



Arts, Sciences & You

The Newsletter of the College of Arts and Sciences

Belmont to Bring Debate08 into the Classroom

by Liz Hunton, Junior, English major

Belmont will host the Town Hall Presidential Debate on Tues., Oct. 7, and although student involvement in the event itself may be limited, the College of Arts and Sciences is working hard to bring politics into the classroom.

The Commission on Presidential Debates chose Belmont as one of four sites to host debates before the November election. It will be the first such event ever held in Tennessee, said Gov. Phil Bredesen at a press conference. To make the transition from college campus to media circus easier, BU officials rescheduled fall break, originally set for Oct. 16-19, to Oct. 6-8. Although there won't be classes during the debate, the CAS is incorporating a curriculum highlighting the American political process.

"We're going to do absolutely everything we can to make this rich and beneficial for the students," said Dr. Dan McAlexander, university provost.

The debates will have a large positive impact on BU students, said Nathan Griffith, assistant professor of political science. "When it's here, it will stimulate interest in voting, the voting process and political science."



To further encourage students to watch and respond to the debate, Griffith hopes to have a viewing party of the on-campus debate in the fall.

Vaughn May, associate professor of political science, hopes, with the help of the Student Government Association, to pull together the Belmont Democrats, College Republicans and other campus political groups to have a serious debate over some of the same issues the candidates will face. May taught a class focusing on the presidential race, tracing it from nomination season to Election Day. While he doesn't see very much excitement about the debate yet, May thinks that will change in the fall as the debate draws closer and students

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BU Grad Explores Faraway Lands

by Jena E. Locke, Junior, public relations major



Teammate, Dave Jessop, falls into a snow crevasse. Brice Minnigh and Steve Wright quickly prepared ropes to help him.

Brice Minnigh graduated from Belmont in 1993 and since that time has used his BU education as a springboard to take him all around the world. For Minnigh, the phrase "from here to anywhere" served as more than a tagline; it was a life calling and a mission. And he ran with it.

While at Belmont, Minnigh studied journalism and philosophy while editing for *The Vision* and working for the *Nashville Banner* and *The Tennessean*. After graduation, he worked for NBC News in Moscow and then later several newspapers and wire agencies in Russia, Lithuania, China and Hong Kong.

Although Minnigh was a successful reporter, he still wanted to experience more, and after 14 years of daily journalism, he decided to become a freelance travel writer. He wrote about and photographed adventure trips he took to Taiwan,

China, Russia, Tibet, Kyrgyzstan, Greenland and even the Arctic Icecap.

Minnigh, currently a member of Belmont's Journalism Advisory Board, has thousands of clips to show from his career, but his writing only scratches the surface of what he's seen. "I've learned that you can't live your life in fear because there's not really anything to be afraid of," he said.

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New Dean Dr. Bryce Sullivan to Join CAS in June

by Jena E. Locke
Junior, public relations major

The College of Arts and Sciences will say hello to a new dean next fall. Dr. Bryce Sullivan comes to Belmont to take this position after a seven-year stretch as chair of the department of psychology and director of the interdisciplinary gerontology program at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

"It's going to be a learning process, and I'm not going to presume that I know all about Belmont and where it should go – that's too much of an assumption," Sullivan said. "But I am looking forward to doing what I can to incrementally improve the already world-class educational programs that Belmont offers."

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN...



Mike Pinter

Welcome to the fifth annual College of Arts and Sciences newsletter. As in previous years, the newsletter is possible only because of the organization and efforts of Ms. Dorren Robinson, adjunct faculty member in our Media Studies Department, and a group of her students. We hope the newsletter articles convey some of the energy and excitement that continues to pervade CAS and Belmont overall. During 2007-08, we have again had very successful annual marquee CAS events that include the Humanities Symposium, the Vaughn Science Lecture, the Simmons Distinguished Faculty Lecture, the Science Undergraduate Research Symposium (SURS) and the Sociology Speakers Series. In addition to providing outstanding instruction in our majors programs, our CAS faculty

members also remain committed to involvement and leadership in the various pieces of the Bell Core general education program (First-Year Seminar, First- and Third-Year Writing, Junior Cornerstone, Linked Cohorts and the CAS Capstone). We are completing faculty searches for 2008-09 that will see new faculty members coming in English, Mathematics, Philosophy and Public Relations.

We hope that this newsletter will help you to feel connected to CAS and to Belmont, and we would welcome personal contact with you as well. As CAS grows and changes to meet shifting demands, we know the importance of building and maintaining good relationships with our alumni. If you have not already registered at the university's new alumni website (alumni.belmont.edu), I hope you will register soon so that you can establish that point of contact.

Our 2007-08 year in CAS has been very interesting for many reasons, including some significant changes. After Dean Larry Hall's May 2007 departure for a leadership position at Lenoir-Rhyne College in North Carolina, I was asked to serve as Interim Dean for CAS. Thanks to stellar continuity and leadership provided by the CAS associate deans, department chairs and staff, we've navigated effectively through the year. In June 2008, Dr. Bryce Sullivan (currently Psychology Department Chair at SIU-Edwardsville) will become the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and I will return to my faculty position in Mathematics. On his behalf, I'll invite you to drop by the Dean's Office when you're on campus.

With warm regards,

Mike Pinter

Psychology and Biology Unite on Zebrafish Behavior

by Emily Telford, Junior, public relations major

In a rare collaboration, Belmont biology and psychology students came together over fish. Zebrafish, to be specific.

The students shared a new aquarium and conducted behavioral experiments on zebrafish to learn about genetics. As well as putting Belmont on the map as one of the only universities in the country to have behavioral observation facilities, the program gave students highly coveted experiential learning that many people don't usually see in an undergraduate setting.

"The ultimate goal is to make a hypothesis about gene changes in the fish by studying their behavior," said psychology professor Dr. Lonnie Yandell.

Michelle Howell, a biology major and psychology minor, worked in the program since its launch. "It's really cool to study the behavior of non-human organisms. They're always happy to see us, and they never complain, but keeping them alive is sometimes a problem."

Luke Lancaster and Sarah Lashley presented their research at the Eastern Psychology Association in Boston in March. Lancaster, a junior psychology major, worked closely with the fish almost every day. "We're really lucky to have this program because it gives us an opportunity to get invaluable hands-on experience," Lancaster said.

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Photos by Terry Winnett, Michael Krouskop and Laci Grammer

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Psychology Professor Named 2007 Tennessee Professor of the Year

by Ashley Bearden, Senior, public relations major

The psychology department at Belmont boasts Tennessee's best professor, according to the Carnegie Foundation and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. In November 2007, the organizations named Belmont Psychology Chair Dr. Pete Giordano as Tennessee Professor of the Year.

"Obviously getting an award like that is a nice thing to receive," Giordano said. "A lot of people have helped me during my teaching career. I never felt like this was just my accomplishment."

Giordano credits his achievement in large part to the support and encouragement of fellow faculty members Sue Trout, Mike Awalt, Dave Ribar, Joyce Crowell, Steve Simpler and former dean of education, Earlene Kendall. Giordano also said fellow psychology professor Dr. Lonnie Yandell, who has mentored him since he came to Belmont in 1989, was another example of how this award didn't just belong to him.

"Pete is a clinical psychologist who is interested in teaching," Yandell said. "He has shown a lot of concern for students and likes to work with the profession of teaching on a broad level."

