It’s been years in the making, and now the Boyd Forensic and Anthropological Sciences Scholarship is finally on its feet thanks to the dedication and hard work of anthropological sciences professors and Forensic Science Institute Co-directors Cliff and Donna Boyd. Between the two of them, they have raised $15,000 to fund a scholarship for an outstanding student interested in forensic or anthropological sciences.

They say making the dream of a fully funded scholarship a reality wasn’t easy, considering that up until three years ago, Donna Boyd was receiving no compensation for her assistance in forensic cases through the Virginia State Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (VOCME) in Roanoke. However “with the influx of new Medical Examiners in Roanoke, there was a push to have me compensated like all of its other consultants. I am now paid $250 per case. All of these funds over the past three years, representing over 20 death investigation cases, have been used to endow this scholarship,” says Donna Boyd. Along with the funds from VOCME, Cliff and Donna Boyd have donated to the scholarship the monies from Outstanding Faculty Awards that they have won over the years.

Donna Boyd knows what it’s like to be a scholarship recipient and how important the extra assistance can be to a dedicated student. While attending graduate school at the University of Tennessee, Donna Boyd’s forensic anthropology professor William Bass donated the stipends that he received for his work on forensic cases to fund student scholarships.

As a recipient of one of these scholarships, she has continued the tradition. “I am very happy that I can take tragic circumstances of accidental or violent death and turn them into something a little more positive for others, particularly students. And besides, I feel strongly that no one should ever make a profit from death investigations,” says Donna Boyd.

She says that she hopes that the scholarship recipients can also carry on this tradition of helping others through their skill and knowledge of forensic science.

The student scholarship is sponsored by the RU Forensic Science Institute and awarded annually to an outstanding student conducting collaborative faculty research in forensic or anthropological sciences. The scholarship is awarded competitively based on a student’s academic achievement, engagement in research and the student’s portfolio which includes a resume, at least two letters of recommendation, a 500 word essay describing the student’s research experience in forensic or anthropological sciences.

The Boyds say that they plan to build the scholarship in the future. “I will continue to add all of my forensic case compensations to the scholarship, which will have its first recipient next fall,” says Donna Boyd.

The recipient can be an incoming student or one already enrolled at RU, “but the focus is on collaborative faculty/student research in any discipline related to Forensic Science, such as forensic anthropology, chemistry, biology, information technology and geospatial sciences,” says Donna Boyd.

-Cameron Elliott

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Upcoming Events:

- Biology Guest Speaker Nov. 11, 3:30 p.m. in Reed 201
- CSAT STEM Club Guest Speaker Harvard’s James J. McCarthy will discuss climate science, Nov. 11, 7 p.m. in McGuffey 206
- Center for the Sciences Faculty Forum, Nov. 12, 3—4 p.m. in McGuffey 203
Information Technology Student Personifies Self-Discipline and Organization

Think of the average college student’s day - now add 16 credit hours of classes, five clubs and organizations, undergraduate research, and a job on campus. That is a day in the life of Bretny Khamphavong, an information sciences and systems major, and business administration, management and marketing minor.

Her day starts and 7 a.m. when she wakes to shower and get ready for her 8 a.m. classes. It doesn’t end until around 9 or 10 p.m. Then she heads home to do homework and get organized for the next day, and lands in bed—if it’s a good night— by 1 a.m.

Why the crazy schedule you might ask? Well, Khamphavong serves as president for both Phi Beta Lambda and Upsilon Pi Epsilon. She serves as treasurer of the Association for Computing Machinery, is a member of Women in Computing, and the College of Business and Economics (COBE) Student Advisory Board. She is also involved in a year-long undergraduate collaborative research study with information technology faculty member Hwajung Lee, entitled “Multi-hop Wireless Electricity Charging Protocol in Wireless Sensor Networks,” which could help further the knowledge of wireless electricity uses in areas such as national security and medical advances.

Khamphavong says her self-discipline and effective organizational skills allows her to participate in as many activities and learning opportunities as possible. “I am the most organized person you will ever meet, ever, and that’s a fact,” she says.

Khamphavong, is dedicated to her academics and prides herself on her organizational skills and positive attitude, “I came to college to learn as much as I can. And I feel that by being active, I’m not only learning but I am setting up my future,” she says.

Next semester will be a little more relaxed for her because she challenged herself with larger course loads at the beginning of her college career. However she will still be as involved in her many clubs and organizations.

