

MMG NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 3

Summer 2000

Year 2000 EPSCoR High School Math, Science and Technology Career Program



Photo courtesy of Brenda Tessmann

The Department owes a huge thanks to the individuals who donated their time for presentations during the Year 2000 EPSCoR High School Math, Science and Technology Career Program. The presentations were all interesting and delivered with enthusiasm. Thanks to

Tom Fowler
Alia Merla
Mike Mitton
Cynthia St. Hilaire
Cyndi Villarimo
Zheng-Zheng Wei

who worked with Brenda Tessmann or Jeff Bond. Your efforts were greatly appreciated.

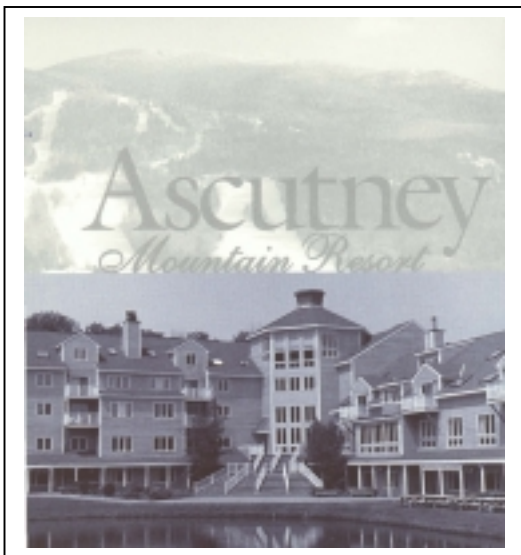
Below, left to right: Alia Merla, Mike Mitton, Tom Fowler, Cindy St. Hilaire, Cyndi Villarimo
Not pictured: Jeff Bond and Gayle Bress.
Photo courtesy of Brenda Tessmann



Y2K Retreat Update

By: Gary Ward

This year's Annual Departmental Retreat will be held on October 6 & 7, at the same location as last year's retreat: the Ascutney Mountain Resort in Brownsville, VT. Many aspects of the program will be similar to that of last year, including: the format of the oral presentations, given primarily by grad students and postdocs; the availability of free bus transportation to and from the retreat; and the return of Scotty Jameson (better known as "the UPS guy") as DJ for the Friday evening dance. Improvements this year will include: a larger room for the



scientific sessions (the lodge at the base of the ski hill); a streamlined check-in procedure; and - knock on wood - a microphone that actually works. We also hope to have a computer projector available for speakers who wish to give their talks in that format.

The Retreat Planning Committee is very pleased to announce that our guest speaker this year will be Dr. Tom Ellenberger, of the Harvard Medical School. Dr. Ellenberger uses an elegant combination of biochemical and biophysical techniques in his studies of DNA repair, replication, and recombination. Dr. Ellenberger's official hosts for the retreat will be a committee of students, headed by **Mike Wichroski**.

The poster sessions were a highlight of both of the previous retreats, and everyone attending this year's retreat is again encouraged to present a poster. Presenting a poster is a great way for the people you see

every day in Stafford to find out what you're doing and for you to get useful feedback on your work, no matter what stage your work is at. **PLEASE GET YOUR ABSTRACTS IN TO DOUG JOHNSON BY SEPT. 1.**

Please contact any member of the Retreat Planning Committee (**Sylvie Doublie** - chair, **Gary Ward**, **Doug Johnson**, **Ken Hampel**, or **Mike Wichroski**) should you have any questions, comments, or suggestions either before or after the retreat.

Check your e-mail and mailboxes for more details on the retreat as they develop - see you in Ascutney!

MMG Softball Team Biohazard III : Champions at Last!

By: Michael John Wichroski

At the end of the Summer of 1999, Team Biohazard stood frozen in the pouring rain watching their playoff dreams fade into oblivion. A first place seeding followed by a gut wrenching loss in the first round of the playoffs left Biohazard wondering if this team was doomed to always play the role of the bridesmaid and never a bride. Team management labored through the offseason signing contracts and dealing with the loss of several key players. The offseason resulted in more questions than answers; however, with the passing of the seasons hope sprang eternal and

team Biohazard geared up for the 2000 season.....Biohazard III would take the field.

Team Biohazard consisted of veterans **Mike Wichroski** (Coach-SS), **Ken Hampel** (P), **Mike Fay** (1B), **Jon Cherry** (LF,SS), **Kirk Brown** (CF,RF), **Robert Pinard** (CF,RF), **John Rose** (CF, RF, P), **Karl Skowronek** (CF, RF), **Tim Trott** (CF), **Mike Mitton** (SS, 1B), **Carolyn Donahue** (C), **Michele Shields** (2B), **Cindi Villarimo** (SF, C), and **Tammy Richman** (SF). Biohazard rookies included **Katie Hancur** (3B,2B, SF, C), **Cindy St. Hillaire** (3B), and **Selena Trott** (3B). Unfortunately, faculty representation was at an all time low with **Doug Johnson** on jury duty and **Gary Ward** spending the year on injured reserve; however, both were present in spirit.

