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Author Ron Suskind captivated his convocation audience with stories about his own life and his relationship with Cedric Jennings, the subject of his 1998 book, *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*. (Photo: Sally McCay)

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Ron Suskind told the most diverse class in UVM history why interacting with people from different backgrounds would make their college experience far richer than if they stayed within their own social circles. He used the experience of researching his best-selling novel about the journey of an African American teenager from a poverty stricken section of Washington, D.C. to Brown University to prove his point.

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[New Profs on Campus](#) The incoming class of 2012 aren't the only new faces in UVM's classrooms this fall; this week nearly 50 new faculty members are meeting their students, settling into their offices, and learning the closest place to get a coffee as the university's 218th year begins.

THE WEEK IN VIEW

Sept. 4 and 5. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Board of Trustees Meetings. Davis Center Fourth Floor. [Information](#), [schedule](#).

Sept. 6. 9 a.m. Historic Tour of UVM. [Information](#), [registration](#). Tour begins at Ira Allen statue, Main Green. Tour runs Saturdays, through Oct. 11.

Sept. 6. 9 a.m. to noon. Leaf Casting Workshop. Create your own natural objects of art with leaf casts of your favorite large-leaf plant. \$20. UVM Horticultural Research Center. [Information](#), registration: (802) 864-3073.

Sept. 8. 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Student Art Exhibit. Work will be on display through Sept. 19. Colburn Gallery, Williams Hall. 656-2014.

Sept. 9. Noon to 2 p.m. Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning Open House. Learn about the programs and services that CUPS provides to faculty, community members, and students. North Lounge, Billings. Information: 656-0095.

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Suskind to Entering Class: Strive for Justice

By Jon Reidel

Article published September 3, 2008

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Author Ron Suskind captivated his convocation audience with stories about his own life and his relationship with Cedric Jennings, the subject of his 1998 book, *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*.
(Photo: Sally McCay)

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Ron Suskind told the most diverse class in UVM history why interacting with people from different backgrounds would make their college experience far richer than if they stayed within their own social circles. He used the experience

of researching his best-selling novel about the journey of an African American teenager from a poverty stricken section of Washington, D.C. to Brown University to prove his point.

Suskind's 1998 book, *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*, was required summer reading for the approximately 2,450 members of the class of 2012 who filled Patrick Gymnasium on Sept. 1 for convocation. Suskind, who spoke for about an hour and received a standing ovation, mixed moving observations about his relationship with Cedric Jennings, the main character in *A Hope in the Unseen* who went to one of the worst high schools in America, with humorous stories about growing up in Brooklyn with a domineering Jewish mother, and powerful quotes from Martin Luther King Jr. and other inspirational leaders.

"I wanted him to tell me what it was like to be in his shoes for a day, for just five minutes," said Suskind, whose book was based on a *Wall Street Journal* series that won Suskind a Pulitzer Prize for feature writing. "What's it like to look through your eyes. So we became a team — a tall, young African American kid and a middle aged lumpy Jewish guy." Suskind added that every member of the incoming class, which hails from 38 states and 10 countries, came to UVM with their own dogmas. "Examine those dogmas in daylight

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and discard the ones that are no use," he said.

Suskind has spent the last few years traveling the globe to write some of his recent books including *New York Times* No. 1 bestseller, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill*; *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of its Enemies Since 9/11*; and this year's *The Way of the World*. During those travels he said he's constantly reminded of how lucky we are in America to attend such incredible colleges and universities. "I've traveled all over the world and I've heard people say, 'If I could just send my kid to one of those places I'd do anything, anything.'"

In one of the more poignant moments, Suskind recalled driving from Washington D.C. to Brown with Cedric and his mother Barbara. None of the other parents spoke to her when they arrived in Providence except for one who asked if she was someone's maid. Suskind became enraged at the question and was saddened further when Barbara started becoming self-conscious about her diction. "It was a place she couldn't relate to," said Suskind. "When we were about to leave she told Cedric to trust in God and to let him guide you." The last thing she said to Cedric before she left was, "You be good."

Suskind said Cedric graduated from Brown, eventually earned a master's degree from Harvard, and is now a 31-year-old social worker in Washington, D.C. The author closed with a quote from Theodore Parker made famous by Martin Luther King, Jr. "The arch of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice," he told students. "Grab that arch and pull it with all your might."

In addition to Suskind's talk, welcoming words were offered by President Daniel Mark Foegl; John Hughes, senior vice president and provost; Gov. James H. Douglas; Robyn Warhol-Down, president of the Faculty Senate and University Marshall; and James M. Taylor, president of the Student Government Association.

Following convocation students made the traditional walk down Main Street to the University Green for a twilight induction ceremony. The largest class in UVM history, which has the highest percentage of ALANA (Asian-American, Latino, African-American, Native American, and multi-racial) students (eight percent) in school history, was officially welcomed on the green as candles lit the night and music played.

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Alumnus David Whiteside interviews Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s son Conor for MTV News at the Democratic National Convention. (Photo courtesy of David Whiteside)

The political youth movement credited with propelling Sen. Barack Obama to victory in the Democratic primary was on display Aug. 25-28 at the Democratic National Convention in Denver where a record 16 percent of the delegates were under the age of 36.

Among those delegates were five Vermonters in their 20s, giving the state its youngest delegation ever and one of the youngest in the nation.

Current students and young alums of the University of Vermont played key roles at the convention as delegates, organizers and political correspondents. Rachel Weston, a 2005 graduate of UVM's Master of Public Administration Program and Vermont's youngest state legislator at age 27, must have felt like a political veteran as four members of the Vermont delegation were younger than her. Taylor Bates of Williston was the youngest at age 18, although UVM sophomore Emily Walsh, also 18, who represented her home state of New Hampshire, wasn't far behind.

David Whiteside of Birmingham, Ala., who graduated from UVM in 2005 with a degree in environmental studies, worked the convention in a slightly different capacity as an MTV Choose or Lose Street Team member. Whiteside's senior thesis led to the founding of Black Warrior Riverkeeper, a non-profit whose mission is to protect and restore the Black Warrior River and its tributaries, and helped earned him a one-year contract with MTV for a video he produced on the environment. His contract requires him to produce one, three-to-four minute video per week about issues affecting young people or about the campaign itself. He had total access in

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Denver.

