Memories of R. Carson Stringfellow

Like the rivers where he searched for mussels, Carson Stringfellow's life flowed and meandered through CSU history for the past 40 years. That flow came to an abrupt and unexpected end when he passed away on January 15, 2012.

Carson grew up in Talbot County and acquired the increasingly rare skills and common sense of a country boy. He graduated from Talbot High; his (1965) yearbook noted that he ran track and his classmates voted him “friendliest.” Inspired by his agriculture teacher, Dewey Turner, he enrolled in Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. From there he transferred to Columbus College. He was a senior when I joined the faculty and Bill LeNoir assigned him to be my first lab assistant. He showed his helpful nature and many skills as he constructed insect boxes, trapped host specimens for parasitology labs and collected more than 300 insects for his entomology class. After graduation he taught biology and science at Talbot County High. Later, he served as headmaster of Woodland Academy. In addition to teaching, he coached the basketball team and even drove the school bus. Carson’s dad, who also passed away this year, spent his working life as a laborer for Swift Textiles, and Carson took a position with Swift around 1975. He was a dedicated employee for more than 30 years, serving as OSHA officer and manager of laboratory and quality control.

Life’s currents swept Carson back to Columbus College when a master’s program in environmental science was initiated in the mid-90s. His enrollment in ecological methodology brought him flooding back into my life. A public hearing was held in Columbus by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to discuss the proposed federal listing of six mussel species. I encouraged the class to attend and Carson met Drs. Jim Williams and Jayne Brim-Box, who had completed a survey of mussels in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint river system. After the meeting Carson talked about seeing mussels in Upatoi Creek in his youth. Later, he asked if he could do a survey of mussels in selected Chattahoochee tributaries and if I would serve as his thesis supervisor. And so began the wonderful experiences of going on field trips with Carson.

In 1997 Carson completed his degree and began to teach environmental science part-time at CSU. He also began to obtain research grants to work on mussels. He forged a powerful relationship with various employees of the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Services, particularly fellow CSU alum, Sandy Abbott. Carson collaborated in many ways with federal studies and maintenance of ACF and Chipola River mussels, helping design, test, and execute mussel survey protocols. He led the publication of a poster depicting the ACF mussels, and he developed and delivered a training workshop for field scientists working with mussels. Last summer he developed a second training workshop covering mussels of the Altamaha River.

Carson Stringfellow became an old-school field biologist. He could make friends and influence people whether they were in a room at a scientific meeting or mucking for catfish in a backwater swamp. Whether swimming in the Chipola River, hiking in an Australian rainforest or slogging through a south Georgia swamp, I always felt safer when with Carson. I watched with pleasure as he held his own with many of the top mussel biologists in the country and enjoyed his company sitting outside a motel listening to the thunder roll, the tree frogs call, and the rain pour down.

I was complimented last year when Carson asked me to co-teach a course on the mussels of the ACF. Field trips, examination of an extensive collection of specimens, and a number of quality guest speakers resulted in a special course. Now, in retrospect, it is even more special to me because it was our final scientific endeavor together. His family, his former students, like Lisa Priester and Andy Hartzog, his colleagues, like Sandy Abbott and many CSU faculty and staff, continue to experience his absence acutely. Carson Stringfellow lived his life to the fullest. He discovered that which interested him and pursued it with enthusiasm. In a gentle, folksy way he touched many others along his way and for many, made their lives significantly better.

- George Stanton

Inside this issue:

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Awards

John Barone - College of Letters and Sciences 2012 Faculty Fellow for Outstanding Teaching

Kevin Burgess - College of Letters and Sciences 2012 Faculty Fellow for Outstanding Research

Kevin Burgess - CSU 2012 Faculty Research & Scholarship Award – finalist

Brian Schwartz - CSU 2012 Faculty Service Award – finalist

External Grants

Kevin Burgess (PI), John Barone (Co-PI) and SG Newsmaster (Co-PI). RUI Pre-Proposal: Integration DNA barcoding with field methods in the construction of pollination networks for prairie ecosystems. NSF (submitted, $399,947)

B. Brosi (PI), Kevin Burgess (Co-PI), P. Armsworth (Co-PI), and J. Dunne (Co-PI). Dimensions of Biodiversity: Collaborative Research: Functional pollination networks and the maintenance of species and genetic diversity. NSF Collaborative Proposal (submitted, $2,000,000)

