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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

INTERview: Steve Budington



"A lot of this for me is having fun with painting," says Steve Budington, assistant professor of art about his current exhibition, *The Pioneers*. "They're not so serious. There is a bit of lightness and humor and kind of absurdity." (*Photo: Sally McCay*)

Steve Budington, artist and assistant professor, asks curious questions in his new exhibit of paintings and drawings in the Williams Hall Colburn Gallery: "What would happen if the physical body could evolve at the rate of cultural novelty? How would it compensate? What would it become?" In advance of his Nov. 6 gallery talk for this show, *the view* had a private tour with Budington and a chance to turn the questions on him.

FULL STORY 🕨

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Census The Vermont Barn Census — a collaboration among the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, the **UVM Historic Preservation Program** and others — is a statewide, volunteer effort to take stock of the number, type and condition of all the historic barns in Vermont. Listen to historic preservation graduate student and project intern Michael Plummer talk about the effort — and see photos volunteers have submitted — in this audio slideshow.

Buy-Local, Buy-

Global Debate A full

house of 700 people crammed into the Grand Maple Ballroom of the Davis Center on Oct. 29 for a much heralded match-up between Bill McKibben, awardwinning writer, environmentalist, and Middlebury College scholar-in-residence, and Russell Roberts, a prominent economist at George Mason University and Stanford University's Hoover Institute.

November 5, 2008 Text Size: <u>Sm</u> | <u>Med</u> | <u>Lg</u>

THE WEEK IN VIEW

Nov. 7. 5-8 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra Fundraising Exhibit and Auction: "Musical Chairs." Featuring sculptures created by students in Professor Kathleen Schneider's "Beginning Sculpture" class. Light refreshments, live music, and a cash bar. Champlain Mill, Winooski. Information: lisamarie@vyo.org.

Nov. 7. 7:30 p.m. Lane Series Concert: Alexander String Quartet. \$25 adult, \$20 student. A pre-concert talk with the artists begins at 6:30 p.m. Music Building Recital Hall. Information, tickets.

Nov. 8. 8 p.m. Lane Series Concert: Devil Music Ensemble. *Red Heroine*: Film screening with live original soundtrack. \$13 advance, \$15 at the door. Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center, Burlington. Information, tickets.

Nov. 12. 12:15 p.m. Area and International Studies Lecture: "Taking Stock of Global Studies." Luis Vivanco, associate professor of anthropology. John Dewey Lounge, Old Mill. Information: 656-1096.

Nov. 12. 7:30 p.m. Research-in-Progress Seminar: "The Presence of New France in the Champlain Valley: 1609-1759." Joseph-André Senécal, professor of romance languages. John Dewey



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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

INTERview: Steve Budington

By Lee Ann Cox and Elise Whittemore-Hill Article published November 5, 2008



"A lot of this for me is having fun with painting," says Steve Budington, assistant professor of art about his current exhibition, *The Pioneers*. "They're not so serious. There is a bit of lightness and humor and kind of absurdity." *(Photo: Sally McCay)*

Steve Budington, artist and assistant professor, asks curious questions in his new exhibit of paintings and drawings in the Williams Hall Colburn Gallery: "What would happen if the physical body could evolve at the rate of cultural novelty? How would it compensate? What

would it become?" Budington has had a number of exhibitions in New York City and elsewhere around the country and abroad. In advance of his Nov. 6 gallery talk for this show, the view had a private tour with Budington and a chance to turn the questions on him.

THE VIEW: You've said that in these paintings you are exploring ideas of the human figure generating new body parts or responding to the environment or to a new cultural development — the body breaking down boundaries. Tell us about what led you to this kind of investigation.

BUDINGTON: The primary engine for these is a disconnect, it seems to me, between our understanding of our bodies physiologically we know so much, and yet our embodied experience is still so highly subjective. You have your physical body but your experience of the world is so much more. So I started looking at early anatomical studies from when (people) were essentially guessing about what was going on in the body, and then I look at accurate physiological forms such as the muscles here (in this painting), the kneecap, heart, skin, all of those things that we know about. But I'm obviously unwinding them, exposing them to the elements to open up some aspect of the embodied experience of the world. I think of these (painted figures) as really human beings having experiences. And in a sense they've been made strange in order for viewers to be November 5, 2008

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Buy-Local, Buy-Global Debate

able to think about those things in a way they wouldn't from a normal representation of the body.

