

PREVIEW

Newsletter of the College of Arts and Sciences Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring 2005



From The Dean's Desk



From the Office of the Dean and my staff, I bring you *Greetings*, during the concluding days of this semester!


This has truly been an exciting year as the pages of this edition of *PreView* will attest. It would be an understatement to say that large numbers of students and faculty have been extremely busy with research, teaching, learning, and service. My congratulations are extended to all of you for a very productive school year.

It was extremely gratifying for us in The College of Arts and Sciences to take the lead role in congratulating all of the students who were listed on the University Honor Roll and the Dean's List. The total number of students receiving honors was in excess of 2,000. What a testament to your

productivity. We all know that hard work always pays off in the long run and that each student who earned a place of honor is serving as a role model for other students.

For those of you who will not be enrolled in classes on our campus this summer, I trust you will remain busy by taking advantage of the opportunities to refresh your minds and bodies, participate in summer programs in other settings, do research, travel and just enjoy the whole experience of living.

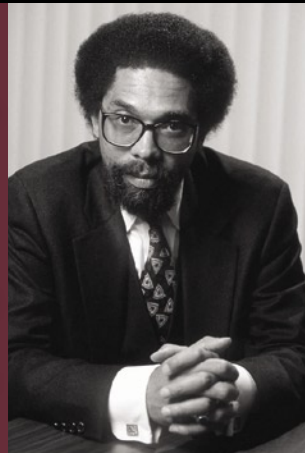
I have truly enjoyed this first year as your dean and look forward to the future wherein we will set even higher standards and achieve even greater goals, as each of us will continue "Striving for Excellence."


Dr. Danny R. Kelley, Dean
The College of Arts and Sciences

"An evening with Dr. Cornel West"

Cornel West, Class of 1943 University Professor of Religion at Princeton University, helped PVAMU celebrate Black History Month by delivering an address in the Memorial Student Center Auditorium on February 3.

Dr. West, author of best-selling *Race Matters* and many other books, is a scholar of African American culture and religion, and is also one of America's most provocative public intellectuals. At PVAMU, he challenged students to enter into a sharper dialogue on race, justice and democracy in America. After the address, faculty, staff and students had an opportunity to visit with Dr. West at a reception and book signing.



Students Participate in TAMU Research Program

Arts & Sciences

PVAMU students will once again participate in a summer research program for liberal arts majors established by Texas A&M University. The Liberal Arts Undergraduate Research Program is modeled on NSF-funded Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) programs around the country. The program aims to increase the number, academic preparation, and prospects for success among undergraduates interested in pursuing graduate work in liberal arts at Texas A&M University. PVAMU is one of a handful of schools chosen to participate.

There has been strong and sustained student interest in the program. Because the REU model has been designed for a small number of students (a total of only 10-12), the university nominates just a select few to participate in the TAMU program each year. The Sociology program has been nominating students from PVAMU for 3 years. All of the sociology applicants were

accepted into the program at TAMU for summer 2005. They are: Ebony Johnson, Damitra Manor, Bobby Johnson, and Simon Williams.

Students from PVAMU's Political Science and History programs will be participating for the first time during summer 2005. Dr. Kenneth Howell, assistant professor of history, and Dr. Artemesia Stanberry, assistant professor of political science, were asked to screen PVAMU's candidates from their programs. Of 27 students who expressed interest, Howell and Stanberry interviewed eight finalists about their academic records, research interests, knowledge of research methods, and career goals, especially their commitment to graduate school. Three of their four nominees were selected: Jason Booker and Oscar Guevara, both political science majors, and Sean Spikes, a history major. In addition, two communications majors, Jeremy Allen and Cory Donley, were selected.

Dr. Larry Oliver, Associate Dean at Texas A&M's College of Liberal Arts, was impressed with both the level of interest among PVAMU students and with the rigorous selection process, and will meet with PVAMU's sponsors soon, to discuss targeting and preparing students for next year's competition.

Foreign Language Workshop

Dr. Sullivan and Dr. Bakama organized the first annual International Foreign Language Workshop which was held on March 21st. Several faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences as well as invited guest speakers presented their research.

