For two decades, BC has offered Norfolk inmates the chance to learn, and to grow

BY MELISSA BEECHER
STAFF WRITER

 Assoc. Prof. John McDargh (Theology) remembers walking inside the prison for the first time, metal doors slamming behind him, correction officers monitoring his every move. His wallet and jew- elry had already been locked away; shoes and belt removed for a body scan, clothing scrutinized.

Stepping into life at Massachusetts Correctional Institute at Norfolk presented a stark contrast to Boston College, where McDargh has been a faculty member for more than 25 years.

Yet despite the alien, intimidating surroundings, recalls McDargh, it was only a matter of minutes before he found something familiar: eager students.

“If there was a surprise, it was how quickly and easily we found a sense of commonality,” says McDargh of his first encounter with Norfolk inmates. “That sense, that idea of being very ‘other,’ very different, very scary, it all gave way when we realized we all spoke the same language of our Christian faith.”

McDargh is one of four members of the University community carrying on a rarely mentioned, but very important, tradition.

The Jesuits and BC staff have a way of helping (the inmates) find the presence of God in themselves,” says Sister Ruth Raichle, the Catholic chaplain at Norfolk. “Volunteers share their wisdom and draw wisdom from the experience.”

MCI-Norfolk is a medium security facility — the largest of its type in Massachusetts — just south of Boston with a population that hovers around 1,500. Despite the highlight of their week to be the classes in philosophy, theology and scripture taught by McDargh, Fitzgibbons Professor of Philosophy Marina McCoy, Jesuit Artist-in-Residence Robert Ver Eecke, S.J., and doctoral student Eduardo Henriques, S.J. Other faculty and staff volunteer on an occasional basis.

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**Around Campus**

All night long

Boston College made the most of its chance to play host for an American Cancer Society Relay For Life benefit.

The 2008 Relay for Life was held in the Flynn Recreation Complex, thanks to the efforts of students, volunteers, organizations, and others in the BC community.

With organizers still tabulating donations as of late last week, the total raised stood at more than $106,000. Nearly 1,000 people, many associated with BC, took part, forming teams to solicit support for the cause. Among those leading the way were “Eagles for Life”, with $5,135 raised, “The Purple Parrots” ($4,115) and “BC Beat Cancer” ($3,871.50).

Relay For Life marathons are intended to evoke the experience of cancer patients’ struggle through “the long night.” Each team had to have at least one member on the RePeL track during the 12-hour event, which featured numerous forms of live entertainment to provide encouragement and diversion for the participants.

Another Relay For Life feature is the Luminaria ceremony, which is dedicated to those who have passed away from cancer, and also recognizes those who have survived.

BC has sent representatives to University Relay For Life events held at Harvard, Boston University, Emerson, Northeastern, MIT and other area schools, but had not served as a venue until this year. A committee headed up by Kevin Benacci, ’09, and seniors Shannon Sullivan and Jenn Bickford worked to ensure all the requirements and guidelines for hosting were met.

“It’s something that we’ve wanted to do for a few years now,” says Bickford, also praising the effort of previous BC Relay For Life co-chairs Meg Conolly and Caillin Graboski, who both graduated last year. “At past relays, it was quite clear by the sea of yellow Superfan shirts that BC was a driving force in both participants and fundraising. Although the students made it clear it was something they would love to have, we started the process a bit too late to get a BC Relay in 2007.”

But with support from BC Health Services as well as the American Cancer Society, Bickford says, this time around the committee was able to stage a Boston College Relay for Life.

“We recruited an amazing and hard working committee, and it was a success far beyond what we ever expected,” she says.

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Open for business

A new publishing enterprise, Linden Lane Press at Boston College, will produce a range of books on the history and attributes of Boston College as the University approaches its 150th anniversary in 2013 – and beyond.

“It’s another sign of Boston College’s maturity that we can manage this and manage it extremely competently,” says Executive Director of Marketing Communications Ben Birnbaum, who will head up the new publishing effort. “Instead of going to an outside vendor, we are fully capable of doing all the work here – the editing, the design and the production.”

“It makes for a much more economical process for us,” he says. “I am sure that we will put out an excellent product.”

