A Message from the Dean

Dear Friends,

It’s with great pleasure that I announce the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents has selected Dr. Wei Yu, Associate Professor of Computer and Information Sciences, to receive a 2015 USM Regents’ Faculty Award for Excellence in Research. This award is the highest honor that the Board of Regents bestows to recognize exemplary faculty. Dr. Yu’s research is in the area of cybersecurity and computer networks, and he’s received grants amounting to $1.5 million as a principal investigator and another $2.2 million as a co-PI. These external funds have been instrumental in support of his eight doctoral students and fifteen master’s students.

The Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) has selected Theresa L. White, a Molecular Biology, Biochemistry and Bioinformatics (MB3) major, to participate in the 19th Annual Posters on the Hill, this April in Washington, DC. Theresa’s research project was one of 60 selected from approximately 500 applications nationwide. A transfer student from Baltimore City Community College, Theresa participated in the NIH-sponsored “Bridges to the Baccalaureate” program at Towson. As an undergraduate student she has been conducting research in Dr. Michelle Snyder’s laboratory, and her work will be presented soon at the American Society of Microbiology. Last summer Theresa conducted research at Cornell University, and is planning another summer research experience for 2015.

These are just two examples of excellence – congratulations to Wei and Theresa! There’s more inside the newsletter, and we hope you enjoy the brand new format. Let us know what you think!

Sincerely,

David A. Vanko
Dean
Faculty Publications and Presentations


Dr. Brian Fath gave keynote presentation titled “Science of Sustainability, Resilience and Cohesion” at the 4th Viennese Talks on Resilience and Networks: The Austrian Road to Resilience, Vienna Austria. 28 January 2015.

Dr. Brian Fath was an invited presenter and research supervisor for the Southern African – Young Scientists Summer Program, University of Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa. His presentation was titled: “Systems Analysis and Holism: Making a Science of Inter-dependence”. January 21 2015.

Dr. Brian Fath was an invited participant to SESYNC Workshop: Linking local consumption to global impacts and presented research titled: MRIO applied to assess urban metabolism and carbon footprint analysis of the Jing-Jin-Ji region. Annapolis, Maryland. 11 December 2014.

Dr. Brian Fath offered a one week graduate course titled Systems Ecology & Ecological Network Analysis at Tsinghua University, Beijing China, January 4–10, 2015.

Grants

Graduate student Cindy Hurtado and Dr. Harald Beck received a $2900 grant from the Phoenix Zoo Foundation for their research entitled: Geospatial Analyses & Ecological Assessment of the Reintroduction of a Large Mammal Species (Peccaries, *Pecari tajacu*) into a Nature Reserve in Argentina.

Dr. Richard Seigel received two new grants from the Maryland State Highway Administration to support his work on conservation and management of amphibians and reptiles. Funding from both projects goes largely to support hiring undergraduate and graduate students to conduct field work.

1) “Effectiveness of Nest Site Restoration for the Endangered Northern Map Turtle” ($33,590). This is funding to continue the unique partnership between the town of Port Deposit Towson University and SHA in managing an endangered species that nests within the borders of Port Deposit.

2) “Are Outbreaks of Emerging Pathogens Correlated with Construction of Wetlands?” ($43,500). This funding continues research to determine whether an emerging pathogen known as Ranavirus is spreading in Maryland via wetlands constructed as mitigation sites for highway construction.

Manuscripts Reviewed

Dr. Harald Beck reviewed papers for *Biotropica* and *Ecography*.

Dr. Vonnie Shields reviewed a manuscript for *Arthropod Plant Interactions*.

Dr. Brian Fath reviewed manuscripts for *Bioscience* and *Ecology and Society*.
Grant Proposals

Ryan Sours is the PI on an NSF-MRI proposal:

Ryan Sours, Beth Kautzman, Barry Margulies, John Sivey, and Shannon Stitzel (co-PI's), Matt Hemm and Ellen Hondrogiannis (senior personnel), “Acquisition of a Liquid Chromatograph-Mass Spectrometer to Support Multidisciplinary Research and Undergraduate Education at Towson University,” $585,352.