Team Biohazard stumbled out of the gate with a loss to the Pathology Department but quickly turned things around with a 10 game winning streak that securely locked up Biohazard's second regular season first place finish in as many years. Highlights from the regular season included bruised ribs and an ER visit for **Mike Wichroski**; unmatched pitching from **Ken Hampel** (the league leader in strike-outs); power hitting from **Mike Fay**, **Jon Cherry**, **John Rose**, **Karl Skowronek**, **Mike Mitton**, **Tammy Richman**, and **Mike Wichroski**; flare and flash from **Kirk Brown**; pure speed from **Robert Pinard** and **Tim Trott**; and excellent fielding from **Cindy St. Hillaire**, **Katie Hancur**,

Michele Shields, **Cindi Villarimo**, **Carolyn Donahue**, and **Selena Trott**. Biohazard finished the season with a league best record of 10-2 and were fully loaded heading into the playoffs. Raw guts and determination led Biohazard through the playoffs to the finals. Biohazard prevailed in the finals and finally brought home an intramural championship to MMG (the first intramural championship ever to our knowledge). Congrats to all who played and supported our team throughout the season. However, a championship season only raises new



questions: Can Biohazard repeat? Will the team withstand the inevitable loss of **Cherry**? Will Coach retire and start focusing on his work? Will **Ward** be back for another season or retire? Will **Donahue** ever listen to Coach? We'll find out.

Generous Donation made to The Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf

By: Mike Mitton

On August 16, 2000, **Mike Mitton**, a technician in the **Raper** lab, called for a special and unique donation to be made to the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf. After talking to his girlfriend, Angel, who had volunteered there over this past summer, Mike learned that they were out of certain items, such as tooth paste, soap, shampoo, etc., which are almost completely forgotten when people give to a food bank. It was clear that our Department rose to the occasion because within just a few days we donated over 50 lbs of toiletries.



Mike said, "They were thrilled to see such a generous and unique donation." Mike also said, jokingly, "It's just our way of trying to clean up Burlington." On behalf of The Chittenden

Emergency Food Shelf and their patrons, *THANK YOU*.

WELCOME to New MMG Graduate Students

Melissa Batonick
Julie Hathaway
Jeff Mital

News from MMG Graduates

Devin Goss, one of our recent graduates, has been accepted for graduate studies in Genetic Counseling at both Beaver College and at the University of Pittsburgh. She is accepting the program with Beaver College as she prefers a smaller college.

Shawn Faske works for the Seattle Biomedical Research Institute (SBRI) at 4 Nickerson Street, Seattle, Washington 98106. He is a Research Technician II, working with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and avium (microbiology and molecular biology mostly).

Dongyan Jiang has just finished a three year postdoc at Harvard and has taken a position as a Senior Scientist at Biosource International in Boston.

Mike Davila has accepted a pre-doctoral fellowship at the National

Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. The position is in Dr. Struewing's section I the Laboratory of Population Genetics.

Brian Murphy, who was an MMG major, and graduated several years ago, is at Bio-Rad. He is an Instrumentation Specialist, selling capital equipment such as quantitative PCR machines, chromatography systems, and Imaging Systems for gel documentation and analysis. He also sells software required to operate these instruments. His customers include both pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. Brian writes, "I accepted the position to get closer to molecular biology. This position requires that I have a solid understanding of the life sciences in order to sell and market Bio-Rad's products. It is great because I have an opportunity to learn more about business while fulfilling my need to work in a biologically related field." Brian can be reached at the following address and/or phone numbers:

Brian W. Murphy
Instrumentation Specialist
Bio-Rad Laboratories
E-12 Carver Place
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

(w) 800-876-3425, Ext. 1545
(h) 609-912-0599

Steve Rawson, a May, 1999 graduate from our Microbiology Major, has been hired at the Rouse's Point Wyeth-Ayerst as a Quality Assurance associate. It is a temp position, but

Wyeth hires from the temp pool so he stands a really good chance at a full time position in the not too distant future. Needless to say, Steve is pretty happy. His address is:

Stephen T. Rawson
722 Bean Rd.
Colchester, VT 05446

Pat Daunais, a 1999 MMG graduate, has become Lab Chief of the HIV Lab in the Department of Infectious Disease at Children's Hospital. This lab supports clinical research being done on anti-retroviral drug therapies with children. After September 1, Pat can be reached at:

Pat Daunais
11 Sherwood St. Apt. #3
Roslindale MA, 02131
daunais@hub.tch.harvard.edu

Tim Allen has a new job at Middlebury College. His title is "Senior Organismal Technician," which is misleading, because maintaining organisms is only a small part of what he does. The job includes media prep., inventory and ordering, glassware, biohazardous waste processing, T.A. work, assisting in the planning of Molecular Genetics labs, and lots of odds and ends. He works in the Department of Science Service and Support, and does work for several departments: Microbiology, Molecular Genetics, Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Environmental Science, etc. Tim is

enjoying the great variety and life in Middlebury. Tim can be reached at:

Tim Allen
Senior Organismal Technician
630 Bicentennial Hall
Middlebury College
Middlebury, Vermont 05753

Phone: (802)443-5729

News from The Raper Lab:

The Mycological Society of America had their annual meeting here at UVM. About 300 people from all over the world attended. **Cardy** chaired a session called "Genes and Molecules Regulating Mating in Fungi," in tribute to her late husband, John R. Raper.

