

# GENETICS *at georgia*

## Geneticists receive \$1.8 million in NSF CAREER awards

By Laurie Anderson

Two UGA genetics researchers won grants from the National Science Foundation valued at more than \$1.8 million for projects that may help combat birth defects and improve the understanding of how new species come into existence.

Douglas Menke and Kelly Dyer, assistant professors of genetics, will receive funding throughout the next five years from the highly competitive Faculty Early Development CAREER Program, which supports research and teaching by outstanding junior faculty.



Robert Newcomb

Menke

Menke will use his \$788,000 CAREER award to study the mechanisms responsible for generating differences in limb length in *Anolis* lizards. He and his students will collect samples of

long- and short-limbed *Anolis* lizards from around the Caribbean, then use molecular techniques to closely observe the growth patterns of their limbs during embryonic development. The project will involve some of the first molecular studies done on *Anolis* embryos.

The study will reveal whether species with similar limb lengths achieve a comparable final appearance through different means.

“Caribbean anoles are an ideal species for studies of the morphological evolution of limbs, since short-limbed species have evolved independently several times on different islands,” Menke said.

see *Geneticists* page 5

Peter Frey



Arnold

## Arnold named AAAS Fellow

By Sam Fahmy

University of Georgia geneticist Jonathan Arnold has been named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, an honor bestowed on him by his peers for “scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications.”

Arnold, a professor in the genetics department of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, is among the 539 AAAS members who was presented with an official certificate and a gold and blue (representing science and engineering, respectively) rosette pin in February 2012 during the AAS Annual Meeting in Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

“Designation as an AAAS Fellow is an honor reserved for the most talented scientists,” said David Lee, UGA vice president for research. “It’s an honor not only for Dr. Arnold to be recognized by his peers for his outstanding contributions to science, but also for the University of Georgia.”

Arnold, who joined UGA in 1982, studies fungi to identify gene and biochemical networks that are involved in fundamental biological processes, such as the circadian clock that plays a role in cellular division and the metabolism of proteins in plants and animals. In a landmark study published in 2007, his team

see *Arnold* page 7

## Roy awarded Alton Fellowship

In recognition of the exemplary progress of her research, Eillen Roy was named the 2011 Kirby and Jan Alton Graduate Fellow by the Graduate Affairs Committee.

Advised by Richard Meagher, Eileen has been examining the molecular evolution of the actin-depolymerizing factor gene family in *Arabidopsis* using ancestral state reconstruction.



Roy

Planning to graduate in December 2012, Eillen is currently applying for a postdoctoral position and will eventually pursue a career as a researcher in a federal agency.

The Alton Fellowship, funded by a generous continuing gift from Dr. Kirby and Mrs. Jan Alton, provides full support for an outstanding fourth-year graduate student.

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Department of Genetics  
The University of Georgia, Athens  
[www.genetics.uga.edu](http://www.genetics.uga.edu)

## editor's note



Welcome to the eighth annual *Genetics at Georgia* newsletter. It's our enormous pleasure to bring you news of all that is happening here at UGA, and to invite you to share the news of your own personal and professional adventures.

This past year has been a fantastic time of growth for our department. Last year, we mentioned that we had recruited Drs. Andrea Sweigert and David Nelson. They are now settled into their new labs and adding new energy and ideas to the department.

I am also delighted to report that we successfully recruited a new department head to Genetics—Dr. Allen Moore. Allen comes to us by way of the University of Exeter in the UK, where he was head of the School of Biosciences and associate dean. Allen has a fantastic wealth of expertise in both research and leadership, and the department is excited to move forward under his leadership. We are also excited to welcome Trish Moore, who will be setting up her own lab in Entomology.

Meanwhile, our students have been busy. Graduate students published papers in an impressive variety of journals this year, from *Conservation Genetics* to *Applied Environmental Microbiology*, from *PLoS One* to *Biological Invasions*. And of course, our graduating seniors are headed off on all sorts of impressive adventures. But you can read more about this from Mary Bedell and Cheryl Pinzone.

