

Consortium Connections

Connecting campuses to promote excellence in science and mathematics

Founded by the Pew Charitable Trusts

May 14, 2012

Vol. 6 No.2



Spring is here and everything is green! I hope you are looking forward to a productive summer of research. We just returned from our annual Executive Committee Meeting in Chicago and we're looking forward to welcoming a group of early career faculty to Hope's campus in July. See the details of these and other events in the newsletter below.



New Faculty Workshop - July 13-15, 2012

Early Career Strategic Planning: Tools for Success

This summer's New Faculty Workshop will be held at Hope College on the weekend of July 13-15th. We'll be starting at lunchtime on Friday and the meeting goes through lunchtime on Sunday! We're planning a workshop with lots of time for conversation, reflection, planning and fun! Hope's campus is located in beautiful downtown Holland, MI only a mile or two from the sandy beaches of Lake Michigan.

More details about the workshop can be found on our [website](#). **Online registration is open and will continue through June 12.**

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 at one of the Consortium campuses are encouraged to participate. The weekend will be a mixture of time for reflection and strategic planning for each participant, and time for discussions and presentations about teaching, pedagogies, establishing a research group, writing proposals for external funding, mentoring and much more.

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!

Congratulations!!! 2012 Janet Andersen Lecture Award Winners

Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science

Professor Tim Pennings
Department of Mathematics
Hope College, Holland, MI

Hope Math Professor Dr. Pennings does research on dynamical systems, mathematical modeling, and the infinite. He has directed Hope's Math summer Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) since 1995 and has mentored research students almost every year since 1990.

 *George Lisensky*

Tim has a famous Welsh Corgi dog, Elvis, who knows calculus. The two of them have given over 100 talks based on their papers "Do Dogs Know Calculus?" and "Do Dogs Know Bifurcations?" (written with Roland Minton) both published in the The College Mathematics Journal of the MAA.

The nomination letter for Dr. Pennings included this description of his work. "Tim exemplifies the professional ideals by which Janet lived. Since he began teaching at Hope College in 1988, Tim has profoundly impacted the lives of a great number of his students, whether mentoring them in mathematics research, teaching them in one of his many courses, or simply by conversing with them following movie nights at his house, after racquetball games, or over lunch. Regardless of the context, Tim is committed to providing his students with the best possible learning experiences and helping them grow as scholars and as people."

Professor Eric Cole
Department of Biology
St. Olaf College, Northfield,
MN

Biological Sciences and Psychology

 **William Hammer**

Eric Cole is one of St. Olaf's most versatile teachers whose courses include a research-intensive Developmental biology course, a January-term offering in Investigative Microscopy and off-campus offerings in the Caribbean and South Pacific. He is also known for a popular non-majors course entitled Life: Meaning & Mystery; Science, Spirit & Stewardship.

In the research laboratory Eric leads a team of undergraduate researchers in the exploration of the intricacies of Cell Biology and Developmental Genetics within a single celled organism: *Tetrahymena thermophila*. During the summer months, he also help deliver workshops with Dr. Leland Johnson on Developmental Biology at the Darling Marine Center, Damariscotta, Maine.

The nomination letter for Dr. Cole included this description of his work. "Eric has a mature research program that would serve as the base for an interesting, informative lecture at the undergraduate symposium. His research program has been well funded to the point of being a prototype for research funding at primarily undergraduate institutions and has involved a large number of student researchers. This is evidenced by the publications with students listed in his vitae (easily identified by the underlining of student authors). Students have been involved in research projects with Eric both during the school year and during the summer. He has interesting research results that he would present in a very stimulating and understandable manner."

Open Position, Director, Midstates Math and Science Consortium

The Midstates Consortium for Math and Science invites applications for the position of Director, starting August 1, 2012. The Director is responsible for promoting connections between faculty, students, staff, and administrators in the natural and applied sciences, including math and computer science, on the thirteen member campuses. The Director works with campus representatives (the Executive Committee) to sustain existing programs and develop new programs. In addition, the Director organizes and supervises the Program Office which includes supervision of a Program Assistant. The Director position is part-time, requiring approximately 15 hours/week throughout the year, including summer.

While the Director is usually a faculty member at one of the member institutions, other Ph.D.-level applicants with strong ties to one of the member institutions will be considered. Applications should be sent electronically to Prof. John Bleeke, Co-Chair of Search Committee, Department of Chemistry, Washington University (bleeke@wustl.edu) and should include a cover letter, curriculum vitae, two letters of recommendation, and a letter of support from a department chair or dean (indicating institutional support). Application deadline: June 15, 2012.

Executive Committee Meeting - April 21, 2012

The Consortium's Executive Committee met on Saturday April 21 at the O'Hare Marriott.

The Executive Committee met in Chicago April 21 to review the progress of the Consortium and reports as of March 31. The meeting began with breakfast and everyone going around the table to introduce themselves as there were five new campus representatives in attendance, Janice Pellino, Carthage College, Phoebe Lostroh, Colorado College, Brad Chamberlain, Luther College, Amy Kolan, St. Olaf College, and Meghan McNulty, the University of Chicago. We honored Wes Pearson, who after serving for more than 20 years as St. Olaf's representative, is stepping down this summer. Activities from the summer of 2011 through the spring of 2012 were reviewed and approved as well as upcoming activities for the spring and summer of 2012. The meeting continued with discussion of Consortium leadership changes and planning for transition, selection of the 2012 Janet Andersen Lecture Award recipients, review of Consortium finances for 2011-12, and ended with discussion and approval of the 2012-2013 budget.

For meeting minutes or a summary of the discussion, please see your campus representative.

Save the Dates

2012 Undergraduate Research Symposia

As you observe all the summer research going on at your school please remember the dates of the Undergraduate Research Symposia and mention them to your students.

The Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science will be Nov. 2-3, 2012 at Washington University

and the Biological Sciences and Psychology will be Nov. 9-10, 2012 at the University of Chicago.

As you plan for your seminar and colloquium series, take advantage of funding to support speaker visits and short-term consultations.

You can apply for these funds to support visits anytime during the academic year or in the summer!

- **Fri Apr 6th 2012**

Muhammed Abu Baker, Professor of Biology at Gustavus Adolphus spoke at Lawrence University "*Cape to Cairo: Habitat Selection and Community Structure of South Africa and Egyptian Small Mammals*"

- **Fri Mar 23rd 2012**

Jeff Johnson, Professor of Chemistry at Hope College spoke at Gustavus Adolphus College "*Breaking Carbon-Carbon Single Bonds: Teaching an Old Bond New Tricks*"



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,

When you see them, please thank your campus representatives for coming to our annual meeting in Chicago in April. It is always good to spend time around a big table discussing ideas about how we can make the programs we offer even more valuable to students, faculty and staff. Because we are in the midst of a leadership transition, the representatives spent some time during the meeting discussing the future of the Director's position and the Program Assistant.

During the Executive Meeting it was our pleasure to recognize the work of Wes Pearson, who has served as St. Olaf's campus representative since the Consortium was founded more than 20 years ago. We also thanked Marlene Field for her excellent work for more than 10 years as the Consortium's Program Assistant.



It has been my pleasure to serve as the Consortium's Director for the last 6 years and I am eager to see how the Consortium will continue to grow and develop under the leadership of the next Director. I anticipate good things will come with the fresh perspective and creativity of the new leadership team.

Regards, Karen Pearson

Beloit College • Carthage College • Colorado College • Grinnell College • Gustavus Adolphus • Hope College • Knox College
Lawrence University • Luther College • Macalester College • St. Olaf College • University of Chicago • Washington University