

PREVIEW

Newsletter of the College of Arts and Sciences Volume 1, Issue 1



From The Dean's Desk

As I mark the fourth year of my service to Prairie View A & M University in what has been a challenging and exciting time in PVAMU's history, we are engaged in continuous development, assessment, and improvement of the undergraduate and graduate programs. Witness the implementation of a minor in Creative Writing; revision of the B.S. in Physics to include four program tracks: Applied Physics, Medical Physics, Computational Physics, Traditional Physics; revision of the M.A. in English to include three tracks: Technical Communications, Creative Writing, Rhetoric and Composition; revision of the B.A. in Social Work; and the development of multiple Web-based courses.

Our goal in enhancing the undergraduate educational experience is to achieve excellence in a way that is unique to PVAMU. The College is committed to developing in our students the traditional liberal arts skills of critical thinking, analysis, problem solving, and communication. This aspect of our students' intellectual growth is being fostered by such initiatives as the Writing Center, the Multimedia Laboratory which is used to teach a variety of technology courses in Communications, faculty Web pages used to supplement classroom instruction, the Physics Learning Center, and the Social Work Practice Laboratory. Students must also be able to integrate knowledge from the natural sciences with knowledge from the

social sciences and humanities. Integration in many ways defines the goal of modern undergraduate education: integration of knowledge across fields, of diverse cultural trends, and of the intellectual and social spheres of life. The implementation of the Undergraduate Medical Academy, in Fall 2004, will strive to exemplify this type of fluency across the boundaries of knowledge.

The College is also committed to the complementarity of teaching and research. Students learn best in a synergistic system in which faculty and students are learners and researchers, whose interactions make for a healthy and flourishing intellectual atmosphere. This synergistic system is exemplified by Dr. Regisford's research program: "Bridging the Gap to the Baccalaureate Degree at PVAMU." The steady rise in research and scholarly activities in recent years has resulted in significant annual increases in the number of books authored by faculty in the College, the number of research papers published, and the number of successful research grant proposals.

The years ahead hold great promise for our students and the University, and I am privileged to help provide leadership for the College of Arts & Sciences. I would encourage you to let me know of your thoughts and concerns as we shape the PV experience of the future.



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Bridging the Gap at PVAMU

Biology

The PVAMU Department of Biology was recently awarded an NIH grant in the amount of \$213,000 annually for three years. Under the direction of the Principal Investigator, Dr. Gloria Regisford, this grant will fund the establishment of a Bridge program between PVAMU and the Houston Community College System (HCCS). The goals of the "Bridging the Gap to the Baccalaureate Degree (BGBD) at PVAMU" are to significantly



increase the number of undergraduate minority students pursuing a baccalaureate degree in biomedical science and biomedical engineering and to motivate them to then attend graduate school at research intensive universities (RIUs) to obtain a Ph.D. degree. The long-term goal is to significantly increase the number of underrepresented minorities pursuing a research career in the biomedical sciences. This collaboration formed between Dr. Regisford, Dr. Laura Carson (program coordinator at PVAMU), and Dr. Eddie McNack (program coordinator at HCCS) will serve to facilitate transitions of underrepresented minority students from HCCS to the science and engineering departments at PVAMU.

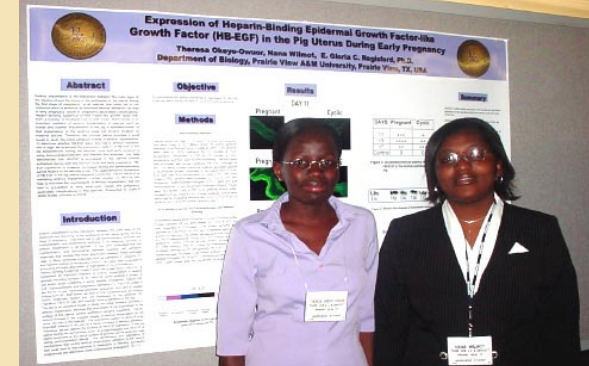
This program also hopes to build on the previously established research programs at PVAMU and to increase the number of

collaborative efforts between the faculty at HCCS, PVAMU, and RIUs. The BGBD program will address the following issues: (1) the lack of research activities at HCCS; (2) the special challenges relative to minority involvement in research; and (3) the need for more minority researchers in biomedical science.

The special challenges relative to minority involvement in research and the need for more

minority researchers in biomedical science will also be addressed by another grant, "Bridging the Gap: Addressing Environmental Justice Through Science," in collaboration with Dr. Lovell Jones at the Center for Research on Minority Health (CRMH), University of Texas, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. This grant was awarded at the end of September, 2003, and Dr. Regisford is also the Principal Investigator for PVAMU's subcontract of approximately \$100,000 annually for four years.