It's easy for us to keep track of the activities of our current students. But we need your help to keep track with events in your own lives. Please send us your updates, both personal and professional. We'd love to hear about family milestones, new jobs, notable accom-

see *editor's* on page 7

Design: Christopher Ross, Susan White  
Photographers: Darlene Strickland,  
Susan White

## news | Graduate Program

It is hard to keep up with all of the awards and achievements of the graduate students in the genetics department. The professional activities of all of the graduate students are highly commendable whether related to research, teaching, or community outreach. Here is just a glimpse of some these activities:

The officers of the Genetics Graduate Student Association (GGSA) serve as liaisons to the graduate school and faculty on behalf of all of the graduate students. They also organize many activities and social events for the department. This year's co-presidents were Christine Hartman and Sarah Sander, the treasurer was Cheryl Pinzone, the communications officer was Sandra Hoffberg, the social chair was Jen Olmstead, and the new position of webmaster was filled by Jared Lee, who created a fully-functioning website for the GGSA. This year the GGSA hosted Dr. David Hillis and Dr. Greg Wray as our student-invited speakers. We are currently underway in inviting other prestigious speakers for next year. Special thanks should be paid to fourth-year students Emily Peeden and Evan Staton, who organized the departmental recruitment for new students entering in Fall 2012.



Volny

We are excited to welcome our first-year students who are now ending their rotations and are beginning to embark on their dissertation projects. This year ten new students were admitted to the program: Megan Behringer, Rodney Jarvis, Ousman Mahmud, Madhumati Mukherjee, Ranjani Namasivayam, Estefania Olivar, John O'Neil, Nicholas Troendle, Matthew Whitesell, and Matthew Zuellig. As these students get started we must bid farewell to the many students that successfully defended their dissertations this year: Virginia Bain, Eve Basenko, Brunie Burgos, Leilei Guo, Lori King, John Robinson, Mark Stead, Quiaozhi Wei, Jianing Xu, Christina Zakas, and Han Zhang. They will be missed, but we know that they will go on to do great things.

Genetics graduate students have been extremely successful this year, and have received numerous awards for which they should be very proud. From the department of genetics, Joel Farkas, Jennifer Olmstead, Emily Peeden and Matthew Volny were named to the NIH training grant. Congrats to these students! Eileen Roy received the Kirby and Jan Alton Graduate Fellowship award in 2011 for being an outstanding senior graduate student. Cassandra Heighington and Christina Zakas were awarded the Linton and June Bishop Graduate Fellowship in 2011 for their outstanding work as graduate students in the genetics department. It is clear that these students have done great work and served as good role models for the junior graduate students. From the University of Georgia, the 2011 Innovative and Interdisciplinary Research Grant Award was bestowed upon Kerin Bentley and Eileen Roy. Jenna Oberstaller from the Kissinger Lab was honored with the 2011 Achievement Rewards for College Scientists Foundation Award. From the Society for the Study of Evolution (SSE), Cheryl Pinzone was awarded the 2011 Rosemary Grant Award for Graduate Research on "The Influence of X-Chromosome Drive on Female Reproductive Life History," and Eileen Roy received a travel award to attend the 2011 Evolution conference to present her research on "The Role of Selection in the Molecular Evolution of the *Arabidopsis* ADF Gene Family." Clearly, the Genetics graduate students do great work both within the department, at the University of Georgia, and abroad.



Oberstaller

Apart from being great role models and excelling in their research, the senior graduate students in the department have made great progress in teaching not only undergraduates, but also high school and primary school students about genetics and science. In addition to working towards a PhD in genetics, fifth-year student Mark Fisher



Bentley

see *Grad* on page 4

## news | Undergraduate Program

We are very pleased that enrollment in our major has increased over the last several years and we now have nearly 200 students who are declared majors or intend to major in genetics. Of the declared majors, the average cumulative GPA as of Fall 2011 is 3.7. Eight majors graduated in Fall 2011, and thirty majors are on track to graduate this spring. We will honor all of these students at a luncheon reception in April.

During the past year, we initiated efforts to attract more students and to improve the curriculum for majors. In fall 2011, the department hosted the first annual open house for students interested in genetics to meet with our faculty and to learn about the major. We are also expanding the list of courses acceptable as major electives. These revisions will improve the depth and breadth of the major, and allow students more flexibility for choosing electives.

