



The Henson News

SPRING 2009

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Richard A. Henson

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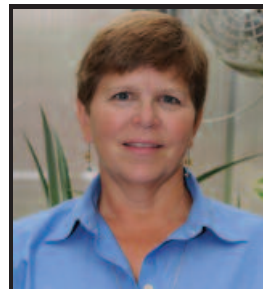
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Dean's Reflections

Greetings from the Henson School of Science and Technology. Since stepping into the dean's shoes last July, I have had a wonderful time getting to know my colleagues at SU and the greater Salisbury community. Although new to Salisbury, I am no stranger to the mid-Atlantic region, having graduated from both the University of Delaware (B.S. and M.S.) and the University of Maryland (Ph.D., entomology). After graduate school, I joined the faculty at the University of South Dakota where I worked my way "up the ladder" from assistant professor, to department chair, to honors/undergraduate studies director, and most recently, graduate dean and associate vice president for academic affairs. My family and I have, somehow, adjusted to winter in the mid-Atlantic after many years in the Northern Plains. We also have thoroughly enjoyed kayaking and birding here on the beautiful Eastern Shore.

Upon arriving in Salisbury, I established several goals for my first year. Needless to say, these have been jostled a bit by the "interesting times" in which we live, but we have been able to make progress on several priorities. First, we have focused on growing and strengthening our STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programs, which are critical to the state and regional economy, as well as preparing SU grads for rewarding employment in our knowledge-based economy. As described in another article in this newsletter, SU enrollment is growing, but science and math majors are not increasing at the same rate. Thanks to the efforts of faculty and administrators across the campus, we will be rolling out a grant-supported Living-Learning Community for STEM majors next fall. We also recently received approval



Henson Dean
Karen Olmstead

for a new earth science major (including a secondary science-education track), proposed an actuarial science track for our B.S. in mathematics, hired an engineer for our dual-degree program in physics and engineering, and have a proposal for a master's degree in applied biology under development.

In the health sciences, we have been challenged to meet student demand and are diligently working to support our burgeoning programs in nursing and respiratory therapy. Last fall, respiratory therapy established its program in Montgomery County at the Universities of Shady Grove (USG) in partnership with Shady Grove Adventist Hospital. The Department of Nursing has also implemented two new graduate programs and submitted several grant proposals to expand their second degree program.

The Henson School is also investigating mechanisms to better support and expand faculty research, including the scholarship of teaching and learning. We have hosted visitors from private and state funding agencies and most recently hosted a regional Federal Labs Consortium focusing on economic development through science innovation. The Henson School's Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative is booming, rapidly expanding grant and contract activity since its establishment in 2004. Dr. Mike Bardzell recently won the highest teaching honor from the Mathematical Association of America for his nationally recognized work in the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Again, I am truly delighted to be part of the team at Henson and look forward to working with Salisbury University students, alumni, and faculty and the greater Salisbury community for years to come!

Responding to the Challenge: STEM, Achievement Gap and the Economy

The University System of Maryland (USM) has identified STEM and Closing the Achievement Gap as two primary goals for higher education in Maryland. STEM programs endeavor to re-invigorate U.S. science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education from elementary school through doctoral programs. Closing the Achievement Gap refers to efforts to improve retention of first-generation, under-represented minority and low-income college students.

Strengthening participation and access to science education are significant goals at the national level and particularly relevant to Maryland given our burgeoning information and technology-based economy and the changing demographics of our state.

Indeed, USM Chancellor Kirwan's urgency of mission reflects a deepening national crisis in U.S.

STEM talent. Without a constant and growing number of well prepared STEM professionals, Maryland stands to be particularly hard hit because of our enormous high-tech and R&D sectors, which are dependent on higher education for the next generation of scientists, engineers, analysts, educators and other STEM professionals.

Both STEM and Closing the Achievement Gap are squarely in the realm of the Henson School whose core mission is science education. For STEM, our charge is to develop strategies that increase the size and preparation of the science labor force, including the preparation and number of science teachers, and strengthen science and technology fields by improving and invigorating innovation and entrepreneurship in the tech sector. The core tactic relies on improving science and math education at all levels. Metrics for STEM vary widely, depending on the exact definition of goals, but comparisons indicate that the percentage of students majoring in STEM fields in U.S. colleges is 20-35 percent less than

in other developed nations. The inclusion of nursing and health sciences in STEM initiatives is appropriate given the science-base of these fields and increasing staffing shortages in these areas. Indeed, nursing is viewed as one of the fastest growing occupations, with hundreds of thousands of job openings anticipated in the next 10 years.

