Humanities Receives $20-Million Gift

A $20-million gift – the largest by an individual donor in Rice University’s history – has been made anonymously as the lead gift in a comprehensive $80-million plan to position the School of Humanities at Rice among the most accomplished programs in the nation.

The anonymous donor said, “The Rice School of Humanities has already achieved national and international recognition. It is our hope that this gift will allow Rice to build on its already strong foundation in the humanities, and augment the school’s excellent faculty with four new, vibrant educators and researchers. It will be a pleasure to watch the school rise even further in prominence.”

Gary Wihl, Dean of the School of Humanities (see photo inset), said this gift is a vote of confidence in what the school has already achieved and in its future potential. “Rice is home to some of this nation’s most accomplished humanities faculty,” he said. “This gift will leverage our existing strengths to a whole new level of visibility and achievement. I am proud to begin a process that will contribute to further excellence in our humanities programs and to the overall excellence of Rice as a comprehensive university.”

The $20-million gift will establish four endowed chairs, allowing Rice to hire faculty members Rice President David Leebron has described as “the best leaders in fields vital to our future.” Endowed chairs traditionally go to faculty members of the highest distinction, and the combination of their prestige and enhanced funding makes these positions valuable tools in high-level recruitment.

“The humanities are an integral part of the fabric of a major university,” Leebron said. “Strengthening them will be a benefit to all Rice programs, from music and architecture to science and engineering. This extraordinary gift is from a donor who understands the value of humanities education and research in our society, and who exercises philanthropic spirit without wish for credit.”

In addition to adding faculty chairs, President Leebron and Dean Wihl are working to raise an additional $60 million to complete the other elements of the plan, including new undergraduate scholarships, increased support for humanities doctoral programs, and new collaborative ventures with artistic and literary communities.

The number of students enrolled in humanities coursework at Rice has increased 12 percent in the last three years, graduate applications to doctoral programs have been increasing every year for the last three years, and external research funding for humanities at Rice jumped by 43 percent over the last two years.

As a result of previous investments over the last decade, Rice humanities at the undergraduate level rank in the nation’s top tier, and the university has highly regarded graduate programs in English, history, philosophy, religion, and linguistics. Rice faculty have won nearly every major national award and fellowship, and Rice is home to five of the leading journals in the country in classics, English, history, religious studies, and feminist economics.

Reprinted courtesy of Rice News
Written by Jennifer Evans
After serving as interim director of the Center for the Study of Languages for just under a year, Deborah Nelson-Campbell, Professor of French Studies, was appointed director of the Center in July 2006 for a three-year term.

Nelson-Campbell graduated from Wittenberg College in Springfield, Ohio, spent a year at the University of Grenoble, and ultimately received an M.A. in French and a Ph.D. in Romance languages from Ohio State University.

After working for four years at Western College for Women, she came to Rice in 1974 when she was hired as an assistant professor and French medievalist in the Department of French and Italian. “My passion is teaching, and I am delighted when my students comment that they didn’t realize learning about the Middle Ages would be so interesting,” laughs Nelson-Campbell. “I want them to become so interested that they will continue to read and study it the rest of their lives.”

Of her four published books, two are critical editions of thirteenth-century poetry: The Lyrics and Melodies of Adam de la Halle and The Songs of Andrieu Contredit d’Arras. In addition, Nelson-Campbell has published a critical bibliography titled Charles d’Orléans, An Analytical Bibliography. Her most recent work is an edition of her grandmother’s journal, The Journals of Tommie L. Hubbard, Madison County, Kentucky 1898-1900. She has also published numerous articles on medieval topics focusing on courtly love, animal imagery, and women’s issues.


Since 1992, she has served as chair of the Advisory Committee of the Sweet Briar Program, and is currently on the board of the Institute of American Universities with programs in Aix-en-Provence and Avignon. Nelson-Campbell has also served on an evaluation committee for IES for their programs in Paris and Nantes, as well as for SIT for their program in Toulouse, and the AUCP program in Aix-en-Provence.

In the Department of French Studies, Nelson-Campbell is a study abroad advisor and approves transfer credit for language courses taken abroad. “I think it is essential for students to spend a summer, a semester, or preferably a year studying and living in a foreign country. Knowledge of foreign cultures and languages is essential for young people,” says Nelson-Campbell, “both for their own education as well as for the future of this country.”

