



College of Arts & Sciences

Newsletter

A publication for alumni and friends of the College of Arts and Sciences

Vol. 2 ISSUE 2

Grambling State University, Grambling, Louisiana

Spring 2009

From Dean Connie Walton

We are finishing another exciting academic year. This spring, 114 students with majors housed in the College of Arts & Sciences



are scheduled to graduate. Many of these students have been accepted into graduate/professional programs. Mario Sanders, electronics engineering technology major, will be attending Penn State University, admitted to a doctoral program in engineering science & mechanics. Mario was awarded a \$43,604 fellowship for 2009/2010. Alicia Liddel, music major, will pursue a master's degree in music performance at the University of Arkansas. The chemistry department has 10 students scheduled to graduate this semester, bringing the total graduated this academic year to 15. Other highlights for this semester include the following:

- GSU Chapter of Beta Kappa Chi inducts 40 students.
- 13 theater arts students attend 73rd National Association of Dramatic & Speech Arts Meeting held in Dallas.
- GSU Chapter of Alpha Lambda Delta inducts 51 students.

The number of articles received for inclusion in this newsletter continues to increase. Several articles submitted for this issue could not be included due to space constraints. We are, therefore, considering expansion of this newsletter from 8 pages to 12. Please feel free to contact me with suggestions you may have regarding the newsletter at walton-cr@gram.edu or (318)-274-4006.

Biology major admitted to Medical School



Daniel Nwachokor

Daniel Nwachokor, a biology candidate for Spring 2009 graduation, recently received a letter of acceptance to the University of Kansas School of Medicine to pursue the Doctor of Medicine degree. Daniel will join other members of the class of 2013 in a pre-matriculation summer program, May 26-July 8, at the Kansas City MO campus of the medical school. The head of the biological sciences department, Dr. Felix Ifeanyi, indicates "this achievement is a dream come true for Daniel who has worked tirelessly towards this goal during his tenure at Grambling State University."

Daniel, who hails from Missouri City, Texas, was a medical science honor graduate of L.V. Hightower high school. Upon enrolling at Grambling State University in 2005, Nwachokor became involved in several

organizations including Golden Key International Honor Society, NAACP College Division, and the Minority Association for Premedical Students (MAPS) for which he has served as president the past two years.

During Daniel's tenure at Grambling, he sought out experiences that supported his goal of becoming a medical doctor. For three summers, beginning with his sophomore year, he was a participant in Meharry Medical School's BS/MD academic enrichment program. Additionally, Daniel shadowed doctors at the Metro-General Hospital in Nashville TN and at Green Clinic in Ruston Louisiana.

Daniel is interested in conducting medical research that explores ethnical differences in the incidence of diabetes.

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Theatre graduate admitted to New York Film Academy

Destyne Miller, originally from Gatesville, Texas, graduated from Grambling State University with a degree in theatre, December of 2008. Destyne has been awarded a \$12,000 fellowship to the New York Film Academy's Master of Fine Arts program in *acting for film*, which she will begin in the Fall of 2009. During her tenure at Grambling State University, Miller was seen in several productions as well as honored with many awards from the National Association of Dramatic Speech and Arts (NADSA). Past roles include: Velma in *Crowns*, Ismere in *Antigone*, Ilene in *Ravage*, Nettie in *Bull in a China Shop*, and Jocasta in *Oedipus*. At the NADSA Conferences, Destyne was awarded All Star Cast three years in a row (2006-2008) and placed 1st (2008) and 2nd (2007) in Poetry. As a theatre major, Destyne directed the one act play *To Be Young, Gifted, and Black* and received 1st place as an experimental piece.

New York Film Academy's MFA in



Destyne Miller

acting for film is a four semester, accelerated program. Students may complete the first year of the program at one of the Academy's three campuses, New York, Los Angeles, or Abu Dhabi. The last year of the program must be completed at the Universal Studios campus in Los Angeles, CA.

