

CLAS News

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES IN WEST VIRGINIA

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- **CLAS Faculty Receive Arts Council Awards**
- **Frostburg Grows to Host Agriculture Training**
- **CLAS Faculty Selected for Achievement Awards**
- **Student's Software Presented at International Conference**
- **The Interdisciplinary Frostburg Science Discovery Center**
- **CLAS Recognizes Students at Dean's Colloquium**
- **Leadership Studies Students Attend TEDx Foggy Bottom**
- **Three CLAS Faculty Granted Tenure**
- **STEM Festival Draws 400 Students, Parents**
- **Chamber Choir Performs in Italy**
- **Undergraduate Research Presented at Symposium**
- **Social Work Students Facilitate Focus Groups**

CLAS Faculty Receive Arts Council Awards

Two faculty members within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences have received the Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award, which recognizes the importance of artists and their works of excellence to the cultural vibrancy of Maryland. A celebration to honor the awardees will be held on Monday, June 8, at the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore.

Selected from more than 400 applicants, this year's recipients created work of exceptional quality within a range of performing, literary and visual art forms. Recipients receive grants for \$1,000, \$3,000 and \$6,000 to honor their achievement and support further advancement of their career.

Latta, who received a \$3,000 grant, is not only a physics professor but a singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist specializing in the hammered dulcimer, banjo, guitar and concertina, as well as many other instruments. He also performs an eclectic mix of music ranging from contemporary folk to Irish to Broadway. Latta

received Individual Artist Award in Non-Classical Solo Music Performance for three songs he submitted in the areas of jazz, pop and folk, two of which he wrote. He performed all vocals and effects and played all instruments on the recordings.

Hein, who received a \$1,000 grant, has been an assistant professor of photography at FSU since 2007. His work has been in exhibits nationally and internationally, as well as juried competitions, private collections and solo exhibits. Although his photographic work has ranged in style and content, his current themes revolve around life with his two children and their busy agendas.



Frostburg Grows to Host Agriculture Training

The Frostburg Grows project is offering a new summer training program for anyone interested in sustainability, agriculture, and local food production. The two week, intensive program will feature a balance of hands-on, skills-based learning, along with in-depth classroom education on a diversity of sustainable agriculture topics ranging from infrastructure to marketing and entrepreneurship. Hands-on learning will take place on the Frostburg Grows farm, as well as on local vegetable and

livestock farms. Lodging is provided on the FSU campus and participants will also spend a weekend camping at New Germany State Park. Four different sessions are available throughout the summer.

For additional information, visit the website at <http://www.frostburggrows.com> or contact Corey Armstrong at 301-687-3136.



Brent Kice
Associate Professor
of Communication



Gerry LaFemina,
Associate Professor of
English



Ben Norris, Assistant
Professor of Chemistry

CLAS Faculty Selected for Achievement Awards

Three CLAS faculty were recently selected to receive Faculty Achievement Awards at the May Honors Convocation.

Brent Kice, an associate professor of Communication, was selected for the Teaching award. Brent has demonstrated outstanding teaching performance in his 7 years at Frostburg State University. He has taught 9 different courses during his tenure, and has served as his department's Basic Course Director for the multi-section Introduction to Human Communication course. Colleagues appreciate his passion for teaching and his willingness to collaborate with them—all of which creates a positive atmosphere for student learning. Students appreciate his challenging and rewarding classroom activities that inspire them and his genuine interest in their learning. He is an enthusiastic teacher who continually strives to develop the critical thinking skills of his students in each and every class he teaches. Brent has earned the respect and admiration of his students and colleagues for his continuous dedication to teaching.