At Rice she has served on the Admissions, Education, and Judicial Affairs committees. At present, she is serving a second term as chair of the Committee on Examinations and Standing, a committee that responds to student petitions requesting exceptions to academic regulations based on extenuating circumstances. According to Nelson-Campbell, despite the time-consuming nature of the position, the process is extremely important both to the university and to individual students who find themselves in very difficult situations. She also chairs the undergraduate committee in the Department of French Studies.

As CSL director, Nelson-Campbell looks forward to yet another challenge. “Even though I love teaching,” she says, “I seek opportunities to diversify my skills and to work with new colleagues on worthy projects. I am very curious about how things work at the University, apart from the classroom. This term has been very satisfying for me thus far, and there’s more to be done.”

The Center for the Study of Languages opened in fall 1997 and

Continued on page 6
Caroline Field Levander, Associate Professor of English and director of the Center for the Study of Cultures (see article on page 8), oversees a new archive, recently acquired at the Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library.

With materials in English and Spanish, the Americas collection (1811-1920) documents the 19th-century and early 20th century political and cultural relationships between the United States, Mexico, Central and South America, Cuba, Spain, and Portugal.

The archive houses many original government publications, such as constitutions, decrees, presidential and congressional messages, plus broadsides and pamphlets that served as public statements about the political and social events of the time.

Other noted items include George F. Dunham’s “A Journey to Brazil on the Good Ship Montpelier,” an 1853 first-hand description of slavery and plantation life in Brazil, and the first Mexico City printing (1821) of Agustín de Iturbide’s Plan de Iguala.

The Americas collection seeks to represent the full range and complexity of the Americas. Thomas Jefferson famously observed that “America has a hemisphere to itself,” and the founding fathers agreed that gaining influence in Spanish America “piece by piece” was essential to the United States.

Conversely, Latin American nations like Brazil, Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador used the American Revolution as a touchstone for their own nation formations, even as they critiqued the U.S. democratic model or aspired to shape it to their own needs.

This story of national exchange and influence across the hemisphere will be more fully told through this archive which brings together key documents. Currently, scholars interested in telling this rich story must travel between the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and the Cuban Society of Historical and International Study in Havana, for example.

A notable exception is the University of Maryland’s Early Americas Digital Archive, which invites scholars to submit their editions of early Americas texts for digital publication. Its historical range of 1492 to 1800 makes it an ideal future partner for Rice’s initiative, which begins with the heyday of nation formation from 1776 to 1815 and ends with the building of the Panama Canal in the early twentieth century.

Reading the archive fosters a better understanding of why Brazilian insurgents owned and read copies of the American Declaration of Independence, as well as works by Jefferson and Thomas Paine, and why José Martí found the U.S. system of governance a rich source of commentary and critique for Cuban independence efforts – and why Fidel Castro quoted the American Declaration of Independence and likened the burning of cane fields to the Boston Tea Party during his 1958 takeover of Cuba.

Re-examination of the U.S. American story naturally follows, for example, when the archive reveals that U.S. slaves escaped South as well as North, establishing communities throughout Spanish America during the U.S. antebellum period. Such an archive, in short, brings into sharper focus the overlapping national stories of the hemisphere.

The archive was acquired by Rice University with funds from the Dean of Humanities and from Fondren Library.

For more information about the Americas Collection, visit http://www.rice.edu/fondren/woodson/mss/ms518.html

Text courtesy of Caroline Field Levander, Center for the Study of Cultures

Edited by Angela Wren Wall
**Recent Rice Faculty Publications**

*Beyond Neutrality: Perfectionism and Politics* ~ George Sher  
*Contemporary Muslim Apocalyptic Literature* ~ David Cook  
*Palgrave Advances in Charles Dickens Studies* ~ Edited by John Bowen and Robert L. Patten  
*Women Medievalists and the Academy* ~ Edited by Jane Chance  
*Cinematic Prophylaxis: Globalization and Contagion in the Discourse of World Health* ~ Kirsten Ostherr  
*Written Texts and the Rise of Literate Culture in Ancient Greece* ~ Edited by Harvey Yunis  
*Nietzsche on Language, Consciousness, and the Body* ~ Christian J. Emden
Robert Pinsky Opens Campbell Lecture Series

Alumnus T.C. Campbell ’34 donated $1 million last year to the School of Humanities in support of a new lecture series devoted to literary studies – the manifestation of both parties’ shared commitment to create a forum to present original ideas on topics of interest in literature. The endowment supports an annual 20-year lecture series – free and open to the public – with future series taking place each fall and featuring major literary figures.