Faculty Professional Development/Disciplinary Service

Kelly Elkins reviewed a manuscript for the Journal of Chemical Education.


Student Highlight

Meet Nicole Hartig

Why did you choose chemistry as your major?
In high school I knew I wanted to go into the sciences but I wasn’t sure I wanted to major in chemistry. My college career began by taking a smattering of science courses at a community college (physics, astronomy, archaeology, biology). I then decided to major in environmental science and have since added a chemistry major as well. My long-term goal is to attain a Ph.D. in environmental toxicology.

What are the most important lessons you have learned from chemistry?
Everything is cumulative. You need to understand that the concepts you are learning do not end with a test or a final exam. I've used a lot of concepts from general chemistry in many upper-level courses, including environmental chemistry.

Which class have you most enjoyed?
It's a tie between environmental toxicology and environmental chemistry. In these courses I was challenged to incorporate information and concepts I had learned in a wide range of previous classes to analyze complex scenarios. These classes were like putting together a jigsaw puzzle — if you have all of the pieces and can find a logical system to efficiently put them together, completing the puzzle is a breeze and a lot of fun at the same time!

What are some of the challenges of being a chemistry major?
When you start out, all of the material seems really difficult. But you have to get a firm grasp on these basic concepts. Soon you find that everything builds upon what you have already learned. Eventually you come to a point where you can look back and realize how simple it was in the beginning. Just getting to that point, that place where you can look back on the “easy stuff,” is a challenge in and of itself.
Publications and Presentations


A full research paper written by Ruimin Hu (a formal doctoral student at the CIS Department) and Jinjuan Heidi Feng has been accepted by the ACM Transactions on Accessible Computing. The paper is titled "Investigating Information Search by People with Cognitive Disabilities."

Omar Darwish and Nadim Alkharouf, co-authored a paper titled: Re-annotation of the woodland strawberry (Fragaria vesca) genome, that was published in the journal BMC Genomics. 2015, 16:29; DOI: 10.1186/s12864-015-1221-1.

Josh Dehlinger and Sam Batista (Firaxis Games) gave a presentation on the growing importance of learning computer programming to 700 students at North Carroll Middle School on December 10, 2014 and helped facilitate the 6th-8th graders participation in the Hour of Code imitative (see www.code.org) as a part of National Computer Science Education Week (December 8-14, 2014).


Subrata Acharya (CIS) Kelly Elkins (Chemistry) and Saurabh Khatiwada (undergraduate student, CIS) presented on the topic “Smart Mobile Drug Testing Applications to Aid in Crime Scene Investigation” at the Faculty Sharing Circles, Towson University January Conference, 2015.

Yeong-tae Song had the following paper accepted for presentation: "Ontological Personal Healthcare using Medical Standards" at International work-conference on bioinformatics and biomedical engineering (IWBBIO 2015, April 15 – 17, Granada, Spain).

Marius Zimand had the paper “On the approximate decidability of minimal programs” (written jointly with Jason Teutsch, National University Singapore) accepted subject to revision in the journal ACM Transactions on Computation Theory.
Services to the Discipline

Suranj Chakraborty has been invited to be an associate editor for the Systems Analysis and Design track for the 2015 International Conference for Information Systems (ICIS 2015) to be held at Fort Worth Texas December 13 -16 2015. ICIS is the premiere conference for Information System organized under the aegis of the Association for Information Systems (AIS).

Jonathan Lazar was invited and attended a private event: Workshop on the Usability and Accessibility of Next Generation Elections sponsored by NIST and the Center for Civic Design, held at the University of Baltimore on January 9th.

Josh Dehlinger reviewed manuscripts for the Journal of Systems and IEEE Software.

Wei Yu was invited to attend the NSF Cloud Workshop on Experimental Support for Cloud Computing (December 2014).

Wei Yu was invited to serve on Department of Energy Panel, 2015.

Wei Yu was invited to attend The National Science Foundation Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace (SaTC) Principal Investigators' Meeting (January 2015).

