Thank you for reading the Research Magazine of the University of New Orleans. Several exciting changes have occurred in the past year, most notably the selection of a new President of the university. Dr. Peter J. Fos was selected as the sixth leader and first President of UNO in January 2012. Dr. Fos has kindly agreed to answer a few questions regarding his vision for the university.

Our cover picture shows the latest excursion of high school students involved in UNO’s summer geoscience field trip. The program is coordinated by Dinah Maygarden of our Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences (PIES). Twice each summer, UNO offers juniors and seniors from high schools around the country the chance to study geology in the mountain west or environmental ecology in the coastal wetlands of Louisiana.

This issue contains several items related to the School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering (NAME) in our College of Engineering. One ONR-funded project involves collaboration between local shipbuilding companies, our National Center for Advanced Manufacturing (NCAM) and Dr. Pingsha Dong of NAME. Friction Stir Welding is a solid-state metal joining process producing high-strength, defect-free joints in metallic materials. The process employs a pin tool with a low rotational speed and applied pressure that “mechanically stirs” two parent materials together to produce a uniform weld. Dr. Dong’s project demonstrates the feasibility of using the technique to manufacture a ship’s hull from titanium alloy producing a vessel with a lower total cost of ownership. UNO and ONR jointly hosted the Titanium Ship Structure Summit in New Orleans on November 7-8, 2011.

Also in this issue we report on a congressional visit to the Netherlands to study how the Dutch have addressed storm surge concerns for their country. Dr. Denise Reed of our Earth and Environmental Sciences Department and PIES was an active participant in the visit which was aimed at learning how the Dutch have responded to their flood disaster of 1953 and how Louisiana might apply what they have learned in light of the flooding of New Orleans and the region following Hurricane Katrina.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the UNO Research Magazine.

Scott L. Whittenburg
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
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Dr. Peter J. Fos–New President of UNO

Q&A:

In December Peter J. Fos became the sixth leader and the first president in UNO history (as a member of the University of Louisiana System, UNO is now led by a president). A UNO graduate and New Orleans native, President Fos has extensive experience as an administrator and faculty member with a proven record of conducting research, fundraising, developing collaborative relationships with other academic institutions, and implementing institutional effectiveness and student success programs. Before arriving at UNO, he held positions at the LSU Health Sciences Center, The University of Texas at Tyler, The University of Southern Mississippi and Tulane University.

What were your experiences when you were selected president of UNO?
My emotions were disbelief and excitement. It felt like a dream. Realizing that I have been selected to lead my alma mater is a very exciting opportunity. I have spent 25+ years in higher education administration, and now I will be able to end my professional career as the first president of my—and my wife’s—alma mater. Wow!

What sort of reception have you gotten from alumni and business leaders since you were selected?
The reception has been overwhelmingly positive. It has been about 18 months since the University of New Orleans had a permanent leader and I sense that alumni and business leaders have been waiting for the selection of the new president. As an alumnus and native New Orleanian, I have been able to connect with and engage alumni and business leaders very quickly. I feel that my, and the University’s, relationship with alumni and business leaders will continue to improve.

How has your past experience prepared you for this challenge?
I have been fortunate to have worked for over 20 years at two major research universities which has prepared me to contribute to UNO—an urban research university. I understand what UNO is today and what it strives to be in the future. My experience in two large university systems—one in Mississippi and the other in Texas—has also prepared me to work for UNO in the University of Louisiana System. My time as a dean and provost and executive vice president has exposed me to an array of issues and challenges.

Where do you see the University in five years?
I hope—and my goal—is that UNO will be a premier university in the University of Louisiana System in all aspects. I see the University as a vibrant, student-centered, research university that is an integral part of the city of New Orleans and the Gulf South region.

How can you experience in health care be applied to your new position?
I feel that my experience in health care uniquely prepares me to assist UNO to become a partner in the new medical center project that is currently under construction in New Orleans. UNO is uniquely positioned to work with the local health sciences centers to prepare our students for careers in health care, including administration, counseling, engineering, urban planning and others. My past experience at the two local health sciences centers will allow me to interface with health care leaders to ensure that the University of New Orleans plays a part in developing New Orleans as a rival to the medical center hubs in Houston and other cities.

What do you want the city, the state and the nation to know about UNO?
I want everyone to know that UNO is a major university that prepares graduates to succeed in careers that are essential to improve our cities, state and nation. Our graduates are competent, globally-aware citizens. I want them to know that UNO has a committed faculty and staff, and a very loyal and diverse student body. The University has a legacy of academic excellence and research excellence.

