Greetings from Smith Hall on Mount Oread! The Fall 2013 semester is rapidly approaching its end. The time has arrived for us to update you on our accomplishments over the past calendar year, and the exciting developments that are looming on the 2014 horizon.

We extend a warm welcome to our new colleague, Paul Nahme, who joined the Department in Fall of 2013 as our new specialist in Judaism. Paul comes to us from the University of Toronto, with combined training in religious studies and Jewish thought. During his years in Toronto, Paul studied medieval philosophy in the Jewish and Islamic traditions, as well as modern German history, Philosophy, and critical theories of secularity. He also participated in numerous collaborative projects on the topic of liberalism and religious law, as well as Islamic and Jewish law in the modern state. He brings to his studies a background in Hebrew and Arabic languages, and knowledge of medieval Jewish history, textual and exegetical traditions. Prior to joining us at KU, Paul served as both a visiting scholar at NYU School of Law in the Tikvah Center for Law and Jewish Civilization and fellow at Cardozo Law School of Yeshiva University, where he concentrated on the intersection of modern legal theory and Rabbinic jurisprudence.

As those of you familiar with the University will know, the KU Keeler Intra-University Professorships are competitively awarded opportunities, offered annually through the Office of the Provost, to undertake collaborative inter-disciplinary projects in units outside one’s home department. 2013-2014 has been an embarrassment of riches for the Religious Studies Department. Three colleagues on the KU faculty expressed interest in applying for Keeler Professorships with our department. Two colleagues applied and were awarded Intra-University Professorships with us. They are Professor John Hoopes (Anthropology) and Associate Professor Ebenezer Obadare (Sociology).

A renowned specialist in Mayan archaeology and the Mayan calendar, Dr. Hoopes has a growing interest in the appropriation of academic scholarship on Mayan archaeology and culture by the popular media and New Age millenarians. He joins the department in Fall of 2013 to expand his knowledge of religious studies and its genealogy as a field, and to engage colleagues who share his interest in assessing the impact of the academic study of religion on contemporary spirituality and alternative religious movements.

Dr. Obadare came to the discipline of Sociology, and to KU, after a lengthy career in the private sector as one of Nigeria’s leading journalists, his specialization being religious developments in Nigeria. His scholarship, to date, has focused largely on Pentecostal Movements in contemporary West Africa. Recently, however, it has shifted to the growing popularity of Muslim prayer groups in contemporary West Africa, a topic for which he has received a two-year research grant from the Social Science Research Council. In the interest of setting Nigerian developments within the context of changing social configurations of Islam in North Africa, he will work collaboratively with Dr. Jacqulene Brinton, who specializes in contemporary Islamic preachers, religious media, movements, and prayer groups in Egypt.

Congratulations and welcome to you both on your success with two fascinating projects!

Past Events, Spring and Fall of 2013:

February 27 – March 1, 2013. Mary Evelyn Tucker, Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Divinity School, Department of Religious Studies, and Center for Bioethics; leading scholar in the area of religion, ecology, and environmental ethics, and co-author of the influential film and educational project, Journey of the Universe. Public lecture and film-showing, organized by Rachel Myslivy, with the collaboration of various Lawrence community groups and KU Environmental Studies.

March 7, 2013. Leonard Primiano, Chair and Professor of Religious Studies, Cabrini College; elected member of the Executive Board of the American Folklore
Society. “The Material and Visual Life of Ex Votos in Vernacular Christianity.” Co-sponsored with the Humanities and Western Civilizations Program.


**October 21, 2013. Vesna Wallace**, specialist in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism and Buddhism in Mongolia, presented a lecture on “Naturalized Buddhist Deities and Their Religio-Political Roles in Mongolia.” Dr. Wallace’s visit was made possible by generous support and coordination with Lama Chuck Stanford, director of the Rime Buddhist Center in Kansas City. Chuck is also one of our FODORS board members.