Giordano received his bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He is a member of the Belmont Undergraduate Research Symposium Steering Team, Fellow of Division Two of the American Psychological Association and a consulting editor for *Teaching of Psychology*. Giordano was also the recipient of the Tower Award for exceptional contribution to campus life from Belmont's Student Affairs division and the Academic Inspiration Award from Belmont's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

According to the Web site for the awards, CASE, a Washington-based international higher education organization, awarded professors who have demonstrated excellence in the following areas:

- Impact on and involvement with undergraduate students
- Scholarly approach to teaching and learning
- Contribution to undergraduate education in the institution, community and profession
- Support from colleagues and current and former undergraduate students

Associate Provost Dr. Marcia McDonald said Giordano met and exceeded the award criteria.

"Dr. Giordano has had a significant impact on the psychology department, mainly by his commitment to working collaboratively with his faculty to build a program that enables students to learn psychology hands-on, by doing research. It is a tribute to Dr. Giordano and his faculty that they focus their energies on enabling students to learn how to do meaningful primary research."

Giordano's colleagues said his assessment of his own teaching has been a major element in his success. "That willingness to ask questions about your own work is the mark of a teacher who is willing to be a lifelong learner, a claim we make about a Belmont education," McDonald said. "Dr. Giordano is a great example of what it means to live the life of a learner – which is why I think he is such an effective teacher." •

Italian Professor Bridges Gap Between Language and Culture

by Pierce Greenberg, Freshman, journalism major

From Europe to the United States, Italian professor Dr. Francesca Muccini has traveled thousands of miles to reach her current destination at Belmont.

Muccini, who grew up in Pesaro, Italy, brings experience and credentials to the foreign language department. After earning her bachelor's degree in Italian in Italy, she moved to the United States to further her education. She earned a master's in French from Miami University and a master's in English from Arkansas State University.

While Muccini's list of language degrees may seem extensive, she insists learning several languages is simply part of Italian culture. "In Europe we have to learn more than one language. I grew up with that state of mind. For European people in general, that's not unusual."

After completing her master's, Muccini earned a doctoral degree from Arkansas State in heritage studies. She taught Italian at the University of Kansas before arriving at Belmont this past year.

"The reason why I decided to come to Belmont was because of the faculty members and the environment and atmosphere," Muccini said. "The first time I visited campus, everyone was so friendly, and I was really impressed by that. The way they treated me was just wonderful."

David Julseth, the chair of the foreign languages department, was impressed by Muccini's knowledge of Italian language and culture. "It was exciting to have an opportunity to hire an Italian professor from Italy," Julseth said. "Her extensive knowledge can help bridge the gap between cultures and languages."

First Year Seminar Offers Counteracting Topics

by Sally West, Freshman, journalism major

Imagine waking up in the morning to a robot making your coffee, or maybe even a hologram of yourself reading off a list of things to do for the day. It's the creation of artificial life.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, imagine death. Imagine waking up to a war-torn country faced with what seems like endless years of conflict and wondering if you'll eat that day, or even survive.

Belmont freshmen considered both in first year seminar classes that touched on polar opposite topics: from taking life to our developing technology's ability to creating new versions of life.

"Artificial Life" was a first-year seminar taught by Dr. William Hooper, a professor in the mathematics and computer science department exploring "creatures" made from software and computer technology. Hooper, who also teaches computer science, math and programming classes, said the "Artificial Life" course exposed him to students he never would have otherwise seen in his other classes.

Dr. Daniel Schafer brought a totally different perspective to the table in his first year seminar "Confronting Genocide." Schafer's interest in this topic goes well beyond his seminar class. He has been the faculty advisor for Amnesty International at Belmont for eight years and also works with Belmont's Coalition Against Genocide. He also serves on the Board of Directors of Tennessee Against Genocide.

These two seminar classes were just two of many taught last semester. Each attempted to relate to the common theme of ways of knowing.

"We were looking at models of life and substitutes for life as a way to know more about the real thing," said Hooper.

His favorite part of the class was the real-life experiences students brought into class, which was shown through papers and in-class discussion. "They are in a different mold than my other students. They are really intelligent people who weren't necessarily into science."

Schafer generally teaches history courses so his seminar included a lot of looking back at previous genocides while still confronting those in the present. "We looked at a variety of materials about genocides in the past. We looked at journalists' accounts, historical accounts and different sources to look at the issue."

The primary issue in the class was the discussion of how to define genocide. The class sought to distinguish it from other ways human rights are abused and used books on Rwanda, the Holocaust, Darfur and a few others as texts, including one that confronted this country's lack of action to stop genocide, *A Problem from Hell* by Samantha Power.

The class involved looking into those texts and conducting debates people during those times might have had. "For me the best part was helping open the students' minds to what's going on in the world," said Schafer. •

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Minnigh has made a living by expecting the unexpected. On a Tibetan mountain bike exhibition in June 2007, he was run off the road by a truck, breaking his hand. After splinting it up with a spatula and cycling for two days to the nearest clinic, he had his bones reset three times without being given any pain killers, aside from a cigarette given to him by the medical attendants.

"I've been in hospitals all over the world, and Tibetan hospitals rank first," he said, and then laughed as he added, "in terms of sheer barbarism."

But to Minnigh, it's all about the adventure.

He's almost starved to death several times, surviving only on melted butter mixed with water and Tabasco sauce. He's been arrested dozens of times in China for being in areas legally "closed to the outside," which he dismisses as "not that big of a deal." Through it all, he's learned a lot.

He enthusiastically agrees with fellow travel writer Tony D'Souza who said, "If I could live 1,000 lifetimes, it wouldn't be enough."

Minnigh recently was commissioned to spend March through June traveling through Tibet, inter-Mongolia, Henan, Hubei, Shanxi, Shaanxi and Jiangxi to write guide books for travelers.

Thom Storey, chairman of the Media Studies department at Belmont University and one of Minnigh's former professors, said, "I never really can keep up with what part of the world he is in, but I always know he is out doing what he is driven to do. He is passionate, intense and totally unpredictable."

Even through the hard times, Minnigh's passion for life helps him find "the violence of nature" as "oddly comforting." Minnigh writes of his Artic Icecap expedition, saying "Mother Nature pulled out all of the stops, taking the temperature down as low as -45 degrees Celsius – and that's without much of a wind-chill factor." He tells of bitter temperatures freezing his eyelashes together and forming what he calls "small stalactites of snot" hanging from his nose.

But there are moments which make the struggles all worthwhile.

Minnigh can say that he's gone to Taiwan and stood at the highest point in Northeast Asia, which he described as "a place that few people even know exists."

The passion Minnigh has for writing, travel and life was given greater focus at Belmont, he said. "You feel so gratified when a story is yours and only yours."

Being able to write those stories came from his Belmont education. Minnigh remembers Storey, his first mentor, saying, "journalists are generalists. They know a little bit about a lot of things."

Minnigh agrees, but also said the more you get into it, the more you realize you don't know. With that constant learning comes great understanding and phenomenal meaning.

"To get true meaning out of travel, you need deciphering skills," Minnigh said. "All my travels have been so meaningful, but I couldn't have deciphered such meaning without first coming to Belmont." •

Sisters Celebrate Success On and Off the Field

By by Pierce Greenberg, Freshman, journalism major

For senior twin sisters Meredith and Sarah Brandt, leading the Lady Bruins soccer team to its first ever Atlantic Sun tournament appearance is just one of the achievements they will leave Belmont having accomplished.