In these presentations, Pinsky explored Americans’ fascination with life in small-town America, highlighting seven illustrative stories dominant in the collective American psyche: Mark Twain’s *Pudd’nhead Wilson*, William Faulkner’s *The Hamlet*, Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*, Willa Cather’s *Song of the Lark*, a film directed by Alfred Hitchcock, *Shadow of a Doubt*, and two films directed by Preston Sturges, *Miracle of Morgan’s Creek* and *Hail the Conquering Hero*.

According to Pinsky, these early and mid-20th-century works epitomize towns that exist untouched and isolated from the rest of the world, virtually oblivious to the passing of history. Pinsky also cites that blindness is the thread that connects these stories — blindness to change, to injustice, to human relationships – and is not completely unlike the illusions people create for themselves, whether intentionally or innocently, about their own small-town experiences.

His lectures will be compiled in a book to be published by the University of Chicago Press, and recordings of the lectures are available in Fondren Library.

Pinsky has dedicated his career to identifying and invigorating poetry’s place in the world. He founded the “Favorite Poem Project,” for which thousands of Americans of diverse backgrounds and ages shared their favorite poems. Pinsky believes that, contrary to stereotype, poetry has a vigorous presence in the American cultural landscape. In fact, two original anthologies of letters from project participants — *Americans’ Favorite Poems* and *Poems to Read* – became bestsellers.

The author of six acclaimed collections of poetry – most recently *Jersey Rain* – Pinsky’s own work reveals an artist of formal dexterity, unique music, and ambitious range. His collection, *The Figured Wheel*, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, and received both the Lenore Marshall Award and the Ambassador Book Award of the English Speaking Union.

His past honors include *Poetry* Magazine’s Oscar Blumenthal prize, the William Carlos Williams Award, and a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship. In 1999 he joined the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and appeared in a cameo role on the television series “The Simpsons” – a distinction rarely afforded to Academy members.

 Currently poetry editor of the weekly Internet magazine *Slate*, Pinsky offers graduate courses in writing at Boston University.

Gary Wihl, Dean of the School of Humanities, chairs a community advisory committee that organizes the activities of the lecture series. Committee members include Robert Patten, the Lynette S. Autrey Professor in Humanities at Rice; Karl Kilian, owner of Brazos Bookstore; Rich Levy, executive director of Inprint; James Gibbons, a member of the Houston Chronicle editorial board; and Edward Hirsch, president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

Written by Angela Wren Wall

For more information about the Campbell Lecture series, visit [http://humanities.rice.edu/lecture.cfm](http://humanities.rice.edu/lecture.cfm).

Former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, left, talks with Rice University alumna Liz Howard ’76 and Gary Wihl, dean of the School of Humanities, the Francis Moody Newman Professor in Humanities and professor of English, at a reception at the Wiess President’s House.

Photo by Jeff Fitlow, courtesy of Rice News
Associated Professor of English Lucille P. Fultz received the 2005 Toni Morrison Society Book Award for her recent book *Toni Morrison: Playing with Difference* (University of Illinois Press, 2003). Toni Morrison, considered one of America’s most influential writers, won the 1989 Pulitzer Prize for her work *Beloved* and won the 1993 Nobel Prize in Literature. Since 1997, the Society has bestowed the award biennially for the best book on Morrison published during the preceding years. Fultz was awarded the prize for books published between January 2003 and December 2004.

Fultz has garnered much praise for her sophisticated presentation and analysis of Morrison’s ideological and artistic development from her first novel *The Bluest Eye* (1970) to *Paradise* (1998). Now considered one of the most comprehensive studies of Morrison, *Playing with Difference* engages readers while challenging them to extract both personal and literary meaning from Morrison’s works.

