

NEWS BRIEFS

Natural Science Museum receives Tree of Life grant

LSU's Museum of Natural Science received \$270,000 from the National Science Foundation's Tree of Life panel to reconstruct the basic outline of the avian tree of life using nuclear DNA sequence comparisons.

The NSF Tree of Life project is an enormous effort to uncover the evolutionary history and characteristics of all organisms.

The money is part of a \$4 million grant split evenly between two groups of researchers. LSU is working under the umbrella of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, as are the Smithsonian Institution, the University of Florida and Wayne State University in Detroit. The other group is headed by the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Student media receive top honors at ceremony

LSU student media received 23 honors at the Southwest Journalism Congress held recently in Baton Rouge.

Best Newspaper for *The Daily Reveille* and Best Magazine for *Legacy* were among the awards presented to LSU. *Legacy* magazine won six awards, *The Reveille* won four awards and the *Gumbo* won three awards.

Undergraduate research program continuing to grow

Offering undergraduate students a unique opportunity to conduct research early in their college career, the Chancellor's Future Leaders in Research (CFLR) program continues to grow, providing a true bonus for studying at a Research-Extensive University.

Initiated in 1999 with approximately 40 incoming freshman, the program has grown to more than 100 students this year. Chancellor Alumni Scholars, Top 100 Scholars and National Merit Awardees qualify for the program.



Philosophy Assistant Professor Jon Cogburn and CFLR student Newton Ogden discuss critiques of the computational theory of the mind as part of Ogden's research.

"It provides our top students the opportunity to become involved in research at the beginning of their university experience," says Doris Carver, associate vice chancellor for the Office of Research & Graduate Studies. "The program also encourages them to take a serious look at graduate study."

Once accepted, students are assigned to a research faculty member for the extent of their undergraduate career based upon their preferred area of study or intended major. Philosophy Professor Jon Cogburn and his CFLR student, Newton Ogden, are making the most they can of the program.

"I expect at some point, after he's done his research and had enough discussions, Newton will help me co-write one or more papers," said Cogburn. "The program has been very helpful for my research and I believe it greatly enhances Newton's undergraduate education."

Present is bright, future looking brighter for Political Science

With the high output of publications from faculty and a recent high ranking in two national studies of political science departments, the LSU Department of Political Science is becoming even more competitive with other schools across the U.S.

According to a State University of New York at Stony Brook study that assessed the scholarly productivity of departments in three leading journals, the *American Political Science Review*, the *American Journal of Political Science*, and the *Journal of Politics*, LSU ranked 30th in total number of articles published in those journals from 1986 to 1995. More importantly, LSU ranked 19th in terms of per faculty publications in the same study.

"These high rankings are especially encouraging, because they do not take into consideration the publications of the past few years."

JIM GARAND

Department of Political Science

A more recent Iowa State University study has LSU ranked 10th in per faculty publications from 1994 to 1998 in

continued on page 2



Landscape Architecture benefiting Mexican community

A once forgotten town in Mexico is getting a facelift with a little help from landscape architecture Professor Bruce Sharky and his graduate students.

Guerrero Viejo, a town abandoned and flooded in the 1950's as a part of a bi-national effort between Mexico and the U.S. to form the Falcon Dam on the Rio Grande, is now the focus of a tourism project of the Mexican government. This past summer, Professor Sharky took his graduate students on a week-long expedition to the history-rich area in order to develop proposals to restore the town's heritage and increase tourism.

"These trips are beneficial for both the students and the community in which they visit," says Sharky. "The students provide a professional service that the town would otherwise be unable to afford."

After surveying the area, the graduate students identified several alternatives for development that will preserve the town's rich cultural heritage. Among them were plans for museums, nature trails, outdoor classrooms, and visitor centers that highlight the town's culture and colonial architecture.

Thanks to outside funding, the students were able to return to Guerrero Viejo in October to present their final proposals to the community. El Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia, the Mexican equivalent to the U.S. Park Service, was also at the presentation, and is incorporating the students' proposals into their long-range development plans.

In November 2002, Professor Sharky presented the proposals on behalf of his students to the Louisiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture. The ASLA presented an Award of Merit recognizing the students outstanding professional achievement.



Two landscape architecture students gather information for their proposals to increase tourism in Guerrero Viejo, Mexico.

Bright future for Political Science (continued from cover)

five leading journals, including the three fore-mentioned journals along with the Political Research Quarterly and Polity.

"Our senior faculty have continued to publish regularly in leading journals, and our newly-hired junior faculty members are focused on getting their research published in these leading journals and have been very successful at doing so," says Jim Garand, political science professor and graduate advisor.

Garand indicates that no less than 10 articles have been published in these journals by new junior faculty since the most recent study was published.

With acceptance rates of around 10 percent, publication in any of these journals is extremely competitive. More notably, LSU's 21-member political science faculty is out-ranking and out-producing many other Ph.D.-granting departments that have an average of 26 political science faculty members, an indication of the strength of LSU's political science program.

Governor's Biotechnology Initiative grant recipients meet to share projects and ideas



Governor's Biotechnology Initiative grant recipients met on November 26, 2002, to share information on the research projects each will be working on for the next year. The total grant money received by all 11 LSU research teams came up to more than \$6.2 million. The projects range from therapeutic approaches to chronic diseases and new methods of treating cancer to research in genomics and enhancing LSU's marine biotechnology program.

