Journalism Major Kickoff with 60 Minutes’ Steve Kroft

On September 27, UAlbany presented its highest honor, the Medallion of the University, to award-winning 60-Minutes principal correspondent Steve Kroft. “It has also provided me an opportunity to escape New York on a beautiful fall day and spend some time with college students, which is always invigorating,” Kroft said. The ceremony was followed by a question and answer session, moderated by Times Union editor Rex Smith, where students were able to interact with Kroft. “I want to thank the university for this wonderful honor and the invitation to help celebrate the journalism major at the University at Albany,” Kroft said.

UAlbany launched the journalism major in 2006. It is the first journalism major program in the State University of New York’s four University Centers. Currently, there are over 90 students enrolled in the program. There are 630 students taking journalism classes, a number that rose by 253 last year. The major is dedicated to introducing students to the historical, legal and ethical contexts of media in the 21st century. It is focused on teaching young journalists skills in critical thinking, efficient writing and effective editing. The program also focuses on training journalism students in the areas of cyber media, governmental public information and public relations. It prepares them for careers in fields from magazines and newspapers to technological developments such as cyber media.

Kroft graduated with a Bachelor’s degree from Syracuse University in 1967. He went on to earn a Master’s from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in 1975. Kroft began his career as a CBS reporter in the Northeastern bureau of New York in January of 1980. He was named a correspondent in 1981, allowing him to work in cities such as Dallas and London. Kroft also served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. He was a reporter for the Armed Forces Network and covered his division’s participation in the invasion of Cambodia. He won several Army awards and the Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Achievement.

As a CBS correspondent, Kroft covered topics such as the Cuban Government’s quarantine policy for people with AIDS, the civil war in El Salvador and the U.S. invasion of Grenada. For his excellence in journalism, Kroft was given three Peabody awards and 11 Emmys, one of which was for Lifetime Achievement in 2003. “Throughout his career, Steve has remained committed to the highest standards in journalism and he serves as an inspiration to our students who strive to pursue journalistic excellence,” said Edelgard Wulfert, acting Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

University in the High School Scores at Albany

When Director Greg Stevens started the University in the High School Program (UHS) in 1983, it consisted of just four local area high schools and 27 students. Since then the program has grown to 222 high schools in 39 counties across New York State and has consistently grown in enrollment through the years. Last year alone the program boasted 13,262 registrations.

For the past 24 years, UHS have been granting high school students the opportunity to earn college credits while developing the skills to succeed in higher education. The University in the High School Program aims to “ensure students succeed when they go on to the next level,” said Stevens. He also explained how the program aims to challenge the more serious students while giving them the experience of a real college course and earning college credit.

UHS began as a collaboration between UAlbany and area high school foreign language departments. Since then it has grown to include courses in 30 academic disciplines, including arts, sciences, criminal justice, business, computing, and public health. The key element to the operation of the Program is the integrity of the credit, a departmental responsibility.

University at Albany Volume 5, Number 2 Winter 2008
A Message from
Dean Elga Wulfert

New faces, new programs, and new opportunities greeted us this fall as we began the 2007-08 academic year. We have welcomed many new students and colleagues to our campus, and recently we also said a few goodbyes.

In late August nearly 2,500 freshmen arrived at UAlbany to begin their college careers. These students, the class of 2011, represent a diverse group of individuals, eager to take on the challenges that lie ahead of them. In the College of Arts and Sciences, 34 new faculty members, an unprecedented number, joined our ranks, and 400-plus new graduate students began their advanced studies in our many departments and programs. The combined energy and enthusiasm of these individuals, along with the rest of the students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends that make up this University, can be captured any day as you walk across our campus and experience this vibrant community.

The Fall semester brought change to our University administration when Officer in Charge and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Susan Herbst left the University at Albany to become the Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer for the University System of Georgia. Although she was only with us two short years, she had proved herself a capable leader who under difficult circumstances moved the University ahead with clarity of vision, integrity, transparency, and tireless work on behalf of our faculty and students. We owe her a huge debt of gratitude and wish her the best in her new position. Upon Dr. Herbst’s departure, Mr. George M. Philip took over as Interim President of the University at Albany. Mr. Philip, a UAlbany alum, is a long-time friend of the University and for many years has served as chairman of the University Council. I am confident that under his leadership we will continue to move forward in our mission of striving for excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, research, and public service.

Change also came to the College of Arts and Sciences when after five productive years as dean, Dr. Joan Wick-Pelletier returned to the faculty. On page 16 you will find a detailed summary of her many accomplishments, including the launching of new majors, programs, and initiatives. Her commitment to revitalizing the arts, her focus on interdisciplinary programming, and her emphasis on advancing the life sciences will certainly live on as part of her legacy and we are immensely grateful for her able leadership during the past five years.

I am confident that the College will continue to move forward in a positive direction, and indeed we have recently seen a number of initiatives come to fruition. In September our journalism program celebrated the one year anniversary of the new journalism major with a visit by CBS 60 Minutes correspondent Steve Kroft. Mr. Kroft participated in an informal question and answer session with our students and was presented the Medallion of the University, this institution’s highest honor, in recognition of his sustained commitment to the profession of journalism.

This year’s theme semester, Gateways to China, was launched on September 5th, with a visit by The Honorable Ambassador Liu Biewe, Consulate General. Throughout the fall semester, there were many events involving film, art, theater, literature, history, and politics that presented the opportunity for faculty, students, staff, and community members to come together to gain a better understanding of contemporary China while celebrating the richness of the country’s history and culture.

The Institute of RNA Science and Technology (IRNAST) continues to be a focal point for research in the life sciences. We have assembled a core of outstanding investigators with research expertise in the area of RNA (ribonucleic acid) structure and function, and two faculty searches are currently underway, at the junior and senior levels, to recruit additional complementary expertise. I am certain you will be hearing more about this work in the months ahead.

As a psychology professor since 1988, I have always found research and teaching immensely gratifying and am continuing my research with my doctoral students with unabated vigor. At the same time, I also now look forward to bringing the same amount of enthusiasm and energy to my new role as Acting Dean. As we begin the Spring semester I remain confident that the momentum of the past years will continue as together we move the College forward in exciting new directions.

A Message from
Associate Dean
Rachel Dressler

The new academic year began with new faculty, students, staff, and administrators developed new classes, new research initiatives, and new programs, as well as strengthened and maintained existing projects. For me, as a recently appointed Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, the beginning of the semester brought an exciting new position, and an opportunity to learn more about the College to which I have belonged for close to fourteen years. I am deeply grateful to my predecessor in this position, Professor Jeanette Altarriba, for all of her advice and guidance as I transitioned into this role. Professor Altarriba contributed a great deal in her years as Associate Dean; she is a very hard act to follow.

Beginning this position caused me to reflect upon what our new faculty members may have felt as they took up their research and teaching responsibilities. This year the College benefited from 34 new hires spread across 18 different departments. Some faculty were brought in to strengthen and extend existing programs, while others were charged with moving their department in new directions. In either case, the College has been greatly enriched by their presence on campus. Students have had new courses or to courses that have not been taught in a long time, faculty have new colleagues to share in planning processes and in the intellectual work of designing academically exciting and substantive programs.

Regardless, of his or her intended role, each of our new faculty faced learning to navigate through the sometimes complicated policies and procedures in place here in the College of Arts and Sciences and in the University as a whole. I urge all of us who have been here for a number of years to serve as mentors in aiding newcomers to function most effectively. Please help new colleagues with such teaching issues as preparing course action forms for their new courses, proposing Honors College courses, Eres and other reserve options, using Blackboard (if they are not familiar with it already), and syllabus requirements. With your help, our new faculty will have a career in the College of Arts and Sciences and in the University at Albany on solid and secure footing.

Message from the Editor

As I assemble this issue of CAS Today, I reflect on the changes that have occurred since the College of Arts and Sciences was reformed in 1993. We have had a number of Deans, Interim Deans but our most recent Dean, Joan Wick-Pelletier, having served the College for five years had the most profound impact on its mission. As you read the reprint of the article written by Mary Fress on page 16 about Joan Wick-Pelletier’s accomplishments and vision of the College, you will see the number of advances that were made in just five years. On preparing to step down as Dean of the College, Joan Wick-Pelletier sent us a note to say that it was an honor and a pleasure to serve the College and thanked us for the excellent working relationship that we shared. I want to say publicly that we thank you for your dedication toward the achievement of the many goals set forth by the administration, our own Strategic Plan and most of all your hard work bringing the College through a period of stability, growth and development. Good luck and be proud of all that you have made possible through your commitment to our academic programs, research initiatives and outreach activities.

Dona Parker
What has been a broken up path of dirt, grass, cement, and asphalt around UAlbany’s uptown campus will soon become a continuous trail for runners, bicyclists, and skaters alike.

Thanks to the Initiative for Healthy Infrastructure, pedestrians will no longer have to weave through cars throughout the twenty-three intersections separating what is commonly referred to as “the loop.” Bicyclists will no longer battle traffic, joggers won’t have to worry about tripping over tree roots, and mothers won’t have to lift their strollers up over high curbs.

The Purple Path, proposed by Adjunct Professor Jeffrey Olson and students in his Master’s of Urban and Regional Planning Studio back in 2005, will provide a 5k multi-use loop around the inner perimeter of the campus. Features will include multiple bike lanes as well as dual surfaced paths, for both low and high impact activity, accessible year-round. Intersections will be fewer and the remaining will have improved safety and accessibility elements, including ramps.

