

NEWS/EVENTS



LSU Alumna Mary Lou Applewhite Receives Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters

Prominent philanthropist and active supporter of Louisiana State University, Dr. Mary Lou Applewhite, was presented with an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters during the University's 277th commencement ceremony on May 18. The degree was conferred upon Applewhite for substantial contributions to her profession, dedicated advocacy of higher education, and generous support of LSU and the College of Science.

Applewhite is a 1951 graduate from LSU and 1955 graduate of LSU Medical School in New Orleans. A trailblazer and role model for women physicians, Applewhite practiced dermatology for 40 years. She was the first female dermatologist in New Orleans and the first female president of the Louisiana Dermatology Association. She was also the

first woman appointed to the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners and the first woman to train at Charity Hospital in dermatology. [More](#)



College of Science Confers More Than 400 Degrees

Twenty students receive University Medals

The College of Science celebrated the accomplishments of more than 400 graduates who completed the requirements for bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees during the College's May 18th diploma ceremony in the Maravich Assembly Center.

The College is proud to announce that 20 of the University's 42 University Medalists are graduates of the College of Science. [More](#)



Photo of humpback whale bubblenet feeding

LSU Students to Study Marine Biology of Southeastern Alaska

A group of LSU students, led by Professor Bill Stickle and Associate Professor Fernando Galvez in biological sciences, will be spending their summer studying the marine biology of southeastern Alaska through the Marine Biology in Alaska Academic Programs Abroad Experience, July 13-August 4. The students will receive six to seven credit hours for their participation and may choose their courses from Marine Communities and Lab, Vertebrate Physiology, and Undergraduate Research.

The experience will include a two and a half day ferry trip between Bellingham, WA and Juneau, AK on the MV Columbia through the famous inside passage. The students will also have a whale-watching cruise where they will observe humpback whales and stellar sea lions, in addition to a helicopter flight onto the Juneau Icefield to observe how glacial scouring formed the topography of coastal Alaska.

ALUMNI

Ronald Alvarez, 2011 Hall of Distinction Inductee, 1979 zoology graduate, and 1983 graduate of the LSU Medical Center, has been elected the 44th president of the Society of Gynecologic Oncology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Alvarez is also a Dean's Circle member.

Jose Gascon, 2002 chemistry Ph.D. graduate, has been awarded tenure at The University of Connecticut. [More](#)

NEW FUNDING

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Michal Brylinski, "Boosting the accuracy of protein function inference in the twilight zone of sequence similarity," Oakridge Associated Universities, 2012-2013, \$5,000.

John Larkin, "Cell Differentiation and the Plant Cell Cycle," NSF, 2012-2015, \$1459,901.

Andrew Whitehead, "Minority Undergraduate Participation in Physiological Genomics Research," REU Supplement NSF, 2012-2014, \$7,500.

KUDOS

Nine College of Science Faculty Recognized at Distinguished Faculty Awards Ceremony

LSU recognize many outstanding faculty members at the 2012 Distinguished Faculty Awards ceremony on May 1 in the Lod Cook Alumni Center. Award winners from the College of Science are:

- Marcia Newcomer, Distinguished Faculty Award
- Julia Y. Chan, LSU Alumni Association Faculty Excellence Award
- Jonathan P. Dowling, LSU Foundation Distinguished Faculty Teaching Award
- Stephanie Kurtz, George H. Deer Distinguished Teaching Award
- Lawrence Smolinsky, H.M. "Hub" Cotton Award for Faculty Excellence
- Raymond Chastain, Tiger Athletic Foundation President's Award
- Patrick A. Kolniak, Tiger Athletic Foundation President's Award
- Dana Browne, Tiger Athletic Foundation Undergraduate Teaching Award
- Kathy S. Thompson, Tiger Athletic Foundation Undergraduate Teaching Award [More](#)

Gabrielle Allen, associate professor of computer science; **Werner Bengler** and **Andrew Merzky**, research scientists at the LSU Center for Computation & Technology; and **Ed Seidell**, professor of physics & astronomy, have been named by the International ACM Symposium on High-Performance Parallel and Distributed Computing (HPDC) as one of the top 20 papers in the last 20 years of publications. [More](#)

June 4 - June 7, Horizons of Innovative Theories, Experiments, and Supercomputing in Nucleur Physics (HITES 2012), will host an international conference in honor of **Roy P. Daniels Professor of Physics & Astronomy Jerry Draayer**. This conference will celebrate Draayer's renowned research and academic achievements. More than 100 participants are expected to attend including some of the world's most prominent nuclear physicists, computer scientists, and young emerging scientists. [More](#)

Christopher Gregg, Science Residential College rector and biological sciences instructor, was named 2011-2012 Faculty Rector of the Year.