Birnbaum says that books published by the new Linden Lane Press will be limited to those works that are of “substantial interest” to Boston College alumni. “It’s got to be about Boston College or some of the important issues that are facing Boston College.”

The first three volumes to be published will include a brief history of Boston College written by University Historian Prof. Thomas H. O’Conor, Founding Fathers, profiles of six presidents of Boston College that had previously appeared in Boston College Magazine, and a collection of the key speeches of the University’s 24th president and current chancellor, J. Donald Monan, SJ.

All three books are due to be published this spring, Birnbaum says, and will be available through the Boston College Bookstore.

Future projects will include a detailed historical update that will complement the acclaimed History of Boston College written by Charles F. Donovan, SJ in 1990, materials gleaned from various oral history projects currently under way, and an illustrated history of the University.

“We are always open to new ideas,” Birnbaum adds.

---BO

On the face of it

Each year, the Accounting Department in the Carroll School of Management puts together a comprehensive survey of its graduating seniors, confirming details down to the amount of the average salary for its newly-minted accountants.

There are a few unaposnecable grads every year and it’s a challenge to track them down. This year, department chairman Asso. Prof. Billy Soo turned to an unlikely tool: the social networking site “facebook” [facebook.com], which caters to the college crowd.

With the help of his current students, Soo was able to find nearly a dozen of them so he could complete the annual report, which he views as a unique opportunity for the department to confirm how well it is serving its students.

“Each year there are some people who are hard to find or they resist our initial request,” says Soo. “This year we used facebook and it helped us reach several students. It just means that our survey offers a more accurate representation of what our graduates are doing.”

By the numbers, it looks like they are doing well.

At 112, the number of accountants graduating last year reached a 10-year high, making up 26 percent of the Carroll School’s graduating class, Soo says. By the end of last summer, more than three-quarters had found employment, with half joining public accounting firms, and most of those with the Big Four firms that dominate the industry. Others went into consulting or investment banking.

All told, the median salary for the accounting department’s Class of ’07 was $55,000, or $5,000 with signing bonuses factored in.

“If we need to, we will use facebook again,” Soo says. “But hopefully people don’t start to block us out. It’s really to the benefit of our current students that our graduates let us know what they are doing in the workplace.”

---EFH

There will be Baldwins

March is Baldwin Month at Boston College — the period leading up to the Baldwin Awards, which honor the University’s outstanding student filmmakers.

The fourth annual awards ceremony, complete with red carpet, will take place on March 28 at 7:30 p.m. in the Heights Room of Corcoran Commons. But from March 10-21, you can watch this year’s entries online at the Baldwins Web site [omc.bc.edu/baldwins], or if you’d prefer a different setting, you can attend a screening of all the 2008 nominations on March 13 at 5 p.m. in Devlin 008 (popcorn included).

After you’ve taken a look at the films, you can cast your vote for the Viewer’s Choice Award at the Baldwin Web site. Nominees from the first three Baldwin competitions are archived there as well.

A panel of faculty from the Fine Arts and Communication departments, and students, will lead the judging in the 13 other categories for Baldwins: Best Picture of the Year, Critics’ Choice Award, Best Screenplay, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Cinematography, Best Editing, Best Score, Best Screenwriting, Best Documentary, Best Comedy.

The Best Picture and Viewer’s Choice films will also be screened at the Boston College Arts Festival Free Flicks event in April.

Baldwins is a joint effort of the Film Studies Program, Communication Department, Boston College Magazine and the Office of Public Affairs.

Some Baldwin moments

“Some of these students were truly unique and others had a pretty good shot at success, but no one had the Baldwin experience. That’s what they would love to have, we started the process a bit too late to get a BC Relay in 2007.”

But with support from BC Health Services as well as the American Cancer Society, Bickford says, this time around the committee was able to stage a Boston College Relay for Life.

“We recruited an amazing and hard working committee, and it was a success far beyond what we ever expected,” she says.

---SS

Clippings

“The costs of this system are borne not only by those deprived, but by their loved ones who are left behind, including US citizen children senselessly deprived of the presence and support of a parent. Finally, there is a great cost to all of us, and to our legal system itself, when the rule of law is undermined by a system that permits such egregious errors regularly to occur.”