Intersecting the Purple Path and connecting the new loop to the rest of the campus will be the Golden Grid. Much improvement has already been made on these connections, including naming campus streets and improving crosswalks.

Participants in the Golden Grid project realize that though the campus is made up of many right angles, diagonal pathways fill in the gaps. “The campus needs to reorient itself to comply with the regular flow of traffic,” said Olson. Problems like these are what the Golden Grid and Purple Path hope to alleviate.

Though the initial student planners have moved on, Olson has made The Purple Path and Golden Grid projects a continuing effort throughout the semesters. The proposals began when Kermit Hall, a great supporter of these projects, was President. Together, Hall and the Planning Studios worked together to make the campus a better place. Through the Planning Studios, students have the opportunity to get real experience while earning their degrees.

Not only do students take part in projects like the Purple Path, but anyone who takes advantage of the campus can be involved. “The key to all of our projects is community involvement,” said Olson. Whether it is a mother with her stroller or a New York Giant, the campus is used by the entire community, and support is welcomed by all.

The Purple Path project aims to do more than create a practical, versatile pathway. “Part of the program is to make sure the public knows about healthy infrastructure,” said Olson. He and his students say they hope by creating better infrastructure, the community will become more aware of their health and exercise methods.

A member of the Golden Grid Planning Studio, Maria Chau emphasized the safety of the new paths. “We are building this because so many people in the community use the path” she said, “so we want to make it a safe place for everyone.” This includes intersections, right-of-ways, and separate spaces for pedestrians and cars throughout the campus.

The mission of the Initiative for Healthy Infrastructure (iHi) is to “facilitate statewide efforts that will create a physical environment which fosters healthy, active lifestyles.” The idea for iHi began five years ago with Olson’s increased interest in trails and walkways combined with a national interest in environmental issues. A $500,000 grant from the New York State Department of Public Health later, and iHi was up and running. It is now partnered with the New York State Healthy Heart Program, along with Research Foundation of the State University of New York and the University at Albany Department of Geography and Planning.

More information on the Purple Path, the Golden Grid, and iHi can be found on the university website at http://albany.edu/~ihi/.

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Gateways to China was the theme this fall as the University at Albany community focused on China’s past and present cultures. The semester, characterized as a celebration of learning, was designed to stimulate interest in China, raise awareness and increase appreciation of all aspects of the Chinese culture, enhance student awareness of programs and academic courses dealing with China, including opportunities to study abroad, and encourage debate and discussion of the implications of China’s growing importance on the world stage. Faculty, students, and staff from across the campus, along with members of the greater community, joined in planning the many varied programs and special offerings making up the China semester.

The semester kicked off on September 5th with a visit by the Honorable Ambassador Liu Biwei, consulate-general in New York City. The Ambassador addressed a crowd gathered in the atrium of University Hall and joined in the opening reception that followed. Later that week the China Center launched its fall seminar series with a lecture by Dr. Merle Goldman, Professor of History Emerita at Boston University, Research Associate at the John K. Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, Harvard University, and well-known expert on Chinese Politics during the reform era. Professor Goldman spoke on the topic From ‘Comrade’ to ‘Citizen’: The Struggle for Political Rights in China.

Other semester highlights included renowned China Scholar Jonathan Spence’s visit to the campus for a special reading as part of the New York State Writers Institute (NYWI) lecture series. The Performing Arts Center was the site of a recent performance by the East River ensemble, a collective of top-notch musicians from north China. In November the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company performed in the PAC.

The Theatre Department this semester was the home of Playwright in Residence Elizabeth Wong. Ms. Wong is an award winning Chinese-American playwright, whose work combines comedy and social commentary while exploring Asian-American themes. Her play, Letters from a Student Revolutionary, was a highlight of the fall theatre schedule.

The China Semester was co-sponsored by the Center for the Humanities, Arts and TechnoSciences, College of Arts and Sciences, Office of International Education, Office of the Provost, and the Urban China Research Network. For more information on the China Semester, please visit www.albany.edu/chats/china.

Ecologies of War

The “Ecologies of War” held November 8 and 9 was the second symposium produced by the Department of English and CHATS that complements a series of events initiated at the University that is designed to open dialogue on shifts occurring within the environment and within various critical theory environments. As reported by English Professor Tom Cohen, this event was “by all accounts hugely successful.” It was intellectually stimulating and very well attended (from 40 to 60 attendees at the keynotes and panels) and it generated excitement about the future breakthroughs in scholarly research, Cohen continues. Attendance at the various venues was diverse with faculty and students from Anthropology, English, Women’s Studies, History, Library Science, LACS, Art and Art History.

Issues and questions addressed over the two day symposium included: the interface of war technologies, terrestrial mutation, and the powers of memory; shifts in social agendas, political orders, and cultural preoccupation in a time of invisible and permanent war; speculation on coming critical horizons and their continuity or discontinuity with the great 20th century discourses, models to respond to a “post-Polar” planetary condition that exceeds what we have meant merely by the global, and what new allegories and management of conflict can be anticipated, to name a few.

The panelists and keynoters, including the renowned lecturer David Harvey, drew students and faculty that mixed with UAlbany and UBuffalo scholars. Present at the Harvey talk were three scholar editors: Robert Marzec from Modern Fiction Studies at Johns Hopkins University Press; Jody Berland, editor of Topia at York University in Toronto; and Al Lopez, editor of Global South at Indiana Press. Global South will produce a volume based on selected papers from the symposium, which is scheduled to appear fall 2008.

Following a cocktail reception in University Hall, the symposium moved to the Campus Center Ballroom where about 500 people came to hear Chris Hedges, Pulitzer Prize-winning war correspondent and best-selling author, deliver the keynote address to discuss his experiences as a war correspondent in Iraq. His talk was co-sponsored by the New York State Writers Institute.

It seems that from the lively question and answer session following the Hedges talk moderated by Professor Mike Hill, that more members of the public joined the symposium for Day Two. This provided a rich mix of the general public with the visiting scholars and students. From all reports the well-attended symposium stimulated its audience and raised many issues for future exploration. Watch for the fall 2008 issue of Global South for more in depth information about the topics discussed at the symposium.

University Celebrates China

by Kathy Gersowitz

The University Art Museum partnered with East Asian Studies Professor Fan Pen Chen to offer a Chinese Shadow Figures exhibit based on her collection. The installation brought to life the one thousand-year-old popular folk art. In addition to the exhibit, The Chinese Theatre Works, the only shadow theatre in the United States, came to campus with its production Tiger Tales, which blended ancient and contemporary techniques.

College of Arts and Sciences faculty were featured in many semester events, including a presentation by Professor Christopher Smith, Departments of Geography and Planning and East Asian Studies and chair of the China Semester planning committee. Professor Smith lectured on The Beijing Olympic Games of 2008: Rhetoric and Reality. Professor James Hargett, Department of East Asian Studies, presented a lecture that examined myths and stereotypes about China and Chinese people in China through American Eyes: Fact or Fantasy?

East Asian Studies Professors Fan Pen Chen, Charles Hartmann, Anthony DeBlasi pose with Dr. Merle Goldman (second from right) who presented a talk on Chinese Politics.
Outreach Opportunity Through Public History

by Dona Parker

Last Spring, CAS Today ran an article on “Oral History Preserves Information for Future Generations.” This fall, CAS Today will explore the Public History program at the University at Albany under the direction of Professor Ivan Janower. For the record, Professor Steen was born in the Bronx and grew up in Queens. His current book, *Urbanizing America: The Development of Cities in the United States from the First European Settlements to 1920,* is about the history of urban development in the United States.

It is not often one gets the opportunity to interview someone so excited about their work that time literally flies—and so it did when History Professor Ivan Steen and I met for a conversation about the Public History Program. Steen considers the Public History Program to be all about “outreach.” Academic history professors basically talk to each other about their research publications and books. Whereas, Public History deals with reaching out to the public in places like museums and archives which is not to say public history professors don’t write books—they just need to spend a good deal of their time creating collaborations with the public.

The Center for Applied Historical Research (CAHR) was established to serve as a way to bring in funding for master’s students to complete their course of study for a Master’s Degree and/or Certificate of Advanced Study in Public History. The Center is directed by Ivan Steen and Patricia West and together they work with agencies to establish internship opportunities for master’s students to help fund their education with either a paid internship or an unpaid internship whereby the student would gain practical experience in the field of Public History.

Agencies contacted include the National Park Service where a student could work at the Van Buren National Historic Site. Because of the center’s activities, the University has been approached by Civil Service Employees Association (that will be 100 years old in 2010) to do research on the history of CSEA—two students each semester have been doing the research on the history of the commission. Another project with the State University of New York at Stony Brook focused on the retirement of an employee who completed 40 years of service last year. The Center has been in existence for more than three years and funding has been devoted to support students’ work on specific projects.

The University Chamber Singers successfully completed their seventh tour last summer, traveling to France and the area surrounding Barcelona. It was the largest group David Griggs-Janower, conductor for the University Chamber singers, has ever taken. It consisted of 35 people in total. 18 of the participants were from the Chamber singers, around a dozen from Albany Pro Musica, and the rest community members of Chorale and/or APMasterworks, a satellite chorus.

“The mix, both vocal and social, of students and community people were terrific.” Janower said, “it was clearly the strongest musical group I’ve ever had on tour.” Hundreds of people attended the group’s first performance, in Monserrat Abbey, outside of Barcelona. Sadly,” Janower said, the rest of the repertoire was performed at a community arts center in Sitges, on the coast of the Mediterranean.

