

Spring 2012

## UNO Research Magazine - Spring 2012

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# THE UNIVERSITY OF New Orleans

O F F I C I A L R E S E A R C H M A G A Z I N E

Spring 2012

22  
Stewards  
of the Earth

Thank you for reading the Research Magazine of the University of New Orleans. Several exciting changes have occurred in the past year, most notably the selection of a new President of the university. Dr. Peter J. Fos was selected as the sixth leader and first President of UNO in January 2012. Dr. Fos has kindly agreed to answer a few questions regarding his vision for the university.

Our cover picture shows the latest excursion of high school students involved in UNO's summer geoscience field trip. The program is coordinated by Dinah Maygarden of our Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences (PIES). Twice each summer, UNO offers juniors and seniors from high schools around the country the chance to study geology in the mountain west or environmental ecology in the coastal wetlands of Louisiana.

This issue contains several items related to the School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering (NAME) in our College of Engineering. One ONR-funded project involves collaboration between local ship-building companies, our National Center for Advanced Manufacturing (NCAM) and Dr. Pingsha Dong of NAME. Friction Stir Welding is a solid-state metal joining process producing high-strength, defect-free joints in metallic materials. The process employs a pin tool with a low rotational speed and applied

pressure that "mechanically stirs" two parent materials together to produce a uniform weld. Dr. Dong's project demonstrates the feasibility of using the technique to manufacture a ship's hull from titanium alloy producing a vessel with a lower total cost of ownership. UNO and ONR jointly hosted the Titanium Ship Structure Summit in New Orleans on November 7-8, 2011.



Also in this issue we report on a congressional visit to the Netherlands to study how the Dutch have addressed storm surge concerns for their country. Dr. Denise Reed of our Earth and Environmental Sciences Department and PIES was an active participant in the visit which was aimed at learning how the Dutch have responded to their flood disaster of 1953 and how Louisiana might apply what they have learned in light of the flooding of New Orleans and the region following Hurricane Katrina.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the UNO Research Magazine.

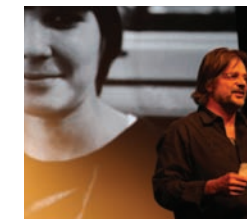
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## Dr. Peter J. Fos—New President of UNO

### Q&A:

In December Peter J. Fos became the sixth leader and the first president in UNO history (as a member of the University of Louisiana System, UNO is now led by a president). A UNO graduate and New Orleans native, President Fos has extensive experience as an administrator and faculty member with a proven record of conducting research, fundraising, developing collaborative relationships with other academic institutions, and implementing institutional effectiveness and student success programs. Before arriving at UNO, he held positions at the LSU Health Sciences Center, The University of Texas at Tyler, The University of Southern Mississippi and Tulane University.

#### What were your emotions when you were selected president of UNO?

My emotions were disbelief and excitement. It felt like a dream. Realizing that I have been selected to lead my alma mater is a very exciting opportunity. I have spent 25-plus years in higher education administration, and now I will be able to end my professional career as the first president of my—and my wife's—alma mater. Wow!

#### What sort of reception have you gotten from alumni and business leaders since you were selected?

The reception has been overwhelmingly positive. It has been about 18 months since the University of New Orleans had a permanent leader and I sense that alumni and business leaders have been waiting for the selection of the new president. As an alumnus and native New Orleanian, I have been able to connect with and engage alumni and business leaders very quickly. I feel that my, and the University's, relationship with alumni and business leaders will continue to improve.

#### How has your past experience prepared you for this challenge?

I have been fortunate to have worked for over 20 years at two major research universities which has prepared me to contribute to UNO—an urban research university. I understand what UNO is today and what it strives to be in the future. My experience in two large university systems—one in Mississippi and the other in Texas—has also prepared me to work for UNO in the University of Louisiana System. My time as a dean and provost and executive vice president has exposed me to an array of issues and challenges.



#### What do you want the city, the state and the nation to know about UNO?

I want everyone to know that UNO is a major university that prepares graduates to succeed in careers that are essential to improve our cities, state and nation. Our graduates are competent, globally-aware citizens. I

want them to know

that UNO has a committed faculty and staff, and a very loyal and diverse student body. The University has a legacy of academic excellence and research excellence.

#### Where do you see the University in five years?

My hope—and my goal—is that UNO will be a premier university in the University of Louisiana System in all aspects. I see the University as a vibrant, student-centered, research university that is an integral part of the city of New Orleans and the Gulf South region.

#### How can your experience in health care be applied to your new position?

I feel that my experience in health care uniquely prepares me to assist UNO to become a partner in the new medical center project that is currently under construction in New Orleans. UNO is uniquely positioned to work with the local health sciences centers to prepare our students for careers in health care, including administration, counseling, engineering, urban planning and others. My past experience at the two local health sciences centers will allow me to interface with health care leaders to ensure that the University of New Orleans plays a part in developing New Orleans as a rival to the medical center hubs in Houston and other cities. ♣



As workers pour the section of street that they designed, civil engineering students Matt Zeringue and Anne Heath take concrete samples while instructor Chuck Fromherz looks on.

## Students Team Up With Make It Right On Cutting-Edge Street Project

A group of UNO civil engineering students can see the fruits of their labor, and so can anyone else who visits a newly paved city block in the Lower Ninth Ward. Twenty-three students undertook an ambitious senior design project in coordination with the Make It Right Foundation and the City of New Orleans. It's a project that could have far-reaching implications for the city's drainage system.

The UNO students did all of the surveys, design work and material testing on a section of North Prieur Street between Jourdan Avenue and Deslonde Street. Instead of conventional concrete, this special test run used pervious concrete and Gravelite base course. Both materials are porous and allow rain water to be stored in the street, as opposed to all of it entering the drainage system.

Make It Right, Brad Pitt's nonprofit that focuses on rebuilding homes in the Lower Ninth Ward, has frequently used pervious concrete in driveways and sidewalks, but this represents one of the few times anywhere in the country that the material has been used on a city street.

The street will be tested in the coming months to determine its durability and strength. Officials with the City of New Orleans are watching closely to see how this stretch of street holds up. According to engineer Chuck Fromherz, a UNO civil engineering adjunct faculty member, widespread use of pervious concrete in streets could reduce the city's drainage load by as much as a third, which could greatly improve New Orleans' frequent street flooding problems.

## UNO Launches WhoData.org

UNO's Department of Planning and Urban Studies (UNO-PLUS) launched WhoData.org, a powerful community data Internet mapping service that gives citizen groups an unprecedented platform to contribute and track information on the progress of New Orleans' neighborhoods.

Since Hurricane Katrina, many neighborhood groups have independently collected property condition information. WhoData.org empowers these groups by providing them with a collaborative property mapping application that will allow residents to assess their own neighborhoods, highlight properties that show indicators of blight, create their own maps and property lists and share this information with the public.

"WhoData.org is a public participation geographic information systems (GIS) program that will encourage our students to work closely with community-based organizations and municipal leaders to integrate neighborhood and regional data for mutual understanding and access," said Michelle Thompson, UNO assistant professor of planning and urban studies.

UNO-PLUS is collaborating with the Neighborhood Housing Services of New Orleans (NHS) and the Regional Planning Commission to increase public access to current and relevant community data.

## UNO Shares \$3.5 Million Grant to Study Juvenile Justice

UNO is one of three universities to share a three-year, \$3.5 million grant to study the long-term behavioral and financial impacts of juvenile justice decision-making. The grant is funded jointly by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The project is entitled "Crossroads: Formal vs. Informal Processing in the Juvenile Justice System." Some youth who violate the law are informally processed, meaning they are diverted from the juvenile justice system. While others with similar histories who are arrested for identical crimes are formally processed, meaning they are put on supervised probation or sent to institutional placement. In many jurisdictions, processing decisions are made in the absence of empirically developed guidelines.

