

Summer 2026 Newsletter: Vol. 4, No. 2



Director's Update

With the summer upon us, the Wallop Team is looking back on a successful spring semester and looking forward to a summer where we can wind down old projects and switch gears to new priorities. Our K-12 Catalog and our work with Wyoming teachers remain a core priority. This May, thanks to Ivan Posey, who is the Tribal Education Coordinator and Director of the Institute of Tribal Learning from Central Wyoming College, we published the new Wind River 101 module in the Social Studies Catalog and in the WDE Civics Education Center. The module includes a three-part video lesson series and supporting materials that provide a primer on the formation of the Wind River Reservation, its governance, and important issues and history of the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes. This curriculum content is meant to help teachers and students meet Wyoming's Indian Education for All social studies standards. We also spent the last several months working to update our English Language Arts (ELA) Catalog to mirror the new Wyoming ELA standards. One of our summer projects will be to complete work to meet new UW and federal government accessibility standards so that our WyoLearn online multimedia materials are fully accessible for all – these are updates that will keep the team busy.

The year-long Wyoming Youth Resilience Project (WYRP) has deepened old partnerships and created some new ones. We have had nearly 20 teachers and their students participate from schools such as Arapahoe School, Cheyenne South High School, Cody Middle School, Ethete School, Meeteetse School, Pine Bluffs Jr./Senior High School, Rawlins Middle School, Riverton High School, Rock Springs Junior High, Sheridan High School, Star Valley High School, Thunder Basin High School, Upton High School, and UW. These students shared their perspectives on opportunities and barriers they see to education, employment, and community resilience. There are now hundreds of images on the Wyoming Resilience Map (see: <https://surveys.wygisc.org/profiles-in-wyoming-resilience>) with

more to be vetted and uploaded across the summer. In addition to submitting their photos and narratives, students also have shared their work in public showcases. This sharing of their perspectives with the public and stakeholders is an important aspect of the photovoice method and integral to our goal to have under-represented student voices shared with the wider community. We were able to attend two of the student showcases. Upton High School had students partner with the Weston County Gazette to compare historic pictures of Upton with pictures of Upton today. We attended their exciting community showcase on May 6th. Marina Scholten was able to attend the gallery showcase at Arapahoe School featuring the work of their middle school students. In our follow-up conversations with our teacher partners, we have learned how excited students were to participate and to share their perspectives about their communities. I'm excited that teachers plan to continue to use photovoice in the classroom and see it as a meaningful way to encourage students to be more civically engaged. Our WYRP work will continue through planned professional development workshops with teachers across 2026-27, where we intend to share photovoice and other project-based learning opportunities in civics education. Special thanks to our many sponsors who made this project possible: The Tucker Foundation, John P. Ellbogen Foundation, Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, Anne and Scott Nickerson Family Foundation, individual supporters, and campus partners such as the School of Politics, Public Affairs and International Studies (SPPAIS), College of Education, and School of Computing.



Joseph Egungbemi, Marina Scholten and Jean Garrison at Upton High School

The Wallop Program co-hosted a keynote UW 250th Celebration event in March featuring Pulitzer-prize winning historian Edward Larson (see story below). Next year we will partner with SPPAIS to host the Conversations on Democracy series and events highlighting public service opportunities on campus, in schools, and in communities across Wyoming.

There's a great opportunity for Wyoming teachers coming up in July to attend the UW College of Education's Civic Literacy Institute. Teachers interested in paid professional development in disciplinary literacy, the U.S. Constitution, and the advancement of America's founding principles are invited to campus July 14th to 17th. More information and registration can be found at <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/civiced/civicliteracyinstitute.html>.

I hope you have a great summer. Please keep in touch!

Jean Garrison

Director, Wallop Civic Engagement Program

Clyde E. & Jerrine N. Stewart Family Professor in Public Service

Wallop Team Update

Over the summer, the Wallop Team will undergo some changes. We are sad to say goodbye to Marina Scholten, who graduated with her Masters in Public Administration (MPA) this May. Marina served as the graduate assistant for the Wallop Program for the past 1½ years and as the project coordinator of the Wyoming Youth Resilience Project for her MPA internship. We wish her well as she starts her career in public service – she's on the job market so reach out if you have an opening! We also are saying goodbye to Olatunji Joseph Egungbemi, who graduated with his Masters in American Studies. He worked with Wallop on the K-12 Curriculum Project and will be moving to Berlin, Germany to pursue a PhD in International History at the Free University of Berlin. We are grateful for all of his assistance and wish him the best.

