Letter from the Dean

I write this as I begin my second year as dean of the College of Science and Mathematics. In the past year, we completed a massive curriculum conversion to semesters, and we are now finally seeing the fruit of our labors. There is added excitement on campus as we begin our very first semester as students pack our hallways and classrooms. Despite predictions to the contrary, enrollment in the College is strong, showing numbers slightly greater than previous years, which were some of the strongest in our history.

We had several retirements of valued faculty, including Helen Klein and Allen Nagy in Psychology, and Alexander Kaplan in Mathematics and Statistics, and our own Associate Dean Dan Voss; together they gave almost 120 years of service to the College. To replace Ken Turnbull, who stepped down, and Lok Lew Yan Voon, who left to take a dean position at the Citadel in Charleston, SC, we have two new Chairs, David Grossie as Chair of Chemistry, and Doug Petkie as interim Chair of Physics. We have five new assistant professors, Ion Juvina and Joseph Houpt in Psychology, Sherif Elbasiouny in Neuroscience, Cell Biology and Physiology, and Gengxin Li and Melanie Woods in Mathematics and Statistics.

We have two new Associate Deans, Mark Mamrack and Kathrin Engisch.

The coming year will present many challenges as we strive to provide high quality education, intensive personal advising and research and career opportunities for students, along with state of the art research facilities, equipment, classrooms, and development opportunities for faculty, in the face of ever scarcer resources. The University and the College are in a period of dramatic transition; the majority of college deans have been at Wright State less than five years, and interim provost Tom Sudkamp is in his first year. We can anticipate new leadership at the College and University levels will pull us out of our comfort zones as some ideas are tried and fail while others are tried and succeed.

I believe that the reduction in our resources due to the decline in state and federal contributions, and the heightened awareness by the public of the outsized cost of an education that cannot guarantee employment, gives Wright State and our College an opportunity. When we ensure that our students are prepared and well-matched to the employment needs of our area, and we provide the educational and professional experiences essential to create opportunities for our students, while at the same time we keep tuition low and school loans at a minimum, we will be a very attractive choice in higher education.

Sincerely,

Yi Li, Ph.D., Dean
Wright State professor Thaddeus Tarpey, Ph.D., was elected by the American Statistical Association as a fellow for his outstanding professional contributions to and leadership in the field of statistical science.

One of only 48 members worldwide elected as fellows, Tarpey was recognized for his influential contributions to statistical research and applications, particularly in the areas of multivariate analysis. Fellows are nominated by their peers and it is a great honor. The American Statistical Association (ASA) is the nation’s preeminent professional statistical society. The ASA was founded in Boston in 1839 serving statisticians, quantitative scientists, and users of statistics in a wide range of areas. The 2012 Fellows are from 18 states and six countries and received their awards July 31, 2012 during a ceremony at the annual Joint Statistical Meetings in San Diego. “Their selection as Fellows signifies that they and their work have earned the admiration of their peers, and I congratulate them on behalf of our association” said Robert N. Rodriguez, ASA president.

Tarpey grew up in Lexington, Ky. and earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Kentucky. His master’s and doctorate degrees are from Indiana University. Tarpey came to Wright State in 1994 after completing an NRC postdoctoral fellowship.

Faculty Research Grants of $5,000

Heather Hostetler, assistant professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Adrian Corbett, associate professor in the Department of Neuroscience, Cell Biology and Physiology

Student Scholarship Awards of $1,500

Arlene M. Maliekal, exercise biology
Amanda M. Sherwood, exercise biology
Elizabeth E. Stayrook, biological sciences and chemistry

The mission of the Women in Science Giving Circle is to create funding opportunities, such as scholarships and research grants, that will serve to enhance the educational and professional success of female students and faculty members in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine disciplines at Wright State University.

Click here to visit their webpage and to learn how you can support women in science.
Randall P. Wagner, M.D. received the 2012 College Outstanding Alumni Award for the College of Science and Mathematics. Wagner graduated from Wright State’s Department of Physics with a B.S. honors' degree in 1980. He was elected to the physics honor society and published a research article as an undergraduate. Wagner earned an M.D. at the Vanderbilt School of Medicine in 1984. Then he and his wife, Debra Benator, took a “gap year” to volunteer as medical directors at a “bush hospital” in Kenya.

Wagner spent four years as a fellow in pulmonary diseases and critical care medicine at Boston University, where he wrote and published a number of book chapters and peer review papers dealing with the pulmonary and immunologic consequences of HIV infection. He was a research fellow at the NIH and later joined the faculty at George Washington University School of Medicine in 1995.

