SVSU names Huntley new dean of Science, Engineering & Technology

After conducting a national search, SVSU administrators determined that the best candidate to lead the College of Science, Engineering & Technology was already in the job. Deborah Huntley has been named dean of the college, effective immediately. She had been serving in that role in an interim capacity since July.

“Deb Huntley is a highly regarded scientist and a first-rate administrator,” said Don Bachand, vice president for academic affairs. “Her work in the areas of academic assessment and strategic planning has been outstanding. Without question, she is the right person for this job.”

A professor of chemistry, Huntley joined the SVSU faculty in 1998, and has held administrative appointments as acting assistant dean from 2001-04 before accepting a position as associate vice president for academic affairs in 2006. In addition, she evaluates other universities as a peer reviewer for institutional accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission.

“I am proud to serve the university in this new capacity,” Huntley said. “We have strong programs and faculty and outstanding facilities, and I look forward to building on those strengths to become a premier institution for undergraduate education and research in science, engineering and mathematics.

“Another major objective will be to develop strong partnerships with regional industries and provide the types of programs and graduates that Michigan needs for its economic recovery.”

An active scholar, Huntley’s research includes collaboration with Nobel-prize winning chemist Roald Hoffmann, a professor at Cornell University, on the density functional treatment of rare earth oxides. She has authored or co-authored some 35 articles published in scholarly journals, including some of the most prominent publications in the field of chemistry. Huntley received SVSU’s prestigious Earl L. Warrick Award for Excellence in Research in 2006.

A resident of Saginaw Township, Huntley completed her Ph.D. and a master’s degree at Cornell University. She holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Connecticut. Prior to joining SVSU, Huntley worked as a research chemist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (Tenn.) for 14 years.

Maurovich announces intention to retire

Robert L. Maurovich has announced he will retire in August 2010 from his position as vice president for student services and enrollment management. He has served in that capacity for 15 years. Maurovich said he feels “privileged” to have served in that role, and expressed confidence in his divisional colleagues to move forward while a search for his successor is conducted. “I have every confidence in their commitment and ability to make our university stronger and better.” After retiring from his administrative role, Maurovich intends to remain at SVSU and assume full-time teaching responsibilities.

SVSU honored for fitness by American Heart Association

SVSU received a gold award from the American Heart Association, and was recognized as a Start! Fit-Friendly Company, among the nation’s top employers for helping employee health. The award goes to organizations that support physical activity, increase healthy eating options at work, promote a wellness culture and implement a number of its proposed physical activity, nutrition and cultural improvement plans.

SVSU’s Healthy U program focuses on education, prevention and exercise, and includes fitness challenges, a workout reward program, educational lunch sessions, weight loss program reimbursement, and free use of personal trainers and the Ryder Center.

“We’re very excited to be recognized and even more pleased that we’ve had about 40 percent of our employees participate,” said Cynthia Bala, associate director of human resources. “We hope to have that number increase every year.”
It’s not easy to have a conversation about biochemistry. The subject is outside the understanding of most people, and even aspiring scientists can find it intimidating.

“I’m dealing with a lot of that this semester,” said Tami Sivy, describing not herself but the “interesting mix of students” in her classes.

“The biology majors are scared of the chemistry and the chemistry majors are scared of the biology. I want them to see how chemistry works inside the cell.”

Sivy pushes students to think. “My goal is to be challenging but fair,” she said.

Cross-science trepidation aside, the second year faculty member has been favorably impressed with her students. “Most are very interested in learning, and they ask for help when they need it.”

Sivy enjoys the classroom and the Michigan native is happy to be back in her home state after a postdoctoral fellowship at Portland State University. “I wanted to focus on teaching,” she said. “SVSU is the kind of environment I was looking for. The professors are really involved with undergraduates.”

For Sivy, that extends into the lab, where she and five research students are studying the release of volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, which is naturally emitted by trees. When those compounds mix with unnatural emissions from cars and factories, it can harm air quality. “It’s having a huge effect on atmospheric chemistry,” Sivy said.

