

NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

## Dwelling in Possibility



"Pride, possibility and partnership": Daniel Mark Fogel inaugurated his presidency by reaffirming his lofty goals. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Fittingly for April, UVM President Daniel Mark Fogel's inauguration mixed memory and desire, as speaker after speaker discussed the university's excellence past, present and future.

[FULL STORY ►](#)

## PREVIOUS ISSUE

["Gaypril" Celebration Set to Kick Off](#)

[Fogel Inauguration on April 4](#)

[Exploring the Life of "Mother Prindle"](#)

[Four Named University Scholars for 2003](#)

[A Call to Service](#)

[Top Evolutionary Computation Specialist to Give Talk, Workshop](#)

[Men's Basketball Makes Academic 'Sweet 16'](#)

[Maya Angelou](#)

[Trustees Propose Competitive Tuition Increase](#)

[Cuban Professor Visiting Campus](#)

[Cross-Cultural Exchange Researcher "Faces" UVM](#)

**Into the Woods** From spring snow laced with tracks from sharp bobcat claws to the spot where cliffs abruptly crash into wetlands because of a geologic thrust fault, six graduate students are surveying nearly every inch of a 350-acre forest in Milton in every kind of weather.

**Optimal Advice** When acquaintances ask James Gatti for advice on how they should allocate their investment portfolios, the longtime associate professor of business administration doesn't tell them what to do. Instead, he shows them some tables he believes will help them make some decisions.

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## THE WEEK IN VIEW

**April 10 4 p.m.**  
**Lecture: "Law Enforcement and Civil Liberties in the Wake of September 11th,"** with Stephen J. Schulhofer, New York University. John Dewey Lounge, Old Mill.

**April 10 7 p.m.**  
**Concert: Dar Williams.** Ira Allen Chapel. Tickets: 863-5966

**April 11 9 a.m. Event:**  
**"27th Annual Vermont Latin Day."** Patrick Gym. Information: Classics Department, 802-656-3210

**April 11 3:30 p.m.**  
**Ceremony: LGBTQA Awards and Community Celebration.** North Lounge, Billings Student Center. Information: 656-8637

**April 15 2 p.m.**  
**Workshop: "Mystery of Business Planning,"** with Derek Cohen, Northeast Area Specialist with the Small Business Development Center. 403 Lafayette

**April 16 7 p.m.**  
**Performance: "A Festival of One-Acts"** Graduating theatre students perform one final time. Royall Tyler Theatre. Information: 656-2094

## NEWS BRIEFS

## EVENTS

## NOTABLES

## SEARCH

## PRINT THIS ISSUE

## PRINT PAST ISSUES

## FEEDBACK

## UVM HOMEPAGE

## NEWS BRIEFS



"Pride, possibility and partnership": Daniel Mark Fogel inaugurated his presidency by reaffirming his lofty goals. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

### Fogel Outlines Strategic Budget Numbers

When President Daniel Mark Fogel presented his ten-year vision for to the Board of Trustees in February, it was received with broad support from the body, which lauded the document's ambition and detail. Members asked Fogel to take the next step and expand that detail with numbers, the all-important financial figures.

On April 3, the day prior to his official inauguration, Fogel ran through the projected numbers that could, in sum, turn his vision into reality. Dissecting a series of slides with his red laser pointer, Fogel walked the trustees through projected financial numbers for the next five years that were as detailed as the campus landscape described in his vision for the campus in 2013.

As he outlined in his February letter to trustees, Fogel's key driver for putting the university on solid financial footing is steadily increasing student enrollments, and tuition revenue, over the next ten years. Before diving into the numbers, Fogel again emphasized his conviction that the moment is ripe for the University of Vermont, citing quality indicators such as more than 10,000 undergraduate applications, a 40 percent increase in graduate applications, and record-breaking grants and contracts figures.

"Everything is aligned to seize this moment of rising quality and assure that the quality is sustained," Fogel said, and he added that the conservative projections of the numbers indicated that the vision is "eminently affordable and highly realistic."

### High School Students to Take the 'Aiken Challenge'

At least one group of high school kids thinks that dairy farms are key to Vermont's future. But it's not the milking end that's the cash cow. It's the manure end.

"Digest This" is the name of a team of Mount Abraham High School students who will extol the virtues of methane gas as a power source before a distinguished panel of University of Vermont faculty.

More than 50 area high school students will compete for cash prizes, a plaque and notoriety on April 15 in the University of Vermont's first-ever Aiken Challenge, as they present projects they've worked on collaboratively since September.

