

Biology Department Alumni News

Volume 34

Fall 2010 Edition

Fall 2010 News

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Grand Opening of Science Hall West

Science Hall West had its grand opening on June 29, 2010. The 65,000 square foot addition to Science Hall contains twelve new teaching labs, twenty eight new faculty research labs, two lecture halls and four classrooms. The building also has a large carpeted lobby with tables and chairs for students. This lobby is already very popular with the students, who use it to socialize, study and just relax.

The new greenhouse is nearly finished and should be completed very soon.



Dr. Wallace, Dr. Levine, Dr. Hu and Kathy Hu returned to WPUNJ for the dedication of the new Science Building.



To the left:

Dr. DeYoung and Dr. Risley in the new lobby at the opening of Science Hall West. Dr. Risley, as the 'shepherd' of the project, received a shepherd's crook.

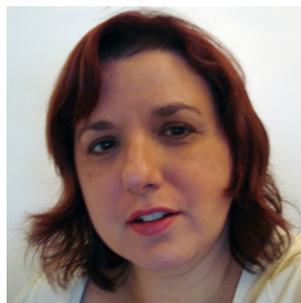
Below:

Science Hall West and East from above

The 'old' Science Hall (now called Science Hall East) is being renovated. The renovation should be complete by October 6, 2011. It will contain teaching labs, classrooms, the offices of the Dean of the College of Science and Health; eight departmental offices; faculty offices, a much enlarged Science Enrichment Center; an enlarged state-of-the-art animal research facility; a new microscopy suite; and will house (for the first time) the Computer Science Department. The Nickles Conference Room will be rebuilt; we will also have a machine shop and a student club room.



New Biology Faculty Member



The Biology Department is pleased to announce our newest faculty member, Dr. Jamie Weiss. Dr. Weiss received her Bachelor's degree from Rutgers and her PhD from Iowa State University. She comes to us from the University of Sheffield in England where she taught Cell Biology and Molecular Biology. Her research uses a multidisciplinary approach to investigate the physiology of Neuronal Calcium Sensors in regulating ion channels, neuronal cell communication, neurotransmitter release and neuronal outgrowth mechanisms. This translation research has important applications for the study of human disease states such as Ataxia, Migraine, Schizophrenia, as well as neurodegenerative and cognitive disorders. Her list of publications and grants record are impressive, and we are very excited to have her at William Paterson University. Dr. Weiss is married with a 6 year old son. Her hobbies are tennis and cooking. This is not Dr. Weiss' first experience at WPUNJ. As an undergraduate, she took Organic Chemistry here one summer with Dr. McCallum!

Biology Majors' Awards

At our award ceremony on May 13, 2010, twelve students were inducted into Beta Beta Beta, the Biology honor society. Brian Harris and Edyta Swiackiewicz received the Outstanding Senior Award. Adam Long received the C. Kent Warner Award. Nicholas DePue received the Capstone Award. The undergraduate research award went to Yelena



2010 Beta Beta Beta Recipients

Smirnova. Ibeth Garcia won the GS-LSAMP award for Community Service and Academics.

The Biology department also gives scholarships every year, funded by our C. Kent Warner Foundation. The awards for the 2010-2011 year are going to Nelson Araujo, Annabelle Beltran, Dana Boschert, Tomiko Rendon, and Brian Smith.

Biology Majors' Research

A total of 60 Biology students were involved in some form of undergraduate research in 2009-2010. During the summer of 2010, 32 Biology/Biotechnology majors had official summer internships, many of them supported by grants and the university administration.

Dr. Jai Menon ran the 4th Annual Undergraduate Research Sympos-

ium in the Biological & Chemical Sciences (April 17, 2010) at WPUNJ. This meeting provides a forum for presentation of research findings by undergraduate students enrolled in colleges and universities in the Mid-Atlantic area. Registrants numbered 150 with 56 poster presentations. Three of our students won awards for their posters.

ISSBB Scholars 2010-2011



18 Biology and Biotechnology majors received ISSBB (Increasing Student Success in Biology and Biotechnology) scholarships this year, funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation to defray the cost of education for students who are going into research or teaching careers. Top Row: Lorato Anderson, Asiel Benitez, Alyssa Beres, Ama Berko, Evadney Browne, Paola Chacon, Middle: Marlania DeJesus, Amanda Kohlsaatt, William Manzo, Michael Mule, Ester Okorie, Tomiko Rendon, Bottom: Heidi Rogers, Christopher Satch, Emily Scully, Ankita Shah, Mushhod Sheik and Gabriella Tosto

Annual Faculty-Student Softball Game (May 2010)



Dr. Peek organized the fourth annual Faculty/Student Softball game on May 14, 2010. The students won this year, 5 to 3. However, they needed to use two faculty team players, so you could say the faculty won by default.

