Greetings! It’s a wrap for academic year 2013-2014 and we wanted to share some department updates since our last Newsletter as well as some alumni news.

A fun way to stay in touch is through our Facebook group, Denison Biology Alumni and Faculty; just search and ask to join! Stay current with the department happenings here http://denison.edu/academics/biology.

If you have an update and would like to be included in the Bio Buzz alumni spring ’15 edition, drop us an email to biology@denison.edu. We hope you enjoy catching up. We like hearing from you!

Our 2014 Haubrich Memorial Senior Research Symposium began with opening remarks by Emeritus Professor, Dr. Phil Stukus, giving a first-person account of friend and emeritus professor, Dr. Bob Haubrich. Dr. Haubrich’s generosity has helped support the Senior Symposium and we rename the event in his honor. Senior Fellows presented their research in Slayter Auditorium and then remaining senior researchers presented their posters in the 2nd floor Burton Morgan lobby.

The day ended with an Awards Banquet in the Knobel Hall, when faculty gave brief remarks on qualities that accompanied departmental award nominations and certificates were distributed.
When hands-on skills meet generous funding, a really good plan finally becomes reality. Watch what four motivated men can do on a fine April day with 32 solar panels and a ladder: Doug Spieles, Mathew McFarren, Richard Downs ’77, and Jeremy King ’97 complete the final installation of a solar array at the Bio Reserve’s Polly Anderson Field Station.

Sustainable energy was a natural idea for the laboratory and research facility at Denison’s Biological Reserve, and the original design for the Polly Anderson Field Station included innovative passive solar elements as well as plans for an array of solar panels on its south-facing roof. But solar technology was considerably more expensive in 1995 than it is today, so those panels had to be postponed.

Nearly 20 years later, economics came into alignment with ideals. Jack McNaughton ’75, whose electrical supply company (McNaughton-McKay) provided solar equipment for the recent energy project at Denison’s Homestead, quoted a price last summer for the Anderson Field Station that happened to neatly match an existing fund. Alumnus Bill Ichord ’76 had earmarked a gift to Denison for environmental and sustainable projects, and Campus Sustainability Coordinator Jeremy King ’97 put the two pieces together.

The field station solar project was made considerably more affordable by doing the installation in-house, which was possible with the passionate expertise of contractor/carpenter/certified solar installer Richard Downs ’77. Downs was one of the original Homesteaders as a student at Denison, and he’s been living the ethos he experienced there in the 1970s throughout his life. In fact, Downs and King have combined their interest and experience to form the Licking County Solar Cooperative, which makes itself available to consult with local citizens interested in solar panel installations.

King and Downs organized the project into four two-hour work sessions, and with the help of volunteers, made up of Denison faculty and staff, the field station now has a 7.8 kilowatt array, which will offset more than half its energy usage each year.

“Downs was one of the original Homesteaders as a student at Denison, and he’s been living the ethos he experienced there in the 1970s throughout his life.”
John Kester III ’09 is currently a Distinguished Doctoral Fellow in his 3rd year as a PhD student in the Environmental Dynamics program at the University of Arkansas. John’s dissertation research focuses on policy decisionmakers’ roles in determining adoption of energy efficiency and renewable energy policies in Arkansas cities. Last year, he attended the Clinton Global Initiative University Meeting in St. Louis where he had the chance to meet former President Clinton and talk to a 1,000 other students from around the world about how to create positive change and commit to action during our time in higher education and in our future careers. John also served as the Associated Student Government Cabinet Sustainability Director last year, where one of his primary responsibilities was organizing the Recycling with the Razorbacks program which recruits volunteers to recycle at athletic events.

