

Keeping in Touch

University of Vermont
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College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
CALs on the Web: www.uvm.edu/cals/



Fanning the flames of excellence

As many of us know from recent camping experiences, campfires require dry wood, kindling, and the ignition of a spark or match to get things going. They also require dedicated and deliberate tending to achieve and sustain an effective flame. In a similar way, classroom and laboratory instruction mimic the dynamics of a campfire. The sparks stimulated by engaging lectures, vigorous discussion, innovative modes of inquiry, and novel applications of knowledge can rapidly transform a dormant classroom into an energetic educational environment ablaze with intellectual activity. Talented students, dedicated staff, and award-winning faculty combine to make the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) a place that is aglow with academic excellence.

CALs students are routinely

recognized for their academic accomplishments and leadership abilities. As noted in Jeffrey Hughes' article about the Field Naturalist Program (below), students from this highly selective graduate program are consistently chosen to receive the Switzer Foundation's prestigious Environmental Leadership Fellowships. Two CALs graduates were recognized at Commencement 2003 for their outstanding leadership qualities and academic achievement.

Anna Bramley (B.S. Biological Sciences) received the *Mary Jean Simpson Award*, which is presented to the outstanding senior woman who best exemplifies the qualities of character, leadership, and scholarship. **Heather Hawkes** (B.S. Nutrition and Dietetics) was honored with the *Mariafranca Morselli Leadership Award*, which recognizes the senior woman who has excelled in science,

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CDAE Professor Dan Baker (right), newly named winner of one of UVM's highest teaching honors—the 2003 Kroepsch-Maurice Excellence in Teaching Award—and members of the Vermont-Honduran Partners Project, take a break using a new ecologically safe evaporator Baker introduced in June to eliminate burning tires and wood in brown sugar processing. Participants, from left, CDAE graduate students **Dave Chappelle** and **Matias Chiota**, **Goldon Aguilar**, CDAE undergraduate **Scott Martin**, **Juan Osorio**, **Gaspar Aguilar**, and VT Sugarmaker **Peter Purington**. (See article on page 6.)

Field Naturalist Program: Planting an acorn and growing a tree



Current Field Naturalist Program students, from left: Regan Brooks, J. Bradley Materick, Peter Ellis, and Kristen Puryear.

The Field Naturalist Graduate Program is only 20 years old, but we already claim title to being the most selective environmental Master's program in the country. Each year, after screening pre-applications of more than 100 prospective students, we encourage a few dozen to complete their applications. From this select group, we ultimately offer admission to four, all of whom invariably accept. Applicants not accepted into the Field Naturalist Program most often enter Yale, Duke, the Univer-

sity of Michigan, or the University of Montana.

Today's Field Naturalist Program is the brainchild of Hub Vogelmann, professor of botany (now emeritus), and Bill Robertson, program director of the A.W. Mellon Foundation. Their vision was to create a graduate program that provides rigorous training in a wide range of disciplines, centered around hard science in a field setting. The desired product would be highly skilled scientific leaders, patterned after 19th century naturalists like Charles Darwin.

But field skills alone are not enough to move the world—effective communication and interpersonal skills also are key. Profes-

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Message from Dean Rachel Johnson UVM—and CALS— on upswing

On September 5, 2003, the editorial page of *The Burlington Free Press* declared that “by almost any measure

UVM is on the upswing.” At a time when many institutions of higher education are dramatically raising tuition and cutting faculty positions, “UVM is aggressively pursuing President Daniel Mark Fogel’s vision for a larger, more academically rigorous university.” In comparison with the class of 2006, UVM’s incoming class of 2007 is 200 students larger and has average SAT scores that are 12 points higher for out-of-state students and 17 points higher for Vermont high school graduates.

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) is an important partner in achieving the growth and excellence that UVM is striving for. CALs is playing a role in the growth of UVM’s undergraduate student body. We have launched an undergraduate biochemistry program that is jointly offered with the College of Arts and Sciences. This new program already has 23 first-year students enrolled. Faculty from CALs and UVM Extension are highly competitive in grant and contract awards and have generated a record

high \$7,716,448 to support their research and scholarship over the past year.

UVM’s top academic building priority is a new life science building that will replace the outdated Hills Building. With the support of the state of Vermont, we have made excellent progress in the planning of this new building. The building will house CALs’ plant science programs and will provide our students, faculty, and staff with state-of-the-art facilities for their teaching, research, and outreach activities.

