Center to Help Reduce Attrition Rates of STEM Majors

By Dona Parker

Faculty frustrated by the high dropout rate of students enrolled in introductory Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses look for answers to reduce attrition in these disciplines. On Wednesday, September 3, 2008, in the Life Sciences Research Building Garden, the Center for Achievement, Retention and Student Success (CARSS) was launched.

Officials at the University at Albany and faculty were present to announce this new initiative funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to create CARSS, with the goal to support programs to reduce attrition in math and science studies. Interim President George Philip and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Edelgard Wulfert were on hand to offer congratulations to chemistry professor and Director of CARSS Rabi Musah for her work in bringing a $1 million grant to the University at Albany. In addition, Professor Hua Shi of Biological Sciences and Ms. Denise McKeon, also from Biological Sciences, were thanked for their collaborative efforts in securing the funding.

Principal Investigator Rabi Musah is an organic chemist and has been a member of the Department of Chemistry since 1998. Her main areas of research are isolation, analysis, biological evaluation and structure elucidation of natural products from medicinally important plants, isolation and biophysical characterization of proteins important in the biosynthesis of plant derived natural

(Please see CARSS p.13)

A Model for Self-Control Strength

By Sabrina Khatayan

Why is it so hard to quit smoking? What makes people get cranky when dieting? How do students keep studying when they would rather be out having fun with friends? These questions, and many others, are addressed by Professor Mark Muraven’s research on self-control.

In graduate school Muraven developed a model of self-control strength. In particular, this model likens self-control to muscular strength, in that it gets fatigued with use. Much like a tired athlete is weaker, a person who has exerted much self-control will find it more difficult to resist temptations. For instance, students were asked not to laugh at a Robin Williams stand-up routine. Those who were asked to control their thoughts and suppress the thought of a white bear before watching the video were less able to control themselves, and laughed and smiled more as compared to students who worked on the equally frustrating and unpleasant task of solving math problems that did not require self-control.

After graduate school Muraven moved to SUNY Buffalo to work at the Research

(Please see Self-control p.20)
A Message from Dean Elga Wulfert

Dear Colleagues, Students, and Friends:

Warm greetings to all of you. It is hard to believe that 15 years have passed since October 26, 1993, when the College of Arts and Sciences was officially inaugurated. Much has transpired since that fall day when 24 departments came together under the new College. Over these past 15 years, the university has added new academic units and programs and an impressive array of new buildings, renovated spaces, and a magnificent entry plaza. This fall we welcomed an unprecedented number of new students, surpassing 18,000 in total enrollment. In the College of Arts and Sciences we also welcomed 14 new faculty colleagues and it was a pleasure to meet each of them at our annual New Faculty Reception in September.

In the spring newsletter, I expressed my confidence in our College to move forward in new and exciting directions. You will read in this issue of CAS Today the many examples of the accomplishments of our faculty, students and staff. To highlight but a few, the National Science Foundation awarded a $1 million grant to Associate Professor Rabi Musah (Chemistry) and her collaborators Assistant Professor Hua Shi and Ms. Denise McKeon (Biological Sciences) to develop a Center for Achievement, Retention and Student Success. Professor Musah, who will serve as the Center’s director, said, “We’ve identified and designed intervention strategies tailor-made to address the issues associated with poor performance in gateway science and math courses.” I congratulate Professor Musah and her colleagues on their efforts to increase student retention and performance in the STEM disciplines. (For more information, see article “Center to Help Attraction of STEM Majors” beginning on page 1.)

In September, we officially launched our new undergraduate major in Globalization Studies. The inaugural event was part of a one-day conference “Rethinking/Relinking the University, Communities, and Globalization,” highlighted by keynote speaker and author Lori Wallach’s keynote address. The major reflects the commitment of over 50 faculty members in 15 departments and four colleges and, according to program director Professor Fernanco Leiva, is designed to “expand the world view of our students and enhance their preparation for a wide range of career paths” in the 21st century.

Each year we acknowledge the outstanding contributions made by College faculty in advancing our teaching mission. This year the College recognized three exceptional faculty members for their creativity and dedication. My sincere congratulations to Professor Martha Rozett, English, for Outstanding Service in Teaching; Professor Igor Lednev, Chemistry, for Outstanding Student Mentoring; and Professor Helene Scheck, English, for Outstanding Innovation in Teaching.

Everyone is well aware of the budget challenges that we are facing in this troubled global economy. As New York State works to reduce the deficit, let us maintain a positive attitude and work together to rise to the challenge, for with challenge often comes opportunity. The ongoing Middle States Commission on Higher Education accreditation process will assist us in examining our goals and the progress made towards these goals, and it will identify opportunities to continue on a positive trajectory.

As President Theodore Roosevelt said: Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at a work worth doing. The work taking place in the College of Arts and Sciences is certainly that. The continued success of the College very much depends on all of us, and I look forward to working with you as we maintain the College as a strong academic unit where research thrives and students are educated and inspired to meet the challenges ahead.

Welcome All

UALbany’s Winter Commencement
Sunday, December 7, 2008
1:00 p.m.
Indoors at the SEFCU Arena

Congratulations to all undergraduate and graduate students who are candidates for degrees in December 2008.

College of Arts and Sciences
Ice Cream Social
June 2008
Olympic Impressions

By Heather Senison

"One World One Dream" was the theme of the 2008 Summer Olympics hosted by China August 8 to 24 in Beijing. I sat down with Anthony DeBlasi, associate professor and chair of the Department of East Asian Studies for his impressions of the impact the Olympics had on the people of China. DeBlasi said the Olympic Games this year have had both negative and positive effects on China.

The games required developments in China's infrastructure such as hotels, roads and other modes of transportation. “All of this had economic benefits,” DeBlasi said. “The infrastructure development provided jobs around Beijing. In the long-term, that infrastructure will be necessary for China’s continued economic development,” DeBlasi said.

He said the Olympics also helped strengthen Chinese nationalism. “The Olympics gave them a sense of Chinese accomplishment and a sense that the world was recognizing China’s growing power,” DeBlasi said. However, DeBlasi said the projects and money that went into Beijing for the games were resources other poorer parts of China needed.

He also said any dissent or protesting against the games was suppressed to keep China from being “embarrassed.” DeBlasi said the western media mostly showed the divide between views toward China. “On the one hand, there is a great fascination with things Chinese and, I think, a shared admiration for Chinese culture,” DeBlasi said. “On the other hand,” he said, “Americans tend to be a little fearful of China’s rise and the fact that it is still ruled by a communist party.”

DeBlasi said the media reflected “the wonders of the games,” such as the opening ceremony, and also “severe criticism” of China’s restrictive government. He mentioned journalists being blocked from sites on the internet, such as from stories regarding the riots in Tibet. He said the controversies over the Tibetan riots, where China allegedly acted with brutality towards protesting monks, were quieted due to the Olympics. He said the controversies were also overlooked around the time of the games because of the massive earthquake in the Sichuan province, which is estimated to have left over 70,000 people dead. The tragedy “created enormous international sympathy,” DeBlasi said.

DeBlasi said the Olympics would not have a big impact on China’s future. He said China’s culture and government already has a “pretty clear trajectory of development.” “I think the impact of the role of the Olympics will be mostly felt in the area of national pride and self-confidence,” DeBlasi said.

DeBlasi was born on Staten Island. He received a Bachelor of Science in Chinese language from Georgetown University. He has an A.M. in Regional Studies, East Asia and a Ph.D. in East Asian languages and civilizations from Harvard University.

He came to UAlbany in 1996 and became chair of the East Asian studies department in 2005. DeBlasi teaches several courses on China and its history, Tibetan culture and Confucianism. He is working on a few projects at UAlbany, including one on the role of Buddhist monasteries in medieval China.

DeBlasi said he enjoys working at UAlbany. He said he has made friends among the faculty and values the students' insights.

"In my view, they genuinely appreciate the time you devote to their work," DeBlasi said of UAlbany students. “They also represent a broad cross-section of our society, so I always get to see a wide range of perspectives on what I teach.”