And you are also looking at equipment in some of your work. What's that in response to?

I think our current embodied experience in the environment is extended in a sense with prosthetics. To get closer to nature, people today are wearing Gortex, ski goggles, all sorts of things which basically serve as a prosthetic for our bodies. It's interesting that in order to get closer to nature we in effect seal ourselves off from it using those kinds of devices.

How much is planned and how much is instinctual when you attack a canvas like this? There's real gestural abstract work; there's clear representation. Some are looser in movement, some finely articulated. Does that play into this equation?

Absolutely. I could never have planned that (painting). I have some intentions, maybe a few elements that I want to work with and I basically start mixing colors and putting paint down on the surface. What happens is the painting has its own demands. I have an intention, I put paint down, and the paint is somewhat chaotic; it doesn't always act how you would expect so I have to respond to what the painting is telling me. I'll respond to the painting, the painting will respond to me, it goes back and forth for a long time and basically I start to interpret what's happening in essentially abstract forms and these figures just kind of emerge out of that.

You have two seemingly contradictory ideas — the wrapping yourself up with some form of prosthesis and the body unwound which feels unprotected. Are those different ideas that show up in different paintings?

The whole idea of being exposed and being protected is something that interests me. When is exposing ourselves actually beneficial and when does protecting ourselves maybe not benefit us? I'm not trying to make a statement on those but to activate questions about those kinds of relationships.

Someone wrote that you "address issues of human vulnerability in a seemingly 'post-human' culture and precarious natural world." Can you talk about your perception of "post-human" and how that affects your work?

That's a complex idea and there are lots of theories about what it means to be post-human. One has to do with the cyborg. What is a cyborg? Some people say a lot of us are already cyborgs in a sense because we have such strong relationships with technological prosthesis including our laptops and so forth. People have artificial knees, artificial hearts, pace makers; in a sense we've already become that. There are nonhuman elements that have already become humanized in some way. Again, it's very elaborate and there are many ideas about what a post-human might be so I'm thinking a lot about those kinds of issues as I paint.

We've heard anecdotally that you are making a huge impact on students when you teach. What are you trying to do in the classroom?

First is to break down any preconceptions students might have about painting. Painting is a strong force in our culture. We all have ideas about what a good painting is, what a bad painting is and I want to unpack some of those. I'm also really interested in art history. In my own work I'm constantly looking at and drawing from old masters and contemporary masters as well. So I expose them to that. One class just finished a transcription project where they were given a masterpiece to transcribe — which is not the same as making a copy. I ask them to think about certain ways of painting in relation to this masterpiece. It allows them to evaluate the formal structure of the painting, how the space is laid out, a lot of those basics of how you mix colors, how you lay out your palette, how light affects color and space and atmosphere. It all breaks down to how you see what you see. Not just what you're seeing, not just mimicking what you see, but how you see it and how is your perception being influenced by a whole number of factors and how do you become aware of those.

What does transcribing a painting mean?

If you're a musician, you can transcribe a symphony piece for a chamber orchestra or a duet or transcribe oral music, the sound into notes. You're translating — it's not just a copy, you're actually creating a new language or transcribing into a different language other than the original. So that's what they're doing. They take a masterpiece and I'm asking them not to look at the style of the painting, all the surface facture, how it's styled depending on when the painting was from, but to look at the underlying structure. I'm asking them to transcribe this one very set masterpiece into another language in order to unpack the pictorial structure of that piece.

Is it a successful assignment?

Incredibly. I'll hang some in the hallway at the opening of this show. When I was an undergrad I had fantastic teachers but I also had some classes that were not very rigorous. I think people may think our classes are a free-for-all, that it's all about expression. But really in order to express yourself you have to learn the language to be able to be articulate within that language. So I really want to give them concrete tools. Visual tools, perceptual tools — things that I wished I had had more of and that I had to really work hard at different points to get. I try to teach what I would ideally have been taught.