Sophie Warny, Museum of Natural Science curator of education, will have her research featured in a new public exhibit at the California Academy of Science. The exhibit, entitled *Earthquake*, will open at the end of May.

MARQUIS PUBLICATIONS

Mark Batzer, LSU System Boyd Professor of Biological Sciences; **Miriam Konkel**, research assistant professor; and **Brygg Ulmer**, associate professor of computer science; and others have published an article entitled, *Orangutan Alu quiescence reveals possible source element: support for ancient backseat drivers*, in Mobil DNA. [More](#)

Peter Clift, Charles T. McCord Professor of Petroleum Geology, is one of the authors of *Fluvial landscapes of the Harappan civilization*, published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. [More](#)

STAR SCHOLARS

College of Science Names 2012 Science Honors Scholarship Recipients

The LSU College of Science and the Honors College are pleased to announce the 2012 Science Honors Scholars. These students are among the College's top incoming freshmen. Each scholar will pursue a science degree with four years of Honors College participation.

[CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF THE SCHOLARS](#)



University Medalist Alex Leder Prepares for Life at MIT

May 2012 graduate in math and physics and University Medalist **Alex Leder** has leveraged his study abroad experiences, research activities, and stellar academic performance to capture one of only 80 graduate spots at MIT.

In addition to MIT, Leder applied to 11 other top graduate schools including Stanford, The Ohio State, Berkeley, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Of the 12 graduate schools, Leder was accepted to 10.

Leder graduated from McKinley High School's Gifted Program and decided to follow in his parents' footsteps and attend LSU. During his academic career he spent a year taking introductory and advance mathematics classes in Germany. Three of the classes were taught in German, which was not a major hurdle for Leder considering he and his family migrated from Germany in the late eighties. The Leder family divided their time between the U.S., Mexico (his mother is a native of Mexico City), and Germany.

When asked about his summer plans, Leder quickly responded, "road trip." After spending a year abroad and most of his spare time in research labs, he is eager to have a break before starting at MIT in September.

A sampling of career plans for other graduates includes:

- Hannah Manuel, mathematics graduate, who will be pursuing a Ph.D. in mathematics from Georgia Tech on a National Defense Science & Engineering Graduate Fellowship,
- Myrtrang Do, biochemistry graduate, who will be pursuing an MD/Ph.D. at Cornell University Medical School, and
- Philip Leblanc, computer science graduate, who will begin working as a software development engineer for Microsoft.

John Gilmer, computer science graduate, won the Honors College Outstanding Thesis Award, for his senior honor thesis, *Unsupervised Semantic Classification Methods*. Gilmer went to St. Petersburg, Russia, to study the Russian language for year. He will be attending graduate school at the University of Washington in computational linguistics in fall 2012.

Stewart Humble, biological sciences major, and **Mel Acosta Jr.**, mathematics major, are two College of Science students recognized as part of the Office of the Dean of Students *Tiger Twelve*. This award is given to current, full-time students, who have a cumulative GPA of 2.5, and have best demonstrated the seven basic principles outlined in LSU's Commitment to Community. [More](#)

Alex Kleinpeter, biological sciences major, has accepted a fellowship to conduct summer research and training at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Kleinpeter will be assisting with research on virus evolution.

Jonathan Lambert, Honors College student double majoring in coastal environmental science and marine biology, received the Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship. This scholarship provides successful undergraduate applicants with awards that include up to \$8,000 per year in academic assistance for full-time study during the nine-month academic year, and a 10-week full-time summer internship position at a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration facility.

ALUMNI & DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Friends, Colleagues Establish Endowment in Memory of LSU Alumnus John Caldwell



Friends and colleagues of LSU alumnus John Caldwell have contributed over \$20,000 to the LSU Foundation to establish the John D. Caldwell and Lion Copolymer Endowment for Graduate Studies. This endowment will support graduate student activities in polymer chemistry at LSU.