The following excerpt taken from the Toni Morrison Society web site details Fultz’s approach: “Taking unsuspecting readers to task for complaining about Morrison’s complexity, Fultz argues that Morrison ‘tests our readerly competence…and insists that we work to uncover meaning.’ But because many of Morrison’s ideas on such charged topics as race and gender have shifted as her work has evolved, according to Fultz, readers must come to grips with a ‘dual project…[simultaneously] analyzing the narrative strategy and interpreting [Morrison’s changing] meaning.’ More than for any other contemporary writer, readers play a critical role in the construction of a Morrison story, finding that her central concern is to uncover for herself and the reader the ‘potencies of difference,’ whether it is between love and hate, masculinity and femininity, black and white, past and present, or wealth and poverty.”

Fultz received the award in July 2005 at the biennial conference of the Toni Morrison Society (TMS), held at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, KY. TMS is an author society of the American Literature Association. Founded in Baltimore in 1993, the Toni Morrison Society is one of few literary societies today devoted to a living author.

*Written By Angela Wren Wall*

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Nelson-Campbell Named CSL Director

Continued from page 2

Presently employs 28 lecturers who teach thirteen languages, including Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. “When I visit our language classes, I am amazed at the energetic and original teaching of our lecturers,” states Nelson-Campbell. “I plan to foster more opportunities for department faculty and lecturers to learn about their respective roles in the education of our language students. It is my responsibility to establish the status of language teaching as equal and linked to the appreciation of literature and culture. These areas cannot be separated and are dependent upon one another.”

Under the auspices of the Center, the Language Resource Center (managed by Claire Bartlett since its opening) continues to provide sophisticated language instruction equipment in two adjacent student labs on the first floor of Rayzor Hall. “Engaging discussion in the classroom is tantamount to reaching our goals,” says Nelson-Campbell, “but without the LRC, students would lose the daily lab access necessary for practicing and honing their individual language skills. We continue to strive for the best language teaching curriculum – with the best possible technology – in the country.”

*Written By Angela Wren Wall*
In February 2005, Actors from the London Stage (AFTLS) presented *The Merchant of Venice* at Rice University to a crowd exceeding 1,000 people. The troupe regularly visits the university to perform Shakespearean plays and to offer workshop-like instruction to students in theatre, English, and other courses.

Due to the tremendous success of these annual visits, Alan Grob, Professor of English at Rice, established in 2005 The Alan and Shirley Grob Fund for Shakespeare Performance, an endowment that funds visits by AFTLS at Rice every other year in perpetuity. Donations also include those from former governor Bill Hobby and his wife, Diana, and Rice Board of Trustees member Bruce Dunlevie ’79 and his wife, Elizabeth. Past AFTLS productions have been sponsored by the School of Humanities and various donors.

According to Trish Rigdon—the head of the Rice Theatre Program who has organized the troupe’s visits for the past five years—tours are scheduled during the spring semester when English faculty typically offer courses on Shakespeare. “On the first day of the actors’ week-long residency, the campus becomes all ‘abuzz’ with activity and excitement,” explains Rigdon. “The feedback from both faculty and students has been overwhelmingly positive.”

Since the group of actors numbers only five, each actor must portray multiple characters. Props and scenery are sparse compared to a full-scale production in order to emphasize the teaching and learning processes. Theater students learn from the actors—not just through their classroom discussions—but from watching their performances in the plays. “The actors have always been not only accomplished theatre artists,” continues Rigdon, “but equally wonderful in the classroom, bringing a fresh perspective to every subject that they teach. The visit to Rice is usually the closing venue for the tour, and the actors have often commented to me that Rice is their favorite stop,” says Rigdon. “It’s a combination of the students, the hospitality of the faculty, the organization of the classes and the productions, the warm Texas weather, and the great food.”

In some years, class visits tended to center on English and theatre courses; but in 2004, Rigdon decided to “spread the wealth across campus,” and she encouraged all schools and departments to find ways to include the arts in their curriculum. “I e-mailed a few ideas to faculty across campus, and they accepted the challenge. In fact, during the production of *Othello* last spring, the actors were even utilized in the School of Engineering. I consider that a huge success, and I hope to see even more creative collaborations in the future.”

The troupe regularly boasts a myriad of accomplished actors who hail from prestigious acting companies such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, work extensively in television and film productions, and regularly appear in theater and literary festivals.

