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Three CLAS Faculty Granted Tenure

Three CLAS faculty were recently approved for tenure: Frank Ammer (Biology), Peggy Biser (Chemistry), and Alemseged Abbay (History). Congratulations!

Mountain City Traditional Arts Coming to Main Street

The Allegany Arts Council, FrostburgFirst, and Folklore and Folklife Programming at FSU have partnered to create Mountain City Traditional Arts at 25 E. Main St. The venue, set to open later this spring, will be dedicated to the education, sales, documentation and perpetuation of traditional art in the Appalachian region.

Kara Rogers Thomas (Sociology) and Valerie Fritz (Biology) are helping to coordinate the effort. Rogers Thomas states that their vision is "to create an experiential, educational and retail venue to teach, showcase and sell traditional art forms and hand-made products from the mountain region." The space will support demonstrations, workshops and artists in residence. The site can house local traditional arts groups and a permanent collection of tools of the trade, such as looms, spinning wheels, quilting frames, and woodworking implements. A small stage area will also allow for performances.

"We anticipate offering scheduled workshops and regular programming as well as encouraging artists to use the space for more informal gatherings," noted Rogers Thomas. Documentary materials such as photographs, video and narrative will be used to contextualize the products, setting this venue apart from other shops.

The facility will be staffed by student interns once it is up and running. Over Spring Break, Kara took 11 students on a trip through Appalachia to visit similar venues, which has provided some great new ideas for the Frostburg site. For more information, feel free to contact Kara Rogers Thomas at x3124 or e-mail krogerstomas@frostburg.edu.

Biology Faculty Awarded Grants

David Puthoff and Sunshine Brosi were recently awarded a \$40,000 grant from the LI-COR Environmental Education Fund for integrating new interactive technology into the curriculum. These funds will cover the acquisition of a photosynthesis and fluorescence system, instrument

training for undergraduates, and technical support.

In addition, Sunshine Brosi was awarded \$15,230 from the National Science Foundation for the project "Open Science: An education network in ethnobiology to coordinate the development of a new culture in the undergraduate science classroom." Brosi was also awarded funding from the Evergreen Heritage Center to develop a non-timber forest product demonstration area there, as well as funding from FSU Faculty Development to establish an ethnobotanical herb garden at the Arboretum.

2009 Summer Camps Scheduled

During Summer 2009, CLAS departments will be offering a number of new and returning summer camps. Under the umbrella of the Savage Mountain Summer Arts Academy, Kara Rogers Thomas will offer a new one-week program in Appalachian Folk Arts, while Gerry LaFemina will coordinate a Garage Band camp for high school students. Other camps returning through Savage Mountain this year are Creative Writing (LaFemina), Physical Acting (Darrell Rushton), Choral (Karen Soderberg), and Wind Chamber Music (Mark Gallagher). All are residential camps for students entering grades 9-12.

After a one-year hiatus, Mohsen Chitsaz plans to revive his computer camp for middle school students. This four-day, commuter camp will teach students to build computers, install operating systems, design graphics, create webpages, and program applications. Students may choose to participate either during the week of June 8 or June 15.

In addition, the Maryland Summer Center programs for gifted and talented students will be returning again this year. Mohammed Eltayeb (Physics and Engineering) will coordinate two weeks of robotics camps (one for middle school and one for high school students). Hang Deng-Luzader will offer the Physics of Solar and Wind Power for students entering grades 6-9. Marc Michael (Math) will be offering a mathematics camp as well for students entering grades 6-9.

Cotton-Top Tamarin Colony at FSU

At the end of June, FSU welcomed the addition of 12 cotton-top tamarins to a newly renovated lab space in the Guild Center. The tamarins were generously donated to FSU by the University of Wisconsin, Madison in hopes of continuing the legacy of quality noninvasive research with this species that was begun by Dr. Charles T. Snowdon and his students.

Erica Kennedy of the Psychology Department manages the tamarin colony and plans to involve students in studying the behavior and problem-solving abilities of these animals. Erica has spent more than eight years studying the intelligence of a variety of primate species and is excited about the opportunity to research tamarins. In addition, she believes that the tamarin colony will serve as a valuable opportunity for FSU students and local K-12 students to learn about animal behavior research. "There are very few colleges and universities in the country that give undergraduates the chance to study the behavior of nonhuman primates, so this is an

especially exciting opportunity for FSU,” notes Kennedy.

There are also several opportunities for the involvement of other academic departments. For example, Erica is working with faculty members in Biology on research concerning fecal cortisol levels of the tamarins before and after their arrival. In addition, a group of students from Computer Science designed a webpage for the tamarin colony as part of a project for a software engineering class. Also, within the Psychology Department, Erica is teaching a new course titled “Animal Learning and Cognition,” which involves students conducting behavioral observations of the tamarins as part of a course project.

Another important goal of FSU’s tamarin colony is to increase students’ knowledge of conservation issues. Cotton-top tamarins are an endangered species, and sadly there are very few of them left in the wild, where their natural habitat is being lost to deforestation. One of FSU’s goals is to increase awareness of this species and of ways to help them in the wild. Conservation programs such as “Proyecto Titi” provide an avenue to assist cotton-top tamarins through education and financial contributions.

A number of opportunities exist for student involvement in the Cotton-Top Tamarin Colony, including volunteering, work study, and research for credit. For more information, visit the website at <http://www.frostburg.edu/dept/psyc/TamarinColony/> or contact Erica Kennedy at x4742.

Appalachian Center for Ethnobotanical Studies Receives \$469,000

Frostburg State University recently received an award of \$469,000 for FY09 through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service to support the work of the Appalachian Center for Ethnobotanical Studies (ACES). Over the past four years, ACES has received a total of \$965,319 for the project. As part of this year’s funding, FSU faculty have been able to continue their research on black cohosh and other native plants with medicinal uses, in partnership with the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute. On June 9-10, a workshop is being planned in Rockville where this research will be presented. For additional details, visit the website at <http://www.frostburg.edu/aces>.