

NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

Real Social Work



Social work senior Eliezer Sollins, working at his field education placement at the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging in Winooski. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Until you see rural poverty — and feel it, touch it and smell it — you don't know it. Eliezer Sollins is talking about the 450 hours of required field education work he, and every other social work student at UVM puts in, describing a trip to a ramshackle one-room camp where a 90-year-old man lives alone.

[FULL STORY ►](#)

PREVIOUS ISSUE

[Demonstrations of Possible New E-Mail Systems Set](#)

[English Wins Approval for New Film and TV Major](#)

[Embracing Constraint](#)

[Indian Art Exhibition Opens at Fleming](#)

[Roster of March Events Will Celebrate Women's 'HerStory' Month](#)

[UVM Writers Series to Feature Bill Roorbach](#)

[A Hunt for Climate 'Treasure'](#)

[Fleeing Nazi Germany](#)

[Shakespeare Play Concludes Theatre Season](#)

[Poetry Contest Seeks Student Manuscripts](#)

Town Meeting

Tradition Sophomore Jordan Wareham is rapt. He and his notebook, budget book, research data sheets and winter gear are occupying a half row of bleachers in the Charlotte Central School on March 1, overlooking a sea — or rather, at this late point in the day, more of a pond of gray heads — as he scribbles feverishly, doing his part to maintain Vermont's *other* town meeting day tradition.

New Men's Basketball Coach

Named Mike Lonergan, an assistant coach at the University of Maryland who led Catholic University to the 2001 NCAA Division III national championship, has been named head coach of men's basketball. Robert Corran, director of athletics, made the announcement on Feb. 26.

THE WEEK IN VIEW

March 2, 7:30 p.m.
Play: UVM Theatre presents, "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Tickets for the final performance of the 2004-2005 season are \$5-\$15. Royall Tyler Theatre.
Information: [Royall Tyler](#)

March 4, 7:30 p.m.
UVM Lane Series Concert: "Red Priest." UVM Recital Hall. Tickets \$25.
Information: [Lane Series](#) or 656-2094.

March 4, 4 p.m.
Lecture: "The Fiction of an Everyman" with Candace Robb, author of historical mysteries. John Dewey Lounge, Old Mill. Information: [Candace Robb](#)

March 7, 3:30 p.m.
Workshop: "Service-Learning in Large Classes: Making it Work," with Gary Daynes, National Campus Compact. North Lounge, Billings Student Center. Information: [partnerships](#)

March 7, 4 p.m.
President's Distinguished Lecture: "Sign, Linguistics, and Deaf Identity: ASL and the Academy," with Christopher Krentz, University of Virginia. Memorial Lounge, Waterman.

March 8, 4 p.m.
Vermont Cancer Center Lecture: "A New Paradigm for the Curative Treatment of

NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

NEWS BRIEFS



Students in a new one-credit honors class in live performance listen to the String Quartet of New York play — and speak — at Southwick. (Photo: Andy Duback)

Honors Music Course Lets College Go 'Live'

The members of the String Trio of New York stride onstage at the UVM Recital Hall at Southwick, bow, station themselves resolutely behind their music stands... and begin talking.

Guitarist James Emery launches into a disquisition on improvisation. The boundary between composed and improvised music, he suggests to the student audience, is a loose one. "Think of composed music as improvisation upon reflection and improvisation as spontaneous composition," he says.

Violinist Rob Thomas adds that a goal of the critically acclaimed trio, which plays a riveting blend of swing jazz and often atonal classical music, is to "generate a lot of energy, but without the volume" associated with electric instruments.

After the trio plays a brief composition, bassist John Lindberg wants the audience to guess where and how much the musicians improvised.

The talk show and musical examples are for the benefit of about 20 students in UVM's new Honors College (along with a few other interested undergraduates), who are enjoying a 30-minute dialogue with the musicians as part of a one-credit course called "Music in Live Performance."

The class requires students to attend five sessions like this one, as well as the Lane Series concerts that follow, and to keep journals of their musical experiences, which they turn in at the end of the semester to Lane Series director and

New Digital Film Contest Seeks Entries from UVM Auteurs

A new digital film festival coming to the university in April hopes to provide a venue for faculty, staff and students to showcase their filmmaking talents and share experiences ranging from educational trips abroad to campus life through the eyes of first-year students.

