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Recommended Citation
WKU Provost, "UA35/1 Doers & Deeds Vol. 7, No. 12" (2009). *WKU Archives Records.* Paper 1586.
http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records/1586

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September 2009
Volume 7, Number 12

Doers & Deeds

Academic Excellence at WKU

"Back of the deed was the doer, back of the doer, the dream." – H.H. Cherry, Founding President

WKU students, faculty and staff traveled to 22 overseas destinations during WKU's summer terms to expand their academic experience. Between May and August, more than 180 students studied with more than 25 WKU instructors. Students learned in Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa.

Eight Western Kentucky University students set sail on August 28 as part of the prestigious Semester at Sea study abroad program. "Semester at Sea is one of the most unique educational programs in the world," said Bernie Strenecky, scholar-in-residence at WKU. He also is the ship's Director of Service Learning and a member of the Semester at Sea's alumni board of directors. This fall, the Semester at Sea program will celebrate its 100th voyage with about 520 students aboard the floating campus. Schools such as Pittsburgh, Colorado, Stanford, Virginia, and UCLA traditionally send groups of students on the voyages.
WKU students making the trip are **Carley Brooks** (Religious Studies major, Louisville), **Lauren Gray** (Marketing major, Lebanon, TN), **Jennifer Hail** (Advertising major, Brandenburg), **Kaitlin Hartley** (Biology major, Versailles), **Cameran Smith** (Religious Studies major, Cambellsburg), **Caroline Wells** (Biology major, Glasgow), and **Bobbi-Lee Williams** (Management major, Portland, TN). The voyage began August 28 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and will end December 14 in San Diego. In between, the ship (the MV Explorer) will dock in Spain, Morocco, Ghana, South Africa, Mauritius, India, Vietnam, China, Japan, and Hawaii.

Steve Huskey

Steve Huskey, Assistant Professor in Biology, has spent much of his career cultivating a colony of dermestid beetles by using their unusual appetites to clean the carnage that separates him from the study of animal bones and functions. The professor's practice gained the interest of producers at National Geographic, who then came and spent a week at WKU filming episodes of the epidermis-eating beetles for a series unofficially titled, "Wow" to be aired in the summer of 2010.

The Masters of Public Administration (MPA) has received a seven-year accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. The MPA program at WKU has been training professionals since 1973 and has had about 450 graduates since it began. Currently, the MPA program has 78 students enrolled.

Rhonda Walker of Bowling Green completed a 10-week internship at the Noble Summer Research Scholar Program in Ardmore, Oklahoma. She is completing her bachelor's degree in agriculture while single-handedly raising her teenage son, running an online business and managing a household. Walker's work involved studying the isolation and functional characterization of a particular set of genes which may be involved in lignin biosynthesis.

The WKU Department of Public Health and its Masters Degree in Public Health program recently received news from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) about its accreditation status. The CEPH Board of Councilors approved accreditation for the MPH program for a seven-year term.

Three WKU students received prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships for the Fall 2009 semester. **Christa Wright**, a senior Psychology major from Elizabethtown, received a $4,500 award for a semester-long exchange program to Kansai Gaidai in Japan. **Amanda Loviza**, a senior double major in Spanish and News/Editorial Journalism from Midlothian, Virginia, received a $4,000 award for a semester-long exchange program in Ecuador. **Jeremy Hand-Roe**, a senior Political Science major from Clarksville, Tennessee, received a $4,000 award for a semester-long program in the Czech Republic.

Students at WKU's Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky made significant gains on the state-required American College Test (ACT). In August, the Kentucky Department of Education announced the results of the March 2009 ACT for all public schools. Gatton Academy students outpaced their peers, receiving an average composite score of 29.9 out of 36 possible points on the exam – a score 11.7 points ahead of the statewide average.

Bob Hatfield, the Lessenberry Professor of Business Education in the Gordon Ford College of Business, was awarded the Distinguished Teacher award by The Academy of Educational Leadership. He has helped pioneer graduate online learning and has designed innovative professional and full-time MBA options.

WKU has received a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant of nearly $900,000 for a program to increase the number of science and mathematics teachers. WKU has been awarded $898,781 from the NSF's Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, which seeks to encourage talented science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) majors and professionals to become K-12 mathematics and science teachers. Through the five-year grant, WKU will initiate and fund the WKU Science and Mathematics Alliance for Recruitment and Retention of Teachers (SMARRT) Program. The program will be dedicated to increasing the number of highly qualified mathematics and science teachers through a comprehensive recruiting and retention plan. Current high school students as well as current WKU STEM students will be recruited into this program, which will offer opportunities for internships, scholarships, mentoring and other incentives for these students to pursue teaching as a career.

Anna Clark

Anna Clark, a 2008 marketing graduate, has been selected to appear in the 2009 issue of "Careers in Professional Selling" magazine. This magazine highlights a few top new salespeople from across the country. Anna was a competitor for the WKU Sales team at the 2008 National Collegiate Sales Competition, and secured employment with her current employer, Standard Register, at that contest.

Officials of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have given a review panel's "excellent" rating to the 2008 efforts of the "Global Study of Karst Aquifers and Water Resources" project led by WKU, which the organization recently announced from its headquarters in Paris, France. The major focus of the U.N. funding is to support communication between scientists from countries around the world working on various earth science and environmental issues – in this case, water resources from limestone karst aquifers, which have been estimated to supply drinking water to 25 percent of the world's population. Chris Groves, Director of WKU's Hoffman Environmental Research Institute, serves as the program's Project Leader within UNESCO's International Geoscience Program.

