

UMR Physics Faculty Receive Teaching Awards



Teaching Excellence Awardees Story, Waddill, Alexander, Bieniek

This past year, four physics faculty members were honored with *Excellence in Teaching Awards* from the College of Arts and Sciences. **Ralph Alexander, Ron Bieniek, Greg Story, and Dan Waddill** received the award for their outstanding effectiveness in large-enrollment courses. According to Dean Paula Lutz, "The award is designed to honor a group of faculty who make a special contribution to student retention." Our four were part of the nineteen faculty in the College to receive the award, which was initiated this year.



Bieniek Leads LEAD (continued from page 5) reluctant to get together and stand up to work at the board in front of everyone. But after a short while, they realized how much they were learning from each other and the occasional intervention of an instructor. It's wonderful to see the dynamics of learning brought to life."

Twenty-three faculty across campus now run LEAD-sponsored learning centers for foundational courses in physics, chemistry, basic engineering, computer science, electrical engineering, civil engineering and English composition. Bieniek notes "The campus is in the midst of a push to enhance active learning and the engagement of students in the learning process. The LEAD program is a major element of that effort. I am very glad to be part of it."

Congratulations to UMR's 2002 Physics Degree Recipients!

May 2002

Bachelor of Science

Steven Michael Alferink
Jason James Burnes
Lewis Matthew Foster
Charlie Robert Morgan Glaus

Master of Science

Benjamin Christopher Eimer

Doctor of Philosophy

Liquan An
Osman Ozturk
Muzaffer Mustafa Tabanlı
Srinivasa Lakshminaras Varadharajan

Professional Degree

Richard E. Slusher

December 2002

Bachelor of Science

João Da Silva Sosa
Lea Ann Cozort
Bernard Joseph Fendler

Master of Science

Carmen Marie Doudna
Jared Franklin Hund

Doctor of Philosophy

Kisa Saranganie Ranasinghe

Professional Degree

Douglas A. Heatherly

Leaving a Legacy Through Your Will

A planned gift makes a perpetual statement about your dedication to MSM-UMR. While many may not be able to establish an endowment today, they find that they are able to leave a significant legacy to the university through a planned gift, such as a bequest, life income gift, or life insurance. By making a planned gift, you show your loyalty to an institution that has played a significant role in shaping your future. For more information about giving a planned gift, contact **Judy Cavender** at 573-341-6090 or e-mail her at judyc@umr.edu.

Alumni Notes:

Bob Spratt (BS '58) writes "I am impressed by the work invested in the newsletter and enjoyed reading it. Also enjoyed chatting with the young man who telephoned me."

Choonbee Tan Zahn (MS '99) reports "we were blessed with the arrival of our son, **Jacob Zhan**, on November 30, 2001. Jacob weighed in at 8 pounds 13 ounces and was 21-1/2 inches tall at birth."

Chris Thornton (BS '90) started his own company, CATCO Technologies, LLC. He married **Pam Porchey** on October 20, 2001, and reports that he is loving married life.

Jerry Keifer (Ph.D. '79) has been promoted to the rank of Professor of Physics at St. Bonaventure University. UMR Alum **David DiMattio** (Ph.D. '99) also recently joined the St. Bonaventure Physics Department as Assistant Professor of Physics.

Dharma Abayarathna (PhD '89) is a Group Leader at Champion Technologies, Inc.

Arthur Nickless (BS '65) tells us that he and his wife Joan now have three grandchildren.

Amateur radio enthusiast **Don Schricker** (BS '74) invites you to visit him on the web at <http://www.qrz.com/w2inq>.

John Bosnak (PhD '63) retired from his position as Project Manager with Honeywell in April, 2002.

Roger May (BS '76) is owner and operator of telecommunications and internet company ASAP Reps.

Richard Thom (BS '67) writes "retired in November 1999 after 32 years with Hughes Aircraft Co. and Hughes Santa Barbara

Research Center, where I was Technical Director and Director of R&D. My wife and I have relocated to Whidbey Island, Washington, where we enjoy traveling when not splitting logs and scraping the moss off our house."

James Wilcutt (MS '67) was recently named Head of the Physical Science Department at Arkansas Tech University.

Jeff Schroeder (BS '95) writes "the clan continues to grow-I now have three kids with the birth of my son **Zack** in July 2001. Work is always an adventure, and owning three companies certainly keeps me busy. Still lovin' Colorado."

Osman Ozturk (PhD '02) has a postdoctoral position at the Chemistry and Biochemistry department at the University of South Carolina-Columbia, where he works on the analysis of the surface of catalysts.

Dan Odero (Ph.D '00) designs and implements state of the art treatment methodologies of cancer using external radiation beams for St. Francis Health Center in Topeka, Kansas.

Harry Dreste (BS '51) has enjoyed his 13 years of retirement. He keeps busy around the home, working on model electric trains and his old Studebaker cars. He belongs to two old car clubs and volunteers at the VA Hospital. He reports that his medical treatments are going well.

We were saddened to hear ...

Athel Merts (MS '51) passed away on December 18, 2001.

Howard Cole (BS '79) passed away in January, 2001.

Bieniek Gives Students a Big LEAD



Ron Bieniek

UMR physics professor **Ron Bieniek** has been named by UMR Chancellor **Gary Thomas** to head a campus wide program designed to enhance active learning and student engagement across the curriculum. As Director of the new Learning Enhancement Across Disciplines (LEAD) Program, Ron is developing a coordinated system of student academic assistance, with the main goal being to "find ways of increasing active student-oriented learning, particularly for students who need some assistance in developing their full potential."

The LEAD program grows out of the very successful Physics Learning Centers which Bieniek initiated eight years ago, and which now serve as a role model for Learning Centers in other departments. Staffed by trained faculty and undergraduate peer instructors, center instructors act as guides who encourage students to take greater responsibility for their learning in an atmosphere of cooperative engagement. Many visitors to the physics learning center remark on the camaraderie that develops when students help students, as instructors roam about the room.



Even students in Prof. **Allan Pringle's** new algebra-based College Physics course use the Physics Learning Center along side students of Engineering Physics. Pringle relates, "At first, my College Physics students were a little (continued on page 8)