



News2 Note

January 2009

Adult Day Services celebrated its 15-year anniversary on December 5 with a conference at the Holiday Inn that included sessions on topics such as the benefits of Adult Day Services and intergenerational activities. Dr. Steven H. Zarit presented the keynote speech, "Caring for Our Older Adults in Community Settings."

The Air Force ROTC commissioned three new lieutenants on December 19. **2Lt Lisa M. DeWalt**, Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercises, will be assigned to Yokota Air Base, Japan, as a Logistics Readiness Officer. **2Lt Tyler W. Martin**, Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management, will be assigned to Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, for Combat Systems Officer training. **2Lt Robert D. Read**, History, will be assigned to Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, for Pilot Training.

Barbara Allen, Science and Technology Studies, National Capital Region, received a runner-up award in *Dance Your Ph.D.*, a video competition sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In the video, "expert" scientist Allen is joined by six performers from the local Bowen McCauley Dance troupe to interpret the findings of her 1999 dissertation titled "Uneasy Alchemy: Citizens and Experts in Louisiana's Chemical Corridor Disputes." Competition rules require that entries be posted to You Tube and that entrants dance in the video. For more about the contest go to <http://www.ncr.vt.edu/Highlights/AllenDance.html>; the video can be found at [You Tube](#).

Elisabeth Austin, Foreign Languages and Literatures, published "Reading and Writing Juana Manuela Gorriti's *Cocina ecléctica*: Modeling Multiplicity in 19th-Century Domestic Narrative" in the *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies* 12 (2008): 25-38.

"Tribute," a 2006 composition for symphonic wind ensemble by **Travis J. Cross**, Music, was analyzed by Christopher Morehouse, in volume seven of *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*, ed. Richard Miles (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2008), 274-81. The latest composition by Cross, "Everlasting Light," was premiered by the St. Olaf Band on Sunday, December 7, with Cross as the guest conductor for the entire performance by the group. In addition, Cross co-presented a session titled "Four Centuries of Masterworks for Brass" with Gail Williams, Gerard Morris, Alicia Neal, and Robert Taylor at the 2008 Midwest Clinic, An International Band and Orchestra Conference, in Chicago from December 16-20; along with his colleagues he served as a clinician as well. As part of the event Cross guest conducted

the Northwestern University Brass Ensemble and the Minnesota Symphonic Winds. The Midwest Clinic is the foremost gathering of band and orchestra music educators in the world.

Gary Downey, Alumni Distinguished Professor in the Department of Science and Technology in Society, was one of two Virginia Tech teacher/scholars to deliver a keynote address at the 2008 Fall University and Graduate School Commencement ceremonies on December 19. Downey addressed undergraduate students at the University Ceremony, and Marc Edwards, College of Engineering, spoke at the Graduate School Ceremony. Approximately 2,500 students were honored for completing their academic degrees.

Joseph Eska, English, has been named to the editorial board of *Historische Sprachforschung*, the longest running periodical in the field of historical linguistics. In addition, he published "The genitive plural desinence in Celtic and dialect geography" in *Die Sprache* 46/2 (2006 [2008]): 229-35.

Anthony Kwame Harrison, Sociology, published the article "Racial Authenticity in Rap Music and Hip Hop" in *Sociology Compass* 2.6 (November 2008): 1783-1800, available online via <http://www.blackwell-compass.com/subject/sociology/>; in addition, his chapter titled "Multiracial Youth Scenes and the Dynamics of Race: New Approaches to Racialization within the Bay Area Hip Hop Underground" appeared in *Twenty-First Century Colorlines: Multiracial Change in Contemporary America*, eds. Andrew Grant-Thomas and Gary Orfield (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2008), 201-20.

Congratulations to **Bob Hicok**, English, on winning a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship for 2009. This is Hicok's second NEA Fellowship, and it follows last year's Guggenheim Fellowship. The goal of the creative writing fellowships is to encourage the production of new work and allow writers the time and means to write. During the past 40 years, the Endowment has awarded over \$41 million to over 2,700 writers and sponsored work resulting in over 2,400 books.

Kirsten Jensen, Foreign Languages and Literatures, received a CEUT Instructional Enhancement Grant for her project "Revamping the Elementary Japanese Curriculum." Jensen also received an OIRED mini-grant for "Virginia Tech in Japan: A Summer Education Abroad Initiative," which will establish a new study abroad program in Japan.

In November **Billie Lepczyk**, Learning Sciences and Technologies/School of Education, was the recipient of the University Dance Educator of the Year Award for 2008 from the Virginia Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. Last month she was awarded the Southern District's University Dance Educator of the Year Award for 2009; one of six districts, the Southern District comprises 13 states. At the National Convention of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance this spring, the awardees from the six districts will be interviewed for the National Award.