CAS Professional Staff Elected

Professional staff were elected to serve on the Faculty Council and Council of Chairs. Left, Tim Wormwood (CAS Computing) was elected to serve as a professional representative on the Council of Chairs with Patrick Ferlo (PAC—not pictured); center, Liz Lauenstein (English) continues as professional representative on the Faculty Council with newly elected Bill Pyszczynska (CAS Computing), right.
Africana Studies

- The Department of Africana Studies hosted a Research Symposium last April that brought together faculty and students for a day of presentations and panels that featured issues relating to Africa and African issues within the United States.

Art

- Phyllis Galembó has a full schedule of exhibitions and features in well known magazines, including a solo exhibition at Steven Kasher that received a favorable review in The New Yorker magazine.

Economics

- Rui Zhao published “Dynamic Risk-Sharing with Two-Sided Moral Hazard,” a 40 page paper in the Journal of Economic Theory, the top journal of that specialty. Professor Zhao’s paper “All-or-Nothing Monitoring” was accepted for publication in the leading general journal of economics, American Economic Review.

English

- Teresa Ebert is co-author of the book Class in Culture, which was published earlier this year and is now being reprinted in a second edition.

- Helene Schect’s new book Reform and Resistance: Formations of Female Subjectivity in Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Culture has been published by SUNY Press.

Geography and Planning

- Roger Stemp’s book The Geography of Religion: Faith, Place and Space will be used by the American Association of Geographers (AAG) as a catalyst for a paper session at the AAG annual meeting and for a series of articles in the Geography of Religions and Beliefs journal.

Judaica Studies

- As part of an effort to build an Israeli and Palestinian Film Collection in the University Library, through the efforts of Rachel S. Harris, the department secured a donation of over 60 DVDs of documentaries, films and television series from the Avi Chai Foundation, New York. This donation will provide students with new resources and allow the department to offer a film course on Israel in the future.

Music

- Albin Zak was a featured speaker at the Mannes Institute for Advanced Studies in Music Theory held at the Eastman School of Music (University of Rochester) in June. In his presentation, “Music Analysis and the Autographic Artwork,” he illustrated the interactive nature of complex sound layers in a multitrack recording and discussed the methodological implications for music analysis.

- David Janower was selected Guest Conductor of the Directors’ Chorus for the NYSSMA/NYACDA (NY State Schools of Music Association/NY American Choral Directors Association) Summer Conference in August ‘08, where he led 50 NY state professional choral directors in rehearsals and performance. He also gave a workshop on expressive choral performances. David Janower was also selected by NCCO, the new National Collegiate Choral Organization, to appear on a panel at their convention in Cincinnati this November.

Theatre

- Lisa Thompson’s play “Single Black Female” played off-Broadway June 10-29 at The Duke on 42nd Street in Manhattan.

Women’s Studies

- The Women’s Studies Department presents the launch of the book Security Disarmed: Critical Perspectives on Gender, Race and Militarization edited by Professors Barbara Sutton (Albany), Sandra Morgen, and Julie Novkov from Rutgers University Press. A panel discussion with four of the book contributors and a discussant was followed by a book signing reception on Friday, October 24, 2008.

Correction

(Executive Editor for CAS Today apologizes for the incorrect information published regarding Professor Joana Sabadell-Nieto’s book Cien Años de Poesía. The translation did not accurately describe the summary of the book. Below is a corrected version.


The book introduces to non-Catalan, Basque or Galician readers selected 20th century poems written by the most relevant poets in the three “other” official languages of Spain. Many of the poems are translated here for the first time into Spanish, and each translation provides the basis for an essay on the complete poetic work of each of the men and women writers who appear in this text.

The book aims to establish a dialogue among the diverse literatures of Spain and among varied theoretical approaches as well. It is a comprehensive collection of essays (53) authored by scholars from universities and research centers from both sides of the Atlantic with expertise in different disciplines, as well as in the other national literatures of Spain, in literary theory, and in cultural studies. From their varied theoretical approaches, they generously accepted to participate in this project, which aspires to facilitate dialogue and the study of an ample poetic corpus for those who have no access to the poetic work studied here because of the linguistic multiplicity that constitutes the landscape of contemporary Spain.)
Schulz Endowment
Lecture for UAlbany Students, Alums and Friends of Women’s Studies

On Thursday, November 6, at the Rockefeller Institute, the Joan E. Schulz Endowment Fund of the University at Albany honored Professor Joan Schulz, outstanding feminist educator and founder of the University at Albany Women’s Studies Department.

This endowment fund is the largest endowment among all the departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. In welcoming remarks, Dean Edelgard Wulfert attributed this success to the alumni and benefactors who “are as devoted as the faculty of the Women’s Studies Department to the mission of the academic program.”

The growth of the endowment fund is also attributed to the devotion to Professor Joan Schulz’s activism, which continues through the four lectures that have been funded since 2000. It was noted that “each speaker has explored the strategies and principles that inform her activism and make it effective.” So too this year’s speaker, New York State Deputy Speaker for the Environment Judith Enck was chosen as someone “who exemplifies the principles of activism in the interest of all citizens” noted Professor Gwen Moore, chair of the Department of Women’s Studies.

This event was well attended and CAS Today recognizes the Joan E. Schulz Endowment Fund as an example of what it takes to develop a strong and sustaining cohort to help support our initiatives and goals.

Correction
The Spring 2008 issue of CAS Today incorrectly listed the names of the recipients of the 2008 Chancellor’s Awards for Student Excellence. Below is the correct list of CAS students who were so honored. You can read a biography on each of these honorees on the CAS Website at http://www.albany.edu/cas/updated/version 02/CAS/featuredstudents.

Zakhar Berkovich – Biology and Judaic Studies
Elizabeth Gray – Philosophy
William Meredith – History and French Studies
Neil Volk – Biology

CAS Website News

It may seem ridiculous or even contrary to the purpose of a newsletter to write about information that can be obtained from a website. But every day when you read the newspaper or watch the news, whether it is local or national, you see or hear the phrase “for more information about this story log on to ...” The College of Arts and Sciences has recently added to its website something to “log on to” for more information and that is its “Featured Student” and “Featured Faculty” section. It was started as a way to inform our readers who surf the net of the recognitions and successes of our students and faculty. This is to let you know if you have not already visited our website that while CAS Today is designed to present highlights of the activities and accomplishments of our faculty, students and alumni, sometimes you can get more information by logging onto http://www.albany.edu/cas/new/college/AS/index.html

Below are a few samples of what you can view.

“Featured Student”
Marcy Isabella

“Featured Faculty”
Professor Barbara Sutton

Fall 2008
Awards and Honors

Art

• Professor JoAnne Carson was awarded the Ellin P. Speyer Award in Sculpture at the 183rd Annual Invitation Exhibition at the National Academy of Design, May 29 to September 7, 2008.

• Mark Greenwold is this year's recipient of the Jimmy Ernst Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Biological Sciences

• Professor Emeritus Jerram Brown has received the highest honor from the Animal Behavior Society (New World only): Distinguished Animal Behavioralist. This award was given to Professor Brown in August 2008 at the annual ABS meeting in Snowbird, Utah. He was also nominated for the 2009 Kyoto Prize in Biological Sciences and chosen to write an autobiography for the book *Leaders in Animal Behavior, Vol. 2*.

Classics

• Professor Michael Werner was recently honored in a ceremony at City Hall by Mayor Gerald D. Jennings for "his hard work and dedication as City Archaeologist for the City of Albany." In 2000, in response to a growing public concern over the archaeological remains from Albany's rich history, Mayor Jennings appointed Dr. Werner as the first City Archaeologist.

Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

• Michael Landin, an alumnus of UAlbany and long-time Instructional Support Specialist with the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, was presented with Communicator of the Year Award from the Hudson River Environmental Society on September 11, 2008.

Economics

• Pinka Chatterji, Assistant Professor since 2007, has been appointed a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economics Research. This bureau is the leading research center for applied economics.

English

• Lynne Tillman has been invited by the MFA fiction faculty of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Virginia to be the Michael M. Rea Visiting Writer in Fiction for spring 2009. The Rea Visiting Writer, named for benefactor Michael Rea, was instituted in 1982 to bring writers of distinction to the University of Virginia's creative writing program. Professor Tillman was also recently elected to serve two terms as a Trustee on the Board of PEN America, the national branch of PEN, an organization that promotes writing, writers, the freedom to write, literacy programs, et al., around the world.