Recent cast rosters include, from left to right below: Christopher Staines, Louise Yates, Gregory Cox, Isabel Pollen, and Tim Hardy (*The Merchant of Venice*). Photos were provided courtesy of the AFTLS web site.

Other recent production casts are: Andrew Dennis, Gemma Larke, George Mayfield, Paul McCleary, and Julia Watson (*Othello*); and David Acton, Victoria Duarri, Chuk Iwuji, Peter Lindford, and Francesca Ryan (*Romeo and Juliet*).

Written By Angela Wren Wall
Currently in her first year as director of the Center for the Study of Cultures, Caroline Field Levander balances the responsibilities of managing the Center while pursuing her research and teaching, along with overseeing two new campus initiatives: the Americas archive (see article on page 3) and the Americas Colloquium.

“The Center for the Study of Cultures is a real jewel in the crown of the humanities at Rice,” says Levander. As the Center’s recent external review points out, the Center stands as the palpable sign of the University’s commitment to humanistic research at Rice.

The Center’s mission is to foster new interdisciplinary initiatives and generate collaborative ventures that stimulate intellectual creativity and new intellectual infrastructure. From the Center’s long-standing support of the Feminist Reading Group, which developed into the Program for the Study of Women and Gender, to its more recent support of the Americas Colloquium and the Asian Studies workshop, the Center has provided vital support to faculty who wish to grow new intellectual communities at Rice and beyond.

The scope of Levander’s research – broadly covering 19th-century U.S. literature, cultural studies, gender studies, and race studies – considers the dual questions of American literature’s political impact and American political culture’s literary effects. “Most broadly,” begins Levander, “my research explores the combined cultural impact of political, social, and literary discourses on historically disenfranchised groups including women, children, and racial others.”

Her book, Voices of the Nation: Women and Public Speech in Nineteenth-Century American Culture and Literature (Cambridge UP 1998), focuses on women and public life. In Cradle of Liberty: Race, the Child, and National Belonging from Thomas Jefferson to W.E.B. Du Bois (Duke UP, forthcoming 2006), Levander explores the child’s obscured links to the racial politics governing U.S. national culture. “In order to bring literary and political texts into the most richly productive play,” says Levander, “I examine diverse archival sources – as well as a wide range of literary sources – to show how political representation in the U.S. emerges and continues to be shaped by the ‘fact’ of gender and racial identity.”

Of her many works in progress, one addresses the contingency and diversity of nation formation, emphasizing reciprocal relations between seemingly disparate parts of North America and Latin America. According to Levander, Global Nation/Foreign Relations in the American Hemisphere adopts a north/south rather than east/west perspective to analyze these issues.

Levander views nation formation in the Americas as a series of struggles against Spain, France, and Britain, highlighting the geopolitical activity of the Americas as a series of interlocking hemispheric encounters. She adopts a polycentric view of the American hemisphere, instead of the more traditional model of the United States as the dominant center. Unlike the wealth of histories and literary studies of the U.S. and Latin America, Global Nations works in broad cultural strokes to show how a decentered Americas past continues to impact foreign and domestic policies in the United States. The book is intended for a general readership interested in American culture in a hemispheric perspective.

Levander is also co-editing with Robert S. Levine, Professor of English at the University of Maryland, College Park, a book titled Hemisphere and Nation: American Literary and Cultural Geographies. “This collection of essays brings together a wide range of junior and senior scholars working in the fields of Latin American Studies, Asian American Studies, American literature, American studies, African diaspora studies, and comparative literature,” explains Levander. “We will explore the urgent question of how hemispheric, inter-Americas scholarship revitalizes individual fields and re-frames familiar disciplinary boundaries. Because of the disciplinary range of the collection, it should appeal to advanced undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty in the humanities.”

According to Levander, the Rice University Americas Colloquium is dedicated to grappling with the question of how interdisciplinary conversation, critique, and collaboration can enrich and transform humanities graduate education among Americanists.

Comprised of faculty and graduate students from across the humanities, this colloquium considers the present and future practice of American cultural analysis in a post-national and global studies context. “Considering the parameters and futures of American cultural practice from a number of vantage points – including American history, literature, and religious studies – this Americas initiative adopts a comparative approach to the hemisphere in order to develop an interdisciplinary inter-Americas program,” says Levander.