Lightning at Our Feet, a production that blends the writings of Emily Dickinson, musical and acting performance, and digital projections of art, photography, film, and theatrical staging to create an original new-media experience, had its New York City premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music from

December 9 and was performed December 11-13. The production was directed by **Bob McGrath**, Theatre Arts. Details can be found here: <http://www.bam.org/view.aspx?pid=127>.

Jerry Niles, Emeritus Professor of Education and former dean of the College, is serving as interim vice president for undergraduate education for the month of January. He is taking over from David Ford, who retired on December 31; Ford's successor, Daniel A. Wubah, will move into the position on February 1. The vice president and dean for undergraduate education provides leadership for undergraduate education, overseeing the offices of Academic Support Services, Enrollment Management, Distance Learning and Summer Sessions, and Undergraduate Education.

On December 18 the following students in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences were inducted into Phi Beta Kappa on the basis of their outstanding academic performance. The newest members of the Mu chapter of Virginia are: **Amy L. Ballard** (Political Science/Philosophy), **Michelle Reneé King** (International Studies/Spanish), **Meredith Muriel Lee** (International Studies, French), **Brook Anne Love** (Interdisciplinary Studies), **Dominique Dijoud Montgomery** (Interdisciplinary Studies), **Gregory Douglas Nelson** (International Studies, French), **Kyra Marie Rosow** (English/Pre-Law), **Jeremiah Daniel Shelor** (English), **Whitney Lee Svensson** (English/Psychology), and **Kristina Ticknor** (Communication). Dean **Sue Ott Rowlands** and College of Science Associate Dean Jill Sible welcomed those attending the initiation ceremony in Hillcrest Hall; chapter president **Mark Barrow**, History, addressed the initiates.

Marlene Preston, Communication, taught two short courses related to the assessment of oral communication, one for the Assessment Division and one for the Communication Centers Section, at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, held in San Diego November 21-24. She also served as a presenter on a panel that received the Outstanding Panel award. In addition, the members of the Communication Centers Section created an award in her honor—the Marlene Preston Leadership Award – that will be presented annually to a member of the section.

Paula Marie Seniors, Sociology, published “Ada Overton Walker, Abbie Mitchell, and the Gibson Girl: Reconstructing African American Womanhood” in the *International Journal of Africana Studies* 13/1 (Spring/Summer 2007): 38-67, which recently appeared in print.

Eric-Gene Shrewsbury, a doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction/School of Education, and **Judith Shrum**, Foreign Languages and Literatures, presented a session titled “Technology in the Service of Language Instruction” at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Convention in Orlando, Florida, on November 22. Shrewsbury described his research and instructional project related to *My Spanish Lab*, published by Pearson, and Shrum described her use and research on Auralog's *Tell Me More* language learning solution.

On December 7 **Theodore Sipes**, Music, and guest pianist/collaborator Erica Sipes presented the world premiere of “Three Songs for a Wedding,” an art song cycle by New York composer Manly Romero that is based on an English translation of Pablo Neruda's “Three Poems for a Wedding.” The recital also included Francis Poulenc's *Le Travail du Peintre*, with slides of works by the various painters included in the cycle, excerpts from Robert Schumann's *Liederkreis, Opus 24*, Gerald Finzi's *Earth and Air and Rain*, and three *arie antiche*. Partial support for the Blacksburg premier of “Three Songs for a Wedding,” as

well as the New York City premier of the same songs, which will take place in April 2009, is being provided by a faculty research grant from the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences.

The following students were the recipients of an Undergraduate Research Institute Grant Award in Fall 2008. International Studies and Spanish major **Emily Barry** received support for “Community Interactions between Developed and Developing Countries shown through El Porvenir, Honduras”; her research will be conducted in Honduras. Barry’s faculty advisor is Michael Blackwell, University Honors. English major **Kara Batt**’s award was for “Sidelines: The starting of a magazine”; her faculty advisors are English faculty **Eva Brumberger** and **Ed Weathers**. English major **Diana Campbell** obtained support for “Analysis of Best Management Practices of Community Gardens in Developing Countries”; her research will be conducted in Honduras. Campbell’s faculty advisor is C. Bryan Cloyd, Pamplin College of Business. Communication major **Rana Fayez** was given an award for “Ethnic Identity in Punk Rock Culture”; her faculty advisor is **Edd Sewell**, Communication. English and History major **Alexandra Ford**’s award-winning project titled “Normandie Suites, Knightsbridge, London: A Memoir,” will be presented at the Susquehanna University Undergraduate Literature and Creative Writing Conference; Ford’s faculty advisor is **Kathleen Fallon**, English. **Caitlin Grady**, a major in Humanities, Science and the Environment, Spanish, and Environmental Policy and Planning, received an award for her project titled “Comparison Study of Water Management Practices Enacted by Peacework Villages in Developing Countries”; her research will be conducted in Honduras. Grady’s faculty advisor is Tamim Younos, Water Resources Research Center. Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management/Apparel Design and Business Management major **Tiffany Henry** received support for “The Next-Generation Online Shopping Experience for Designer Jewelry Customers”; her faculty advisor is **Ji-Hyun Kim**, Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management. English and Economics major **Caitlin Laverdiere**’s award-winning project “The Roles of Student Leaders in an ePortfolio Pilot/ePortfolio Showcase: Experimental Models for Learning and Reflection” was submitted on behalf of the research team consisting of English majors **Brittney Davis**, **Alexandra Ford**, **Bristol Lowder**, **Patrick McCarthy**, **Sara Musick**, **Alexandra Orchard-Hays**, **Lorelle Stephanski**, **Katie Stitt**, and **Laverdiere** herself, all of whom received support for the presentations at the Virginia Tech Regional Sakai Conference. **Nancy Metz**, English, is the faculty advisor. English and Biology major **Michelle Rivera**’s award-winning project “Lemon Flavored Lollipops” will be presented at the Susquehanna University Undergraduate Literature and Creative Writing Conference; her faculty advisor is **Nancy Metz**, English. History and Classical Studies major **Alex Tardiff** received support for “The Historiography of Marcus Atilius Regulus”; his faculty advisor is **Trudy Becker**, Interdisciplinary Studies.

