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## Done!



Enjoying the ending: A graduate rises to celebrate receiving her diploma. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Gustavo Esteva, who addressed the university's 202nd Commencement, began his discussion of hospitality and openness to happenstance by describing a surprise – his own.

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### THE WEEK IN VIEW

*May 25-27, Event: Ongoing. Men's baseball will host the 2006 America East Baseball Championships with the top-seeded Catamounts playing opening day against Albany at 7 p.m. Centennial Field. Information: 1-866-4-CAT-TIX (1-866-422-8849) or [America East](#)*

*May 28, 5 p.m. Concert: Green Mountain Chamber Music festival. Music Building Recital Hall. Information: 656-2525.*

*June 1-4, Reunion Weekend: Full slate of activities celebrating five-year reunions for alums. Various locations. Information: 656-2010. [Reunion](#)*

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## Done!

### *Enthusiastic graduates celebrate their accomplishments at Commencement*

By Kevin Foley

Article published May 23, 2006



Enjoying the ending: A graduate rises to celebrate receiving her diploma. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Gustavo Esteva, who addressed the university's 202nd Commencement, began his discussion of hospitality and openness to happenstance by describing a surprise — his own.

The grassroots intellectual and author

of 30 books began his speech by describing his interests and values, describing his life in an indigenous village in the poorest province of Mexico, his skepticism of human rights, his dislike of nation states and criticism of representative democracy, his work with radical social movements.

"For you to host me today, a man swimming and working against the current, is a very important expression of Vermonter hospitality in an inhospitable world: where instead of hosting the otherness of the other, radical cultural differences are feared and flattened by nationalism, fundamentalism and globalization," he said, discussing his "total surprise" at the invitation.

Weaving his theme of surprise and hospitality throughout his address, Esteva encouraged graduates as they leave what he called the "bubble" of their formal education to leave themselves open to surprise and hospitable to difference.

"In these years, after 9/11, we all have heard many sensible calls to tolerance, stimulated by unacceptable reactions of intolerance. But despite the olive branch, this call for tolerance has also the thorny pricks of intolerance. Tolerance stings. It wounds," Esteva said. "Tolerance can never embrace. It suffers differences, instead of being hospitable to them."

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Despite conflicts over immigration and terrorism, he urged the audience to mutual affection and sympathy in a world ever more challengingly plural, creating through their actions "a world in which many worlds can be embraced." He asked, "Are we going to open our arms hospitably or are we going to arm ourselves?"

The text of Esteva's speech is available at [Commencement Speech](#).

#### **Honors and awards**

Days of rain and a dark forecast moved Commencement ceremonies inside to the Gutterson Multi Purpose Room. The proceedings began with trustees, student leaders and Vermont Gov. James H. Douglas offering their reflections and best wishes to the graduates, then UVM President Daniel Mark Fogel took the stage. His remarks celebrated memorable university and Vermont moments ranging from the day in high school the new graduates first opened their acceptance envelopes to T.J. Sorrentine's game-winning three in the opening round of the 2005 NCAA men's basketball tournament.

Fogel gave special recognition to members of Students Take Action Now Darfur, whose work against the Sudanese genocide included the recently approved divestment of university funds from Sudan; the 14 ROTC graduates accepting commissions in the U.S. Army; and, especially, to retiring Sen. James Jeffords and outgoing UVM Senior Vice President and Provost John Bramley.

Lauding Jeffords' leadership in environmental and conservation issues, as well as his staunch support of the university and overall "conscience and courage and compassionate conservatism," Fogel expressed pleasure that the three-term U.S. senator will soon embark upon an ambassadorial role at the university, contributing to the College of Education and Social Services' National Institute for Leadership, Disability and Students Placed at Risk. Beginning in 2007, Jeffords will also work with students and faculty as a James Marsh Professor-At-Large.

Fogel thanked Bramley, who is returning to the Department of Animal Science faculty, for being a crucial partner over the past four years. He described the outgoing provost as a distinguished scientist and able academic administrator with a ready wit.

The president's remarks are online at [Fogel Remarks](#).

#### **Student and faculty awards**

Five students were honored with university awards. Natalia Fajardo won the Mary Jean Simpson Award, honoring the senior woman who exhibits the highest qualities of leadership, academic competence and character; Colin Robinson won the F.T. Kidder Medal, honoring the senior man ranking first in character, leadership and scholarship; Sarah Poirier won the Class of 1967 Award, presented to the senior who best exhibits leadership, academic competence and character, and who has earned the respect of faculty and fellow students; David Santucci won the Keith M.

Miser Leadership Award, recognizing outstanding service to the university; and Katherine Kasarjian won the Elmer Nicholson Achievement Prize, recognizing the greatness of the student's UVM experience and the expectation that the student will make a major contribution in his or her field of interest.

Five leaders received honorary degrees. In addition to Esteva, Fogel awarded honorary degrees to four others: Graham Stiles Newell, a teacher of history and Latin in St. Johnsbury, and known as a "walking encyclopedia" of town, state, and world history; Elizabeth Cushman Titus Putnam, a leader in conservation and youth development, and founder of the Student Conservation Association; Barbara W. Snelling, former Vermont lieutenant governor, and founder and president of the institutional advancement consulting firm, Snelling, Kolb & Kuhnle, Inc.; and Hubert "Hub" W. Vogelmann, professor emeritus of botany, a pioneer of research on acid rain, founder of UVM's Field Naturalist Program and a principal force behind the creation of Vermont's Act 250.

The UVM Alumni Association honored retiring Classics Professor Z. Philip Ambrose with the George V. Kidder Outstanding Faculty Award, citing nominations from former students that called Ambrose, who taught at UVM for more than 40 years, a "force of nature" in the classroom with "encyclopedic knowledge" of his field.

Fogel and Bramley conferred degrees on an estimated 1,807 undergraduates, 418 graduate students (including 61 doctorates), 96 medical students, and 47 international students. Members of the Class of 2006 came from 40 states and 17 countries, almost 1,000 of them from Vermont. The class included 146 ALANA (Asian American, Latino/a, Asian, African American, and Native American) students.

