Department News

New Faculty for 2006-07

Camille McNeely accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Biology with an emphasis on stream ecology. Camille received her Bachelor’s degree in Zoology from the University of Texas, Austin, and Ph.D. in Integrative Biology from the University of California, Berkeley. Post-doctoral research was at the University of Minnesota for the National Center for Earth Surface Dynamics. Camille will start Winter 2007 and will be teaching invertebrate zoology courses.

Katerine Roberge will assume the position of Lecturer for Anatomy/Physiology Fall 2006. Katerine has a Bachelor’s degree in Biology and Master’s in Anatomy and Cell Biology from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. She has taught A/P at the University of North Dakota, Minnesota State University-Moorhead, and Spokane Community College, as well as teaching this year at Eastern Washington University.

Other Comings & Goings

Dona Boggs, Professor of Biology, will continue in AY2007 as Program Director for the National Science Foundation Functional and Regulatory Systems Cluster, Division of Integrative Organismal Biology in Washington, D.C.

Awards

EWU Recognition

Margaret (Peggy) O’Connell, Professor of Biology, was awarded the prestigious Trustee’s Medal. It honors teaching excellence, scholarship / research, and academic program accomplishments.

John Shields, Scientific Instructional Technician II, was selected for the College of Science, Health and Engineering Chairs’ Excellence Award for Staff.

EWU HOSTS STATE SCIENCE OLYMPIAD TOURNAMENT

On Saturday, April 8, more than 700 middle school and high school students converged on the EWU campus for the Washington State Science Olympiad Tournament.

Twenty-one middle school and twenty high school teams competed in 50 events (25 per division) covering biology, chemistry, computer science, physics, and technology.

Events such as Astronomy, Compute This, Disease Detective, Don’t Bug Me, Ecology, Fermi Questions, Health Science, and Rocks and Minerals primarily test students’ knowledge and ability to problem-solve. Awesome Aquifers, Balloon Race, Experimental Design, Food Science, Mystery Architecture, and Physics Lab ask students to perform experiments or build devices within the allotted time (50 minutes). In Bottle Rocket, Bridge Building, Mission Possible, Scrambler, Sounds of Music, Storm the Castle, and Wright Stuff students build devices prior to competition that are evaluated at the tournament. Students’ ability to communicate technical material is tested in Write It-Do It, where one team member is shown a model and writes a description on how to build it. The directions are handed to a teammate who must construct the model without having seen it.

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Science Olympiad (cont. from page 1)
These are just some examples of the challenging tasks in which students display their scientific knowledge and skill. In order to have a shot at placing, teams must compete in all events. With fifteen members on each team, most students are involved in two or more events. These are an amazing group of future scientists!

This tournament would not be possible without the tremendous efforts of the 220 volunteers who contributed from hours to weeks of their time. Event supervisors who prepared and judged the tests, experiments, and challenges represented 18 different companies and organizations.

Contributors providing funding were American Chemical Society-Inland Northwest Local Section, American Society for Metals International-Inland Empire Chapter, Boeing Corporation, Kim Hotstart Manufacturing, New Light Industries, and Ramada Spokane.

But it wasn’t all work for the students. This year’s pre-closing entertainment included the EWU Chem Team, door prize giveaways, EWU’s mascot, Swoop, and Karaoke.

Eighteen individuals and groups amused the audience with their musical renditions. There wasn’t time to get everyone in who wanted to perform since the Closing Ceremony got under way. Thanks to all who participated – it was a lot of fun.

This year we were joined by our new university president, Dr. Rodolfo Arévalo and his wife, Nadine. Other presenters included Courtney Bonuccelli and Jay Clark from Isothermal Systems Research; Ray Soltero, Dean, EWU College of Science, Health & Engineering; Jean Cavanaugh, State Director, Washington Science Olympiad; and Swoop.

Going to the National Science Olympiad in Bloomington, Indiana, on May 19-20 in the middle school division were Canyon Park Middle School from Bothell (first place) and ExCEL Academic League from Vancouver (second place). Prairie High School from Brush Prairie (first place) represented Washington’s high school division.

Competition from Prairie High School who won first place for Remote Sensing also received a special award from the Association of Washington Geographers.

Spirit awards go to the team in each division that embodies the spirit of Science Olympiad competition – honesty, integrity, sportsmanship. Event supervisors and team coaches vote on recipients. Teams from Kennewick – St. Joseph’s School (middle school) and Kennewick High School – garnered the award in both divisions.

Go to http://www.ewu.edu/x38056.xml for a complete list of all individual and trial event results.

