Scholarship in the spotlight
Second annual conference showcases undergrad research
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More than 170 student researchers showed off their scholarship through presentations and performances during the second annual Georgia State Undergraduate Research Conference on March 14 at the Student Center.

Organizers said the goal of the conference is to encourage research and scholarship among undergraduates. That effort continues to grow, as the number of entrants in this year's conference increased by about 40 students over last year. The number of participating departments also increased — from 18 to 22.

"It was great," said Deborah Garfin, a psychology lecturer and one of the conference organizers. "It was so impressive that the students did a phenomenal job. There were faculty members who said several presentations could have appeared at a professional seminar."

The event showcased presentations and performances by students working in teams of up to 10 members. Projects could be presented orally, by poster or through an artistic performance.

John Sullivan, a senior religious studies major, won first place in the oral presentation. Biology students Bianca Lestrer, Erin Keen-Rhinehart, Brett Teubner and Teal Pelish won first place in the poster competition. They were sponsored by biology professor Timothy Bantness.

Nija Dalal, a student in the Welch School of Art and Design, won first place for artistic performance. Her faculty sponsors were associate professor Liz Throop and lecturer Paul Kodeck from the Welch School.

During the afternoon awards ceremony, Sullivan’s project was selected as winner of the Provost Award. His presentation was on the role of mantras and sound in Hinduism.

"I was very surprised and excited," Sullivan said. "I’m very grateful. It’s nice validation of my research."

Georgia State is sponsoring the three category winners to attend the sixth annual Colonial Academic Alliance Undergraduate Research Conference at Northeastern University in Boston from April 4-5.

Also at the awards ceremony, communications professor Leonard Teel received the inaugural Faculty Award for Undergraduate Research, which is given to a faculty member who shows commitment to fostering the research of undergraduate students. Teel received an award of $2,000 and gave the keynote address at the conference.

President’s Award winners announced
By Liz Babiarz • lbabiarz@gsu.edu

For his continued work developing projects for his students to assist the needy in the Atlanta community, associate professor of sociology Charles Gallagher has been named the outstanding faculty member for the 2008 President’s Awards for Community Service and Social Action.

Gallagher is one of five award recipients who will be honored by Georgia State President Carl Patton and the Office of Civic Engagement during a 2 p.m. ceremony April 9 in the Student Center Speaker’s Auditorium. This year’s keynote speaker is Alicia Philip, president of the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta.

The President’s Awards were established to honor faculty, staff, students and community groups making a significant, positive impact in the community and demonstrating an outstanding commitment to service and social action. The university community is invited to attend the ceremony.

“We know people don’t engage in service to receive recognition," said Lovell Lemos, director of the Office of Civic Engagement. "So, we feel it is important that we take the time to celebrate their accomplishments to let them know we appreciate what they do, and hopefully their work will inspire others to give back and address a community need.”

Over the last decade, Gallagher’s sociology students have logged about 1,500 hours of community service. Some of their service projects have included tutoring students in underperforming schools, helping low-income women prepare for job interviews and delivering meals to those suffering from advanced AIDS.

What is the purpose of the Usery chair?

The idea for the chair is to help promote an understanding of the workplace and enhance the well-being of workers. The chair will conduct and facilitate high-quality research and interact with researchers, policy-makers and community leaders dealing with labor policy. I believe that good research really does help lead to — maybe not ideal — but at least more reasonable public policies.

Where were you before joining Georgia State's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies?

I started here in January. For the last eight years I’ve been at a small liberal arts university, Trinity University in San Antonio. It is a wonderful place to send one’s kids to college. But it had a small department and I missed having research colleagues. Prior to that, I was at Florida State University for quite a few years. My contact with Georgia State started following an academic meeting at which my wife was at dinner talking with a Georgia State faculty member and saying how much she loved Atlanta.

How has the American workplace changed over the years?

Stated simply labor markets are more competitive and the nature of jobs has changed. Increased trade and immigration have increased competition. Computing technology has led to a loss in jobs with tasks that are readily programmable or routinized – production jobs, reservation agents, etcetera, complemented employment in jobs with non-routine tasks involving analytic and abstract thinking. These changes help explain some of the increased earnings inequality.

What type of research are you planning as the inaugural holder of the Usery Chair?

Much of my past research has looked at wage determination – basically how wage differences are determined. I’ve focused on the effects of skills, in particular education and job experience; institutions such as unions; discrimination; and public policies such as deregulating airlines and trucking. I will continue work along these lines but with particular emphasis on how worker attributes, such as schooling, interact with job-specific tasks and skill requirements to determine worker compensation.