The recently appointed dean of the Henson School, Karen Olmstead, has made STEM and Closing the Achievement Gap her priorities as well. "The percentage of SU students in STEM majors has been stagnant for some time, even while SU enrollments have increased dramatically," said Olmstead. "We need to find ways to increase enrollments, retention and capacity for more students our STEM, science education and health-science majors."

The second initiative, Closing the Achievement Gap, was undertaken because studies have shown that in the aggregate, under-represented minority, low-income and/or first-generation students are less likely to complete their college degrees. First-generation refers to students who are the first in their immediate families to attend college. These students are often at higher risk for financial need and/or lack family experience with the demands and routines of a college experience.

A study revealed that an achievement gap does exist at SU in key General Education courses. This achievement gap is particularly acute in STEM fields because of the already lower success rate for all students in basic science courses which are required to enter STEM majors and completing a B.S. on time. Henson School and other SU faculty are working to develop strategies and practices to bridge the gap. The newly created Center for Student Achievement (see related story in this newsletter), while developed to serve all student academic issues, is particularly focused on the success of first-generation and other students "at risk" of not being retained.

Mike Bardzell (Department of Mathematics and Computer Science) and Rich Bowler (Department of History, Fulton School of Liberal Arts) are collaborating with staff in the Residence Life Office to create a STEM Living-Learning Community. Incoming first-year students will be recruited into this community and will share courses (Calculus, History of Science and Society) as well as common residence hall assignments and extracurricular activities. These shared experiences are intended to build interest and retention in science or science education majors as well as connections to careers

and/or professional training after college. This STEM Living-Learning Community is supported by a grant from the USM which also supports the establishment of an advisory board for the preparation of science teachers, a graduate assistantship to coordinate STEM activities on campus and other activities targeted at increasing STEM and science/math secondary majors.

The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science has always had a solid student-led tutoring program, which is now being complemented by a math aptitude exam that provides guidance for students who are uncertain of their ability to succeed in particular math courses. The math aptitude and support software (ALEKS – Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces) provides state-of-the-art interactive assessment and tutoring that is customized for the individual student.

The Department of Physics recently formalized its dual-degree program in engineering with the University of Maryland at College Park and hired Dr. Mark Muller to support engineering education at SU. Muller received his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the University of Hawai'i. As a graduate of a physics/engineering dual-degree program himself, Muller is very excited to be joining the program.

As noted above, Closing the Achievement Gap and STEM are highly inter-related issues. Demographers project that over the next five years or so, "minority" students graduating from Maryland high schools will become the largest source of college-bound students in the state. Because our current economic plight is likely to be a multi-year problem, the affordability of college becomes an even more serious concern. The financial and academic pressures on the next generation of college-goers will critically affect the success of the STEM initiative. Thus, another concern is our crumbling scholarship base. "The recent economic downturn has hammered our endowments," said Mike Folkoff, associate dean of the Henson School. "Without greater financial support for college students, SU's STEM efforts, while laudable, may be diluted."

Despite the challenging economic times, the Henson School is dedicated to increasing the number and diversity of science and health science graduates and ensuring the success of these students. We look forward to working with partners from across campus and the education and business communities to achieve these important goals.

Opportunity Nocks: Student Scholarships and Awards in Henson

Opportunity knocks is a colloquial term suggesting an unexpected opportunity. To nock is a term used when an archer loads an arrow that is intentionally targeted down range: a premeditated action. In this economy, the pressure on families and individual students has become an everyday anxiety and a national dilemma. For many, a very large concern is finding a way to pay for college. Waiting for the financial aid opportunity to knock is just waiting. Like nocking an arrow, obtaining financial aid is an active process. Here is a summary of some of the targets in the Henson School.

We in the Henson School of Science and Technology (HSOT&T) are all familiar with the venerable Henson Scholarships program that has been a staple of our school's student financial aid initiative. These scholarships were established by the Henson Foundation Board when HSOT&T was endowed in 1988. Henson scholarships are awarded based on academic merit and are intended as four year awards, although some scholarships are reserved for outstanding juniors and transfers.