The research project will evaluate juvenile justice policy by examining the social, developmental and economic consequences of processing decisions in addition to evaluating their effects on re-offending. Researchers will study an ethnically diverse sample of 1,200 male juvenile offenders between the ages of 12 and 16 years old from Louisiana, California and Pennsylvania and interview them semi-annually for three years. The outcomes of interest include educational attainment, mental health, employment preparation, social relationships and recidivism as well as their associated economic costs and benefits.

"We're trying to quantify all that to see if the kids who stay out of the system do better in a lot of ways than kids who are in the system, or vice versa," says UNO psychology professor Paul Frick.

## UNO Gets More than \$600,000 For Oyster Project

UNO has received \$632,880 from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to provide information technology and fisheries modeling for the sustainable management of Louisiana's public oyster seed grounds. UNO's computer science and biological sciences departments are working on the three-year project.

The LDWF is responsible for closely monitoring the size and health of oysters on nearly 1.7 million acres of public water bottoms. Every year, the LDWF conducts a survey on the public oyster seed grounds to determine the size and number of oysters present. Researchers on the project will input this information, along with the acreage of the oyster reef, into a mathematical model. The model, taking into account oyster growth rate and mortality rate, will predict how many oysters fishermen can sustainably harvest without depleting the reef.

The entire information system will be hosted by the UNO Department of Computer Science. The investigators for the project are Thomas Soniat, biological sciences professor of research, and computer science professors Mahdi Abdelguerfi and Shengru Tu.



## Acting Secretary of Commerce Visits UNO

Acting Secretary of Commerce Rebecca Blank visited UNO in September to announce \$102 million for three coastal restoration programs in Louisiana. She also toured a lab to learn more about the coastal research work of UNO's Center for Hazards Assessment, Response and Technology and Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences, which use a scientific mapping technique that incorporates local community members' ecosystem knowledge to provide a more comprehensive data set.

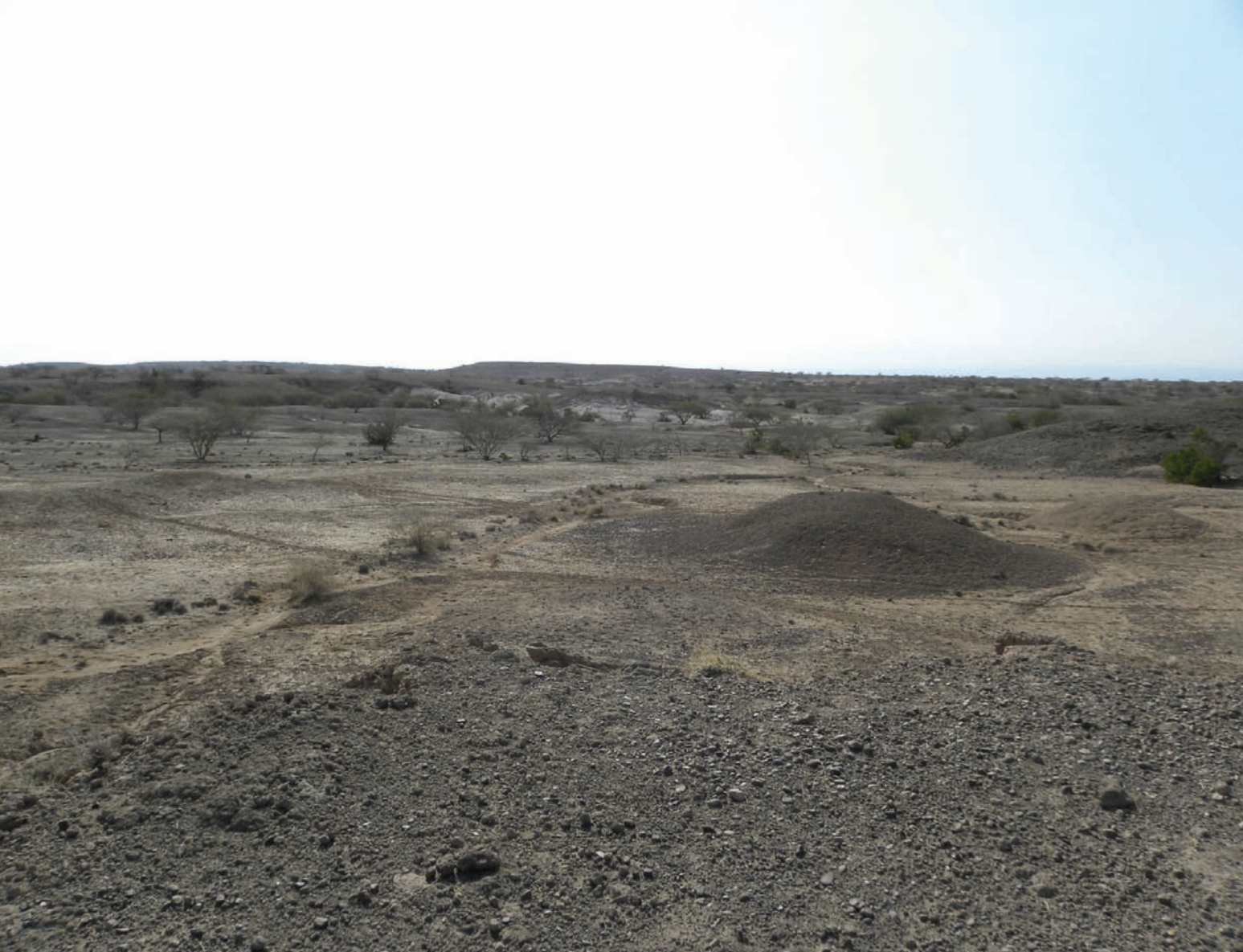
*(left to right) Shirley Laska, professor emerita of sociology; Rosina Philippe, resident of Grand Bayou; Acting Secretary of Commerce Rebecca Blank; Matthew Bethel, postdoctoral researcher. Photography by Tracie Morris Schaefer*

## UNO Selected For South Korean Shipbuilding Project

UNO has been awarded a 10-year \$3 million contract as one of three American university partners on a South Korean shipbuilding research project. UNO, the University of Michigan and the University of Maryland were selected to work with one of South Korea's two Global Core Research Centers. The centers will focus on research opportunities within South Korea's two major export industry sectors: shipbuilding/marine structures and electronic industries.

The centers will be operated by a lead university in South Korea with a consortium of academic

institutions and South Korean manufacturers. A portion of the research funding is allocated to overseas consortium members, including UNO. The UNO principal investigator is Pingsha Dong, the Northrop Grumman Endowed Chair in Shipbuilding and Engineering and director of the Welded Structures Laboratory. Dong, an internationally renowned engineer, will provide advanced research in the areas of welding; fatigue design and analysis; and structural assembly procedures for marine structures.

