

Braun Fellowship to support development of an engineering textbook and the study of business practices in West Africa

Two professors have been selected as the latest Braun Fellows. Enayat Mahajerin will produce a novel engineering textbook and Joseph Ofori-Dankwa will study business conditions in sub-Saharan Africa through research support grants totaling up to \$37,500 over the next three years. Funds may be used for research expenses, equipment, travel and/or other related support.

A professor of mechanical engineering, Mahajerin plans to author a textbook tailored to 21st century needs in the areas of mathematical modeling, contemporary numerical methods and computer programming.

He intends to emphasize ingenuity, insight and imagination, which he says are often absent from traditional texts but frequently needed to



Mahajerin



Ofori-Dankwa

solve engineering problems.

The working title of the book is *Computational Methods with MATLAB Programming*, and it will contain numerous examples to illustrate analytical methods. MATLAB is a computer programming language used by both education and industry. Mahajerin plans to employ a student research assistant to help with setting up experiments and collecting data for the project.

Ofori-Danka will study the emerging economy of West Africa, and specifically, the nation of Ghana, which he says

has been largely unrecognized by U.S. firms, though countries such as China and India have been quick to see the business opportunities. His research focus will be to more fully describe the scope and opportunities associated with the West African market and to identify factors that influence successful firm performance, which have not been comprehensively identified previously.

Factors leading to successful entrepreneurship in such economies also will be examined by Ofori-Dankwa. He contends identifying such market success factors may help U.S. firms and investors to more fully explore, engage and ultimately benefit from the potential opportunities associated with this emerging economy.

A resident of Saginaw Township, Mahajerin joined the

SVSU faculty in 1984 and has received the university's highest honors for teaching (Landee Award, 1989) and research (Warrick Award, 1990). An active scholar, he has published or presented nearly 80 articles and papers during his career. Mahajerin also has served as faculty adviser to SVSU's chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers since 1985. He completed his Ph.D. at Michigan State University.

Also a resident of Saginaw Township, Ofori-Dankwa joined the SVSU faculty in 1987 and likewise was honored with the Warrick Award (in 2005); he received the House Award for Teacher Impact in 2000. He has written 27 articles that have appeared in scholarly journals, and has given more than 50 presentations at management conferences. Ofori-Danka also has served as faculty adviser to SVSU's chapter of Delta Sigma Pi, a co-ed business fraternity, since 2005. He completed his Ph.D. at Michigan State University.

Mahajerin and Ofori-Dankwa form the fourth class of Braun Fellows. Established in 2005, the Braun Fellowship program was created through a \$1.5 million endowment from the Saginaw-based Harvey Randall Wickes Foundation. Administered by the Saginaw Community Foundation, the program's purpose is to recognize the exceptional accomplishments and potential of select SVSU faculty and staff. It is named in honor of Ruth and Ted Braun of Saginaw.



James Fry

The popular musical group Three Men and a Tenor provided entertainment at the annual Alumni Celebration, Nov. 7. The event included presentation of SVSU's Distinguished Alumni award to Laverne (Vern) Weber, president and chief executive of Standard Electric Company. Since 2003, the Association also has presented awards to recognize outstanding alumni from each of the university's five colleges: David Gilmour, 1981, ABS; Michael Tribble, 1987, CBM; Joy Baker, 1984, COE; Andrea Frederick, 1996, HHS; and William Washabaugh Jr., 1985, SET. Formed in 1992 while the performers were members of the Men's Glee Club at Michigan State University, Three Men and a Tenor has been featured guests on more than 80 national radio and television stations and starred in their very own PBS-TV music concert special in 2003.

Peter Barry

Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Upon arriving at SVSU after finishing his Ph.D. at the University of Florida, Peter Barry didn't know what to expect. One lesson learned: wear sweater vests. Coming from Southern climes and two years where he "never wore shoes," only flip-flops, Barry was frequently mistaken for a student until he adapted his attire. "Now they recognize me," he quipped.

In his fifth year at SVSU, the Wisconsin native is settled in and branching out. Barry recently became faculty adviser for *Cardinal Sins*, a student-run literary publication. To some, that may seem to be an odd fit for a philosopher, but not for him.

"Frankly, I just got lucky. I've really enjoyed it. It's a great opportunity to work with students," Barry said, explaining that he had been associated with *Sins* as a faculty editor, so when the vacancy occurred, he stepped in.