Eighteen teams have taken up the challenge and will try to sway a panel of judges from UVM's College of Engineering and Mathematics and the Gund Institute for Ecological Studies as they creatively make their case for global energy solutions such as wind power and recycled vegetable oils.

Presentations will be from 9:15 a.m. through noon in the North Lounge of the Billings Student Center. Awards will be announced at 12:30 p.m.

Last fall, in conjunction with the 2002 George D. Aiken Lectures on alternative energy sources, two area high schools were given the challenge – a 10-question assignment leading to a project "that will influence the greatest change in your community" to reduce dependency on foreign oil and address global warming issues?

This pilot program of the annual Aiken Lectures aims to involve students younger than college age in energy, foreign affairs, agriculture and the environment – topics that long occupied the attention of George D. Aiken, a former U.S. senator and governor of Vermont.

### Web Center for Vermont Housing Data Debuts

To help make accurate and comprehensive housing information available to all in Vermont, the Center for Rural Studies and the Vermont Housing Finance Agency created an information Website, [www.housingdata.org](http://www.housingdata.org), earlier this month.

The site is a compendium of demographic and

Fogel told trustees that the university cannot expect to finance its ambitions with increased state appropriations and must keep tuition increases to a minimum in order to stay competitive. That places the funding burden on increased enrollment, which Fogel proposes increasing by 200-250 students each of the next five years, and another 1,000 by the end of the decade. Graduate enrollment would increase by approximately 85 students per year over the next ten years.

Given this scenario, UVM would see an increase of \$57 million in revenue when comparing fiscal year 2003 with 2008. Fogel detailed the addition of 61 tenure track faculty and the enhancement of graduate student support packages as being among the strategic investments the increased revenue would fund.

"Even with the enrollment increases, we would remain the smallest institution of our type in the country, but we would achieve the economy of scale that we need," Fogel said. Student-faculty ratios would rise slightly (16 to 1 in 2008) under the plan, still keeping the university on a more intimate scale than the Public Ivy years of the 1980s, when the ratio was as high as 16.7 to 1.

Graphs showing the university's comparative price against its higher education competitors were among the most encouraging information Fogel shared with trustees. As other state universities face shrinking state appropriations, their tuition promises to rise significantly. By holding tuition increases at 4.5 percent or lower annually over the next decade, Fogel's strategic budget indicates that the university will increasingly improve its price-value position.

Building financial aid support by approximately \$2 million per year over each of the next five years is key to the challenge of building enrollments, Fogel said. The university will look to private support for these essential dollars, first priority of the university's comprehensive fund-raising campaign.

Capital improvements – including residence hall upgrades, a new student commons, a new life sciences research facility, and increased parking – would be funded by a \$204 million bond beginning in approximately two years. Debt service on the bond would be funded from a number of sources, including student fees, room rates, parking fees, and tuition revenue.

As trustees commented and questioned Fogel and Provost John Bramley following the presentation, they were largely supportive of this next step, but also cautious in seeking more information.

Trustee Margaret Hummel asked for further details in a future meeting on the debt service of the proposed \$204 million bond. "I'm alarmed by the amount the annual debt service will grow to by 2008; it's an issue that needs to be clarified," she said.

Trustee Bruce Lisman asked Fogel and Provost John Bramley about potential risks if enrollment increases aren't met and the difficulty of

market data, including an easy interface to search a huge, updated database of affordable rental housing listings. The site also includes an interface to display and search Vermont towns for a wide range of census-derived issues related to housing.

"As far we know, this is a one-of-its-kind website. We haven't seen nor heard of any other like it in the nation," says Chip Sawyer, the center's information outreach coordinator.

In addition to the datasets, Housingdata.org also offers mortgage calculators, definitions of technical housing terms, information about special-needs housing and a bulletin board.

### **Stanford Professor Gives Ecological Economics Seminar**

Renowned researcher Joan Roughgarden, professor of biological sciences and geophysics at Stanford University, continued the School of Natural Resources's Ecological Economics Seminar Series on April 8 with a lecture on "Modeling the Economically Optimal Management of Ecosystem Services."

Roughgarden's lecture focused on her examination of populations of barnacles in the marine intertidal zone of central California, and how a better understanding of life histories of those populations can help the effective management of nature reserves.

The influential ecologist said that she "comes from a populations and community background" and that taking the economic approach to some environmental issues doesn't mean you have to "sleep with the devil."

The talk drew about 60 students, faculty and members of the public to the Votey Building.