Their hard work in the classroom has led to four straight Atlantic Sun All-Academic awards, given to students who maintain a 3.5 GPA or higher.

When the Brandts began their careers at Belmont in 2003, the soccer program was trying to rebound from a dismal 1-16-1 season. Four years later, with the twins' help, the team posted a 13-7-2 record, and Belmont's defense and goalkeeping were nationally ranked during the season.

"This is the best season we could ask for, especially to end on," said Sarah, whose play earned her an Atlantic Sun First Team All-Conference selection.

Sarah, a biology and pre-med major, and Meredith, a mass communication and Spanish major, have always put academics first, they said. "We knew that school was the most important thing; soccer was just an added bonus," Sarah said.

Currently, Meredith is looking at graduate schools in hopes of one day working towards a master's in sports administration or education.

Eventually, she wants to work as an academic advisor to student-athletes. "I stuck with communications because it opens you up to anything you want to do," she said.

Sarah aspires to be a doctor and has already been accepted to several medical schools. "The main reason I want to be a doctor is that I want to help people. I know that I won't get bored with it, and that's really important."

While their soccer careers at Belmont are over, both sisters believe the lessons learned on the field will carry over into their professional lives. "Being a defender, you have to learn how to communicate," said Sarah. "It has taught me how to be committed to something that I care about, and I know that's something that I'll be able to use as a doctor."

"It helped us learn how to manage our time effectively," said Meredith.

Both Sarah and Meredith said they will take a lot away from their time at Belmont. "I had a high level of education from a quality school," said Meredith. "I've developed relationships with other students and professors and things that I can still use in my future."•

A New Vision for the Belmont *Vision*

by Megan Roddick, Freshman, journalism major

This year, Belmont's student newspaper, *The Vision*, was more visible online than in racks. The paper was updated online every week rather than every other week in paper form.

"Since 1951, the Belmont student paper has been available on campus," said Thom Storey, chair of the Media Studies Department.

But as technology advanced, Belmont faculty knew an update would eventually be required. The Belmont *Vision* made its initial online debut in 2004. "At first it was meant to be a complement to the traditional print paper that was being distributed biweekly," said Storey.

However, since the paper hit the Web, the number of online viewers has consistently increased while the print form has not been getting as much circulation. "What we have found and what many media have found is that people are going more and more to the Internet for their news," said adviser to *The Vision* and journalism faculty member Linda Quigley. "People are just not reading the paper product that much anymore."

With the *Vision's* online success, a mutual decision among student editors and faculty involved with the paper was made to restructure the paper and make the online product the primary source for Belmont news. With *The Vision* online, students will have many new and exciting opportunities to become involved. The online paper will be incorporating *The View* and *The Voice*, Belmont's former television and radio outlets.

Not only will these changes save money for the paper, but it's expected that the switch to the Web will be far more meaningful to Belmont's 4,700 students, Storey said. In the future, *The Vision* online will be partnered with a paper product distributed monthly.

"After much consideration, we decided to produce a tabloid that follows the Web," said Quigley.

This paper will focus more on feature stories and issues relevant to the student population. It's the department's hope the transition for *The Vision* is a smooth one. "I think the change to online is going to be quite an adjustment for the campus not to have the paper to pick up every other week," said 2007-08 *Vision* editor junior Courtney Drake. "However, I feel that overall it will benefit the community to receive up-to-the-minute updates."•

The Belmont Vision

- 3,500 copies of *The Vision* are printed for every issue.
- There are 25 students on staff, overseen by Linda Quigley.
- Publication will be once a month on paper and weekly online – www.belmontvision.com
- First appearance on the Web was Spring 2004.
- Spring 2008 marked the switch to a monthly tabloid with increased Web presence.

SURS Gives Science Students a Chance at Research

by Jena E. Locke, Junior, public relations major

Students left the classroom and dove into the research field for Belmont's fourth annual science undergraduate research symposium in November.

"Usually, the best thing you can get out of a class is a good grade," said Dr. Lonnie Yandell, psychology professor and a research faculty advisor. "But that's not the case in the research classes here at Belmont."

SURS (Sciences Undergraduate Research Symposium) developed out of the grassroots movement known as BURS (Belmont Undergraduate Research Symposium) in the fall of 2004. "I always loved BURS," said Dr. Robert Grammer, the associate dean of the school of sciences, of the annual spring event. "But adding SURS allowed students a chance to give presentations in the fall."

By offering the research symposium, Belmont gives students a new way to grow academically beyond labs and lectures. Sarah Mertan, a freshman music business major who thought she was bad at science, participated in SURS through Yandell's honors analytics class. Mertan remembered her feeling of intimidation when the project was first introduced. "I thought there is no way I can produce a research study on this level especially without a background in science," she said.

But throughout the course of the semester, Mertan began to realize taking what she was learning to the next level was actually rewarding and fun. "Fun" is the same word Yandell uses to describe SURS. The most fun, he said, is to see his students go through the process and gain confidence. "I love watching the students walk back to their seats after presenting," Yandell said. "The look on their face is like they've gone to the mountaintop and back."

The research experience gives students more than just a confidence boost. Taking advantage of such an opportunity gives them an edge when continuing their education. "With a big research project like this on your résumé, you've got the leg up on the other applicants," Grammer said.

This advantage comes from the fact that students are showing an interest and demonstrating a passion in their field beyond course requirements. Yandell said, when trying to get into a good grad school, "research is the key."

Some graduate schools are beginning to require previous research experience and others strongly encourage it. When applying for graduate school, letters of recommendation also speak volumes about the students applying, Yandell said. He pointed out the research process helps with this, too, since working one-on-one with a professor through research creates a personal relationship that goes beyond the typical teacher-student relationship.

Mertan said the relationship she built with her adviser, Yandell, was helpful as she worked through the process. "The goal is for students to learn," Yandell said.

Belmont assures learning takes place by going against the norm. At other schools, the professor comes up with the topic and assigns it to his students. At Belmont, the students come up with their own topic to research.

According to both Mertan and Yandell, finding the problem is the hard part. Solving it is easier, they said. "When students spend time deciding what they want to learn about, then the project is truly theirs, and that is their motivation," Yandell said. •

Chemistry and Physics Department Shows Visible Growth

by Sally West, Freshman, journalism major

The chemistry and physics department at Belmont is growing and continues to make changes, making the program even stronger. The department has added two new chemistry professors within the past four years.

One of them is Dr. Rachel Rigsby, who received her doctorate in biochemistry from Vanderbilt University where she studied the biochemical nature and activity of enzymes of microbial antibiotic resistance. Dr. Jason Weibel, another recent addition, came to Belmont after working at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California.

The hires in the chemistry department were in response to the surge in growth in the program, said Dr. Robert Grammer, associate dean of the school of sciences.

The chemistry and physics department also added three physics professors in the last two years: Dr. Scott Hawley, who was a researcher in numerical relativity prior to coming to Belmont; Dr. Christian

Thomas, who did research with gravitational microlensing; and Dr. Steve Robinson, who had just recently finished his doctorate in electrical and computer engineering.

The Audio Engineering Technology major which was added a few years ago has helped jump-start the physics department, Grammer said, because it requires three physics courses.

Those studying in the chemistry and physics departments have other opportunities in the health sciences field as well as other medical and engineering programs. Not only are the chemistry and physics departments diverse, but they also require faculty to have a strong academic background. "The absolute Belmont requirement is a master's, but in the science department, it requires a Ph.D.," Grammer said.