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Beware of quick fixes to trim belly fat

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“Belly Fat Gone,” “Flatten Your Belly in Four Days,” “Five Foods to Help Banish Belly Fat.” These are a few of the titles found when scanning health magazines. All the stories pointed to research published in Diabetes Care in 2007 on body composition that used three different diets with the same calories but different nutrients. The researchers recruited 11 Spanish volunteers (that’s right, only 11 subjects, average age of 62 years, with a family history of diabetes). All were obese and insulin-resistant. All subjects followed the diets for 28 days. One diet was high in carbohydrates, the second was high in saturated fat and the third was a Mediterranean-type diet that was high in monounsaturated fats.

These heart-healthy fats are found in avocados, olives and olive oil, nuts and seeds and dark or semi-sweet chocolate. Results showed that weight and fat were unchanged, but when on the high-carbohydrate diet, body-fat distribution was altered and fat tended to accumulate in the gut. That is a bit different than claiming that foods high in monounsaturates shrink belly fat.

I’m not criticizing the study; the authors found that a diet rich in monounsaturated fats prevented (but did not reduce) belly fat from accumulating when compared with a high-carbohydrate diet in older obese men and women, and that has implications for disease prevention. They also reported that insulin resistance was lowered with the Mediterranean diet type.

All of the plans restrict calories while including foods rich in the heart-healthy fats. One diet plan called for 1,600 calories a day eaten in four 400-calorie meals. Again, nothing wrong with that diet plan, but let’s call it what it is — a diet that restricts calories. Adding unlimited servings of guacamole, macadamia nuts, olive oil, olives and chocolate without cutting calories will not help much.

To keep your belly in check, remember the acronym SED — strength training to preserve muscle mass, exercise aerobically to burn fat and diet should include heart-healthy fats while cutting about 100 calories per day.

Georgia State Student Recreation Center hosts annual Fit Fair

C O L L E G E N E W S

New technology services available

Georgia State’s Division of Information Systems and Technology (IS&T) is now offering a new customer service walk-up window and will soon open the Exchange, a faculty technology resource center.

The customer service walk-up window, located in 109 Library South, opened in January as a place for faculty students and staff to get general information about IT services available on campus. At the window, users can also receive help connecting their personal laptops to Georgia State’s wireless network, CatChat.

This summer, IS&T will open the Exchange, a resource center with the latest technology training and support for faculty and their students. Similar to the Digital Aquarium, the Exchange will have private and open work areas with PCs and Macs, conference rooms with Smartboards, a recording studio, and equipment available for checkout. Faculty can receive training to make podcasts, multimedia presentations and videos.

The Exchange will be located across from the walk-up window in 106 Library South. Both the customer service walk-up window and the Exchange will be open 8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, contact the IS&T Help Center at (404) 413-4357.

Celebration of Garifuna culture

Georgia State Student Recreation Center is bringing together health-related services from across the campus for its annual Fit Fair April 8-10.

“Outwiz, Outplay, Outlast,” the Fit Fair will kick off with a marketplace of different departments and groups sharing information about health and fitness, offering blood pressure and body-fat assessments as well as other health services and programs. The marketplace, and a scavenger hunt, will run from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. April 9 in the Library Plaza.

Test your department’s health by signing up faculty and staff for mini-fitness assessments. The Fitness Center staff will be traveling to campus offices from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. April 9 to offer the service. Make an appointment by calling (404) 413-7799.

Also on April 9, learn how to create healthy meals at a cooking demonstration at 1 p.m. in the Student Recreation Center lobby or participate in a bench press contest at 2 p.m. in the free weight area. For more information, visit www.rialtocenter.org/garifunasympo.html.

ANDREW YOUNG SCHOOL OF POLICY STUDIES
Panel to discuss former congresswoman’s legacy

Among the milestones Barbara Jordan is remembered for are being the first African-American woman elected to the Texas Senate and being the first African-American congresswoman elected, and re-elected, from the South.

But it will be her skillful oratory — as evidenced in her landmark keynote address to the 1976 Democratic National Convention — that will be remembered during a roundtable discussion at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies.

“Remembering Barbara Jordan: A Moral Voice of the American Political System” will be held from 2:30 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, April 8, in the 7th-floor seminar room.

The discussion panel will include former U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young and Max Sherman, professor emeritus and former dean of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. It will be moderated by Atlanta City Council President Lisa Borders.