We are grateful for the continuing support of our alumni, parents, and friends. These are stimulating times for the College and the University, and we invite your active participation in our major campaign aimed at broadening our scholarship resources, strengthening our faculty support, and enhancing our teaching and research facilities. As always, please keep in touch. I may be reached at 802-656-0137 or calsdean@uvm.edu.

Transitions in the College

We extend a warm CALs welcome to new faculty members in Botany and Agricultural Biochemistry—**Brian Beckage** and **Terrence Delaney**; in Community Development and

Education to students: **Judy Barber**, **Dr. Paula Fives-Taylor**, and **Dr. Valerie Chamberlain**.

Several faculty in CALs were conferred emeriti status: **Dr. Alan Gotlieb**, **David Rogers**, and **Dr. Elizabeth Scannell Trent**. We wish our new emeriti much success and thank them for their dedicated service!

Applied Economics—**Chris Koliba** and **Edward McMahon**; in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics—**Viswanath Bandaru**, **Mariana Matrajt**, **Kathleen Seiler**, and **Hui Wu**; and in Plant and Soil Science—**Scott Costa**.

Dr. **Jean Harvey-Berino** has been appointed as permanent chairperson of the Nutrition and Food Sciences Department and also received the 2003 Robert L. Bickford, Jr. Keystone Award (see article on page 4 for details). Dr. **Donald Stratton** takes on the directorship of the Justin Morrill Honors Program in CALs (Web site at www.uvm.edu/~jmhonors).

Dr. **Warren Schaeffer**, professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, received emeritus status this past May and generously donated a new mace made of Vermont maple for use at future CALs Commencement ceremonies. Dr. Schaeffer’s commemorative gift bears inscriptions that honor the College and pay tribute to several faculty and staff for their outstanding dedi-



At the CALS Commencement ceremonies, Warren Schaeffer (with mace) paid tribute to colleagues (from left) Judy Barber, Paula Fives-Taylor, and Valerie Chamberlain.

CALS students honored for achievements



Heather E. Hawkes '03 (center) is presented with the 2003 Lawrence K. Forcier Outstanding Senior Award from Dean Rachel Johnson and Dr. Lawrence K. Forcier at the CALS Alumni and Friends Dinner on May 3.

Heather Hawkes '03 was awarded the 2003 Lawrence K. Forcier Outstanding Senior Award on May 3 at the 10th Annual CALS Alumni and Friends Dinner at the Clarion Hotel in South Burlington, VT. She was chosen for her excellent academic record, demonstrated positive community presence, and leadership in CALS. Hawkes holds UVM honor society memberships in TOWERR, Mortar Board, Phi Eta Sigma, Kappa Omicron Nu, and Golden Key. Within the UVM community, she worked as a UVM AdvoCAT, and was founder and president of the UVM student Food and Nutrition Club, a CALS Advisory Board member, and a CALS representative on the Student Advisory Panel to the President. Hawkes received two other UVM awards the *Blair Williams Award* and the *Mariafranca Morselli Leadership Award*. She is currently enrolled in a dietetic internship at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital.

John Pigott '05 pulled it off! He won the prestigious Cacchione Cup, First Place in the Individual Open Fences Class, and a very close Second in the Individual Open Flat Class at the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association's National Championships in Murfreesboro,



John Pigott '05 and fellow USA team member Kama Godek (left) and Hally Phillips celebrate First Place for their team in the Overall Competition at the International Student Riding Association's Nations Cup in Bedford, N.Y., held July 16-20, against 18 international, three-person teams. Pigott also won First Place in the Individual Jumping Competition.

Tenn., May 1-4. For entrance into the National Championships, Pigott competed in eight regional and New England equestrian competitions and won most of them. The Cacchione Cup earned Pigott a \$1,500 grant to compete in Europe, an \$800 scholarship, and two saddles. "It's the top honor in the nation; it's what everyone strives for and what I've been striving for since I first got to college," Pigott says.

The story doesn't end there. In June Pigott won Second Place for Individual Jumping in Hanover, Germany, and in July in Bedford, N.Y., as part of the USA three-person team, Pigott won First Place in the Overall Competition among 18 international teams and also received First Place in the Individual Jumping Competition. A junior, with a double major in animal science and chemistry, Pigott plans to pursue a career in veterinary medicine after graduation.