Internal Grants

John Barone. CSU Stem Mini Grant. Use of a writing consultant in a writing course. $1836

John Barone and Kevin Burgess. CSU University Grant. Use of DNA barcoding of prairie flora. $9945

Kathleen Hughes. CSU Stem Mini Grant. Evaluation of two peer-assisted learning strategies in Biol 2221 (Anatomy and Physiology I). $2592

Kathleen Hughes. University Grant, Office of the Provost. Role of Estrogens in Astrocyte Viability. $2,267

Presentations

Julie Ballenger and Michele Elmore. Rare discoveries and range extension of endangered wetland plant species. Columbia State University, The Nature Conservancy. Southeastern Lake and Watershed Management Conference, Columbus, GA.

Julie Ballenger. Columbus State University Departments of Biology, Chemistry and Earth and Space Sciences Gulf Coast CESU Membership presentation at the Joint CESU Regional Meeting. St. Petersburg, FL.

John A. Barone and JoVonn G.Hill. Effect of habitat specialization and dispersal abilities on the metacommunity structure of plant, ants and grasshoppers in black belt prairies. Columbus State University, Mississippi State University. Association of Southeastern Biologists, Athens, GA (paper)

John A. Barone and K.G. Stephenson. Historical extent and ecology of southeastern prairies. Southeastern Prairie Symposium, Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi.

John A. Barone and JoVonn G. Hill. Metacommunity structure of blackland prairie communities in Mississippi and Alabama. Grasslands in a Global Context Symposium. Institute for Grassland Studies, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.


Kevin Burgess. Barcoding local floras: potential challenges and future applications. Next generation approaches to phylogenetics and phylogeography in Southeastern systems. Association of Southeastern Biologists, Athens, GA (symposium)

Cristina M. Caldwell, Michele Elmore, Julie Ballenger and Kevin Burgess. Interspecific hybridization in rare Georgia pitcher plants (Sarracenia spp.) Columbia State University, The Nature Conservancy. Association of Southeastern Biologists, Athens, GA (poster)

Alicia M. Garcia. Assessing the effects of restoration on phenological progression and reproductive success of the rare Georgia rockcress (Arabis georgiana Harper). Association of Southeastern Biologists, Athens, GA (paper)

Kimberly Holley, William Birkhead, Kevin Burgess and Greg Moore. Interspecific hybridization between a rare, endemic bumble (Micropterus cataractus) and a more abundant, invasive bumble (M. punctulatus). Columbus State University, USFWS Warm Springs Fish Technology Center. Association of Southeastern Biologists, Athens, GA (poster)

Lauren A.Neill and Brian W. Schwartz. Genetic and physiological characterization of copper utilization mutants in Saccharomyces cerevisiae. Georgia Academy of Sciences, Kennesaw, GA (paper)


Publications


Bringolf, R., Jennings, C and Zuiderveen, Jeff. 2012. ‘Assessment of Endocrine Disruption in Fish and Estrogenic Potency of Waters in Georgia’. Report submitted to Georgia Water Resources Institute, Atlanta, GA.


Brian S. Helms, Chester Figiel, John Riverra, Jim Steeckel, George Stanton, Troy Keller. Life history observations, environmental associations, and soil preferences of the Piedmont Blue Burrower (Cambarus (Depressicambarus) harti) Hobbs. (accepted by Southeastern Biologist, July 2012).


Student Achievements

Awards (2012 Honors Convocation)
- George Stanton Award - Neena Alex (right)
- Cellular & Molecular Award - Hemalata Mandiga (far right)
- Organismic Award - Shannon Tyler (bottom left)
- Biology Education Award - Carrie Ann Sharritt (below center)
- Ecological & Evolutionary Award - Scott Whitley (below right)

Research Grants (internal)
- Hemalata Mandiga - CSU Student Research and Creative En- deavors (SRACE); Beta Beta Beta (BBB) presentation; Tower Day
- Parag Patel - SRACE; BBB presentation; Tower Day
- Mfoniso Umoren - SRACE; BBB presentation *3rd place Johnson Award; Tower Day
- Abolanle Abikoye - SRACE
- Marisa Naciuk - SRACE; Tower Day

Georgia Academy of Sciences
- Lauren Neill (Brian Schwartz, mentor)