Most of our majors are active in a variety of on-campus activities, but two in the past year are particularly notable. Catherine Debban served on the Student Advisory Board to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Allyson Byrd is one of a small group of graduating students invited to attend a Presidential Honors Day Luncheon in April.

Many genetics majors received awards for their research or gave presentations at local and national conferences in 2011. Erin Giglio, Farres Obeidin, Justin Smith, and Nick Talathi, were selected to be Summer Fellows in the Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities (CURO) at UGA. Michael Bray, Garrett Casale, Erin Giglio, Victoria DeLeo, Pranav Kaushish, Tatum

Mortimer, and Muktha Natrajan gave presentations at the 2011 CURO Symposium. Notably, Pranav Kaushish was awarded the 2011 CURO "Best Paper in the Sciences" award for his Honors thesis. Catherine Debban and Erin Giglio each presented posters at the Southeastern Population Ecology and Evolutionary Genetics meeting. Daniel Pique attended the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students in St.



Kaushish

Louis, where he received an award for outstanding microbiology poster, and attended the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Conference in Savannah, where he won 1st place for best oral presentation and 2nd place for best poster.

Several genetics majors were chosen for 2011 summer programs at other institutions. Allyson Byrd and Francine Katz were interns at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, respectively. Catherine Debban, Victoria DeLeo, and William Hughes were in summer research programs at the Rocky Mountain Biological Lab, at Emory University, and at Kansas State University, respectively; and Daniel Pique was an Amgen Research Scholar at Stanford School of Medicine.

Last year, the Cynthia Kenyon Outstanding Undergraduate Award was presented to Christina Swoope who then graduated from UGA and enrolled in a doctoral program at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in Baltimore. We are currently in the process of choosing from



Byrd



Pique



Talathi

see *Undergrad* on page 5



## head's note

I am delighted to provide my first "head's note" as your new head of department of genetics. The fantastic faculty, the long-standing tradition of excellence in research, and the international reputation of the department for integrating the breadth of genetic studies into its research and teaching were all factors that attracted me to take up the position as head. Returning to the US from England, where I was a professor at the University of Manchester (6 years) and more recently the University of Exeter (6 years), the relative lack of rain was attractive too. They don't call England the "green and pleasant land" for nothing.

I have only been here since September, and I want to thank Jeff Bennetzen for doing an admirable job as "interim" head of department. It is interesting that interim can last for nearly a whole term. The truth is that the department continued to perform exceptionally well in grants, publications, and teaching under Jeff and I am grateful that I was able to walk into a well-run and functioning department. His leadership was exceptional.

The economic climate is (putting it mildly) challenging throughout the world, and the University is not immune to the economic downturn. Despite multiple years without a pay raise, the staff in Genetics are impressive. I have been delighted to find that there is a real team spirit, that staff all feel they are contributing to the success of the department and that the faculty clearly see the support and help that is provided by the staff. I have to mention a few, simply because they have been so helpful to me personally in my transition here. Universities delight in having their own unique processes and timelines and UGA is no different. Dave Brown is one of the best IT guys I've encountered. Darlene is the first person I see every morning.

see *head's* on page 5

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT  
[www.genetics.uga.edu](http://www.genetics.uga.edu)

## Paterson named Regents Professor

By Sharron Hannon

Andrew Paterson, a UGA scientist considered a world leader in the mapping and sequencing of flowering-plant genomes, has been named a Regents Professor.

Regents Professorships are awarded by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents to distinguished faculty whose scholarship or creative activity is recognized both nationally and internationally as innovative and pace setting. The professorship, which includes a \$10,000 salary increase, is granted for an initial period of three years and may be renewed. No more than one such award may be given at UGA in any year.

Paterson came to UGA in 1999 and holds appointments in three departments: crop and soil sciences in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and plant biology and genetics, both in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. He also heads the Plant Genome Mapping Laboratory, a unit jointly administered by the two colleges, and is a member of UGA's Institute for Bioinformatics, the Bioenergy Systems Research Institute and the Plant Center.

In a nomination letter, the heads of the three departments describe his work as addressing "fundamental dimensions of a transition to a more bio-based economy, balancing increased food security with expanded bioenergy supplies while mitigating climate-related challenges such as a looming worldwide water crisis."

