Although you might not realize it, there’s a good chance that you know people who are frequently hungry or wonder when they will be able to get their next meal.

According to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report, 48.1 million people in America lived in food-insecure homes in 2014. This means that they were not confident of having or being able to acquire enough food because of financial reasons or other limited resources. The World Food Programme has found that 795 million people in the world, or one in nine, do not have enough food to live a healthy and active life.

Deborah Ballard-Reisch wants to improve hunger awareness and decrease hunger as much as possible. She is the Kansas Health Foundation Distinguished Chair in Strategic Communication and a professor in the Elliott School of Communication.

The hunger awareness journey began for Ballard-Reisch when Numana Inc. approached her for help with their strategic communication needs. Since then, Ballard-Reisch’s work in hunger awareness has become a culmination of her academic backgrounds in communication and public health. Her labor has not only benefited Numana, but it has also benefited the WSU population, Kansas, the U.S. and other countries.

### FROM NUMANA TO HAITI

In the spring of 2009, Numana, Inc., of El Dorado began a grassroots movement to feed the starving. Their primary service was to hold food-packing events and send the meal packages to distressed parts of the world for distribution to schools. They reached out to Ballard-Reisch for help with press releases and persuasion strategies to gain support for their mission. The focus of their work intrigued her.

“A lot of research indicates that if you can feed kids in school, kids are more likely to go to school in areas where food is scarce,” said Ballard-Reisch. “Their parents will send them so they get to eat. An educated populace is more upwardly mobile, has more potential, and creates more resources, so feeding kids in schools is a win-win.”

In late December 2009, almost 4,000 people, including Ballard-Reisch, packaged 285,000 meals for Numana to distribute to Salvation Army schools in Haiti. The meals filled a semi-truck trailer. Meals were expected to arrive in Haiti by boat six to eight weeks later.

“Then the earthquake hit,” said Ballard-Reisch.

The Jan. 12, 2010 earthquake registered at 7.0 magnitude near Léogâne and affected nearly 3 million people. They had no easily accessible water or food.

“The U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division found out where the food was, grabbed it and airlifted it into Haiti,” said Ballard-Reisch. “It was some of the first food they got into Haiti. I was hooked.”

### “EVERYONE PAYS FOR THIS”

Following the Haiti event, Ballard-Reisch received approval from then President Donald Beggs for Wichita State to sponsor...
a second Numana food-packing event during the 2010 Super Bowl weekend.

“That weekend we packaged more than 641,000 meals,” Ballard-Reisch said. “We could tell people that the food they packed that weekend would be in the hands of people in Haiti to eat by early Wednesday. That created a major high.”

Although the food-packing event was benefiting people in another country, she was fully aware of hunger’s impact on American society and the local economy.

“When you talk about hungry kids in school, you’re talking about the inability to concentrate, an inability to thrive and the possibility of decreased brain acuity and mental capacity,” said Ballard-Reisch. “You’re talking about a group of people who will never be able to reach their potential because at critical time periods in their lives they are not getting the nutrients that they need to be healthy.

“Even though hunger may not impact us individually, it impacts people who are around us and impacts our local, statewide, national and global capacity for the future,” she said. “It’s not just malnutrition. It’s Type II diabetes and hypertension that are a direct consequence of the inability to afford quality food.

“That is a huge cost to our nation. These people often don’t have good resources,” said Ballard-Reisch. “They don’t have health care, they don’t have insurance and they end up in emergency rooms where they can’t be turned away. Everyone pays for this.”

HUNGER AT WICHITA STATE
Her interest in hunger awareness piqued, Ballard-Reisch began to look into campus hunger and its contrast with the “freshman 15”—a commonly held belief about the amount of weight first-year college students gain. She found that there was no research behind either issue.

That set the stage for broader study in her health communication course. Her first class, offered in 2011, included international, graduate and undergraduate students. Their class discussions raised two important issues for hunger awareness on campus.

“The international students talked about lack of familiarity with food here, and they often eat on very different time schedules than American students do,” said Ballard-Reisch. “It’s very labor-intensive to prepare the food they are familiar with. They don’t really have time to do that when they get out of class at 10 o’clock at night, and there’s no place to eat or nothing familiar to eat if they do find a place to eat.”

Traditional American college students also present unique challenges with regard to having enough food.

“There’s a lot of pride in students. They are jazzed to be independent of their families,” said Ballard-Reisch. “When they have to make a decision to pay rent, to pay utilities, to buy gas, to pay tuition, to buy books or to eat, they pick all those other things first. They are not comfortable asking for help.”