Roughgarden, who has taught at Stanford since 1972 and currently serves as director of its Earth Systems program, is well known for her research on the relationship between evolutionary biology and ecology, which involves a combination of theoretical ecology and field studies.

The next lecture in the series is scheduled for April 17 at 12:30 p.m. in Carpenter Auditorium. Norman Myers, honorary visiting fellow at Oxford University, will speak on "Perverse Subsidies and Other Institutional Roadblocks on the Way to Sustainable Development."

maintaining admissions standards while growing the enrollment pool.

Fogel responded that a significant percentage of the enrollment increases will be driven by increased retention rates. "Given the quality of our applicant pools and the work of our faculty and staff, we are doing increasingly well in this area," the president said.

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## NEWS BRIEFS

## EVENTS

## NOTABLES

## SEARCH

## PRINT THIS ISSUE

## PRINT PAST ISSUES

## FEEDBACK

## UVM HOMEPAGE

## EVENTS



The color and complexity of Chinese opera is coming to the Flynn on April 15 – and members of the UVM community can get two tickets for the price of one. (*Publicity photo.*)

### Movement and Music from China

It's dazzling, exotic, musical—and it's potentially half-price. University students, staff and faculty can get two tickets for the price of one for an evening of traditional Peking opera at the Flynn Centre MainStage April 15 at 7:30 p.m. The event is co-sponsored by the President's Initiatives for Diversity.

Li Xiao Dan's Chinese Opera Company (replacing the China-based Peking Opera troupe originally scheduled for this performance) integrates music, theater, dance, ancient acrobatic disciplines, the romance of long-ago dynasties and high-flying martial artistry for a performance called "spirited, enthusiastic, and exemplary" by the Brooklyn Museum of Art. The New York-based company is led by celebrated actress and dancer Li Xiao Dan, recipient of China's prestigious National Artistic Achievement Award.

For its Flynn performance, the company will present excerpts from its popular repertoire, including the festive, highly acrobatic Lion Dance associated with China's Lunar New Year; the lushly romantic, traditional Peking Opera story of "The Drunken Beauty"; and a colorful "mini-opera" regaling the shenanigans of the famed Monkey King, one of the most beloved characters in Chinese theater and literature.

Two-for-one ticket vouchers are available at the Center for Cultural Pluralism and the ALANA Student Center, and must be redeemed for actual tickets at the Flynn Theatre by 5:30 p.m. on the day of the performance. Vouchers are good for \$32 and \$27 tickets.

### Latin Day 2003 is April 11

Latin Day *in aula Universitas Viridis Montis* may feature more kilts than togas this year. *Mores Gentium Mundi*, or, the "Cultural Diversity of the Roman World," is the theme for the popular annual event that will bring Vermont middle and high school students to campus on April 11 to learn and perform.

"We're doing things a little differently this year," explained Mark Usher, assistant professor of Classics. In past years, students have performed skits based on Greek and Roman mythology. This year, students will dress as tribes from other regions – from the ancient Egyptians and Etruscans to the Parthians and Vandals – and depict their interactions with citizens of Rome.

"We'll definitely see Cleopatra and the queen of the Barbarians," predicted Usher, who is managing the event for the second year. Expect also to see blue body paint and kilts, he said. "The Gauls and the Celts wore kilts, and painted their bodies blue before going to battle."

The university's 27th Latin Day, held in Patrick Gym, will begin with opening ceremonies at 9:20 a.m. and conclude at 12:30 p.m. after awards are presented. Skits will run from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Also planned are competitions in translating Greek and Latin texts and discussions of passages from Seneca, Caesar and Ovid. Displays created by students to illuminate elements of the Roman Empire will be available for viewing all morning.

Participating schools include Bellows Free Academy, Brattleboro Union High School, Burlington High School, Champlain Valley Union High School, Essex High School, Hanover (N.H.) High School, Harwood Union High School, Milton High School, Mount Abraham Union High School, Mount Mansfield Union High School, Riverside Middle School and Whitcomb Junior/Senior High School.

### Student Careers Culminate in One Act

Nine graduating seniors will bring together every aspect of their theatre training, from acting and design to theatrical history, as directors of the UVM Theatre's "Festival of One-Acts." The festival will be performed April 16-19 at 7 p.m. on the Royall Tyler stage.

Audiences can expect an eclectic evening of comedies, dramas, classic and contemporary plays produced under the guidance of Sarah Carleton, assistant professor of theatre.