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## Sharing the Passion

***Kroepsch-Maurice winner teaches with service, discussion seminars and an abiding enthusiasm for her subject***

By Lee Ann Cox

Article published May 24, 2006



Julie Richards, senior lecturer of social work, models professional techniques in the classroom. (Photo: Sally McCay)

Social work is an oddly unsung profession. It has the highest of aims — serving humans in need — and relatively low status. When that disjunction comes up, again, at the end of the semester in Julie Richards' senior seminar, she isn't surprised.

The class is a chance for students to check in and reflect on the 15 to 25 hours a week they're working at nonprofit agencies like the Lund Family Center for pregnant teens or Vermont CARES, assisting people with HIV/AIDS. But they sometimes talk in class about how their parents or friends don't get what they're doing, or how the public perception of a social worker's job is often unclear or even negative.

Richards, senior lecturer in social work and undergraduate program coordinator, understands. At age 15, a course in moral development awakened her to the families living in gutted-out buildings not so far from the affluent Manhattan neighborhood where she lived. Fighting injustice and helping people in crisis were more than fleeting teenage idealism for her; they became her life's mission, a cause she wasn't always honored for.

"As a kid I think I was the only one I knew who snuck out to go to a nursing home because I wasn't allowed to go," Richards laughs. "Other people go to parties; I go to nursing homes."

That sensibility is part of the reason why department chair Gary Widrick says Richards is such a magnet for students, "an ambassador" for social work. He credits her with drawing numerous students into the major who were initially just dabbling in a course.

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"I love what I do as a social worker," says Richards, who is an alumna of UVM's undergraduate program. "I feel like it's such a tremendous privilege to be able to accompany someone on their journey through a stressful situation or crisis... because I find it so rewarding, it inspires me to teach. I want other people to feel that passion... I want other people to see that there are a lot of like-minded people who feel like it's not about you as an individual, but that being a part of the human race means you follow the golden rule and help people maximize their potential."

For that spirit, which guides every interaction she has with students, the university recognized Richards' excellence with a 2005-2006 Kroepsch-Maurice Award for Excellence in Teaching.

### **Walking the walk**

Her classes are typically low on lecturing. Richards uses a flexible, dynamic approach to teaching that adapts to her students' learning styles. (Richards says she loves to talk, but recognizes that many of her students are oriented differently). Most importantly, she drops the veil from therapeutic work with clients by constantly modeling the practice of social work.

Richards, even in graduate school, had frustratingly few opportunities to view that kind of exchange, so it's a priority in her teaching. So class can look a lot like client work, with Richards practicing "radical listening."

"She'll wait you out," explains recent grad Jenna Kidney, "and let you keep spinning until you answer your own question, something that we're supposed to do with clients, reaching for feelings."

Richards also puts students in the field early. She was instrumental in getting service-learning into freshman and sophomore social work classes, a move which has had a huge impact on the curriculum.

"That's been identified as one of the strengths of our program now," says Widrick. "The feedback is that our students are better prepared for challenging situations when they get to their internships. There's a real change in the maturity of our students and I attribute that to Julie's leadership and to her personal approach."

For students, Richards is teacher, mentor, friend and, often, mom-away-from-home. The blend is necessary. Social work undergraduates face unique pressures: At the end of the day, their roommates might want to head downtown – but the social work student has spent the afternoon sitting with a client threatening suicide. The student has trouble shaking it off, even if they followed protocol precisely. The student might feel paralyzed by doubt, or maybe unearth painful issues from their own life.

The special stresses of social work studies makes matching passion with self-care a big theme for Richards. She spends a lot of time helping young social workers devise strategies to avoid burnout or compassion-fatigue. "You're constantly questioning yourself," she says. "Am I really helping

this person? How do I evaluate my practice so that I can be of better service? I feel like students need a lot of mentoring through that."

But she adds that the questioning is exciting because it lacks definitive answers. "We're always looking and trying to figure out 'What did I learn from this?' and 'What could I do differently?' So intellectually I find it fascinating because you're never going to get there. You're always striving for more. And better."

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## Confronting Sexual Violence

***Social work professor's plan, recently funded by state, is a comprehensive effort to prevent abuse***

By Jon Reidel

*Article published May 24, 2006*



Susan Roche, associate professor of social work, hopes her five-year plan dramatically reduces sexual violence in the state. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Sometimes unexpected events propel a researcher's work to the forefront of a major issue. Sadly, these exciting alignments are often created out of tragedy. For Susan Roche, associate professor of social work, such a moment occurred during the 2006 Vermont

legislative session when lawmakers felt compelled to change existing law in response to two terrible events.

The first, which drew national attention in January, was the conviction of a Williston man who sexually abused a young girl. He was initially sentenced to 60 days in jail, a term that raised a national furor and left Vermont legislators vowing to strengthen the law. Around the same time, a man who had received a five-month jail sentence 15 years earlier after confessing to the rape of a young girl was accused of killing a 29-year-old woman in the Northeast Kingdom after overhearing her making plans to leave him.

As these events were unfolding, Roche was putting the finishing touches on a year-long study and comprehensive plan titled "The Vermont Approach: A Strategic Plan for Comprehensive, Collaborative Sexual Violence Prevention in Vermont." Although lawmakers were focused primarily on strengthening the punitive aspects of the existing Sexual Violence Prevention Act, they also wanted an educational and preventative element to help curb a recent statewide rise in sexual abuse cases, which included a 50 percent increase in 2004.

For help, the state turned to "The Vermont Approach."

"They (legislators) want to stop this trend," says Roche, who credits

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graduate research assistants Kelly Miller and Anne Rich for helping complete the study. "I think they get it. It's very complicated. This is effort to... revitalize the emphasis on prevention and connect the work of everyone... I always tell policy students that these are the kind of times you can't expect, but that can be amazing when they happen because of the positive impact you can have."

#### **Comprehensive launch**

Lawmakers included \$130,000 in the 2007 budget to be appropriated to the university to support implementation of the plan with the goal of "launching a statewide, collaborative, comprehensive approach to ending sexual violence in our communities." The revised Sexual Violence Protection Act also calls for the university's Anti-Violence Partnership, a community collaborative at UVM, to create a task force to identify opportunities for sexual violence prevention education in Vermont schools. Roche is the university co-chair of the Anti-Violence Partnership comprised of public and private nonprofit agencies and various offices and academic units at the university.