Students Team Up With Make It Right On Cutting-Edge Street Project

A group of UNO civil engineering students can see the fruits of their labor, and so can anyone else who visits a newly paved city block in the Lower Ninth Ward. Twenty-three students undertook an ambitious senior design project in coordination with the Make It Right Foundation and the City of New Orleans. It’s a project that could have far-reaching implications for the city’s drainage system.

The UNO students did all of the surveys, design work and material testing on a section of North Priest Street between Jourdan Avenue and Desblonde Street. Instead of conventional concrete, this special test run used pervious concrete and Gravelite base course. Both materials are porous and allow rain water to be stored in the street, as opposed to all of it entering the drainage system.

As workers pour the section of street that they designed, civil engineering students Matt Zeringue and Anne Heath take concrete samples while instructor Chuck Fromherz looks on.
UNO Launches WhoData.org

UNO’s Department of Planning and Urban Studies (UNO-PLUS) launched WhoData.org, a powerful community data Internet mapping service that gives citizen groups an unprecedented platform to contribute and track information on the progress of New Orleans’ neighborhoods.

Since Hurricane Katrina, many neighborhood groups have independently collected property condition information. WhoData.org empowers these groups by providing them with a collaborative property mapping application that will allow residents to assess their own neighborhoods, highlight properties that show indicators of blight, create their own maps and property lists and share this information with the public.

UNO Shares $3.5 Million Grant to Study Juvenile Justice

UNO is one of three universities to share a three-year, $3.5 million grant to study the long-term behavioral and financial impacts of juvenile justice decision-making. The grant is funded jointly by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The project is entitled “Crossroads: Formal vs. Informal Processing in the Juvenile Justice System.” Some youth who violate the law are informally processed, meaning they are diverted from the juvenile justice system. While others with similar histories who are arrested for identical crimes are formally processed, meaning they are put on supervised probation or sent to institutional placement. In many jurisdictions, processing decisions are made in the absence of empirically developed guidelines.

UNO Gets More than $600,000 For Oyster Project

UNO has received $632,880 from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to provide information technology and fisheries modeling for the sustainable management of Louisiana’s public oyster seed grounds. UNO’s computer science and biological sciences departments are working on the three-year project.

The LDWF is responsible for closely monitoring the size and health of oysters on nearly 1.7 million acres of public water bottoms. Every year, the LDWF conducts a survey on the public oyster seed grounds to determine the size and number of oysters present. Researchers on the project will input this information, along with the acreage of the oyster reef, into a mathematical model. The model, taking into account oyster growth rate and mortality rate, will predict how many oysters will be present. Researchers on the project will input this information, along with the acreage of the oyster reef, into a mathematical model. The model, taking into account oyster growth rate and mortality rate, will predict how many oysters will be present.

UNO Selected For South Korean Shipbuilding Project

UNO has been awarded a 10-year $3 million contract as one of three American university partners on a South Korean shipbuilding research project. UNO, the University of Michigan and the University of Maryland were selected to work with one of South Korea’s two Global Core Research Centers. The centers will focus on research opportunities within South Korea’s two major export industry sectors: shipbuilding/marine structures and electronic industries.

“WhoData.org is a public participation geographic information systems (GIS) program that will encourage our students to work closely with community-based organizations and municipal leaders to integrate neighborhood and regional data for mutual understanding and access,” said Michelle Thompson, UNO assistant professor of planning and urban studies.

UNO-PLUS is collaborating with the Neighborhood Housing Services of New Orleans (NHS) and the Regional Planning Commission to increase public access to current and relevant community data.

The research project will evaluate juvenile justice policy by examining the social, developmental and economic consequences of processing decisions in addition to evaluating their effects on re-offending. Researchers will study an ethnically diverse sample of 1,200 male juvenile offenders between the ages of 12 and 16 years old from Louisiana, California and Pennsylvania and interview them semi-annually for three years. The outcomes of interest include educational attainment, mental health, employment preparation, social relationships and recidivism as well as their associated economic costs and benefits.

“We’re trying to quantify all that to see if the kids who stay out of the system do better in a lot of ways than kids who are in the system, or vice versa,” says UNO psychology professor Paul Frick.

UNO’s Department of Computer Science. The investigators for the project are Thomas Soniat, biological sciences professor of research, and computer science professors Mahdi Abdelguerfi and Shengru Tu.

The entire information system will be hosted by the UNO Department of Computer Science. The investigators for the project are Thomas Soniat, biological sciences professor of research, and computer science professors Mahdi Abdelguerfi and Shengru Tu.

