

The Clarion, Chiaroscuro staffs attend statewide college media conference

Abigail Callahan
Staff Writer

On Saturday, Feb. 22 staff members of both The Clarion and Chiaroscuro attended The NC College Media Association Conference. This annual one-day conference rotates to different North Carolina campuses each year and brings journalism and media students together from

The Clarion earns four awards, including 'Best of Show' - see story, page 3

across the state. This year's host campus was Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina.

The conference started with opening remarks by Leigh Taus, an Appalachian State University Publication Adviser and Director followed by keynote speaker, Moss Brennan, a journalist

from the Watauga Democrat.

The conference offered a variety of panels to choose from, covering different aspects of journalism and media. Sessions included "The Pitch is Right," a game show style brainstorming session to share story ideas led by Bob Dillner,

See 'Clarion,' page 2



Staff members of The Clarion and the Chiaroscuro pose with the Clarion's "Best of Show" award plaque Feb. 22 on the Appalachian State University campus. First row, left to right: Madeleine Pollock, Zoe Hughes, Andrew Brown, Autumn Jones. Back row, left to right: Courtney Wall, Alexa Jennings, Karis King, Vinnie Munson-Jackson, Abigail Callahan, Rowyn Roberts.

Visiting Writer Series kicks off with readings from Megan Kaminski and Alyse Bensel

Madeleine Pollock
Staff Writer

On Friday, Feb. 21, the English program kicked off the Visiting Writers Series with readings from Megan Kaminski, a poet, essayist, and professor of English and environmental studies at the University of Kansas, and Dr. Alyse Bensel, poet and associate professor of English here at Brevard College.

Bensel was Kaminski’s first PhD candidate at the University of Kansas, and they have been friends ever since. Bensel began the event by saying, “I am fortunate to read with my dear friend and doctoral advisor as we discuss poetry and place with you this afternoon.”

Kaminski is the author of three poetry books: *Gentlewomen*, *Deep City*, and *Desiring Map*, and two artist books, *Prairie Divination* and

Quietly Between. Kaminski takes an integrated arts and research approach to her writing, what she referred to as “plant humanities,” where she aims to explore ideas of “indeterminacy, rootedness, and resilience” by studying and describing plant interconnectedness.

Bensel, author of two poetry books as well as three chapbooks and the director of the Looking Glass Rock Writers’ Conference, started the event by introducing Kaminski and herself, then read four poems from her Sept. 2024 book *Spoil*. Bensel shared how she wrote the book alongside her dissertation, saying “Anytime I needed to rant about something I’d throw it in a poem.”

The poems, “Hurricane Season,” “The Body in This Lifetime,” “FaceBook Messenger Pastoral,” and “The World is My Flower Garden” highlighted the many themes of *Spoil*, like “long-distance friendships, relationships, the effects of social media on self-image and friendships,” as well as “medical gaslighting” and an “undercurrent of slowly becoming diagnosed with chronic pain due to uterine fibroids and cysts.”

Next, Kaminski read an essay in progress called “Prayer Ritual Alchemy,” which she says

has a secret subtitle, “Neurodivergence healing and grace of plant and disability poetics.” The essay explored how “land calls us into relationships of care for each other and how a place can connect us across different political and cultural backgrounds.”

Kaminski split up the reading of her essay with three poetic interludes in which she shared the poems “Tick Clover,” “What We Don’t Know Yet,” and “Summons.”

“When the deep shame and fear that was ingrained in me since birth kept me from finding safety and belonging in the faces of other human people, plants invited me into their community and the felt grace of the world,” Kaminski said.

Kaminski’s essay closed with the line: “And so I continue to leaf and vine and root and entangle myself into the world and into the mystery that connects us all, trusting in the vulnerability and the grace that comprises our days and ourselves.”

For those who missed the event, Bensel and Kaminski’s books can be purchased online or anywhere books are sold. A video recording of the series will also be available on YouTube in the coming weeks.

THE CLARION

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The Clarion is a student-run college newspaper produced by student journalists enrolled at Brevard College. Unsigned editorials represent the collective opinion of the staff of The Clarion. Other opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the faculty, staff or administration of Brevard College.