In France, the group was able to combine with community choir members for their last two concerts. “The singers in the other choirs greatly appreciated our group’s sound, precision, energy and wide variety of repertory,” Janower said. Of course, he said, they also appreciated the two songs by French composers, Maurice Duruflé and Claude Debussy. The group benefited from the abundance of English-speaking members of the French choirs whom they were able to converse, verbally and musically, with in receptions that were held after the performances.

The fantastic experience of interacting with musicians in France, viewing the unusual architecture in Barcelona and performing on the beautiful coast of the Cote d’Azur, “was well more than eye-opening to our students,” Janower said.

The group not only sang wonderfully but also represented UAlbany, its state and the nation with their friendly behavior and musical talent.

The Center for Applied Historical Research also works with the Association of Public Historians of New York State, and provides workshops for a minimal charge. They also do workshops at Regional meetings. The goal at the Center is to create a community of historians regardless of where they are employed—high school history teachers, municipal historians, history curators in museums, etc. The Program in Public History provides training for students to work as historians in a variety of venues. One student had an internship with the Nantucket Historical Society where he got to spend his summer on Nantucket Island. Some of these internships are paid but even though some are unpaid, the experience is sometimes too important to pass up.

The Public History Program has been enriched through the new faculty hire who began in the Fall of 2007. The program expects to include a concentration in Public History within the History Ph.D. A new course will be prepared by new faculty member, David Hochfelder. (See new faculty biographies on page 12.) It is becoming recognized by faculty and scholars in traditional Ph.D. programs that all doctoral students could benefit from a course in public history.

The introduction course in Public History includes field trips to historic sites. One of these brings students to Cooperstown for a visit to three sites and a chance to interact with the students in the Cooperstown program of study. The sites visited there are Fenimore Art Museum, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Iroquois Storage Facility. Their trips take them behind the scenes to places where the tourist is not allowed. After the tour, students must write a paper about the visit in addition to reading several books that are assigned for the course.

The students are also treated to guest lectures given by professionals who do the work of a public historian all day long. This helps students learn about the various employment opportunities open to them and participation at the lectures helps with networking.

The reason for this is attributed to the success many Ph.D. graduates and master’s graduates have experienced in finding interesting jobs. A recent graduate of the History Ph.D. program completed a dissertation project that was a true public history project that got the Rapp Road community named a New York State Historic District and has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The dissertation written by Jennifer Lemak has been revised in book form and was published in SUNY Press. Another former Public History and Ph.D. student, Robin Campbell, has been employed at Peebles Island as curator for the New York State Office of Parks and Recreation’s Bureau of Historic Sites for 28 years. Some graduates work in the archival area. One student, Anna Appelman, is the Descriptive Archivist for the Georgia State Archives, under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Secretary of State. The variety of positions open to one trained as a public historian seems to go on and includes Director of the Old Barracks Museum in New Jersey to Archivist for the Bellevue Alumnae Center for Nursing History.

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**Anthropology**

Robert Jarvenpa and Hetty Jo Brumback delivered the keynote address at the international conference: “The Ethnohistory and Archaeology of Northern Eurasia: Theory, Methods and Practice” that was held at the Irkustsk State Technical University in Russia. Their address was based on their recent NSF-funded international team research project conducted in Canada, Alaska, Finland and Russia.

**Music**

Max Lifchitz will begin a two-year term January 2008 as Vice President of the College Music Society. As a Board Member he will be involved in planning the yearly national and international conference and will work closely with the regional chapters of the organization.

**Sociology**

Ryan King received the Law and Society Association Best Article Award in 2006 and the American Sociological Association Culture Section Best Articles Award in 2007.

Richard Alba was keynote speaker at the Netherlands American Studies Association; Fellow at the Center for Study of Poverty and Inequality at Stanford University; Associate at EQUALSOC, European Union Network of excellence; and named as Huggins Lecturer, Afro-American Studies Department at Harvard University to begin spring 2008.

Donald Hernandez received the Presidential Citation awarded by the American Psychological Association to recognize and commend “…distinguished contributions to the health and well-being of immigrant children and their families…” Professor Hernandez was also keynote speaker at the International Workshop on “Biographic Transitions of Immigrants: Education, Family, Profession” organized by the German-Israeli Research Consortium on Migration and Societal Integration.

**Art**


**English**

Langdon Brown directed a staged reading of “Engaging Shaw” by John Morogello at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts New Play Festival. “Engaging Shaw” will receive a regional theatre production under Brown’s direction at the New Jersey Repertory Company in March and April 2008.

Eric Keenanahan gave a public lecture entitled “Queer Nationalism and the Homeland Security State.” It was a four-part lecture series in Seminars in the City that was sponsored and organized by CLAGS (Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, CUNY).

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**Living Learning Communities in CAS**

Three proposals for Living Learning Communities submitted by faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences were chosen for funding by the former Vice President for Student Success, James Anderson. The three communities are: China House: a living learning community where residents speak Chinese and deepen their understanding of Chinese culture, proposal submitted by Ray Bromley and Anthony DeBlasi; Francophone: a living learning community where residents speak French and study areas of the world outside France where the French language is spoken, proposal submitted by Eloise Brière; and Beyond Hollywood and Bollywood: Living, Learning, Exploring Influences of Culture and Politics on Cinema: a living learning community for students who are passionate about the world of cinema, proposal submitted by Vivien Ng.

Each of these communities can accommodate up to thirty students and the program began this academic year. CAS Today will feature these living learning communities in its Spring issue.

**Theater Department Design and Technical Faculty Host USITT**

The design and technical faculty of the Department of Theatre recently hosted the USITT Upstate New York Section meeting. The meeting was held on a Saturday afternoon and filled all five theatres, the shops and classrooms with a variety of design and technology events. Of note, BMI Supply, responsible for the major lighting upgrade in the Main Theatre in 2005, had lighting representatives showcasing new products of interest to design and technical theatre people. Also, a demonstration of Lightbox was led by its creator, Charles Kirby, who received the Wally Russell Most Promising Newcomer Award in 2006. It was an afternoon filled with many opportunities to view and try the latest technical and design tools.

**Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Department Hosts Albany High Teachout**

At the end of March, the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences was visited by Albany High School teacher, Jeff Beyer, accompanied by 60 of his students for the purpose of hearing two half-hour talks. One talk was led by Michael Landin on Weather and Forecasting held in the new Map Room and the other led by Professor Vincent Idone on Lightning held in the Earth Sciences second floor conference room.

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**History Department is Relocated**

The faculty and staff of the History Department has moved to renovated space on the first floor and basement levels of the Social Science Building. They have traded their dorm room offices on Dutch Quad for brighter and functional spaces.
Awards and Honors

Art
(Exhibitions and Scholarly Accomplishments)
❖ Audrey Kupferberg – Appraisal of a large collection of 1912 film posters for the Museum of Modern Art Film Department.
❖ JoAnne Carson – Awarded the Louise Bourgeois Residency for a Sculptor, Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, New York.
❖ Adam Frelin – Alpert Ucross Residency Prize, Alpert Award in the Arts

Languages, Literatures and Cultures
❖ Eloise Brière – Given the Diversity Leadership Award for 2007-08 by the University Commission on Diversity and Affirmative Action.

Grant from CNSE to fund Performance
Theatre Professor Jackie Roberts has received a grant from the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering to fund a 2009 Biotech Performance Festival. The Festival will be jointly funded by the Department of Theatre and CNSE and include the work of novelist William Kennedy of the New York State Writers Institute. The purpose is to provide an outlet for a theatrical response to a world rapidly transformed by technology. Professor Roberts explains that “as artists, our perceptions of nature and culture have been greatly affected by this modern phenomenon.” The Festival will put out a call for ten-minute plays that address the cultural and aesthetic significance of biotechnology. The text may tackle any aspect of this issue from stem cell research to genetic manipulation. "But there will be a special interest in works that are in dialogue with nanotechnology," says Roberts. In keeping with the spirit of the project, the plays may have a cast of two to eight characters but no one-character shows. Also, the playwright is free to use any style of language or physical movement, however the action will occur within a predesigned BioArt installation. This is designed as a competition and nine texts will be chosen to make up the Festival that will be fully produced by the University in the fall of 2009.

Excellence Awards, Spring 2007
CAS Faculty Receive University Honors
Officer in Charge, Susan Herbst, recognized and honored recipients of the University’s excellence awards at a ceremony and reception held in the Campus Center Ballroom on April 23, 2007. We are pleased to recognize the following recipients from the College of Arts and Sciences:

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING (FULL-TIME)
Lotfi Sayahi, Languages, Literatures and Cultures
David Wills, Languages, Literatures and Cultures
Cheryl Frye, Psychology
Jannette Swanson, Sociology

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH
Steven Messner, Distinguished Teaching Professor

Also selected for the 2007 COLLINS FELLOWS AWARD is Professor Steven Messner, Distinguished Teaching Professor appointed to the Department of Sociology. A long-time citizen of the University at Albany, he was honored at the Spring 2007 Graduate Commencement Ceremony.

2007 Dean’s Teaching Award
The College of Arts and Sciences awarded the 2007 Dean’s Teaching Award to the following faculty: Gerald Zahavi (History) for Innovation in Teaching; Karyn Loscocco (Sociology) for Service in Teaching; and Amy Murrell Taylor (History) for Service in Teaching. 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 2006 Dean’s Teaching Awardees. The winners were honored at a luncheon in the Patroon Room where they received a certificate and $400.