Steve Horton and **Lisa Vaillancourt** (both previous postdocs in Cardy's lab) and **Tom Fowler** participated in the meeting.

In June **Tom Fowler** gave a major talk at a Gordon Conference.

Research Education for Undergraduates' grants from the NSF were awarded for **Cindy St. Hillaire** and **Marie Guyette**, two students in Cardy's lab.

Mike Mitton is a new North End (Burlington) landlord.

News from the Johnson Lab:

CONGRATULATIONS to Dr. **Tammy Richman** and Dr. **Janet Murray** for successfully defending their Ph.D. dissertations this summer. Janet will be working in Dr. **Barry Finette's** lab as a Postdoctoral Fellow with funding from the Environmental Pathology Training Grant. Tammy will be staying in the lab for another year. **Alia Merla** is next!!

WELCOME to a new graduate student in the lab; **Alysia vandenBerg** is a Cell & Molecular Biology graduate student who joined the lab in June. She recently was awarded a fellowship from the Cancer Biology Training Grant for three years.

We had three great undergraduates in the lab this summer: **Marcie Eipper-Mains** (Cornell), **Karen Cole Booska** (UVM), and **David Simpson** (UVM). Karen and David will continue their research over the coming school year.

News from the Pederson Lab:

After working in my lab as a postdoc for the past 14 months, **Debby Geraghty** is now working toward an MBA at Boston College. She hopes to eventually find a position in a scientific or medical research charity that will use both her scientific and administrative skills. Her current email is geraghde@bc.edu.

Jungie Chen, who received his doctorate in 1993, has recently taken a position as Assistant Professor at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Graduate student **Haibo Zhang** has joined the lab.

Marilyn van Duffelen recently participated in her third AIDS Bike Ride. This was 340 miles in 4 days, from Raleigh NC to Washington DC. With your help, the Ride raised almost \$5 million dollars to assist those suffering from HIV/AIDS.

News from the Burke Lab

Nils Walter, former postdoc in the lab, now at The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and **Christine Bernhardt**, formerly in **Mary Tierney's** lab, finally got married on August 12, 2000 in Neu-Isenburg, Germany, celebrating with their families and closest friends with a civil service in a nicely renovated old mill building. They then took off for a short honeymoon to Rothenburg and Fuessen. Nils has also been awarded his first NIH grant entitled "Folding and function of the hammerhead and delta ribozymes" and his group is developing quite nicely. He can be seen at his website: www.umich.edu/~rnapeopl

Sam Butcher, former graduate student in the lab, having received his PhD in 1995, has recently accepted a tenure track position at The University of Wisconsin in Madison in

the Department of Biochemistry. He is currently at The University of California, Los Angeles in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

Cyndi Villarimo traveled to her mother's homeland in the Philippines during the month of July for a family reunion that took place in her mother's village of Sawang, Guindulman on the island of Bohol in the South Pacific. Luxury accommodations included amenities such as no running water, no toilets, no electricity, and food that had to be pulled from the ocean by one's own hands on a daily basis. Is it any wonder that Cyndi mainly ate rice?! Her experiences helped her to appreciate what we have right here at home in Vermont.

Former graduate student in the lab, **Qiao Yu**, PhD 1998, will be married on September 2, 2000 in Indiana to Jack Bobo. Qiao is currently a senior scientist at VIRxSYS Corporation in Gaithersburg, MD and Jack is an attorney in Washington, DC.

News from the Doublé Lab:

Molly Coseno, a 1999 MMG graduate will join the Doublé lab in September.

News from the Wallace Lab

Maxwell Dale Hogg was born June 9th, 2000, at 7:45 p.m., at Fletcher Allen.

After being stuck for 40 hours he finally popped out weighing in at 8 lbs. 8 oz. with an overall length of 21 1/2 inches. He has since been growing in the 100th percentile of all the growth charts and has begun to hold his head up, roll over and talk up a storm. Proud papa **Matt Hogg** says, "He is the most beautiful baby ever and if you don't believe me you can check out pictures and movies of his first three months at www.uvm.edu/~mhogg."



Recent additions to the Wallace Lab include **Ian Parker** as a Lab Tech III and **Justin Meyette**, an MMG undergraduate who spent the summer purifying repair enzymes under the tutelage of postdoctoral associate, **Vishy Bandaru**. Justin will continue with his research during the school year.

Chris Gifford recently received her Ph.D. and has moved to Austin, Texas. She can be reached at:

Chris Gifford
13101 Trail Driver
Austin, Texas 78737

The Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics

Cordially invites you to wish

JANET KURJAN

Best of luck in her new
career

Wednesday,
September 6, 2000
Stafford Hall
Second Floor Lobby
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