The first two semesters of the program focus on the enhancement of the craft of acting, and using these techniques in film. The last year of the program requires the student to complete specialized courses as well as write and produce a film.

Social Science Honor Society recognized

At the end of the Fall 2008 semester, Grambling State University's chapter of Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society attended the organization's triennial convention that was held in Atlanta, GA. The conference theme was a "Political Party". Convention events included an awards banquet, workshops, and seminars. The keynote address for the awards banquet was delivered by the State of Georgia's Commissioner of Labor, the Honorable Michael T. Thurmond. A merit award was presented to the GSU chapter in recognition of outstanding service. Dr.

Frances Staten, faculty advisor, was appointed to serve as a Pi Gamma Mu Governor, in appreciation of her dedicated service to the organization.

Brandon Scott, junior sociology major, gave a presentation that was titled *Double Consciousness*. Alice Leonce (sophomore criminal justice major), Elizabeth Forbin (accounting major), Perlum Toomb (marketing major), and Torronyka Jones, (psychology major), members of GSU's Social Research Club, gave a poster presentation that highlighted their research project on longevity.

Family Consumer Science students assist with ESPN hosted *Bassmaster Tournament*



Tournament participants included students and chefs.

The 39th **Bassmaster Classic** came to the Shreveport/Bossier region February 20-22, 2009. This event is considered the “super bowl” for anglers, luring people from around the world. The Shreveport Times reported the tournament attracted more than 137,000 visitors.

Chef Saul Williams, III was chosen to cater the Bassmaster Classic Elite Dinner that was hosted by ESPN. Four students: Christal Eugene, Dominique

Jones, Natalie Parson, and Sophon Thach worked side by side with culinary professionals as they served 250 guests at a *plated sit down dining experience*.

Chef Saul, owner of *Guillaumes Catering and Orleans Bar and Grill* in Shreveport, Louisiana, is working with the family and consumer sciences department this semester by providing training for students in event catering and preparation of signature meals.

Students co-author paper

Dr. Brett Sims and two students had their research results on *Computational Results of an Ion Flux Model* published in the volume 3, October 2008 issue of the **Proceedings of Intellectbase International Consortium**. The research was completed on GSU's campus during the summer of 2008 and funded by a National Research Experience for Undergraduates Program award to Dr. Sims. The student researchers, who were included as co-authors, were Heather Smith (computer science major) and Tariq Scott (electronics engineering technology major). The

Smith/Scott student team developed a computer code that produces computational results for a new ion flux model that includes the ion channel protein electrostatic influence that is due to protein conformation. Dr. Sims, Brandon Bradley (mathematics major), and Johntae Bass (physics major) published a paper titled *A least Action Principle Analysis of Cardiac Pulse Propagation* in this same journal. This work used classical physics to develop a Lagrangian for a numerical propagating heart pulse solution to theoretically investigate a traveling heart pulse.

National Student Exchange at GSU

More than twenty-five years ago, the National Student Exchange (NSE) Program came to Grambling State University as a result of the efforts of Dr. Lamore Carter and Dr. Helen Richards-Smith. The National Student Exchange Program founded in 1968, has nearly 200 member colleges and universities. Students who qualify may exchange to one of the member institutions for a semester or a year. Through the NSE program, students can access academic options that will supplement their studies at Grambling State University, and students at other university may exchange to Grambling for that same reason.

Currently, two National Student Exchange participants are studying at Grambling State University. They are: Meliah Smith and Monique Coleman. Meliah is from Chattanooga, Tennessee and a student at East Tennessee State University. Monique is from Louisville, Kentucky and is a student at the University of Kentucky. Both students exchanged to Grambling State University for one year. Dr. Ellen D. Smiley serves as coordinator of the national student exchange and Ms. Jackie Newsome is the assistant. For additional information, please call 318-274-2114.



