



COSAM Covalence E-News, May 2010

Headlines

- [COSAM Outreach Hosts AU Explore](#)
- [COSAM Professors Receive On-Campus Recognition](#)
- [COSAM Junior Selected for the REU NSF Fellowship](#)
- [Arboretum Announces Photo Contest Winners](#)
- [COSAM Digital Updates](#)

COSAM Outreach Hosts AU Explore



On Tuesday, May 4, [COSAM Outreach](#) hosted some 1,500 middle school students on campus for the sixth-annual [AU Explore](#). Representing 29 schools, students along with faculty and parents visited interdisciplinary stations including Build a Kaleidoscope, Physics of Music and All About Eyeballs, among others.

Slimah Crumble, a sixth grader at Drake Middle School in Auburn, enjoyed the Science of Glow the most. “We put chemicals in a tub, and they glowed red, yellow, blue and green. I love science, and today I got to see how it works.”

Another Drake sixth grader, Callie Earles, said she enjoyed panning for gold.

“AU Explore is a hands-on opportunity for science to follow the student out of the classroom and into the real world,” said Silvia Scaife, a Drake Middle School teacher. “One of the college volunteers was so encouraging to our students. He told them not to deny their intelligence. One day being smart will pay off.”

Mary Lou Ewald, director of COSAM Outreach, said, “AU Explore is a unique opportunity for middle school students to spend some quality time on a college campus and learn about the exciting possibilities in science and mathematics. Since 2005, COSAM has hosted more than 10,000 students and teachers at this annual event.



Salimah Crumble and Callie Earles, Drake Middle School sixth graders



“The level of participation in the event by COSAM faculty and students is phenomenal. Their creativity in presenting higher-level science concepts in a fun, non-threatening environment is the key to continued success. Their enthusiasm for science is what sparks these young students’ imaginations,” said Ewald.

[Back to Headlines](#)

COSAM Professors Receive On-Campus Recognition



Dr. Robert Boyd, Biological Sciences

Dr. Robert Boyd, professor of Biological Sciences and Dr. John Gorden, instructor of Chemistry, each received special recognition on campus in May 2010.

The Learning Community (LC) at Auburn University recognized Dr. Boyd as the Learning Community Coordinator of the Year. The LC's general purpose is to help students transition to university-level work and to connect them to others with similar interests (both freshmen and more advanced students). Dr. Boyd teaches Conservation Biology in this setting.

"The awards committee couldn't have identified a more deserving recipient of this award than Dr. Boyd. His Learning Community course is designed to inform and excite freshmen about issues and potential careers in the emerging field of biological conservation," said Dr. Jack Feminella, Biological Sciences department chair. "Dr. Boyd's course has been highly successful both in helping students develop effective study skills to navigate their challenging curricula, and bringing

into clear focus Auburn's commitment to education about global environmental stewardship and sustainability."

"It was a nice surprise," said Dr. Boyd. Since fall 2008, Dr. Boyd has worked with Dr. Sharon Roberts, Biological Sciences, in addition to Ruthie Payne and Chris Wyckoff from Academic Support, in designing and running the Conservation Biology class.

Members of the Honors College selected Dr. Gorden as the Professor of the Year for the Honors College. The University Honors College offers qualified Auburn students a unique academic experience, designed to provide the advantages of a small college in the midst of the many diverse opportunities available at a large university.

"Dr. John Gorden is one of the most thoughtful and persuasive young teachers I have encountered in my three decades of academic life," said Dr. James Hansen, director of the Honors College. "His handling of the honors chemistry classes has been nothing short of masterful. He also goes out of his way to help students in any way he can. He makes students work for their grade, but if they give a solid effort, they will learn chemistry."

Dr. Gorden said his efforts in the classroom aren't about chemistry, but how chemistry relates to life. "I'm fortunate (in the Honors College) to have a lab in addition to my classroom. This allows more one-on-one interaction so that I may relate how something works to everyday life. It's important to tap into a person's passion."

[Back to Headlines](#)

COSAM Junior Selected for the REU NSF Fellowship



Michael Narcisse-Cousar, a junior in Microbiology, was selected by Dr. Holly Ellis, associate professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, to work on evaluating the mechanism of desulfonation of the alkanesulfonate monooxygenase enzyme from *Escherichia coli* in summer 2010 under The Research Experiences for Undergraduates program (REU).

"Students seeking degrees in the sciences at Auburn University are often required to perform undergraduate research. Each student working in my lab is assigned an independent project and is not merely an assistant to the graduate students," said Dr. Ellis.