**November 14, 2013**, Thursday, 4:00 PM, Smith 108. Professor **John Hoopes**, KU Anthropology, “Magical Pasts for Healing the Future: Archaeology, Imagination, and Dark Green Spirituality.” More information about John’s research and scholarly activities can be found at: http://kansas.academia.edu/hoopes

**Upcoming Events, Spring 2014**

**February 28, 2014, 3:00 PM, Smith Hall 108. Dr. Philip Lutgendorf** will speak on “The Clue in the Lake: Tulsidas and the Sufis of Avadh.” Dr. Lutgendorf is Professor of Hindi and Modern Indian Studies, and Co-Chair of the South Asian Studies Program at the University of Iowa. He is one of the most innovative and wide-ranging contemporary scholars of South Asian religions. His early work focuses on the Rāmāyana epic in North India. His first book, *The Life of a Text: Performing the Rāmāyaṇa epic of Tulsidas* (1991; Univ. of California Press), remains a classic in the study of South Asia and the relationship between text and performance. He has written extensively about Hindi cinema, and also the monkey-god Hanuman, the subject of his 2007 book, *Hanuman’s Tale: The Messages of a Divine Monkey* (Oxford UP). He is also currently the President of the American Institute of Indian Studies.

**Monday April 28, 2014. Annual Religious Studies Reception and Lecture: Awards Reception, 5:30-7:00 P.M., Alderson Room, Kansas Union (please RSVP to Amanda Enneking, aennekin@ku.edu, if you plan to attend).**

**Annual Friends of the Department of Religious Studies Lecture, Monday, April 28, 7:30 – 9:00 P.M., Kansas Room, Kansas Union. Dr. Saba Mahmood, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley.**

**Dr. Saba Mahmood** is an acclaimed specialist in contemporary Islam in the Middle East and Europe, with interest in issues of religion and secularism, law and politics, ethics, gender and sexuality. Her work focuses on the interchange between religious and secular politics in postcolonial societies with special attention to issues of embodiment, cultural hermeneutics, law, and gender/sexuality. Her scholarship is best known for its interrogation of liberal assumptions about the proper boundary between ethics and politics, freedom and unfreedom, the religious and the secular, and agency and submission. Professor Mahmood is currently working on a book about the right to religious liberty and non-Muslims minorities in the Middle East. She is also co-author of a related three-year project (2010-2013) entitled “Politics of Religious Freedom: Contested Norms and Local Practices” funded by the Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religions and International Affairs. The aim of the project is to chart the checkered and contested career of the right to religious freedom in the United States, the Middle East, South Asia, and countries of the European Union. Her works include: Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech, co-authored with Talal Asad, Wendy Brown, and Judith Butler, University of California Press, 2009; Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject, Princeton University Press, 2005 (second edition, with new preface, 2011).

For further details regarding upcoming events, please visit our department website: www.religiousstudies.ku.edu or web.ku.edu/~ksreligion.

**Activities of Department Faculty and Staff**

Jacqueline Brinton (Assistant Professor, Islam), submitted her book manuscript, “Preaching Islamic Renewal: Popularizing Religious Authority in Modern Egypt,” to the University of California Press in Spring of 2013. She is now working on the final revisions, with the expectation that the book will be published in the coming year. During the summer months, she traveled to Egypt
to begin research on her next project, which will be the response of traditional Islamic preachers of the Egyptian ‘Ulama to the ‘Arab Spring’ and recent social, political, and religious developments in Egypt. The unexpected military coup made fieldwork difficult, yet the opportunity to be present, as eye witness, to these momentous events was revealing. In 2013, Jackie also had an article accepted for a book on moderation and Sufism, in which she examines aspects of Sufism in contemporary Egyptian society. Meanwhile, back at KU, she continues to serve as the Middle East Studies Coordinator through the center for Global and International Studies. The program hosted a very successful year of public lectures and events. This year she will help design and spearhead an initiative to create a Middle East Studies Minor at the University.

Aaron, Ketchell (Lecturer; Ph.D. from KU American Studies) continued to teach the department’s REL 104, Introduction to Religious Studies, and offered undergraduate courses on American religious history, religion and popular culture in the United States, and the history of Christianity. He also published a book review in the *Journal of American History* and evaluated multiple textbook manuscripts for introductory-level courses on Christianity submitted to Oxford University Press. His current research examines expressions of popular Catholicism in northeast New Mexico. The primary focus of the project is El Santuario de Chimayo--the shrine, famed for its holy healing dirt, which attracts approximately 300,000 pilgrims per year.