From the left, Johntae Bass, Tariq Scott, Dr. Brett Sims, Brandon Bradley, and Heather Smith

Biology instructors participate in “STAR” workshop at LSU



Natalie Hendrix, Stephanie Villalba, and Kimberly Joseph-McCarter

Three biology instructors – Mrs. Stephanie Villalba, Ms. Natalie Hendrix and Mrs. Kimberly Joseph-McCarter, were among twenty faculty members selected from five Louisiana colleges and universities to participate in a workshop at LSU, Baton Rouge, January 6-8, 2009. The STAR (Scientific Teaching, Assessment and Resources) workshop, geared toward faculty who are in their first few years of teaching at the college level, was a mini-institute that explored new models of instruc-

tion for undergraduate biology courses. The models emphasized active learning, assessment and diversity as the key themes in scientific teaching.

This semester, the biology faculty are incorporating some of the lessons learned from the STAR program into their lectures and laboratory exercise. The STAR program participants shared the information received at the workshop with other GSU faculty at a session hosted by the biology department on March 19, 2009.

QEP work is in progress

As Grambling State University prepares for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) visit in April 2010, the College of Arts and Sciences (COAS) continues to play a vital role in the development of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). A survey was used to inform the process for selection of the topic. After receiving the analysis of the survey from the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, the

Quality Enhancement Plan Team sent a recommendation to the University’s Leadership Team. The Leadership Team, which includes the president, the provost and other key university officials, reviewed the recommendation, the analysis of the survey data, and the results of the Rising Junior Examination for the last five years. The Leadership Team selected the topic, **“The Improvement of Mathematical Skills and Knowledge”** which was

officially announced on December 1, 2008. Both the Leadership and Quality Enhancement Plan Teams agreed that the topic selected is a major institutional challenge, one that needed to be addressed to enhance learning for all undergraduate students.

For additional information please contact Dr. Sharma at sharmapr@gram.edu or Mrs. Michelle Williams-Young at youngm@gram.edu.

The Invisible Man Exhibit showcased in Dunbar Hall

February 5th -March 5th, 2009, Grambling State University’s Dunbar Gallery hosted an exhibition by emerging artist Charles Huntley Nelson. The primary focus of the exhibition was a video installation entitled *“The Invisible Man”*.

The installation was based on a composite of images from the *H.G. Wells* movie with dialog from Ralph Ellison’s *“Invisible Man”* along with images from the movie interpretation of *I-Robot*. The video featured footage from the films digitally fused with original images created by Nelson. As a part of the installation, Nelson created water-

color images from still frames within the video. The result was an intriguing exhibition that focused attention on digital techniques as a means for the creation of art. Donna McGee, head of the art department, stated “students and visitors seemed to enjoy the exhibition which is the first video installation we’ve presented. The video generated insightful dialog about how it was made as well as the meaning behind it.”

Charles H. Nelson is a native of Houston, Texas where he graduated from the High School for the Performing & Visual Arts. He received his BFA



Charles Huntley Nelson discusses exhibit with Betty Giles, left, and Donna McGee, art department chair, right.

from Washington University in St. Louis, MO, and his MFA in painting from Howard University.

Family and Consumer Science professor receives Kit

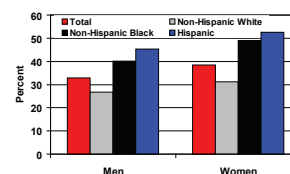
Dr. Frankie Rabon, associate professor in the department of family and consumer sciences, recently received *The Road to Health Toolkit*, made available through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Diabetes Education Program.

The *Road to Health Toolkit* is designed for professionals who work with

Hispanic/Latino and African American/African Ancestry communities at risk for *Type 2 Diabetes*. According to the CDC, 90-95% of diagnosed cases of diabetes are *Type 2*.

Dr. Rabon will use the *Road to Health Toolkit* to provide additional training to students enrolled in food and nutrition courses.