Dr. Harriette Howard Lee-Block and Dr. Gloria Regisford accompanied four students—Stacy Lloyd, Latasha Rabsatt, Nana Wilmot, and Theresa Okeyo-Owuor—to the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) in San Diego, California. Wilmot and Okeyo-Owuor, both students in Dr. Regisford's lab, presented their work during the poster session. Other students presented their research at the local undergraduate research symposium.



Mathematics Research Math

Dr. Jian-ao Lian, Professor of Mathematics at PVAMU, has a 3-year on-going research project of \$177,222 funded by the U.S. Department of Defense to study multiwavelets and multiresolution analysis of NURBS curves and surfaces. Two research papers will appear in IEEE journals and one in a mathematical journal soon. Dr. Lian has written or has been directly involved in writing over twenty research and educational proposals. He was awarded a two-year \$77,020 grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in 1995 and

a contract of \$20,000 from Boeing Company of St. Louis in 2001. As an active member of the Center of Excellence for Communication Systems Technology Research (CECSTR), Dr. Lian collaborates with faculty members in the Department of Electrical Engineering on campus as well as researchers outside of campus. A \$133,254 grant from partnerships with Los Alamos National Laboratory and Litton Advanced Systems was awarded in September 2001 to develop hardware and software for a satellite based instrument intended to detect, identify, locate, characterize and report threats of a radio frequency

nature. Dr. Lian continues writing proposals for further outside funding opportunities, attending professional meetings, and producing and publishing quality research results.



Communication Program Receives Grant for State-of-the-Art Digital Production Facilities Communications

The Department of Languages and Communications at PVAMU is entering the digital age with two state-of-the-art digital production labs, new digital newsgathering equipment, and a qualified staff of media professionals. The Communications program has received \$300,000 for equipment over the past two years from Title III grants. The television studio has received three new Ikegami HC390 cameras with Vinten pedestals for studio production classes. Twenty new Canon mini DV cameras and Sony Hi-8 field cameras are available for field production. The photojournalism course has switched to digital format with the addition

The current PC computer lab in Hilliard Hall has been upgraded with Adobe Photoshop,



InDesign, and Macromedia Dreamweaver software for graphic design, layout, and Web page creation. These Dell computers have also been updated with high-speed Firewire digital equipment interfaces to support digital audio and video input. Old Studio B has been

converted into a digital media production lab with twenty Macintosh G4 computers and 20" flat screen displays. The computers are outfitted with industry standard digital editing software including Final Cut Pro and Adobe Premier. The lab is also set for future growth in digital media courses with graphic layout and Web page design software including the Adobe Digital Video Collection and Dreamweaver MX. Mr. Harambee Taymullah, the department's media specialist, and Dr. Afif Arabi, media production instructor, led the writing of the successful grant proposals.



Strong Collaborative Research with the U.S. Navy

Dr. Nelson Butuk has established a strong collaborative research program in Computational Fluid Dynamics at the Navy Applied Research Laboratory at Penn State University. Two PVAMU students majoring in math—Rosemary Berry in 2002 and Oharan Eyuhan in 2003—have already benefited from the collaboration by spending two months of the summer semester at the laboratory. The students were involved in developing an advanced math module to be incorporated into the software design tool used at the laboratory.

The SWBPS division's Social Work Program was awarded a \$58,688 grant from the federal government, under the Title III development program for HBCUs.

Welcome & Orientation

Division of Social Work, Behavioral & Political Sciences



The Division of Social Work, Behavioral and Political Sciences (DSWBP) inaugurated an annual Student Orientation program in September 2003. The planning committee--consisting of Drs. Robert Baker, Allison Cotton, James Jones, Elizabeth Martin, Lee McGriggs, Sarah Williams, Andrew Ewoh, Bakama Bakamanume, and Juanel Sippio--executed a program that introduced

those students interested in pursuing degrees in History, Political Science, Social Work, and Sociology. Students had the opportunity to socialize with DSWMP faculty, and PVAMU's new President, Dr. George C. Wright, also addressed the students. Dr. Wright, a noted historian, set the tenor for the program with his progressive goals and optimism, reassuring the

new and returning faculty and also reviewed Division policies, procedures, and personnel for

students present that the pursuit of a "life of the mind" via a liberal arts education was one of the most admirable and worthwhile pursuits a college student could undertake. President Wright also challenged the DSWMP faculty to dispense with artificial disciplinary boundaries that have unfortunately become prevalent within the academy. Most important was the admonishment that the PVAMU legacy was not something that the present generation of professors, staff, and students has the right to relinquish or betray.