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Continued from page 1

“Storytelling Through Images: The Photography of Hurricane Helene” led by Lynette Holman, and “Managing Submissions: Providing Literary Criticism and Feedback to Your Peers” led by Jessica Cory.

The award luncheon kicked off with speaker Chris Moody, a journalism and broadcast media professor at Appalachian State University. He encouraged students to “find stories that matter.” He shared insights from his career, which included major news networks like MSNBC, CNN, Fox News, and NPR.

In the afternoon, many of the members of The Clarion and Chiaroscuro attended the “Art of the Interview” led by Austin Bartolomei-Hill. The third session, “Finding Sources for Your Story

on Campus and Beyond” explored strategies for connecting with the local community to enhance writing skills.

The staff won several awards for their outstanding work. Managing Editor Zoe Hughes and Layout Designer Emma Murray placed third for Opinion Writing, while Emma Murray secured second place for Single-or-Two-Page design. Former Editor-in-Chief from the fall 2024 semester, Olivia Hyde, earned an honorable mention in the same category.

The Clarion was awarded Best in Show for small school newspaper, making it a two-time winner of this honor.

Next year, the conference will be held at Elon University. The Clarion and Chiaroscuro are committed to delivering quality journalism and storytelling and continuing to represent Brevard

Clarion earns 'best of show' honor in NC College Media Association contest

Staff also earn three individual awards in writing and design

The Clarion received four awards for outstanding work in a statewide college media contest, including the prestigious "Best of Show" award for overall excellence.

Individual awards went to Zoe Hughes and Emma Murray for opinion writing and to Murray and Olivia Hyde for page design. The results, for content published in 2024, were announced at the North Carolina College Media Association Conference, which took place at Appalachian State University in Boone on Saturday, Feb. 22. Ten staff members of The Clarion and Chiaroscuro, the Brevard College arts and literary journal, attended the conference.

"I'm so proud of the Clarion staff for all of their accomplishments, especially in how they responded to Hurricane Helene and all the hardships it caused last semester," Clarion faculty adviser John Padgett said. "Newspaper work is by its very nature highly collaborative, so the 'best of show' award is really an award for everyone who plays a part in putting out the newspaper each week."

The best of show award was for the two issues published immediately after Hurricane Helene, on Oct. 4 and Oct. 11. The first of these included content intended for publication on Sept. 27,

the day the storm hit, but which was delayed because of the massive power outages and loss of internet and cell service throughout western North Carolina.

Brevard College was one of five small colleges (under 8,500 students) to receive a best of show award. Judges in the contest were media and communications faculty members from colleges and universities in North Carolina. They considered the overall excellence of the selected issues, including appearance, balance of content, and sense of place, as well as the quality of writing, reporting, and visual elements such as photography, art and design.

In individual categories, Zoe Hughes and Emma Murray received a third-place award in opinion writing for their article "Empty your SHEIN Cart! How fast fashion impacts our world," which appeared in the Nov. 15 issue.

Murray and Olivia Hyde also received accolades for page design. Murray earned a second-place award for her front page in the Nov. 22 issue, "BC mountain bikers win 7 national championships," and Hyde received an honorable mention for designing the "Two-sentence horror stories" page in last semester's "Scarion," the Halloween-themed issue published on Nov. 1.

The four total awards at this year's contest is a new high for The Clarion staff, who have been submitting material to the contest since 2013. "It's a fierce competition, especially when you consider how small Brevard College is compared to who we're competing with," Padgett said. "There have been some years when we don't win anything."

This is only the second time The Clarion has received the top award in the NCCMA contest. They also won the Best of Show award for 2018.

Last year, Brevard College publication staff earned three individual awards: two for the newspaper, and one for a nonfiction piece in Chiaroscuro. The literary magazine has only been submitting material to the NCCMA contest for three years.

The North Carolina College Media Association was formed in December 2007 and is based in the Hussman School of Journalism and Media at UNC-Chapel Hill. Its purpose is to support and encourage college media operations at public and private colleges and universities throughout the state.

The complete list of award recipients can be found on the NCCMA website at <https://nccma.unc.edu/>.

Mark your Calendar: I heart BC Day to take place on March 20



Denim: a brief history

Zoe Hughes
Managing Editor

tinue to innovate on this timeless material. The versatility and durability of the fabric allowed it to become the staple in fashion, especially in America, that it is today.