Estimated lifetime risk of developing diabetes for individuals born in the United States in 2000



Narayan et al, JAMA, 2003

Faculty and students attend Minority Leaders Program

The Air Force Minority Leaders Program held its winter review February 16-19, 2009 in Atlanta Georgia. GSU faculty and students representing chemistry, computer science, and physics attended this meeting, along with two high school science teachers. The GSU team participated in three review groups - *Radio Frequency Research, Materials, and Sensor Program for High Schools*.

Dr. Y. B. Reddy, Michael Terrell (computer science major), and Nikema

Smith (computer science major) gave a joint presentation that focused on *Cross-Layered Perspective of Cognitive Networks*. Dr. Danny Hubbard's presentation highlighted materials that could be used to steer a laser beam. Dr. Seetala Naidu discussed properties of nanomaterials. Colef Talbert's (chemistry major) poster presentation also included this work.

During the *Sensor Program for High Schools Review Session*, Ms. Patricia Schneider and Ms. Nyoka Freeman,

Carroll High School teachers, discussed their participation in a sensors workshop that was held on Grambling's campus. They also addressed the incorporation of the workshop material into their classrooms. Mr. Karl Etherly (computer science major) provided input on his experience working with the high school teachers and students.

The Minority Leaders Program targets research that can make military operations more efficient.

Art exhibit held for high school students

An exhibition featuring the work of area high school students was featured at Grambling State University's Dunbar Gallery from March 9th – 26th 2009. The exhibition, held annually, provides an opportunity for GSU's art department to reach out to talented high school students by offering them a venue to exhibit their work.

This year's exhibition included 80 entries from Winnfield, Wossman, Neville, Ruston, Choudrant, Sterlington, and Pineville High Schools. Subject matter of art works included portraits, nature studies, and abstraction. According to Donna McGee, head of the art department, "The work shows that high school art teachers are diligent



Visiting students review artwork.

about teaching drawing techniques and exploration with various media while addressing a variety of subject matter."

Emerging artist, Charles Huntley Nelson of Atlanta, was the juror of awards.

English Day celebration held

The English department, guided by acting head, Dr. Jennifer McMullen, worked this semester to establish a more active presence on campus.

An **English Day** celebration was held on March 3, 2009. This celebration began with a fellowship luncheon. Yumeaka Washington, an attorney with the 2nd Judicial District Attorney's office representing Jackson, Bienville, and Claiborne Parishes, served as the keynote speaker. The audience consisted of faculty and students representing departments throughout the university. Ms. Washington highlighted the benefits of having an undergraduate degree in English to success in law school and the practice of law. That evening a *Creative Exhibition* program was held. Students and faculty read original poems and works of published writers.

Psychology professor receives Tom Joyner Foundation Award



Dr. LaWanna Gunn-Williams

Dr. LaWanna Gunn-Williams, professor of psychology, is a 2008 recipient of the **Tom Joyner Foundation's Hardest Working Professor Award**. This award is given to individuals who labor beyond the expectations of their positions in specified professions. Dr. Gunn-Williams was secretly nominated by students in her psychology classes.

The accolades of students were used by the foundation judges in selecting Dr. Gunn-Williams. Three students wrote about the influence that she has had on their lives and the many roles that Dr. Gunn-Williams plays. A psy-

chology senior wrote "she will always be the one professor students come back to visit. When I first came here as a freshman student from California, my parents were skeptical about leaving me. They went with me to meet my advisor who happened to be Dr. Gunn. She made me feel welcomed and helped to ease my parents' insecurities. She assured them that she would be here for me, and she really has kept that promise." Dr. Gunn-Williams received the **Hardest Working Professor Certificate and award** in January of this year.

CMAST sponsors workshop to promote student performance

The Center for Mathematical Achievement in Science and Technology (CMAST) sponsored workshops that promoted enhancement of student performance, March 16, 2009. Dr. Sandra McGuire, director for the center for academic success at LSU-Baton Rouge, met with faculty from 9:00 am-11:30 am in Grambling Hall Auditorium. She stressed the importance that teaching strategies and learning skills have on student's mastery of concepts and ultimately academic performance. Emphasis was placed on the role that fac-

ulty play in helping students *learn how to learn*.

