A Note from the Dean

It’s been busy in the School of Science and Technology since our last newsletter and I am eager to share what we’ve been up to. From teaching and learning innovation to connecting with our alumni, our school is buzzing with activity. Spring semester is off to a strong start with record enrollment in our school. We have 1783 undergraduate and graduate students – a significant increase from a few years ago.

In his recent State of the CSU address, Chancellor Timothy White characterized the state of the California State University as “strong, proud and aspirational.” We certainly feel that about our school and campus. He pledged a renewed focus on student achievement and graduation. He outlined several areas critical to student success, which must be supported by public and private investment. Chancellor White concluded “It is an investment,” and “the cost to California will be greater if we don’t do it.”

Chancellor White’s plans include rebuilding the faculty to ensure student access to quality teaching and learning as well as enhancing student academic and career advising. Initiatives – including online strategies – to provide access for more students are expanding. For example, an online cosmology curriculum is being used this Spring and several faculty members are exploring the potential of flipped classrooms. In addition, high-impact practices, including service learning, undergraduate participation in applied research, internships, and first-year student learning communities are an SST priority. Our school is heavily engaged in these initiatives with new freshman curricula in biology and chemistry and our interdisciplinary course for freshman focused on the Russian River watershed. Students in this course meet general education requirements in math, biology, and critical thinking. With our drought worries, water is a particularly timely topic.

Many of our students are involved in research and capstone projects. I invite you to attend our 2014 Science Symposium on April 30 in the new Student Center. The symposium features the creative research and scholarship of our talented student body. We’re planning on an early evening event – check back at www.sonoma.edu/scitech/symposium for the details.

These highlights of activities in which students and faculty participate every semester show why we have reason to be proud of the many dedicated faculty members and productive students in our school. If you want further information please contact me at stauffer@sonoma.edu.

Lynn Stauffer, Dean
School of Science & Technology
Spring 2014

SCI 120 freshman presenters at the 2013 Science Symposium. The 2014 Science Symposium is April 30, 5:30-7 pm in the Student Center.
T-LogoQube, designed and built in part by SSU students, was launched into orbit on November 21, 2013. The tiny satellite, measuring only 5-by-5-by-15 centimeters, consists of a radio and a sensor that reads and measures the earth’s magnetic field. Students can communicate with the satellite twice a day via radio to tell it to pivot, spin, and perform other maneuvers by using wire coils that react to the magnetic field and push the satellite around in orbit. This makes it quite probably the only satellite in orbit that can be reprogrammed in flight.

T-LogoQube was one of four PocketQubes launched from Russia via the Unisat-5—an Italian micro-satellite that carried and released them into space. The launch was the first to deploy PocketQubes, the smallest class of satellites ever operated in orbit. T-LogoQube is also the first satellite to use the Logo computer programming language. The language is simple but formulates complex programs. The satellite’s small size and simplicity of the language make the satellite an inexpensive and accessible learning tool for students. It also allows them to be more experimental and take more risk as it is not as cost and size restrictive as larger satellites.

The satellite was built by about a dozen SSU students led by physics major Kevin Zack and Professor Lynn Cominsky, and mentored by Dr. Garrett Jernigan. SSU partnered with a group of students mentored by PocketQube originator Professor Bob Twiggs at Morehouse State University in Kentucky. Read more about T-LogoQube on SSU’s News Center and the Press Democrat.

Ongoing information on the satellite can be found on T-LogoQube’s webpage.
The first meeting of SSU’s Engineering Industry Advisory Board (IAB) was held on January 31 at the Photonics Laboratory within the Cerent Engineering Science Complex of the Department of Engineering Science. The IAB board consists of fifteen industry executives and educational leaders of the North Bay region. The main purpose in forming the Board is for the ES Department to establish an active connection with the local high-tech industry leaders and executives, and to receive feedback and support from potential employers of the department’s graduates in Electrical Engineering and Computer and Engineering Science.

In his opening remarks, President Armiñana gave an account of the history of the department and its graduate and undergraduate programs. Following the President’s remarks, Provost Emeritus Rahimi led a discussion session focusing on student recruitment, community support, student internships, the hands-on nature of the engineering program and its accreditation. Dean Lynn Stauffer, Department Chair Meng-Chih Su, and faculty participated in the discussion by expressing their views and answering questions from the Board members. Prior to the meeting, the Board members had an opportunity to view student projects demonstrated by EE students.