Biology & Ed Majors Teach MESA Students
On February 1 more than 20 Biology and Elementary Education majors conducted physiology and ecology classes for 100 visiting MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) students. The MESA program provides enriching opportunities in mathematics, engineering and science for underrepresented students in grades K-12.

Biology majors who helped design the lab activities and ran the classes were graduate student Pat Alberts and seniors Melissa Barrett, Steve Becker, Molly Coyne, David Fischer, Stefanie Frybarger, Michael Graybeal, Lynda Keenan, Randy Robbins, and Gina Swallow. In addition to the Elementary Education majors who participated, numerous volunteers from the Introductory Biology 100 and 115 courses assisted in the labs.

MESA students learned about taste buds, hearing, muscle reflexes, water ecology, animal interactions with the environment, and other physiology/ecology-related topics.
Awards (cont. from page 1)

Other Honors

Charles Herr, Associate Professor of Biology, was recently voted Best College Professor in the Inlander newspaper Readers’ Choice Awards.

Sidney Kasuga, Professor of Biology, received the first annual Founders’ Award by Cancer Patient Care of Spokane.

Grants Awarded

Prakash Bhuta, Professor of Biology, received an EWU Strategic Planning grant for initiatives in support of the plan goals. The grant is for the purchase of a Student Response System (SRS) – a technology commonly referred to as clickers that allows faculty to quickly and easily quiz students to determine whether additional instruction is needed. The expected outcome is to engage students in an active learning process, promote better interactions between faculty and students, and allow research to analyze the impact on student learning and faculty pedagogy.

Ross Black, Professor of Biology, was granted funds from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife for a Banks Lake study.

Margaret (Peggy) O’Connell, Professor of Biology, received a U.S. Bureau of Land Management grant for development of a small mammals field identification guide.

Allan Scholz, Professor of Biology, was awarded two grants from the Spokane Tribe for a Lake Roosevelt Hatchery-Kokanee salmon stock evaluation and fisheries meeting costs.

John Shields, Scientific Instructional Technician II, secured a grant to upgrade the department Computer Lab.

Biology Students Create Display

Four of Peggy O’Connell’s students, Jamie Bronleewe, Katherine Crowley, Andrea Sly Horney, and Terri Hutton recently finished construction of a spectacular display in the northwest stairwell of the Science Building. A formal dedication will take place on June 7 at 8:30 a.m.

The quartet of students (with assistance from family members, Peggy O’Connell, the Mars Lab, and others) put in more than 150 hours to create a display depicting a mountain stream, complete with boulders and cliffs. After years in storage, a mountain goat, cougar, five bears, an owl, and a golden eagle come to life against a breathtaking scenic background. Reaching from the stairway landing nearly to the ceiling, the display is a wonderful treat for the eyes.

Thank you, ladies, for a job well done. The department and its visitors will appreciate your efforts for years to come.

Hollister-Stier Textbook Awards

Recipients of Winter and Spring quarter Textbook Awards were:

Ross Abplanalp
Collin Ellis
Margaret Marshall
Russell Matheson
Darlene Soderberg

Awards are made possible through contributions by Hollister-Stier Laboratories. The Biology Department and our students appreciate your generosity.

2006-07 Scholarships Awarded

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<tr>
<th>Scholarship Name</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biology Memorial</td>
<td>Alissa Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheney Recycling Center</td>
<td>Janelle Holzer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spokane Walleye Club</td>
<td>Maegan Strand</td>
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<td>Swartz Graduate Biotechnology</td>
<td>Nick Bean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swartz Undergraduate Biotechnology</td>
<td>Jessica Wampole</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swartz-Werschler Fellowship</td>
<td>Alissa Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swartz-Narrance Fellowship</td>
<td>Gwen Hartman</td>
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Selections are still under way for the Pathology Associates Medical Laboratories Medical Technology and Swartz Medical Technology scholarships. Swartz-Narrance Fellowship applications will be accepted Fall 2006. Thank you to all sponsors and selection committee participants.
Can you help us?

The Biology Department has been building a database of our alumni. If you graduated 6 months or 50 years ago, we’d like to hear from you. What have you done since graduation? Additional education / schools? Jobs? Travel?,,, whatever you’d like to share.

One thing we really want to know is whether you are working in the field in which you received your degree from EWU.

Please contact Sue Murphy (address next column) with any information you’d like to provide.

Contact Us

*Biology News* is a quarterly publication of the Eastern Washington University Department of Biology. To contribute items of interest – news, features, alumni updates – please contact:

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