---BC
Stepping Up to Science

University gives Boston schoolchildren a close-up, hands-on look at the world of science

BY ED HAYWARD
STAFF WRITER

Public Science Day Boston 2008 brought fourth and fifth graders from Dorchester’s Russel Elementary School to campus earlier this month for a hands-on lesson about turtles and the work of Boston College scientists.

Organized by the Step Up initiative—a partnership of Boston College and the city’s four other largest universities and the Boston Public Schools—the students were treated to the chance to hold, draw, measure, and weigh a dozen palm-sized Cape Cod Diamondback terrapins, part of an ongoing study of the turtles overseen by Boston College’s Profs. Eric Strauss (Biology), who also directs the Environmental Studies Program.

For many students, it wasn’t just the first chance to hold a turtle; it was the first visit to a college campus. “It’s pretty cool,” said Namtate Bebeleza, 11, a fourth-grader at the Russell School. Boston College partners with the Office of Governmental and Community Affairs.

The field trip coincided with leading scientists from across the US convening in Boston for the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Public Science Day activities at Boston College and the four other area universities are part of the Step Up initiative’s commitment to coordinate learning support services to assist schools in raising academic achievement.

“Public Science Day provided an opportunity for schools across the city to explore the world of science in partnership with area universities,” said Catherine Wong, director of Urban Outreach Initiatives at the Lynch School of Education, which coordinates the Step Up initiative in conjunction with the Office of Governmental and Community Affairs.

“In addition to learning about turtle hatchlings at BC, the 4th and 5th grade Russell School students will have the opportunity to meet and talk with BC students about their college experiences and career aspirations. The latter is a key focus of the Lynch School’s Urban Outreach Initiatives, which promote experiences beginning in the early elementary years that nurture and engage urban youth to imagine themselves succeeding in college, and pursuing careers within diverse communities.”

Institute to Be Launched

Continued from page 1

Second History of Religion Conference Set for March

Boston College graduate students are organizing a sequel to a major 2006 conference on the history of religion, one that now promises to be a regularly occurring event.

The Biennial Boston College Conference on the History of Religion, which takes place March 14-15, will gather graduate students and established scholars from around the country to converse and discuss major methods and themes tackled by historians of religion. The organizing theme for this year’s conference is “Religious Identities.”

Highlights of the conference include an opening keynote address by Jonathan Sarna, the Joseph H. & Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University and author of several works on American Judaism. A series of panel discussions, many of them chaired by BC faculty members or graduate students, will comprise most of the schedule. Titles include “Lay Catholic Piety and Action,” “Public and Private Religion in the British Isles,” “Catholic Identities in Germany, 1871-1933,” “Accessing the Sacred in Latin America” and “Memory and the Mucuracué: Lived Religion in America.”

“We chose ‘religious identities’ as the major organizing theme of this year’s conference to highlight the creation of both institutional and personal religious identity, but also to see how religion interacts with other categories of one’s life to inform their identity,” said doctoral candidate Sarah K. Nyman, who is the conference committee chair.

“Moreover, this theme allowed our conference to gain greater breadth both geographically, as well as greater breadth chronologically and denominationally.”

Colleges and universities represented at the conference will include Bowling Green, Antioch, Seton Hall, Brigham Young, Lethbridge, Redlands, Cornell, Florida and the University of Chicago and Vanderbilt divinity schools.

The 2006 conference grew out of regular meetings of graduate students in the History Department who were drawn to research involving religious-related topics. Their particular area of interest involved examining the religious experience of ordinary men and women living out their faith in the modern world, a topic not often covered by traditional historical scholarship.

Nyman notes that this year’s conference received nearly 100 paper proposals, necessitating the addition of an extra panel for each session. Even with the expansions, she says, it was impossible to logistically fit all the proposals into the conference format.

Information about the conference is available at www.bc.edu/academic/interdisciplinary/religion/histconf.html.

—Sean Smith
At Home in ‘A Different World’

BY MELISSA BEECHER

When University President William P. Leahy, SJ, announced just before the 16th anniversary of Asuo-Mante’s win as the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship winner at the annual King Scholarship Banquet, the 21-year-old student was overcome with emotion. His mother, seated next to him in the audience, became emotional as well. “Thank you, God,” she whispered to her son.