The next quarterly IAB meeting is scheduled for May 2 in which several task forces are expected to report on their progress about the tasks suggested by the Board.

The launch of the engineering IAB has inspired much interest from the public and was featured in the Press Democrat.

SATURDAY SIDEKICKS

St. Patrick’s Day came early for children at Saturday Sidekicks as they participated in “Follow the Leprechaun,” “Swing Over the Rainbow,” and the Irish Jig. Currently in its 19th year at SSU, this 8-week program serves children with disabilities from local communities, providing hands-on service learning experience for students in Kinesiology, Environmental Studies, and Psychology, as well as local high school students. Kinesiology professor Elaine McHugh directs the program, with the help of several experienced student assistants who plan the weekly theme, set up mats and other equipment, lead the group activities, and mentor the newer volunteers. Participants range from 5 to 21 years of age, and some of the teens in the program have been participating for more than 10 years! Only two more sessions are left in this semester’s program, but a summer bike and swim camp will take place June 16-20, and Saturday Sidekicks will be back next spring!
On Wednesday, February 12, members of the Sonoma State Geology, Biology, Anthropology, and Geography departments gathered together in Darwin Hall to celebrate International Darwin Day. Darwin Day commemorates the 205th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin in 1809, the famed British geologist and naturalist best known for his 1859 book *On the Origin of Species*, a work that first presented his groundbreaking insights regarding evolutionary theory.

Nearly 50 interdisciplinary faculty and student Darwin enthusiasts joined together for a fun hour-long "Darwin in Darwin: Darwin Day in Darwin Hall" celebration highlighting Charles Darwin's contribution to science and promoting the study of the sciences. Dr. Matt James of the Department of Geology kicked off events by re-telling tales regarding the life of Darwin and clearing up popular misconceptions and myths surrounding the legendary figure. His speech was concluded with the thrilling bottle-opening-sabering of celebratory sparkling cider (it must be seen to be believed!) before all partook in pizza, cupcakes, and drinks. A great time was had by all.

This year’s event served as a precursor to a much larger Darwin Day celebration planned for 2015. Thanks to all who joined us this year and we look forward to spreading the celebration of Charles Darwin’s life next year. Co-sponsors and co-organizers of Darwin Day were Dr. Nathan Rank of Biology, and Drs. Karin Enstam Jaffe and Alexis Boutin of Anthropology. More information on International Darwin Day can be found here: [http://darwinday.org/](http://darwinday.org/).

Dr. Perri is an assistant professor in his 5th year in our department. As a teacher-scholar, his research with SSU undergraduate students spans multiple disciplines. In the wet lab, Dr. Perri has focused on atmospheric chemistry and water quality. Students in his lab have assembled instrumentation to go into the field and collect air samples that they test for organic aerosols, matching weather patterns and various pollutants. In collaboration with the SSU WATERS Collaborative, undergraduates in courses across campus such as general chemistry, environmental science, and the School of Science and Technology freshman year experience (Science 120) collect water samples from the Copeland Creek watershed and give them to Dr. Perri’s students for ion content and pesticide analysis.

Dr. Perri’s research also extends into the classroom. Computer-inclined students have established a computer cluster, website, and methodology where upper division chemistry students can perform quantum mechanical calculations to model molecular structure and energetics in order to bring hands-on chemistry to the lecture room.

If you are interested in learning more about Dr. Perri’s educational and research activities you can reach him at [Mark.Perri@sonoma.edu](mailto:Mark.Perri@sonoma.edu).

More information on chemistry department research with SSU undergraduates can be found on the department’s [webpage](http://chemistry.sonoma.edu/).

Dr. Saeid Rahimi of the Engineering Science Department was honored at the Department’s inaugural Industry Advisory Board meeting. President Rubeen Armiñana presented a plaque to Dr. Rahimi recognizing his long and fine leadership and constant dedication to serving the University. Dean Lynn Stauffer presented a mini iPad as a gift acknowledging Dr. Rahimi for his vision and inspiration in leading the School of Science and Technology through the past years.

