



## May 2013 Newsletter

### 2013 Ogden College Faculty Awards Recipients

Dr. Andrew Wulff (Geography & Geology) – Teaching Award  
Dr. Michael Smith (Biology) – Research/Creativity Award  
Dr. Nancy Rice (Biology) – Public Service Award  
Dr. Kevin Williams (Chemistry) – Student Advisement Award

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## **College/Department News**

### **WKU students take advantage of Study Away courses during Winter Term**

For many WKU students, Winter Break means more than just a pause from college life and classes. The time off can also be an opportunity to travel, learn more about their world and earn additional college credit through [Study Away](#) courses. This January 34 WKU students took advantage of Study Away opportunities during Winter Term, studying in New York City, Pasadena/San Francisco or New Orleans/Galveston. [\(full story\)](#)

### **28 students, 7 faculty members attend Winter Term course in Ecuador**

Twenty-eight WKU students and seven faculty members participated in the Winter Term class to the Ecuadorian Amazon and Galapagos regions. Leaders were Dr. Kristie Guffey from the Glasgow campus and Dr. David Coffey from the Bowling Green campus. Other faculty members included: Dr. Martin Stone, Agriculture; Dr. Cecile Garmon, Educational Leadership; Dr. Melissa Stewart, Modern Languages; Dr. Ron Ramsing, Kinesiology and Recreation; and Prof. Hajara Mahmoud, Biology at Glasgow campus. [\(full story\)](#)

### **Lexington team wins robotics title**

“Automaticus Rex,” a homeschool group from Lexington, was named overall champion at the [Kentucky FIRST LEGO League State Robotics Championship](#) on Feb. 2. The competition at WKU’s Diddle Arena featured 39 teams with about 290 participants. The theme of this year’s event was “Senior Solutions™,” which called for teams to research and explore the topic of aging and how it may affect a person’s ability to maintain his or her lifestyle. [\(full story\)](#)

## **WKU faculty, staff, students may join Kentucky Academy of Science**

WKU faculty, staff and students interested in joining the [Kentucky Academy of Science](#) may do so for free because WKU is a 2013 Enhanced KAS Affiliate. Membership in KAS is open to anyone with an interest in science. KAS members are eligible to apply for research grants, submit manuscripts for publication in the Journal of the Kentucky Academy of Science (JKAS), receive complimentary electronic access to the JKAS, and are entitled to discount KAS meeting registration fees. [\(full story\)](#)

## **Bowling Green High School team wins 2013 Physics Olympics at WKU**

A team from Bowling Green High School won the [2013 Western Kentucky Physics Olympics](#). Coached by teacher Cristen Olson, the “Purple Chem” team had the best combined placement in the five Physics Olympics events on Feb. 23 at WKU. Team members, all sophomores at BGHS, are: Emily Penn, Kate Bigler, Teaghan Chen and Hannah Lindsey. [\(full story\)](#)



## **Meteorology graduate lands position with U.S. Air Force**

When Nathaniel Shearer of Berea entered WKU’s Meteorology Program in the [Department of Geography and Geology](#) in Fall 2007, he had his sights set on adding to the military tradition within his family by becoming a Weather Officer for the U.S. Air Force. [\(full story\)](#)

## **WKU Habitat chapter sending 3 groups on spring break projects**

WKU’s [Habitat for Humanity campus chapter](#) will be sending three volunteer groups to Arkansas, South Carolina and eastern Kentucky for spring break trips next week. The WKU groups will travel to Benton, Ark.; Sumter, S.C.; and Morehead, Ky., to assist the local Habitat for Humanity Affiliates in those areas with various projects as part of Habitat’s [Collegiate Challenge](#). [\(full story\)](#)

## **WKU Geomorphology students learn about landscape processes in the Ozarks**



A group of [WKU geography and geology](#) students braved snowy weather at the beginning of March to participate in a field trip to the Ozarks, including the Salem Plateau and the St. Francois Mountain area of southeastern Missouri as part of a Spring 2013 course in Geomorphology taught by Dr. Jason Polk. [\(full story\)](#)