The chemistry and physics department may not be as big as other programs, but they're expanding and making changes to help give students more personalized attention, said Grammer. •

Templeton Prize Winner Speaks About Relationship Between Science, Religion

by John P. Boan, Senior, mass communications major

For centuries, scientists and theologians alike have struggled with the relationship between science and religion, trying to come to terms with how such seemingly oppositional fields of thought can coexist. Coming to Belmont University as the keynote speaker for the annual Vaughn Lecture series as well as a convocation event, the Rev. John Polkinghorne, a British particle physicist and priest in the Anglican Church, addressed the subject, speaking to crowds of students and faculty on Nov. 13 and 14.

Todd Lake, vice president of spiritual development at Belmont and longtime friend of Polkinghorne, said the juxtaposition of religion and science was a relevant issue. "In our country this warfare of science and faith is huge; so people are looking for a sane way through this mess," he said. "Students are hungry on this campus to figure out how to put together science and faith. They know that a Godless naturalism is selling us short, and this magical world that Six Day Creationists want to give us where fossils in the ground and things like the Grand Canyon exist as tricks God is playing on us doesn't make sense either."

Polkinghorne spoke of a middle ground where science and religion not only coexist but where both disciplines are mutually supportive, Lake said. "I think he said it best when he said there are gifts that Christian

faith can give to science and there are gifts that science can give to Christian faith, and we are all the poorer for not unwrapping either," he said. "He doesn't view them as able to come to an uneasy truce, but he views them as mutually reinforcing and in a necessary conversation with each other. I would absolutely agree with that."

Polkinghorne's own personal history is testament to how science and faith can come together. Working as a theoretical physicist at Cambridge, Polkinghorne played a significant role in the discovery of the quark in the early 1960s. He resigned his professional chair at Cambridge and in 1982, was ordained as an Anglican priest. Twenty years later, he received the prestigious Templeton Prize for his contribution to research into the interaction between science and religion.

While Polkinghorne's expertise crosses scientific and theological fields, his lecture was part of the Vaughn Lecture series and concerned interpreting quantum theory.

Dr. Robert Grammer, associate dean of the school of sciences, said while Polkinghorne's discussion "was a talk for a lay audience, for them to understand the significance of something they couldn't get in a class here," it was also "a shot in the arm for the science majors, because of the nature of who it was giving the talk." •

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Sullivan's mindset is right on track with Belmont's, valuing the way learning and service are brought together. However, his path of getting here was, as he says, "not as direct as you might think."

Sullivan worked at General Motors for 16 years but found his job there unfulfilling. That's when he decided to begin work on his undergraduate degree as a non-traditional student at Georgia State. He didn't have clear goals of what he wanted to do; however, once he started taking psychology classes, he found something he could finally get excited about. "I look at life with the idea that the most important thing is to serve others," Sullivan said, "and I realized psychology was a place I could do that."

After getting his undergraduate degree in 1992, he went on to Ohio State where he began work on his doctorate degree, which he completed in 1997.

University College Dean Dr. Jimmy Davis said Sullivan's background is not typical, but it prepared him for the job. "He has a freshly minted degree, but is certainly not a freshly minted person. His life experiences, knowledge and publication record are outstanding."

Davis sees Sullivan as a person who has experiences in life that are parallel to the mission and values of Belmont, showing he's a great fit for the job. For example, Sullivan partnered learning and service, a key portion of Belmont's mission statement, when he spent time helping the victims of Hurricane Katrina both on a personal and

professional level. Sullivan said his faith prompted him first to do clean-up and construction with his church, and later, he went back with his professional background in psychology to help heal people who were hurting emotionally.

Provost Dr. Dan McAlexander noted that Sullivan truly understands the healthiness of "the dialogue between issues of faith and issues of inquiry." McAlexander said that from visits with Sullivan, he can tell Sullivan sees Belmont as a wonderful place where he can put into practice his life goal of service and acknowledge the importance of the whole individual learning, both mentally and spiritually. It's this kind of learning Sullivan sees Belmont offering which excites him to become a part because he firmly believes it will give students a foundation to anywhere in the world.

In addition, Sullivan has already acquired a broad knowledge of the Belmont community. When he initially met the deans of the various schools within the College of Arts and Sciences, he noticed one of the deans was out of town right off the bat, Davis said. This knowledge stems from his eagerness to learn more about Belmont and a sincere interest in the values Belmont upholds. As Sullivan sees it, Belmont is a unique university in the way it does more than just giving "lip service" to the faith aspect of individuals.

He comes to Belmont in June, ready to jump on board and become immersed in the Belmont community. •

The Guy Who Does It All

by Megan Roddick, Freshman, journalism major

When the College of Arts and Sciences needed an interim dean for 2007-08, Dr. Mike Pinter stepped in.

“Mike has done an excellent job as the interim dean and has taken it very seriously,” said Thom Storey, media studies department chair. “He could’ve just come in this year and made sure that nothing got messed up. However, he has really worked hard to keep things moving forward in the CAS. His reward is that he gets to leave.”

When former CAS dean, Dr. Larry Hall, announced that he was leaving Belmont last March, the pressure was on to find a replacement. “We tried to do a quick search for a full-time dean last summer, and we didn’t get the caliber of candidates that we were looking for,” said Storey. “We decided to go with an interim dean and take more time in getting a good replacement.”

“I guess I had sucker written on my forehead,” joked Pinter.

In truth, Pinter was the obvious choice. He had done this job before seven years ago. Dr. Robert Grammer, chair of the biology department, said, “Mike is the kind of person who will do what needs to be done for the university.”

Even though his heart was set on teaching, Pinter agreed to be the interim dean. But on one condition – that it was a temporary position. “Mike loves to teach, and clearly his students love him. I’m glad that we found a replacement. This was an awful lot for him to take on, and I know that he is looking forward to a more normal faculty life,” said Storey.

Freshman Stephanie Diggs had hoped to have Pinter’s first year seminar class earlier this fall and was surprised to hear he was no longer her professor. “I was so excited to study under Dr. Pinter! I had heard such great things from his previous students.”

Although he didn’t teach the course, he did attend the class regularly as a guest speaker. “When Dr. Pinter came to class, I found myself wishing the clock backwards – the time flew by so fast. By the way he spoke at our lectures, I’m sure that all of his classes would be interesting,” said Diggs.

Although teaching is his passion, Pinter admits after a year of absence that he’s got butterflies. “Going back is intimidating to think about. As a teacher, my job every day is to get up in front of a room full of students with something worth saying fueled by the creativity and energy needed in order to teach,” he said.

In May, Pinter will depart his duties as interim dean. After that, his summer will be spent preparing for fall classes. ●

BRIDGES GAP continued from page 3

At Belmont, Muccini teaches four Italian classes with about 40 students. One of Muccini’s main goals is for that number to grow. “I hope to achieve a much bigger number of students,” said Muccini. “There are so many descendants of Italian families, and I want them to be aware of their roots and their ancestors.”

While learning the language is the main topic of Muccini’s classes, she also focuses on incorporating Italian culture into the curriculum. Students often come to her with general questions regarding Italian fashion, food and entertainment.

To further expose students to other cultures, Belmont offers a summer study program in Florence. This year, David Ribar, an art professor, is running the program, which allows students to take four weeks of classes at the Florence University of the Arts. In 2009, Muccini will take over planning the trip.

