

WE ARE... MARSHALL™

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David Pittenger Named COLA Dean

Dr. David J. Pittenger, Associate Provost at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga since 2004, has been named dean of the College of Liberal Arts. He will assume his duties at Marshall on July 1.



Dr. David Pittenger

"I see a lot of opportunity in the college and at the University, and I want to be a part of it," Pittenger said. "There is a strong commitment to students and eager faculty engaged in teaching, research and providing service for the community."

Don Van Horn, dean of the College of Fine Arts, headed the search committee that selected Pittenger. "We feel that Dr.

Pittenger had the strongest grasp of the kinds of issues that are challenging higher education right now and that he would be the one who could be the most effective leader for the College of Liberal Arts as we move into the future," he said.

Pittenger, a native of Akron, Ohio, received a B.A. in Psychology in 1979 from the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio; an M.S. in Psychology in 1981 from Texas

'Third House' Set for March 5

For the 19th consecutive year, members of the Capitol press corps are teaming up with the Marshall University W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications (SOJMC) to bring "The Third House" to the stage.

The event, the school's largest annual fundraiser, will be at 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, at the West Virginia Cultural Center Auditorium. A catered reception will follow the show. Tickets are \$25 and are available from the Governor's Press Office, the President of the Senate's Office, or the SOJMC.

This year's production, "Live from the Archives, Library, Gift Shop and Grill," will feature WQBE's Larry McKay portraying former state Archives and History Director Fred Armstrong combing through "Third House" archives. As he does, the press corps troupe will showcase many best-of-the-best skits and musical satire from previous years. The production typically pokes a little fun at the expense of state leaders. SOJMC Dean Corley Dennison said this year's production won't disappoint.

"Expect to see some of your old favorites as well as clever new skits from this session," Dennison said.

(continued on page 4)

A&M University; and a Ph.D. in Psychology in 1989 from the University of Georgia..

Pittenger first went to UT-Chattanooga in 2000 as a professor and head of the Department of Psychology. He has extensive experience as a creative leader in a number of academic and administrative positions dating back to 1999. He has educational and work experience at liberal arts colleges, regional comprehensive universities and research institutions.

In addition to UT-Chattanooga, Pittenger has taught at Texas A&M, Blinn Junior College in Bryan, Texas, the University of Georgia and Marietta College. As an instructor, Pittenger has earned national and local awards for excellence. He had considerable experience developing departmental and general education curricula, strategic plans and assessment and accreditation activities.

He and his wife, Denise, are parents of two grown children, Rebecca and Alex.

Fran Browning Named Employee of the Month

Fran Browning, Accounting Assistant I in the School of Medicine/Finance, has been named the Marshall University Employee of the Month for January, according to Jim Stephens, chair of the Employee of the Month Committee.

An employee since 1989, she was nominated by JoAnn Raines.

In her nomination Raines wrote: "It is well known in the Medical School that if you need help, you can turn to

(continued on page 3)



Fran Browning (left) receives her Employee of the Month plaque from President Kopp.

Geography Professor Receives 'Paper of the Year' Award

Dr. Kevin Law, assistant professor of geography, recently won the John Russell Mather Paper of the Year Award sponsored by the Climate Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers.



Dr. Kevin Law

The title of Law's paper is "A Statistical Model to Forecast Short-term Atlantic Hurricane Intensity." Law said the paper is based on his dissertation and was published in *Weather and Forecasting* in October 2007. He will present the paper and receive the award April 16 at the National AAG meeting in Boston.

"I was extremely surprised by the award, considering the group does not always grant a winner each year," Law said. "It is a great honor as well, since I was competing

against some very well known scholars from some of the top universities in the discipline."

His research, as with the award-winning paper, focuses on hurricane predictions.

"I am trying to develop a model that tries to forecast the intensity of hurricanes," he said. "This paper looked at

key environmental predictors and tried to forecast the 24-hour wind speed change. The model compared favorably with National Hurricane Center forecasts."

Law says he is always trying to improve the model and will be comparing this model with other ones used by the National Hurricane Center. He will be presenting this research at the American Meteorological Society's Conference on Hurricanes and Tropical Meteorology in Orlando (Fla.) in May.

Law has been at Marshall since 2006. He graduated with a Ph.D. in Atmospheric Science from The Ohio State University in 2006.

He currently is developing a meteorology program within the Geography department. It would be the first meteorology program in a four-year institution in West Virginia, he said.

