Summer/Fall 2012 eNEWSLETTER

From the Dean

With this edition of our Summer/Fall eNewsletter we continue with the new format started with the Winter 2012 edition that mimics our science blog – Science News – found on our College’s web page and also on our College’s Facebook page. I hope that you have been following the news and events in our College by regularly visiting these sites (past editions of Science Connect at http://www.science.fau.edu/newsletter/index.html ). Also, with this edition of Science Connect I can inform you that I will be stepping down as dean of the College in the coming year. This Fall I begin my seventh year as dean, and I have been part of the College’s administration for the past 15 years, beginning in 1997 when Dr. John Wiesenfeld was dean and later serving as senior associate dean under Dean Charles White and Dean Nathan Dean. It has been my privilege and honor to serve in these roles. I am proud of our many accomplishments during this period, and I need not go into them here except to say that I am especially proud, as I am sure you are, of the achievements of the faculty and students of our College during these challenging times. It is their exploits that are deservedly chronicled here. Provost Claiborne has initiated the search process to identify a new dean for our College and you can find the details of the search process on our web page – click on the box labeled Dean’s Search. If you have someone whom you believe would be an outstanding dean for our College, then please consider nominating them accordingly. As always, I invite you to contact me for any additional information you would like about the College, or to send me an email at perryg@fau.edu to let us know your recent exploits.

Science News

September 29, 2012 Dr. Marguerite Koch (Biological Sciences) published a comprehensive review on climate change and ocean acidification effects on marine plants in the very highly ranked international journal Global Change Biology (impact factor 6.6).

September 13, 2012 Congratulations to Drs. Herb Weissbach, Lionel Resnick and David Binninger (Center for Molecular Biology and Biotechnology) on the issuance of the patent entitled TREATMENT OR PREVENTION OF CANCER AND PRECANCEROUS DISORDERS. For details see: http://appft.uspto.gov/netacgi/nph-arscr?Sect1=PTO2& Sect2=HITOFF&p=1&u=%2Fnphtml%2FPTO%2Fsearch-bool.html&r=1&f=G&d=PATENT&D=d=PG01&s1=%22weissbach+herbert%22.IN.&s2=%22florida+atlantic+university%22.AS.&OS=IN/%22weissbach+herbert%22+AND+AN/%22florida+atlantic+university%22

September 11, 2012 Dr. Brett Laursen (Psychology), has been awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota.

August 30, 2012 Dr. Cyril Parkanyi (Chemistry and Biochemistry) received an Honorable Mention in the August 30, 2012 edition of News Digest International (www.newsdigest.co), referencing his work on heterocyclic chemistry at Florida Atlantic University.

August 7, 2012 Summer Commencement closed out a record number of both undergraduates and graduates graduate for the academic year 2011-12 with a graduating class of 838 Baccalaureate degrees, 89 Master’s degrees and 40 PhDs. The College now produces the greatest number of PhDs per year at FAU.
August 1, 2012 Dean Gary W. Perry announced that he will be stepping down as dean in the coming year, and return to teaching and research. Dr. Perry has served as dean for the past six years and has been part of the College’s administration in the dean’s office for the past 15 years. Dr. Perry will continue as dean until a new dean for the College has been identified, and Provost Brenda Claiborne has announced that a national search for Dr. Perry’s successor will commence immediately.

July 20, 2012 Farewell to Avy Weberman who has been the College’s Development Officer for the past 4 years. Avy will be returning to a senior development position at Florida International University in the College of Arts and Sciences. Avy has worked tirelessly to raise money for our college and we are very grateful to him. We wish him all the best and success in his new position at FIU.

July 6, 2012 A banner year for fund raising for FY2011-12. Thanks to the generosity of many individuals, foundations and corporations this past year was a banner fund raising year for the College that ended on June 30, 2012. More than $685,190 in cash-gifts and pledges ($422,339) and gifts-in-kind ($262,851) recorded this fiscal year through June 30, 2012. This represents the highest gift amount given to the College in any one year for more than 14 years.

July 2, 2012 Congratulations to the following faculty in science: Dr. Russell Ivy, Chair of Geoscience, promoted to full professor; Dr. Edward Large, Complex Systems and Brain Sciences and Psychology promoted to full professor; and Dr. Erik Noonburg, Biological Sciences, promoted to associate professor with tenure.

June 28, 2012 Nathan W Dean (Physics), Emeritus Professor of Physics and former Dean had a solo show of his photography “The Art of the Image” sponsored by the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County and showing at the Robert M. Montgomery Building, 601 Lake Avenue, Lake Worth through July 7, 2012.

