The beginning of a new academic year is an exciting time for our department’s faculty, staff, and students. It’s a time to look ahead at all we hope to accomplish, and also a time to pause and look at all we have already accomplished. When I look at recent Department of Exercise Science achievements, the most prominent is the growth, which has been phenomenal - growth in the number of students, growth in the size and quality of our faculty, and growth in our extramural research funding.

Student growth is tremendous. This fall 127 graduate students are enrolled, an increase of 37% from last year’s enrollment (93 students). Although all of our graduate programs are growing, I am particularly pleased with the growth of the Ph.D. program. While the graduate program is growing, the undergraduate student numbers also are increasing, with 621 undergraduate students enrolled, an increase of 20% from last year.

Two new tenure-track faculty members joined the faculty this fall, Michael Beets and Raja Fayad. Also, three new post-doctoral fellows were added to the faculty this past year. Besides growing the faculty, we expanded our grant support staff. Now, in addition to Gaye Christmus, the department supports a grant administrator (Kristi Harmon) and an administrative assistant (Maude Holt). Their primary roles are to aid faculty in developing applications for funded projects and, and when projects are funded, to provide administrative support for these projects. If you have a chance, go to our website at http://sph.sc.edu/exsc/ and look at what the faculty and staff are doing.

Another area of accomplishment is the continued growth of funded research. The level of extramural research support and productivity in our department is outstanding. We received $4 million in external research support last year. Four of our faculty members, Jim Carson, Russ Pate, Patricia Sharpe, and Sara Wilcox, currently hold R01 grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Two additional R01 awards, to Steve Hooker and Russ Pate, are expected to be funded in early 2009. John Baynes holds an NIH Merit Award, a highly selective grant given to investigators with a track record of superior research and productivity. Mark Davis has significant research funding from several agencies, including the Department of Defense, DARPA, and the Gatorade Sports Science Institute. Shawn Youngstedt recently received a Department of Veterans Affairs Merit Award. And Stacy Fritz received grants from the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Other faculty members are conducting small research studies and pilot studies, in preparation for submitting major grant applications this year. In addition to faculty research funding, our graduate students...
LOST ALUMNI

Unfortunately, these are only a few of the folks missing from our database. Please look the list over & help us out if you can. Send an email or send the last sheet of this newsletter to:

Dorothy Yarborough,
Department of Exercise Science
USC Arnold School of Public Health
Columbia, SC 29208

Or you may call 803-777-5267, fax 803-777-8422, or e-mail yarboro@gwm.sc.edu.

Danton Lee Johnson
Donna Johnson
Jaymi S. Johnstone
Charles Keefer
Lisa Kerr
Regina Legaz
Ignacio Liunoras
Jennifer Paige LePors
Bryan Mattson
Amy Evans McGill
Jennifer McNab

CONGRATULATIONS SPRING & SUMMER ’08 GRADUATES

BS

Lucas D. Abney
Lindsay M. Allen
Njideka C. Anadu
Laura J. Burgess
Edward T. Collier
Tara C. Connell
Lauren C. Day
George C. Dutton
Marshall A. Edrada
Brandon A. Elmore
Suzanne B. Fraij
Antony L. Frederick
Derek A. Freshman
Tonya N. Gaines
Julia E. Gambone
Connie M. Garces
Travis J. Gawler
Amanda L. Gibson
Kimberly A. Gillespie
Sibhane E. Glasgow
Amanda R. Glawe
Brady B. Goggin
Christopher J. Golden
Monica P. Goodwin
Shanae L. Gordon
Cecilia D. Grant
Darren C. Hamilton
Marke Hammel
Susan C. Hughes
Allison W. Jones
Nathaniel R. Jones
Clifton B. Kelly
Ethan R. Kenney
Rebecca C. Kerr
Alison R. Kleckley
Danielle N. Lambert
Kimberly R. Langer
Abby E. Lavelle
Brittany L. Lawrence
Derek M. Liuzzo
Katelyn A. Lowe
Amber E. MacEachern
Morgan D. Mason
Julia C. McCabe
Briana C. Packer
Thomas H. Parsons
Aaron T. Paschall
Mary A. Pratt
Temehia C. Pressley
Maria P. Psomas
Angel D. Ready
Ashley S. Rovers
Brittany E. Roarden
Amanda L. Sapp
Naomi A. Schmalz
Colleen E. Schwartz