The performance will be preceded by a free lecture by Professor Li Kai of Oberlin College at 6 p.m. in the Amy E. Tarrant Gallery. Kai will give a presentation on the more than 2000-year-old tradition, examining the various art forms that comprise the Peking Opera.

Information: 656-8818 or go to [Peking Opera at the Flynn](#).

### **Folk Singer's Concert Features Holocaust Songs**

Folk singer, guitarist and prolific author Jerry Silverman will perform on April 10 at 7 p.m. in the UVM Recital Hall, Redstone Campus.

"The Undying Flame: Ballads and Songs of the Holocaust," a major work in the field of Holocaust scholarship, contains 110 songs in 16 languages, including Yiddish, German, Hebrew, Spanish, Russian, Hungarian and English.

Many of the songs, which Silverman sings in their original languages, were written by concentration camp prisoners and inhabitants of the ghettos of Eastern Europe. Others are anti-Fascist anthems inspired by the Spanish Civil War, Red Army songs and songs of Resistance fighters.

Information: 656-1492 or visit [the Center for Holocaust Studies](#).

"The festival is never the same," says student director Erin Fehr. "That's what is so great about it."

Student directors choose plays that will challenge them and entertain audiences. Among this year's selections are "The Proposal," by Anton Chekhov; "Transformations: Snow White," adapted from the poetry of Anne Sexton; and "Arabian Nights," a comedy by David Ives.

All nine directors have appeared onstage and off in recent UVM Theatre productions such as "Cole" and "The Crucible." The cast comprises current and former students.

Tickets are \$4 and available both in advance and at the door. For information or to order tickets, go to [UVM Theatre](#) or call 656-2094.

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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

## NOTABLES

*April 9 – April 15, 2003***Publications and Presentations**

**Sally Huber**, professor of pathology, and **Danielle Sartini**, a laboratory technician in the department, had an article, "Role of CD1d in Coxsackievirus B3-Induced Myocarditis," published in the March 15 edition of *The Journal of Immunology*. A photo taken by Huber was also chosen for use on the journal's cover.

**Anne Moore**, a graduate student of English, was among three students to earn top honors at the Women's Studies Symposium, held in Castleton on March 22. Moore was among 10 college students in Vermont who were chosen to present papers on the theme "Feminism for the Post-Viagra Age." Her paper was titled, "It's in the Blood: Dark Doubles in Buffy the Vampire Slayer."

**Awards and Honors**

Senior **Stephanie Bennett** won a citizenship award on April 9 from the city of Burlington for her work in the community. The presentation was part of the "Neighborhood Night of Successes" event. Bennett has been chair of the Student Government Association's Committee on Legislative Action and as a steering committee member of the Ward 1 Neighborhood Planning Assembly. Of special note was the forum you spearheaded this past fall on quality-of-life issues in neighborhoods, which was attended by residents, landlords, city officials, city administrators, as well as UVM students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

**Kathleen Liang**, assistant professor of community development and applied economics, was selected as a member of the Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program Advisory Committee. The committee is a statewide external advisory body to the Sea Grant management team. The principal activities of the group are to provide input during annual program planning (the basis for the program's annual funding proposal) and to assist in the review and selection of research proposals for funding. The advisory committee will also play a central role in developing a five-year strategic plan.

*April 2 – April 8, 2003***Awards and Honors**

The **Vermont Child Health Improvement Program** in the department of pediatrics received a \$300,000, three-year grant from the March of Dimes. The program's proposal on improving prenatal risk assessment and quality of care was selected by the March of Dimes Vermont Chapter and submitted to the national organization along with 59 other applications from chapters across the country. The Vermont Chapter was one of only four chapters chosen to award its organization with a grant. UVM faculty involved include **Judith Shaw**, director of VCHIP and research assistant professor of pediatrics; **Dr. Eleanor Capeless**, professor of obstetrics and gynecology; **Dr. Peter Cherouny**, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology; and **Dr. Charles Mercier**, associate professor of pediatrics.

**Mark Bouton**, professor of psychology, has been elected President of the Eastern Psychological Association for 2004-05 and will serve as President-Elect in 2003-04. The EPA is one of the larger regional divisions of the American Psychological Association. Its former presidents include notable psychologists like B.F. Skinner and Florence Denmark.

NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

## Dwelling in Possibility

**Fogel inaugurated as the University of Vermont's 25th president to help seize "the greatness that lies within our grasp"**

By Kevin Foley



"Pride, possibility and partnership": Daniel Mark Fogel inaugurated his presidency by reaffirming his lofty goals. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Fittingly for April, UVM President Daniel Mark Fogel's inauguration mixed memory and desire, as speaker after speaker discussed the university's excellence past, present and future.

