Better Health Through Chemistry

Vanderbilt Institute of Chemical Biology uses chemistry to solve biological, medical problems, pages 8-9
Raiders of the Lost Altar

Like a scene from an Indiana Jones movie, Vanderbilt archaeologist Arthur Demarest turned detective recently, helping Guatemalan police to rescue an elaborately carved, 1,200-year-old Maya altar from antiquities looters.

The 600-pound artifact is one of the finest Maya artifacts known and gives researchers vital information on the closing years of the Maya civilization, says Demarest, Ingram Professor of Anthropology, who helped recover the altar from the looters’ hideout.

The altar was rescued through an unusual collaboration among Guatemalan undercover agents, local Maya villagers, and American archaeologists that included a six-month pursuit of the relic and the arrest of the ring of looters.

The great altar was placed in 796 A.D. as a marker at the end of the royal ball court of Cau- ncuén, the site of one of the largest royal palaces ever found, where the ancient city’s ruler would play the sacred Maya ball game against visiting kings. The role of the game was more ritual than sport. Location of ball courts in the ritual space within Maya cities, and the imagery that accom- panied them, underscores their role as boundaries between the actual and supernatural worlds.

They also used the royal game to celebrate state events and to record the state visit. “They told me that a woman had been bru- tishly beaten by men in baseball caps who were searching for a great altar that had been looted from Cau- ncuén, one that I hadn’t even known existed.”

The altar is one of two from Cau- ncuén known to exist. The other, unearthed in 1915, is on display in Guatemala’s National Museum of Anthropology and has long been con- sidered one of that museum’s greatest treasures.

Demarest says, “The carvings on the altar actually represent the two kings playing and, thus, record the state visit.” The stone altar was used as the goal post for later games, as well as a sacrificial altar.

Guatemalan officials state that this may be the first time an entire network of looters and dealers of Maya artifacts has been exposed. "These arrests are just the tip of the iceberg," says Jack Sasson, Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible at Vanderbilt Divinity School and professor of classics in the College of Arts and Science, serves as director of the program.

"It is not enough for people to know what they have in their community, their state and their country, but they must also learn to appreciate the rich interrelationships among the cultures and societies in which we live today," says Sasson.

"All cultures include aspects of religious expression, and faith com- munities often reflect the cultures in which they develop," says Jay Clayton, a physician and law professor at Vanderbilt. Clayton was a fan of science fiction as a youth. His wife, Ellen Wright Clayton, is a physician and law professor at Vanderbilt who studies the ethical, social and legal implications of genetics advances.

"After 20 years of discussion around the dinner table, I realized that I had learned a lot about the social implications of advances in genetics," he says. "And I think we should start teaching genetics in all four years of high school curricula but that’s not how we’re doing things today."

"We’re going to get this important topic into the all important high school biology classroom," Clayton says. "Every student in high school in America takes a mandatory science course. This is a chance to raise these issues in classrooms where it’s never appeared before."

--- Jim Patterson, Vanderbilt Register
World-class mathematician joins Vanderbilt faculty

Alain Connes, widely considered to be one of the three most influential living mathematicians, has accepted an appointment as a professor at Vanderbilt, enabling the University to become a base for training new mathematicians to fill the ranks left vacant by a retiring generation of scholars.

Under the arrangement, Connes, who is a professor of mathematics at the Collège de France and holds the Mochane Chair at the Institut des Hautes Études Scientifiques in France, will spend several weeks each spring in Nashville to collaborate with members of the Vanderbilt math department and participate in an annual workshop for young mathematicians.

"Connes has taken geometry to whole new level — one that is finding important applications in theoretical physics," explains Guoliang Yu, a Vanderbilt mathematics professor who works in the area.

New name, new chair

The former Department of Geology has a new focus, a new name and a new chair. In May 2003 — after 35 years of distinguished service and leadership — Professor and Chair Leonard P. Altenstadt retired. His successor, David J. Furthbush, became chair in August 2003, and the department was renamed Earth and Environmental Sciences.

Professor Furthbush came to Vanderbilt from Florida State University where he was a professor of geological sciences and director of the Center for Earth Surface Processes Research. He says the department’s new name “reflects the growing breadth of topics covered in our field, and the fact that the geosciences play an increasingly important interdiscipli- nary role among the natural sciences — notably the Earth and life sciences — the social sciences and engineering.”

