



# Biological Sciences Newsletter

**UIC** COLLEGE OF  
LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES  
Department of Biological Sciences

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## Boss' Corner

Hi Everyone -

This Fall semester has been a busy time for the Department. The faculty and staff have been occupied as usual with our teaching and research missions. In the midst of our busy times, there is one happy event to share with you. In October, the University of Illinois Alumni Association honored Dr. Rick Morimoto (Northwestern University) for Outstanding Achievement (<http://www.uiaa.org/uic/honors/achievement.html>). He was one of three individuals honored at the dinner, at which he was accompanied by his wife and the surviving wife of his PhD thesis advisor. As many of you may know, Rick was a precocious and talented undergraduate in the Department of Biological Sciences ('72 B.S.), earned a Masters in Pharmacy at UIC ('74), earned his PhD at University of Chicago, and completed post-doctoral training at Harvard University. Over the past 25 years, he has risen through the ranks at Northwestern University, where he supervises a large laboratory in the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Cell Biology engaged in research in human diseases caused by defects in protein folding.



One administrative note to share with our newsletter readers is that Professor Howard Buhse has decided to retire at the end of 2011. Even though this marks the end of an era for the department, which will be celebrated with a symposium in May 2012, it created an administrative loss to the Department of Biological Sciences. For over 20 years, Professor Buhse served as the Department's Associate Head. Fortunately for us, Professor John Leonard agreed to assume the Associate Headship responsibilities and started in August 2011 in that capacity. Please join me in welcoming Professor Leonard in this new capacity.

Sincerely yours,  
Brian K. Kay, PhD



*Professor Howard Buhse giving his last BIOS 320 lecture before he retires. Photos by Steve Sullivan.*

Not sure what you want to do when you graduate?

Visit the Office of Career Services.  
1200 West Harrison Street  
Room 3050  
Student Services Building (SSB)  
Chicago, Illinois 60607

Call (312) 996-2300 to schedule an appointment or consult the Office of Career Services website for drop-in advising times.

Research library open Monday-Friday from 8:30am-5pm.

## Faculty Spotlight: Kate Warpeha, PhD

My city grade school was pretty poor and didn't have any microscope that actually looked like a microscope, I just thought the unusual wooden block with a mirror in it (over by the window where we had plants growing and fish in a tank) was a decoration. My teacher, Ms. Durkin, one day brought in an onion and we removed newly sprouted roots and with a tweezers peeled the "skin," a thin membrane that didn't look like much of anything. After putting it on the slide with a drop of dye, I explored the dynamic events happening in that tiny environment. Corny as it sounds, it changed my life. A whole new hidden world came calling.



Science and reading were my favorite subjects and for my Bachelor's I majored in Biology and almost finished a major in English but I didn't feel like staying an extra semester, so it (and chemistry) became my minors. Focusing on compelling science, and writing about it, was what I wanted to do.

Like 2nd grade, I still am most interested in the nucleus and its still poorly understood ways of responding to our environment. We investigate global change biology in the local immediate environment, or the greater environment, where we are exposed to many signals (living [fungi, bacteria] and non-living [cold, heat, UV]). Understanding how our cells perceive then respond to incoming signals is a great area of study. How signals are "stored/remembered" and can affect long-term outcomes for cells, positive (strengthening, growing, acclimation) and negative (reducing yield in terms of plants, genetic alteration, cancer) is also an area of intense focus in our research. Science is not for everyone; you basically measure things and think about what could it mean, and the hours are long. But every new understanding and breakthrough we experience reminds me that I am so glad someone pays me to do something so satisfying.

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## Research Opportunities

BIOS 399 provides students with the opportunity to work directly with a faculty member and become involved with research during their undergraduate years. Students registering for BIOS 399 may earn 2 hours of credit towards their Biological Sciences major. This course may be repeated and students may apply a total of 5 hours of independent research/study towards the Biological Sciences major. For more information on this course please visit the [website](#).

The UIC Undergraduate Research Experience is yet another valuable way to connect with researchers on campus. The [website](#) provides a list of experiences available and an e-mail webform to easily contact the researchers.

## Faculty in the News

- Professor Thomas Park is quoted in various news sources including Fox News, MSNBC, and LifeScience on his team's role on mapping-out the genome of the naked mole rat. Read about it [here](#)
- A story on Associate Professor Jennifer Schmidt's work on Whale Sharks appeared in UIC News. Read it [here](#).
- Associate Professor Dave Featherstone and Professor Janet Richmond were quoted in an article in ScienceDaily regarding a link between the tomosyn and learning and memory. Read it [here](#).
- Assistant Professor Emily Minor is profiled in UIC news. Read it [here](#)

### Graduate Office

Director of Graduate Studies:  
**Roberta Mason-Gamer**  
 (312) 996-2637

Admissions:  
**Margaret Kleist**  
 3250 SES  
 (312) 996-2955

Continuing Students:  
**Beth Brand**  
 3248 SES  
 (312) 996-2955  
 bethann@uic.edu

## Congratulations and Thank You!

In November, the department joined together to honor several employees for their service and dedication to teaching over the years.