On the academic side, Barry teaches courses in ethics and legal philosophy, including some that are included in the relatively new legal philosophy minor he started.

"This program has pretty intense study of logic, but also of philosophical questions related to the law and to social policy, so it's really a well-suited minor for anyone who wants to go to law school."

Barry's research interests include areas that explore the darker side of humanity.

"Ethics, generally, is my area of expertise, so these classes give me a chance to teach and to talk about a lot of things that I myself find quite interesting.

"I'm especially interested in the position that says torture is always morally wrong," he said, adding that he is also studying "evil" generally and in Florida jurisprudence where evaluating whether a criminal act is evil can be a factor considered for capital punishment. "The law seems to be very interested in what evil people are like."

People have made Barry's time here anything but punishment. "What I've been most impressed with has been the support and relationships that I have with colleagues. The face of the faculty is getting younger, but I have a number of senior and established colleagues here – both inside and outside my department – who have been incredibly supportive."

Barry also stands up for his field when it is dismissed as indiscriminate musings.

"I really like to resist the temptation of thinking about philosophy in a way that we can make up anything that we want, unencumbered by evidence, unencumbered by research. Good philosophy, good ethics takes the sciences (and other disciplines) seriously."



Kathleen Lanza

Administrative Secretary, Graduate Admissions • November 2009

Kathleen Theiler Lanza doesn't need to read the latest employment figures to know that many in Michigan are looking for work. She sees them regularly as they seek to improve their prospects in a very competitive job market.

"A lot of people, especially now, are coming back and saying 'I just got laid off. I need to do something to further educate myself.' We find out what their degree is in, and what they have been doing, and steer them in the right direction."

An SVSU graduate, Lanza never expected to become an employee. Of course, as a student the campus "looked a lot different," but now "it feels like coming home." She started working here in 2001 and recently became full time in graduate admissions, and her role continues to evolve.

"That's one of the things about my job that I really enjoy. It's not just putting applications in the system; I do application reports and enrollment reports. That took a little bit of educating. I like that the job changes; it's always growing."

Data entry is growing, too, as the number of graduate applications crossing Lanza's desk has increased 127 percent since fiscal year 2006. A surge in international interest is major contributing factor. Translating that interest into enrolled students often requires extra attention.

"They have a couple more hurdles that we have to jump, because they have to make sure they can pass their visa process. Also, they have to pass requirements the federal government has for evidence of financial support; another hurdle is the language barrier."

Lanza said clearing those obstacles results in widespread benefits.

"The MBA program is one of the biggest that attracts international students," she said. "They're coming in from India, China, all over. That's great for SVSU, to have that international diversity. It's really good for the regional community and the economy, too."

Away from work, Lanza enjoys spending time with her siblings and activities with her son, Patrick, 10. Those include nature walks, bike rides, playing the piano and museum trips. She also likes to read and "anything with art."

Lanza describes herself as a "really organized person," which has aided the transition of working more closely with the College of Education in addition to her traditional colleagues.

"I'm working with some great people; it's a great team." And a winning one. "It's nice to see graduate admissions grow. To be part of that growth is pretty exciting."