Denim has had a long and diverse history that has been seen in many places and cultures, starting back in the 17th century.

Denim is made in a twill weave pattern with cotton and dyed yarn. The fabric is unique because of its durability and versatility. Denim is arguably the most well-known and commonly worn fabric in the modern age.

The word “jeans” comes from the Genoese sailors, who were referred to as “Genes.” The Hindi word “dungaree” was also used for denim—it originates from Dongri Killa in Mumbai, India. It refers to the coarse piece of cloth worn by the sailors of Dhunga.

The first edition of the denim fabric was called “Serge de Nîmes,” serge meaning a sturdy fabric and Nîmes is a city in southern France. This fabric was introduced in France during the 17th century but is believed to have been used throughout Europe in the 16th century.

Denim’s first appearance in the U.S. was in 1817 when U.S. Navy servicemen were permitted to wear the dungaree outfit because of its durability and how easily it could be folded and stowed away. Later on—in 1853, near the peak of the Gold Rush—a man named Loeb Strauss started a business that supplied workwear to miners. These miners frequently had their pockets torn because of the physical demands of their jobs. To fix this issue, Nevada tailor Jacob Davis designed jeans with copper rivets to prevent wear and tear on miners’ pockets.

In 1872, Davis presented the idea of using rivets on pockets to Strauss, who had since changed his name from Loeb to Levi. The following year, on May 20, 1873, the first patent for blue denim was made for Davis’s and Strauss’s “waist overalls,” made for the mine workers of the era.

This is widely regarded as the birth date of blue jeans. These garments made for miners and workers were called “bull denim” These were dyed with indigo dye and orange thread to match the copper rivets and increase durability.

After almost a century of denim being mostly used by miners and other blue-collar workers, the 1950s music and film industry brought jeans into the closets of many Americans. Marlon Brando and James Dean were two famous actors of the time who helped make wearing denim fashionable, making it a symbol of youth and rebellion. By the 1970s, denim had become a popular choice for people of all ages and demographics.

Today, denim is used in many different styles, and new colors and materials are used to con-



'Big Bad' prepares for upcoming run of shows with dress rehearsal



Dress rehearsal photos by Alecia Janeiro



“Big Bad,” a production by BC Theatre and directed by theatre major Sierethene Chepes, opened last night at the Morrison Playhouse in the Porter Center.

Tickets for remaining shows can be purchased online at <https://our.show/brevard-college/bigbad> or at the door. Ticket prices

are \$5 for Brevard College students, faculty, and staff and \$10 for the general public.

Showtimes are as follows:

Friday, Feb. 28, 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 1, 7 p.m.

Sunday, March 2, 2:30 p.m.

Hit TV show 'Invincible' returns for third season

Autumn Jones
Editor in Chief



★★★★★

Content Advisory: 17+

Genre: Animation, Action, Adventure

Directors: Dan Duncan, Shaun O'Neil, Haylee Herrick, Sol Choi, Ian Abando, Tanner Johnson, Jason Zurek

Since the premiere on Feb. 6, season three of the hit TV show "Invincible" is unfolding. Each week, one episode is released on Amazon Prime Video.

The Invincible series adapts the comic books by Robert Kirkman, who is also known for creating "The Walking Dead" and "The Boys," both of which also became successful television shows.

"Invincible" follows Mark Grayson, a teenage boy who inherits superhuman abilities from his dad, Omni-Man, a powerful superhero. While Mark, or Invincible, begins his journey as a superhero, he unravels frightening secrets about the actual nature of his father and the complex, often gruesome, world of superheroes.

The series merges traditional superhero tropes with severe action, emotional depth, and mature themes, exploring the consequences of power, responsibility, and trust.

The first season of "Invincible" was released on Amazon Prime in April of 2021, and since then has severely increased in popularity. As of Feb. 26, the show is ranked number two in the U.S. on Prime Video.

As an avid fan of this series, I was eager when season three was announced in late January. The show's adaptation is almost completely identical to the comics and stays consistent with both storylines and character development throughout.