“Having someone like Francesca, being a native Italian, would be an ideal trip leader,” Ribar said. “She’s got plenty of experience that would make this a smooth transition.”

While at KU, Muccini led a group of students on a similar program in Florence and has high expectations about future trips. “I expect them to bring back a full experience,” said Muccini. “They can only bring back something that will enrich them and deepen their knowledge of Italian culture.”

Ribar believes that Muccini will make an excellent leader and professor. “She just has great intelligence, wit and an important perspective on American culture,” he said. ●

Environmental Studies Program Flowers at BU

by Benjamin R. Reed, Senior, theatre major

The environmental studies program will reach a milestone when its first graduate crosses the stage next May. The program has been around for five years, but in 2009, junior Andy Wicke will be the first student in the history of the program to follow its line of study all the way to a diploma.

Dr. Darlene Panvini, associate professor of biology and head of the environmental studies program, described the major as an “interdisciplinary approach to understanding human’s relationship with the world.” One of the biggest strengths of the program is that the students are out in the community, in the environment, learning hands-on, she said.

As part of the program, Wicke has been to a recycling center, an organic farm and numerous parks to get hands on experience. He

also took a trip to Washington, D.C. to learn what an environmental lobbyist does. “Environmental studies is very versatile and exposes you to current issues and professions and careers that are linked and involved with environmental issues,” Wicke said.

One of the ways the major does this is by offering two tracks: the science track and a policy track. Panvini explained that both require an interdisciplinary approach to learning, as students are required to take courses in science, economics, entrepreneurship, math and religion.

Wicke is on the science track and plans to use his degree to go to dental school. “A friend always used to call me the green dentist,” Wicke said. ●

Pharmacy Becomes a New Belmont Program

by Benjamin R. Reed, Senior, theatre major

Belmont University is gearing up to welcome 75 students as the inaugural class of the School of Pharmacy in the fall of 2008.

All that anyone needs to do is go to the second floor of the Inman Health Sciences building to feel the electric excitement bustling around Room 202 where four offices of the School of Pharmacy are connected. On a recent visit, people were fluttering by, telephones were ringing, and students were meeting with faculty. A short walk down the hall is the Dean of the School of Pharmacy's office, Dr. Phil Johnston.

"We're really onto something that makes us unique," he said. "We developed a curriculum that not only meets all the standards, but it's going to set students apart."

Johnston has been on the road a lot visiting with professionals in the industry and talking to them about the new program. The defining element of the school is its specialized four-track option. Students can choose from a focus in pharmacy management, informatics, care management or pharmacy missions. The list was much longer when Johnston and his team began the research last June, but after taking the list to working professionals, Johnston and his team distilled it to the four tracks now being offered by the School of Pharmacy.

"I've been in front of 500 to 600 pharmacists and shown them the tracks and, believe me, if they thought we were off, they would have been happy to tell me," Johnston said.

Helping Johnston lead the new school is Dr. Sal Giorgianni, director of experiential education and development. Giorgianni came out of retirement and moved to Nashville from Florida to take the position, and he said he's excited about the new and innovative approach Belmont

is taking. "We want to create great communicators with an aptitude for business, who are broad thinkers as well as good clinical practitioners."

He likened the fresh, innovative approach taken by the School of Pharmacy as similar to what was done in the Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business. When asked if he thought the Belmont School of Pharmacy could be the pharmacy school for rock stars, he smiled and said that wasn't the exact goal. But then he added, "we like to believe our students will become rock stars in a professional sense."

While the new school appears to be on the right track, there are still some hurdles to jump. All pharmacy schools must be accredited, and the program has gone through three of the four requirements, the next one being an inspection of the campus and classrooms. When the school passes this inspection, it will be allowed to accept its first class of 75 students in the fall. However, the program won't become fully accredited until the first class makes it all the way through the program.

Even without the accreditation the school is receiving interest on a national level and has applicants from 13 different states. In fact, only six of the 75 students attending in the fall come from Belmont's undergraduate program. One of those six is Kelley Loudon, a senior chemistry major who has already been accepted.

"I'm excited, I know this sounds dorky, but I'm really excited to learn about the drugs and how they interact with the body," Loudon said.

Loudon said she is equally proud of Belmont for creating the program. "This is going to be a huge achievement for Belmont, Nashville and the pharmacy profession." ●

Graduate Students Host 2007 TAHPERD Convention

by Liz Hunton, Junior, English major

Belmont graduate students organized a statewide convention so well, they've been asked to do it again next year.

The 2007 Tennessee Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (TAHPERD) convention was part of the Facility Operations and Event Management course administered by Amy Baker, assistant professor of sport administration. The course is a requirement for students working toward a master's degree in sport administration and works under a problem-based learning model where students are given a real world problem and spend the semester solving it.

"It forces students to think and be creative," Baker said. Last year's problem was planning a convention where professionals come together from across the state to learn new techniques and ideas related to physical education. The students hosted the convention at Embassy Suites in Cool Springs and more than doubled the attendance from previous years – from 250 to 600 participants.

"We've been asked to plan the 2008 convention because of the success of the 2007 one," Baker said.

Students in the spring 2007 semester started the initial planning while students in the fall executed the event. Teresa Meece, a graduate student who took the class in the fall, enjoyed the convention. "It was amazing, hands-on, a good experience with real-world event planning."

The planning for the event ranged from sending postcard reminders to potential attendants, to getting event sponsors, to dealing directly with attendees, Baker said. Each student also had the opportunity to moderate a session during the convention.

"We all got to look at and prepare every part of the convention. Everything from the food to venue; we all got to see what went into it," said Kyle Roelke, who took the class in the fall.

Baker's class this semester is already working on the convention for this fall. "Several students are really excited about the opportunity for a hands-on experience. Students are asking if they will get the opportunity to work with the convention," Baker said. ●

Traveling the World and Writing About It: The 2007 Humanities Symposium

by Liz Hunton, Junior, English major

Last fall, Belmont University held its sixth annual humanities symposium – Transforming Travel: Rewriting the World as We Know It – giving students and the community a chance to learn about travel writing.

The symposium ran from Nov. 11-19 and included 19 events and six outside speakers. “We probably could have done two weeks of programming without any doubt,” said Margaret Monteverde, associate dean of the school of humanities. “It is the tip of the iceberg, really, what we’re able to present here.”

Monteverde came up with this year’s theme: “Travel transforms the traveler. The traveler then transforms the experience in writing. The writing then transforms the way we view the world.” She also taught a travel writing class, which tied in to the symposium.

The symposium included events in which both students and professors participated, including several creative readings, an essay writing contest, a study abroad art show and a writing workshop. Students wrote funny, travel-related stories for the essay competition. The winner, Morgan Kelley, a senior English major who took Monteverde’s class, read his story, “The Jon Boat,” at the peripatetic reading, which opened the symposium and included 21 other student, faculty and alumni readers.

This year’s symposium also offered a writing workshop coordinated by Danielle Alexander, assistant professor of English. “The goal basically is to allow students to work with nationally-known editors and travel writers to hone their skills and know what good travel writing is and how to publish it,” she said.

The writers – including Tony D’Souza and Belmont alumnus Brice Minnigh, as well as Belmont faculty members Sandra Hutchins, Thom Storey and Linda Quigley – led the workshop. Participant Ashley Strosnider, 22, a senior majoring in English, said, “Brice shared a lot with us about the way he approaches turning experiences into stories.”