The discussion, which will be followed by a reception, is free and open to the public.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Legendary performance artist Karen Finley to teach

A Maymester course for the department of English during Maymester, Finley’s performances have long provoked controversy and debate, and she has received both an Obie Award and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

English department chair Matthew Roudané added that she will also deliver a performance while at Georgia State. Finley performed last September at the Ritaio Center for the Arts.

“To say the least, we are thrilled that Karen will be teaching in the department of English here at Georgia State,” Roudané said.

Free and open to the public, the conference will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 26 in room 150 of the College of Education.

Gloria Merriex, an award-winning, 10th-grade math teacher from the Dual Fine Arts...
Students participate in food stamp outreach
Graduate students in assistant professor of social work Fred Brooks’ community projects course are collaborating with the Atlanta Community Food Bank’s (ACFB) Atlanta Prosperity Campaign. They’re working to implement software programs in identified ACFB partner social service agencies throughout metro Atlanta. The two software programs will identify services for which agency clients are eligible, with a focus on food stamps.

The goal of the Atlanta Prosperity Campaign is to help reduce inequalities and broaden wealth among Georgia residents. In Georgia, only 65 percent of eligible people participate in the Food Stamp program. An estimated 408,000 households in Georgia live with hunger or the threat of hunger, which amounts to 12.3 percent of households in Georgia, according to the Georgia Budget and Policy Institute. The students hope that their participation in this project will help to increase awareness of food and economic insecurity issues in Georgia.
Milestone honors

Georgia State’s Office of Employment Relations would like to recognize employees celebrating milestone anniversaries with the university. Milestone honorees will be recognized at a university-wide recognition reception 2 p.m. April 21 in the Student Center Ballroom. To view the full list of honorees visit www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfa/employee/2008MilestoneList.pdf.

Faculty and staff marking their 25th, 30th and 35th anniversaries are listed below.

25

Floyd R. Arnold, Information Systems and Services
Lynn H. Batson, Registrar
David Batson, English
James L. Brosa, College of Law
Janelle P. Cochrane, Child Development Center
James G. Emshoff, Psychology
Teryl K. Greer, Biology
Janet Ann Gabler-Hover, English
Jilke Gathier, Psychology
L. Lynn Hogan, College of Law
Nancy P. Johnson, Law Library
Laurne L. Jones, Business Administration Dean

Robin Morris, Vice President of Research
James D. Palmour, Library Services Support
Gloria M. Parsons, Building Services Administration and Support
Jerry Racklicof, Finance and Administration
Matthew C. Roudland, English
Cynthia A. Shinkle, College of Graduate Placement
Cherian S. Tschancher, Management
Annie H. Turman, Student Advising Services
Arthur Vendenberg, Information Systems and Technology
Marylyn C. Wills, Counseling Center
Jackie Wilson, Information Systems and Services
Michael P. Young, Facilities Management

30

David G. Anderson, Library
Michael B. Borden, Political Science
Suzanne D. Fagen, APSYS
Brian O. Gorman, Library
Victor M. Grant, Police
Elise C. Hall, Building Services
Carol A. Howell, School of Nursing
Annette H. Johnson, Counseling and Psychological Services
Bruce E. Kaufman, Economics Department
Toshima Kii, Sociology
R. Ray Lanier, College of Law
Jorge L. Martinez, Economics Department

Harold McIlrath, Physics and Astronomy
David J. McCreary, History
Laverne M. Morris, Property Control
George P. Moschla, Marketing
Ellen I. Pusiey, Provost/AP Academic Affairs
Donald C. Rieutz, Sociology
Susan E. Roman, Nutrition
Alphonso L. Rosser, Information Systems and Technology
Bruce A. Seaman, Economics Department
C. Leigh Selting, College of Health and Human Sciences
Philip E. Williams, Library Services Support

35

T. Kay Back, Communication
Kenneth L. Bernard, Marketing
Timothy J. Crimmins, History

William R. Folkhaus, Risk Management and Insurance
M. Armenia Williams, School of Nursing

Sushil Prasad, a professor of computer science, gave the keynote address at the first International Workshop on Mobile and Ubiquitous Context Aware Systems and Applications and then delivered an invited talk at the ninth International Conference on Distributed Computing and Networking.

Kim Reimann, assistant professor of political science, has been awarded the Social Science Research Council’s Abe Fellowship for her project, “NGOs, Transnational Networks and Regional Governance in East Asia.” The funds will support field research in Japan, Southeast Asia and Washington, D.C., beginning later this year.