"The Vermont Approach" is expected to be the guiding document behind the state's effort. The plan focuses on strengthening the efficacy, collaboration and coordination of sexual violence practitioners, researchers, fundraisers and policy makers. It also aims to find the best ways to implement multiple strategies to prevent sexual violence including providing statewide leadership; developing community sexual violence prevention efforts and allies; changing media representations; and educating professions, families and individuals.

"We've never had a document with an actual plan that includes all the players," says Judy Rex, director of the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services and agency co-chair of the Anti-Violent Partnership. "It's long overdue. Most prevention efforts have been focused on children in schools. This adds new elements like targeting the media and their effect. Susan used a very inclusive process, which doesn't always happen in state government. Because of this, there's more buy-in because people feel like they were listened to."

#### **Changing social norms**

The plan lays out specific actions for each strategy starting with a call to create a statewide leadership forum to foster accountability for the five-year initiative and a new Sexual Violence Prevention Alliance, which will be comprised of key stakeholders and allies and will carry out future actions. The plan also recommends a media effort to help draw attention to the ways advertising depicts women and violence. It also recommends developing an educational response to deal with sensational cases and seize chances for education opportunities and intervention.

"People across the state have told me that if we're going to prevent this we're going to have to change social norms that either make sexual violence invisible and less tolerable, or change the kind of language we use and the way we talk and think about sexual violence," says Roche.

"It's hard to get at social norms, but we've got to find ways of doing it."

Other recommendations include targeting high-risk sexual offender groups such as teenage boys with a history of violence; developing a funding plan that integrates business partnership, foundation, grant and governmental funding strategies to support the plan; and offering technical assistance for institutions wanting to integrate sexual violence prevention into their policies and procedures.

"It's very humbling to be in this picture," says Roche. "It's a historic moment and we have something to offer in a thoughtful way: a year's worth of focused study and inquiry."

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## New Strategies for Systems

*UVM's new interdisciplinary biocomplexity group wants to make a mark in the fast-growing field, which offers new tools for analyzing everything from epidemics to ecosystems*

By Joshua Brown

Article published May 24, 2006



Organization from anarchy: Slime molds, simple organisms that can self-organize into complex systems, are exemplars of biocomplexity, an area of study gaining traction at UVM and elsewhere. (Image: US National Park Service)

A strange gelatinous blob floats into view on the PowerPoint projector screen. "Of course most of you will recognize this as a picture of slime mold," says Maggie Eppstein, assistant professor of computer science and biology, with a hint of a smile.

And, looking around the room at the Bishop

Booth Conference Center in Burlington, there are quite a few nods of recognition from the assembled group of 33 UVM mathematicians, biologists, physicists, engineers, medical researchers, computer scientists and others participating in a planning retreat on May 16. But they're not here to plan a study of slime mold.

They're here to consider how the university might contribute a new field of study known as biocomplexity. This emerging science crosses many disciplines, drawing on powerful computers (like the ones at UVM's new Vermont Advanced Computing Center) and new theoretical tools to model and explain phenomena from the spread of bird flu, to metabolic pathways in cells, to predator/prey relationships in ever-changing ecosystems. Biocomplexity in the environment is a new priority area for the National Science Foundation, and universities like Johns Hopkins and the University of Southern California have launched programs in the field. And advances in biocomplexity can even help to explain the outlandish slime mold.

These humble beings (the slime molds, that is) spend most of their lives as separate single-celled creatures. But when times get tough on the forest floor or Petri dish, an amazing thing happens: the individual cells

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aggregate into a great swarm.

### **Self-organizing systems**

This is an example of biocomplexity. Studying just one slime mold cell does not come close to explaining the behavior of the whole group, and yet each one is essentially identical. There is no central organizing principle, only a large number of simple cells interacting with each other – but organized behavior emerges nevertheless.

Conversely, breaking down a complex system and looking at its parts does not give a clue to its behavior: study the basic unit of the brain and you'll be able to describe electrical conductivity in a neuron – not consciousness. And yet, controversially, many neuroscientists assert that consciousness is just that: an emergent property of billions of mostly self-organizing brain cells.

Biocomplexity is not defined simply by having a lot of pieces. It presents itself when simple building blocks, like cells, exhibit organized, adaptable behaviors. A watch is complicated; an anthill is complex. Remove one gear from the thousand in the watch and it stops working. Dig your beach bucket into a line of ants moving to and fro from a food source and its thousands of equal inhabitants reorganize to find a new path.

"So why do we study complex biological systems?" Eppstein asks the assembled scientists, as the last stragglers try to carry their coffee and bagels and chairs, while the rest of the participants shift their chairs to make room. She points to two reasons: first, to learn about them for basic science, from how our bodies work, to rational drug design, to new conservation biology methods.

"And we can steal ideas from them. We have these incredibly intricate, evolved systems and we can really use a lot of the ideas from them," Eppstein says. "For example there are now many biologically inspired computing methodologies such as artificial neural networks." In other words, not only can we understand biological systems better with our computers, we can teach our computers to act like biological systems.

In some ways, the new interest in biocomplexity is a response to the last 100 years of reductionist science. Huge advances in biology and physics have been secured by looking for the most basic components of a system whether proteins or quarks. But that mode of inquiry is running into limits.

"Many biological systems depend on the dynamic interaction of components," Eppstein says, "and the only way to understand the emergent behaviors is to model them; it's an area where many areas of biology are hitting walls."

"So the biologists have pressing problems that need advanced modeling – and this kind of modeling requires many of the computational skills

available in the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences," she says. "Why can't we work together?"

"I ended up being the organizer of this retreat," Eppstein says, "simply because I want it to happen. I could see that several separate initiatives across campus related to biocomplexity were getting going. With one foot in computer science and one in biology I wanted to get them together." Paraphrase, maybe?

### **Cluster of efforts**

The College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences is leading the way. In a retreat of its own last December, the school decided to build a "spire of excellence" in Complex Systems Analysis and Engineering. And – in alignment with Dean Domenico Grasso's long-standing commitment to environmental problem solving, and with encouragement from Eppstein and others – the spire will focus on biological and ecological systems.