Because of food-insecure students’ pride, their classmates, professors and acquaintances might not be aware of their need.

ERIK YOUNG is Ballard-Reisch’s Kansas Health Foundation graduate research assistant. He’s been involved with hunger awareness for a couple of years and gives presentations to classes and organizations.

“I mention how hunger and food insecurity happens in our own backyard, and not too many people realize it,” Young said. “It is sad, it is unhealthy, and it is almost inconceivable that being food insecure happens to our own college student peers on campus, but the horrible truth is that it does. There will always be a need to fight hunger, and oftentimes that need comes from places we would least expect it to.”

Compounding the issue is the reality that unhealthy food is less expensive than healthful, good quality food. This leads to larger health issues. Ballard-Reisch says it points to the link between the obesity epidemic and the availability and affordability of quality food. She believes it could be a foundation for the “freshman 15.”

HUNGER AWARENESS INITIATIVE
The students in Ballard-Reisch’s 2011 health communications course formed the Hunger Awareness Initiative (HAI), and Young now serves as its vice president. HAI has two goals: to raise awareness of hunger and to unpack the nature and scope of hunger on campus. Through work with Ballard-Reisch, HAI has created a five-pillar model for starting these kinds of campus initiatives. It acts as the foundation for projects they provide. Students identify events they want to do and plan them. These events have included food drives, food-packaging events and T-shirt and bracelet sales to raise funds. The organization has gone from hosting a Hunger Awareness Day to holding a Hunger Awareness Month (October).

“We do fun things; it’s not just all sad and gloom and ‘hunger is terrible, what do you do about it?’” Young said. “We have fun making a difference. We encourage everyone to join the fight against hunger on campus and in the community.”

The work involved with these hands-on, tactile activities leaves a lasting impression on participants.
“We work with the idea that if you let people touch things and do things, you increase their excitement and their commitment,” said Ballard-Reisch. “Every year we end our campus food drive with a lifeline to end hunger. We actually pass the food hand to hand to the Kansas Food Bank food trucks. When people can get their hands dirty making a difference, they feel good and are more likely to do something again. These events also build a community which is equally reinforcing of collective action for change.”

Because of the depth and scope of hunger, HAI became a formal student organization, supported by the Student Government Association. The organization receives some financial support and members, in turn, carry out events that support other organizations. Two programs include the Empty Bowls Chili Cook-off to benefit the Kansas Food Bank and fundraisers to support Angels of the Amazon, a food-in-schools program based in Esparanza Village, Peru.

HAI is also trying to become a clearinghouse to track hunger awareness activities taking place on campus. One set of activities involves the qualitative and quantitative research conducted by Ballard-Reisch and her students. They base their understanding of hunger awareness needs on data collected by qualitative interviews and focus groups, and by quantitative surveys. The work has allowed her students to become experienced qualitative and quantitative analysts, conference presenters and published authors.

“We really hit the evidence-based approach. If you don’t have your research, it doesn’t make any sense to start a project if you don’t know what the people want and what works,” Ballard-Reisch said. “We have presented at the Kansas Hunger Dialogue, the Universities Fighting World Hunger Summit, communication conferences, pop-culture conferences, honors conferences and public health conferences to get the word out.”

Ballard-Reisch and her students are currently designing a survey to determine whether a food pantry is needed on campus and how it might be structured. They will conduct the survey in the spring and share the results with the Student Government Association. It’s one more step along WSU’s own hunger awareness journey.

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT:

Deborah Ballard-Reisch exudes a bright, positive energy that defies dampening. It sustains her in her work with hunger awareness and expresses itself through her creative and interdisciplinary approach to tackling the subject.

“’I’m really proud of this and believe that we’re doing good work,’” she said. “’It’s the capacity building potential of this initiative that I think is really exciting.’”

She describes one of her professional highlights as starting Wichita State’s Hunger Awareness Initiative.

In her free time, Ballard-Reisch loves exploring different cultures, good food, movies and theater productions, as well as photographing flowers, food, cities as well as landscapes. She has two adult children: Alyssa, who graduated from the University of Nevada last December and Stefan, who is currently attending Wichita State.

She arrived at Wichita State in 2007 as the Kansas Health Foundation Distinguished Chair in Strategic Health Communication. Her early career included teaching in the field of communication at the University of Nevada at Reno. While there, she broadened her experience to include public health, but she returned to her communication roots when she came to Wichita State. She’s also a fellow at Auburn University’s Hunger Solutions Institute. In 2013, she was presented with the Virginia Lockhart Health Education Award by the Kansas Public Health Association.

