



Focal Points

the College of Arts & Sciences
Tennessee Technological University

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EARTH SCIENCES

EARTH SCIENCE MAJORS SPEND SPRING BREAK STUDYING GEOLOGY OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

"Holy cow, this bag is heavy!" remarked the airport baggage handler. "What do you have in this suitcase, rocks?"

"Actually, yes, and lots of 'em," replied TTU geology major Stephen Schurger, a senior from Kingsport.

Schurger and 5 other geology majors were returning from a Spring Break geology field trip to the Southwest U.S. sponsored by the Department of Earth Sciences and the College of Arts and Sciences. Rock samples collected during the trip added substantially to the returning students' baggage. The trip was part of Geology 4850, a 3-credit hour course taught this year by Dr. Michael Harrison and Dr. Evan Hart.

A lot of planning and preparation were done by the students. "We did not just show up and go camping for a week," said Matt Osborne, a senior from Kingsport. "We had weekly lectures in the classroom before the trip, and each student was required to research two topics on the geology of the areas we would visit."

"The neat part about the research done by students was that we presented our material to the rest of the class members on-site," said Joe Kington, a junior from Lobelville, TN. "For example, I presented



L-R: Ryan King, Stephen Schurger, Dr. Evan Hart, Joe Kington, Matt Osborne, Jason Cox, Scott Massa, & Dr. Michael Harrison.

Geology students at Grand Canyon Village, south rim of Grand Canyon, AZ.

(Cont'd on page 2)

DEAN'S MESSAGE

Accountability

... only a few persons influence the formation of our character; the multitude pass us by like a distant army. One friend, one teacher, one beloved, one club, one dining table,

.....

—Jean Paul Richter

On 22 October 2003, National Public Radio transmitted a "Morning Edition" report by Claudio Sanchez entitled "College Costs Rise Sharply." In addition to seemingly accurate information about tuition, the report included undocumented political opinions pointing to faculty salaries as part of the problem. Based on the information readily accessible to me as a dean, I would

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my topic (on the evolution of the Grand Canyon at Desert View point) overlooking the canyon. Talk about making the field your classroom; it was a great visual aide." The instructors followed up classroom lectures with additional lectures in the field. In the end students were required to take a final exam encompassing lecture material and student presentations.

There is a lot more geology to see in the Southwest besides the Grand Canyon. Although the 5-million-year-old, 1-mile-deep gash carved by the Colorado River was the highlight of the trip, other popular stops included the Imperial Valley sand dunes, Joshua Tree National Park, and San Francisco volcanic field. "You don't have recent lava flows in Tennessee, so walking on the lava beds was a special treat for most of us who had not been to the West," remarked Jason Cox, a senior from Tullahoma.

Many of the students were impressed with the way geologic features can be distinguished so easily in an arid region. "I like trees like the next guy, but it sure

makes it a lot easier to interpret the geology of an arid region because there are so few trees," said Scott Massa, a senior from Algood.

Another favorite stop was Winslow, Arizona, where students posed for photos on "the corner." Not far from Winslow is the famous Meteor Crater, a very big hole in the ground formed by meteorite im-



Geology student Stephen Schurger with a chunk of the meteorite responsible for Meteor Crater, AZ.



Geology students enjoy a lunch stop atop the Coconio plateau near Flagstaff, AZ.

Mt. Juliet. "However, the ones in Tennessee are much older and more difficult to identify. Meteor Crater is impressive in both its size and its relatively young age."

"Geology is best taught in the field," says Dr. Harrison. "The geology of California and Arizona is very different from that of Tennessee. We feel our students benefit greatly from seeing a variety of geologic settings."

--Michael Harrison, Assistant Professor

happened about 50,000 years ago. "We also have at least 2 meteorite impact craters in Tennessee," remarked Ryan King, a senior from



TTU Geology students gaze over the Additional Hill monocline to the San Francisco Mountains near Flagstaff, AZ.



Matt Osborne & Stephen Schurger (Geology students) struggle to hoist a block of basaltic lava.

argue that faculty compensation is not part of the problem. In fact, when you consider that these salaries pay for the central act of higher education—the dialogue between professor and student—they remain a bargain.

Here are some telling comparisons. For academic year 2002-2003 the tuition and fees at Tennessee Tech—by all accounts a very affordable university—are about 10 times higher than they were thirty years ago.¹ Meanwhile, the cost of living increased by a factor of 4.² By contrast, during the same period average faculty salaries in the College of Arts & Sciences have only quadrupled, almost exactly matching the cost-of-living increase during the intervening years.³ Starting salaries for assistant professors show a similar trend. In the sciences (excluding Computer Science), starting salaries have just barely kept pace with the cost of living, while in the humanities and social sciences (excluding Economics and Psychology), they have fallen slightly behind.⁴ Even our most senior professors, who have spent the last thirty or so years in full-time teaching and research, command salaries that are only 5.5 to 6 times higher than their average starting salaries.⁵ Thus, while their periodic pay raises have kept ahead of the cost-of-living, they pale in comparison with the rise in tuition and fees.

At this low-to-medium-priced institution, students in recent years have been paying 900% more than they did thirty years ago for a college education. This is more than twice the increase in the cost of living during those years. Although we may all lament this development, there is no basis for blaming it on faculty salaries, which remain, I would argue, the most cost-effective investment students can make in their personal, professional, and civic development.

Endnotes

¹\$3066 for Academic Year (AY) 2002-2003, versus \$318 for AY 1972-73.

²The standard Consumer Price Index moved from about 42.9 to about 179.1.

³Average salaries went from \$12,000 to \$48,000.

⁴In the sciences \$43,000 and in the humanities/social sciences \$41,000, each versus \$11,000 from 1968-74 (increase factors of 3.9 and 3.7, respectively).

⁵These senior professors make, on the average, \$66,000 in the sciences and \$61,000 in the humanities and social sciences. The average starting salaries for both discipline areas thirty years or so ago was about \$11,000.



BIOLOGY

New Faces, New Focus

Because of retirements during the last few years, a number of new faculty members have been hired recently in the Department of Biology. Each of these individuals has proven to be a dynamic teacher, and all are developing active research programs in areas at least somewhat different from our previous research specialties. I'd like to take a few moments to introduce these individuals and

briefly discuss their research interests.