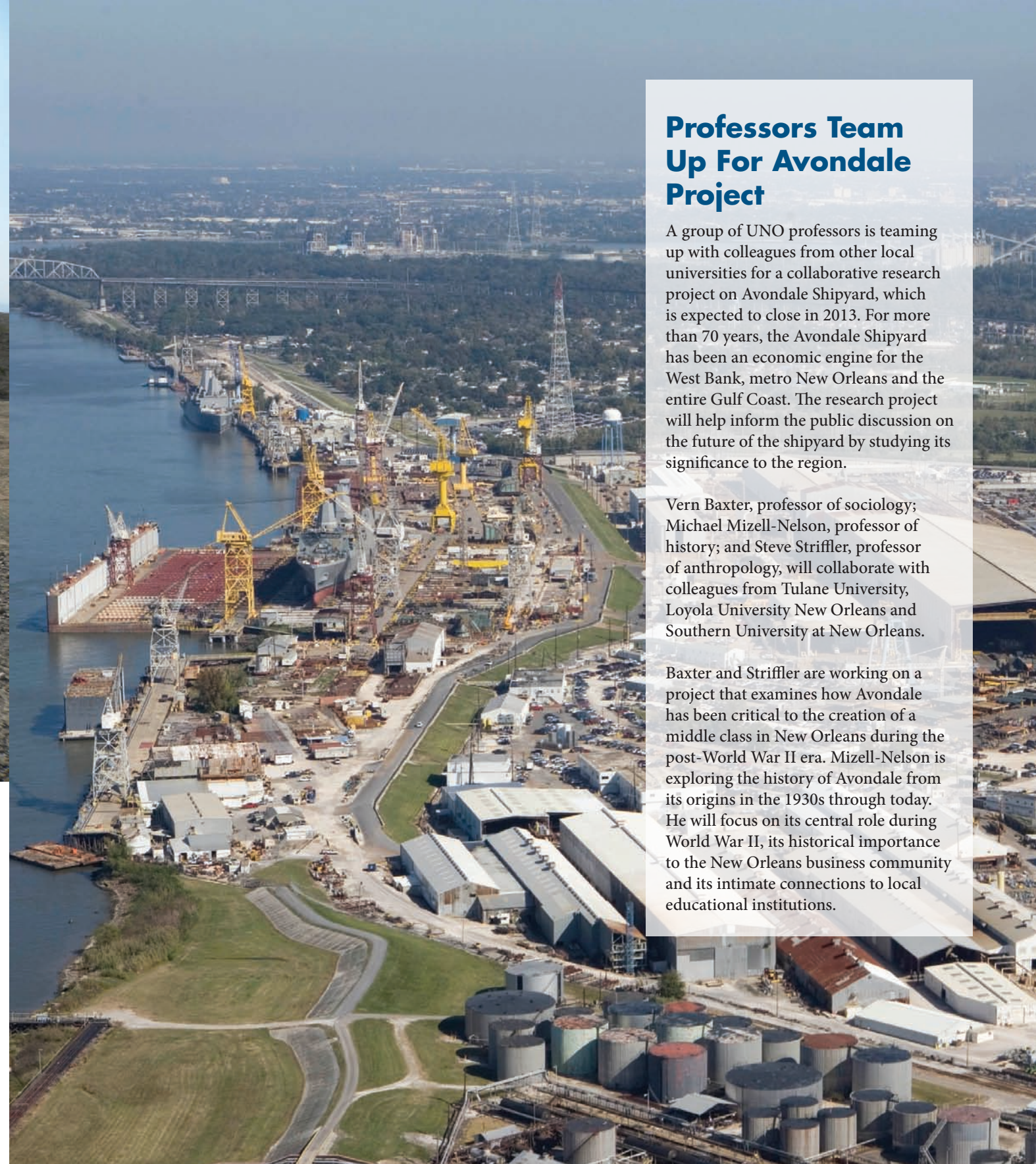


Some of the earliest known fossils of humans were excavated from Aramis, Ethiopia.

## UNO Research Reveals Early Humans Lived in Riverfront Property

Early humans lived in a riverfront environment in Ethiopia, according to a study published in *Nature Communications* by UNO researchers M. Royhan Gani and Nahid D. Gani. This finding is in contrast to the previous interpretation of early humans living in a woodland environment far from a river. Knowledge of the habitat of early humans is crucial to answering the questions of early human evolution, including the development of bipedalism—walking on two legs.

The researchers studied the habitat of *Ardipithecus ramidus*, a 4.4 million-year-old early human found in Aramis, Ethiopia. They interpreted the data to suggest the presence of major rivers and river-margin vegetation. This would place *Ar. ramidus* in a river-margin habitat part of an otherwise savannah landscape. Understanding the landscape inhabited by *Ar. ramidus* will help assess the different theories for the development of early humans.



## Professors Team Up For Avondale Project

A group of UNO professors is teaming up with colleagues from other local universities for a collaborative research project on Avondale Shipyard, which is expected to close in 2013. For more than 70 years, the Avondale Shipyard has been an economic engine for the West Bank, metro New Orleans and the entire Gulf Coast. The research project will help inform the public discussion on the future of the shipyard by studying its significance to the region.

Vern Baxter, professor of sociology; Michael Mizell-Nelson, professor of history; and Steve Striffler, professor of anthropology, will collaborate with colleagues from Tulane University, Loyola University New Orleans and Southern University at New Orleans.

Baxter and Striffler are working on a project that examines how Avondale has been critical to the creation of a middle class in New Orleans during the post-World War II era. Mizell-Nelson is exploring the history of Avondale from its origins in the 1930s through today. He will focus on its central role during World War II, its historical importance to the New Orleans business community and its intimate connections to local educational institutions.

## **As Good As It Gets**

Filmmaker James Chressanthis introduces his documentary “No Subtitles Necessary: Laszlo & Vilmos” at a screening in the Robert E. Nims Theatre at the UNO Performing Arts Center in September. The screening marked the debut of the theatre’s new, state-of-the-art digital projector. The Barco 4K DLP projector is the highest resolution projector available (four times the resolution of high definition TV). It gives UNO film students the opportunity to view their work as it would be seen in any of the finest theaters in the world.



### Digging The Quarter

The UNO anthropology department conducted an archaeological excavation in January in the French Quarter at the future location of the Irish Cultural Museum. Led by UNO archaeologist Andrea White, a team of volunteers found clues about the people who lived at 933 Conti St. over the last 230 years.

### UNO Awarded \$4.8 Million Grant for Titanium Shipbuilding

UNO has been awarded a three-year, \$4.8 million grant from the Office of Naval Research to advance the science and technology of titanium shipbuilding.

The research will be focused on the manufacturability and structural performance of a titanium mid-ship section.

Titanium alloys offer many advantages for ship hull applications compared to traditional structural steels and aluminum alloys. For example, titanium alloys are more resistant to corrosion, have a high strength-to-weight ratio and a high resistance to fatigue. However, the cost of materials and the lack of robust welding and joining techniques have prevented the shipbuilding industry from realizing the enormous potential of titanium for ship hull applications, said Pingsha Dong, a professor in the School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering.

According to Dong, with recent advances in welding and math-based design for fabrication techniques, this project represents perhaps the most comprehensive exploration of state-of-the-art technologies to date by actually building a full-scale titanium mid-ship section.

Dong is an internationally renowned researcher in the area of welded structures. Over the years, UNO researchers have developed numerous advanced manufacturing and welding process modeling tools, innovative welding process applications and experimental testing facilities for deploying shipbuilding technologies to U.S. shipyards.

#### ACCOUNTING

**John C. Gardener**, professor of accounting, published the following journal article: Safrulizani Mohd Salleh, John C. Gardner, Zunaidah Sulong, and Carl B. McGowan, "The Interpretation of 'In Context' Verbal Expressions Used in International Accounting Standards: A Comparison of Students Studying at United Kingdom Universities by Demographic Factors," *Journal of International Business Management and Research*, Volume 2, Issue 5, September 2011, 63-82.

#### ANTHROPOLOGY

**David Beriss**, chair of anthropology, presented "City of Gastronomy: Global Recognition and Local Resilience in New Orleans" at the 71st annual meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, March 29-April 2 in Seattle, Wash.

**Jeffrey David Ehrenreich**, professor of anthropology, co-organized a panel, "Carnival in the Americas: Body, Identity, and Expressive Performance in Ritualized Celebrations" and presented a paper entitled "It's Carnival Time: Meanings, Messages, and Cultural Identity in the Beaded Suits and Painted Faces of the Black (Mardi Gras) Indian Tradition of New Orleans."

**Martha C. Ward**, research professor of anthropology, was a discussant in the panel "Public Policy and Publics in Post-Katrina New Orleans: How Critical Topics Circulate and Shape Recovery Policy."

#### BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

**Charles Bell**, assistant professor of biological sciences, was a co-organizer at the International Botanical Congress 2011 in Melbourne, Australia. He presented "Dating the tree of life: prospects and pitfalls."

**Phil DeVries**, professor of biological sciences, published: DeVries, P. J., L. G. Alexander, I.A. Chacon & J. A. Fordyce 2011. "Similarity and difference among rainforest fruit-feeding butterfly communities in Central and South America." *Journal of Animal Ecology - Early View*.