Alison B. Shaw
Katherine A. Small
Mary T. Stewart
Tiffany M. Terrell
Randi N. Thomas
Jarman L. Tisdale
Christopher T. Voerg-Jones
Nathan D. Vogan
Abbie S. Williams
Annie Q. Winstanley
William B. Woodberry

MS

Kylie A. Adams
Mark A. Cairns
Erin A. Keesterson
Jamie L. McClellan
Shannon E. Pallardy

PhD

Tyrone A. Washington

THE ACTIVIST

Fall 2008
The Activist is published biannually by the
Department of Exercise Science
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University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

Dorothy Yarborough, Editor
Latoya Townes, Layout Design

(Hooding ’08 photos courtesy of Tom Johnson)
Alumni Profile of Megan Matthews Buning, Class of 2003

Megan Matthews Buning left Exercise Science in 2003 after earning a bachelor of science degree in exercise physiology with a concentration in motor development and a cognate in athletic training.

Matthews Buning joined the Coastal Carolina University softball team as an assistant coach this past fall. She previously served as an assistant coach at Florida State University from 2004-2007, where she helped the Seminoles to three consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances, including a trip to the NCAA Super Regional in 2005 and guided Seminole pitchers to FSU and ACC records. At the same time Megan served as a recruiting aide to Hall of Fame coach Dr. JoAnne Graf and participated in the program’s summer camps.

A native of Greer, SC, Matthews Buning joined the FSU staff after a phenomenal career as a pitcher here at the University of South Carolina, where she set school records for strikeouts, complete games, innings pitched, and finished one win shy of the all-time win record. She was named a Third-Team All American in 1999, a three-time All-Southeast Region team member, and was a two-time All-SEC selection, finishing her career 11th on the NCAA career strikeout list with 1,090, while racking up 101 career wins.

Four-time member of the SEC Honor Roll, Matthews Buning was named USC’s Female Student Athlete of the Year in 2002. A seven-time SEC Pitcher of the Week was also named the SEC Softball Tournament MVP in 2002.

In addition to her playing experience at USC, Matthews Buning spent 2004 as a professional softball player for the New England Riptides, in April of 2004 took part in the Olympic Test event for the British National Team, and was the winning pitcher for the Gold Medal Game in Athens, Greece. In 2002 she was a silver medalist at the Puerto Rican Olympic Festival and also served as a guest pitcher for the British National Team at the Canada Cup in Vancouver.

The former Megan Matthews married Shaun Buning in 2003 and is currently pursuing her master’s degree in sports psychology at FSU. She resides with her husband in Conway, SC.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

DURSTINE

are also receiving extramural support for their research projects. Chris Kline received a Public Health Research Dissertation Award (R36), titled “Exercise: A Novel Treatment for Obstructive Sleep Apnea,” from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In January 2008, funding was obtained to support Tatiana Warren on an NIH National Heart, Lung, Blood Institute Research Supplement to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research. This award is a supplement to Dr. Wilcox’s R01 “A Partnership to Promote Physical Activity and Healthy Eating in AME Churches,” and provides both assistantship and research-related funds. Our faculty and students are doing an outstanding job in procuring extramural research funding.

Finally, one area that I have been working to develop, and in which I hope to see growth in the coming year, is financial support from alumni and friends of the Department of Exercise Science. The department has little money for student scholarships, and the financial needs of our graduate and undergraduate students are great. In order to overcome this concern, we have established the Alumni Scholarship Funds, which will be used exclusively to provide scholarships to students in the Department. I am asking you to make a contribution to this Fellowship Fund. You can donate quickly and easily by going online to our website at http://sph.sc.edu/exsc/ and click on the Ways to Give link which is found as the last item under Featured Links on the right side of the page. Look in particular for the Arnold School of Public Health and the Department of Exercise Science listings, and make your contribution directly to the Exercise Science Department. If you need help in making your donation to the department, please call our development office at (803) 777-3471, or e-mail shaney@gwm.sc.edu. Thank you for your support of our students and the Department of Exercise Science.

In closing, if in the future you have an opportunity to come to Columbia, please let me know, and I will show you around our new building.

-J. Larry Durstine-

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SAY HELLO TO…….