"Kevin has brought a lot of energy to the Geography program," said Dr. Larry Jarrett, chair of the geography department. "Meteorology is a field everyone is concerned with and hurricanes are of real interest to Kevin. The students are very excited about the new offerings Kevin has put together."

CSX Makes Gift to RTI, Engineering

CSX Corporation presented \$20,000 to Marshall University Feb. 15 – \$10,000 each to the Nick J. Rahall, II, Appalachian Transportation Institute and Marshall's newly reinstated engineering program.

A check presentation took place in the office of MU President Stephen J. Kopp on the Huntington campus. Kopp was joined by Randy Cheetham, CSX's Regional Vice President-Public Affairs, Robert Plymale, director of the Rahall Transportation Institute, Dr. Tony Szwilski, interim dean of Marshall's College of Information Technology and Engineering (CITE), and Sara Mullen, director of development for CITE, in the presentation.

"CSX's contributions to the Rahall Transportation Institute and the new engineering school at Marshall recognize our long-standing relationship with the university and the important role it plays in Huntington, where

(continued on page 4)



CSX's Regional Vice President-Public Affairs Randy Cheetham, second from left, presented a check for \$20,000 to Marshall University. The funds will support research at the Rahall Transportation Institute at Marshall and fund a scholarship for Marshall's engineering program. From left to right are Marshall President Stephen J. Kopp, Cheetham, Rahall Transportation Institute Director Robert Plymale, Dr. Tony Szwilski, Interim Dean of Marshall's College of Information Technology and Engineering (CITE), and Sara Mullen, director of development for CITE.

Classified Staff Election Set for March

The Classified Staff Council will hold an election to fill vacant positions in all EEO groups for the remainder of the 2007-2009 term. Elected candidates will serve on Council until June 30, 2009. Nominees are:

EEO Group 10, Administrative, Executive & Managerial: Lisa Williamson, Lewis College of Business

EEO Group 30 – Other Professionals: Karen Barker, Center for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning; Kimberly Lawson-Murphy, Lewis College of Business

EEO Group 40 – Technical & Paraprofessional: John Bowen, Bursar; Toni Ferguson, School of Education; Cora Westmoreland, Registrar

EEO Group 50 – Clerical: Bernice Bullock, Faculty Senate; Carol Henson, Applied Science and Technology; Connie Zirkle, Psychology

(continued on page 4)

WE ARE... MARSHALL™



**MARSHALL
UNIVERSITY**

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The next regular issue of *We Are...Marshall!* will carry an issue date of March 7,

2008. Deadline is Feb. 29. Articles or other materials for consideration should be sent to Pat Dickson, editor, at the South Charleston campus or by e-mail to pdickson@marshall.edu.

Profile: Linda Hamilton

A series on interesting Marshall University people.



Linda Hamilton

Everyone knows those plastic building bricks which come in intriguing shapes, sizes and bright colors. They're perfect for constructing buildings and bridges and multiple other everyday objects. But put them in the willing hands of school children and with their imaginations unleashed, these ordinary looking objects can be transformed into almost anything imaginable. Add some 21st century technology and suddenly they become cities complete with traveling cars and working traffic signals, robots that carry

out a multitude of tasks, a merry-go-round, even a trip through the uneven terrain of Mars, you name it and the sky's literally the limit.

LEGO® blocks, a perennial favorite of children for the past 50 years, are the building blocks that have always allowed children to create projects both fanciful and practical, but now, with sophisticated technology paired with technical expertise, a whole new universe of possibilities has been unlocked. And the best thing is the students are learning complex scientific principles without even knowing it. They think they're just having fun.

And that's exactly as it should be, according to Linda Hamilton, Outreach Coordinator for K-12 programs using LEGO Robotics and an Instructor in the math department. No one knows more about the unlimited possibilities of LEGO projects than she and her unbridled enthusiasm for her work is contagious. She's been working with LEGO programs for years and for her it's a joy to see even very young children learn about math and science, computer programming and engineering techniques through working with those little plastic bricks.

"Children can learn math and science just by doing. You can use LEGO materials to do anything," she says. "Kids learn life skills as well, if you don't succeed at first, keep trying. They don't worry much about getting things wrong. They learn problem solving, if you're not successful the first time, just figure out what was wrong and make it work. That's going to be increasingly important for this generation because they are going to have to learn how to learn."

Although it may look like a playroom, the small LEGO "lab" housed in the Rahall Appalachian Transportation Institute actually is a sophisticated robotics arena that can be used on-line from anywhere in the world.