"It was incredible out there," said Whiteside. "The last day in the stadium was so inspirational. Whether Obama wins or not he's the first African-American to be nominated and it really felt like you were witnessing history. You could see even before the convention that young people were getting excited and more involved in the political process, and now there seems to be even more momentum."

Vermonters helping lead the youth movement

The reason for the influx of young Americans into the political process has been attributed to a number of factors including the coming of age of Millennial Generation or Generation Y (Americans born between 1982 and 1994). Weston says Americans born during this time period grew up with community service and understand the importance of helping neighbors. She saw this first-hand at the convention when she attended a community service event put on by the DNC that resulted in the building of a new playground in Denver.

"We're in the midst of a generational change from Gen X to the current group of Millennials who grew up around community service," said Weston, who listed Michelle Obama's speech as one of the highlights of the week. "I was proud that our little delegation from Vermont had the most people come out to build the playground. Getting our hands dirty and helping out really highlights our community ethic and the importance of helping others."

Liz Saxe, the 23-year-old communications director for the Vermont Democratic Party, said the rise in voters under the age of 35 has been particularly sharp since 2004. "Madeleine Kunin has been joking about bringing up the average," she said, "but the effort to include young people in the political process started with Howard Dean and has been picked up by Senator Obama who has taken it to the next level."

Kunin, who still speaks to classes at UVM where she has been a distinguished visiting professor since 2003, was among Vermont's 23 delegates, which included Sen. Patrick Leahy, Rep. Peter Welch and DNC Chair Howard Dean. Kunin, who blogged for the *Huffington Post* during the week, has attended conventions for decades since serving as governor of Vermont from 1985 to 1991.

For Walsh, who took a semester off during her freshman year to work for the Hillary Clinton Campaign, the hot issue of whether the Democratic Party would become unified after a divisive primary between Obama and Clinton was put to rest after speeches by Sen. Hillary Clinton and vice presidential nominee Sen. Joseph Biden.

“You could definitely feel the unity on the floor,” Walsh said. “It was difficult in some ways to see Clinton speak because she was so good and because we’d worked so hard for her, but you really had the feeling at the end of the convention that no matter what, the party had come together and was in good shape.”

theview

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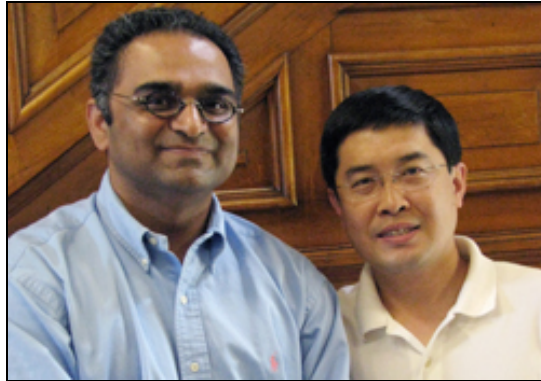
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UVM HOMEPAGE

New Profs on Campus

By The View Staff

Article published September 2, 2008



New faculty members Asim Zia and Tao Sun join the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics to teach and research environmental policy and public communication, respectively.

The incoming class of 2012 aren't the only new faces in UVM's classrooms this fall; nearly 50 new faculty members are meeting their students, unpacking their offices, and learning the closest place to get a coffee as the university's 218th year begins.

While we weren't able to speak with all of them, seven of the new professors took a few moments to answer our probing questions about both their research and relaxation styles. What follows are snapshots of the lives (academic and otherwise) of our newest faculty colleagues.

New faculty: Cathy Beaudoin

UVM title: Assistant professor of business administration

Training: Ph.D. in accounting, Drexel University

Research interests: Beaudoin's research interests include examining the decision making process in accounting and financial reporting contexts. This includes examining various factors that influence financial executives' accounting and financial reporting choices as well as analyzing how accounting and financial reporting factors influence managers' operating decisions.

Other activities: Beaudoin has extensive work experience in public accounting and in industry. Beaudoin has worked in the tax department at KPMG Peat Marwick, in various accounting and financial reporting positions in the financial services industry and, most recently, as vice president of finance for a large publicly-traded company.

Why she chose UVM: "I think the values of the university, as well as the great environment found around the Burlington area, are quite appealing," she says. "The university has an outstanding reputation for graduating well-educated undergraduates, and that was very

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appealing to me. The idea of working at an institution that values the ideal of the 'teaching-scholar' factored heavily in my job search." She looks forward to bringing her real-world work experience into the classroom.

Quirky personal fact: Loves to ballroom dance, especially Viennese Waltz and Quick-Step

New Faculty: Pablo Shiladitya Bose

UVM title: Assistant professor of geography

Training: Ph.D. in environmental studies, York University (Toronto)

Research interests: Bose's work focuses on three distinct areas. First, the political and ecological effects of globalization and international development, looking particularly at sustainability in major Indian cities like Kolkata, New Delhi, and Mumbai. Second, he studies transnationalism and the political, economic, and cultural connections that migrants maintain between new and old homes. Third, he examines struggles for social and environmental justice by immigrant and especially racialized communities. Bose is currently undertaking a project on refugees and mobility in Vermont, funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and UVM's Transportation Research Center, looking at issues of access and equity in terms of transit use and transportation infrastructure, as well as community empowerment and involvement in local and regional planning and decision-making.

Outside interests: Bose enjoys riding his bike, trying to learn new languages ("Being a 'Pablo' who doesn't speak Spanish takes a lot of explaining," he says), meeting new people, and generally getting involved in too many things.

Why he chose UVM: A dean at York University was a former geography chair at UVM, which got Bose interested. "There's a really great and dynamic group of faculty here and a lot of support for innovative research," he says. Bose first came to UVM as a Henderson fellow (also with a fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada). It helped that the Burlington environment and culture reminds him of his hometown, Vancouver.

Quirky personal fact: Bose is completely addicted to bad movies and TV (particularly on HBO) and good food. High on his to-do list: taking an artisanal cheese course here.

