FEBRUARY 2011 ISSUE

Dear Center for,

I ran across this very expressive photo of Dr. Kraig Scott in the WWU archives the other day. You can see his passion for music in his face. You’ll find many more great photos like this on the Alumni Facebook page. Be sure to join our group, if you haven’t already.

An invitation to Homecoming Weekend should be arriving soon with a schedule of events inside. The weekend kicks off on Thursday, April 21 at 6:00 p.m. with the Homecoming Banquet and Mini-Concert at the Marcus Whitman Hotel, where we will honor the Alumni of the Year. Be sure to join us! See the complete weekend schedule.

WWU is coming to California in February. Events include an Alumni Dinner with Dr. JoAnn Wiggins in Roseville and a Dessert Reception with President John McVay in Loma Linda. In addition, I Cantori will be performing concerts in the Oakland, Paradise, and Sacramento areas.

Thanks to all of you who gave or pledged your support during Phonathon. More than $174,000 was raised for

UPCOMING EVENTS

WWU Alumni Dinner
Thurs., Feb. 17 | Roseville, Calif. | Atrium, Adventist Health
Join us at 6:30 p.m. for good food, fellowship, and an update on WWU with special guest Dr. JoAnn Wiggins, Dean of the School of Business. Please RSVP by Feb. 14.

I Cantori Concerts
Come enjoy the melodic voices of Walla Walla University’s I Cantori live in concert! Visit the website for more information.

Alumni Vespers & Reception
Fri., Feb. 25 | Desert Hot Springs, Calif. | Dessert Hot Springs Adventist Church
Join us for an alumni vespers at 6:45 p.m. with President John McVay. A reception will follow.
student scholarships this year. If you haven't given yet, it isn't too late. Give online at wallawalla.edu/give.

P.S. I am looking for alumni willing to write about their favorite WWU memory for the alumni blog. If you're interested, send me an email.

Till next time,

Nicole Batton
Alumni Director
alumni@wallawalla.edu

Loma Linda Dessert Reception
Sat., Feb. 26 | Loma Linda, Calif. |
Dreyson Center, Loma Linda University
Indulge in some decadent desserts and visit with President John McVay while learning what is new at WWU. Starts at 7:00 p.m. Please RSVP by Feb. 22.

Portland Evensong & Reception
Sat., Mar. 12 | Portland, Ore. |
Sunnyside Adventist Church
Don't miss this opportunity to watch Dr. Melvin West and Dr. Loren Dickinson collaborate one last time for a final Evensong. The event will be held at 4:30 p.m., and an alumni reception will follow.

SAVE THE DATE!
Homecoming 2011
Apr. 21-24 College Place, Wash.

RESOURCES
Give a gift to WWU
Reserve a guest room
Update your contact info
Get help with estate planning
Search the WWU Archives

USEFUL LINKS
2000 Alumnae Becomes Missionary Cardiologist

Dr. Tiffany (Stanhiser) Priester '00, a biology graduate, recently moved to Malawi to start a Cardiology Clinic and Intensive Care Unit at Blantyre Adventist Hospital. Tiffany is the only cardiologist in the entire country. She says she is finally fulfilling her dream of mission work. Read the full story.

2005 Alumnus Appointed Executive Director at Life Care Center of San Juan Islands

Aaron Marson '05, a business graduate, is the executive director for the Life Care Center of San Juan Islands. Prior to this new appointment, Aaron served as executive director at Life Care Center of Federal Way, and before that he was assistant administrator at Garden Terrace Alzheimer's Center of Excellence in Federal Way. He has also been a development associate for Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Foundation in Loma Linda, Calif. Read the full story.

2008 Graduate Studies Genetics on Mutant Flies

Sean Hayes '08, a biology graduate who just completed his master's degree at WWU, was recently hired at Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), one of the largest privately-funded biomedical research organizations in the world. Hayes is specifically focusing on neurobiology. He is part of the Fly Olympiad Team at HHMI. "Basically we have several thousand mutant lines of flies that have different genes that have been artificially introduced, and we are continually experimenting to figure out what these different genes are causing," says Hayes. Read the full story.

Have news to share?
CAMPUS NEWS

WWU Business Students Take Second Place in Tax Challenge
In early January, two teams of Business students participated in the annual tax challenge at University of Washington. Though the event was not held last year due to budget, the 2009 event saw a WWU team take first place. This year, one of WWU’s teams placed second. Read the full story.