Sociology Faculty and Students Present Papers

Sociology

Each of the full-time sociology faculty delivered papers at the Southwestern Social Science Association meeting in New Orleans, on March 23-26. Professor Sarah Williams presented "Poison Ivy? Educational Aspirations of HBCU Students at Ivy League Schools." Three faculty presented their work as a combined panel, entitled Poverty II: Visible and Invisible Punishment and Low-Income Populations: Assistant Professor Allison Cotton presented "Panhandling the



Death Penalty: What Money Buys"; Assistant Professor Karen M. Douglas offered "Three Hots and a Cot:

The New 'Entitlement' Program Replacing Welfare"; and Associate Professor Robert Jones discussed "Impoverishment as U.S. Government Policy: How Government Transfers Money from Minority Urban Low-income Areas to White Rural Areas." The panel was organized by Dr. Douglas. All four of these faculty papers were very well received.

In addition, three PVAMU sociology majors presented papers at the conference sessions highlighting undergraduate research: Kelly Porter discussed "Residential Patterns in CowTown: Theories of Urban Structure and Neighborhood Change in Fort Worth, Texas"; Andrea Bridges offered "Black Suburbanization



in Recent Decades: How Does Houston Texas Fit in national Trends?"; and, Jamal Dale presented "A Three Race, Race: An analysis of the 2003 Houston Mayors Election." The presentations received

great reviews by students and faculty. These three papers were researched by the students while participating in the summer 2004 TAMU Research Experiences for Undergraduates.

Univ. Scholars Paper and Poster Competition Winners:

Biological, Chemical and Physical Sciences Research Posters:

- First Place (\$150): Tausha Calvin, Master's, Computer Information Systems
- Second Place (\$100): Ebony Towns, Master's, Mechanical Engineering
- Third Place (\$50): Justin Wedeking, Senior, Computer Engineering Technology

Sculptures, Drawings, Music, Constructed Models, etc.:

- First Place (\$150): Cody Arkadie, Senior, Architecture
- Second Place (\$100): Stacey Marie Wiggins, Senior, Architecture
- Third Place (\$50): John Dickinson, Junior, Criminal Justice



M. Golam Faruk, graduate student in Electrical Engineering, and Dr. Orion Ciftja, Assistant Professor of Physics presented the paper, "A study of two-dimensional quantum-dot helium in a magnetic field," at the 2nd Annual Texas A&M University System Pathways Research Symposium, held in Corpus Christi on October 15-16, 2004. This was a continuation of an earlier study, entitled "Ground state properties of two-dimensional quantum-dot helium in zero magnetic field: Perturbation, diagonalization, and variational theory," conducted by Dr. Ciftja and Dr. A. Anil Kumar which was published in the *Journal Physical ReviewB* (2004).



Dr. Larry Williams, Assistant Professor of Social Work, joined the faculty in 2004. Prior to coming to PVAMU, he was adjunct professor of sociology at Mercer University, and adjunct instructor of social work at Georgia State University, in Atlanta, Georgia. He was previously director of social services at AID Atlanta and of the Salvation Army in Atlanta. Professor Williams' research interests include criminal justice, HIV/AIDS in African Americans, power and oppression of minority populations, and clinical practice. He has written on topics related to criminal justice, multicultural

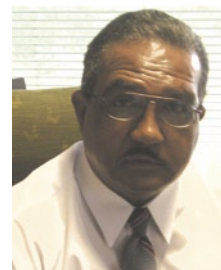
perspectives in education, and HIV/AIDS risk factors among minority populations. Dr. Williams has two articles scheduled for publication in the *Journal of Human Behavior*, and is collaborating on a book on the global trafficking of children for prostitution.

Dr. Innocent Aluka, Associate Professor of Physics, has completed the research project titled "Integrating p-wave and s-wave seismic data to improve characterization of oil reservoirs." This research was supported by a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) grant in the amount of \$183,000. Dr. Aluka is currently the Principal Investigator of a new project, "Expanding Conventional Seismic Stratigraphy into the Multicomponent Seismic Domain," with the Bureau of Economic Geology at UT-Austin as the sub-contractor. This research, supported by a two-year \$200,000 DOE research grant from September 1, 2004, will expand conventional seismic stratigraphy to the full-elastic seismic wavefield that could influence worldwide seismic operations for a number of years.

Kenneth W. Howell, Assistant Professor of History, has successfully defended his dissertation and will receive his Ph.D. from Texas A&M University-College Station, in May 2005. His dissertation is titled: "James W. Throckmorton: The Life and Career of a Southern Frontier



Henderson County, Texas: An Antebellum History, 1846-1860 (Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1999).



