

# Highlights from the Office of the Dean

## College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, CSULB

CNSM Faculty & Staff Newsletter

August 27, 2007

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## Message from the Desk of the Dean

Welcome to Fall 2007! It is my hope that all of you enjoyed a summer filled with a balance of excitement and relaxation, some adventure, some work, and some joy! As we move into Fall 2007 I want us to feel energized by one another and the excellent teaching and research we are doing in this college, excited by our talented and enthusiastic students and guided by the important role we play as local, regional, national and international STEM educators, researchers and leaders.

I know we will all be energized by the recent signing of the [America COMPETES Act](#) which includes doubling funding to the NSF by 2011, strengthening math and science education pre-K-16, expanding NSF graduate research fellowship and traineeship programs, and supporting the development of professional science master's degree programs. The future is bright with possibilities. Please don't hesitate to share your new thoughts and ideas with me. Have a great start to this new semester!

Regards,  
Laura

Laura Kingsford, Ph.D.  
Dean, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

## CSULB Ranked Eighth in Awarding Bachelor's Degrees to Minority Students

*Diverse Issues in Higher Education* recently ranked CSULB eighth in the nation in conferring bachelor's degrees to students of color. The university awarded undergraduate degrees to more than 2,900 minority students, who made up 46 percent of its 2006 graduating class.

The ranking was part of the magazine's 2007 special report on the "Top 100 Undergraduate Degree Producers," a list of the best minority degree sources among United States institutions of higher learning. It is the only national report on the ability of U.S. colleges and universities to award degrees to African American, Latino, Asian American and Native American students. (Read more in [August 2007 issue](#) of *Inside CSULB*)

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*In all disciplines combined, the university was No. 6 in the nation in conferring bachelor's degrees to Hispanic students.*

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*My exam questions are based on application and understanding of the material, not memorizing facts out of the textbook.*

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**The Nicholas Perkins Hardeman Academic Leadership Award** is designed to reward and acknowledge publicly significant contributions to the principle and practice of shared governance at CSULB

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*CNSM staff member is among 2007 CSULB graduates*

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## Spotlight on Faculty and Staff

### 2007 Distinguished Faculty Teaching Award

Our own Stephen P. Mezyk was honored with the 2007 Distinguished Faculty Teaching Award. Mezyk, an associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry, is originally from "down under", but he has made himself at home at CSULB.

"My teaching philosophy is that I don't teach; I help the students learn the material and make sure they are ready for the next courses in their degrees," he noted. "I don't believe in memorization at all, to the point where I always allow students to bring their own sheet of paper into exams with whatever material they want written on that sheet. My exam questions are based on application and understanding of the material, not memorizing facts out of the textbook." [read more](#) Our congratulations go out to Steve!

### Merryfield Honored with Hardeman Leadership Award

Margaret Merryfield, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, received the 2007 Nicholas Perkins Hardeman Academic Leadership Award. Merryfield noted that among her proudest achievements was as program director from 2000-06 with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Honors in Biological Sciences program. With a budget of \$1.6 million, the HHMI project provided research stipends, supplies and travel support for 125 students over six years; sponsored the development of a series of honors courses; and offered faculty development focused on mentoring and incorporating ethics and critical thinking into the curriculum.

"I think my scientific background makes me especially analytical in my approach to problems," said Merryfield when asked about her achievements. "I always appreciate data and evidence. I also think it has an impact on my communication and writing style. I try very hard for clarity of expression." Margy, congratulations on receiving this well deserved award!! [read more](#)

### Biological Sciences' Staff Member is a Recent CSULB Graduate

Among the CSULB staff members who received degrees this past May is CNSM staff member, Diane Graham, from the Department of Biological Sciences. Diane graduated with a BS in Business Administration with an option in Human Resources. She currently serves as an instructional support technician in Microbiology and has worked at CSULB for over 15 years. We extend our warmest wishes and congratulations to you, Diane, for this professional and personal accomplishment. We're proud to have you on our CNSM team! [read more](#)

## Teaching Perspectives & Tips

### SQW3R Supports Student Comprehension

**Consider Trying SQW3R from the first day of the semester!** As the new semester begins, one of the first activities many students engage in is to purchase new textbooks for all their courses. But, we want them to do much more with these texts than to simply pay for them and carry them home. We want these texts to be used to support student learning. For many students, this never happens. It's not that students don't attempt to read and learn from the textbooks we select for our STEM courses, but many do not achieve success using our textbooks to assist with content comprehension.

SQW3R is a reading and study technique we can model and begin to use in lecture, a technique that has been shown to support students with reading comprehension, retention and application of text material. The SQW3R Steps are shown in the box at right. Please click [HERE](#) to read more details on how to implement the routine use of SQW3R into your lecture and discussions.