Bill Lindsey (Associate Professor, Japanese religions) participated in two conferences this past year, serving as a discussant at the “Color in Ancient and Medieval East Asia” at KU in March and giving a paper at the “Children and Childhoods Conference” in July at Suffolk University in Ipswich, England. The latter paper, which traced the historical and ritual development of a regional and noted Buddhist childrearing confraternity in Japan, has been revised, reviewed, and accepted for journal publication. He is currently working on completing a textbook to serve introductory survey courses in Asian religion.

Joshua Lollar (Lecturer; Ph.D. from Notre Dame University, Department of Theology and Religion) has recently published a monograph with the Brepols series *Monothéismes et Philosophie*, entitled *To See into the Life of Things: The Contemplation of Nature in Maximus the Confessor and his Predecessors* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). The work is a study of the religious philosophy of Maximus the Confessor (580-662), who is one of the most important figures in the formation of Byzantine religious and philosophical culture. Maximus’ *Ambigua to John*, a compendium which creatively weaves together many strands from the earlier Greek patristic tradition, constitutes his most speculative and challenging work. Yet it has not received a synthetic treatment until now. *To See into the Life of Things* (a reference to Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey”) gives a synthetic reading of this collection of texts and shows that Maximus’ thinking in the *Ambigua to John* circles around the concept of the contemplation of nature (θόρυβος ὁδότεος), the aspect of religious philosophy that occupied a mediating position between ethical praxis and mystical theology in the Greek patristic tradition.

Tim Miller (Professor, new religious movements and religion in America) edited a volume for Ashgate Publishing (United Kingdom) that was issued in 2013: *Spiritual and Visionary Communities: Out to Save the World*, a book that launches a new series on new religious movements coordinated at the London School of Economics. He wrote two chapters for the volume, and oversaw the chapter contributions of two of our graduate students, Torang Asadi and Hilary Hauber Lazebnik. He delivered an invited scholarly lecture at the University of Oregon in memory of a recently deceased scholar, entitled, “The Intentional Communities of Oregon and the Legacy of Jim Kopp.” He delivered papers at the conferences of the International Communal Studies Association, the Utopian Studies Society (Europe), and the Communal Studies Association (U.S.), and also gave panel presentations at two of those conferences. He served as a resource person and session presider at a conference at Baylor University, “Reflecting on an American Tragedy: The Branch Davidsins 20 Years Later.” He also gave talks to three community groups in Lawrence and Topeka. He is now working of his third volume on the history of American intentional communities in the twentieth century.

Paul Mirecki (Associate Professor, ancient Near Eastern studies) completed a textbook manuscript, entitled, “The Bible in Context,” which is under contract with Cognella Academic Publishers (San Diego, CA) to appear in 2014. He also published the article, “Manichaeism, Scribal Magic and Papyrus Kellis 35,” in the volume *Gnostica et Manichaica* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz). In October he read the paper, “The Early Modern Book: A Handcrafted Illustrated Gospel Harmony from Little Gidding, England ca. 1630 (Harvard University, Houghton Library A 1275.5),” at the 38th Annual European Studies Conference, University of Nebraska-Omaha. Apart from his regular undergraduate Understanding the Bible course, in the fall he taught a digitally oriented graduate seminar focusing
on the archaeology of the Greek “mystery religion” site on Samothrace Island, which featured study of 800 photos he took at the site in 2006 with travel support from FODORS.

Paul Nahme (Assistant Professor, Judaism and modernity, contemporary Jewish thought, medieval Jewish and Islamic philosophy, religion and law) has been happily transitioning into his new home in the Department of Religious Studies. This fall, he has been developing new courses in Modern Judaism, Religion in Modern Israel, and Religious Issues and the Supreme Court. His article, entitled, “Law, Principle, and the Theologico-Political History of Sovereignty,” was published in the journal Political Theology. A second article, “The Normative Dimensions of Creation and Prophecy in Maimonides’ Guide,” was submitted for publication. He has also been preparing a grant application for a major project on Halakhah (Jewish law), hermeneutics, and normative philosophy. In November of 2013, he will give a paper at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion on the place of Jewish Law in a post-secular context. The paper will be revised for inclusion in an edited volume for which he is also co-editor. He is scheduled to present a second paper, concerning the parallels between rabbinic and philosophical ethics in 19th century German-Jewish thought, at the AJS conference in December.