Matching his vision with hiring, Grasso has added several new professors with expertise in complex systems and specifically in biocomplexity, to join the engineering school faculty. Three of these new hires attended the retreat and made presentations on how models of complex systems and chaos theory can inform biological inquiry.

In a separate initiative, the statewide EPSCoR program (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) housed at UVM is focusing its renewal plans on "Multiscale Modeling in Biocomplexity," looking at evolutionary and ecological systems.

Faculty from every division of the university have expressed interest in the new effort, Eppstein says. She encourages inquiries into what she's calling, for now, the "UVM Biocomplexity Group." At the retreat, Eppstein and other attendees considered a range of ways to bring biocomplexity into academic programs; ideas ranged from in-house faculty workshops to a graduate certificate in complex systems to interdisciplinary "complex systems" course numbers.

Though some of the science of biocomplexity is mind-bending, the goals of the new group – "increasing interdisciplinary collaborations, attracting good students and faculty, getting more money and gaining excitement," the retreat notes say – are, well, pretty straightforward.

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### [Film and Music on a Summer Night](#)

May 15, 2006

The Lane Series' annual multimedia series, "Film and Music on a Summer Night," begins July 8 with free screenings of feature films preceded by live music. Concerts begin at 7 p.m., films start at 9:15 p.m. (or nightfall) in the Redstone pine grove behind the UVM Recital Hall on the following dates:

### [VCHIP Guides Will Spread Prenatal Care Knowledge](#)

May 18, 2006

The Vermont Child Health Improvement Program and the State of Vermont worked with prenatal care providers statewide over the course of 15 months to improve pregnancy outcomes by implementing updated, evidence-based prenatal care practices and developing improved office systems. The results of that collaborative process are now packaged in two new documents designed to widely disseminate the findings.

### [Do Consumers Use Calorie Labels? Fat Chance, Says New Study](#)

May 19, 2006

"Americans are now officially supersized," said a recent *New York Times* editorial, citing increasingly ponderous figures on obesity. Nearly two-thirds of adults and millions of children are packing pounds that put their health at risk. Among the ideas for reversing this trend was a call for nutrition labeling in fast food and other chain restaurants. But will it help? That's the question driving a new study led by Rebecca Krukowski, doctoral student in psychology, that will be published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* in June.

### [In Flu Epidemic, Protect Adolescents or Elderly First?](#)

May 19, 2006

An American flu pandemic would present difficult and tragic choices: As many as 90 million people might become sick, and widespread shortages of vaccine would likely leave more than 90 percent of the population unprotected in the pandemic's first year.

### [State Agency, Rubenstein Continue Collaboration Talks](#)

May 23, 2006

Don DeHayes, dean of the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, turned to Tom Torti, secretary of Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources, and asked "what does a Rubenstein graduate need to know, be able to do, and stand for – to be competitive in our ever-changing field?"

### [Trustees Approve Budget, Master Plan](#)

May 23, 2006

The board of trustees concluded its May 18-20 meetings with approval of an approximately \$233 million general budget, the new campus master plan and a \$2.5 million stormwater project. The group also elected not to pursue discussions with Union Institute and University, which is selling its 32-acre Vermont College campus in Montpelier.

### [Archivist's 'Inquest'](#)

May 24, 2006

Twenty-two years ago, Jeffrey Marshall, freshly equipped with a master's degree from UVM in history, went to work archiving documents from the recently burned Chittenden County courthouse. Among the amazingly un-singed case files and administrative papers, Marshall found what would become the inspiration for his first novel: a 19th century inquest report on the death of Experience "Speedy" Goodrich, a Burlington woman who appeared to have died from the complications of an abortion obtained through mysterious means.

### [Sudanese Student Celebrates UVM Divestment](#)

May 24, 2006

It wasn't a graduation present, but it felt like one to Archier Mou. The Students Take Action Now Darfur member got word just before Commencement that trustees had approved divesting UVM funds from companies that support the country's murderous government.

### [Defining Davis](#)

May 01, 2006

Ironworkers fearlessly walking the roof beams of the Dudley H. Davis Center have become a familiar sight as the new UVM skyline takes shape along Main Street. As the workers' welding torches sparked on a recent brisk morning, Ray Lavigne, Allen Josey and Pat Brown, pushed ahead on the Davis Center five stories below in the relative comfort of a metal construction trailer, talking through several of the myriad details and decisions that arise daily on the largest construction project in UVM history.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

## Film and Music on a Summer Night

By The View Staff

Article published May 15, 2006

The Lane Series' annual summer multimedia series, "Film and Music on a Summer Night," begins July 8 with free screenings of feature films preceded by live music. Concerts begin at 7 p.m., films start at 9:15 p.m. (or nightfall) in the Redstone pine grove behind the UVM Recital Hall on the following dates:

- *July 8:* The Cathie Ryan Band, traditional Irish music with one of the world's great Irish-American sopranos. Film: *In America*, The adventures of a young Irish family emigrating to New York's Hell's Kitchen in the 1970's.
- *July 15:* Big Spike Bluegrass Band, traditional music. Film: *Field of Dreams*, Kevin Costner's baseball classic.
- *July 22:* Rani Arbo and Daisy Mayhem, 40's swing and more from the local favorites. Film: *Sullivan's Travels*, Preston Sturges' 1941 screwball comedy.
- *July 29:* The Wiyos, a Brooklyn-based group specializing in "vaudevillian ragtime blues, hillbilly swing and old-time country." Film: *O Brother, Where Art Thou*.

Parking is available in the Gutterson garage. The concerts and screenings are family friendly, and guests are encouraged to bring blankets, lawn chairs and picnics (alcohol is not allowed). Information: 656-4455

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## VCHIP Guides Will Spread Prenatal Care Knowledge

By The View Staff

Article published May 18, 2006

The Vermont Child Health Improvement Program and the State of Vermont worked with prenatal care providers statewide over the course of 15 months to improve pregnancy outcomes by implementing updated, evidence-based prenatal care practices and developing improved office systems. The results of that collaborative process are now packaged in two new documents designed to widely disseminate the findings.

The first, a state guide, targets a broad audience consisting of providers, policy makers, state and federal government, funders, insurers, and other key decision makers who are interested in improving pregnancy outcomes for women and infants. The guide discusses the direct relationship of this work with pregnancy outcomes and suggests resources to obtain the most current best-practice guidelines.