Biology Faculty - What we're doing now

Our faculty have been very productive over the past year, with 11 articles in refereed journals (plus 2 in review), 1 book (in preparation), and a total of 32 presentations at regional, national and international meetings; some of which are co-authored by students. The faculty have also been very active in applying for outside funding, with over \$1,500,000 in active grants, and several pending.

Dr. Bob Benno and Dr. Marty Becker from Environmental Science (below) rocking at the February benefit for Haitian earthquake victims.



Dr. Danielle Desroches coordinated two major fund raising events with MAPS. One was for St Jude Children Hospital and one was for Earthquake Ravaged Haiti. As the coordinator of GS-LSAMP -MAPS she funded over 25 summer interns, who worked on campus, at St Joseph Regional Medical Center or at Kessler Institute. She was also one of the faculty selected to welcome the President of the Dominican Republic when he came to campus (below).



Dr. Eileen Gardner has applied for a renewal of the NSF (ISSBB) Scholarship grant. Over the past 4 years, the grant has supported 45 Biology undergraduates who are



interested in research or teaching careers.. The renewal would support up to 60 undergraduate and graduate students. She also supported the sanity of adopting the metric system in Washington, DC in October.



Dr. Marty Hahn (Emeritus) and Lynn Hahn shown above playing Santa and Mrs. Claus for the families of Colorado National Guardsmen and women who are currently in Iraq. They entertained 50 families - about 400 people in attendance. They all loved Santa Claus.

Dr. Claire Leonard was promoted to full professor this year. She took a cruise to Alaska in August where she visited the Mendenhall Glacier (below).



Dr. Kendall Martin received tenure this year.

Dr. Jaishri Menon was very busy this year. Besides running the Undergraduate Research Symposium, she submitted an article for publication to the *Journal of Morphological Sciences*. To top it off, both of Jai's children got married this year.

Dr. Emmanuel Onaivi Dr. Shanzhi Gu was funded by a Chinese fellowship to conduct short-term research with Dr. Onaivi on cannabinoid genetics and epigenetics. Kayode

Oluoyemi is completing his graduate independent research with Dr. Onaivi on the interaction between wine and cannabinoids in mice. Dr. Onaivi was recently selected as an editorial member of the *Pharmaceuticals Journal* and was invited to write an editorial.

Dr. Michael Peek was promoted to Associate Professor this year. He is collaborating with Dr. Slaymaker on a project on one of New Jersey's most important coastal plants. American Beachgrass is the primary colonizer and is integral in forming sand dunes along NJ's coastline. Dr. Slaymaker is finding significant genetic diversity within and between populations. Next, Dr. Peek will determine if this genetic variation translates into growth or physiological differences. Such findings will be significant for coastal communities efforts to manage and restore NJ's beaches.

Dr. Mike Sebetich visited Montana and Wyoming in the summer of 2010. The fish were glad to see him leave.

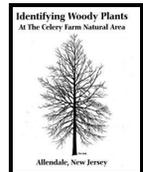


Dr. David Slaymaker traveled to see family in Hong Kong, Kansas, and Arkansas. He also spent the summer, with Dr. Peek, cruising New Jersey beaches collecting beachgrass leaves. Two undergraduate researchers helped process and analyze the leaves as part of a research project on plant molecular population genetics. This academic year, Dr. Slaymaker is on sabbatical to continue this project.

Dr. Joe Spagna got a paper accepted in the *Journal of Arachnology* with two student co-

authors (Vivin Mohan and Edgar Valdivia) and recently spent the summer collecting data (with the same students) on ants that jump using their jaws. The paper details how spiders 'trot' with all 8 legs off the ground when the are moving fast.

Dr. Edith Wallace (Emeritus), has published a new book, "Identifying Woody Plants at the Celery Farm Natural Area".



On November 12, 2010 the University held the Investiture of its 7th president, Dr. Kathleen Waldron. Dr. Risley was the banner carrier for the College of Science and Health. Many of the Biology department faculty were present at the festivities. Dr. Martin, Dr. Weiss, Dr. Gardner, Dr. Lee, Dr. Spagna and Dr. Wahrman are shown.



Photo of the new Solar Panel Array in Lot 6. WPUNJ now has the most solar panels of any university in the nation. The photo was taken by Dr. Pradeep Patnaik with Dr. Steve Vail flying the plane.

Alumni Activities

Alumni News

Here is some news of what our alumni have been doing. Please let us know what you're up to. You may visit our facebook (Bio William Paterson) or you may email Dr. Eileen Gardner at gardnere@wpunj.edu.