Robert Shelton (Associate Professor, religious ethics, peace and conflict studies), now in his fourth (out of five) year of Phased Retirement, continues to serve .75 time in the department. A member of the university-wide “Faculty of the Late 60’s” group, he gave a presentation to that group in October on the transition from the Kansas School of Religion to the Department of Religious Studies, drawing on his many years of experience since his arrival at K.U. in 1967. His recent research travel has focused on the resources of Chautauqua Institution in upstate New York, where he spent two weeks attending lectures and discussions on a range of topics in ethics, international concerns, interfaith activities and explorations. He continues to teach departmental courses and supervise graduate students in religious ethics, as well as teach core courses and guide graduate student research in K.U.’s Peace and Conflict Studies Program. Bob continues work in the Lawrence community, as the academic ethics member on the Lawrence Memorial Hospital Ethics Committee, and as Facilitator with the Community Advisory Panel for a chemical product company, Israel Chemical Laboratories, in Lawrence, as well as several local church educational activities.

Hamsa Stainton (Assistant Professor, religions of India and South Asia), assumed the role of the Department’s Director of Undergraduate Studies in Fall of 2013, an experience that he finds to be rewarding for the close interaction that it allows with our active, creative students. He also served on the College committee for Foreign Languages and Area Studies Fellowships, and continues to take a leadership role in the development of South Asian Studies at KU. This fall he launched two new courses: a seminar on the history, theory, and practice of Yoga, and a special first-year seminar on religious responses to death and dying. In November, he is scheduled to present two papers at the American Academy of Religion Annual Conference in Baltimore. Both papers are part of his developing book manuscript on historically influential North Indian developments in genres of Sanskrit poetry and devotional prayer. In 2013, Hamsa also published several short articles and reviews, and continued his work on an edited volume on Hindu Tantra. On a personal note, his wife, Danika Swanson, and he were overjoyed to welcome their daughter Ellora into the world in March of 2013!

Dan Stevenson (Professor and Chair, Chinese religions, Buddhism), continued his service as Department Chair. He completed revisions on his solicited article, “Buddhist Ritual in Song Dynasty China,” for the volume on Modern Chinese Religion: Value Systems in Transition - Song-Liao-Jin-Yuan, edited by John Lagerwey and Pierre Marsone, due to be published by Brill in 2013. In September he delivered a gallery talk for the Spencer Museum of Art on “Lives of Buddhist Artifacts,” and in early November he delivered one of two keynote speeches for the Texas Asia Conference (University of Texas, Austin), entitled, “The Japanese Monk Gyōnen’s (1240-1321) Essentials of the Eight Sects (Hasshū kōyō hōjō) and Modernist Chinese Remappings of Buddhism as a ‘World Religion.’” He continues to serve as co-editor of the Chung-hwa Journal of Buddhist Studies (Taipei, Taiwan). He continues to make progress on his book manuscript, “Doing the Work of the Buddhas in Song Dynasty China (960-1279),” which he hopes to submit for publication review in late spring of 2014.

Molly Zahn (Assistant Professor, Hebrew Bible and early Judaism). 2013 has been a busy year for Molly Zahn. In February she was named a Kingdon Fellow for Academic Year 2013-2014 at the University of Wisconsin’s Institute for Research in the Humanities. Since arriving in Madison in August, Molly has been working on a new book project examining interpretive modifications of existing scripture and the production of new scriptural texts in early Judaism.
Graduate Student Activities

