

theindependentvoice

Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges... Educators, Employers, Community Partners

Building a College & University Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) Network

The efforts of CCIC-member institutions to assist in shaping an economically competitive science and technology infrastructure in Connecticut have been enhanced by our participation in a National Science Foundation funded STEM Faculty Development project in conjunction with Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL). The project's goals include gaining an understanding of how to work within existing networks to strengthen expertise within and across such networks with an eye towards strengthening student learning in STEM fields. (www.pkal.org)

CCIC has been selected as one of three formal networks across the nation to participate in this multi-pronged effort. To further strengthen the project work, we have invited participation from the Connecticut State University System. So far, there have been two all day summits for faculty and administrators. The sessions focused on defining and learning about pedagogies of engagement to enhance teaching and learning. Participants have seen various techniques in action through a simulation exercises and learned of others through discussion. They also talked about barriers on campus to embracing pedagogies of engagement and ways to overcome these barriers. The cadre of faculty and deans interested in this initiative has grown significantly in the few months since it began, and we now plan to seek funds to support campus-based efforts in addition to the learning summits.

As noted by PKAL, this initiative spotlights what is known about:

- how individual undergraduate faculty in STEM disciplines can actively engage students in their own learning
- how programs in these fields can shape learning experiences through which the students are introduced to and socialized into the natural science community on their campus
- how academic deans and other institutional leaders can support the efforts of individual faculty, programs, and departments, helping to shape the intellectual, social, financial, and physical infrastructures essential for undergraduate natural science communities to flourish on their campus.

Ohio Educator to serve as new President of St. Vincent's College



Martha Shouldis, Ed.D., has been named President of St. Vincent's College, a sub-

subsidiary of St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

St. Vincent's College is the only two-year Catholic College in the State of Connecticut and offers an Associate in Science

degree in nursing and allied health sciences as well a general studies. It also has a wide range of certificate and continuing education programs.

Sister Marie Burns, D.C., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of St. Vincent's College, said Dr. Shouldis was selected after a national search and that the entire board was impressed "by her level of experience and the successes she has achieved at her

various assignments, and her commitment to the success of our students."

Dr. Shouldis comes to St. Vincent's College from Mercy College of Northwest Ohio in Toledo, Ohio where she served as Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty from 2002 to the present.

As Chief Academic Officer, she focused on the education and preparation of graduates for the fields of Nursing (AS, Pre-

licensure and BSN completion), Health Information Technology (AS), Radiologic Technology and Therapeutic Massage (AS) and Health Care Administration (BS) for the College's campuses in Toledo and Youngstown.

Dr. Shouldis' was awarded her Ed.D., in Higher Education Administration with a minor in Adult Education from West Virginia University. She also earned a

New Pres. (cont. p. 3)

This semester, Connecticut College welcomed its first class of Science Leaders - 17 bright, diverse students handpicked to participate in a unique program designed to increase the number of women and minority students graduating from the college with a degree and research experience in the sciences.

The program, funded by a National Science Foundation grant, is designed to foster a passion for science through applied research and close association with faculty and other science students, and prepare students for careers in the sciences through close faculty mentoring, hands-on research and internship opportunities. Students enrolled in the program receive enhanced scholarships, additional mentoring and support, career preparation and counseling and assistance applying to graduate and medical school.

"Connecticut College offers a comprehensive science education - our students go on to be world-class researchers, doctors and academics," Dean of the Faculty Roger Brooks said. "We're delighted that we can now offer these opportunities to more students from underrepresented groups."

Chemistry Professor Marc Zimmer, who is leading the program, said the inaugural group of Leaders all receives significant financial aid, and that



CAPTION: Chemistry Professor Marc Zimmer, center, stands with the first group of students enrolled in Connecticut College's new Science Leaders program.

about half of the students are already conducting research with professors - a rare accomplishment for freshmen.

Canissa Grant, who is researching fireflies with Chemistry Professor Bruce Branchini, said Connecticut College's small classes and financial aid offer made her decision to become a Science Leader an easy one. "I just really liked the atmosphere here," she said.

