

Final Written Report and Summary of Results for
Professional Development Grant

by

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With the Professional Development Grant I received in the Spring Semester of 2007, I traveled to San Angelo, Texas and presented a reading from my novel entitled *Meeting the Dead* at the 11th Annual ASU Writers Conference in Honor of Elmer Kelton, held at Angelo State University on 23-25 February 2007. While at the conference, I networked with other writers and arranged for one of them to read at Arkansas Tech. I was also able to secure the position of Fiction Editor for the *Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas*.

At the conference, I read selections from *Meeting the Dead* to an audience of approximately 250-300 listeners, including the editor of the *Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas*, who subsequently offered me the position of Fiction Editor for the magazine. After the reading, I signed copies of the novel, and of my short story cycle *Whispers in Dust and Bone*. In addition to the reading and book signing, both of which positively represented the Arkansas Tech University BFA Program in Creative Writing to the very many people who were in attendance, I recruited a writer for the Reading Series that I oversee for the Department of English at ATU. Clay Reynolds, an award-winning fiction and non-fiction writer, accepted my invitation to read and speak to classes here at Arkansas Tech. He visited our campus in April 2007. The reading, reception, and class visits were a great success.

In conclusion, the trip was a great success for the BFA Program in Creative Writing at Arkansas Tech University, and for the university as a whole. I hope that I can attend next year's conference.