Continued on page 9
In November 2005, Rice undergraduate Noorain Khan was awarded a 2006 Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford, England. After graduating in spring 2006 with degrees in political science, religious studies, and women’s studies, Khan will journey to England in October 2006 to pursue a doctorate in anthropology.

Born of South Asian descent, Khan is specifically interested in the topic of Muslim women veiling. For her graduate work at Oxford, Khan proposes to compare the attitudes toward veiling in three cities: Kurachi, Pakistan; Houston; and London. “I want to discern how these women view veiling, what shapes their attitudes, what their attitudes are toward immigrants and immigration laws, and more. Ultimately,” says Khan, “I plan to attend law school in order to work with women and/or another marginalized community.”

At Rice, Khan chairs the Baker Institute Student Forum, a policy-oriented organization that offers campus programs and events; she also oversees the production of an undergraduate policy journal under the auspices of the Forum. As the president of Campus Girl Scouts at Rice, Khan started a three-tiered mentorship program (like one in her home state of Michigan) where older members write and present workshops to younger members on various social issues.

As a senior in high school, Khan was recognized as a “Young Woman of Distinction,” an award given to the top 10 Girl Scouts in America; she also worked at the Michigan Women’s Foundation, a philanthropic organization that distributes funds to support women in the state.

Houston Mayor Bill White and Council Member M.J. Khan recently hosted an event honoring Khan’s accomplishments. The ceremony was held on Tuesday, January 17, 2006, at City Hall Chambers located at 901 Bagby, Houston, Texas.

Written By Angela Wren Wall

In addition to holding workshops with guest speakers from other institutions housing Americas initiatives, a coherent and sustained graduate seminar course is being designed to track Americas research across the disciplines.

Upcoming events include talks by Verene Shepherd, Professor of History at the University of the West Indies at Mona, Jamaica, on March 22–24, 2006, and Mauricio Tenorio: Profesor Investigador, División de Historia, CIDE, México; Professor of History at The University of Chicago, on March 31, 2006.

Text courtesy of Caroline Field Levander
Edited by Angela Wren Wall

Rice graduate student Ryan Foster is a recent recipient of a Waggoner Fellowship, a competitive research grant from within Rice University. Foster is currently conducting research on the natural philosophy of Friedrich Schelling as a research associate of the Forschungszentrum Europäische Aufklärung, Potsdam (Research Center for the European Enlightenment, Potsdam), a center with which the School of Humanities has a special partnership.

As a Presidential Fellow, Foster has been distinguished in his entry into graduate study at Rice, and has won several competitive grants within the university over the course of his graduate studies. “Ryan is the first graduate student from Rice to work there, but we are hopeful that others – including faculty – may in the future be accommodated in the Center while pursuing research in connection with the Enlightenment and its impact,” says Jack Zammito, Professor of History. “We also have plans in the near future to host a conference at Rice in partnership with the Center; Rice has sponsored two joint conferences with the Center in the past, each resulting in a book publication.”

Text courtesy of John Zammito, Professor of History
Edited by Angela Wren Wall
In today’s high-tech, e-centric, digital age where developments in science and technology drive economies and capture headlines, some people might question the relevance of the humanities.

Bruce Dunlevie, the man behind such revolutionary innovations as eBay and Palm Pilot, is not among them.

In fact, the Rice alumnus believes ardently in the value of the broad social and cultural education. In 2000 he donated $1 million to Rice to promote innovative programs with a focus on writing. Of that gift, $200,000 was given to the School of Humanities to fund a pilot project for students enrolled in the school’s humanities courses “From Ancient Greece to Medieval Islam: Introduction to Western Literature, History, and Philosophy”; “From Renaissance to Einstein: Introduction to Western Literature, History and Philosophy”; and the Freshman Seminars.

The Dunlevie Summer Writing Fellowship provides fifteen $1,500 fellowships each year for three years on a competitive basis. Fellowship recipients, who are selected based on “their ability and promise in expository writing and the coherence and interest of the project,” will pursue further a topic from the introductory courses and, working with a faculty adviser, will write a paper on the topic over the summer.

