



GRADUATE STUDIES & RESEARCH

Grad Project Leads to Black History Walking Tour

SU graduate history student Allison Stancil, a digital humanities intern for SU's Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, made it easier to trace the footsteps of the past with a walking tour highlighting Salisbury's Black history. The tour is available free online at <https://theclio.com/tour/2090/1> and can be downloaded for use on the walk without cell service.

While many of the buildings, homes and businesses that once were integral to the Black community are no longer standing, Stancil's tour takes participants to key areas and to important neighborhoods such as Georgetown, Cuba, California and Jersey. Stancil, who grew up in Pocomoke City, MD, and has driven these streets hundreds of times, said she didn't know much about these areas before taking on the project. She believes many others may have similarly limited knowledge. The tour takes a real look at Black history of Salisbury, including the tragedies of lynching, segregation and "urban renewal."

NSF Awards SU's Freeman \$480K for Flying Squirrel Research

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is helping a SU biological sciences professor expand research and student education in the intriguing bonds between flying squirrels. Dr. Angela Freeman received a three-year, \$480,233 NSF grant to continue their independent research, "Neuroendocrinology of Flying Squirrel Social Behavior." The funding will support student assistant compensation, construction and placement of local aviaries, food and housing for the squirrels, and lab equipment.

"I had this question about flying squirrels, who display somewhat rare behavior compared to other mammals, in choosing to connect and nest together with unrelated peers throughout the year, independent of outside factors such as temperature and season," said Freeman. "I wanted to explore the hormones in their brain to better understand their shifting social and bonding behavior."

Freeman's research employs a three-part approach that will explain what behaviors are modulated during nonapeptide action, during which endogenous release occurs during co-nesting, and how sensitivity to these peptides differ between seasons. The team will determine how oxytocin, a hormone important for bonding and trust, affects communal nesting behavior in squirrels by administering the naturally occurring neuropeptide oxytocin or blocking its effects. They will also explore which parts of the brain are active during communal nesting and whether these brain regions produce oxytocin.

Wight Contributes \$40,000 to Dorothy Ruxton Chemistry Student Research Fund

Former SU President Charles Wight has always been a teacher and researcher at heart. A professor of chemistry and an expert in chemical explosions, Dr. Wight dedicated decades of his academic career to teaching, research and administration at universities in Utah, before being named SU's ninth president in 2018. The author or co-author of more than 170 academic papers, his own research interests have focused on physical chemistry, the chemistry of explosives and propellants, and the kinetics of solid state reactions and thermal analysis. Since arriving at SU, he has taught a general chemistry course every fall semester – and continues to do so even after retiring from the presidency in July 2022.

Wight and his wife, Victoria Rasmussen, have provided generous philanthropic support for SU and its students, most notably creating a research fund for chemistry students. Established in 2021, with gifts totaling \$40,000, the Dorothy Ruxton Chemistry Student Research Fund provides travel grants and professional development resources to allow SU chemistry students to present their research at conferences and network with established scientists in the field. The fund is named in memory of Wight's mother, who died in 2019.