Other outside speakers included Molly F. Miller, a Vanderbilt geologist speaking on Antarctica; Alexa Smith, a reporter speaking on international conflict; D’Souza, a freelance journalist and novelist speaking on his travels; and Margaret A. Doody, a novelist, scholar and holder of the endowed John and Barbara Glynn Family Professorship of Literature at the University of Notre Dame speaking on her travels in Venice.

Monteverde helped organize the first annual symposium in 2002, bringing together the English, foreign language and philosophy departments to express the importance of the study of humanities in understanding the world. Next year’s topic, “The Cultures of Argument: Debate, Dissent and Dialogue,” will relate to the presidential debate being held at Belmont. •

Writing Program Helps Students and Community Tell Their Stories

by Ashley Bearden, Senior, public relations major

Not only is Belmont University’s writing program making its mark on students, but it’s also leaving a lasting impression on the community.

The writing program at Belmont is making its way into the education of every Belmont student, and one of the most exciting aspects of the program is the wide range of cutting-edge courses and internship opportunities offered to the nearly 50 majors and minors.

“Our writing program is kind of a model writing program,” said Dr. Bonnie Smith, director of the Writing Center. “The writing major is very broad, offering a variety of courses in creative, critical and expository writing in addition to a variety of literature courses.”

Belmont’s writing program emphasizes the collaboration of literature and writing. Smith said the English department at Belmont did not see itself as just emphasizing writing or just emphasizing literature but as a combination of both. Students in the writing program are encouraged to take advantage of career-oriented writing opportunities throughout Nashville, putting the skills learned in the classroom to

use in the real world. Belmont students have written for *All the Rage*, *Nashville Scene*, *Nashville City Paper*, local hospitals and public relations agencies.

The writing faculty at BU knows the importance of literacy, writing and students sharing their learned skills with the community. Last semester Dr. Amy Hodges-Hamilton taught a community-based writing course in which students met weekly with members of the Nashville community who were affiliated with Morningside, Glenn Cliff High School and the Magdalene House. The students were to either write their community member’s story or write side-by-side with them, assisting their community partner in expanding his or her writing skills. At the end of the semester, the faculty, students and their community partners met in the Leu Art Gallery for a reading of the stories.

“Our program is somewhat unusual compared to writing programs at other schools,” said Dr. Cynthia Cox, director of the writing program.

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Belmont PRSSA Wins Three National Awards

by Emily Telford, Junior, public relations major

Belmont's Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) chapter won three awards at the national conference held in Philadelphia last year.

The chapter took home top honors in two categories and third place in another. More than 280 colleges and universities competed. Belmont won the Chapter Development Award and the Outstanding PRSA/PRSSA Chapter Relationship Award, bringing home \$1,100, an engraved bell and two plaques.

"Belmont's PRSSA chapter is doing everything right," said Dr. Bonnie Riechert, assistant professor in the communications studies department and the group's faculty adviser. "We have great student leadership, incredible support from area professionals and from the university and college administration and amazing talent and creativity within the chapter. The chapter is continually expanding its involvement on campus and in the community, building on the past accomplishments."



At the conference, Riechert was admitted to the PRSA College of Fellows, a prestigious honor given to only two percent of PRSA members.

Founded by associate professor and director of the public relations program Pam Parry, Belmont PRSSA received its charter in July 2005. She said, "To have an objective panel of judges deem your chapter as the best in the country is an amazing compliment. To have it happen twice in one year is almost surreal. I could not be more proud of our chapter."

At the national conference 10 Teahan Awards are presented annually to recognize the outstanding achievements of PRSSA chapters, its members and advisors. Current chapter president Jess Reuter noted, "It says so much about the growth and dedication of our chapter that we won these awards. The fact that we're only three years old says even more. These prizes are highly coveted and highly prestigious, and I am so proud to be a part of this exciting time at Belmont."

According to the PRSSA Web site, the chapter development category is open to chapters with fewer than 20 members or those that have

had a charter for no more than three years. The judging criteria are chapter newsletters, membership drives, fundraisers, relationships with other PRSA chapters, public relations publications and overall membership involvement. Entries are judged for exceptional effort and creativity. One judge gave Belmont a score of 100. "In all my years of judging the Teahan Chapter Awards, I have never given a perfect score—until now. I was a member of PRSSA, and I would have jumped at the chance to be part of something as wonderful as your chapter. This entry, this chapter and this energy is truly amazing," the judge wrote on his evaluation.

The Outstanding PRSA/PRSSA Chapter Relationship category acknowledges the strong relationship between the PRSSA chapter and its local professional chapter of PRSA. Criteria includes programs that encourage interaction between PRSA and PRSSA, as well as support, internships, professional advisory councils, joint seminars and awards and recognition given for outstanding performance, according to the PRSSA web site. Past winners of this award include Ohio University, Kent State University and Ball State University.

"We are really lucky to be in a city where the local PRSA chapter is so supportive. Our members worked hard to build a great relationship with the professional chapter, and this year we plan to nourish and strengthen that relationship with positive interaction and communication," chapter PRSA liaison MacKenzie Fischer said.

As well as the two Teahan awards, Belmont received third place in The Betsy Plank Ethics Advocacy Award category for its annual September Ethics Week event. This was the second consecutive year Belmont placed in this category. Chapter Historian Hillary Bond said, "Belmont PRSSA places a high emphasis on ethics, and it's great to be recognized for our efforts. Our goal next year is to take first in this competition too."

Graduating senior Lisa Bates received two awards, a Gold Key award for student leadership in PRSSA and a Presidential Citation for outstanding service in the PRSSA and public relations program. •



Belmont Says Goodbye to Revered Professor

by Megan Roddick, Freshman, journalism major

The current chair of the mathematics department and distinguished teaching professor Dr. Stephen Campbell will retire in May after 37 years at Belmont.

"I wound up here in 1971 after an old college friend of mine and former physics professor, Dr. David Driskill, offered me a teaching position while some other faculty members were finishing up degrees," said Campbell. "Driskill said that he couldn't guarantee me any more than two years work." But Belmont couldn't let him go.

As the years passed, Campbell's reputation became more formidable. "When I first came to Belmont, I could tell immediately by the students lining up in the hallway to see Dr. Campbell how respected he was by them and how dedicated he was to them," said Dr. Mike Pinter, interim dean for the CAS. "I admired his approach, and I suppose I sought out the sort of relationships that I saw him have with his students."

One of Campbell's former analytics students describes math as her "arch enemy" and said it's anything but her thing. However, when Dr. Campbell's name is mentioned, her face lights up. "Dr. Campbell is really one of the best teachers I've ever had. He is so patient, helpful and never condescending. When you didn't understand something, he would always make the time and sit down with you for hours until you got it," said junior Hannah Klimetz. "To Dr. Campbell, no question is ever a dumb one."

One of the greatest gifts of teaching, according to Campbell, is seeing that light bulb turn on. "I had a student who indicated to me that she had always had a real difficulty with math. Early in the semester, she just blurted out in class one day, 'I get it, I get it!' Inside I was shouting, 'All right! That's why I'm here!'" Campbell said. "I truly love learning. I try to encourage my students by letting them know quite frankly that math was my worst subject in school. However, you can always develop

with practice. Part of the process of making connections in your brain is actually working through the process yourself."

He compared math to riding a bicycle. "I can't just tell you how to ride a bicycle. Until you try it, it doesn't actually click."