The Engineering Science Department has established a scholarship in Dr. Rahimi’s name, which will reward a qualified graduate student each year for academic excellence.

For 30 years, Dr. Rahimi served SSU as a professor in Physics and Astronomy Department, Dean of School of Science and Technology and Provost of the University. He has been an emeritus professor since his retirement in 2011.
Aaron Owen & Kevin Zack

Sonoma State Society of Physics & Astronomy students have been awarded the Sigma Pi Undergraduate award to design and construct a CubeSat ground station, enhancing our current CubeSat development life cycle at Sonoma State. The project entails building the tracking system on the SSU campus. The ground station’s physical components will include the rotator assembly, antenna system, amplifiers and radios. They are using open source software which includes tracking and packet decoding software. Students working on the ground system are gaining experience in both hands-on and computer applications related to the implementation of the ground station and the CubeSat program.

The primary objective of the project is to enable students to gather telemetry and command current and future SSU satellites. SSU will benefit by improving our Small Satellite program so that we can not only develop and build the satellites, but we will soon be able to operate them, and acquire and analyze data, thereby conducting physics experiments. Having the ability to acquire telemetry data will open up avenues for other research projects for STEM students that do not have to be directly related to the satellite program. In addition to gathering their own data, students will also be able to contribute nationally by decoding the data from other universities’ satellites that operate in the T-LogoQubes 70cm HAM band. This will give students experience working in collaboration with students from other universities.

Upon completion, they expect the ground station to have the ability to track satellites, allowing them to receive and decode telemetry packets. They also expect the students working on the project to obtain the fundamental knowledge of satellite tracking and antenna systems.

This will be the final piece to the CubeSat life cycle at SSU, completing the program. This ability is especially important as SSU’s satellites gain in sophistication from simple magnetic measurements to X-ray astronomy observations which is the scientific goal of our second satellite, now being designed and built for a tentative launch off the International Space Station in September of 2014.

LEARNING BY MAKING

Professor Lynn Cominsky and Early Academic Outreach Director Susan Wandling have joined forces to win a $3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education. “Learning by Making: STEM Success for Mendocino County” aims to teach Mendocino high school students how to construct and design their own hands-on science and engineering experiments that involve making scientific measurements pertinent to the future of our planet and economy. The ultimate goal of the project is to increase the number of CSU and UC qualified students in Mendocino County while also ensuring their success in STEM.

The program’s curriculum involves coding in the Logo programming language. Another one of Professor’s Cominsky’s recent projects, the tiny T-LogoQube satellite recently launched into space, uses the Logo language for command and control. The Logo language is easy to learn—it was designed for 5 year-olds—so it “is ideal for interfacing to experiments that the students themselves can design,” says Cominsky. It will also assist these rural high school students overcome one of the hurdles our next generation of scientists face: learning how to write computer programs.

This project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and is part of the nation’s Investing in Innovation (i3) program (www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html), designed to support creative curricular programs that will improve student achievement and increase college enrollment. SSU earned one of 18 grants available nationwide. Learning by Making beat out 600 other proposed programs.

The team and their partner schools in Mendocino County are excited to start with the project. However, Wandling says, “One hurdle we still face is raising the rest of the matching funds required by the i3 program.” The program is also looking for donations of computers, experimental sensors and expertise, especially in biology, as well as cash donations.

For more information, please contact Susan Wandling (susan.wandling@sonoma.edu) or Lynn Cominsky (lynncom@universe.sonoma.edu).

NORTH BAY DISCOVERY DAY

All things science at the North Bay Discovery Day held at the Sonoma County fairgrounds last October wowed kids and their families. Young scientists peered through microscopes and examined samples as part of the School of Science and Technology’s exhibit. Our students, led by Dr. Fran Keller of the Biology Department, helped kids unleash their inner scientist!
Dr. Mary Ellen Wilksuz successfully defended two competitive program grants and was awarded a total of $330,000. The competitive nature of the awards are significant, as SSU vies for funding with large medical centers and universities such as UC Davis, UCLA, Stanford, UCSF, and our larger sister campuses such as Fresno and Long Beach. Base Program’s funding grant mandate is to increase ethnically diverse health professionals in underserved communities. This grant mandate closely mirrors the mission of SSU’s FNP program, of graduating FNPs who will meet the needs of underserved populations. SSU scores extremely well in grant criteria in that 90% of our graduates practice in such areas of unmet need. We graduate close to 50 FNP/MSN and Post MSN students every year. Of these students the majority are multi-lingual speaking English in addition to one other language (primarily Spanish) and several other students reporting 3-5 different languages spoken. Last year our student cohort represented 37 under-represented minority groups which speaks highly of our diversity. We are proud to report that many of our graduates return to their rural and frontier communities and continue to care for the underserved.