### 5 years

Boris Igc,  
 Iryna Safatiuk  
 Sang Thai  
 David Wise

### 10 years

Beth Brand  
 Ronald Dubreuil  
 Corinna Kitcharoen  
 Roberta Mason-Gamer  
 Brian Zeid

### 15 years

Aixa Alfonso  
 Hormoz BassiriRad

### 25 years

Joel Brown  
 Paul Malchow

### 35 years

Lillie Love



Professor Hormoz BassiriRad (left), Associate Professor Paul Malchow (center), and Professor Joel Brown (right) at the recognition breakfast. Photo by Brian Kay, PhD.



Associate Professor Dave Featherstone (left) and Mike Muller (right) received 2011 teaching recognition awards. Photo by Brian Kay, PhD.

## Pre-Health Advising

Do you have a Pre-Health goal and need help applying to professional school?

Please visit the [Pre-Health website](#) for valuable information about workshops, letters of recommendation, advising, and admission tests.

It is highly advisable to attend a Pre-Health workshop specific to your educational goal (i.e. pre-med, pre-dentistry, pre-pharmacy) to become familiar with the timeline for applying as well as information on enhancing your application.

If you are in need of individualized assistance, Candice Eisenhauer and Cristina Gambino are available. They are available during walk-in hours Tuesdays from 8:30am-9:30am and from 2:30pm-3:30pm during fall and spring semesters. You can also schedule an appointment by calling (312) 996-3366 and requesting to speak with a Pre-Health advisor. Please come to the meeting prepared with questions.

If you have a quick question that can be answered by e-mail, please send it to [prehealth@las.uic.edu](mailto:prehealth@las.uic.edu). If you have a question specific to letters of recommendation, please send it to [pletters@las.uic.edu](mailto:pletters@las.uic.edu)

**Scholarships!**

The Office of Special Scholarship Program (OSSP) assists undergraduates and professional students in applying for nationally competitive and UIC scholarships.

For more information on upcoming scholarships, visit them in 2506 University Hall, or at their website.

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## Scholarship and Internship Opportunities

January Deadlines:

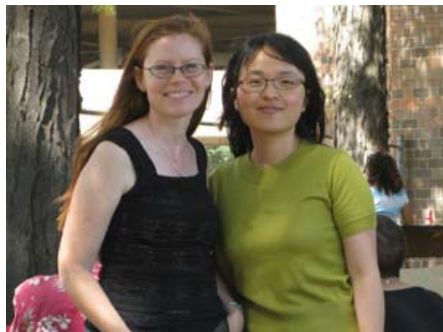
- [DAAD Rise Summer Internship Program](#) is offered to students in the fields of biology, chemistry, physics, earth sciences, and engineering. Students apply for a program which would enable them to spend 2-3 months doing research in Germany.
- [Mass Media Science and Engineering Program \(AAAS\)](#) is offering a summer internship opportunity for underrepresented undergraduate and graduate students.

February Deadlines:

- [Jewish Federation Academic Scholarship Program](#) is available to Jewish students interested in physical sciences, life sciences, math and additional fields.
- [National Institute of Health \(NIH\) Undergraduate Scholarship Program](#) offers scholarships available for disadvantaged backgrounds who are committed to biomedical, social, and behavioral science careers.
- [University of Montana Summer Research Program](#) is a 10 week summer program available for students to participate in environmental health sciences.

## Announcements

- The Department of Biological Sciences Undergraduate Awards Day is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2012 from 4pm-6pm. Edgar Diaz, MD has agreed to be the keynote speaker for the event and refreshments will be served. We encourage alumni, faculty, staff, and students to attend. Further information will be available as the event approaches. Please contact the main office at (312) 996-2211 with questions.



*We would like to extend a warm welcome to Kate Warpeha (left) and Hua Jin (right) who joined the faculty as assistant professors. Photo by Brian Kay, PhD.*

The Biology Colloquium is an exciting opportunity to learn about careers and meet other Biological Sciences majors.

Want to know more?

Check out the [BCO website](#).

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## Academic Calendar

January 9: Instruction Begins

January 16: Martin Luther King Day. No classes.

January 20: Last day to add or drop a course via student self service without receiving a 'W' on record.

March 16: Last day for undergraduates to use optional late drop and receive a grade of 'W' on their academic transcripts.

March 19-23: Spring vacation. No classes.

April 27: Instruction ends.

April 30-May 4: Final examinations.

### Make a Gift to Biology

**We are committed to developing support for our Biology students. We have a number of scholarships to fund students and their research. We are focused on increasing the scholarship opportunities provided to them, and enhancing the classroom experience by acquiring up to date technology for our laboratories. Making a gift is easy and tax-deductible and it has an immediate impact on the experience of Biology students.**

To make a gift, simply write a check payable to:

The University of Illinois at Chicago

In the Memo section write:  
Unrestricted Biology

University of Illinois at Chicago

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of Biological Sciences (MC 066)

845 West Taylor Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60607

Contributors:

Brian Kay, PhD  
Vanessa Ricker  
Kate Warpeha, PhD

<http://www.uic.edu/depts/bios/ungradstudy.shtml>

#### Keep in Touch!

#### Alumni Questionnaire

Please send me more information on:

- Contributing to an article in the newsletter
- Upcoming seminars
- Department needs for private support
- Volunteer opportunities
- Other please specify

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

CUT OUT, COMPLETE AND MAIL FORM TO:

VANESSA RICKER  
DEPARTMENT OF  
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (MC 066)  
845 WEST TAYLOR STREET  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607-7060

-OR-

E-MAIL US THE INFORMATION AT [RICKERVK@UIC.EDU](mailto:RICKERVK@UIC.EDU)