Dr. John Gunderson is a microbial ecologist who has a keen interest in molecular genetics. This area is one of the fastest growing fields in the biological sciences, and the addition of John to our staff is an early step in our goal to expand this portion of our program. John's collaborative research efforts with other scientists studying microbial systems in the Chesapeake Bay provided the background needed to also become our primary marine biology instructor, an interesting and unusual blend.

Dr. Hayden Mattingly is a conservation biologist who primarily studies endangered fish and their

habitat requirements. He is currently studying captive propagation and reintroduction of the critically endangered Barren's Topminnow. This fish is found only in a few isolated ponds in Tennessee, yet we have a healthy captive population in the basement of the biology building. Hayden and his graduate students are studying the interaction of Topminnows and Mosquito Fish, a widely introduced exotic species, thereby providing information that will be essential when evaluating success rates of reintroduction attempts.

Dr. Steve Hayslette, a wildlife biologist, is also interested in the interaction of native and introduced animal species. Steve is studying

the interaction between our native Mourning Doves and the Eurasian Collared Dove, a species that was introduced into Florida and is now spreading northward (including into Tennessee). Steve and his graduate students have built a captive dove facility at the edge of campus, and they are studying competition between the two species through controlled feeding trials. Their results will provide insight into possible displacement of our native dove by the invading exotic species.

Dr. Chris Brown is an animal ecologist who is interested in reproduction, growth, and locomotion of spiders and scorpions. Chris recently made a trip to Texas to collect scorpions (a non-deadly species), and he has a small laboratory in our building in which he can control temperature and lighting to simulate natural conditions. Although we have not noticed any of Chris's scorpions loose in the building, I expect to receive reports eventually that scorpions have joined our building fauna that now commonly include crickets and fruit flies, and occasionally reptiles or amphibians.

Dr. Wayne Barger is our most recent addition, only arriving this fall. Wayne is a botanist who is interested in physiological processes and genetics of ferns. We are in the process of purchasing a greenhouse that will serve as a dual growing space for Wayne's ferns and teaching materials for our numerous plant-oriented classes. Wayne has proven to have some interesting teaching approaches; recently, he convinced his class to wear cheap, colored glasses (the kind given as prizes in cereal boxes) throughout

his lecture, making them think that they were seeing a three-dimensional slide presentation. A little levity goes a long way in a botany class.

We are indeed pleased that all of these individuals have joined our faculty. With all of the new faces and focuses, things are certainly hopping in the Biology Department.

--Dan Combs, Chair



CHEMISTRY

Greetings to our many friends and alumni across the fruited plain. This fall the Chemistry Department boasts 86 chemistry majors, the largest number any of us can remember, and 20 more than we had a year ago. Thanks go to aggressive recruiting efforts at TTU and a very healthy need for pharmacists.



Chemistry Lab Students

Along with the large enrollments at Tech come significant chal-



Chemistry students

lenges, as we came perilously close to running out of lab space this Fall.

Despite hard economic times, Chemistry is continuing to prosper, largely through the generosity of our many alumni and friends like you. Retired physician **Dr. Herman Pinkerton** comes immediately to mind as the first donor of a major gift to the new **Million Dollar Capital Campaign** launched by the Department to benefit health preprofessional majors. This endowment is designed to provide undergraduate research stipends and supplies necessary for students to become involved with faculty mentors. The hands-on

learning afforded by undergraduate research is crucial in developing the teamwork experience and critical thinking skills to thrive in both industry and medical school.

Dr. John Clayton, Senior Vice-President of Schering-Plough, recently gifted the Department with the first installment of funds to renovate our largest lecture auditorium. This was matched by his company. So many of you have displayed your gener-

osity that this space is too small to give you due credit.

Many of you remember the spirited softball games that were traditional fare for fall or spring picnics in Chemistry. (I'll never forget one sunny May afternoon at Standing Stone when we returned to the picnic area from a game of softball to find **Dr. Sublett** sitting "Indian"-style on top of a picnic table with an arm nestling a large bowl of potato salad. He was happily eating right out of the bowl.) The tradition has been revived with a "first annual" softball game between the **ACS Student Affiliates** and the **Chem Med Club**. These two large and active clubs are not rivals by any means, as many chemistry students are members of both organizations. But in the interests of good fun they took to the field in October for a major showdown that resulted in a 28-10 drubbing by the Chem Med Club. **Dr. Eugene Kline** (whom I like to call the "Coach John Madden of Organic Chemistry"), the Chem Med advisor, was beaming the following day, while Affiliates advisor **Dr. Dave Crouse** could not be reached for comment.

--Scott Northrup, Chair



Scott Northrup (center) and students
(Chemistry)



ACM COMPETITION:

TTU Scores Second Consecutive Top-Ten Finish in Regional Programming Contest

On November 1, TTU's Department of Computer Science served as local host for the Mid-Central region of the ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest, which is sponsored by IBM. Eleven teams from six schools (three from TTU; two each from Austin Peay, MTSU, and Western Kentucky; and one each from Belmont University and Maryville College) converged on Bruner Hall for five hours of intense but friendly competition. They competed simultaneously via satellite with about 100 other teams from Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee. The goal for each team was to write computer programs to solve a set of problems, with

titles ranging from "Treadmill" to "Tournament Brackets." Normally, programming students are allowed to take a week or two to complete an assignment, but these groups of intrepid students were given only five hours to complete up to eight problems. The students had to deal with sharing limited resources (only one computer per team, consisting of three students), budgeting their scarce time, and anticipating the secret test cases of the tough judges who were likely to be their coaches. The winning team is the team solving the most problems; in the case of a tie, the faster team wins.