During her acceptance speech, Ballard-Reisch challenged the audience to think of hunger as a public health issue resulting in high cultural costs including contributing to diminished capacity as well as chronic illnesses like Type-II diabetes, hypertension and heart disease.

She earned her undergraduate and doctoral degrees at Bowling Green State University and her master’s degree at Ohio State; all three are in an area of communication.

WSU’S HUNGER AWARENESS INITIATIVE FIVE-PILLAR MODEL

- Collaborators
- Media
- Capacity building
- Events
- Research

Ballard-Reisch stresses that involvement of community members is paramount to the success, sustainability and transferability of hunger reduction programs.

A SAMPLING OF EVENTS FROM THE 2015 HUNGER AWARENESS MONTH AT WSU

- Build-a-Bowl: Students and campus community members made and decorated clay bowls. Then the WSU Ceramics Guild fired and glazed the bowls for use at the Empty Bowls Chili Cook-off where the bowls were available for purchase.
- Empty Bowls: Auction Preview, Oct. 17-25
- Ceramics exhibition with work by Emma Draghi, Florence, Italy
- Empty Bowls Chili Cook-off and Silent Auction, Oct. 24
- RAVE Against Hunger

Collaborators included Ulrich Museum of Art; WSU College of Fine Arts; WSU School of Art Design and Creative Industries; WSU Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; WSU Elliott School of Communication; SODEXO; KMUW; WSU Sociology Club; WSU Hunger Awareness Initiative; and WSU Ceramics Guild.
By Lainie Rusco

Wichita State University has reinstated its master’s degree in physics following approval last month by the Kansas Board of Regents.

The physics master’s was suspended in 2003 by the Regents, citing low enrollment and graduation numbers in the major.

Ron Matson, dean of the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences—which encompasses physics—said the next step is to recruit students.

There are 40 undergraduate physics students at Wichita State this fall, but Matson thinks that number will increase now that undergraduates can be recruited to the master’s program.

The goal is 20 master’s students, and five graduates, a year. Five graduate teaching assistantships are available in the physics program, and prospective students can apply for admission into the physics master’s program.

The official restart date is spring 2016, but applications are being accepted now.

REVIVING THE PROGRAM

When the master’s degree was suspended 12 years ago, the Earth, Environmental and Physics Sciences (EEPS) program was created to house the graduate activities of physics, as well as geology and environmental science, and to help professors continue to seek research funding.

But a lot has changed since then, including the addition of faculty who specialize in multiple physics disciplines, a greater focus on research and the need for more educational opportunities in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields.

The revival of the master’s program will allow physicists to train students in those areas and better position the program for receiving external funding to support faculty and graduate student research, said Tom DeLillo, chairman of the Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Physics.

Physics training generally includes core courses in classical mechanics, quantum mechanics, electromagnetism and thermal and statistical physics, in addition to exposure to a range of mathematical, experimental and computational techniques.

“It is difficult to imagine a broader, more interdisciplinary course of study for anyone entering the STEM fields,” DeLillo said.

With the addition of the master’s program, DeLillo sees more opportunities for fruitful collaboration with other areas of science and engineering, including what he calls the most critical technical environmental problem: the production, distribution and conservation of clean energy.

“Physicists know all about energy,” he said.
Mary Waters

The humanities play an important role in WSU’s move to become the innovation university in Kansas. This might require a shift from traditional methods of scholarship, but Mary Waters is embracing that opportunity.

Her work with the Criticism Archive caught the attention of the selection committee made up of other distinguished professors in Fairmount College. They chose Waters for the Melva V. Hughes Distinguished Professorship in English, which was vacated when William Woods retired.

“It’s a confirmation that digital humanities is an up and coming direction for humanities teaching in general,” said Waters. “The college is definitely on record as supporting it as a legitimate scholarship method.”

Waters recognized early in her career that technology could ensure broad accessibility and access to the humanities for millions of people. Her work with the Criticism Archive digitizes and preserves scholarly editions of critical essays by Romantic women writers. The database is searchable and is published as part of the Poetess Archive at Texas A&M. The poetess project is associated with a larger archive, the Network Interface for 19th Century Electronic Scholarship.

Part of the allure for Waters in digitizing the humanities is that works can be preserved in perpetuity. Paper manuscripts lack permanence and might not be widely available. Digital material can be made available at low or no cost, transferred to new platforms and translated to new electronic languages yet unknown. This is especially important from a financial perspective because publishing scholarly works for a limited academic audience can be significantly cost prohibitive.