New faculty: David Brock

UVM title: Assistant professor of rehabilitation and movement science•

Training: Ph.D. in exercise physiology, University of Virginia

Research interests: While earning his doctorate, Brock's focus shifted from elite athletes to the general population and an examination of different nutrition and exercise interventions with patients with metabolic syndrome, which is characterized by a group of obesity-linked risk factors for type 2 diabetes and heart disease. A recent two-year National Institutes of Health postdoctoral

fellowship in the Division of Cardiovascular Disease at the University of Alabama School of Medicine reinforced Brock's faith in the value of exercise for both preventing and improving these types of conditions. "Humans are designed to be physically active," says Brock. "But over three-quarters of the U.S. population is considered overweight or obese with very few individuals meeting the national physical activity recommendations." He aims to focus future investigations on individual and environmental barriers/promoters to adopting a physically-active lifestyle.

Why he chose UVM: Attracted by the state's physical beauty and the university's reputation, Brock was most compelled by the people he met here. "There is a real sense of passion and commitment that I have yet to experience elsewhere," shares Brock. He hopes to be an integral part of building a nationally recognized exercise science program. •

Quirky personal fact: Brock spent four years in the U.S. Coast Guard at three different search and rescue stations on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

New faculty: Tao Sun

UVM title: Assistant professor of community development and applied economics

Training: Ph.D. in mass communication, University of Minnesota

Research interests: Consumer lifestyle and media effects. "My previous studies include correlates of life satisfaction among elderly consumers, life style differences (e.g., between individualistic and collective cultures, between urban and rural consumers), antecedents and consequences of online word-of-mouth, and crisis communication during the SARS epidemic in China."

Outside interests: Reading news, watching NFL and MLB, ice- and roller-skating.

Why he chose UVM: "UVM is one of the best research universities in New England. I am just fortunate to be part of this highly supportive research community."

Quirky personal fact: "Prior to coming to the US to start my academic life, I worked as an editor on the international news desk of China's Xinhua News Agency. My work hours then were 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for one week, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. for the next week and had the third week off before the cycle started all over again."

New faculty: Laura Webb

UVM title: Assistant professor of geology

Training: Ph.D. in geological and environmental sciences, Stanford University

Research interests: Webb studies the evolution of large-scale tectonic systems, using field geology, microscopy, and radiometric dating of minerals to determine the timing of geologic events. "I'm currently involved in two collaborative research projects funded by the National Science Foundation," she says. "One project centers on characterizing the record of faulting and rock deformation in

southeastern Mongolia and how it relates more broadly to the protracted history of growth of the Asian continent.”

Outside interests: Hiking, cross-country skiing and “virtually anything outdoors, really, and enjoying fine food and wine at home with friends and family. I have a growing interests in birds, fungi and ethnic art.”

Why she chose UVM: “My research is really important to me, but I wanted to be somewhere where teaching is also valued,” Webb says. “UVM is a perfect match. It also is a fantastic location to be able to take students into the field and study a wide variety of geologic environments.”

Quirky personal fact: “I have a penchant for goats and goat cheese. I secretly hope that my husband will one day decide to become a dairy goat farmer!”

New Faculty: Asim Zia

UVM title: Assistant professor of community development and applied economics

Training: Ph.D. in public policy, Georgia Institute of Technology

Research interests: Zia investigates the role of adaptive decision making in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies at multiple governance levels. His research activities have been focused on three areas: First, in the area of environmental policy analysis and evaluation, he has been studying descriptive, dynamic and normative aspects of space-time scale choices for designing and implementing environmental policies. This research was recently sponsored by the National Science Foundation’s Human Social Dynamics program. The findings will appear in a multi-authored book, tentatively titled *Scale Matters: Where We Are, Who We Are and Why We Care*. Second, he has been working in the area of climate change mitigation and adaptation policy development. In this context, he is investigating the role of mental and cultural models in the adoption of renewable energy technologies for improving the effectiveness of climate change mitigation policies. He has also organized workshops in South Asia to strengthen institutions for collaborative management of natural hazards that are expected to intensify under most of the climate change scenarios. Third, in the area of transportation, air quality and land-use planning, his research focuses on the evaluation of policies that are implemented at state and national levels to reduce green house gas emissions and other smog-forming criteria pollutants from transportation activities.

Other activities: Zia is also working on understanding the trade-offs among conservation and development activities that are undertaken by communities located in biodiversity hotspots. In collaboration with researchers at Georgia Tech, UGA and ASU, he is organizing multiple-criteria, decision-making workshops in Vietnam, Tanzania and Peru to understand how people with different cultural models perceive conservation-development trade-offs, especially their space-time boundaries for decision making. Outside of work, he tries to find time for tennis, soccer, squash,

hiking and biking, but he and his wife's time is mostly dedicated to caring for their young family, including two daughters and a son.

Why he chose UVM: It is not only the stunning landscape, but the progressive values of Vermonters, especially their model of direct democracy and local community development, that attracted Zia to UVM. He also loves the university's emphasis on greening the campus and communities surrounding UVM.

Quirky personal fact: In addition to English, he is fluent in Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and German. He also likes to write fiction and poetry in multiple languages and plans to learn French.

New faculty: Steven Zdatny

UVM title: Professor and chair of history

Training: Ph.D. in history, University of Pennsylvania

Research interests: Zdatny studies the social, political, and cultural history of modern France. His first book examined the politics of the French lower middle classes in the twentieth century. Then, finding fascinating documents about Paris society and culture, he edited and published them as *Hairdressing and Fashion: A Hairdresser's History of Paris, 1910-1920*. His latest book is *Fashion, Work, and Politics in Modern France*. Zdatny's current project is looking at the evolution of hygiene, both public and personal — sewers and running water, bathtubs, soap, indoor toilets, deodorant, etc. — in France from the middle of the 19th century into the 1970s. "I am trying to bring smell into history," he says.

Outside interests: Sports — basketball, golf, squash, tennis, and more skiing now that he's moved north. Zdatny spends a month every summer in Paris with an apparent fondness for cafés.

Why he chose UVM: In part, Zdatny says, on a lark, to shake things up a little (he left West Virginia University). His daughter is heading to London to work in the House of Commons before starting college, and his son is just entering high school. "There weren't many places I would have considered going," he says, "but Burlington was a perfect place: beautiful, progressive, interesting. And UVM is a terrific institution. The history department is full of personable, intelligent, highly productive colleagues."