Edward Schwarzschild, English, was selected as a Fulbright Teaching Fellow and is traveling abroad for the 2007-08 academic year. Schwarzschild is the author of Responsible Me, which was chosen as one of the “Best Books of 2005” by the San Francisco Chronicle. Professor Schwarzschild has a new book out (September 2007) entitled: The Family Diamond.
Theatre students, alumni, staff, friends and family from as far away as Connecticut and Washingtonville, NY joined together on October 20th to honor the life-long dedication and commitment of Professors Jarka and Grayce Burian. Grayce (seated) was on hand to help dedicate the Jarka and Grayce Burian Theatre Resource Library in memory of her husband. The student's resource library was made possible through the generous donation of books, papers and drawings from their nearly five decades of work within the University at Albany Theatre Department, the Schenectady County Community College Theatre Department and throughout the Capital District theatre scene. Interim Dean Edelgard Wulfert and theatre department Chair J. Kevin Doolen spoke to the prestigious academic and theatrical accomplishments of both Jarka and Grayce and the enduring relationships that the Burians had formed throughout the UAlbany community. Friend and sculptress Terri Cosma Boor (second from the left) joined the festivities with her donation of a marble sculpture, entitled Cassandra, adding beauty to the wonderful tomes and treasures that fill the bookshelves.

Photo credit: Tim Raab, Northern Photo

### Student Success

- **Laura Wittern-Keller**, History doctoral student, won the New York State Archives annual Excellence in Research Award in recognition of the depth of the research she did for her dissertation. Dr. Wittern-Keller has been appointed to a two-year term as visiting assistant professor in the Department of History.

- **Also from History**, **Susan McCormick** was a leader in preparing a successful grant application. Researching New York Conference was awarded $2500 for support of the public programs from the New York State Council for the Humanities.

- **David Cook**, Atmospheric Science undergraduate major, has received the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Hollings Scholarship Award. He is the number one ranked student weather forecaster in the United States as evaluated in his participation in the WxChallenge, a national forecasting contest.

- **U.S. Navy Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, Jr.** announced the recipients of the 2007 Department of Commerce Gold and Silver Medal Awards. Atmospheric Science graduates **Geoffrey DeMego**, **Eric Rogers** and **Matthew Pyle** were selected for the Gold Medal award. The Gold and Silver Medals are the highest honor awards that can be granted by the Secretary of Commerce for dedication to Commerce and NOAA missions.

- **Steve Hymowech**, English graduate student, has an essay entitled “Surfing the Novel: Recognizing Patterns of Imperial Democracy” forthcoming from Cambridge Scholars Press.


- **English graduate student Aidan Thompson’s** poetry was published in December 2006 by Palimpsest Press. The title of the book is So Earnest to Have a Green Point.

- **Val Haynes**, English, was awarded the Michael Corso Award at the recent DSS Awards Ceremony and Luncheon. She graduated in May 2007 with a B.A. degree in English with a GPA of 3.96 and has begun graduate study in Composition and Rhetoric at the University at Albany.

- **Theatre student, Shuhei Kinoshita**, from Japan, received the Burian Award this past Spring. He has a 3.68 GPA, which is especially impressive since he came to the University without knowledge of the English language.
The College of Arts and Sciences faculty have been very busy preparing grant proposals to fund their research and many have been successful. We have included a top list of successful faculty who have received significant grants in Fiscal Year 2007 (see inset box). Following is a list of faculty who have also received funding for their research.

- **Professor Jackie Roberts** (Theatre) has received from the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) an award of $10,000 for the 2009 Biotech Performance Festival.
- The American Cancer Society awarded Professor **Min-Ho Lee** (Biological Sciences), a grant of nearly $700,000 in funding over the next four years.
- **Professor Scott South** (Sociology) recently received a grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.
- **Professor Virginia Eubanks** (Women’s Studies) has received a two-year grant from the NSF Program on Ethics and Values of Science, Engineering and Technology. The grant will fund her research on “The Citizenship Effects of Welfare Administration Technologies.”
- **Professor Jennifer Stromer-Galley** (Communication) has been successful in her first NSF proposal attempt. She, along with a colleague in Texas, and **Nick Webb** in Professor Tomek Strzalkowski’s Center will receive funding.
- **Professor Michael Werner** (Classics) has received an award to investigate and evaluate the remains of the Roman amphitheater at Viminacium Archaeological Site, managed by the Archaeological Institute, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Funds for the project will be used to define the physical extent of the site where the amphitheatre is located and evaluation of the state of preservation of the structure in order to place it under the protection of law as a cultural monument.

### College of Arts and Sciences in Fiscal Year 2007

#### TOP TEN GRANT GETTERS (as of 11/2/07)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ing-Nang Wang</td>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>$242,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Alba</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>$159,682</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Strait</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>$122,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evgeny Dikarev</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>$115,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Molinari</td>
<td>Atmospheric Sciences</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helmut Hirsch</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elana Gordis</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>$75,541</td>
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<td>Kevin Knuth</td>
<td>Physics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zai Liang</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>$69,667</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fang Yang</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>$36,356</td>
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- **Professor Adam Frelin** (Art) has received an IHJ Commemorative Arts Installation grant, Japan/US Friendship Commission and the US Embassy. He also received a dwelling project grant from the Forest Hiss Educational Trust.

### Research News

Professor **Lawrence Schell** (Anthropology) was elected to the rank of American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow. Each year the Council of AAAS elects fellows whose “efforts on behalf of the advancement of science or its applications are scientifically or socially distinguished.” He was honored “for pioneering research on the influence of physical and behavioral factors on human growth and health in urban American environments.” He was elected at the same time as another UAlbany professor, **Marlene Belfort** of the Department of Biomedical Sciences, School of Public Health.

Professor **David Strait** (Anthropology) has received a National Science Foundation grant of $940,000 to study how the facial skeletons of human ancestors and some primates are adapted to withstand the forces imposed by chewing. Strait’s research has also included comparing wrist bones of early hominids with those of people, apes and some monkey species. For that research, he was featured prominently in an article in *Science News*: August 4, 2007 issue. The article includes a lengthy discussion with the promise of more debate on the issue on whether bipedalism originated in tree-walking apes or ground-striding hominids. Anthropologist Kevin D. Hunt of Indiana University in Bloomington notes that “this new dispute joins a long-running clash of hypotheses about what circumstances led to the evolution of an upright gait in the first place.”

Professor **Timothy Gage** (Anthropology) has accepted an invitation from NIH Center for Scientific Review to serve as a member of the Social Sciences and Population Studies Study Section. Members are selected on the basis of their demonstrated competence and achievements in their scientific discipline as evident by the quality of research accomplishments, publications in scientific journals and other significant scientific activities, achievements and honors.

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Just In:

Distinguished Professor **Eric Block** (Chemistry) has received notification from the National Science Foundation that his research will be funded until 2011. This makes 30 years of continuous NSF funding.
Elise Andaya
Anthropology

Andaya was born in Cambodia, Australia, and spent a year there. She then moved to Auckland, New Zealand, and lived there for 16 years. After later studying at NYU, Andaya learned of the assistant professor positions available here at the University at Albany. She came aboard knowing that the University at Albany’s Anthropology department provides an “extremely, collegial, warm, and inviting” atmosphere. “Some departments can be solitary—very confusing. I didn’t want that,” she tells CAS Today.

Currently, Andaya teaches “Intro to Cultural Anthropology.” Next semester, Andaya will teach “Anthropology of Health and Well-being” as well as “Anthropology of the Americas.”

If there is one thing about the college life Andaya encourages students to embrace it is openness. “It is ‘experimental’ after all, which means that things won’t always turn out as expected,” she said. “It is important to be open-minded to different perspectives of others around the world.”

For Ayala, teaching is an opportunity to empower her students and impart the value of learning social differences. In addition to teaching, she has co-authored a book manuscript on migration, looking at its connection to the redefinition of the normative structures in Mexico as well as the redefinition of the normative structures in Latin America.

Maria Isabel Ayala
Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latino Studies

Much of Assistant Professor Isabel Ayala’s scholarly work can be traced back to her first-hand experience with migration and its social impact. “As a first-generation immigrant, I have experienced the process of becoming,” she said. “I am aware of the meaning implication that it can have, not only for communities in general, but for the people that engage in this type of process.”

Thus, very aptly, Ayala’s research and training have focused specifically on migration and its social and cultural consequences for the Latino population. Within this area of study, she has a major emphasis on structural inequalities. Taking on a sociological perspective, Ayala hopes to make her students understand the complex interrelation of the factors that affect Hispanics in the United States and Latin America.

Ayala was born in Havana, Cuba and spent 16 months observing the healthcare and social changes (to name a few) as a graduate student. The most interesting part of this was seeing a country that was communist and finally changing. It was also interesting to see the consequences of these changes before her eyes as well. She made reference to those visits with her students and how they have helped her students to understand the social, economic, and political pressures that make them necessary.

Kevin Bell
English

“Sometimes it feels daunting,” said Professor Kevin Bell. “I often feel that there is too much in the world that we should be thinking about. How do we learn to prioritize?”

Assistant Professor Kevin Bell earned his Ph.D. from New York University and has served as a guest lecturer at universities in both the U.S. and the U.K. Among Bell’s goals is the hope of creating classes that “generate more of an interest in the subject matter.” Though relationships between experimental artworks and some of the political pressures that make them necessary.”

Bell specializes in British and American literary modernisms, 20th and 21st-century American literature, film, and cultural theory. One of his courses, this semester includes a class on British and American literary modernisms, which involves talks of writers like Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and Ralph Ellison. Another of his courses focuses on experimental African American writing. “The material is difficult,” he said. “It is ‘experimental’ after all, which means that things won’t always turn out in exactly the ways you might intend as a teacher.”