At TTU's site, the winning team was from TTU and solved four out of the eight problems. That team, consisting of graduating seniors Daniel Balasubramanian, Marc Santoro, and Jason Wyatt, earned tenth place in the overall regional standings. This top-ten regional finish earned the team special prizes from IBM and gave TTU back-to-back regional top-ten results. TTU was the only university in the state of Tennessee to finish in the top ten in the region for the second consecutive year. Marc Santoro and Jason Wyatt were on another winning team earlier this year, along with Edward Roush; they placed first at the IEEE Southeast Conference programming contest in Jamaica in April. Jason Wyatt was also on last year's regional top-ten team from TTU. The second, third, and fourth place teams at TTU's site each solved three problems; the second place team was from MTSU, and the third and fourth place teams were both from Western Kentucky University. These teams placed 39th, 40th, and 42nd in the entire region. TTU's other teams—one consisting of James Card, Andrew Coleman, and Sumit Khanna, and the other team



Li in ACE Lab

consisting of Doug Gregory, Stephen Shook, and Tommy Whited – each solved two problems for solid performances. The top two teams in the region, from the University of Illinois and Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario, Canada), will represent the region at the world finals to be held in the Czech Republic's capital city of Prague in March 2004.

Systems administrator Eric Brown, departmental secretary Valerie Nash, and associate professor Martha Kosa planned and organized the event. Instructor Mark Boshart, assistant professors Mike Rogers and Doug Talbert, and students Mark Arrieta, Rachel Bachman, Rob Dye, Jeremy Ey, Jill Hannah, Michael Perera, Edward Roush, Joe Schutte, and Luis Velazco also worked hard to ensure the success of the event.

CSEM SCHOLARSHIP:

Computer science students continue to receive support through the National Science Foundation's Computer Science, Engineering, and Mathematics (CSEM) Scholarship Program. David Feaker, who transferred from Roane State, has received a CSEM scholarship for the Fall 2003 semester, and it will be extended through Spring 2004.

SURGE:

The Computer Science Department's new graduate degree (M.S.) program in computer science with a focus on internet-based computing is in its second year of operation. To promote successful undergraduate research collaborations and to encourage undergraduate students to pursue a graduate degree, the Department

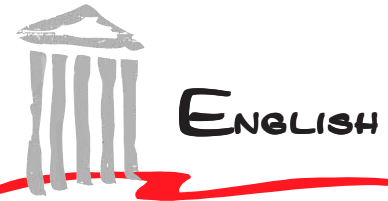
has begun a new 5-year integrated program called SURGE, Supporting Undergraduates through Rapid Graduate Experiences.

"The SURGE program makes it easier for computer science undergraduate students to take up to nine credit hours of graduate courses while still a senior," said Dr. Doug Talbert, coordinator of the SURGE program. The students must meet a minimum set of criteria approved by the Graduate School Executive Committee to be considered for admission to the SURGE program. The department admitted its first student into SURGE this semester.

I2:

The Computer Science Department has a lead role in a two-year grant from the National Science Foundation to establish a high-performance network connection to campus. According to Dr. Doug Talbert, the grant's principal investigator, the campus should have a high-speed connection to the Internet2 backbone before the end of the spring semester. Such a connection enables new types of collaborations and allows access to previously inaccessible resources. "An Internet2 connection will provide new opportunities to improve teaching and research across campus," said Dr. Talbert. Within the Computer Science Department, Drs. Talbert and Mike Rogers have immediate plans to incorporate I2 into the classroom and collaborative research.

--Dr. Martha Kosa, Dr. Mike Rogers,
& Dr. Doug Tabert



Last year's curriculum crunch reduced the number of English Department degrees from three to two but also created a new Communications degree. Our majors in Journalism and Professional Communication will be sharing the new BS degree in English-Communications. These two concentrations together now boast nearly 100 students. With the addition of a speech-course requirement for all TTU students, we will be adding new Speech faculty for next year, and we plan to add a Speech concentration within the English-Communications BS very soon.

The first annual Festival of Student Writing was launched last April for students in ENGL 1010 and 1020 sections to display and discuss their writing and presentation projects. Nearly 300 students participated in this event in



English Festival

the RUC Multipurpose Room, joined by faculty, administrators, and other guests. Project formats included posters, videos, brochures, flyers, songs, live perfor-

mances and readings, slide shows, t-shirts, and re-enactments, and topics ranged just as widely. Many projects were collaboratively composed, and many students adapted their festival texts from more traditional essay projects. Tony Baker, Director of Composition and the festival's organizer, characterized the festival as a "constructive, energetic, chaotic dialogue about student writing." The festival will be an annual spring event.

Among the most noteworthy achievements of English Department faculty in the past year was the new book edited by Journalism professor Russ Witcher, his second on the subject of post-Watergate media coverage of Richard Nixon. This selection of Articles, interviews and book excerpts (1976-2000) on Nixon was published by the Mellen Press. Several faculty have received important professional appointments and recognition. Josephine McQuail has just begun her term as executive director of the Northeast Modern Language Association; her duties include keeping membership records and the daunting task of organizing NEMLA's annual convention. Kristin Walker, who directs our Professional Communication program, was named production editor of the online *International Journal of Modern Engineering*, and Linda Null, along with Education professor Suellen Alfred, were named co-editors of a personal reading column in *English Journal*, the journal of the National Council of Teachers of English. The NCTE also awarded our Theatre director Mark Creter its Intellectual Freedom award last fall for his production here of Eve Ensler's controversial play *The Vagina Monologues*. More recently, instructor Jennifer Golz received the "Better Life Award" at the Tennessee Health Care Association meeting this fall for her work with service learning in ENGL 1020.

Finally, since the last issue of *Focal Points* we have mourned the passing of our former chairperson Bob Bode, who died February 18 within months of his retirement the previous June. Bob's friends and colleagues gathered March 4 for a memorial service at the Backdoor Playhouse. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the scholarship fund named in Bob's honor should contact the English Department.

--Kurt Eisen, Interim Chair



English Festival



English Festival



English Festival



FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The Department of Foreign Languages has a new look this fall with renovations in the departmental office: new carpet, freshly painted walls, new chairs in the reception area and a custom-made secretary's station. Along with these changes, the Department has a new interim chair, Dr. Marketta Laurila, who with the patience and help of the entire department has survived the hectic first months in her new role. Dr. Phillip Campana, after many years of service as departmental chair, stepped down to devote his time to teaching and numerous professional activities.

Other changes include the addition of Dr. Karen Burdette to the faculty. She came to Tech last fall as Assistant Professor of Spanish after teaching for two years at Appalachian State University. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Georgia with a specialization in Spanish Linguistic/Second Language Acquisition.