Dairy management students from the University of Vermont (UVM) and Vermont Technical College (VTC) received a Platinum Award for their superlative presentations at the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge in East Lansing, Mich., on April 11-12. The winning team consisted of UVM Animal Science majors **Liz Brunst, Keeley McGarr, Rachel Pucetti, and Sean Hardy**; CDAE major **Jeff Sheldon**; and VTC students Ransom Conant, Jessica Coutou, Brett Denny, and Jason Taylor. They were coached by UVM faculty member and FARMS Program Coordinator **Don Maynard** and Miner Institute Instructor **Wanda Emerich**. Each team conducted a dairy farm site visit, met with farm owners and herd managers, reviewed actual production and farm financial data, and developed and then presented a comprehensive plan for farm management improvements. The two-day event was sponsored by more than 50 companies within the dairy industry and drew 24 teams from 22 universities. The Vermont House of Representatives recognized these students' outstanding achievements with a congratulatory Resolution (H.C.R. 122)!



Platinum Award-winning UVM team members (from left): Sean Hardy, Liz Brunst, Keeley McGarr, Rachel Pucetti, Rachel Hearne (non-participant), and Jeff Sheldon.

Continued on page 6

Bickford Keystone Award creates strong connections



Robert L. Bickford, Jr.

The newly established Robert L. Bickford, Jr. Keystone Award in Nutrition and Food Sciences has already created some important connections for **Rebekah Eaton**, a junior Nutrition and Food Sciences stu-

dent and Dr. **Jean Harvey-Berino**, chair of the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences. Thanks to funding support from CALS alumnus **Bob Bickford '43**, the two began a research collaboration this summer that is evaluating whether a reduced-calorie diet with a variety of interventions may improve

weight loss in a group of overweight adults.

Not only did Eaton gain some valuable experience working with Harvey-Berino, but she also became very familiar with some advanced software products that track and analyze the dietary records of dozens of study participants. "It was great to work with these sophisticated computer programs," Eaton says. "I am looking forward to using these skills in my other classes and in the presentation of my findings at an upcoming conference."

For Harvey-Berino, the Bickford Keystone Award makes it possible to get undergraduate students more deeply involved in a research project. "It was a real plus to have Rebekah start work-

ing on the project this summer and carry it through into her junior year. She's a bright, hard-working student who will get much more out of being involved in a major research project over a year's time instead of simply observing one for a few weeks during a semester."

Other academic departments within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences are seeking "keystone award" benefactors that will make it possible to offer more substantive opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research collaborations with faculty. For more information about keystone awards, please contact College Development Officer Howard Lincoln at (802) 656-2509 or howard.lincoln@uvm.edu.

Naturalist, from page 1

sional-level writing and public speaking are mainstays of the entire Field Naturalist curriculum.

Field Naturalists tend to be older (the average entering age is 28+) and extremely bright (median GRE scores are in the 92nd to 97th percentiles). More than half are Phi Beta Kappa or Phi Kappa Phi scholars, about 20% are National Merit Scholars or Finalists, more than half are fluent in at least one language other than English, and about a third have served as Peace Corps Volunteers. In reviewing applications, we only half-jokingly ask, "Does this applicant have what it takes to become Secretary of the Interior someday?"

We cannot yet claim a Secretary of the Interior, but we can rightfully claim to be training tomorrow's conservation CEOs. As has happened three other times in the last twelve years, two of our current second-year students—**Regan Brooks** and **Kristen Puryear**—have received Environmental Leadership Fellowships from the Switzer Foundation. Only ten graduate students each year receive this most prestigious of awards, and over the past 15 years (except for Yale University, which leads us slightly), the tiny Field Naturalist Program has won more of these fellowships than any entire university. This is doubly impressive given that only four field naturalists compete each year against hundreds of students from Yale, Harvard, MIT, and other New England universities.

The Field Naturalist Program is housed

in the Department of Botany, with four botany faculty—Walter Poleman, Cathy Paris, Dave Barrington, and Jeff Hughes (all of whom have received University teaching awards)—playing central roles in the program's success. Faculty from other units on campus—Natural Resources, Geology, Plant and Soil Science, Biology, Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Geography—also play key roles.