Quirky personal fact: Zdatny, perhaps too vehemently, claims no quirkiness, denying that he was a brain surgeon before turning historian or that he's prone to mix anthrax in his kitchen. "I have the most prosaic likes and dislikes, am happy or sad reliably according to the stimuli," he says, "and don't like to engage in any activities where I stand a fair chance of quick, violent death (like alligator wrestling or cleaning out the gutters of my house)."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Publications Give UVM High Marks

By Thomas Weaver

Article published September 2, 2008

Lauded for "green" initiatives, medical primary care training, and alumni earning power, among other strengths, UVM has posted impressive numbers in various publications' higher education rankings of late.

Forbes.com reported the Center for College Affordability & Productivity's evaluation of UVM as the top public university in New England. Vermont was eighteenth among all publics and sixtieth among all universities nationwide. The key criteria: "Do students like their courses? How successful are they once they graduate?"

A recent Sierra Magazine placed UVM third among among the "10 Coolest Schools," in an article focusing on college and universities for their environmental commitment.

The College of Medicine earned a No. 5 ranking among the nation's 126 medical schools for quality in primary care training in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2009 edition of *America's Best Graduate Schools*.

There was also good news about the future prospects of UVM's graduates. The *Wall Street Journal* ranked the university 18th among the top thirty public universities for success in placing students in the nation's most prestigious medical, law and business graduate programs. And BusinessWeek.com placed Vermont seventh among public universities in a list of the fifty U.S. colleges whose bachelor's degree graduates earn the highest salaries. UVM was fortieth among all schools in the top fifty.

Read more about UVM's recent [national acclaim](#).

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New Year Brings Most Talented, Diverse Entering Class in UVM History

By Jon Reidel

Article published September 2, 2008

The new academic year ushers in the most talented and diverse group of first-year students in University of Vermont history.

The approximately 2,450 first-year students, from 38 states and 10 countries, have an average combined SAT score, in reading, math, and writing, of 1,775, 18 points higher than last year and a UVM record. The combined reading and math score, corresponding to the earlier SAT format, is also a record. The approximated size of the class is identical to last year's entering class, the largest in UVM history.

ALANA (Asian-American, Latino, African-American, Native American, and multi-racial) students will account for eight percent of the incoming class, the highest percentage ever at UVM. The incoming class includes about 630 Vermonters, approximately the same number as 2007.

The total number of undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, medical and non-degree students enrolling at UVM this fall is expected to exceed last year's record total of 12,239.

Several new majors and programs are new to the university as well this fall. The "Writing in the Disciplines" program, directed by new faculty member Susan Marie Harrington, will offer workshops and personalized consultations for faculty in academic departments across the university for teaching writing. The program "will assist faculty in (re)designing courses and assignments, helping them think about ways they teach writing and the ways writing can help demonstrate what students are learning," Harrington said.

Majors in Chinese and Japanese languages will also be offered this year for the first time.

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Honors College Seminar Spurs Faculty Collaboration

By Jon Reidel

Article published September 2, 2008

What do you get when you put 20 professors from different disciplines in a room and have them design cities?

The answer for the faculty members who attended the fifth annual Honors College Faculty Seminar Aug. 18-20 at University Heights on "Transportation, Health and Environment" was dynamic, energy efficient cities with multi-disciplinary elements not normally found in traditionally designed metro areas.

More importantly, the exercise, as well as other interactive sessions, spurred collaborations among faculty whose ages spanned four decades and backgrounds ranged from geography to political science to computer science. It also showed the value of working and learning in an interdisciplinary way. Faculty participants said they had met on average only three or four people in the room prior to the seminar.

"It's very rare that two people come out of these seminars and actually solve problems together," said Dr. Richard Galbraith, associate dean of Patient Oriented Research and program director of the General Clinical Research Center. "I compare it to dating; there's either a connection or there's not, and this seminar was a good place to make connections. It's the intellectual spark that matters, and if two people have it they may actually fix some things together. That's my hope."

Past seminars have focused on a wide range of topics including quality of life, making ethical choices, and the teaching resources of the Fleming and other area museums. The 2005 seminar produced a literature review focusing on two different ways of looking at quality of life that was intended to be submitted to *Science* or *Nature*. Other years have spawned collaborative teaching efforts that brought new perspectives to courses.

This year's seminar, which was facilitated by Dr. Alan Rubin, research associate professor of medicine and psychiatry, and Lisa Aultman-Hall, director of the University Transportation Center, included a group of non-UVM professionals who participated as facilitators. Representatives from the Chittenden County

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Transportation Authority; Vermont Department of Health and the Planning and Zoning City Department of the City of Burlington and other local organizations served as facilitators.

"This has been a great experience for me," said David White, director of planning and zoning for the city of Burlington. "The challenge will be for you to continue this conversation in the future and develop some key collaborations that last."

White helped faculty design their cities, which tended to focus most heavily on energy efficiency and health and wellbeing. One city designed entirely around the power of the sun had a sun-related marketing theme complete with sun-based street names, spoke-like signs and a town green shaped like the sun. All of the cities had walking, running and bike, and one banned cars from entering the center of town.

These elements spurred discussion about the reality of creating such towns and whether people would even want to move there. Chris Koliba, director of the Master of Public Administration Program and associate professor in community development and applied economics, prefaced his group's final town presentation by calling attention to the multitude of road blocks and regulatory hurdles that would have to be overcome in order to ever bring such a town to fruition.

Faculty said that although they undoubtedly viewed the experience through their respective disciplinary lenses, they heard other points of view that they intend to incorporate into their own teaching. Exactly how to accomplish that was debated extensively in the final session of the seminar titled "Bringing it Back to School."

Donna Ramirez, associate professor of economics, said she tends to look at the world in terms of financial optimization, but that the seminar showed her the importance of bringing other forms of optimization into the classroom." This seminar was all about optimization, but not profit maximization," she said. "Optimization could also be about wellbeing or health."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Palmer Explores Zinc's Role in Heart Muscle Relaxation

By Jennifer Nachbur

Article published September 3, 2008

A new five-year, \$1.25 million grant from the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute will allow Bradley Palmer, research assistant professor of molecular physiology and biophysics, to closely examine the role of zinc in the relaxation processes of individual heart muscle cells known as cardiomyocytes.