June 22, 2012 Dr. Jeanette Wyneken (Biological Sciences) along with Kate Mansfield, Ph.D., affiliate assistant research professor in the college of science and a sea turtle biologist and visiting assistant research professor with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Southeast Fisheries Science Center and Florida International University’s College of Arts & Sciences, along with a team of researchers, have developed a safe and reliable method of attaching a satellite tracking tag to sea turtles at a younger age. Otherwise known as the “lost years,” very little is known about the behavior, movement patterns and habitat use of sea turtles from the time they leave the beaches as hatchlings until they show up again years later in coastal waters as larger juveniles or adults.

June 22, 2012 Professor Michael E. Mann, Professor of Meteorology and Director Earth Systems Science Center Penn State university delivered a lecture entitled “The Hockey Stick and the Climate Wars” at FAU’s Living Theaters, Boca Raton, FL.

June 20 – June 22, 2012 Dr. Len Berry (Geosciences and Florida Center for Environmental Studies) host Sea Level Rise Summit: Risk and Response at Boca Raton Marriott with speakers from City, County, National, Private and Public Organizations, Academia and Business.

June 11, 2012, Summer Science Institute. Fifteen students were accepted in the inaugural class of Florida Atlantic University's Charles E. Schmidt College of Science "Summer Science Institute", a STEM initiative. The "Summer Science Institute" for youth ages 11 through 17 will be offered in two, four-week sessions from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on FAU's Boca Raton campus, 777 Glades Road, Boca Raton. The Institute is a non-credit academic program specifically designed to meet the intellectual and cognitive needs of high-performing middle and high school students interested in discovering the world of science. The program uses a problem-based learning model to develop students' critical thinking skills and draws from a broad range of disciplines within the sciences to maximize the potential of interdisciplinary science studies. Class sizes are small, and students will participate in hands-on research projects and will have exposure to laboratories and expert scientists. See http://www.science.fau.edu/oce/
May 18, 2012 Dr. Spyros Magliveras (Mathematical Sciences) who directs FAU’s Center for Cryptology and Information Security (CCIS) has received notification that CCIS has been designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Research (CAE-R) for the academic years 2012-17 by The National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security.

May 4, 2012 Dr. Ingrid Johanson (Student Services) hosted the Future Doctors Reception that celebrates those seniors who have been admitted to medical, dental, pharmacy and veterinary schools. The event was held at the Faculty Club in Engineering East and also welcomed many of the “docs” who participate in the pre-professional programs of the college.

May 3, 2012 - Spring Commencement saw our largest class of graduates in science, including the largest number (17) of graduating PhD’s in any one commencement ceremony of the college. The graduating PhD class also included the first candidates to be awarded the PhD in Geosciences.

May 2, 2012 Dr. Gerard M. Cuomo DDS (BS '80) was honored as the college’s 2012 Distinguished Alumnus at the Distinguished Alumni Event held at the Marleen and Harold Forkas Alumni Center by FAU’s National Alumni Association. Dr. Cuomo, who has a dental practice in Boca Raton, runs a pre-professional course in the college for those students who want to go on to dental school.

April 25, 2012 Professor Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, Ph.D. will present the 2012 Nobel Laureate Lecture on Friday, April 27 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the Libby and Harry Dodson Auditorium, Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, 777 Glades Road, Boca Raton campus. Dr. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi shared the 2008 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine with Professor Luc Montagnier for their discovery of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in the 1980s. This event is co-sponsored with Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute (VGTI) of Florida. For more information see http://www.science.fau.edu/nobel/

April 18, 2012 – Dr. Warner A. Miller, professor and chair of the department of physics in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science, has received a $675,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense for a three-year project titled “Discrete Ricci Flow in Higher Dimensions.” Miller will lead a team of researchers from FAU, Stony Brook University and Harvard University to apply the Hamilton’s Ricci Flow method, a form of geometric mapping and analysis, to characterize and possibly control information-based cyber applications.

April 10, 2012 Dr. Leonard Berry (Geosciences), Director of the Florida Center for Environmental Studies, will testify on behalf of Florida in a special session of the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resource Committee on Thursday April 19th to address the threat of sea level rise to the U.S. Florida has been estimated as having 40 percent of the whole national risk, so this will be an important opportunity to outline agency and university responses to this problem.

April 3, 2012 Dr. Abhay Ashtekar, Director, Institute for Gravitation and the Cosmos, and Eberly Professor of Physics, The Pennsylvania State University, will present the final Frontiers in Science Public Lecture for Spring 2012 on April 6, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. in the Charles E. Schmidt Biomedical Science Center, BC 126. Dr. Ashtekar is a theoretical physicist, and he will address the notions of space and time. According to Einstein’s general relativity, which is the geometric theory of gravitation, space-time ends at singularities, and classical physics just stops. For more information on the series see http://www.science.fau.edu/frontiers/brochure_2012.pdf

We welcome your comments and suggestions on this and future issues. Please send any feedback to Lynn Sargent lsargent@fau.edu.