The focus of Waters’ digitizing project is women’s literary criticism, rather than women authors’ literature, and much of that has to do with accessibility. For example, Mary Shelley’s “Frankenstein” is available in digital and print editions that make it widely accessible for anyone to read. However, the criticism Shelley wrote for literary magazines has not been made accessible to a broad audience.

“One of the things the Criticism Archive will do as it develops is serve as an identification locus so a person can find literary criticism by Mary Shelley or other writers in the same period of literary criticism,” Waters said. “Rather than the famous creative works themselves, it’s the literary commentary, so it’s a resource for studying the background issues and aesthetics, and for understanding the literary periodicals and the culture surrounding them.”

The main subject of her current archive work is Anna Letitia Barbauld’s literary criticism. Barbauld is considered the earliest of the British Romantic period’s women literary critics with the most extensive body of high-profile work. Once all of Barbauld’s critical essays have been digitized, Waters will start working on Mary Wollstonecraft’s literary criticism; she is generally considered the second most significant female critic.

Waters’ scholarship also allows students to be significantly involved. She developed a digital humanities seminar where students learned about the digital humanities field and created digital editions of essays for the Criticism Archive. They learned XML code and transcribed and encoded the entries. They also researched and wrote entries for use as scholarly annotations. This experience has led two of her students to become research assistants, including one who now works with online learning for Wichita State.

Waters still conducts traditional research and recently had a chapter published in the Cambridge Companion to Women’s Writing in Britain, 1660-1789. She became interested in 18th- and 19th-century British women writers through authors like the Brontë sisters, Charlotte and Emily, who wrote “Jane Eyre” and “Wuthering Heights,” respectively.

Waters is grateful for the additional financial support the Hughes professorship provides. It is part of the Kansas Board of Regents Faculty of Distinction Program. The professorship includes an annual stipend that supplements Waters’ yearly salary.
**FACULTY & STAFF ACCOLADES**

**Kristin Brewer**, director of the Midwest Criminal Justice Institute, received the “Protect our Children Award,” presented by the U.S. Attorney’s Office.

The **Community Psychology doctoral program** received the Excellence in Education Award from the Society for Community Research and Action/Division of Community Psychology. The award recognizes long-standing, exemplary graduate education in community psychology.

**Lael Ewy**, behavioral health systems specialist for the Center for Community Support and Research, was appointed to the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Council.

**Chuck Koeber**, senior associate dean and associate professor of sociology, was elected the 2016 president of the Association for Humanist Sociology.

**Kenneth Kriz**, Regents Distinguished Professor of Public Finance and director of the Kansas Public Finance Center, received the 2014 Jesse Burkhead Award for a paper he co-authored, “The Two Worlds of Municipal Bonds: Are Lower-Rated Bonds Punished by Financial Crisis?” The award is given to the best papers published in the journal Public Budgeting and Finance.

**Victor Isakov**, mathematics, received a $274,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for his project “Some inverse problems: increasing stability and drift-diffusion models.”

**Alexandre Shvartsburg**, assistant professor of chemistry, was selected as one of three WSU faculty to receive the 2015 Coleman Fellowship.

**Debbie Willsie**, field practicum director, School of Social Work, was appointed as a member of the Sedgwick County Advisory Council on Aging.

**Doris Chang**, women’s studies, received a $5,000 Professor Liao Shutsung Research Grant of the North American Taiwanese Professors Association. In June, she was invited to give a lecture titled “Taiwan’s Feminist Discourses and Women’s Movements: State of the Field and Future Prospects” at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

**Jibo He**, psychology, is co-principal investigator with **Murtuza Jadliwala**, electrical engineering and computer science, and principal investigator, for a $380,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. They will study “CSR: Small: Surviving Cybersecurity and Privacy Threats in Wearable Mobile Cyber-Physical Systems.”

**Greg Houseman**, biological sciences, procured a $629,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for his project “Interactive effects of exogenous and endogenous spatial heterogeneity on plant diversity.” This work will be conducted at the WSU Biological Field Station and will include significant involvement with Maize High students.

**Lava Kadel** and **Michael Sullivan**, undergraduate student, presented posters at the Oklahoma Pentasectional American Chemical Society meeting in Norman, Okla. Sullivan won first place for the best undergraduate poster presentation, “Indium Complexes with Nitrogen and Sulfur Donor Ligands.”

