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The Farquhar Forum College Magazine

Farquhar Honors College

6-1-2008

Summer 2008 Farquhar Forum

Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences

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http://nsuworks.nova.edu/far_forum/7

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FARQUHAR COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

FARQUHAR FORUM

Summer 2008

DISCOVERY

Charting New Paths for
Academic Exploration



NOVA SOUTHEASTERN
UNIVERSITY



A Message from the Dean

Much of the curriculum in higher education is shaped by the discoveries of scholars who have been bold explorers in their fields. Often, breakthroughs involve innovative thinking beyond the traditional boundaries of a field. At the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, such qualities are actively nurtured.

Faculty and staff members strive to provide opportunities for students to examine—and question—their academic disciplines through discussion, applied research, and hands-on scholarship. The Undergraduate Honors and Leadership Roundtable Scholars programs, for example, are designed to inspire talented students to develop their capabilities through projects of scholarly discovery and service. The Dual Admission Program, in which select students are admitted to NSU graduate and professional programs when they enroll in undergraduate programs, challenges students to study outside of their academic requirements and may include traveling abroad. Assured that their place in the graduate program of their choice is confirmed, dual admission students have the freedom to dedicate some of their time and concentration to studies

they might not have otherwise investigated. Student explorations such as these not only promote a well-rounded education, but enhance critical thinking, creativity, and academic risk taking. Ultimately, I believe this leads to more enthusiastic professional achievement and stronger academic success.

In this issue of the *Farquhar Forum*, you will learn about intellectually adventurous students, as well as their faculty mentors. These individuals raise the bar for themselves and their academic communities by making the most of opportunities for inventive scholarship. By utilizing the diverse programs and outstanding faculty of the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, these students have expanded upon their foundations of knowledge—and charted new paths.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Don Rosenblum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Don Rosenblum, Ph.D.

Dean, Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences

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The Farquhar Forum is published twice a year by
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Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences

Seeing Colors,

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ost of you see these words you're reading right now as made up of mostly black letters. But, some of you see the letters as having different colors if you look closely enough. If, for example, you usually perceive the letter **d** as **blue**, you could be experiencing **synesthesia**. Two psychology majors from the class of 2008 decided to learn more about this intriguing condition.



Samantha Domingo first heard of synesthesia at the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences in a class with Jaime Tartar, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Domingo recalled, “The course was about the biological basis of behavior. Professor Tartar spoke about people perceiving letters and numbers in colors. She said the number 7 could be orange, and I said, ‘No, it’s brown.’ I then realized I had synesthesia. It made me want to learn more about this phenomenon.”

Tartar agreed to mentor Domingo on this project, and they started working on an experimental design for a research study on synesthesia.

For this student, the research was personal as well as academic. “I hear colors with certain songs too. The title may be red, but the song itself might be blue. So, I spent the summer doing a literature review because I wanted to do a study project on whether people with synesthesia are more creative—a current hypothesis in the field.”

A Synthesized Approach

Domingo’s fellow student, Laxmi Lalwani, soon joined the project. Lalwani said, “Samantha and I started talking about what color the number 1 is after she learned she has synesthesia. Some people with synesthesia translate numbers into shapes, not colors. We both wondered whether such people are more creative. Samantha wanted to study this and needed someone to analyze data. And I love statistics.”

This proved a fortuitous pairing, as Lalwani explained. “I’m the grounded one. Samantha comes up with the creative ideas and I put the findings in order with the methodology.” It was hard, at first, for Lalwani to think about synesthesia “because it didn’t make sense to me. I’m not synesthetic. But that made it interesting. Neuroscience has a concrete base—neurons fire and the behavioral aspect follows from there. I’m very practical about that, so I wondered what’s the sense of seeing letters as colors, or taste having shapes? Maybe it’s just different neurons firing at the same time. Synesthesia isn’t a hindrance, so we tried to see if it helps in some ways.”

For Domingo, having Lalwani as a research partner was a great help. “She’s mathematical, analytical, organized. I come up with the ideas. She’s great with the study process, the statistics, keeping everything clear and well-paced so I don’t leap to conclusions prematurely.” Creativity was difficult to define for the

Reporting in **Black** and White

study's purposes because it covers a broad area of human behavior. Using NSU undergraduate students for their subject pool, they started with simpler goals. Domingo said, "We began by finding out who is a synesthete and who is not. Most researchers look at associations of colors to letters and numbers. We developed a questionnaire, a self-report creativity measure, because people who are creative tend to identify themselves that way."

Looking at Perceptions

The chance to delve into both psychology and physiology was part of Domingo's attraction to this project. "Biopsychology combines my interests, blending sciences and arts. There are things that can't be fully shown empirically, things we can't explain because the human brain is too complex to understand. This project explored some of those areas."

She wants to learn more about synesthesia but doesn't want to fully decode its secrets. "Most people are not conscious of exactly how they perceive things," she said. "Laxmi's name is green to me; someone else's name is red. But getting too analytic about paying attention to the colors takes some of the emotion out of it, and I believe my synesthesia is linked to my emotions." Domingo related her own synesthesia to her creativity. "I love visual art and music, and I'm a drummer. I always

wanted to go to art school but wasn't sure it would give me a good living," she admitted. "So I went into psychology, which is, to me, a more creative branch of science."