WWU Celebrates Annual Engineers Week
The Edward F. Cross School of Engineering is gearing up to celebrate National Engineers Week Feb. 21-25 with the Annual Egg Drop Contest and the Engineers Week Banquet on Feb. 24. Learn more about the featured speaker.

WWU Celebrates Black History Month
A variety of special events are being planned for this coming weekend in honor of Black History Month. Organizer Pedrito-Maynard Reid says, "Sabbath will be an all-day feast for the senses." A mass choir, comprised of African-American choirs and musical ensembles from across the Northwest, will be performing a special concert at 4 p.m. in the University Church. See the complete schedule of events.

Send it to us at alumni@wallawalla.edu.

More alumni news online >>

More campus news online >>
BULLETIN BOARD

• Win a WWU shirt!— We're planning a one-week alumni event in 2013 and want to know where to go. Tell us what destination you would like to visit. Europe? Costa Rica? Pacific Northwest? A cruise? A walking tour? Send us your ideas and be entered in our drawing for a free WWU shirt.

• WWU Alumni Golf Tournament -- Are you a golfer? Join us for the annual Eugene Winter Alumni Golf Classic and play on Walla Walla's newest golf course! The format is a four-man scramble, shot-gun start. The tournament will be held at the Wine Valley Golf Club on Friday, April 22 at 8:30 a.m. Register or learn more.
WWU grad fulfills medical missionary dream

By: Becky St. Clair

As a child, Tiffany (Stanhiser) Priester, a 2000 biology graduate of Walla Walla University, listened to stories of medical missionaries on the radio or in church and knew without a doubt that’s what she wanted to do. She even went to “career day” in eighth grade as a medical missionary in a khaki safari outfit, and, like the other students, stood in front of the class and explained what it was she wanted to be.

Today, Priester is living her dream as a cardiologist at Blantyre Adventist Hospital in Malawi.

“Most people laughed at me when they heard my ‘career’ goal was to be a medical missionary,” says Priester. “It has been a long journey to get to this point, including a lot of prayer and a lot of research.”

In Malawi, nearly half of the 13 million people live under the poverty line, and it is estimated that 15-20 percent are in the “ultra-poor” category: those who live on $1 or less per day. The gross domestic income is only $900 per year per person, and HIV/AIDS and infant mortality rates are very high, with a life expectancy of only 50 years. Currently, there is no cardiologist in Malawi and only two ICU beds in the entire southern region, serving over six million people.

Blantyre Adventist Hospital is located in the middle of a large city, but also in one of the poorest and least developed areas of the world. The 35-bed hospital is currently building an ICU that will eventually have eight beds, and Priester plans to run the ICU and open a cardiology clinic.

“As currently, those who can afford it fly out of the country for this kind of advanced medical care,” explains Priester. “I hope to also stimulate other hospitals in the area to increase the level of care they provide, thus increasing the number of intensive care beds in the region.” Such a plan would also help keep money in the Malawi economy that the affluent would otherwise spend to fly outside of the country for their medical care.

Priester’s interest in cardiology began when she was working part time during summers and holidays for the cardiology department at Loma Linda University Medical Center in Loma Linda, California. Though she was on a rotation of the general medicine wards, cardiology work excited her the most.

Blantyre Adventist Hospital already has two surgeons, a pediatrician and an obstetrician, as well as the nursing staff, and those in the pharmacy and laboratory. Just an hour south of the city is Malamulo Mission Hospital, where two other
Marson appointed executive director at Life Care Center of the San Juan Islands

Nov 10 2010

Life Care Center of the San Juan Islands has a new executive director, Aaron Marson.

"I am very excited to have Aaron join the dynamic team in Friday Harbor," said Dan Murray, vice president of Life Care Centers of America's Cascades Region, which encompasses seven facilities in Washington. "His enthusiasm, coupled with his intelligence, will be a great fit for this community."

Marson succeeds Nai Saefong, who was executive director from Nov. 16, 2009 until Sept. 25. She oversaw improvements in the center's system of care and the transition from Islands Convalescent Center to the Life Care Center name. She moved to Portland to pursue a new course in her career.

"We have a very warm and caring family of associates working here," Marson said. "We have multiple populations and client groups in our facility, and it's exciting to be a part of people's post-acute rehab stays. Our nursing and therapy staff truly play a big role in getting people back to their lives in the community. For our long-term residents, it's a privilege to provide a safe, home-like setting to support and care for them."