The second, a practice toolkit, serves as a practice implementation kit for providers who want to make changes in their office systems to improve prenatal care. It offers an overview of a model for improvement and includes elements, such as the "improvement checklists," to facilitate implementation. The toolkit can be used as a complement to the state guide.

Both publications are now available on the VCHIP website at [www.vchip.org](http://www.vchip.org). Follow the link to "Projects."

VCHIP, a College of Medicine program, assisted in the state's effort to decrease the rate of preterm and low-birthweight newborns with the Improving Prenatal Care in Vermont project, which concluded collaborative work with medical practices last June. The effort was funded by the March of Dimes and the Vermont Department of Health, and involved collaboration by the UVM Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and the National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality.

For past coverage of VCHIP, see [Improving Children's Health Care](#)

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## Do Consumers Use Calorie Labels? Fat Chance, Says New Study

By Lee Ann Cox

Article published May 19, 2006

"Americans are now officially supersized," said a recent *New York Times* editorial, citing increasingly ponderous figures on obesity. Nearly two-thirds of adults and millions of children are packing pounds that put their health at risk.

Among the ideas for reversing this trend was a call for nutrition labeling in fast food and other chain restaurants. But will it help?

That's the question driving a new study led by Rebecca Krukowski, doctoral student in psychology, that will be published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* in June. The answers aren't encouraging. Significant numbers of people surveyed indicated that they lacked either the knowledge or inclination to effectively use labels in restaurants.

"We were kind of surprised at our results," says Krukowski, who co-authored the paper with Jean Harvey-Berino, Jane Kolodinsky, Rashmi Narsana and Thomas DeSisto. "It appears that a large portion of the population isn't interested in having (nutritional information)."

That Americans might benefit from acting upon such data is clear. Thirty-seven percent of adults in a large representative sample reported eating at a fast-food restaurant at least once during a two-day period. According to a report by the FDA Working Group on Obesity, Americans spend nearly half of their food budget outside the home – and that food is higher per meal in calories, total fat and saturated fat.

Even if people read labels, they can't affect food choices that contribute to obesity unless consumers read them and have a basic understanding of how the calories in, say, a Texas Double Whopper would fit into their total day's caloric allotment for maintaining weight (the Texas-sized burger, before fries, has 1050 calories, between 42 and 75 percent of peoples' daily allotment).

### Weighing responsibility

In two separate but similar telephone surveys, researchers asked 649 Vermont "community" participants (as part of the 2004 Food and Agriculture survey by the Center for Rural Studies) and 316 Vermont college students a series of questions to determine whether they can reasonably estimate their calorie requirements, whether they read

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existing food labels and, if so, what information they are looking for, as well as whether they desire caloric information on foods served in restaurants.

Overall, one-third of all participants were unable to accurately target their daily calorie needs, based on an expansive definition of 1500-2500 kcals. There was a significant gender difference in the college sample, however – college women (80.9 percent) were much more accurate than the other three groups.

In terms of label reading, about half of the college students and a third of the community sample reported that they do not generally look at food labels. When asked about what information is used when they do read labels, even fewer people were found to consistently examine two pieces of data that work together in weight control: calories and serving size. In the community sample, 31 percent of participants looked at calories but only 5 percent looked at serving size; in the college sample, 56 percent looked at calories, 12 percent at serving size.

If nutrition labels in restaurants were available, 57 percent of the community sample and 44 percent of the college sample say they would not use the information, though, again, a significantly greater proportion of women in both samples reported that they would use restaurant food labels to look for low calorie foods as compared to men.

Whether consumers want them or not, food labels could become a reality - the Menu Education and Labeling Act, which would require restaurant chains with 20 or more outlets to post calorie and other nutritional information adjacent to each food item, was introduced in the House of Representatives in 2003. While the bill simmers in committee, experts and advocates debate the merits of legislating labels.

For many, it's a no-brainer. It's about consumers' right to know what's in their food. Krukowski's conclusion from the study is that greater access to information is a net positive, but more work is needed.

"We first need an education campaign designed to teach appropriate calorie intake and food label reading skills," she says. Another approach suggested in the study is to develop definitions for "low," "moderate" and "high" calorie foods, similar to the designation now used for "low fat."

But Jean Harvey-Berino, associate professor and chair of the department of nutrition and food sciences, worries that the focus on labels is well-meaning but misdirected. To say the food industry should label their high-calorie, high-fat offerings is letting them off too easy. She'd like to teach people to make better choices, but she'd rather see a better Big Mac.

"Our culture is a landmine of food and it's immediately gratifying," says Harvey-Berino. "American culture is about eating quickly and eating as much as you can get for as small amount of money as you can. People who don't are part of the counterculture...I'd like to see an environmental

change first instead of pounding the drum about personal responsibility. I just think it's too hard."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

## In Flu Epidemic, Protect Adolescents or Elderly First?

By Kevin Foley

Article published May 19, 2006

An American flu pandemic would present difficult and tragic choices: As many as 90 million people might become sick, and widespread shortages of vaccine would likely leave more than 90 percent of the population unprotected in the pandemic's first year.

When there is not enough medicine for all, how should government prioritize who gets the scarce doses first?

One seemingly obvious answer, and one endorsed by two federal committees, would be to ration the medicine in such a way as to save the most lives possible. But in a paper appearing in the May 12 issue of the journal *Science*, University of Vermont ethicist Alan Wertheimer, professor emeritus of political science and current visiting scholar at the National Institutes of Health, and Ezekiel Emanuel, head of the NIH's clinical bioethics department, argue for an alternative approach.

Attempting to save the most lives gives the oldest, youngest and sickest priority for vaccination. Guidelines from the National Vaccine Advisory Committee and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Policy, in fact, place healthy people aged 2 to 64 as the very lowest priority, below even funeral directors.

Emanuel and Wertheimer's distribution recommendations are different: they put healthy people from early adolescence to middle age toward the front of the line for vaccination. (Both sets of recommendations give first priority to frontline health-care workers and people involved in producing and distributing vaccine.) They argue for allocating scarce medicine by accounting for an individual's degree of investment in his or her life, balancing that consideration with attention to life expectancy.