#### SQW3R Method of Study

- S** – Survey
- Q** – Question
- R** – Read
- W** – Write during 2<sup>nd</sup> reading
- R** – Recall
- R** – Review

Check out SQW3R teaching details & tips on [this website](#)

## Funding News-IMPORTANT!

**SCAC APPLICATIONS FOR MINI-GRANTS, SUMMER STIPENDS, AND ASSIGNED TIME ARE DUE IN DEPARTMENT OFFICES, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2007**

This fall the Scholarly and Creative Activities Committee (SCAC) Awards process for the 2007-08 academic year will encompass all categories of awards: mini-grants for spring 2008, summer stipends for summer 2008, and assigned time to be taken during the 2008-09 academic year. Applications for all three awards are due to departments on September 24, 2007. The SCAC application directions on the Office of University Research website state: "A total of FIVE (5) copies of the application are required, one copy is retained by the Department..." The call for SCAC applications including directions and the 2007 application form is now available on the [Office of University Research](#) website along with examples of highly rated SCAC proposals previously funded. In addition, there are SCAC support workshops scheduled on Sept. 12th and 13th, 12-1pm – both to be held at the Anatol Center Conference Room. *Please note: Reports of work accomplished for all outstanding previous SCAC awards, except assigned time awards to be taken in Fall-07 or Spring-08, are due in the Office of University Research (OUR) by September 17, 2007. These reports must be filed at OUR in order to be eligible for a new award. Questions concerning the application process may be directed to Dale Jorgenson (djorgens@csulb.edu), Director for Research Compliance.*

## InCites

Go behind the scenes of highly cited research in these interviews, essays, [podcasts](#) and rankings featuring highly cited [researchers](#) in a [variety of fields](#). Read and listen to scientists such as Chris Miller and Michael Rossmann (Microbiology), Keith Burrige (Molecular Biology & Genetics), Lincoln Lauhan (Chemistry & Materials Science), Barry Huebert (Geosciences), Steve Kay (Biology & Biochemistry), Andrei Zelevinsky (Mathematics), Brian Enquist (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology), Benjamin Lindner (Physics) talk about their research and their insights into the research process. These offerings can be put to great use in work with our students. The passion these scientists each have for their work bubbles to the surface as you read and listen to them talk about their research. These InCites links are offered through Thomson Scientific's [Essential Science Indicators<sup>SM</sup>](#), a resource that enables researchers to conduct ongoing, quantitative analyses of research performance and track trends in science.

## Campus Highlights

**University Facts** is a collection of demographic data describing our CSULB campus. This is the latest CSULB Fact Sheet available at this time. The next Fact Sheet will come out at the end of the coming fall semester.

The **CSULB Leadership Academy** is a series of workshops focused on cultivating leadership excellence by developing student leadership potential for practical and professional application. There are seven mandatory two-hour workshops and five one-hour elective workshops. There is no minimum GPA or previous leadership experience required to join the program. The Leadership Academy is open to ALL CSULB STUDENTS! Please encourage some of our CNSM students to consider this opportunity.

New Dean of the College of Engineering named – **Forouzan Golshani**, chair of the Computer Science and Engineering Department at Wright State University in Ohio, has been named the new dean for the College of Engineering at CSULB. He will also serve as special assistant to the provost on accessible technology.

## Local \*STEM Events & Talks

Please share events with undergraduate and graduate students

**8/27/07** [Workshop on Self-Replicating Chemical Systems](#), 8:00 AM 8/27 through 7:00pm 8/28, 100 Broad Center, Caltech, Caltech's Information Science and Technology department and Center for Biological Circuit Design are sponsoring a workshop for researchers who are broadly interested in the chemical, physical, and logical properties of self-replicating chemical systems. For details and registration, go to <http://www.cbcd.caltech.edu/replication/>.

**8/27/07** UCI Observatory. [Visitor Night](#). See the full moon, the planet Jupiter and star clusters with the 24-inch telescope located in the Observatory and other smaller telescopes. Includes lecture "What Happened to Pluto?" 8-10 p.m., Observatory. Visitors are welcome to stay to see the total lunar eclipse that begins near midnight and ends at 5:20 a.m. Free. More: 949.824.2603 or [tsmecker@uci.edu](mailto:tsmecker@uci.edu).

**9/7/07** Chemistry Lecture, [Scripps Research Institute](#), 2:00pm at W.M. Keck Foundation Amphitheater, The Beckman Center for Chemical Sciences, [Paul Hergenrother](#), Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Topic: TBA

**9/11/07** [General Biology Seminar](#), 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM, 119 Kerckhoff CalTech, Topic to be announced. [Dan Geschwind](#), professor of neurology, Reed Neurologic Research Center, UCLA.

**9/13/07** [UCI Center for Immunology](#). *The Many Facets of PI3-Kinase Function in B Lymphocytes*. With [Robert C. Rickert](#), associate professor, Program of Inflammatory Disease Research, Infectious and Inflammatory Disease Center, Burnham Institute for Medical Research. Hosted by Dr. Paolo Casali, Center for Immunology director. Noon, Tamkin Hall, Room F-114. 12:00pm, More: 949.824.9648.

\* **STEM** is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

### SEPTEMBER 2007

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