Brainy English professor joins Vanderbilt

In her new book, Cecelia Tichi, the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of English, argues that a new wave of muckrakers is reviving a tradition that stretches back to the early part of the 20th century.

Novelist like Upton Sinclair exposed societal ills with groundbreaking and popular books that fueled public furor and led to reforms in the early 1900s. Tichi’s Exposes and Excess: Muckraking in America 1900-2000, published by the University of Pennsylvania Press, makes the case that authors like Barbara Ehrenreich (Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in Ameri- can) and Eric Schlosser (Fast Food Nation) are firmly in Sinclair’s tradition.

“Individually, these books stir the minds and hearts of a nation in crisis,” Tichi said. “Collectively, they issue a wake-up call, a revue for America that is reminiscent of another group of writers.”

Tichi also cites authors Naomi Klein, Joseph Hallinan and Laurie Garrett as part of the new muckraking corps. She believes the signs indicate the work of these modern muckrakers is beginning to make a difference.

Class of 2007 smartest, most diverse to date

This year’s Arts & Science freshman class represents the smartest and most ethnically diverse in the 130-year history of the University, according to William Shain, dean of undergraduate admissions.

“We don’t publish test scores, but I can tell you the average SATs are up several points from last year,” he said. “And last year’s scores were up 7 points from the year before.”

Shain said the SAT scores — which are well above 1300 — are up a significant 20 points since 2000. Also making the incoming A&S freshman class distinctive is the percentage of the students accepted into the A&S Class of 2007.

Fifty-four are of Latino descent, also a record high, surpassing 47 in 2002. Thirty-five are African American. The most in a previous year was 66, a record set in 2001 and 2002. Fifty-four are of Latino descent, also a record high, surpassing 47 in 2002. Thirty-five are African American. The most in a previous year was 66, a record set in 2001 and 2002.

Learning How to Teach

The learning process never stops, even for professors. And no one encourages this fact more than the Center for Teaching (CFT), a resource for Vanderbilt faculty and teaching assistants (TAs) since 1986.

“The core mission is to support a culture of teaching excellence at Vanderbilt,” says director Allison Pingree. “And to work with individuals and units across the University to sustain a culture that sees teaching and learning as vital forms of scholarship.”

The Center for Teaching, located on the first floor of Butchot Hall, promotes better teaching in several ways. A&S professors and teaching assistants use the center for individual consultations or for workshops that allow them to collaborate about teaching techniques with a small group of other faculty members. They also use the extensive resource library filled with videos and books about best teaching practices. International TAs also use the center to get support for adjusting to an American classroom and connecting to the students and culture they live in. All consultation services are private and confidential.

Allison Pingree

Pingree says she hopes the center will continue to improve its services to teachers in the future. In doing so, she says, the center needs to focus even more on student learning.

“Teaching without learning is just talking,” Pingree says, citing educational researchers Tom Angelo and Patricia Cross. “The real focus needs to be on helping students figure out what makes them learn best. If we can focus on their discovery and development, then the deepest kind of learning can happen.”

— Kelly Nelan
Women aren’t smarter, better or more capable than men, says Marie Wilson, A’62. They just deserve to be treated as equals.

“My (Second) Most Memorable Professor

My most memorable professor is philosophy professor John Lachs, who has been my mentor and long-time close friend. Nothing I can say would add to John’s already legendary status at Vanderbilt.

I would like to pay tribute to Richard Meda, professor of religion. During my sophomore year (1968-1969), I took two courses from Dr. Meda — New Testament and Early Catholic Christianity — which were probably the two most interesting courses that I took at Vanderbilt. The historical study of the development of early Christianity has significantly influenced my religious thinking and philosophy. This alone might qualify Dr. Meda as my second most memorable professor, but what made him especially outstanding was that he taught these courses while he was dying from [a degenerative illness].

At the time I took these courses, Dr. Meda was still able to walk, but he had lost much of the use of his arms. I remember how, when he entered the classroom, he would have to swing his arms back and forth to get the books he was carrying up onto the lecture table.

Dr. Meda died in 1970 when I was a junior. He was a study in courage and a most memorable professor.

— Neal Manners, B’71

Reminisce and make new memories!