Grant & Awards

Jinjuan Heidi Feng, Subrata Acharya, and Ziyin Katherine Tang at the Computer and Information Sciences Department submitted a proposal to the Department of Education titled "Portable Assistive App to Improve Independence for People with Autism: i-Virtual-Caregiver." The proposal was submitted in collaboration with The Hussman Center for Adults with Autism and ITNova.
Books

Geoffrey Goodson has received a contract from Cambridge University Press to publish an undergraduate/graduate text book on the topic of chaotic dynamics and fractals. It is entitled: Chaotic Dynamics: Tilings, Fractals and Substitutions.

Book Reviews


4th Regional Undergraduate Mathematics Research Conference

Saturday, March 7, 2015

The Mathematics Department and Towson University will host this event in the York Road Building from 9am until 5:30pm. Undergrad students are invited to present results of completed original research in mathematical sciences, or give an expository talk, or give a talk about research projects in progress (the scope of the conference includes Pure and Applied Mathematics, Statistics, and Mathematics Education).

In addition to student presentations, the conference will feature two invited faculty talks, and an information session on career opportunities for mathematicians.

More information about the conference can be found at http://www.towson.edu/math/research/UMRC_2015/

Participants can register by visiting the conference webpage or by going directly to the registration form: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dGJkJTJvatuxRYGtdkITSWFpbk0weFE6MQ

Journal Refereeing and Reviewing

Sergiy Borodachov refereed a paper for the Journal of Computational and Applied Mathematics.

Russell Hendel was asked to review several papers for the The 13th International Conference on Education and Information Systems, Technologies and Applications: EISTA 2015.

Community Outreach

On January 9, 2015 Honi Bamberger taught a lesson on collecting data, using spinning tops to all Kindergarten students at The Park School in Baltimore.

Mathematics Education Club meetings

December 4, 2014 Ms. Ann McCallum, author and educator from Montgomery County Public Schools, conducted a session for members. “Eat Your Homework: Dishing out Math and Science” was an interactive and motivating session that nearly 30 students attended.
Papers Published or Accepted for Publication

Diana Cheng co-authored a paper entitled "Developing critical thinking skills from dispositions to abilities: Early childhood to high school mathematics education" with Einav Aizikovitsh-Udi of Beit Berl College, Israel. This paper will appear in the March 2015 issue of Creative Education.

Diana Cheng's article entitled "Roofs, stairs, and lines: Middle school students' strategies for solving steepness problems" is published in the January 2015 issue of The Online Journal of New Horizons in Education, 5 (1), pp. 12-27. This paper is available at the following website: http://www.tojned.net/volume.php?volume=5&issue=1

Julien Colvin (math education graduate student) and Ming Tomayko's paper "Putting TPACK on the radar: A visual quantitative model for tracking growth of essential teacher knowledge" was accepted for publication in the journal Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education.

Russell Hendel's paper, "Coefficient Convergence of Recursively Defined Polynomials," was accepted for publication in the Fibonacci Quarterly.


Workshops and Presentations

Honi Bamberger conducted a hands-on geometry workshop for all 4th thru 6th grade teachers at the National Presbyterian School in Washington, D.C. on December 9, 2014.

During the week of January 12, 2015, as part of the Race-to-the-Top District grant awarded to the Enlarged City School District of Middletown, New York, Honi Bamberger and a team of mathematics educators observed in classrooms of all K–6 teachers. An administrator's workshop was conducted on the 14th, and on the 15th Dr. Bamberger met with all second and third-grade teachers for an after-school workshop on computational practices.

Gail Kaplan accepted an invitation to lead a one day workshop in Hagerstown to train Advanced Placement Calculus teachers how to more effectively prepare their students for the Advanced Placement examination in May 2015.

Gail Kaplan led a professional development workshop for AP teachers participating in a year-long program to expand their repertoire of materials to use to improve student understanding.

Other Professional Activities

Gail Kaplan was appointed to the National Academic Assembly of the College Board. "The Academic Assembly considers issues and actions related to providing universal access to high standards of learning. The assembly works to expand access to educational excellence for all students through the articulation and elaboration of academic standards and standards for the delivery of curriculum and instruction. Among other topics, the assembly addresses issues related to curriculum, assessment, the governance structure of schools and sustained professional development.”
Other Professional Activities (continued)

Gail Kaplan accepted an invitation as a colloquium panelist for “Access to Challenging Course Work,” at the 2014 College Board Forum in Las Vegas. This was an opportunity to share her perspective and expertise as part of an engaging discussion about expanding and improving access to challenging course work for female and underrepresented students in the STEM fields.

