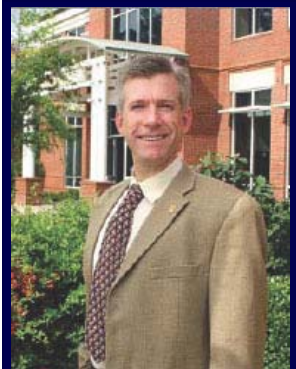


# ALLEN E. PAULSON COLLEGE OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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Dr. Bret S. Danilowicz  
Dean

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## WELCOME TO 2008!

This past year highlighted the advancements being made at Georgia Southern when the university was formally designated as a Research/Doctoral University by the Carnegie Foundation. Last year also revealed the established quality of our college's academic programs and faculty; our enrollment grew faster than in any other college on campus, which is particularly impressive given the national trend of declining enrollments in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Further, the College of Science & Technology (COST) now retains students in their degree programs at the highest rate in the university, again bucking the national trend of declining retention in STEM fields. Our faculty's dedication to teaching, undergraduate research, and advisement has directly led the college to these outstanding achievements.

So what does this New Year have in store for COST? A development late in the year gave insight into our future direction. In December 2007, President Bruce Grube signed the Presidents Climate Commitment (<http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/>), making our university just one of four public universities in the state system (of thirty-five universities) to set a target of carbon neutrality for our campus. It is STEM faculty and students which make planning and implementing a sustainable future possible. To seize upon Dr. Grube's initiative, the college is launching a College Office of Sustainability, and we are presently searching for the first director of this center from among our faculty. To highlight a few of many possible initiatives, the College Office of Sustainability will organize a tri-annual seminar series on sustainability, develop a comprehensive inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions from the college, identify best practices for sustainability at other universities and develop an implementation plan for bringing these practices to COST.

The College Office of Sustainability is just the beginning of a progression of initiatives which will firmly plant sustainability into the awareness and practices of our students-our region's future workforce. Our curricula and courses will require revisions, and we will be seeking opportunities for faculty and students to partner on interdisciplinary research projects on sustainability. COST is in a rather unique position to move our region towards a sustainable future. Along with awarding degrees in the basic sciences, we have applied science degrees as well, including one of just three BS programs in Construction Management in the State. We can educate our students with a deep understanding of the environment and human ecology, while creating graduates who can pragmatically incorporate sustainability into the economic development of the region.

We are presently seeking funding from the State to construct a new Biology Building. While such funding would be welcomed, it by itself would not be sufficient to achieve all of the goals we wish to achieve in educating a sustainable workforce and providing for a sustainable future for our region. Thus, we are actively seeking partnerships with, and philanthropic investments from, individuals who share this same vision for our region and nation. I would encourage you to 'spread the word' about our programmatic ambitions, and please encourage potential partners for sustainability to get in contact with us.

Let us strive for a sustainable future. Toward this goal, I hope that 2008 is both an enjoyable and memorable year for you. I guarantee it will be for our faculty and students.

Dr. Bret S. Danilowicz, Dean

## DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY CLIMBS TO No. 13 IN NATIONAL RANKINGS

For the fourth time in five years, the Department of Chemistry at Georgia Southern University boasts one of the most productive degree programs in the United States.

According to the latest rankings by the American Chemical Society (ACS) Committee on Professional Training, Georgia Southern is No. 13 in the nation for the number of graduates who earned a certified bachelor's degree in chemistry.

In addition, Georgia Southern is the highest-ranked institution in the state.

"I am delighted that we continue to be recognized at a national level for our outstanding undergraduate program as well as our commitment to the profession," said Mary Boyd, the chair of the Department of Chemistry.

To compile the rankings, the ACS surveyed the more than 640 colleges and universities that have a bachelor's degree program which has been certified by the ACS.

The institutions are ranked based on the number of graduates they produce in a given academic year. Thirty-four Georgia Southern students earned certified degrees in 2005-2006, the year used by the ACS for its most recent survey.

The University was tied for No. 19 in the previous national rankings, which covered the 2004-2005 academic year. Georgia Southern was No. 22 in the 2003-2004 rankings, and also No. 22 in the 2001-2002 rankings.

The ACS is comprised of more than 158,000 individual members at all degree levels and in all fields of chemistry. The organization provides a broad range of opportunities for peer interaction and career development.

The ACS Committee on Professional Training has been assessing, approving and monitoring under-

graduate chemistry programs since 1941. Students in approved programs can earn certified degrees by completing a rigorous curriculum that satisfies ACS requirements.