(On a side note, I think the Clinton Global Initiative University Meeting is a great opportunity for students and I would suggest letting biology students know about it. It is by far and away the best conference/meeting I have attended in my higher education. http://www.cgiu.org/)

~John Kester III ’09

From Dora Vines, class of ’13:

“Dental school is awesome and I’m doing great in school! I love it, which is probably a good thing! If there is a thing as “over-prepared”, then Denison has done it! I was so nervous when I started, but after taking a few tests, I realized I didn’t have anything to worry about. It’s strange because I felt like I always worked so much harder at Denison than I do here. I think that Denison (or the biology curriculum) does an excellent job of teaching students on how to approach questions. A lot of my friends here came from a state school and I notice that they memorize and regurgitate on tests, but I realized that this is what separates an A student from a B student. When a question requires them to do more thinking (rather than regurgitating) is where they seem to lack. I learned that it is not always what you can memorize, but the way you approach the question/situation and if you actually learn the material you can derive an answer. (And I spend about 1/2 the time they do when it comes to studying and perform better on tests!) I am so thankful for all of the professors I had and the assignments I may have once thought was tedious work because it sure is paying off now. Please let the others know how awesome the Biology curriculum is and their approach to teaching it!”

(will do, Dora) ;)

John Kester III ’09

From Dora Vines, class of ’13:
When asked on our Facebook group what folks have been up to, this is what you get:

“Ok Denison alums, let's hear from you! What have you been up to since you left your "home on the hill"?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sarah Karr</th>
<th>Sheep. So many sheep. And some goats too I guess.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kelly McBride Folkers</td>
<td>Jag bor i Sverige. Jag älskar!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lauren Meyer</td>
<td>I went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison for the PhD program in Developmental Psychology, but I left after earning my MS. Now I'm in Missoula, MT where I'm working as a freelance science copyeditor. If you ever need someone to help with an article, grant application, poster, presentation, etc., check out Science Refinery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Slaby</td>
<td>I've had many seasonal field jobs since graduating; currently I'm working for the wetland ecologist at the Cleveland Metroparks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Kester III</td>
<td>Staying in school! Did my Masters in Sustainable Communities at Northern Arizona University and am currently pursuing a PhD in Environmental Dynamics at the University of Arkansas. As part of my fellowship, I am working for The Sustainability Consortium as a lead researcher helping to develop consistent metrics for consumer product supply chains. I was just at Denison a few weeks ago and can't wait to be back for again my 5th year reunion next year! Thanks so much for creating this page!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay Biga</td>
<td>I'm currently finishing up my PhD at Oregon State University - I actually was working on it in Dr. Rebecca Homan's lab just a few weeks ago! I'm also teaching as a visiting assistant professor at Western Oregon University in the Biology Department!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Magnus</td>
<td>William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine for me!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Kirkton</td>
<td>Thanks for starting this group. It is fun learning about the department and all the success alumni have had. After graduating in 1997, I earned a PhD in biology at Arizona State University focusing on insect respiratory physiology, I did a post-doc at Univ CA San Diego medical school and now I am an associate professor of biology and co-director of bioengineering at Union College in Schenectady, NY.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly McBride Folkers</td>
<td>Scott, I met you at the Experimental Biology meeting in San Diego last year! Cool to see you in this group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Kirkton</td>
<td>Yes, I definitely remember! I hope Sweden is treating you well.</td>
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Lisa Cotner  I did seasonal field work in herpetology for a while, got my masters in Natural Resources Management in 2009, and now I'm working for Illinois DNR in the Lake Michigan Coastal Management program, running our grants program and getting our Nonpoint source pollution control program up and running.

Megan Fleming  Nice to hear from everyone! I'm working in the EPA's Office of Research and Development. I'm a part of a research study on hydraulic fracturing potential impacts to drinking water resources. Other than that, I review various Agency proposed rulemakings. One I spent most of my time on today pertained to improving standards for managing hazardous waste pharmaceuticals at healthcare facilities.

Rachel Stevenson  I'm studying synaptic plasticity in the spinal cord at Brown University (neuro PhD program). Thanks for making this group--it's great to see where Denison biology degrees have taken everyone!

Anna Boudoures  I am currently working towards my PhD at Washington University in St. Louis studying how obesity influences oocyte metabolism, fertilization and early development!

