



BIOSPHERE

The Weekly Bulletin of Biology

Biology Colloquium: Friday, 20 February 2015, 2:00 pm in CR 5125

“The Embryonic Origins of Hematopoietic Stem Cells”

Matthew Inlay, Ph.D.
 Department of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry
 UC Irvine

New Funding to Help STEM Teaching

Dr. **Gini Vandergon** is part of a team (drawing from the College of Science and Mathematics and the College of Education) that received a Bechtel grant for \$265,000 to improve student achievement in science and mathematics. The grant, “Preparing a new generation of educators for California,” provides funding for 18 months with a chance to apply for more funding in the future.

The funds will be used to study pedagogical improvements in approaches to teaching pre-service and in-service science and math teachers. Specifically, the team will implement and evaluate the effectiveness of enhancements in teacher preparation and professional-development activities on the campus in which their pedagogical tool Computer Supported Collaborative Science (CSCS) is embedded. This approach uses web-based technology, as well as

collaboration, to help students learn concepts in math and science.

The CSCS team’s previous work with science teachers provides evidence that this type of instruction is accessible and effective in high-need urban schools. Expanding the program will prepare teachers for 21st Century instruction that addresses the new standards for both science and math.

New Publication

Brooke Van Kummer and Dr. **Randy Cohen** are authors of an article titled, “Exercise-induced neuroprotection in the *spastic* Han-Wistar rat: The possible role of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF).” Their open-access article appeared in *BioMed Research International*. This paper is based on Van Kummer’s Master’s thesis and is the fourth article from her graduate student research at CSUN.

Biology Plays Key Role in Honor bestowed on CSUN by Apple

At the CSU Board of Trustees meeting last month, CSUN was named an [Apple Distinguished Program](#). This award was based, in no small part, on the work of Biology professors who (we're sure you'll have noticed) have been working hard to improve teaching with technology. Many have produced eLessons and flipped their classes and are using tablets in their classes to better engage Biology majors and non-majors alike. In addition, Biology professors are leading the rest of the campus by vetting which practices work best (as well as identifying those to avoid). Check out the [video](#) that tells about myCSUNtablet. You'll see some familiar faces.

At Meeting of Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology

G. Tsounis and Dr. **Peter Edmunds** presented, "Soft coral success in degrading reefs: A case study in St John, U.S. Virgin Islands."

Heather E. M. Liwanag, **Matthew M. Dickson**, **Sigfrido A. Zimmermann**, **Tanja Wolfmeyer**, and Dr. **Robert Espinoza** presented, "Rapidly adapting to the neighborhood: physiological responses of Mediterranean House Geckos to their introduced climates." Dickson, Zimmermann, and Wolfmeyer are Biology undergrads, and Dr. Liwanag was a former CSUN postdoc who is now an Assistant Professor at Adelphi University.

Marine Grads Funded

The CSU Council on Ocean Affairs, Science & Technology (COAST) recently awarded Graduate Student Research Awards of \$3000 each to **Sam Ginther** and **Calvin Won**.

Ginther's proposal was, "The effects of an invasive alga, *Sargassum horneri*, on kelp forest habitat and fishes at Santa Catalina Island, California." He works with Dr. **Mark Steele**.

Won's proposal was, "Spawning aggregation dynamics and sound production of the Barred Sand Bass, *Paralabrax nebulifer*, at Huntington Flats, California." He is working with Dr. **Larry Allen**.

Alum In Captain's Seat

Dr. **Miriam Golbert**, who completed her Masters with Dr. **Steve Oppenheimer**, is now the Chair of the Biological Sciences Department at College of the Canyons.

Biosphere: The Weekly Bulletin of Biology

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