

# Faculty Chat



**Dr. Frances Lucas**  
President of Millsaps College



**Dr. Michael Galaty**  
Associate Professor of Anthropology

## The choice is ours . . . and yours

*The Chronicle of Higher Education* has published a series on the growing divide between wealthy and financially disadvantaged colleges and universities. Most privileged institutions do little to recruit students eligible for Pell Grants—those who lack the financial resources to pay for college. In fact, the vast majority of students enrolled at the wealthiest, most selective colleges and universities in America—those institutions most capable of paying for larger numbers of disadvantaged students—are from privileged households. In short, the rich colleges enroll predominately rich students.

In contrast, those colleges and universities that do enroll large numbers of disadvantaged students typically have very small endowments and are driven by tuition. Therefore, they are least able to absorb the costs of enrolling them. Consequently, the overall percentage of disadvantaged college students is shrinking.

Yet small liberal arts colleges like Millsaps that don't have tremendously deep pockets do manage to enroll a large number of disadvantaged students. Millsaps has a history of enrolling disadvantaged students. In fact, for the last 10 years, an average of 25 percent of our students have been Pell Grant-eligible. We are one of the few nationally recognized liberal arts colleges to have such a high percentage.

At Millsaps we have a historical mission of reaching out to the economically disadvantaged. During Reconstruction, when the College was founded, through the Great Depression, most of Mississippi was impoverished. We adhered to that mission during that time by default. But during the 1960s, when the Millsaps College Board of Trustees voted to integrate the campus at great cost and peril, opening up the school to more Mississippians, it was a *choice*—and it was the right one.

In the 1980s and '90s, Millsaps

prospered as Mississippi itself began, slowly, to show signs of prospering. Much of this new prosperity was shattered in August 2005 when Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast. Thirty percent of the College's traditional recruiting market became financially damaged overnight.

Today, we stand at a crossroads. We have embarked on a major capital campaign, *Legacy: A Campaign for Millsaps College*, which we expect to increase our endowment. Our academic program grows stronger by the year.

And yet we do not want academic and financial success to distract us from our historical mission. While it is unlikely that we will ever have billions to spend, we do now feel called to reaffirm our commitment to the disadvantaged of our state and country.

The faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees have set the strategic goal to increase need-based scholarship money while aspiring to more national prowess. Accomplishing this objective at the same time will be exceedingly difficult; doing so while maintaining a 25 percent Pell Grant-eligible student body might be impossible.

*But we are determined to try!*

Recruiting and retaining students who have severely limited resources requires real commitment—a commitment that transcends statistics, that is maintained in the face of change. Our commitment to social justice did not happen by accident. It was and is a choice. We hope that each of you will join us in committing to Millsaps College by contributing to the *Legacy* campaign and reaffirming the ideals upon which the College was founded.

— Dr. Frances Lucas  
and Dr. Michael Galaty

*Debra McIntosh, the College archivist,  
contributed to this piece.*

# Faculty & Staff

## McGuire is named 2006 Professor of the Year for Mississippi

In November, Dr. Sarah Lea McGuire, professor of biology, was named 2006

Professor of the Year for Mississippi by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). McGuire was selected from faculty members nominated by colleges and universities throughout the

country.

“Dr. McGuire is a marvel,” wrote Dr. Richard A. Smith, senior vice president and dean of the College, in his letter nominating McGuire for the competitive teaching award. “She appears to be one of those rare individuals who can do it all. She is a superb teacher and a nationally recognized scholar.”

McGuire’s scholarship focuses on identifying, cloning, and characterizing new fungal genes that are involved in controlling cell division, and her teaching covers courses from Introductory Cell Biology to Science and Society. She has been instrumental in developing courses for the Millsaps Core Curriculum that provide broad, challenging exposure to chemistry, biology, physics, and geology.

“No one works alone in science,” McGuire said. “No one accomplishes anything without the support of others around them. I’ve been fortunate all of my life to have wonderful people surrounding

me, supporting me, and encouraging me. From the day I arrived at Millsaps, I have been supported by the College, the science division, the biology department, and the students.”