All Field Naturalists work as *pro bono* consultants for nonprofit organizations in need of technical environmental assistance. For example, within the past two years we have worked with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, the towns of Milton and Richmond, and the Vermont Nature Conservancy.

Within a year of completing the Field Naturalist Program, 100% of our graduates have landed positions within the fields of conservation and stewardship. Within two years, 40% have been promoted to positions of director.

Great ideas die unless supported, and none of the past or present field naturalist excellence would be possible without the generous support of the Lintilhac Foundation, the A.W. and R.K. Mellon Foundations, and friends

such as Marillyn Wilson, Shu Bassett, and Frank and Bird McCormick. Our success is their success.

With so many daunting environmental challenges before us, it is easy to become discouraged and pessimistic about the future of our environment. Before losing hope, however, drop us a line and we will send a field naturalist your way. Spending time with our students will convince you that there still is hope after all.

—Jeffrey Hughes



Adam Wheeler, graduate student in the Plant and Soil Science Department, grew a 628-pound pumpkin at the Horticulture Research Center (HRC) as part of his Giant Pumpkin Project to stimulate interest in horticulture with area school children and as an outreach to bring K-12 students to HRC to view the Common Ground Student-run Farm and various research projects being conducted onsite. Adam's pumpkin won 2nd place at the Champlain Valley Fair in August, and he has grown 8 other pumpkins weighing in excess of 400 pounds.

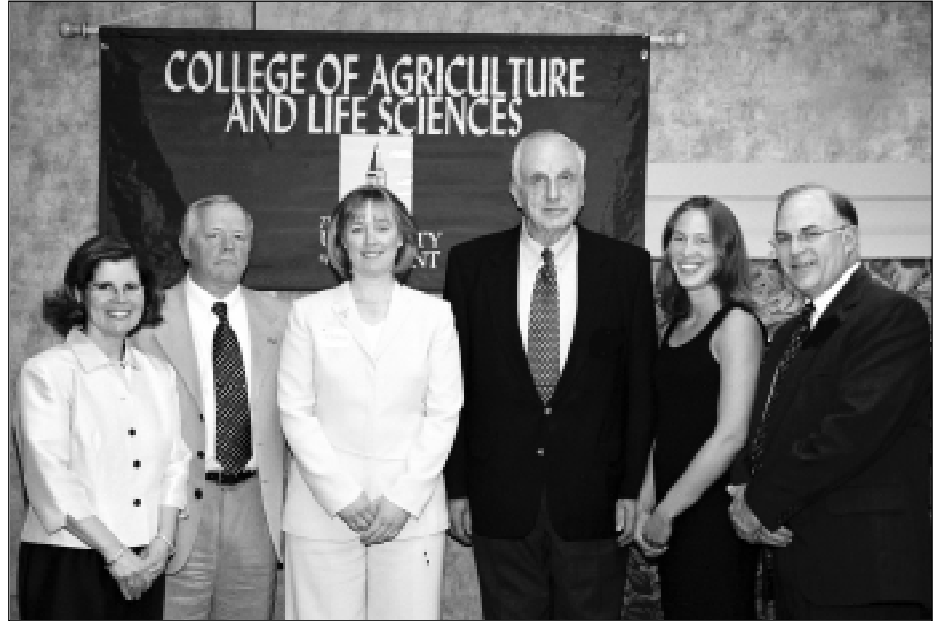
CALS recognizes alumni for outstanding achievements

Heather Hawkes '03:
See text on page 3.

Irene Newsham '82 serves as director of the Doreen and David Hermelin Laboratory of Molecular Oncogenetics at the Hermelin Brain Tumor Center in Detroit, Mich., and is recognized as one of the nation's leading researchers on molecular and cellular biology of malignant transformation and metastasis and in the identification of novel biomarkers for lung, breast, and brain cancer. Newsham and colleagues have discovered a new gene that has the ability to suppress the growth of lung, breast, and brain tumors. Newsham received her B.S. degree in Biochemistry from UVM in 1982 and her Ph.D. in Genetic Toxicology from MIT.