• Charles Shepherdson is currently appointed with the United States Department of State as a Senior Specialist with the Fulbright Program for 2006-2011. During the 2007-08 academic year, he was in Asia as a National Science Council Visiting Professor at the National Taiwan University.

Geography and Planning

• Catherine Lawson was recently appointed Chair of the Transportation Research Board's ABJ30 Urban Transportation Data and Information Systems Committee.

History

• The Capital Region Archives Dinner Committee and the Capital Area Archivists of New York gave an award to Professor Gerald Zahavi. The award recognizes Professor Zahavi's "continued efforts to preserve and promote New York's cultural heritage" over the past two decades. The proclamation singled out his support of regional archival repositories dealing with New York labor, business and social history, including placement of "encaged collections, such as the Helen Quinini Papers, Norman Studer Papers, and the Black Photography Studio collection, with appropriate institutions" as well as his initiatives in creating the Documentary Studies program at the University at Albany.

• Amy Murrell Taylor has accepted fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies. She will use these fellowships to conduct research at the National Archives, and other archives in Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky on the social history of slave refugee camps in the U.S. Civil War.


• Rick Fogarty's article "Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914-1918," published by Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008, won the Charles R. Bailey Memorial Prize for the best article produced by a member of the New York State Association of European Historians in the last three years.
Languages, Literatures and Cultures

- **Mary Beth Winn** has been awarded two prestigious fellowships from the Newberry Library in Chicago and the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany. The NeMLA-Newberry Library Fellowship provides for a month-long residency at the Newberry Library, one of the country’s foremost collections of rare books. The two-month residency in Wolfenbüttel will enable Professor Winn to benefit from the extraordinary collections of the Herzog August Bibliothek, one of the world’s leading independent research libraries.

Philosophy

- **Bonnie Steinbock** has been awarded a month-long scholarly residency at the Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Center, located on Lake Como, Italy. While on sabbatical this fall, she will be a participant in this prestigious residency and will be writing a chapter on embryonic stem cell research for the second edition of her book *Life Before Birth: The Moral and Legal Status of Embryos and Fetuses*.

Psychology

- **Christine Wagner** has been named a consultant for the World Health Organization. She will be technical consultant for the WHO Steering Group Meeting on *Hormonal Contraceptive Use during Lactations and Effects on the Neonate* to be held in Geneva, Switzerland.

College Dinner 2008

An enjoyable evening shared with colleagues and featuring Professor Albin Zak from Music as our guest speaker.

College of Arts and Sciences Excellence Awards, Spring 2008

CAS Faculty Receive University Honors

Interim President George Philip recognized and honored recipients of the University's Excellence Awards at a ceremony and reception held in the Campus Center Ballroom on May 5, 2008. We are pleased to recognize the following recipients from the College of Arts and Sciences:

- **Excellence in Teaching (full-time)**
  - Sharon Danoff-Burg, Psychology
  - Michael Landin, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

- **Excellence in Teaching (teaching assistant)**
  - Dana Basnight-Brown, Psychology
  - Alice Krause, Languages, Literatures and Cultures

- **Excellence in Research**
  - Lawrence Schell, Anthropology

Academic Service

- Randall Craig, English
- Reed Hoyt, Music

2008 Dean’s Teaching Award

The College of Arts and Sciences awarded the 2008 Dean’s Teaching Award to the following faculty: *Helene Scheck* (English) for Innovation in Teaching; *Martha Rozett* (English) for Service in Teaching; and *Igor Lednev* (Chemistry) for mentoring. The recipients were nominated by their colleagues and each nominee submitted supporting documentation including letters of support. These documents were reviewed and evaluated by a committee made up of 2007 Dean’s Teaching Awardees. The winners were honored at a luncheon in the Patroon Room where they received a certificate and $300.
A recent story in UAlbany's Campus Update reported that our faculty attracted a record $391.7 million in research awards in 2007-08, an increase of 39 percent from the previous year. Although the College of Arts and Sciences' increase was not so dramatic, its faculty was very active in applying for and receiving grants in 2007-08. The list of faculty who received funding is presented below.

Biology:
- Assistant Professor Melinda Larsen (Life Sciences) received two grants from NIH. One is a five-year grant (8/1/08-7/31/13) with a German mathematician entitled "Modeling Dynamics of Salivary Gland Branching Morphogenesis" for $1,514,276. The second is a two-year grant (8/1/08-7/31/10) entitled "Engineering Functioning Salivary Glands Using Micropatterned Scaffolds" for $402,317. Professor Larsen is principal investigator on this grant, which is a joint effort with Professors James Castracane and Anand Gadre from CNSE.
- Assistant Professor Hua Shi (Life Sciences) received a grant from the Department of Defense entitled " Recruiting Corepressor to Agonist-Activated Estrogen Receptors through Molecular Bypass" from 8/15/08-9/14/09 for $113,625.
- Assistant Professor Haijun Chen is the recipient of the American Heart Association's national Scientist Development Grant. He is using those funds to study a class of molecules that play a key role in controlling the rate of a human's heartbeat.
- Professors George Robinson (Biology) and Monika Calef (Geography and Planning) received the "Wildlife Conservation Analysis for Montgomery County, NY" grant funded by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and administered by the NYS DEC. The one-year award to UAlbany is $71,000, plus 25% matching funds from partner organizations, and requires analyses of biodiversity databases, the use of Geographic Information Systems, and presentations and workshops for biologists, educators, and county planning professionals.

Chemistry
- Professor Igor Lednev (PI) and John Welch (Co-PI) have received a three-year $372,000 grant from the National Science Foundation entitled “Folding Genetically Engineered Beta-Sheet Forming Fibrillogenic Polypeptides.”

Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
- NASA announced that a proposal submitted by John Delano establishing a "NASA Astrobiology Institute" at RPI was one of only 7 successful proposals in the United States during the current 2-year review cycle. Professor Delano is Co-Principal Investigator on the grant, as well as Director of Education and Public Outreach activities for the grant totaling $1.5 million per year for 5 years. The grant will investigate the astrophysical, biochemical, and geochemical processes and environments that led to the origin of life on Earth, and its prospects on planets elsewhere in the galaxy.

Economics
- Professor John Bailey Jones was recently awarded a $62,000 grant to support and extend his work on elderly savings behavior from the National Institute on Aging. His most recent work, "Differential Mortality, Uncertain Medical Expenses, and the Saving of Elderly Singles," explores the question of elderly individuals spending down their wealth slowly, even as they near the end of their lives.

Geography and Planning
- The University at Albany's Department of Geography and Planning along with the research team of the University of Michigan and the National Business Incubation Association has been selected by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration for a $250,000 grant to investigate best practices of the business incubation industry. Assistant Professor David Lewis is the principal investigator for the Albany campus and Co-PI for the award.

History
- Professor Nadia Kizenko has been awarded a three-month Title VIII/American Councils research grant to complete research on her Confession in Modern Russian project. This Advanced Research Fellowship is funded by the U.S. Department of State, Program for Research and Training on Eastern Europe and the independent States of the Former Soviet Union.

Judaic Studies
- Professor Barry Trachtenberg has been awarded $6,000 by the National Endowment for the Humanities to research Dialegeynye entsiklopedye (The General Encyclopedia), the first and most comprehensive encyclopedia in the Yiddish language.

Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
- Professor of French Studies Eloise Brière with Jesus Alonso-Regalado of the University Libraries obtained a matching grant from the government of Quebec to help acquire additional Quebec texts for the University Library.
Two Programs Selected for Conversations in the Disciplines Awards

The Conversations award was started in 1979 as an academic experiment that has remained true to its goal of fostering scholarly discourse within and outside the State University system. It has been successful in increasing the visibility for the SUNY system to the educational communities and the general public.

One program selected for a Conversations in the Disciplines Award for Academic Year 2008-09 was for a proposal submitted by Psychology Professor Cheryl Frye entitled Conversation in the Capital District on Hormones. A two day conference was held in October at the University at Albany where researchers from across the SUNY system came together to discuss the general topic of the functional effects of hormones. Keynote speakers were Dr. Herbert Jacobson of Albany Medical College who discussed “50 Years of the Estrogen Receptor”; Dr. Paul Davis of the Ordway Research Institute who discussed “The Thyroid Hormone and Health”; and Mr. Chris Dances of the Albany County District Attorney’s office who led a talk discussing “Operation Which Doctor.”