Meredith Atwood  I went to SUNY-ESF for my Master's and am currently pursuing my PhD at Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. I study vernal pond ecology, specifically how pond biogeochemistry influences food web dynamics. I'm about to make a big move to Portland, OR to be with my boyfriend and will be working with some labs at Portland State (while still doing my PhD field work in CT). Lindsay Biga-- we should meet up... perhaps you can show me some west coast herps

Holly Menninger  Psyched about this group! Fun seeing some old names and faces! I earned a PhD in Behavior, Ecology, Evolution & Systematics from the University of Maryland in 2007. Worked in science policy in DC for a couple years at AIBS, fought the good fight against invasive species doing extension work at Cornell for a couple years, and now am doing what I LOVE, communicating science and leading a citizen science program at NC State: http://www.yourwildlife.org/  

Judy Dilworth  Just found this group yesterday. I graduated DU in 1971 and became a medical technologist M.T. (ASCP) in 1974, after a year's internship at a hospital in Toledo, OH. I have spent all but five years of my career as a clinical microbiology technologist. If you have a urine, throat, sputum, stool, wound, fluid or anything tested for pathogenic bacteria, we are the ones who read out the plates, identify the bacteria, perform susceptibility testing when appropriate, all as quickly as possible so the doctor can treat the patient. I have specialized in microbiology, but I have also been trained in hematology, blood bank, clinical chemistry, urinalysis, and serology, although I haven't worked in those departments in 25 years. I currently work part time at a large clinical microbiology lab in Toledo, OH, and have made no plans to retire as yet. Dr. Stukus was my advisor way back when. I saw the blurb in the newsletter that he's still living in Granville, and has a small micro lab at OCF. Micro people just can't give it up.

Tommy Bilbo  In an Environmental Toxicology graduate program at Texas Tech studying mosquitoes and insecticides. Thanks to Dr. Schultz for the great entomology foundation!

Katie Sparks  This group just makes me miss Denison so much! I got my MA in Ecology and Evolution at the University of Kansas and then took a turn toward museum work. I got an MA in Museum Studies at KU, and right now I'm a Curatorial Assistant at the Missouri State Museum (biding my time in history collections until the right art or natural history job opens up)! I hope you're all getting to do what you love to do!

Sarah Rebecca  I went to Xavier University to get my masters in science of nursing, an RN license, and certification as a clinical nurse leader (CNL). I work as a nurse at the James Cancer Hospital in Columbus and am back in school working toward a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) certification and a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree...I'm hoping to end up in Hospice and Palliative Care, but who knows what the future holds! Glad to hear about everyone's success!
I’ve been working as the Assistant Naturalist at Blackwater Falls State Park in West Virginia since June. My primary duties involve designing and leading interpretive nature programs, including both nature hikes and indoor presentations. I love the teaching aspect of the job; it’s great to share nature with kids and their parents. I try to make sure they walk away with more biological knowledge than they started with, even if they’re mostly just having fun. ~Annie Harmon ’13

From David Abbott ’13: I have some good news to share with you. A few days ago I got accepted into an international MD program at San Raffaele medical school in Milan, Italy. I’m currently doing genomics research for New York State, in Albany, New York, but I’m looking forward to starting medical school abroad this fall. If you think any of your students may be interested in this track, here is an article that got me excited about the idea:

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/31/world/europe/31iht-educSide31.html?_r=0

I can’t believe how long it’s nearly 5 years since I walked through Denison. I’m getting nostalgic. I remember all my professors in the biology and biochemistry department very fondly. And the educational experience I had at Denison gave me a strong foundation.

I would like to share with you as well as the Biology & Biochemistry Department that I will be graduating from medical school on May 29, 2014 and begin my residency program in Internal Medical at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY. –Ezinnaya Ubaharaji ’09

Lauren Meyer, class of 2006, was a biology minor (complementing her Psychology major and Neuroscience concentration). Among her many other activities while at Denison, Lauren was the Public Relations Chair of DUBS (DU Biological Society) for two years. After graduating, she went on to earn a M.S. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Last year, Lauren founded the company Science Refinery. She likes to call herself a "science communication consultant," but what that really means is she’s a freelance copyeditor, helping scientists improve their manuscripts, grant applications, posters, presentations, and even CVs and cover letters. Lauren can help you communicate your science so you can get back to doing the science you love. To learn more about Lauren and Science Refinery, check out the website (http://ScienceRefinery.com) and like the Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/ScienceRefinery). Lauren looks forward to working with more Denison alums!