



# STUDENT HONORS

Nearly 3,500 graduate students are engaged in research and scholarship activities across 115 master's and 43 doctoral programs at the University of Delaware. Each year, more than 700 UD undergraduates also actively participate in research. The honors highlighted here, selected from dozens across UD, demonstrate the excellence and promise of our student scholars.

Names in bold — University Honors Program students



## Grad student wins prestigious fellowship from American Heart Association

Megan Wenner, a doctoral student in the Biomechanics and Movement Sciences Program, won a \$21,000 pre-doctoral fellowship from the American Heart Association last year to support her dissertation research on the effect of salt intake on persons who take Celebrex, a prescription drug for arthritis, to see if the drug increases sensitivity to salt.

"The fellowship is very competitive, and her application scored in the excellent rating," says her adviser, William Farquhar, associate professor in the Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences.

Wenner, who completed her Ph.D. earlier this year, is now pursuing postdoctoral research at Yale University on reproductive hormones and body fluid regulation.

Marco Bedolla (left) and Aleksey Dvorzhinskiy are UD's 2009–10 Goldwater Scholars.



## Rivers named 2009 Truman Scholar



**William Rivers**, a UD student working on an Honors Degree with Distinction in international relations with a concentration in U.S. foreign policy, has been named a 2009 Truman Scholar. He is the seventh UD student to win the prestigious award in the last eight years.

The award provides \$30,000 for graduate study, along with priority admission and supplemental financial aid at several premier graduate institutions, leadership training, career and graduate school counseling, and special

internship opportunities with the federal government.

Recipients must be U.S. citizens, have an outstanding record of achievement and leadership ability, and be committed to careers in government or the not-for-profit sector.

For Rivers, the scholarship will help to pay for law school, which he said he hopes will eventually lead to a career as a U.S. attorney or a federal prosecutor.

"The positions are the point of contact between humans and the Department of Justice," Rivers said. "Going to law school would give me the opportunity to be the best advocate I could be. I will pray about it and talk about it. It's a fantastic opportunity, and I want to see how I can benefit the most people by doing this."

## Longwood grad student selected to attend national forum



Jackie Bergquist, a Fellow of UD's Longwood Graduate Program in Public Horticulture, was selected by the Institute of Museum and Library Services to attend the national conservation forum "It's Alive! Petals to Primates: Preservation Challenges of Living Collections" in February in San Diego.

Bergquist, whose research focuses on disaster management in public horticulture institutions, was invited to participate based on professional and community leadership.

Graduates of UD's Longwood Program, a partnership with Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pa., manage some of the nation's finest public gardens and horticultural institutions.



## Goldwater Scholars aim for careers in science and engineering

Aleksey Dvorzhinskiy, a junior biological sciences major, and **Marco Bedolla**, a junior chemical engineering major — have won Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships, one of the top awards in the United States for undergraduates studying mathematics, science, and engineering. The award covers the cost of tuition, fees, books, and room and board up to \$7,500 per year.

Since freshman year, Dvorzhinskiy has been working in the laboratory of Diane Herson, associate professor of biological sciences, on the resistance of a strain of *Salmonella* to antimicrobial compounds. He plans a career in medicine and wants to earn both his M.D. and Ph.D. so that he can conduct biomedical research and integrate his findings in patient care.

"The opportunity to do undergraduate research has been one of the best things about the University of Delaware," Dvorzhinskiy said. "While I have gained a great deal from my traditional coursework here, I believe the true strength of my academic training comes from the hands-on research experiences that I have had."

Bedolla, of Newark, Del., also has been involved in research at UD since his freshman year. Working in the lab of Mark Barteau, Robert L. Pigford Chair of Chemical Engineering, Bedolla is exploring the gas-phase epoxidation of propylene. He plans to pursue a Ph.D. in chemical engineering. His career goal is to lead a research group in surface chemistry and catalyst design and possibly teach at the university level.

## Art history student awarded Thaw Curatorial Fellowship



**Janet Dees**, a doctoral student in art history, received the Eugene Thaw Curatorial Fellowship for two years at SITE Santa Fe, a contemporary arts organization in New Mexico.