Amy Bloch
Art

“I expected terrific and friendly colleagues, smart students, lots of support, and good resources. And, in fact, that’s what I’ve found here.”

Proximity to cities like Boston, New York City and boasting world-class libraries and museums, were part of what drew Assistant Professor Amy Bloch to come teach at UAlbany.

After earning her Ph.D. in Art History from Rutgers University, Bloch went on to serve as Visiting Assistant Professor at Rochester Institute of Technology followed by two years as Assistant Professor at California State University, Chico.

Bloch’s goals while at UAlbany include getting to know and learning from both her colleagues in the art department, whom she describes as “fantastic teachers and scholars,” and her students. She also plans to continue advancing and developing her own research program.

This semester, Bloch is teaching Renaissance Art, an introductory course surveying Italian Renaissance art and architecture which relates individual monuments and/or cities to general trends and themes relevant to the Italian Renaissance era.

“I hope my students take away an interest in, and love of, art and architecture—but, as importantly, I hope that students leave my classes with the ability to look at art and architectural structures in educated and sophisticated ways,” said Bloch. “I want them to become curious, smart, and careful viewers.”

Jorge Brioso
Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Assistant Professor Jorge Brioso comes to the University at Albany from the University of New York at Buffalo. He was born into a family of US Army officers, which gave him the opportunity to travel a lot and experience different cultures. His research interests include the study of a Trans-Atlantic cultural tradition, particularly the exchange of intellectual and artistic ideas between Spain and Latin America.

While at Carleton College, Professor Brioso taught a variety of courses: “Prose in Spanish and Latin America,” “Contemporary Spanish Cinema,” “Lorca, Dávila, Bulto: Surrealism in Painting, Poetry and film,” “Contemporary Spanish Novel, Don Quijote,” “Trans-Atlantic Exiles: Cuba and Spain,” “The Invention of the Novel: Don Quijote,” and Spanish languages at all levels. He is interested in encouraging students to establish links between the cultural and intellectual exchange between Spain and Latin America. Professor Brioso worked closely with students to advise them on their academic pursuits.

Professor Brioso is currently working on a book project about what he considers to be the three important trends in modern Spanish culture. He is an expert in the study of the transatlantic exchange that occurred between the countries on opposite sides of the Atlantic. (NOT AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW)

Elizabeth Popp Berman
Sociology

Economic sociology is an area of sociology that the university had previously lacked, but Assistant Professor Elizabeth Popp Berman was eager to change that. After studying sociology as an undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania, then earning her Ph.D. at UC Berkeley, Berman found her niche in her field. While sociology as a field has always been concerned with the emphasis on organization and economy truly piqued her interest.

“Ever since I was an undergraduate, sociology had a way of making sense of the world that rang true with me,” she said. “Currently, market and sales are getting increasingly more important and central to my work. I think some of the most important things in sociology deal with those factors. I’m looking forward to teaching it.”

Originally from central Pennsylvania, Berman is glad to be back in the northeastern area. With a family of her own now, she’s able to continue her career and stay in closer touch of her parents. However, Albany is a far cry from the sheep farm in rural Pennsylvania where she was raised. “I really like Albany so far,” she said. “It’s easy to get around and friendly, but it also doesn’t feel like a small town.”

This semester she teaches “Sociology of Science” and “Organizations in Society.”

Recently, she published an article in Theory and Society. “Before the Professional Project,” examines how organizing English and Anthropology PhD programs. Berman has a forthcoming article in Social Studies of Science. "Why Did Universities Start Patenting? Institution-Building and the Road to the Bohr-Dole Act?" Currently she is also at work on a book manuscript based on a dissertation, tentatively titled Creating the Market University: Science, the State, and the Economy.
Industrial and Organizational Psychologist Marcus Crede has lived all over the world, and happily cites the University at Albany as his latest home. He resided in Germany for nine years before moving with his family to South Africa where he lived for 14 years. He then obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in central-eastern Illinois and subsequently spent two years teaching at Fairleigh Dickinson University in central New Jersey before coming to Albany.

Within his field, Crede is interested in workplace behaviors, predictors of workplace behavior (such as job satisfaction and personality), and factors that influence the academic performance of college students. Currently he studies factors that influence the manner in which students adjust to the college environment. In other work he has focused on factors that cause job satisfaction or dissatisfaction and how satisfaction influences employee behavior.

“This through my research I hope to be able to shed some additional light on how people experience their jobs and how we can make work more enjoyable and employees more effective,” he said. “Industrial Psychologists study work, which affects our happiness and sense of identity in a very fundamental manner. It’s important that researchers are able to make their area of inquiry relevant to people outside of their immediate field.”

Crede teaches a graduate class this semester, “Survey in Organizational Psychology.” Next semester he will turn his attention to undergraduates, teaching “Experimental Psychology” and “Industrial/Organizational Psychology.”

— MEIKO BEYER

**David Eason**  
East Asian Studies

“Having spent time at such public universities as both a teacher and a student, I also feel uniquely able to relate to the experiences, as well as the concerns, shared by many of the students at SUNY-Albany.”

Assistant Professor David Eason comes to the University at Albany from the University of California, Los Angeles where he designed and taught the course entitled “The Samurai in History and the Popular Imagination.” Previously, he served as Visiting Foreign Researcher at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan after earning his Master’s Degree from the UCLA Department of History in 2003. He then advanced to Ph.D. candidacy.

When he visited Albany last February, Eason was very impressed with both the East Asian Studies Department and the university as a whole. But the students, he said, are what impressed him the most. “I was pleased to see such an engaged and lively group of students and this was one of the major reasons behind deciding to leave Los Angeles and start teaching here in Albany,” he said.

This semester Eason is teaching a survey course of Japanese history spanning from the earliest historical records up until the year 1600 along with a course on Japanese women’s history. “I want students to realize that Japan has a rich, complex, and at times deeply controversial history, and that the study of the problems and issues that accompany this past are relevant not only in furthering an understanding of present-day Japan, but also in deepening one’s understanding of many of the larger developments that have and continue to take place in the world at large.”

— JILL GAVIN

**Richard Fogarty**  
History

After teaching in Virginia and Pennsylvania, Assistant Professor Richard Fogarty went homeward bound for his next teaching position. The historian of 20th-century Europe specializing in French history, is a native of upstate New York and excited to be back in the area. Fogarty will be teaching history courses with an emphasis on his interests, such as imperialism, war and society, race and racism, and the First World War. “What links all of these issues—race, imperialism, war and society—are the stories—history is a collection of stories, and who doesn’t like stories?”

Currently he teaches a graduate reading seminar on twentieth-century Europe, and in the spring he will teach “France Since 1815” to undergraduates and a graduate reading seminar on the history of European imperialism. Teaching is a career Fogarty approaches with energy and inspiration, and he still recalls influential teachers in his own life from when he was an undergraduate history major at SUNY Geneseo. “I try to follow the example of the great teachers I had during my own education,” he said. “I teach with passion and enthusiasm, and hope that at the very least students will examine the subjects I teach more closely, if only to find out why I’m so passionate and enthusiastic. And, in the end, history is a collection of stories, and who doesn’t like stories?”

He completed his graduate study in the warmer climates of the University of Georgia and the University of California Santa Barbara, but the University at Albany setting has so far been an agreeable transition. Fogarty notes the welcoming atmos-phere, research and teaching opportunities, as well as the campus itself, which he finds ideally suited for running.

This spring semester, Fogarty is also looking forward to the publication of his book, Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914-1918, which will be published by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

— MEIKO BEYER

**Heekyoung Hahn**  
Mathematics and Statistics

As a young student growing up in South Korea, Assistant Professor Heekyoung Hahn found her calling for math early on, at the age of ten years old. Not only did she look forward most of all to her math classes each school day, but she also engaged her older brother’s friends studying math at the college level in discussions about math. “In one such episode, a college guy, my brother’s friend, told me about rational and irrational numbers, as well as the infinity concept,” she said. “At that age of course, I thought the biggest number could be only 100,000 or something like that. So I was very motivated and fascinated to study math more.”

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— MEIKO BEYER
**New Faculty**

When it came time to choose her college major upon entering Sookmyung Women’s University, she naturally chose math. Hahn went on to complete her Ph.D. at Sookmyung, before coming to Albany to teach. This semester she teaches Linear Algebra. “I love to study, but I also love to teach,” she said. “Personally, I like having students come to me and interacting with them. I show my passion for math to my students and it motivates them.” According to Hahn, “mathematics is the right way to explain phenomena logically.”

Hahn is also continuing research in number theory while teaching, and finds Albany an ideal place to pursue both teaching and scholarly work. “Everyone here is so willing to help,” she said. “Sometimes I just want to study, but I know all the meetings and advice are helping me.” She has published several articles, her latest publication will appear later this year in Ramanujan Journal, titled “Eisenstein series associated with gamma_1(3).” Though excited about all her research and teaching opportunities, Hahn is also looking forward to one day coming back to another long-time interest, painting. “Maybe one day as a hobby I will try it again, but right now, I’m too busy!”

— MEIKO BEYER

**David Hochfelder**

**History**

From electrical engineer to history professor, Assistant Professor David Hochfelder has taken a seemingly drastic career path change. However, Hochfelder integrates his two academic backgrounds. He specializes in the history of technology, an area of history he hopes to revise as a teaching at UAlbany. “I always had an interest in history, but electrical engineering seemed like a better professional choice at the time,” he said. “Nevertheless, I took history courses every chance I had as an undergraduate. One of my history professors explained to me that I could combine my engineering with history.”