**Steve Johnson**, dean of the College of Sciences, is the principal investigator on a project entitled "U.S.-Gabon Workshop 2011: Evolution and Conservation of Central African Biological Diversity: New

Approaches and Avenues for International Collaboration," which has received a \$60,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. The workshop will provide a forum for scientists studying the evolution and conservation of biological diversity in the central African rainforests.

**Simon Lailvaux**, assistant professor of biological sciences, published: Lailvaux, S.P., Zajitschek, F., and Brooks, R. 2011. "Differential aging of bite and jump performance in virgin and mated teleogryllus commodus crickets." *Evolution*, 65:3138-3147.

**Stanley Leibo**, professor of biological sciences, lectured about "embryo banking" at the Second International Congress on Controversies in Cryopreservation of Stem Cells, Reproductive Cells, Tissues and Organs in Valencia, Spain in April 2011.

**Zhengchang Liu**, assistant professor of biological sciences, was awarded a grant from the National Institutes of Health-National Institute of General Medical Sciences for \$284,331 in September 2011 to research amino acid sensing and signaling in yeast.

**Carla Penz**, associate professor of biological sciences; **Phil DeVries**, professor of biological sciences; and **Thomas Simonsen**, Natural History Museum, United Kingdom, recently described a new species of butterfly that has likely gone extinct due to habitat destruction. Their publication was portrayed in the *National Geographic Magazine-France*.

**Bernard Rees**, associate professor of biological sciences, published: Martinez, M.L., Raynard, E.L., Rees, B.B., and Chapman, L.J. 2011. "Oxygen limitation and tissue metabolic potential of the African fish *Barbus neumayeri*: roles of native habitat and acclimatization." *BMC Ecology*, 11:2.

**Wendy Schluchter**, chair of biology sciences, is the principal investigator for a four-year, \$541,807 National Science Foundation grant award to establish an undergraduate research program designed to boost participation of under-represented minority groups in the biological sciences. UNO will partner with Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) on the project, which is entitled "Collaborative

Research: URM: UNO/SUNO Partnership in Mentoring Undergraduates in the Biological Sciences." Also involved in this grant are co-principal investigators **Carla Penz**, assistant professor of biology, and SUNO's **Illya Tietzel**. **Schluchter** published: Biswas, A., M. N. Boutaghou, R. M. Alvey, C. M. Kronfel, R. B. Cole, D. A. Bryant, and W. M. Schluchter. 2011. "Characterization of the activities of the CpeY, CpeZ, and CpeS Bilin lyases in phycoerythrin biosynthesis in *Fremyella diplosiphon* strain UTEX 481." *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.

#### CHEMISTRY

**Weilie Zhou**, assistant professor of materials science, led a group presentation for the Advanced Materials Research Institute that received the Best Senior Presentation award in November 2010 at a Nanoelectronic Devices for Defense & Security Conference held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The presentation titled "Highly Sensitive Gas Sensors Based on Three Dimensional WO<sub>3</sub>" was presented by Zhou, postdoctoral researcher Baobao Cao and graduate assistant Jiajun Chen. The biannual science and technology conference of the U.S. Department of Defense reviews evolving research and development activities related to nanoelectronics for national defense and security.

#### COMPUTER SCIENCE

**Mahdi Abdelguerfi**, chair of computer science, professor **Shengru Tu**, assistant professor **Daniel Bilar** and **Golden Richard III**, professor and director of UNO's Greater New Orleans Center for Information Assurance, have all been chosen to work on three new research and development contracts worth more than \$800,000 from the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) Systems Center New Orleans awarded to the computer science department. The three one-year contracts became effective on September 1, 2010. The contracts are for autonomic computing and security essentials, platform independent secure mobile computing, and web mash-up and semantic frameworks. UNO Vice President for Research & Economic Development **Scott Whittenburg** is the project director.



### CREATIVE WRITING

**Ken Rayes**, director of the Greater New Orleans Writing Project, recently received an anonymous \$50,000 gift for the organization. The gift will enable GNOWP to become an effective regional affiliate of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, a national nonprofit organization that conducts the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. As a regional affiliate, the GNOWP will distribute information to schools to solicit submissions, provide support during the submissions process and organize local judging for the competitions. To support this venture, the GNOWP is partnering with the Lusher Charter School creative writing program.

### EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

**Martin O'Connell**, assistant professor and associate chair of earth and environmental sciences, and graduate students attended the annual meeting of the Louisiana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society in Lafayette to present the results of various research projects, particularly those related to improving local fisheries. Projects included examining redbird reintroduced to Bayou St. John, assessing how juvenile tarpon use coastal marshes as nursery habitats, tracking the spread of a non-native fish in Port Sulphur and determining how the oil spill impacted lemon shark populations at the Chandeleur Islands. O'Connell, **Mark Kulp**, associate professor of earth and environmental sciences, and **Meg O'Connell**, research associate at UNO's Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences have received a \$35,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to compile and study pre-oil spill data on the Gulf of Mexico. The data collection will allow scientists to have a basis of comparison for future studies on the impact of the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster. The project is entitled "Seamless Marine-Strandline-Wetlands Sediments Data Structure to Support Decision Making Against the Deepwater Horizon Coastal Oiling."

**Patricia Williams**, associate professor with the Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences, and **Bhaskar Kura**, professor of civil and environmental engineering, presented the paper "Potential

Health Effects of Chinese Dry Wall Components: A Preliminary Analysis" at the Air and Waste Management Association's annual conference June 21-24 in Orlando, Fla.

### EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

**Brian R. Beabout**, assistant professor of educational leadership, counseling and foundations, presented the paper "Selling School: An Analysis of School Marketing in New Orleans" at the American Educational Research Association in New Orleans, La. held April 8-12. **Beabout** was recently awarded the *Charles M. Reigeluth Emerging Scholar Award* by the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. He presented a paper entitled "Site Visitation as a Discrete Event in Systemic Change Processes" at the 2010 AECT Convention. Beabout also was the lead author on a paper entitled "Social Upheaval and Educational Change: Opportunity or Obstacle?" published in *The International Journal of Educational Reform*. Last, he published a book chapter entitled "Family engagement in charter schools," which appears in the *Handbook on Family and Community Engagement* published by Information Age Publishing.

**April Bedford**, interim dean of the College of Education and Human Development, served as co-chair of the presentation "NCTE Authors—A Master Class in Children's Literature: Trends and Issues in an Evolving Field," the National Council of Teachers of English annual convention, Chicago, Ill., November 19, 2011.

**Paul Thomas Bole**, associate professor of professional practice; **Brenda Burrell**, associate professor; **Mary Ellen Cronin**, professor; and **Janice Janz**, associate professor, in the Department of Special Education and Habilitative Services, secured a five-year federal grant to improve teacher preparation programs and outcomes for teacher candidates working with PK-12 students with high incidence disabilities.

**Marc Bonis**, assistant visiting professor of educational leadership, counseling and foundations, co-authored the paper "Seasonal Bone Density and Body Composition Changes in Elite, Male High School Wrestlers" in the *International*

*Journal of Wrestling Science*, February 2011. **Bonis** recently published a book entitled *The Fat Old Man's Guide to Health and Fitness: Second Edition* (ISBN: 978-1589393646, \$12.95, 108 pp.), which describes his 16-week, "do more, eat less" program for reversing several health problems common to middle-aged men.

**Yvelyne Germain-McCarthy**, professor of curriculum and instruction, presented "Re-inventing the Rule for Division of Fractions" at the Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Association for Teachers of Mathematics, October 19-21, 2011 in Monroe, La.

**Kate Reynolds**, associate professor of special education and habilitative services, published: Reynolds, K., Sharpton, W., Scott, R. & Klein, D. (2011). "One Course, Five Iterations: The process of transforming a traditional on-campus course into a synchronous web delivered course that also meets the needs of adult learners with disabilities," *Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications 2011*.

### ENGINEERING

**Rasheed Azzam**, distinguished professor of electrical engineering, was a member of the steering and program committees, session chair and invited speaker at the 8th Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers International (IEEE) Conference on High-Capacity Optical Networks and Emerging Technologies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Dec. 19-21, 2011.

