

NEWS/EVENTS

LSU Computational Biologist Recognized Among Nation's Top Junior Faculty



Assistant Professor **Michal Brylinski** of LSU's Department of Biological Sciences and the Center for Computation and Technology, or CCT, is among the recipients of Oak Ridge Associated Universities' annual Ralph E. Powe Junior Faculty Enhancement Award.

Oak Ridge Associated Universities is a consortium of doctoral-granting academic institutions. The Powe Award recognizes exceptional academic work by university junior faculty within several disciplines: engineering or applied science; life sciences; mathematics and computer science; physical sciences; and policy, management or education. The award grants \$5,000, matched by the member institution, designed to enhance the recipient's professional growth.

"Recruitment and recognition of high achieving faculty are important in moving LSU to the top rank of America's research universities," explained Kalliat T. Valsaraj, associate vice chancellor of LSU Office of Research & Economic Development. "The Ralph E. Powe award marks Dr. Brylinski as firmly in that category." Brylinski conducts research in the area of computational biology at LSU, and hopes that the Ralph E. Powe award will help his group develop a research program at LSU focusing on the modeling of biological networks using structure-oriented approaches.

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BIOS Creators Teach Colleges to Replicate Successful Pre-College Preparation Program

Sheri Wischusen, LSU College of Science director of undergraduate research and her husband, **William Wischusen**, associate chair for introductory biology, hosted a conference titled "BIOS Workshop: Student Success and Retention" in San Francisco on June 7-8. The purpose was to teach faculty from other institutions how to replicate their successful pre-college academic boot camp programs. Sheri and Bill's participation in the workshop resulted in six other institutions wanting to replicate the BIOS concept on their campuses.

In 2005, the Wischusens created Biology Intensive Orientation for Students, or BIOS, to help students make a successful transition to college and improve the academic performance of incoming biology students in their introductory classes. Seven years later, this intensive one-week orientation program has not only positively impacted student performance in their major, but also improved program retention rates. Each department in the LSU College of Science now operates a boot camp, and this August over 360 students will participate in CoS boot camps. More than 30 schools throughout the nation have replicated the program, including UCLA and Loyola Chicago.

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The MNS Degree Programs Have Another Successful Summer

The LSU Masters of Natural Science (MNS) have again found success in their summer teaching programs. A total of 73 teachers participated in The Louisiana Math and Science Teacher Institute (LaMSTI), while 23 participants attended the Central Louisiana Academic Residency for Teachers (CART).



CART, created by Mathematics Professor **James Madden**, is a site-based teacher program that takes qualified certified teachers and pays their tuition as they work toward a MNS degree. In turn, the residents agree to teach in Central Louisiana high schools for three years after they receive their diploma. **Frank Neubrandner**, Demarcus D. Smith Alumni Professor of Mathematics, is the master behind the similar program LaMSTI. This program sponsors a special track of the MNS degree, which resides in the LSU College of Science. The track is designed for practicing middle and high school math or science teachers, and includes graduate course work designed to increase teachers' knowledge and command of their subject matter and curriculum.

This year, LaMSTI had 24 new teachers begin their first summer and 25 teachers return for their second summer. The program's inaugural cohort returned for their third and final summer and are slated to graduate on Friday, August 3rd. 12 CART residents finished up their coursework and will also graduate on this date. CART welcomed 11 new residents this summer. Overall MNS served 96 secondary STEM teachers representing all levels of math, physics, chemistry, and biology.

CART is a partnership that is funded through a United States Department of Education Teacher Quality Partnership Grant. LSU researchers received an \$8 million grant, plus \$8 million in matching funds to improve STEM education in central Louisiana. The grant is provided by U.S. Department of Education, matched by The Rapides Foundation, LSU, LSU-Alexandria, The Orchard Foundation and nine Central Louisiana school districts. LaMSTI is funded by a \$5 million grant from the National Science Foundation.

[Click Here Learn More MNS Programs](#)

KUDOS

Astronaut Performs LSU Chemistry Professor's Experiment

At 3:40 AM on June 26, **John A. Pojman**, a Chemistry Professor at LSU, received a call from Don Pettit, an astronaut on the International Space Station. Dr. Pettit discussed the experiment he was about to perform, which was created by Professor Pojman. The experiment, Miscible Fluids in Microgravity (MFMG), tests if miscible fluids can act like immiscible fluids. On earth, gravity mixes the fluids, but in a weightless environment of ISS, it is possible to observe subtle phenomena. This is the fifth experiment that Pojman has developed for the International Space Station.