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The centers will be operated by a lead university in South Korea with a consortium of academic institutions and South Korean manufacturers. A portion of the research funding is allocated to overseas consortium members, including UNO. The UNO principal investigator is Pingsha Dong, the Northrop Grumman Endowed Chair in Shipbuilding and Engineering and director of the Welded Structures Laboratory. Dong, an internationally renowned engineer, will provide advanced research in the areas of welding, fatigue design and analysis; and structural assembly procedures for marine structures.
UNO Research Reveals Early Humans Lived in Riverfront Property

Early humans lived in a riverfront environment in Ethiopia, according to a study published in *Nature Communications* by UNO researchers M. Royhan Gani and Nahid D. Gani. This finding is in contrast to the previous interpretation of early humans living in a woodland environment far from a river. Knowledge of the habitat of early humans is crucial to answering the questions of early human evolution, including the development of bipedalism—walking on two legs.

The researchers studied the habitat of *Ardipithecus ramidus*, a 4.4 million-year-old early human found in Aramis, Ethiopia. They interpreted the data to suggest the presence of major rivers and river-margin vegetation. This would place *Ar. ramidus* in a river-margin habitat part of an otherwise savannah landscape. Understanding the landscape inhabited by *Ar. ramidus* will help assess the different theories for the development of early humans.

Professors Team Up For Avondale Project

A group of UNO professors is teaming up with colleagues from other local universities for a collaborative research project on Avondale Shipyard, which is expected to close in 2013. For more than 70 years, the Avondale Shipyard has been an economic engine for the West Bank, metro New Orleans and the entire Gulf Coast. The research project will help inform the public discussion on the future of the shipyard by studying its significance to the region.

Vern Baxter, professor of sociology; Michael Mizrill-Nelson, professor of history; and Steve Striffler, professor of anthropology, will collaborate with colleagues from Tulane University, Loyola University New Orleans and Southern University at New Orleans.

Baxter and Striffler are working on a project that examines how Avondale has been critical to the creation of a middle class in New Orleans during the post-World War II era. Mizrill-Nelson is exploring the history of Avondale from its origins in the 1930s through today. He will focus on its central role during World War II; its historical importance to the New Orleans business community and its intimate connections to local educational institutions.
Filmmaker James Chressanthis introduces his documentary “No Subtitles Necessary: Lasdo & Vilmos” at a screening in the Robert E. Nims Theatre at the UNO Performing Arts Center in September. The screening marked the debut of the theatre’s new, state-of-the-art digital projector. The Barco 4K DLP projector is the highest resolution projector available (four times the resolution of high definition TV). It gives UNO film students the opportunity to view their work as it would be seen in any of the finest theaters in the world.
**UNO Awarded $4.8 Million Grant for Titanium Shipbuilding**

UNO has been awarded a three-year, $4.8 million grant from the Office of Naval Research to advance the science and technology of titanium shipbuilding. The research will be focused on the manufacturability and structural performance of a titanium mid-section ship section. Titanium alloys offer many advantages for ship hull applications compared to traditional structural steels and aluminum alloys. For example, titanium alloys are more resistant to corrosion, have a high strength-to-weight ratio and a high resistance to fatigue. However, the cost of materials and the lack of robust welding and joining techniques have prevented the shipbuilding industry from realizing the enormous potential of titanium for ship hull applications, said Pinghui Dong, a professor in the School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering.

According to Dong, with recent advances in welding and math-based design for fabrication techniques, this project represents perhaps the most comprehensive exploration of state-of-the-art technologies to date by actually building a full-scale titanium midship section.

**Digging The Quarter**

The UNO anthropology department conducted an archaeological excavation in January in the French Quarter at the future location of the Irish Cultural Museum. Led by UNO archaeologist Andrea White, a team of volunteer archaeologists found clues about the people who lived at 933 Conti St. over the last 230 years.

**ACCOUNTING**


**ANTHROPOLOGY**

David Beris, chair of anthropology, presented “City of Gastronomy: Global Recognition and Local Resilience in New Orleans” at the 71st annual meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, March 29-April 2 in Seattle, Wash.


Martha C. Ward, research professor of anthropology, was a discussant in the panel “Public Policy and Publics in Post-Katrina New Orleans: How Critical Topics Circulate and Shape Recovery Policy.”

**BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**

Charles Bell, assistant professor of biological sciences, was a co-organizer at the International Botanical Congress 2011 in Melbourne, Australia. He presented “Dating the tree of life: parasites and pathogens.”


Steve Johnson, dean of the College of Sciences, is the principal investigator on a project entitled “U.S.-Gabon Workshop 2011: Evolution and Conservation of Central African Biological Diversity: New Approaches and Avenues for International Collaboration,” which has received a $650,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. The workshop will provide a forum for scientists studying the evolution and conservation of biological diversity in the central African rainforests.