Gail Kaplan arranged for a group of secondary mathematics teachers in to provide a workshop followed by a panel discussion and for our current pre-service teachers on Monday, November 24, 2014. This provided an amazing opportunity for our secondary mathematics students not only to expand their repertoire of student centered activities, but also to gain practical advice on applying for jobs, the first year of teaching, etc.

Stanley Max has been invited to take part in the 2015 Advanced Placement Statistics reading held in Kansas City, and he has accepted the invitation. This will be his fifth time serving as an AP Statistics Reader.

Conference and Seminar Presentations

Diana Cheng made two presentations at the 2015 Joint Mathematics Meetings of the American Mathematical Society and Mathematical Association of America, held in San Antonio, TX on January 10-13. Her talk “Letter Number Substitution Problems for Mathematics Education Majors” was based on work she completed with Nicole Horner, who graduated in December 2014 with her master’s degree in mathematics education. This paper was presented in the General Session on Mathematics Education. Graduate student David Thompson and she presented a talk entitled “An Animal Population Simulation and Mathematical Modeling Activity for Secondary Mathematics Majors” in the MAA Session on Trends in Undergraduate Mathematical Biology Education.

Congratulations to the Mathematics faculty recipients of Fisher College Awards at the 2014 Fall Forum

Dr. Gail Kaplan, co-recipient of the Excellence in Teaching Award

Dr. Ohoe Kim, recipient of the Mentoring Award

Dr. Felice Shore, recipient of the Professional Service Award
**Conference and Seminar Presentations (continued)**


Russell Hendel's paper, "The Rule of Four, Executive Function and Neural Exercises," was accepted for presentation at The 13th International Conference on Education and Information Systems, Technologies and Applications: EISTA 2015, to be held in Orlando, Florida in July 2015.

Martha Siegel organized and led two panel discussions at the Joint Mathematics Meetings, held January 9-13 in San Antonio, TX:

The first panel was *Recommendations for the 21st century mathematical sciences major*, and featured talks by the Vice President for Education of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM), Chair of the Education Committee of the American Statistical Association (ASA), co-chair of the Committee on the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics (CUPM) of the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) and a representative of the Committee on the Mathematical Education of Teachers (COMET) of the MAA. Panelists presented new recommendations for majors in applied mathematics, statistics, mathematical sciences across the disciplines, and teacher education, respectively. The second panel, *Mathematics and the sciences: Necessary dialogue*, was co-led by Peter Turner, Dean at Clarkson University. Panelists were Jenna Carpenter (Louisiana Tech) speaking on mathematics and engineering, Mark Green (former director of the Institute for Pure and Applied Mathematics at UCLA, Professor Emeritus UCLA, Vice Chair of the Committee on the Mathematical Sciences in 2025 of the National Research Council’s Board on Mathematical Sciences and Its Applications ), S. James Gates (physicist, director of the Center for String and Particle Theory at University of Maryland College Park and member of PCAST), and Kirk Jordan (IBM Distinguished Engineer and director IBM Computational Science Center T.J. Watson Research Center).

Tatyana Sorokina gave a talk at Foundations of Computational Mathematics Workshops in Montevideo, Uruguay, on December 15, 2014. The title of the talk is "Linear Differential Operators on Spline Spaces and Spline Vector Fields." The project and the trip were supported by Simons foundation collaboration grant.

**Faculty Spotlight**

Dr. Honi Bamberger visits the Park Kindergarten, Baltimore, MD

Teacher Jo Anne Yamaka writes, "Working with Dr. B, the children made a Venn diagram based on whether or not they had the letter “n” in their first name. They then counted the letters in their first name and noticed the relationship of the number of letters in their name to the number of empty spaces on the paper strip of ten squares on which they recorded their name. Last, they made a graph based on how many letters there are in their first names. The children loved every minute of this incredibly rich math activity…and so did the teachers!"
Publications


*Media coverage:*

SPIE news room published an article entitled “Self-assembled tunable photonic hypercrystals” highlighting Vera Smolyaninova’s work: [http://spie.org/x111854.xml](http://spie.org/x111854.xml) (SPIE is the international society for optics and photonics).

