

Consortium Connections

Connecting campuses to promote excellence in science and mathematics

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Winter is here and the snowflakes have been flying! Did you know that [Wilson A. Bentley](#) (1865-1931) a farmer from Vermont, modified a very primitive box camera with a microscope to take photographs of snowflakes in 1885? He said "*Under the microscope, I found that snowflakes were miracles of beauty; and it seemed a shame that this beauty should not be seen and appreciated by others. Every crystal was a masterpiece of design and no one design was ever repeated. When a snowflake melted, that design was forever lost. Just that much beauty was gone, without leaving any record behind.*"

Mark your calendars for these events in 2010!

- **Executive Committee Meeting - Chicago, Saturday May 1st**
- **Strategic Planning for Early Career Success: Workshop for new faculty, senior graduate students and postdocs, Lawrence's Bjoklund Lodge, Door County, WI July 9-11**
- **Part 2 of our Campus Sustainability Workshop Series - Beloit College - early fall 2010**
- **2010 Undergraduate Research Symposia**
 - Nov 5 - 7: Biological Sciences and Psychology, The University of Chicago
 - Nov 12 - 14: Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science, Washington University in St. Louis

C-SURE Application Deadline Approaching: Feb 26th

Summer Research Opportunities for [Undergraduates in Cognitive, Computational and Systems Neuroscience \(CCSN\) at Washington University](#)

Undergraduate students from Consortium campuses are invited to apply for summer research fellowships in the CCSN program. During this second summer of the program we are aiming to fund a total of 10 undergraduates, 5 from Wash U and 5 from the other Consortium campuses. If selected students will conduct research in partnership with an undergraduate from Wash U under the mentorship of a faculty member affiliated with the Cognitive, Computational and Systems Neuroscience (CCSN) pathway.

Stipends, housing arrangements and travel allowances are all included in this unique summer research opportunity. The deadline for applications is Feb 26th, 2010, and fellows will be announced in late March or early April. Our [website](#) has more information about the program and questions about applying can be addressed to [Professor Dennis Barbour \(dbarbour@biomed.wustl.edu\)](mailto:dbarbour@biomed.wustl.edu).

2010 Janet Andersen Lecture Award: Nomination Letters Due April 25th



We are eager to receive nominations for the 2010 Janet Andersen Lecture Award. We invite faculty, students, staff and administrators to nominate faculty members in the Consortium for this award. We encourage nominations for faculty members of any rank who have vigorous research programs involving undergraduates, who are exceptional mentors for undergraduate research students, who are engaged and skilled teachers, or who create interdisciplinary research opportunities for undergraduate students.

The Consortium will accept nominations for the 2010 award until April 25th. The award recipients will be selected at this spring's Executive Committee Meeting on May 1 in Chicago. To see more information on our 2008 and 2009 Janet Andersen Lecture Award Winners please visit our web site <http://www.mathsciconsortium.org/janet-andersen-award>.

Please send a letter of nomination with relevant details about the faculty member and a recent CV of the nominee to Karen Nordell Pearson at nordellpearson@hope.edu. Call (616-395-7217) or email Karen with any questions.

Executive Committee Meeting: May 1st

The Midstates Consortium's Executive Committee will be meeting Saturday May 1, 2010 at the O'Hare Marriott. If you have any questions or ideas please talk to your [campus representative](#). Campus Reps will have copies of the meeting agenda by mid-April.

New Faculty Workshop - July 9-11, 2010

Early Career Strategic Planning: Tools for Success



This summer's workshop for new faculty, advanced graduate students and postdocs will be held at Björklunden, Lawrence's 'northern' campus in Door County, Wisconsin on the weekend of July 9-11th. Björklunden, pronounced "Bee-york-lun-den", meaning birch forest by the water, is a large property with a gorgeous lodge on the shores of Lake Michigan. For more information about Björklunden, visit <http://www.lawrence.edu/dept/bjork/>.

More details about the workshop can be found on our [website](#). Online registration will begin in early May and will continue through the end of June. Graduate students and postdocs interested in teaching at liberal arts colleges, newly hired tenure-track or term appointment faculty, and faculty just completing their first or second years are encouraged to participate.

As you complete searches for new colleagues, please make them aware of this opportunity. Participants from the last several summer workshops found the weekend valuable and fun!



Green Updates



Moving Campus Sustainability Forward through Collaborative Student-Faculty-Staff Projects

After the weekend workshop at St. Olaf in October 2009, teams from campuses left with Action Plans for moving sustainability efforts forward on their campuses in the short and long term. Here are some updates from campuses around the Consortium.

Beloit College: The Beloit group has met in a variety of formats including joint faculty-student meetings to brainstorm ideas for moving forward. (contributed by Yaffa Grossman, grossman@beloit.edu)

- Chemistry Professor Brock Spencer is teaching an Environmental Studies course on developing research databases related to sustainability. He's had lots of energy in the course. Contact: spencer@beloit.edu
- Associate Professor Pablo Toral taught his Global Political Ecology course last semester. This course involves a group-based activism project, the most notable of which resulted in the creation of the Beloit College Revolving Fund for sustainability activities. The students solicited and obtained \$25,000 from the Beloit Student Congress and are working on a senior gift as well. See the "Related documents" link on <http://www.beloit.edu/environmental/> for the details.
- Finally, we've developed and announced the Beloit College Sustainability Fellows Program for this summer. This program will fund six fellows to work on campus and in the local community on sustainability projects. See http://www.beloit.edu/environmental/sust_fellows/.