## **WKU Rocket Team Participates in NASA Student Launch Competition**



A WKU team of scientists and engineers spent last week at the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center and Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama, competing in the NASA University Student Launch Initiative, a national competition to launch a rocket and payload to 5280 ft and safely return it to Earth. Over the course of the last ten months they established a grueling schedule to design, test, computer

model and build a series of subscale rockets to prepare for the construction of a six foot, fifty pound vehicle that could lift a science payload and two video cameras to the one mile marker. Each month an expert certified NASA Team conducted a video conference with the group to be sure all technical and safety specs were met and that the stability and budget criteria were being observed. The core group that made up the 'vette City rocket Team that went to Huntsville included Daniel Jones, Owen Gaulle, Mariel Schumate, Timothy Bucklew, Jason Leszczewicz, Jordan Edens, and Kolton Jones, their high altitude rocket mentor Darryl Hanks along with the full scale red and white rocket known as Pi Bar. The team was sponsored through a NASA KY Space Grant and local Bowling Green companies Hitcents, Randolph, Hale and Meredith, Microchip, GM Corvettes, ACE Engineering, and CSD Engineering. The final flight was on a humid day with 36 other university teams lined up for the launch. Six teams failed to launch, two had catastrophic take offs, four were disqualified for exceeding the height ceiling with WKU reaching an altitude of over 4100 feet, receiving a total data collection file and a near perfect landing.

### **WKU's Hardin Planetarium adds digital projection system**



A new digital projection system at the [Hardin Planetarium](#) may not take audiences to infinity and beyond but “it does take us places we were never able to see before,” according to WKU astronomy professor Richard Gelderman. ([full story](#))

### **GIS master's graduate appointed to new position**

**Chris Blinn**, who earned his M.S. Geoscience degree in GIS from WKU in May 2012, has been appointed Lead GIS Specialist at [Advanced Network & Computer Services, Inc.](#) (formerly Mark Rolley Consulting), in Evansville, Ind. ANCS is an IT consultancy firm that specializes in providing solutions in many areas such as GIS, Web Development, Network and Security, VAX, Mobile products, and Graphic Design. ANCS also is the contracted IT firm overseeing the day-to-day IT operations of the City of Evansville and Vanderburgh County, Ind. Its customer base also includes local businesses in the area, and even some other local governments in other states. ([full story](#))

### **WKU Annual High School Programming Contest**

The Department of Computer Science at WKU held the annual High School Programming Contest on April 19<sup>th</sup> and the Gattton Academy Programming Contest on April 24<sup>th</sup>. The contests are sponsored by the Department of Computer Science, Ogden College, and WKU. Seven teams from four high schools in Kentucky participated in the contest. The schools were Barren County High School, Bowling Green High School, Nelson County High School, and Warren Central High School. Each team consists of up to three students. The first, second and third place winning teams of the High School contest were Nelson County, Warren Central, and Barren County, respectively. Each member of the first-place winning team (Chandler Young and Aaron Brown) from Nelson County received a \$1,000 scholarship. Three teams (each with up to three students) from the Gattton Academy participated in the Gattton contest. Each member of the first-place winning team (Sam Dong and Akhil Ghanta) received a \$1,000 scholarship. The annual High School programming contest attracts the attention of high schools throughout Kentucky. It also brings excellent students to the Computer Science Program at WKU. Congratulations to

all the students who participated. For more information, please contact the contest coordinator, Dr. Rong Yang via email at [Rong.Yang@wku.edu](mailto:Rong.Yang@wku.edu) or by phone at (270)745-2940.



### **Teams from Louisville, Russell win 2013 Kentucky Science Olympiad**

The state finals for the [2013 Kentucky Science Olympiad](#) were held April 27 on the WKU campus. The overall winners were **duPont Manual High School's Red Team** from Louisville in the high school division and **Russell Independent Middle School's Maroon Team** from Russell in the middle school division. ([full story](#))

## **International**

### **WKU team tackles Caribbean climate change with international collaborators**



At the beginning of January, a group of faculty from WKU's [Department of Geography and Geology](#) visited Belize for a two-day meeting hosted by the [Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre \(CCCCC\)](#), which included members of Cuba's meteorological organization INSMET (Instituto de Meteorología) and the Belize National Meteorological Service. ([full story](#))



### **WKU's Hoffman Institute project addresses water crisis in West Africa**

In February 2013, [Hoffman Environmental Research Institute](#) staff member and graduate student Jonathan (Joneo) Oglesby journeyed to Niger, West Africa, to conduct preliminary thesis research with the Songhai people. ([full story](#))



