"I can’t imagine a life without microscopes. And field work!" a senior recently confessed to me during a conversation about her future. This student, after completing over 170 intern hours and coursework to pursue a health-related career, finally discovered her real passion. During her research experience this past year she found herself collecting earthworms, spending hours in the lab identifying them, and presenting that work at several conferences. Combine that with a parasitology course that stoked her desire to pursue graduate studies in biology. She has already reached out to over 60 parasitologists across the country and lined up several collecting excursions this summer. But more importantly, she has found herself. Her excitement and enthusiasm as she shared this revelation with me reminded me of why I love teaching and mentoring students.

I also have the privilege of working with dedicated, intelligent, and compassionate colleagues. Faculty and staff in Biology support each other by pitching in when the workload seems overwhelming, offering praise and encouragement, stimulating curiosity, providing critical feedback, and sharing a moment of brevity with a well-timed joke! I am ever grateful for the opportunity to call them colleagues and friends.

While the academic year is coming to a close, the summer is definitely not quiet around here! John and I will spend Maymester teaching in Costa Rica. Chris, Lori, and I will engage in summer research with students. Steve will accompany high school student finalists from the Middle Tennessee Science and Engineering Fair to the national conference. Ray and Terri will organize labs and order supplies to get us ready for the fall semester. Please drop by to visit if you are in Nashville!

Hope your summer is relaxing and rewarding!

Dr. Darlene Panvini
Chair, Biology Department

Graduation 2016!

32 Biology
5 Neuroscience
6 BMB
1 ENV

More photos can be seen on our Facebook page, Serotonin Helix.
CSM Awards

CSM Awards were held in the Wedgewood Academic Center on April 11, 2016. Dr. Darlene Panvini and Dr. Jennifer Thomas, Department of Biology, and Dr. Rachel Rigsby, Department of Chemistry and Physics, presented awards to ten deserving students, from freshmen to graduating seniors.

Freshman Achievement Award in Biology
Nardeen Fayik

Ronald M. Barrett Pre-Health Award
Anna Margaret McDonald

Donald R. Ramage Award for Service to the Learning Community in Biology
Ryan Fox

Robert T. Grammer Research Award
Vian Pulous

Outstanding Student in Biology
Zara Latif

Biology Scholarship Award
Rachel Hongo

David R. Hill Environmental Service Award
Melissa Martin

Freshman Achievement Award in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Mary Barber

Outstanding Student in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Felicity Newton

Ben Walloch Endowed Scholarship for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Isria Jarrett

Congratulations to Spring 2016 Alpha Chi Inductees!

Biology
Anna Anderson
BMB
Nancy Le
Environmental Science
Melissa Martin

Alpha Chi membership is the highest academic honor awarded by Belmont University. It is an international, interdisciplinary honors society open to junior and senior university students who rank in the top 10 percent of their class.

TAS Awards

Tennessee Academy of Science
Spring 2016 meeting winners
Tennessee Academy of Sciences Regional Meeting, Belmont University, April 16, 2016.
Student Presentations

Cellular and Molecular Biology:
Second place – Alyssa Tidwell
Third place – Kathryn Hook

Health and Medical Science:
First place - Parker Tumlin
Second place - Araceli Garland
Third place – Brandy Sweet

Alyssa Tidwell and Kathryn Hook

Brandy Sweet, Araceli Garland and Parker Tumlin
Spring Semester Biology Speakers

This spring, students and faculty had opportunities to hear from numerous speakers, including:

Brain Awareness Week Speaker:
Jeff Schall, Ph.D.
E. Bronson Ingram Professor of Neuroscience
Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences
Vanderbilt University
"On the Interaction of Law and Neuroscience"

Environmental Science Lecture Series Speaker
Julie Sweetland, Ph.D., VIP for Strategy and Innovation, FrameWorks Institute
"Climate Communication: Inviting Dialogue, Not Despair"

BMB Series Speaker
Douglas P. Mortlock, Ph.D.
Research Assistant Professor of Molecular Physiology and Biophysics
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine
"Genome editing: What is CRISPR, and what can we do with it?"