The one character that was not comic-accurate, arguably for the better, is Omni-Man's wife, Debbie. In the comics, Debbie plays more of a supporting role, whereas in the TV series, she is one of the main characters. The show enhances Debbie's story and strengthens her importance in keeping Mark from becoming like his father,

which contributes to the story as a whole.

The critiques of season three present two main arguments: the animation is subpar and it feels filled with filler episodes. Honestly, the animation seems the same to me, though I enjoy the plot, so I don't notice any difference. It's also important to remember that a significant fight is coming at the end of the season if the show is to remain comic-accurate, so the animators may be trying to conserve funds for that specific scene.

As for the feelings of the season having nothing but filler episodes, I agree slightly—only regarding episodes four and five. Both episodes are paced slowly and do not contribute much to the main plot, but I understand that not every episode can have some life-changing event happen to the characters, as it would overwhelm the audience, and honestly, people would complain about that too.

According to Variety, most people like "Invincible" because it was created when superhero-literate people knew exactly how superhero stories went. "Invincible's" main goal was to say, "You think you know what superheroes do?"

When I first started watching the show, I was new to the superhero world. "Invincible" eased me into it with a straightforward approach, but as you dig deeper, it reveals layers of complexity.

"Invincible" is a realistic depiction of the famous question, "What if superheroes were real?" It explores the moral dilemmas a hero would encounter, especially those of a teenage hero who is balancing saving the world and growing up; wielding strength in a world not ready for it.

Overall, "Invincible" is a show I would recommend, especially if you are a fan of Marvel, DC, or any superhero show.

North Carolina Stage Company brings epic Tony Award-winning play 'The Lehman Trilogy' to Asheville

The year is 1844 and Henry Lehman stands on the dock of a ship heading to America. What follows is the incredible story of three immigrant brothers searching for the American dream, finding their place in a new country, and helping to define modern capitalism as we know it.

This vast theatrical event, directed by NC Stage co-founder Charlie Flynn-McIver charts the humble beginnings, outrageous successes

and devastating failure of the family business turned financial institution that would ultimately bring the global economy to its knees.

Over the course of three acts, three talented actors-- Adam Kampouris (All is Calm), Philip Kershaw (A Case for the Existence of God, Witch), and Willie Repoley (Angels in America, Frost/Nixon)--portray three generations of a family whose name became synonymous with

the 2008 financial collapse and the following recession, taking us on the journey of the brothers who came with nothing, speaking not a word of English, and built an entire universe.

Details: The Lehman Trilogy by Stefano Masini, adapted by Ben Power

Dates: March 13 - April 6, 2025

Where: North Carolina Stage Company at 15 Stage Lane in downtown Asheville, NC.

Black History Month ends today, but its importance will continue

STAFF EDITORIAL

The headline in the New York Times last week said it all: “Trump Marks Black History Month, Even as He Disparages Value of Diversity.”

The article—about a reception the president hosted in the White House on Feb. 20 commemorating Black History Month with the usual pomp, circumstance, and celebrity appearances—noted, in the second paragraph, “the dissonance in the East Room was jarring.”

It listed several examples of that dissonance: blaming diversity, equity and inclusion (more commonly referred to as “DEI”) for a fatal plane crash, gutting DEI programs and initiatives in all federal agencies, and cancelling by many of those agencies planned Black History Month celebrations this year to comply with the administration’s pronouncements.

Indeed, Black History Month in 2025 somehow feels different.

Perhaps it is because of everything else going on in the world that this year’s BHM events have felt muted somehow, drowned out by the steady drumbeat of news from Washington and elsewhere.

Even tech giant Google has removed references to Black History Month and other diversity celebrations such as Women’s History Month and Pride Month in default settings for Google Calendar, as The Verge reported on Feb. 7. A Google spokesperson told Verge the move was adopted in mid-2024 to show “only public holidays and national observances from timeanddate.com globally,” stating Google’s attempts to add such “cultural moments” from around the world were not “scalable or sustainable.”

Still, on this last day of Black History Month for 2025, The Clarion wanted to draw attention to several efforts by government agencies to highlight African Americans’ contributions to science, culture, and history.