Together, Lalwani and Domingo verified that synesthesia has its uses. Domingo explained, "It helps with memory because it offers an extra association. I can better remember a name because it's red and an office number because it's orange. Research indicates that synesthesia can help with learning languages because it occurs in the brain region where languages function. There's a genetic component too—it runs in families. And we tend to find more instances in women."

Lalwani discovered a scientific way to look into a world that others experience directly. "We're finding that, in the general population, lower-level synesthetes have a significant correlation with self-reported creativity. On my own, I'd have never suspected this condition even existed. So, it's amazing to be a part of this, to learn more about how creative people pull things together."

Moving Forward

The study helped Lalwani better appreciate creative people. "It's improved my tolerance of them. I'm a deadline keeper, and I put things in order, but I better understand that people who are creatively inspired

have a different way of putting projects together."

Next, Lalwani has varied topics to look into during her doctoral program in psychology. "I'm interested in studying cognitive implications of women with HIV. Neurogenesis, too, how the hippocampus can generate new neurons. Also, hemispheric compensation, how if your brain is young enough, it'll form new connections to restore some normal brain functioning that's lost."

This summer, Domingo is completing a paid summer internship at the University of Utah, working in the laboratory of Ray Kesner, Ph.D. She will be involved in projects using behavioral paradigms to study the functions of different subregions of the hippocampus before going on to her doctoral program in psychology.

In many ways, these two students have different approaches to their academic work. Yet, their collaboration sheds new light on a creative connection to psychological research. The two presented their results in a poster session at an Association for Psychological Sciences conference in Chicago in May and at the college's Undergraduate Student Symposium this April, where they took the award for Best in Show.

Every year, the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences presents its Distinguished Speakers Series, bringing notable experts from various disciplines to speak to the campus community and meet with select students in small seminars. This year's speakers related to the college's year-long academic theme of "Truth and Power." Their bold, thought-provoking, and insightful presentations reflected knowledge and experience garnered during their groundbreaking careers in social justice, scientific research, and politics. These diverse perspectives illustrate the power of truth when people speak out about the principles that affect us all.

Distinguished Speakers Series Explores



ALTAF ALI

The keynote speaker for the college's Convocation ceremony on September 4, 2007, was Altaf Ali, the executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Florida Chapter. This organization has worked hard to forge greater understanding between Muslims and people of other faiths and has defended the civil rights of Muslims. Ali worked for the Florida Department of Children and Families for six years as a family services counselor supervisor. His community spirit has placed him on the board of the South Florida Human Rights Council and the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida. He encouraged the audience to strive not only for their own successes but also to help others in need. Ali also praised the college leadership for its accomplishments and inclusive approach to learning.



ERIN BROCKOVICH

The Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences presented noted legal rights champion Erin Brockovich on November 1, 2007. As a legal assistant, Brockovich spearheaded investigations into a pro bono real estate case in California. The biggest direct action lawsuit of its kind, this precedent-setting case forced a giant power utility to make the largest legal settlement in U.S. history, paying out \$333 million in damages to more than 600 residents of a town that suffered exposure to Chromium 6, a toxic chemical that had leaked into the groundwater. In 2000, a popular movie was released about Brockovich's role in this case. She has hosted inspirational television shows; published a book, *Take It from Me, Life's a Struggle but You Can Win*, and worked as a consultant.

TRUTH AND POWER



ERIC KANDEL, M.D.

The Division of Math, Science, and Technology welcomed Eric Kandel, M.D., on February 21, 2008. Recipient of the 2000 Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology, Kandel joined the faculty of the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University in 1974 as the founding director of the Center for Neurobiology and Behavior. He spoke at NSU on discoveries from his groundbreaking studies of the basic molecular mechanisms underlying learning and memory. His research has uncovered biochemical changes that accompany memory formation, such as the functional modulation of the synapses in short-term memory and the activation of genes and synthesis of proteins to grow new synaptic connections as part of long-term memory. These studies have been central to understanding not only normal memory, but also dementia and other mental illnesses that affect memory.



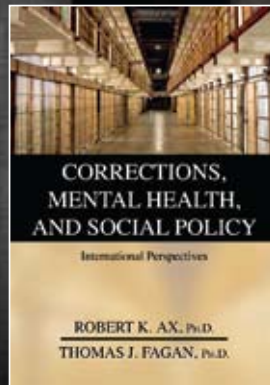
KERRY KENNEDY

The Division of Humanities presented Kerry Kennedy on April 17, 2008. Kennedy has led dozens of human rights delegations to countries around the world since 1981. She published *Speak Truth to Power: Human Rights Defenders Who Are Changing Our World*, which features interviews with famous human rights activists. The book generated a theatrical presentation, a PBS television program, and education and advocacy tools distributed to thousands of high schools and colleges. Kennedy is on the board of directors of the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial. She has run three programs: the National Juvenile Justice Project, which helps cities create more effective, less costly programs for dealing with young offenders; the RFK Journalism and RFK Book Awards; and the RFK Center for Human Rights, which supports enforcement of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights.



