



BIOSPHERE

The Weekly Bulletin of Biology

Biology Colloquium: Friday, 27 March 2015, 2:00 pm in CR 5125

“Connectivity of Coral Reef Populations: You Can't Always Get Where You Want”

Howard Lasker, Ph.D.
Departments of Geology and of Biological Sciences
University of Buffalo

New Publication

Dr. **Casey terHorst** is an author of a new paper in *Molecular Ecology*, “Causes and consequences of failed adaptations to biological invasions: the role of ecological constraints.”

MS Thesis Defenses from the Edmunds Lab

Dan Sternberg: Population biology of the sea fan *Gorgonia ventalina*. 10 am, Tuesday 24 March in CR 5201.

Hannah Nelson: Phenotypic plasticity in the soft coral *Eunice*. 10 am, Thursday 26 March in CR 5201

Dr. O.'s Case in *Nature & Science*

Dr. **Steve Oppenheimer** has letters in *Nature* and in *Science* (the two most important journals ... ever).

In both, his theme is that hundreds of undergraduates can profit from being part of a research program, gathering data, analyzing it, interpreting it, presenting it, and working with peers.

Such opportunities, generally speaking, are hard to come by, but Oppenheimer has built his career around research for the masses. Oppenheimer writes in the first person plural, by which we suppose he intends to imply that CSUN generally taps into a hearty chunk of the raw talent of the people.

Oppenheimer's zeal is relentless. Research and teaching can be devised to hold each other up!

Women-in-Science Highlight¹

—Nickie Cammisa

Olympia LePoint (1977–) is a two-time CSUN alumna. She has all of the accomplishments you would expect in a Women-in-Science highlight. She wrote an empowering book to help everyone

¹ This column comes from CSUN's Women in Science Club. See their [Facebook page](#) for more details.

succeed in math, *Mathaphobia*. She teaches college. She's a professional public speaker who started her own company. And, she's a rocket scientist (I'm not kidding—she helped launch 28 space shuttle missions). She was in the top 5 of 6500 students in her graduating class. All that's impressive, right?

But aside from her being close to our hearts here at CSUN, LePoint's story also tells us about overcoming adversity. She not only dealt with the obstacles that come with being a woman in math, she also grew up in one of the toughest areas of South LA. She and her sisters often feared for their own lives, she writes. For example, LePoint was attacked by an elementary school classmate who was a gang member. In her freshman year at CSUN, the 1994 Northridge Earthquake deprived LePoint of her belongings and scattered her friends. It takes a fierce spirit to rise to the top after all that.

LePoint writes, "If I became a rocket scientist, given such early dysfunction, I am convinced that you can be anything you desire: if you choose to work on removing fear from your life."

Alumnus Headed for Caltech

Andrew Hill has been accepted into the Ph.D. program at Caltech, starting in September. Hill has been working in Dr. **van Buskirk's** lab for the last two years, and graduated with his B.S. last May.

He who Speaks for the Mosses

Dr. **Paul Wilson** is the spokesman for a planned bryophyte chapter that is petitioning to exist under the umbrella of the California Native Plant Society. He recently testified before the CNPS's Chapter Council. He is on the agenda to testify again in three months. *Oh, lo, these existential questions!*

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