The premiere event of the first annual UVM iMovie Festival, sponsored by Apple Computer and organized by an undergraduate student, will be held at 8 p.m. on April 17 at Billings North Lounge and will feature original works submitted by campus affiliates to a panel of judges. The judges will select the three best shorts for prizes and they, along with the runners up, will go up on the silver screen at the festival premiere. Entries to the competition are due by April 8.

Junior Malachi McCaulley, creator of the festival with support of the new film and television studies major and the Center for Teaching and Learning, says his goal was to create an event with wide participation where faculty, staff and students could share their common experiences both on- and off-campus.

McCaulley says he has noticed a lot of interest in the festival, with many of the questions coming from novices wanting to know how to make a film. He has already received a film based on a snowboarding trip, while another group is in the process of producing a situational comedy based on Student Government Association groups.

There are two categories for submission: existing work (things done for classes, vacations and other previous projects) and prompted work (3-to-5 minute films using "the UVM experience" as a theme). Winners receive Apple products like iPods, JBL Creature Speakers and copies of iLife '05. Each short will be judged on the following criteria: use of technology; story; videography; integration of theme; editing; and creativity.

Festival organizers hope the event draws interest from people with varying backgrounds such as theater actors, screenwriters from any discipline and film students

iMovie festivals and contests began sprouting up on college campuses across the country a few years ago. One of the first was at Duke University, where first-year students split into teams and make films about their first-year college experience. The Apple program has been in the news again lately with the success of *Tarnation*, a computer-edited independent film that received an honorable mention at the Sundance Film Festival. Despite its name, the

course instructor Jane Ambrose.

The course was co-developed by old friends Ambrose, a longtime chair of UVM's music department before moving to the Lane in 1989, and Honors College dean Bob Taylor, and is a product of their mutual self-interest.

For Ambrose, the goal is to expose undergraduates to serious music across a variety of genres, and to build an audience for offerings like those of the Lane Series.

For Taylor, it's about creating a panorama of enrichment opportunities for honors students.

Like an NFL executive managing a salary cap by juggling supporting-cast players with stars, Taylor's concept is to mix big-ticket events, like the President's Distinguished Presidential Lecture Series address eminent Islamic studies scholar John Esposito gave last fall, which the college helped sponsor, with less expensive productions.

To stretch his budget, Taylor isn't above taking advantages his or his colleagues' personal relationships with well-known artists, writers and thinkers.

Last year, for instance, Taylor brought a colleague, environmentalist and writer Bill McKibben, to a special colloquium and dinner for honors students that was a peak experience at a price well below market.

Taylor puts special energy into prospecting within two of UVM's most "underutilized resources," as he calls them, for undergraduate education, the Lane Series and the Fleming Museum.

He hopes to match the Lane Series course, which has also exposed students to young pianist Vassily Primakov, classical guitar virtuoso Paul Galbraith, and Brazilian jazz vocalist and *Down Beat* magazine darling Luciana Souza, with another one-credit offering that would give students special access to new Fleming exhibits.

"They're really world-class acts," says Honors College student Joe Kubacz of the artists in the course. "It's not every day you get an opportunity to talk with people like that."

Give the enterprising Taylor a few more years, and that might not be the case.

UVM's HOPE Eating Disorder Program Recognized By Health Website

As part of its coverage of Eating Disorders Awareness Week, which runs through March 4, the weekly, Internet-based electronic media program www.healthpolitics.com, which is dedicated to reporting on issues at the intersection of healthcare and politics, singled out the UVM Center for Health and Wellbeing's HOPE program as one of four "top college eating disorder programs."

UVM iMovie Festival will accept submissions in any format, including Windows Media Maker or analog film.

For those that have never used computer film-making software before, festival organizers are offering iMovie workshops that cover the basics such as importing footage; breaking it into clips; adding transitions, effects and titles; exporting and more. Digital camcorders and editing stations are available to use for UVM affiliates at the Center for Media Development, located on the ground floor of the Bailey/Howe Library.

McCaulley is holding regular office hours to discuss digital film and other computer issues at the Bailey/Howe Cyber Cafe on Thursday afternoons between 3:15 p.m and 5:15 p.m. For more information on the contest visit [iMovie Festival](http://iMovieFestival)

Registration Open for 'Mastering the Maze'

Organizers of "Mastering the Maze," a one-day conference that will feature more than 500 staff members attending about 70 available workshops, have added some new programs focusing on the implementation of the university's strategic vision and how it is expected to affect the working lives of employees.