"Dr. Paterson's colleagues at UGA and beyond clearly hold him in the highest regard for his scientific accomplishments and remarkable productivity," said Provost Jere Morehead, whose office oversees the nomination process for the award. "At the same time, he has trained a large number of postdocs and graduate students and provided inspiration for more than 100 undergraduates who have had the opportunity to contribute to research projects in his laboratory. His total accomplishments make him well deserving of the title of Regents Professor."

Paterson's work has yielded greater understanding of flowering plants' common ancestors and of the evolutionary paths leading to present-day plants. He pioneered molecular mapping methods that have been adopted across the life sciences and has developed broadly applicable techniques for identifying and characterizing genetic variations in natural populations.

Over the course of his academic career, Paterson has received \$35 million in grants to support his research and has attracted interest from venture capitalists and biotechnology companies.

Paterson has published his research in highly ranked journals including *Nature*, *Science* and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*. Among his many honors, he was named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2008 and was one of two Guggenheim Foundation Fellows in plant sciences in 2007. In 2010, he won the inaugural award from the International Cotton Genome Initiative for outstanding contributions to cotton genomics and last year was elected overall chair of the initiative. In 2011, he was one of two winners of the national Distinguished Agriscience Scientist Award, conferred jointly by the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation and the American Farm Bureau.

Recent work in his Plant Genome Mapping Lab has included mapping the genomes of the two progenitors of a large perennial grass, *Miscanthus*, that shows promise



Peter Frey

Paterson

## Grad...from page 2

and fourth-year student Liza Lucht have been working on an Interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate in University Teaching. Liza presented a paper titled, "The Sweet Side of Genetics: An Active Learning Simulation Using Gummi Bears," at the 19th Georgia Conference on College and University Teaching. The 2012 Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards from the UGA Center for Teaching and Learning were awarded to Mark Fisher, Alex Mihala, and Cheryl Pinzone.



Pinzone

In addition to teaching, many of our students are dedicated to community outreach. On a yearly basis, many graduate students in the department serve as judges in the Georgia Science and Engineering Fair for junior and high school students in order to foster enthusiasm for science and encourage local youth to pursue higher education. In addition to teaching and guest lecturing at UGA, Liza Lucht has also visited Honors and AP Biology classes at a local high school and a 5<sup>th</sup> grade science class at an area elementary school. Finally, in collaboration with the extended 'Odum Family' in Ecology, both Mark Fisher and Sarah Sander are members of "The Ecotones," the newest a cappella vocal sensation to hit Athens. They are a group of ecologically minded students at the University of Georgia who help to spread the joy of sustainability and investing in the future.

I am awed by the magnitude of talent and professionalism that exists amongst the department's graduate students. In the years to come, the changes and innovations these students will create will be on the leading edge of research and of widespread importance in the community.



Lucht

Cheryl Pinzone

## Undergrad...from page 3

several equally outstanding nominees for this year's award.

Several genetics majors have received awards for the upcoming year. For summer 2012, Devon Humphries was awarded a UGA CURO Summer Fellowship, Drexel Neumann was accepted into the Amgen Scholars Program at Washington University, and Kerry Hennessy was offered a medical research internship at the University of Tennessee. Victoria DeLeo was named a 2012 Barry M. Goldwater Scholar, a national scholarship that recognizes exceptional sophomores and juniors in engineering, mathematics and the natural sciences.



Hennessy



DeLeo

Graduating majors who were accepted to doctoral and professional programs for fall 2012 include Allyson Byrd (PhD program in Genomics and Computational Biology, University of Pennsylvania), Garrett Casale (MD program, University of Virginia School of Medicine), Erin Giglio (PhD program in Evolution, Ecology and Behavior, University of Texas - Austin), Pranav Kaushish (DMD program, Georgia Health Sciences University College of Dental Medicine), Madeline Krentz (PhD program in Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Kentucky), Robert Liebman (MD program, Medical College of Georgia at Georgia Health Sciences University), and Daniel Pique (a post-baccalaureate traineeship at the NIH).