Asuo-Mante is a sociology major with a pre-med concentration, with plans to study in the department’s fifth year master’s program and then pursue medical school. At BC, Asuo-Mante has held a position on the executive board of the AHANA Collective Theatre, Dance Marathon and the African Student Association.

“I want to return to West Afri- ca, maybe with Doctors Without Borders, and bring the message of more than 300 people, Asuo-Mante said later, he struggled to find the right words to express his gratitude.

Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship winner

Some 300 inmates attend religious services at MCI-Norfolk each week. In the Catholic tradition, a Spanish Mass is held on Sundays, an English service on Mondays and a combined service is given two times a week. Once a month, Asian Mass is celebrated, which is attended by the smaller Vietnamese population.

Fr. Henriques started celebrating Mass for the Vietnamese community in Spanish-speaking apartments in 2013. The volunteers help with liturgy planning and, at times, giving the homily.

“Anytime something would happen, I would defend people (from authority figures). My famil- iers always said ‘our little lawyer’ so a little pressure has always been on,” said Curry.

A look at the two other finalists for the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship

Shadayah Chardae Curry

During an introduction, Shadayah Chardae Curry, 20, proudly states she is from Brookline, Mass. She is equally proud of her plans to return to New York af- ter graduation next year and help other young women discover life beyond her beloved borough.

“Where I came from is such a big part of who I am,” said Curry. “I am interested in going back to the neighborhood and helping girls who simply don’t have the opportunities out there for them.”

Curry said her career path became clear at a very early age. From the time she was a child, Curry was teased about her abil- ity to argue her way out of any- thing.

The Bos ton College at Home in ‘A Different World’

“At a time, I had no idea how competitive it was.”

Being among the top 20 in high school class, Asuo-Mante was admitted and started making plans for another move — to Boston.

Today, Asuo-Mante is a sociol- ogy major with a pre-med concen- tration, with plans to study in the department’s fifth year master’s program and then pursue medical school. At BC, Asuo-Mante has held a position on the executive board of the AHANA Collective Theatre, Dance Marathon and the African Student Association.

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By Melissa Beecher

The Boston College

Chronicle

1/25/13

“When I started attending school here, it was much more focused on the practical application of what you studied.”

During his senior year of high school, Asuo-Mante said he also attended college courses in his field of study. He had always wanted to attend college, but when most of his friends started talking about acceptance letters he realized he would have to act fast. He started studying various schools and soon became familiar with BC.

“I was e-mailed so much mate- rial from different schools, one of them was Boston College. I ended up flipping through a magazine of the top 100 colleges and uni- versities and saw Boston College among them,” said Asuo-Mante. “I realized what a good school this was and sent in my application. I was aware that the truth and we know the truth now: education equals freedom.

“My today is full of yesterday’s traumas, children that I never had the chance to teach,” said Gabrah. “We have much more work to do.”

In his remarks, Fr. Leahy agreed that the continuing, educa- tional pursuits is the best way for all students to carry on King’s dream. Lasting change — at BC and beyond — has been made by “individuals who have passion and a vision, nurtured by knowledge and a willingness to commit and serve.”

That message held especially true for this year’s recipient. Asuo- Mante was 16 years old when his family moved from Ghana, in West Africa, to New York and a few months later to Manchester, Conn.

“At a different world, Asuo-Mante re- members. Adjusting to life in the United States was made easier by his focus on education, specifically science, he says. “In Ghana you must learn facts, memorize them. When I started attending school here, it was much more focused on the practical application of what you studied.”

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“After the event, it’s life itself.”

— John McDargh

“The Boston College at Home in ‘A Different World’

By Melissa Beecher

The Boston College

Chronicle

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Michael Resler works his students hard — and shares his sense of play in the process

“Heights of Excellence” profiles faculty members who, through their exemplary teaching and research, contribute to the intellectual and spiritual life of Boston College

BY MELISSA BEECHER
STAFF WRITER

He sits atop a desk, legs dangling. In his lap is a copy of Euripides’ play, “Helen,” a poem penned circa 1185 about King Arthur’s knights. In his hand he holds a text of the same story, a “tour-de-force” a “Well-Beloved” by a German philologist, a “master” and editor of languages within their historic, cultural context — Resler speaks both for his endless enthusiasm and his demand for excellence in the classroom.