"The idea is that it's important to ask whose lives are they and at what point in life are they," says Wertheimer, who co-developed the UVM Honors College's first-year ethics curriculum before retiring last year. "There is a big difference between saving the most lives and the most life years."

He explains that a 20-year-old might have 65 years left to live; a 65-year-old, in contrast, might expect to live only 20 more years. To Emanuel and Wertheimer, it was not necessarily desirable to dedicate vaccines to sick retirees with few remaining life years at the expense of healthy college

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students. So they argue for an alternative approach, one partially based on what they call the "life-cycle principle."

The principle asserts that people should be permitted an opportunity to live through all stages of life, experiencing childhood, adolescence and a maturing career. From this perspective, the death of a child is more tragic than the death of an elderly person, not because older people are less important, but because the younger person has not yet had the opportunity to enjoy all of life.

But distributing vaccines solely to maximize years of life has problems of its own, chiefly because it would, if followed strictly, allocate all resources to infants. So Emanuel and Wertheimer argue that vaccine policy should also consider the amount an individual has invested in his or her life. A 20-year-old, they suggest, has developed more unfulfilled interests, plans and hopes than a baby and therefore deserves a higher priority for vaccine.

They also emphasize public order in their suggested vaccine-distribution priorities, giving vaccine priority to people in roles that help stanch the spread of disease. They say this actually reduces the overall death toll of an epidemic if it follows a trajectory similar to the 1918 outbreak rather than more recent epidemics.

Wertheimer concedes that making these kinds of calculations is extremely difficult and controversial.

"People don't like to ask the sorts of questions in this paper," Wertheimer says. "It would be nice if we did not have to confront this issue. And we may not have to. But at some point, it seems likely that we may have to confront a pandemic or something else that poses a similar dilemma."

Dr. Jon Abramson, chair of pediatrics at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center and leader of one of the government committees, told reporters in response to the *Science* paper that the government's priority of reducing hospitalizations and deaths was flexible if predictions about which groups were most vulnerable to the flu turned out to be incorrect in an epidemic. "You adjust, you reprioritize," he told *HealthNet Daily*. He also told the news service that the committee recommendations were based on "equity" and that they considered points similar to the ones raised by Emanuel and Wertheimer.

To read Emanuel and Wertheimer's article, see <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/reprint/312/5775/854.pdf>

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UVM HOMEPAGE

## State Agency, Rubenstein Continue Collaboration Talks

By Joshua Brown

*Article published May 23, 2006*

Don DeHayes, dean of the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, turned to Tom Torti, secretary of Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources, and asked "what does a Rubenstein graduate need to know, be able to do, and stand for – to be competitive in our ever-changing field?"

This is a question DeHayes has been asking his faculty recently as the school continues to grow, bucking a national trend of declining enrollments in natural resource programs. But his faculty is not the only group he wants to hear from. Which is why, on May 18, he invited leaders from Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources to lunch at the Aiken Center.

"Good science is at the heart of our decisions," Torti replied a few minutes later, "But in dealings with the public, our staff need to be able to educate, not just give information. They have to grab people, make them want to care."

The free-wheeling, three-hour conversation that followed was the next step in a process that began last fall when a day-long retreat brought together fifty people from both the school and agency to identify ways they could work together more closely (see [Rubenstein School to Work with Agency of Natural Resources](#) for more).

This meeting put top staff from several divisions of the agency around the table with seven faculty members from Rubenstein – over turkey sandwiches and Coke. The professors listened more than talked as the agency staff described their needs and perceptions of a UVM graduate. The comments varied:

"Having good grounding in the physical and chemical systems, which are proxies for biological systems, is a great place to start," said Larry Becker, state geologist. "I'm looking for passionate people who are critical thinkers."

"Environmental issues change all the time," said Barry Cahoon, rivers program manager, "and so the demands on science to develop public policy have to change all the time too. They have to be quick on their feet."

"I'm looking for employees that are multidisciplinary, and have a core foundation in forestry," said Steve Sinclair, state forester. "But it's not all

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science based. In our department a lot of our decisions are based on social factors."

"We work in a fishbowl," said Mike Fraysier, director of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, "students need good experience in communication and public speaking."

In the last hour, conversation turned toward the agency and their current effort to rethink their work and organization. "Air, forest, land, people, are all connected," DeHayes remarked. "What if the agency was more integrated around the issues that affect all of these, and was less segregated by resources?"

The meeting concluded with both ANR staff and Rubenstein faculty noting the value of service-learning opportunities where student research connects to the work of the agency, and the hope for more partnerships — and conversations — in future years.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

## Trustees Approve Budget, Master Plan

By The View Staff

Article published May 23, 2006

The board of trustees concluded its May 18-20 meetings with approval of an approximately \$233 million general budget, the new campus master plan and a \$2.5 million stormwater project. The group also elected not to pursue discussions with Union Institute and University, which is selling its 32-acre Vermont College campus in Montpelier.

During the meetings, trustees heard good news about Continuing Education and undergraduate admissions, received word of projected budget increases in Project CATalyst, and approved divesting university funds from companies that support the genocidal Sudanese regime. (For more on the work that led to this decision, see [Sudanese Student Celebrates UVM Divestment](#).)

Reports on activities in committee meetings follow:

**Facilities and Technologies:** Discussion of an anticipated \$4 million increase in the \$26 million Project CATalyst budget was a central focus of the committee. J. Michael Gower, vice president for finance and administration, updated trustees on the progress of CATalyst, which achieved its "go-live" goal on April 1 and was implemented for its first payroll run on April 11. Other aspects of the project are on schedule to go live on July 1 this year. The increase in budget is due to a combination of higher than anticipated staffing, consulting and software costs, Gower said. Chair Robert Young and Trustee Deborah McAneny were among committee members who urged Gower and fellow UVM administrators to update trustees, either through the Executive Committee or via e-mail, as soon as possible when a project will likely exceed board-approved spending. Gower emphasized that the projected budget picture has become clear very recently and that trustees will not be asked to approve a resolution for increased spending until the August meetings. "A lot of lessons have been learned through this process," Gower said. "This is a foundational project, a necessary project that is going to be enormously beneficial in the long run." He added, "You can bet that on future projects we'll have considerably higher contingency built into the original budget."