Caldwell received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern State University and his master's degree in chemistry from LSU. After enduring a lengthy battle with liver cancer, he passed away Sunday, January 29. Caldwell spent 30 years as the chief process technical manager at the Royalene EPDM operation in the Lion Copolymer plant in Geismar. He was fondly remembered as an "exceptional engineer."

"I have never met an engineer as good as John. He was second to none," said Gregory Nelson, CEO and president, Lion Copolymer. "This industry has lost someone who was extremely talented and we are happy to leave a legacy for his children and family through the LSU endowment."

Caldwell's family and friends gathered at Lion Copolymer on May 14 to memorialize the remarkable scientist and innovator. Thankfully, Caldwell learned of the endowment prior to his passing and was astounded to know that the gift would benefit graduate students working towards the same degree that helped catapult him into a long and successful career in polymer chemistry.

"LSU prepared him well," said Caldwell's wife Sabra. "He was very proud of his LSU heritage." So proud in fact, two of his children, Christine and James, are LSU graduates and one, Meredith, is currently pursuing a bachelors of science in mathematics. He also hand-picked several LSU chemistry graduates to work at Copolymer.

"After extensive conversations with Lion Copolymer, it was evident that, outside of family, John's passion was LSU. Then when you hear of his dedication to his profession and his outstanding accomplishments as a chemist and the advances he made to the polymer chemistry industry, it made sense to align this gift with the LSU chemistry program." The endowment will support student activities in the LSU Department of Chemistry's polymer chemistry graduate program.

If you would like to make a donation to the John Caldwell Lion Copolymer Endowment for Graduate Studies, please do so via check or online at www.lsufoundation.org/contribute (specify John D. Caldwell-Lion Copolymer Endowment). Checks should be made payable to LSU Foundation, notation line John D. Caldwell-Lion Copolymer Endowment, and mailed to the LSU Foundation at 3838 West Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

ExxonMobil, Its Employees and Retirees Give More than \$1.75 Million to LSU

ExxonMobil presented the LSU Foundation with a \$1,034,765 gift on behalf of the ExxonMobil Foundation during a May 7 reception in the Live Oak Lounge of the LSU Student Union.

The gift represents ExxonMobil Foundation's match of 2011 employee, retiree and surviving spouse donations that were eligible for the University's Educational Matching Gift Program, and it continues ExxonMobil's longstanding support of LSU. The company's matching gift program is a leader in private industry, providing millions of dollars to higher education in the U.S. since its inception in 1962. The ExxonMobil Foundation matches \$3 for every \$1 contributed by an eligible participant. LSU has consistently been one of the program's top beneficiaries in the world. In 2008, LSU became the first university in the world to receive more than \$1 million in matching funds from ExxonMobil Foundation in one calendar year.

Among the LSU colleges and units supported by this most recent gift are the LSU AgCenter; the colleges of Agriculture, Art & Design, Education (including the LSU Laboratory School), Engineering, Humanities & Social Sciences, Music & Dramatic Arts, and Science; the E. J. Ourso College of Business; LSU's Office of the Chancellor; LSU Continuing Education; the Honors College; the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center; the schools of Library & Information Science and Veterinary Medicine; LSU Libraries; the LSU Museum of Art; Office of Student Aid & Scholarships; the LSU Rural Life Museum; and Swine Palace. Gifts were also made directly to the LSU Foundation and the LSU Alumni Association.



LSU College of Science Remembers Sid Bonner, 1928-2012

The LSU College of Science would like to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Albert Sidney Bonner.

Albert Sidney Bonner earned a bachelor of science degree in geology from LSU and a master of science degree in geology from Stanford. Bonner's career in the petroleum industry spanned 40 years. He was a strong supporter of LSU, particularly the University's Geology & Geophysics Department. Fellow LSU graduate and best friend Joe Reid began the Sid and Peggy Bonner Scholarship in Geology to honor his friend.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Sid and Peggy Bonner Scholarship Fund through the LSU Foundation, 3838 W. Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

To submit news items for the upcoming College of Science E-News, email djenkins1@lsu.edu

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