According to the ACS, some employers offer higher starting salaries to graduates who have certified degrees. Also, a certified degree can be beneficial in obtaining admission to graduate school.

"Our graduates typically attend graduate, dental or medical school, or find employment in the chemical industry," Boyd said.

The latest ACS survey revealed that 12,120 students received their bachelor's degrees during the 2005-2006 academic year from institutions that offer a certified degree program. However, only 4,252 of these graduates (35.1 percent) earned certified degrees. The study also showed that 6,291 of the certified degrees (51.9 percent) were awarded to women.

The top five institutions in the ACS rankings for certified bachelor's degrees are, in order: the University of Texas at Austin, the University of California at San Diego, the University of Virginia, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, and the University of California at Santa Barbara.

The national rankings also include the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (in a four-way tie at No. 16) and the U.S. Naval Academy (in a four-way tie at No. 21).

The Georgia Institute of Technology - which is among the schools tied at No. 21 - is the only other Georgia university to appear in the national rankings for certified bachelor's degrees.

For more information on the Department of Chemistry at Georgia Southern, visit <http://cost.georgiasouthern.edu/chemistry> or call (912) 681-5681.



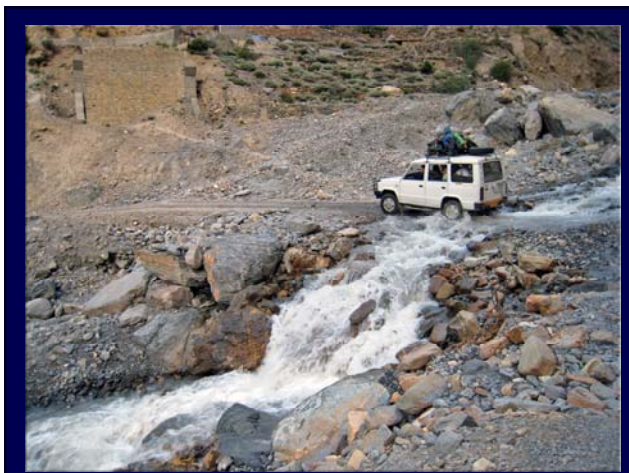
Undergraduate research student Kristen D'Antignac House works with anaerobic bacteria in a glove box while assistant professor of chemistry Dr. Dontarie Stallings observes.

"OUR GRADUATES TYPICALLY ATTEND GRADUATE, DENTAL OR MEDICAL SCHOOL, OR FIND EMPLOYMENT IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY"

## INDIA SUMMER STUDY ABROAD WITH GEOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

This summer 27 students were offered the opportunity to take geography courses in the Himalayas with former faculty member Keith Bosak. Bosak led two groups of 15 students each on a three week trekking experience from New Delhi to the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve (NDBR) in the Garhwal region of the Himalayas. The courses offered were Mountain Geography and Sustainable Mountain Development with an emphasis on recent land use change in the Himalayas. The trip began with a 14 hour flight into New Delhi, India. After staying overnight in Delhi we spent three nights in Rishikesh; a holy city along the Ganges River. After recovering from jet lag, we explored the city and met students from a local university. The group entertained lecturers on local land use policy, preservation of Bhotiya heritage, biodiversity, and significant grassroots campaigns and movements. This served as a valuable and informative introduction to the material to be covered throughout the course. After a long bus ride the following day, we found ourselves at 8,000 feet above sea level in the small town of Deval. As the sun set in the beautiful foothills of the Himalayas, we set up camp and prepared for the 8 days of trekking that lay ahead.

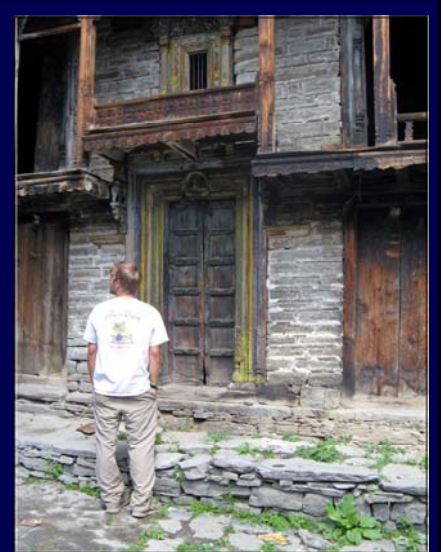
Not everyone in our group was an accomplished hiker, but Dr. Bosak as an experienced climber led the group at a pace slow enough for everyone to acclimate to the elevation, but efficient enough to cover enough ground for the day. We began trekking at approximately 8,000 feet and over the next few days climbed to an elevation of over 14,300 feet above sea level. Everyone carried their own packs and were accompanied by porters from the Mountain Shepherds organization. The Mountain Shepherds are a group of local men that make a living from their vast mountaineering experience and extensive knowledge of the region. The porters and two mules carried the tents and food every day along with providing all meals for the group.