Biology Spring Speaker Series
Don Walker, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Tennessee Technological University
"Inside-out; Evolution of the salamander microbiome and its protective nature against fungal pathogenesis"

Biology Alumni Speakers
Himesh Zaver (15) currently a first year medical student at ETSU spoke to biology students about medical school.

Alumni: if you would be interested in talking with current students about your career path and experiences, please contact us.

ASB Conference

Biology faculty members Nick Ragsdale, Jennifer Thomas, Darlene Panvini, Chris Barton and 20 Biology, BMB, Neuro and Environmental Science undergraduate research students attended the 2016 Association of Southeastern Biologists Meeting on March 31 - April 3 in Concorde, NC. Abstracts were presented by undergraduate and graduate students from Georgia, North Carolina, Alabama, Ohio, Tennessee and other southeastern states. Belmont students presented posters and talks, attended presentations, symposiums and workshops and had the opportunity to see and discuss research with students from many universities in the southeast area. Lindsay Millward won first place in the Tri Beta District II oral presentation session and will go to the National Tri-Beta Convention in May. Belmont was recognized for having the most abstracts submitted. In addition, Taeler Dahm won first place for the Cellular and Molecular Oral Presentation. Taeler received a $300 check from ASB and a certificate. More photos can be seen on our Facebook page, Serotonin Helix.

Belmont Scholarship and Awards Day Convocation

The Second Year Award, Leadership was awarded to Missy Martin (environmental science and social entrepreneurship double major, public relations, social issues concentration, minor) at the Awards Day Convocation on April 13.
Congratulations to our seniors!!

Here is just a partial list of places our seniors are headed after graduation. Watch our Facebook page as we update graduating seniors information this summer!

Angel Brothers (BIO) - “So excited to (finally!) announce that I have accepted a position at the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine for the Class of 2020!!! I cannot express how blessed I am to have this opportunity to fulfill my lifelong dream of becoming a Veterinarian.”

Lindsay Millward (BIO)- “So excited to announce I will be continuing my education at Central Washington University in Ellensburg to earn my Masters in Biology with CWU Biological Sciences department. My thesis will be focused on road ecology.”

Sarah Trippett (BIO) - “I'm overjoyed to announce that I have been offered and have decided to accept a spot in the UT Houston Med School class of 2020!”

Lindsey Dennis (BIO) - “My plans are to begin Belmont's MAT program this summer and I will begin student teaching this fall on my journey of becoming a middle or high school science teacher!”

Danielle Aument (BIO) - “I am going to be attending the Wingate University Physician Assistant program starting this August!”

Parker Tumlin (BIO) - “I will be attending the University of Tennessee Health Science Center's College of Medicine.”

Katland Stoddard (BIO) - “After graduation I plan on attending Belmont for the education department's Master of Arts in Teaching program.”

Miranda West (NEURO) - “I will be attending the Master's of School Counseling program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill beginning in May.”

Zara Latif (BIO) - “In the fall, I will be attending UT Memphis Medical School.”

Chase Mackey (NEURO) - “I'm taking at least a year to work as a research assistant at Vanderbilt to diversify and deepen my research experience. Currently I'm applying to be either a Research Coordinator or Imaging Specialist at the Medical Center, or the Imaging Institute where I work currently.”

Nelly Grigorian (BMB) - “Starting in June, I will be a team leader for FEMA Corps, which is an AmeriCorps program through the federal government in which I will be with a team of about 10 people and we will spend about 2-3 months working in different FEMA joint field offices across the country. This will last for a year.”

Samantha Gould (NEURO) - “After graduation I intend on holding a position as a Research Assistant at Vanderbilt University for 1-2 years before pursing a doctorate degree in Cognitive Neuroscience Research. I'm excited for what the future has in store!”