The atmosphere was joyous, with a glowing Fogel standing behind the podium in his red regalia, looking out at his family, friends and colleagues, and saying, "You see before you a very happy man."

Fogel was preceded on the podium by a procession of friends and dignitaries. Vermont Governor Jim Douglas, Senator Patrick Leahy, Representative Bernie Sanders and a representative of James Jeffords enthusiastically wished the university's new leader well. Dean Maglaris, chair of the Board of Trustees, spoke of presidents past and "the heritage we are passing on."

William Jenkins, the president of the Louisiana State University system who chose Fogel for his first senior leadership roles at LSU, spoke with obvious affection about the "mixed emotions" he felt watching Fogel leave that university to command another. He then told a story about Fogel's early days in the LSU chancellor's office.

A phone rang early one morning, Fogel answered it, and the caller demanded to know if "the head hog was at the trough." Initially offended by the caller's rudeness, Fogel took him to task – until the matter of a large gift was raised. "Hold on a moment," Jenkins said Fogel said, "I believe the big pig just walked in the door."

### The idea of the university

Fogel began his address with personal acknowledgement to dozens of friends and family, most of them present, whose "teaching, love, example and support" brought him to this day. He then moved to the idea of the university, describing their greatness, and their inherent structural tensions between "continuity and tradition" that shifts into "intransigent resistance" to necessary change.

"And yet I cannot conceive of a greater honor than to be entrusted with the stewardship of a great university, to stand forth in the midst of so many powerful and diversely gifted intellects and the workings of so many aspirations, strivings, and dreams, with the mandate to manage, to lead, and to set forth the vision for what is to come," Fogel said, allowing that he had stolen a bit of his own thunder by promulgating a detailed [set of aspirations](#) for the university well before his inauguration.



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### Into the Woods

From spring snow laced with tracks from sharp bobcat claws to the spot where cliffs abruptly crash into wetlands because of a geologic thrust fault, six graduate students are surveying nearly every inch of a 350-acre forest in Milton in every kind of weather.

### Optimal Advice

When acquaintances ask James Gatti for advice on how they should allocate their investment portfolios, the longtime associate professor of business administration doesn't tell them what to do. Instead, he shows them some tables he believes will help them make some decisions.

### The Mentor

One paragraph in the book *Getting Started With Computers and Using Microsoft Office 2000* seems out of place in the midst of the complicated computer jargon. But to UVM lecturer Robert Erickson, the book's author, the passage is not just an example of how to use Word's format function. It's a reminder of the way he wants to live his life.



Fogel talked of “pride, possibility and partnership,” as he described the university’s accomplishments during his first nine months in office: burgeoning research funds, rising applications, successful reorganizations of crucial departments, purchasing the Trinity College campus, creation of an Honors College, expanded and accelerated plans for new residence halls, a faculty labor contract.

These successes, he repeatedly emphasized, were not his alone.

“In undertaking my work at UVM, I have been energized by the people of UVM who are the catalysts and the co-authors of the vision,” Fogel said. “In many ways, it is more reflection than invention, giving back to those to whom they truly belong the ideas, the pride, and the commitment of this entire community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends. It is your passion, your pride, your sense of possibility that fuel me....”

Fogel began the conclusion of his address by reciting a few stanzas by New Englander Emily Dickinson:

*I dwell in Possibility—  
A fairer House than Prose—  
More numerous of Windows—  
Superior—for Doors—*

*Of Chambers as the Cedars—  
Impregnable of Eye—  
And for an Everlasting Roof  
The Gambrels of the Sky—*

*Of Visitors—the fairest—  
For Occupation—This—  
The spreading wide of narrow Hands  
To gather Paradise—*

“I pledge that I will always do my best to articulate who we are, what we stand for, and where I think we are headed,” he then said. “But let there be no mistake: it is you who make the place go. This is our university.”

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The complete text of Fogel's address is available [here](#).

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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

## Into the Woods

**Milton project puts graduate students into the field and charges them to return with a detailed report to the town. Blending close ecological observation with community engagement is a defining characteristic of the Field Naturalist Program**

By Cheryl Dorschner



Conservation biologist and UVM adjunct Liz Thompson, gesturing far left, helps graduate students map "natural communities" in Milton. Students are, from left, J. Bradley Materick, Kendra Schmeideskamp, Regan Brooks and Brooke Wilkerson. (Photo: Walter Poleman)

From spring snow laced with tracks from sharp bobcat claws to the spot where cliffs abruptly crash into wetlands because of a geologic thrust fault, six graduate students are surveying nearly every inch of a 350-acre forest in Milton in every kind of weather.