Mathur Rajesh, Research Associate working with Dr. John Baynes, came here from Mobile, Alabama, with his wife Sangeetha, a biologist in the School of Medicine, and their six year old daughter Jhanavi. Rajesh is an analytical chemist with specific skills in the application of liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry to solve problems in biochemical sciences. He earned his PhD in Chemistry from the University of Missouri-Rolla.

Harriet Cunningham, Program Coordinator for Faith, Activity, and Nutrition (FAN) Program. She’s a graduate of Clemson University and brings an extensive background in marketing and project management to that role. A member of Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) service sorority, she is also the recipient of numerous achievement awards and will bring the same energy to FAN. Harriet has repeatedly demonstrated concern for others in her role as an avid community volunteer on Boards like the United Way of Greenville, Better Business Bureau, Alliance for Quality Education, in her church and PTSA. She views the FAN Program as an opportunity to help people see that they can make small lifestyle changes that will have a major impact on their overall health. She has two children: daughter Candice is a student at Greenville Technical College and son Bennie is a student at Clemson University.

Assistant Professor Michael Beets who came to us from Corvallis, OR, where he was Post Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Public Health at Oregon State University. He earned his bachelor’s degree and two master’s degrees from Wichita State University and his doctorate from Oregon State University. His research interests focus on developing positive health behaviors as they relate to physical activity and diet of children with and without disabilities. Additionally, he is interested in how parents and siblings influence children’s behaviors. Michael and his fiance, Violet, enjoy running, swimming, biking, blueberry and peach picking, and can be often found enjoying the outdoors and sunshine. Their wedding will take place in Anacortes, WA (the gateway to the San Juan Islands) August 1, 2009.

Raja Fayad, another new Assistant Professor in the Department. He has been a research assistant professor in the Department of Human Nutrition, University of Illinois at Chicago. He has a medical degree from Aleppo University School of Medicine in Aleppo, Syria.

Denise McHugh, the new Administrative Assistant in the Physical Therapy Program, who works directly with Harvey Mathews. Denise was born and grew up in Columbia and lives in Irmo with her husband and three children. Her family leaves her little time for relaxing, but she enjoys reading when she can fit it in.

Norma Frizzell, Research Associate working with Dr. Baynes, who is originally from Ireland. There she studied biochemistry at Queens University Belfast, then completed her PhD there examining the effects of glucose modified proteins on the retinal vasculature during diabetic retinopathy. Norma came to USC four years ago to complete postdoctoral studies in Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry with Dr. Baynes. At the end of that position she returned to Ireland for one year but has now rejoined Dr. Baynes to study a novel protein modification they believe may be associated with mitochondrial stress during diabetes, exercise and cancer. They hope this work will provide a broader understanding of the complex events associated with mitochondrial dysfunction. When the South Carolina sun gets too hot for Irish skin, Norma enjoys disappearing into the North Carolina mountains and hiking for a weekend.

ALUMNI UPDATES

On July 25, 2008, Ashley Taylor Horne (BS ’06) married Matthew Stephen Williams of Columbia at St. Joseph Catholic Church. Ashley is employed with the South Carolina Heart Center as an exercise physiologist, and her groom, who earned a B.S. in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management from USC, works in his family’s business, Lizard’s Thicket Restaurants.

Kelly Spoon (BS’07) is a Wellness Specialist for Carolinas HealthCare System in Charlotte, NC. She works for a department called LiveWELL Carolinas, which is their employee wellness program. Their goal is to help employees with their efforts to improve their lifestyles, whether it be smoking cessation, weight loss, or an exercise program.

Claire Groschwitz (MS ’04) graduated May 17, ’08, from the University of Wisconsin with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. She is a captain in the US Army Veterinary Corps assigned to Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, Florida.

Brett Netherton (MS ’05) has moved into a new home he built in Prosperity, SC, where he is the owner of Rocworks, LLC. He’s very proud of the double-deck pontoon boat he’s built, with a rope-swing, water slides, and water balloon launchers on the top deck.

Ted Bridges (MS ’01) and wife Amanda greeted baby girl, Emma Grace, in Norfolk, VA, early in the summer of ’08.

Living in Greensboro, NC, and teaching physical education, Tonia Zehr Miller (MS ’01) checks in often with the Department.