A second Conversations award was approved for the 16th Conversation in the Discipline Biomolecular Stereodynamics to be held at the University at Albany campus June 16-20, 2009. The program has been developed on behalf of the departments of chemistry, biological sciences, and the College of Arts and Sciences under the direction of Chemistry Professor Ramaswamy Harman. It will feature a keynote address on June 17 by Nobel Laureate Andrew Fire, Professor of Pathology and Genetics at Stanford University, on nucleic acid structures associated with gene silencing. Visit this link to the program: http://www.jhsponline.com/16thconversation.cfm for more information.

Mathematics and Statistics

- Assistant Professor Autun Miles has received a three-year $85,555 grant from the National Science Foundation entitled “Algebraic and Number Theoretic Aspects of Vertex Algebra Theory.” This project focuses on certain algebraic and number theoretic aspects of vertex algebra theory.

Psychology

- Professor Laurie Feldman received funding from the National Science Foundation for the project titled: “Women in Cognitive Science: Conference Support 2008-09” for ($23,080).

- Professor Ewan McNay was awarded a Transfer grant from the National Institutes of Diabetes for the project titled: “Insulin in the Hippocampus: Memory Enhancement and Impact of Type 2 Diabetes” for $274,670.

- Professor Cheryl Frye has been awarded $60,000 for the study "The role of estrogen receptor beta as a target for beneficial effects of androgens in an animal model of andropause." This grant is funded by the Karo Bio Research Foundation that supports academic research within the field of Karo Bio’s research activities.

- Professor Mark Muraven is the recipient of a three-year $600,000 grant from the Department of Defense Army Research Institute to investigate the role of self-control in coping with stress. (See feature article on page 1).

Sociology

- Professor Scott South received a $623,278 grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NIH) to study patterns of migration between neighborhoods of varying socioeconomic status and racial composition.
Student Success

Anthropology

- Karime Gadjik, an undergraduate student, joined Professor Masson's (Anthropology) Mayapan archaeological project this summer under the auspices of a NSF "Research Opportunities for Undergraduates" grant program. The purpose of her study was to document the rates of bone fusion and the range of sizes of the deer population consumed at Mayapan; she is testing the hypothesis that deer were a product, raised in captivity and butchered at a young age.

- Elizabeth Paris (along with her advisor, Professor Marilyn Masson) recently received word that she received an NSF doctoral improvement grant to perform her dissertation research on political and economic organization of Postclassic Maya settlements in highland Chiapas, Mexico. She will be the first to work on sites around the high-altitude city of San Cristobal, Mexico in 40 years.

- Christopher Lynn was recently honored as a Best Grant Awardee by the Graduate Student Organization (GSO). He was awarded $1500 toward his project "Glossolalia Influences on Stress Responses Among Apostolic Pente-costals" by the SSSR Student Research Awards committee of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

Biological Sciences

- Biology graduate student William Daley received the 2008 Peter S. Markey Book Scholarship.

- Santhoshi Bandia received the 2008 Lawrence and Marie Shore Graduate Scholarship in Life Sciences.

- Christopher Collins received a $1500 grant from the American Society of Mammalogists, which will help fund his research of parasites and causes of mortality in white footed mice.

Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

- Graduate students Alan Strock, Nicholas Metz, and Jason Cordeira attended the 14th Cyclone Workshop in Saint-Adele, Canada in September along with faculty member Daniel Keyser.

- Graduate student Nicholas Metz presented research project results on August 11th at the Applied Climatology Conference, which was held jointly with the Mountain Meteorology Conference, in Whistler, BC. The presentation, "Preferential Pathways for Southern Hemisphere Extreme Cold Events", was prepared jointly with fellow graduate students Heather Archambault, Thomas Galarneau, Jr., Alan Strock, and Professor Lance Bosart. It received a "Best Student Oral Presentation" award at the conference.

Economics

- Graduate student Xuguang Simon Sheng and his thesis advisor, Distinguished Professor Kajal Lahiri, published "Evolution of forecast disagreement in Bayesian learning model" as the lead article in the June 2008 issue of the *Journal of Econometrics*, the top journal in their specialty.

English

- Graduate student Kelly Secovnie participated this summer in an Intensive Advanced Yoruba Group Project Abroad. Funded by a Fulbright-Hays fellowship which provided an eight-week immersion experience in Yoruba language and culture, the institute was held at Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

- Graduate student Michael Jonik received a Research Award from the Emerson Society for his dissertation project entitled "Emerson's Natural History of the Intellect." He was presented with the award at the American Literature Association Conference held May, 2008 in San Francisco.

- Graduate student Jennifer Hill was a visiting writer at the prestigious Vermont Studio Center last winter.

- Graduate student Robert Ficociello was awarded the 2008 Eugene Garber Prize for Short Fiction.

History


- Graduate student David Jones won a prestigious Fulbright Award to conduct ten months of research in Namibia, which began October 2008.

- Graduate students Camelia Lenart and Leszek Murat presented papers at the annual meeting of the New York State Association of European Historians at LeMoyne College.

- Graduate student Joy Newman's paper, "A Numerical Quandry: New Interpretations of Youth Drinking Behavior and the Appropriate Minimum Drinking Age," has been accepted as part of the scholarly presentation program of the 2009 annual meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine.
Languages, Literatures and Cultures

- Nicole Nelson and Olga Tamchin, undergraduate students in Languages, Literatures and Cultures, studied abroad this summer with grants from SPFFA (Société des Professeurs Francophones d’Amérique [Society of French and French-speaking Professors in America]). SPFFA awards are granted to students who compete with applicants nationwide.

Psychology

- Alison Looby, doctoral candidate in clinical psychology, received a National Research Service Award (NRSA) for "The Role of Expectancy in Prescription Stimulant Misuse" from the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Department of Biological Sciences Undergraduate Research Symposium

On April 25, 2008 the Department of Biological Sciences recognized undergraduate science majors carrying out supervised experimental research. The honorees presented their work in either a poster or oral format. Those students have worked with on-campus faculty and off-campus supervisors over two semesters. Those honored were:

Eric Koch – recipient of the Glenn L. Bumps Award, the Class of 1905 Bazzoni Fellowship and the Presidential Award for Undergraduate Research

Christina Padgett – recipient of the Glenn L. Bumps Award

Abigail Curtis, Jonathan Friedman, Wesley Harlow, Fraulin Joseph, Jessica Taylor and Jess Weiss – recipients of the Department of Biological Sciences Excellence in Research Award.

Africana Studies Hosts Governor-General

His Excellency, the Most Honorable Professor Sir Kenneth O. Hall, Governor-General of Jamaica, delivered his keynote address “Caribbean Development within the New Global Economy” on September 17, 2008, at the University at Albany. The Governor-General’s visit was to launch the fortieth anniversary celebration of the Department of Africana Studies. His keynote address can be accessed at www.albany.edu/africana.

The Governor-General previously served as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Faculty Dean at the State University of New York at Old Westbury (1989-1994), as Assistant Provost for Academic Programs at SUNY-Central (1988-1989), and as Assistant Provost at SUNY-Oswego (1982-1984). Sir Hall was Professor of History at the State University of New York at Oswego. He was also Adjunct Professor of Caribbean Studies in the Department of Latin American, Caribbean and US Latino Studies at the University at Albany, and Professor of American Studies at SUNY, Old Westbury.

In 1994 he assumed the position of Deputy Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). In 1996 he was appointed Pro Vice Chancellor and Principal of the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies. He transformed the UWI-Mona campus in terms of the modernization of facilities, curriculum reform, emphasis on research, and increased student enrollment, among other initiatives. Sir Hall was appointed Governor-General of Jamaica in February 2006 and is Jamaica’s fifth Governor-General since its independence in 1962. His Excellency is the author of several seminal articles, reviews and books related to history and international relations.