**Edit Kaminsky Bourgeois**, chair of electrical engineering, has been appointed Chair of the IEEE ComSoc GLOBE-COM/ICC Technical Content Committee for the 2012-2013 calendar years.

**X. Rong Li**, Chancellor's University Research Professor of Electrical Engineering, made the following presentations at the 13th International Conference on Information Fusion, Edinburgh, UK, 26-29 July 2010: "Hybrid Grid Multiple-Model Estimation with Application to Maneuvering Target Tracking," "Estimation and Filtering for Gaussian Variables with Linear Inequality Constraints," "Recursive LMMSE Filtering for Target Tracking with Range and

Direction Cosine Measurements," "On Optimal State Estimation with Multiple Packet Dropouts," and "State Estimation with Point and Set Measurements." **Li** had eight papers published in the proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Information Fusion, Chicago, Ill., July 2011.

All presentations were published in the *Proceedings of 13th International Conference on Information Fusion* as well as four articles **Li** co-authored: "Joint Identification and Tracking of Multiple CBRNE Clouds Based on Sparsity Pursuit," "Distributed Multiple Model Fusion with Transformed Measurements," "Quasi-Tracklet Fusion with Cross-Correlation Considered," and "Distributed Estimation Fusion under Unknown Cross-Correlation: An Analytic Center Approach."

**Bhaskar Kura**, professor of civil and environmental engineering, published: Kura, B. (2011). "Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill of 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico: High on Emotions, the Desire to Survive and Evolve, a Commitment to Help an Already Ailing Community, and the Opportunity to Learn and Educate," *EM, the Magazine for Environmental Managers*, the Air & Waste Management Association, June 2011.

**Ting Wang**, professor of mechanical engineering, and his research group presented six papers at the Turbo Expo 2012 sponsored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in Vancouver, British Columbia. Wang and research associate Jobaidur Khan received the best paper award in the area of industrial and cogeneration for their research paper, "3D Modeling for Wet-compression in a Single Stage Compressor Including Liquid Particle Erosion Analysis," presented at Turbo Expo 2010 in Glasgow, Scotland.

### ENGLISH

**Randy Bates**, associate professor of English, will have a chapbook of his poems, *Dolphin Island*, published this summer by Finishing Line Press.

Associate Professors **Paul Bole**, **Brenda Burrell** and **Janice Janz**, and Professor **Mary Cronin**, all of the Department of Special Education and Habilitative

Services, have secured a \$1.5 million federal grant from the Department of Education. The purpose of the five-year grant is to help redesign teacher education programs to better prepare pre-service and in-service teachers to work with students with high-incidence disabilities in today's K-12 schools.

**Marietta Del Favero**, associate professor of educational leadership, counseling and foundations, and N. J. Bray, University of Alabama associate professor of educational leadership and policy studies, recently published a chapter titled "Herding Cats and Big Dogs: Tensions in the Faculty-Administrator Relationship" in *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research* (2010, vol. 25, pp. 477-541).

**Nancy Dixon**, instructor of English, had her article, "Armand Lanusse's 'A Marriage of Conscience,' Les Cenelles, Plaçage and the Censorship Law of 1830," published in the anthology *Turning Points and Transformations: Essays on Language, Literature, and Culture*, from Cambridge Scholars Publishing in Cambridge, England, Fall 2011.

**Nancy Easterlin**, university research professor of English and director of women's studies, will have her book *A Biocultural Approach to Literary Theory and Interpretation* published by Johns Hopkins University Press in April 2012. She was awarded a year-long Guggenheim Fellowship in 2008 in support of this interdisciplinary project.

**Carolyn Hembree**, English instructor, will have her first poetry collection published by Kore Press; she has individual poems forthcoming in *Gulf Coast* and *The Southern Poetry Anthology*.

**Carl Malmgren**, research professor of English, won the Omega Publications Prize for Best Novel of 2010 for *Paris Metro*, a portrait of café life, a coming of age novel and a whodunit.

**Kimberly Mason**, assistant professor in counselor education, recently received "best in show" at the Louisiana Counseling Association conference in September 2010 for her presentation "Cyberbullying Sexting? Understanding and Managing Today's Internet Challenges."

**Doreen Piano**, associate professor of English, had her interview "Working the Streets of Post-Katrina New Orleans, An Interview with Deon Haywood, Executive Director, Women With A Vision," accepted for publication in *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Winter 2011. She also had a book review of local activist Jordan Flaherty's book *Floodlines: Community and Resistance from Katrina to the Jena Six*, published in *Reflections: A Journal of Writing, Service Learning and Community Literacy*, Spring 2011. Her essay "Getting My Hands Dirty in a Feminist Archive: A Zine Collector's Observations," was published in the Zine Library Exhibition Catalog. Curator: Emily Morrison, Trouser House: A Contemporary Art and Urban Farming Initiative in New Orleans, La.

**Anne Boyd Rioux**, professor of English and undergraduate coordinator, has received a Creative Endeavor Opportunity Grant from the University of New Orleans to conduct research on her book *A Life of Constance Fenimore Woolson*, which is under contract with the Johns Hopkins University Press.

**Andre Perry**, associate dean of the College of Education and Human Development and CEO of the Capital One-UNO Charter School Network, co-authored an essay entitled "School by School: The Transformation of New Orleans Public Education," which appeared in a major piece of analysis on the New Orleans region five years after Hurricane Katrina. It is one of seven essays by local scholars on post-Katrina efforts to address key elements of the city's recovery in *The New Orleans Index at Five*, a project of the Washington-based Brookings Institution and the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center.

### FILM, THEATRE AND COMMUNICATION ARTS

**David Hoover**, chair of film, theatre and communication arts, performed in two professional theatre productions in the past six months. He played the role of Fielzig in the co-production of *The Drowsy Chaperone* for the Jefferson Performing Arts Society and Theatre 13. In addition, he played the role of Toby Belch in the Tulane Summer Shakespeare Festival's production of *Twelfth Night* for

which he was also represented on the cover of the October issue of *American Theatre*.

**Hamp Overton**, associate professor of film, theatre and communication arts, presented "Composition: From Painting to Photography to Motion Pictures" at the University Film and Video Association conference, August 3-6 at Emerson University in Boston, Mass.

#### FINE ARTS

**Richards Johnson**, professor of fine arts, closed his solo exhibition at Cole Pratt Gallery in New Orleans, La. The show ran from January 30-March 14, and featured mixed media paintings which, unlike his earlier abstractions, took the history of art and studies of the classical nude as their subjects.

**Jim Richard**, professor of fine arts, exhibited his work in "Then and Now," a survey of artists whose contributions have significantly changed the development of the contemporary art scene in New Orleans. The celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans, La., ended June 12. **Richard** held his first solo exhibition at Jeff Bailey Gallery in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York, NY from November 17, 2011 - January 7, 2012. This was the 20th solo exhibition of his career. **Richard's** collages and gouache paintings joined larger-scale oil on linen works.

**Jeff Rinehart**, fine arts instructor, had prints accepted into the Southern Open, a prestigious annual exhibition open to artists residing in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. The show was held at the Acadiana Center of the Arts in Lafayette, La. May 14-July 9.

**Dan Rule** and **Christopher Saucedo**, professors of fine arts, and **Tony Campbell**, artist in residence, were curated into "Catalyst," an exhibit at Space 301 in Mobile, AL, from July 8-September 4, 2011, sponsored by the Joan Mitchell Center. The show focused on the event of the BP oil spill and its effects on region as researched, experienced and interpreted by the artists.

**Nick Stillman**, critic in residence, published "Senga Nengudi's 'Ceremony for Freeway Fets' and Other Los Angeles

Collaborations," an article about artist Senga Nengudi, for the Los Angeles-based magazine *East of Borneo* in December 2011.