“The student response to this pilot program has been very strong,” said Gary Wihl, dean of the School of Humanities. “The number of applications is growing very quickly as word is getting out. This pilot program — plus our new student journal, R2, and the courses that we have added in creative writing — prove that many Rice students are eager to write and that they write well. Bruce Dunlevie’s enlightened support enables us to showcase the writing abilities of our students.”

And among the reading audience is Dunlevie, himself, Wihl noted. “Bruce receives and reads a copy of every paper,” he said.

Lovett College junior Mishka Douglas was among the first class of fellowship recipients who wrote their papers over the summer and met to discuss the experience in October.

“This was probably one of the best writing experiences I have ever had,” the English major who wrote about religion in King Lear and Jane Eyre. “In the classroom, the time we have to work with the teacher is limited. Working with [Associate Professor of Spanish Lane] Kauffman, I got to see so many mistakes I didn’t know I had been making all along. It was really wonderful.”

Lovett College sophomore Mike Kallstrom said he appreciated the chance to “connect the dots of ideas” examined in the introductory humanities courses. His experience writing about how ancient Greek literature laid the foundations for emotion inspired him. “I decided I wanted to take at least one writing-intensive class every semester for the rest of my time at Rice,” he said. “The way the professors make themselves available and are so accessible — I want to take full advantage of that.”

He said his work also piqued great interest in the fellowship among his peers. “There are a lot of people out there who have

Dunlevie Scholarship Winners

Will Rice freshman Dana Hoffman, “Desegregation in Denver Public Schools”
Brown freshman Emily Korinek, “Right and Duty in Literature”
Baker junior Michelle Moller, “Esoteric and Mystical Currents in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam”
Lovett freshman Shira Polster, “Politics in Shakespeare and Corneille”
Will Rice junior Elizabeth Snyder, “The Old Testament and the Gospel of Mark”
Will Rice freshman Clay Wiske, “Thucydides and the Philosophy of War”
Sid Richardson sophomore Shuai Xu, “Democracy in Tocqueville, Whitman, Doctorow, and Ha Jin.”
Dunlevie Writing Fellowships
Continued from page 10

great ideas who would like to write them down,” Kallstrom said.

The exercise of writing for the sake of writing with no grade attached was rewarding not only for the students — the nine humanities faculty advisers were enriched, too.

“It was a voyage of discovery for both of us,” said Sarah Westphal, associate professor of German, who guided Martel College sophomore Alexandra Bacalao in writing an essay on “Virgil’s Aeneid and Women’s Roles in Ancient Rome.”

Donald Morrison, professor of philosophy, agreed. He advised Jones College sophomore Jay Kim on his essay about Thucydides’ methodology in “History of the Peloponnesian War.” “I really enjoyed working with the students on a project that was longer and more complex, more polished and well-crafted than what can be accomplished in the course of a semester,” Morrison said.

English professor Dennis Hus ton lauded the fellowship that gives students time to think deeply through the issues and ample time for research and writing. “There’s something wonderful about seeing arguments develop over a more in-depth work,” he said.

Wihl said he hopes to continue to offer the scholarships for at least two more years. The first eight recipients of next summer’s Dunlevie Summer Writing Fellowships were recently announced (see page 10).

Seven more recipients will be chosen in spring 2006. For students enrolled in spring 2006 courses, nominations from instructors are due April 27, 2006. Awardees will be announced May 4, 2006.

Tracy Jo Barnwell Awarded Parks Creative Writing Fellowship

In fall 2005, the School of Humanities awarded the second annual Parks Creative Writing Fellowship to Dr. Tracy Jo Barnwell, who received her Ph.D. in creative writing (2005) from the University of Houston, considered one of the top two or three writing programs nationally. Prior to her Ph.D., Barnwell received a B.A. in English literature from Rice (1996), and an M.A. in creative writing from Johns Hopkins University (1998).

Barnwell wrote two doctoral dissertations: one in fiction titled “Now Showing at the Bijou Rose,” and one in poetry titled “Monsters in Repose.”

The fellowships are funded by the Parks Family Foundation, created by donors Cecily and Gavin Parks. An alumna from Rice, Mrs. Parks is a poet and is currently pursuing a degree at New York University.

As an undergraduate at Rice in 1996, Barnwell won both the Academy of American Poets Award and the George Williams Creative Writing Prize. Later honors include the Bartheilme Prize in Fiction from the University of Houston (2004), and being named a finalist for the Poetry Prize (1999) offered by The Nation magazine.