After lunch, she met with students. Dr. McGuire was able to connect with student perception of academic challenges and their emphasis on understanding instructor expectations. Students were provided with examples of how other students were able to improve initial failing scores, to earn grades of "B" or better in courses that are considered difficult.

Dr. McGuire shared learning strategies that utilize meta-cognition.



Dr. Sandra McGuire

History Club salutes Black History Month and Women's History Month

The history department, in conjunction with the Carter G. Woodson History Club, sponsored a film festival on February 17-19, as part of Black History Month. To capture the diverse aspects of African American History, the department selected two films—*Glory*, and *Rosewood*—which dealt with issues of slavery and segregation. Dr. Roshunda Belton, acting history department head, and Dr. Jimmy McJamerson, professor of history, provided comments and historical contextualization for each film.

In observance of Women's History Month, Dr. Belton and members of the history club visited two fourth grade classes at Alma J. Brown Elementary and presented information on environmental history. The topics discussed coincided with the national theme—"Women Taking the Lead to Save Our Planet." Presenters were history majors Lauryn Duvall, Pashawn Jones, Sherita Hollings, Cheryl Mango and Misty Booker.

French Film Festival

Grambling State University was one of five Louisiana colleges and universities to receive a grant from the French-American Cultural Exchange program sponsored by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and the French Ministry of Culture. This grant (\$1,800) was used to host an event titled *The Tournées French Film Festival*.

The festival started on March 5 and ended on March 31. The program consisted of six award-winning international films that demonstrate the cultural diversity of France and other French-speaking countries. The films were screened in French with English subtitles. Each *showing* was followed by discussions moderated by faculty.

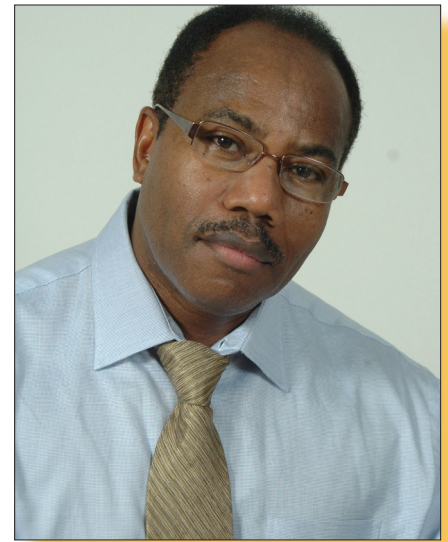
Dr. Chimegsaikhan Banzar, assistant professor of French and principal investigator of the grant, indicates that “this event will contribute to promoting the French language and culture at Grambling, and enhance our French and French Education programs.”

The festival was open to the general public and admission was free.

Physics professor authors two books

Dr. Avaine Strong, head of the department of physics, has two books that are being published. One book of literary genre is titled *Get Strong—a true story* published by Dorrance Publishing Co., Pittsburgh PA. *Get Strong* covers a short period of Dr. Strong’s life, and his experiences with the judicial system. A considerable portion of the book centers around a plight for justice, commingled with Dr. Strong’s attempts to sustain a healthy personal life while pursuing a Ph.D. in physics. The second book is a technical work. In the course of searching the internet, a German publishing company, Verlag Dr. Muller AG & Co. (VDM), based in Mauritius,

came across a reference to Dr. Strong’s Ph.D. thesis titled “On the deployment and station keeping dynamics of N-body orbiting satellite constellations.” VDM wanted to make the work available to a larger audience, and contacted Dr. Strong to determine if he would be interested in publishing his thesis in the form of a printed book. Dr. Strong agreed to have this work published. It is anticipated that the *Deployment/Stationkeeping dynamics of N Body Orbiting Satellite Constellation* book will be available in stores in three months. *Get Strong* probably will not hit bookstores until late 2009 or early 2010.