#### FOREIGN LANGUAGES

**Manuel Garcia-Castellón**, professor of foreign languages, has published a new book this year entitled *Rios de letras. Antología de la imagen del río en la literatura* (Madrid: Clan Editorial, ISBN 978-84-96745-58-2, 200 pp.). The book was inspired by the defense of fluvial ecosystems of the Iberian Peninsula. Any profits from its editions will go to the benefit of AEMS-Rios con Vida, a Spanish agency devoted to the protection of the environment.

**Joke Mondada**, associate professor of Spanish, presented the paper "The expression of feelings in Susana Chávez-Silverman's Mini Barrio Norte Crónica at the XL LASSO (Linguistic Association of the Southwest) Conference, September 29-October 2 on South Padre Island, TX.

**Juliana Starr**, associate professor of French, presented the paper "Animal Alterity: Judith Gautier's Mémoires d'un éléphant blanc" at the 37th Annual 19th Century French Studies Colloquium in Philadelphia, Penn., held October 27-29, 2011.

#### HISTORY

**Connie Zeanah Atkinson**, associate professor and associate director of the Midlo Center for New Orleans Studies, was invited by California State University Chico in March to present her paper "In That Number—Tourism in Post-Disaster New Orleans" for Reflections and New Directions: A Conference on the Anthropology of Tourism in Honor of Valene L. Smith.

**Günter Bischof**, university research professor of history and the director of CenterAustria, co-edited volume 20 on *Global Austria* in the series *Contemporary Austrian Studies*, published jointly by UNO Press and Innsbruck University press, to which he also contributed a preface and an introduction. **Bischof** co-edited *Der Wiener Gipfel 1961: Kennedy - Chruschtschow*, a 1,000-plus page volume on the topic of the U.S.-Soviet Vienna Summit of 1961. In that volume, he co-authored three essays;

a shorter English volume is in the making. He also co-authored an essay on Kennedy's alliance management around the Vienna Summit in the contemporary history journal *HISTORICUM* and another essay on US-Austrian relations in 1962 in the *Journal of the Austrian State Archives*. **Bischof** also co-edited *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria* (Contemporary Austrian Studies vol. XIX) published by UNO Press (ISBN: 978-1608010257, 448 pp.), and *The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968* (The Harvard Cold War Studies Book Series), now out in paperback with Lexington Books (ISBN: 978-0739143049, \$95.00, 530 pp.). He also chaired and participated in panels at the German Studies Association meeting in Oakland, Calif. **Bischof** and the Center-Austria staff organized the annual meeting of the Austrian Studies Centers in New Orleans, La. in October.

**Nikki Brown**, assistant professor of history and undergraduate studies coordinator, authored "Lillian Horace and the Respectable Black Woman: Black Women's Activism in Combating Jim Crow" in *Rediscovered and Recovered: The Life and Works of Lillian Bertha Jones Horace*, Karen Kossie-Chernyshev, ed. Texas A&M University Press.

**Robert Dupont**, associate professor of history and author of *On Higher Ground: The University of New Orleans at Fifty*, and **Raphael Cassimere**, university teaching professor emeritus of history, presented a panel discussion entitled "Making the New Orleans Middle Class: The Origins and Early Years of UNO" at the 2010 Po-Boy Preservation Festival held in November in New Orleans, La.

**Andrew Goss**, chair of history, had his new book, *The Floracrats: State-Sponsored Science and the Failure of the Enlightenment in Indonesia*, published in 2011. An Indonesian translation will appear later this year. **Goss** is the author of *The Floracrats: State-Sponsored Science and the Failure of the Enlightenment in Indonesia* (ISBN: 978-029924864-2, \$26.95, 264 pp.), which was published by the University of Wisconsin Press in March. In his book, **Goss** examines the professional lives and philosophies of Indonesian scientists and how science in Indonesia follows a state agenda focused mainly on exploiting the country's resource-

es rather than sharing scientific knowledge with the general public.

**Mary Niall Mitchell**, associate professor of history, was one of four scholars invited to join a panel discussion entitled "Is There Anything More to See? Civil War Photography and History," sponsored by the American Social History Project at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, November 3, 2011. The panel was part of a series commemorating the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War.

#### HOTEL, RESTAURANT AND TOURISM ADMINISTRATION

**Harsha Chacko** and **Jeffrey Schaffer**, professors of hotel, restaurant and tourism administration, and **Kim Williams**, assistant professor, published an article in *The Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism* entitled "A Conceptual Framework for Attracting Generation Y to the Hotel Industry Using a Seamless Hotel Organizational Structure."

#### LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

**Steve Striffler**, professor and Doris Zemurray Chair in Latin American studies, presented a paper entitled "International Solidarity and Neoliberal Crisis: A View from Colombia" as part of a panel on "Economic Crisis and the Quotidian: Effects, Counter-Publics, Movements Across the Americas and Europe" at the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, held Nov. 17-21 in New Orleans, La.

#### MANAGEMENT

**Kenneth J. Lacho**, professor of management, presented "Your Roadmap to Success—The Business Plan" at the annual meeting of the National Association of Blind Merchants, September 21-24, 2011 in Nashville, Tenn.

#### MARKETING AND LOGISTICS

**Pamela Kennett-Hensel**, chair of marketing and logistics, and **Milton Pressley**, professor of marketing and logistics, published an article entitled "Job Politics in the Corporate World: Have Students' Perceptions Changed in the Past 25 Years?" in the Proceedings of the Market-

ing Management Association's 2011 Fall Educators Conference. **Kennett-Hensel** was appointed chair of the department. She was also appointed to the board of the Marketing Management Association.

**Paul Hensel**, professor of marketing and logistics and senior associate dean, was honored as reviewer of the year for the *Marketing Education Review*.

**Kyeong Sam Min**, assistant professor of marketing and logistics, co-authored the following papers: "Designing Advertising Campaigns for Destinations with Mixed Images: Using Visitor Campaign Goal Messages to Motivate Visitors," *Journal of Business Research*, and "The Games People Play: How the Entertainment Value of Online Ads Helps or Harms Persuasion," *Psychology & Marketing*.

**Milton Pressley**, professor of marketing and logistics, served as the academic director of the 2011 UNO International Summer School.

#### MATHEMATICS

**Susan Danielson**, mathematics instructor and director of the Learning Resource Center, and **Charlotte Lewis** recorded a complete set of 65 instructional video tapes for the Math 1115 Internet course using the homework software Hawkes. Hawkes, which is used in hundreds of universities, purchased the rights to use the videos in its software.

**Linxiang Li**, professor of mathematics, published a paper "Obtaining cotton fiber length distributions from the beard test method Part 2—A new approach through PLS regression," *Textile Technology*, 2011.

**Dongming Wei**, professor of mathematics, published the article "Analytic and Finite Element Solutions of the Power-law Euler-Bernoulli Beams" in the *Journal of Finite Elements in Analysis & Design*, Jan. 2012.

#### MUSIC

**Frankie Kelly**, music instructor, served as associate music director for the pre-Broadway review "Soul Doctor: The New Schlomo Musical." She also performed as part of the UNO Musical Excursion Concert Series.

**Steve Masakowski**, Coca-Cola endowed chair and director of jazz studies, performed a concert for a sold-out audience in the Tbilisi Georgia State Concert Hall on January 15, 2012. Masakowski, along with three other jazz musicians from New Orleans (adjunct professor Roland Guerin, alumni Mark Braud and Doug Belote), performed music by Georgian composer Zaza Marjanishvili along with a 30-piece orchestra. The concert was titled "A Gift to Tbilisi" and was sponsored by the Tblisi Center for Cultural Events.

#### PHILOSOPHY

**Guy Beck**, instructor of philosophy, authored *Sonic Liturgy: Ritual and Music in Hindu Tradition*, published by the University of South Carolina Press in December 2011. It is a theoretical study of the historical connection between Hindu rituals and chant and music, drawing upon the current fields of ritual studies and liturgical studies.