Julisa Nunez (NEURO) - “I will be attending St. Louis School of Medicine for an MS in Anatomy.”

Donnie Hoyle (BIO) - Attending Belmont College of Pharmacy in August.

Vian Pulous (BIO) - Begins studies at ETSU Medical School in July.

Morgan Turner (BIO) - Will be attending Masters of Genetic Counseling program at the University of Alabama Birmingham in the Nashville track.

Melissa Wolf (BIO) - “I was just hired as a research assistant at Vanderbilt's immunometabolism lab studying inflammatory disease, cancer, and anti-tumor immunity. I hope to go to graduate school after gaining a year of this valuable research experience.”

Jasmin Mohn (BIO) - Will pursue a Masters in Math at MTSU.

Felicity Newton (BMB) - Attending Ph.D. program at Notre Dame in Biological Sciences.

Alex Jeffers (ENV) - Seasonal naturalist with WPNC SWEAT team.

Jeff King (BIO) - Attending St. Louis University Medical School.
Alumni Corner

Azad Karim (12) Matched to Northwestern University for cardiothoracic surgery.

Becky Adams (08) Received a grant to visit a lab in Edinburgh, Scotland for a collaboration this past February.

Emily Smothers Ezell (11) “The Ezells are moving to Mississippi!! I matched family medicine at the North Mississippi Medical Center! We are excited to see what this next chapter brings...”

Jordan Helms (15) Currently a Research Intern at Georgia Department of Public Health

Jordan Murray (12) Will be doing medical rotations at Methodist Medical Center Oak Ridge, Oak Ridge, TN.

Roxy Musharafteia (12) Received her Doctorate in Pharmacy from Belmont University.

Sarah Ayers (11) Matched to Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, Jackson, TN for residency.

Sara Updegraff (11) “This girl arrives in Australia in 4 days and found out she officially has a job working as a Marine Biologist on a snorkel boat that goes to the Great Barrier Reef!...”

Stephanie Ray (15) “It’s been a long process, but it’s finally real!! I’m excited to announce that I have officially accepted an offer of admission to the Microbiology Ph.D. program at The Ohio State University, starting this fall!”

John Gossen (15) Working as a volunteer at a hospital in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania through the Lumos Foundation.

Sara Bonaparte (15) Accepted to graduate school at Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University

Nick Kirk (12) Received his Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from UT, Knoxville.

Kari Morse (14) Received her Masters in Exercise and Nutrition Science from Lipscomb University.

Butler Undergraduate Research

Drs. Darlene Panvini and Laura Stephan, along with 5 biology, biochemistry & molecular biology and neuroscience majors, attended the 28th Undergraduate Research Conference at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana on April 8. The conference was attended by more than 900 individuals representing 58 colleges and universities from 11 states. Presentations were in varied disciplines including sciences, humanities and social sci-

Wings to Soar

Beta Beta Beta (Tri-Beta) Biological Honor Society sponsored a program by the Wings to Soar Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Program, a nonprofit organization that cares for injured birds of prey unable to survive on their own by creating awareness for the importance of birds of prey through interactive outreach programs. During Tri-Beta’s program, participants watched a video, listened to music and had the unique opportunity to view birds in action as they flew overhead.

Dr. Laura Stephan, Julisa Nunez, Eeleyah Tanwar, Angel Brothers, Morgan Turner, Dr. Darlene Panvini and Robin Weyman
Biology Alumni Update

Name________________________________________________Graduation Year_______________

Address___________________________________________________________________________

City_____________________________State_____________Zip Code________Phone____________

Email address_______________________________________________________________________

Employment____________________________________Title________________________________

Recent promotion, honor, award, family activity?___________________________________________

We want to hear from you! Please take a moment to fill out the information below and send to us.

Contact Us!

- Have any comments about the newsletter or the Department?
- An alum with an update on activities?
- Like further information about the Department, its offerings or activities?

Please contact us by one of the following e-mail addresses or by postal service:

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Check out our website:
www.belmont.edu/biology

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