The second grant received for $144,000 was for a special project. The Department of Nursing is developing a 6-unit Clinical Educator certificate program which would enable nurse practitioners to return to school to learn how to be a clinical instructor for the advanced practice nursing student. This grant will allow us to develop curriculum as well as run a pilot program and provide stipends to our first cohort of students to help offset the cost of tuition and textbooks. This special project grant money will allow us to staff an additional clinic day at the local Jewish Community Free Clinic providing episodic care to the underserved community right here in Rohnert Park.

MARSH WHITE GRANT AWARDED TO SONOMA STATE SOCIETY OF PHYSICS STUDENTS ONCE AGAIN!

Nicola Peyko & Ben Cunningham

For the second year in a row, Sonoma State University’s Physics and Astronomy Club has won the Marsh W. White Award to promote an interest in physics. Last year, SSU’s Physics club, a chapter of Society of Physics Students, used the award grant to explain the importance of science to a fourth grade class at Roseland Elementary School in Santa Rosa, CA. This year the Physics Club applied for the Marsh W. White Grant in hopes of hosting a physics fair in conjunction with the Physics and Astronomy Department’s Public Viewing Nights. The club will also digitize astronomical images and past What Physicists Do talks and make them available to the public. These efforts are all to try and show the intimate connection between Physics and Astronomy.

Since the spring of 1976, Public Viewing Nights have been providing education and outreach to both SSU students and the general public. The Physics Club’s planned physics fair will be held with the March 28, 2014 Public Viewing Night, weather permitting. During the fair, applications of Physics and Astronomy will be demonstrated using demos and activities such as ones that show the ratio of sizes and distances of the Solar system, what comets are made of by showing one being made, and having imitation extraterrestrial soils which simulate Lunar dust, Martian dirt, and the like for people to see the differences between our soil and others.

Additionally, SPS will use the Marsh White Grant to archive incredible slides of such astronomy related images as Apollo 8 astronauts’ pictures of the moon’s surface, astronomical images taken using SSU’s Observatory, and historical images of SSU’s Astronomy program. A collection of these scanned slides will be used in making a slideshow to show to the public. This will help bridge together Physics and Astronomy and hope that showing mind blowing homemade projects and striking pictures from Manned Space Missions will spark an interest in these sciences among Sonoma State students and the public. SPS also hopes to make Physics less intimidating and more inspiring to students.

To achieve all of these goals, SPS prepared a committee to submit a proposal for the SPS national Marsh W. White Award, which is a grant given out to SPS chapters nationally with the best proposals on how to promote interest in physics to the public. This award was first given in 1975, and is named in honor of one of the most influential founders of Sigma Pi Sigma, Dr. Marsh W. White. SSU’s chapter of SPS is proud to accept this award once again and will be taking the sciences to Sonoma State University, soon, to help inspire and bridge the gap between Astronomy and Physics.

Checkout SST's many public lecture series: www.sonoma.edu/scitech/pls
The Provost’s Undergraduate Research Fund and the Steve Norwick Memorial Fund awarded sixteen $1,000 grants to SST faculty to support student projects in 2013-14.