**Frank Schalow**, university research professor of philosophy, edited a volume entitled *Heidegger, Translation, and the Task of Thinking: Essays in Honor of Parvis Emad*, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer Publishers, 2011), 340 pages. The book collects essays from a wide range of international scholars, who address the methodology for translating Martin Heidegger's writings from German into English, as well as the impact that these translations have had on understanding his thought. **Schalow** recently co-authored the book, *Historical Dictionary of Heidegger's Philosophy* (ISBN: 978-0810874930, \$105.00, 462 pp.) published by Scarecrow Press in September. The book defines the key terms of Martin Heidegger's philosophy, as well provides an introduction to his thought. **Schalow** was also named co-editor of the international philosophy journal *Heidegger Studies*.

#### PLANNING AND URBAN STUDIES

**Renia Ehrenfeucht**, associate professor of planning and urban studies, had the following paper published: "Precursors to Planning: Regulating the Streets of Los Angeles, California, c 1880-1920," *Journal of Planning History*, first published on December 5, 2011.

**John L. Renne**, early research professor of planning and urban studies and associate director of the UNO Transportation Institute, has been invited by Councilmember Kristin Gisleson Palmer to chair the Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee to the New Orleans City Council.

#### POLITICAL SCIENCE

**John Kiefer**, associate professor of political science, and director of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program, served as local conference host for the Southeastern Conference of Public Administration. The four-day conference in September 2011, held at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, La., is the premier regional conference in the U.S. for public administration. The conference was organized by the UNO MPA program and the Department of Political Science.

**Kiefer** with co-authors **Pamela Jenkins**, professor of sociology, and **Shirley Laska**, professor emerita of sociology and director emerita of the Center for Hazards Assessment, Response and Technology (UNO-CHART), published a book chapter in 2010 titled "Attending to the Forgotten: The Elderly, Collaborative Practice and Evacuation in Strategic Collaboration" in the book *Strategic Collaboration in Public and Nonprofit Administration: A Practice-Based Approach to Solving Shared Problems* (Dorothy Norris-Tirrell, ed., CRC Press, ISBN: 978-1420088755, \$69.95, 417 pp.). The chapter presents best practices in meeting the needs of vulnerable populations during catastrophes.

**Kiefer** also presented the following papers at academic conferences last year: "The Four Pillars of Disaster-Resilient Communities," at the Special Research Conference of the Board of Regents, New Orleans, La. "A Systems Approach to Disaster Recovery: Exxon Valdez v. Deepwater Horizon," at the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration, Wilmington, N.C.; "Natural Hazard Mitigation," at the American Society for Public Administration national conference, San Jose, Calif. "An Analysis of the Evacuation of New Orleans: The Gustav Data," at the American Society for Public Administration national conference, San Jose, Calif. "Haiti and Emergency Management," at the national conference

for the American Society for Public Administration, San Jose, Calif. and "City-Assisted Evacuation Planning," invited workshop speaker, National Evacuation Conference, New Orleans, La. **Kiefer** has been appointed to the National Council of the American Society for Public Administration. He has also been appointed to the editorial board of the *Journal of Public Affairs Education*. In March, he presented a paper and chaired a panel on "Critical Infrastructure Mitigation" at the American Society for Public Administration national conference in Baltimore, MD.

**Christine L. Day**, professor and chair of political science, and Alicia N. Jencik published the article "Aging and Disasters: Coping in the Wake of Hurricane Katrina" that will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Journal of Emergency Management*.

**Daniel C. Lewis**, assistant professor of political science, published "Public Opinion Toward Intergovernmental Policy Responsibilities" with Sandra K. Schneider and William G. Jacoby in *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* (2011, vol. 41, issue 1, pp. 1-30). He also has two articles forthcoming in 2011, including "Direct Democracy and Minority Rights: Same-Sex Marriage Bans in the American States" to be published in *Social Science Quarterly* and "Bypassing the Representational Filter? Minority Rights Policies Under Direct Democracy Institutions" to be published in *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*.

**Robert Montjoy**, research professor of political science, was an invited speaker on university-community engagement at both the Kettering Foundation's "Dayton Days" in Dayton, Ohio, and Old Dominion University's Public Service Week in Norfolk, Va.

**Salmon Shomade**, assistant professor of political science and pre-law advisor, recently had two manuscripts accepted for publication: "Sentencing Patterns of Drug Court Judges in Conventional Criminal Courts," to be published by *Judicature* and "The Confirmation Obstacle Course: Signaling Opposition through Delay," co-authored with Lisa M. Holmes and Roger E. Hartley, to be published by *The American Review of Politics*.

#### PONTCHARTRAIN INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

**Patricia M. Williams**, coordinator for Toxicology Research Laboratories and associate professor, was an invited speaker at the 42nd annual meeting of the Environmental Mutagen Society, October 15-19, 2011 in Montreal, Quebec. Williams is a diplomate of the American Board of Toxicology and co-presented in a symposium on "Environmental Oil Contamination: Effects on Marine Life and Human Life." She presented "Are Seafood Safety Considerations Adequate to Prevent Chronic Health Effects of the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill on Coastal Louisiana Residents?"

#### PSYCHOLOGY

**Paul J. Frick**, university distinguished professor and chair of psychology, finished his five-year term on December 31, 2011, as editor of the *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, the official journal for the Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology (Division 53), American Psychological Association. During his term as editor, the journal increased its impact factor from 2.015 in 2005 to 3.44 in 2010.

**Elizabeth (Birdie) Shirtcliff**, early research professor of psychology, received two National Institutes of Health grants in August 2011. One is to examine biobehavioral mechanisms for severe disruptive behavior in adolescent girls. The other is to move the stress field forward with the VerOFy device, a new tool to improve cortisol measurement. **Shirtcliff** co-authored a review entitled "The Adaptive Calibration Model of Stress Responsivity" that appeared in the March 2011 issue of the international journal *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, the official journal of the International Behavioral Neuroscience Society. **Shirtcliff**, and evolutionary psychologists Marco Del Giudice of the University of Turin and Bruce Ellis of the University of Arizona conclude in the review that, contrary to popular belief, stress is actually beneficial to the human body.

#### SOCIOLOGY

**Francis O. Adeola**, professor of sociology had his book *Hazardous Wastes, Industrial Disasters, and Environmental Health Risks*, published by Palgrave-Macmillan in October 25, 2011.

**Pamela Jenkins**, professor of sociology, was awarded the 2011 Leanne Knot Memorial Award that recognizes innovation and contribution in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking prevention or intervention. This award was presented to Jenkins at the Louisiana Statewide Conference on Sexual and Domestic Violence.

**John Gery**, research professor of English, published new poems in *Rio Grande Review* (Fall 2011); the *Southern Poetry Anthology, Volume IV: Louisiana; and Improbable Worlds: An Anthology of Texas and Louisiana Poets*.

**Shirley Laska**, professor emerita of sociology, received the 2011-12 Southern Sociological Society Distinguished Lectureship Award in April.

**Susan A. Mann**, professor and associate chair of sociology, authored *Doing Feminist Theory: From Modernity to Postmodernity*, Oxford University Press, January 2012.

**Dennis R. McSeveney**, professor emeritus of sociology, was elected president of the Association of College Honor Societies and elected treasurer of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans.

**Ken Rayes**, English instructor and director of the Greater New Orleans Writing Project, contributed the article "Katrina and Music" to the *Encyclopedia of American Music and Culture* [Four Volumes] by ABC-CLIO. The article examines the ways that New Orleans and New Orleansians' cultural identities were transformed through evolving relationships with popular and local music after the Katrina levee failures.

**Anne Boyd Rioux**, professor of English and women's and gender studies, received a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for one year to write a biography, under contract with the Johns Hopkins University Press, of the American writer Constance Fenimore Woolson.

**Will Torrey**, English instructor, was awarded the 2011 Zone 3 prize in fiction for his short story *Trabajar*.

**M.O. Walsh**, visiting assistant professor of English, won the 2011 William Faulkner-William Wisdom Award for his novel in progress entitled *Whiteflies*. He received a cash award and commemorative gold medal at the Faulkner Society's annual Words and Music gala in November.✿

# DUTCH LESSONS

By Adam Norris

Known the world over for picturesque windmills and vivid fields of tulips, the Netherlands also draws international acclaim for its water management and flood protection system, which is considered the global gold standard.





