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CSAT Student Awarded Prestigious Statewide Scholarship

Beth Meyer has been spending a lot of time lately hanging out in sinkholes and befriending salamanders. The Radford University senior biology major is working with biology professor Karen Francl on a research project to examine the biotic diversity of karst sinkholes at RU’s Selu Conservancy. “We compared vegetation and habitat condition in karst sinkholes relative to their surrounding uplands,” Myer said. “This is part of a long-term study investigating salamander use of the karst sinkholes.”

For her part of the research, Meyer recently was awarded a $500 scholarship by the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship through Science and Education scholarship is presented annually to a Virginia college or university junior or senior student who “has the potential to make significant contributions to the field of wildlife management.” Meyer is the first RU student to receive the scholarship since the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society began offering the award eight years ago.

For the scholarship, Meyer was judged on her GPA, strong letters of recommendation, an essay about the major concerns affecting Virginia’s wildlife, her wealth of field research experiences and her instrumental work in helping to establish the newly-created RU Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Meyer and her fellow researchers found “great, and some unexpected results,” she said. First of all, they found sinkhole and upland forests have similar structural complexity, but each has its own unique species composition. They also found a “higher percentage of exotic, invasive species in sinkholes than in uplands, specifically field sinkholes.” Myer said.

Meyer presented her research, “Biotic Diversity of Karst Sinkholes at the Selu Conservancy, Southwestern Virginia,” recently at the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society winter meeting. “This has been such an amazing project to be a part of as I have learned so much more actually working in the field than in the classroom,” Myers said. “I am very thankful to be working with some amazing faculty here at Radford.”

Beth Meyer conducting field work at RU’s Selu.

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Dean’s Student Advisory Council 2009-2010 Selected

The College of Science and Technology's Dean's Student Advisory Council is an integral part of the Dean’s Office. The council consists of an outstanding student representative from each discipline. The 2009-2010 council was recently nominated by their programs. Several students will continue to represent their disciplines. Brittany Christian will represent chemistry, Caleigh Samuels will represent physics, Erin Fowler will continue to represent biology, Stephanie Kinsella will continue to represent computer science, Brittany Little will represent information systems, Lisa Cotsimopoulos will represent geology and Gabby Ness will represent Mathematics.

The 2008-2009 council included biology major Erin Fowler, chemistry major Erin Waddell, physics major Trevor Twyford, geology major Angela Giuliano, computer science major Stephanie Kinsella, information systems major Andrew Shortt and statistics major Gabrielle Miles Ness. Waddell, Twyford, Giuliano and Shortt will be graduating this spring. This council of outstanding students were key to successful outreach and college projects such as the Super MACC competition, homecoming alumni panel presentations, the creation of the STEM club and the upcoming CSAT Picnic scheduled for May 4 in Bisset Park.
Biology Students Present at “Chalk Talks”

The College of Science and Technology hosted a series of “Chalk Talks” for students to informally talk about their current research, field questions and receive feedback from faculty and fellow student researchers. This month’s talk featured research by biology students Matthew Williams and Emily Williamson. Williamson presented her research on the HIRA gene, a chromatin remodeling protein in the Arabidopsis thaliana flower. Williams presented his research on the expression of the genes ASF1 and HIRA involved in the regulation of stem cells in plants and animals.

The “Chalk Talks” are open to faculty and students who want to learn more about student research on campus and to offer valuable feedback for outstanding student researchers.

RU Chemistry Students Present at ACS Poster Session

The Virginia Blue Ridge Section of the American Chemical Society hosted its seventeenth annual undergraduate and high school poster session on Wednesday, April 8.

Close to 25 college and high school students from across southwestern Virginia and West Virginia presented their research including RU chemistry students Amanda Neighbors, Lindsey Poole and Robert Thomsen. RU Chemistry student Erin Waddell received the outstanding student award from the Virginia Blue Ridge Section of the American Chemical Society.

CSAT is Hosting Summer “Camp Invention” for Youngsters

The College of Science and Technology is partnering with the National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation to offer a week-long science summer camp for elementary school children from June 22 – June 26, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Reed and Curie Halls.

