2021 WALTER HARRISON FACULTY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Each year the **Walter Harrison Faculty Development Grants** are awarded to mid- to late-career faculty to support significant scholarly efforts which advance their careers, raise the profile of the institution, and advance the mission of the University of Hartford.

This year, we’ve selected five faculty members to receive the grant:

TIMOTHY O. ADEKUNLE, Ph.D. – Associate Professor of Architecture (CETA)

The current pandemic caused by COVID-19 has not only affected the entire globe, but has also shaped the way we live, learn and transact business. In an effort to mitigate similar effects in the future, Dr. Adekunle’s project is to assess the performance and indoor environmental quality of selected buildings at the University of Hartford to understand how the thermal environment has influenced learning, productivity, and the overall well-being of users. He deems this research to be critical for the preparation of the resilient built environment in educational sector and other sectors in the post-pandemic period.

CARRIE KOFFMAN – Associate Professor of Saxophone, Instrumental Studies (The Hartt School)

Carrie’s project is a solo multi-media performance entitled *Voiced.* As the word “voiced” has multiple meanings, the project intends to give voice to topics or people where one isn’t normally given. The aim of this project to produce a unique artistic forum in which to share her musical voice, using a combination of the saxophone family, various recorded sounds, and Carrie’s own speaking voice. One of the works she has commissioned thus far, is *Hush* by Hartt faculty member Gilda Lyons. It is fueled by a need to explore, unpack, and reexamine the ways a woman’s voice can be informed by received gendered language over the course of a lifetime. The text, which is spoken throughout amidst percussive and breath-driven sounds, is: “Shhhhh…Shhhhh…Speak up. Not too loud. Shhhhh…Smile. You’re pretty when you smile. Shhhhh… Make sure you ask nicely. Stand up straight. Straight, tall, slim. Smart AND pretty….” You can hear a performance of this work at [**https://studio.youtube.com/video/KFFF1rKdOTY/edit**](https://studio.youtube.com/video/KFFF1rKdOTY/edit)

PATRICIA MELLODGE, Ph.D. – Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering (CETA)

SANDRA L. SAAVEDRA, M.S., P.T., Ph.D. – Associate Professor of Physical Therapy (ENHP)

Drs. Mellodge and Saavedra plan to develop a wearable sensor system to monitor the posture of non-ambulatory children with the ultimate goal of improving their postural control. Children with neurologic disorders that result in deficits in trunk postural control are unable to play, interact with the environment, or sit upright. These can contribute to the child developing scoliosis, (curvature of the spine) with significant health risks for pneumonia, pressure sores, and surgical intervention for scoliosis and hip dysplasia. This is a complex, multifaceted project including hardware development, modeling, data analysis, physiological interpretation, and patient considerations which requires input from engineering and physical therapy. This knowledge will be beneficial to researchers, clinicians and families by providing full day monitoring in the home setting (rather than a lab) for real world outcomes and determining the effectiveness of therapy sessions or positioning equipment.

DANIEL C. WILLIAMSON, Ph.D. – Professor of History (Hillyer College)

On April 9, 1981 Bobby Sands was elected to the British Parliament to represent the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency in Northern Ireland. Twenty-six days later the new member of Parliament was dead, having succumbed to starvation resulting from a hunger strike. The violent conflict in Northern Ireland, commonly referred to as the “Troubles,” lasted from 1969 to 1998 and resulted in the deaths of over 3,500 people. The dispute at the heart of the Troubles was whether Northern Ireland should remain part of the United Kingdom or merge with the Irish Republic. As the hunger strikes were a major turning point in the Troubles, the objective of Dr. Williamson’s project is to research and write a book-length manuscript detailing the diplomatic interactions between the governments of Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States during the period of the hunger strikes in both 1980 and 1981. His book aims to shed light on the impact that the hunger strikes had on diplomatic relations between Ireland and the United Kingdom and the role that the United States played in those relations and to chart the development of these relationships throughout the course of the conflict.