An essential mineral found in almost every cell of the human body, zinc stimulates the activity of dozens of enzymes responsible for critical chemical reactions. Palmer's research will specifically address the role of protein-bound zinc and free zinc ion in the heart's relaxation process. Relaxation plays a significant part in heart function, because it permits the chambers to fill with blood before the next contraction.

Palmer, who had already studied other factors that influence the relaxation of cardiomyocytes, narrowed his research to focus on zinc after a serendipitous incident at the U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory.

"We basically stumbled into this line of research when the X-ray beam at a high energy particle accelerator stopped working," admitted Palmer. "We started talking with other researchers also waiting for the beam and those discussions led to collaboration and eventually, a discovery."

Palmer and his colleagues discovered that the zinc in a heart muscle cell is localized to the boundaries of the sarcomere, which is the most basic force-producing structure in a muscle cell and repeats about every two microns (a micron is one millionth of a meter; roughly one hundredth the width of a human hair). He and the other scientists observed that the zinc looked like distinct tiger stripes on or in the cell, but were unsure why it was there. They later learned that zinc ion could compete with calcium ion for some ion channels and for force-regulating proteins in the sarcomere. This competition is important in the control of muscle force, because calcium ions initiate force production and an accumulation of zinc ion would conversely promote relaxation.

"Our work is targeted to address the possibility that zinc protects

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heart function when the heart is exposed to oxidative stresses, such as those occurring with diabetes or during a heart attack," said Palmer. "These types of health conditions are known to disrupt protein-bound zinc and reduce relaxation function."

Over the next five years, Palmer and his colleagues will focus on identifying which ion channels, ion transporters and binding proteins control the balance of zinc and calcium ions in the heart muscle cell. To accomplish this task, the group will use the X-ray fluorescence technique and the confocal microscope, which will allow a visualization (in some cases in real-time) of the accumulation and redistribution of protein-bound zinc and zinc ion when the cell is under oxidative stress. The team will also measure the effects of zinc ion on the rates of force production and relaxation by the sarcomere.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Summer News Digest

By Amanda Waite

Article published September 3, 2008

In addition to the many [national rankings](#) UVM accumulated in recent weeks, the university's summer news spanned service programs for Abenaki youth to research on cyclist doping. Get caught up on the latest with these summer news highlights; stories are listed chronologically, beginning with the most recent:

Professor Rex Forehand Wins Prestigious Psychology Award

On August 15 Rex Forehand, Heinz and Rowena Ansbacher Professor of Psychology and director of the university's clinical training program, was honored with the American Psychology Association's 2008 Award for Distinguished Career Contributions to Education and Training. His nomination for the award was due to the collective accolades of several former students who are now influencing the field through their own academic accomplishments. [Full story.](#)

UVM Outreach Key to Abenaki Youth Success

UVM's annual Summer Happening program exposes Abenaki adolescents to college life, offering opportunities to develop relationships and increase their comfort level on campus. The event combines cultural activities, leadership skill development and academic workshops. [Full story.](#)

Professor's Research on Doping and Cycling Takes World Stage

With a grant from the World Anti-Doping Agency, Brian Gilley, assistant professor of anthropology, has spent the last year studying attitudes among under-23-year-old cyclists towards doping. Using American amateur collegiate cyclists as a control, Gilley interviewed elite junior and young adult Italian, Belgian, and American riders and found a surprising mix of responses about willingness to dope. The majority of those interviewed, however, believe intense pressure from team managers and sponsors explains the prevalence of cheating. [Full story.](#)

Senior Lands Top International Study Fellowship

Student Nathan Harrison has spent the last three years studying and exploring the origins of traditional folk music, such as bluegrass and Appalachian mountain music. The accomplished musician and UVM senior will have the opportunity to take his musical endeavors one step further after being named a 2008-2009 Killam Fellow by the Foundation for Educational Exchange between Canada and the

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United States of America. [Full story.](#)

McClure Donates \$5 Million to Launch Center on Aging at UVM

A \$5 million gift from Burlington philanthropist Lois Howe McClure, along with \$100,000 in funding from the State of Vermont, will support a new Center on Aging at the University of Vermont. Its mission will be to coordinate and support collaborative education, policy-making activities, and research in the gerontology and geriatrics arena. [Full story.](#)

EPA, UVM's Gund Institute Team Up

A new partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Research and Development and the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics will help decision makers more accurately determine the costs and benefits of actions that alter ecosystem services — the goods and services of nature such as clean air and water, erosion and flood control, soil enrichment, and food and fiber. [Full story.](#)

University of Vermont Benefactor Stephen B. Rubenstein Dies at 69

Stephen B. Rubenstein of New Vernon, N.J., an entrepreneur, real estate developer and philanthropist, died Monday, June 23, at New York-Presbyterian Hospital. Rubenstein and his wife Beverly became the largest individual donors in University of Vermont history with a \$15 million commitment to support environmental education and research announced in 2003. The gift resulted in the renaming of the university's School of Natural Resources to the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, the university's first named school and one of only a few named environment and natural resources program in the world. [Full story.](#)

Robert Wood Johnson Grant Funds Health Video Game Study

The University of Vermont College of Medicine has received an \$189,772 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to explore how interactive digital games could be designed to improve players' health behaviors and outcomes. UVM joins 11 other research teams supported in this first round of funding from Health Games Research, an RWJF national program established to strengthen the evidence base related to the development and use of games to achieve desirable health outcomes. [Full story.](#)

Vermont Wins Fourth Consecutive America East Academic Cup

The University of Vermont has been awarded the America East Academic Cup for the fourth consecutive year and becomes the first institution in conference history to win the award five times (1996, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008). UVM student-athletes boasted a 3.14 cumulative grade-point average during the 2007-08 season. The 3.14 GPA ties the record for the top GPA in the 12-year history of the award, which Vermont set when it won the Academic Cup in

2005 and 2006. [Full story.](#)

UVM Offers Free Summer Housing for Refugee Families

The university opened vacant summer residences to families from Iraq, Myanmar, and beyond this summer. In partnership with the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program (VRRP), UVM helped provide immediate, direct aid to families whose lives have been upended.