The Camp Invention program is a nonprofit science enrichment experience that develops creative thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving skills through hands-on-exploration and fun for children entering grades one through six.

Program activities include: “Problem Solving on Planet Zak” in which the children “crash-land” on an alien planet and have to use their creativity and teamwork to return home,” Imagination Point: Ride Physics” in which students design cool rides for an amusement park and learn about the science behind the fun, “Saving Sludge City” in which students learn ways to green up and rebuild “Sludge City” by creating clean landfills and inventing vehicles that won’t pollute the air, and “I Can Invent: Fantasy Inventions and Complicated Machines II” in which students take apart a broken machine and see what’s inside. Then they will use the gears, guts and gadgets to invent a machine that’s never been seen before.

Final registration deadline is May 27. To register visit www.campinvention.org.
Registration - Registration for fall 09 classes began Monday, April 6, 2009. Hopefully all of your advisees have been to see you and received their PIN for fall. Also, the new fall PIN must be used for summer registration. If you have any advisees who are planning to take summer courses, please advise them to register now. The administration will be evaluating the enrollment in summer classes within the next week or two, and courses with low enrollments will be cancelled.

Commencement – Commencement is right around the corner. The main university ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 9. The college ceremony for CSAT will begin at noon in Cupp Stadium. Students can pick up their rain tickets and honors tassels in the Advising Center beginning Monday, May 4.

New Core Classes - CORE 102 has now replaced ENGL 102. If you have continuing students who still need to take ENGL 102 or repeat ENGL 102, please be sure that they know this will now be CORE 102. All COMM and MSTD classes are now listed under the prefix COMS, and are under the School of Communication on the open classes listing.

New Withdrawal Policy - Please be aware that beginning fall 09, the last day to withdraw from courses will be the end of the eighth week, and university withdrawals can be entered until the twelfth week.

Catalogs – This year, university catalogs are online and printed copies will not be provided to students. Catalogs will be printed for faculty; however, due to the large amount of curricular changes, the printed catalog will not arrive until the beginning of the fall semester.

Academic Petitions – If your advisee needs an Academic Petition, please email me the student’s name and ID, what the petition is requesting, and the justification. I can then write the petition and notify the student to come pick it up for the appropriate signature. If you just send the student to me, they don’t usually know what they are petitioning, and neither do we!

Congratulations to CSAT Dean’s Scholars

The following students were selected as Dean’s Scholars.

Geology – Laurel Purdum
Mathematics – Gabrielle Miles Ness
Information Systems – James Stanley Gilbert

Computer Science – Kory Wayne Koch
Chemistry – Amanda Neighbors
Physics – Trevor Twyford
Biology – Brian Prall

MES 3D Lecture Packs House

After the full-house success of his 3D presentation on Death Valley last semester, CSAT geologist Parv Sethi offered another 3D adventure of the Arches National Park, in Utah to a packed house in Hurlburt Auditorium last night.

The audience learned about how the remarkable geologic structures found within this park tell us about the ancient events of a restless earth. He described clues left behind of ancient oceans, seemingly endless salt lakes, great upheavals of land and the ever-continuing work of the forces of wind, water and ice - all of which helped shape the over 2,000 natural arches and windows in the park.

Sethi is a nationally-recognized, award-winning teacher who has traveled extensively both within and beyond National Parks in the U.S. in his quest for researching and photographing geological landscapes. He enjoys using his own photography in his geology lectures and can be often found sharing stories of his geological adventures in the classroom.

Use of 3D visualization techniques for teaching and learning geology is his more recent teaching and research interest.
The College of Science and Technology inspires students to look beyond their world and into the global arena of ingenuity, invention and research.

College faculty dedicate themselves to their students' success. They are mentors who guide inquiring minds through the process of discovery in the classroom and in real-world research.

The College of Science and Technology houses the Departments of Mathematics and Statistics, Information Technology, Geology, Chemistry and Physics, and Biology.

College faculty and students collaborate across disciplines in research and real-world problem solving. This synergy inspires many opportunities for faculty and student innovation to take root and grow to meet the ever changing needs of the global community.

Thank you for being a part of our CSAT faculty. You inspire excellence within our students and your colleagues.