Campbell had a lot of practice in his chosen field. He received his undergraduate degree at Murray State University, his master's at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and his doctorate at Vanderbilt. Although he's had quite an impressive run, he still continues to work on math for fun every day and plans to keep his face familiar around campus.

"I will miss the routine of it all: arriving on campus shortly after 7 a.m., the responsibly of making the coffee for the hallway, bringing my lunch, checking e-mail and preparing myself for classes," said Campbell. "However, I'll miss my students and colleagues the most."

With all the pictures of Campbell's family hanging in his office, there is no doubt they are anxiously awaiting his upcoming free time. "I do enjoy those five grandchildren of mine," he said with a smile.

It is certain by Campbell's upcoming to-do list he will stay busy. "My wife and I are looking into service opportunities. I'm also interested in woodworking – please note that it is beginning woodworking," he chuckles.

For those whom Campbell has made an impression on at Belmont, it is hard to say goodbye. "I always tried to take advantage of his being down the hall from me," said Pinter. "He will always be considered a mentor for me."

Senior Doug Carpenter remembers his past with the professor and thinks to the future of his underclassmen. "It's a shame that the next generation of students will not have the opportunity to study under the guidance and patience of the great Dr. Campbell." •

ZEBRAFISH continued from page 2

The facility, located on the third floor of the Hitch Science Building, consists of 12 tanks and research equipment. "We receive the clear eggs, and they develop in about 20 days," Yandell said. "We get to see every stage of development. The idea is that if we can research their differences, we can learn about their genetic behavior."

Students use varying techniques to make observations about the fishes' genetics. For example, there is a group of non-striped fish called Pearls. If the Pearls consistently demonstrate a specific behavior different from the striped fish, the students can track those differences with genetic code.

In a current experiment, the fish are being placed in a tank with a red filter on one side and a green filter on the other. Students observe the animal's behavior through color perception and preference, according to which side the fish swim to.



Although the fish are very small and nearly identical, Howell worked closely enough to recognize most of the organisms individually. "I'm starting to get attached to the babies, since I've been working with them since conception," Howell said.

The Animal Behavior and Neuroscience Initiative resulted in cooperative projects between biology, computer science and psychology. Yandell and Dr. Lori McGrew headed the initiative, and

students presented their work at the national meeting of the Society for Neuroscience and the Tennessee Academy of Science.

Zebrafish are small starter-fish commonly used when setting up an aquarium for the first time. They originate in Bangladesh and can be bought at most pet stores.

Yandell said he and the students hope to eventually expand the facility. •

High School Students Discover Belmont Through Math

by Ashley Bearden, Senior, public relations major

Each year in April more than 200 bright eyes and fresh faces are seen running about Belmont's campus. They're not transfers. They're high school math whiz kids.

For more than 20 years, Belmont has served as a host for one of the Tennessee Mathematics Teachers Association math contests. Prestigiously selected Williamson County high school students take a day off school to come to Belmont to compete individually for awards in algebra I, geometry, algebra II, statistics, pre-calculus and calculus and advanced topics.

"There's a bit of prestige in coming to the math contest," Colonel Jim Cook, instructor of mathematics at Belmont, said. "It's a confidence boost for the younger kids who come to compete in the lower level stuff and a certification for older kids. The contest is an affirmation that they really are learning a lot."

"Math contest participants are usually a cut above the rest," Cook said. "It's not a wide open thing. There is a selectivity process on the part of the teachers."

The students take standardized tests in their specific area, then the tests are graded by Belmont faculty and student volunteers. During this time, math contest participants and their teachers explore Belmont's campus. For many of them, a college campus is uncharted territory.

"It's good for students to get exposure to a college campus to get them thinking about what they might do in the future," Dr. Mary Goodloe, chair of the department of mathematics, said. "It's

good for them to see people who have pursued or are pursuing math as a career and are excited about math."

Math majors also volunteer to help direct guests around campus and talk with visiting students and faculty.

"Our students are proud of Belmont," Goodloe said. "They enjoy talking with students and their faculty. A lot of our students are thinking about being teachers so I think it's a great opportunity for them to meet these teachers and make these contacts since these are the schools where they could be doing student teaching.

"It's a good opportunity for Belmont to build relationships with these schools, and for us faculty, it's a fun day," Goodloe added. "We remember enjoying something similar when we were that age. The contest helps recognize and reward students who enjoy math."

The afternoon of the math contest, everyone congregates once more for the awards ceremony where all participants are awarded a certificate of participation. The top 10 contestants are recognized, and the top three are awarded a personalized plaque.

"This is a fun event for Belmont and schools around Nashville because we get to interact with each other," Amy Valentine, a junior math major, said. "We love to talk to the younger students, and it gives them a chance to show off some of what they have learned in their math classes. Everyone likes to take a break from their schedules for a day and participate in a friendly competition." •

Physics Students See Research in Their Future

by Jessica Reuter, Junior, public relations major

Dr. Robert Magruder, chair of the physics department, has been researching better ways to produce optical devices such as optical transistors and optical switching devices.

Students like Caitlin Smith, junior physics major, have chosen to participate in Magruder's research and have been preparing to do research since their first days at Belmont. "I'm figuring out why all of my studying and homework was useful," said Smith.

Smith has spent her spring semester preparing and learning about the research Magruder and his associates have already done since 1992 and will spend this summer researching with him. "Our goal is to develop new ways of making materials for optical devices," said Magruder.

Several students have assisted Magruder in the lab, measuring materials and collaborating in reporting their findings. "We want our students to do research," said Magruder. "It helps give our students a competitive edge when applying for graduate school or going into the field."

Several reports have been published giving them a competitive edge over others applying for graduate school. "The act of researching on its own will help prepare me for graduate school," said Smith. "Even if it's not exactly what I want to do, I have to start my own experiments and research."

The opportunity to be involved with hands-on research gives the student the chance to apply everything they learned in the classroom to practical experience.

Through his long-term research, Magruder has teamed up with universities all over the world including the University of Alberta in Canada, the University of Leuven in Belgium and Vanderbilt University here in Nashville

Allowing the students to assist in the research is really a "win-win situation" because the students gain hands-on experience into the field they would like to go into. And as for Magruder, he has help with his research. •

New Faculty Members Show Diverse Backgrounds

Dr. Shelby Longard, assistant professor in the sociology department, is originally from Memphis, Tennessee. She received her bachelor's degree in sociology from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., and then went on to receive her doctorate in sociology from Vanderbilt University.

She worked as an adjunct at Belmont, before teaching at Vanderbilt for three years. Eventually she ended up at Belmont again and was hired full time this fall. She has taught First Year Seminar, Junior Cornerstone, Social Movements and Introduction to Sociology and will teach Southern Culture next semester.

Her specific area of study is gender and familial socialization, and her favorite part of Belmont is how civic-minded the students are. "I have really enjoyed how students are involved in the community, and the small class sizes are nice, too."

Stephen Foust is an assistant professor in the media studies department. He went back to school after 30 years to receive his master's in mass communications from Middle Tennessee State University. Prior to that, he received his bachelor's degree from Indiana University.



He was hired on as an assistant professor at Belmont this fall and before that helped with the journalism camp during the summer.

He said he enjoys the opportunity to engage his students and added that what Belmont is doing with the merging of web, print and TV news is great. "Belmont gets it. That's the future."

He teaches Broadcast News, Electronic Newsgathering, Practicum II and TV News Casting. Outside of teaching he likes to hike, whitewater paddle and swim.