She added that SVSU has been very accommodating and helpful when it comes to supporting her research efforts with unit grants and other measures, and the students “are doing some really good work” and realizing what they learn in class is interconnected with the world around them.

Sivy says the hardest part of her work is balancing the demands of teaching, research and family responsibilities and “coming out with a good attitude.” In that respect, her chemistry department colleagues have been a valuable resource.

“There’s a good mix. Those who have been here for a while are guiding those of us who are young, eager and excited.”

From the old hands to the new hires, Sivy says those in chemistry form bonds with their students.

“We know all of them,” she said. “That’s helpful for their learning and our teaching.”

Especially considering many students will need to continue with postgraduate study to achieve their career ambitions.

“Our goal is to help them do that,” Sivy said. And increase their understanding along the way.

“I’m here because I love biochemistry. I hope that comes across in my teaching.”
October brings leaves changing color, Halloween costumes, and open enrollment for benefit plans at many organizations, including SVSU. That means it’s the busy season for benefits manager Ann Miner, though it begins much earlier as she contacts health providers and others to confirm details and negotiate rates.

Health care costs are “increasing at alarming rates,” she said, making it the No. 1 priority year after year, and creating an ongoing challenge to maintain benefit levels.

One change to open enrollment this year is the move to an online process, rather than sending the traditional paper packets through inter-office mail.

“Number one, it will save paper,” Miner said. “Also, people can do it anywhere, including at home where they can include family members in the discussion.”

While faculty and staff will need to print and complete some forms this year, the eventual goal is to “do as much online as possible.”

Miner says one of the favorite parts of her job is meeting with new employees as part of the orientation process.

“It’s quite a privilege. I get to know everyone on campus.”

Those who come from other institutions are often impressed with the benefits SVSU offers, from retirement packages to parking permits.

“New faculty can’t believe parking only costs $20,” she said.

Some of Miner’s colleagues at other universities have had the unpleasant task of giving layoff notices, something SVSU has avoided through good fiscal management, despite the difficult economic times. “We’re very fortunate,” she said.

Miner also deals with workers compensation and a host of other issues. “My phone rings constantly. You never know what to expect. That’s part of HR.”

To relieve her stress, Miner expresses her creativity by creatively adding beads to kitchen utensils and serving pieces.

“I love beads and colors,” she said. “Every piece is different.”

It has developed into a part-time business, as Miner sells them “all over the state” at around 15 art fairs each year.

In her remaining free time, Miner enjoys spending time with her three granddaughters and golfing, though she doesn’t hit the links as often as she used to.

Miner has worked at SVSU since 1998, though her time on campus extends to when she was employed by the Center for International Earth Science Information Network, which was previously located at SVSU.

“It’s an honor to be here. We have a great HR team. It’s a great environment; everyone we work with is friendly, and the benefits are excellent.”

Ann Miner
Benefits Manager • October 2009

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Professional Profile

- **Karen Brown-Fackler**, associate professor of nursing, presented “Student Incivility in Higher Education” at the 9th Annual Lilly Conference for College and University Teaching and Learning in Traverse City in September.

- **Fenobia I. Dallas**, assistant professor of English, had a manuscript titled “FuturePerfect: Students Envisioning the Future” accepted for publication in the fall 2009 issue of *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*. Also, Dallas presented a paper titled “The Destruction of a Community Through Eminent Domain Claims: 1960s Toledo, Ohio” at the Association for African American Life and History Conference, Oct. 1 in Cincinnati, Ohio. In addition, Dallas presented a paper titled “ Morphing into Monotony: Digital Hegemonic Imagery” at the “Beyond the Dolls: Representation as the AntiLife?” panel at the Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference, Oct. 8 in East Lansing, Mich.