**Abril Marshall** and **Mark Strohminger**, graduate students in history, worked with the Kansas African American Museum to produce the book “African Americans of Wichita.” Other Wichita State collaborators included Robert Weems, Willard W. Garvey Distinguished Professor of Business History, and Jay Price, professor and department chair.
NEW FACULTY & STAFF HIRES

Elizabeth Paris, Anthropology
Rachelle Meinecke, Anthropology
Carrie Dickison, English
Amy Parker, English
Brendan Clark, Psychology
Joel Suss, Psychology
Maria Thompson, LAS Advising Center
Carey Glenn, Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Program

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS
During the spring, summer and early fall of 2015, Peer Moore-Jansen, anthropology, engaged several graduate students on his field project involving the mapping of and field and archival data gathering of interments in Maple Grove Cemetery, Wichita. Sponsored by a grant from the Jackman Foundation, he and his students recorded nearly 13,000 interments. He also engaged in the scanning and archiving of a majority of the accompanying cemetery records. David Hughes, anthropology, contributed significantly in the development and transformation of the cemetery maps into workable ArcGIS formats. Susan Matveyeva, university libraries, supervised the actual scanning of maps and certain archival documents.

Scientists on the Fermilab NOvA research project, including particle physicists from Wichita State University, saw their first evidence of oscillating neutrinos, confirming that the detector built for the project not only functions as planned, but is making great progress toward a major leap in the understanding of the ghostly particles. Professors Nickolas Solomey, Holger Meyer and Mathew Muether, from WSU’s Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Physics, have been remotely monitoring data from a dedicated control center in Jabara Hall between trips to Fermilab facilities in Batavia, Ill., near Chicago.

IN MEMORIAM
Emeritus professor of mathematics, died May 4. Memorial contributions may be given to the Olathe Hospice, 15310 S. Marion St., Olathe, KS 66061.

Sharon Miles

Lucio Arteaga
Emeritus professor of mathematics, died May 4. Memorial contributions may be given to the Olathe Hospice, 15310 S. Marion St., Olathe, KS 66061.

Will Klunder

Arthur H. Rohn
Emeritus professor of anthropology, died Aug. 23. He joined the University of Wichita in 1952 and retired from Wichita State University in 1992.

Emi Butsch

Karl H. Schlesier

Former foundation director for Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, died July 13. Memorial gifts may be made to the Wichita Public Library Foundation, 223 S. Main, Wichita, KS 67202.

Associate professor of history, died Sept. 24. A memorial has been established with American Red Cross Blood Donation, 1900 E. Douglas Ave., Wichita, KS 67214.

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LaVona Spencer
Dear alumni, faculty, staff and friends,

Wichita State University and, consequently, Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are moving forward at breakneck speed as President Bardo unfolds his vision of an innovation university. Fairmount College is the foundation of education and degree programs at Wichita State, and while WSU and the college had a smaller enrollment than hoped for this fall (~3 percent in head count), we are putting in place a strategic enrollment management plan that holds promise for the coming years.

I want to highlight several noteworthy items within the college. First, faculty research grants improved by 20 percent between fiscal years 2014 and 2015. In 2015, the amount of externally funded research and grants reached $7 million. This increase has occurred in a national climate of declining federal research monies. Congratulations to our faculty who continue to bring quality to all the research, teaching and service dimensions of their careers.

Second, the Morse Development Fund in Fairmount College was established to support travel and programming that will increase the amount of WSU Foundation support coming into the college. John Morse, one of our Fairmount College Advisory Council members and chair of the FCAC fundraising committee, allowed the development fund to be created to improve future funding in LAS.

Third, the innovative programs being developed in Fairmount College are staking our claim in the innovation university:

- The philosophy department has a new Forum for Ethics in place to train medical, business and engineering professionals.
- The psychology department continues cutting edge research in the application of technological devices used in aging populations to improve driving safety.
- The master’s degree in physics has been reinstated as a way to support our students in the field as well as improve research prospects for faculty in physics.
- The history department continues its exciting work in public history by publishing books on regionally important topics with students and community members.
- Anthropology is mapping and developing what appears to be a very large Native American dig site in southern Kansas that has remarkable potential for student involvement.
- The Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Physics and many of the science departments are involved in STEM outreach to students from elementary through secondary school levels and are also collaborating with the colleges of education and engineering in the process.

Reflecting at the end of my first three years serving as your dean, I must say I am pleased with our college and continue to be very optimistic about WSU and LAS. It is essential I give a shout out to the five incredible, hardworking staff that really make this 400-person organization run: thanks to Senior Associate Dean Chuck Koeber, Senior Assistant Deans Marche Fleming-Randle and Cheryl Miller, Assistant to the Dean Candice Weathers, and Budget Manager Erin Mundus. Not incidentally, I am happy in my work because they are my colleagues. Because of this crew, we continue to serve LAS faculty, staff and students (and the broader university) with excellence, and I am grateful to them for making all this happen.

Sincerely,

Ron Matson, dean