Designed to provide UVM administrative staff with useful skills and new approaches to accomplishing their work more effectively, the March 24 conference offers employees financial, human resources, computer and supervisory training, explores streamlined business processes, and introduces policies and practices. Keynote speaker Glen Elder, associate professor of geography, will speak on "Identity & Place" at the 13th annual event. Registration for "Mastering the Maze" began Feb. 28.

The conference, which is sponsored by University Training & Development, will offer newer workshops such as "Blueprint for the Future: Campus Master Plan" and "Understanding and Taking Ownership of the Strategic Vision – What Role Do We Play?" to keep employees updated on the implementation of UVM's strategic vision.

In keeping with the Maze's "Explore Tomorrow Today" theme, a construction projects update is being offered, as well as a session focusing on the technological changes employees can expect from the university's new administrative software package, Oracle/PeopleSoft. "Envisioning UVM as the Environmental University" and "Advancing the Vision – The Strategic Financial Plan" are also scheduled.

"We listen to what people say before we create the agenda, so the workshops appeal to as many people as possible," says Mary Ann Roy, co-chair of the event with Margaret Caldwell. "It's a time for people to step out of the office and see other people and what they do at the university. It's also a chance to get informed about all the changes going on around them related to the

The HOPE program ("Help Overcome Problem Eating") began in 1996, and features a multidisciplinary team of UVM experts dedicated to eating-disorder education, prevention and treatment. The team features experts in counseling, nutrition, medicine athletic training and psychiatry. The idea is to support students as they overcome various forms of problem eating and to promote positive body image.

The HOPE team currently comprises family nurse practitioner Anne Standish, counselor Nancy Weber, athletic trainer Kelly Johnson and registered dietician Candace Polzella. Different members of the team assume different responsibilities complementing their skills at various points in the assessment and treatment process.

"Any student can initiate confidential evaluation and care through any member of the team and would participate in creating a plan for care to meet his other individual needs," Polzella told the site. "Such a plan often includes counseling, nutritional guidance, and medical follow-up and is reviewed in an ongoing confidential process."

In addition to individual assessment and treatment, the HOPE team sponsors education and prevention programs and activities on the UVM campus. One of these, "The Century Project," arrives in Billings Student Center on April 4. It's an exhibit of nude photographs and personal statements gathered by Frank Cordelle from women and girls spanning a 100-year range in ages.

The HOPE team also offers speaking engagements to interested classes, teams, and clubs upon request. They can also provide information on how to help a friend or family member.

The program, says Polzella, is seeing more students than it ever has before — though it's hard to tell if that's because the incidence of eating disorders is on the rise, or that the importance of treating the problem is better publicized on campus and in the media.

Information: [HOPE Program](#)

strategic vision."

One of the goals of the event is to touch on as many topics as possible relating to employee life at the university. In doing so, the 16-person committee included workshops dealing with UVM Photography; self defense training; walking tours of the Trinity Campus; women's issues relating to weight, diet and exercise; UVM athletics; and how to handle stress.

Mastering the Maze is divided into morning and afternoon sessions. The day starts with check-ins at 7:30 a.m. at Royall Tyler Theatre with coffee and live jazz, followed by Elder's keynote address at 8:15 a.m.. The first workshop session starts at 9:15 a.m. Lunch at Cook Commons includes films and informational sessions.

For more information or to register, visit [Mastering the Maze](#)

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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

EVENTS

President's Lecture to Explore Sign Language in Academia

Christopher Krentz, an assistant professor of English at the University of Virginia and director of that university's well-regarded American Sign Language Program, will visit campus on March 7 for a President's Distinguished Lecture Series event.

Krentz's talk, "Sign, Linguistics, and Deaf Identity: ASL in the Academy," is scheduled for 4 p.m. in Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building. The issue is particularly relevant at UVM, where a proposal to allow students to satisfy a foreign language curriculum requirement through American Sign Language classes has generated much controversy in the Faculty Senate.

Krentz is editor of *A Mighty Change: An Anthology of Deaf American Writing, 1916-1964* and has published articles on deafness and disability in literature and culture.

His current book project, *Writing Deafness*, investigates literary treatments of deafness and deaf people in nineteenth-century America. Juxtaposing canonical authors like Twain, Melville, and Cooper with relatively unknown deaf writers of the period, he examines how the meaning of deafness evolves through writing. Although he was slowly losing his hearing at age nine, Krentz had little contact with the signing deaf community until age 23, when he began employment at Gallaudet University, learned ASL and proudly identified with deaf culture. Krentz helped to found the ASL Program at the University of Virginia.