### **WKU geoscientist presents lecture at karst water conference in China**

WKU Distinguished Professor Chris Groves returned from Guilin, China, this week where he gave an invited keynote lecture at the [International Symposium on Karst Water under Global Change Pressure](#). ([full story](#))

## **Awards/Recognition**

### **2 more WKU students earn national floodplain management certification**

Two more WKU students have earned national certification in floodplain management. Rory Watson, a senior Interdisciplinary Studies major from Leitchfield, and Doug Woodson, a junior Civil Engineering major from Franklin, recently passed the Certified Floodplain Manager examination. [\(full story\)](#)

### **18 inducted into Alpha Epsilon Delta**

Eighteen WKU students were recently inducted into the [Alpha Epsilon Delta](#) National Health Pre-professional Honor Society. AED is dedicated to the encouragement and recognition of excellence in pre-professional health scholarship, including medicine, dentistry and veterinary. The Kentucky Gamma Chapter at WKU was established in 1968 and inducted its 1,000<sup>th</sup> member during the Nov. 19 ceremony. [\(full story\)](#)

### **3 professors receive state nature award**

The state [Nature Preserves Commission](#) has given three [WKU biology](#) professors its annual award for work that protects biological diversity. [Albert Meier](#), [Ouida Meier](#) and [Scott Grubbs](#) received this year's Biological Diversity Protection Award for their work creating the [Upper Green River Biological Preserve](#). [\(full story\)](#)



### **WKU faculty member appointed State Geographer**

Dr. Margaret M. "Peggy" Gripshover, associate professor of geography in WKU's [Department of Geography and Geology](#), has been appointed as State Geographer for the Commonwealth of Kentucky by Gov. Steve Beshear. [\(full story\)](#)

### **7 Study Away students receive SGA scholarships for winter, spring**



Student Government Association (SGA) awarded [Study Away scholarships](#) to seven WKU students taking courses during winter term and spring 2013. [\(full story\)](#)

### **WKU student named nation's Top Army Engineer Cadet for 2013**



The [Society of American Military Engineers](#) has selected WKU Cadet Sean Tedtaotao as the nation's Top Army Engineer Cadet for 2013. Tedtaotao, a senior mechanical engineering major and military science minor from Guam, competed with fellow Army cadets who represented the other 273 host ROTC programs from around the country. [\(full story\)](#)

## WKU named a StormReady University by NWS



Since there is no way to stop severe weather, being ready for it is key. That preparation has resulted in WKU being designated a StormReady® University by the NOAA National Weather Service Forecast Office in Louisville. John Gordon, meteorologist in charge, and Joe Sullivan, warning coordination meteorologist, made the presentation March 20. ([full story](#))

## Biology: Graduate student receives Gisela Mosig travel award

WKU biology graduate student **Amanda Seaton** was awarded the Gisela Mosig travel award to attend the 113th General Meeting of the American Society for Microbiology in Denver on May 18-21. The grant is awarded to the graduate student who submits the best-qualified abstract. Seaton works in Dr. Rodney King's laboratory where she is defining the requirements for early gene expression in a newly discovered bacteriophage called HK639. The Mosig award honors the memory of Gisela Mosig (1930-2003), a pioneer in the field of phage T4 genetics, and is sponsored by New England Biolabs, a recognized world leader in the discovery, development and commercialization of recombinant and native enzymes for genomic research.

## Mechanical engineering team wins ASME district design competition



What do baby monitors, radio-controlled vehicles and nuclear disasters have in common? If you need to build a small robot to inspect a simulated damaged nuclear reactor like post-tsunami Fukushima, you might use a baby monitor to give you telepresence, and you might use RC vehicle parts to avoid obstacles so you can accomplish the emergency tasks humans couldn't do safely: report on pressure gauge readings, start a cooling pump and retrieve a radiation sensor. ([full story](#))

## Civil engineering students first overall at regional competition



For the second year in a row, WKU civil engineers took first place overall at the Ohio Valley Student Conference. WKU students finished first in balsa wood bridge building, second in environmental engineering, third in steel bridge and concrete canoe and fared well in other events — concrete horseshoes, concrete softball bat, technical presentation, surveying and AutoCAD — at the regional competition April 4-6 in Cleveland, Ohio. ([full story](#))