Dees will be doing research for exhibitions, working with artists, and developing her dissertation on Sherman Fleming, Adrian Piper, and Linda Montano, well-known artists who combine visual and performance arts.

At UD, Dees served as an instructor and curated the exhibition "In Remembrance: Artists from the Paul R. Jones Collection." Other honors include the Alisa Mellon Bruce Predoctoral Fellowship from the National Gallery of Art and awards for outstanding achievement and excellence in teaching from the UD Department of Art History.

## Economics student wins research, teaching honors



**Stela Stefanova** has forged a path of accomplishment on her way to a doctorate in economics. During the past year, Stefanova won the 2009 Lerner College of Business and Economics' Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching Award and the University's 2008 Excellence in Teaching Award for Graduate Students.

She also was selected for two summer internships at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Based on her work there, she and her co-authors won a best paper award at the American Agricultural Economics Association conference, and she also took first place in the association's annual poster competition.

Last August, Stefanova and fellow economics doctoral students

Laura Cojocaru and Leo-Rey Gordon were chosen by the National Science Foundation to attend the third Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Economic Sciences in Germany, where they had the opportunity to interact with 14 Nobel Laureates.

## Sussman Prize honors stellar doctoral graduates

Michelle V. Knights, graduate of the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, and Bethany Welch, graduate of the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, won the College of Education and Public Policy's Sussman Dissertation Prize.

The award was established in 1997 by Marvin B. Sussman, the former Unidel Professor of Human Behavior who was widely regarded as a truly interdisciplinary scholar. Sussman died in 2007.

Knights' dissertation, "Environment and Process: Exploring Developmental Pathways of Self-Regulatory Capabilities in Young Children at Risk," looked at how preschoolers develop the ability to control their own behavior in social settings. She is now an assistant professor of human development and family science at Messiah College in Grantham, Pa.

Welch's dissertation, "The Catholic Church and Revitalization: A Case Study of the Office for Community Development of

the Archdiocese of Philadelphia," investigated how religious institutions in America have expanded their role into areas such as community development, housing, public affairs, social services, and education. She is now a senior research associate at the Center for Governmental Research in Rochester, N.Y.



*Bethany Welch, left, and Michelle Knights, won the Sussman Prize.*

## Chateaubriand Fellowship winner studying reef fish



**Ben Ciotti**, a doctoral student in marine biosciences, is doing research in France and French Polynesia on the ecology of juvenile damselfish (*Dascyllus aruanus*) living in coral reefs with support from a Chateaubriand Fellowship from the Office of Science and Technology of the Embassy of France in the U.S. Ciotti is one of 20 graduate students from American universities to be selected for the honor.

Every year, the Chateaubriand Fellowship provides pre- and post-doctoral researchers in science, humanities, and social science positions with the opportunity to conduct their studies in some of the best research institutions in France. Recipients receive a monthly stipend, roundtrip airfare to France, and health insurance.

Ciotti is examining the genetic and physiological properties of the young damselfish that survive on various experimental reefs around the island of Moorea near Tahiti and testing whether these properties vary according to the environmental conditions at each site.

## Three receive Fulbright awards



Three University of Delaware students received 2009 Fulbright Scholarships for research in Europe and Southeast Asia.

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government through the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. It is designed to "increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries."

◆ **Megan Fisher**, a recent graduate in biological sciences, will take classes at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitaet Muenchen in Germany and conduct research with Jochen Graw at the Helmholtz Zentrum Muenchen (German Research Center for Environmental Health), investigating the role of BetaB2-crystallin in intracellular signaling.

◆ **Jared Larson**, doctoral student in political science and international relations, will travel to Lisbon, Portugal, to study the effects of Muslim immigration to Spain and Portugal.

◆ In affiliation with Atma Jaya University in Jakarta, Timothy McKinnon, doctoral student in linguistics, will continue his work to save an endangered language — the Malay dialect known as Kerinci — on Sumatra, Indonesia's largest island.