Beta, Beta, Beta District II Mu Omicron Chapter
(Assoc. of Southeastern Biologists Annual Meeting, Athens, GA)
- Terry Langfitt *3rd place Frank G. Brooks Award (Milwood Motley, mentor)
- Neena Alex *2nd place Frank G. Brooks Award (Katey Hughes, mentor); Tower Day

CSU Tower Day
- Khaliyah Abikoye (Monica Frazier, mentor)
- Neena Alex (Katey Hughes, mentor)
- Will Borin (John Davis, mentor; Honors mentor, Kevin Burgess)
- Emily Husted and Bill Tomkiewicz (International class, Andros Island; Julie Ballenger, faculty advisor)
- Emily Husted and Bolivia Hurtado de Mendoza (International class, Belize; Kevin Burgess and Jennifer Newbrey, faculty advisors)
- Hemalata Mandiga (Kevin Burgess, mentor)
- Bolivia Hurtado de Mendoza (Internship)
- Marisa Naciuk (Monica Frazier, mentor)
- Martha Newell (Internship)
- Parag D. Patel (Kevin Burgess, mentor)
- Valerie Staples (International class, Andros Island; Julie Ballenger, faculty advisor)
- Mfoniso Umoren (Kevin Burgess, mentor)
- Sydney Worthy and Elicia Walker (International class, Andros Island; Julie Ballenger, faculty advisor)

Senior Research Projects
Fourteen seniors completed independent research projects in 2011-2012. Nine presented their work at professional meetings (Association of Southeastern Biologists Annual Meeting, Athens, GA; Georgia Academy of Sciences, Kennesaw, GA; and CSU’s Tower Day - Showcase of Undergraduate Research & Creative Scholarship).

Senior Research - Evaluating the efficacy of Indian herbal medicines on cancer cells and confirming their genetic identity using DNA barcoding

by Hemalata Mandiga

With the expansion of the herbal market in western society, there is a growing concern about the adulteration of herbal medicines. This usually occurs by substituting valuable herbs with inexpensive alternatives. We felt it was important to find ways to test the authenticity of herbal medicines. We wanted to confirm the species composition of each herbal medicine and test their efficacy on human cells. We chose anticancer herbal medicines native to the Indian subcontinent. Turmeric and curcumin are popular spices used in the practice of Ayurveda, the use of herbal medicines, and have shown to detoxify enzymes, prevent DNA damage, and decrease tumor formation.

The goal of my research was to identify the plant derivatives in herbal medicines that were in powdered form and test their efficacy on cancer cells. In order to identify the plant derivatives, we used DNA barcodes. We found that only 33% of the powdered samples matched what was on the manufacturer’s label.

As a result of my research project, I have learned many new laboratory techniques. This has been an invaluable opportunity for me to gain research experience, improve my knowledge of medical ethnobotany, and improve my laboratory skills.
Research Experience for Undergraduate program - Costa Rica

by Jenise Santos

The pathogenic chytrid fungus, *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*, causes a disease called chytridiomycosis, which is implicated in the decline of amphibian species world-wide. Among the species that have been affected by chytridiomycota is *Craugastor bransfordii*, Bransford’s litter frog, which is found in Costa Rica, Panama, and Nicaragua. During the summer, I participated in a Research Experience for Undergraduate program at La Selva in Costa Rica through the Organization of Tropical Studies. This research required me to collect Bransford’s litter frogs and soil samples in the tropical rainforest in order to observe whether the soil or cutaneous layer of frogs contained anti-fungal bacteria that inhibits the growth or mitigates the effects of this deadly fungus. I never thought that I would be fortunate enough to spend two months in Costa Rica fully immersed in the rainforest and the culture of the people. This program definitely helped me to grow as a biologist. On a typical walk from the dorms in the rainforest to the laboratory I could see sloths, macaws, howler monkeys, toucans, capuchin monkeys, snakes, peccaries, and many other species. The biodiversity was just breathtaking. Being a field biologist was never something I had really considered until now. Through this experience I truly gained an appreciation and excitement for research.

Medical Internship Leads to Senior Research Project

by Sydney Worthy

During the summer of 2012 I participated in the Pathway to Med School internship in Albany, Georgia, and focused my research on obesity in adolescents. My descriptive research consisted of administering surveys at ten medical clinics in southwest Georgia. I studied correlations between screen time and physical activity and the Body Mass Index of adolescents who were surveyed. Through this internship, I was exposed to primary care while shadowing physicians in family practice, internal medicine, and pediatrics.