Join fellow alumni, current students and Vanderbilt friends for the annual extraUganza weekend, the largest alumni celebration on Vanderbilt’s campus. Mark your calendar and join your friends for the fun. For details and hotel information, visit our Web site: www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/reunion or call 615-322-6034.

New Ingram Chair to Promote Brain Research

It’s not quantum physics or DNA; it’s the mystery of the human mind.

How do we make choices about career or marriage or what to eat for breakfast? How do we know right from wrong? How do the brain make us who we are?

Vanderbilt Psychology Professor Jeffrey D. Schall and his colleagues are unraveling these mysteries. His research looks at how the brain processes visual information, produces attention and awareness, controls actions, and knows when it makes a mistake. Someday his findings may help people with vision impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), schizophrenia, and Alzheimer’s disease.

In recognition of this promise, Vanderbilt University has named Schall the first E. Bronson Ingram Professor of Neuroscience. The chair was created through the generosity of Robin Ingram Patton and her husband, Richard, B’84, in memory of Robin’s father, E. Bronson Ingram. An Nashville corporate and civic leader, E. Bronson Ingram served as president of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust from 1991–1995. Robin’s mother, Martha Riven Ingram, is currently chairman of the board.

“The Pattons’ generosity comes during a time of rapid exploration and discovery in brain research,” said Richard Marcy, dean of the College of Arts and Science. “Jeff Schall is exploring some of the most complex questions in brain sciences today.”

Schall, 43, came to Vanderbilt in 1989. He is director of the Center for Integrative & Cognitive Neuroscience (CICCN), one of Vanderbilt’s interdisciplinary institutes focusing on areas of inquiry that cross boundaries of disciplines, departments, and even schools. Schall is also director of the Vanderbilt Vision Research Center and a senior investigator with the John F. Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development.

He has received an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship, a McKnight Endowment Investigator Award, and the 1998 National Academy of Sciences Troland Research Award, the most prestigious award given to an experimental psychologist under age 40.

Endowed chairs are vital to research, Schall explained. “A gift like the Pattons’ provides extra funds to support activities that grants can’t. We can take advantage of breakthroughs we might not be able to otherwise.”

The Pattons endowed the E. Bronson Ingram Chair through Van- derbilt’s $1.25 billion Shape the Future Campaign. “My father believed it was important to recognize and support genuine achievement, and that’s what endowed chairs do,” said Robin Patton. “Jeff Schall has already proven himself to be an outstanding scholar, and Richard and I believe his research will have great impact.”

Schall also emphasized the influence of his family on his work. “My mother taught me to wonder, my father taught me to serve, and my children help me to see tomorrow,” he said.

For Schall, that tomorrow will include collaboration with Seheek Park, associate professor of psychology; Gordon Logan, Centennial Professor of Psychology; and Herbert Mezra, holder of the John M. and Julia Pirrung, Peabody BS’03, are working at Lloyd’s of London this year thanks to the Walter C. Wadles Fellowship. Wadles, B’83, established the fellowship to give Vanderbilt women a chance to work at the British insurance marketplace.

Former cheerleaders Ellen Russell Sadler, B’59, left, Mary Lawrence Allen, A’54, Betty Velson, A’54, and Gloria Polk Nobles, B’58, returned to campus in October for reunions/marketing activities during extraUganza 2003, along with almost 4,000 other alumni and guests. More information and photos are available at www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/reunion.
Initial grants: 'unprecedented support' for VICB

When Vanderbilt University chemist Darryl Bornhop, right, and neurosurgeon Reid Thompson received a grant from the National Science Foundation in 2006, it was the beginning of something new. The $580,000 NSF grant provided an opportunity to develop a new imaging technology, which they hoped could help improve brain cancer surgery. Over the years, their collaboration has led to significant breakthroughs in the field of brain tumor imaging and surgery.

Bornhop, born in 1955, and Thompson, born in 1967, first met in 2007 when Thompson was a postdoctoral fellow at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center. Bornhop was a professor of chemistry at the time. They quickly realized the potential for their research to impact patient care. Together, they developed a fluorescent tag that could be used to light up brain cancer cells, making them visible during surgery.

In 2011, the National Science Foundation awarded another grant to Bornhop and Thompson, this time for $2 million. The funds were used to develop a new technology, called the Vanderbilt In Vivo Imaging Platform (VIVIP), which could be used to image brain tumors in real-time during surgery. The VIVIP technology has been used in more than 100 surgeries, and has shown promising results in improving surgical outcomes.