Liebman

We look forward to the upcoming year, as we accept new students into the major and continue to educate and train our exceptional current majors.

Mary Bedell

Dave Gupta (BS/MPH '11) is in his 1<sup>st</sup> year of medical school at GHSU.

Elizabeth Hedgepeth (BS '08) completed an MPH in epidemiology at UGA in May 2011.

Adeline Lee (BS '11), currently a junior high coordinator for Christ Community Church in Franklin, TN, will begin the graduate nurse practitioner program for women's health and adult care at Vanderbilt in the fall.

Kaitlin McNally (BS '10) is now a research assistant at the Boyce Thompson Institute, Cornell University.

Muktha Natrajan (BS/MPH '11) is pursuing a PhD in clinical neuroscience at the University of Cambridge, UK.

Jonathan Powers (BS '10) is working in the tissue-processing lab (cardiovascu-

lar tissue for transplant) at CryoLife in Kennesaw, GA.

Jennifer Simpliciano (BS '11) is currently a research technician at UGA, and she hopes to attend medical school in the future.

Deanne Tibbitts (BS '01) completed her PhD (2011) in molecular and medical genetics at Oregon Health and Science

University studying oncogene regulation in lymphoblastic and myeloid leukemia.

Alice Weaver (BS '10) is in her 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Medical Scientist Training Program at the UA-Birmingham School of Medicine pursuing an MD/PhD.

## alumni news

Please send your news updates to Susan at [whites@uga.edu](mailto:whites@uga.edu)

## Geneticists...from page 1

The research will help scientists determine how limb size and shape are controlled. The findings also may aid in understanding how genetic mutations in humans can alter limb growth and result in congenital birth defects of the extremities.

Dyer will use her \$1.04 million CAREER award to investigate how new species form, as she and her students study the genetic basis of mating behaviors in *Drosophila* flies.

"Courtship between a male and a female fly is very elaborate. A male sings, dances and produces perfumes to attract a female and then the female evaluates these cues to choose a mate," Dyer said. "In the quinary group of *Drosophila* flies we are studying, some females are very picky about which males they will mate with, while others are less picky and will even mate with males from a different species.

"Ultimately, we want to know whether genes that enable a female to distinguish a male from a different species are also involved in discriminating among potential mates from her own species," she added. "This will tell if the processes that reinforce barriers between species may also trigger reproductive isolation within a species."

The findings also could help researchers understand whether two different species that come into contact will merge together or remain distinct, a potentially useful tool in a world where human-induced changes force more animal groups to squeeze into smaller geographic ranges.

As part of their projects, the researchers also will encourage learning opportunities for under-represented minorities. Through the Peach State Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation and the genetics department's Summer Undergraduate Fellowships in Genetics programs, Menke and Dyer will invite undergraduate and graduate students—and, in Dyer's case, high school teachers and their students as well—to participate in fieldwork, carry out lab experiments and conduct analyses.



Dyer

see Regents on page 7

see Geneticists on page 8

## head's...from page 3

Jeanne and Donna keep us all on track with finance. You may have no idea of the bureaucratic paperwork that Tina handles, and believe me you don't want to know! Erika manages to keep me on track with the myriad of deadlines and appointments I have to meet, and I'd be completely lost without her help. Cheryl manages the graduate payroll with aplomb, despite it being one of the more complex I've seen! Janice has managed to train yet another GAC coordinator and Susan's contributions mean I never have to worry about our undergraduate degree because it is run so competently. Carmen enthusiastically keeps the undergraduate labs running smoothly. The key here is simple: if you aren't thinking about how things got done, then people who are doing their job surround us. My transition here has been made easier and more pleasant by being surrounded by professionals who really know their jobs. Thank you all.



Sweigart

Our faculty continue to gain national and international recognition. Jonathan Arnold was awarded AAAS fellowship, which is richly deserved. Mike Arnold and Mike Terns were named Distinguished Research Professors, joining Sidney Kushner, Rich Meagher, and last year's recipient Kelly Dawe as Distinguished Professors in the department. Andy Paterson was also a Distinguished Professor, but this year was named a Regents Professor for his contributions to research at UGA. We are proud to have such notable researchers in the department, as well as our GRA Eminent Scholars, CJ Tsai and Jeff Bennetzen. Leadership is easy when those you "lead" are leaders themselves.