Professional Profile

- **Deborah Ramirez Bishop**, professor of management, and **Christopher J. Surfleed**, assistant professor of economics, presented a paper titled “Hispanic Professionals and Managers: Moving Forward By Looking Back” at the Second Annual Research Forum of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs 2009 Conference and Career Expo in Minneapolis, Oct. 9-10.
- **Karen Brown-Fackler**, associate professor of nursing, has been selected by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Commission on Nurse Certification to serve as an item writer for the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) Certification Examination.
- **Julie Foss**, assistant professor of modern foreign languages, presented “The Role of L1 and L2 Working Memory in L2 (French) Proficiency” with co-authors David Z. Hambrick and Dallas Dralle (Michigan State University) at the 2009 Second Language Research Forum in East Lansing, Mich. Foss also presented “Talking About Contemporary France” at the 2009 Michigan World Language Association Conference in October.
- **Eric Gardner**, professor of English, presented “Christian Recorders and Other (Sometimes Rebellious) Early Black Women Writers” at the Society for the Study of American Women Writers Conference in Philadelphia. While at the conference, Gardner also chaired a session on women writers and religion and worked as part of a committee charged with developing the bylaws for a new author society devoted to the study of turn-of-the-century black writer Pauline Hopkins.
- **Gladys Hernandez**, professor of modern foreign languages, and four students (Trevor Cline, Brittany Frost, Kelsey Krueger and Jacqueline Zingg) presented “Cinema in Spanish Classes” at the Michigan World Language Association, Oct. 15-16 in Lansing, Mich.
- **Judith Kerman**, professor of English, has been named to a three-year term on the Fulbright Program’s selection committee for Canada and the Caribbean. She was a Fulbright Scholar to the Dominican Republic in 2002 and served as a resource person at the Fall 2009 Predeparture Orientation for Fulbright Scholars in Washington, D.C.
- **Margret McCue-Enser**, assistant professor of communication, presented “Lincoln’s Speech to the Washingtonian Temperance Society: Constitutive Metaphor and the Development of Rhetorical Leadership” at the National Communication Association Convention, Nov. 12 in Chicago, Ill.
- **Ed Meisel**, lecturer of chemistry, traveled to Lansing Nov. 10 to receive an award, “Most Innovative Greenhouse in Michigan,” sponsored by the Michigan Agri-Science Educators Association and the Horticultural Teachers Association.
- **Marsha Millikin**, lecturer of English, presented “Rising like a Phoenix?: Fulfilling the Quest in Sherman Alexie’s Film Smoke Signals” at the Michigan Council of Teachers of English Autumn Assembly, Oct. 30 in Lansing, Mich.
- **Sally Shepardson**, assistant professor of biology, presented “Ultrastructural Morphology of *Bittacus strigosus* Sperm” at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Michigan Entomological Society, Oct. 8-10 at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon, Mich. The paper was co-authored with **Kathleen Pelkki**, biology laboratory technician, and **David Stanton**, professor of biology.
- **Stephen Taber**, associate professor of biology, has discovered a new species – a large fly from a western Michigan forest. The finding will be published in *The Southwestern Entomologist* as “A New Species of *Tricyphona* Zetterstedt Crane Fly (Diptera: Tipulidae).”
- **Robert Tuttle**, associate professor of mechanical engineering, had a paper titled “Examination of Steel Castings for Potential Nucleation

Phases” accepted for publication in the *International Journal of Metalcasting*. The paper documents the examination of several industrial castings for nucleation sites. It is the hope of current research at SVSU to use the information from this paper to create stronger steels.

- **Steve Yanca**, professor of social work, has coauthored the 10th edition of a textbook, *Social Work Practice: A Generalist Approach*, published by Allyn and Bacon (2010). He has been the coauthor with the original author, Louise C. Johnson, professor emerita from the University of South Dakota, since the 7th edition (2001). It is a classic in social work education, having been originally published in 1983 as the first practice text written specifically for bachelor’s-level social work students. The text is now part of a trilogy of textbooks that cover the entire generalist social work practice curriculum using the same model of practice, making this a unique contribution to social work education.

Also, Yanca presented “Generalist Social Work Practice with Groups: Sharing the Past, Present, and Future” at the Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups in Chicago in June.

New Cardinals

- **Laura Donajkowski**, event coordinator, welcomed a daughter, Julianne Rose (6 lbs., 11 oz., 19 in.), Nov. 11.

Condolences

- To **Michael Andrzejewski**, energy management specialist/foreman, on the loss of his stepfather, Douglas See, who died Oct. 19.
- To **Laureen Reed**, lecturer of physics, on the loss of her father, Byron Burgoyne, who died Nov. 2.

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.
- The university will close for the Thanksgiving holiday Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26-27. All dining services facilities will close at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 24 and remain closed through the weekend. The RFoC, C-Store and Freshens will open at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29. All others will resume normal business hours Monday, Nov. 30. Zahnow Library hours are Wednesday, Nov. 21, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Thursday, Nov. 22 - Saturday, Nov. 24, closed; and Sunday, Nov. 25, 1 to 9 p.m. The Ryder Center and Fitness Center close at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 25; the facilities will resume regular hours Monday, Nov. 30. All computer labs will remain accessible Wednesday, Nov. 21 and Sunday, Nov. 25 according to the regular lab schedule; all labs are closed Thursday, Nov. 26 through Saturday, Nov. 28. Next month, Dec. 24 and 25 are considered SVSU paid holidays; Dec. 28-30 are additional paid days; and Dec. 31 and January 1 also are SVSU paid holidays.

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.

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Noon on Wednesday before the publication date.
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