Today, Bornhop and Thompson continue to work together to develop new imaging technologies that could revolutionize brain cancer surgery. Their collaboration has not only led to important scientific breakthroughs, but has also helped to improve the quality of life for brain cancer patients. Through their dedication to research and innovation, they have become leaders in the field of brain tumor imaging and surgery.
**R e s e a r c h  N e w s**

Hammering gold into primordial energy-matter soup

Vicki Greene has had a lot of good news lately. The soft-spoken associate professor of physics is a member of an elite cadre of physicists who are trying to create and characterize an exotic state of matter called the quark-gluon plasma. The entire universe may have existed in this state 14 billion years ago, a few milliseconds after the Big Bang, and it may be recreated briefly in the beams of exploding stars.

Greene and her fellow scientists are not ready to proclaim that the $600 million atom smasher, called the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC), has succeeded in reproducing this primordial plasma in the fiery micro-explosions that it creates. But the results of their last series of experiments make it highly likely that this is the case.

“In these kinds of experiments, there are always other explanations, so we are being very cautious about the claims that we make,” Greene stresses.

Professor of Physics Charles Maguire, who is also a member of the RHIC team, adds that “there are about three chances in four that the plasma is there; but scientists don’t like to claim something until they are 95 percent certain.”

RHIC is located at Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island. It operates by accelerating two beams of heavy ions, such as the nuclei of gold atoms, to nearly the speed of light in opposite directions around a ring 2.4 miles wide and 4 stories tall. By analyzing the information produced by PHENIX, the Vanderbilt physicists and their colleagues are attempting to reconstruct events that take place at a scale that is almost unimaginably small and in times that are fantastically brief.

At the interaction points where the two beams collide, a small percentage of the gold nuclei flying past each other collide head on, creating microscopic fireballs that last less than a trillionth of a nanosecond and produce showers of subatomic particles that the scientists can track and identify.

The gold-gold collisions at RHIC bring nearly 400 protons and neutrons into collision at 99.995 percent the speed of light. When two nuclei hit head-on, temperatures spike to some 100 million times that of the solar surface. At these temperatures, scientists predict that individual protons and neutrons inside the merged gold nuclei should melt, leaving free-roaming quarks and gluons. At lower temperatures, quarks and gluons are never seen alone but always stick together in pairs and triplets to form a wide array of subatomic particles.

At the nanoscale level, this recreates conditions that scientists think existed when the universe was created. For a brief period, the universe consisted of blazing plasma made of a mixture of quarks and gluons. As the universe expanded and cooled, quarks and gluons fell into various combinations to create protons, neutrons and a host of other less stable particles. In this fashion, the familiar atomic structure of matter came into being.

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**Research Briefs**

**Bigger not always better**

A study by a team of Vanderbilt psychologists sheds new light on one of the most sophisticated efforts performed in human history: identifying and tracking moving objects. “The bigger an object, the easier it is to see. But it is actually harder for people to determine the motion of objects larger than a tennis ball held at arm’s length than it is to gauge the motion of smaller objects,” says graduate student Duje Tadin, who coauthored a paper in a July 2003 issue of Nature and postdoctoral fellow Lee A. Girgavy and Professors Joseph S. Lappin and Randolph Blake.

**Genetic engineering**

One of the first studies of what actually occurs when transplanted move from genetically altered plants to wild vegetation indicates that such transferences need not have a major environmental impact. The field study by John Burke, assistant professor of biological sciences, and researchers at Indiana University found that a transgene which protects commercial sunflowers against white mold disease is not transferred through wild sunflower populations. Their findings were published in May 2003 in Science.

**Southern discomfort**

Only Republicans, political conservatives, and the affluent have bucked a 10-year decline in the rates of people living in the South who identify themselves as “Southerners,” according to an article by sociologist Professor Larry Griffin and postdoctoral student Ashley Thompson in the fall 2003 edition of Southern Culture.

Polls conducted from 1991-2001 indicate that about 70 percent of people living in the South consider themselves Southerners today, versus 78 percent a decade ago.

---David F. Sadler

Did you know?