Typical mode of transportation. Day trip up the Niti valley toward the Tibetan border.

The highlight of the trip was the group's 5-day cultural interaction with the people of Lata village. In Lata we came to under-

stand the importance of environmental sustainability. Lata is located just outside the NDBR core zone in the Niti Valley, along a tributary of the Ganges, less than 50 kilometers from the Tibetan border. The beginning of grassroots environmentalism, such as the Chipko Movement in 1974, originated with ecological protests in the Uttranchal state. During the Chipko Movement, the women of Lata and surrounding villages success-



Geography major Blair Dietz admiring  
woodwork in Ghamsali.

fully protested against the clear cutting of local forests. Due to heavy tourist attraction to the area and severe ecological damage, the core zone was closed in late 1982. The creation of the NDBR and Nanda Devi National Park in the 1980's closed off this area, separating the people living within the core zone from the forest by placing restrictions on livestock grazing and resource use. The people of Lata suffer from these restrictions. No longer having access to the land which supported the livelihoods of their ancestors, the villagers now depend on income from ecotourism while now struggling to preserve their traditions and heritage. During our stay in Lata, we participated in an optional day hike to Lathi Kharak; a 5,000 foot vertical elevation change for a glimpse of Nanda Devi from the edge of the core zone. An overnight camping trip the following day, took us up the Niti Valley to Ghamsali; a village reminiscent of a time where trade was prosperous along the India-China border. The closing of the border to trade in the 60's has left a few friendly residents and colorful, intricate woodwork along the trim of several structures.

As the trip wound down to a close, we spent a few days back in Delhi enjoying the comforts of a 4-star hotel. The last adventure was a day trip to Agra to visit the Taj Mahal. The love story behind the construction and perfect symmetry of the "Crown Palace" makes this world wonder even more awe inspiring.

After a long plane ride back to Atlanta, we said goodbye to new friends and hello to meat and flushing toilets. Senior Geology major Abby Cramer describes the experience as, "challenging, humbling, and unforgettable." Keith Bosak is currently an Assistant Professor of Nature Based Tourism and Recreation at the University of Montana and continues to play an active role in the ongoing struggle for land rights in the Garhwal region of the Himalayas.

## ENGINEERING STUDENTS PROMOTE SCIENCE TO MEMBERS OF LOCAL GIRL SCOUT TROOP



Society of Women Engineers members with Girl Scout Troop 064

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) promotes engineering as a desirable career option for females.

Girl Scouts of America is devoted to helping girls build character and skills for success in the real world.

These two organizations and their stated goals overlapped recently when a group of students from the Georgia Southern University section of the SWE attended a meeting of Girl Scout Troop 064.

In an effort to increase the girls' interest in science and technology, the University students helped the troop perform a series of experiments that described several basic scientific principles.

Fifteen scouts in grades four through six participated in the event, which was held on Tuesday evening, Nov. 27, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Highway 67 in Statesboro.

"We wanted to do something to get these girls excited about science and technology," said Shonda Bernadin, an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Technology at Georgia Southern and the advisor for the SWE section at the University.

"Studies have shown that there has been a declining interest among American students in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields, but we want the girls to know about all of the possibilities that exist for them."

SWE was represented at the Girl Scout meeting by Jaklyn Edelstein, a mechanical engineering major from Fayetteville, Ga.; Mwanje "Mo" Kiggwe, a chemical engineering major from Duluth, Ga.; Randall Ricketson, a civil engineering major from Locust Grove, Ga.; and Laura Settle, a mechanical en-

gineering major from Richmond Hill, Ga.