JOSEPH WILSON

On May 10, 2008, the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences presented Joseph Wilson, former ambassador, at NSU's 2008 Undergraduate Commencement Exercises. A member of the U.S. diplomatic service from 1976 through 1998, Wilson served as acting ambassador to Iraq during Operation Desert Shield. His diplomatic career encompassed posts as an ambassador in Africa, as well as appointments with the National Security Council and as a political adviser to the U.S. Armed Forces in Europe. In 2002, after Wilson publicly refuted claims that Saddam Hussein attempted to buy uranium from Niger, a leak exposed his wife as a CIA operative. This resulted in felony convictions against Lewis "Scooter" Libby, former chief of staff to vice president Dick Cheney. Wilson published a memoir, *The Politics of Truth: Inside the Lies That Led to War and Betrayed My Wife's CIA Identity—A Diplomat's Memoir*.



Correcting the Correctional System

There are remarkably few books available that examine the challenges of the modern correctional system, and even scarcer are texts that examine the system's handling of mentally ill inmates. Fewer still speak about how changes in social policy trickle down—affecting prison populations and employees, as well as the communities that surround them.

To promote new solutions to these problems, Thomas Fagan, Ph.D., associate professor in the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, recently published *Corrections, Mental Health, and Social Policy: International Perspectives* (Charles Thomas, Publishers). Fagan and his co-writer, Robert K. Ax, are psychologists with extensive experience in studying and working within the correctional mental health field at state and federal institutions.

The team's research challenges ways in which mental health issues have been traditionally approached in the corrections system. Intended for theorists, scientists, practitioners, and advocates, this book is an edited volume of contributions by experts in different areas. Its findings will interest a wide range of criminal justice and legal professionals, social and political scientists, health care providers, and students of psychology and criminal justice.

"We discovered," Fagan mentioned, "that the United States locks up more people per capita than any other country. We now confine 1 in every 100 people in this country. We lock up more than all European countries combined. And our recidivism rates are huge. Currently, five states spend more on their prisons than they do on

"Tougher laws cleaned up the streets but moved the problem into prisons not designed to help this new population."

Thomas Fagan, Ph.D., associate professor,
Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences

education. The money we're spending in all states has gotten so huge that education, health care, and various other benefits are suffering."

Fagan points to a source of this problem. "Sixteen to 20 percent of prison populations are seriously mentally ill. Thirty years ago, most of them would be in state hospitals. In countries with socialized medicine, these people aren't treated as criminals. They're treated as sick. Our book tries to look into what's being done in other countries and considers whether such approaches might work here."

While the legal system has criminalized some behaviors, such as homelessness, that are associated with serious mental disorders, incarcerating rather than treating the mentally ill is counterproductive. "One problem is that prisons are physical structures created for a more narrow purpose. If you put a mentally-ill person in a five-by-eight cell, they're going to get much worse. They need to be where they can interact regularly

with others, but you don't want them interacting with murderers and such," Fagan explained. "Prisons were doing fine treating convicted felons who belonged there. But because of social changes that had nothing to do with prisons, the prisons started filling up with mentally ill people. Now prisons are multipurpose arenas, which they were not designed to be."

But changes are on the horizon. Fagan learned that "Some police departments are training officers to recognize when people display symptoms of serious mental illness and are taking them to places where they'll get appropriate treatment. And there are mental health courts that specialize in working with identifiably mentally ill people who have broken the law. Instead of sending them to prison, they address their needs in the community—get them housing, make sure they're on their medicine, make sure they have some structure in their lives. These courts are diverting this population to treatment options rather than just blindly sending them to prison."

In writing *Corrections, Mental Health, and Social Policy*, Fagan kept his research open to both the reality and the possibilities of the U.S. corrections system. His work shares new ideas for creating real, lasting change. He said, "It was a good time to write this book because more people realize we're spending billions on prisons, and a significant share of that on nonviolent people who don't really need to be in prison. In the time since the current policies led to this situation, many treatment options have been developed. Maybe it's time to look at those and give some of them a try."

F A C U L T Y A C H I E V E M E N T S



Mark Jaffe, D.P.M., was named the 2008–2009 Outstanding Full-Time Teacher of the Year in the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences. Jaffe teaches in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology.



Gerard Loisel, M.S.T., was named the 2008–2009 Outstanding Part-Time Teacher of the Year in the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences. Loisel teaches in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology.

These awards reflect endorsement and support from students and peers.



Shanti Bruce, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Division of Humanities, spoke at and ran a full-day workshop for the Conference on College Composition and Communication in New Orleans, April 2–5. She was also the keynote speaker at the Pacific Northwest Writing Centers Association Conference in Everett,

Washington, on April 25. Her speech was related to the release of the second edition of her book, *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors* (Heinemann Boynton/Cook, 2008).



Charles L. Zelden, Ph.D., professor in the Division of Humanities, gave the annual Justice Stanley F. Reed Lecture at Kentucky Wesleyan College on February 26. Titled, “Defeating the All-White Primary: The Story Behind Justice Stanley F. Reed’s Majority Opinion in *Smith v. Allwright* (1944),” the lecture examined the

Supreme Court’s overturning of the all-white Democratic Party primary in Texas for being unconstitutional and examined the effect of this ruling on the civil rights movement.



