The glorious weather that accompanied the first week of the 2018–19 academic year reminds us how fortunate we are to be part of the UW community. With the largest entering class in the history of the UW, the Quad is once again a busy crossroads between classes — due in part to over 200 new undergraduate majors in the School. The warmth of the first day extended into the evening and was appreciated by those who attended our Welcome BBQ, where we celebrated the arrival of 17 new graduate students to the School. This brings our active graduate population to 58.

Every new year also brings change to the staff and faculty. In the administrative office, Mariama Salia departed to seek new adventures and has been ably replaced by Photomedia alum Ruth Kazmerzak. Violetta Walker moved her family across the country so that she could take on the job of administrator following the retirement of Risa Morgan Lewellyn.

I want to thank a trio of our full-time lecturers, Kate Roberts, Morten Steen Hansen, and Dan Paz, who shared their expertise and passion for teaching with us for the past few years. Kate Roberts has moved to Tennessee where she is now an assistant professor at the University of Memphis. Morten Steen Hansen has relocated to Rome, Italy, where he is in residence at the Danish Academy, and Dan Paz is actively pursuing her studio career here in Seattle and will return to teaching at the UW in winter quarter 2019.

We are excited by the arrival of Stephanie Hanes as a full-time lecturer with degrees in ceramics from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and Rhode Island School of Design. Whitney Lynn is our most recent tenure-track hire and joins the Interdisciplinary Visual Arts (IVA) program as an assistant professor. Whitney received her BFA from Virginia Commonwealth University and earned an MFA in New Genres from the San Francisco Art Institute.

While the level of activity at the School is decidedly quieter during the summer, our current students, faculty, staff, and alumni were as active as ever. While some were studying or teaching in our study abroad programs in the Netherlands or London/Paris, others were gaining real world experience as interns with individual artists or at corporations like Intuit. A few students enjoyed the quiet, creative intensity provided by a session at the Haystack School of Crafts (Maine), Anderson Ranch (Colorado), or the Pilchuck Glass School (Stanwood, Washington). A few other students benefitted from our ongoing international relationships with LaSalle University in Singapore and the Manifattura Ceramiche Rometti in Umbertide, Italy. It is with great enthusiasm that we have followed the exploits of alum Nora Atkinson who moved from the Bellevue Arts Museum to national prominence as a curator at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian with stops at Burning Man along the way.

Looking forward, this promises to be another interesting year as we grapple with the joys and challenges of being informed and vital members of the greater arts community, and we continue to explore and discover how our community intersects, is informed by, and influences the world in which we live. On February 16, 2019, the Jacob Lawrence Gallery celebrates its 25th anniversary. Dedicated to Jacob Lawrence in 1994, the Gallery has supported learning at the School by following the example of Lawrence, one of the most widely acclaimed Black artists of the 20th century and faculty at the UW for over a decade. As an artist, Jacob Lawrence never shied away from important societal issues; as a professor, Lawrence inspired that same approach in his students.
In celebration of this history, the Gallery is leading a fundraising campaign for the next Jacob Lawrence Legacy Residency. Beginning in 2015, the Gallery committed to dedicate every February — Black History Month — to showing the work of Black artists. Black artists at all stages of their careers are nominated by a selection committee to travel to Seattle for a residency during the month of January and an exhibition in February. The Jacob Lawrence Legacy Residency and Exhibition has become the cornerstone of the Gallery's program, enabling artists, students, faculty, and staff to engage in dialogue and learn from one another.

I invite you to be an early donor in our campaign. We have already raised $5,000 through the generosity of our donors and wish to compliment that with an additional $5,000. Please join us in supporting the development of new work that honors Jacob Lawrence's commitment to teaching, social justice, and experimentation!

Attracting and retaining excellent faculty is key to creating the type of educational community that the UW has long prided itself on and is recognized for as one of the world’s leading public research universities. When our students enter classrooms and studios, they are met by nationally- and internationally-recognized scholars, designers, and artists who are interested in sharing their knowledge and engaging in discussions and critiques that can enrich their own research. We do our best to support and recognize the contributions of faculty, sometimes by appointing them to an endowed fellowship, professorship, or chair. This form of recognition encourages active engagement in teaching, research, and leadership by providing funding for travel, materials, publications, research assistants, curricular initiatives, and more. While many of the School faculty have benefitted from such support, we need to create additional opportunities to stay abreast with our peer institutions and cope with the increasing surge in the cost of living in Seattle. Please see our story on supporting faculty and read a few of the testimonials that describe the impact that such funding provides.

As always, I appreciate your interest in and support of the School of Art + Art History + Design, and I encourage you to stay informed and in touch with all that we do. Be sure to take advantage of our public programming if you are still in the neighborhood.

Jamie Walker

- Director, School of Art + Art History + Design
- Professor, 3D4M: ceramics + glass + sculpture
- Wyckoff Milliman Endowed Chair in Art