Emilia Hansen, who is majoring in Political Science, International Studies, and Economics and minoring in Honors, continues as our communications and media materials expert next year. Charlsie Erickson, who is entering her second year in the Communications Masters Program, remains our website manager. Misty Springer, a PhD student in the Public Humanities Program and the photovoice consultant for WYRP, will step into new shoes as the assistant program director for next year. Finally, we are pleased to introduce our new team member, Taelor Nielsen. Taelor is in her second year of the Masters in International Studies Program and has past experience as the recruitment and administrative coordinator for SPPAIS's Middle East North Africa Program. This whole team is integral to our success!



Taelor Nielsen

Wallop Program Partnering on UW's America 250 Celebration

In March 2026, the Wallop Program collaborated with the President's Office; UW Libraries; American Heritage Center; Office of Community Engagement; the Free Expression, Intellectual Freedom, and Constructive Dialogue Initiative; and the College of Arts & Sciences to host Pulitzer Prize-winning Historian Edward J. Larson on campus in a presentation focusing on his latest book *Declaring Independence: Why 1776 Matters*. The talk explored why and how the fight for freedom launched in 1776 still matters 250 years later. A recording is available on the Wallop Program website.

Larson is University Professor of History and holds the Hugh and Hazel Darling Chair in Law at Pepperdine University. He received the Pulitzer Prize in History for his book *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion*. He is the author of sixteen books and over three hundred published articles and has taught at Stanford Law School, University of Melbourne, Leiden University, Yale Law School, University of Richmond, and the University of Georgia, where he chaired the History Department. He has his PhD in the history of science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a law degree from Harvard University.



Edward Larson and Jean Garrison on stage during the live Q & A

New Byra Kite Intern in Spring 2026: Amelia Easterwood

As part of the focus on providing public service opportunities for students, the Byra Kite Internship Fund was started to support student internships in public service from the local to the national and international levels. The Spring 2026 Byra Kite Internship recipient is Amelia Easterwood from Chicago, IL. Amelia, who is pursuing an MPA at UW, completed her internship with the Wyoming Department of Health's Communicable Disease Unit within the Prevention Program. Her internship work focused on public health programming, policy-related initiatives, and statewide prevention efforts, which will help prepare her for a career in public health policy at the state or federal level.

Amelia shared: "This internship serves as a vital bridge between my academic coursework and my professional aspirations. Through hands-on experience in a state-level executive agency, I am applying principles of public management, policy analysis, and program evaluation to real-world public health challenges. I am developing the skills necessary to thoughtfully manage public programs, collaborate with diverse stakeholders, and contribute to evidence-based policy decisions that improve community health outcomes."



Amelia Easterwood

Wallop Partner Profile: Misty B. Springer from UW's Public Humanities Program

Misty B. Springer has been working with the Wallop Program for several years. In 2018, Misty came to UW to earn an MPA with a focus on International Studies from SPPAIS. She was part of Wallop's statewide outreach programming in the Wallop Conversations on Democracy series – sharing the research she completed in the Republic of Georgia, in part, supported by a Wallop Research Fellowship. Currently, she works with WYRP partner teachers to help them use the photovoice method and to develop their student showcases. Misty especially enjoys teaching educators how to bring photovoice into the classroom because it offers a creative way for young people to express themselves and to share their views about Wyoming and their communities. Her role in the Wallop Program will expand in 2026-27 as she will serve as the assistant director who takes the lead on new projects with our K-12 teacher partners.

Her impressive record includes past receipt of a Fulbright Research Fellowship to the Republic of Georgia, where she used photovoice as a tool for women to express their lived realities, often reflecting

deeply entrenched gender asymmetry. She also has served as a Peace Corps volunteer in South Africa teaching classes in underserved elementary schools, worked as an artistic director for an NGO in South Africa, taught English in Japan, and worked as a professional actress and playwright in Chicago and Europe. In addition to her MPA, she has a Bachelor of Arts from DePaul University.

As a PhD candidate in the Department of English Public Humanities Program, she is a member of the Re-Storying the West project (see: <https://www.restoryingthewest.org/>), which seeks to uplift and share the complex, layered, and multivocal stories of the people across the state. Misty is the producer and host of a podcast linked to the project. Her current research focuses on ethical, collaborative cultural preservation that works in partnership with two Indigenous San tribes in South Africa. This work includes building sustainable partnerships through the creation of a nonprofit that supports economic development with the tribes. As the 2026 recipient of the Stewart Family Serviceship Fellowship, she will continue her research and community work in South Africa this summer and early fall.

Misty shares: “Wyoming has always been good to me. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities that have come to me through my education at UW. I am also elated to expand my role with the Wallop Program and am looking forward to doing great things with the team next year!”



Misty B. Springer

What's Next?

Our plans for fall 2026 include launching the Conversations on Democracy discussion series and we look forward to participating in UW Giving Day on October 21-22!

Contact Us!

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