Before joining Life Care Center of the San Juan Islands, Marson served as executive director at Life Care Center of Federal Way. Prior to that appointment, he was assistant administrator at Garden Terrace Alzheimer's Center of Excellence in Federal Way. He has also been a development associate for Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Foundation in Loma Linda, Calif.

A native of Spokane, Wash., Marson earned his bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in finance from Walla Walla University. He went on to earn his master's degree in business administration with a concentration in health administration from Loma Linda University. He currently resides in Friday Harbor.

Life Care Center of the San Juan Islands, located at 660 Spring St., is one of 19 skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities in Washington operated or managed by Life Care Centers of America.

Founded in 1976, Life Care is a nationwide health care company. With headquarters in Cleveland, Tenn., Life Care operates or manages more than 220 nursing, post-acute and Alzheimer's centers in 28 states.

For more information about Life Care, visit www.lcca.com.

Find this article at:

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

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Studying Mutant Flies

Biology grad doing genetic research

By: Becky St. Clair

Sean Hayes, a 2008 biology graduate of Walla Walla University, completed his masters in biology on the WWU campus as well, receiving his degree just this year. His education and research work in biology landed him a job at Howard Hughes Medical Institute, one of the largest privately-funded biomedical research organizations in the world.

Located on the Janelia Farm Research Campus in Ashburn, Virginia, which is owned by HHMI, Hayes is specifically focusing on neurobiology through highly collaborative research. He is part of the Fly Olympiad Team there.

“Basically we have several thousand mutant lines of flies that have different genes that have been artificially introduced,” explains Hayes. “We are continually experimenting to figure out what these different genes are causing.”

The different experiments involve flies jumping gaps, running toward lights, flying toward lights, and more, hence the term “Olympiad.” Hayes’ experiment is called the observation assay.

“In this particular experiment we’re activating certain genes in their brains that cause the flies to do exhibit strange behaviors,” says Hayes. “I’m designing the experiment and will eventually be recording the behaviors I see the flies exhibiting under a microscope. The purpose of this is so that we can eventually figure out what genes and, more specifically, what neurons cause what behaviors.”

By learning more about what neurons create which behaviors in flies, researchers such as Hayes are making progress in finding ways to see what specific neurons do in the human brain. This has man practical implications, such as fully-functional artificial limbs that could even feel touch and temperature like a real limb would.

“I feel very fortunate to have a job where I not only collect data, but also get to give input on how that data is collected,” says Hayes. “The people here are wonderful to work with, and the work itself is challenging and rewarding. I’m thrilled to be part of such a large project with such expansive applications.”

For more information about the Janelia Farm Research Campus, click the link below.

Links:

Janelia Farm Research Campus

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Tax Team Takes Second Place

WWU well-represented at UW challenge

In early January, two teams of four Walla Walla University School of Business students participated in the annual tax challenge event at University of Washington. Though the event was not held last year due to budget, the last event saw the WWU team taking first place. This year, one of WWU’s teams placed second.

“The tax teams did a great job again this year,” says JoAnn Wiggins, dean of the School of Business at WWU. “Though they expressed disappointment at ‘only’ getting second place, their professors and I were certainly not disappointed. I know I would have been rattled by some of the questions they were asked. They did very well.”

This year’s team was made up of Brittany Smith, senior international business major; Linda Stecker, senior accounting and business administration major; Donovan West, senior accounting major; and Kaitlyn Fitch, junior accounting major.

The event was only announced in early December, leaving participating students to do the bulk of their challenge preparation over Christmas break.

“It is difficult to get motivated to do a tremendous amount of studying over the holidays,” says Norman Anderson, faculty sponsor of the WWU tax team, “but the students were dedicated and made us proud.”

At the event, teams of three or four students work for four hours on a tax problem, using only their tax books for reference. They are expected to address all tax issues and calculate the proper income tax for the hypothetical taxpayers in the problem. The problems are graded and the top three teams make it to the finals to be held the following day. Finalists are given additional facts and another four hours to prepare oral and PowerPoint presentations for the ‘clients’ and the judges.

This tax challenge is open to all junior and senior business majors and students volunteer to be members of a team. The other six competing teams represented University of Washington, Oregon State University and Southern Oregon University.