There have been over 200 scholars in the 30-year history of the program. However, it may not be well known that there are many other programs for student support specific to Henson; in the past two years important new financial aid programs have been created. Along with Henson Awards, there are annual awards such as the David Yuri Hooper Scholarship, which was first given in 1994. The Hooper Scholarship is for biology majors with a minimum GPA of 3.00. These awards are limited to students from single-family households that demonstrate financial need. Sometimes there are no eligible biology majors; in that case, the award becomes available to students from other Henson majors. The Hooper Scholarship reflects a very enlightened view of the needs of the students in modern society.

In addition to the Hooper Scholarship, there is the Wallace Q. French Memorial Scholarship given by the Tidewater Health Association, the Cort Scholarship in chemistry, and a number of distinguished scholarships and awards specifically targeted toward nursing majors. Nursing awards are amazing

in their diversity and purpose, encompassing all phases of their program from entering students, to continuing students and to graduate study. Please contact the Nursing Department for information on nursing opportunities.

The newest scholarship program, the Lucy Tull Scholarships, may by itself change the meaning of educational opportunity on the Lower Eastern Shore. This program was funded by the generosity of Ms. Lucy Tull, a devoted Shore native and longtime Salisbury citizen. The scholarships are designed to support the students from the Lower Eastern Shore counties of Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset studying in medically-related fields in the Henson School. Because they are directed toward medical fields, a large number of the scholarships are necessarily reserved for nursing majors; however, majors in the health sciences, those wishing to continue their education in other health fields, (e.g., pharmacy, optometry, veterinary, physical therapy, etc.) as well as students studying to become high school biology and chemistry teachers that will train the next generation of health professionals are welcome to apply. These full, four-year scholarships are a rare opportunity designed to support students demonstrating financial need. Nevertheless, students beyond their freshman year, including transfer students, can apply for any vacant slots in the program.

Beyond the obvious scholarship and awards, there are many other possibilities for support. A local firm, K&L, has helped create a unique program of financial aid and summer internships working for this corporation. There is a program for non-resident nursing graduate students working in Maryland hospitals that waives out-of-state tuition for working professionals. The Guerrieri Summer Program provides a rich undergraduate research experience supported in part by a summer stipend. Finally, individual majors frequently offer internship and co-operative work opportunities.

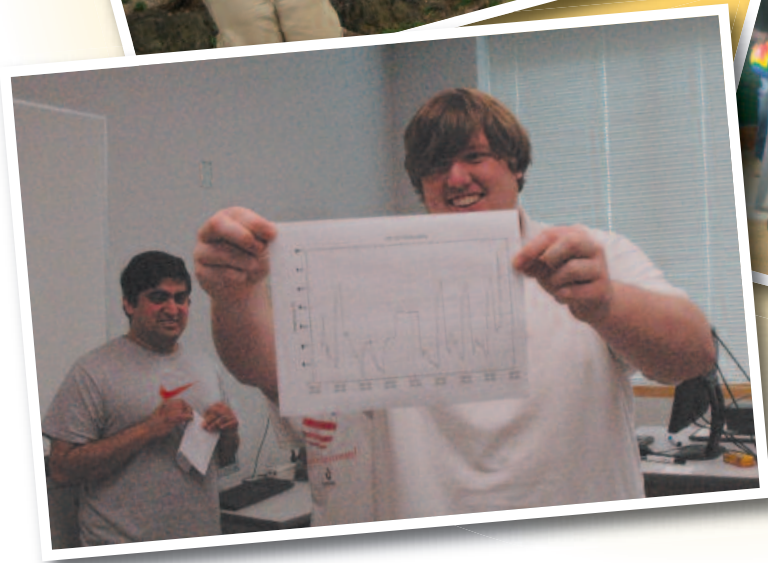
This is just a sample of available programs that are specific to Henson. The technical details and application processes are described on the Henson School Web page. Of course, you might want to contact the Salisbury University Financial Aid Office for a much more comprehensive presentation of the complete University financial aid program. And if you want to consider giving a scholarship or award, please speak with the dean of the Henson School.

Tull Distinguished Faculty Award Winners



Pictured (from left) Henry Hanna III, chair of SU's Campaign 2012; Dr. Karin Johnson, 2008 Tull Distinguished Faculty Award winner; Dr. Michael Folkoff, then interim dean of the Henson School; Mary Kane, 2008 Tull Distinguished Faculty Award winner; and Dr. Susan Battistoni, then chair of the SU Nursing Department

Henson Students: Research, Work or Play?





The “New Marylane”: Henson’s Advising Services Coordinator

By Dr. Lisa Leslie
Advising Services Coordinator, Henson School



I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself to everyone (that and the fact that Mike Folkoff was desperate for copy to fill the newsletter!). My name is Lisa Leslie and I am the “new Marylane”—Henson’s new advising services coordinator.

