MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

The overarching goal of our participation in Campaign UW: Creating Futures is to provide funding for transformational change at our College. One critical element of this goal is to ensure an outstanding faculty who can lead the way in educating the next generation of natural resources scientists and professionals, advancing cutting-edge research and transferring breakthrough technologies, and sustaining the economic, social, and ecological values of our Northwest world. Recruiting and supporting a well-educated and highly motivated faculty is critical to our long-term success.

In the spirit of transformation, at least ten new faculty members will join the College over the next 15 months, a remarkable enhancement of our teaching, research, and outreach capabilities. Our College, one of the oldest units on the UW campus and one of the original natural resource programs in the country, has had several opportunities during its long and distinguished history to hire a new generation of faculty to lead into the future. Looking back over the College’s record of research and teaching, it is gratifying to realize that the faculty we have hired over the years have made a remarkable contribution to the understanding and the management of our planet’s natural resources.

Our past and current research in topics such as sustainable forestry, fire ecology, ecological restoration, invasive and endangered species, urban sustainability, global warming, forest productivity, paper science and engineering, and natural resources policy continues to contribute to political, social, and economic decisions made every day by leaders and citizens and is a key element in our state and regional economy. Our upcoming Distinguished Alumni Speakers Series highlights our alumni who, over the years, have assumed leadership positions across a wide range of disciplines and professions. This is further tangible evidence of the quality of our faculty’s teaching and mentoring.

Faculty searches are currently underway in four areas: remote sensing and biospatial analysis (supported by Precision Forestry Cooperative (PFC) funds), plant sciences, natural products chemistry, and for the director of the Center for Sustainable Forestry at Pack Forest who will be a non-tenured faculty member engaged in teaching, research, and service both at the Center and on the Seattle campus. These positions are expected to be filled by Autumn 2006. Another search will begin soon for a second faculty position supported on PFC funds. An additional four “bridge” positions have been approved by the UW administration that will be repaid using PFC funds. An additional four “bridge” positions have been approved by the UW administration that will be repaid using PFC funds. An additional four “bridge” positions have been approved by the UW administration that will be repaid using PFC funds.

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Over the years, long-time RFNRP and SMC project managers and technicians like Bob Gonyea and Bert Hasselberg have helped SMC maintain 441 installations in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon, primarily in Douglas-fir and Western Hemlock. The installations, which are tracked in a database, contain 4,986 plots with a variety of treatments. These contain almost 288,057 trees which together have received 1,337,964 measurements. Soil survey data, vegetation surveys, and stem section information are also collected.

The SMC is currently monitoring 95 Type I, II, and III installations. Begun in the late 1980s, these three types represent a wide range of site conditions and geographic areas. Each installation contains a series of treatment plots examining a set of thinning, fertilizing, and pruning regimes. Thirty-eight Type I installations were established in juvenile plantations before the onset of inter-tree competition. Twelve Type II installations were established in plantations reaching commercial thinning age and assumed to reflect conditions that the tree competition.

The installations are providing a wealth of new data that is leading to improved understanding of early intensive management and supporting the development of improved management models. Among research accomplishments, the SMC has sponsored a large study on the processing of plantation Douglas-fir into lumber and veneer that established important linkages among silviculture, log quality, and value. It completed studies on modeling branch and crown structure and occlusion after pruning in young Douglas-fir. SMC-ORGANON, a first-phase growth and yield model, was developed in the 1980s based on data sets supplied by members; a phase-two update based on SMC installation data will be released later this year. Publications and workshops transfer the latest research results to members and to the public.

“Other accomplishments over the years,” says Briggs, “include collaboration with other cooperatives in the region and international organizations like the New Zealand Douglas-fir Cooperative, and the professional and academic successes of the more than 40 graduate students who have worked with the SMC. And the most satisfying accomplishment of all is the knowledge that the work we have done together has benefited all of our members.”

Mike Mosman, Vice President of Resources for Port Blakely Tree Farms, a long-time cooperative member agrees: “Port Blakely Tree Farms is a family owned company committed to managing its timberlands in a responsible, sustainable manner. The high quality information generated by the SMC provides us with the tools to make good science-based management decisions consistent with our goal of being good land stewards.”