“We had two great teams at the competition this year, and could have easily walked off with both first and second place,” says Anderson. “I am extremely proud of each student who participated in the competition.”

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Annual Engineers Week Banquet

Tickets for sale through Feb. 18

By: Becky St. Clair

Walla Walla University’s Edward F. Cross School of Engineering is gearing up for another celebration of National Engineers Week during Feb. 21-25.

Egg Drop Contest
The annual egg drop contest will take place on Thursday, February 24 at noon. Come to Kretschmar Lawn and watch adults toss raw local organic eggs from the roof of Kretschmar Hall. Find out who will win Best Engineering Design at this student-run event, coordinated by Ryan Gratias, president of WWU’s student chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Admission is free; refreshments will be available.

Engineers Week Banquet
For more than 25 years Walla Walla University has sponsored a banquet in honor of National Engineers Week. On February 24, William Rohr will deliver the lecture for the 2011 Engineers Week Banquet at 6:30 p.m. in the Reid Campus Center on the campus of Whitman College in Walla Walla. Rohr is both an orthopedic surgeon from Fort Bragg, Calif., who specializes in reconstructive surgery, and an engineer trained at Princeton.

The title of Rohr’s presentation is “Innovation is a Strategy: Lessons from a Blowfly.” In his lecture, Rohr will focus on how science and engineering contribute to the dilemma of letting go of old ideas to make room for innovative new ones, as they both are built on strong tenets that dictate not only the tools and approach to evaluating problems but also the interpretation of the results.

“As a young student who was both a pre-med student and an engineering major, my task was to understand the feeding behavior of the blowfly,” says Rohr. “I quickly learned that what the biologist perceived as behavior was to an engineer simply a series of interrelated feedback loops. The same problem, just analyzed with different tools. Innovation is often simply the result of seeing things differently.”

Rohr’s experience is extensive, having worked as the vice president of science and technology for Codman and Shurtleff, a Johnson & Johnson company, served on the Medical Device Sector Research and Development Vice Presidents’ Council. He has also worked as the worldwide VP of research and development for Johnson & Johnson Professional where he was in charge of all research and development of all orthopedic and neurosurgical products worldwide.

Rohr will focus his presentation on the pharmaceutical and medical device industry, which is entrenched in paradigms that seem to make little room for innovation. He will attempt to demonstrate that the answer to this problem lies in seeing things differently, in this case by incorporating the disciplines of engineering and physics and applying new approaches to the process of technology development.
Tickets for the banquet are available by calling 509-527-2765; the cost is $20 for students and $30 for the general public. The evening’s menu is Italian. The deadline to reserve tickets is Friday, February 18 at noon.

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Weekend Events Feature Mass Choir

WWU Celebrates Black History Weekend

By: Becky St. Clair
Walla Walla University invites the public to attend any of several events on Feb. 4 & 5 celebrating the history of African-Americans.

All day Friday interested high school seniors will enjoy African-American University Days by touring campus and attending classes to get a glimpse of what life as a WWU student is like. Friday evening vespers will feature African-American music and drama as well as a presentation by Ofa Langi, recent graduate from WWU’s School of Theology. Vespers begins at 8 p.m. in University Church located at the corner of 4th Street and Bade.

“Saturday will be an all-day feast for the senses,” says Pedrito Maynard-Reid, professor of missiology and university ombudsman, and coordinator of the weekend’s events.

Berean Fellowship, an African-American worship community on the WWU campus, will present First Serve at 9:30 a.m. in the University Church, with Langi presenting. At 10:30 a.m., Maynard-Reid himself will lead a Bible study in the same location.

The second service at the University Church begins at 11:30 with guest speaker James Doggette, senior pastor of the Madison Mission Church in Huntsville, Ala., and professor of religion and theology at Oakwood University. His sermon title is, “Defaced but not Devalued.”

Accenting the second service will be a mass choir comprised of African-American choirs and musical ensembles from across the Northwest. The same musicians will perform for the second annual “Total Praise: A Festival of Choirs” in the University Church at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 5. Choirs will include African-American and African choirs and praise groups from Oregon, Washington and Walla Walla University. The concert is free and open to the public.

Finally, WWU’s Black Student Christian Forum (BSCF) will host an International Fair of games and food for the university’s weekend guests at 8 p.m. on Saturday.

For more information, email pedrito.maynard-reid@wallawalla.edu.