CASE established the Professor of the Year program in 1981, and the Carnegie Foundation became the co-sponsor a year later. TIAA-CREF, a leading financial service organization, became the primary sponsor for the awards ceremony in 2000. Higher education associations, including Phi Beta Kappa, offer additional support for the program.

This year there were winners in 43 states, Guam, and the District of Columbia. CASE assembled two preliminary panels of judges to select the finalists, and the Carnegie Foundation then convened the third and final panel, which selected four national winners. CASE and Carnegie select the state winners from top entries resulting from the judging process.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching was founded in 1905 by Andrew Carnegie “to do all things necessary to encourage, uphold, and dignify the profession of teaching.” CASE is the largest international association of education institutions, serving more than 3,200 universities, colleges, schools, and related organizations in 54 countries.

—Margaret Cahoon

## Sypniewski wins Outstanding Young Faculty Award



Dr. Holly Sypniewski, assistant professor of classics, was named the recipient of this year’s Millsaps Outstanding Young Faculty



Award. The award carries with it a cash prize of \$1,000 and a one-semester release from teaching to support the winner's scholarly activities. Sypniewski plans to spend her release time developing a college-level text and commentary on Horace's *Ars Poetica*.

Sypniewski graduated cum laude from the University of Cincinnati with a B.A. in classics. She then earned an M.A. and a Ph.D. in classics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has taught at Millsaps since 2002 and strives, as she says, "to emphasize the skills of critical thinking and expression" in all her classes. She also "aims to educate students to analyze antiquity without modern cultural biases, while valuing important correlations between past and present."

As a scholar, Sypniewski works with both Greek and Latin texts. She is the author of two articles—one of which has been accepted for publication, with the other under review—a third article scheduled to be submitted for publication, seven conference papers, and six invited lectures. She was also selected to participate in a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar in 2005.

Sypniewski's book about *Ars Poetica* is intended to make Horace's influential poem about poetry accessible to undergraduate students or to readers in other academic areas who have an interest in literary theory. She will devote much of her time to writing and hopes to complete her book by December.

—M. C.

## Ward ushers in the Age of Chirality as symposium chair

Toss out the word "chirality" at your next dinner party, and you'll quickly realize it's not a household word. Is it a new Pilates move? Maybe a chiropractic technique? A personality trait? Some kind of charity?

Answer: None of the above.

But ask Dr. Timothy Ward, professor of chemistry and associate dean of sciences at Millsaps, about chirality, and you can come to understand it.

In a nutshell, chirality comes from the Greek word "chiral," meaning handedness. On one hand, there's the left; on the other, there's the right. And while our hands are mirror images of each other, they are not

be awarded this distinction.

"My award as chair of the meeting is a direct reflection on the significance of research at Millsaps," Ward said. "We are heavily involved in addressing several basic research questions about the antibiotic vancomycin, which is used in the prevention and treatment of infections caused by gram-positive bacteria. Previous research has shown that vancomycin is a



Dr. Timothy Ward uses a model of a molecule to explain chirality to freshman Erin Redman and sophomore Matthew Oglesbee.

superimposable; for example, you can't fit a left-handed glove in one made for a right hand, and vice-versa.

Thanks to his authoritative grasp of the subject matter, Ward will be among those world-renowned scientists at the 19th International Symposium on Chirality this July in San Diego ([www.chirality2007.org](http://www.chirality2007.org)). Ward has been chosen to serve as chair; he is the first and only professor from an undergraduate institution ever to

good chiral selector, so we are studying the mechanism of separation."

Dr. Richard A. Smith, senior vice president and dean of the College, praised Ward for this outstanding accomplishment and its impact on the College. "Serving as chair of the symposium is a huge honor for Ward and Millsaps College. It speaks to his standing in the field of chirality, his credentials as one of the best teacher-scholars at Millsaps, and, most importantly,

to the quality of the learning experiences of the many undergraduates who work with him on his research. We are indeed fortunate to have Dr. Ward at Millsaps College.”

Ward explained that most biological molecules have chirality, and while there is no course in the Millsaps curriculum exclusive to chirality, it is covered in a variety of ways.