The LEGO company has made robotics a big part of its worldwide educational reach and for the past several years has sponsored design and engineering camps. Hamilton got on board very early and has found ways to take concepts and apply them to transportation.

Using the Internet to remotely control sensors in projects with special software, she has supervised the construction of a miniature city complete with buildings, moving cars and working traffic signals. In 2004 she scored a major coup when with a NASA grant Marshall was chosen to host one of three Planetary Society Web sites, which allowed visitors to use a robot in simulated explorations of Mars that coincided with a real Mars mission. As part of the Red Rover Goes to Mars project, dubbed "Red Rover, Red Rover," a model Mars terrain was built in Jenkins Hall, where the LEGO lab was then located. Hamilton and others constructed a realistic miniature of the Mars Station South Pole landscape, complete with lava rocks, ice layers and snow. Visitors from all over the world were able to log on and steer LEGO versions of NASA's rovers, Spirit and Opportunity, around their tabletop Mars terrain. They used the same basic program that NASA scientists used to guide the rovers and visitors saw a minuscule Martian surface that looks startlingly realistic when viewed over the Internet.

(continued on page 4)

Fran Browning

from Page 1

Fran for assistance. Her wealth of knowledge spans from Banner Finance to solving phone problems to identifying 'who do I need to contact.' She is always willing to help anyone in need, regardless of the person's position or depth of knowledge about the particular issue at hand."

Raines cites a personal example of Browning's willingness to assist others. Being new to Banner Raines said she was having difficulty navigating the purchase requisition screens. "When called, despite her overwhelming workload, Fran responded and graciously and very patiently...walked me through the Banner process in a true 'We are Marshall' team spirit. It is evident that Fran works for Marshall University team, not just a division. She is a long term and very dedicated MU employee who exemplifies the team spirit!"

Browning was presented with a plaque, balloon bouquet and a check for \$100 by President Stephen J. Kopp.

Nursing Program Achieves High Pass Rate for RN Examination

Marshall University's nursing program has among the highest pass rates for the National Nursing Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses in West Virginia, according to Dr. Denise Landry, chair of the School of Nursing.

In fact, with a 95 percent pass rate, in state nursing programs with 20 or more students, Marshall ranks number one. .

By a wide margin, Marshall students have surpassed both the state and national averages. In 2007 West Virginia students' rate of passage was 81 percent and the national average was approximately 85 percent, according to Pamela Alderman, president of the West Virginia Board of Registered Professional Nurses.

"I am extremely proud of our graduates and our nursing program," said Landry. "We have an exceptional

(continued on page 4)

Marshall Artists Series Presents "Teddy Roosevelt and the Treasure of Ursa Major" March 4

It's the summer of 1904 and President Theodore Roosevelt wants his three rambunctious children to be quiet and stay out of mischief. He gives the three, Ethel, Kermit and Archie a copy of "Treasure Island" to read and to their delight a real life treasure map falls out. Their adventures as they solve riddles and learn White House history is told through music and songs as "Teddy Roosevelt and the Treasure of Ursa Major" comes to the Keith-Albee Center for the Performing Arts on Tuesday, March 4 at 7 p.m.

The show features songs by noted Washington D.C. satirist Mark Russell who sets out to prove that learning history can be fun. The production, part of the Marshall Artists Series, was mounted by the Kennedy Center in association with the White House Historical Association which imagines stories about the children of the nation's presidents beginning with this new musical inspired by Theodore Roosevelt and his family.

For ticket information call the box office at 66656 or visit the Web site at www.marshall.edu/muartser.

Linda Hamilton

from Page 3

And if outer space isn't your thing, you can get to the LEGO city in the Rahall Transportation Center by interacting, once again through the Internet, with the components of a bustling city, including cars, building, traffic monorails, and tiny traffic signals that work. Even small children can get into the act, Hamilton says, by building their own version of a working farm and the activities that go on there.

Hamilton has worked tirelessly with area schools, initiating programs permitting students to build LEGO rovers and then setting up software that allows students from one school to communicate to a rover at another school. She visits schools regularly with a scaled-down version of a LEGO city and, with no limits on imagination, teaches them how to construct their own projects and have fun online.

The aim, she says, is to make complex technological and scientific topics easier for school children to grasp. "Instead of saying that you want them to study math or science, tell them you want them to explore and play...learning will take place faster and with deeper understanding."