In addition, the URI awarded support to **Nancy Metz**, English, for the English Undergraduate Research Conference.

Among the recipients of the 2008 University Exemplary Department Award were three units in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences: the **Department of History**, the **Department of Teaching and Learning in the School of Education**, and the **Undergraduate Research Institute**. Two other units, the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering and the School of Architecture + Design in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies were recognized as well at a ceremony on December 2 at The Inn at Virginia Tech. Both Provost McNamee and President Charles W. Steger were on hand to present the plaque and the cash award to a representative of each winner. Chair **Daniel Thorp** accepted on behalf of the Department of History; Chair **Susan Asselin** represented the Department of Teaching and Learning; and **Diana Ridgwell**, director of student development for the

College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, was the representative of the Undergraduate Research Institute. This year, the awards were presented to departments that work collaboratively across departmental boundaries to fulfill common or complementary goals.

For the past seven years the Department of History and the Department of Teaching and Learning have worked together on a series of projects with a common goal of providing enhanced training and tools for K-12 teachers of history and social studies in Virginia. The projects have received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the U.S. Department of Education, and other state and federal agencies; they have helped more than 100 teachers enhance their skills in the classroom and have made new and innovative teaching materials available to many more. The largest and longest running example is the Teaching American History Program. In the past five years the project has engaged eight faculty members from the two departments in helping the Montgomery County Public Schools and a consortium of Roanoke area schools to receive grant support. A second collaboration resulted in The Digital History Reader. A team of eleven faculty and graduate students from four departments, including History and Teaching and Learning, received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2003 to develop a set of on line materials appropriate for use in university or high school courses in modern European History and the history of the United States. The digital instructional materials integrate written texts with images, video, and audio materials, are easily accessible, and challenge students to think historically.

The CLAHS Undergraduate Research Institute was conceived of only three years ago and already is fulfilling its mission to expose undergraduate students to investigation, inquiry, and creative expression in the liberal arts and human sciences; enhance opportunities for advanced research initiatives; elevate the visibility of that research; and provide access to resources for student development and faculty mentorship. Some 59 students have been matched with faculty mentors in research activities, and through a competitive grant process 29 students have received funding to further their research. Mentoring of students has been enhanced as more students present research at undergraduate conferences sponsored by departments, the university, and other venues such as the ACC Undergraduate Research Conference. Students receive assistance in identifying research opportunities in the newly created Survey of Research Methods in the Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. The institute also was awarded a Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching grant to develop modules for an online undergraduate research course. Perhaps the feather in the institute's cap to date is the establishment of an undergraduate research journal, *Philologia*, whose inaugural issue will appear this spring.

Presented annually since 1994, the University Exemplary Department Award recognizes the work of departments or programs that maintain a first-class teaching and learning environment for students and faculty.

Alumni Highlight

The Westfield High School drama program, established by 1995 Theatre Arts graduate **Scott Pafumi**, was featured in a two-hour special titled "Drama High: The Making of a High School Musical," on ABC-TV on December 15 at 9 p.m. During the 2007-08 school year, ABC News spent three months filming Pafumi's production of *The Wiz*, beginning with auditions and concluding with the final performance, which took place in November and December 2007; student video diaries and interviews reveal the story of the production. The Westfield production of *The Wiz* received 17 Cappie nominations and

won three awards. The Cappies, "Critics and Awards Program," is a program through which high school theater and journalism students are trained as critics, attend shows at other schools, write and publish reviews about them, and at the end of the year vote for awards.

Pafumi is director of the theatre arts department at the high school, which is located in Chantilly, Virginia. His program has won more Cappie Awards than all but one other school in the area.

Please submit items for inclusion in upcoming **News2Note** newsletters to
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