Henry Engster G'74, Ph.D.'77 is widely known and respected as a scientist and leader in the field of poultry nutrition. Engster is currently Vice President of Technical Services for Perdue Farms, Inc., where he oversees a staff of approximately 90 professionals. His business and professional achievements in the U.S. poultry industry are numerous, including serving as President of the International Poultry Science Association. Engster received M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from UVM in Animal Nutrition.

Roger Allbee '67 has had a career highlighted by numerous contributions to the agricultural industry in Vermont and the nation. He served as consultant to the Vermont Governor's task force on agricultural and forestry taxation, agricultural advisor to U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords, author of the first national research bill on acid rain, Vice President of Springfield Farm Credit Bank (an advocate for Northeast farmers in D.C.), and formed his own international agricultural trading company to expand export markets of New England food products. Allbee was instrumental in the creation of the Northeast Dairy Foods Research Center run jointly by UVM and Cornell and has actively supported UVM programs in agriculture, forestry, and water quality management. He currently serves as Executive Director of the USDA Farm Services Agency in Vermont. Allbee received his B.S. degree in Agriculture Economics.



Four alumni and one graduating senior were recognized for outstanding achievement at the CALS 10th Annual Alumni and Friends Dinner on Saturday, May 3, 2003, in South Burlington, VT. Dean Rachel Johnson (left) poses with award winners **Roger Allbee '67**, **Irene Newsham '82**, **Thomas Holzinger '53**, **Heather Hawkes '03** (Outstanding Senior), and **Henry Engster G'74, Ph.D.'77**.

Thomas Holzinger '53 is recognized internationally as a leading dairy expert, specializing in process control, quality assurance, product safety, and regulatory compliance. Holzinger had a distinguished career spanning 34 years at the Borden Company. He rose through the ranks to become the Corporate Director of Quality Assurance and Compliance for the corporation's 5,000 products made in 137 plants around the globe. During his career, he served on numerous national panels and advisory boards including the American Dairy Science Association, the National Dairy Board Science Advisory Board, the Dairy Research Foundation, and the Institute of Food Technologists. Now retired from Borden, Inc., he shares his expertise around the world by assisting numerous organiza-

tions and businesses with their food product development and processing needs. Holzinger received his B.S. degree from UVM in Dairy Technology.

Seeking your nominations for the 2004 CALS Alumni Awards

**New Achiever Alumni Award
Outstanding Alumni Award**

Due: Friday, February 13, 2004

Nomination forms at:
www.uvm.edu/cals/alumni

Awards presented at the
CALS Alumni and Friends Dinner
Saturday, May 1, 2004
Inn At Essex, Essex Junction, VT

Alumni Update

Check out the new online connection to communicate with classmates from the past at www.alumni.uvm.edu.

Student achievements (continued)



Emma Wall G'04 received first place in Graduate Competitions at the Northeast American Dairy Science and American Society of Animal Science meetings held in Phoenix, Ariz., on June 26. Upon completing her B.S. in Animal Science at UVM, she moved to Connecticut for a year to work in the dairy industry. "... it re-sparked my desire to continue with school," Wall says. She returned to UVM and is working on her Master's degree in lactation physiology and plans to pursue her doctoral degree in this area or in reproductive physiology.



"Laura is an exceptionally dedicated teacher with communication skills that are superb ... and challenges students to think and figure out the answer to their questions themselves, thereby developing our student's intellects and problem solving skills," says Plant and Soil Science Lecturer Wendy Sue Harper. **Laura Hanrahan G'03** was recognized as an Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant on April 23 by the Graduate College, one of eight receiving such an honor across UVM. In addition, Hanrahan received third place for her research presentation entitled "Phosphorus Runoff from Surface-Applied Dairy Manure from Different Phosphorus Diets and Management" at the Northeastern Branch of the American Society of Agronomy on July 1 in Burlington, VT. Hanrahan is seeking a career in the natural resource conservation profession.



Sandra Musters G'03 received first place at the National Dairy Science Association's Graduate Competition in Phoenix, Ariz., on June 26. According to Animal Science Chair Karen Plaut, "It is limited to one competitor per university and is a big honor to win." Sandra arrived at UVM as an exchange student from the Netherlands, completed her undergraduate degree in Animal Science, and then decided to continue with a Master's degree, which she finished this past August. Musters has returned home and is now seeking a laboratory technician position with a pharmaceutical company.