For the 16th consecutive year, WKU's School of Journalism and Broadcasting has finished among the top eight schools nationally in the annual Hearst Journalism Awards Program. WKU placed seventh in the 2008-09 Hearst competition, continuing a tradition that began in 1993. This year, WKU won the Hearst program's Intercollegiate Photojournalism Competition for the 17th time in 20 years and won the program's second annual Multimedia Competition.

A class project by WKU physics students will benefit the international scientific community working at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). The project to develop a software control system for an Automated Gas Environment System (AGES) that is being built at ORNL's Spallation Neutron Source (SNS) places WKU at the forefront of this kind of scientific collaboration. The three students – **Jacob Baxley** of Hartford, **Nathan Campbell** of Beaver Dam and **Gordon Gameson** of Murfreesboro, Tennessee – presented a poster about their project in May.

After the first few weeks of living as an international student in Kasigau, WKU junior **Lindsey Filiatreau** had hiked nearly 1,000 vertical meters during her adventure to reach the peak of Mt. Kasigau, took an unforgettable safari trip to Masai Mara and is eager for her upcoming basket weaving lessons with the Women's Basket Weaving Guild in Rukanga Village. Filiatreau, a Biology and Chemistry major and Honors College student from Bardstown, has teamed up with the Global Leadership Scholars

The Imagewest team in Spain

Program which is offered by the Leadership Studies Office at WKU and designed to train students to be leaders in their respective field and on an international level. The program requires that the student travel to a foreign region for two years and design a project that will help the people in that foreign community have a better quality of life. Filiatreau's project goal is to convince the people of Kasigau that rainwater catchment systems can help alleviate water scarcity and make life easier during the early weeks of the dry season. The project will have a research agenda and form her Honors thesis.

WKU biology student **Joseph Chavarria-Smith** has accepted an offer to join the doctoral program at the University of California-Berkeley and has received a graduate fellowship award from the National Science Foundation. Chavarria-Smith, a senior from Belton, graduated in May with a major in recombinant gene technology and a minor in chemistry. This fall he will start a doctoral program in UC-Berkeley's Department of Molecular and Cell Biology. He received a prestigious Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship in 2007. He was also accepted into doctoral programs at Stanford, UC-San Francisco and Colorado.

Imagewest traveled to Spain for four weeks this summer to give WKU students the opportunity to work with clients there. Imagewest started its journey collaborating with various universities in Barcelona. After working in Barcelona, Imagewest International worked on developing an advertising campaign for the City Council of Villanueva de la Canada, a municipal district of Madrid. Imagewest also partnered with a university in Madrid, The Universidad Camilo Jose' Cela (UCJC).

In the spring, **John All**, Associate Professor of Geography, was named a Fulbright Scholar to Nepal for the Fall 2009 semester. All will be teaching environmental remote sensing at Tribhuvan University in Kirtipur, Kathmandu, and helping to create a new remote sensing laboratory. He will also be working with local researchers and graduate students, examining climate change impacts on vegetation in the Himalayas and how differing resource management strategies maximize long-term ecological and social sustainability. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world and All hopes his work will help minimize the social impacts of climatic variability and change in the region.

A WKU team of six faculty and students from the Department of Geography and Geology and the School of Journalism and Broadcasting traveled to the Caribbean island of Jamaica to assist that country's Water Resources Authority (WRA) with planning for studies to protect vulnerable water resources. The group was led by the Hoffman Institute's **Pat Kambesis** and **Chris Groves**. **Priscilla Baker**, with WKU's Crawford Hydrology Laboratory, and **Dalene Smith**, a Geology major from Louisville, both participated. They were joined by **James Kenney**, coordinator of WKU's Photojournalism program, along with Photojournalism major **Daniel Houghton** of Fayetteville, Georgia, who documented the fieldwork.

WKU has become the U.S. partner in an international MBA program called the "Trilateral MBA" (TMBA). The one-year MBA program takes a cohort of students through the three North American countries. All classes are taught in English. The TMBA students begin in the fall at Universite de Moncton, primarily a French-speaking university in Canada. Next, the students relocate to WKU for the spring term. Finally, the students finish their degrees in Queretaro Mexico in the summer. Internships are possible at the end of the program.

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Rachel Bowman of Murray, a student at the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science, has been named a recipient of the Department of Defense (DoD) SMART Scholarship, a nationally-competitive award valued at more than $250,000. The SMART Scholarship (Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation scholarship) was established in 2006 by the Department of Defense to support undergraduate and graduate students pursuing degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields and to increase the number of civilian scientists and engineers doing research in the Department of Defense laboratories. Bowman is the first WKU student to be awarded the SMART Scholarship. As a recipient of the scholarship, Bowman's award will pay for full tuition and books at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she has chosen to pursue her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering after graduating from the Gatton Academy in May. Also included in the award are annual summer internships at a Department of Defense laboratory and a guaranteed career position upon graduation with her baccalaureate degree.

Rachel Bowman

In the spring, the Accounting Department had more than 30 student tax preparers as part of the tax assistance program. Together, the student preparers spent more than 250 hours assisting in the tax preparation of 226 individual tax returns. The number of returns increased 33% from 2008. The tax assistance program offers help to those in both the WKU community and the larger Bowling Green community.