I plan to become a physician, and this internship allowed me to gain research experience and exposure to the field of medicine. I am continuing this research project in the fall and spring for my B.S. (Biology) senior research.

Student Studies Treatment for Osteoarthritis

by John Neill

My interest in becoming a Surgical Physician’s Assistant, and my personal contact with patients suffering from osteoarthritis (OA), led to my independent research on the treatment of OA. OA is characterized as cartilage deficiency within a joint that leads to bone on bone friction, which causes severe pain. Every day, many patients resort to surgery for treatment. Before reaching this costly decision, alternative treatments are commonly pursued, such as cartilage supplements (e.g. glucosamine). Manufacturers advocate this product, claiming glucosamine is a building block for joint fluid, cartilage, tendons, ligaments, membranes and blood vessels. Although this statement is valid, the manufacturers of these supplements allude to a curative benefit.

My research investigated the influence of glucosamine hydrochloride (HCl) on chondrogenesis (the growth of cartilage) in damaged elastic cartilage of rats. Sixteen male Sprague Dawley rats were used as model organisms. The experimental group received glucosamine HCl supplement for an 8-week treatment period. The remaining rats, the control group, did not receive treatment. Before and after the treatment period, cartilage was docked from the ear of the rats and collected. Collected tissues were stained by histological processes onto glass slides and observed under a microscope for counting purposes. There was no significant difference in the average number of lacunae (the location where individual cartilage cells reside) between the experimental and control group. My research found that glucosamine HCl does not appear to stimulate cartilage growth.
Student Study Abroad Experiences

Exploring the Land Down Under
by Samantha and Sydney Worthy

Studying abroad in Australia was one of the best experiences we have had while at CSU. We spent two weeks in Cairns and other sites in North Queensland, mostly in the rainforest and tablelands. Before our trip, we were familiar with some of Australia’s native birds, plants, and animals. However, we had no idea that we would see over 130 bird species and 50 plant species. We saw amazing fauna - a laughing kookaburra, a frilled-neck lizard, rock wallabies, crocodiles, wombats, and koalas. We even saw a platypus, which we did not realize was a special opportunity until a local told us that she had never seen one. One of our fellow students helped to catch a freshwater moray eel. We each conducted research projects, which further broadened our knowledge of Australia. In only two weeks, we learned so much more in the field than we could have in a classroom.

The Wonders of Belize
by Emily Husted

Upon arrival in Belize, we had a long bus ride through the countryside on bumpy unpaved roads with big rolling tree-covered mountains on either side. The scenery was breathtaking! Exploring the rainforest the next morning was beautiful! Heraldo, our guide, educated us about the rainforest plants and their uses by humans. The next day we hiked through the rainforest to a cave to see some stalactites, stalagmites and Mayan paintings. The cave had some large caverns but we had to squeeze through tight places to get to them. Heraldo took us to his house later and showed us how they make tortillas, chocolate drink from fresh crushed cacao beans, and bracelets, baskets and other crafts. After dinner one night we went back to the village for some dancing. We learned how to do a traditional Mayan dance while Heraldo and his brothers played Mayan music on the marimba. Everyone participated, even the professors.

Health Issues Studied in Oxford, England

In summer 2012, the first science course was taught at the Spencer House in Oxford. The course, Universal Health Care Systems and Health Care Reform in America, was for students interested in pursuing careers in medicine and biomedical science. They studied England’s National Health Service and conducted a comparative study on diabetes in the U.S. and U.K. As part of the course, students visited several science museums, met with physicians, toured the Royal London Hospital, Chelsea Physics Garden (original apothecary garden for the hospital), and Oxford University’s Medical School. Prior to going to Oxford, students conducted research on the drug Metformin (most commonly used in the treatment of diabetes) in pancreatic cells. While in Oxford, the class toured the Oxford Botanical Gardens (pictured at left) with Dr. Alison Foster, curator of the gardens, who discussed the various medicinal plants in their garden as well as those important for the treatment of diabetes. As a highlight, she showed the class the plant Galega officinalis, from which Metformin was produced.
**New Study Abroad Programs Begin in 2013**

**Natural Environments and Ecology of Tanzania**

This class, in May 2013, will introduce students to East Africa and the environments of the ancient rift valley. Students will see the great migration of nomadic herbivores constantly on the move in search of fresh grass. Herds cross the Mara River from Tanzania to Kenya and back again in a constant cycle, following the rains and new plant growth. Students will visit Olduvai Gorge, the cradle of mankind, before dropping into the Ngorongoro Crater, an extinct volcano and part of the geologically active rift valley. Students will explore Ruaha National Park, a pristine environment with little human impact, where animal interactions and behaviors can be observed.