Eurocafe

The Department also has appointed Camron Rudd, who is working toward a B.A. in German

and a B.S. in Engineering, to the newly created position of student manager of The Language Learning Center. Camron will work closely with the faculty to ensure the smooth running of the Center and the optimal use of the language lab.

On October 4th, R.E.A.L. (Rural Educator's Alliance for Languages), representing 21 counties in the Upper Cumberland, held its biannual meeting at Tech. The issue of P-16 was introduced by the DFL faculty. Members decided to devote a part of the spring meeting to P-16 and to discuss how the organization can contribute to the initiative.



Spanish Club

Last spring the foreign language majors created the Euro Café, a place to study, visit, watch foreign language channels on TV or view foreign language films on a large screen. Soft drinks, coffee and snacks are also available. Students have taken advantage of this space for foreign language conversation hours, club activities, tutoring, chess games and other activities.

The Euro Café, the World Cultures and Business study room, a student library and the language lab comprise The Language Learning Center. These student areas have given the majors as well as non-majors a space to develop a sense of community and have con-



Octoberfest

tributed to the success of the foreign language clubs, which conduct weekly meetings and conversation hours. The Cookeville community has also benefited from the increased activity of the clubs. For example, the Spanish Club, in addition to conducting academic and social activities, has become active in volunteerism. Teachers at Jere Whitson Elementary School have sent a special thank-you to the Spanish Club for working one-on-one with their Hispanic students, who now comprise 25% of their student population. According to these teachers, there has been a significant difference in performance and attitude among their students since club members have been volunteering. The German Club also plans to make volunteerism a part of its activities. The Clubs have E-newsletters and plan to develop club websites.

--Marketta Laurila, Interim Chair



HISTORY

2003 has been a rewarding year for the Department of History. One of the highest honors went to Dr. George Webb, whose *Science in the American Southwest: A Topical History* (University of Arizona Press, 2002) was awarded the Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà Award from the Historical Society of New Mexico. Dr. Katherine Osburn received three prestigious awards: An American Philosophical Association Grant, a Newberry Library Fellowship, and a TTU Non-Instructional Assignment for 2003-2004. Dr. Mike Birdwell has the lead article (on Tennessee's Thirtieth Division in World War One) in the most recent edition of *The Journal of East Tennessee History*. Dr. Gil Fernandez was invited to Spain, where he presented a paper on General Tomas de Zumalacarregui, later published within the conference proceedings.

Service awards have also been plentiful. Dr. William Brinker received a commendation for thirty years of service as the Newsletter Editor for the Society of History of American Foreign Relations. Dr. Wali Kharif was recognized for twelve years of service on the Board of Directors at Lazarus House Hospice. Dr. Larry Whiteaker deserves thanks as he steps down after years of service as the departmental library liaison. Dr. Jeff Roberts served as President of the Cookeville Rotary Club for 2002-2003, receiving both "Rotarian of the Year" honors and a Presidential Citation from Rotary International Headquarters.

Our students continue to excel. Troy Smith, a senior in the department, won the College of Arts and Sciences Award for Excellence in Liberal Arts. Troy also won a grant from the National Society of Colonial Dames and the B.F. Jones Endowed Scholarship from the department, and was recently named to Who's Who Among American University Students. Brandon England received the Marion Hood Langlois Endowed History Scholarship and was named the outstanding graduate in the department. Hannah Holland, now a sophomore and president of our History Club, won the History Faculty Scholarship.

Our faculty continue to expand the curriculum. Dr. Paula Hinton has taught three new courses since the summer of 2002, including "History of Crime in America," "History of Masculinity in America," and "Ghosts, Myths and Legends in American History." Dr. Susan Laningham taught "Women in Medieval and Early Modern Europe," and plans to develop a course on the History of Mexico in the fall of 2004. Dr. Wali Kharif is designing a colloquium on Sports History, one of the field's fastest growing subfields, to be taught in the spring of 2004.

Technology continues to impact the department's program. Various instructors are creating web pages and employing new instructional technologies in the classroom. Dr. Patrick Reagan continues to provide extensive service in the development and maintenance of the departmental website (www.tntech.edu/history). The website has been nationally recognized for its inclusion of information about the department, the discipline, and source material.

Dr. Reagan has another achievement to celebrate. On No-

vember 4th, he and his wife, Reilly, welcomed their second child, James John West Reagan. Wayne and Kelly Gore await a similar celebration sometime this spring, when they will bestow upon our departmental secretary, Lois Clinton, perhaps the most special title of all: grandmother.

--Jeff Roberts, Chair



MATHEMATICS

In the fall of the 2003-2004 academic year, Dr. Richard Le Borne was appointed as Associate Professor and tenured; and Mrs. Shelly Forgey was appointed as Instructor on the tenure track. Dr. Annie Selden retired from her position as Professor and Ms. Charmaine McMurry was hired as secretary. Dr. Alice Mason, who joined the Tennessee Tech faculty in 1983, died on March 6 at Centennial Medical Center from complications following heart bypass surgery last November. Dr. Mason earned her Master's and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Florida. Dr. Mason is fondly remembered for her devotion to teaching and her progressive ideas for encouraging students, particularly females, to pursue careers in Mathematics.

The Graduate and Undergraduate Reviews took place in March 2003; reviewers were Donald Bennett of Murray State University for the Undergraduate Program and Lila F. Roberts of Georgia Southern University for the Graduate Program Review. The reviewers have stated

that the Department of Mathematics offers well-balanced curricula at both undergraduate and graduate levels, that the quantity and the quality of research done by faculty have increased, and that the number of grants applied for by the faculty has increased. The reviewers found that students are confident in the quality of the education they are receiving. The Master of Science in Mathematics program was found to be of great benefit and of high quality, and there has been a significant increase in recruitment efforts and in the number of graduate students. It is expected that a recently introduced non-thesis option in the graduate program will attract more students to the program.