[Full story.](#)

UVM's Costanza Featured in Major BBC Series

Robert Costanza was featured in a new BBC documentary series *Nature, Inc.*, on the economic value of biodiversity. Costanza, director of UVM's Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, achieved world fame for his 1997 paper in *Nature* that placed the total value of global "ecosystem services" — like pollination, soil formation and clean water — at about \$33 trillion. [Full story.](#)

UVM Names Wiser Director of Admissions

Elizabeth A. Wiser was named director of admissions on June 12. Wiser brings more than 15 years of senior leadership experience in admissions and enrollment management to UVM. She has been associate director of undergraduate admissions and first-year experience at The Ohio State University in Columbus since 2003. Prior to her tenure at Ohio State, she was vice president for enrollment management and director of admissions at Capital University in Columbus. [Full story.](#)

Jean Harvey-Berino Wins Prestigious James Beard Cookbook Award

Using the science behind more than 16 years of ongoing academic weight loss research, Jean Harvey-Berino, professor and chair of the department of nutrition and health sciences, won the 2008 James Beard Foundation award for a book in the "Healthy Focus" category. *The EatingWell Diet* by Jean Harvey-Berino with Joyce Hendley and the editors of EatingWell (The Countryman Press) combines the magazine's healthful, delicious recipes with Harvey-Berino's behavioral modification program, Vtrim, funded by the National Institutes of Health. [Full story.](#)

UVM Sails to 11th Place at Nationals; Two Catamounts Named All-Americans

The UVM sailing team proved its first-ever national ranking was no fluke over the June 2-4 weekend by placing 11th in the Spring National Dinghy Championships in Newport, R.I. The Catamounts, ranked 7th in the nation by *Sailing World* magazine heading into college sailing's most prestigious event, were the only club-level team (as opposed to varsity status) aside from Brown University. [Full story.](#)

Groundbreaking Ceremony Held for James M. Jeffords Hall

A groundbreaking ceremony was held over the summer for a third significant new addition to the University of Vermont campus, this one an academic facility: James M. Jeffords Hall. The \$55.7 million, 97,000 square foot research, laboratory, and classroom building will be completed in March 2010. [Full story.](#)

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Dana Library Helps Milton Providers and Patients Find Best Internet Health Info

By Jennifer Nachbur

Article published September 3, 2008

Thanks to a \$40,000 grant, doctors, nurses and patients at Milton Family Practice and patrons of the nearby Milton Public Library have learned how to improve their use of consumer-oriented health information on the internet. The funding, received by the Dana Medical Library at the University of Vermont from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, New England Region, has allowed the Milton practice to participate in a project designed to improve provider-patient communications about health and encourage the expansion and promotion of health information services for the community at large.

"Health care providers need a streamlined way to recommend Web sites to their patients and be confident that the information patients will find is evidence-based and at the right level for different needs," said Marianne Burke, project leader and director of UVM's Dana Medical Library.

Burke and Peggy Carey, assistant professor of family medicine, co- led a team of medical librarians from the Dana Medical Library and Fletcher Allen's Frymoyer Community Resource Center in partnership with Milton Family Practice and Milton Public Library for a demonstration project, which promoted the use of an "Information Prescription." In this protocol, developed by the American College of Physicians Foundation and the National Library of Medicine, the health care provider gives a patient or family member a written prescription to seek further information on a health or disease topic on MedlinePlus. Medlineplus.gov is a comprehensive evidence-based, commercial-free Web site with more than 740 health-related topics developed and updated daily by the National Library of Medicine.

"The prescription pad makes it simple for the doctor to suggest topics patients can find in MedlinePlus.gov and seek further information on their own," said John Ferguson, medical director at Milton Family Practice and clinical associate professor of family medicine.

Other project features included educational meetings with providers at the Milton Family Practice, each of whom received custom

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prescription pads; educational bulletin boards featuring MedlinePlus brochures; the installation of an internet-accessible computer and printer to allow patients to follow-through on suggestions made by their physicians; and a phone line tied to the Frymoyer Community Resource Center to enable patients to seek assistance in navigating the internet for health information. The project team also trained librarians and staff at the Milton Public Library to use MedlinePlus and other health information sites, so that they could better assist library users seeking health and wellness information. The Dana Library also donated a family health reference book collection to the Milton Public Library in July.



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UVM HOMEPAGE

Fleming Acquires Barn Ball, Hosts Three Fall Exhibits

By Chris Dissinger

Article published September 3, 2008

The Robert Hull Fleming Museum recently acquired the large spherical sculpture Barn Ball, created by New York-based artist Lars-Erik Fisk. A gift of Betsy Wakeman of Hanover, N.H., Barn Ball was placed on permanent display in the museum's lobby in August.



Measuring over 18-feet in circumference, Barn Ball represents one of the most familiar components of the New England landscape: a red clapboard barn with white windows atop a fieldstone foundation and filled with hay (replaced here with sisal for fire-safety concerns).

Fisk, a 1993 graduate of the University of Vermont, conceived Barn Ball as one of a series of four

spherical sculptures representing elements of the rural Vermont landscape — barn, field, road and trees — aspects that we immediately identify with the surrounding agricultural landscape, which he humorously reduces to their most salient and distinctive features. By packaging the idea of a barn into a simple sphere, the artist encourages viewers to consider whether their ideas about the rural landscape have any connection to the physical land itself.

"We are delighted to welcome Lars Fisk's Barn Ball to the collection," said Museum Director Janie Cohen, "Lars's unique take on an iconic Vermont subject brings the Fleming Museum's Vermont landscape collection into the third dimension. We are deeply grateful to Betsy Wakeman for this generous gift."

Fisk has exhibited his work both locally and at major institutions on the East Coast. He has participated in numerous artist-in-residence programs around the country and served as art director for the band Phish; a collaboration that resulted in Barn Ball appearing on the cover of their 2002 CD, "Round Room."

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UVMers are welcome to meet Fisk at a special reception for the exhibit on Wednesday, Sept. 10 at 5 p.m. at the museum.