- Nathan Rank, Biology, "Insect Diversity and Herbivores Loads on California Bay Laurel"
- Michael Cohen, Biology, "Nutrient Mining by Plant-degrading Bacteria"
- Karina Nielsen, Biology, "Elemental Analysis of Coralline Algae: variation in CA:Mg ratios in the intertidal zone"
- Derek Girman, Biology, "Phenology and Microgeography of Herpetofauna in Response to Climate Effects"
- Jenn Lillig, Chemistry, "Investigation of Key Molecular Features in the Targeting of Toxicity of Anti-Listerial Proteins"
- Steven Farmer, Chemistry, "Investigation of Fluorescent Molecules from Gymnopilus Croceoluteus"
- Mark Perri, Chemistry, "Pesticide Analysis of Local Water and Flora"
- Carmen Works, Chemistry, "Isolation and Characterization of a Novel 15.6 kDa Protein isolated from Bovine Liver"
- Farid Farahmand, Engineering Science, "Water Monitoring Network Development at the Fairfield Osborn Preserve"
- Farid Farahmand, Engineering Science, "Sensor Network Development at the Fairfield Osborn Preserve"
- Lauren Morimoto, Kinesiology, "The Impact of Backward Walking on Hamstring Flexibility"
- Lynn Cominsky, Physics & Astronomy, "CubeSat Project at SSU"
- Thomas Targett, Physics & Astronomy, "The Size-Mass Relation of Galaxies at 3<z>4"
- Hongtao Shi, Physics & Astronomy, "Proposal to Build and Test an Optical System for Applications in Medical Physics and Astronomy"

**SST FACULTY AWARDED GMC ACADEMIC INTEGRATION GRANTS**

The Green Music Center Board of Advisors and University Affairs Committee funded four 2013-14 academic integration proposals from the School of Science & Technology.

1. Chemistry faculty, Drs. Fukuto, Lares, Lillig and Works, received $10,000 to offer two notable events: (1) a Nobel Laureate lecture and (2) a Chemistry of Wine lecture. Both events will have broad reaching interest. Students, faculty, staff and the community will be invited.

2. “SSU Works”, a cross-disciplinary project in sustainability, was awarded $10,000. Dr. Claudia Luke, Director of the SSU Preserves is collaborating with Paul Draper in Arts & Humanities to put on a Sustainability Expo along with other related events, performances, and programs.

3. Drs. Cominsky, Khaleel and Ravikumar, from the Departments of Physics & Astronomy, Engineering, and Computer Science respectively, received $13,000 for their proposal "Integration of Music and Audio Principles within Engineering Science, Physics, and Computer Science Course”.

4. The proposal “Precision Measurements of Concert Hall and Classroom Acoustics”, from Drs. Cominsky and Jones in Physics & Astronomy, will bring $18,450 of advanced acoustics equipment to enhance student learning in the Physics of Music course.

**GRANT TO MONITOR NEW MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Biology professor, Dr. Karina Nielsen, in partnership with her colleagues at Humboldt State, UC Santa Barbara and Smith River Rancheria, was awarded a $450,000 California Sea Grant to conduct baseline monitoring in the new marine protected areas in Northern California. Their proposal is titled, “The Ecological State of Northern California’s Sandy Beaches and Surf Zones: A Baseline Characterization for MPA Assessment.”
**FUTURE FACES OF PHYSICS AWARD**

*Kevin Zack & Ben Cunningham*

Sonoma State University’s SPS (Society of Physics Students) chapter in partnership with MESA at SSU is hosting an introduction to microcontrollers and their scientific applications funded by the Future Faces of Physics Award granted by the Society of Physics National Organization. SSU’s SPS chapter intends to help combat the technological divide that many underrepresented students face in their pursuit of a science education.

During the past semester, SSU SPS members Benjamin Cunningham and Kevin Zack originated Skills Labs to provide a platform for peer-to-peer instruction in potentially valuable skill sets not included in a traditional classroom education. Subjects range from science communications to lab equipment operations and proper tool use, and are applicable to capstone projects, grad school, and future careers. As an extension of the Skills Lab hosted by the SSU SPS Club, and in conjunction with the MESA chapter on the Sonoma State University campus, the SPS/MESA Skills Lab will provide an introduction to microcontrollers to underrepresented students. At the end of the two labs, students will be loaned a Starter Kit to take home so they can continue exploring microcontrollers on their own for the duration of the semester.

The goal of the SPS/MESA Skills Lab is to provide underrepresented freshman and sophomore MESA students with the opportunity to develop skills that would not otherwise be taught in a classroom but are highly applicable to future work in STEM fields. Furthermore, after the lab and after students have had the opportunity to explore the Starter Kit on their own, they may be more likely to see the possibilities that microprocessors can provide and how that can be applied to their own projects. By bringing hands-on activities to underrepresented lower division students, they hope to pique their interest in lower division physics and engineering while supporting the dedication necessary for upper division classes. Learning how microprocessors work goes beyond what is taught in the classroom and is fundamental to many types of STEM research.