Stanley Leibio, professor of biological sciences, lectured about “embryo banking” at the Second International Congress on Controversies in Cryopreservation of Stem Cells, Reproductive Cells, Tissues and Organs in Valencia, Spain in April 2011.

Zhengchang Liu, assistant professor of biological sciences, was awarded a grant from the National Institute of Health, National Institute of General Medical Sciences for $254,331 in September 2011 to research amino acid sensing and signaling in yeast.

Carla Penc, associate professor of biological sciences, Phil DeVries, professor of biological sciences; and Thomas Simon-Laiiaux, Natural History Museum, United Kingdom, recently described a new species of butterfly that has likely gone extinct due to habitat destruction. Their publication was portrayed in the National Geographic Magazine-France.


Wendy Schlucker, chair of biological sciences, is the principal investigator for a four-year, $541,807 National Science Foundation Grant award to establish an undergraduate research program designed to boost participation of under-represented minority groups in the biological sciences.

UNO will partner with Southern University at New Orleans (UNO) on the project, which is entitled “Collaborative Research: URM: UNO/SUNO Partnership in Mentoring Undergraduates in the Biological Sciences.” Also involved in this grant are co-principal investigators Carla Penc, assistant professor of biology, and Shengru Tu, professor of biology.

**COMPUTER SCIENCE**

Mahdi Abdalgorei, chair of computer science, professor Shengru Tu, assistant professor Daniel Bilay and Goldo Richard III, professor and director of UNO’s Greater New Orleans Center for Information Assurance, have all been chosen to work on three new research and development contracts worth more than $800,000 from the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) Systems Center New Orleans awarded to the computer science department. The three contracts became effective on September 1, 2010. The contracts are for autonomous computing and security essentials, platform independent secure mobile computing, and web mashup and semantic frameworks. UNO Vice-President for Research & Economic Development Scott Whittembeug is the project director.
Focus

CREATIVE WRITING
Ken Rave, director of the Greater New Orleans Writing Project, recently received an anonymous $50,000 gift for the program. The gift enables GONWP to build a national affiliate of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, a national nonprofit organization that conducts the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. As a regional affiliate, the GONWP will distribute information to schools, collect submissions, provide support during the submissions process and organize local judging for the competition. To support this venture, the GONWP is partnering with the Lusher Charter School creative writing program.

EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
Martin O’Connell, associate professor and chair of earth and environmental sciences, and graduate students attended the annual meeting of the Louisiana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society in Lafayette to present the results of various research projects, particularly those related to improving local fisheries. Projects included examining potential outbreaks of fish disease, sampling redfish reintroduced to local waters, and organizing local judging for the Scholastic Art and Writing Project. O’Connell recently published a book entitled “The Fish Old Man’s Guide to Health and Fitness.” Second Edition (ISBN: 978-158933946-6, $12.95, 128 pp.), which describes an 80-year-old fisherman’s “do nothing” program for reversing health problems common to middle-aged men.

Trevyn Germain-McCarty, professor of communication and information, presented a paper entitled “Reinventing the Rule for Division of Fractions” at the Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Association for Teachers of Mathematics, October 19-21, 2011 in Monroe, La.


ENGINEERING
Rashad Atzam distinguished professor of electrical engineering, was a member of the steering and program committees, assisted in organizing, and invited speaker at the 11th International Conference on High-Capacity Optical Networks and Emerging Technologies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Dec. 19-21, 2011.

Edit Kissinyi Bourgeois, chair of electrical engineering, has been appointed Chair of the IEEE ComSoc GLOBECOM ECC Technical Committee for the year 2011-2012.

X. Bong Li, Chancellor’s University Research Professor of Electrical Engineering, made the following presentations at the 14th International Conference on Information Fusion, Edinburgh, U.K. 26-29 July 2010. “Hybrid Grid Map Update for Distributed Application to Maneuvering Target Tracking,” “Estimation and Filtering for Gaussian Variables with Linear Inequality Constraints,” “Recursive LMMSSE Filtering for Target Tracking with Range and Direction Cosine Measurements,” “On Optimal State Estimation with Multiple Radar Sensors,” and “State Estimation with Point and Set Measurements.” Li had eight papers published in the proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Information Fusion, Chicago, Ill., July 2011.

All presentations were published in the Proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Information Fusion as well as four articles Li co-authored: “Joint Identification and Tracking of Multiple CBNE Clouds,” (Based on Security Pursuit,” “Distributed Multi Model Fusion with Transformed Measurement Relationship,” “Joint Identification with Cross-Correlation Considered,” and “Distributed Estimation Fusion under Unknown Correlation: An Analytic Center Approach.”