The Fleming is also host to three exhibits this fall including, *Stooks, Stacks, and Sheaves: Agricultural Landscapes in America, 1850 - Present* (Sept. 2-Dec. 19), *Buddha in Paradise: Tibetan Art from the Rubin Museum* (Sept. 16-Dec. 19), and *Architectural Improvisation: A History of Vermont's Design/Build Movement 1964-1977* (Sept. 25-Dec. 25). Read more about the exhibits on the [Fleming Museum website's "Changing Exhibitions" page](#).

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Seeding a New Generation of Chemists

By Joshua Brown

Article published September 3, 2008

For most high school students, a summer job does not involve mastering Schlenk tubes, Erlenmeyer flasks, sublimators, valve-bottom flasks, or several kinds of distillation apparatus. Nor does it involve managing an original research project, nor co-authoring a scientific paper for publication.

But for two students in [Project SEED](#) — a new effort at UVM run by assistant professor of chemistry [Rory Waterman](#) — it did. And with a good paycheck to boot.

A program of the American Chemical Society, “SEED works to encourage economically disadvantaged high school students to pursue chemistry by providing genuine summer research opportunities,” Waterman says. “This is not glass washing.”

The two students he mentored, Stephanie Chan and Amsal Karic, are both from South Burlington High School. This is the second year of SEED for Chan, who received a \$3,000 stipend and was the inaugural member of the project at UVM in 2007.

She worked for eight weeks in Waterman’s lab, developing experiments to help his overall research goal of finding new ways to create bonds in phosphorous. This work advances an important area of basic chemistry that could have value in fields ranging from drug delivery to LED lights.

Her efforts focused on zirconium-phosphorus bonds, part of Waterman’s search to discover new metal-catalyzed bond-forming reactions. As a result, Chan is a co-author on a paper about zirconium complexes that Waterman will be submitting for publication shortly.

And Karic, in his first year of the program, received a \$2,500 stipend. He’s beginning his senior year at South Burlington. He worked in Waterman’s lab and also was mentored by Waterman’s colleague, Chris Landry.

“Science is not diverse enough,” says Waterman, who was concerned about limited diversity in candidates coming to interview for positions in his department. “We need to be doing something about

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this wherever we can — and as early as we can. By the time students are in college, it's really too late."

The National Science Foundation agrees. They awarded Waterman a \$623,000, five-year CAREER grant in April to help develop his research on phosphorous-containing molecules. An important piece of the grant is that "underrepresented minority high school students will be encouraged to participate in summer research."

Which means a lot of work for Waterman. "These are people with one high school chemistry course," he says, "there's a steep learning curve."

But the investment seems to be paying off. "Before I started this, I was just mildly interested in chemistry," Chan says, now a first-year chemistry major at Dartmouth College. "But this has been really fun. I'd been thinking of a medical career, but now I'm not sure. Maybe research."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Hort Farm Apple Sales Begin Sept. 5

By The View Staff

Article published September 3, 2008

The UVM Horticultural Research Center continues a 50-year tradition this season with apple sales every Friday through October from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the farm.

New this year is the first certified organic crop to be produced at the Hort Farm. The organic crop is the product of a USDA-funded project led by plant and soil science professor Lorraine Berkett.

Apples are \$1 per pound for conventional varieties, \$2 per pound for organic. Bulk orders and interdepartmental purchases are welcome. Apple sale proceeds help fund research and education programs at the Hort Farm.

Available varieties will change each week as the ripening season progresses.

Available varieties and approximate dates:

- Paula Red, Sept. 5
- Zestar, Sept. 5
- GingerGold, Sept. 5
- Sunrise, Sept. 5
- McIntosh, Sept. 12 through season's end
- NY 74828, Sept. 12 through season's end
- Silken, Sept. 12
- NJ 109, Sept. 12
- Honeycrisp, Sept. 12 or Sept. 19 (limited quantity)
- Gala, Sept. 19
- NY 75414 (Speckles), Sept. 19
- Cortland, Sept. 26 or Oct. 3 through season's end
- Liberty, Sept. 26 through season's end
- Macoun, Oct. 3 through season's end
- Golden Supreme, Oct. 3 through season's end
- Empire, Oct. 3 through season's end
- Mutsu, second week of October
- Northern Spy, second week of October, potentially later

[Read directions to the Horticultural Research Center.](#)

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The political youth movement credited with propelling Sen. Barack Obama to victory in the Democratic primary was on display Aug. 25-28 at the Democratic National Convention in Denver where a record 16 percent of the delegates were under the age of 36. Current students and young alums of the University of Vermont played key roles at the convention as delegates, organizers and political correspondents.

[New Profs on Campus](#)

The incoming class of 2012 aren't the only new faces in UVM's classrooms this fall; this week nearly 50 new faculty members are meeting their students, settling into their offices, and learning the closest place to get a coffee as the university's 218th year begins.

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NOTABLES

September 10, 2008

Publications and Presentations

Kevin McKenna, professor of Russian, published "Didactics and the Proverb: The Case of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Literary Memoir, *The Oak and the Calf*." McKenna examines how Solzhenitsyn uses proverbs to illustrate and underscore the message of his five-hundred page memoir about his experiences as a writer in the Soviet Union during the tumultuous period from 1962 to 1974.

Wolfgang Mieder, professor of German and Russian, who stepped down as chairperson after 31 years, is the editor of the English translation of Lutz Röhrich's seminal work on fairytales titled, "And They Are Still Living Happily Ever After: Anthropology, Cultural History, and Interpretation of Fairy Tales." Mieder also edited the 25th volume of "Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship." The volume contains Mieder's article "Let Us Have Faith that 'Right Makes Might': Proverbial Rhetoric in Decisive Moments of American Politics," an examination of proverbs in American political discourse. He traces the use of proverbs in the political speeches of American presidents from Abraham Lincoln to George W. Bush as well as in those of political activists like Frederic Douglass, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Martin Luther King Jr. In addition, Mieder is the author of "Don't Swap Horses in the Middle of the Stream: An Intercultural and Historical Study of Abraham Lincoln's Apocryphal Proverb," which traces the origin of the proverb and documents its subsequent use throughout different centuries and cultures.