For more information on the series or Krentz's lecture, visit the [President's Distinguished Lecture Series](#) Website.

Distinguished Lecturer Will Address Topical Topic: Women in Science

Sue Rosser, a professor and dean at Georgia Institute and Technology, and a prolific and outspoken writer and commentator on women in science and technology, will give a University of Vermont President's Distinguished Lecture on March 9.

Rosser will give her free, public talk, "Women, Science and Society," at 4 p.m. in Billings Campus Center Theater.

"In this talk I will look at what differences women have made and can make in science and engineering. Using the lenses provided by different theories from women's studies, I'll focus on examples from biology and technology to reveal differences in choice and definitions of problems chosen, approaches used, and theories and conclusions drawn from research. These reveal why women bring new, significant perspectives to science and serve as a crucial link between science and society," Rosser says.

Rosser is one of the most prolific writers on the issues of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, which are often called the "STEM disciplines."

She has edited collections and written approximately 115 journal articles on the theoretical and applied problems of women and science and women's health. She has also written or edited nine books, including her most recent, *The Science Glass Ceiling: Struggles of Academic Women Scientists*, published in 2004 by Routledge.

Rosser received her Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1973. Since July 1999, she has served as Dean of Ivan Allen College, the liberal arts college at Georgia Institute of Technology, where she is also

Campus Celebrates Women's Day

UVM will mark International Women's Day on March 7-8 with a variety of events, including a breakfast lecture by Nigerian activist Bolanle Adetoun.

The program is as follows:

- March 7, 5 p.m. Event: "Meditations and Music for Peace," where UVM community members will offer meditations for peace in many languages. Local musicians will perform harp and drum music. Fleming Museum, Marble Court.
- March 8, 7:30 a.m. Breakfast and lecture: "Fostering Women's Empowerment in West Africa," with Bolanle Adetoun, Nigerian woman who has worked to empower women in Africa for the past 20 years. Waterman Manor, \$3 at the door for breakfast (the lecture is free and starts at 8:10 a.m.).
- March 8, 12 p.m. Talk: "Gender and the HIV/AIDS Pandemic," with Adetoun and UVM psychologist Sondra Solomon. Marsh Lounge, Billings Student Center.
- March 8, 3 p.m. Panel discussion: "Impacts of Urbanization and Education on African Women," with Adetoun and UVM faculty. Marsh Lounge.
- March 8, 6 p.m. Celebration: "Five Senses onto the World," with study abroad returnees and international students sharing food, music and photos of and by women from around the world. Living/Learning, Fireplace Lounge.
- March 8, 7 p.m. Student panel: "Confronting Gender-Based Violence," led by Adetoun and featuring UVM student activists.

Information: [International Women's Day 2005](#)

Author of Historical Mysteries to Speak

Candace Robb, the author of a series of Owen Archer mysteries set in 14th century York, will lecture and sign books on March 4 at 4 p.m. in John Dewey Lounge, Old Mill. The title of her talk is "The Fiction of an Everyman."

Kirkus Reviews has praised Robb for her "lively, endearingly detailed evocation of late-14th-century England." Robb's most recent trilogy of

professor of history, technology and society.

The President's Distinguished Lecture Series, established by President Daniel Mark Fogel in October 2002, brings top researchers to UVM to enhance the academic experience; showcase faculty, students and programs; and bring the campus community together.

For more information on the series or Rosser's lecture, visit the [President's Distinguished Lecture Series](#) Website.

An Afternoon of 'Literary Orations'

On March 3 at 3:30 p.m. in Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building four UVM faculty and staff will read women's poetry and literature.

The readers are: Rocki-Lee DeWitt, dean of the School of Business Administration; Emily Bernard, assistant professor of English; Professor Helga Schreckenberger, director of the women and gender studies program; and Janie Cohen, director of the Fleming Museum.

The event celebrates women's History/Herstory month and is hosted by Golden Key International Honor Society and the UVM Honors College.

Lane Series to Present Acclaimed European String Quartet

The Leipzig String Quartet will appear in a UVM Lane Series concert on March 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the Recital Hall, Redstone Campus. They will perform compositions by Beethoven, Alban Berg and Brahms.