As for the future, she is open for anything. “Graduate school is a great possibility, but I honestly don’t know right now. I am just ready to take what I have learned and experienced here and put it to use,” she says.

-Cameron Elliott

Chemistry Faculty Member Tim Fuhrer Finalist in National Competition

Chemistry instructor Tim Fuhrer will travel to New Orleans Nov. 13-19 as one of the five finalists in The Undergraduate Computational Engineering and Sciences 2010 award program designed to recognize faculty who have recently developed courses, programs and curricular material aimed at promotion the widespread integration of computational techniques in engineering and the sciences at the SC10 Conference. All of his travel expenses are paid by the conference, which is sponsored by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

Fuhrer will give a 15-minute presentation about his project “Computational Chemistry Lab” on Nov. 14. Other finalists include faculty from Duquesne University, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, University of Oklahoma and Prince George’s Community College. The award will be given after the presentations before a jury.

The SC10 is the international conference for high performance computing, networking, storage and analysis.
This weekend, the Information Technology Department will host the regional IBM Battle of the Brains on RU’s campus, a programming competition affiliated with the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and sponsored by IBM. Information technology faculty members Maung Htay and Hwajung Lee have worked diligently with others within the college to prepare for the competition.

Radford University, Virginia Tech, Bridgewater College and West Virginia University Institute of Technology will participate in a high stakes regional round of problem solving to advance to the finals, which will be in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt Feb. 27—March 4, 2011.

Teams of three students will push their brains to the limits, applying their programming skills and maintaining their mental endurance to solve complex, real world problems under a grueling five-hour deadline. Tackling these problems is equivalent to completing a semester’s worth of computer programming in one afternoon.

The team that solves the most problems correctly in the least amount of time will win a coveted spot on the World Finals roster.

CSAT’s information technology department has three teams of students participating in the regional competition.

Last year, nearly 22,000 contestants from 1,931 universities from 82 countries on six continents competed at 242 sites.

Math and Biology Students Discuss Research During Chalk Talks Oct. 28

Two students discussed their research during Chalk Talks on Thursday, October 28 at 5 p.m. in Reed Hall, room 215. The talks are organized by biology faculty member Gary Cote and presented the last Thursday of the month.

Mathematics major Camron Withrow discussed his research "Why Adding Points to a Donut is Associative.” His faculty mentor is John McGee.

Biology major Brian Ingram discussed "Scanning Electron Microscopy of Microscopic Crystals in Plant Tissues.” His faculty mentor is Cote.

The presentations are a chance for the students to discuss their research in an informal and supportive environment. These talks give students valuable experience presenting their research and receiving feedback from fellow students and faculty.

"Any faculty member whose students conduct research should encourage their students to present,” adds Cote. "Remember that a Chalk Talk is a great experience for students, whether in the middle of their research program, starting their research, or finishing it up,” he says.

For more information about Chalk Talks, contact Cote at gcote@radford.edu.

Left: Camron Withrow
Above: Brian Ingram
The CSAT STEM Club will continue to collect cans for their volunteer project until November 16 and will be placing boxes for food donations in the Math, Biology, Chemistry, Geology, and Dean’s Offices. Last Tuesday on October 26, the club visited the RU Museum of the Earth Sciences during our last meeting. The event went really well, and we encourage anyone who has not been to the museum to go.

Also, coming up for this week and next week, we have two guest speakers; the first will be Dr. Parvinder Sethi on November 4 in the Bonnie Hulbert Auditorium at 5 p.m. Dr. Sethi’s talk will be a 3-D Presentation on the Grand Canyon, and our goal is to fill up the whole auditorium. Our second talk will be held on November 11 at 7 p.m. in McGufey 206, and our guest speaker will be Dr. James J. McCarthy, a Professor of Biological Oceanography from Harvard. He will be discussing “Arctic Climate Change: Why it should concern us.” His presentation will have emerging elements of natural history, climate science, effects on indigenous peoples, and global connections to people living far from the Arctic. We will have a reception before Dr. McCarthy presents from 4-4:50 p.m. in the Stuart Hall lobby for anyone who is able to come. This will be a chance for students to speak with Dr. McCarthy before the presentation.

Another trip that we will be planning for this semester is a tour of the RU Greenhouse during one of our meetings. During the spring semester, we would like to visit the RU Planetarium with Dr. Rhett Herman and a enjoy a walk through campus to see all the trees while they are in bloom with Dr. Christine Small.

- Jasmine Jackson

Secretary, CSAT STEM Club