Students will develop on-site projects that will assess distribution, interactions and behavior of the various animals in the different habitats. Upon return to CSU, students will analyze their data and present their findings. Experiencing the flora and fauna of east Africa, as well as meeting and interacting with the proud people who live in Tanzania, will give CSU students a better understanding of the constant effort and sacrifice that is required to survive in this wild, yet delicate, ecosystem.

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**The Ecology and Evolution of Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands**

This course, to begin March 2013, will focus on the area where Charles Darwin started developing his focus on natural selection and evolution. The eight-day trip begins in Quito, Ecuador and includes a visit to the equator. The class will then travel to the Galapagos Islands and stay in a motel on one of the islands. For the next three days, the class will see sights at several of the islands, including the breeding stations for the Galapagos tortoises, and experience snorkeling with sea lions. At the end of the course, the group will return to Quito and visit Mt. Cotopaxi, the second largest active volcano in the world, about 13,000 feet above sea level.

**Darwin & Evolution at Oxford University**

This course reviews the history of evolution and Charles Darwin’s contribution to this field of inquiry. While the emphasis is on Darwin’s life, the pivotal contributions of other scientists to the concept of evolution are also explored. The course reviews the social, philosophical, and theological issues associated with the development of Darwin’s Origin of Species, which is also explored as a product of the man and his age. This course provides a unique opportunity to experience the historical places that not only played a major role in the development of Darwin as a scientist but also his idea that is now central to the field of biology. Excursions include visits to Cambridge University, the Natural History Museum in London, and Darwin’s home, Down House.

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**Recent Graduates**

**Congratulations to our December 2011 and May 2012 graduates!**

**B.S. in Biology:**
- Ifeoma Akuta (Pre-Medical)
- Neena Alex (Pre-Medical)
- Matthew Goodson
- Hannah Hendricks
- Terry Langfitt (Pre-Medical)
- Oscar Machado (Pre-Medical)
- Roseann Manasan (Pre-Dental)
- Hemalata Mandiga (Pre-Medical)
- Marisia Naciuk
- John Neill
- Lauren Neill
- Parag Patel (Pre-Medical)
- Jaime Reed
- Shannon Tyler (Pre-Veterinary)
- Mfoniso Umoren (Pre-Medical)

**B.A. in Biology:**
- Chanda Adams
- Ashlin Allen (Pre-Medical)
- Natasha Arora (Pre-Medical)
- Marquavia Clark (Pre-Pharmacy)
- Kayla Harpe
- Vanessa Jackson (Pre-Medical)
- Faraji Prator
- Ileana Ramirez

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**Upcoming Study Abroad Trips:**
- Galapagos (Ecology) - March 2013
- Andros Is., Bahamas (Health Issues) - May 2013
- Tanzania (Ecology) - May 2013
- Oxford, England (Darwinian Evolution) - July 2013

For more information visit: [http://bio.ColumbusState.edu](http://bio.ColumbusState.edu)
1994 - Brandon Hill - graduated from Morehouse School of Medicine (M.D.) in 1999, board certified in internal medicine and allergy/immunology; lives in Tennessee.

2000 - Noel Bryan Hayes earned his Master’s and Specialist degrees in Elementary Education from Troy State University in Phenix City. He has been teaching at the Phenix City Elementary School for the past 10 years. Noel is married and has a son, Carter Cole.

2000 - Jeremy Dockery earned his M.Ed in 2003 and Ph.D. in 2006 and is currently the Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at Baldwin High School in Milledgeville, Georgia. Jeremy is married to Anita Guerrero Dockery and they have a daughter, Whitney.

2000 - Ruth Ann Welch Baird graduated from the University of Georgia’s College of Medicine in 2005 and is currently working as a veterinarian at the Shiloh Veterinary Hospital in Kennesaw, Georgia. Ruth Ann married Patrick Baird (Geology 2000) and they have two children, Caroline & John.

2002 - Matt Breeden earned his Juris Doctorate from Mercer University in 2005. He currently serves as the Chief Assistant District Attorney for the Dougherty Judicial Circuit, is a member of the Albany-Dougherty SWAT team, and is the Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Middle District of Georgia. He also serves on the Board of Advisors for the Darton College Paralegal Program. Matt is married to Genevieve and they have three children.