(L-r: CAS Dean Wolpert; UAlbany Interim President Philip; Sir Hall; and Professor Marcia Sutherland, Dept. Chair and event organizer)
Securing the Future Through Diverse Energy Investments

Steven V. Lant  B.A. '79, M.A. '84
CEO/Chairman of the Board/President/Director, CH Energy Group, Inc.

"As a diversified energy company, we are looking for investment opportunities in renewable energy, such as power generated through wood and waste treatment bi-products, wind, and solar," states Steven Lant from his office at the company's headquarters in Poughkeepsie, NY.

Lant heads CH Energy Group, Inc. which serves over 360,000 residential and commercial customers in an eight county region. Formerly known as Central Hudson Electric and Gas (established in 1927), CH Energy Group has diversified as a result of state regulations issued in 1999 ordering utilities to divest themselves of electricity-generating plants. A commitment to strategic resource planning has enabled CH Energy Group, under Lant's leadership, to make significant regional investments in alternative and emerging technologies such as biomass fuels and ethanol in expanded markets.

Lant's two degrees in Economics, a B.A. in 1979 and M.A. in 1984 provided the foundation for a rewarding career in the energy field. After completing his bachelor's degree, he enrolled in the department's doctoral program. During his years in the Economics department, two professors challenged and influenced him greatly. Lant cites Dr. Donald Reeb as "adding a balanced perspective of theory and application to my learning experience." He added, "Reeb had a genuine interest in my success. He also had professional credentials in consulting and public finance—two areas that intrigued me." Lant also expressed high regard for Dr. Kajil Lahiri, an "internationally-recognized econometrics scholar." As his graduate study was underway, he decided to forego his pursuit of a Ph.D. and pursue a career in industry. "My first professional position was in sales forecasting, which I very much enjoyed."


CH Energy has broadened its portfolio through investments in emerging technologies and renewable energy sources. Such ventures include a partnership in a biomass electric generating plant in upstate New York using wood chips and related bi-products from several logging companies serving the furniture market to generate electricity. In 2004, CH Energy invested in a $78 million ethanol production plant in Lexington, Nebraska with an annual production capacity of 40 million gallons. The company's commitment to renewable energy is exemplified through joint ventures with two wind farm projects in the Mid-Atlantic region using federal and state incentives.

As a central figure in the regional business community, Lant's volunteer involvements include Health Quest (trustee), Dutchess County United Way (former chairman) and the American Heart Association (chairman of the 2008 Heart Walk). He is Chair of the Local Organizing Committee for the 2009 Empire State Games, to be held in the Hudson Valley in July 2009. He is also a director of the Business Council of New York State. His wife Linda, a UAlbany alumna, received a B.A. in Economics and German in 1978 and M.S. in Accounting in 1980.

Noteworthy from Economics:

Laiwu Zhang (Ph.D. 1995) was recently appointed Chinese Deputy Minister of Science and Technology. Before that he was Vice-Governor of the Chinese province, Ningxia.

Yong-ho Baek (Ph.D. 1986) is Commissioner of the Korean Fair Trade Commission.

Myung Hun Kang, (Ph.D. 1984) is a member of the Monetary Board of the Bank of Korea.

Noteworthy from English:

Alum Jane Winer has been appointed to serve as Interim Provost at Texas Tech. She is currently Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.
products, and development of inhibitors of key proteins important in HIV-1 pathogenesis and infection. Much of this work has been funded by NSF—most recently with a Career Award—Organosulfur Natural Products Chemistry. During summer months, Professor Musah has worked with MS. Susan Cooper of Simon’s Rock College in a “Young Women in Science” program. The program is designed to encourage young women in the 13 to 17 year old age group to explore the excitement of and to consider careers in science. Professor Musah is a popular teacher of both undergraduate and graduate level courses in the areas of organic chemistry, biochemistry, and forensics chemistry.

Co-investigator Hua Shi joined the University at Albany faculty in Biology in 2005. Professor Shi’s research interests are in the areas of molecular and cellular biology of transcription and signal transduction, aptamer-mediated multi-pathway control in living organisms, and target validation for anti-viral and cancer therapies. He started his career as a medical doctor at a cancer research institute in a Beijing hospital. He earned his Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology from Cornell University and stayed on as a postdoctoral and research associate. A member of the Life Sciences initiative, Professor Shi provides a new generation of RNA based molecules with which to explore therapeutic models in living cells and organisms. Currently his research is funded by the US Department of Defense. In addition to teaching required undergraduate and graduate courses on biochemistry, he is also interested in creating innovative, cross-disciplinary courses. Last year, he and Professor Musah developed and taught a course about viruses and human society with NSF funding.

Co-investigator Denise McKeon is an instructor in the Department of Biological Sciences, as well as the department’s Undergraduate Advisement Coordinator. She teaches undergraduate laboratory courses and a course in life science issues. Her research interests are in the area of applied microbiology and microbial ecology, specifically in water quality, antibiotic resistance, and antimicrobial activity of natural products. Although she provides advisement to many students toward completion of their degree requirements, she is, among students, often regarded as “an advisor about life in general.” The guidance she offers and rapport she develops with students through advising and teaching have become popular resources, particularly for students in the process of making career choices and/or career adjustments in the area of life sciences.

What is so evident when you read about each of these three individuals is that they share a common goal, or more importantly, a strong desire to create an environment where students can learn without being stressed. Each of them recognizes that some students do not take to science courses and may in fact fear science courses because they do not think they can succeed in them. It is the goal of the grant to help alleviate this pressure and allow more students the opportunity to succeed. With the establishment of CARSS, the team plans to pair successful STEM students with students who need help in their science courses.

Peer training is headed by Program Coordinator, Dianne Jester, who is collaborating with STEM departments and working with faculty to articulate the process and to help select students to apply for paid Peer Tutor positions. The services of mentors and tutors will be available to all STEM majors (i.e. students majoring in Biology, Chemistry, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Mathematics and Physics), with the anticipated outcome that students working through the challenging “gateway” courses will see the most dramatic results. The program is also designed to recruit and retain students from historically underserved populations into STEM majors.

The proposal includes an assessment and evaluation feature which will provide information through published work for other academic institutions wanting to increase graduation rates in STEM fields. Temporary space in the Life Sciences Building (Suite 1124) has been made available for CARSS where STEM majors can arrange meetings with their assigned Peer Tutors and Mentors. The university is currently renovating a permanent space for CARSS.
New Faculty

Sheila Curran Bernard
History
Sheila Curran Bernard joined the University at Albany this semester as Associate Director of the Documentary Studies Program/Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Director of Media Programs for the New York State Writers Institute.

Although she's only been in Albany a short time, "I feel very welcomed and am thrilled to be here," she said. Prior to coming here, she worked independently "helping clients to grow, shape, and polish media projects."

Bernard has worked on projects ranging from PBS series and theatrical documentaries to programs for museum, classroom, and web use. She's garnered an Emmy, two Peabodys, and other awards for her work. Bernard has been honored with residencies at the MacDowell Colony and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and has lectured at the Pennsylvania College of Technology, the Nieman Conference on Narrative Journalism, and elsewhere.

She most recently taught at Princeton University as the Anschutz Distinguished Fellow in American Studies.

Bernard's published work includes Documentary Storytelling, which she described as a "best-selling text on the use of narrative techniques to strengthen and enrich nonfiction filmmaking." Her new book, Archival Storytelling, co-authored with Ken Rabin, explores the use of third-party visuals and music in media production, and looks at related issues including the extension of copyright, the shrinking public domain, and the application of fair use clauses to certain filmmaking situations.

"The best part of my work in nonfiction media has been meeting and collaborating with an extraordinary range of people in diverse fields," Bernard said. She hopes to continue collaborating at UAlbany.

— Carly Laniado

Samantha Friedman
Sociology
The mother of two young children and from the home of "The Boss," Sociology professor Samantha Friedman uses her position to promote her commitment to equal opportunity.

After receiving her undergraduate degree from SUNY Buffalo, her Ph.D. from Penn State University Park, and teaching at both George Washington University and Northeastern University, Friedman makes her "comforting" return to a state university setting.

Friedman has published about 20 articles, written one book, teaches two sections of Intro to Sociology and is actively pursuing two research projects. Her sections of ASOC 115 have at least 120 students, and she was used to teaching 30-40 at her previous institutions. However, even with that many students, "it is still fun. They are like a breath of fresh air," she said.