Suzanne Ferriss, Ph.D., professor in the Division of Humanities, published a new book, co-edited with Mallory Young, Ph.D., titled *Chick Flicks: Contemporary Women at the Movies* (Routledge, 2008). This volume considers ways that popular films represent women, as well as how culture represents

experience in ways that were shaped by—but often disavow—feminism. Among the contributors are Kate Waites, Ph.D., also a professor in the Division of Humanities.



Fuzhen Zhang, Ph.D., professor in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology, has been chosen as editor for a special issue of the journal *Linear Algebra and Applications*. This issue honors exceptional mathematician Shmuel Friedland, D.Sc., from the University of Illinois—Chicago. Zhang also received

an honorary professorship from Shanghai University, China, as Jianzhi Professor. This recognition is awarded to internationally renowned scholars. Shanghai University is one of the largest universities in China.



Gary Gershman, J.D., Ph.D., associate professor in the Division of Humanities, moderated a panel discussion at the Jewish Museum of Florida in Miami Beach on Abraham Lincoln’s relationship with Jews in the United States. The event was sponsored by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, established by Congress.

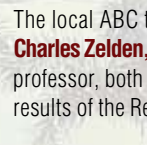


The local NBC television affiliate, WTVJ, interviewed **Robin Sherman, Ph.D.**, assistant director and associate professor in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology, on whether the theory of evolution should be taught in Florida public schools. Sherman advocated that the theory of evolution is important

for understanding how biological science works and that its study is important for maintaining adequate standards of quality in Florida public schools.



Matthew He, Ph.D., director and professor in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology, co-published “Harmony of Living Nature, Symmetries of Genetic System and Matrix Genetics” with Sergey Petoukhov in the *International Journal of Integrative Biology*. He was published online at <http://ijib.classicus.com>, in Volume 1, Issue 1.



The local ABC television affiliate, WPLG, sought political analysis from **Charles Zelden, Ph.D.**, professor, and **Gary Gershman, J.D., Ph.D.**, associate professor, both from the Division of Humanities. They commented on the results of the Republican and Democratic primaries.



Andrea Shaw, Ph.D., assistant director and assistant professor in the Division of Humanities, published an essay in *Music, Memory and Resistance: Calypso and the Caribbean Literary Imagination* (2007) titled “Big Fat Fish: The Hypersexualization of the Fat Female Body in Calypso and Dancehall.”

MAKING A NAME FOR THEMSELVES

A seat in the theater can make you more than just a guest in the audience.



The Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences has launched its Name a Seat campaign to raise scholarship funds and promote programs associated with the Performing and Visual Arts Wing of the University Center. This development project supports advancement of the expanding roster of performing, visual, and administrative arts programs at the college.

Donors can create their own legacies in the arts while supporting college arts initiatives. A reasonable, tax-deductible contribution allows them to name a seat in either the Performance Theater or the Black Box Theater. Lisa Hickman, director of development, spoke to the *Farquhar Forum* about this project.

Forum: Is the Name a Seat campaign a new initiative for the college?

Hickman: Yes. While naming rights are typically reserved for gifts that go beyond most people's giving capacity, supporters of the Name a Seat campaign can "own" a little piece of the Performing and Visual Arts Wing for a modest donation that will make a major impact.

Forum: What is the campaign intended to accomplish, for both the immediate future and the long run?

Hickman: Name a Seat is designed not only to get students, alumni, faculty and staff members, and friends of NSU excited about what's happening with the college arts program, but also to let them be a part of it. When patrons attach their names to the Performing and Visual Arts Wing, they contribute to student scholarship funds. The named seats serve as an outward showing of support for our students and programs. As patrons become partners with us in this initiative, they will likely want to contribute to our arts programs for years to come.

Forum: What do donors appreciate most about this opportunity to create a legacy in the South Florida arts community?

Hickman: The rewards are reciprocal. Donors are supporting students' undergraduate educations. These students can then give back by making important contributions to South Florida's cultural life.

Forum: What would you most want to say to each potential donor?

Hickman: Success builds upon success. Private donations do more than raise funds—they send the message to the broader community that the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences is well worth supporting.

Forum: How can donors feel confident that they're contributing to a quality program?

Hickman: The proof is already here for prospective donors who attend performances and see what our students have to offer. And it's not just the performing and visual arts majors. The college has ensured that the students' dynamic educational experience is enhanced by access to quality arts programming.

Forum: What is the future of the performing and visual arts at the college?

Hickman: There's much to be excited about. The Performing and Visual Arts Wing of the University Center will be completed soon. The college leadership is creating art, arts administration, music, and dance majors that will accompany the existing theatre major. The future promises more partnerships with community arts organizations. Best of all, new faculty members and courses are providing more opportunities for students to develop their creative and professional potential through the arts available in their undergraduate education.

For further information about donor opportunities, contact Lisa Hickman, director of development, at (954) 262-8052 or lisahick@nova.edu.

Student Film Festival Is Ready for Its Close-Up



Students' creativity, technical skills, and quality of work are on the rise, according to Chetachi Egwu, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Division of Humanities. The Second Annual Student Film Festival at the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, which Egwu runs with Weylin Sternglanz, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, produced more engaging and technically proficient films than those entered the year before. "I saw growth," Egwu said. "There's a progression from the first to the second year. Many students in the second year had either taken part in it last year or had other film experience."