The committee passed a resolution authorizing \$2.5 million in spending on stormwater projects. Improving two treatment ponds at the southern edge of Redstone Campus will cost \$2 million. The ponds' depth and surface area will be increased and the outflow better regulated in keeping with 2002 standards that address improving water quality in

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addition to flood control. Constructing drainage catch basins and underground stormwater lines at Centennial Field, a \$500,000 project, is also included in the work planned.

**Academic and Student Programs:** Four years ago, Continuing Education was \$10 million in debt, was losing an additional \$1 million each year and had 90 staff. Today, a revitalized program with 45 staff has \$14 million in revenue and returns more than \$3 million annually to the university general fund, reported the co-directors of CE.

Some 93 percent of UVM graduate students prefer to read articles online, instead of paper, the president of the graduate student senate told the committee – a useful finding for the library's journal acquisition strategy.

Vice President Lauck Parke reported that nearly 18,000 applications for undergraduate admission – a large jump from last year – had yielded 2,380 that have accepted admission and sent a deposit. Anticipating the traditional "summer melt," about 8 percent of these students will not start in the fall, which should yield a freshman class of around 600 in-state and 1,600 out-of-state students. "The strongest Vermont students are now considering UVM in a way they hadn't in past years," added Don Honeman, dean of enrollment planning and admissions.

The committee's final business was approval of the six-credit university-wide diversity requirement.

**Budget and Finance:** Committee members passed the fiscal 2007 budget after being informed of changes since the February meeting and of the rectification of a \$5.5 million shortfall through a combination of \$3.6 million in reduced expenses and \$1.9 million in additional revenue.

The budget includes a 5 percent tuition increase for out-of-state students and a 4 percent increase for in-state students.

The most significant change was an increase in energy cost projections of \$1.2 million due to a combination of rate filings by the Burlington Electric Department and Vermont Gas Systems. A shift of money from a contingency fund kept the budget in balance.

Other business included the approval of the \$2.5 million in stormwater projects discussed above. The committee also approved final debt management policy guidelines. Chair Kathleen Hoyt briefed members on the debt subcommittee meeting at which Fogel asked members to reconsider the university's debt-burden ratio, which currently stands at five percent.

**Diversity:** In her final report as vice provost for multicultural affairs, Willi Coleman told the committee that all five of the programs she oversees are strong and that UVM has built a solid foundation to support increasing diversity challenges.

LuAnn Rolley, Director of the Women's Center, presented an overview of the history, objectives and initiatives of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, which she co-chairs. In 2005 and 2006 the commission submitted several recommendations to President Fogel focusing on gender-based and sexual violence and Rolley reported that significant progress had been made toward addressing those issues.

Associate Professor Jacqueline Weinstock announced that the Campus Climate Report is complete. She offered a broad overview, cautioning that the ability to generalize from the report is limited by the small and unrepresentative nature of the sample. The survey showed that 82 percent of respondents are comfortable with both the overall climate and the climate in their college or academic unit.

Sherwood Smith, assistant professor and director for the Center for Cultural Pluralism, presented an introduction to the concept of white privilege. The committee expressed interest in deepening that discussion and broadening it to include the entire board.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

## Archivist's Investigations End in 'Inquest'

By Amanda Waite

Article published May 24, 2006

Twenty-two years ago, Jeffrey Marshall, freshly equipped with a master's degree from UVM in history, went to work archiving documents from the recently burned Chittenden County courthouse. Among the amazingly unsinged case files and administrative papers, Marshall found what would become the inspiration for his first novel: a 19th century inquest report on the death of Experience "Speedy" Goodrich, a Burlington woman who appeared to have died from the complications of an abortion obtained through mysterious means.

"The report was really quite astounding," Marshall, now the university archivist, recalls. "I was just immediately attracted to it and thought, 'This would make a great historical article some day.'"



When the background material that would be necessary for an historical article failed to surface, Marshall didn't lose interest in the story. "It needed some other way of being told. Somebody suggested I tell the story as historical fiction, and it took me about ten seconds to decide that that was the way to go," he says.

This spring Marshall published *The Inquest* (University Press of New England), a fictionalized look at Speedy's death and the questions surrounding it. Told from the perspective of three narrators — Charles Daggett, the accused medical student; Stephen Decatur Parker, a UVM undergraduate of Marshall's imagination; and Nancy Goodrich, the sister of the deceased — the novel is constructed in 19th century language, a lexicon Marshall has acquired after 20 years of reading and archiving the period's letters and journals.

While Marshall has written some fiction before — he was the winner of a 1978 Vermont Cynic short story contest — he was surprised by the ease of

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writing this novel. "It was like the story was just waiting to be told, and once I started, I enjoyed every minute of it. I never had any writer's block," Marshall explains. "It was just fun."

Post-publication, Marshall continues to research 1830s Burlington and the events surrounding Speedy's life and death. "I'd love to find out who her parents were," he muses. "There are all kinds of details – things I made up in the book that I'd like to kind of either confirm or discount – hopefully confirm."

With such a positive first novel experience under his belt, Marshall isn't discounting the possibility of a second. "I don't have anything particular, but now I can look at any document and think 'Hmm. I wonder if I could do something with that.'"

For now he's content to focus on his position as university archivist, a job that both informed and is informed by his work on the novel.

"Anything I learn about Burlington and Vermont is something I can use on the job," he explains. "And (writing *The Inquest*) really is part of what we try to do here – to make history approachable and interesting to people. I see that as part of my mission as a special collections librarian."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

## Sudanese Student Celebrates UVM Divestment

By Jon Reidel

Article published May 24, 2006

It wasn't a graduation present, but it felt like one to Archier Mou. The Students Take Action Now Darfur member got word just before Commencement that trustees had approved divesting UVM funds from companies that support the country's murderous government.

For Mou, who left Sudan 19 years ago, and who has worked to help end his country's genocidal violence, the May 20 decision by the board to divest was important, but not surprising.

"We talk a lot about responsible investing and it's my understanding that wouldn't include investing in something that helps fund the killing of innocent people," he says. "I didn't see how the university couldn't divest."