Once again, the past calendar year has proved to be a very active one for our graduate students. Two students had papers accepted for presentation at national meetings of major professional societies: Rachel Myslivy, for the American Academy of Religion (Baltimore) and American Society on Literature and the Environment; Torang Asadi, for the Association for the Sociology of Religion and the Communal Studies Association. Three additional students presented refereed papers at annual meetings for regional divisions of major professional societies: Tashia Dare, for the Mid-Atlantic AAR, and Emily Stratton, for the Pacific Northwest AAR; and Jamie Gundersen, for the Central States AAR. Jamie Gundersen’s paper on “The Jewish Epigraphic Record at Pompeii” won the award for “best graduate student paper” at the Central States AAR Conference (Denver). Well done, Jaimie! Three students delivered papers at national conferences and symposia organized by other universities: Stephanie Petersen (University of Iowa); Emily Stratton (Indiana University); and Torang Asadi (Columbia University). Jamie Gundersen and Emily Stratton also both read papers at the 2013 Mid-America Humanities Conference, an event organized annually by the University of Kansas.

Graduate Student Papers Published or Accepted for Publication:

Torang Asadi had two papers accepted for publication in 2013, “Perfect Embodiments: Corporeal, Communal, and Collective Bodies of the Twelve Tribes,” in Communal Societies (Vol. 31, no. 3, 2013), and “The Innovation of Tradition and a Tradition of Innovation: the Cultural Developments of the Twelve Tribes Community,” in Out to Save the World: Spiritual and Visionary Communities in Modern Society, edited by our colleague, Tim Miller, (INFORM/Ashgate, 2013).

Student Distinctions, Awards, and Grants:

Rachel Myslivy won the annual KU Sustainability Award, and was awarded a Rupert Zadigan Environmental Studies Scholarship, for her work with the Kansas Green Sisters and various environmental initiatives. Jen Welch was awarded a 2013 Summer Internship with the Muslim Public Affairs Council in Washington, DC. Tashia Dare and Emily Stratton were both awarded much-coveted KU Foreign Language Area Studies Scholarships for the full 2012-2013 academic year: Tashia for study of Arabic; Emily for study of Kiswahili. Congratulations to you all!!

Three of our graduating Masters students have applied and been accepted into PhD programs for Fall of 2013, each of them with a much-coveted, full five-year scholarship. They include Jamie Gundersen, Department of Religious Studies at Syracuse University, Emily Stratton, Department of Religious Studies at Indiana University, and Torang Asadi, Department of Religious Studies at Duke University. Stephanie Petersen has been awarded a Clinical Pastoral Education Residency with the HCA Midwest Health System, Kansas City. Andy Blakemore is pursuing a Masters in Education at Emporia State, with plans to teach at the high school level. Rachel Myslivy has obtained her “dream job” as a Program Director at the Climate + Energy...
Project, a regional non-profit that seeks to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in America’s Heartland. Major Seth George, Army Chaplain, is finishing up preparatory coursework at the United States Command & General Staff College (CGSC), Fort Leavenworth, and will begin his appointment as an instructor of religious studies at the College in Spring of 2014. Clint Shriner successfully defended his masters thesis in Fall of 2013, and will receive his degree in December. Congratulations and best wishes to you all!

News from Our Alumnae/Alumni:

In 2013, Joshua Steineger (B.A., KU Religious Studies), successfully defended his doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago Divinity School, and has accepted appointment as an Assistant Professor of philosophy and religion at Lindenwood University. His dissertation concerns the role of an Eastern Patristic authority within 13th Century Latin Scholastic debates about Anselm’s famous argument for the existence of God. Shane Thompson (MA) has been accepted into the graduate program at Brandeis, where he will pursue a degree in Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East languages. In Spring of 2013, Brenton Sullivan (MA) completed his Ph.D. in Sino-Tibetan Buddhism at the University of Virginia, and was awarded a three-year post-doctoral fellowship at the University of British Columbia. Jimmy Yu (MA from KU Religious Studies; Ph.D. in Religion and Chinese Buddhist history, Princeton) is up for tenure at Florida State University this year.

Religion in Kansas: An ongoing student and faculty research project

Professor Tim Miller continues to offer regularly his course on Religion in Kansas as the first step in a long-term project to preserve and study all manner of documents, memorabilia, oral lore and information concerning the wide spectrum of religious traditions and communities that have been active in the state, past and present. The course has a sizeable fieldwork component which is designed to train students in oral historiography and archival research by sending them out into the state to gather documents and conduct interviews with persons who have had long-term involvement with religious communities in Kansas. Materials gathered and processed by participants in the course are made available to the public in digital form on the KU website, www.religiousstudies.ku.edu or web. ku.edu/~ksreligion.