Jane Okech, assistant professor, Department of Integrated Professional Studies is the author of a September 2008 article in the *Journal for Specialists in Group Work* titled "Reflective practice in group co-leadership." She is also the lead author of a September 2008 article in the *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling* titled "Informing culturally competent practice through cross-racial friendships." Her co-author on the paper is Julia Champe, assistant professor, Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

Helga Schreckenberger, professor of German and Russian, published "Joseph Hahn: Kunst als Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben," illustrating the influence of the exile experience on Joseph Hahn's

poetry. Hahn, a refugee from Nazi Germany, lived in Middlebury for the past eighteen years. He died on October 31, 2007.

Schreckenberger argues that the experience of exile impacted not only the thematic aspect of Hahn's work but also its language.

Awards and Honors

Dr. Richard Colletti, professor of pediatrics, received the 2008 Distinguished Service Award from the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (NASPGHAN) in recognition of his excellence and service to the field. Colletti will be presented with the award at a ceremony during the NASPGHAN and Children's Digestive Health and Nutrition Foundation joint annual conference in San Diego on Saturday, November 15. **Dr. Roger Young**, professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences, was elected to the national Board of Trustees of the March of Dimes Foundation. March of Dimes trustees, who serve as volunteers, represent the public in governing the organization and advancing its mission and serve five-year terms. Young has reviewed scientific grant applications for the March of Dimes for six years, and served as a member of the organization's Scientific Advisory Committee since 2006. He is a recognized leader in the field of uterine physiology of pregnancy, and has a long-range goal of decreasing the rising rate of prematurity in the United States, which is consistent with a component of the mission of the March of Dimes.

Karen Richardson-Nassif, associate dean for faculty and staff development and diversity in the College of Medicine, and colleagues will be receiving the Best Paper Award for 2007 from the Research In Medical Education Committee of the Association of American Medical Colleges at the organization's annual meeting in San Antonio on November 4. The group is being recognized for their joint paper titled "Crafting Successful Relationships with the IRB, which was presented at the AAMC annual meeting in 2007.

September 3, 2008

Publications and Presentations

Representatives of the UVM Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program Office delivered a poster presentation and a workshop at the National AHEC Association (NAO) 2008 Conference in Denver, Colorado June 28 to July 1. **Dr. Richard Pinckney**, assistant professor of medicine, presented a workshop titled "Teaching health professionals about pharmaceutical advertising: experience from the Program in Wise Prescribing." **Laurie Hurowitz**, research assistant professor of medicine, delivered a poster presentation titled "Promoting Healthier Weight in Adult Primary Care in Vermont – A Public Health and AHEC Partnership." The NAO national

conference takes place every two years and represents a nationwide sharing of successful efforts to connect students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health.

Awards and Honors

Betsy Greene, associate professor of animal science, received the 2008 Communication Award in recognition of Excellence in Use of Communications Media from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents. Greene was the national winner for her work with eXtension's HorseQuest website. Greene is also co-chair of the "HorseQuest Community of Practice" which includes over fifty national equine experts throughout the country.

Dr. Ted James, assistant professor of surgery, received the Cancer Liaison Physician Outstanding Performance Award from the Commission on Cancer (CoC) for his leadership and guidance as a physician champion. This national award recognizes physicians who go above and beyond expectations to improve and provide direction to their cancer program. James is among 55 recipients nationwide to achieve this recognition.

Rex Forehand, Heinz and Rowena Ansbacher Professor of Psychology and director of the University's clinical training program, received the American Psychology Association's 2008 Award for Distinguished Career Contributions to Education and Training at their annual meeting on August 15.

Adam Lock, assistant professor of animal Science, received the 2008 Young Scientist Award for Research for the Northeast by the American Dairy Science Association and the American Society for Animal Science. Lock is noted for his research on the role of fats and lipids in animal and human nutrition as well as studies with ruminant nutrition.

Lee Nelson, clinical professor of rehabilitation and movement science, received Massachusetts General Hospital's Institute of Health Professions Distinguished Alumni Award at their commencement on May 3, 2008. This award recognizes individuals who have worked to expand and refine the scientific basis for clinical practice through research and scholarship; contributed to new models of practice to foster provision of effective, affordable and ethical care; and contributed significantly to advancing the mission, reputation and standards of the Institute.

Monica Patton is one of fifteen fourth-year medical students to receive an American Medical Association Foundation Physicians of Tomorrow Scholarship. Recipients were nominated by their medical school dean and chosen by a selection committee based upon their academic standing and financial status, as well as community

involvement, letters of recommendation and personal statement. Each student will receive a \$10,000 scholarship to help defray medical school expenses. Currently participating in a clinical rotation at Maine Medical Center, Patton recently completed "The CDC Experience: Applied Epidemiology Fellowship at CDC," a competitive fellowship program that selects eight medical students from around the country each year to spend 10 to 12 months at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Students in the Department of Animal Science won awards at the national meetings of the American Dairy Science Association and the American Society for Animal Science in Indianapolis. **Emma Wall**, a doctoral student also in the Vermont Genetics Network Bioinformatics Core was the sole recipient of the H. Allen Tucker National Appreciation Award for travel to the American Society of Animal Science's annual meeting in Indianapolis last week. She presented two papers of significance to the Vermont dairy industry with her advisor, **Thomas McFadden**, as coauthor. They were, "The acute response to milk removal and the long-term response to frequent milking treatment involve distinct mechanisms" and "The persistent milk yield response to frequent milking during early lactation is associated with persistent changes in mammary gene expression." She was presented with a check and plaque at the awards dinner. **Lindsay Lord**, a master of science candidate won second place in the Northeast Graduate Student Competition for her presentation, "Photoperiod regulates diurnal expression patterns of genes related to immune function in PBMC of heifers." **Jennifer Scudder**, also a master of science candidate, placed third in the Northeast Graduate Student Competition with her presentation, "Colicin E1 and EDTA have additive antimicrobial effects against E. coli isolates in bovine milk."

Denise Youngblood's book *Russian War Films: On the Cinema Front, 1914-2005* was named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title. Youngblood, professor of history, has also received a grant from the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies to support her current project, "Double Vision: Soviet and American Films during the Cold War" (with Tony Shaw).

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