In addition to holding local poetry readings periodically in town, Barnwell has also entered her two screenplays – Slot Star (2004) and Scudge (2003) – in multiple film festivals across the country. Some of Barnwell’s forthcoming poetry will be published in Pleiades, Cranky, and The Gettysburg Review.

As a lecturer and writer-in-residence at Rice, Barnwell offers two identical undergraduate courses each semester. “Fiction Writing” (ENGL 301), is a workshop focused on the critiquing of student work and the study of specific elements of craft. Designed as an independent study, “Advanced Poetry Writing” (ENGL 493), is a reading-intensive course intended to further the study of poetry writing through the examination of student work and discussion of specific contemporary masters of the genre.

According to Susan Wood, Gladys Louise Fox Professor of English, the application process is open to persons with either an M.F.A. or a Ph.D. in creative writing. “Typically, we solicit names from the creative writing faculty at the University of Houston,” says Wood. “This benefits us at Rice and helps us forge a bond with the outstanding writing program at the University of Houston.”

Once applications are received, the creative writing faculty – Wood, Justin Cronin, Associate Professor of English, and Marsha Recknagel, Writer in Residence – interview the final candidates. “We welcomed this fellowship heartily because it fills a great need here at Rice for postgraduate work and teaching experience in fiction writing – and should allow ample time for fellowship winners to finish a first book.”

Last year’s winner, Amber Dermont, also wrote fiction, and recently had her short story, A Splendid Wife, published in The Georgia Review.

Written By Angela Wren Wall

Reprinted courtesy of Rice News
Written by Jennifer Evans
Providing a dynamic union of art and education is the goal of Rice University’s newest partnership with the museum community of Houston. Rice University-Museum Collaborative Partnership representatives celebrated their union and joint ventures at a luncheon March 15, 2006, at Cohen House.

Partnership representatives include the President’s Office; the School of Humanities, including the departments of Visual Arts and Art History and the Rice Art Gallery; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Menil Collection; and the Glassell School of Art. The partnership—led primarily by the School of Humanities—brings together Houston’s museums, with their wealth of original art, photography, and unique documentation, and Rice’s scholarly and educational resources to develop programs and studies of Houston’s unique artistic holdings.

Suzanne Deal Booth ’77, who received her bachelor of arts degree in art history from Rice and has many years of experience in art conservation, made a significant gift to help launch Rice’s participation in the partnership. “Suzanne’s gift will enhance and develop every aspect of the visual arts at Rice University. Greater ties to the museum community will create opportunities for new research of national and international caliber, expand our offerings in studio arts, and give our unique Rice Gallery a much greater presence in the art world. Suzanne’s gift is the capstone of a building effort that will have lasting benefits to our students and faculty and to Rice as a whole in connection with President David Leebron’s new vision of our role in Houston.”

After obtaining a master of arts degree and certificate in art conservation from New York University, Booth began her work at the J. Paul Getty Museum in California, and subsequently spent several years organizing international conservation education projects at the Getty Conservation Institute. She is currently an art consultant and founder of the Friends of Heritage Preservation, a small, private association of members based in Los Angeles, dedicated to the recognition, preservation, and conservation of artistic and cultural heritage.

Booth has a long-standing interest in the Houston arts community. While a work-study student at Rice, she was an assistant to the late Dominique de Menil, founder with her husband, John, of the Menil Collection that houses their vast art collection. At the time Booth was working with her, Menil was organizing exhibitions of her art collection at Rice’s “Art Barn.”

As an alumna, Booth has been actively involved in the Rice Art Gallery and serves as a member of the Humanities Advisory Board and on the University Art Committee. “I’m delighted to be in a position to donate to this initiative,” Booth said. “It’s a great way to expand the artistic richness of the Houston community and strengthen the city’s cultural and community ties with Rice.”

Possible future joint projects include appointing fellows from the Glassell School to teach courses in the Department of Visual Arts; the joint production of major scholarship in the field of art history and through symposia and exhibits; establishing postdoctoral fellows to conduct research on specific holdings at the museums; jointly sponsored lectures and publications; and establishing two new positions at the Rice Gallery, curator of education and director of outreach.

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Written by Margot Dimond