Talking with a reporter on a recent day in his Lyons Hall office, Resler — between checking e-mails and answering a knock on the door from a CIA agent checking up on a former student interested in working for the government — brushes off the Fulbright accolades.

“The students do the work, I just help them along,” said Resler. “Although I will admit that the success of the program is boldfaced recruiting. I’ll sit down with fresh faces and personally for many years. When asked to describe his friend, O’Connor quotes Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s Faust.

‘Old Age does not make childish, as they claim, it merely finds us genuine children yet.’

Resler. “My friends joke that maybe, after all this time, it wasn’t his interest and respect for us. If anything, he likes us even more because we don’t have PhDs after our names — we don’t have all of the baggage that an academic career and the pursuit of tenure seem to accumulate.”

Not that Resler is a pushover. By Resler’s own admission, “I feel I have to justify the tuition they are paying. If it doesn’t challenge them, I’m cheating them.”

As a staff member and Catholic issues editor of the conservative BC student newspaper The Observer, Campbell said he was often at odds politically with Resler, whose office sports a collection of anti-George W. Bush memorabilia.

Despite such differences, he says, “I was, and remain, one of Professor Resler’s most devoted fans. The reason behind this is that, unlike many professors who disdain the muddle of undergraduate-level political discourse, Professor Resler revels in it. He has the utmost respect for the political beliefs of all of his students, and it was for this reason that I felt completely comfortable asking him to write a guest column for The Observer last year — and why he felt completely comfortable writing it.”

That Feb. 6, 2007, column takes to task the traditional Catholic position on homosexuality. Resler, an openly gay man, writes, “How I live out my sexuality — with what degree of justice, honesty, compassion and responsibility — is certainly a valid moral question. But that I am born with a same-sex propensity is, in my view, inherently no more a legitimate moral concern than is left-handedness.”

As he does in the classroom, according to Campbell, Resler keeps students’ feet to the fire during the Fulbright application process, helping them through drafts and rewrites. The letters of recommendation Resler writes for students are powerful and well-tailored to each individual, says Campbell, who describes the one Resler wrote on his behalf as a “tour-de-force.”

“I only hope they say things like that at my funeral,” says Resler.

“The cruelest month”

Beyond his work, Resler has found a hobby that he calls equally exhilarating: snowboarding.

“I have been snowboarding for the past 12 years,” says Resler. “My friends joke that maybe, after all this time, it wasn’t a youthful sense of discovery that keeps us forever young,” says O’Connor. “He never becomes jaded. As a colleague, you always want to meet the standards he sets.”

O’Connor says that students rise to the high standards Resler demands and more often than not walk away better from the experience.

“As a parent, you always look for professors to do for your children what you would do for them in the intellectual sense,” says O’Connor. “He is a master teacher, in the broadest sense of the term, who treats students as his own. One thing that makes for a good teacher is to understand play, in its proper and noble sense.”

Resler grew up in Florida in the 1950s and 1960s. His father was German-Austrian, but Resler readily admits that his early exposure to the language was “children’s German” from his grandmother, as his father had stopped speaking his native tongue, given anti-German sentiment of the time.

An interest in language in high school propelled Resler to study German, and in 1965 he started attending Universität Salzburg in Austria. He earned a bachelor’s degree in German from The College of William and Mary in 1970 and quickly returned to Europe. While on a Fulbright Scholarship he studied at Ruhr-Universität in Bochum, Germany, and Johannes-Gutenburg-Universität in Mainz.

When Resler returned to the US, he headed north to attend Harvard University for his master’s and PhD, and soon found a home in Boston. After a four-year teaching fellowship at Harvard, in 1976 he was hired at BC as an assistant professor of what was then Germanic Studies. He has chaired the German Studies Department since 1992.

But he was the founding director of the Fellowships Program in 1995 and has served as a member of the University’s Fulbright Committee since 1985. In 1997, he earned the University’s Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Award.

