

Campus Observer

July 22, 2009

A Newsletter for the Florida Tech Community

Vol. 10 Issue 7

\$100,000 Grant Means New Critical Language Center

The Department of Humanities and Communication has received a \$100,000 grant from the National Security Education Program, ROTC Language and Culture Project, Institute of International Education, to support a Center for the Study of Critical Languages (CSCL). The new center will focus on the study of Chinese language and culture.

Department Head **Bob Taylor** and faculty **Alan Rosiene** and **JoAnn Parla-Palumbo** will lead the new center's programs. Parla-Palumbo will become the CSCL director. In the 2009–2010 academic year, **Wanfa Zhang** will offer courses in beginning Chinese, and **Gordon Patterson** will teach a course in Chinese history and culture.

Highlighting the first 2010 summer session will be the Chinese Language and Culture Intensive Institute.

For more information, call ext. 8082 or e-mail jparlapalumbo@fit.edu.

\$1 Million-plus Funds Arctic Research

John Trefry, Department of Marine and Environmental Systems, was awarded \$1,012,000 in new funding from several sources to continue his environmental research in Alaska.

A contract from the U.S. Department of Interior, Minerals Management Service, allows Trefry to participate in a two-year chemical and biological assessment of the Chukchi Sea prior to opening the area for offshore oil drilling. The Chukchi Sea is located north of the Bering Strait between Alaska and Russia. Study results should help identify areas of ecological importance and determine the source of any future chemical or biological changes.

"A challenge of our upcoming studies," said Trefry, "is to distinguish the impacts of any regional human activities from processes that may relate to global climate change."

Augmenting the federal funding is money from Shell Exploration & Production Co. and Conoco Phillips Alaska Inc. for complementary efforts in both the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. Another part of the total is \$115,000 from the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council and Chevron for biogeochemical studies in Cook Inlet, Alaska.

Trefry has carried out research in Alaska and the Alaskan Arctic since 1997. He and university and commercial colleagues leave for their first one-month cruise aboard the research vessel *Alpha Helix* in late July.



John Trefry samples lahar, or volcanic mudflow, after the 2009 eruption of Mt. Redoubt in Alaska.

Falcons Win Safety Award—Again

In May, the university's student flight team, the Falcons, won the American Airlines Safety Award at the 2009 National Intercollegiate Flying Association's (NIFA) Safety and Flight Evaluation Conference (SAFECON). This was the third time in four years that the team won the award. **Steve Cusick** is the Falcons' faculty adviser.

Sponsored by American Airlines, the award is given annually by NIFA to the flight team that demonstrates the safest practices during SAFECON and at the team's home base during the past academic year.

This year's NIFA competition involved 28 of the leading collegiate aviation programs and 335 pilots. The pilots flew into St. Louis, Mo., from across the country to participate.



Falcons faculty adviser Steve Cusick is second from left. Flight team, from left: Greg Fratantaro, Conner Shea, Nick Blouin, Tony Ferendo, David Callender, Tim Wing, Will Rae, Andy Greco, Matt Wentz and Chris Egan

Faculty and Staff News

Office of the President

President **Anthony J. Catanese** was elected as a trustee of the Florida Independent Colleges Fund, a foundation that manages the endowment and scholarships for private colleges in Florida. He also was elected vice chairman and to the executive committee of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida. This is the representative group of Florida's 28 private colleges and universities. Additionally, Catanese was elected for an unprecedented fifth term to the executive committee of the board of directors of the Florida Association of Colleges and Universities. The organization represents all Florida nonprofit universities, colleges and community colleges.

College of Aeronautics

Guy Boy has joined the college as a professor with specialties in aerospace engineering, computer science and human factors. He continues as a senior research scientist at the Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition.

Dean **Winston Scott** charmed attendees with his astronaut experiences when he made a presentation at a recent Melbourne-Palm Bay Area Chamber of Commerce breakfast.



Winston Scott

College of Business

Annie Becker's proposal earned \$130,000 from Brevard Workforce for an Entrepreneurial Training Services (ETS) program as part of the National Center for Small Business Information. The program provides free business development training to qualified aerospace employees affected by the space shuttle retirement. **Bob Keimer**, program coordinator, will direct the program. The e-mail address is ets@fit.edu.

Donn Miller-Kermani and **Carey Gleason**, Office for Advancement, were

honored recently by the Melbourne-Palm Bay Area Chamber of Commerce as nominees in the Second Annual Women of Excellence Celebration at the Hilton Melbourne Beach Oceanfront.