After a brief but rewarding four years as an electrical engineer, he returned to school at Case Western Reserve to earn his Ph.D. in history. Prior to that, he earned his B.S. and M.S. in Electrical Engineering at Northwestern University. As a teacher of history, he focuses on the relationship between technological innovation and social change. He is also interested in public history and the period of 1865 to 1920 in the U.S.

This semester, Hochfelder teaches a graduate seminar in public history and an advanced undergraduate course on the Gilded Age. Next semester, he will teach “U.S. History of Technology.” Hochfelder is passionate about passing on the skills he uses as a historian to his students. “Every student can and should become a historian,” he said. “A historian uses analysis, well-constructed arguments, and believes in having one right answer or a monopoly of knowledge; students can show different viewpoints and learn how to support them with evidence and present them to each other.”

He looks forward to teaching at Albany, where he sees many opportunities to create new courses. Currently, he is also at work on a book on the history of the telegraph.

— MEIKO BEYER

**Kelli Lammie**

**Communication**

“Throughout my education, my professors were influential in teaching me not what to think but how to think more critically and analytically. I strive to have a similar influence on my own students.”

Assistant Professor Kelli Lammie received her Ph.D. last year from the University of Pennsylvania, Annenberg School for Communication. Before coming to UAlbany, she served as Visiting Assistant Professor at Fairfield University, where her courses included “Mass Media and Society,” “Political Communication Seminar,” and “Argument and Advocacy.”

Lammie’s desire to work in an environment that valued both teaching and innovative research led her to UAlbany. While here, Lammie hopes to serve as a mentor to both undergraduate and graduate students, helping them to achieve their own goals. She also hopes to “foster a strong collegial atmosphere and collaborate with colleagues and students on research projects.”

She realizes that students are constantly exposed to a variety of media that can influence their attitudes and tries to instill the relevance of these media effects and political communication theory in her students.

Lammie says she hopes her students leave the classroom with “the ability to assess evidence critically and organize and articulate their own ideas successfully.”

— JILL GAVIN

**James Lilley**

**English***

Most college students can relate to this scenario: being required to take a General Education course that is of a topic or subject that is not her/his “cup of tea.” This scenario describes how Professor James D. Lilley came to teach English at the University of Albany.

Originally, Lilley wanted to study philosophy and religion as his major while attending Stanford University as an undergraduate. But after taking that life-changing English general education course, his focus shifted toward something different. Lilley then moved on to pursuing his Ph.D. in English at Princeton University. He applied to these schools while living in his native country, England, near Oxford.

After studying and getting his Ph.D. in Princeton, he applied for Assistant Professor for the English Department at the University at Albany as a start to his teaching career. One of the outstanding qualities of the department that drew Lilley’s attention was common interest in literature. He appreciated how his fellow staff members were interested in the subject as “political, social, and philosophical context.”

Currently, Lilley is teaching “Intro to English Studies” and “19th Century American Literature.” The goal in his teaching is “to make the text come alive” for his students in the classes he teaches. In the spring semester, he will teach “American Gothic Literature.”

When he’s not teaching, Lilley writes articles and publishes papers for various journals. He has written essays and given talks on topics like 18th and 19th century British and American literature, Mexican American and Native American studies, and border and postcolonial theory. He has also published his first book, a collection of essays on Cormac McCarthy, who recently won the Pulitzer Prize for literature. His current project is another book that will cover visual “transformations” throughout the 18th and 19th century providing images of the “other.”

“Sholem-Aleichen. She also hopes to one day teach a course on Marc Chagall, a major Russian-Jewish artist whom her parents always spoke of fondly. “I believe that the work of educating myself is essential to teaching others. What concerns me the most of all is the history in people’s heads. That is why I’m a cultural historian. I think about how and why people make decisions. Lastly, I want my students to be informed citizens of the world, so I teach them to read and analyze the newspaper.”

Aside from her current research, Lilley also wrote a book last year, Conspicuation: The Search for Modern Russian Jewry. She is excited to continue Jewish Studies at Albany, and cites her new colleagues as a major source of motivation. “The staff is very energetic and intellectually engaging—exactly the kind of people you want to be around.”

— JILL GAVIN

**Olga Litvak**

**Judaic Studies**

Director for the Center for Jewish Studies and Associate Professor Olga Litvak came upon her field serendipitously. She started out intending to be a German major while an undergraduate at Columbia College, but after meeting an influential academic adviser, she changed her mind. “You could say I came into this field by accident,” she said. “When I met my adviser we clicked intellectually. I immediately knew I would want to take any of his classes, no matter the subject. I just wanted to study with him.”

That adviser of course was a specialist in Judaic studies, also with an emphasis on Eastern Europe. Litvak excelled at her newfound interest, opportunely she was already fluent in Russian. She had immigrated to the U.S. from the former Soviet Union years ago as a child with her parents. Coincidentally, Albany was the first place they lived when coming to the states before eventually taking residency in Brooklyn, NY. She went on to pursue her Ph.D. in History at Columbia University.

Now back in Albany as a professor, Litvak is here to stay for much different reasons. This semester she teaches “History and State of Israel.” Next semester she will teach “Sex and Money” on the literature of S.N. Rabinovich, also known as Sholem-aleichen. She also hopes to one day teach a course on Marc Chagall, a major Russian-Jewish artist whom her parents always spoke of fondly. “I believe that the work of educating myself is essential to teaching others. What concerns me the most of all is the history in people’s heads. That is why I’m a cultural historian. I think about how and why people make decisions. Lastly, I want my students to be informed citizens of the world, so I teach them to read and analyze the newspaper.”

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— SABRINA KATRAN

**Kurt McKeans**

**Biological Sciences**

“Transitioning from a position as a research scientist to running your own lab can be very difficult and time consuming. I really enjoy being in an active lab and find that interactions between undergraduates, graduate students, and post-docs makes for a productive lab as well.”

Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences Kurt McKeans comes to UAlbany after most recently serving as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Cornell University. McKeans earned his Ph.D. in 2002 at University of California Riverside, where he wrote his dissertation, entitled “The consequences of sexual selection, diet and life history trade-offs on antimicrobial immune function in Drosophila melanogaster.” He credits the new Life Sciences building, a new program in the ecology and evolution of diseases, and the Center for Functional Genomics all as features which attracted him to UAlbany.

McKeans hopes that his students leave the classroom “possessing the ability to think like a scientist and to understand the types of questions that science can address (the age of the earth) as well as those that science can’t address (is there a super-natural or is there a god).”

Throughout his time at UAlbany, McKeans hopes to train students in both the classroom and the lab to be “productive, scientifically literate and engaged members of society.”

McKeans says he loves what he does and hopes that, by the end of the year, he will have others in the lab pursuing what they love about biology.

— JILL GAVIN
Mihye Seo
Communication

It’s not every semester that you walk into class and find that your professor is a Radiohead or Weezer fan. That is, unless you’ve met Professor Mihye Seo. Born and raised in Seoul, Korea, Seo originally went to Korea University to study Chemistry, and even received her Bachelor’s degree in that field. But she was unsure of what to do with her life. She admitted that she thought about going into journalism in the field of reporting. What interested her the most however, was the study of communication and its connection with mass media effects—one of the aspects of communication she teaches here at the University at Albany. While Seo was in Korea, she applied to several universities and colleges in the United States including Ohio State University, the college she was accepted to. She continued her Communication studies there, which led her to the University at Albany, as a visiting professor. While writing her dissertation for Ohio State, she was drawn to the Communications department here at the University at Albany after seeing a “wanted” ad calling for a visiting professor. Seo applied last spring to the “really good, friendly” environment of the Communication department and in April, she finally completed her Ph.D. for Ohio State while physically being here in Albany.

Seo currently teaches “Mass Media Effects in Political Communications” and “Message Design and Social Inﬂuence.” She wishes to get her students interested in mass media despite many theories this subject entails. “It’s one big puzzle where you find one piece after another and put it together. It’s quite fun.”

— Sabrina Katayan

New Faculty

Nathan Powers
Philosophy

Armed with a sense of humor, Assistant Professor Nathan Powers aims to bring students into seemingly daunting philosophical discussions with a smile and a laugh. While teaching ancient Western philosophy, his area of expertise, Powers strives to engage his students’ sense of humor, as well as their minds. “Humor makes people feel welcome to join in the conversation,” he said. “It’s very rewarding to see students who are normally shy, or who feel like they don’t have much to say, warm up to a philosophical discussion. It’s amazing how much work a good joke can do. It can focus people’s attention, change the subject painlessly, and, more specifically to philosophy, it can make people think about a familiar issue from an unfamiliar perspective.”

Currently Powers is particularly interested in what happens in ancient philosophy during the two hundred years after Plato and Aristotle. He studies recent research looking at the value that these centuries had as a diverse and productive time in the history of philosophy. “It’s when ancient philosophy stops being an exclusively Greek project and becomes part of the way that different cultures interact with each other.” He said. “Philosophical schools debated deeply about the foundations of knowledge and ethical ideals in this period. I’m interested in both aspects of them.”

This semester he teaches a graduate course on ancient philosophy as well as a general introduction to philosophy. He looks forward to teaching a graduate seminar on Plato next semester.

— Mieko Beycr

Corianne Scally
Geography and Planning

“The students here seem eager, receptive, and actively engaged in learning and doing planning—a great motivation for a new faculty member.”

Assistant Professor Corianne Scally comes to UAlbany after earning her Ph.D. in Planning & Public Policy at Rutgers University. During that time she also served as Editorial Consultant for the Housing Policy Debate with the Fannie Mae Foundation and Project Consultant for the National Housing Institute.