Several federal government agencies, including the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Archives and Records Administration, have teamed up to create a website for Black History Month, <https://blackhistorymonth.gov/>, which features links to several online exhibitions and videos. These include:

John Akomfrah: “Five Murmurations.” Described as “an incredibly powerful film by London-based, Ghanaian-born artist John Akomfrah made in response to the global pandemic, murder of George Floyd, and worldwide protests in support of Black Lives Matter.” On view at the National Museum of African Art through August 24, 2025, and online at <https://africa.si.edu/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/john-akomfrah/>.

Your Park Story: Black History and Heritage. This feature from the National Park Service spans “more than 400 years of Black history and heritage ... preserved in national parks and communities around the country.” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/npscelebrates/black-history-month.htm>.

Black History Month at the Smithsonian. The 2025 theme is “African Americans and Labor” with a focus on the various and profound ways that work of all kinds intersects with the collective experiences of Black people. <https://www.si.edu/events/black-history-month>.

Power & Light: Russell Lee’s Coal Survey, at the National Archives Lawrence F. O’Brien Gallery. Russell Lee’s 1946 coal survey photographs tell the story of laborers who helped build the nation, of a moment when the government took stock of their health and safety, and of a photographer who recognized their humanity. <https://visit.archives.gov/whats-on/explore-exhibits/power-light-russell-lees-coal-survey>.

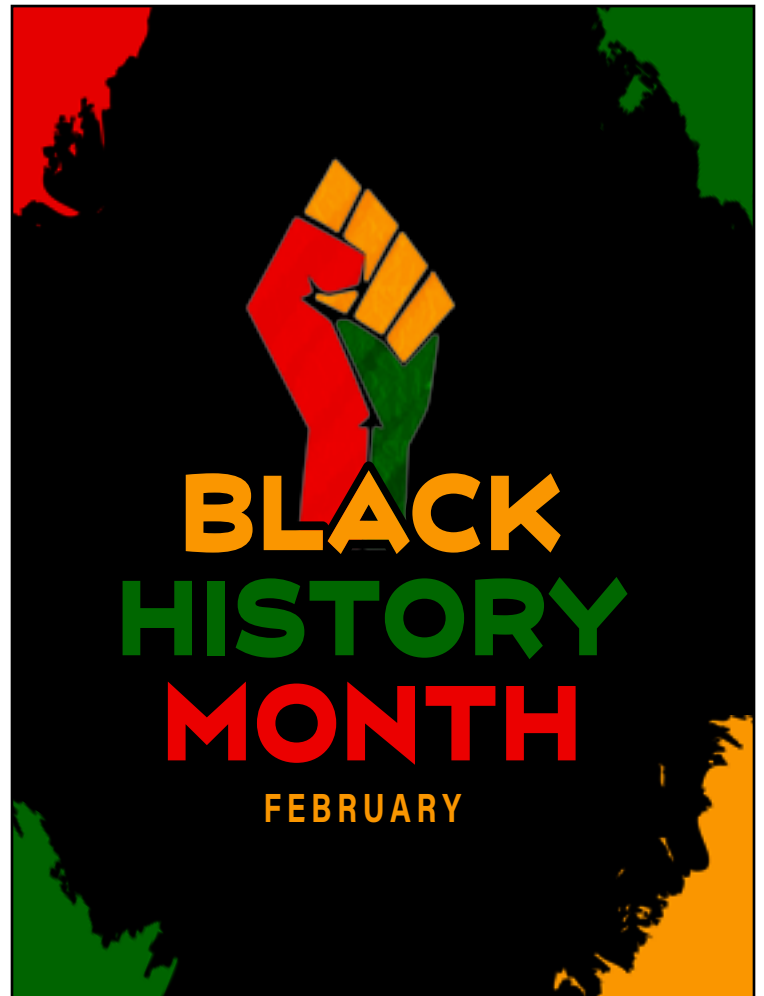
In addition to these exhibits by federal government agencies, the state

of North Carolina also has resources devoted to African American history. **The North Carolina African American Heritage Commission** (online at <https://aahc.nc.gov/>) was created in 2008 to “assist the Secretary of Cultural Resources in the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of African American history, arts, and culture.”

The North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (online at <https://www.dncr.nc.gov/>) also features a Black History Month page titled “**Lift Every Voice: Celebrating Black NC History**,” which has travel and tourism suggestions and links to other resources.