Our long-range objective is to create a comprehensive information center on religion in Kansas, past and present, that will be administered by the Moore Religious Studies Reading Room in Smith Hall, with digital access through the Religious Studies website (above). We invite our friends and supporters to join us in the project. We depend heavily on public collaboration. Our documentation of Kansas religious history is only as rich as the knowledge and insight that persons who are heirs to this living history are willing to provide us. If you know of materials that should be preserved for posterity, or of persons with long involvement in one or more of the many religious organizations in the state who would be willing to be interviewed, please get in touch with Tim Miller at tkansas@ku.edu or 785-864-7263. All suggestions are welcome, and we will follow up to the extent that our limited resources permit.

Thanks to the generous support from the Friends of the Department of Religious Studies, the Religion in Kansas Project was able to hire two fieldwork interns this summer to continue our work of exploring and documenting trends in the Kansas religious experience. Emily Stratton, a Spring 2013 graduate of the KU Religious Studies MA program, took as her focus the phenomenon of “church planting”—a major trend in contemporary American evangelicism—in Kansas. For this project, Emily recorded oral histories with over a dozen church planters and created an online subject guide on the topic (http://ksreligion.wordpress.com/) that includes transcripts of the oral histories as well as an overview and critical analysis of the church planting movement and a bibliography of resources that are popular with church planters. Kaitlin Manley, an incoming graduate student in KU’s Museum Studies MA program, concentrated her efforts on creating an index of the archival collections, held by repositories across the state, that are related to religion in Kansas. Kaitlin also worked with several local historical societies to digitize their holdings related to religion in Kansas. The resources Kaitlin collected can be found on the Religion in Kansas Project’s new online home, http://ksreligion.omeka.net/. This new online platform for the project, also made possible by FODORS funding, allows us to create a searchable database of resources held locally and across the state. Work on migrating oral histories from the existing database (http://ksreligion.ku.edu/) to the new Omeka database is in progress and expected to be completed by the end of 2013.

Additions to the Moore Reading Room Collection

In addition to our regular purchase of books and materials through funds from the Friends of the Department of Religious Studies, the collection housed in our Moore Religious Studies Reading Room benefits regularly from
public donations of books. It contains a truly remarkable spectrum of materials, which range in date from the nineteenth century to the present and make available, under one roof, virtually all of the major works that have been formative to the field of Religious Studies. The collection is open to the public, and we welcome your visit!

**Our Award-Winning Students**

Department Graduate Teaching Assistants for 2013-2014:
- Nathan Bowman (REL 107)
- Brian Miller (REL 124)
- Peter Rea (REL 104)
- Jenifer Welch (REL 171)
- Serena Smith (REL 106)

Graduate Student serving as Graduate Teaching Assistants in KU’s Western Civilization program:
- Emily Stratton (Spring 2013)

Recipients of Friends of the Department of Religious Studies, Zelma McIlvain, Starrett-Clark, and St. John’s Episcopal Scholarships 2013-2014:
- Returning graduate student Rachel Myslivy; among our incoming graduate students, Diana Brown and Katie Hobson.

Mabel Jensen Memorial Fund to Support Student Research and Professional Activity (2013):
- Torang Asadi, Tashia Dare, Jaimie Gunderson, Rachel Myslivy, and Stephanie Petersen

**Lewis Ethics Essay Awards, 2012-2013:**
- Rachel Myslivy, “The Ecological Activism of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Resulting Efforts of the Communities in Kansas”
- Andy Blakemore, “Consolation of the Spirit: The Tahirih Justice Center and Its Many Roots”
- Stephanie Petersen, “Zakat Foundation of America”
- Tashia Dare, “The Placement of Agency and the Hijab.”

**Department of Religious Studies Prizes for Student Research, 2012-2013:**

**Graduate:**
- Emily Stratton, “Making it Big on All Fronts’: The Opportunism Underlying the Pentecostalization of Accra.”
- Jaimie Gunderson, “Hair, Homosexuality, and Paul.”