Ting Wang, professor of mechanical engineering, and his research group presented his paper entitled “Turbulent Flame Turbo Expo 2012” sponsored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in Vancouver, British Columbia. Wang and research associate Jobishod Khan received the best paper award in the area of industrial and cooperation projects. paper is 2D Modeling for Wavepropagation in a Single Stage Compressor Including Liquid Sprays in the Intake Air. The paper was presented at Turbo Expo 2010 in Glasgow, Scotland.

ENGLISH
Randy Bates, associate professor of English, will have a chapter of his poems, Bibrate, published this summer by Finishing Line Press.


Anne Bourau Kuts, professor of English and undergraduate coordinator, has received a Creative Endeavor Opportunity Grant from the University of New Orleans to conduct research on her book A Life of Constance Fenimore Woolson, which is under contract with the Johns Hopkins University Press.

Andre Perry, associate dean of the College of Education and Human Development and CEO of the Capital One-UNO Charter School Network, recently published an essay entitled “School by School: The Transformation of New Orleans Public Education,” which appeared in a major textbook on the New Orleans recovery five years after Hurricane Katrina. It is one of seven essays by local scholars on post-Katrina New Orleans and some of the key elements of the city’s recovery in The New Orleans Index at Five, a project of the Washington- based Urban Institute. Perry is a faculty member of the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center.

FILM, THEATRE AND COMMUNICATION ARTS
David Hoover, chair of film, theatre and communication arts, performed in two professional theatre productions in the last six months. He played the role of Feder in the coproduction of The Diswy Award for the Jefferson Performing Arts Society and Theatre 13. In addition, he played the role of Toby Belch in the Tulane Summer Shakespeare Festival’s production of Twelfth Night for
The University of New Orleans Research Magazine

Faculty Focus

which he was also represented on the cover of the October issue of American Theatre.

Hamp Orton, associate professor of film, theatre and communication arts, presented “Composition: From Painting to Photography to Motion Pictures” at the University Film and Video Association conference, August 34 at Emerson University in Boston, Mass.

FINE ARTS

Richards Johnson, professor of fine arts, closed his solo exhibition at Cole Pratt Gallery in New Orleans, La. The show ran from January 15 through March 2 and featured mixed media paintings which, unlike his earlier abstractions, took the history of art and studies of the classical mode as their subjects.

Jim Richard, professor of fine arts, exhibited his work in “Then and Now,” a survey of artists whose contributions have significantly changed the development of the contemporary art scene in New Orleans. The celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans, La., ended June 12.

Richard held his first solo exhibition at Jeff Collins in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York, NY from November 17, 2011 to January 17, 2012. The 920 sq. ft. exhibition of his collage paintings joined tangerine oil on linen works.

Jean Rühsen, fine arts instructor, had put together the art, and Tony Campbell, artist in residence, were curated into “Cathy,” an exhibit at Space 301 in Malibu, Calif. From July 27, 2011 to September 4, 2011, sponsored by the Joan Mitchell Center. The show focused on the event of the BP oil spill and its effects as researched, experienced and interpreted by the artists.

Nick Stillman, critic in residence, published Seng-Li Ngendali’s “Ceremony for Freeway Peet” and Other Los Angeles Collaborations,” an article on artist Seng-Li Ngendali, for the Los Angeles-based magazine East of Borneo in December 2011.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Manuel García-Castellón, professor of foreign language, has published a second book this year entitled “El árbol. Anotaciones de la imagen del árbol en la literatura” (Madrid, Clan Edicional, ISBN: 978-84469754-55, 205 pp.). The book was inspired by the defense of urban ecosystems of the Iberian Peninsula. Some gains from its edition is its contribution to the benefit of AESM-Rico con Vida, a Spanish agency devoted to the protection of the environment.

Joke Mondaal, associate professor of Spanish, presented the paper “The expression of feelings in Susana Chávez-Silberman’s Mini Barrio Norte Génesis” at the XL LASSCO (Lingüística de la Asociación del Sureste) Conference, September 24-25 at the Centre of Padre Inci, TX.


History

Connie Zannah Atkinson, associate professor and assistant director of the Miller Center for New Orleans Studies, was invited by California State University Chico to present her paper “That No Man—Tourism in Post-DuSable New Orleans” for Reflections and New Directions: A Conference on the Anthropology of Tourism in Honor of Valerie L. Smith.


- a shorter English version is in the making.


LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

Steve Steffrizer, professor and Dots Zemnoun Chair in Latin American studies, presented a paper entitled “International Scholarship and Neoliberal Crisis: A View from Colombia” at a panel on “Economic Crisis and the Quotidian: Efforts in Colombia to Overcome the Crisis Across the Americas and Europe” at the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, held Nov. 17-21 in New Orleans, La.