A prolific Medieval philologist — a scholar of languages within their historic, cultural context — Resler specializes in the 12th and 13th century German Arthurian romances. Resler brings the same intensity to his role as translator and re-constructor of “dead language” literatures as he does to his role as teacher.

“The power a translator holds in his or her hands must be used responsibly,” says Resler. “You have a responsibility — personally and professionally — to make sure that work available to those who might not be exposed to it.”

A “tour-de-force”

Nathaniel Campbell, ‘07, says it was Resler’s encouragement that laid the groundwork for his Fulbright Scholarship and acceptance to a PhD program at the Medieval Institute at the University of Notre Dame. As a sophomore, Campbell said, he was encouraged by Resler to apply for an Advanced Study Grant to study Medieval Latin literature and paleography. While in Germany, Campbell became enamored with St. Hildesburg’s握住 in music. A footnote within a text at St. Hildesburg’s Abbey, knowledge of German and Resler’s constant reminders about Fulbright led him to his topic: Hildesburg’s prophetic and apocalyptic thought in the 13th century.

A “heights of excellence” profile of faculty member who, through their exemplary teaching and research, contribute to the intellectual and spiritual life of Boston College

Campbell says his admiration for Resler goes far beyond academia. He recalls Easter Sunday of his senior year, when he couldn’t afford a plane ticket home to Colorado. Resler invited a couple of students to his New Hampshire cabin for dinner, a trip made all the more eventful when a problem with the sewer line prevented Resler from cooking, sending the small party searching for a deli. Campbell said after hours of food and conversation, he left feeling that someone he respected valued his opinions.

“The key to understanding the remarkable relationship that Professor Resler has with his students is to understand that he takes an actual and legitimate interest in our lives, and has the deepest respect for our experiences,” says Campbell.

“It distinguishes him from most other professors: The fact that we’re still undergraduates does nothing to diminish his interest and respect for us. If anything, he likes us even more because we don’t have PhDs after our names — we don’t have all of the baggage that an academic career and the pursuit of tenure seem to accumulate.”

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Career Center Grant Program a Gateway to the World

BY MELISSA BEECHER CHRONICLE STAFF

Last summer Megan Green ’08 traveled to Nairobi, Kenya, exemplifying the new approach to performing educational skills on HIV/AIDS. Imagine her surprise when she arrived to find more than 100 teen girls standing in a field anxiously to learn about acting.

“Most people are curious to find what I was about. For many of them, I was the first white blood cells formed in their...”

The Women’s Studies Program, Vietnamese American Studies, and the AHANA Leadership Council will sponsor a screening of the documentary “Never Perfect,” which explores the historical, cultural, and social history of the increasing popularity of cosmetic surgery in the United States.

“Never Perfect” focuses on the experiences of a young Vietnamese-American woman, highlighting not only the issue of body image and self-perception but also the stigma of racial self-hatred and American standards of beauty.

The screening will be shown in Cushing 001, will be a discussion with the director, Regina Park. For information, see www.bostoncollege.edu/cwds/cas/av/cas/ws or e-mail hesse@bc.edu.

Deadline for New Media Awards nominations Friday

Nominations due tomorrow, Feb. 29, for the New Media Awards, which honor Boston College faculty for innovative and imaginative use of digital, Internet and other forms of technology in their teaching.

Students may nominate faculty members, or see www.bc.edu/dev/news/new-nominations.html.

Asst. Prof. Jianmin Gao (Chemistry)

PhD, McGill University

Fields of interest: The biology of monococytes and macrophages – the large white blood cells formed in bone marrow – AIDS pathogenesis and other neurodegenerative diseases.

Courses: Graduate seminar in Cell Biology and Immunology in HIV Infection, Cell Biology of the Nervous System.

Wang was supported by the National Institutes of Health, which last year awarded him $141,000 for his research in HIV Infection, Cell biology of the nervous System.

Gao is a member of the editorial boards of Thresholds in Philosophy and Theology and Levinas Studies: An Annual Review.