In the past ten years, he has been involved in the medical leadership at the Washington Adventist Hospital. Last year, he became the vice president and chief medical officer for Washington Adventist Hospital.

Shawn Heflick became a nature lover while growing up on the family farm near the northern Ohio city of Marion. “I ran amuck with my dog in the fields and woods, catching and observing wildlife,” he recalled. Then came his first brush with a mating ball of Garter snakes. “It was the coolest thing I had ever seen.” Heflick threw himself into biology and later enrolled at Wright State, graduating in 1993.

He was working with the Florida Wildlife and Conservation Commission when he became involved with NatGeo’s WILD television channel and “Python Hunters”. The TV show chronicles him capturing, wrestling, and saving giant pythons in the Florida Everglades.

“I don’t find it overly dangerous, but everyone else seems to disagree,” said Heflick, a conservation biologist and herpetologist. “For me, being able to educate the masses about conservation and wildlife is the ultimate gratification from the show.”

“Wright State played a key role in my success,” … “I had a lot of opportunities to participate in field studies and also a mentor in David Goldstein, chair of the department of Biological Science, who gave me a great start and insight into science.” —Shawn Heflick
A record number of degree applications was received for the spring ceremony—2,820 total—making it the largest commencement in Wright State’s 44-year history. Each graduate has a personal story of hard work, dedication and triumph. Congratulations on your achievements.

**DIRECTCONNECT, Boosting Admissions Through Outreach**

On June 9, 2012 Wright State University celebrated the largest graduating class in its 44-year history. To prepare for the vacancies created by this record-breaking student achievement, and in response to anticipated state-wide declining enrollment, Provost Steve Angle met with college deans in January 2012 to discuss tactics that would increase enrollment for Fall 2012 and promote the value of a Wright State University Undergraduate education to prospective students.

With the challenge identified, College of Science and Mathematics (CoSM) Dean Yi Li, and CoSM assistant dean, Joyce Howes, proposed an event designed to encourage high-achieving high school students, with expressed interest in science and mathematics, to experience being a Raider.

CoSM found a willing partner in Dominique Belanger, Ph.D., director of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP). Each spring UROP hosts a “Celebration of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities” showcasing lectures, posters, videos, and other presentations of research scholarship and creative activities of students. This celebration was a perfect context for the college event, DIRECTCONNECT.

Joyce Howes and CoSM director of student services Susan Yeoman, constructed an agenda that allowed students and their parents to meet with Dean Li, enjoy lunch, attend two mini-lectures, and meet with students who are engaged in research activities. The DIRECTCONNECT event was designed to provide attendees an actual classroom experience along with an introduction to the research opportunities that are vital to develop critical thinking and investigative learning. As an added incentive, through financial support from the provost’s office, $400 book grants were awarded to attending students who also enrolled at Wright State for Fall 2012 with a declared science or mathematics major. Out of the 41 students who attended DIRECTCONNECT, 39 received the book grants and currently are taking fall semester classes at WSU.

If you would like to financially support efforts such as DIRECTCONNECT, RESEARCHCONNECT, CAREERCONNECT and others please call Chris Adkins-Lamb, director of Major Gifts for CoSM at 937-775-4980, or email Chris at christopher.adkins-lamb@wright.edu.

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"In the pioneering spirit of the Wright brothers, Wright State will be Ohio’s most innovative university, known and admired for our diversity and for the transformative impact we have on the lives of our students and on the communities we serve.”

—President David R. Hopkins
A delegation led by former Provost Steven Angle signed a memorandum of understanding with three universities in central China.

Delegates included Stephen Foster, associate vice president for international affairs; Yi Li, dean of the College of Science and Mathematics; and Carol Loranger, chair of English Language and Literature. The Chinese universities with whom the agreements were signed are expected to send their students to Wright State to study English, engineering, business, mathematics, and science.

The agreements expand Wright State’s reach in China. Last year, Wright State signed dual-degree agreements with Dalian Jiaotong University, the Dalian Institute of Science & Technology, Shanxi University of Finance and Economics, and Taiyuan University of Technology.

Through a partnership with the Museum of Terracotta Soldiers and Horses of Shi-Huang-Di, Wright State experts will go to the site to conduct research aimed at expanding the excavation and better protecting and displaying the mausoleum. The university will accept students from the museum seeking to learn more about conservation, historic preservation and exhibition preparation.