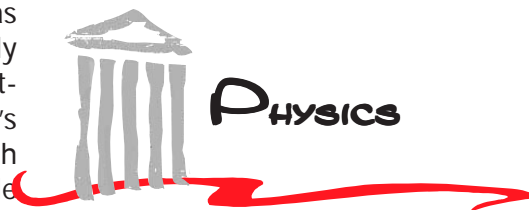
On April 22, 2003, over 320 middle-school and high-school students (more than ever before) from Middle Tennessee arrived on the TTU campus to participate in the 47th Annual TMTA Mathematics Contest. A local testing center was housed in the Mathematics Department while the mathematics faculty served as proctors for the contest. Mrs. Shelly Forgey presented a workshop for attending teachers on "Geometer's Sketchpad projects for the High School Geometry Classroom," while Dr. Maggie Phelps presented a seminar on "Using NAEP and Other Released Items for Student Practice and Lesson Expansion."

From 9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. students were taking tests in one of the following six areas: Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Precalculus, Statistics, and Calculus with Advanced Topics. At 1:00 p.m. in the Derryberry Hall Auditorium Dr. Brian O'Connor and Dr. Rafal Ablamowicz, Testing Center Chair, announced the top ten scoring students in each subject and presented plaques and Certificates of Merit to the top three scoring students, also in each subject. The top three scoring students in statistics, geometry, and calculus received additional awards from the

TTU Mathematics Department. In 2004, the 48th Annual Statewide Mathematics Contest is tentatively planned for April 22. For more information visit the mathematics website at <http://math.tntech.edu/Contest/TMTA2003.html>

On April 24, 2003, the Chairman of the Department of Mathematics, Dr. Rafal Ablamowicz, presented Mathematics Awards at the CAS Honors Night. The Stanley Dolzycki Memorial Scholarship was awarded this year to Jim Lindsay, and Lynda Buck became the first recipient of the Graduate Student Mathematics Teaching Award. The S.A. Patil Award went to Lee Cox, the R.H. Moorman Award went to Katherine Jane Fanning, and the Grateful Heart Scholarship recipients this year were Natalie Grace White and Katherine Jane Fanning.

--Rafal Ablamowicz, Chair



TTU continues to be very visible in the area of nuclear physics, as four senior physics majors recently presented research results at the American Physical Society Division of Nuclear Physics annual meeting in Tucson. Mary Kidd, Ethan Lake, Brian Moazen, and Derrick Stevens all received travel funds from an NSF grant which supports undergraduate participation in this meeting. A total of 68 undergraduates from across the country submitted research proposals.

Mary Kidd worked at Brookhaven National Lab this past

summer as part of its Research Experience for Undergraduates program. Her work focused on the design and testing of a new type of neutrino detector. This was Mary's third summer research experience, following a summer of work at TTU and Duke and another at Notre Dame.


Ethan Lake presented results from a study of the Manganese-53 system via proton scattering on Chromium-52. Ethan is double-majoring in physics and mechanical engineering, and this is his second presentation at a DNP meeting (he also attended the meeting in Hawaii two years ago). Ethan's work was done both at TTU and at Duke under the direction of Dr. John Shriner of TTU.

Brian Moazen also made his second presentation at a DNP meeting, having already been to last year's meeting in East Lansing. Brian presented his results on determining the composition of targets used in astrophysical studies at Oak Ridge National Lab. Brian's work was directed by Dr. Ray Kozub of TTU.

Derrick Stevens also presented results on the Manganese-53 system. He analyzed the level densities in this system for the purpose of providing experimental tests of a new theoretical model. The work was done at TTU and at the nuclear physics lab at Duke University.

Mary, Brian, and Derrick all plan to graduate in May and are in the process of applying to graduate schools. Ethan says he has another year (maybe two) to finish the requirements for both degrees.

--John Shriner, Chair



SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

The following account by alumna Lynn Greenwell Seals offers a special perspective on the value of a degree in this department.

--Gretta Stanger, Chairperson

In the fall of 1986 my life was about to change in a way I never thought possible. I was a 32-year-old, divorced mother of three at the pinnacle of my career as an airport manager and pilot. When I awoke that morning I noticed my hands and legs felt numb. Since I had always been heavy, I immediately thought I was having a heart attack and went to the doctor. He sent me to a neurologist, who ordered an MRI, and I was instantly diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. I was dumbfounded and wanted "it" cured immediately. I found out there was no cure. My neurologist suggested I keep on flying because the numbness could be the only symptom I would ever experience. He was correct until four months later, February 12, 1987. I awoke and when I tried to get out of bed, I fell and lost control of my bladder. I called the neurologist, who immediately hospitalized me to run more tests. One month later, after every test known was done, I came home from the hospital as a paraplegic confined to a wheelchair with the same diagnosis, Multiple Sclerosis. My career as an airport manager and pilot was over and, more importantly, my income was gone. The first step was accepting the fact that I might never walk again

and learning to survive in a wheelchair.

With the help of Voc Rehab I began college the following January, 1988, at Tennessee Technological University, which was about 100 miles round-trip from my home. I was so naïve I had no idea that any university would not be handicapped accessible. Many classes were on the second floors with no elevators, and much to my surprise, very few female bathrooms were accessible for those handicapped. I realized that the obstacles I was experiencing were not intentional and that, in most cases, people were not aware of the needs of handicapped persons. President Volpe responded immediately to my concerns with an advisory committee and made me "Dean of the Handicapped" on the Board.

During the years at Tech, I experienced two attacks from MS, causing full paralysis from the nose down. After massive doses of intravenous steroids, I was able to return to being paraplegic once again. I graduated in the spring of 1993 and earned the Senior Award for Academic Excellence in Sociology. I was the first female to graduate in a wheelchair.

It took two years and 59 interviews to find a job. I had no trouble getting interviews, because I was the token minority – a woman in a wheelchair. When I realized that a job was not soon to be found, I decided to attend Graduate School at Tennessee Tech. I truly wanted an MSW, but it was not offered in many colleges at this time. I started in the fall of 1993 in Agency Counseling in the College of Education at Tennessee Tech.

There is no doubt in my mind how valuable my education was in preparing me for my soon-to-be-

found careers. As far back as the study skills class I begrudgingly took (since it was required), I found myself able to survive and thrive as a non-traditional student. The internship program supervised by Dr. Jerry Neapolitan was the biggest eye opener to me. Every major should require an internship. Being in a wheelchair made it difficult to find a placement due to the fact that many offices were not handicapped accessible. The Drug Free Alliance at the Mall in McMinnville was the only placement I could find. Little did I know that this internship would lead to the job I do today as a Substance Abuse Counselor at Warren County High School.

