on Associate and Baccalaureate Education. As an academic advisor with over twenty years of experience, Kimberly helped identify crucial bridges between classroom practice and post-graduation needs.

Please keep submitting accomplishments by you and your colleagues, as well as comments and inquiries. You can email [provost@jmu.edu](mailto:provost@jmu.edu) or submit a question anonymously through the [Ask the Provost](#) option online.

Sincerely,  
Heather

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Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs  
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She/Her/Hers

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