

## October 2008 – September 2009

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HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES  
Geneva, NY 14456

## Report on Faculty Grant Activity at Hobart and William Smith



Provost Teresa Amott

### Letter from the Provost

In these challenging economic times, we are especially grateful to faculty who have devoted countless hours to pursuing external funding. I applaud the persistence and determination of faculty who seek external funding despite the ever-fiercer nature of competition for these shrinking resources. That so many grant applications were successful in this environment, is simply remarkable, and testimony to the quality and promise of the projects and the high caliber of the faculty. This funding makes possible activities impossible to sustain otherwise: dance residencies by nationally acclaimed companies;

fieldwork and travel for undergraduate researchers; summer study abroad in Siberia and China for our students; collaborative initiatives with scholars at other institutions—these are just a few of the worthy projects successfully funded in the past year. I am also deeply appreciative of the knowledge, energy, and commitment of our outstanding staff in the Grants Office who assist and support faculty in this endeavor. On behalf of our faculty, I want to thank them for the long hours they devote to these tasks and their unstinting good will and professionalism.

Sincerely,

Teresa Amott, Provost and Dean of Faculty

## Faculty Grant Activity July 2008 – August 2009

**“That so many grant applications were successful in this environment, is simply remarkable, and testimony to the quality and promise of the projects and the high caliber of the faculty.”**

— Teresa Amott

- **Kristy Kenyon**, assistant professor of biology, received a grant from the National Institutes of Health under its Academic Research Enhancement Award program to support her work on the molecular and cellular activities that direct embryonic cells toward the creation of highly specialized olfactory systems in moths. How embryos generate sensory systems is a central focus in the field of developmental biology.
- **Erin Pelkey**, associate professor of chemistry, received a grant from the National Institutes of Health under its Academic Research Enhancement Award program for a project entitled *New Methodology for the Synthesis of Highly*



Kristy Kenyon



Erin Pelkey

*Functionalized Nitrogen Heterocycles*. These methods support an important area of organic chemistry and the emerging field of synthetic organic chemistry, and may assist medicinal and pharmaceutical chemists in the discovery of novel drugs. Pelkey was also funded by the National Science Foundation for a similar research project but declined the award as a result of receiving the NIH grant.



Jim MaKinster



David Galloway



Kristen Welsh



Nan Arens



Cynthia Williams

- **Jim MaKinster**, associate professor of education, received a grant from the National Science Foundation to supplement his current *Crossing Boundaries* award, a collaborative initiative with colleagues at Cornell University that provides middle and high school students with real-time information and technical competence to use information technologies to address biodiversity conservation issues. With this new funding, MaKinster will establish collaborative relationships with at least three organizations in Kenya; one of these will be the Green Belt Movement founded by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr. Wangari Maathai Sc.D.'94, P '94, P '96.

MaKinster also again received funding from Finger Lakes WIRED to enable young women from high schools in rural areas of the Finger Lakes region to attend the Colleges' Environmental Summer Science Youth Institute.

- Thanks to the work of Associate Professor **Cedric Johnson** and Professor **Cynthia Williams**, the Fisher Center received funding from the New York State Council for the Humanities for the fall 2009 lecture series on *Engendering Crisis*.
- **John Halfman**, professor of geoscience, received support from both the Owasco Lake Watershed Association and the Town of Fleming to conduct stream sampling studies in eight sites in the Owasco Lake watershed. Halfman will collect and measure stream discharge, conductivity, and temperature data at each site, as well as analyze water samples for suspended sediments, phosphates, and nitrates.

- In collaboration with a colleague at Union College, **David Galloway**, associate professor of Russian area studies, was funded by the U.S. Department of Education to develop web-based interactive instructional materials on Russian verbs of motion that will greatly enhance the teaching of Russian at the beginning and intermediate levels. Additionally, with colleagues **Judith McKinney** and **Kristen Welsh**, Galloway was instrumental in enabling the Colleges to secure a Russian Foreign Language Teaching Assistant for the academic year 2009-10 from the U.S. Department of State.

- **Mihaela Petrescu**, assistant professor of German, received a fellowship from the Association of American Teachers of German to participate in the Berlin Seminar in summer 2009. Petrescu has also applied to the Max Kade Foundation for support of a short-term study abroad tour for advanced students of German.