Gerry LaFemina, Associate Professor of English, is recipient of the Academic Accomplishment award. Gerry has produced an impressive array of scholarly works in his 11 years at Frostburg State University. Since 2004, he has published 8 books of poetry, fiction, and criticism; a chapbook of poetry; and edited or co-edited 3 anthologies. Recently, he has published a novel, *Clamor*, 2 full length collections of poetry, *Notes for the Novice Ventriloquist* and *Little Heretic*, and a book of critical essays on poetry, *Palpable Magic: Essays on Poets and Prosody*. Gerry is also very active in publishing his work in literary journals and magazines and has produced over 25 different literary publications since 2012. In addition, he has appeared on the national and international scene as a poet and scholar. The English department is proud of the visibility that Gerry brings to his department and to the University.

Ben Norris, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, was selected for the University and Community Service award. Ben has exhibited an exceptional record of service to Frostburg State University and the local community in his 5 year tenure. He is the coordinator of the STEM Scholars@Sowers Hall program, an academic residential community for freshman STEM students. He is an original member of the CLAS Undergraduate Research Working Group that has planned the Undergraduate Research Symposium for the past 4 years. Ben is a member of the Experiential Education Task Force, which has been charged with developing an experiential graduation requirement for undergraduates. As a member of the American Chemical Society, he is actively involved in K-12 outreach and serves as the faculty advisor for the Student Members of the American Chemical Society. Through all of these activities, Ben continually displays exemplary service to his students, the University and the community.

Congratulations to these well deserving faculty!

Hitting the Right Note: Computer Science Student's Music Software Presented at International Conference

A new application developed by a recent Frostburg State University graduate captured the attention of Silicon Valley companies at an international conference held in February.

Timothy Cross of Cumberland created a program called Musicians Aid before graduating from FSU in fall 2014 when he earned a bachelor's degree in computer science. Cross wanted to see if he could build a program that teaches how to play sheet music by turning notes played by a musician into lines of sheet music with the help of software.

"Musicians Aid was a program I developed to assist musicians with the concept of coming up with their own ideas of music," Cross said, "and being able to play the notes, then also have the notes shown on screen, so if they want to play them again, they could."

The research was presented Feb. 12 at the IS&T/SPIE Electronic Imaging Conference in San Francisco with the research paper "Musical Examination to Bridge Audio Data and Sheet Music." Cross'

work was under the guidance of Dr. Xunyu Pan, assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science and Information Technologies. Pan's colleagues Dr. Liangliang Xiao, assistant professor, and Xiali Hei, instructor, assisted with the research paper.

SPIE is an international organization for optics and photonics professionals whose electronic imaging conference is attended by well-known companies like Google and Hewlett-Packard.

"I'm very honored," Cross said. He was intrigued by the interest shown by various people and their reasons, "because there are so many different ways you could expand on the project."

The FSU President's Experiential Learning Enhancement Fund Program and an FSU Foundation Opportunity Grant provided funding for the research.

Cross and Pan know the program has limitations in recognizing complex songs and different instruments. Pan hopes to develop the technology further.



Cross now works full-time as an applications developer at IBM Allegany Ballistics Laboratory Federal Data Center in Rocket Center, W.Va., outside Keyser. He said the research he completed at FSU was valuable as he was interviewing for his new job.

"It helped me be a way better programmer and helped me to get deep into learning concepts of Java," Cross said.

To learn more about Musicians Aid, [view their YouTube video](#).

Conservation, Sustainability, Culture and Art: The Interdisciplinary Frostburg Science Discovery Center

Under the direction of a talented and diverse advisory board, the Frostburg Science Discovery Center has begun to re-brand its image. In addition to the Cavalario Collection, an impressive collection of animals from all over the world, the Science Center now houses a 337-year-old white oak tree cookie, and is temporarily displaying the Coco de Mer nut, world's largest uncultivated fruit. As always, the Center continues to offer Science Sunday tours and programs at 5:00 pm on Sundays, and tours are free and open to the public. Elementary through high school groups visit the center on field trips and participate in activities anywhere from discussing human-animal interactions, to

recording data through observation. In addition to the Biology Department, the Center is also working on projects in collaboration with the Visual Arts Department and the Geography Department. In the future, the Center intends to begin collaboration with additional departments on campus, work as a resource for other campus projects, and continue to offer meaningful interpretation of the current collection. For more information or to share ideas, comments and questions, please contact Suzy Snow, Center Director, at fsdc@frostburg.edu or 301-687-4723.