A native of China’s Jiangxi Province, Wang’s research focuses on nanotechnology and engineering. He has participated in novel synthesis methods for developing high-quality nano-scale semiconductor materials at low cost, as well as innovative applications for scientific and technological developments. Wang says new materials can ultimately pave the way toward a non-invasive diagnostic test for early detection of cancer.

Wang’s research is made possible through a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

For information, see www.bc.edu/dev/news/new-nominations.html.

Asst. Prof. Dunwei Wang (Chemistry)

PhD, Stanford University


Courses: Principles of Chemical biology, Physical Chemistry for Biology Majors (spring 2009).

Gao’s research concerns the intimate details of how proteins fold and misfold, the latter occurrence has been implicated in a wide array of diseases, such as Alzheimer’s disease and Type II Diabetes. Gao, from China’s Shandong Province, was a postdoctoral fellow at the Scripps Research Institute between 1998 and 1999, when her time in Kenya: A mother whose body she helped deliver named the child in Patterson’s honor.

Janet Costa Bates, associate director of career counseling and education, says the center’s nonprofit internships have evolved over time and become as much a life experience for the young recipients as a way to bolster their resumes.

“It’s not just finding find students jobs, but helping them understand their skills, understand their interests and see how those things fit together in the working world,” Bates said.

The nonprofit internship program, launched in 1990, when the center was the College’s Expo funded the program as a way to encourage students of color to pursue career opportunities in the nonprofit sector.

Hailed as one of the first service-learning programs in the country, the program was lauded as an example of innovation in the Philip J. Brockway Award by the Eastern Colleges Personnel Officers’ Association.

As the program grew and students university-wide became eligible, funding sources changed. Currently, AHANA Career Services and the Career Center’s Job Fair receipts fund summer internships.

“The goal is to open students’ eyes, to have them go out and do the extraordinary or incredibly things they are capable of doing,” said Bates, who adds that the center hopes to expand the number of program grants. “The service component works well with the Jesuit mission of the University.”

The other two 2007 recipients were A&S senior Stacy Brown, who organized Vembros’ Safe, Healthy Non-profit that fostered mobile medical testing in Santa Rosa, NM, and A&S senior Tim Mo- riarty, who distributed food and clothing at the St. Francis House in Boston.

“I said to the students, ‘you may never know how many lives you saved, but you did’, said Bates. “They saved lives this summer. We’ll just never know how many.”

POSTINGS

“The Never Perfect” screening, discussion tonight

The Women’s Studies Program, Vietnamese American Studies, AHANA Women’s Leadership Council, ALCC Women of Color Caucus, and the AHANA Leadership Council will sponsor a screening of the documentary “Never Perfect,” which explores the historical, cultural, and social history of the increasing popularity of cosmetic surgery in the United States.

“Never Perfect” focuses on the experiences of a young Vietnamese-American woman, highlighting not only the issue of body image and self-perception but also the stigma of racial self-hatred and American standards of beauty.

The screening will be shown in Cushing 001, will be a discussion with the director, Regina Park. For information, see www.bostoncollege.edu/cwds/cas/av/cas/ws or e-mail hesse@bc.edu.

Deadline for New Media Awards nominations Friday

Nominations due tomorrow, Feb. 29, for the New Media Awards, which honor Boston College faculty for innovative and imaginative use of digital, Internet and other forms of technology in their teaching.

Students may nominate faculty members, or see www.bc.edu/dev/news/new-nominations.html.

Asst. Prof. Jianmin Gao (Chemistry)

PhD, McGill University

Fields of interest: The biology of monococytes and macrophages – the large white blood cells formed in bone marrow – AIDS pathogenesis and other neurodegenerative diseases.

Courses: Graduate seminar in Cell Biology and Immune Pathogenesis in HIV Infection, Cell Biology of the Nervous System.

Wang was supported by the National Institutes of Health, which last year awarded him $141,000 for his research in HIV Infection, Cell biology of the nervous System.

Gao is a member of the editorial boards of Thresholds in Philosophy and Theology and Levinas Studies: An Annual Review.

Courses: The Philosophy of Levinas, Heidegger and Marcel on the Sacred, and more secular accounts meet and conflict. Bloechl is book series editor of Levinas Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. He is also a past president of the Philosophers in Jesuit Education Association.