Finally, a collection of Black History Month videos from Films On Demand can be found by visiting the database from the Jones Library website.

Black History Month may officially end today, on this last day of February, but the contributions by African Americans to history will continue to be commemorated and celebrated by sites like the ones listed in this editorial. We encourage all our readers to peruse these resources, and by doing so, you might just help make clear the importance of such agencies, programs, and initiatives.



NFL Draft Status: Who will go number 1 overall?

Ace Evett
Staff Writer

As of Feb. 26, the NFL offseason is getting intense as teams and prospects prepare for the upcoming NFL Draft, scheduled for April 24-26 at Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The Tennessee Titans hold the first overall pick, followed by the Cleveland Browns and then the New York Giants.

Top Prospects

Penn State defensive end Abdul Carter is one of the top contenders for the No. 1 overall pick. Carter's breakout season, which included 12.5 sacks and 23.5 tackles for loss, has made him one of the top prospects even though he played with a shoulder injury. Carter has been open about wanting to play for the Titans, as he has praised the organization and also said that he believes he can make an immediate impact.

Another well-thought-of prospect is Travis Hunter, a do-everything player from Colorado who plays both wide receiver and cornerback. NFL Draft expert Mel Kiper Jr. has the New

York Giants selecting Hunter with the third overall pick, believing his game-breaking playmaking ability is a difference-maker for the franchise.

Teams Scheme

The Titans, with new General Manager Mike Borgonzi, are willing to trade the No. 1 pick if it will garner additional assets and still land a generational-type player such as Carter or Hunter. That would be enticing to the Browns, Giants, or Raiders, among others, who may wish to trade up.

The Washington Commanders are also making strategic decisions, permitting defensive lineman Jonathan Allen to seek a trade and shopping free agents like defensive end Josh Sweat. They are also attempting to extend the contract of wide receiver Terry McLaurin and determining offensive line transactions to further strengthen their roster ahead of the draft.

Scouting Combine Highlights

The NFL Scouting Combine is underway, and prospects are trying to improve their draft stock.



Penn State defensive end Abdul Carter

Michigan defensive tackles Kenneth Grant and Mason Graham are trying to lock up first-round status. Graham is showcasing his ability to stop the run and penetrate the pocket, while Grant is trying to demonstrate his strength and improved conditioning.

As the draft approaches, both teams and prospects are busy with combined showings and important strategic decisions poised to shape April's selections.

Brevard defeats NC Wesleyan 70-60 to advance to first-ever USA South Championship

The Brevard College women's basketball team (20-5) earned a spot in the USA South Conference Tournament Championship game for the first time in program history, while also hitting the 20-win mark for the first time in 20 years with a 70-60 triumph over NC Wesleyan (16-9) on Thursday evening at the Boshamer Gymnasium.

Brevard had four players reach double figures in scoring, while senior point guard Lexi Shepard broke her own NCAA-era single-game program record with 11 assists. BC claimed its 20th victory of the 2024-25 campaign, marking the first time the program has reached the 20-win mark since the NAIA era in 2004-05 (25 wins).

Senior tandem of Josie Hester and Makenna Parkins each recorded 18-point, 10-rebound double-doubles, the 15th career double-double for Parkins and the first double-double at BC for Hester. Jada Petty-Wilkins added 16 points with three 3-pointers, dished out three assists, and logged a 40-minute game for the first time in her career. Naliyah Boyce totaled up 13 points and eight rebounds, as the quartet of Tornados combined for 65 of BC's 70 points in the contest. Hester was a catalyst on defense for Brevard with four steals and a block, while Shepard recorded a pair of blocked shots herself.

Shepard, a Summerville, South Carolina senior guard, dished out double-digit assists for the

second time this season – with both totals coming against the Battling Bishops. The fourth-year Tornado starter distributed 10 dimes out in an early-season matchup with NCW on December 3, 2024 – originally setting the program mark before her 11-assist output on Thursday night. Shepard already holds the career NCAA-era record for assists at 334.

The Tornados will take on top-seeded Southern Virginia in Buena Vista, Virginia on Saturday at 4 p.m., with the winner receiving an automatic bid into the 2025 NCAA DIII Championship Tournament.