**About half of all A&S undergraduates receive some type of financial aid in order to attend the University.**

---askvandy.com

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**Research News**

External funding for research increases dramatically

The dollar value of contracts and grants for A&S was $11 million in FY 1991. It grew to about $21.5 million in FY 1999. Then, for the last four years, it has risen steadily to last year’s total of $28.2 million.

The increase in competitive research awards “is very impressive, but not unexpected,” said Julie Childress. “It is the result of the efforts of the exceptional new faculty hires complementing the leadership of the very productive group of existing researchers.”

---David F. Salisbury

**Ask the Faculty**

**Professor of Psychology Steven D. Hollon**

primary research interest lies in the causes and treatment of depression in adults. He is particularly interested in the relative contribution of cognitive and biological processes to depression and the comparative effectiveness of psychotherapeutic interventions versus medication in treating depression.

Q. Could you talk in general about depression?

A: Depression is a very common disorder. It probably affects at least 15 percent of all people in this country. It is about twice as frequent in women as in men. The more common type is unipolar depression, which means the person gets depressed only a few times. But usually more severe, is bipolar disorder, where a person might have depressive episodes and manic episodes; the manic episodes define it as bipolar. It is much less common, affecting about one to two people in 100. Bipolar disorder has a very strong biological basis, and medications, like lithium or the anticonvulsants, tend to be the core of treatment.

For unipolar depression, a couple of things are helpful. Medications, like antidepressants and anticonvulsants, tend to produce response — meaning a person will clearly get better — in about two-thirds of the individuals. The antidepressant medications like specific serotonin reuptake inhibitors, which are the latest versions of things like Prozac or Paxil or Zoloft, appear to be very effective and don’t typically have problematic side effects and are generally not addictive.

P: What is the role of heredity in depression?

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Geology professor studies origin of mammals in Antarctica

For 26 years, Molly Miller has been a professor of geology at Vanderbilt. Every four or five years, she leads her lab coat to don multiple layers of fleece and fabric in order to collect rock samples in the ultimate geologic laboratory: Antarctica. Miller has been fascinated by the way sediments record the history of the earth, and more recently, the evolution of mammals.

Miller’s fascination with the earth and its history was sparked at the age of nine when she discovered a 350-million-year-old fossil while on a camping trip. Although her interest had been piqued, she didn’t begin her study of the earth sciences until her freshman year in college. “I sort of had a falling in geology, she went on to earn a master’s degree at George Washington University, where she met and married her husband, Calwin Miller. When the couple was ready to enter academia, they faced a new challenge. “It was very difficult, especially at that time, to have two academic jobs and have any kind of normal family life,” says Molly Miller. “So we decided very early on that the way to do this was essentially to share one job and have both parents involved in bringing up the children.” Their emphasis on family and an emphasis on their next expedition. Once she arrived in Antarctica and saw the ice, Miller quickly determined that the strata had been deposited in fresh water. She observed that the trace fossils in it closely resembled marks made by modern insects, the dominant bottom-dwelling animals in modern lakes and streams. Miller documented the existence of huge lakes that would have tempered the climate and created a suitable environment for plants and advanced animals.

Miller found the expedition so exhilarating she decided to stay on the continent. By determining how various rock layers were formed, her goal was to distinguish geographical features such as rivers, swamps and mountains. Of particular interest was a widespread rock unit consisting of shale with interbedded sandstone that Miller had previously studied while studying the geology of Antarctica. In this frozen landscape she could find the expedition so exhilarating she decided to stay on the continent. Miller’s closest call occurred several years ago when a large storm hit the Transantarctic Mountains where she was working. She and her colleagues had just set up camp when it began snowing. “The winds were about 50 miles an hour and snowing hard,” she says. “We were dug in for four days. That was pretty sobering.”

Miller views Antarctica as a both a scientific and character building experience. “When you have experiences that put you in the perspective of a larger place, I think those are the most meaningful types of experiences,” Miller says. “When you are in Antarctica you see yourself as part of the entire system. You are a little more vulnerable and thus more a part of it.”

Vanderbilt and Fisk Universities win $2.9 million to study nanotechnology

Vanderbilt and Fisk Universities professors will conduct joint research and train doctoral students from both institutions in order to study the rapidly growing interdisciplinary field of nanoscience and nanotechnology. The $2.9 million grant, said. “It integrates graduate education with research and enhances collaboration within and between Vanderbilt and Fisk, creating unprecedented opportunities for discovery and education.”