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Chemist Fiebig Earns Prestigious Sloan Research Fellowship

By Prof. Torsten Fiebig (Chemistry) has been awarded the prestigious Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Sloan Research Fellowship, intended to enhance the careers of the very best young faculty members in specified fields of science. A total of 118 Sloan Research Fellowships were established in 1955 to provide support and recognition to early-career scientists and scholars— are awarded annually in seven fields, including chemistry. Selection procedures are designed to identify researchers who show the potential for making fundamental contributions to new knowledge.

"It’s a great honor," said Fiebig, who joined the BC faculty in 2003. "It feels fortunate to be among those recognized by the foundation. We pursue a level of excellence at Boston College, so I think this is much a reflection on my research group, the Chemistry Department and my colleagues here at the university."

Fiebig works in the areas of photophysics—the transport and processing of light—photonics, where researchers are probing the potential uses of DNA in nanotechnology, as well as laser technology with potential applications to minimally invasive surgery. Currently, the Fiebig research group investigates the interaction of ultra-violet radiation with DNA on the ultra-fast time scale in order to answer the question of how excess energy dissipates in nucleic acids. The research addresses a long-standing issue in DNA photophysics and could provide new insights into the damaging effects of sunlight on DNA—damage that is often a precursor to cancer and other diseases.

"—Ed Hayward"
BC Exhibition Spotlights Local Irish Musicians

The John J. Burns Library will host an exhibition next month that features portraits of Boston’s “Greatest Generation” of Irish traditional musicians, including Boston College Sullivan Artist-in-Residence Seamus Connolly, director of BC’s Irish music programs.

These portraits are the work of Notwell artist and Boston Irish music scene habitual Richard Toomey, who will also display his paintings of Irish landscapes at the exhibition, which runs from March 1-31.

Opening reception “Reflections of Ireland: Music and Landscapes” will take place on March 11 at 4:30 p.m., with live Irish music. The exhibition and reception are co-sponsored by the Center for Irish Programs and Burns Library.

Toomey, a South Boston native who teaches art in SCSU’s Public Schools, says he considered himself more of a landscape artist particularly maritime scenes — but was inspired to undertake the portrait project after a trip to Ireland several years ago.

Seeing so many talented young people playing the traditional music of their homeland inspired Toomey to reconnect with the music, Toomey says. It also reaffirmed his respect in particular for those musicians in Boston who had helped preserve and pass on the music, as performers, teachers, organizers and mentors.

“People like Seamus, Larry, Joe and Jimmy have done so much to keep alive the music so that younger generations can continue to enjoy it,” he said.

“We put a high premium on athletic celebrities, like a Larry Bird or a Bobby Orr, but they are only able to do what they do for a relatively short time. There are musicians here still playing into their 70s and 80s, even 90s, and helping provide the continuity between generations.”

Toomey's subjects also include two BC alumni, accordion players John Connolly, ’74, and Tom Sheridan, ’64.

“It felt as important to recognize this ‘Greatest Generation’ in some way — not as a eulogy, but as an appreciation of a still active, dynamic force in Irish music.”

Boston College Sullivan Artist-in-Residence Seamus Connolly.

Local Irish Musicians

Before he and his “Semi-Pro Comedy Tour” took the stage Feb. 13 at Conte Forum, movie star comedian Will Ferrell met briefly with the Undergraduate Department of Boston College Campus Entertainment department, the event’s organizer. So, Chronicle wondered, what do you say to celebrity like Ferrell when he’s only got a few minutes? Here’s how Will Ferrell in photo:

“What was he like when he was. . .”

“Humorous, funny, like this. . .”

“Very funny and of course, naturally funny, and was very gracious and thanked us for having him. When he was signing photos, people would come up to him and say, ‘Oh, would you mind not signing this too?’” — majorly flabbergasted one line, but said it fast so I don’t think he noticed. I have no idea what he said back to me, but I know he smiled and said something like, ‘of course’ or ‘absolutely.’ Even though we only met him for five or 10 minutes, it was enough to know that he truly is a very nice and extremely funny man who deserves all the fame that has come to him over the years.” (Photo by Lee Pellettiere)