Ted Winfield, associate vice president for budget and resource management, said investment committee members readily endorsed the measure, as did the committee of the whole. The initiative first got on track in April, when the university's Committee on Socially Responsible Investing recommended severing financial ties with companies that provide financial or military support to the Sudanese government. That move came after Mou and senior Jeffrey Skoldberg gave a presentation on genocide and the divestment strategies of other universities.

Mou said just before the recent meeting that his only concern before the whole board took action was that it can sometimes be difficult to find out where some investments are located and dispersed, especially when they are in what he calls a "mixed account." That's part of the reason that his organization asked the university to adopt a policy of "targeted divestment," which involves severing financial ties with companies that support the Sudanese government, but not firms that help the country's civilians.

"It takes more work to find these kinds of investments, but it has been done at other universities, so I knew we could do it if we wanted," says Mou. "It's a matter of choosing between trying to figure out how to divest from a mixed account and saving the lives of innocent people. It may not even be a lot of money, but I think the statement alone is important and may encourage other universities to follow our example."

With graduation behind him, Mou says he will now focus on a trip during which he will return to his country to try to find some of his family

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### [Commencement 2006](#)

Gustavo Esteva, who addressed the university's 202nd Commencement, began his discussion of hospitality and openness to happenstance by describing a surprise – his own.

### [Teaching Award](#)

Social work is an oddly unsung profession. It has the highest of aims – serving humans in need – and relatively low status. When that disjunction comes up, again, at the end of the semester in Julie Richards' senior seminar, she isn't surprised.

### [Confronting Sexual Violence](#)

Sometimes unexpected events propel a researcher's work to the forefront of a major issue. For Professor Susan Roche, such a moment occurred during the 2006 Vermont legislative session when lawmakers felt compelled to change existing law in response to two terrible events.

### [New Strategies for Systems](#)

A strange gelatinous blob floats into view on the PowerPoint projector screen. "Of course most of you will recognize this as a picture of slime mold," says Maggie Eppstein, assistant professor of computer science and biology, with a hint of a smile.

members. "I'm not sure what has happened to some of them, but I am optimistic," he says.

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## NOTABLES

May 24, 2006

### Awards and Honors

A team of researchers led by **Bruce Beynnon**, associate professor and director of research in orthopaedics and rehabilitation, garnered a prestigious American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine award for their scientific paper on rehabilitation following knee ligament surgery. The paper, titled "Rehabilitation After Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction: A Prospective, Randomized, Double-Blind Comparison of Programs Administered Over Two Different Time Intervals," will be recognized and presented at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine annual meeting in Hershey, Pa., on June 30.

Associate Provost **Jill Mattuck Tarule** was invited to participate in and give a paper at the Oxford Round Table in August. Tarule will travel to England to participate in the round table's "women and leadership" program. The Oxford Round Table provides a forum for the study and consideration of current issues facing state and national systems of education. The Round Table meets periodically and at each session is comprised of a small select group of leaders from both the public and private sectors of several countries.

### Publications and Presentations

**Susan Edelman**, research associate professor, and **Chigee Cloninger**, research associate professor, both of the Center on Disability and Community Inclusion, are co-authors with other colleagues of an article, "Cortical Visual Impairment: Guidelines and Educational Considerations," published in the spring 2006 issue of *Deaf-Blind Perspectives*.

**Louise Lampman-Larivee**, training coordinator for the Department of Social Work's Title IV E Abenaki-UVM-Department of Children and Families Partnership Project, was recently invited to present a paper at a conference sponsored by the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University in May. The conference was titled, "The Politics of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Lampman-Larivee co-authored the paper with Lisa Brooks, an assistant professor at Harvard. The paper was titled "Intangible Title?: Documenting Oral History at Maquam."

Dr. **Magdalena Naylor**, associate professor of psychiatry, **Michele Comette**, research specialist in psychiatry, **Elena Ramirez**, clinical assistant professor of psychology, **Erin Roland**, graduate assistant in psychology, **Rebecca Krukowski**, graduate assistant in psychology, Dr.



**John Helzer**, professor of psychiatry and **Shelly Naud**, research analyst in medical biostatistics, presented a paper titled "Effective Weight Loss Relapse Prevention: Use of a Novel Telephone-based Tool" at the Society for Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting in San Francisco on March 23. The poster is on display in the Arnold 6 hall.

**David Novak**, assistant professor of business administration, and co-author Suresh Nair of the University of Connecticut had a manuscript accepted for publication in the peer-reviewed *European Journal of Operational Research*. The manuscript, "A Traffic Shaping Model for Optimizing Network Operations," presents a goal-programming model for estimating user demand for different categories of network traffic under a variety of bandwidth policy restrictions.

**Jane Okech**, assistant professor of integrated professional studies, and a co-author will publish "The Supervision of Group Work Model: Adapting the Discrimination Model for Supervision of Group Workers" in the June issue of *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*. Okech is also lead author of "Competency Concerns in Group Co-Leader Relationships." The article will also appear in the journal's June issue.

Dr. **Richard Rubin**, clinical associate professor of psychiatry, and colleagues will present a new research poster on "Atomoxetine Treatment for Pediatric Patients with ADHD and Comorbid Anxiety" at the American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting in Toronto.

**James Sinkula**, professor and John L. Beckley chair of business administration, and a co-author had an article, "Does Market Orientation Facilitate Balanced Innovation Programs?: An Organizational Learning Perspective," accepted for publication in the *Journal of Product and Innovation Management*. The study shows that optimal new product development programs require a balance between "customer-led" and "lead-the-customer" innovation practices. A lively debate, however, exists in the literature as to whether a strong market orientation can facilitate this balance. The paper addresses the debate, reaffirming the position that a strong market orientation helps facilitate a balance between incremental and radical innovation. It also suggests that the abandonment of traditional conceptualizations and measures of market orientation are premature.

On May 20, **Sondra Solomon**, associate professor of psychology, gave the keynote address at the 19th annual Walk for Life in Brattleboro sponsored by the AIDS Project of Southern Vermont. Solomon spoke about her recent research interviewing Vermonters living with HIV/AIDS and the challenge of HIV-related stigma in a rural state.

May 3, 2006

**Awards and Honors**