You were teaching at an art and design school before you came to UVM in 2007. What brought you here?

I was especially attracted to the liberal arts aspect. I really enjoy working with students who are coming from philosophy or biology classes; they bring that into the painting class and that makes a much more interesting conversation about art. Especially at the undergraduate level I think it's crucial. I want my students to be exposed to a broad range of topics. To be a painter is not to be hermetically sealed in your studio. I think to be a successful artist you have to be in the world; you have to know about what's going on and respond, to be in conversation with those things. The best painters in history have done that, always.

The Pioneers will be on exhibit in the Colburn Gallery in Williams Hall through Nov. 14. Budington will give a gallery talk on Nov. 6 at 4:30 p.m., followed by a reception from 5 to 7 p.m.

theview

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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Audio Slideshow: Vermont Barn Census

By Amanda Waite Article published November 5, 2008

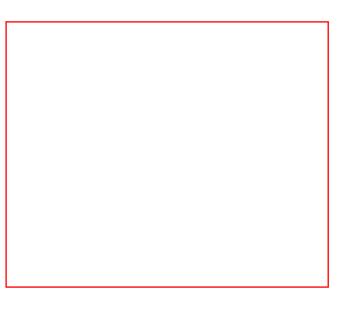


This barn on the Riford farm, near Ludlow, Vt., is one of the photos that volunteers have submitted as part of the Vermont Barn Census effort to gather information about all the historical barns in the state. (*Photo courtesy of Michael Plummer*)

The Vermont Barn Census — a statewide, volunteer effort to take stock of the number, type and condition of all the historic barns in Vermont — is a project of the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, the UVM Historic Preservation Program, Historic Windsor's

Preservation Education Institute, Save Vermont Barns, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and Preservation Trust of Vermont.

Listen to historic preservation graduate student and project intern Michael Plummer talk about the effort — and see photos volunteers have submitted — in this audio slideshow.



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Buy-Local, Buy-Global Debate



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UVM HOMEPAGE

Buy-Local, Buy-Global Debate Is Mostly Civil, But Some Sparks Fly

By Jeffrey Wakefield Article published November 5, 2008

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT



"Don't force me to live in your world," said buyglobal advocate Russell Roberts, who opposes regulation and supports free trade. "The evidence is on my side," countered buy-local proponent Bill McKibben in the first debate of the new Janus Forum. (Photo: Sally McCay)

prominent

people crammed into the Grand Maple Ballroom of the Davis Center on Oct. 29 for a much heralded match-up between Bill McKibben, awardwinning writer, environmentalist, and Middlebury College scholar-inresidence, and Russell Roberts, a

A full house of 700

economist at George Mason University and Stanford University's Hoover Institute.

The occasion was an event titled "Buy Local or Buy Global: A Debate," the inaugural contest in a new debate series called the Janus Forum featuring thinkers with opposing views on important social and economic issues.

Listen to a recording of the debate on UVM's iTunes U page.

(Clicking on the link will launch iTunes on your computer, or prompt you to download the program.)

The event delivered Crossfire-like heat, on occasion, but a good amount of light, as both speakers enumerated in detail the environmental and economics analyses for which they're known, McKibben in support of the buy-local movement, Roberts in opposition.

The rules of the debate, spelled out by moderator Emerson Lynn, editor and publisher of the *St. Albans Messenger*, called for each speaker to deliver a 20-minute opening argument, followed by a 10-minute rebuttal of the other's position, concluding with questions

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from the audience.

McKibben opened the session with a high-speed recitation of 14 points, each one bristling with research citations, supporting the notion that buying food and energy locally would result in both a more environmentally durable economy and more cohesive communities. He challenged Roberts to answer his points — ranging from the fact that fertilizer-intensive agribusiness is eroding soil, a historic hallmark of civilizations that collapse, to the idea that Wal-Marts and other box stores deplete community well being and actually shorten lifespan — any one of which would win him the debate, he argued, if not factually disproven.

Roberts allowed his analysis to range beyond food and energy, which were set in advance as the twin focal points of the debate, McKibben reminded audience members several times, to more comprehensively indict the buy-local movement. Humans always want "more and better," Roberts said. While it's important to temper that basic human urge, he said, human striving has resulted in a bounty of innovation unimaginable 100 years ago that has made life better. Eschewing global trade in favor of buy-local style self sufficiency, he said, is the road to poverty.