The team is taking a semester-long landscape inventory and assessment class with Walter Poleman, a botany lecturer, as part of their coursework in the Field Naturalist Program. Milton contracted with the

university to develop a management plan for the town forest, as the community tries to balance the recreational wishes of citizens with preserving the property's natural assets. So the course's lab is an unusual landlocked, bowl-shaped, tract of land that drains into a 30-acre pond. As the students measure, record and identify everything from the soil to the hawks circling above the ash trees their goal is to understand the forces behind the ecosystems here, and then to communicate that to city officials and citizens in a compelling way.

"These are first-year graduate students who, in fall, we introduce to the land – they're immersed in all aspects of it," says Poleman, who is also associate director of the Field Naturalist Program. "This semester, they can apply their knowledge. As a team they've spent an incredible amount of time in this forest. It's a two-credit course – they all say it should be 20 credits."

The students in the class are from the Field Naturalist and Ecological Planning Programs: Peter Ellis, J. Bradley Materick, Kristen Puryear, Kendra Schmeideskamp, Brooke Wilkerson and Regan Brooks.

### Listening to needs, then listing resources

The course got off to a fast start in January when Milton officials held a public forum to hear ideas for the land's use. They were surprised that more than 50 residents turned out.

"Townsppeople's interest ranged from snowmobiling to hiking to preservation without any access," says Milton Conservation Commissioner Dan Gaherty.

Students paid attention.

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"That forum really helped them see what they needed to inventory and what could impact the landscape," Poleman says. "Now the students are evaluating those suggested uses in light of what they find out about the land."

So far the group has inventoried a beaver pond and wetlands; noted several animal species including otter, bobcat, coyote, raccoon, porcupine and pileated woodpecker; and spotted building foundations. They've walked the property with the county forester and done mapping with conservation biologist Liz Thompson who is an adjunct faculty member in the botany department. They've learned a bit of the land's history: when the pond was dammed and the forest logged.

On April 7, Ian Worley, a botany professor and interim director of UVM's environmental program, donned another hat – that of pilot – and flew pairs of students over the land. "The aerial views give you a great sense that this is a bowl-shaped landscape; and you can see how the land connects to the surrounding landscape," Poleman says.

"It's one of only two completely undeveloped watersheds in the Champlain Valley," says graduate student Regan Brooks.

The class has organized a "birding bonanza" bird-identification census for May during the spring migration.

Besides the tangible accomplishment the UVM students will bring to the town, Gaherty says they'll also develop a greater love of the land.

"What's neat for me is to see how the students, in a matter of a few weeks really came to appreciate this land," Gaherty says.

Milton and UVM have worked together previously, inventorying a property on Eagle Mountain. "Milton knows we'll be comprehensive analyzing the natural and cultural features and come up with recommendations," Poleman says.

Gaherty agrees.

"We had such a good relationship with UVM, that when this project came up, we wanted to work together again. Access to this property is contentious. If there's enough interest in it as a recreation area, we might try to solve accessibility." He adds, "In my opinion it would be a shame to lose the property."

Poleman calls this human factor in the Milton work, "kind of a microcosm for what students may encounter in National Parks work – citizens with many points of view."

### **Delicate balance**

Naturally, the kind of students who choose to become field naturalists already care deeply about the environment and certainly have their own wishes for the future of this land.

"This group tries to be very balanced in their views," says Poleman. "While we're all conservation biologists, you don't get too far with those blinders on: We're also consultants."

And that sort of community engagement along with landscape analysis is "the real hallmark of the UVM's Field Naturalist Program," says Poleman. "We take the resources of UVM into the community."

As April melts to May, birds will migrate back to this forest and the first wild leeks will poke through this calcareous soil formed so long ago by the glaciers. Bloodroot and trilliums will unfurl their leaves. Students are anxious to see this place for the first time wearing its vernal colors. They have barely a month to finish their work.

On May 12 the six students will stand before the selectboard, conservation commission and townspeople with their final recommendations.

"Our charge is to figure out what uses – given what we find out about the property – would be sustainable," Brooks says. "The town will take the document that we produce and say what they agree and disagree with."

But after their advice is passed to the town, the semester ends and they've received their two (alas, not 20) credits, will the students go back to the forest they now know so well to see what flowers bloom in June, where the otter goes to cool off on a summer night and what the bobcat hunts in autumn?