“Nanoscience” describes objects that measure approximately a milli- meter, or roughly 1/100,000th of a human hair. Nanotechnology is based on understanding the behavior of materials at the nanoscale level and how they can be used to accomplish goals such as the continued miniaturization of computer components and genetic engineering. The Vanderbilt-Fisk program will involve more than 30 professors from the Vanderbilt departments of chemistry, physics, biomedical engineering, civil engineering, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering, and the Fisk departments of physics and chemistry.

Research News

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A&S student Michelle Weil helps a young Hispanic student with English as part of the Spanish department service-learning project.

¿Habla usted español?

When students sign up for Ellen Olazagasti-Segovia’s Spanish 202 class, they no longer have to worry about completing Web-based assignments or engaging in chat rooms to perfect their language skills. Instead, those tasks, which were once a required part of the course, have been replaced by a more meaningful and rewarding method of learning: volunteering.

During the past two years Olazagasti-Segovia has helped the Spanish department integrate service learning into the curriculum. Devoting their time and efforts to the Nashville Hispanic community, Vanderbilt students not only are able to improve their language proficiency, but they also forge strong bonds with the individuals they help.

The need for volunteers within the Nashville Hispanic community has risen with the growth of the Spanish-speaking population over the past eight years. Today, there are approximately 100,000 Hispanics living in Nashville. More often than not, the language barrier creates significant problems for these immigrants. That is where Vanderbilt students come into the picture. Whether translating prison rules for Hispanic inmates or reading a book to a first-grade class, the students’ help is eagerly welcomed.

“They were all very appreciative,” says junior Sumeet Vaikunth, who taught English to Hispanic immigrants at St. Ann’s Catholic Church last year. “Sometimes the task would be as small as helping to make a telephone call to pay a bill, but to them it was very important.”

Perhaps one of the most popular places to volunteer is Haywood Elementary School. Here Vanderbilt students interact with many Hispanic children who are the first in their families to be born in America. Often the children face culture clashes between their Spanish-speaking families and their own desire to fit in with their peers.

“My students will be mentors to those kids, to help them sort through all those problems,” explains Olazagasti-Segovia, a senior lecturer in Spanish. “Having a role model from the dominant culture is very important for these children. If you feel like you are ‘the other,’ that you are completely alienated, but then you find this very nice young person who is attending Vanderbilt and is interested in helping you out, that means a lot. It does make a big difference.”

Sheila Hamilton, a teacher from Haywood Elementary School, agrees. “It is really a two-way street. They help us as much as we help them. We are very grateful to Vanderbilt for recognizing how important service learning is for our community.”

Required for both majors and minors, Spanish 202 obliges the students to take on the serious commitment of immersing themselves in the Hispanic community. They are asked to sign two contracts, one to their professor and one to the agency they help, agreeing to give at least two hours a week to the program. Such a commitment requires students to put in more hours in this class than they do in other language courses, but the payoff is much greater for both the students and those they help.

Responses have been overwhelmingly positive according to Olazagasti-Segovia. “I could tell of the program’s success from the very beginning. Class participation increased tremendously,” she said. “Students feel more confident because now they know what it is like to talk to native speakers.”

The bonds formed do not end simply because the semester does. The Vanderbilt students have been invited to birthdays, weddings and other family gatherings as a sign of gratitude by those whose lives they have touched.

Relationships are kept strong and the learning process never stops.

“Even though the students started volunteering because it was a course requirement, some became so involved that they decided to continue on their own with their projects,” Olazagasti-Segovia says. “That for me has been amazing and unexpected and, of course, I am very proud of that outcome.”

Inspired by this success, Olazagasti-Segovia has designed a new service-learning course, “Latino Immigration Experience” for Early Career Contributions to Psychology in the area of behavioral/cognitive neuroscience. According to the APA, “This award...is an outstanding accolade for scientific achievement.”

Lenn E. Goodman, professor of philosophy, has been named Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities.

Timothy McNamara, professor and chair of psychology, has been named associate provost for faculty. He is responsible for faculty reappointments, tenure and promotions, as well as fostering interdisciplinary initiatives between the faculties of Vanderbilt’s 10 schools.

Two more A&S faculty members have been elected Fellows of the prestigious American Association for the Advancement of Science: Sokrates T. Pastolides, the William A. and Nancy F. McMinn Professor of Physics, and Ned A. Porter, Stevenson Professor of Chemistry and chair of the department.