The REU supplement was granted to Dr. Ellis from an ongoing NSF-funded proposal. "The REU supplement is an excellent opportunity for investigators that possess NSF funds to obtain fellowships to support undergraduate research over the summer months," said Dr. Ellis. "My overall goal is to provide this REU opportunity each summer to under-represented students in the sciences at Auburn University, and hopefully encourage students to further their degree in a graduate education. Funds for the REU program will be requested in subsequent proposals and will include additional students in research training. The hope is to eventually establish a full REU site involving several investigators within the Chemistry and Biochemistry department."



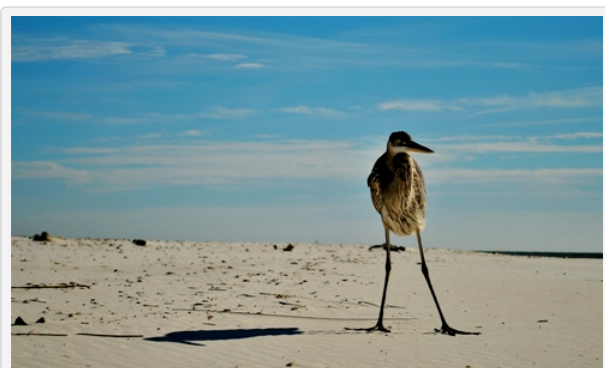
Dr. Ellis selected Narcisse-Cousar out of three students who provided and met the following requested material and criteria:

1. Personal statement describing their interest in research and how research would help them with their future academic endeavors.
2. Biographical sketch that included their honors and awards in addition to service and outreach to the College and community.
3. The student had to possess a minimum overall 3.0 GPA to be considered for the REU.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to do research for NSF. This will not only be an outstanding learning experience that many people will benefit from, but a perfect catalyst to jump start my career," said Narcisse-Cousar.

[Back to Headlines](#)

Arboretum Announces Photo Contest Winners

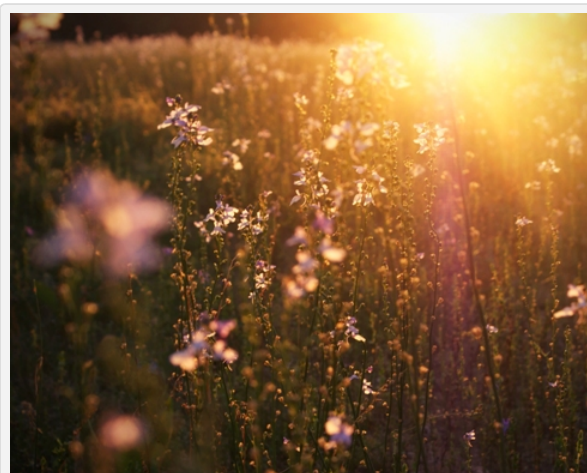


"Beach Bird" taken by Doug Baumann

The College of Sciences and Mathematics [Donald E. David Arboretum](#) 2010 photo contest winners were announced on April 29 at a special ceremony. The contest, a collaborative effort between COSAM's Donald E. Davis Arboretum and Auburn's Department of Art, featured nearly 100 entries that were judged in seven categories including: Birds and Mammals, Davis Arboretum, Reptiles and Amphibians, Other Wildlife, Flora, Artistic, and People's Choice. The People's Choice award allowed the public to participate, as all entries were on display in the Department of Art's Biggin Hall for more than a week with a ballot box in place for voting on an overall favorite photograph.

This year's People's Choice award was given to Jonathan Stone for his photo, "Mild and Hazy." Other contest winners were: Doug Baumann for "Beach Bird," John Rhodenizer for "Little River Falls," David Cline for "Lotus Frog," Julia Bartosh for "A Second Shimmer," Liliana Stern for "White Trillium," and Patty Tyler for "Crossvine."

Some of the winners and contest entries will be featured in the upcoming 2011 Arboretum calendar.



"Mild and Hazy" taken by Jonathan Stone

[Back to Headlines](#)

COSAM Digital Updates

[A Day in the Life](#)





COSAM Student Services Parent's Website



COSAM Scrubbing for Germs



Program Episode 35: Nobel Laureate Dr. Harry Kroto talks chemistry and philosophy.

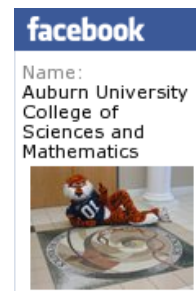
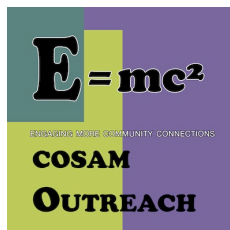
2010 Spring Graduation and COSAM Picnic

COSAM Limitless Learning

Program Episode 36: Col. Hank Hartsfield: COSAM alum and NASA astronaut reflects on past and future U.S. space programs.

Graduation Farewell

[Back to Headlines](#)



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