Time will tell.

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EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

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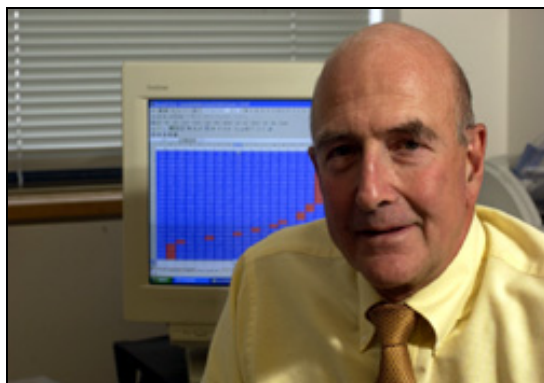
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FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

## Optimal Advice

By Jon Reidel



James Gatti, an associate professor of business administration since 1972, is examining a variety of portfolio allocation strategies with a focus on the relevance of the length of a holding period. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

When acquaintances ask James Gatti for advice on how they should allocate their investment portfolios, the longtime associate professor of business administration doesn't tell them what to do. Instead, he shows them some tables he believes will help them make some decisions.

Those tables, derived from a Monte Carlo simulation, are a crucial analytical tool in Gatti's recent research and should, hypothetically, make it easier for someone to select a

blend of stocks, bonds and cash that will provide the best chance of achieving the desired level of risk and return.

Gatti's work suggests that the simulation, which uses probabilities derived from past results to calculate the likely outcomes of different blends of future investments, is a useful tool for financial planners to use to analyze the long-term portfolio results.

"It remains an open question as to whether the optimal allocation is the same regardless of the length of the holding period," Gatti says. "There have been differing views among practitioners and the academic community."

That open debate is contrary to much of the advice in financial magazines, which advocate ever-shifting portfolio proportions as if they were clearly superior. Gatti doesn't have any answers to the conundrum – and he points advice-seekers to the tables to draw their own conclusions – but he says the past yields some potentially useful trends. Bonds outperform stocks by a bit when markets are down, as they have been recently. But when markets are up, stocks beat bonds, giving them the long-term edge.

### Over the years

Gatti says that portfolio allocation advice has been around for a long time and has varied greatly. He mentions a Talmudic reference that suggests a man's wealth should be equally divided between land, merchandise, and cash – a principle that equates to a modern day split between common stock and bonds.

A more recently held bit of conventional wisdom contends that the common stock percentage of a person's portfolio should decline as one ages from a high of 70 percent in one's twenties to 30 percent after retirement. This "wisdom," Gatti notes, tends to shift with the times.

He says that if he had listened to the prevailing thinking of his day when he was hired 31 years ago following his graduate studies at Cornell and a stint as a research analyst at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, and put all his money into bonds, he wouldn't be in the comfortable financial position he is

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### Dwelling in Possibility

Fittingly for April, UVM President Daniel Mark Fogel's inauguration mixed memory and desire, as speaker after speaker discussed the university's excellence past, present and future.

### Into the Woods

From spring snow laced with tracks from sharp bobcat claws to the spot where cliffs abruptly crash into wetlands because of a geologic thrust fault, six graduate students are surveying nearly every inch of a 350-acre forest in Milton in every kind of weather.

### The Mentor

One paragraph in the book *Getting Started With Computers and Using Microsoft Office 2000* seems out of place in the midst of the complicated computer jargon. But to UVM lecturer Robert Erickson, the book's author, the passage is not just an example of how to use Word's format function. It's a reminder of the way he wants to live his life.

today.

So Gatti is skeptical of investment truisms, even as he works on the assumption that the past is a “reasonable guide to the future.” Gatti contends that relying too heavily on the standard mean-variance framework planners use to assess risk and return alternatives for varying portfolios “does not give the individual a clear picture of the choices available.”

“The question is: ‘what does the future hold?’” Gatti says. “The last 77 years, which saw the Great Depression and several bear markets, is a pretty good guide.”

That guide suggests that portfolios with lower concentrations of common stock outperform those with greater concentrations when simulated market performance is poor. Nevertheless, longer holding periods seem to favor greater allocations to common stock, for any given level of market performance, he contends.

In the end, Gatti says the vastly superior performance of high stock concentrations when markets perform well “may offset the slight superiority of high bond concentrations when they perform badly.”