Another goal of this project will be to introduce underrepresented students to a skill set that, when pursued, opens up more opportunities for them in the future. Through this workshop, the students will be exposed to circuit design and construction, a programming language interpretation and creation, and both hardware and software troubleshooting. These are all skills which are useful in many aspects of scientific pursuits.

Reaching out to underrepresented students for this project, they hope to combat the misconception that customizable electronic systems are prohibitively expensive and require advanced skills to create successfully functioning designs. They also aim to instill the idea that it is easy to gain access to low cost, highly customizable electronic components and to demonstrate that there is an active and supportive community of like-minded people on and off line to help overcome any obstacles that might occur while starting out.

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**IET PRESENT AROUND THE WORLD COMPETITION**

Dr. Haider Khaleel, Engineering Science, is organizing the Present Around the World (PATW) competition to be held on the SSU campus in April, 2014. The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) sponsors the PATW competition worldwide to encourage and recognize young and talented students and professionals of engineering, science and technology backgrounds. The competition also aims to develop and improve students’ and young professionals’ presentation skills while providing an environment in which they can network, learn about the latest advancements in their fields, and gain access to new ideas.

Khaleel organized the PATW competition last spring, which was hosted in the Engineering Science (ES) Department. Two ES students won cash prizes and were awarded one-year memberships with IET. The first place winner was also awarded a trip to Toronto, Canada (fully funded by IET), to present in the regional finals.

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**GRADUATE APPOINTED TO CALIFORNIA’S BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING**

Elizabeth Woods, of Sonoma, has been appointed to the California Board of Registered Nursing. Woods has been a nurse practitioner at the Jewish Community Free Clinic since 2005. She was a registered nurse labor representative at the California Nurses Association from 1994 to 2007, an adjunct clinical professor at Sonoma State University from 1984 to 1995, and a nurse practitioner and sexual assault examiner at the Sonoma County Community Hospital from 1982 to 1988. She was a family nurse practitioner at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, Santa Rosa from 1976 to 1994 and a registered nurse in the Hillcrest Hospital Intensive Care Unit from 1966 to 1976. Woods earned a Master of Science degree in nursing from Sonoma State University.

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**TARGETT A YOUTUBE SENSATION**

Dr. Tom Targett in Physics and Astronomy is becoming a YouTube star. His *What Physicists Do* lecture titled “A citizen science colonization model for the Koprulu Sector in StarCraft 2, micro Terran to defeat Protoss and Zerg?” has been viewed over 8000 times. In his lecture, Dr. Targett discusses how videogames like StarCraft 2 can increase people’s understanding of the scientific method.
KINESIOLOGY MAJOR SELECTED FOR CSU TRUSTEE’S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

Kinesiology major and biology minor, John Michael Vincent Coralde, was selected as one of the 23 recipients of the California State University Trustee’s Award for Outstanding Achievement. John Michael Vincent, a native Filipino, came to the U.S. at age 14. He overcame a great deal as he struggled to learn English and to fit in with his Sonoma County peers. He graduated from Elsie Allen High School and is now in his senior year at SSU. While at SSU, he has become a student leader involved in Summer Orientation and Summer Bridge. He is currently serving as a Peer Advisor in SST. He plans to pursue a Masters in Public Health. We are so proud!

POSITIVE IMAGES HONORS DEBORAH KINDY

Positive Images honored Deborah Kindy, Department of Nursing, with the "College Educator of the Year" award at their annual Awards and Candle-Lighting Ceremony December 20, 2013 for her work in Nursing 480: Health, Sexuality and Society. Co-founded by executive director Jim Foster, MFT, ED, Positive Images has been providing support and advocacy to Sonoma County’s gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, agender, and straight youth and young adults as well as education to the greater community for 22 years.