On May 31, Dr. George E. Brown stepped down as Head of the Department of Biology, a position he has held for 17 of his more than 35 years of service at the university. Professor Brown leaves a solid legacy: the department has an enrollment of over 300 students, and graduates over 60 students per year, more than 50% of whom go on to professional programs, such as medical, dental, pharmacy, physical therapy, and optometry school. Dr. Brown is the principal investigator for the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) and each summer leads a successful Pre-Concepts Institute (PCI) program in biology for approximately 30 incoming PVAMU students.

Politician, 1825-1894." Professor Howell is now working to complete a book-length manuscript on Throckmorton, who was a governor of Texas during the Reconstruction Era. He previously published

Dr. Premkumar Saganti, Associate Professor of Physics, successfully completed the first year of a two year grant from NASA-Johnson Space Center. Dr. Saganti is a principal investigator of the grant, which is in support of the Mars radiation environment modeling and data analysis from the Mars instrument, MARIE (Martian Radiation Environment Experiment) currently at Mars onboard the 2001 Mars Odyssey spacecraft. Dr. Saganti presented several invited and contributed papers at scientific conferences including: COSPAR in Paris, France (July 2004); ICRC (International Cosmic Ray Conference), Catania, Italy (June 2004); and ICRS-10 (International Conference on Radiation Shielding) / RPS-2004 (Radiation Protection Shielding), Madira, Portugal (May 2004).

Second Annual Student Research Poster and Creative Art Display

The University Scholars Program sponsored a campus-wide research poster and creative art display on April 5, in the ballroom of the Memorial Student Center. The display provided graduate and undergraduate students alike the opportunity to showcase their research or artistic products, and gave them experience in presenting their work in an academic and professional setting. The displays were judged in the following three categories: biological, chemical and physical sciences research posters; education, social sciences and business research posters; and, sculptures, drawings, music, and constructed models.

The Center for International and Area Studies has received a Fulbright-Hays Group Study Abroad grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which will enable a small group of Texas educators to travel to China during the summer of 2005. From 30 May to June 30, they will receive intensive training in Chinese history, politics, economy, geography, education, literature, religion, philosophy, and culture.

Five professors and one media specialist from PVAMU will participate, including Jianyue Chen (History); A.J. Baltes (Languages and Communications); Harambee Taymullah (Languages and Communications); Allison Cotton (Sociology); Larry Williams (Social Work); and John Fuller (Engineering). The

remaining participants include four professors from Houston Community College, two from North Harris Montgomery Community College District, one each from Lee College and Texas A&M, and two teachers from the Waller County Independent School District.



Dr. Chen, the author of the grant and a leader of the trip, stresses the need for American educators to know more about China, especially by studying it first hand, because China, with its rapidly expanding economy, has been playing an increasingly important role in world politics. The participants will establish ties with their Chinese academic counterparts, laying the foundation for future faculty or student exchange programs and research collaboration. In addition, they will visit historical and cultural parks and museums, and even live with Chinese families.

Upon their return, the travelers will integrate what they have learned into their curricula, and will serve as lead teachers and "resource persons" for disseminating their new knowledge of China via workshops, presentations, and papers at local, regional, or national meetings. Dr. Chen hopes that artifacts of the trip, such as photos, recordings, and examples of material culture will become valuable tools for teaching and research.

New NMR Facility

Chemistry

A National Science Foundation major research instrumentation grant, awarded to Drs. Antoine Carty and Ananda Amarasekara, has allowed the chemistry department to acquire a 400MHz superconducting Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectrometer. This state of the art, instrument, with a 9.4 Tesla superconducting magnet and a multinuclear probe capable of recording NMR spectrums in the solution state, will be used for both undergraduate and graduate level research as well as for teaching organic chemistry and spectroscopy laboratory classes.

NMR Spectroscopy is the most widely used technique for elucidation of structure in organic and inorganic molecules. Before the instrument's acquisition, samples for NMR work were shipped to contracted facilities at Texas A&M University at College Station and University of Texas at Arlington. This severely limited the ability of PVAMU researchers to carry out significant experimental work, and to respond efficiently to novel or unexpected results.