Together, Bernadin and the Georgia Southern students helped the Girl Scouts perform the following experiments:

- Deep Sea Divers – the principles of flotation, air pressure and density were introduced during this activity. Using balloons, paperclips and weights, the girls built their own divers and placed them in a one-liter bottle. This session also included some measurement and data collection.
- Night and Day – each girl created her own model of the earth, which spun on its axis and changed its seasonal position relative to the sun. The girls observed the cause-and-effect relationship that these movements have on days and nights, years and their lives.
- Periscopes – this activity introduced the girls to the basic properties of reflection. After experimenting with mirrors that reflected geometric shapes and symmetrical words and images, each girl constructed her own periscope and figured out how to apply the tool.
- The Lighthouse – the girls built lamp assemblies, created their own lighthouses, and then studied the behavior and properties of the emerging rays of light. The experiment included the reflection, refraction and convergence of the light rays. "These experiments helped to reinforce the girls' knowledge of science by providing a fun and exciting atmosphere for learning," Bernadin said. "The girls did a great job in performing their experiments, and the student leaders were excellent in engaging the girls, guiding them through the experiments and explaining the main concepts."

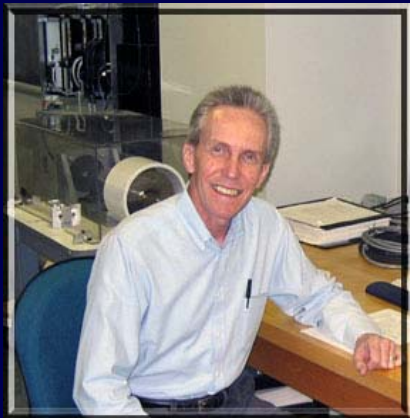
"We were thrilled to have the Georgia Southern students do this for us," said Louise Fechter, the leader for Girl Scout Troop 064. "We are trying to bring up strong girls, and increasing their interest in science is one way of helping them reach their potential."



Dr. Shonda Bernadin assisting with a science display

IN AN EFFORT TO INCREASE THE GIRLS' INTEREST IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS HELPED THE TROOP PERFORM A SERIES OF EXPERIMENTS THAT DESCRIBED SEVERAL BASIC SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES.

## DR. FRANK GOFORTH JOINED THE DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING



Dr. Frank Goforth

Dr. Frank Goforth joined the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Technology as Assistant Professor in August 2006. Dr. Goforth graduated May 2006 with his Doctorate in Engineering from Cleveland State University with dissertation topic regarding nanometer precision hysteresis control of Atomic Force Microscope (AFM) piezoelectric actuators.

Dr. Goforth brings to GSU a wealth of

industry experience which is extremely beneficial in teaching in an applied engineering program. Upon receiving his BSEE from MIT, Dr. Goforth spent 25 years working in industry, which includes experience at Texas Instruments as design engineer and project manager, Rockwell Automation as Director of Design Engineering and later Director of R&D for their industrial controls business division, and Cleveland Motion Controls as Vice-President of Engineering.

Dr. Mohammad Davoud, chair of the department, believes Dr. Goforth is on the leading edge of a new generation of academics, "baby boomers" seeking to put their experience to work helping link college academics with industrial practice.

Dr. Goforth has leveraged his professional experience since joining the department by recruiting a new Industrial Advisory Board for Electrical Engineering Technology, an effort crucial to the renewal of ABET accreditation. He has established relationships with human resource managers of companies in the southeast Georgia region, resulting in a

significant increase in coordination when placing graduates into permanent positions as well as undergraduate intern positions. He has also facilitated the donation of over \$700,000 of instrumentation equipment to the department since his arrival.

Dr. Goforth has recently initiated a promising new relationship with the National Nanotechnology Manufacturing Center. This federally funded center is dedicated to the development of manufacturing technology for cutting edge nanometer scale processes, moving these technologies out of the labs and into profitable commercial production.

Dr. Goforth, in addition to his business and industry outreach, is an active member of Savannah sections in the Instrumentation, Systems and Automation (ISA) society and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). He has also been an editor for the American Control Conference (ACC) since 2004. We enthusiastically welcome Dr. Goforth to the College of Science and Technology.

## PHYSICS PROFESSOR RECEIVES NSF GRANT TO PROMOTE UNDERGRADUATE ASTRONOMY RESEARCH AT GSU

Georgia Southern physics professor Sarah Higdon has been awarded a \$179,376 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to undergraduate astronomy research at the university.

The five-year collaborative grant is designed to help develop research opportunities for undergraduate students who will have the chance to work with scientists from around the world on a major astronomy project.

The grant provides students and faculty at Georgia Southern and 13 other institutions access to the Arecibo Legacy Fast ALFA (ALFALFA) Survey, an ongoing project that is expected to detect 20,000 galaxies out to a distance of 750 million light years.

"This grant makes it possible for undergraduates to contribute to the scientific output of the ALFALFA extragalactic survey and follow-up studies," said Higdon, a professor of astronomy in the Department of Physics. "At the same time, the students will learn valuable lessons about the way that science collaboration functions through their interactions with their faculty mentors, their peers and the leaders of the pro-

ject."