#### **Business bull market?**

In addition to his current portfolio performance research, Gatti has completed extensive research in the areas of joint cost allocations, transfer pricing, financial regulation and innovation, security pricing, monetary theory and public finance.

During that time, Gatti says the combination of quality research within the business administration department and an emphasis on teaching, has put the program among the best on the East Coast.

“Our research is far better than it was 20 years ago and the commitment to teaching remains,” Gatti says. “We’ve gotten very strong in marketing, accounting and finance. Are we as good as we should be? No. But in those three areas, I would put our students up against anyone.”

Gatti says that although UVM’s business administration program may not be as large as some institutions, and thus produces fewer alumni, a proportionately high number of students have gone on to become major players in the business world.

“We have a number of alumni who have done very well,” Gatti says. “I think that says a lot about the quality of the students we attract and the quality of our program.”

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EVENTS

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UVM HOMEPAGE

## The Mentor

By Jon Reidel



Robert Erickson, lecturer of computer science, devotes considerable time to working with teenage boys in need of mentoring. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

One paragraph in the book *Getting Started With Computers and Using Microsoft Office 2000* seems out of place in the midst of the complicated computer jargon.

But to UVM lecturer Robert Erickson, the author of the computer science textbook, the passage is more than just a mock sentence used to show students how to use the program's character format function. It's a

reminder of the way he wants to live his life.

"What can you do to make the world a better place?" reads the passage. "After all it starts with you! Only you can make a difference."

Words to live by, according to Erickson, who has spent the last five-and-a-half years as a mentor of teenage boys through the Community Friends Mentoring program at the Howard Center for Human Resources. Erickson says the program, which promotes the healthy development of young people by matching them with adult volunteers in one-on-one friendships, is the best way for him to remain true to his creed.

"It's every person's responsibility to give something back to the world," Erickson says. "The path to becoming a better human being is by helping others. Everyone has to choose some way to give back whether it be picking up trash or helping young kids. This is what works best for me."

### The initiation

Erickson was paired up with a teenage boy from Chittenden County in 1998 after hearing about the program from a friend. Teaching four classes at UVM didn't leave Erickson a lot of free time, so he set a realistic goal of meeting his new friend once or twice a week.

After getting stood up for some of the initially scheduled visits, Erickson started making alternative plans just in case his student didn't show up. Eventually, the pair started communicating better and the get-togethers became more frequent.

"Going into it I was thinking that my role was to be a friend and act as an example of what you're supposed to do," Erickson says. "I'm not going to be preachy. I'd rather lead by example."

Most visits consist of Erickson taking his buddy to a movie, bowling alley or somewhere to play pool. Sometimes after the movie, Erickson has the boy do yard work as payback for the movie to teach work ethic.



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"We just hang out," Erickson says. "We don't always talk unless he wants to. Just spending time together is important."

Erickson, who has hiked the length of the Long Trail in 25 days, has taken his student on hikes with the Green Mountain Club and on trips with the Smuggler's Notch Snowmobile Club. In both instances, he's had his buddy perform some type of work such as bridge building and trail clearing.

"He's a really awesome combination of being laid back yet consistent and reliable," says Kristen Hayden-West, coordinator of Community Friends Mentoring. "The boys react really well to him. He's solid where it counts."

Erickson assigned students in his advanced Web design class to construct a website for Community Friends. Each student designed a site, all of which Hayden-West reviewed before choosing one as her non-profit's official site.

"He called and said, 'Your program needs a Website and my class needs a non-profit to build one for, ' " Hayden-West says. "He's been a great supporter of the program."

### **Staying involved**

Hayden-West asked Erickson if he'd take on another boy after his three-year period with the first boy ended. Erickson said yes, and has been mentoring him for almost two years.

"They're like night and day," Erickson says of the two boys. "Luckily I've been able to find some common ground with each."

Erickson said he read about one of the boys getting in trouble in the newspaper and decided to talk to him about the incident, despite his usual practice of letting the boy broach touchy subjects himself.

"I've tried to stress to both of them that it's okay to have fun, but that you must consider the consequences of your actions," Erickson says.

Erickson plans to stay in touch with both boys, but realizes that will be increasingly difficult as they grow older. Erickson hired the boy he's currently mentoring as the photographer at his wedding. Erickson invited the first boy to the wedding, but he was unable to attend. He plans to call him again, though, to tell him that he and his wife of one year are going to have a baby.

"I plan to treat both of them like I would any other friend," Erickson says. "If something good or bad happens I'll call them to tell them about it. I hope they do the same."

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For more information about the program Erickson is participating in, see [Community Friends](#)

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