Friedman is excited to be a part of the UAlbany Sociology department. "We have a highly ranked department and great resources," she explained. "The graduate students are very, very good!"

Currently, Friedman received a grant from the National Institute of Health for her research project titled "Cybersegregation: Is Neil a more desirable tenant than Tyrone of Jorge?" In this project, she plans to look at ads posted on Craig's List and apply three times: once as Neil, once as Tyrone, and once as Jorge. Friedman then plans to look at the different ways renters respond, their frequency, and the content of the response. This is her biggest research project yet.

Although she is an urban anthropologist who primarily focuses on race issues, she wants to move into the trans-national field of health. "Everyone has health," she said. Friedman plans to focus her studies on overweight and obese women in Turkey. Although she is still sorting out what is happening, she has noticed that there is an equal amount of overweight women in rural and urban areas. In typical situations, there are more overweight and obese women in urban settings rather than in a rural environment.

It is easy to become disconnected "locked up in your office, looking at research models," she said. That is why Friedman loves teaching. "I tap into reality with my students."

— Carly Laniado

Michael Ford
Psychology
"It seemed to be a great fit for me," Assistant Professor Michael Ford said of why he decided to teach at the University at Albany.

"When given the offer to come to UAlbany, I accepted mainly because I was impressed by the psychology department and the industrial-organizational psychology program," Ford said. "My interests in teaching and research fit with those of the department and university."

Ford was born in Syracuse, New York. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Hamilton College in Clinton, New York.

Before coming to UAlbany, Ford completed his Ph.D. in industrial-organizational psychology at George Mason University in Virginia.

He said this area of psychology focuses on "understanding human thought, affect, and behavior in the workplace."

Ford said his specific research interests are in the ability of individuals and organizations to balance their responsibilities in the workplace with their needs and experiences outside of it.

"Here at UAlbany, I am starting up a project looking at how individuals self-regulate and respond emotionally in multiple life domains," such as work, family and school, Ford said.

In the fall 2008 semester, Ford is teaching a personnel psychology graduate course. He will offer Introduction to Industrial-Organizational Psychology undergraduate courses in the spring of 2009.

"I have only been at UAlbany a short time," Ford said, "but I can say that I've been very happy with my experience so far."

"The people here, faculty, students, staff, and administration, have been welcoming and helpful in all respects," he said.

— Heather Senison

Lisa Fuller
Philosophy
Assistant Professor Lisa Fuller figured out what she wanted to study in one shot. As an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, she took an Introduction to Philosophy course and so became acquainted with what she regarded as a challenging and relevant discipline. Fuller subsequently studied a wide range of topics in philosophy such as Philosophy of Law, Ethics, and Epistemology. But it wasn't until her junior year at Toronto that she finally decided to move on to graduate school. And so began the next chapter of her educational journey at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Here, Fuller completed a two-year Master's program. This included coursework, a thesis, and a research assistantship at the Centre for Applied Ethics. It was at this time that she became interested in issues of poverty and global justice. After completing her Master's degree she returned to the philosophy department at the University of Toronto to enroll in their doctoral program. Her dissertation was concerned with how international aid agencies should decide which populations to help, given that their resources are scarce and global needs for medicine, food, and clean water are vast. In order to better understand this problem, Fuller traveled overseas to Kenya, Somalia,
and Holland to observe aid agency projects and meetings. She worked closely with the Canadian and Dutch sections of Doctors Without Borders during this time. With her Ph.D. in hand, she traveled to England to take up a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Sheffield. She learned of the opening here at the University at Albany through the American Philosophical Association’s “Jobs for Philosophers” publication.

She has always loved the college life, with its many opportunities to meet new people and for the sense of accomplishment that the end of each term brings. This fall she is teaching two courses. The first is APHI 212: Introduction to Ethical Theory. Here, she wants to share ideas with students that will be relevant to decisions they make in their own lives. Her second course is APHI 338: Moral Problems in Medicine, where they examine the moral arguments for and against certain practices in the health care field, such as physician assisted suicide and genetic testing and screening. She is very pleased with how students in both classes are enthusiastically engaging in discussion, as this makes for a much more dynamic and collaborative atmosphere.

When Fuller isn’t teaching, she’s working on publishing her work. Next semester, she will continue this research, and teach one graduate seminar called “History of Political Philosophy” which she is eagerly anticipating. And if she has any free time in her schedule, she loves to visit new restaurants. She also likes to relax by reading contemporary fiction and practicing yoga.

— SABRINA KATRAYAN

Adam Gordon
Anthropology

When Adam Gordon was a little boy, he dreamed of growing up and building space planes. Little did the professor know that studies in that field would be more monotonous than he could ever imagine.

Originally from Maryland, Gordon decided his undergraduate years would remain in the same state at the University of Maryland at College Park. He began to study Aeronautical Engineering with hopes of fulfilling his boyhood dream, but came face to face with a topic that nearly killed him in boredom, thermal inversion layers. That’s like studying the different atmosphere layers surrounding the Earth. Gordon just didn’t find it “interesting.” He wanted to fulfill that saying, “Do what you love and you’ll never work again.” During his sophomore year, Gordon tried Geology since he also loved dinosaurs as a kid. Jackpot! With this new interest, he created his own individual studies program with Geology, Zoology, Paleontology, and Paleo-Anthropology (study of human or human-related ancestor/relative fossils) as he broadly studied each of these topics for his undergraduate degree. Being close to Washington gave Gordon the chance to study and work briefly at the Smithsonian, specifically the National Museum of Natural History. He volunteered to work for Rick Potts and the Human Origins Society where he helped excavate old sites in Kenya for human presence. They studied the anatomical differences between humans that once lived there 5 to 6 million years ago to humans today in order to answer the evolutionary process mystery through ecological differences.

After graduating from the University of Maryland, Gordon and a few of his friends took a cross-country tour of the U.S. during his one-year break from school. He also juggled a few unrelated jobs as a way to pay the bills and then moved to Austin to begin graduate school at the University of Texas. He continued his work in the evolutionary process for his master’s by traveling to Ethiopia and parts of Africa for his dissertation studies to study primates like apes, gorillas, orangutans, lemurs, and old/new world monkeys. He measured their body mass index and their bones and compared them to ancient primate fossils. Another study Gordon conducted during grad school was still looking at the primate collection, and finding that either female primates select larger males to mate with or larger males compete with smaller males for the female. This validates what he saw in parts of Africa as he studied primates. Gordon graduated from Austin in 2004 with his Ph.D.

The next stop was at George Washington University. Here Gordon continued his own research with his own team of faculty and students. He also trained doctoral students and held graduate study seminars using research design and statistical methodology. Then late this summer, Gordon moved to Albany from Brooklyn where he was living with a friend. He had learned of David Strait’s program here at the University at Albany and how the anthropology program was “placed on radar.” And one of his colleagues from Austin did her undergraduate studies in Albany, Lisa Shapiro. So Gordon stepped in as an Assistant Professor in the Anthropology program. This fall he began one course—AANT 416 Topics in Human Biology, but he reconstructed the program to discuss Primate Evolutionary Biology where the class studies living primates and primate fossil records. Next semester, he will be teaching a freshman-level course called Introduction to Human Evolution and a graduate seminar on Primate Evolution, a new course added to the Anthropology program. He’s excited to be teaching here. He loves the students and the faculty.

Gordon is jumping ahead with thinking about next summer. He’s been invited to study in South Africa and conduct research on the Australopithecus fossil material from an ancient anthropology site, the Sterkfontein site. Gordon would also like to visit Madagascar again and continue studying primates like the lemurs who only live on that island. So what does Gordon do in his free time when he’s not doing so much research? “Well, I used to love biking in Texas, so hopefully I can take that up again in Albany.” He also enjoys hiking, camping, and in the winter, snowboarding. He also enjoys meeting new people, conversing, and getting to know them. “It’s a fresh breath of acquaintance,” he says.

— SABRINA KATRAYAN

Loretta E. Kim
History

Assistant Professor Loretta E. Kim wants to contribute as much to the University at Albany as it can give to her.