CDAE People and Projects In the News

UVM's *The View* reports on CDAE Lecturer **Dan Baker** winning the University's Kroepsch-Maurice Teaching Award for 2003: "Because his course work touches a variety of fields that are each rapidly evolving—agricultural economics, sustainable development, demographics, public administration and others—Baker is a master at revising his materials and staying abreast in a variety of core areas."

UVM's Peace Corps recruiter and CDAE graduate student, **Carmen Jaquez**, was highlighted in *The Burlington Free Press* (10/5/03). Jaquez was a Peace Corps volunteer in Uganda from 1995 to 1997 and is one example of the diverse experiences offered to students enrolled in CDAE's M.S. Program.

Ken Becker, CDAE Lecturer, with graduate student **Meaghan Sheridan** and CDAE Department Chair **Jane Kolodinsky** have found that a small-scale yogurt or cheese plant supplied by five 100-cow dairy farms is an economically feasible idea. *The Barton Chronicle* (9/24/03) wrote, "The report was based on a detailed study paid for by a \$29,000 Community Development Block Grant. The movement was started by a group of farmers discouraged with the price of milk."

CDAE has been awarded \$150,000 to offer five Community Development Work Study Fellowships for economically disadvantaged and minority students entering either the CDAE M.S. or MPA Programs. These Fellows combine work

with local community development or government organizations with full-time graduate study.

Students enrolled in CDAE's **Consumer Assistance Program** course gain hands-on experience working for the Attorney General's Office. Students collected data for a study released on 9/25/03 showing wide price disparities in retail prices for a variety of prescription drugs in local pharmacies. "When the same amount of the same drug costs three times more at one area pharmacy than another, we're talking real money here. Smart consumers will shop around," said Attorney General William Sorrell.

To read these and other articles, go to www.uvm.edu/cdae/news/news.php.

—Jane Kolodinsky

Vermont's Agricultural Hall of Fame includes UVMers

University of Vermont provost Dr. A. **John Bramley** and alumnus **David Marvin** (CALs '70) were among the first inaugural group of inductees into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame on August 28 at the Champlain Valley Exposition in Essex Junction, VT.

Bramley came to Vermont from England in 1990 to become chair of UVM's Department of Animal Science. From 1999-2001 he was CALS Dean until his appointment as interim provost, and in October 2002 Bramley was appointed permanent provost. He is credited with revitalizing the UVM Animal Science Department and has achieved international acclaim for his mastitis research.

Marvin is current chair of the CALS Advisory Board, the Shelburne Farms Board, and the Vermont Land Trust. Marvin and his wife, Lucy, own and operate Butternut Mountain Farm in Johnson, VT, a nationally known retail and mail order maple business. The Marvins also oversee a 1000-acre diversified forestry operation producing maple syrup, Christmas trees, and timber.



Dave Marvin '70 (right) receives his Vermont-authored print from Vermont Governor Jim Douglas.



Provost John Bramley is shown receiving his Hall of Fame Award from Vermont Governor Jim Douglas.

UVM Farm receives 2003 Dairy of Distinction Award

The Paul Miller Research Center, a.k.a. UVM Spear Street Farm, has recently received the honorable **2003 "Dairy of Distinction" Award** from the Vermont Division of the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Program. All active Vermont farms were eligible and judged on their merits of cleanliness of animals and facilities, attractiveness and landscaping of buildings, barnyards, fences, and roads. Many thanks go to **Greg Eurich**, Director of the Plant and Animal Bio-Research Facility, and the UVM Farm Crew for all their efforts to bring UVM and CALS this notable recognition!

Fanning the flames, from page 1

demonstrated leadership, and contributed significantly to the advancement of women on campus.

Other noteworthy accomplishments include the high honors Platinum Award received by Animal Science students **Liz Brunst**, **Sean Hardy**, **Keeley McGarr**, **Rachel Pucetti**, and **Jeff Sheldon** at the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge last spring (see details on page 3).

A major ingredient in the formula for student success is the role of outstanding faculty members. Botany and Agricultural Biochemistry Lecturers **Cathy Paris** and **Walter Poleman** and Community Development and Applied Economics Lecturer **Dan Baker** are three glowing examples. Dr. Paris received the 2003 *Joseph E. Carrigan Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching* and Professors Poleman and Baker both have recently been named the 2003 winners of the *Kroepsch-Maurice Excellence in Teaching Award*, one of the highest honors for teaching at UVM.