“Chirality is first introduced in general chemistry as inherent in the properties of light based on its electric and magnetic field vectors,” Ward said. “In organic chemistry, chirality is essential in the properties of molecules and how they are arranged around the central atom. And biochemistry looks at proteins, lipids, DNA, carbohydrates, and nucleic acids and their biological properties, which in part are based on their chirality. The general phenomenon of chirality impacts many aspects of everyday life.”

According to Ward, approximately 40 percent of the drugs in use are known to be chiral, and only about 25 percent are administered as pure enantiomers, meaning they have “right” and “left” hand molecules. Because of the chirality of many drugs, the pharmaceutical industry is heavily affected by the research concerning chiral separations.

The phenomenon of chirality can be demonstrated by comparing medications used to treat depression. Antidepressants like Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil, and Luvox—referred to as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors—have been studied to determine the differences in their pharmacological actions. If the “right hand” and “left hand” molecules (enantiomers) have meaningful differences in their therapeutic ratios, one can cause adverse consequences to the overall benefits for a patient.

“Biological sciences are impacted with regards to each enantiomer’s physiological effect within the body,” Ward said. “The administration of ‘pure’ enantiomers is of great importance.”

Ward used his expertise in this field last year, when he was called to be an

expert witness in a federal trial involving a patent infringement case against Ivax Pharmaceuticals. The plaintiffs, Forest Laboratories and H. Lundbeck, current patent holders of the antidepressant Lexapro, sued Ivax for its attempt to patent a generic copy of the drug. Ward, who testified for Ivax, was asked if “one skilled in the art” could make this drug and indeed perform a separation. While Ward testified that this separation could be done, the court ruled in favor of the current patent holders. The case is now under appeal.

—Lisa Purdie

## Fleming family leaves professor’s memoir to the Wilson library



Dr. Neal Bond Fleming was a Millsaps professor from 1945 to 1962, and the ties that were created during his years here have influenced the Millsaps campus, Fleming’s family,

and a group of his former students who are connected through ministry and friendship.

The most recent connection is Fleming’s daughter’s gift to the Millsaps-Wilson Library of a copy of his book, *Of Me and My Family*, which includes descriptions of his experiences as a professor at Millsaps and at other colleges in Louisiana and Georgia. In the book, Fleming describes his thoughts on teaching, social change, and raising his family here.

While at Millsaps, Fleming, his wife, Mary Louise, and their children lived on faculty row. He remembers days enjoying the beauty of the campus—of his children playing on the lawn, a fig tree in the yard,

and a student who gave them beautiful plants. Fleming was a professor and the chair of the religion and philosophy department and then of the philosophy department when the two separated.

“We enjoyed living there, and we love the place,” Fleming remarked in a telephone interview from his home in Atlanta. “People there were so friendly. . . . That’s what I like most.” That affection for Millsaps was shared by other members of his family, including his eldest child, who completed a degree here.

“I remember my days growing up on the Millsaps campus and as a student there with pleasure, especially the intelligent and caring teachers,” wrote his daughter Mary Dell Fleming Palazzolo, B.A. 1964, who sent the copy of Fleming’s memoirs to the library. Dr. and Mrs. Fleming set up a book fund in 1995 in honor of their eldest daughter and send an annual gift to the College in memory of their time at Millsaps.

Fleming recalls his years at Millsaps as a time of development for himself and the students he taught. He describes his time spent here as “the opportunity for my growth intellectually, academically, and spiritually, and dealing with students and seeing them grow. I think I meant something to students.”

“It would be almost impossible to say just which courses I enjoyed most,” Fleming wrote in his memoirs. “I liked them all. The best were when the students seemed to respond and to get the idea! It was exciting and challenging to see students meet new ideas. I enjoyed recognizing that students had studied, that they had open and eager minds, and seeing or feeling them grow.”

Fleming’s influence on students is evident from the bonds he formed. In 2006, a group of Millsaps alumni from the early 1950s met in Tupelo for lunch and began to reminisce. Their time together led to a renewal of friendship with “one of their favorite professors” and to the establishment of a one-time sponsored scholarship in his honor.