Joining me this year as new faculty in the department were Andrea Sweigart and Dave Nelson. The lifeblood of any department is its new faculty, and we are pleased to have two new vigorous and exciting colleagues. Both are well underway in their research programs, with

undergraduates through postdocs working away in their labs. They have quickly established themselves as valuable members of the department and it seems I can't remember a time when they weren't in the department.

Existing faculty continue to excel at their jobs, but Jessie Kissinger has had a remarkable year that deserves special mention. Alongside maintaining one of the best-funded and most active research programs, and a busy travel schedule with international collaborations and workshops, Jessie was promoted to professor in recognition of her international reputation and accomplishments. As if she had nothing better to do, she has also taken on the directorship of the Institute of Bioinformatics, and is tackling that job with her characteristic vigor. I marvel at her energy and I congratulate her on such notable accomplishments.

The department continues to win competitive research grants, despite what can only be described as a dire funding rate from NSF and NIH. It is not just a struggle to get funded these days – the struggle is the new norm – but the bar is now set at astronomical heights. Nevertheless, we continue to enjoy remarkably good funding levels, reflecting a ramping up of effort by faculty in response to the current climate. There were two grants awarded that I want to mention specifically. Two of our assistant professors, Kelly Dyer and Doug Menke, were awarded NSF CAREER awards. These



Nelson

are 5 year grants, and I can do no better than to quote from the NSF website: "The Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program is a Foundation-wide activity that offers the National Science Foundation's most prestigious awards in support of junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through outstanding research, excellent education and the integration of education and research within the context of

## Friends of Genetics

We proudly recognize alumni and friends who have supported our academic programs from April 9, 2011 to March 30, 2012. We are grateful for the generosity of all of our donors. If your name is listed incorrectly or is missing, please e-mail [whites@uga.edu](mailto:whites@uga.edu) so that we may properly acknowledge your generosity. To make a gift to the department, please refer to the gift form on page 7.

Janice M. and N. Kirby Alton  
Michael and Alice Bender  
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of Michael Bender  
Steven and Christine Kozlosky, in  
honor of Keith & Alex Kozlosky  
Tong-Ruei Li  
Pat and Doyle Mote  
Katherine R. Spindler

the mission of their organizations. Such activities should build a firm foundation for a lifetime of leadership in integrating education and research." I know of no other department that has had two CAREER awards in a single year. Clearly we have very talented researchers moving through the ranks in our department. Moreover, as the CAREER award recognizes, they are also teachers and the CAREER awards ensure the link between teaching and research that is so valuable and makes our department so strong.

So, having been here for just over 6 months, I remain excited about the possibilities and the future. I hope to be able to update you on new hires next year, as we have just completed a search, and with a bit of luck the economic climate will change. Regardless, I thank our supporters, students, staff and faculty for making the department of genetics the force that it is. We will continue to pursue excellence in research, teaching, and service as is befitting our departmental tradition.

Allen Moore

## Regents...from page 4

as a source of ethanol and bioenergy. This will allow breeders to build on the plant's natural strengths--it can grow to more than 12 feet in height in soil of marginal quality--and remove some of its weaknesses, which include a tendency to flower too soon.

Paterson also has received attention for his leadership in the assembly of the first gold-standard sequence of a cotton genome and for the sequencing of the sorghum genome. Sorghum is a drought-tolerant food crop that also is used to make biofuel.

Kenneth Feldmann, a professor in the School of Plant Sciences at the University of Arizona who has worked with Paterson for more than 20 years, terms his scientific accomplishments "original, innovative, substantial and pace setting."

"As I worked with Andy at the beginning of his career, I came to understand that he was going to do great things," Feldmann said. "He gets so much accomplished because he sees how the current project fits into the big picture."

Source: Columns, Mar 19, 2012

## Arnold...from page 1

studied the bread mold *Neurospora crassa* to create the first working model of how biological clocks operate.