My background is kind of wacky and varied. Undergraduate: Nine institutions across Texas and Maryland, with majors such as accounting, computer science, business and engineering, before finally settling in with my “one true love,” English. My bachelor’s degree is from Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Back then, it was Corpus Christi State University, a small junior- and senior-level-only institution where people could finish off the degrees they started at the huge Del Mar Community College. Because I felt like I hadn’t really been a “proper” English major, I went on for a master’s degree at Appalachian State in North Carolina. In between my two years there, I spent a month backpacking around England “on the trail of Byron,” the subject of my thesis. The first thing I said when I returned home was that I wanted to go back and stay longer.

I got my wish when I was accepted to read for my Ph.D. at the University of Essex in Colchester, England. Doctoral programs are different in England; with no coursework, I spent six years reading about and writing my 200,000-word dissertation on the figure of the sister in the lives and writings of the Shelley literary community (a prize for anyone who can name its members!). Two years in, I transferred to the University of Liverpool to work with one of the top Shelley scholars in

the country. I lived in Chester, one of the few cities left that has its Roman walls still intact, and took the train into Liverpool several times a week. I read papers at conferences all over Europe, taught for a winter term at the University of Indianapolis in Athens, Greece, and completed two 200+ mile hikes: the Coast-to-Coast across Northern England and the Southern Upland Way across southern Scotland.

I returned to America in 2000 with a job as an English instructor at Virginia Tech. Trying to find time for research while teaching four sections of composition and British literature courses was daunting, and eventually my interest turned toward the pedagogy of teaching and how to make my lessons more effective, and more interesting, for my students. I was part of a cross-disciplinary peer-education pilot program between my literature and ecology class and a colleague’s forest ecology class, and I tried many other things to make the teaching and learning of writing and literature more palatable for my mostly-engineering-major students.

But the harder I worked, the more I realized that teaching was not where I needed to be. Shortly before the shootings at Virginia Tech, I was already looking into Kansas State University’s graduate certificate in academic advising in higher education program (I will finish this certificate in December). After the shootings, I paved a path for myself into the recovery efforts, becoming the project manager for the newly-formed Office of Recovery and Support, where I participated in campus safety and security investigations, assisted the injured students as they came back to school and contributed to the support of the families who lost loved ones on that terrible day. After 18 months of dedicated service to that office I returned to my job search and couldn’t be happier with where I ended up.

I am so excited to be part of the Henson School. A Ph.D. in literature may seem like an odd fit, but I have extensive experience explaining the value of a liberal arts education to students whose strengths are in math and science. I hope to bring a new energy and perspective to the education of Henson students. I know I have big shoes to fill!

Feel free to drop by any time for a chat; I’m willing to share my experiences, in hiking, in the British education system, and in campus security and student support services. I’ll even share my vegan pumpkin chocolate chip cookie recipe!

Newly Hired, Retired and Changes to the Guard

WELCOME TO

NEW CHAIRS IN FALL 08

Dr. Steve Gehrich	.....	Biology
Dr. Anita Brown	.....	Chemistry
Dr. Michael Bardzell	.....	Math/COSC (Fall 09)
Dr. Lisa Seldomridge	.....	Nursing
Dr. Joe Howard	.....	Physics

NEW FACULTY IN FALL 08

Dr. Patti Erickson	.....	Biology
Dr. Dana Price	.....	Biology
Dr. Stephen A. Habay	.....	Chemistry
Dr. Robert D. Luttrell, Jr.	.....	Chemistry
Dr. Gina Bloodworth	.....	Geography
Dr. Mark deSocio	.....	Geography
Randall Figgs	.....	HLSC
Adriana Guerra	.....	HLSC
Dr. Brian Dean	.....	Math/COSC
Dr. Michael Gauger	.....	Math/COSC
Dr. Veera Holdai	.....	Math/COSC
Dr. Gerard Keough	.....	Math/COSC
Jaimi Hall	.....	Nursing

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICE

CHAIRS RETURNING TO THE CLASSROOM

Dr. Mark Holland	.....	Biology
Dr. Kathleen Shannon	.....	Math/COSC (Fall 09)
Dr. Susan Battistoni	.....	Nursing
Dr. Gail Welsh	.....	Physics
Dr. Ellen Lawler (Assoc. Dean)	.....	Biology

BEST WISHES TO RETIREES

Dr. C. Richard McKenzie	.....	Physics
Dr. Donald Cathcart	.....	Math/Cosc
Dr. William Grogan	.....	Biology
Dr. Philip Luft	.....	Math/Cosc
Dr. John Tyvoll	.....	Chemistry
Dr. Vaughn Wagner	.....	Biology
Dr. Harry Womack	.....	Biology
Marylane McGlinchey	.....	Henson Academic Advisor

Center for Student Achievement: Helping Students Achieve Their Academic Potential

By Dr. Heather Holmes, Director, Center for Student Achievement

The Center for Student Achievement opened its doors September 2, 2008.