Sternglanz and Egwu founded the Student Film Festival because both have produced and acted in films, and they wanted to share the experience with students. "Student response has been overwhelming," Egwu noted. "The work takes more time and effort than most people expect, but we had three crews of three to seven people making short films with equipment we loaned them."

Participating teams took three workshops with Egwu, Sternglanz, and staff members from NSU's media services. Workshops covered the basics of screenwriting, photography, lights, sound, and editing. The teams each had three days to shoot a film and subsequent access to a computer with film-editing capabilities.

Each film depicted a unique approach. Afroza Khan directed *Amber's Crush*, which illustrated the power of a moment to change a life forever. *Self-Image: Juxtapose*, by Iva Marc, was more avant-garde, using her poetry as a voiceover to images. *Easy to Love*, directed by BeNita Williams, explored a couple's fears about getting tested for HIV and won first prize. The three films were showcased at the Undergraduate Student Symposium on April 4 before a packed room.

In a recent interview with the *Farquhar Forum*, award-winning student film director BeNita Williams discussed her work.



"The rewards outweigh the turbulence on the way to reaching my goals."

—BeNita Williams, student filmmaker

Forum: What motivated you to make this film?

Williams: I wanted to do something thought-provoking for HIV Awareness Month, an informative and entertaining presentation about things we think about daily but don't discuss enough. The film is about an engaged couple at a crossroads in their lives when they take physicals. I wanted to show how a history of intimacy can connect a large number of people to a couple, and I wanted to make the story simple enough that viewers can laugh and understand and take something home with them—all in six minutes.

Forum: What drew you to this particular plot and these characters?

Williams: My passion for these issues. There's a time in our lives when we have to take accountability. In the movie, when Lisa tells Brian that he has to be tested, he's afraid of the unknown. They have to discuss realities. Would a positive test make her not want to marry him? He asks, "Would you still touch me? Would you still love me?" The talk is about the foundation principles of their love, the root. The movie doesn't give the answer to his test, but it affirms

that she wants to be there for him. The audience also sees which person connects with whom in a chain of connections between intimate partners. Many people from the past can be involved in a primary relationship.

I wanted the movie to provoke thought with wit, without losing focus on the drama of whether or not she would want him. It's a mixed racial couple, so it shows that HIV has no color. The film brings up issues people have to deal with, bringing them home, face-forward.

Forum: Where does your interest in filmmaking come from?

Williams: My passion is to use film, television, stage, and radio to present issues in ways that entertain and provoke thought. Performing and creating are comfortable for me. I've acted, even had some small roles in movies. I've done voiceovers and was a finalist for Miss USA in Florida. I did my own mini-stage production at the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center in Fort Lauderdale. It was called *STD: Single, Tired, and Desperate*. And I was in the NSU Theatre production of *Nickle and Dimed*. I'm a double major in theatre and communications, with a minor in media studies. And I work with the Caldwell Theatre Company in Boca Raton as a tech. I just love the stage, the writing, and the directing—the whole spectrum of the theater experience.

Writing and directing are passions for me. When you're passionate about something, even when you're tired, you still do it because it has a deeper purpose. The rewards outweigh the turbulence on the way to reaching my goals.

To find out about next year's Student Film Festival, contact Chetachi Egwu, Ph.D., at egwu@nova.edu or Weylin Sternglanz, Ph.D., at sterngla@nova.edu.



The Age of Exploration

At the annual Undergraduate Student Symposium, presented by the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, students demonstrate the broad reach and deep inquiry of college scholarship through their proposed, ongoing, and completed research projects. In this forum, open to visitors from NSU and the general public, undergraduate students articulate the intricacies and implications of their specialized study projects. This year's symposium, held on April 4 in the Alvin Sherman Library, also included literary, film, and theatrical demonstrations—creating a dynamic event full of innovative exploration and creative discovery.

Modern Renaissance Woman

She may be comfortable looking into a microscope, but biology major and Honors student Christie Rubio also has telescopic vision to see further up the academic road. Minor in chemistry and psychology, she would take on a theatre minor if she had the time. "I love performing, so I want to be in some productions. I sing, act, and dance." But her career aspirations come first. As a dual admission student for osteopathic medicine, Rubio is preparing to become a reconstructive plastic surgeon for children, burn victims, and patients with congenital anomalies such as cleft lips and palates.

"When I mention plastic surgery," the first-year student explained, "it's about people looking normal. It's not about a Beverly Hills or South Beach practice. I'm interested in the people who need the work, not the people who just want it." Rubio also works with the Multicultural Association for Pre-Health Students, a newly chartered organization at NSU dedicated to recruiting under-represented students into health care and medical fields. "I want to work with that group because I love different cultures. More important, their goal is to serve the underserved. I'm involved in a chapter we want to establish at NSU."

Rubio hopes to also work on merging "the gap between graduate and undergraduate students. The graduate students could mentor the undergraduate students, and older undergraduate students will mentor the new ones. It's a holistic model."

At this year's Undergraduate Student Symposium, Rubio presented on the use of yeast cultures to research the effects of mercury, her Divisional Honors project. Her mentor, Emily Schmitt, Ph.D., associate professor in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology, helped to

Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences

foster and strengthen this student's love of research. Rubio is isolating RNA, which she can provoke into acting like DNA, producing material that can be evaluated by computer from a microarray slide. "We work with protein assays and can confirm the effect of substances, such as mercury, that led to disrupted protein in the genes of yeast."