“I am concentrating on getting to know the faculty and getting students interested in East Asia broadly, and introducing my research experiences to the Albany community at large,” Kim said.

Kim, who was born in Portland, Oregon, spent the previous academic year at Kenyon College in Ohio where she worked as a visiting instructor and dissertation fellow.

Kim said she decided to come to UAlbany because “I felt very positive about the meetings I had here during my campus interview discussing my potential role as an advisor at both levels of education. I enjoy advising both graduate and undergraduate students.”

At UAlbany, Kim specializes in the history of China and Central Asia from the 16th through the 19th centuries. In the fall 2008 semester, Kim is teaching a course in imperialism and colonialism in East Asia.

Next semester she will offer an undergraduate class on film relating to 20th Century Chinese history and a graduate seminar on Europeans in East Asia from the years 1500-1800.

“As for research,” Kim said, “I am working on a study of the Sino-Russian border and their role in creating and enforcing that boundary from the 16th through 20th centuries.”
New Faculty

Kim said she enjoys working at UAlbany because she is "very happy to be part of a supportive and diverse department." "I am always pleasantly surprised when I find more and more resources for teaching and research around campus," Kim said.

— HEATHER SENISON

Kir A. Kuiken
English

Growing up, Kir Kuiken loved to read literature and novels of all types. If you step into his office at the university, you’ll notice two bookshelves packed against the wall and loaded with books. “I have at least seven more at home,” he says. The Canadian native wanted some hands-on experience with interest in reading and went to Trent University, right outside of Toronto, to complete a double major in English and Philosophy as an undergraduate student.

Kuiken’s next stop would be the University of California at Irvine where he received a Master’s in Philosophy, a Master’s in Comparative Literature, and a Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature. His dissertation covered the Romantic conceptions of the imagination, where he explored the understanding of the relationship between literary imagination and the construction of modern political sovereignty. He spent time studying at the Huntington Library in California as well as Irvine’s Critique Theory Institute.

After receiving his Ph.D., Kuiken began searching for positions that complemented his research. He discovered that the English Department at the University at Albany was engaged in the “cutting edge” and interdisciplinary work that he was looking for. Since his own work shares these characteristics, Kuiken was ready to be a part of the program as well.

Currently, Kuiken teaches AENG 305Z, Studies in Writing About Texts, a study of the relations between literature, terror and politics. He is also teaching AENG 334, 19th Century British Literature and in October, he traveled to Detroit for an international conference on Romanticism with other worldwide scholars. Kuiken is working hard on a book manuscript, expanding the work and focus of his dissertation. Next semester, he will be teaching a course in Contemporary Literary and Political Theory and another on British Literary Traditions. He also will continue to attend several conferences in his field, and will participate in a symposium on Representations of the French Revolution.

In his free time, Kuiken enjoys listening to live music in genres from underground rock to classical, but you won’t catch him listening to country. He also loves to rock climb. As a Canadian native, he likes to return to his old home in Edmonton, Alberta next to the Canadian Rockies to visit his immediate family. But right now, Kuiken loves his new home in Albany and all that the city has to offer him.

— SABRINA KATRIVAN

Ewan McNay
Psychology

Before coming to the University at Albany, Professor Ewan McNay spent his time “playing bridge, cooking a lot, and chasing around a five-year-old,” he said.

Now, McNay does brain research and teaches Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience. His research is focused around the role of glucose supply to the brain and its link to both Type 1 and 2 diabetes and Alzheimer’s disease. “We’re taking a look at the role of fuel supply to the brain—how diabetes affects it.”

McNay attended college at the University of Sheffield in England and did his graduate work at the University of Virginia. During his graduate work, he proved that the “common assumptions of what’s going on with glucose in the brain are completely false,” he said.

“It’s exciting.”

“Science is a way of thinking and looking at the universe,” McNay explained.

Also during his time in graduate school, at UVA, he and his lab partners taught rats how to do tricks. “We had this one rat, #17, that was the smartest,” McNay explained. “We saved him for awhile and taught him how to do things like jump through hoops.”

McNay also worked at Proctor and Gamble, where he met his wife, and taught medical students at Yale, prior to joining the UAlbany faculty.

“The welcome here, particularly at this university has been great,” he said. The environment in upstate New York is much slower and friendlier than what he’s used to. McNay said that “it’s nice.”

— CARLY LANNIADO
Tomás Urayoán Noel

English

The Department of English at the University at Albany focuses a lot on poetry and New American Literature, so it serves as a "natural home" for Professor Tomás Urayoán Noel's studies.

Noel, a native of Puerto Rico, came to the United States for his master's degree at Stanford, and pursued his Ph.D. at NYU in neuric (New York Puerto Rican) poetry. The neuric poets that Noel studied for his dissertation connect theory and practice "in a way that is infinitely sexier than the theorists," he said.

He worked in New York City in the dot-com industry before he started hanging out in the New York poetry scene of the late 1990s. He became interested in both the performance and written aspects of poetry; how a poem can come to life on stage and on the page, and then social and political implications of these works.

Noel enjoys his specific field of poetic study because he "engages with work that embraces cultural differences." From a bi-cultural family himself, he feels that it is natural to be working with "ethnic" or "cultural" poetry.

After writing two bilingual books, Noel took his first full-time teaching job at UAlbany, teaching a poetics class called From Open Field to Open Mic, and creative writing. "I love it," he said. "The students aren't too terrified by poetry."

"A lot of my work is either fun or funny," Noel explained.

"There's so much play with what I work with, but there are political elements. It makes you question. It's fun to engage with loose open ended text."

— Carly Laniado

Carl Bon Tempo

History

"Music is like history. I could go on and on about sub-genres. History is the same way. Well I teach American political and public policy history."

The last thing you'd ever expect is to walk into one of your classes and get a professor who used to have his own rock band back in college...that is unless you've met Assistant Professor Carl Bon Tempo.

Upon entering Georgetown University, Bon Tempo wasn't quite sure what he wanted to do or study in college, though he did think he might like to pursue some type of graduate study in the future. Eventually, he settled on history and political science, receiving his BA in history. After graduating, he remained in Washington, D.C. to pursue an interest in American foreign policy, interning at the prestigious think-tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

At Georgetown, Bon Tempo also began a punk rock band called "My Life in Rain" with some friends. They got their first record contract during his senior year and the band stayed together even while Bon Tempo continued working in foreign policy. They toured from the Northeast to the Midwest performing everywhere from small venues like record stores to some of the biggest rock clubs in the country, like the seminal CBGB in New York City that was home to big-time bands like Talking Heads, Blondie, and the Ramones. "We weren't wildly successful, but people were paying us to make records," Bon Tempo tells us of his experience.

After making three albums, Bon Tempo left the band and headed south to the University of Virginia to begin his graduate studies. He wrote his Masters Thesis on the political group, Young America, which existed from the 1840s to the early 1850s. For his Ph.D., Bon Tempo decided to study 20th Century American History. He wrote his dissertation on the history of American refugee policies during the Cold War.

After receiving his Ph.D. in 2004, Bon Tempo began to apply for teaching jobs at universities. He spent one year teaching at the University of Michigan. Next, he spent two years at the University at Waterloo in Ontario, Canada. Looking to return to the United States, he then took a lectureship at Princeton University. But when the University at Albany offered him an assistant professorship in American political history, he jumped at the chance. This semester he is teaching a graduate class. He reports that his students are bright, eager, and excited to learn. Next semester, Bon Tempo will teach two courses: a graduate research seminar on 20th Century American History and an undergraduate course—AHIS 220 Public Policy in Modern America.

Bon Tempo's first semester at Albany is exciting for another reason: his book, America's at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War, will be published in October.

When he's not teaching or researching, you can find the Sicilian cooking up a storm, trying recipes from Southeast Asian to Italian food or trying out new restaurants. He's also a big-time sports fan, cheering on his Alma Mater, the Georgetown Hoyas basketball team, the NBA's Boston Celtics, and his hometown Washington Redskins. And of course, you might find him jamming out to some tunes in his office.

— Sabrina Katrayan

Huaming Peng

Economics

Huaming Peng decided to join the faculty at the University at Albany because "the faculty at the department of economics are very friendly and open minded," he said.