Sen. Mary Landrieu (center) and UNO professor Denise Reed (fourth from right) joined by other members of the U.S. congressional delegation. *Photography by Matthew D. R. Lehner, Office of Sen. Mary Landrieu*

The infrastructure alone is extraordinary. The Delta Works, with its massive storm surge barriers, is an extensive national flood defense system, prompted by the catastrophic 1953 floods that killed more than 1,800 people. UNO earth and environmental sciences professor Denise Reed says she is impressed not just by the Dutch engineering, but by the comprehensive approach to water management. Reed was a part of a Louisiana congressional delegation, led by Sen. Mary Landrieu, that visited the Netherlands in November.

“There was a mix of going to see specific projects and understanding those water management concepts in the contexts of a specific example, but there were also broader discussions with [Dutch] ministry folks about how they put environment and infrastructure together,” says Reed.

For the Dutch, water management, flood protection and stemming coastal erosion are national priorities because they have to be. A staggering 70 percent of the country’s gross domestic product is generated below sea level, so the very survival of the Netherlands is dependent upon living harmoniously with water. Reed says the Dutch benefit from having a federal agency that marries the interests of the environment and infrastructure.

“It’s similar to how we’ve done it in Louisiana where we’ve put protection and restoration together at the state level but at the federal level we’re still fragmented, which is still a problem for us,” Reed says.

The delegation included members of federal and state agencies and levee boards as well as university scientists and representatives from nongovernmental organizations. Some of the highlights of the trip included traveling to the Dutch coast to see the Netherlands’ main defense against storms from the North Sea, meeting with Dutch ministry officials and visiting the city of Dordrecht, which is built on and around a levee. The group also spent an entire day at Deltares, the Dutch water institute.



*Downtown Rotterdam*

“Deltares is specifically designed to link the thinkers with the doers,” Reed says. “To bring in folks from the universities, private industry and agencies to really identify problems and develop solutions and get them on the ground. That’s one of the things we’ve been exploring in Louisiana. Really thinking about how we can link the good things going on in the universities in Louisiana, like UNO, how can we link those more directly with the kind of skill set that some of our folks in private industry have?”

The delegation also visited Rotterdam, Europe’s largest port, to gain an appreciation for innovative solutions in urban areas and Biesbosch to learn more about a project called “Make Room for the River.”

“They realized a few years ago that the Rhine River levees at some point in the future would not be high enough,” Reed says. “There was subsidence and sea level rise and those kinds of things. Rather than taking the kind of brute force engineering approach and just build the levee higher, they actually took a different approach. They moved the levees out and increased the space that the river had to work with. If the river has more space on each side, the water level doesn’t get as high.”

“That is the kind of creative approach we need in coastal Louisiana to think about how we use the river and how we navigate and how we get the sediment to start building land again.” ♣

# STEWARDS OF THE EARTH

Sirel White hikes in Utah.  
Photography by Gregory L. Jones

By Jessica Ann Llanes

Lava tubes, hoodoos and Upheaval Dome sound more like landscape features of an alien planet than the sandstone deserts of Utah, but to high school students taking part in UNO's summer geoscience field trip, they are just as exotic.

"The trip out West is such a new experience for most of the students—a life-changing experience," says Dinah Maygarden, who has been coordinating the program since 2006 and involved since 1997. "We had a sandstorm down at Rainbow Rocks near Moab. That went into the kids' journals."

Twice each summer, UNO offers juniors and seniors from high schools nationwide the chance to study either geology in the Wyoming and Utah wilderness or environmental ecology in the coastal wetlands of south Louisiana.

Both field trips are part of a minority education recruitment program established by UNO's earth and environmental sciences department. The goal of the program is to encourage high school students from backgrounds under-represented in the earth sciences to gain experience "in the field" with experts and industry professionals.

Last year's Louisiana field trip, which drew students from as far away as Pennsylvania, coincided with the BP oil spill. Students had the opportunity to interact with BP spokespeople and witness cleanup efforts firsthand at UNO's Shea Penland Coastal Education and Research Facility at Chef Menteur Pass.

"After the oil spill happened, Dinah was getting text messages from former students who were watching it unfold," says Heather Egger, a fellow program coordinator. "They were interested and asking questions." She says the spill also has drawn increased interest in the program from potential students outside Louisiana.

Lou Fernandez, former chair of UNO's geology department, received a National Science Foundation grant to develop the program in 1974, and it begins its 37th year this June. It is designed to be not just a field trip, but hopefully the starting point

for lifelong exploration. Recent program expansions include scholarships, tutors and mentoring support.

"I do believe that the program is building character and also stewardship—a stewardship for the home state of Louisiana but also the country, learning about your home and keeping it with you," explains Egger.

Several students who take part in the program return the following year or join later trips as mentors. Others have siblings who participated in field trips of years past. Many go on to pursue earth and environmental science degrees at UNO.

"When we start out, we ask them what they want to be when they grow up. Most say doctors or lawyers ... because that is what they know," Maygarden says. "So one of the things we try to get them to understand is that there are jobs in the earth sciences—and some of them are really well paid."

Sirel White, now a senior geophysicist at ExxonMobil, was recruited into the field trip program as a mentor. Although his undergraduate study was in engineering ('00), his decision to pursue a master's in geology ('06) was heavily influenced by his field trip experiences.



Photography by Jessica Ann Llanes



Students at Avery Island.

Photography by Jessica Ann Llanes



Students hike in southern Utah.

Photography by Gregory L. Jones

“It opened my eyes to geology,” White explains. “A lot of these kids may not have gone to college at all without the perspective these field trips provide. Even if they don’t pursue geology, it gives them the motivation to prioritize higher education.”

The program is the first and longest continuously running of its kind, not just at UNO, but in the nation. Its success has made it a national model for designing similar science programs elsewhere.

“The summer program help put UNO’s geoscience department on the map,” explains Laura Serpa, who was involved with the program from 1989 until 2006 and spent more than 20 years teaching geology at UNO. She says the University graduates more under-represented, particularly African American, students in the earth sciences than any other U.S. institution.

“When I started [in 1989], only about 3 percent of the students at UNO were black and virtually none in the sciences. By the time I left, 40 percent



Heather Egger and students near Chef Menteur Pass.

Photography by Jessica Ann Llanes

of the geology department was black—almost all of them had been in the summer program,” Serpa says. “New Orleans is ahead of the curve—working with minorities and getting students into the sciences.”

Now a geology professor at The University of Texas at El Paso, Serpa has once again rejoined the program as part of a collaborative effort by UNO, UTEP, San Francisco State and Purdue. The effort is supported by a four-year, \$400,000 NSF grant that begins its second year this summer.

The future of the program, however, remains uncertain. When initial funding disappeared, the program was subsidized with private donor and industry-sponsored support, including help from ExxonMobil, Chevron and Shell Oil. Sponsors donate more than money. Guides like ExxonMobil geologist Gregory L. Jones, who has been involved in the program since 1995, and recent addition Ivan Gill, a science education coordinator at UNO, also donate time recruiting and teaching students on the field trips.

“There is some concern about getting stable funding to continue to do this over the long term,” says Serpa. “It really brings students into the field, into the sciences, and minorities in particular. That is what we say we are trying to accomplish, to bring kids into the sciences.” ♣

*If you are interested in becoming involved with the program as a donor, mentor or volunteer or know a high school student who might want to participate, visit <http://ees.uno.edu/map/> for more information.*

## OFF CAMPUS



Martin O’Connell, assistant professor of earth and environmental sciences, and a student in his estuarine environmental science class collect fish during a field trip to the southern end of Lake Pontchartrain.



2000 Lakeshore Drive  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148

*As Louisiana's Urban Research University of National Stature,*  
the University of New Orleans will rank in the Top 200 of American Research Universities. The University will continue to be recognized as a major research university as reflected by our designation as a Research University – High Research Activity by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

*For more information on our research efforts please go to <http://research.uno.edu>.*