Alumni, parents, and friends of CALS have been fanning these flames of excellence with their charitable gifts over the years. With October's launch of the \$250 million Campaign for the University of Vermont, broader and higher levels of donor activity will be needed to successfully complete the campaign by July 2007. Major campaign priorities for the College include new classroom and laboratory facilities to replace the Hills Agricultural Sciences building, funding to help sustain the exemplary teaching and research work of the CALS faculty, and enhanced scholarship support for outstanding undergraduate and graduate students. For information on how you can help fan the flames of excellence, contact College Development Officer Howard Lincoln at (802) 656-2509 or howard.lincoln@uvm.edu.



Beranda Marks '04, Hort Club/Greenhouse Manager; Jessica Waite '05, Hort Club Vice President/Treasurer; Melissa Stolhammer '04, Hort Club member; and Elijah Lloyd '05, Hort Club President, placed third in the collegiate branch horticultural competitions at the American Society for Horticultural Science's annual meeting, October 3-5 in Providence, R.I. UVM Horticulture Club advisor, Dr. Mark Starrett, from the Plant and Soil Science Department accompanied the team to the conference.

—Howard Lincoln and Rachel Johnson

Keeping in Touch

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Feeling the force—that's g-force!

Dr. **Karen Plaut**, Professor and Chair of the Department of Animal Science, whose main research focus is mammary gland development, was recently awarded a three-year grant through NASA's Fundamental Space Biology Program. Plaut and two NASA scientists are studying the effects of hypergravity on metabolic activity in pregnant rats. Hypergravity is more than one times the gravity experienced on earth, and these pregnant rats are being exposed to gravity two times greater than normal. This research is being conducted at NASA-Ames Research Center in Moffett Field, CA.

Many environmental factors affect mammary gland development, and studying altered gravi-

tational forces such as hypergravity and microgravity (weightlessness in space) are methods to help us better understand it.

In June 2003, Plaut began the first phase of a three-year study, which required a tremendous amount of support and offered a rare opportunity for several members of her research team: **Rhonda Maple**, research technician; Dr. **Ela Zakrzewska**, post-doctoral associate; **Laura Lintault**, graduate student; and four undergraduates, **Tanya Mulvey**, **Gina Roberts**, **Kat Coughlan**, and **Carrie Hanover**. All packed up and headed west for the first phase of a two-week research project. The students learned about animal husbandry and all-night research projects. For all involved, it was a change from

the classroom to the "real world" experience of a large research project.

Three abstracts have been submitted to the American Society for Gravitational and Space Biology Conference to be presented in November.

—*Rhonda Maple*



Members of Dr. Karen Plaut's research group for the hypergravity study stand in front of the only human-rated centrifuge in the country at NASA-ARC: (from left) Laura Lintault, Kat Coughlan, Tanya Mulvey, Dr. Plaut, Dr. Ela Zakrzewska, and Gina Roberts.

Wang awarded Fulbright Scholar Grant

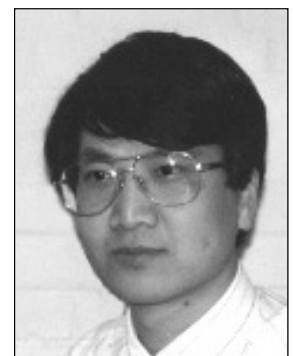
Dr. **Qingbin Wang**, an associate professor in the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant to lecture and conduct research at Jilin University in China during the 2003-2004 academic year. He will teach courses in applied economics and international trade policy and examine China's food demand under economic transition and agricultural trade with the U.S.

Wang is one of 18 U.S. faculty and professionals who will lecture

at Chinese universities during the 2003-2004 academic year through the Fulbright Scholar Program. Recipients of Fulbright Scholar awards are selected on the basis of academic achievement and extraordinary leadership potential in their fields.

"This is a great opportunity for me to expand my research in the area of U.S. agricultural trade with China and to develop case studies for my courses in international trade policy and applied economics," says Wang. "I will also assess the potential opportunities for Ver-

mont farmers and small businesses in the Chinese market. With a booming economy and as a new member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), China is rapidly becoming an important player in the world market for many agricultural products and there should be many opportunities for Vermont businesses."



—*Qingbin Wang*