Zimmer said the students are enrolled in many of the same classes, and that all of the students are taking his first year seminar, "Glow," in which they study Green Florescent Protein - the protein that makes some jellyfish and other organisms glow in the dark. As part of the class, the students will travel with Zimmer to Vieques, Puerto Rico, to witness glowing coral firsthand. These experiences, Zimmer said, will help the students form a cohesive support group.

"With Science Leaders, we've tried to create a cohort of students with similar interests who can help each other with science over the four years," Zimmer

said.

Sokkha Hak, who came to Connecticut College through the Bright Prospect Scholar Support Program, which helps minority students apply to college, said she chose to enroll in the Science Leaders program over pursuing a science education at UCLA. "I chose Connecticut College because of the research opportunities," she said. "It is just the perfect fit for me."

As part of the program, faculty and students will also work to increase interest in science among high school students by team teaching at partnership high schools, presenting at science summer camps and volunteering through new and existing community outreach programs at local schools.

All prospective science majors at Connecticut College who are U.S. citizens and who qualify for need-based financial aid are eligible for the program, but admission priority is given to women, students of color, first-generation college students and students who are economically disadvantaged.

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UB grads scooped up by employers, defying gloomy national hiring trend

University of Bridgeport graduate Mike Samaan '08 never had to look for a job. Sikorsky offered him one producing helicopter blades after Samaan dazzled during a paid

summer internship. Heather Morgan '08 graduated from UB's Fones School of Dental Hygiene, and was immediately hired by a Danbury, Conn., dental office. She's not alone: all of her graduating class found work.

And Righthero Phillips '08 received several job offers after earning a bachelor's degree in international political economy and diplomacy at UB's International College. These leaps from college to careers starkly contrast a recent national poll, which finds job prospects for U.S. college graduates are at the lowest levels in six years. Employers plan to hire just 1.3 percent more graduates in 2009 than they did a year ago, according to a survey by National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). That's far slower than the 16 percent hiring increase posted by employers in 2008.

The grads say the outlook for University of Bridgeport students is brighter in large part because the school focuses on providing career-oriented education so in demand by employers.

"At Fones, they taught us to interview and how to write a good resume. I think that really helped," said Morgan, 23, whose new job perks include 401K retirement benefits, health insurance, and paid vacations.

UB's design programs include required classes, such as Web Applications and Busi-

Rensselaer's International Scholars Program Promotes Global Citizenship

ness Practices, which have been created with feedback from industry employers.

Samaan, 22, of Shelton, was among last year's graduates who completed the industrial design program before working for Sikorsky. At UB, Samaan won a \$10,000 scholarship from the global wireless industry for one of his inventions, a steel headset. Samaan credits the award, and the respected reputation of UB's industrial design program for accelerating his career. "It just worked out really well," he said. Righthero Phillip's pending offer with Department of Contract Management Agency culminates a longstanding goal of working in government.

"I'm very interested in politics," said Phillips, 25, who had turned down other employment offers before accepting one that was "the right job." International College graduates like Phillips bolster their resumes before they enter the workforce thanks to the school's career-minded curriculum. Its required internship, for example, puts students to work in the diplomatic field, overseas, or in government before earning a diploma. That training is perfectly timed. The government plans to hire 19.8 percent more college graduates in 2009 than a year ago. That outpaces other private industries included in the NACE study (http://www.naceweb.org/public/joboutlook_special102208.htm)

"With passport in hand, the computer bag over my shoulder, and purse gripped under my arm, I put my best foot forward and made my way through the different steps of check-in." - Cassandra Asvestas, ISP '08

"We got to hear from the highest ranking software engineer at IBM (Rome Software Laboratory). The focus of his presentation was on how IBM went from a national company, to a conglomerate of international companies, to now a multi-national company." - Nick Saretzky, ISP '08

"The key to this city (Shanghai) is knowing where to go. Some places might cost you 300 rennibi for dinner, where the place next door might cost 30." - Nick Considine, ISP '08

These three quotes are from students who participated in Rensselaer's inaugural International Scholars Program (ISP) in June 2008. This exciting 10-week summer program provided recent college graduates with a global learning experience in Europe and Asia, and an accelerated career-building opportunity, as they make the transition from college to the working world. The students who completed the program earned 40 percent of the requirements toward a Rensselaer master's degree in Management or Information Technology.

