

October 1, 2008

Dear Physics Alumnae and Alumni,

The Physics faculty and staff would like to invite you to our **Homecoming reception on Saturday, November 8**. We would love to have a chance to see you again. You are also invited to our annual **homecoming seminar on Friday afternoon at 4:00** in Olin 101. The speaker will be Professor Shane Hutson from Vanderbilt University. Professor Hutson got his B.A. degree at W.F.U. in 1992 and his M.S. degree in 1993. The title of his talk is "How does a fly make itself? Modeling cell-level mechanics"

The homecoming reception will be in the foyer of Olin Physical Laboratory, and will be held three hours before the homecoming football game against Virginia. The time is still uncertain because game time will not be set until a week or so before the game; dictated by TV scheduling. As soon as we know, we will post the time on our web page at <http://www.wfu.edu/physics>. If you do not have web access, let me know and I will be happy to give you a call when the time is set.

Let me give you a few updates on things happening in the Department. Daniel Kim-Shapiro is the first recipient of the Harbert Family Distinguished Chair for Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship. Provost Tiefenthaler says "The chair is to be awarded to an outstanding teacher whose work is of international renown." You may recall that last year Professor Kim-Shapiro received a prestigious MERIT award from the National Institutes of Health for his work studying the effects of Nitric Oxide in Sickle Cell disease.

Bill Kerr retired as of July 1 after 38 years at Wake Forest. We are very grateful to Bill for the excellent teaching, advising, and research that he has done during his time here. Luckily for us, Bill is planning to stay active in research and so we expect to continue to see a lot of him.

We have hired Timo Thonhauser as Bill's replacement. Timo's research is in the area of theoretical and computational condensed matter physics. He received his Ph.D. from Karl-Franzens-Universität, Austria in 2001 and has had postdoctoral positions at Pennsylvania State University, Rutgers University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He also spent a year as a visiting scientist at MIT.

I also have a couple of promotions to report. Fred Salsbury was promoted to associate professor on July 1 and Rick Matthews has been promoted again. You may recall that a little over a year ago Rick was promoted to the position of Associate Provost. This past spring he was promoted again to become the Associate Provost for Information Systems. This means that he is now in charge of this very important part of the University. We wish Rick the best in his new job.

One of our graduate students, Christine Carlisle, who is working with Professor Martin Guthold, won a Pre-doctoral fellowship from the American Heart Association. Her proposal entitled "The mechanical properties of native and variant fibrin fibers" was scored in the top 15th percentile. The award carries a \$40,000 stipend, distributed over two years.

Last spring Wake Forest University's Center for Nanotechnology and Molecular Materials, which is headed by David Carroll, hosted a conference in the area of *nanoparticle delivered hyperthermia treatments for cancer*. Approximately 40 scientists from around the world attended. More information on Center activities can be seen at the website: www.wfu.edu/nanotech or in its newsletter <http://www.wfu.edu/nanotech/news.html>.

One of our faculty members, Eric Carlson, gave a television interview on the Large Hadron Collider when they started it up a few weeks ago. You can access it from our web site at <http://www.wfu.edu/physics/news-wfup.html>. Dave Carroll was part of a panel discussion on "Carolina Business Review", a local PBS program which is produced in Charlotte. You can read the Window on Wake Forest article about it by going to <http://www.wfu.edu/wowf/2008/20080221.carrollpbs.html>.

On the educational front, we are continuing to offer our majors and grad students a series of "Career Events". We supply pizza, our alumni provide the advice, and our students provide the questions. Last year we had Timothy F. Summers (BS 83) on Oct 9, 2007, Andrew Shelton (BS 04) on Nov 6, 2007, and James A. Chervenak (BS 91) on Mar 27, 2008. This year we so far have Thomas Clarkson (BA 77) scheduled to come on November 4. If you would be willing to join our students for lunch and talk about your career, please let me know. Our students need to know the rewards and joys of all the careers our alumni have chosen. You can help them broaden their horizons.

Our tradition of broad involvement in undergraduate research continues. When you visit if you look around the building you will see posters and publications in our halls bearing the names of undergraduates. You can also read about some of students and their research projects at <http://www.wfu.edu/physics/profiles/profiles.html>.

I want to give special thanks to all of you who designated the Physics Endowment Fund as part of your alumni giving. This fund enables us to send students doing research to conferences and allows us to provide lunches at the career advising events. This fund lets us do things for our students that we would not otherwise be able to do. Your generous

contributions to the department create opportunities for our students that greatly enhance their educational experiences.

Please come by Olin Physical Laboratory and join the fun. We are looking forward to seeing you.

If you can't make it, please drop me a note or give me a call and tell me what you're up to. If this letter was forwarded to you, please let us know your current address.

Best regards,

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