Led by Cornell University astronomers Riccardo Giovanelli and Martha Haynes, the ALFALFA survey is based at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. Using the world's largest radio telescope, the survey is mapping a large part of the sky by using radio wavelengths that are appropriate for the detection of neutral hydrogen gas in other galaxies.

One of the main goals of the project is to discover low-mass, 'starless' galaxies, which contain hydrogen gas, but have not yet formed stars. The abundance of the 'dark' galaxies, their characteristics and their locations are key clues to understanding how galaxies form and evolve throughout the universe.

Higdon is working with Colgate University professor Tom Balonek and Union College Rebecca Koopman. Together, they are developing an undergraduate student program that includes four core components:

An annual group workshop at Arecibo that features

APPROXIMATELY \$3-MILLION DOLLARS IN SOFTWARE WAS DONATED TO THE CMCET DEPARTMENT.

## PHYSICS PROFESSOR RECEIVES NSF GRANT TO STUDY GALAXIES CONTD..



Dr. Sarah Higdon

- observing sessions, lecture, and group activities.
- Observing time at Arecibo for several groups of

students per year.

- An annual summer research stipend program that will support seven students who will make a presentation at a national meeting. Funding to provide computers to each of the 14 consortium schools.

As part of the grant, Higdon will also collaborate on curriculum and public outreach endeavors with Jose Alonso, the director of the Angel Ramos Foundations Visitors Center at Arecibo.

Two Georgia Southern students are already involved in the ALFALFA survey. Physics majors Josh Davidson and Daniel Richey accompanied Higdon to Arecibo and gained experience with the radio telescope in January, 2007.

## CMCET WORKS WITH THE COMMUNITY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

After receiving a letter from Mr. Robert Peel, the mayor of Vidette, Georgia, the department of Construction Management and Civil Engineering Technology (CMCET) agreed to assist that community as it addresses its deteriorating 100-year old water distribution system. Faculty and student volunteers spent the Fall semester performing many hours of surveying work. The department, in collaboration with a professional land surveyor (Mr. Tate Horton), professional civil engineer (Mr. Chris Stovall, Thomas & Hutton Engineering), environmental specialist (Mr. Joe Sills-Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Environmental Protection Division), and the mayor of Vidette, is enjoying this opportunity to contribute to the town of Vidette.

The executive board of the Georgia Asphalt Pavement Association met with Drs. Moore and Shen on campus to discuss Dr. Shen's research in the area of Crumb Rubber Asphalt. The board expressed interest in Dr. Shen's work and in supporting the department. A related meeting was also held with the head of the State of Georgia's Scrap Tire Unit. The Unit is under the umbrella of the Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Protection Division. Drs. Moore, Shen, and Das met with the state's representative to consider opportunities for collaboration.

Approximately \$3-million dollars in software was donated to the CMCET department. The software exposes students to the latest trends in building information modeling (BIM), such as construction cost

estimating, scheduling, quantity estimating, analysis and design.

Faculty members were invited by Holder Construction Company in Atlanta to a presentation on the use of BIM as a means of reducing construction costs and meeting increasing owner demands for short duration design and construction schedules. The presentation at Holder's headquarters was followed by a site tour at the new Aquarium Hilton Hotel project in downtown Atlanta, which is being constructed by Holder and managed by a graduate of the CM Program.



Dr. Junan Shen, Mr. Holder, Head of Georgia Scrap Tire, and Dr. Brian Moore, CMCET Department Chair

## CMCET WORKS WITH THE COMMUNITY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CONTD..

In early November, Drs. Gustavo Maldonado and Ismail Basha, along with Professor Amal Basha, took three teams of students to Jacksonville, Florida to compete in the Region 2 Competitions of the Associated Schools of Construction. These student competitions pit Georgia Southern CM students against their counterparts at Georgia Tech, Auburn, University of Florida, Virginia Tech, and other universities located in the Southeastern U.S.

Winners of the regional competition go on to face competition at the national level. The competitions challenge the student teams to estimate construction costs, prepare construction schedules, understand contract documents and construction law, and understand how to effectively manage the construction process to ensure that large commercial construction projects are safely completed within budget and on schedule.

## DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY UPDATES

The Biology Department had an active year and produced 60 peer-reviewed publications and three books. Faculty and students presented 79 talks with 13 of these being invited presentations or keynote addresses. Biology faculty held 10 editorships, associate editorships, and editorial board positions for professional journals. A recent survey determined that Master's program alumni work in 32 states and 10 countries; however, 50% stay and work in Georgia.