The Leipzig String Quartet was founded in 1988 by Andreas Seidel and Tilman Buening, violins, Ivo Bauer, viola, and Mattias Moosdorf, cello. Three members of the group were first chairs in the world-famous Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. In reviewing a recent concert, the *New York Times* commented on the ensemble's "Leipzig sound," "...the dark, full-bodied string tone ascribed to the Gewandhaus Orchestra." The review goes on to comment on the "rich, mellow, unadulterated beauty" of the quartet's playing.

The Leipzig String Quartet performs extensively throughout Europe, in Israel, Africa, North and

books departs from her Owen Archer character, focusing instead on Margaret Kerr, a young Scottish woman in 13th century Edinburgh, whose life is utterly changed by the conflict between the Scots and Edward I. Of the first book in this trilogy, *Booklist* said, "Robb's captivating blend of history and mystery vividly evokes medieval Scotland."

Information: www.candacerobb.com

South America, Australia, Japan, and Southeast Asia, including appearances at many of the famous festivals. Since 1991, the ensemble has had its own concert series in Leipzig where they remain based. They have made more than 30 recordings, spanning from Mozart to John Cage. Their recording of the complete Schubert quartet literature is considered by many the most important release for the Schubert year.

Tickets, information: 86-FLYNN or 656-4455



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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

NOTABLES

March 2, 2005

Publications and Presentations

Two Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources professors delivered papers at the American Association for the Advancement of Science Meeting in Washington, D.C. Feb. 17-21. Assistant Professor **Saleem Ali** spoke on "Himalayan High Ice: Climate, Water, Hazard, War and Peace," describing potential escalation of conflicts in border countries over water as the climate changes in the region. Professor **Robert Costanza** delivered "New Developments in Human and Social Dynamics: Social Science for Public Policy." The AAAS is one of the premier nonprofit organizations of scientists worldwide and publishes the journal *Science*.

February 23, 2005

Awards and Honors

Jill Mattuck Tarule, dean of the College of Education and Social Services, received the Edward C. Pomeroy Award for Outstanding Contributions to Teacher Education at the 57th annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education in Washington, D.C., held Feb. 20-23. The award recognizes service either to the teacher education community or to the development and promotion of outstanding practices in teacher education at the collegiate, state or national level.

The Vermont Association of Professional Horticulturists presented three of its highest awards to university recipients during ceremonies at the association's annual meeting on Feb. 9 in Rutland. Plant and Soil Science professors **Leonard Perry** and **Mark Starrett**, and the Common Ground student-run educational farm, took home the honors. Starrett was awarded the New England Nursery Association Young Nursery Professional of the Year Award. Perry received VAPH's Horticultural Achievement Award. Common Ground organic farm received the Environmental Awareness Award in recognition of its practices contributing to the protection of the environment. Former farm manager **Matt Leonetti** received the award on behalf of current farm manager **Yarrow Collins** and the Common Ground students.

On Feb. 4, the **College of Medicine** held the first annual Celebration of Foundations, an event that marked the transition of second-year medical students from the preclinical education phase -- called the Foundations Level -- to the clinical education phase -- called the Clerkship Level -- of the new Vermont Integrated Curriculum. The class of 2007 is the first class to complete this phase of the Vermont Integrated Curriculum. Foundations award winners, which were elected by the members of the class, are as follows:

- American Medical Women's Association Gender Equity Award: Dr. **Paula Tracy**, professor of biochemistry and medicine
- American Medical Students Association Golden Apple Award: **Bruce Fonda**, lecturer in anatomy and neurobiology
- Outstanding Foundations Course Award: Neural Science
- Foundations Course Director Award: **Cynthia Forehand**, professor of anatomy and neurobiology
- Foundations Teaching Award (award recipient will hood members of the Class of 2007 at their graduation): Dr. **William Hopkins**, associate professor of medicine
- Foundations Integration Award, which is given to the faculty member whose teaching best captures the spirit of the Vermont Integrated Curriculum: **Gerald Silverstein**, lecturer in microbiology and molecular genetics

NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

Real Social Work

Field education program supports students as they learn by doing

By Kevin Foley

Article published Mar 02, 2005

Social work senior Eliezer Sollins, working at his field education placement at the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging in Winooski. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Until you see rural poverty — and feel it, touch it and smell it — you don't know it.