Dr. Roy Ryan, class of 1952, said those who contributed to the initial fund were alumni of both Millsaps College and Emory University, which was also Fleming's alma mater. These contributors included Ryan; Dr. William Appleby, B.A. 1950; Bishop Clay Lee Jr., B.A. 1951; the Reverend Duncan Clark, class of 1952; the Reverend Edwin Curtis, B.A. 1952; the Reverend H. Lavelle Woodrick, B.A. 1952; the Reverend Glyn Wiygul, class of 1952; the Reverend Roy Eaton, class of 1952; the Reverend Donald Anderson, B.A. 1952; and Dr. Bryan Scarbrough, class of 1959. Others who would like to make a contribution in Fleming's honor may contact the development office at 601-974-1023.

Fleming, who turns 97 this year, lives with his wife in a United Methodist retirement home close to the Emory campus. They have been married for 67 years and have eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. All live in the Atlanta area except for those who live at Jekyll Island, Georgia.

Besides the living testimony of admiring students, a written legacy of Fleming's influence is summed up in the 1956 *Bobashela*, which was dedicated to him: "Millsaps College will continue to grow and prosper, and we are confident that many of her students will grow in mind, body, and spirit in the footsteps of one who will always be remembered and loved by those who have had the privilege of knowing him and his life."

—Patti Wade

# A travel experience like no other!

The Yucatàn Experience:  
3000 Years of Maya  
Archaeology, Culture, and Cuisine  
January 7–14, 2008

Travel with Dr. George Bey, professor of anthropology and associate dean of international education at Millsaps, and Jay Schimmel, chef and owner of Schimmel's, one of Jackson's premier dining establishments.

*Limited space is available.* For more information visit:

[www.millsaps.edu/alumni\\_friends/yucatan](http://www.millsaps.edu/alumni_friends/yucatan)

Sponsored by the Office of Alumni Relations



## Ring Cycle

Leaders of the Senior Year Experience Committee have designed a new official Millsaps College ring featuring the Millsaps crest, motto, and bell tower; and the "M" logo. According to the ring committee, their objectives were to "sculpt a ring that is not only tasteful, powerful, even elegant, but one that also bonds together current and past students as citizens of the Millsaps community." All students who have successfully completed a minimum of 60 semester hours (junior class status), or who have completed one of the College's graduate degree programs, are eligible to purchase a ring. The ring is available in women's and men's sizes in silvertone celestrium (\$289.95) and 10-karat yellow gold (\$379.95 for women, \$449.95 for men), with the graduation year and degree etched on the side. For more information and an order form, call Balfour at 601-362-6990.

# Faculty & Staff

## Arts and Letters

**James Bowley** (religious studies) published *Introduction to Hebrew Bible: A Guided Tour of Israel's Sacred Library* (Prentice Hall), a college textbook and study guide for the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). In July, Bowley will be a visiting professor

Symphony Orchestra, coordinated the concert.

**Ramón Figueroa** (modern languages) had his book *Los Equilibristas* published earlier this year by Letra Gráfica. The book is a study of the short stories of Emilio S. Belaval (Puerto Rico), Juan Bosch (Dominican Republic), and Lino Novás

(English) edited Yone Noguchi's novel *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl* (1902) for a new annotated edition published by Temple University Press in January. Franey contributed a new introduction and collaborated with Marx on other editorial tasks.

**Kathi Griffin** (writing center) and peer writing tutors Emma Doineau, Jon-Mark Olivier, and John Yargo presented, as a panel, "[mis]Understanding Silence: No noise is not good noise," at the 2007 Southeastern Writing Centers Association (SWCA) conference in Nashville. Griffin was also recently elected to the SWCA board as the 2007–08 at-large representative.

**Lynn Raley** (performing arts) appeared as pianist with Marta Szlubowska-Kirk, violinist, and Alexander Russakovsky, cellist, in the debut of *Trio Appassionato* at Millsaps in January. The trio then toured for performances at the University of Southern Mississippi and at California State University-Fresno, where they opened the newly inaugurated San Joaquin Music Society chamber music series.