Faculty and students were recognized in teaching, research and service in a number of different venues. Sophie George was awarded a University-wide Academic Award for Excellence in Scholarly Activity. Bruce Schulte was awarded a University-wide Academic Award for Excellence in Service award. Dr. Laura Regassa was presented the Ivan Roth Award for Service from the Southeastern Branch of the American Society of Microbiology. Drs. Michelle Cawthorn and Lorne Wolfe were recognized by the Student Disability Resource Center for their efforts in teaching students represented by the Center. Jeremy Camp, a master's student advised by Bill Irby, was recognized for the Best Graduate Student Paper award at the Georgia Entomological Society Meetings. Brandon Noel, a master's student advised by Dr. Ray Chandler, was presented an honorable mention award for best student presentation at the North American Ornithological Conference in Veracruz, Mexico. International undergraduate student Katalin Patonai, advised by Dr. Sophie George, received first place for her presentation in Ljubljana, Slovenia, out of 100 participants from 22 European countries. Dr. Lance Durden described three new species. Dr. Quentin Fang was invited to deliver two lectures at a Beijing Summer Workshop for scientists, sponsored by the China Academy of Sciences. Dr. Lorenza Beati was invited to give two lectures on molecular tools for the detection of pathogens in arthropod vectors and two laboratories on tick identification at the Veterinary School of Ross University, St. Kitts.



Dr. Michelle Cawthorne

Dr. Michelle Cawthorn was presented the Outstanding First Year Advocate Award. This honor recognizes her many contributions to the academic and personal success of first-year students.

The Biology Department was ranked 34<sup>th</sup> in the nation for producing African American Bachelor degree graduates in Biological and Biomedical Sciences.

Dr. Michelle Zjhra was named a Fulbright Scholar by the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Michelle will be working on plant sustainability issues at Vietnam National University in Saigon during the Spring 2008 semester. In addition to conducting her own research, she will lead workshops and training programs for her Vietnamese colleagues.

Dr. Alan Harvey's research on spontaneous alternating behavior in paramecium was highlighted in *NewsRx* a website summarizing important new research findings for pharmacology and biotechnology professionals. Dr. Alan's research has implications for developmental and psychopharmacological studies.

Several newspapers and a Savannah television station highlighted Danny Gleason's research cruise aboard the NOAA vessel Nancy Foster. Drs. Danny and Alan Harvey are constructing a Web-based guide to the benthic invertebrates and cryptic fishes of Gray's Reef. Danny is also studying recruitment in invertebrates such as sponges, corals and tunicates.

Newspapers also published articles highlighting Bruce Schulte's research on elephants. Bruce, Smithsonian National Zoo scientist Elizabeth Freeman, and students are testing a field kit to monitor hormone levels in female elephants in South Africa. A goal of this research is to more easily assess the reproductive status of females and better understand their behavior.

## How your support can help ...A message from the Dean

Demand is escalating both regionally and nationally for graduates trained in the disciplines of science and technology. Reflecting this need, enrollment in our college has rapidly increased; there are now more than 2,500 majors in our degree programs.

To ensure our graduates are prepared to enter the workforce or attend a competitive graduate school, our facilities and equipment for instruction and research must be continually upgraded.

Thanks to contributions and endowments from alumni, students, and friends of the college, we have been able to build upon our reputation of producing proficient and dynamic graduates.

The Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology is positioned to be a national leader in the education and engagement of students in basic and applied research. The education we provide is critically needed to support the growing science- and technology-driven economy of our region and our nation.

With your support, we will continue to improve our ability to provide a world-class comprehensive educational and research experience for our students. We presently confer recognition to individuals or organizations using the five levels of giving listed below. Whatever level of funding to which you choose to support the college and its programs, your support is welcomed.

Bronze: \$100 - \$499  
Silver: \$500 - \$999  
Gold: \$1,000 - \$4,999  
Platinum: \$5,000 - \$9,999  
Titanium: \$10,000 or more

If you would like to make a gift to assist the college as it continues to build and improve educational opportunities in science and technology, please contact Dean Bret Danilowicz or visit <http://welcome.georgiasouthern.edu/foundation/givingoptions/opportunities.shtml>. Click the envelope and opportunities for giving to select our college.

Thank you for your consideration and support of the Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology at Georgia Southern University.

Dr. Bret S. Danilowicz, Dean



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