From the work of many, one of the recommendations of the Foundations of Excellence Task Force (2006) was to establish an academic resource center where students would have access to guidance and academic support to achieve greater academic success. For the past year, a committee of faculty, staff and administrators from the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs offices met to develop the foundation for this initiative.

The mission of the Center for Student Achievement is to enhance student learning, academic success and personal growth through engagement in the Salisbury University academic community.

Goals

- Support the academic success of all students
- Promote academic success through strategic use of resources
- Increase students' ability to become independent learners
- Implement practical, proven strategies for improving academic skills
- Help students develop competencies that directly enhance their success in the classroom
- Increase student retention
- Improve graduation rates

The Council for Student Achievement and Success will continue to guide the CSA to fulfill the mission and meet the goals of the Center.

We are seeing students in the Center for Student Achievement for a variety of services. During the month of February, visits averaged 55 students per day. Students utilize the center for academic coaching (one on one with a staff member), for study hours, to attend study skills workshops, to prep for the Praxis exam, to learn more about the ALEKS math learning modules, to seek information about national scholarships, and for many other reasons.

The CSA hosts workshops three times weekly on academic skills and strategies. Some of the workshops provided include improving study skills, note-taking strategies, test taking, time management, presentation skills and stress management. These workshops offer students opportunities to improve their skills and develop strategies to help them succeed in their academic career. The CSA is always open for study time and students are welcome to utilize our resources including a small computer lab.



Leadership development is another focus of the Center. The leadership workshop series and Leadership Challenge (portfolio program) offer students an opportunity to develop individual and team leadership abilities. The CSA also provides an Early Intervention Program that is designed to target students experiencing academic difficulty during mid-semester reports and students on academic probation.

The CSA serves as a clearinghouse for tutoring programs already established on campus, making referrals and offering online math learning modules. Tutoring services for Anatomy and Physiology are currently being offered twice a week in the CSA.

We are currently gearing up to pilot Supplemental Instruction for eight courses for

fall 2009. Supplemental Instruction (SI) is designed to target historically difficult courses. The fall pilot sections will focus on math, science, economics and music. We are accepting faculty recommendations for upperclass students that would be outstanding candidates for SI leader positions. Please refer students to me in Guerrieri University Center Room 213.

A new initiative for the spring semester in the CSA is our Scholar Holler program. Scholar Holler highlights an outstanding student recommended by a faculty member. The first Scholar Holler recipient is Morgan Forsman nominated by Dr. Robert Barber. Forsman was nominated for her "exemplary work in both statistics and calculus." We will highlight a Scholar Holler recipient each month on our Web site and in *The Flyer* newspaper. Nominations are encouraged. Please visit www.salisbury.edu/achievement/scholar_holler.html

We are very proud of our Web site designed and maintained by our graduate assistant Kari Morris. You can visit our Web site at www.salisbury.edu/achievement, which has lots of information, from faculty and student resources, to hours and undergraduate research updates. Students and faculty can also e-mail us at achievement@salisbury.edu

The Center for Student Achievement is here to help all students identify and evaluate their needs in order to reach their academic potential. The CSA is currently open 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday and Wednesday; 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday and Friday; and 4-10 p.m. Sunday. We are located in Guerrieri University Center Room 213.



Board of Regents Faculty Award in Teaching



Dr. Michael Bardzell accepts congratulation from his colleagues in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science for earning the Board of Regents Faculty Award in Teaching for 2009. Bardzell is being rightfully recognized for his outstanding classroom teaching and research with undergraduates at SU, as well as his many teacher/mentoring activities he performs in K-12 schools in our region.

The Regents Award is in addition to Bardzell's recent recognitions by the Mathematical Association of America through a 2007 regional teaching award and most importantly through their awarding him the 2008 Franklin Tepper Haimo Award for Distinguished University Teaching of Mathematics, one of only three faculty nationwide to receive this honor this year.