The mismatch in opening statements — McKibben presenting a detailed critique, Roberts offering a macro-economic analysis — led to one of the more pointed exchanges of the afternoon.

McKibben, describing Roberts' remarks as a soliloquy, chided him for not answering his points (helpfully going through all 14 of them again). Roberts, he said, was presenting "assertion without evidence" and warned of the dangers of that rhetorical style by citing a radio interview Roberts did a year ago, where he downplayed the impact of sub-prime mortgage lending.

Admitting that he and many others erred on the mortgage issue but clearly piqued, Roberts responded that it was ironic for a graduate of the University of Chicago — where Roberts earned a doctorate in economics, studying under the legendary proponent of data-driven analysis, Milton Friedman — to be criticized for lack of evidentiary rigor by "a guy in a sweater."

In his own inspired turn of phrase, McKibben took issue with Robert's characterization of life in an overly romanticized agricultural past as, in Thomas Hobbes' phrase, "nasty, brutish and short," by asking audience members if they had ever been to Burlington's Intervale.

"Does it look like a Hobbsian hellhole to you?" he asked.

The two went back and forth over the reliability of the research

studies McKibben cited. One study, by the United Nation Food and Agriculture Organization, demonstrating that world poverty was on the rise, provoked another salty exchange.

Roberts flatly disputed the study, saying poverty would be difficult to define and measure in a nation, let alone over the entire global population.

"Then we live in an existential universe where data doesn't matter," McKibben said.

"Numbers are important, Bill," Roberts shot back.

While there was no formal adjudication to determine the debate's winner, it was clear where the audience stood. During the Q&A period, nearly all of the dozen or so questioners asked pointed questions of Roberts and seemed supportive of McKibben's ideas.

That was likely due, however, not to debating prowess — although McKibben exhibited it in abundance — but to the audience's political predisposition, which Roberts, forewarned as he must have been about Vermont, might have miscalculated.

At one point he asked the students in the audience to stand, then asked those who did not intend to be farmers to sit. Quite a few remained defiantly on their feet, as the audience hooted and applauded.

"When I survey high school and colleges students" and ask this question, Roberts said, most sit down, "but maybe it's a different crowd here."

The Janus Project at UVM was established to produce a series of debates on important social and economic issues facing society and to stimulate reasoned discussion of those issues. The debates will stress the contrast and relative effectiveness of solutions that rely on freedom of individual choice as opposed to governmental or regulatory-based approaches to problems. The goal of the series is to improve our understanding of these alternatives through a direct confrontation of competing ideas. The topic of the next Janus Forum debate, scheduled for the spring of 2009, is health care.



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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

'The Vermont Cynic' Captures National Award

By View Staff Article published November 5, 2008

The Vermont Cynic, UVM's student-run weekly newspaper, placed among the top five weekly university tabloid newspapers at the National College Media Convention's Best of Show competition in Kansas City, Mo.

The contest, which draws entries from around the country, is judged by local journalists and national judges based on criteria ranging from news value to photography to leadership. The top five newspapers in the competition, sponsored by Associated Collegiate Press and College Media Advisers, were from Guilford College in North Carolina, the University of North Florida, York University in Toronto and Elon University in North Carolina. The 6,000circulation *Cynic* placed fifth in the 4-year weekly tabloid category.

"The conference was chock full of great sessions and interesting speakers, but it was also a chance to compare the *Cynic* to other newspapers from around the country," wrote *Cynic* editor Dakota Rubin in an e-mail to the newspaper's editorial staff, "We got our paper critiqued by an adviser, and he had really good things to say about our newspaper, which was very encouraging... we beat out some of the best schools in the country for this honor." November 5, 2008

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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Gifts Establish Green & Gold Professorships

By Jay Goyette Article published November 5, 2008

The College of Arts and Sciences is the recipient of major gifts in recent months that have enabled it to establish two new endowed Green & Gold Professor positions, funding for which supports the teaching, service, research, salary, benefits and other general purposes associated with an endowed faculty position.