CHEMISTRY WINE SEMINAR

Dr. Phil Crews, Professor of Chemistry at UC Santa Cruz and owner of Pelican Ranch Winery (Capitola, CA), will be presenting a Chemistry of Wine seminar at the Green Music Center as part of an Academic Integration Award to the Department of Chemistry. The seminar will be April 17 at 7 pm and tickets will be available free to the public. More event and ticketing information will be coming soon on the Chemistry Department’s webpage.

COMPUTER SCIENCE ALUMNI REUNION

The Department of Computer Science held its alumni reunion on November 17, 2013 at the Event Center of Sonoma Mountain Village. The gathering was attended by about 180 people, including alumni, their guests, computer science faculty, and Dr. Lynn Stauffer, the Dean of the School of Science and Technology. The alumni came from far and near, from the East Coast to Sonoma and Marin Counties.

The alumni started arriving in the late morning, with Kristi Yost and Nick Mahnke, the Presidents of WICS and the CS Club respectively, greeting them and passing out lanyards. As they arrived, groups started forming: many knew each other, while others were eager to get to know each other and to swap stories of days-gone-by in the Computer Science Department. This went on well into the noon hour and well after the buffet was set up and ready for the guests. The lunch included appetizers, salads, platters of grilled vegetables, grilled chicken breast, and roast beef, along with desserts.

After everyone was seated with their food, the MC, Dr. George Ledin, called Dr. Stauffer to the podium for the opening remarks. Dr. Kooshesh, the Chair of the CS department, gave a brief overview of the state of the department and the current curriculum. Dr. Ledin and Roger Mamer, who had spent hours reviewing pictures of departmental activities from the past, had prepared a slide show. Pictures of faculty and students over the years attending various gatherings such as LAN parties, club meetings, and graduation parties, along with CS trivia questions provided the backdrop while the guests dined and chatted.

After lunch, the faculty previously mentioned, along with Dr. Ravikumar, Dr. Rivoire, Dr. Scott Gordon (currently at Sacramento State), Mike Lyle, and Faculty Emeritus Dr. Bob Plantz got another chance to visit with the alumni. It was clear that everyone was genuinely happy to be there, nostalgia was widespread, and no one seemed in a hurry to leave. The party broke up at about 3 pm, an hour longer than even expected, with promises to do this again in the future.

It was rewarding to see so many successful professionals who passed through the CS program. The department and school are proud of them and will cherish the memories of the gathering. As alumna Sue Leake of Agilent writes:

I was pleasantly surprised by the huge turnout, but in retrospect I shouldn't have been... it speaks volumes about the inclusive and nurturing culture of the CS department at SSU. Although I didn't get a chance to speak with all of you, please know that my short time at SSU had a great impact on my life and I just can't say enough good things about my experience there. I look forward to more events like this. My hope is that it was the start of a new tradition of annual SSU CS reunions.

Please visit the Computer Science Department’s webpage for pictures.
On February 22, 2014 the SSU Department of Mathematics and Statistics hosted the annual conference of the Mathematical Association of America’s Golden Section. Over 200 math faculty, students, and community members from Northern California and Nevada attended the conference held in Warren Auditorium and the new Student Center.

President Armiñana welcomed the participants to kick off a day of fascinating math talks and a student poster session. The talks included cutting edge topics like “Randomness in Theory and Practice,” by Alon Amit (Origami Logic), and “Common Core State Standards – Mathematics: A perspective from a member of the writing team,” by Phil Daro (Strategic Education Research Partnership).

Undergraduate and graduate students from universities throughout Northern California presented their research and scholarly activities in a poster session in the ballroom at the new Student Center. Three teams from Sonoma State presented their results from the recent Math Modeling Competition on modeling traffic flow and designing a sports ranking system.

The conference was sponsored by the SSU math honor society $\pi\mu\epsilon$ (Pi Mu Epsilon) and the Math and Stats clubs with many students volunteering to make the conference a great success.
Giving to the School of Science & Technology

Sonoma State relies on the generous support of alumni and friends to fund the special and innovative programming that makes all of the difference in a student's experience. Collaborating with a faculty mentor on a research question, presenting at a conference, participating in outreach activities, and being a part of a vibrant academic community are examples of the opportunities your gifts make possible. To make a gift, send a check to our address above or visit Sonoma State University’s Development Office (click on "Give Online"). Thank you.