College of Engineering

The graduate thesis of **Ben Collingsworth**, working under thesis adviser **Ronaldo Menezes**, has been published in *New Scientist* and picked up by the *Wall Street Journal*, *Discover* magazine, *Techworld.com*, blogs "On Message with Ben Gross," the National Public Radio blog and elsewhere. Collingsworth's work on complex networks focused on e-mail messages sent within the company during the last 18 months of Enron's existence.

Syed Murshid was invited to present his research at the World's Best Technology Showcase in Arlington, Texas. He presented "Spatial domain multiplexing: the bandwidth multiplier in optical fibers."



Syed Murshid

A paper co-authored by **Ashok Pandit** and **Howell Heck**, titled "Estimations of soil conservation service (SCS) curve numbers for concrete and asphalt," was published in the *ASCE Journal of Hydrology*, a special issue on impervious surface hydrology.

Jean-Paul Pinelli and graduate students **Gonzalo Pita** and **Antonio Velazquez** each presented a paper at the 11th Americas Conference on Wind Engineering in San Juan, P.R. Pinelli presented "Cost effectiveness of hurricane mitigation measures for residential buildings."

Manolis Tomadakis presented two papers at the 2009 Spring National Meeting of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) in Tampa, Fla. One was "Gas diffusion layer fiber size distribution and diffusion regime effects on polymer

electrolyte membrane fuel cell performance," co-authored by **Katie Fuselier '07 M.S.**

Dean **Tom Waite** was an invited speaker at a recent Brevard Indo-American Medical and Dental Association symposium at Melbourne's Rialto Hilton. Waite detailed Florida Tech's new biomedical engineering curriculum.



Tom Waite

College of Psychology and Liberal Arts

A book edited by **Mary Beth Kenkel**, *Competency-Based Education for Professional Psychology*, will be published this summer by the American Psychological Association.

Radhika Krishnamurthy has been certified as a diplomate of the American Board of Assessment Psychology (ABAP) and Fellow of the American Academy of Assessment Psychology. ABAP is the only international certification board for doctoral-level psychologists with specialized expertise in psychological testing and assessment. Assessment psychology emphasizes the development, use and interpretation of tests based on psychological theory, knowledge and principles.

Jim Reynolds and **Chris Frongillo** presented a paper at the 2009 Distance Learning Administration Conference in St. Simon's Island, Ga. It was titled "Who's on first?: training non-traditional adjunct faculty and new DL administrators."

Bob Taylor was on the faculty of the Florida Humanities Council Teachers Seminar, "The Civil War in Florida." Held at the University of South Florida, the seminar was attended by 33 selected Florida public school teachers.

Frank Webbe was appointed by Florida Governor Charlie Crist



Frank Webbe

to the state's Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee. His term runs June 12, 2009, to Feb. 13, 2011.

College of Science

Marc Baarmand's on-campus presentation on the science of CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) in the movie, *Angels and Demons*, was attended by more than 60 people. The talk prompted invitations for him to speak in a Science Café presentation of the university and Brevard Zoo, and at Florida Atlantic University.

Hakeem Oluseyi appeared on the July 6 episode of The Science Channel's *Brink*, discussing a nebula that will one day create a new star. He is expected to do at least nine more *Brink* appearances over the year.

Terry Oswalt gave an invited public lecture to a full house at Montana State University in Bozeman on "Why people believe weird (astronomical) things." He was at the university to represent Florida Tech at the annual business meeting of the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR). Oswalt is a councilor in the CUR physics and astronomy division.

Virender Sharma, Nasri Nesnas and chemistry graduate student **George Anquandah** published "Kinetics of the Oxidation of Endocrine Disruptor Nonylphenol by Ferrate(VI)" in the journal *Environmental Chemistry Letters*.

Jon Shenker received \$23,000 from the Bonefish & Tarpon Trust to continue his studies on the biology and ecology of juvenile tarpon in the Everglades.

Athletics

Bill Macom, head coach for men's and women's tennis, was named 2009 Florida-Melbourne district tennis professional of the year by the United States Professional Tennis Association.



Bill Macom

Student Leaders Rock

The Student Leadership Awards ceremony was a welcome opportunity to congratulate and honor the many student leaders and leading student organizations on campus.

The event honored faculty, too. **Clayton Baum**, chemistry, was named Adviser of the Year and **Maria Pozo de Fernandez**, chemical engineering, earned the Andrew Revay Jr. Award for outstanding contributions to student life.