Scally realizes there is an opportunity to strengthen ties between the university and its surrounding neighborhoods. The supportive environment of the university, she hopes, will help her succeed as a researcher and teacher, giving her the chance to contribute important scholarship in her subfields of housing and community development.

Scally seeks to build positive relationships with not only local community organizations involved in housing and community development, but also with government agencies as well. She says this could promote future partnerships with significant impact on the health and vitality of the city and its residents.

Among other classes, she is teaching Urban Community Development for graduate students this semester.

Scally has been impressed with the overall UAlbany community and appreciates how friendly and helpful everyone has been at helping her get acclimated to the university.

— Jill Gavin

Timothy D. Sargay
Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Employing his natural inclination to pick up nuances in sound and voice, it comes as little surprise that Assistant Professor Timothy Sargay chose a linguistic path. In particular, his area of expertise is Russian language, which he finds to be especially intriguing to his ears. “I have long been enchanted by the melodic tunes of Russians,” he said. “One of the catalysts in my pursuit of Russian studies is probably the musical or speech-sound dimension, whether spoken or sung. I am likewise charmed by the purity of the vowel sounds of Russian and the softness of its “dorsal” articulation of all the dental consonants, which contrasts very starkly with the snappy crispness of English.”

As a teacher of Russian language, Sargay likes his role to that of a voice or music teacher. One of the main roles as an educator is also to teach translation, where he assigns texts for translation and helps students to refine their translation work. This semester he teaches a third-year Russian language and upper-level Russian language and Russian-English, English-Russian translation courses. “The courses I teach are supposed to develop practical linguistic skill sets, and so they naturally gravitate toward a “workshop” model in which I am closer to a coach than I am to a lecturer,” he said of his approach to the classroom.

As a translator himself, Sargay looks forward to completing his translation of a contemporary Russian “memioristic novel” ofられたKantorsocial satires of 2006. A Drawing Textbook. He has been doing primarily scholarly work for the past 15 years, having just recently completed his dissertation in Slavic Studies at Yale University. Previously he also worked as a translator and editor for Russian media affairs on the staff of a research journal, The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press.

— Mieko Beycr

Jason Shepard
Chemistry

“I am happy to again be on campus, as the general atmosphere in the Chemistry Department and the overall academic community seems to be both congenial and collegial.”

After three years lecturing for Biomedical Sciences graduate coursework downtown with the School of Public Health, Assistant Professor Jason Shepard is now back on campus in the Chemistry Department.

Shepard earned his Ph.D. in chemistry and Biotechnology from Tufts University in 2003. He then went to work for the NYS Department of Health as a research assistant in their Biodetection Laboratory, where he still conducts research.

Shepard would like to bridge the gap between what students learn in the classroom and what they do in the workplace, especially in regards to his Forensic Chemistry class. His goals for his first year in the Chemistry Department include acquiring instruments and equipment for a proper research lab as well as applying for external funding. “This new position provides me with new challenges for me, including much more interaction with students and the potential to help continue to develop new coursework on Forensic Science.”

Shepard will also serve on the Chemistry Department Undergraduate Advisement and Equipment Committees.

— Mieko Beycr

Kendra Smith-Howard
Department of History

Starting out in childhood, Assistant Professor Kendra Smith-Howard has continued a life-long interest in environmental history. She often visited her grandparents’ farms and spends her free time in the outdoors and wilderness. Fresh from graduation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with her Ph.D., Smith-Howard joins the Albany history department looking forward not only to her classes and research, but also to the many other opportunities for her academic interests.

“This is a region and a place full of environmental history stories that have been largely unexplored by scholars in my field. It’s the state of the Adirondacks and the Catskill Mountains, close to the homes of John Burroughs and George Perkins Marsh, the Hudson River School sites...” she said. “I’m also eager to partner with my fellow scholars in history and across campus to get the campus thinking about environmental topics. I’m cheered by the fact that the last two books selected for the campus reading project have had environmental themes.”

Currently, she is teaching a graduate seminar on “American Environmental History.” Next semester she will teach an undergraduate course, “The Progressive Generation, 1900-1937” as well as a graduate seminar on the history of public health. “I don’t think of my students as empty vessels with whom I’ll fill with great nuggets of truth,” she said about her approach to teaching. “I love learning, and learn lots from the exchanges that develop with students in the classroom. I like interacting with students and helping them to meet their goals. I try to get out of the way and allow for opportunities to see learning happen.”

She finds inspiration in her field not only from her students, but also from historical figures involved with the environment. In particular, she loves to hear oral histories of dairy farmers and to read the diaries of women farm workers. On a related note, she is currently revising her dissertation on the cultural and environmental history of milk in the U.S. for publication as a book.

— Mieko Beycr

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New Faculty

Paul Stasi

English

“I hope my students learn to refuse to simply accept the world as it is and try out the commodified narratives with which our culture surrounds us.”

Assistant Professor Paul Stasi served as Visiting Assistant Professor at Northwestern University before coming to UAlbany where he taught, among other courses, “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Poem.”

He earned his B.A. from Stanford University and earned a Ph.D. in English from the University of California at Berkeley. His dissertation is titled “Cosmopolitan Primitivism: Modernism, Imperialism and the Historical Sense.”

Stasi is excited about teaching at a public university and is happy to be back on the East Coast where he grew up. His hopes for his first year include learning how to produce writing while teaching. For his students, he hopes they gain a “critical habit of mind” and “an interest in reflecting upon one’s place in the world.”

Stasi was impressed by the member of the English department he met during his interview process and says he has been pleased by the collegiality of the rest of the faculty as well. He has also enjoyed the “sincere engagement” shown by many of his students in class discussions.

— Jill Gavin

Sapna Swaroop

Sociology

Assistant Professor Sapna Swaroop comes to the University of Albany from a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago’s Population Research Center funded by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. She was appointed to the postdoctoral fellowship in 2005 after earning the Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Michigan in 2005.

Swaroop’s research examines the effects of neighborhood characteristics and racial/ethnic segregation on civic participation behavior and voluntary organizations. She has published in three of the “top” sociology journals and is a member of the American Sociological Association and the Population Association of America.

In the future, Swaroop plans to investigate how the presence of neighborhood social resources facilitates or hinders racial/ethnic change. She will also explore the extent to which “ethnic enclaves” supply the close-knit social networks and informal social support they are presumed to provide with a focus on predominantly Mexican neighborhoods in Chicago and Los Angeles.

(Not available for interview)

Kate Strully

Sociology

Assistant Professor Kate Strully researches and teaches sociology from a multi-faceted viewpoint. She concentrates her studies, based primarily on the U.S., on examining the relationships between race, class, and health. Strully’s areas of study span everything from employment to birth weight to patterns of health deficiency within generations of families. Currently, she is undertaking research on racial segregation patterns in the U.S. and how it may shape the spread of disease, contributing to racial inequality in areas of health and well-being. “My research tries to understand how patterns are maintained over generations, and how U.S. social and economic policies either augment or reduce the disparities,” she said.

This semester, Strully teaches “Medical Sociology” and “Social Inequality.” Teaching at the university level, she finds the opportunity to give students a new awareness about their society a rewarding experience. For Strully, the pleasure of sharing information and knowledge is gratifying and, simply put, fun. “It’s always satisfying when, part way through the semester you realize the students know all sorts of new things they didn’t know before they started the class,” she said.

There are many different aspects to her topics, she finds that at the root of things, the material is accessible and interesting for students. Strully finds creative ways to make connections with the academic study of society to everyday life. “Sociology is exciting because it forces you to think critically about all sorts of different aspects of the world and your life,” she said. “It’s everything from what foods you eat to how goods are traded in the global economy. I try to come up with examples that are relevant to contemporary social debates and to students’ lives, anything from presidential debates to the war in Iraq to popular TV shows.”

As Strully continues her research and teaching, she is finding Albany to be a friendly and supportive environment. “The fall foliage is beautiful,” she said. “And all of my colleagues and students have been very welcoming.”

— Mieko Beyer

Jing Zhang

Mathematics and Statistics

Algebraic geometry demands constant practice with open problems from its students, but Assistant Professor Jing Zhang approaches teaching with both practicality and passion. Of his field he said simply, “I am interested in math and want to show my students its beauty.” As for the hands-on classroom setting, he endeavors to prepare his lectures carefully and make connections to other subject areas in order to educate his students effectively.

Zhang completed his Ph.D. at Washington University in St. Louis. Now in his role as professor, he finds teaching at Albany to be a pleasant transition, noting the friendly atmosphere and good teaching environment. This fall semester he is instructing graduate students in his class, “Algebraic Geometry and Riemann Surfaces.” Though other areas of mathematics have appealed to him, such as research in numerical, real, and wavelet analysis, Zhang enjoys his current focus on algebraic geometry. “Algebraic geometry is a fascinating field because it is a branch of mathematics which combines techniques of many different fields,” he said. “It has deep connections with almost every aspect of modern mathematics.”

Active in publications, he has published just over a dozen articles, of which the most recent was “On the existence of nontrivial theorems with vanishing Hodge cohomology,” in the Michigan Math Journal in 2006. In addition to his publishing and teaching, Zhang also has been a reviewer for Mathematical Reviews.

— Mieko Beyer

New Faculty Reception

Recently tenured and promoted Associate Professor Rongwei Yang from Mathematics and Statistics greets new colleagues Jing Zhang and HeeKyung Hahn.

New faculty member Corinne Scally (Geography and Planning) is in the background.