Dr. Avaine Strong

Spanish professor publishes articles



Dr. Miguel Ángel De Feo

Dr. Miguel Ángel De Feo, assistant professor of Spanish, had an article selected by the editorial board of **Ediciones Baquiana** for inclusion in a two year anthology (**Anuario-IX, 2007-2008**). This anthology will highlight outstanding works in the field of literary criticism. Dr. De Feo’s article, *La utopia desarmada: un itinerario sobre la decadencia argentina en El atroz encanto de ser argentinos*, de Marco Denevi was published first in **Revista Literaria Baquiana**. It examines the Argentinean crisis of 2001 as the last consequence of the lengthy decadence of Argentina due to military interven-

tionism and democratic feebleness.

Dr. De Feo had an article titled “*Las (per) versiones del “Yo” y del “Otro” en Mea Cuba de Guillermo Cabrera Infante*” included in the book **Guillermo Cabrera Infante: el subterfugio de la palabra**, which was recently published by Editorial Hispano Cubana. The Madrid based press produced this collection of works about the legendary Cuban Guillermo Cabrera Infante. De Feo’s essay analyzes the conflicting relations between the nostalgic memories of Cabrera Infante’s homeland (called *in-silio*) to his life in exile.

Willis works with U.S. Census Bureau



Dr. J. Russell Willis

Dr. J. Russell Willis, sociology professor, was recently appointed by the U.S. Bureau of the Census to serve as its point person at Grambling State University.

This spring, the Census Bureau will hire thousands of workers locally and nationally to verify addresses in preparation for the 2010 Census. Dr. Willis has invited the bureau's regional representative to speak on campus. While here, the representative will discuss the importance of the census and will also

recruit new hires. New hires will work in north Louisiana, or in their home communities at an hourly rate of \$8-\$13 for a period of eight to twelve weeks.

As an undergraduate student, Dr. Willis had a good experience working with the bureau. "I want to make sure that as many Grambling students as possible are able to have the same type of experience," says Willis. Anyone interested in the temporary positions should visit www.census.gov/2010censusjobs.

Foreign Language professor publishes poetry book



Dr. Gonzalez

Dr. Ruben Gonzalez, head of foreign languages department, recently published a book of poetry titled *Poemas que nunca (siempre) se leeran*, which when translated means *Poems That Never (Always) Will be Read*. The book was published by Xlibris publishing company in January 2009 and contains a collection of 84 poems.

Mathematics Faculty publishes in Higher Algebraic K-Theory

Dr. Aderemi Kuku, a professor of mathematics and a premier authority in the field of Higher order K-Theory, recently published a text-book titled *Representation Theory and Higher Algebraic K-Theory*. This book, published by Chapman & Hall/CRC, emphasizes the practical use of topological constructions and discusses the higher order algebraic K-Theory of exact, symmetric monoidal, and Waldhausen categories.

K-Theory has applications in theoretical physics, Dynamical systems, Control theory and Econometrics.

Dr. Kuku has served various prestigious national and international science and mathematics organizations in



Dr. Aderemi Kuku

various capacities, and is the recipient of numerous awards in recognition of his contributions to the field of mathematics. He joined the department of mathematics & computer science in Fall 2008.

McJamerson appointed to state-wide committee

Dr. Jimmy McJamerson, an associate professor of history, was recently appointed to the Teaching History Committee of the Louisiana History Association (LHA) by its president, Michael G. Wade. At the 51st annual conference, Dr. McJamerson and Dr. Elaine Foster represented GSU and were joined by Dr. Gwendolyn Duhon of McNeese State University in a presentation titled "Using Poetry to Teach History, Lan-

guage and Reading Comprehension." The presentation was based on McJamerson's workbook titled *On the Shoulders of Our Ancestors*.

Recently, Dr. McJamerson also received a contract with Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, New York, for the publication of his new book titled *The Black Press During World War II: A Case Study of Cultural and Global Influence*.



Dr. Jimmy McJamerson