Some of the individual students singled out included **Sharif Abdel-Majid**, Outstanding President; **Joseph Noel**, Student Leader of the Year and Outstanding Senator of the Year; and **Kevin Shah**, student government president, who earned the Florida Tech Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Muslim students, advised by **Muzaffar Shaikh**, engineering systems, and **Hamid Rassoul**, physics and space sciences, especially shone. The Muslim Students Association won the Outstanding Educational Event Award for their Academic and Educational Support program. **Fawzi Alghamdi** and **Zeeshan Usmani** both earned the United States President's Gold Community Service Award. Alghamdi also earned the Florida Tech President's Gold Campus Service Award and Gold Philanthropy Award. Usmani also won the Florida Tech President's Silver Campus Service Award as did **Mohammed Salem Alzahrani**.

Transitions

New Hires

Adam Driggers, information technology; **Alison Grammer** and **Joni Oglesby**, human resources; **Steven Price**, **Silvia Barker** and **Bethany Vitaris**, Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI); **Susan Eaton**, OSI's Center for Global Preparedness; **Leonard Amato Jr.** and **Tom Gorman**, facilities; **Elizabeth Walczak**, mathematical sciences; **Susan Riner** and **Elizabeth Walsh**, School of Psychology; **Caroline Gruel**, registrar; **Christopher Raimondi**, athletics; and **Shawn Marston**, Hampton Roads Extended Studies site.

Promotions

Mary Dyer and **Liana Kangas**, OSI; **Cindi Schmitt**, OSI Professional Development Programs; **Eric Hausman**, grounds; and **John Politano**, Office of Sponsored Programs.

June MVP



The June Most Valuable Panther was **Laure Bennett**, assistant manager, account management, Office of the Controller. Congratulations, Laure!

MVP Committee Chair **Leslie Savoie** at lsavoie@fit.edu will begin accepting nominations again in August.

Campus Calendar

Aug. 11
Orientation

Aug. 17
Fall semester classes begin

Aug. 29
Grand Opening of Funk Center for Textile Arts
10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Sept. 7
Labor Day holiday

Lightning, Camera, Action!

Joe Dwyer, physics and space sciences, with graduate students Meagan Schaal and Eric Cramer, are being filmed for a science series called "hitec" on the German network 3Sat.



The three are testing a Florida Tech-built cosmic-ray muon detector, which is designed to study the relationship between cosmic rays and lightning. Seven more of these detectors are in use at the University of Florida/Florida Tech lightning center at Camp Blanding, Fla.

The program, all about lightning, is set to air Aug. 7 on German, Austrian and Swiss public TV.


Dwyer's research has also sparked interest from the National Geographic Channel, the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) and the Discovery Channel in Canada.

Online Grocery Program Helps Students with Meal Plan

Groceries4U, an online grocery ordering and pick-up program, allows Florida Tech students to order groceries from nearly 900 fresh, frozen and canned items available online using the debit portion of their meal plan as payment.

"The program was created to meet student demand for greater flexibility to use their meal plans and the kitchen facilities at Harris Village and Columbia Village," said Tom Stewart, food service director.

Products offered in this program also include personal care items, and laundry and cleaning supplies. Students pick up their purchases at the Rathskeller. For more information, log on to <http://groceries4u.fit.edu>.



Florida Institute of Technology
High Tech with a Human Touch™

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From the President's Desk



Anthony James Catanese

Florida Tech students continue to give us all new reasons to be proud. They take medals in athletics events, publish award-winning papers and earn some pretty amazing prizes and scholarships. Before they even leave Florida Tech, many have top-notch résumés.

Apart from taking pride in them for their on-campus and academic accomplishments, we cheer when they go out into the world, bringing honor to themselves and Florida Tech. Just take, for example, the achievements of recent months.

In April our hybrid rocket team took first place in the "precision flight to 2,000 feet" category, beating out teams from the University of Florida, University of Central Florida and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. The event, held in Flagler County, was sponsored by the Florida Space Grant Consortium and the Northeast Florida Association of Rocketry.

In May another rocket team took third place and was named "Rookie of the Year" in the national 2009 University Student Launch Initiative held at the NASA Huntsville Center. The Panther II, which reached an altitude of 5,020 feet, also received an award for best payload design, a fuel slosh experiment. This payload experiment is applicable to NASA's next-generation Constellation Program.

Also in May, the student flight team, the Falcons, did us proud yet again. They won the American Airlines Safety Award at the 2009 National Intercollegiate Flying Association's Safety and Flight Evaluation Conference in St. Louis. This was the third time in four years the team won this award, this year competing among 28 of the leading collegiate aviation programs.

In June two of our students, NASA summer interns, were chosen to be among 80 high-performing interns from across the country. Graduate student Michael Vergalla and senior Ryan Clegg were selected to be part of the NASA Student Ambassador Virtual Community. The cream-of-the-crop, they've been making professional connections and helping NASA inspire and engage future interns.

Just a few more examples of why Florida Tech students are among the best of the best!