The Coco de Mer Nut, the world's largest uncultivated fruit, on display at the Frostburg Science Discovery Center



Leadership Studies Students Attend TEDxFoggyBottom

George Washington University hosted their annual TEDxFoggy Bottom event, April 3rd, with the theme "Be Rebellious." Thanks to a PELEF grant, Leadership Studies students Nathan Moorhead, graduating senior Essence Moseley, Wyatt Rud-sill, and Joanna Veras attended the event with faculty members Elesha Ruminski and Christine Willingham.

The event included 1,500 participants with a combination of live presenters, representing a variety of fields, and included interactive events where attendees could network and meet the presenters. The annual event is one of the largest student-run TEDx events in the U.S.

The wide range of speakers impressed the FSU students and the innovative approaches the speakers used to bring positive change to their environments. Essence Moseley said, "I have been struggling to envision what life will be like after college. These speakers helped me see, by thinking outside the box, I can shape my life in a way that is meaningful for me."

CLAS Recognizes Students at Dean's Colloquium

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences recently honored 14 students who were nominated by their respective departments for outstanding projects and activities. A dinner was held where the students shared an informal description of their work with each other, as well as the Provost, Dean, Associate Dean, and Assistant Dean. The goal of the event is to create potential for cross-fertilization of ideas and to foster interdisciplinary understanding and respect. The students were presented with a certificate of recognition and their project abstracts were published in a booklet to be shared across the college and on the website.

Those projects recognized included

students from the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Communication, English, Geography, History, Theatre, and Visual Arts. Projects topics included research on health issues in Sub-Saharan Africa, creation of a documentary film, and a study abroad experience in Italy, among many others.

Student feedback on the event was overwhelmingly positive. "I learned a lot and recognize the importance of all the research done, as well as what other students are involved in and how it's all related," said one of the attendees. According to another, "It gave me insight into the focuses of other majors on campus, showing the level of work and dedication that students here put into their interests."

Three CLAS Faculty Granted Tenure

CLAS is pleased to announce that three faculty were recently approved for tenure: Heather Gable (Nursing), Richard Russo (Geography), and Wei Li (Sociology). Congratulations!

Western Maryland STEM Festival at FSU Draws Nearly 400 Students and Parents

Frostburg State University, Appalachian Laboratory, the Allegany County Board of Education, and the Garrett County Board of Education collaborated to host the Western Maryland STEM Festival for regional K-12 students on Saturday, May 2. The free event was held from 10AM-2PM in the Cordts PE Center Main Arena and attracted nearly 400 people. Activities included hands-on science investigations including stream tables, air-powered stomp rockets, stop-motion animation, robotics, origami, strawberry banana DNA, cabbage chemistry, and electric circuit experiments.



Bob Larivee of the Chemistry Department demonstrates magnetism and motors to some Mountain Ridge students

Festival T-shirts were given away to all children attending, featuring a design by a Fort Hill High School student. Festival sponsors included the FSU Foundation, ATK, Verso Corporation, AES Warrior Run, Western Maryland Health System, Exclamation Labs, and the Local 104 Carpenters and Joiners Union.

Chamber Choir Performs Throughout Italy

During the FSU Chamber Choir's eight-day trip to Italy (March 11-18) the group performed in churches in Assisi, Florence and Rome. While in Umbria, in central Italy, the choir sang in the Lower Basilica of San Francesco in the hilltop town of Assisi. The choir also performed in Concert at the Church of Santa Maria dei Ricci, a small church in Florence's historic center. In Rome the choir sang in the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva near the Pantheon. The tour culminated in a joint concert with a local choir, the Corale Polifonica Marcellinese, at the Santa Maria delle Grazie in Monte Domini in Marcellina.