The Wind River Canopy Crane Research Facility is a potential NEON site. Photo: Mary Levin.
Ray Miller ('58) recently published Forests, People and Flora of Seattle in 1850: Major species and landscapes distributed to every Chamber of Commerce and business association in Washington State and to many local governments. Research Scientist Kathy Wise worked on the project in partnership with the PAW chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (PAW-ISA). The project was funded by the Washington Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry Program and the U.S. Forest Service.

Two College alums were technical contributors: Elizabeth Walker ('95), City Forester for Kirkland, Washington, and Stacey Brockman who, he writes, “was both an inspiration and a mentor to me during my years at CFR.”

The Washington Pulp and Paper Foundation (WPPF) annual meeting in May included remarks by UW President Mark Emmert recognizing the ongoing importance of the partnership between the UW, the College’s paper science and engineering program, and the WPPF. Kathy Budman Gibson, Chairman of the Board for Buckman Laboratories, was the keynote speaker.

The College’s Visiting Committee met on May 25, 2005 with an agenda focused on the College’s ongoing effort to update its three-year goals. The meeting also included a discussion of communication and public relations efforts by the UW and the College and ways in which committee members might assist.

A crowd of nearly 50 attended the Dewann Forestry Focus Sessions on June 2, 2005 to hear speakers discuss “The Changing Northwest Forest: Keeping the Landscape Green.” Speakers included Gene Dunnervy from the Cascade Land Conservancy, and Michael Andreakos, Gordon Ballard, John Calhoun, Bruce Lipke, and Kevin Zaitz from the College. Dewann programs are recorded by UNITV in digital format and broadcast nationwide on the UNITV channel and the ResearchChannel. They can also be viewed via streaming video at the UWTV website. The series is funded with support from Mary Ellen and W. Richard Dannen.

The College News is the University of Washington Botanic Gardens is the leading voice for the regeneration and preservation of the rainforests of the Pacific Northwest. It publishes a biannual newsletter, The Rainforest Review, that provides updates on current projects and research. The Rainforest Review is distributed to subscribers worldwide, and it is available for free online at www.botanicgardens.org.

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International Forestry School in South Africa

“The school attracted students from around the world,” reports Carrie Spradlin, “including four from the U.S (besides us, one from Auburn University), two from Krakow University in Poland, one from the University of Panama in Brazil, and five from the University of KZN. This diversity allowed us the exchange of information regarding forestry issues in each respective country, as well as a lively and intriguing cross cultural exchange. We enjoyed attempting to translate phrases from English to Zulu to Polish and Portuguese!”

Throughout the three-week tour of southern KZN and Zululand the students became aware of the many issues and struggles facing commercial, community, and small farm forestry within South Africa. Environmental regulations are just being introduced by the budding democratic government, and large and small landowners are becoming aware of the environmental impacts of agro-forestry, although the long road to conservation has just begun. The students report: “Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification is a hot topic among corporate and cooperative pulp and paper producers. Issues of social sustainability were also raised throughout the school. AIDS-HIV, poverty, and social oppression have all significantly impacted forestry in South Africa and mechanization, wages, and health care were major discussion topics.” The group also visited several game parks and many historical sites and buildings.

This was an amazing, once in a lifetime opportunity for us,” say the Spradlins and Randrup. “Cross-cultural education helps open minds and develops an international community of students focused on natural resource management.” The Spradlins, who received BS degrees from the College this spring, have gone on to enroll in the College’s Peace Corps Masters International Program. Randrup is an undergraduate studying wildlife science.

Three students from the College traveled to South Africa in July to attend a three-week International Forestry School hosted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) in Pietermaritzburg. Carrie Spradlin, Brian Spradlin, and Joel Randrup received funding from the Lockwood Endowment for Program Enhancement to attend the session, which focused on sub-tropical commercial forestry within the province of KZN. KZN is the most densely populated region of South Africa; it stretches north from the port city of Durban to the Mozambique and Swaziland borders. An incredibly diverse area, it includes several types of sub-tropical forest, a towering mountain range, mangrove swamps, thorn veld, beaches, and grassland.