Colorado College: Several posters at the workshop featured online Sustainability Tours that campuses are using to help communicate and share sustainability initiatives and successes. The Campus Sustainability Council recruited a volunteer working group to help get a Sustainability Tour going for Colorado College. Check out what we've got so far at this [link](#). (contributed by George Eckhardt, GEckhardt@coloradocollege.edu)

Grinnell College: Our action items were: (1) to communicate what we learned at the conference broadly; (2) to pursue "cross-fertilization" between Grinnell and other campuses to support the use of local foods in dining; (3) to seed the idea of an alumni fund for campus projects to conserve energy or other resources; (4) to consult with other campuses about ways to renovate and restore buildings in "green" ways; and (5) to consider ways that Grinnell's field station can partner with field stations at other Midstates schools to study environmental change and ecological restoration.

We're working on all 5 items, but here's an update on the first 3.

- Item 1 (publicity): We sent a conference report to 29 administrators, faculty, and students who set campus policies or advocate for sustainability. We also spread the word about the conference to students, employees, and alumni this month via a story in a glossy campus publication (A periodical newsletter called "g-mail".)
- Item 2 (local foods): We held a meeting with Grinnell's Dining Services Director to advocate incorporating local foods in campus dining, and we put him in touch with Augustana College's Director.
- Item 3 (green alumni fund): We've talked to our College and Alumni Relations Office and received positive feedback. We will continue these conversations. Meanwhile, a group of students has been working on trying to create a similar fund through Grinnell's "Senior Challenge" (i.e., the graduating seniors' college gift-project). This fund would be specifically dedicated to the large wind turbines that Grinnell has planned for years but has not yet built.

Finally, though it was not one of our action items, another outcome of the conference is that it inspired our "EcoCampus" committee to bring Suzanne Hansen (Macalester's Sustainability Coordinator) here in March to talk about her work there and to brainstorm about how we could enhance campus sustainability at Grinnell. (contributed by Vince Eckhart, ECKHART@grinnell.edu)

Macalester College: Macalester College is working on implementing our new [Sustainability Plan](#). Right now we are planning for energy efficiency and renewable energy on campus. In addition, the Sustainability Office is working with 25 students involved in the Sustainability Student Worker Network to implement projects in their own departments across campus. (contributed by Susanne Hansen, shansen2@macalester.edu)

Washington University in St. Louis: The team of four students from WashU went home with several ideas to pursue. Melissa Legge (melissa.legge@gmail.com) contributed these updates.

- We returned to WashU after the conference really inspired to creating student worker positions in sustainability work for our campus. We have been working with the a member of the administration to make this happen by exploring options for creating work-study positions and we may be able to pull something together for next fall.
- Some students are working to create a student-managed fund for green projects through our student government. A committee of the student government would determine which projects to fund based on proposals from other students and student groups. This would give students a direct fundingsource for sustainability initiatives. We have had a lot of guidance from Matt Kazinka of Macalester College as we are working on this idea.
- Recently, our Chancellor created a committee to consider incorporating sustainability education into academics here as part of a larger initiative to save energy on campus. Students in this subcommittee are drafting a white paper of recommendations on how to have students both learn about sustainability and participate in campus sustainability efforts through their coursework, drawing heavily on some of the ideas shared at the MCMS workshop.
- WashU recently released its [Sustainability Plan](#) and members of the administration have been presenting it to many stakeholders all over campus and collecting feedback. This is something Wash U has been working on for a very long time, and it is an exciting milestone for us.

Reminder: funding is available to support speaker visits and short term consultations anytime, all year!

Recent Speaker Visits:

On Sept. 24, 2009 St. Olaf Chemistry Professor Robert Hanson spoke at Washington University. His talk was titled "*Using Quaternions to Identify and Describe Protein and Nucleic Acid Secondary Structure*". Sophia Hayes from the Chemistry Department was the host for "this all too brief visit."



Recent Short Term Consultations:

On Feb. 4, 2010 Marion Fass from Beloit's Biology Department went to Augustana to share her expertise on SENCER (Science Engagement for New Civic Engagement & Responsibility) with Dell Jensen and others in the sciences.

Scott Bur from the Gustavus Chemistry Department asked David Lopatto from Grinnell's Psychology Department to consult on four projects during a visit in mid-February, 2010. The projects included the Chemistry Department 10 year review, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Program 10 year review, an HHMI grant and a CCLI grant.

If you have a seminar that you would like to give, please add your name to our database.

visit: <http://www.mathsciconsortium.org/speaker>

Comments from the Director



Friends and Colleagues,

I hope the second half of your academic year has gotten off to a great start. It is exciting to hear how groups of students and faculty have moved their sustainability agendas forward after the meeting at St. Olaf last October. Thanks to those of you who sent me updates. Planning is underway for the second in this series of meetings to be held at Beloit College this fall! Please send me your ideas for what you'd like to see happen at that meeting.

As always, we are eager to meet new faculty, graduate students and postdocs who want to spend a weekend on the shores of Lake Michigan in Door County, Wisconsin thinking and planning for success in their current and future academic positions. Please contact new hires and other junior faculty members, advanced graduate students and postdocs and encourage them to attend this workshop.

I'm eager to hear your ideas and to find ways to support what you'd like to accomplish, learn and explore. Please send me an email at nordellpearson@hope.edu.

Karen Nordell Pearson

image sources: www.bigplastichead.com/.../2008/12/snowflake.jpg

