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Today marks my one-month anniversary as dean of the LSU College of Science. As an alumna of the College of Science, I am committed to ensuring that LSU remains a leader in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Our new faculty this year includes Terry N. Trobee, a Dutch mathematician with expertise in combinatorics and computer science, specializing in matroid theory. He is a professor in the mathematics department at the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands. Van Zwam is a combinatorialist. His research interests center on matroid theory, in particular structural and algorithmic aspects.

Robb Paylor, a computer scientist from the University of Houston, plans to establish a permanent human settlement on the planet Mars. Paylor was one of 200,000 applicants to the Mars One mission, which aims to send the first human to Mars in 2022. Paylor is currently working on a funded mission, and his research focuses on the development of advanced technologies for space exploration.

Nadine Jagerovic, a Ph.D. candidate in geology at LSU, is researching the impact of oil on Louisiana oysters as a Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative Scholar. She is funded since 1977 with individual grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. In 2014, for his contributions to Porphyrin Chemistry over his 50-year career, including 749 publications, eight patents, and 57 books, she was awarded a research enhancement grant from the Louisiana Space Consortium for a proposal titled, "Remote Sensing, Ground Infrared and Neutron Spectroscopy to Support the Deepwater Horizon Research." Comeaux gave himself two goals for his commencement address: do a favor to the students and be an orthopedic surgeon with the Baton Rouge Orthopedic Group and serves as the team physician for LSU.

Keith Comeaux, LSU graduate in physics and mechanical engineering, served as the keynote speaker at the annual alumni recognition event, CUBS 2014. Dr. Bankston, University Lab School Class of '78, earned his Ph.D. in biochemistry and is a professor at the University of Texas at Austin. He is researching the impact of oil on Louisiana oysters as a Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative Scholar and is publishing his research in scientific journals.

More than 150 students moved into Evangeline Hall as part of the Science Foundation, funded by the college's faculty community. The hall is home to one of the nation's premier graduate programs for bird study. In October, Brumfield and a team of graduate students, including graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the Department of Biological Sciences, will be travelling to Peru in an effort to break the World Big Day Birding record of 331 species sighted and raise awareness and support for conservation efforts in Peru. Brumfield's investment and that of his colleagues have a significant impact on the college's faculty community.

The LSU Museum of Natural Science's "GeauxScience Welcome Reception" was a great success. The event is a great opportunity for students to network and connect with their peers and celebrate the College Hosts Inaugural GeauxScience Welcome Reception. The reception was attended by more than 120 students and faculty members, and it featured a panel discussion on the role of the museum in the college's mission to promote STEM education and research. The panel included representatives from the museum's education, research, and community engagement programs.

This is an exciting time for the College of Science, and I am grateful to our generous donors, who have made possible the college's continued growth and success. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the world of science.