The hours Rubio spent in the lab required great patience because the work progressed in stages, each demanding great care. In addition, Rubio learned to perfect the scientific style of reading and writing. She explained, "I like to write, especially when everything's flowing well. But, in scientific writing, we have to always make sure that what we're saying is extrapolated from data, and not expressing opinions or assumptions."

The process of exploration and discovery inspires this bright, young researcher. As she noted, "You have an outline to follow, but most things in science happen by accident. When you're researching, you have a goal for discovery, but explorations can defy your limitations in a useful way. We always have limitations, but I get excited about arriving at something new. It's great to do something I didn't know I could do."

Time Traveler

American studies major Matthew Rosenzweig can converse about General Douglas MacArthur, as well as Presidents Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon, with an insider's knowledge and ease. And he's determined to continue the legacy of their lessons. "I see the same strategic and political mistakes from Korea and Vietnam in the Iraq War today," he insisted. "I wonder who's in control; do our leaders learn from the past?"

With this inspiration, Rosenzweig began his symposium research project by writing a paper on the military's development of the Special Forces in the early phases of the Cold War. During the Vietnam conflict, these were called the Green Berets. As he explained, his faculty mentor, David Kilroy, Ph.D., associate professor in the Division of Humanities, "gave me a long leash when I prepared my presentation for the symposium. He let me do what I could do. He also asked me a lot of constructive questions and challenged me, which helped a lot because I didn't want to come off as too much of a war hawk or dove. I didn't want to give my full opinion, but leave room instead for people to make up their own minds."

His project underscored the value of taking an in-depth approach to American studies. "My research provided me with a distinct image of U.S. culture, how we became who we are. My studies helped me witness the recursive power of history." He explained, "I wish I'd found more evidence that we learn, as a government and a people, from our mistakes. Now I'm better able to empathize with and understand

what people went through during the Cold War and in the antiwar and civil rights movements. I better understand our government and the lack of ability for opposing sides to come together.”

Accepting and learning from the age-old challenges that continue to impact this country should keep Rosenzweig busy for a long time. He expressed an interest in working in the Foreign Service, but first wants to study conflict resolution following his graduation. “The whole idea of a healthy foreign policy is give and take,” he insisted. “Getting the perspectives of others is important. In the ‘60s, there was a romantic idea in the United States about the Special Forces, but we hate terrorists for practicing similar tactics. This raises the ethical question, ‘who monitors the monitors of this kind of activity?’ It’s important to ask that because there are times when we need to use our capabilities for unconventional warfare, but we also want the world to be harmonious.”

Attitude Explorer

Inspired by his study of various research methodologies, psychology major Randy Denis wrote a research proposal for a course with Weylin Sternglanz, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Embarking on an ambitious project, Denis proposed to test whether men and women would rate a gay male tutor differently from a presumably heterosexual one. He presented the proposal at this year’s Undergraduate Student Symposium.

“Putting this question in the open,” said Denis, “could make some of our implicit attitudes explicit. This is a social psychology project because it tests attitudes.” Actually implementing the methodology he proposed will be difficult, he realized, because of its scope. His proposal suggested assessing evaluations by 60 students in two groups, each group being half male and half female. One group would work with a tutor wearing a shirt saying, “Proud to be at NSU,” and the other group would work with a tutor wearing a shirt saying, “Proud to be Gay.” Denis’s project would rate students’ experiences with each tutor to evaluate statistical differences between the groups. A significant difference in ratings could indicate that believing the tutor was gay had influenced the participants’ ratings.

“I feel we need to keep a conversation flowing on this issue because interpersonal relationships are very important—especially in our undergraduate years,” Denis explained. “I’m grateful I had the chance to present my proposal at the symposium, and I hope to do this research. The arena of social psychology interests me, but I’m also very interested in the political aspect of such a study. The findings of a project like this can teach us more about common attitudes and what we could do if we want to change them.”

Like all of the college’s symposium presenters, Denis is willing to overcome technical obstacles and personal challenges to see that this important research is completed and shared with the community. “I’ve learned that a study like mine could have an impact on society, and my strong interest in the subject helped me quickly get over my nervousness about presenting it to anyone, to professors and students coming by.” He continued, “I see NSU as a progressive school. We can talk about war, and last year’s academic theme of identity brought up a lot of discussion about issues that have great meaning to me. Only in the United States can a member of a minority like me, a Hispanic gay guy, come out and express how he feels and try to change the world for the better. The risk is worth it. I believe there’s a movement toward greater equality here. I hope I’m part of a generation with open eyes.”

FACULTY SYMPOSIUM

The First Annual Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Symposium showcased outstanding scholarship undertaken by faculty members of the college from across the disciplines. An engaging single-day event, these presentations demonstrated both the unity of purpose and diversity of interests of our faculty members. Don Rosenblum, Ph.D., dean of the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, stated, “Our faculty members are all engaged in creating and examining, testing and affirming the material covered in our classes. The Faculty Symposium is a celebration of this scholarship, demonstrating each faculty member’s commitment to a productive life of exploration and critical thinking.”