Her interest in LEGO activities began in the late '80s when she did LEGO projects with continuing education classes. Her enthusiasm for her work and the creativity she exhibited in taking LEGO programs to schools soon caught the eye of Planetary Society officials and led to Marshall's being named one of only three sites at the time for the Red Rover, Red Rover simulation, the other two sites being Pasadena, Calif. and at the Centro de Astrobiologia in Madrid, Spain. She began taking her work to area schools and helped the students at Davis Creek Elementary, located near Barboursville, to make contact with a fifth grade class in Melbourne Australia.

Preliminary work had gone on for weeks in preparation for the initial exchange between the two classes. Davis Creek fifth graders had constructed their own version of the Mars landscape. Finally it was time for the excited Australians to remotely maneuver a rover around Mars, deploy mining machines and manipulate other vehicles. The event was a huge success on both sides of the world.

As the popularity of the LEGO programs has grown, a whole network of workshops, camps, competitions and prep sessions for competitions has evolved. Each year there is an international FIRST LEGO League robotics contest and Hamilton mentors teams from this area. The teams will face some stringent and complex challenges, but there's more to the competition than just winning or losing, she believes. "I'm more into groups of people helping people, rather than winning or losing."

Originally from Montana, Hamilton can trace her love of science and teaching back to family roots. "My grandmother was a first grade teacher and my grandfather was a science teacher who also did what they called audio/visual aids back then, but what would be computer science now. My father was an engineer."

After graduating from the University of Montana, she made her way to Pakistan, where she taught in an American school for four years. Then it was on to Ecuador for another teaching stint and finally back to the U.S., where she met and married Dr. John Drost, currently a professor in the Marshall Math department. They came to Marshall 23 years ago. Hamilton's pleased that her children live near enough for some timely visits. Currently one son, Jack, lives in Georgia; another son, Jay, is at Marshall; and her daughter, Lisa, who is a computer editor, lives in Lexington, Ky. Hamilton's granddaughter, Kylie, often can be found at her grandmother's weekend LEGO sessions.

Hamilton's unbridled enthusiasm for the learning possibilities of LEGO projects leaves her scant free time. In addition to her frequent school visits, there are always after-school programs, summer camps, sessions at libraries and boys and girls clubs, gatherings of all sorts, With her evangelistic fervor about the learning possibilities springing from what was once commonly thought of as a just a child's toys, she'll take any opportunity to spread the word and to encourage participation.

"The LEGO activities are ones that kids can show adults. What they do is construct positive learning situations, using the principles of STEM—Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. They learn all these things by doing. But they also learn about working as a team and not giving up when things don't work perfectly. I love watching kids turn ideas around in their heads. When they work on these LEGO projects, they are the builders, the doers...they learn so much better."

To learn more about LEGO activities go to www.marshall.edu/LEGO.

Third House

from Page 1

"Several creative people put in a lot of time to make 'Third House' a great success. We appreciate their hard work, energy and cleverness."

"Third House" is organized by the SOJMC Alumni Association. Funds will directly benefit students.

To order tickets from the school or for more information, e-mail sojmc@marshall.edu or call (304) 696-2360.

Classified Staff

from Page 2

EEO Group 60/70 – Service/Maintenance: Christopher Kennedy, Plant Operations

Paper ballot voting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11 at the following locations:

Morrow Library, Staff Council Office, Room 123 – 8:30 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.

Sorrell Maintenance Building, Room 104 – 8:30 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.

Morrow Library, Main Lobby - 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Electronic voting is scheduled from 7 a.m. on Monday March 17 until 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 18. Electronic voting instructions are available on the Staff Council Web page at www.marshall.edu/staff-council/EVoting_System_instructions.htm or by contacting Charlene Hawkins at ext. 62222.

CSX Gift

from Page 2

so many of our employees live and work," Cheetham said. "RTI's research continues to be a vital resource for the railroad industry, strengthening its ability to support the American economy. And we look forward to the day when Marshall University School of Engineering graduates come to work for CSX."

The funds will be used to support further research at the Rahall Transportation Institute and to fund a scholarship for the engineering program.

Plymale said the support of CSX is important to RTI's success.

"We appreciate CSX's ongoing financial and technical support for our research," Plymale said. "It is an important partnership for us."

Szwilski said he, too, is grateful for CSX's latest gift.

"The CSX scholarship is a significant investment in our engineering students," Szwilski said. "In addition, CSX is helping to support the engineering program's growth and success."

Nursing Pass Rate

from Page 3

group of students who make many sacrifices—money, family, time, —in order to attend our program. And we have a dedicated faculty who work to provide these students with the highest quality education possible. "

Students who complete nursing programs, either associate or baccalaureate degree programs, must take the National Council Licensure Examination to receive their licenses.