1987

Sylvia Carrington-White (MA '87) earned her MBA and is Senior Executive Customer Focus Representative at Merck & Co. She spoke to the LSAMPS students this year (see picture below with Dr. Desroches).



1989

Kwasi Ofori Armah (BS '89) is chairman of Radiology and Chief of MRI Services at York-Memorial Hospital, York, PA. He went to UMDNJ Medical School, residency in Diagnostic Imaging at Temple; and fellowships at Univ. of Iowa and PennState-Hershey Med Ctr. He has an MBA in the Business of Medicine. He is married and has a son who will turn 16 in April.

Janice Cobb (BA History '89) is working in the WPU Academic Support Center, and also as an adjunct for Sussex County Community College and for Passaic County Community College.

Dave Vollenweider (BS, '89) has been a biology teacher at Passaic High School for 14 years. His "Trout in the Classroom" classes were featured on public television. This project involves NJ's state fish—the brook trout. Students hatch, watch the development of, and release the trout. Dave has 10 fishing/fishery publications, and holds a US Coast Guard inland Captain's license. He has started a fishing guide business, "Live to Fish Guide Service".

1994

Matthew Samra (BS '94) (below) went to medical school at the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine in Missouri. He is currently a Vascular/Thoracic Surgeon at Deborah Heart and Lung Center, where he is Director of the Deborah Vein Center. He spoke to the Galen Society to speak about becoming a surgeon this fall.



1995

Ashwini Shidore (MS BT '95) has moved back to India with her family. They now have an apartment in Pune, Maharashtra.

1996

Michael DePalma ('96) is the Senior Director, Business Development at MediMedia USA.

1998

Kevin Curtis (BS '98; MS '05) is teaching AP Environmental Science and Chemistry at Pope John XXIII HS in Sparta. He is going to NJCU for a MA in Educational Technology.

Regina Wilson (BS '98) is a post-doctoral fellow in Virology at UMDNJ. She spoke at an LSAMPS meeting this year and also spoke about research careers at our Career Day in March 2010 (see picture on right).

2001

Jackie Terzano (BS BT '01; MS BT '04) is an Associate Scientist with Merck Research Labs. She is responsible for Toxicology Purification, pre-clinical and Phase I/II viral clearance evaluation studies.

2002

Christopher Hayden (BS BT'02) is in the Masters degree program in Biotechnology here at WPUNJ.

2004

Christine Johnson (BS '04; MS '06) is teaching at the County College of Morris.

Krishna Tobon (BS'04) is in a doctoral program at UMDNJ in Pharmacology and Physiology. She spoke at our Biology/Biotech Career day in March 2010 (see photo on right).

2005

Sara Huber (BS '05) graduated from Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 2010.

Charnsmorn Hwang (BS '05) is an Ecohydrologist and will be getting her MS in Forest Hydrology from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

Lester Myers (BS '05) is at Progenitor Cell Therapy in California. He is shown below removing and sealing cells from a CytoMate which is used for washing and concentrating large volumes of cells before cryopreservation.



Elizabeth Njoroge (BS'05; MS '08) is at Tulane University School of Medicine. She was one of the officers of their Student National Medical Association from 2009-2010.

2006

Pamela Bierwas (BS '06) is attending veterinary school at SGU.

Maria Bell (BS '06, MS '08) transitioned from patient care to Clinical Documentation Coordinator, Quality Resources, at Newton Memorial Hospital. She is responsible for data audits for Joint Commission and CMS validation processes.

Xiao Ji Chen (BS '06) is in his final year at the University of Medicine and Health Sciences in St. Kitts. (see photo below)



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**We're on Facebook!
Bio William Paterson**

Visit the Alumni link on the
Biology website:
<http://www.wpunj.edu/biology/>

2007

Nancy Abdallat (BS BT'07) is finishing up her masters degree in Biotechnology here at WPUNJ.

Jennifer Caglio (BS '07) is attending UMDNJ's Doctor of Physical Therapy Program and will graduate in 2011.

Olga Chomicova (BS '07) is a Research/Pharmacology Associate for Spinal Muscular Atrophy at Psychogenics, Inc. She spoke at our Career day in March 2010 (see picture).

Jill Dispensa (BS'07) is attending Kansas State School of Veterinary Medicine.

Juan Gutierrez (BS '07) has been at Howard University College of Dentistry in Washington, D.C. since 2007, and is now in his final year. He wrote us to let us know that he and Erin O'Hagan ('07) are engaged!

Shail Kabrawala (BS '07, MS BT '09) is a research technician at Brown university

Erin O'Hagan (BS '07) is in her 3rd year at Mercy College, where she is getting a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. She is engaged to Juan Gutierrez ('07)!