The Terracotta Warriors Museum near Xi’an, a collection of terracotta sculptures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China dating from 3rd century B.C., will now be available to Wright State faculty and students to study because of a new agreement.
Wright State University College of Science and Mathematics is pleased to announce two new associate deans who will lead in key areas of graduate research and education as well as undergraduate education and outreach.

They are:

Mark Mamrack, associate professor in the department of Biological Sciences and CoSM director of planning. Mark has been named associate dean of research and Graduate Education. His primary responsibilities include research infrastructure and tech support, grants and contracts, graduate curriculum and support, personnel hiring, annual reviews, and development.

Kathrin Engisch, associate professor in the department of Neuroscience, Cell Biology, and Physiology. Kathrin has been named associate dean of undergraduate education and outreach. Kathy works with the college student affairs office; oversees undergraduate curriculum and teaching grants; serves on numerous committees; assists in budget reviews and decisions with the college business manager; develops alumni relations initiatives.

The College of Science and Mathematics offers eight undergraduate programs (including 9 majors and 8 minors), 13 masters programs, and 3 PhD programs. Kathy and Mark started their duties on July 1, 2012 as former associate dean Dan Voss retired.

Best Wishes to Dr. Dan Voss on his retirement.

Dan Voss, Ph.D. joined the faculty at Wright State in 1983, after completing his Ph.D. in statistics at The Ohio State University, where he concentrated in experimental design. During nearly 30 years in the college, Voss taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate statistics courses, and served as director of the statistics program, department chair, associate dean, interim dean, and a second term as associate dean. Congratulations as he and his wife, Nancy, embark on new adventures and new golf courses.
Doug Petkie, Ph.D., associate professor of physics and electrical engineering has been named interim chair of the Department of Physics effective July 1, 2012, as Lok Lew Yan Voon, Ph.D. will departed to become dean of The Citadel’s School of Science and Mathematics.

Petkie received his BS in Physics at Carnegie Mellon University and his PhD in physics at The Ohio State University. Since joining Wright State University in 2002, Doug has served as the co-director of the Engineering Physics Program, program faculty for Wright State Research Institute, has been a member of the faculty senate, a graduate faculty member in the Environmental Sciences and Engineering PhD programs, elected as a physics councilor for the Council on Undergraduate Research, and has chaired or served as a member on several departmental, college and university level committees.

David Grossie, Ph.D. associate professor of chemistry, became chair of the Department of Chemistry on July 1, 2012, as Dr. Ken Turnbull stepped down to return to the faculty. Grossie received his B.S. in chemistry from Texas Lutheran College and his Ph.D. from Texas University and a postdoctoral research associate at Baylor University. Since 2001 David has served as assistant chair of the Department of Chemistry at Wright State University.

He has taught graduate courses and conducted research in inorganic chemistry, along with a variety of undergraduate courses and labs. David chaired the COSM Computing & Technology Committee and was a member of the Science Lab Renovations Committee, University Technology Committee, and University Classrooms of the Future Committee.

He was also involved in the development of networking and technology plans for the University.
Let us know what you think and how we can improve our newsletter!
cosm@wright.edu

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Building Prosperity through Community
The Wright State University Presidential Lecture Series was developed to advance human justice and promote the university’s commitment to creating a diverse community and learning environment.

Save the date for the 2012-13 speakers:
November 20, 2012
Genevieve Chase, founder and executive director of American Women Veterans, and advocate for veterans issues.

March 7, 2013
Neil deGrasse Tyson, author, Frederick P. Rose Director of Hayden Planetarium and visiting researcher at Princeton University.

April 16, 2013
Van Jones, president and co-founder of Rebuild the Dream, a platform of people-powered innovation and green jobs advisor to President Obama.

Wright State University
College of Science
And Mathematics

Contact us at:
134 Oelman Hall
Dayton, Ohio 45435-0001

Web
www.wright.edu/cosm

Phone
(937)775-2611

Fax
(937)775-3068

E-mail
cosm@wright.edu

This newsletter is published by the College of Science and Mathematics for its alumni, faculty, staff, and friends.

Up-Coming Events

11/15/2012 - Seminar for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
11:00AM in 129 Medical Sciences
Susceptibility to cutaneous SCC: It’s not just the sun
Dr. Amanda Toland
The Ohio State University

11/16/2012 - Mathematics Colloquia
3:00PM in 222 Math & Micro (MM)
Discrete Math
Dr. Mark Watkins
Syracuse University

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