Eliezer Sollins is talking about the 450 hours of required field education work he, and every other social work student at UVM puts in. Sollins, the son of a geriatric nurse, is interested in aging and ageism, so he is assigned to the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging in Winooski. Right now, Sollins is discussing his

work the previous Friday, when he visited a 90-year-old man living alone with dogs in a ramshackle one-room hunting camp.

"I'd never seen anything like that before," Sollins says quietly. "But he was doing it, he was surviving. No matter what I do after I graduate, I've learned something real and valuable. I've learned how to support people, and I've seen what they're really dealing with."

Spanning the state

Graduate and undergraduate students in the Department of Social Work put in more than 45,000 hours of unpaid field education work in 59 agencies scattered within an hour or so of Burlington last year, and are on a similar pace this year. Their jobs run the gamut of what professional social workers face: domestic and sexual violence, substance abuse, aging, medicine, corrections, hunger and social policy in the Vermont State Legislature.

J.B. Barna, the department's coordinator of field education, says the program's emphasis on field education is due to a national accreditation requirement, but is also tightly tied to the department's emphasis on policy, practicality and social justice. Field placements, she says, often become venues where students find their professional voice.

"It is the place where they can bring the classroom to life. They sit in a class for hours and hours, but until they are sitting with a poor family they don't learn what this work really looks like," she says. "This is about knowing truly what it means to be a social worker. What are my strengths? My gifts? My hang-ups?"

The work is often intense, even disturbing. Sollins says it's disorienting to come home to his usual apartment, friends and schoolwork after visiting somewhere like the hunting camp.

Because the work can be so charged — helping battered women or addicts in an emergency room leaves an indelible impression on students — Barna says

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[Town Meeting Tradition](#)

Sophomore Jordan Wareham is rapt. He and his notebook, budget book, research data sheets and winter gear are occupying a half row of bleachers in the Charlotte Central School on March 1, overlooking a sea — or rather, at this late point in the day, more of a pond of gray heads — as he scribbles feverishly, doing his part to maintain Vermont's *other* town meeting day tradition.

[New Men's Basketball Coach Named](#)

Mike Lonergan, an assistant coach at the University of Maryland who led Catholic University to the 2001 NCAA Division III national championship, has been named head coach of men's basketball. Robert Corran, director of athletics, made the announcement on Feb. 26.

the department tries hard to support students in the field, as well as their volunteer instructors at the agencies where they volunteer. Social work undergraduates have field work woven into their classes and research for three years, giving them a foundation for their formal field experience in their senior year, when they're spending 15-20 hours a week in an off-campus agency.

Undergraduates in the program combine their practical experience with academics, taking two seminar-style courses concurrently with their field work. One class is designed to develop their professional skills; the other seminar focuses more on emotional support, allowing students to trade war stories and share strategies for coping with ethical issues and the eternal question of separating yourself from your job.

"You need that," Sollins says, "you come back from a tough day of work, where you've seen abuse or poverty at its worst, and you're stepping back into this world where your roommate is a business major and he has no understanding of what you're doing. So in class we share stories with what we're dealing with, and work things out together."

Passions for change

But while the work is intense, it's hardly dour. Sollins spends a fair amount of time at his placement just *talking* with elderly people, keeping them company and listening to their stories, or helping them out with household chores and bills and paperwork.

He enjoys it, he says, in part because listening to and laughing with older people appeals to his "love of history." Barna echoes the theme. She says a common student reaction early in a field placement is a form of excited incredulity. "They walk into an agency, and they're thinking. *I can do this? You're really going to let me help these people?*", she adds.

The field experience is a time for students to fine-tune their interests, experiment with new techniques — or even discover if they're not right for the profession. It's also an opportunity for the private practitioners within the outside agencies, many alumni of the UVM program, to give something back to their profession by training the next generation of social workers. (Barna is very appreciative of the time and effort it takes to mentor even the best students through their field work.)

Sollins values the ups and downs of his various real-world experiences. And even though he expects his future career will be "more macro" than working as a social worker providing direct service — he's already given a public comment to the Vermont legislature during consideration of the "Death With Dignity" act last year and is interested in law and policy — he believes the power of the direct work will inform whatever he, and his classmates, do in their future careers.

"In the field, you feel like you can never do enough. There's always something more that people need; that feeling never leaves you, and it's hard," Sollins says. "It changes you. You can't graduate from this department without fully understanding the importance of social and economic justice and human rights. Even if you go on to be a business owner, you're going to be a conscious business owner."