I had to take two full-time jobs to justify giving up my Social Security. In January 1995 the Warren County Board of Education hired me as a Substance Abuse Counselor for its 1800 population, and the hospital hired me to work the weekend shift as a Patient Advocate in the Emergency Room. Being disabled was an asset working with kids with drug problems, because when they would tell me "how unfair they had been treated," I could point out, "You made a choice to smoke that joint – I did not choose to sit in this wheelchair." Sympathy went right out of the conversation.

In 1996 I received the Business and Professional Women's Organization "Woman of the Year" award. It was very interesting to see what other people see as accomplishments. Living with a chronic illness was not nearly as difficult as raising three teenage daughters alone. My children were 11 and 12 years old when I came home in a wheelchair.

Majoring in Sociology gave me the ability to work and understand the diverse groups of people

I would be dealing with on a daily basis. Drug abuse, unfortunately, is non-discriminating and touches all humans regardless of ethnic background or social status. Although I was not able to finish graduate school due to finding employment, the practicum in counseling under Dr. Gloria Griffith has been an invaluable asset that I use daily with the kids at the high school and my older kids at the nursing home where I am a social worker and behaviorist. I could not write behavior plans if it were not for the insight from Dr. Ada Haynes's problem solving class and being able to "think outside the box." I was so very proud this past summer when the dreaded state surveyors came to the nursing home (where I work) for the yearly evaluation and for the first time identified my behavior plans as the "best" they had ever seen implemented. My administrator was pretty tickled herself! My administrator refers to me as her "poster child for MS," as we have several residents who are in our facility due to this same disease. Getting the degree opened the door to opportunity, and although I whine about it taking 59 interviews and 2 years to find employment, the truth is there would not have been one interview without the degree. I absolutely love my jobs and hope I never have to choose between them. My educational background is strongly based in the fields of sociology, psychology and social work, and I am so fortunate to go from one end of the spectrum to the other—i.e. from teenagers to nursing home occupants—in a day's work.

The year 1997 is one I won't soon forget. I had read about a drug called Cylert for people with MS for fatigue. The drug had been used mainly for kids with ADD. I

called my neurologist and asked to try it. He ordered the drug in January 1997. Approximately three weeks later I woke up with a charlie horse. That may sound insignificant to you, but I had not felt anything in my legs for over 11 years. I called the neurologist and asked for physical therapy again. After extensive physical therapy, on October 10, 1997, I received leg braces. On August 12, 1998, my leg braces were shortened, and on March 14, 1999, I took my first steps without braces. The world certainly looks different when you are no longer belt-buckle-high. My neurologist will not say whether the Cylert made me walk or I am just in remission, but I continue taking Cylert today (37.5 mg, 8 times a day). I continue to work two full-time jobs today. I continue as the Substance Abuse Counselor at Warren County High School and I am a Social Worker, Behaviorist at Raintree Manor Nursing Home.

In 2002 I received the Upper Cumberland Social Worker of the Year Award. Living with MS has given me certain gifts I would have never experienced. It changed the course of my life, especially career-wise, giving me the opportunity to go to college. MS caused me to see through the eyes of the disabled. I am a better person today than the person I was before I was in the wheelchair, and for that I am thankful. This spring I will be 50 years old, I have a wonderful husband, and we have 16 grandchildren. I am ambulatory today, no braces, no wheelchairs and no complaints.

--Lynn Greenwell Seals



MAXINE
SMITH

FELLOW'S COLUMN

INCLUSIVENESS IN HISTORY

This year, the College hosts Dr. Elwood Watson, a Maxine Smith Fellow from East Tennessee State University. As an historian, Dr. Watson offers these thoughts concerning what history should be about.

Earlier this year, with the Supreme Court decisions on affirmative action, sexual privacy laws and other legal rulings, there is no question that college campuses and professional schools across the nation will be hotbeds of political passion from both the left and the right. Moreover, it seems that the so-called "culture wars" that infused a large segment of American society in the past have reemerged as both liberals and conservatives (and some moderates), have decided to revisit topics that some of us thought had been put to rest by the latter part of the last decade. Such blatant truths are evident in world of academia. The more things change, the more they seem to stay the same. Or at least, this appears to be the case in the historical profession.

During the early and mid 1990s, just as many English departments debated the "proper" role and direction that the literary canon should assume, a large number of history programs confronted identical issues. These concerns ranged from what is consid-

ered "legitimate" history to what is "insignificant" history. By the end of the 1990s, it was widely assumed by a sizeable number of historians that despite the stratification that was prevalent within the profession at the beginning of the decade, an equilibrium had been reached: history can be more inclusive without ignoring the significance of the traditional (whatever "traditional" may mean) issues of the older canon. Perhaps some of us were too premature in espousing such a seemingly optimistic statement.

Throughout this year on the op-ed pages of local, statewide and national newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and others, some historians, mostly conservative ones, have written articles bemoaning the current state of the history profession. These are the men (and some women) who have derided updated national history standards, history departments and the profession in general. Some historians have denounced the past year's American Historical Association meeting as being "saturated" with sessions that dealt with "non traditional" groups – read African Americans, women, Native Americans, gays and lesbians, "ordinary" people, etc.

Although the culture wars have ebbed and flowed, there are those in the discipline who refuse to acknowledge pluralism as a necessity. These are the historians who view historical diversity as the "evil bogeyman" infiltrating our college campuses, distorting accuracy and wreaking havoc everywhere it goes. Such a mindset is false and intellectually dishonest, and it does a significant disservice to the profession. The following arguments are among the most commonplace within this group:

Accusation: Academic history has become thoroughly egalitarian. It seeks to elevate the history of ordinary men and women doing things at the expense of great men and women doing great things.

Very few people would argue against the fact that George Washington, Susan B. Anthony, Winston Churchill, Joan of Arc, Mahatma Gandhi, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr. were great individuals who profoundly influenced the constituents of their time period. Yet it would be very naïve and even more so, arrogant, to dismiss the fact that each of these individuals' greatness was due to the support of millions of "ordinary" people who decided to follow, support and, in some cases, sacrifice their own livelihoods in an effort to bring about change.