## 2013 awards: Ogden College of Science and Engineering

WKU's Ogden College of Science and Engineering presented its annual awards on April 21 at the Carroll Nicely Conference Center. The following students were recognized for their academic achievements. ([full story](#))

## Geography and Geology: Department head lectures as Marsico Scholar

Dr. David Keeling, Geography and Geology Department Head and University Distinguished Professor, gave several lectures at the University of Denver last week as the 2013 Marsico Visiting Scholar. ([full story](#))

## Research/Grants



### **28 WKU students present research at annual Posters-at-the-Capitol event**

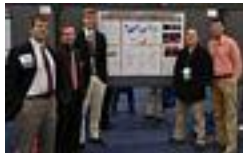
Twenty-eight WKU students presented research during the 2013 Posters-at-the-Capitol event Feb. 21 in Frankfort. ([full story](#))

### **Richard S. Reynolds Foundation gift will enhance WKU geology program**



WKU announced Tuesday (Feb. 5) that it has received a gift of \$120,000 from the Richard S. Reynolds Foundation of Richmond, Va., made in honor of William G. Reynolds, who had local business ties in the western Kentucky area. ([full story](#))

### **Meteorology students present research at national conference**



Students from the WKU meteorology program presented their research findings at the 93<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting of American Meteorological Society. Each winter, the American Meteorological Society hosts a research conference that brings in thousands of meteorologists, climatologists and weather enthusiasts. The meeting is among the largest in the world and, according to the AMS, “promotes the development and dissemination of information and education on the atmospheric and related oceanic and hydrologic sciences and the advancement of their professional applications.” ([full story](#))

### **Engineering-Manufacturing-Commercialization Center hosted open house**

The EMCC is a new center that has been created within the Applied Research and Technology Program (ARTP) as part of the Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Institute. The EMCC is located in Thompson Complex Central Wing, room 16. ([full story](#))

### **2013 Student Research Conference session winners**

More than 300 students presented research during WKU’s 43rd annual Student Research Conference on March 23 at Gary Ransdell Hall. The conference, part of REACH (Research Experiences and Creative



Heights) Week, showcased the scholarly activities of graduate and undergraduate students of diverse disciplines from across WKU's Bowling Green and regional campuses. [\(full story\)](#)



### **WKU science graduate awarded NSF Fellowship**

**Shelby Rader** of Irvine, a 2012 graduate of the Honors College at WKU who majored in Geography & Geology and Chemistry, has been awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. This highly competitive award provides three years of financial support (including salary, travel and research funding) for graduate study while Rader pursues a science doctorate at the

University of Arizona. The NSF-GRF is intended to challenge those scientists who will become future international leaders in their field, by providing the opportunity to explore cutting-edge areas of transformative science. The inclusion of three WKU Ogden College of Science and Engineering alumni in the award list (Shelby Rader, along with **Schuyler Wolff**, Physics and Astronomy; and **Amanda Smelser**, Biochemistry) pays tribute to WKU's ongoing mission of educating and training the highest quality students in the nation.

### **WKU Microbiology Club receives grant**

The WKU Student Chapter of the American Society for Microbiology recently received a \$300 grant from the Kentucky-Tennessee branch of the American Society for Microbiology to support chapter activities. The chapter's mission to promote student interest and enhance microbiology education at WKU, to further theoretical and practical knowledge of microbiology related research, to provide educational outreach programs to the community, and to promote student participation in local, state and national ASM meetings.

### **WKU Geoscientists Publish Research and Viewpoints**

Faculty and students in WKU's Department of Geography and Geology have been busy during the Spring 2013 semester preparing, revising, and publishing manuscripts in national and international journals that report on several research initiatives. In addition, faculty continue to contribute to ongoing discussions about pedagogy and research strategies via opinion pieces and viewpoints. [\(full story\)](#)



### **Green River Grotto, other groups clean Crumps Cave**

On April 21, five years of hard work for the Green River Grotto student organization and WKU's Hoffman Environmental Research Institute, with help from numerous other like-minded organizations, including the Greater Cincinnati Grotto, Louisville Grotto, Hart of Kentucky Grotto, Pine Mountain Grotto, and the American Cave Conservation Association, culminated in a grand cleanup at the

Crumps Cave Education and Research Preserve in Warren County. [\(full story\)](#)