

CLAS *notes*

The Newsletter of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences



Message from the Dean

Everyone wants to back a winner, which makes things easy for members of the CLAS community. We are recognized consistently for our quality educational programs. Remaining at the top of our game takes a strong commitment from our faculty and administrators. But in recent years it has required something else as well: private financial support.

For the past seven years, New Jersey has steadily reduced its funding for higher education, leaving us with no choice but to seek other means of support. As CLAS alumni, I know you recognize the value of a top-notch education. In fact, many of you choose to attend graduate school here, or give back to the College through programs that assist today's undergraduates. What you may not realize is that we need your financial support as well.

With over 20 undergraduate majors and more than 3,000 undergraduates presently enrolled, CLAS is the largest of Rowan's seven colleges. We should be at the forefront of alumni donations. As you read this issue of CLAS Notes, please keep in mind the pride you have in the degree you earned from the CLAS. And please consider what your support can mean to today's students...and tomorrow's.

Sincerely,
Jay Harper

CLAS Helps Women Build New Lives

Forty women fighting to overcome drug addiction at Seabrook House's residential MatriArk Family Center in Bridgeton are receiving a helping hand through a unique new CLAS program. BOAST (Behavioral Office-Based Achievement and Success Training) was launched in February, and within a month 10 participating women entered the workplace with new skills and noticeably more confidence in their abilities.

Staffed by six undergraduate students in CLAS's Specialization in Behavioral Services for Children and their Families program and two graduate students — one from Rowan and the other from Temple University — BOAST uses a hands-on approach to teach life and work management skills to women preparing to return home.

"This really is a unique program because it incorporates both a workplace component and a life skills component," said CLAS psychology professor and BOAST director Mary Louise Kerwin. "We have, in effect, created a simulated society that helps these women learn firsthand how to do everything from dress and conduct themselves properly in the workplace to balance their check-books. And because they are learning in a simulated environment, it's safe to make a mistake and learn from it."

BOAST was one of only eight projects selected from 153 applications to receive a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant as part of its New Jersey Initiatives program. The three-year grant totals \$295,000.



Rowan junior psychology major **Christina Breen** and **Professor Mary Louise Kerwin** (both standing) work with women in the BOAST program at Seabrook House.

Rowan University Discovers: Lemaire's Summer Excursions Bring Learning to Life Around the Globe

When it comes to teaching, geography professor Denyse Lemaire's classroom truly is the world. Since 2005, she has spent summer break teaching for-credit courses abroad, instructing her students to actually storm the shores of Normandy, holding geology class at the edge of Mount St. Helens and administering exams aboard transatlantic flights. This year, her busy schedule includes three different class tours exploring three continents, allowing students to experience geography, history and culture firsthand.

"As a geography and geology professor, I think the most wonderful thing is to see the look on my students' faces when they discover something new," said Lemaire, who personally visited nearly 70 countries before developing her Rowan University Discovers series. "I like to see the awe that comes across their faces when they experience firsthand what many people only read about in books."

This year's itinerary includes a 25-day tour of Australia, New Zealand and Fiji; a two-week excursion through five European nations, beginning with a visit to the beach at Normandy and attendance at a Memorial Day ceremony to honor the Americans who died there in 1944; and a



Geography and Anthropology Professor Denyse Lemaire spends her summers teaching CLAS courses abroad.

'I like to see the awe that comes across their faces when they experience firsthand what many people only read about in books.'

three-week tour of 14 American national parks in nine western states. Tour sizes range from 18 to 26 participants, and, as with her trips in prior years, available spaces were filled within a matter of weeks.

"I pride myself on making the trips affordable, educational and fun," said Lemaire. "To make that happen, I do everything myself, including planning the routes, booking the rooms and airfare, taking the reservations, and even finding friends to drive the buses we rent to travel around. It's all too important to me to entrust to someone else."

In 2005, Lemaire, a native of France, organized her first summer trip for Rowan students, to China. The following year she expanded the tour to include Tibet and added a European trip to the summer series. Australia and the national parks followed a year later. Her trips are the hallmark of a CLAS education, which emphasizes hands-on, student-centered learning as part of a value-added experience.

"Exposing students to the world is what I do, and I love it," she said. "I'll never forget talking to the dean about my idea for a travel program and being encouraged to come up with an itinerary so we could discuss it. I was so excited that overnight I developed not just the itinerary, but contacted travel agencies, mapped everything out and had everything in place but the final prices. I haven't stopped since."



Students in last year's National Parks course enjoyed the view at Glacier National Park in Montana.



Raymond Hennessy turned his passion for the environment into a career.