- **Eric Gardner**, professor of English, has a new book, *Unexpected Places: Relocating Nineteenth-Century African American Literature*, recently published by the University Press of Mississippi. Recovering the work of early black authors and editors who have been left off maps drawn by historians and literary critics alike, the book restores to consideration Black literary locations in antebellum St. Louis, antebellum Indiana, Reconstruction-era San Francisco, and several sites tied to the Philadelphia-based Christian Recorder during and after the Civil War.

- **René Hernandez**, assistant professor of health sciences, has been appointed to The Dow Chemical Company’s Human Studies Review Board. She currently serves on the State of Michigan Bureau of Health Professions Physician Assistant Task Force with subcommittee membership to both the Disciplinary and Rules Committees.

- **M. Yousef Jabbari**, associate professor of mechanical engineering, presented “Teaching the Concept of the Critical Radius of Insulation to Undergraduate Students” at the Annual Conference of the ASEE North Central Section, April 3-4 in Grand Rapids. The presentation was a summary of the results of an investigation coauthored by Riyan K. Hermas, a SVSU mechanical engineering senior.


New Cardinals


Condolences


- **To Lorie Kohn**, administrative payroll clerk, whose mother-in-law, Clara Kohn, passed away Oct. 20.

- **To the family of Edward Noronha**, who passed away Oct. 8. Noronha hosted SVSU exchange faculty in Mysore, India, and was an inbound exchange faculty in spring 1997, winter 2003 and AY2008-09.

- **To Adrian Ramirez**, financial aid advisor, whose father, José Zavala Ramirez Jr., passed away Sept. 28.

Briefly Speaking

- Faculty and staff may present the Alumni Scroll to graduating members of their immediate family during Commencement at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 18. Call Joe Vogl at ext. 4051 to make arrangements. Faculty and staff also are reminded to place their regalia orders. The university continues to provide regalia free of charge to faculty, adjunct faculty and staff. Orders are due by Nov. 13. Order regalia at: svsu.edu/webapps/regalia; if you already have your own regalia and plan to attend, please go to this site to notify the SVSU Foundation that you will be attending. To confirm that your regalia order was received, call the Bookstore at ext. 4277.

Grants announced

- **Hasan Al-Halees**, associate professor of mathematics, received $1,000 from MEEMIC Insurance Company for the Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition. This scholarship program promotes the importance of mathematics among high school students.

- **Janalou Blecke**, dean of the College of Health & Human Services, received $40,427 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for SVSU’s Scholarships for Disadvantaged Nursing Students program. These funds will provide scholarships to students who need financial assistance to pursue a degree in nursing.

- **Peggy Flatt**, professor of nursing, received $855,556 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the Nursing Workforce Diversity (NWD) Program. This program will increase the nursing education opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds while increasing diversity in the classroom and workforce.


- **Robert Schooks**, director of Center for Manufacturing Improvement, received $79,375 from the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center in support of the Northeast Office at SVSU.

- **Deborah Smith**, associate professor of teacher education, received $184,830 from the Michigan Department of Education for the Urban Literacy Cadre (ULC) project. The establishment of the ULC, in partnership with charter schools, will improve student achievement by supporting teachers’ literacy integration and community building skills.

- **Brian Thomas**, assistant professor of sociology, received $1,140 from Michigan Campus Compact for his Green Cardinal Youth Mentorship Project. This project offers a service-learning opportunity to SVSU students that will positively impact Saginaw’s urban environment while engaging and building relationships with inner-city youth.

- **Marilyn Wheaton**, director of Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, received $333,325 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for America project. This project will catalogue and create digital records of the sculpting career of Marshall Fredericks, allowing a broader public to appreciate his artistic achievements.

The Interior is published on the last Tuesday of each month for faculty and staff at SVSU. University departments sponsoring activities or events listed in the Interior will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities when contacted at least three days in advance.

**Submission Deadline:**

Noon on Wednesday before the publication date.

Please send items by e-mail to: tmi@svsu.edu.

For campus event information, click www.svsu.edu/newsevents