Arnold was cited by AAAS "for distinguished contributions to the fields of population genetics, fungal genomics and systems biology," and for his service to the National Institutes of Health's Genetic Variation and Evolution study section, which reviews grant applications to the agency related to genetic variation.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science is the world's largest general scientific society and publisher of the journal *Science*. AAAS was founded in 1848 and includes 262 affiliated societies and academies of science, serving 10 million individuals.

Source: Columns, Vol. 39, No. 20, Jan 17, 2012

## editor's...from page 2

ishments, whatever you'd like to share with us! Just send your updates to Susan White ([whites@uga.edu](mailto:whites@uga.edu)), and we will include them in the next newsletter.

And while we are happy to hear from you in any way, please consider including a contribution. We are especially interested in helping our students present results from their research at national meetings. For the student, this can be a real highlight of their career here at UGA, and helps bring recognition not only to their own work, but also to the entire department. Please consider helping to make this possible by contributing to the Genetics Alumni Student Travel Fund, or choose from other funds that also help support the goals of the department of genetics. Your support at any level can really make a difference in the academic life of a student. You can find more details on the pledge form below.

Daniel Promislow

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Your gift helps build on 32 years of excellence in teaching and research at the University of Georgia. Our accomplishments are made possible by your support, so please consider giving to Genetics today, via credit card or check.

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**Jonathan Arnold, named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science**  
**Michael Arnold, named Distinguished Research Professor**  
**Kerin Bentley, recipient of a 2011 Innovative and Interdisciplinary Research Grant Award by the Graduate School**  
**Catherine Debban, appointed to the 2011 Franklin College Dean's Student Advisory Board**  
**Victoria DeLeo, awarded a 2012 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship**  
**Kelly Dyer, recipient of an NSF CAREER Award**  
**Mark Fisher, Alex Mihala, Cheryl Pinzone, recipients of 2012 Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards by the Graduate School**  
**Pranav Kaushish, recipient of the 2011 CURO "Best Paper in the Sciences" Award for his Honors thesis**  
**Jessica Kissinger, named director of the Institute of Bioinformatics and promoted to professor**  
**Rodney Mauricio, recipient of a research grant from the Traditional Medicinals Foundation**  
**Doug Menke, recipient of an NSF CAREER Award**  
**Drexel Neuman, accepted as a summer 2012 Amgen Scholar at Washington University in St. Louis**  
**Farres Obeidin, a 2011 CURO Summer Fellow**  
**Jenna Oberstaller, a 2011-2012 ARCS Foundation Scholar**  
**Andrew Paterson, named Regents Professor**  
**Cheryl Pinzone, awarded the Society for the Study of Evolution Rosemary Grant Award**  
**Daniel Pique, recipient of a Post-baccalaureate Traineeship at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases**  
**Eileen Roy, recipient of a 2011 Innovative and Interdisciplinary Research Grant Award by the Graduate School, and a Graduate Student Travel Award by the Society for the Study of Evolution**  
**Justin Smith, a 2011 CURO Summer Fellow**  
**Nick Talathi, a 2011 CURO Summer Fellow**  
**Michael Terns, named Distinguished Research Professor**  
**Jan Westpheling, appointed to the Charter Lecture Selection Committee**

## Bishop Fellows named

The Linton and June Bishop Graduate Fellowship is awarded by the Graduate Affairs Committee to two



Heighington

senior students who have shown exceptional progress, independence, and creativity in their research. The 2011 co-awardees were Christina Zakas of the Wares lab and Cassandra Heighington of the Kipreos lab.

Cassandra studies cell cycle regulation using *C. elegans* as a model organism. In the future, she would like to use the knowledge gained from basic research to discover new targets for cancer therapies.

Christina completed her thesis on larval dimorphism in marine invertebrates and graduated in December 2011. In the future, she would like to continue working on her dissertation topic, but currently Christina is working on a phylogeography project in Chilean barnacles as a postdoctoral researcher in John Ware's lab.



Zakas

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"CAREER grants are among the most prestigious awards given by the NSF and are unique in providing a stepping stone for the integration of teaching and research by future research leaders," said Allen J. Moore, head of the genetics department. "Kelly Dyer and Douglas Menke reflect the best of UGA faculty, with innovative ideas for combining their cutting-edge research in evolutionary and developmental genetics into unique research and educational experiences for students."

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