Accusation: Mainstream historians are driven by a political agenda that seeks to elevate "group rights" over "individual rights." They subtly indoctrinate students with the idea that justice and rights are synonymous with one's group identity, be it one's race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.

Whatever political agendas "mainstream" historians have, the same can probably be said for "extremist" historians. Moreover, if these scholars are making an effort to incorporate diverse historical perspectives into the curriculum to complement established historical information, then this effort should be lauded.

Accusation: By denigrating the principles and great deeds of America's past and dethroning its heroes, today's college history professors are destroying in our youth the proper reverence for the ideals this nation stands for. And a nation that hates itself cannot last.

To make such a broad generalization about a segment of his-



Dr. Elwood Watson

tory professors is irresponsible and more importantly, inaccurate.

To be sure, scholarship acquainting itself with subjects such as race, gender, popular culture, sexuality, etc., is considerably more visible today than it was, say, thirty years or even twenty years ago. However, should this fact in and of itself be considered cause for alarm? Hardly.

It is safe to say that up until the mid-to-late 1970s, (the mid-to-late 1980s for a large number), the majority of History departments offered very few, if any, courses in women, African-American, Asian, or similar sorts of history. Many departments offered no courses in cultural history, period. Did this sort of exclusion of certain groups "benefit" the historical profession, as some "traditional" historians would seem to have us believe?

The purpose of a true liberal arts education is to educate students to understand and appreciate the experiences of people of various cultures in addition to their own. The integration of ideas is paramount. The reality is that up until very recently, much of American history has focused on politics,

war, diplomacy and economics to the exclusion of race, gender, sexuality, popular culture, etc. The stories and experiences of minorities of all groups were largely obscured or ignored entirely. Marginalizing other pertinent worldwide experiences subverts the primary role of a liberal arts education, whether it be in history or any other discipline.

History courses that explore the experiences of individuals in minority groups balance the often-linear focus of a mainstream curriculum by including diverse viewpoints that can modify extreme viewpoints on both ends of the political spectrum. Moreover, such an approach does indeed promote diversity, albeit a healthy one, that some historians seem to despise.

Accusation: College students are being taught to hate America.

Such a statement is absolutely false. While it is certainly true that some historians do dare to challenge conventional viewpoints that have been routinely espoused and firmly etched into the fabric of a sizeable portion of our nation's populace, for the majority, it is not due to hatred. Rather, it is an attempt to afford students the opportunity to analyze and reevaluate commonly held beliefs, as opposed to accepting long-held beliefs without question. What is wrong with this? After all, didn't the founding fathers argue, debate, reexamine and reconstruct issues as they assembled together the document better known as the constitution? More importantly, this is what historians are supposed to be trained to do.

Because a considerable number of historians have decided not to adhere to the mindset that "previously,

commonly held" viewpoints are the "correct" viewpoints, they have aroused the wrath of a number of historians (mainly conservative, older ones) who seem to long for the "good ol' days " when "traditional"—wasp, male, feel-good—history was the only type of history that was disseminated to students without any sort of rebuttal. This mindset is myopic, exclusionary, dishonest and potentially dangerous. It also represents the same sort of retrograde, indoctrinated form of teaching that many of these individuals argue they so rabidly deplore. Instead of being attacked and distorted, such pluralism should be welcomed on a college campus, the supposed citadel for the rational examination and exchange of ideas among people of diverse groups and cultures. Historians should not, and cannot, ignore the important history of white men and those of Eurocentric origin. But attention must be given to the stories and experiences of minorities and historically marginalized groups as well. A smorgasbord of historical approaches should be welcomed. Any attempt to prescribe certain approaches to the exclusion of others will only hurt American society and result in a history that represents "some of the people" rather than "all of the people."

--Dr. Elwood Watson
East Tennessee State University



COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

OPEN HOUSE





Greetings Fellow Arts and Sciences Alumni:

Let me take this opportunity to introduce myself, Maryjane Webster, the new Alumni and Development Liaison for the College of Arts and Sciences. After graduating from Tennessee Tech with a B.S. in Economics and a minor in Chemistry, I spent several years in the healthcare industry as a software consultant. Excited to be back at Tennessee Tech, I am proud to be working closely with the departments within the College of Arts and Sciences in an effort to boost Alumni support and needs' awareness.

I look forward to working with you in the future. Please feel free to contact me at (931) 372-6417 or mwebster@tntech.edu.

--Maryjane Webster, Assistant Development Director




Maryjane Webster

Read ***Focal Points*** online! If you wish to see the current issue, or any of the previous issues, go to the following URL:

**[http://www.tntech.edu/cas/
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Visit TTU's new Online Alumni Directory: Search for other Alumni or update your own information at