New Faculty

Chemistry



Dr. Ananda Amarasekara received his Ph.D in organic chemistry from the City University of New York, and thereafter he did two years of postdoctoral research at Bar-Ilan

University, Israel. He has taught chemistry at the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka and at the University of Texas at Arlington. With research interests in the area of development of novel synthetic methodology in organic chemistry, he has published 40 papers in refereed journals.



Dr. Remi Oki joins the faculty as a professor and head of the department of chemistry. His research interests are in organometallic, inorganic chemistry and biomaterials. Dr. Oki's

research on bioglass for bone repair was recently funded by the National Institute of Arthritis and Muscular-Skeletal Research. He has grant support from the American Chemical Society. Dr. Oki has published over 40 articles in refereed journals.



Dr. Xinwei Yan earned his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Washington University, St Louis, MO. Before joining the department he worked at the Lawrence Berkely Laboratory at

the University of California, Louisiana State University and Amtek Instruments, Houston. Dr. Yan's major contributions are the development of the world's only simultaneous nitrogen/sulfur

chemiluminescence detectors for both GC/SFC and HPLC and the development of a new total fluorine analyzer. He holds two patents in methods and apparatus of simultaneous chemiluminescent sulfur and nitrogen detection.

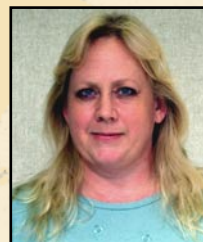
Languages & Communication



Dr. Elizabeth Kessler comes to the faculty from California State University-Northridge. Dr. Kessler, whose local ties include doctoral study at University of Houston, adjunct teaching at

UH, and five years as resident faculty at HCC, focuses on Chicano/a studies. She has edited *Hands Across Borders: A Multicultural Reader for Writers* (2002), and currently she is working on several new manuscripts.

Music and Drama



Bonnie R. Cherrie will be serving as Costume Designer and Historian for Drama. Ms. Cherrie, who has twenty years of experience in professional fashion and costume design in California,

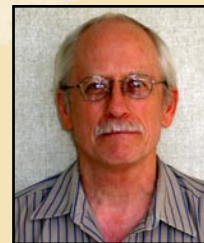
Nevada and Utah, recently completed a Masters of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in historical clothing and textiles. Her expertise earned her an invitation to the 2003 International Ancient Textiles conference in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Jeff Freeman, Low Brass Instructor, recently received a Master of Music degree from the University of Texas and is currently enrolled in the Doctorate of Musical Arts program. Freeman

is an active freelance trombonist in Austin and has performed with the Mid-Texas Symphony,

Longview Symphony, Abilene Symphony and the Austin Lyric Opera Orchestra. He is a founding member of the Austinbones trombone quartet.



Dr. James Lee has an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Fine Arts from Texas Tech University and a Master of Arts degree in Theatre Arts from the University of California at Riverside. Over more

than 35 years, he has performed as director and actor with many community, university and professional theatres, including the Oregon, Old Globe, and New Jersey Shakespeare Festivals. He has taught at the University of California, the University of Central Florida, and Texas Tech University.

Physics



Dr. Orion Ciftja's research considers the behavior of correlated electronic systems subject to strong magnetic fields. Dr. Ciftja brings expertise and experience in condensed

matter physics, including areas such as materials science, superconductivity and superfluidity, and novel phenomena in solids, liquids and a peculiar phase in between solid and liquid, termed liquid crystals. Dr. Ciftja recently published three research papers on the topic in *Physical Review*.



Dr. Premkumar Saganti has joined the department and the NASA-sponsored Center for Applied Radiation Research (CARR). Dr. Saganti, a research scientist from NASA-Johnson

Space Center, is an expert on space physics, computational physics, and medical imaging.

Social Work, Behavioral & Political Science



Dr. Allison Cotton comes to the sociology faculty with a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado. Dr. Cotton's research interests include Criminology, Deviance and Gender studies.



Dr. P. See Lim has joined the political science faculty. Dr. Lim earned her Ph.D. at the University of Houston. She studies American Politics, International Relations, and Comparative Politics.



Dr. James Jones received his Ph.D. from Ohio State University and joined the history faculty. His research interests include the Civil Rights Movement, Black Power Era, Black Popular

Culture, and Black Nationalism



Dr. Steven Wilson who received his Ph.D. from Rice University in 2000, has joined the history faculty. Dr. Wilson studies U.S. Legal History, Civil Rights, and Border Studies.