Clare Douglass, a visiting professor in the English department, is originally from Ormond Beach, Florida. She received her bachelor's degree in English from Wake Forest University and went on to receive her doctorate in English from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

She first came to Belmont this fall and teaches First Year Writing and Third Year Writing. "The best part of Belmont is the students, and my classes were really awesome," Douglass said.

Outside of teaching, she enjoys entertaining and interior design.



Lisa McGuire graduated from the State University of New York at Ferdonia with a bachelor's degree in physiology. She then went on to Ohio University to

complete her master's degree in college student personnel.

"I came to visit a friend in Nashville, and I fell in love with the city," McGuire said.

McGuire first came to Belmont in 2003 and worked for Residence Life. In September 2007, she moved to the College of Arts and Science as the administrative coordinator.

Nicole Mullins is a native Nashvillian. She received her bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University and is currently working towards her master's degree in education at Belmont. Mullins first came to Belmont in August 2004 to work in Belmont Central. She then moved to the College of Arts and Science in July 2007 as the office manager. "Belmont is a great place; it has so much to offer," said Mullins. •

WRITING continued from page 10

"Most schools don't combine different areas of writing, such as journalism, script-writing and creative writing, into their program, but we think it's important to build diverse types of writing skills."

Since Cox came to Belmont in 1992, the program has grown immensely. The recent change in the Bell Core curriculum, with the addition of Third Year Writing, requires every student to take at least two writing courses while at Belmont. To meet the needs of the writing courses offered each semester, the writing staff has grown to eight full-time faculty and eight to 10 part-time faculty. The credentials of the additional faculty adds specialty to the writing program at Belmont, a hard find at most colleges and universities.

"It's extremely rare for a school this size to have such a large faculty that specializes in writing," Cox said. "Both our full-time and our part-time faculty members have usually taught in a number of writing schools and have unique specialties."

Smith said, "The teaching experience of our large writing staff is a testament to Belmont's commitment to have tenured or tenure-track professors. Belmont courses require a lot of writing, so we want people who are well-trained to teach writing."

"It was the best teaching experience I've ever had," Hodges-Hamilton said. "Quite a few of our faculty have a commitment to writing in the community, and writing in the community is a way to move outside of ourselves. It gives us a sense of importance of story and of others' stories... When students write out of their own experiences and beyond that into other people's experiences, it gives them a multi-layered approach to writing."

Smith said the writing program has been so successful in recent years because of the students who have come through the program. "We have wonderfully talented student writers who make teaching within the writing program a pleasure." •

Courage to Teach Celebration in Troutt Theater

by Emily Telford, Junior, public relations major

Belmont hosted a celebration of Parker Palmer's nationally renowned book, *The Courage to Teach*, and its national cohort organization, the Center for Courage and Renewal, in the Troutt Theater on Nov. 17.

The Center helps foster personal and professional renewal through supporting retreats that offer the time and space to slow down and reflect on life and work. Skilled facilitators lead these retreats, and this event was the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the gathering of all national facilitators.

Palmer is an educational activist, writer and senior partner of the Center for Courage and Renewal, an educational non-profit that "strengthens individuals, professions, and communities through retreats and programs that help people reconnect who they are with what they do," according to the Web site.

Dr. Merrie King, an education professor and the Montessori Program director, is a national facilitator and helped coordinate the event.

"Being a national facilitator is the most important professional development activity that I have ever been involved with," she said.

Associate provost Dr. Marcia McDonald welcomed guests to the event with a retelling of her first meeting with Palmer at a workshop for the Belmont Teaching Center in 1997.

"Looking back on that day, I can say with confidence that it was one of the transforming events for our campus," McDonald said.

Palmer gave a brief speech about his upcoming projects and book tour, then seven contributors read selections from new book *Leading*

from *Within* and Palmer's *Courage to Teach*. Belmont faculty member Karen Lee Turner and a local Nashville poet contributed to this book and read their selections.

The event ended with a dessert reception sponsored by the provost. King said that former Belmont president Bill Troutt and Palmer were good friends so hosting the event in the Troutt Theater was especially significant for the author.

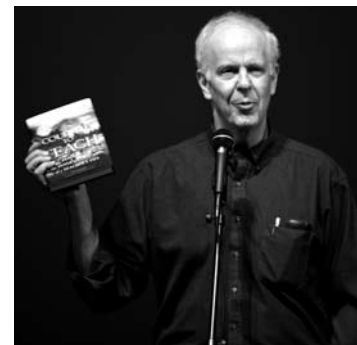
"This event got the word out on what kind of place Belmont really is," said King.

At the event, educators from across the nation toured campus and met with students.

"The ideas and perspectives that took root in our faculty as a result of Parker Palmer's visit and in his book have stayed with us and are a secure part of our culture," McDonald said.

McDonald said the Teaching Center continues to bring in leading speakers as a way to bring resources to teachers to ensure high quality teaching.

"We value teaching that is engaged and personal, so we actively seek people like Palmer to provide that," McDonald said. •



Writing Program Benefits Both Student and Tutor

by John P. Boan, Senior, mass communications major

Edward Bulwer-Lytton, English novelist and playwright, proclaimed the power of the written word, coining the phrase, "The pen is mightier than the sword." Nearly 180 years later, Belmont University students working with the Writing Fellows Program are discovering that teaching the written word may be mightier still.

The program, instituted last fall in association with the Writing Center at Belmont, places peer writing tutors in seven First Year Seminar classes. Tutors work with students one-on-one throughout the semester revising papers and helping them build their writing skills. "I definitely think my writing has improved," said Kelly Stack, a freshman theatre major. "I feel like I am now able to write a strong thesis and support it more fully than I could have at the start of the year."

While many of the students noticed improvement, many tutors also saw their writing improve because of the experience. "I was able to see styles and patterns in the students' papers that mirrored my own writing," said Amanda Danley, sophomore English writing major. "And in taking an objective, critical look at their papers and seeing what improvements could be made, I could apply the same techniques to my own writing for revision."

The writing program was started, in the mold of similar programs at Brown University and the University of Wisconsin, for the purpose of

helping both tutee and tutor alike, said Bonnie Smith, assistant professor of English and Director of the Writing Center. "It's not just about the tutor dispensing knowledge to the tutee; it's a learning situation where sometimes the peer tutor may be learning more through the interaction than the peer being tutored," Smith said. "To sit in a classroom and talk about writing is one thing, but going out and talking to someone about what they write and how they write and what they are trying to accomplish through their writing is even more valuable."

In addition to tutoring, the students involved in the program also took Smith's class on tutoring peer writing.

"It was so neat to have an opportunity to learn, teach and challenge myself all in one class," said Abby Hollingsworth, junior English writing major. "I knew I loved to write but I had never tried tutoring or teaching before this."

The program embodies the different ways in which Belmont works to challenge students of all disciplines and interests, said Smith. "It's the experiential nature of this that is so great for Belmont," she said. "A lot of what we do, we learn by doing. At Belmont we believe the borders of the classroom are very permeable, and this program really carries that out in a great way." •

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learn more. “I have no doubt our students will show a lot more enthusiasm,” he said.

The sociology department will also be taking on a political focus in the fall, said Ken Spring, assistant professor of sociology. The Living Sociology Speaker Series, a biannual series put on by the department, will host speakers focusing on the issues of the campaign. “We will be bringing in topics unique to this election,” Spring said. “The best way we can serve our students is to create informed citizens in addition to engaged learners.” •



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