- **Susan Henking**, professor of religious studies, received a fellowship from the American Council on Education to participate in its premier higher education leadership development program. She is currently working with Chancellor John Cavanaugh at the central administrative offices of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

- **Nan Arens**, associate professor of geoscience, received a grant from the American Chemical Society's Petroleum Research Fund to support her work on Black Shale Deposition in the Late Catskill Basin. Arens will test

predictions associated with the three principle formation hypotheses: a tectonic model, climate models, and a biotic model. Additionally, Arens applied to the National Science Foundation for a research project titled *An Upland Flora from the Late Cretaceous of Central Montana: Vegetation Change, Diversity and Climate* and, with colleague **David Kendrick**, requested NSF support for a curricular project to develop, assess, and deploy a teaching method for geoscience students that parallels inquiry-based learning in STEM laboratories.

- **Cynthia Williams**, the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Dance, received funding from both the New England Foundation for the Arts and the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation to support a residency and performances in early 2010 by the Axis Dance Company, a troupe composed of both wheel-chair and stand-up dancers. Williams also was awarded funding from New York State DanceForce to support a three-day teaching and performing residency featuring Jody Sperling and Time Elapse Dance.
- Associate Professor of Dance **Cadence Whittier** received a grant from the Phelps Arts Center, a decentralized site of the New York State Council for the Arts. The award will support *Dancing Design/Moving Sound*, a concert series of multi-disciplinary artists including dancers, choreographers, musicians, as well as composers and sculptors who will offer performances throughout the summer and fall of 2009.



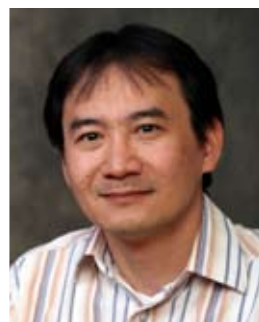
Meghan Brown



Stacey Philbrick-Yadav



Tara Curtin



Eugenio Arima



Justin Miller

- **Tom Drennen**, associate professor of economics, again received funding from Sandia National Labs to support a research assistant to work on an alternative liquid fuel transportation model that compares the production costs, carbon emissions, and energy balances of several alternative liquid transportation fuels. Drennen also collaborated with researchers at the University of Rochester to submit a proposal on Distributed Renewable Energy to the National Science Foundation under its Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship program.
- **Meghan Brown**, assistant professor of Biology, received a Junior Fulbright Fellowship under the U.S. Department of State's Fulbright Scholar Program to spend a semester in Italy at the Istituto per lo Studio degli Ecosistemi to continue her research on *Bythotrephes*, the spiny waterflea native to Lake Maggiore.
- **Stacey Philbrick-Yadav**, assistant professor of political science, was instrumental in enabling the Colleges to secure a Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant in Arabic for academic year 2009-10 from the U.S. Department of State.
- Thanks to **Eric Barnes**, assistant professor of philosophy, HWS was awarded a grant from the Open Society Institute to enable the Colleges to host the International Debate Education Association Round Robin Debate Tournament. This second annual award allowed HWS to welcome an international contingent of highly-competitive debate teams from India, Israel, South Africa, and the United Kingdom, in addition to the top teams in the U.S.
- Assistant Professor of Geoscience **Tara Curtin** submitted a proposal to the American Chemical Society's Petroleum Research Fund requesting support for a project titled *Calibrating Sediment Proxies for the Study of Holocene Climate Change in the Finger Lakes*.
- Religious studies faculty **Michael Dobkowski** and **Richard Salter** submitted a proposal to the Litthauer Foundation requesting support to enable students enrolled in Religious Studies 279, *Torah and Testament*, to travel to Toronto to see the exhibit of the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Royal Ontario Museum.
- With colleagues at South Dakota State University, **Eugenio Arima**, assistant professor of environmental studies, submitted a proposal to the National Space and Aeronautics Administration titled *Shifting Fire Regimes of the United States, Australia, and Brazilian Amazonia: The Roles of Climate Change, Land Use, and Mitigation Efforts*. Arima also requested NASA funding for a collaborative proposal titled *Integrating Amazonian Social Science Panel Data for Carbon Cycle Modeling*. Additionally, with colleagues from Michigan State University Arima has requested support from the National Science Foundation for collaborative research on *Contentious Land Change in Amazonia's Arc of Deforestation*.
- Chemistry faculty **Justin Miller** and **Erin Pelkey**, in collaboration with biology colleagues **Sigrid Carle** and **Patricia Mowery**, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation under its Major Research Instrumentation program to acquire a liquid chromatograph-mass spectrometer and related equipment for synthesis and evaluation to initiate a cross-disciplinary research program aimed at finding and characterizing novel histone deacetylase inhibitors which are potential anticancer therapeutics.
- **Mary Hess**, an instructor in the English department, submitted a travel and research proposal to the New York State Archives for her work on a project titled *They Hear His Voice: The Long Odyssey of Peter Wilson, Cayuga Physician and Orator*.
- Assistant Professor of Physics **Pasad Kulatunga** submitted two proposals to the National Science Foundation: the first, under NSF's Major Research Instrumentation program, proposes acquisition of an imaging system and associated equipment to conduct single quantum dot spectroscopy and optical trapping of bio-conjugated quantum dots; the second was for research titled *Experimental study of microscopic trap loading and an investigation of atom dynamics in configurable microscopic double-wells*. Kulatunga has also submitted a proposal to the National Institutes of Health for a project titled *Investigation of the Spectral-Shift and the Fluorescent Intermittence of Bio-Conjugated Quantum Dots*.
- Working with science faculty and administrative colleagues, **Christine de Denus** submitted a proposal on behalf of the Colleges to the National Science Foundation requesting support under Stimulus Funding to install climate control in the research and research training labs in Eaton and Lansing Halls.