Steven B. Jaehnig, professor of philosophy, published a volume entitled Heidegger, Translator, and the Task of Thinking: Essays in Honor of Parvis Emad (Albany, State University of New York Press, 2010). The book contains critical essays which address the methodology for translating Martin Heidegger’s writings from German into English, and the importance that these translations have had on understanding his thought. Schalow recently co-authored the book, Historical Dictionary of Heidegger’s Philosophy (ISBN: 978-081087490-0, 216 $0, 462 pp.) published by Scarecrow Press in September. The book defines the key terms of Heidegger’s philosophical system as well as an introduction to his thought. Schalow was also named co-editor of the international philosophy journal Heidegger Studies.

Steve Masłowski, Coca-Cola endowed chair and director of jazz studies, performed a concert for a sold-out audience at the Tbilisi Georgia State Concert Hall on January 15, 2012, Masłowski, along with his quartet, performed for New Orleans (adjunct professor Rolando Gruev, alumni Mark Braid and Doug Belardin), performed music by the University of New Orleans Jazz Ensemble and guest composer Zaza Marjanashvili within a 10-piece orchestra. The concert was titled “A Gift to Tbilisi” and was sponsored by the University of New Orleans Center for Cultural Events.

PHILOSOPHY

Guy Beck, instructor of philosophy, authored Sözic: Ritual, Music and History in Indigenous Polynesia, and was recently invited to join a panel discussion entitled “Is There Anything More to See? Civil War Photography and History” sponsored by the American Social History Project at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, New York on March 2, 2011. The panel was part of a series commemorating the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War.

HOTEL, RESTAURANT AND TOURISM STUDIES

Harsha Chacko and Jeffrey Schafer, professors of hotel, restaurant and tourism administration, and Kim Williams, assistant professor, published an article in the Journal of Hospitality Research entitled “Conceptual Frameworks for Attracting Generation Y to the Hotel Industry Using a Seamless Hotel Organizational Structure.”

MATH AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Raphael Cassimere, and professor of mathematics, and director of the Learning Resource Center, and Charlotte Lewis recorded a complete set of 64 video tutorials for the TI-Nspire for use in their own classes as well as the home school: softwares: Hasske, Hasske, which is used in hundreds of universities, purchased the rights to the use the videos in software.


MUSIC

Frankie Kelly, music instructor, served as associate music director for the pre-Broadway revue Soul Doctor: The New Broadway review Soul Doctor: The New


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Focus

John L. Renne, early research professor of planning and urban studies and associate director of the Urban Transportation Institute, has been invited by Convenerment Kristin Geraldin Palmier to chair the Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee to the New Orleans City Council.

POlITICAL SCIENCE

John Kifer, associate professor of political science, and director of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program, served as local conference host for the Southeastern Conference of Public Administration. The four-day conference in September 2011, held at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, La., is the premier regional conference in the U.S. for public administration. The conference was organized by the UNO MPA program and the Department of Political Science.


Robert Montjoy, research professor of political science, was an invited speaker on university-community engagement at both the Kettering Foundation’s “Dayton Days” in Dayton, Ohio, and Old Dominion University’s Public Service Week in Norfolk, Va.

Salmon Shomade, assistant professor of political science and pre-law advisor, recently had two manuscripts accepted for publication: “Sentencing Patterns of Drug Court Judges in Conventional Criminal Courts,” to be published by Judicature and “The Confirmation Obstacle Course: Signaling Opposition through Delay,” co-authored with Lisa M. Holmes and Roger R. Hurley to be published by The American Review of Politics.

PONTCHARTRAIN INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Patricia M. Williams, coordinator for Toxicology Research Laboratories and associate professor, was an invited speaker at the 42nd annual meeting of the Environmental Mutagen Society, October 13-15, 2011 in Montreal, Quebec. Williams is a diplomate of the American Board of Toxicology and co-presented a symposium on “Environmental Oil Contamination: Effects on Marine Life and Human Life.” She presented “Are Seafood Safety Considerations Adequate to Prevent Chronic Health Effects of the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill on Coastal Louisiana Residents?”

PSYCHOLOGY

Paul J. Frick, university distinguished professor and chair of psychology, finished his five-year term on December 31, 2011, as editor of the Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, the official journal for the Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology (Division 53), American Psychological Association. During his term as editor, the journal increased its impact factor from 2.015 in 2005 to 3.44 in 2010.