**Elise Smith** (art) has had two articles accepted for publication: "'The aged pollard's shade': Gainsborough's *Landscape with Woodcutter and Milkmaid*" (*Eighteenth Century Studies*) and "'Whom the gods love die young': Evelyn De Morgan and the Legend of the Wandering Jew" (*British Art Journal*).

in Prague for the Lessing Institute at the Anglo-americká vysoká škola (New Anglo-American College) and will teach classes on biblical literature in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim cultures.

**Cheryl Coker** (performing arts), soprano, performed in Dublin in January with Lester Senter, mezzo-soprano, and Coleman Pearce, piano. The concert was performed in the Hugh Lane Gallery as part of a series. Pearce, former conductor of the Mississippi

(Cuba) and their balancing of political and aesthetic concerns in their literary works.

**Amy Wiese Forbes** (history) had an article, "The Lithographic Conspiracy: How Satire Framed Liberal Political Debate in Nineteenth-Century France," accepted for publication in the journal *French Politics, Culture and Society*.

In collaboration with Edward Marx of Ehime University in Japan, **Laura Franey**

**Marlys Vaughn** (education) and a research student, Ashley Runnels, presented a paper at the national Association of American College Teacher Educators (AACTE) conference in New York in February 2007.

**Sarah Wamester** (modern languages) joined the department in September in a dual position as assistant professor of Spanish and director of the language laboratory. She is overseeing the installation of a fully digital language laboratory/smart

classroom in Murrah Hall.

In a joint venture with **Julian Murchison** (sociology-anthropology), Wamester has also begun a computer-assisted Directed Independent Language Study program at the College for Swahili language learners.

**Lola Williamson** (religious studies) and **Devparna Roy** (sociology) presented their research on Hinduism in Jackson at the Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion Conference in Nashville in March. Williamson has also had a paper accepted for the American Academy of Religion Conference in San Diego in November 2007 and a paper for publication in *Svadharma: Harvard's Hinduism Journal*. Both are on topics of American Hinduism. She has also organized and is chair of a new section for the American Academy of Religion called North American Hinduism.

## Else School

**Ajay Aggarwal** (management) has been appointed to the review board of *Journal of Business Disciplines*. He and **Ray Phelps** (marketing) co-authored a paper entitled "MBA Students' Wants and Needs: A Kano Approach." The paper has been accepted for presentation at the 37th annual meeting of the Southeast Decision Sciences Institute in Savannah, Ga.

**Bill Brister** and **Walter Neely** (both finance) presented a paper entitled "Endowment Asset Allocation and Rebalancing: The Effects of Lower Expected Risk Premiums" at the annual meeting of the Southern Finance Association in November.

## Science

**George Bey** and **Michael Galaty** (both sociology-anthropology) organized a workshop on Mycenaean and Maya states for the annual meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in San Diego in January.

Galaty delivered the paper "Projekti Lugina e Shales" (The Shala Valley Project) at the annual meeting of the Albanian Institute of Archaeology in Tirana, Albania, in December. An invitation to a foreign archaeologist to address the Institute at its annual meeting is considered a rare honor.

Galaty, James Bowley, and **Harvey Fiser** (business law) have received a grant from

November. The presentation centers on the inclusion of ethics, based upon the ACS Chemist Code of Conduct, as a topic in the senior chemistry seminar.

## Staff

**Don Fortenberry** (student life), serving as



the Associated Colleges of the South to spend one week in Albania this June to develop an interdisciplinary study-abroad program for Millsaps students.

**Jimmie Purser** (chemistry) had a presentation accepted for the national meeting of the American Chemical Society (ACS) in Chicago in March. The presentation is a follow-up to one he made at the combined Southeast/Southwest Regional ACS Meeting in Memphis last

minister for student missions, is coordinating student teams through the McNair Fund for Christian Missions to spend a month each this summer in India, Malawi, Romania, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

**Nola Gibson** (continuing education) was a consultant to Davidson College in January as they planned their first Advanced Placement Institute.