Peng, an assistant professor at UAlbany, was born in a small town in Guangdong, China. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and a Master's of Statistics from Macquarie University in Australia. Peng also received a Master's of Art and a Master's of Philosophy at Yale University. Peng was expected to defend his Ph.D. dissertation in October of 2008 at Yale where he was a teaching assistant before he came to UAlbany.

In the fall 2008 semester Peng is teaching an Econometrics III course. He said his main area of interest for research is econometric methodology and applied econometrics. Econometrics involves using mathematics and statistics to study problems, analyze data, and develop and test economic theories and models.

Peng says he is also doing a project at UAlbany in which he is working on "Estimation and Inference in Large Panel Models with GARCH Effect."

Referring to UAlbany, Peng said, "I am very glad that I decided to come to UAlbany. It is the right place to work."

— Heather Senison
New Faculty

- **Ryan Tom**  
  Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

  Originally from southern Wisconsin, Professor Ryan Tom's appointment at UAlbany is his first teaching job after receiving his Ph. D. from the University of Washington in Seattle. Tom received his graduate degree in May of 2007 and spent a year doing post-doc work for the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado. Tom plans to spend his time during the fall doing research as well.

  "I'm excited to work with colleagues and students," Tom said. "This is one of the best departments in the United States for atmospheric science and I think my research will bring a new direction for the department."

  His research involves evaluating ways to combine direct weather observations and forecast models to create a better atmospheric analysis. A better analysis equals a better forecast.

  He also studies the predictability of storms, specifically focusing on the 2008 hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This research compares what goes on inside the hurricane and the environment around it and how it affects forecast models.

  Tom's findings were presented at the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Science Colloquium in mid-September.

  "I try to make my research have scientific value, but still have a practical use," he said.

  In the spring of 2009, Tom plans to teach a graduate-level course in atmospheric dynamics.

  "As far back as I can remember, I've always been interested in weather," Tom explained that all throughout middle and high school, there was no faltering; it was what he always wanted to do.

  —CARLY LANIADO

- **Baris Yoruk**  
  Economics

  Assistant Professor Baris Yoruk came to the University at Albany in the fall of 2008 because he "wanted to work at a research university."

  Previously, Yoruk worked as a teacher's assistant, a resident assistant and an instructor at Boston College.

  Yoruk said he was attracted to UAlbany because "the Economics Department at UAlbany has a well-established graduate program and provides an active research environment."

  Yoruk was born in Derizli, a small city in western Turkey. He received his Bachelor of Arts and a Master's in Economics from Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey.

  Yoruk also has a Master's in Economics and a Ph.D. in Economics from Boston College, the latter of which he received in August 2008.

  At UAlbany, Yoruk's main areas of interest are applied microeconomics and public economics. He teaches intermediate micro and applied econometrics for undergraduates and public economics for Ph.D. students at the university.

  Currently, Yoruk is working on a project involving the economics of charitable giving and volunteering.

  "In particular," Yoruk said, "I focus on gender differences in charitable giving and the effect of different fund raising strategies on charitable contributions of time and money."

  Yoruk said UAlbany's campus, which has recently received several renovations including a new entryway fountain, "is beautiful."

  "Up to now, both the faculty and my students were very friendly. My overall experience with UAlbany is very positive," Yoruk said.

  —HEATHER SENISON

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CAS New Faculty Reception  
September 18, 2008
Faculty Retirements

Six members of the teaching faculty retired this summer with a total of 189 service years. Colleagues in the College of Arts and Sciences extend their best wishes to Jon Jacklet (40 years) from Biological Sciences; Floyd Henderson (35 years) from Geography and Planning; Thad Mirer (35 years) from Economics; Roberta Bernstein (28 years) from Art History; George Levesque (27 years) from Africana Studies; and Gail Landsman (24 years) from Anthropology.

Obituaries

Akiho Miyashiro, Geological Sciences

Akiho Miyashiro died July 2008 after falling over a cliff at John Boyd Thacher State Park. Professor Miyashiro retired from the Department of Geological Sciences in 1991. He was at the university for 22 years and earned international acclaim. In 1997 he won one of the field’s most prestigious honors, the Geological Society of America’s Arthur L. Day Medal. Miyashiro was a plate tectonics pioneer. He studied the behavior of rocks at very high temperatures and pressures. His field is known as metamorphic petrology. He wrote the classic textbook Metamorphism and Metamorphic Belts. Professor John Delano commented in his obituary that Miyashiro made major contributions to our current understanding of how major mountain systems formed. Former student Susan Anderson and neighbors Daniel and Millie Grossberg spoke of his quiet nature and his love of nature.

William Reedy, History

Professor Emeritus William Reedy passed away peacefully on October 24 at Norwalk Hospital from complication of Parkinson’s disease. Professor Reedy was a specialist in Medieval England. A memorial service was held on November 1 at the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany.

Staff Changes

Professional Staff

Ross Lazenear was hired this past summer as Instructional Support Specialist for the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. Ross has a Master’s degree in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He has experience as a research intern at the University of Wisconsin in the Center for Climatic Studies and he was a teaching assistant while completing his Master’s degree.

Support Staff

Jaime Moore was hired in the spring as Keyboard Specialist 1 in the Department of Anthropology. Prior to her appointment at UAlbany, Jaime was with the SUNY Applications Services Center.

Retirements

The Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences bids farewell to Michael Landin, long-time Instructional Support Specialist in the department, having served 33 years in that position. In addition to supervising the department’s Weather/Climate Center, Mike taught several weather related courses and recruited and oversaw the Atmospheric Sciences internship program including the National Weather Service internship and the local TV internships. He is continuing to teach the large enrolled general education course “ATM 107N, The Oceans” for the 2008-09 academic year. Most of you probably have heard him provide the twice daily live weather commentaries and forecasts on Northeast Public Radio (WAMC). He gave his final regular report for the Morning Edition program on May 16, 2008. Mike celebrated 30 years providing that program on November 30, 2007.

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Institute on Addictions. There he learned how to apply his research on self-control to models of addictive behaviors. He found that when people had recently exerted self-control (in contrast to people who did not exert self-control but did work on a frustrating, difficult, and unpleasant task), they tended to drink more than they should and more than they wanted to. In other words, a person is more likely to lose control over alcohol intake when his or her self-control strength is depleted. This may be why people get cranky when dieting because they have to spend strength on trying to control their food intake, as they have less strength available to control their temper.

In 2000 Muraven moved back to Albany (his home town) to continue his research on self-control. For example, in a National Institute of Health supported project conducted here at Albany he found that social drinkers performed more poorly on a test of concentration after sniffing (but not drinking) their preferred alcoholic beverage compared to after sniffing water. The stronger their urge to drink the alcohol, the more their self-control performance suffered.

More recently, Muraven has been focusing on whether it is possible to build self-control. Continuing the physical strength metaphor, after working out, an athlete is weaker, but with rest and recovery, he/she gains strength. The same might be true for self-control. Muraven has a five-year, $1.3 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to investigate whether practicing small acts of self-control, like cutting back on sweets, can build individuals’ self-control so that they might be more successful at quitting smoking. He hopes that this research may lead to treatment programs that build self-control to help in other behavioral changes, like dieting, anger management and drug abuse.

The Department of Defense has also taken an interest in Muraven’s work. He received over $600,000 for a three-year project investigating the role of self-control in coping with stress. This research will investigate whether people’s level of self-control is related to their ability to cope with stress. This study will test UAlbany students’ heart rate, skin temperature and blood pressure in response to a stress created in a laboratory setting. The students will also carry palm pilots for several weeks, to report their stress and coping responses as they go about their daily lives. Individuals with greater self-control capacity should exhibit better coping than those whose self-control is diminished. In addition, some students will also build up their self-control by practicing small acts of self-control to see if their coping improves over time.

Muraven and his students at the University have also been trying to refine the model of self-control strength, as well as test applications of the model. Some ongoing projects include the role of self-control in aggression, risk taking, and socially inappropriate actions. They are also trying to understand how motivation interacts with self-control strength, so that people may be better able to reach their self-control goals.

This article is based on Sabrina Katrayan’s interview with Professor Mark Muraven and was edited by Professor Muraven.