Elizabeth Ann Hershey (BS ’07) married Jeffrey Scott Neal of Charleston on September 6, ’08, at the Citadel’s Summerall Chapel. Elizabeth Ann is attending the Palmetto School of Ultrasound, and Jeffrey has a BS in electrical engineering from the Citadel.

On November 29, Ella Margaret Nixon, who will be awarded a BS from Exercise Science in May ’09, will marry Matthew John Firko. The bridegroom-elect is an ’08 Clemson University graduate with a degree in Business Management who works with ProLogistix.
SOME RECENT EXERCISE SCIENCE PUBLICATIONS


Xuemei Sui, Timothy S. Church, Rebecca A. Meriwether, Felipe Lobelo, and Steven N. Blair, “Uric acid and the development of metabolic syndrome in women and men,” Metabolism Clinical and Experimental, 57; 845-852, 2008.


Doctoral candidate Will Lyerly married Erin Fitzgerald Farmer on June 28, 2008, at the First Presbyterian Church of Aiken. A reception followed at Woodside Plantation Country Club, the honeymoon was in the Dominican Republic, and the couple is at home in Gilbert, SC. Erin graduated from the College of Charleston and the University of West Georgia and is a school counselor at Lexington High School.

Chris Kline, doctoral student, is the recipient of a Public Health Research Dissertation Award grant (R36) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). He will investigate the effects of exercise as a complementary or alternative treatment for individuals who suffer from obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), a common sleep disorder that affects approximately 10% of adults.

The appointment of Harris Pastides as USC’s new president drew high praise and a lot of pride from friends and academic colleagues at the Arnold School of Public Health where he once served as our dean. Prior to his appointment as president, Dr. Pastides served as USC vice president for research. We all wish him the best.

Mei Sui, Research Associate, and husband Li welcomed Andrew Shanwei Qiao on June 27, 2008. He arrived weighing 7.7 pounds.

Russ Pate, USC associate vice president for health services, testified to the House Education and Labor Committee on Capitol Hill on July 24 during deliberations on the Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids Act (FIT Kids). He spoke in support of legislation that would encourage schools to put more emphasis on quality physical education and physical activity for all public school children.

Presentations:

Sara Wilcox presented and received a Society of Behavioral Medicine Citation Award for her presentation at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine in March ’08: “Adoption and implementation of a physical activity and low fat diet intervention in community health centers.” At that same meeting, she and doctoral candidate Meghan Baruth, along with others, presented “Physical activity, fruit and vegetable consumption, and church support in African American church members.”


The Research Consortium Research Writing Award Committee selected Steven N. Blair as a 2008 Research Writing Award recipient, based on his article, “Construct Validity Evidence for Single-Response Items to Estimate Physical Activity Levels in Large Sample Studies,” published in the March 2007 issue of Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport.

Research grants:

The National Cancer Institute (NCI, NIH) recently funded a four-year RO1 grant, with Jim Carson as the principal investigator, to study the role of inflammation in the induction of cancer cachexia.

Stacy Fritz received two new grants recently: one from the American Heart Association, “Examining Differences in Outcomes for Intensive Mobility Training Compared to Locomotor Training in Chronic Stroke,” and the other from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, “Commercially-Available Interactive Video Games for Individuals with Chronic Mobility and Balance Deficits Post-Stroke.”

Shawn Youngstedt is the PI of a recently approved for funding 3-Year Veterans Administration Merit Award entitled “Bright Light: An Adjunct Treatment for Combat PTSD.” Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is the most common mental disorder of war veterans.

Patricia Sharpe (principal investigator) and the Prevention Research Center have been awarded strategically given mini-grants of $15,000 each to help a Sumter County community struggling with chronic disease and physical inactivity get on its feet. The grant money is given through Sumter County Active Lifestyles (SCAL), a coalition of health-interested Sumter County residents that is the lynchpin of the PRC’s research project.
KEEP US INFORMED

Alumni Information Update
Please take a moment to send us information about your personal and professional activities, job changes, honors, research, etc. Send, fax, or e-mail your information to:

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E-Mail: yarboro@gwm.sc.edu

Name _________________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State _______ Zip ____________

Phone (____) ______________ Year of Graduation _______ Degree ______________

E-mail Address: _________________________________________________________

Employer ______________________________________________________________

What’s new with you? Job change? Job title or position? Personal events? ____________
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