Elizabeth (Birdie) Shirtliff, early research professor of psychology, received two National Institutes of Health grants in August 2011. One is to examine biobehavioral mechanisms for severe disruptive behavior in adolescent girls. The other is to move the stress field forward with the VeraMo device, a new tool to improve cortisol measurement. Shirtliff co-authored a review entitled “The Adaptive Calibration Model of Stress Responsivity” that appeared in the March 2011 issue of the international journal Neuroendocrine and Fluctuational Reviews, the official journal of the International Behavioral Neuroscience Society.


Pamela Jenkins, professor of sociology, was awarded the 2011 Leanne Knob Memorial Award that recognizes innovation and contributions in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking prevention or intervention. This award was presented to Jenkins at the Louisiana Statewide Conference on Sexual and Domestic Violence.

John Gery, research professor of English, published new poems in his Grand Re- vue (Fall 2011), the Southern Poetry Anthology, Volume V: Louisiana; and Improbable Fable: An Anthology of Texas and Louisiana Poets.

Shirley Luka, professor emerita of sociology, received the 2011-12 Southern Sociological Society Distinguished Lectureship Award in April.

Susan A. Mann, professor and associate chair of sociology, authored Dying Feminist Theory: From Modernity to Feminism, Oxford University Press, January 2012.

Dennis R. McSevney, professor emeritus of sociology, was elected president of the Association of College Honor Societies, and elected treasurer of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans.

Ken Reyes, English instructor and director of the Greater New Orleans Writing Project, contributed the article “Katrina and Music” to the Encyclopedia of American Music and Culture [Fours Volumes] by ABC-CLIO. The article examines the ways that New Orleans and New Orleans’ identities were transformed through evolving relationships with popular and local music after the Katrina levee failures.

Anne Boyd Rioux, professor of English and women’s and gender studies, received a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for one year to write a biography, under contract with the Johns Hopkins University Press, of the American writer Constance Fenimore Woolson.

Will Torrey, English instructor, was awarded the 2011 Zone 3 prize in fiction for his short story Trabajar.

M.O. Walsh, visiting assistant professor of English, won the 2011 William Faulkner-William Wisdom Award for his novel in progress entitled Whistleblower. He received a cash award and commemorative gold medal at the Faulkner Society’s annual Words and Music gala in November.
Known the world over for picturesque windmills and vivid fields of tulips, the Netherlands also draws international acclaim for its water management and flood protection system, which is considered the global gold standard.
The infrastructure alone is extraordinary. The Delta Works, with its massive storm surge barriers, is an extensive national flood defense system, prompted by the catastrophic 1953 floods that killed more than 1,800 people. UNO earth and environmental sciences professor Denise Reed says she is impressed not just by the Dutch engineering, but by the comprehensive approach to water management. Reed was a part of a Louisiana congressional delegation, led by Sen. Mary Landrieu, that visited the Netherlands in November.

"There was a mix of going to see specific projects and understanding those water management concepts in the contexts of a specific example, but there were also broader discussions with [Dutch] ministry folks about how they put environment and infrastructure together," says Reed.

For the Dutch, water management, flood protection and stemming coastal erosion are national priorities because they have to be. A staggering 70 percent of the country’s gross domestic product is generated below sea level, so the very survival of the Netherlands is dependent upon living harmoniously with water. Reed says the Dutch benefit from having a federal agency that marries the interests of the environment and infrastructure.

"It’s similar to how we’ve done it in Louisiana where we’ve put protection and restoration together at the state level but at the federal level we’re still fragmented, which is still a problem for us," Reed says.

The delegation included members of federal and state agencies and levee boards as well as university scientists and representatives from nongovernmental organizations. Some of the highlights of the trip included traveling to the Dutch coast to see the Netherlands’ main defense against storms from the North Sea, meeting with Dutch ministry officials and visiting the city of Dordrecht, which is built on and around a levee. The group also spent an entire day at Deltares, the Dutch water institute.

"Deltares is specifically designed to link the thinkers with the doers," Reed says. "To bring in folks from the universities, private industry and agencies to really identify problems and develop solutions and get them on the ground. That’s one of the things we’ve been exploring in Louisiana. Really thinking about how we can link the good things going on in the universities in Louisiana, like UNO, how can we link those more directly with the kind of skill set that some of our folks in private industry have?"

The delegation also visited Rotterdam, Europe’s largest port, to gain an appreciation for innovative solutions in urban areas and Biesbosch to learn more about a project called “Make Room for the River.”

"They realized a few years ago that the Rhine River levees at some point in the future would not be high enough," Reed says. "There was subsidence and sea level rise and those kinds of things. Rather than taking the kind of brute force engineering approach and just build the levee higher, they actually took a different approach. They moved the levees out and increased the space that the river had to work with. If the river has more space on each side, the water level doesn’t get as high.”