2003 - Amy Gamble Coker is a lab analyst at Columbus Water Works. Amy is married to Brian and they have two sons, Ethan and Logan.

2003 - Mary Hill Johnson is the Assistant Director of the Coca-Cola Space Science Center in Columbus, GA. She is married to Brian and they have a son, Ethan.

2003 - Joseph Thames is a contractor on Fort Benning working with the Environmental Management Division. Joey is married to Erin Quinn Thames and they have a son, Sully Hollis (the next generation biologist).

2004 - Rebecca Allen earned her Ph.D. in Immunology from Ohio State University. Her research focused on the effects of stress on immune function. She is currently applying to Medical School.

2004 - Dorothy Cheruiyot earned her MS in Environmental Science from CSU in 2009 and her Ph.D. from Auburn University in 2012. Her research focused on plant-insect interactions and bioaccumulation of environmental toxins. Dorothy is teaching biology and coaching cross country at Brookstone High School.

2005 - Brett Harris Brooks graduated from Auburn University’s College of Veterinary Medicine in 2009. She is married to Stuart Brooks who is serving at Fort Rucker in the Blackhawk Flight School. Brett is working as a relief veterinarian in Enterprise and Dothan, Alabama.

2006 - Sarah Duncan graduated from Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2010 and is working as an associate veterinarian at Northside Animal Hospital in Columbus, GA.

2006 - Julie Monks is currently deployed in Afghanistan as an Army Reservist where she is serving our country as an Intelligence Analyst.

2007 - Amanda Bergen graduated from the University of Georgia’s College of Veterinary Medicine in 2012 and is continuing her education in an internship in large animal medicine and surgery at the University of Georgia.

2007 - Contessa Bowman graduated from Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) in 2012 and is working as an associate veterinarian at B&A Animal Hospital in Boaz, Alabama.

2007 - Lauren Eklund Demko works for PSS World Medical as an account manager with a focus on orthopaedics and pain management for physicians dispensing in Columbus and the surrounding areas; married to Nick Demko.

2008 - Bliss Lucas earned an MEd in Secondary Science Education from CSU in 2010 & is currently working on her EdS in Instructional Technology from the University of West GA while teaching 7th grade Life Science in Phenix City, AL.

2009 - Kimberly Sheena Holley completed her MS in Environmental Science from CSU in 2012 and is working as a watershed technician with Engineering and Environmental Inc. on Fort Benning.

2009 - Meredith Gilbert - completing a Pharm.D at Mercer University College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences (graduation May 2013); hopes to practice clinical pharmacy after completing a pharmacy practice residency; engaged to Joshua Plock (wedding June 2013).

2010 - Eli Mitcham worked at Meriweather Internal Medicine in Warm Springs, GA and is currently in his first semester at Mercer School of Medicine.

2010 - Jennifer Silvers earned her MS in Environmental Science from CSU and is now pursuing her DVM from the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine.

2011 - De’smond Henry is in his second year of medical school at St. Matthew’s University School of Medicine.

Alum Award Winner

Jason Harrison (B.S. Biology 2000) is CSU’s College of Letters & Sciences 2012 Alum of the Year for Sciences and Mathematics. He graduated magna cum laude from CSU in 2000 and worked at the Medical Center as a radiology technician while completing his studies. Jason’s senior research on blue crabs along the Georgia coast received a Frank G. Brooks Award from Tri-Beta Biological Honors Society for excellence in undergraduate research. Jason credits his research experience at CSU with giving him the foundation and understanding of the process of science. He received his Ph.D. in 2005 from the University of South Alabama, Mobile, where he found his true calling in neurobiology. He received his M.D. in neurosurgery in 2009 and is currently a resident physician in neurosurgery at VCU (Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center).

Meet our newest faculty member...

Cliff Ruehl is an Assistant Professor of Biology, specializing in zoology. He received his B.S. in Biology from Trinity University, M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries from Texas A&M University, and his Ph.D. in Biology from Florida International University. Prior to his appointment at CSU, Dr. Ruehl was an instructor in the Department of Biology at East Carolina University. Dr. Ruehl’s research concentrates mainly on aquatic invertebrates and the interface of evolutionary biology, population ecology and community ecology.
Study Abroad Snapshots (see student stories - page 5)