The following faculty members received A&S awards recently: David A. Weintraub, associate professor of astronomy, the Jeffrey Nordhaus and Katherine Stubb Nordhaus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching; Peggy A. Thomas, professor of sociology, Award for Outstanding Graduate Teaching; Roger Moore, senior lecturer in English, the Harriet S. Gilliam Award for Excellence in Teaching by a Lecturer or Senior Lecturer; Michael Bes, associate professor of history, the Ernest A. Jones Faculty Adviser Award; Kate Daniels, associate professor of English, the Alumni Outstanding Freshman Advising Award.

Where Are They Now?

At 82, Professor Emeritus James R. “Bob” Wesson is still teaching. Having retired from Vanderbilt in 1990, Wesson now teaches part-time to a Sunday school class at Greerwood United Methodist Church, where he and Jan, his bride of 60 years, also sing in the choir.

The Wessons also attend fitness classes at the YMCA, in part to keep up with their 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. “Some are in Nashville, others are in other parts of the country,” says Wesson. “A great deal of our time is spent with them. We’ve enjoyed them a lot.”

During his tenure as professor of mathematics, Wesson won the Thomas Jefferson Award and the Laura Gregg Ingal Award for Excellence in Teaching. “I do try to follow some of the happenings in academia, and mathematics particularly,” he says.

A longtime season-ticket holder to VU football and basketball games, Wesson regularly reads Vanderbilt alumni magazines and occasionally hears from former students.

“My wife and I use a computer,” says the amiable Wesson, quickly adding, “and she an expert at it. So that helps us communicate with our family and friends.”

Friends and former students can reach Wesson at wesson@vprc.vanderbilt.edu. — Shelton Clark

Kudos

Lewis Baldwin, professor of religious studies, will be inducted into the Martin Luther King Jr. Collegium of Scholars at Morehouse College in Atlanta in April. He serves on the advisory board of the African American Churches Project, which is based at Morehouse and involves a survey of nearly 2,000 black churches in the U.S. In connection with this project, Baldwin has contributed the lead chapter in volume one of a projected three-volume work, New Day Begun: African American Churches and Civic Culture in Post-Civil Rights America.

William J. Collins, associate professor of economics, has been named Model-Okun visiting Fellow in Economic Studies at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., for 2003-04.

Isabel Gauthier, assistant professor of psychology and Kennedy Center investigator, has received the 2003 American Psychological Association (APA) Distinguished Scientific Award for Early Career Contributions to Psychology in the area of behavioral/cognitive neuroscience. According to the APA, “This award...is an outstanding accolade for scientific achievement.”

Francoise Bergoglio, awarded from right, associate dean of Arts and Science and a professor of Spanish, received the 2003 Chancellor’s Cup during Homecoming Weekend in October. Established by the Nashville Vanderbilt Club in 1963, the award is given annually to a faculty member for “the greatest contributions outside the classroom to undergraduate student-faculty relationships.”
Last year, Vanderbilt's Dyer Observatory celebrated its 50th birthday, but the history of observatories at the University goes back much further. During the late 19th century, Chancellor Landon C. Garland, who was also a professor of physics and astronomy, oversaw the design and construction of Vanderbilt's original observatory. Located on the site now occupied by Rand Hall, it was named for Edward Emerson Barnard, one of America's most famous astronomers and one of Vanderbilt's earliest students.

At the age of 26 Barnard joined the University as an assistant in the new observatory and as a special student. During his four years at Vanderbilt, he was the first to make numerous astronomical discoveries, including 15 comets and many nebulae. He went on to national acclaim as a member of the Lick and Yerkes Observatories, where he discovered Jupiter's fifth moon and became the first to photograph the Milky Way. Vanderbilt's Barnard Hall is named in his honor.

In 1952, the Barnard Observatory was razed to make room for Rand Hall. At that time, Vanderbilt Astronomer Carl Seyfert convinced Arthur J. Dyer, BA1891, president of the Nashville Bridge Company, and Jack DeWitt, E'28, vice president of WSM radio and television, to help raise funds for what became Dyer Observatory.

More information on Dyer's outreach programs can be obtained by contacting its outreach coordinator at nancy.dywer@vanderbilt.edu.