New faculty member Torje Brion (Languages, Literatures and Cultures) receives instructions from Professor Joanna Sabadell-Nieto.

New faculty member Corianne Scally (Geography and Planning) is in the background.

New faculty from English James Lilley, Patricia Chu, and Kevin Bell share stories about their first days at Albany. Kurt McKeen (Biology) is in the background.
Caribbean Scholar on Campus

by Heather Stenison

Professor Patricia Mohammed visited UAlbany this semester, continuing UAlbany’s year-long friendship with the three campuses of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados. She contributed to UAlbany’s initiative to foster faculty and student exchanges between the three campuses of the University of the West Indies.

Her presence was an example of UAlbany’s push towards increased internationalization and diversity,” said Glyne A. Griffith, chair of the Latin and Caribbean Studies department (LACS) and an associate professor with the Department of English. “The visit was also important for LACS and the Department of Women’s Studies, as both departments were able to enhance their Caribbean studies offerings at UAlbany,” Glyne said.

Mohammed, a professor of gender and development, was here on a Fulbright out of the LACS department. The courses she taught were “The Philosophy of Gender in Caribbean Thought” and “Imaging the Caribbean: Cultural and Visual Translation.” They were shared resources between LACS and the Department of Women’s Studies, as students of both majors could earn credits from them.

Her visit was possible due to the efforts of Griffith, former CAS Dean Wick-Pelletier, and the chair of the Women’s Studies department, Chris Bose. Their initiative was also collaborated with UAlbany’s Office of International Education and the Office of International Education at the University at Albany in 1967. The author of over 50 scholarly publications, Mohammed is an expert on Caribbean thought, gender development and women’s rights.

Support Staff on the move…

Christine Gervasi was hired this past summer as an Instructional Support Specialist for the Department of Biology. Christine has a Ph.D. in Biology from the University at Albany and has served as an Instructor for the North East Regional Forensics Institute (NERFI). The CAS Technical Services new Instructional Support Technician/ Electronic systems position has been filled by Vladimir Grigoryants. Vladimir has a Ph.D. in Physics and was most recently employed by the SUNY Research Foundation as a Senior Research Associate. The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures welcomes Janna Harton as their new Assistant to the Chair. Janna has a B.S. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with administrative experience at the University of South Florida. Gail Hughes has been hired as a Staff Assistant in the Department of English. She has an M.A. from the University at Albany and experience as a teaching assistant, an adjunct lecturer and as an advisor for the Human Biology program at the University. The College’s newest Assistant to the Chair, Maria Moon, comes to us from the Department of Athletics where she served as the Assistant Director of Athletics and Aquatics. Maria has an M.S. from San Francisco State University. Note that Maria is charting new territory in this newly created position in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. The Department of Mathematics and Statistics is pleased to have hired Stacy Newman as their Assistant to the Chair. Stacy has an M.P.A. from the University at Albany. Stacy was previously employed at Skidmore College where she served as the Associate Director in the Office of Donor Relations. Deb Privott, Staff Assistant, joined the Dean’s Office in August. Deb has an M.A. in Criminal Justice from the University at Albany. Prior to being hired by CAS, Deb served as the Alumni Quadrangle Coordinator with the Department of Residential Life and Housing. CAS Computing has hired William Pszyczynska as a Lead Programmer Analyst. William has a B.A. from the University at Albany. He comes to the University from Information Services at Albany Medical Center.

Retirements…

The Department of Biological Sciences extends best wishes to Alice Jacket who retired in September. Alice served as an Instructional Support Specialist for the Department. Dona Parker officially retired in July after completing 40 years of service at the University at Albany. Dona has served as Assistant Dean for the past 20 years. Dona will continue in the Dean’s Office on a part-time basis for the next several months. Marianne Simon, who retired in September, will be sorely missed by CAS Computing Services and the College as a whole. Thankfully, Marianne has agreed to work part time for the College. The Department of Chemistry extends their best to Fred Wolff who retired in July. Fred will continue on a part-time basis through the fall. Chemistry’s secretary, Michelle (Missy) Tillapaugh, retired at the end of October. Missy has worked at the University for over 37 years. Congratulations to all!

Obituaries

Chemistry Loses an Active Emeritus Member

Distinguished Professor of Chemistry Emeritus, Harry Frisch, died September 21, 2007. Born in Vienna, Austria, Professor Frisch and his parents left Austria in 1938 and made it to Canada in 1940 and New York in 1941. He received his bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Williams College in 1947 at the age of 19 and finished his Ph.D. at Polytechnic Institute in Brooklyn in 1952. Dr. Frisch started his academic career as a post-doc at Syracuse University, then assistant professor of chemistry at the University of Southern California and as a researcher at Bell Telephone Laboratories in New Jersey. He joined the Chemistry Department at the University at Albany in 1967. The author of over 550 scholarly papers starting with his first paper in 1961 until the time of his death, when he still had papers in press. Dr. Frisch retired in 1999 and remained active in his field. In 2002, he was awarded a Fulbright scholar grant and he spent a semester at South Africa’s University of Stellenbosch, where he lectured and conducted research on “Physics and Physical Chemistry of Macromolecules and Stiff Polymers.” In 2000, he won the Joel Henry Hildebrand Award in Theoretical and Experimental Chemistry of Liquids of the American Chemical Society for 2000. Dr. Frisch is survived by his sons, Benjamin (and Benjamin’s wife Jenny Knight) of Brooklyn, NY, and Michael of Kansas City, Mo.

Support UAlbany’s College of Arts & Sciences
Joan Wick-Pelletier: College of Arts and Sciences is “on a Great Trajectory”

by Mary Fiess

It’s not all that common to find deans performing at university concerts—especially deans of large academic units. But busy as Joan Wick-Pelletier was as dean of UAlbany’s College of Arts and Sciences, she still found the time to perform.

It was, for sure, a labor of love for Wick-Pelletier, a trained soprano. But it was also an example of how much she values the broad range of programs that constitute the College of Arts and Sciences and make it such a vibrant core of life at the University at Albany.

UAlbany “had the sense to put the arts and sciences together,” she noted when she arrived in September 2002. In the time since, she says, the College has made significant strides, tapping the range and richness of programs put together within its purview, as well as programs beyond its purview.

In just the past year, the College launched three new undergraduate majors: journalism, globalization studies, and documentary studies. Over the last few years, the College has developed new forensic programs on the undergraduate and master’s levels. Through a series of “cluster” hires, the College has expanded UAlbany’s capabilities in life sciences research.

“I love the people in the College and what we have been able to accomplish together. The college is on a great trajectory,” said Wick-Pelletier, who stepped down at the end of August after five years at the helm of the College of Arts and Sciences.

“Joan has made tremendous contributions in her five years at UAlbany,” said Officer in Charge Susan Herbst.

A search for a new dean is under way, and Edelgard Wolpert, a professor in the Department of Psychology, is serving as acting dean. A mathematician by academic training, Wick-Pelletier emphasized from the outset how the key areas encompassed by the College—humanities and the social sciences, mathematical, physical and biological sciences, and the fine and performing arts—are all critical in creating a distinctive whole.

When she arrived on campus, the Life Sciences Research Building was under construction as part of UAlbany’s strategy to build strength in life sciences research. An important priority for her throughout her tenure as dean was recruiting scientists who could complement and build on UAlbany’s research strengths and develop new knowledge in the life sciences.

Recruitment of new faculty was accomplished by interdisciplinary search committees. “We hired new faculty researchers to work interactively; their specific department affiliation was a secondary consideration,” said Wick-Pelletier. Just recently, the College launched a new Institute of RNA Science and Technology, which involves scientists from across the campus in biology, chemistry, biophysics, and biomedical sciences in research discoveries based on the informational molecule, RNA.

“Dean Wick-Pelletier’s support has been instrumental in the development of this important new initiative and direction for scientific research at the University,” said Albert Mills, chair of the Department of Biological Sciences and the scientific director for life sciences.

“She has a very strong sense of the balance of all the disciplines, and she knew how the fine and performing arts help make this University a very vibrant place,” noted Albin Zak, chair of the Department of Music, who came to UAlbany in 2004.

“Given her appreciation for the fine and performing arts, it’s not surprising,” says Zak, that he, J. Kevin Doolen, chair of the Department of Theatre, and JoAnne Carson, chair of the Department of Art, work together well to strengthen that dimension of life on campus. Both Zak and Doolen were hired by Wick-Pelletier and Carson was appointed chair of the Department of Art by her.

Communications was another important “theme” for Wick-Pelletier, given all the strengths across the College in history, English, documentary studies/multi-media, journalism, film studies, creative writing and communications.

“I wanted to position us so that if a student were interested in the communications field, this campus would clearly stand out,” she said. She notes that the journalism program, which officially became a major last fall and the first such major among SUNY’s four University Centers, currently has more than 90 students declaring journalism as their major. A total of 630 students are enrolled in journalism courses, up from 253 students last year—all a reflection of strong student interest.

“The communications disciplines here are thriving. We have a nice critical mass,” said Nancy Roberts, a professor in the departments of Communication and Journalism, who was hired in 2004 to help build the journalism curriculum into a major. “Joan recognized the potential at UAlbany in this area and she put a lot into realizing the potential.”

Wick-Pelletier also “worked effectively to engage communities far beyond the campus, through advisory boards and other regional institutions,” noted Officer in Charge Herbst.

As she looks ahead, Wick-Pelletier says she plans to be even more involved in the community, particularly in its cultural aspects. “Albany has become my home, and I look forward to being able to take part in more of the cultural life of my home,” she said.

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