**Undergraduate:**
- Ann Erickson, “Traditional Views Regarding the Roles and Physiology of Women and their Impact on Women’s Practice of Buddhism in China.”
- Jenna Mittelmeier, “The Regulation of Buddhism in China: Recent and Historical Trends of Government Interference.”

**Recipient of the Lynn Taylor Award, 2012-2013:**
- Mike Marcus

**Let’s Keep in Touch**

It is always a pleasure to have our friends and former students of the Department stop by Smith Hall for a visit when they are on campus. Should you be further afield, please don’t hesitate to drop us a letter or email with your latest news. We will gladly pass it along. We are also pleased to include you on our mailing list for lectures and special programs. Just let us know how to reach you. Thanks for the many things you do to advance the cause of the academic study of religion. We look forward to hearing from you. For regular updates on Religious Studies courses and activities at KU, please see our website, www.religiousstudies.ku.edu.

Our popular canvas tote bags, which display the name of the department and a wonderful reproduction of the stained glass window in Smith Hall, make great gifts and are a perfect way to make a small contribution to the department. They may be purchased from the Department for $10, plus postage and handling.

*“Have Interest, Will Travel”: Faculty Lecture/Workshop Opportunities*

Our faculty members like to share their research and interests with groups in Kansas and nearby areas. In most cases, a speaker will give a single, illustrated lecture, although other arrangements can easily be accommodated. Department faculty members already carry full-time loads of teaching, research, and service at KU, so we cannot promise to fill all requests. In some cases well-qualified graduate students are also available for presentations. Travel expenses are subsidized, where necessary, by the Friends of the Department of Religious Studies. For contact information and details regarding faculty expertise, please consult our website (www.religiousstudies.ku.edu) or the department office:

Department of Religious Studies
1300 Oread Avenue, Smith Hall
Lawrence, Kansas 66045
785/864-4663
rstudies@ku.edu

In the effort to develop more environmentally sustainable practices, we hope eventually to circulate our annual newsletter in electronic format. If you would like to receive our newsletter by email, please send your address to Amanda Enneking at aennekin@ku.edu. And send us some news when you do!
Friends of the Department of Religious Studies  
at the University of Kansas  
1300 Oread Avenue • Lawrence, Kansas 66045  
785-864-7236 • FODORS@KU.EDU

November 18, 2013

Dear Friend of Religious Studies in Kansas:

As you see from Dr. Stevenson’s update in this newsletter, the Department of Religious Studies is engaged in many creative endeavors that contribute to students’ and the wider community’s understanding of the history and contemporary significance of religions. The Friends of the Department of Religious Studies at KU is very appreciative of the generous support of benefactors that helps to make these endeavors possible. Private donations are crucial for supporting ongoing educational and community service activities of the Department of Religious Studies and for encouraging innovation and excellence. Public support through the state is not sufficient for all of these activities. This year, our private supporters (including those of past years, whose endowments continue to provide resources) provided $62,000 for departmental programs. As always, student scholarships were our largest budget item, at $23,000, and support for the departmental reading room (including acquisitions and student salaries) was second, at $15,000. Lesser amounts supported faculty research, conferences and lectures, faculty outreach, our annual banquet, and many more things.

Outstanding graduate students continue to seek us out, and we welcome them, of course—but we always have trouble providing them with as much support as we would like. Solid support for students is important for recruitment, retention, and recognition of excellence. As the percentage of state support within the university’s budget continues to decline, we need to offset these differences through the private sector.

Please help support the academic study of religion with a gift in the enclosed envelope. If you prefer, you can contribute directly to the KU Endowment Association. Please indicate clearly that you want to earmark your donation for the Department of Religious Studies.

Thank you for your support in the past and the future. We welcome you to attend our Religious Studies Annual Awards Reception and Public Lecture scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2014, as described in this newsletter. Otherwise, please feel free to stop by the department anytime you are on the KU campus. Attendance at our annual banquet comes free to those who make a donation to the Department of Religious Studies.

Sincerely,

Edward R. Canda, Ph.D.
President, Friends of the Department of Religious Studies