Characterization of surface modification in atomic force microscope-induced nanolithography of oxygen deficient $\text{La}_0.67\text{Ba}_{0.33}\text{MnO}_3-\delta$ thin films E. Kevin Tanyi, Rajeswari M. Kolagani, Parul Srivastava, William Vanderlinde, Grace Yong*, Christopher Stumpf and David Schaefer AIP Advances 4, 127129 (2014).


Possible Mechanisms in Atomic Force Microscope-Induced Nano-Oxidation Lithography (negative AFM tip case) in $\text{La}_0.67\text{Ba}_{0.33}\text{MnO}_3-\delta$ Thin Films on SrTiO$_3$(001) Grace Yong, William Vanderlinde, E. Kevin Tanyi, David Schaefer, Christopher Stumpf, Rajeswari M. Kolagani, Accepted for poster presentation at the March Meeting of the American Physical Society, San Antonio Texas, March 2-6, 2015.

Student Achievements

Cacie Hart was selected to participate in the Young Physicists Forum to be held in conjunction with the American Physical Society Meeting in San Antonio, Texas March 2-6, 2015.

Zoey Warecki (December 2014 graduate) was awarded a spring internship at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory where she will work on materials for renewable energy applications.

Read more about our student accomplishments here: [http://www.towson.edu/physics/students.asp](http://www.towson.edu/physics/students.asp)

Information on seminars, planetarium shows and events: [http://www.towson.edu/physics/events.asp](http://www.towson.edu/physics/events.asp)

The Society of Physics Students (SPS) is being recognized by the national SPS office with an Outstanding Chapter Award in the Zone 4 category. This is the third time in the last four years that the club has received this award.
Presentations and abstracts

Parviz Ghavamian gave an invited review talk Electron-Ion Thermal Equilibration at Collisionless Shocks at the workshop "Shock Acceleration: From the Solar System to Cosmology" at the Lorentz Center in Leiden the Netherlands, January 5-9, 2015.

Veron, Ad-Marbach, Wolfson, Ozbay, Mead, Merrill, Sezen Barie, Fox-Lykens (December 15-19, 2014). Developing Climate Literate, Pre-service, Middle- and High-school Teachers.” Presented at American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting, San Francisco, CA.


Joel Moore gave a research talk on road salt at the 20th annual meeting of the Maryland Water Monitoring Council.

Joel Moore gave a research seminar on road salt and urban geochemistry at the US Geological Survey Water Science Center in Catonsville.


Raj Kolagani presented a talk on “Strain-Induced Oxygen Stoichiometry Modulations in CaMnO3 Thin Films” at the Electronic Materials Session of the American Vacuum Society Conference held at the Baltimore Convention Center, November 10-15 2014.

Community Engagement and Professional Service

Joel Moore reviewed a NSF proposal.

Joel Moore was elected to serve a three-year term on the board of the Maryland Water Monitoring Council.

Raj Kolagani chaired a session on Metal Oxide Thin Films at the Mid-Atlantic Section Meeting of the American Physical Society held at Penn State University (Oct 2-4, 2014).

Raj Kolagani participated in the NSF grants workshop conducted by the National Science foundation on December 9, 2014 at the Maryland Science Center of Baltimore.

Join us for a Planetarium Show! Location: Smith Hall Room 521

On Feb. 20, 2015, Dr. Alex Storrs presented “Leftovers” —Asteroids and comets, highlighting some of the early results of the “Dawn” mission, which will rendezvous with asteroid 1 Ceres in early March. Telescope viewing is available after the show, weather permitting.
Student Accomplishments and Activities

ENVS M.S. student William LaBarre successfully defended his thesis titled “The Effectiveness of Bioretention Structures for Metal Retention and Toxicity Reduction of Copper Roof Runoff.”

Undergraduate ENVS student Amy Moore is the inaugural recipient of the Francesca Borrelli Johnson Environmental Endowed Scholarship. Congratulations Amy!