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LSU Professor Joins New MURI Project

LSU Mathematics Professor **Rob Lipton** recently joined the Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative (MURI), which supports the research of teams of investigators whose backgrounds intersect multiple traditional science and engineering disciplines in order to accelerate research progress. The Department of Defense awarded \$155 million in funding for this research initiative.

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College of Science Professors Named Rainmakers

Dr. **Jacqueline Stephens**, professor of biological science, and Dr. **Milen Yakimov**, professor of mathematics, each received LSU Rainmaker Awards for Research and Creative Activity. Each year, the university's Office of Research & Economic Development, or ORED, with the support of Campus Federal Credit Union, finds and honors faculty members whose work and contributions extend far beyond the classroom. Yakimov won the Mid-Career Scholar Award for his research in noncommutative algebra which studies the structure and geometric and algebraic properties of noncommutative rings. Stephens received the Senior Scholar Award in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics due to her research program that studies adipocyte cells and obesity's role in the development of type 2 diabetes.

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Yakimov standing among his fellow Rainmakers.

MARQUIS PUBLICATIONS

Sophie Warny, Curator of Paleontology at LSU's Museum of Natural Science, recently contributed to a study that was published online June 17 in *Nature Geoscience*. The goal of the study was to gain a better understanding of what future climate may look like on Earth. The university-led study found that ancient Antarctica was much warmer and wetter than previously expected, and climate was suitable to support substantial vegetation.

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STAR SCHOLARS

Distinguished Graduate Stewart Humble Shares His Story of Success

Honors College student **Stewart Humble** managed to accumulate an abundance of awards and honors before receiving his bachelor's degree. Humble graduated in May from the College of Science with College Honors and was named a member of the Tiger Twelve Class of 2012, a Communication across the Curriculum Distinguished Communicator and a University Medalist for his perfect GPA. He was also named Honors College Outstanding Student for his freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years. While each accomplishment is impressive on its own, the remarkable part of Humble's experience is that he is the only LSU 2012 graduate to receive all of these distinctions.



Picture: Honors College Dean Nancy Clark and Stewart Humble

At age 22, Humble has already earned a lifetime's worth of accomplishments throughout his time at LSU. These include:

- LSU Ambassador
- Vice President of the Tiger Athletic Foundation Collegiate Club
- Treasurer for Alpha Epsilon Delta
- Honors College Welcome Leader and Community Bound Service Plunge Group Leader
- Honors College Peer Leader
- LSU Department Chemistry and Biological Sciences Undergraduate Research Assistant
- Student Assistant for the Department of Chemistry
- Parent Orientation Leader for LSU's Spring Invitational

Humble also found time to travel to Cape Town on the first Honors College Trip to South Africa. There, he volunteered with orphans and helped coordinate the construction group that built a playground and soccer field for local children.

Humble is currently in the process of applying to medical school.

[Click Here to See More of Stewart's Accomplishments](#)

ALUMNI & DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Give to the 2012 College of Science Annual Fund Campaign

Your philanthropic support is an important component of our Formula for Excellence. The College is currently conducting our 2012 Annual Fund campaign. By now, all college alumni have received a letter signed by Dean Kevin Carman and the chair of their respective department. Annual fund gifts play an important role by providing "working capital" for our college's and departments' top priorities, including student organizations, pre-college academic boot camps, educational travel expenses, and scholarships for outstanding students. By giving through the LSU Foundation, 100% of your donation is utilized by the College of Science.

Donors can divide their gifts between the College and the department from which they graduated (biological sciences, chemistry, geology, physics & astronomy, mathematics, and the Museum of Natural Science). Gifts of \$1,000 or more qualify for Dean's Circle Membership. (maybe add a link here to our Dean's Circle webpage from the College's site). Be a part of the College's Formula for Excellence. **GIVE** to the 2012 College of Science Annual Fund and help assure that the LSU College of Science continues to compete successfully with the finest academic institutions in the world and prepare the best and brightest students for successful careers in science.

To learn more about the College of Science Annual Fund Campaign, please contact us at science@lsu.edu.