ISP 2009 has been enhanced to now provide students with a com-



Rensselaer ISP Information Technology students in front of the Coliseum of Rome.

plete one-year accelerated master's degree program which includes a nine-week summer term abroad: one week sailing on Cunard® Line's Queen Mary 2® for the transatlantic journey to Europe with classes beginning aboard the ship; four weeks in Rome, Italy; and four weeks in Shanghai, China. All ISP students will participate in the international summer travel regardless of the term in which they begin their master's degree.

Students gain a new perspective on the world and themselves living in Rome and Shanghai not as tourists, but as global citizens. ISP is an exceptional opportunity that provides students with international networking experience and a one-year master's degree from Rensselaer for a competitive edge to jump-start their careers.

Degree tracks include Management and Information Technology with global emphasis on trade, innovation, security, and competitiveness. Students are met and taught by world leaders in industry and visit major corporations overseas. Also, all

students are part of a project team, gaining first-hand understanding of global business and advanced technology. Applications are currently being accepted for ISP 2009. For more information, please visit: www.ewp.rpi.edu/isp.

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New Pres. (cont. from p. 1)

Certificate, Management Development Program (MDP) from Harvard University and a Master of Public Health from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, School of Public Health.

She earned her Bachelor of Science in Public Health Dental Hygiene from Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, Indiana, and an Associate of Science, Dental Hygiene from Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. XXX

The CT legislature will have 28 new members in the House of Representatives and 5 new senators. Newly elected legislators whose district includes a CCIC member are:

- Rep. Gary Winfield** - Albertus Magnus College, Yale Univ.;
- Sen Anthony Musto** - St. Vincent's College;
- Rep. Tony Hwang** - Fairfield University
- Rep. Ezequiel Santiago** Univ. of Bridgeport.

Overall, 50 legislators received their degree from a CCIC member institution while 57% of legislators have a degree from an independent college.

University of New Haven Forms Articulation Agreements With Area Community Colleges

HCC and GCC Students Offered Scholarship Opportunities and Guaranteed Admission

This summer the University of New Haven held formal signings of dual admissions and core-to-core articulation agreements between the University and Gateway Community College (GCC) and Housatonic Community College (HCC).

The new agreements facilitate the transfer of part- and full-time Housatonic and Gateway Community College students to the University of New Haven. Included in the agreements are academic grants of up to \$12,000 for academically strong students. "Our goal is to make UNH the preferred institution for community college graduates who want to transfer to a four-year university," says Art Goon, dean of the UNH University College, which administers the program. Goon also points out that plans are in development for articulation agreements between the University of New Haven and other Connecticut community colleges.

Goon points out that there are typically three types of articulation agreements with community colleges: dual admissions, core-to-core and program-to-program. Until recently, the articulation agreements UNH had with various community colleges were strictly program-to-program, or specific to a particular major, such as criminal justice or accounting. The recently signed agreements with Gateway Community College and Housatonic Community College contain all three components.

Under the dual admissions agreement, GCC and HCC students are guaranteed admission to any UNH bachelor's degree program including full-time, part-time evening, and accelerated-degree programs, with third-year status, on the condition that they:

- Graduate from GCC or HCC with an associate of science or associate of arts for which there are program-to-program agreements;
- Earn a minimum GPA of 2.50 or better;
- Complete the dual admissions intent form by the time they make application to UNH;
- Satisfy all other UNH admissions requirements.

Under the core-to-core agreement, UNH agrees to accept and apply the general education requirements embedded in the GCC and HCC associate degrees to the appropriate UNH core competencies. Students will still need to complete the UNH core competencies not satisfied by the GCC and HCC general education requirements, and certain grade and transfer guidelines must be met in order for the community college students to be eligible.

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Student Success Statewide



The Independent Voice is a publication of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges, a public policy association representing Connecticut's nonprofit independent higher education institutions.

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The Independent Voice follows a regular rotation schedule featuring four of the sixteen member institutions in each quarterly issue.

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