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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

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This year, as they have for nearly a generation, Professor Frank Bryan's Vermont politics students have fanned out across the state to take their stations on bleachers and folding chairs and closely monitor the mechanics of participatory democracy. Their research informed Bryan's book *Real Democracy: The New England Town Meeting and How It Works*, published last year by the University of Chicago, but mostly it informs *them* about a key Vermont tradition of citizen legislation, whether they grew up in Vermont or, like Wareham, were raised somewhere where democracy is abstract instead of immediate.

Charlotte is having a quiet town meeting this year — arguably the biggest issue of the day is whether to purchase a \$140,000 "Volvo" or a cheaper "Subaru" rescue ambulance, as the Iraq national guard proposal voted on elsewhere is not on the official agenda — but Wareham is into the proceedings. He's working his pencil tracking the ever-changing tally of participants at the meeting, recording outcomes and amendments to the various propositions (the town went high-end on the ambulance, by the way), and recording the demographics of who speaks and for how long.

During the school-board portion of the meeting, town resident Lorna Jimerson offers a heartfelt plea for more engagement with educational issues — the town's recent decision to vote on the school budget by Australian ballot rather than in the traditional meeting, she thinks, will inevitably drain away public participation. The 40 or so in attendance (down from 180 earlier) break into first scattered, then strong applause.

Wareham understands such concerns about the future of town meeting, but says the class and his experience observing left him optimistic about the tradition.

"I was talking to my roommate yesterday, who was really apathetic about politics in the United States and feeling like individual voices can't be heard in the process," Wareham says. "I told him to talk with me about it tomorrow, after the town meeting, after I've seen how it works at the local level. And it does work — it seemed like people were really engaged."

Wareham's passion for politics comes through the crackles of a cell phone conversation later that evening. It's more than 12 hours after he departed for Charlotte's six-hour meeting at 7:30 a.m., but he's still buzzed about what he saw and heard.

"I thought it was awesome. I was blown away," he says.

This year, with a much-hyped storm poised to dump five-to-twelve inches of snow, Bryan made attending town meeting optional rather than mandatory (the professor hasn't gone soft; he says he "didn't want to be responsible for someone wrapping themselves around a tree"), but Wareham didn't even consider skipping the trip.

"This is a class in Vermont politics, and town meeting *is* Vermont politics," he

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[Real Social Work](#)

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[New Men's Basketball Coach Named](#)

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says. "How can you not go to the event that epitomizes what you're learning about?"

Rollicking recap

The next day, in a jammed classroom on the north end of Lafayette, the class meets and recaps the experience. The "weenies" (Bryan's term) who skipped the meeting, about 40 percent, cower as Bryan quizzes students who did go about what they saw and heard, tossing off Vermont trivia all the while.

Bryan asks the class, again and again, citizens can govern themselves? Was the town meeting they saw good democracy? Did it work? And the students, to be fair, are divided. For all the romance of the New England tradition and the ideal of citizen legislation, Vermont town meetings are also marked by uncomfortable chairs, lengthy deliberations about issues trivial to outsiders, and the occasional kook.

Early in the discussion, a student describes the well-attended meeting in North Hero (which, incidentally, Bryan's data once indicated was one of the best in the state in terms of its energy and participation) which decided to discontinue town meeting and shift to Australian ballot.

"No democrat can argue with a town meeting being killed democratically," Bryan tells the class. "It was a suicide, a democratic one. Can you really complain?"

The student, somewhat wistfully, says, "Yes."

The class discusses how, in a well-run responsive town, the meetings in many years probably *should* be boring. Bryan argues that, whatever the *New York Times* might say, long discussions about fireworks displays, snow plowing, police salaries and new fire trucks are important, because citizens are deciding among themselves about issues that affect them daily.

In part because of the research assignment, which requires students to closely track attendance and participation at their meetings, the class spends a lot of time on attendance. Many students were disappointed by the turnout at their meetings, and the way the citizenry melted off during the course of a long day.

When asked a similar question earlier — if what he saw indicates that town meeting is healthy — Wareham pauses.

"It's a tough question. I do think it's healthy, but at the same time, it was mostly older people, I didn't see one younger person there at all. The mean age was probably 44 years old. In that demographic, I do think it's healthy," he says. "But roughly 250 people took part, over a long day. Some people got cut short, but if someone really wanted to speak. So yeah, ultimately I think it's extremely healthy, and part of what makes Vermont unique."

theview

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Longergan Tapped as Men's Basketball Coach

By Gordon Woodworth

Article published Mar 01, 2005

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New men's basketball coach Mike Lonergan, shown here in action in Maryland. (Photo courtesy of UVM Athletic Communications.)