The choir also stayed in Perugia, the capital of Umbria, exploring the Etruscan and medieval portions of this lively walled hill town. In Florence (the cradle of the Renaissance) during our walking tour we visited the Piazzale Michelangelo, the Duomo and the Ponte Vecchio. The students were able to visit museums of their choice and interest. In Rome we were taken on a driven tour and then visited the Pantheon, the Coliseum, the Roman Forum and St. Peter's Basilica.

The FSU Chamber Choir was deeply touched by the warm welcome we received on this trip. The students were in awe of the beautiful landscape, the people and completely charmed by their wonderful tour guide Raffaella. When Jessica Knouse and Eleanor Fabic first saw the Duomo in Florence, they both said, with tears in their eyes, "we have never seen anything so beautiful, Sod". Back at FSU during choir rehearsals the members now look at each other and smile, knowing that what they did was extremely special and life changing. Several choir members have been asked by the tour company, ACFEA, to apply for internships and employment because they were so impressed by the FSU students.

Karen Sarnaker states that this was "an amazingly wonderful experience for us all. We all miss Italy."



The Chamber Choir in front of St. Francis Basilica, Assisi





Associate Dean Cindy Herzog on the red carpet at the Department of Communication's Frosty awards

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Have any interesting news items about faculty, staff, or students in your department? Submit them to Linda Steele (lstele@frostburg.edu) for the next issue.

Student Research Presented at Symposium

The annual CLAS Undergraduate Research Symposium took place on May 1, 10AM-1PM, in the Lane Center. This year's event included 90 presentations featuring the work of 136 students, mentored by 45 faculty across 15 departments and the Honors Program.

This year's projects included the creation of a media center for a handheld computer; an assessment of hydrological changes in the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers; an analysis of President Barack Obama's public address, "We Will Degrade and Ultimately Destroy ISIL"; the evaluation of essential metals in vitamins; tests of the salinity of the soil in spots around the FSU campus; and many more.

Dr. Roger Dow, Associate Dean of Education, praised the event saying, "The breadth and depth of the research presentations I was privileged to review were elegant, extremely well researched and articulately communicated."



Social Work Students Partner with Local Organizations for Experiential Education

Students in SOWK 471 (Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations) facilitated a series of six focus groups with local human service organizations as part of an effort to address poverty in Allegany County that is being spearheaded by the Allegany County Health Planning Coalition. The effort arose from the Coalition's comprehensive community needs assessment, which revealed that nearly every identified area of need in the county was related to problems associated with poverty. As a result, the Coalition investigated national intervention models and has formed a steering committee and five work groups in an attempt to move this community change effort forward.

The focus groups facilitated by social work students are helping to lay the groundwork for a series of workshops that will begin in the fall. Focus groups have been held at the downtown Cumberland YMCA, The Allegany County Department of Parole and Probation, the John F. Kennedy Apartments, Allegany College of Maryland's Pathways Pro-

gram, and the Human Resources Development Commission's Work Experience Program. The sixth focus group used a "house meeting" approach, tool used in community organizing.

The students are analyzing the findings from the focus groups and preparing a final report and presentation for the steering committee and work group members.

In addition to the focus groups, at the request of the Allegany/Garrett Social Work Caucus, four students from the class wrote letters to the editor in celebration of national social work month. These letters were published in the *Cumberland Times-News* throughout the month of March as part of the Caucus' activities to recognize social workers in western Maryland.

The SOWK 471 course is taught by Dr. Kathleen Powell. Students enrolled in the Spring 2015 class are Diamond Cannon, Glynis Cosner, Cheriann Hester, Jordan Pruitt, Donna Mattingly, and Tsion Tesfaye.

Dean's List by the Numbers—Fall 2014

Students in CLAS achieving 4.0 GPA—200
Students in CLAS achieving 3.4 or above—558

Total Fall 2014 CLAS Dean's List students—758

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