PRESENTATIONS INCLUDED

Donald M. Baird, Ph.D., “New Compounds with a Potential for Use as Hydrogen Storage Media”

Micheline M. Carbonara, M.A., “Mea Culpa: Confessionalism and the Internalization of Honor in Della Porta’s *Fratelli Rivali*”

Frank Casale, Ph.D., “W. D. Ehrhart and the Dissenting Veteran”

Victor H. Castro, Ph.D., “Adventures in Parameter Space”

James E. Doan, Ph.D., “From the Sensual to the Damned: Legends of Don Juan and the Vampire”

Joshua Feingold, Ph.D., “Cycloseris Recruitment to a Former Coral Death Assemblage, Galápagos Islands, Ecuador”

Gary Gershman, Ph.D., “Why I Hate the Yankees: The History of Sports Rivalries and Social and Cultural Conflict in American Society”

Evan Haskell, Ph.D., “Roles for Dendritic Spines in Processing Temporal Information”

Darren Hibbs, Ph.D., “External World Skepticism in Ockham and Descartes”

Chris Jackson, Ph.D., “Formula Fiction to Literature? PI Creator Marcia Muller Charged with Breaking and Entering”

Edward O. Keith, Ph.D., “Environmental Causes of Marine Mammal Strandings” and “Status and Recovery of the Antillean Manatee (*Trichechus Manatus Latiostris*) in the Alvarado Lagoon System, Veracruz, Mexico”

Eric Mason, Ph.D., “Eco-Composing the Community”

David L. McNaron, Ph.D., “Meeting Objections to the Danish Cartoons of Muhammed”

Madhavi Menon, Ph.D., “High Self-Esteem: A Boon or a Bane?”

Reza Razeghifard, Ph.D., “Design and Synthesis of Photoactive Peptides Based on Photosynthetic Proteins”

Andrea Shaw, Ph.D., “‘Born in Chanel, Christened in Gucci’: The Rhetoric of Haute Couture in Dancehall Music”

Eileen M. Smith-Cavros, Ph.D., “Environmental Justice for Low-Income Neighborhoods”

Lee Williams, Ph.D., “Hollywood as Imaginary in the Narrative of Modernist Hispanic Writers”

Charles Zelden, Ph.D., “The Case That Must Be Spoken of and Understood: Bush v. Gore and the 2000 Presidential Postelection Crisis”



An Academic Enhancement to Quality of Life

Linda Maurice, community relations manager for the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, is passionate about providing quality satellite programs for senior learners. For 31 years, the LLI has offered educational, cultural, and social events for adult learners through NSU's main campus in Fort Lauderdale. The organization has found enough interest in its services that it has now expanded its offerings into satellite educational programs across South Florida's tricity area. These locations have been established through collaborations with Classic Residence by Hyatt, which provides well-rounded senior lifestyle opportunities to its residents in various locations, as well as the King's Point Culture Club, an educational and social service of a large residential community.

What excites Maurice most about the satellite programs is the excitement the residents demonstrate at the LLI presentations. "They love going back to school and taking university-level classes with our lecturers. For them, it's fun. And it can be surprising. We offered a speaker who talked about the Big Band Era, about swing and jazz. A quiet gentleman came up after and spoke with the presenter. It turned out that he had played with big bands. He was excited

"We are able to give an eager population university-level continuing education. It enriches their lives, and we feel great doing it."

—Linda Maurice
community relations manager, LLI

to find his lifelong interest being shared because it brought back many great memories."

The satellite locations fulfill the LLI mission to create lifestyle enrichment, health and wellness, and intellectual enhancement for older adults. Such experiences contribute to an improvement in wellness and overall quality of life. Programs that are offered at the LLI's satellites mirror the ones at the home location. Lectures by well-qualified guest experts can include topics such as Japanese culture, opera, history, music, and film.

Edward Aqua, D.Eng., the LLI director, explained. "The Classic Residence concept seems to fit in well with the

LLI's mission because the Hyatt wants its people to live well. The satellite program was created to enable attendance by people who were not able to come to campus. We wanted them to enjoy the same lifelong learning experience as our members on campus. By reaching people who are already residents of an independent or assisted living facility, we satisfy our goal of helping people feel comfortable in coming together for lifelong learning in a strong academic environment."

Bringing enlivening academic stimulation to classrooms in these communities engages those who cannot reach NSU's main campus for a variety of reasons. Most members of this audience are unable to travel as much as they'd like. "We can bring the LLI to them," Aqua said. "We maintain a high academic quality for the programs we present. Our presenters meet strong academic and professional standards. This supports our participants in maintaining active minds."

"Having a university come in to teach classes to this population is a great innovation," Maurice insisted. "What is most important is that we and the staff at these facilities are able to give an eager population university-level continuing education. It enriches their lives, and we feel great doing it."

Preparing for the Real Cyber-World

“Technology improves every year, and it improves the lives of just about everyone. I want to contribute to that.”

—Bryan Candela, computer science major

Students studying computer information systems are people you want to ask about the latest technologies. Due to their hands-on approach to technology innovation, these degree-seekers know about the latest tech toys, programs, codes, and hardware. Computer science majors, on the other hand, can offer information on the future of the field and the trends that will inspire the next generation of technologies. They also learn more about the new styles of leadership and patterns of critical thinking that upcoming trends demand. The Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences supports both of these types of “techies,” with undergraduate majors for students seeking competitive careers in the quickly evolving world of computer commerce and technology.