The students in the Environmental Sciences and Studies Senior Seminar course gave a presentation in downtown Towson at the Baltimore County Government Building of their final project report titled, A Public Life Study of Towson.

As part of the activities supported by the NSF funded MADE-CLEAR project [Maryland and Delaware Climate Literacy Education Assessment and Research], Drs. Jane Wolfson, Ron Herman and Asli Sezen-Barrie organized a 2 day workshop for Pre-Service Teachers who were currently completing their middle-school and secondary education Science Methods course. Ten students involved in the workshop learned about climate and climate change through a presentation by Dr. Todd Moore, Department of Geography and Environmental Planning; participated in educational activities lead by Melissa Rogers [MADE-CLEAR] and Dr. Dana Veron [University of Delaware]. The students, with the guidance of scientists, science educators, and current teachers developed lesson plans appropriate for their future teaching activities that addressed climate change and aligned with the new Next Generation Science Standards.

Service to Discipline

Joel Moore was elected to serve a three-year term on the board of the Maryland Water Monitoring council.

Christopher Salice served as editor for a manuscript in PLOS ONE and reviewed manuscripts for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry and PLOS ONE.

Christopher Salice was asked to be an Associate Editor for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry published by the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry.

Grants

Christopher Salice was the lead on a pre-proposal to the Strategic Environmental Research Development Program (SERDP). The proposal was submitted with collaborators from Texas Tech University, Oregon State University and CH2MHill.

Salice, C.J., Anderson, T.A., Field, J., McCarty, C: “Advancing the understanding of the Ecological Risk of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances” for a total award amount of $980,000.

Publications and Presentations

Christopher Salice had a manuscript accepted for publication: Luna, T.O, Plautz, S.C, and Salice, C.J. Chronic effects of 17(alpha)-Ethynylestradiol, Fluoxetine, and the mixture on individual and population-level endpoints in Daphnia Magna. (in press) Archives of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology.

Joel Moore gave a research talk on road salt at the 20th annual meeting of the Maryland Water Monitoring Council.

Joel Moore gave a research seminar on road salt and urban geochemistry at the US Geological Survey Water Science Center.
The Bioscience Education and Outreach program, in partnership with the MdBio Foundation is excited to announce they are hosting the 2015 Accelerating Science Education Conference. The conference will take place July 12-15 at the Towson University Center for STEM Excellence.

Join STEM professionals, educators and other partners from around the world to learn about innovative advances in informal science education. The Accelerating Science Education Conference is targeted at new and established STEM education programs – it is the premier venue to network with peers, seek advice, and share best practices.

The conference includes plenary sessions, poster presentations, and workshops that address key topics in Informal science education such as:

- Engaging diverse learners
- Identifying funding sources
- Building a mobile laboratory
- Incorporating Next Generation Science Standards
- Collecting meaningful evaluation data
- Preparing your students for an evolving job market
- Interfacing with your audience and incorporating technology into your teaching
- Marketing your program

Call for Presenters

The 2015 MLC Conference planning committee is working to develop an impactful agenda and invites you to be part of it. We are now accepting applications for workshop and poster presentations. The conference is targeted at both new and established informal mobile science education programs with staff that fill a variety of roles, instructors, program directors, support staff, etc. Applications to present are due February 15, 2015. Please consider presenting a workshop or poster and share this information with colleagues who might be interested. Visit the website for more information or contact Dr. Mary Stapleton at mkstapleton@towson.edu for more information.
The Jess and Mildred Fisher College of Science & Mathematics

Mission Statement

Through rigorous and high quality undergraduate programs in a wide variety of scientific, computing and mathematical disciplines and graduate programs in research-based, practice-based, applied and interdisciplinary fields, FCSM prepares its students to live and work productively in a scientific and technological world and to pursue learning throughout their lives. Faculty members engage both their undergraduate and graduate students through interactive teaching, advising, basic and applied research, and collaborative activities internally and externally. They form partnerships both to serve the metropolitan community as well as to meet regional, national and international needs. The result is dedicated, innovative, flexible, and highly prepared individuals who excel in graduate school, professional school, and careers in industry, government and teaching.

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