"That is the kind of creative approach we need in coastal Louisiana to think about how we use the river and how we navigate and how we get the sediment to start building land again."
Lava tubes, hoodoos and Upheaval Dome sound more like landscape features of an alien planet than the sandstone deserts of Utah, but to high school students taking part in UNO’s summer geoscience field trip, they are just as exotic.

“The trip out West is such a new experience for most of the students—a life-changing experience,” says Dinah Maygarden, who has been coordinating the program since 2006 and involved since 1997. “We had a sandstorm down at Rainbow Rocks near Moab. That went into the kids’ journals.”

Twice each summer, UNO offers juniors and seniors from high schools nationwide the chance to study either geology in the Wyoming and Utah wilderness or environmental ecology in the coastal wetlands of south Louisiana.

Both field trips are part of a minority education recruitment program established by UNO’s earth and environmental sciences department. The goal of the program is to encourage high school students from backgrounds under-represented in the earth sciences to gain experience “in the field” with experts and industry professionals.

Last year’s Louisiana field trip, which drew students from as far away as Pennsylvania, coincided with the BP oil spill. Students had the opportunity to interact with BP spokespeople and witness cleanup efforts firsthand at UNO’s Shea Penland Coastal Education and Research Facility at Chef Menteur Pass.

“After the oil spill happened, Dinah was getting text messages from former students who were watching it unfold,” says Heather Egger, a fellow program coordinator. “They were interested and asking questions.” She says the spill also has drawn increased interest in the program from potential students outside Louisiana.

Lou Fernandez, former chair of UNO’s geology department, received a National Science Foundation grant to develop the program in 1974, and it begins its 37th year this June. It is designed to be not just a field trip, but hopefully the starting point for lifelong exploration. Recent program expansions include scholarships, tutors and mentoring support.

“I do believe that the program is building character and also stewardship—a stewardship for the home state of Louisiana but also the country, learning about your home and keeping it with you,” explains Egger.

Several students who take part in the program return the following year or join later trips as mentors. Others have siblings who participated in field trips of years past. Many go on to pursue earth and environmental science degrees at UNO.

“When we start out, we ask them what they want to be when they grow up. Most say doctors or lawyers ... because that is what they know,” Maygarden says. “So one of the things we try to get them to understand is that there are jobs in the earth sciences—and some of them are really well paid.”

Sirel White, now a senior geophysicist at ExxonMobil, was recruited into the field trip program as a mentor. Although his undergraduate study was in engineering (’00), his decision to pursue a master’s in geology (’06) was heavily influenced by his field trip experiences.
“It opened my eyes to geology,” White explains. “A lot of these kids may not have gone to college at all without the perspective these field trips provide. Even if they don’t pursue geology, it gives them the motivation to prioritize higher education.”

The program is the first and longest continuously running of its kind, not just at UNO, but in the nation. Its success has made it a national model for designing similar science programs elsewhere.

“The summer program help put UNO’s geoscience department on the map,” explains Laura Serpa, who was involved with the program from 1989 until 2006 and spent more than 20 years teaching geology at UNO. She says the University graduates more under-represented, particularly African American, students in the earth sciences than any other U.S. institution.

“When I started [in 1989], only about 3 percent of the students at UNO were black and virtually none in the sciences. By the time I left, 40 percent of the geology department was black—almost all of them had been in the summer program,” Serpa says. “New Orleans is ahead of the curve—working with minorities and getting students into the sciences.”

Now a geology professor at The University of Texas at El Paso, Serpa has once again rejoined the program as part of a collaborative effort by UNO, UTEP, San Francisco State and Purdue. The effort is supported by a four-year, $400,000 NSF grant that begins its second year this summer.

The future of the program, however, remains uncertain. When initial funding disappeared, the program was subsidized with private donor and industry-sponsored support, including help from ExxonMobil, Chevron and Shell Oil. Sponsors donate more than money. Guides like ExxonMobil geologist Gregory L. Jones, who has been involved in the program since 1995, and recent addition Ivan Gill, a science education coordinator at UNO, also donate time recruiting and teaching students on the field trips.

“There is some concern about getting stable funding to continue to do this over the long term,” says Serpa. “It really brings students into the field, into the sciences, and minorities in particular. That is what we say we are trying to accomplish, to bring kids into the sciences.”

If you are interested in becoming involved with the program as a donor, mentor or volunteer or know a high school student who might want to participate, visit http://ees.uno.edu/map/ for more information.
As Louisiana’s Urban Research University of National Stature, the University of New Orleans will rank in the Top 200 of American Research Universities. The University will continue to be recognized as a major research university as reflected by our designation as a Research University – High Research Activity by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

For more information on our research efforts please go to http://research.uno.edu.