Christine de Denus



Donald Spector



Feisal Khan



Betty Bayer



David Weiss

- Physics professor **Donald Spector** submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation for a research project titled *Sources of Physical Entropy in Computation*. Spector proposes to identify both the physical entropy associated with basic computation steps and the entropy encoded within computer programs themselves.
- **Steve Penn**, associate professor of physics, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation to continue his work on Advanced LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory). A long-time collaborator in this multi-university initiative, Penn focuses on two of the noise barriers—test mass thermal noise and bilinear noise—that must be overcome before LIGO makes regular gravity wave detections.
- **Feisal Khan**, associate professor of economics, received funding from the Smith Richardson Foundation for a project titled *Banking with Allah: Pakistan's Experience with Islamic Banking*. Khan is working on a monograph on the Pakistani experience with Islamic (Sharia compliant) Banking focusing on how it differs from conventional banking and how it affects Pakistan's overall stability.
- **Helen McCabe**, assistant professor of education, applied for a Fulbright fellowship to China under the U.S. Department of State. Her project, *Collaboration and Networking Among Disability Organizations in China: Examining the Impact on Disability Policy* will build on her work begun in 1992.
- **Kristen Welsh**, assistant professor of Russian area studies, applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities for summer support of a project entitled *Combining Thought and Ecstasy: Pushkin's Poetic Inspiration in Nabokov's Prose*.
- **Betty Bayer**, professor of women's studies, and colleagues at the Fisher Center requested support from Margaret H. Wycoff Foundation for the Center's 2009 speakers series on animation.
- Assistant Professor of Religion **Etin Anwar** submitted proposals on *Globalism and Islamism at the Crossroads: Shaping Identities in Indonesia* to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University. Anwar also applied for an NEH summer stipend for this project.
- **Marc Corliss**, assistant professor of math and computer science, working with colleague **John Vaughn**, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation requesting support to design and implement a complete computer system called MiniSys, as well as a set of integrated software tools, all of which students can use in computer science course projects.
- Professor of English **David Weiss** submitted a proposal to the National Endowment for the Arts requesting support for *The Body Lyric*, a festival of disability and the arts that will take place on campus in Spring 2010.
- **Devparna Roy**, assistant professor of anthropology and sociology, submitted a proposal to the Rural Sociological Society to support her work on the attitudes of New York State corn farmers toward genetically modified, organic and hybrid seed.

It is possible that you are not listed in this newsletter but you have, in fact, recently applied for or received a grant or fellowship. If this is the case, please let us know! We are sorry that we missed you and would very much like to hear more about your project.

<http://www.hws.edu/offices/grants.aspx>