The Department of Chemistry also is pleased to announce the following recent publications and presentations: Ananda S. Amarasekara, "Nitrosation of beeta'-hydroxylamino-alpha, beeta unsaturated oximes: Synthesis of 1,7- dioxo-2,6-diaza-spiro[4,4]nona-2,8-diene ring system," *Tetrahedron Letters*, Vol. 46(15), 2635-2638, 2005; DeShawn Lang, Talya Williams, Altovise Phillips and V.M. Doctor, "Mechanism of the stimulatory effect of native fucoidan, highly sulfated fucoidan and

heparin on plasminogen activation by tissue plasminogen activator: The role of chloride," *European Journal of Drug Metabolism and Pharmacokinetics*, Vol. 29(4), 269-275, 2004; and, Shana Stoddard, Leona Guillory and Remi Oki, " Synthesis of 3-dimensionally ordered macroporous sol-gel bioglass monolith" a poster session at the American Chemical Society's National Meeting at San Diego, CA, March 13-17.

On March 22, Dr. Aderemi Oki of the PVAMU chemistry department was the invited speaker at a seminar in the Department of Bioengineering at Texas A&M University—College Station.

PVAMU Honor Societies Induct New Members

The PVAMU chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the political science honor society, initiated ten students in a ceremony held on April 20, 2005.

The PVAMU chapter of Lamda Pi Eta, the national communication honor society, welcomed five new members in an induction ceremony held on April 19, 2005.

Naval Aircraft

NROTC

PVAMU Midshipmen got a close up view of a TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopter, on March 3. Pilots from Training Squadron 8, based at Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Milton, Florida, landed the aircraft on the open field near Hobart Taylor Hall. The TH-57 Sea Ranger was one of an assortment of aircraft from various Naval Aviation Training Commands visiting at Ellington Field, southeast of Houston. At Ellington Field, the Midshipmen were afforded more opportunities to speak with instructor pilots and student naval aviators, and learn about the intense challenges of training and military operations, as well as the pleasures of life lived in the skies. Ensign Shaun Steinburger reassured the Midshipmen that: "There's something to do everyday ... [but], you'll have a good time." After the event, Phillip Jones, a PVAMU midshipman and Communications major noted that "I was excited to be selected for flight training, and I enjoyed speaking with the flight instructors and students. They gave me a lot of good advice!"

Established in 1968, the program at PVAMU carries the distinction of being the first Naval ROTC unit at a Historically Black College/University. To date, the unit has commissioned 287 officers in the Navy and Marine Corps.

PVAMU Hosts Acclaimed Musical Ensembles

The Department of Music and Drama presented The National Brass Virtuosi (Michael Sachs, Trumpet; Mark Neilhas, Trumpet; Michael Mayhew, Horn; Richard Stout, Trombone; Dave Kirk, Tuba), on March 31, and The Marian Anderson String Quartet, on April 19. Both ensembles performed in concert in Hobart Taylor Recital Hall.



Mathematics Awareness Month

The Department of Mathematics organized a variety of fun and educational activities in celebration of Mathematics Awareness Month, throughout April 2005. The national theme was "Mathematics and the Cosmos." Mathematics faculty and majors served as facilitators and workshop leaders. The MAM events were aimed at students aged 6 to 16, included nationally renowned guest presenters, a Middle-to-Secondary Level mathematics competition for area students. Activities were also planned for undergraduates.

Students from area schools engaged in several creative mathematics activities, including games and puzzle solving workshops, which were designed to foster interest and appreciation in mathematics. Invited colloquia presenters and seminar guests included Dr. James Donaldson of Howard University, Mrs. Bernestine D. Dickey of NASA, Dr. Yuri Yatsenko of Houston Baptist University, and Dr. Bill Williams of Carnegie Mellon University. Dr. A. M. Haghghi was the featured presenter. Dr. Johnson Wetiba conducted a SAIL Seminar.



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College of Arts and Sciences
Prairie View A&M University
P. O. Box 277
Prairie View, Texas 77446-0277
Telephone: 936.857.4710
Fax: 936.857.2118

The PreView Staff:

Dean of Arts & Sciences
Danny Kelley

Assistant Dean
Onimi Wilcox

Editor-in-Chief
Steven Wilson

Graphic Design & Layout
Corinne Weisgerber
Shannan Butler

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