NROTC

Midshipmen Celebrate U.S. Navy's 228th Birthday



On October 18, 2003, eight Midshipmen from the PVAMU Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps Program (NROTC) attended the celebration of the 228th birthday of the United States Navy. The celebration took place at the Westin Galleria Hotel Ballroom, and was sponsored by the Houston Council of the U.S. Navy League. These Midshipmen, all seniors, were afforded the

opportunity to interact with service personnel from various communities within the sea service, including the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The keynote address was by the Honorable Gordon R. England, 73rd Secretary of the Navy.

Navy ROTC Leads Homecoming Parade 2003

On October 25, 2003, the PVAMU Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) participated in the 2003 Homecoming parade through the campus. This event brings together alumni, students, organizations, area high schools, and community leaders to celebrate the illustrious tradition of PVAMU. The NROTC unit, carrying the national flag, led the parade from the campus entrance, down University Drive, to the reviewing stands located in front of the W.R. Banks building.



Captain Larry Watson, USN, has been appointed Commanding Officer of PVAMU's Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) Houston Consortium, which includes Midshipmen

from PVAMU, Rice University, Houston Baptist University and the University of Houston. Captain Watson, a graduate of the United States Naval Academy (BS, 1975), the Naval Post Graduate School (MS, 1987), and the National Defense University (MS, 1997), and former Commanding Officer of the ships USS Flatley and USS Peleliu, will serve as a Professor of Naval Science.



The Charles Gilpin Players won six awards in the Region Six Kennedy Center/ American College Theatre Festival, held November 4-7, 2003 in El Paso. Under the direction of C. Lee Turner, the production of Romulus Linney's *A*

Lesson Before Dying garnered three Excellence in Acting honors for Roenia Thompson, Kendrick Brown, and Angela Johnson and three Excellence in Technical Theatre/Management prizes for Fernie Corrales, Jenelle Edmund, and Ronald Smith. Helping to continue the Gilpin Players' 17-year winning streak at the Festival were Ricjuane Jenkins (technical directions), Mrs. Bonnie Cherrie (costume and make-up design), Dr. James Lee (voice/diction/management advisement), and Arthur Thomas (art designs).

Research & Accomplishments

LaToya Guinn, James Johnson and V.M. Doctor of the Biology department published "Ionic Modulation of the effects of heparin and 6-aminohexanoic acid on plasminogen activation by Streptokinase: The role of ionic strength, divalent cations and chloride," in *The European Journal of Drug Metabolism and Pharmacokinetics*, Vol. 28, 161-66 (2003).

Also in Biology, Jason Bell, Shalisha Duhon and V.M. Doctor, "The effect of fucoidan, heparin and cyanogen bromide fibrinogen on the activation of human glutamic-plasminogen by tissue plasminogen activator," *Blood Coagulation and Fibrinolysis*, Vol. 14, 229-234 (2003).

Mehl Penrose, Assistant Professor of Spanish, published "Invisible 'Tipos': 'LLamados Atras' Serafin Estebanez Calderon's Escenas andaluzas," forthcoming in *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, and "Forging a Bourgeois Reader's Role: Luis Canuelo and Mariano Jose de Larra as Protagonists of Spain's Polemic Press," *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 2.3 (2003).

Steven Wilson, Assistant Professor of History, published the book *The Rise of Judicial Management in the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas, 1955-2000*, the article "Brown Over 'Other White': Mexican Americans' Legal Arguments and Litigation Strategy in Desegregation Litigation" in *Law & History Review* (March 2003), and the chapter "Malefactors of Great Wealth: A Short History of 'Aggressive' Accounting," forthcoming in *Enron: Corporate Fiascos and Legal Implications*

Orion Ciftja, Assistant Professor of Physics, was invited to Arlington, Virginia May 8-9, 2003 as a Panel Reviewer for the Electronics, Photonics, and Device Technologies (EPDT) program of the Electrical and Communications Systems (ECS) Division of the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Lucius R. Wyatt, Professor of Music and Director of the University Symphonic Band, was recently elected to *Who's Who in America for 2004*. He was previously elected to *Who's Who in American Music*, and received two New Achiever Awards from PVAMU. The University Symphonic Band has recorded its second compact disc recording, *Festival of Concert Classics*, under the direction of Dr. Wyatt.

A. Jan Taylor, Instructor of Music and Director of Choral Activities, has been appointed Assistant Conductor of the Houston Symphony Orchestra Chorus for the 2003-2004 season.

Wendy Bergin, Flute Instructor, conducted the Flute Ensemble in a concert in November 2003. Dr. Bergin has been principal flutist in the Opera in the Heights Orchestra since 2001.

Richard G. Thomas, Professor of Physics, retired after the 2002-2003 academic year. Dr. Thomas has spent more than fifty years of his life at PVAMU, during which he made substantial contributions. He has graciously agreed to develop a history of Physics at PVAMU.



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