2008

Nick Link (BS '08) is teaching Biology at Passaic County Technical Institute. He is also in the WPUNJ MAT program and is a Noyce Scholar. He spoke at the May Career Day (see photo on right).

Justin Linteris (BS '08; MS '10) received his masters degree in Biology in 2010. He is working as an adjunct and a tutor at WPUNJ and will soon be taking the PRAXIS exam.

Joshua Morris (BS '08) works as a chemist at Mane USA, a fragrance company. He plans to transition into teaching High School Biology.

Shweta Pandya (MS BT '08) was accepted for admission in the PhD Program in Molecular Genetics at Wellington, New Zealand.

Michele Carmela Volaric (MS BT '08) is a Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory Technologist at Bioreference Laboratories in Elmwood Park, NJ

2009

Subhi Abugosh (2009) is attending Ross University School of Medicine in Dominica.

Hannah Ampofo (BS '09) attended the Temple Medical School NIH summer research program at the Sol Sherry Thrombosis Research Center.

Christopher Berghout (BS '09) is attending the MS program in Biotechnology here at WPUNJ.

Valerie Calilap (BS '09) is now a Chemistry Laboratory Technician at a fragrance company, and is applying to pharmacy schools.

Mike Cooper (BS'09) is at St. George Univ. Medical School in Grenada

Carl Gothmann (BS BT '09) is now QA Technician at World's Finest Chocolate.

Jennifer Johnson (BS '09) is in a PhD program at Stony Brook University. She spoke at our Career Day (see photo below).

Poliana Oliveira (BS'09) was accepted into the UMDNJ MS program in Biomedical Sciences

Sarah Oshman (BS '09) is now at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ School of Dentistry

Jacqueline Pietri (BS '09) is now in the MS Biology program here at WPUNJ.

Kaitlin Tilney (BS BT '09) is a Clinical Production Associate II at Celgene Cellular Therapeutics working with placental stem cells.

James VanGurp (BS'09;MS'10) is attending the School of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ

Harene Venghatakrishnan (MS BT'09) is a research technician/laboratory manager at the University of Mass. Medical School in Boston.

2010

Leigh Alzapiedi (BS BT'10) now has a job as an Accession Technician at CGI, Cancer Genetics, Inc.

Emerik Zekiel Azores (BS '10) was accepted

into the graduate program in Pharmacy at the University of Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo).

Jennifer Borgia (BS '10) works as a research associate for Sanofi-Aventis.

Denio Brown (BS '10) is working at Valley Home Care. He recently applied to the accelerated nursing program at UMDNJ.

Nicholas Depue (BS '10) is working for the State Prosecutor.

Ennid Gonzalez (BS'10) is attending the Stony Brook School of Medicine in Long Island.

Brittany Knoll (BS '10) is a student at the Lake Erie School of Osteopathic Medicine.

Adam Long (BS '10) is attending Podiatry School at Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Taylor Schneider (MS '10) is teaching at Passaic Valley High and will be attending Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in January.

Edyta Swiackiewicz (BS BT'10) is enrolled in the masters degree program in Biotechnology here at WPUNJ.

Katrina Tumielewicz (BS '10) is attending the University of Prince Edward Island Atlantic Veterinary College

John Urban (BS'10) is in the Graduate Program in Molecular Biology, Cell Biology, and Biochemistry (MCB) at Brown University studying Functional and Computational Genetics. He spoke at our Career Day in March (see photo below).

Yazan Vwich (BS '10) will start at Ross University Medical School in January, 2011.



In March we held a Biology/Biotechnology Career Day, emphasizing research and teaching careers. The outside speakers were all WPUNJ alumni. Shown here are Kathy Sayad ('86), Jennifer Johnson ('10), John Urban ('10), Olga Chomicova ('07), Nick Link ('08), Regina Wilson ('98) and Krishna Tobon ('04).

You Haven't Been Mentioned In An Alumni Newsletter Yet?

Email me at gardnere@wpunj.edu and let me know what you're doing! Include your name, your graduation date, and any personal and/or professional information you would like us to print.

BLAST FROM THE PAST—BETA BETA BETA INDUCTION 1986



Some of the students initiated into Beta Beta Beta in 1986. Ching Ping Liu is on the far left. June Kim is second from left. Sixth and seventh from the left are Louis Sayad, currently an adjunct at WPUNJ, and Kathy Ullrich (Sayad). Joe Salinas is in the front right. At the far right is John Schaeffer.



Some of our faculty also attended the event. From left to right are Dr. Miryam Wahrman, Dr. John Rosengren, Dr. Danielle Desroches, Dr. Robert Benno and Dr. Robert Callahan.