The Segal & Davis Family Foundation has made a \$250,000 commitment to establish the Robert B. Lawson Green & Gold Professor of Psychology in honor of Robert B. Lawson, professor of psychology, who has announced that he will retire in May of 2010 after having served 44 years on the faculty in the Department of Psychology. The philanthropic foundation was formed by Scott S. Segal '77, a prominent trial attorney in Charleston, West Virginia, and his wife, Robin Jean Davis, Chief Justice of the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals.

Segal says the Segal & Davis Family Foundation has founded several professorships in law and medicine at institutions in West Virginia, and "we just thought it was time to do something for my alma mater at Vermont." When he began looking back at his time at UVM, he says, Professor Lawson immediately came to mind. "Professor Lawson was one of my favorite professors of psychology," says Segal, who majored in psychology at UVM and earned his law degree at West Virginia University. "He opened my eyes to a lot of perception issues in psychology and how important they can be, and I've applied many of those in my practice of law. I continue to believe that a strong psychology department is critical to the University of Vermont, and that is one of many reasons that we donated the professorship."

"I just about fell off my chair" when learning at a dinner with Segal last April of the Segal & Davis Family Foundation's forthcoming gift, Lawson says. "I was very humbled and honored by it. I think it's a real tribute to the department and to the university reflecting the commitment and the value that former students get from being part of the UVM community."

"I'm very grateful to Scott and Robin for their support of UVM and the students and faculty who will benefit in the years to come. All of November 5, 2008

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us here at the university appreciate the support and sustained participation of alums in university life. They are remembered just as they remember their time at UVM. You can take them out of Vermont, but you can't take UVM out of them."

Breazzano gift honors son's graduation

A \$500,000 commitment from David and Roxanne Breazzano, parents of Michael Breazzano '09, will also enable the College of Arts and Sciences to establish the Breazzano Family Green & Gold Professor. Income from this endowment may be used at the dean's discretion to support faculty in any department in Arts and Sciences. "We've very grateful to our donors for this support," said Eleanor Miller, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "The Green & Gold professors have been very important to us strategically in helping us to retain the very best faculty, who may be getting tempting offers from other institutions. Being able to offer that person the recognition of a named professorship and additional research funding, for example, can sometimes tip the balance."

David Breazzano said the family's gift was a form of graduation present to his son, who is due to graduate next spring. "We've watched Michael grow and develop as a person in his three years at UVM, and we think it's a great institution," he says. "We've done a similar thing for our other sons, and we feel this makes for a more permanent type of graduation gift. It's consistent with our other philanthropic ventures . . . I'm a great believer in the importance of education. It's a noble cause."

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Holocaust Scholar to Speak at Hilberg Memorial Lecture

By View Staff Article published November 5, 2008

John Roth, the Edward J. Sexton Professor of Philosophy at Claremont McKenna College, will give a lecture titled "The Failure(s) of Ethics: The Holocaust and Its Reverberations" on Nov. 10 at 8 p. m. in Fleming 101 as part of the annual Raul Hilberg Memorial Lecture.

Named the 1988 U.S. National Professor of the Year by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Roth is the founding director of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights at Claremont McKenna College, where he also serves on the faculty of Claremont Graduate University. He has written a number of books including *A Consuming Fire: Encounters with Elie Wiesel and the Holocaust; Approaches to Auschwitz: The Holocaust and Its Legacy (with Richard L. Rubinstein); Different Voices: Women and the Holocaust (edited with Carol Rittner); and his latest work* titled *Private Needs, Public Selves: Talk About Religion in America.*

For more Information call 656-1492.

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FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Marsh Mineralogist to Lecture Nov. 12

By The View Staff Article published November 5, 2008

James Marsh Professor-at-Large Mickey E. Gunter, professor of geological sciences and adjunct professor of materials science and environmental science at the University of Idaho, will deliver a public lecture titled "Fear of Risk vs. Risk of Fear" on Wednesday, Nov. 12 at 4 p.m. in the Livak Grand Ballroom, Davis Center. A reception will immediately follow.