Systems, Not Solos

“Technology improves every year,” said computer science major Bryan Candela. Only 18 and already a college junior, Candela seems to be in a hurry to accomplish something important. He will graduate with a bachelor’s degree before he is 20. Classes at NSU help him accomplish this. “Technology also improves the lives of just about everyone. I want to contribute to that.”

“Product and project development lead the way in the field of computer research,” explained Saeed Rajput, Ph.D., computer science coordinator and assistant professor in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology. “Google, for example, posts problems our students can work on, and it’s open to everyone. Those of us in academia can have a close relationship with the industry through our applied research. It prepares students to make their mark on tomorrow’s technology discoveries.”

Old practices in the field utilized algorithms, step-by-step procedures for problem solving. This has changed, Rajput insisted. “We are at a point where we look at problems so complex, we have to combine sophisticated machines, clustering computers so they can work on a single problem in a unified manner. At Nova Southeastern University, students are able to work in teams large enough to address such intricate challenges.”

Teachers with corporate backgrounds give students open-ended problems for independent study, promoting the kind of critical thinking necessary for success in this growing profession. Students collaborate, rather than working in solitude like the previous generation of computer whizzes. “Students see how their coursework fits into a bigger project,” Rajput explained. “The industry hires people who function well within a collective effort.”

This focus on interactions between people, rather than the accomplishments of brilliant individuals, helps project managers in the industry raise the entire team, not only the best members, to a higher level. “Here, students focus their applied research on systems to prepare for work with major corporations in the field, such as Google, Yahoo, and Facebook,” said Rajput. “Our students do not compete. They work together instead.”

Leaping Ahead

This fast-growing, rapidly changing field is perfect for a student such as Candela, who

is determined to achieve his potential quickly. When he found a program at a community college that allowed him to work toward an associate’s degree in engineering during his last two years of high school, Candela leapt at the chance. Then, he joined NSU as a computer science major with math and physics minors. As a career-minded student, Candela has found that small class sizes and a professional, forward-thinking approach to learning are helping him advance to where he wants to be. “My teachers really want their students to be successful, to achieve in life. We work on real-world projects, not just classroom exercises, which help us when we apply for jobs. We can put these on our resumes. Students here learn what they need to do to start working.”

Graduate Student Testimonial

Discovering the M.A. in Writing Program

By Cortney Palmacci, M.A.

Since I learned to talk, I have been telling stories. Since I learned to read, I have been reading stories. Since I learned to write, I have been writing stories. I have been an elementary school fiction writer, a middle school journalist, and a high school poet. I have tried different jobs and studied other subjects, but when I heard about NSU's M.A. in Writing program, I knew that was where my future lay.

My transcripts reflect a diverse academic background. I have studied business, literature, and education, among other subjects. I am curious by nature and enjoyed taking classes in many different subject areas. However, I had come to a place in my life where I needed to make a decision about what I wanted to do with my future. Choosing a career that involved writing was easy. The hard part was choosing between the Farquhar College of Arts and Science's M.A. in Writing degree program and other writing programs.

The more I researched, the more the M.A. program seemed better suited for someone like me. The coursework was varied. Rather than focusing on only my fiction or poetry, this program would allow me to study both, if I chose. The program also offered classes in other areas I was interested in, such as magazine writing and the instruction of writing. The curriculum included academic classes, rounding out the knowledge I would gain throughout the program. For someone who is interested in more than just writing books, the program makes sense. The diverse coursework makes the experience and the degree more marketable and opens more doors for graduates than other writing programs would.

In the end, I could not be happier with my choice. I was able to write a novella for my thesis, which I hope to expand for publication. I am also looking into teaching, as well as Ph.D. programs.

Born and raised in South Florida, Cortney Palmacci is a member of the first graduating class of the college's M.A. in Writing program.



IN MEMORIAM

*Anna
Farquhar*

The Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences sadly announces the death of Anna "Nan" Farquhar. She was the widow of the college's namesake, James Farquhar, a pioneer in Florida land development in the 1940s. He became the founding chairman of the Nova University Board of Trustees in 1961. He also served as a benefactor to the university in its early years and was board chairman emeritus until 1976. The Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences is named in his honor, in appreciation for the tremendous support and leadership that he provided to the university.

Abraham Fischler, Ph.D., NSU president emeritus and longtime friend of the Farquhar family, said, "Nan Farquhar and her husband Jim were the 'heart and soul' of the university for many years. Their generosity is legend. A charming, unassuming person, she and Jim supported numerous philanthropic organizations, especially in the arts and education, including the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art and the Fort Lauderdale Symphony. Nan served on many boards and supported all fund-raising events at the university as well as many others in Fort Lauderdale. She gave time and effort to migrant workers in the sugar fields and sought to improve the quality of life for all."

Don Rosenblum, Ph.D., dean of the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, reiterated the university's gratitude to Anna and James Farquhar by saying, "The college appreciates what the Farquhar family has done for us, and we remember them fondly. They are recognized through the Farquhar Award, given to an undergraduate student at Commencement each year."

Anna Farquhar was the mother of two: a daughter, Lynn, and son, Doug.



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