Hennessy '82 Keeps Ports Secure

CLAS alumnus Raymond Hennessy has spent more than 20 years keeping New Jersey's ports safe, monitoring environmental issues and, since Sept. 11, working to prevent terrorist threats. As worldwide concern over global warming continues to escalate, Hennessy is addressing a global issue here at home by helping the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey reach carbon neutral status by 2010.

Originally a chemistry major with plans to pursue a career in dentistry, Hennessy decided that course of study wasn't right for him after his freshman year, so he turned to his fraternity brothers for advice. They urged him to focus on what he loved — the outdoors — so he majored in Life Sciences, with a concentration in the environmental track.

Entering the environmental field in its infancy, Hennessy worked on the county level and for the state Department of Environmental Protection for a few years handling water and

air compliance issues before joining the Port Authority in 1986. Today he is the Authority's environmental programs manager for New Jersey marine terminals, currently in Jersey City.

During his more than 22 years with the agency, Hennessy has taken on several other responsibilities beyond overseeing compliance issues at the agency's marine facilities. Several years ago he received N.J. state fire official

certification and managed the fire safety issues at the ports as an added aspect of his job. Following Sept. 11, he was selected to work on an assignment for the port to manage and comply with the Department of Homeland Security programs.

"I've loved every moment of my work in the field," said Hennessy, who earned his bachelor's degree in 1982 and still spends his leisure time enjoying the outdoors. "In the end, my TKE brothers were right — you have to do what you love. And I am passionate about what I do."

'You have to do what you love. And I'm passionate about what I do.'

New Major Focuses on Flexibility

The newest major at CLAS perfectly fits the needs of many of today's undergraduate students, offering remarkable flexibility in both the course of study and credit transfers. The Bachelor of Arts, Liberal Studies: Humanities/Social Science (LS:HSS) major allows students to create their own specialized major within a broad range of subjects and allows incoming students to transfer a large number of credits.

"This course of study was developed in the spirit of a true liberal arts degree, with a good deal of flexibility built in," said Aimee Burgin, the program coordinator. "We also accept up to 90 transfer credits, which helps fill a great need for non-traditional students who have completed many credits toward degree completion but have not committed to a specific course of study."

The major has proven so successful that more than 50 students have enrolled in LS:HSS since last fall. This fall, the program will welcome its first freshman class.

Students enrolled in LS:HSS may choose two program sequences from among such subjects as cartography and geography information systems, English, history, law & justice studies, philosophy, political science, Spanish, women's studies, advertising in the workplace, business, computer science, journalism, mathematics, physical sciences (chemistry, physics, general) and physics.

In addition to the traditional course of study, an accelerated version of the Liberal Studies major is being offered through the College of Professional and Continuing Education (CPCE) as the Saturday Studies Program. This more-structured accelerated program currently combines law & justice with business, and may be expanded to other areas in the future, according to Burgin.

After 25 Years, Dr. James Retires from CLASroom

When Dr. Herman D. James stepped down as Rowan University's fifth president in 1998, he went back to his first love: the classroom. Now, after teaching for a decade in CLAS, the Graduate School and the College of Education, he's planning to retire. Fittingly, he's capping his quarter-century of service to Rowan just where he wants to be...teaching Rowan students.

"My whole idea was to finish my academic career in the classroom," says James, who taught undergraduate sociology courses, including the intro course, in CLAS.

Ironically, James, under whose 15-year tenure Glassboro State College became Rowan University and received what was then the largest gift – \$100 million – ever made to a public college or university, never planned to be an administrator.

"I am extremely proud of my presidency, but I came upon administration because while I was in the sociology department at the University of Massachusetts the president there asked me to take an administrative assignment," James recalls. "I told myself it would be temporary — five years and then back into the classroom. I finally returned to teaching in 1998, more than 20 years later."

His decision to retire this year was based on a desire to meet new challenges, including visiting every continent in his lifetime, he says.

"I stepped down as president after reaching almost all of the goals I had for Rowan when I first took the position," said James, who attended Alabama's Tuskegee University

James' legacy to Rowan and CLAS is profound, according to CLAS Dean Jay Harper. "The combination of his years of experience in higher education and his intimate knowledge regarding how decisions are made was an invaluable resource for our students," Harper says.



Dr. Herman James plans to travel in his retirement.

CLAS Notes

Volume IV, Issue II Spring 2008

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CLAS Notes is published twice a year by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences to highlight the achievements of its faculty, staff, students and alumni. Send suggestions and comments to:

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Michael Grafals '08 became the fourth CLAS student in the past three years—and the second straight English major—to land a prestigious Fulbright Program scholarship. Beginning this fall, Grafals will study and teach in Spain.

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