Gunter is an internationally known mineralogist, focusing on optical mineralogy, and an expert on the health effects of asbestos and crystalline silica. Throughout his years of scholarship, research and service, he has authored more than 100 scholarly works, including the textbook *Mineralogy and Optical Mineralogy* (Mineralogical Society of America, 2007). He has been the recipient of numerous awards including, the Mineralogical Society of America Distinguished Lecturer Award and the University of Idaho Teaching Excellence Award (the highest teaching award at the university).

Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations, call Conference & Events Services, 656-5665.

Information: 656-3186.

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Publications and Presentations

John Hughes, professor of psychiatry and psychology, authored a paper that was recently identified by Essential Science Indicators as the highest cited paper in the research area of Nicotine Replacement Therapy, an honor which also indicates it is one of the most-cited recent papers in its field. Titled "A meta-analysis of the efficacy of over-the-counter, nicotine replacement," the paper was originally published in the journal *Tobacco Control* in March 2003. A Q&A piece with Hughes, as corresponding author of this "Fast Moving Front" article is posted on the Thomson Reuters ScienceWatch® website for November 2008.

Christopher Francklyn, professor of biochemistry, and **Anand Minajigi**, graduate student in biochemistry, published a paper titled "RNA-assisted catalysis in a protein enzyme: The 2'-hydroxyl of tRNAThr A76 promotes aminoacylation by threonyl-tRNA synthetase" in the November 7 Early Edition of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* (PNAS).

Wolfgang Mieder, professor of German and Russian, published "Proverbs Speak Louder Than Words" Folk Wisdom in Art, Culture, Folklore, History, Literature and Mass Media, a collection of ten essays illustrating the significance of proverbs in the past and present. Mieder documents their multifaceted use and occurrence in literature, politics, art, folklore, mass media, and popular culture including comic strips and bumper stickers. Each essay demonstrates the communicative value of proverbs, their versatility and universality, which makes them an inevitable prerequisite for cultural literacy. In addition, Mieder contributed an article to a volume dedicated to the Nobel Prize-winning German author Günter Grass. His contribution, "'Vermont.' Günter Grass' grünes Gelegenheitsgedicht," presents an analysis of Grass' poem on Vermont and its different translations into English provided by UVM German students.

Awards and Honors

Jane Okech, assistant professor in the Counseling program (IPS) and her collaborators Megan Johnson (Cross Roads Counseling Services & Counseling Program Alumni), Deborah Rubel (Oregon State University), Randall Astramovich and Wendy Hoskins (University of Nevada, las Vegas) were honored with the Western Association for Counselor Education & Supervision (WACES) 2008 Research Award. The award recognized the contribution of their empirically based article "Doctoral research training of counselor education faculty" which was published in the December 2006 issue of the Journal for Counselor Education & Supervision. The award was presented at the recently concluded Western Association for Counselor Education & Supervision Conference (November 5-9), Palm Springs, California.

Deborah Worthley, director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in UVM's division of continuing education, has been named associate director for education of the recently-announced Center on Aging at UVM. Jeanne Hutchins, current manager of Elder Care Services at Fletcher Allen, has been named program manager of the Center on Aging.

November 5, 2008

Publications and Presentations

Matthew W. Bovee, assistant professor of business administration, will present preliminary results in a peer-reviewed working paper entitled "Characteristics of Decision-Useful Financial Reporting Information: An Empirical Validation of the Proposed International Accounting Model" at the 13th International Conference on Information Quality, at MIT Sloan in Boston on 15th November. The paper empirically validates a foundational model influencing the quality of financial reporting information - the United States' accounting model of the attributes of useful information. In the near future this model is set to be incorporated into an international standard, globally affecting professional decisions about the characteristics of useful financial reporting information and thus its quality for a multitude of business users. While validated information quality models exist in Information Systems as potential substitutes, these have not been fully reconciled with descriptive models of information usefulness in accounting. Using survey data from business information users as defined by the accounting standards, and partial least squares analyses, the study empirically tests and compares the proposed model for the international accounting standard and a pre-existing empirically validated Information Quality model from Information Systems.

October 29, 2008

Awards and Honors

The Sister Elizabeth Candon Distinguished Service Award was presented to **Gayle Wright Bress** at the annual meeting of the