Mike Lonergan, an assistant coach at the University of Maryland who led Catholic University to the 2001 NCAA Division III national championship, has been named head coach of men's basketball. Robert Corran, director of athletics, made the announcement on Feb. 26.

Lonergan, 39, who also spent three years as an assistant coach at Colgate, will succeed Tom Brennan, who this

season is finishing up a 19-year run as head coach at Vermont.

"I am delighted that Mike Lonergan will be joining us as our new head men's basketball coach," said A. John Bramley, provost and senior vice president. "He combines great success as a head coach with experience in a very competitive conference at the University of Maryland. I am very impressed by his enthusiasm to work with great student-athletes and his commitment to continue the tradition of combining excellence in the classroom with competitiveness on the court.

"Tom Brennan is a tough act to follow," Bramley continued, "but I know that the program will be in great hands with Mike Lonergan."

Lonergan, who joined Coach Gary Williams's staff at Maryland in April of 2004, led Catholic University in Washington, D.C. to seven consecutive NCAA Division III Tournament appearances and nine overall from 1992 to 2004. He compiled a 251-88 (.740) record during his 12-year tenure and his squad averaged 24.7 victories per season over his last seven years. He is the only coach in the country in any division to have won the regular-season conference championship each of the seven-year span from 1998 to 2004, and was honored at the 2004 Final Four at the NABC Champions Luncheon.

A 1988 graduate of Catholic University, Lonergan earned a B.A. in history. He went on to attain a master's degree in criminal justice at American International College, while working as an assistant coach during the 1988-89 season.

"We're thrilled and excited to have Mike join our staff," Corran said. "The values, experience, and record of success which he brings to UVM will enable us to sustain our program as a leader within America East and the northeast region and as a model for the role of athletics within higher education. We look forward with great enthusiasm and optimism as Mike assumes the leadership of our men's basketball program."

Before returning to his alma mater, Lonergan served as an assistant coach at Colgate University for three seasons from 1989-1992. There he served as the top recruiter for his former college coach, the late Jack Bruen, who was named

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[Town Meeting Tradition](#)

Sophomore Jordan Wareham is rapt. He and his notebook, budget book, research data sheets and winter gear are occupying a half row of bleachers in the Charlotte Central School on March 1, overlooking a sea — or rather, at this late point in the day, more of a pond of gray heads — as he scribbles feverishly, doing his part to maintain Vermont's other town meeting day tradition.

Patriot League Coach of the Year in Lonergan's final season with the Red Raiders.

"I am very excited about becoming the next head coach at the University of Vermont," Lonergan said. "It has been a lifelong dream of mine to become a Division I head coach at a great academic institution like UVM. The program Coach Brennan, his players and his staff have built, and how they have built it, represents everything I believe in. I am very grateful to Dr. Corran and the selection committee for giving me this opportunity. My wife Maggie and I are very excited about raising our kids in Burlington, Vermont. We feel truly blessed by my hiring and look forward to getting started."

Lonergan was the head coach at Catholic from the 1992-93 to 2003-04 seasons, leading the Cardinals to nine of the 11 NCAA appearances in the history of the program, all while graduating 100 percent of his players and taking on Division I foes such as Princeton, American, Davidson and William & Mary. Catholic's victory over the University at Albany of the America East Conference in 2000 was the program's first over a Division I school since 1981. He has coached a Division III All-American in each of the last five seasons.

A native of Bowie, Md., Lonergan is married to Catholic University's women's basketball coach, the former Maggie Meagher, who led her squad to its finest season ever in 2003-04 and just finished the 2004-05 season with a 20-7 record. They have two children — a son Jack (5), and daughter Margaret (4). Lonergan has signed a five-year contract with Vermont, with a base salary of \$110,000 per year.

In addition to his coaching work, Lonergan has also been active in community and professional organizations. He is a member of the National Association of Basketball Coaches, has served as a spokesperson for the America Cancer Society's Coaches vs. Cancer program, was co-chairman of the Coaches vs. Cancer Three-Point Shootout Committee, and has volunteered with the Special Olympics. A board member of the St. Gabriel Parish Youth Organization, he was also a member of the Catholic University Alcohol Awareness Advisory Committee.

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