www.tntech.edu/alumni/

Spring 2004		Center Stage Series
January 12 – February 6 Feb. 5, 11:00 am – Gallery Talk Feb. 5, 3:30 pm – Slide Lecture	Patrick Schmidt J.D.A.G	An exhibition of oil paintings addressing the juxtaposition of pattern imagery in our surroundings. Mr. Schmidt appropriates decorative pattern, manipulates color and surface to steer our perception, and places paintings in continuous series, creating an installation that “surrounds” the viewer.
February 3 7:00 pm	Shindana Cooper RUC Multipurpose Room	African Griot (storyteller). Ms. Cooper, a skilled storyteller, poet & motivational speaker is “dedicated to stimulating awareness in the African/African-American communities by perpetuating the centuries old traditions of oral history.”
February 4 – 5 Feb. 4, 8:00 pm - Concert Feb. 5, 11:00 am – Masterclass	Emma Johnson Wattenbarger	Ms. Johnson is one of the very few woodwind players to have made an international career as a soloist, and has established herself as one of the world’s foremost clarinetists, performing regularly in the USA, the Far East, and throughout Europe. An award winner, she has recently been appointed Professor of Clarinet at the Royal College of Music.
February 9 – March 5 Feb. 10, 11:00 am – Opening Reception Feb. 10, 3:30 pm – Slide Lecture	Kerry Stuart Coppin J.D.A.G.	This exhibition features large photographic prints. Mr. Coppin’s photographs are “a means of bridging international borders to construct a portrait of Africans born in the Western World.” His work “attempts to visually connect the experiences of North American Black communities to Black community experience in the rest of the world.”
February 10 7:00 pm	African Resurrection Derryberry Auditorium	West African Dance & Drum. The group perpetuates the centuries old tradition of African dance, drum & folklore.
February 25 - 26 February 25, 8:00 pm – Concert February 26, 11:00 am – Masterclass	Chestnut Brass Company Wattenbarger	The Chestnut Brass Company began as a small group of street musicians in Philadelphia, and has been captivating audiences with its energetic performances for over 20 years. The majestic sound of the Baroque trumpet to the bluesy blare of the trombone won the group a Grammy Award for best Crossover Classical CD.
March 2 7:00 pm	Wilma Mankiller Derryberry Auditorium	Ms. Mankiller is the former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Mankiller was the first female in modern history to lead a major Native American Tribe. Known as the Bell project, she helped members of a whole community revitalize the community themselves.
March 8 – April 7 Mar. 8, 11:00 am – Opening Reception Mar. 8, 3:30 pm – Slide Lecture	Lucille Lacey J.D.A.G.	Ms. Lacey’s exhibition of digital prints addresses the way we process visual imagery, and attempts to “capture the momentary flashes of the subconscious revealing themselves on the edge of a . . . dream.” She combines scanned images, objects, collage, computer-generated images, and appropriated video frames. This imagery is digitized, layered, manipulated, retouched, and then modified through drawing and painting.
March 24 – 25 Mar. 24, 8:00 pm – Concert Mar. 25, 11:00 am – Masterclass	George Crumb Wattenbarger	Now approaching his 75 th birthday year, George Crumb, the winner of Grammy and Pulitzer Prizes, continues to compose new scores that are enriching the musical lives of all who come in contact with his profoundly humanistic art. Many of his works include programmatic, symbolic, mystical and theatrical elements, which are often reflected in his beautiful and meticulously notated scores.
April 12 – May 7 Apr. 13, 11:00 am – Opening Reception Apr. 13, 3:30 pm – Slide Lecture	Bruce Erickson J.D.A.G.	Mr. Erickson’s exhibition of oil paintings is largely autobiographical, and deals with recollections of personal experience. His paintings are heavily influenced by late Gothic Italian and Baroque Flemish narrative painting, and show a similar intensity of surface and theme. The work is charged with evocative mystery.
April 13 8:00 pm	Mark O’Connor & The Hot Swing Trio Wattenbarger	Dubbed “one of the most glorious sounds found in jazz” by the St. Petersburg Times, violinist/composer Mark O’Connor, along with bassist Jon Burr and guitar virtuoso Frank Vignola, perform jazz standards and new compositions in a program titled “Mark O’Connor and the Hot Swing Trio.”
April 17 11:30 am – 6:30 pm	Window on the World R.U.C.	This will be the sixth year of the International Festival. Enjoy entertainment, food, crafts, and culture from around the world.
April 24 8:00 pm	Holland Wind Players Wattenbarger	An ensemble of twenty internationally acclaimed musicians from the famed Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the National Radio Symphony of the Netherlands. The Players’ music consists of a widely varied and comprehensive repertoire. This extraordinary program will focus on compositions especially written for winds, strings and/or percussion.

J.D.A.G. – Joan Derryberry Art Gallery – 1st floor of the Roadeen University Center, **Wattenbarger** – Auditorium in Bryan Fine Arts Building
Derryberry Auditorium – 2nd floor of Derryberry Hall

Admission is FREE to all events but students must have their Eagle ID Card. Students are given priority when seating is limited.
Center Stage Events are made possible by the General Education Fund of Tennessee Tech University.
Questions? Call 372-3637 or email centerstage@tntech.edu Visit the website at www.tntech.edu/centerstage

Departmental Needs

Due to continuing budget cuts, Tennessee Tech is working closely with alumni and friends to gain support for improving its programs and enhancing the student experience.

Within the College of Arts and Sciences, support is needed in the following areas:

Biology:	Greenhouse Project Pennebaker Auditorium Renovation Don Estes Scholarship Endowment
Chemistry:	Laboratory Supplies and Renovations Vernon Allen Scholarship Endowment
Computer Science:	Computer Science Student Awards Scholarships
English:	Scholarships - Minorities and Graduate Assistantships Faculty Development Opportunities
Foreign Languages:	Student Enrichment Projects Scholarships
Geology/Earth Sciences:	Field Trips and Enrichment Activities TTU Earth Science Alumni Scholarship Endowment
History:	Student Enrichment and Faculty Development Projects B.F. Jones Scholarship Endowment Marion Hood Langlois Endowed History Scholarship
Math:	Graduate Assistant Program Best Graduate Assistant Award
Physics:	Frederick L. Culp Physics Scholarship Endowment Robert L. Shannon, Jr. Physics Scholarship Endowment
Sociology & Political Science:	Adjunct Professor Program Student Enrichment Projects

College of Arts & Sciences

My personal commitment is: \$ _____

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(Please enclose Match form)

Total Gift: \$ _____

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- _____ Chemistry
- _____ Computer Science
- _____ Earth Sciences
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- _____ Foreign Languages
- _____ History
- _____ Mathematics
- _____ Physics
- _____ Sociology/Political Science

Specific:

Lab Equipment, Student Enrichment, etc.

Tell Us About You . . .

*Please help us keep your records current by
completing the information below.*

Tech Class year / major program _____

Maiden Name: _____
(if applicable)

Your Preferred Name: _____

Spouse's Preferred Name: _____

Is Your Spouse a TTU Alum? ___ Yes ___ No

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Focal Points is published once or twice per year by the College of Arts and Sciences at Tennessee Technological University, a Constituent University of the Tennessee Board of Regents. The newsletter is designed to foster community within the college and to inform friends and alumni.
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Dear CAS Alum—would you like to receive *Focal Points* as an e-mail attachment in the future? If so, please send your e-mail address to us via: FocalPoints@tntech.edu. If possible, include your graduation year and your major. Thanks!

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Graduation Year: _____

Major: _____

Comments: _____