Spring 2003 Chancellor's Distinguished Lectureship Series

The Chancellor's Distinguished Lectureship Series is made possible by the generous gifts of private donors with the express purpose of enhancing LSU's research and scholarly image. The following lectures have been scheduled for February 2003. Visit www.research.lsu.edu for the entire 2003 schedule and more information.

February 4, 2003 ♦ **Roald Hoffmann**, *Frank H.T. Rhodes Professor of Humane Letters and Professor of Chemistry*, Cornell University, "One Culture, or the Commonalities and Difference Between the Arts and Sciences," 3:30 p.m., 103 Design Building

February 14, 2003 ♦ **Freeman Hrabowski**, *President*, University of Maryland-Baltimore County, "Role Models and Mentors: Creating a Climate of Success," 4 p.m., Lod Cook Conference Center

February 16, 2003 ♦ **Keith & Rosmarie Waldrop**, *Editors*, Burning Deck Press, "A Reading by Keith & Rosmarie Waldrop," 5 p.m., Hill Memorial Library

February 27, 2003 ♦ **Wolfgang Ehrfeld**, *Chief Executive Officer*, Ehrfeld Mikrotechnik, and *Professor*, Johannes Gutenberg University, "LIGA - A Technology Whose Time Has Come," 1:30 p.m., Energy, Coast & Environment Auditorium

February 27, 2003 ♦ **Sara McLanahan**, *Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs*, Princeton University, "Fragile Families in the 21st Century," 2 p.m., LSU Colonade Theatre

Baton Rouge joins Paris and Montreal to boast Belgian studies center

With the recent renewal of an agreement between the State of Louisiana and the French Community of Belgium, a new research center devoted to the study of Belgian Francophone literature and culture has been established at LSU.

The Centre d'etudes Wallonie-Bruxelles, housed within the Center for French and Francophone Studies, will focus primarily on researching Francophone literature and Belgian culture from an interdisciplinary perspective. Baton Rouge joins only two other cities worldwide, Paris and Montreal, to boast of such a center.

The center will not only be a source for Belgian Francophone literature and culture research, it will also work in conjunction with the government of the French Community of Belgium to augment LSU's collection of books and periodicals by routine donations. It will also host seminars featuring Belgian scholars and artists, participate in exchanges with the other two Belgian studies centers, and help create a new business French program at LSU that will develop contacts with business schools in Wallonia and Brussels, Belgium.

ISDS students helping to make Louisiana highways safer

Since 1995, a student team in the Department of Information Systems and Decision Sciences has completed a wide range of projects from seatbelt usage research to drunk driving statistics analysis for the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission (LHSC) and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

Recently, thanks to a \$1 million grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, ISDS students, led by ISDS Department Chair and Professor Helmut Schneider, were able to compile and analyze traffic data, forecast traffic trends, and present the LHSC with a yearly report of drunk driving behavior in Louisiana.

"The project increases students involvement in applied research, and provides work experience and an understanding of the importance of public policy on safety issues," says Schneider.

Using the research conducted and compiled by the ISDS team, law enforcement agencies increased patrolling and a public awareness campaign was developed. According to the final report *Targets of Opportunity*, the alcohol-related fatalities decreased by 14.8 percent in 16 selected parishes with increased patrols in a 12-month period.

Students also maintain Louisiana Traffic Records Data Reports, a web site containing many types of traffic reports ranging from crash statistics to DWI tests. The team, comprised of 25 undergraduates and six graduate students, collects actual crash report data directly from law enforcement offices across the state and observational survey data from an external research firm.

The team's research is also used to identify trouble spots around the state where accidents occur frequently or have a lower seatbelt usage rate, and as a scientific basis to support legislation that toughens laws on traffic violations.

Faculty Awards, Honors & Distinctions

Jim Borck, English, was awarded a Helm Fellowship by the Lilly Library at the University of Indiana.

Peter Chen, Computer Science, was awarded the Harry Goode Award from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and the Allen Newell Award from the Association for Computing Machinery and the American Association of Artificial Intelligence.

Darrell Henry, Geology and Geophysics, was named as the U.S. representative to the Commission on Tourmaline Nomenclature, which will develop a consistent nomenclature scheme describing tourmaline group minerals.

Dorothea Lerman, Psychology, received the B.F. Skinner Award for New Researchers from the American Psychological Association, and the New Researcher Award from the American Association on Mental Retardation in 2001.

Suzanne L. Marchand, History, was awarded a Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowship for Recently Tenured Scholars by the American Council of Learned Societies.

Kevin Mulcahy, Political Science, was named a Fulbright Distinguished Fellow. He will also hold the Lazlo Orszagh Chair of American Studies in Budapest in fall 2002.

Mary Sirridge, Philosophy, received an A.C. Mellon Grant to work at the Knights of Columbus Vatican Film Library at St. Louis University.

Isiah Warner, Chemistry, was named a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professor, one of only 20 from across the country.

LSU RESEARCH is published quarterly by the Louisiana State University Office of Research & Graduate Studies, 130 David F. Boyd Hall, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803. Call us at 225/578-5833 or e-mail at research@lsu.edu.
LSU IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/ACCESS UNIVERSITY

Kevin M. Smith, *Vice Chancellor & Dean*
Doris L. Carver, *Associate Vice Chancellor*
Todd A. Pourciau, *Assistant Vice Chancellor*
J. T. Lane, *Editor*
Jill E. Davis, *Assistant Editor*



LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Research & Graduate Studies
130 David F. Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 733
Baton Rouge, LA