RICE AT LARGE — AN INTRODUCTION

Educational outreach at Rice has a long and important history. For years, faculty and staff have worked in various ways to assist the greater Houston community and its independent school districts. Yes, the early efforts may have been small in number and scope, but powerful contributions were made.

The Office of the Associate Provost was established in 1996 in part to support outreach. At that time, there were approximately 19 identifiable outreach programs, most of which involved small numbers of K–12 teachers or students, especially in math and science. The first official university-wide celebration of educational outreach at Rice came in 1998 with the “Enduring Vision” section of an April edition of Rice News, which highlighted the 38 initiatives in place at that time. By year’s end, three more programs came onboard.

Rice University’s outreach efforts ... affect approximately 7,000 K–12 teachers and 100,000 students.

We are indebted to the faculty members, who have been instrumental in pioneering educational outreach models that exist in some form to this day at Rice and elsewhere. We cannot forget their vision and leadership. Among them are Raymond O. “Ronnie” Wells, Jr., professor emeritus of mathematics and education; John Polking, professor emeritus of mathematics; Richard Tapia, the Noah Harding Professor of Computational and Applied Mathematics; the late Frederick Rudolph, the Ralph and Dorothy Looney Professor of Biochemistry and Cell Biology; Ken Kennedy, the Ann and John Doerr University Professor of Computer Science; and Ronald Sass, professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology, to name a few.

What has changed in 10 years? For starters, the number of such initiatives has grown dramatically. Today a wide range of courses. In 2005, President David Leebron launched Rice’s Engaging Houston initiative to further highlight and enrich Rice’s connection to the diverse and varied communities that make up the city we call home. As President Leebron states, our connection with the outer community has “produced hundreds of mutually beneficial collaborations that have greatly enriched civic and academic life.”

Rice University’s outreach efforts directly or indirectly affect approximately 7,000 K–12 teachers and 100,000 students. Rice understands its institutional role and impact as an important member of the community, and equally as important, Rice realizes the need to better articulate what it is doing to enrich greater Houston.

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From 2001 to 2006, the Asian Studies Program at Rice University has conducted six East Asia Institutes for Houston-area secondary teachers who seek to bring a knowledge and understanding of Asia into their classrooms. So far, these institutes have provided a total of 150 teachers with concepts, content, texts, visual images, and other curricular materials that have allowed them not only to integrate substantial East Asian content into their own courses, but also to continue learning about East Asia independently. In addition, a number of these teachers have been able to assist their fellow teachers in incorporating East Asian content into the curriculum of their respective schools.

The most distinctive feature of the East Asia Institutes has been their explicit focus on “world-making”—that is, the way different complex ways that geography, history, and the forces of globalization have shaped the politics, economics, social life, and culture of East Asia—past and present.

In order to bring teachers into direct contact with the cultures they have been studying, the Asian Studies Program also has organized two expenses-paid three-week National Consortium for Teaching about Asia (NCTA) summer study tours to East Asia. Teachers must compete for a space on the tours, and each study tour has allowed 22 teachers to become even more familiar with the cultures they are studying.

This program was funded with generous financial support from the Freeman Foundation and valuable assistance from both NCTA and the Rice Center for Education.

For more information, visit www.asia.rice.edu/outreach.cfm.

—Richard J. Smith
Director
Asian and Global Outreach Center for Education
RICE UNIVERSITY OFFERS AP DIGITAL LIBRARY

Created to address a need for readily accessible science content for high school teachers and students of AP* and pre-AP* biology, chemistry, and physics, Rice University’s Susanne M. Glasscock School of Continuing Studies offers an online Advanced Placement Digital Library (APDL).

APDL is a collection of multimedia Internet resources that have been selected on the basis of their educational merit and suitability for classroom use. Each resource contains a review by a master AP teacher or college faculty member in their respective subject and a hyperlink to the resource on the Internet.

APDL was launched in October 2003 and now has more than 7,700 registered users. By selecting resources best suited to their learning interests and needs, teachers and students worldwide have used APDL to educate themselves about science concepts commonly taught in AP courses.

For users needing to find information on a specific topic not available in APDL, a personal research assistant service, accessible via email, also is available at no charge to AP and pre-AP science teachers and students. This assistant performs the research necessary to fulfill the request in less than three working days. The first request for the personal research assistant was made in September 2004 and has had approximately 250 users so far.

“Not only will the personal research assistant help teachers, but it also will help improve APDL by adding additional resources from which other teachers and students around the world can benefit,” says Siva Kumari, associate dean of Continuing Studies and director of the school’s teacher professional development programs.

APDL was funded by the National Science Foundation, and the personal research assistant was made possible through a renewed grant from the Micron Foundation to Rice University’s Susanne M. Glasscock School of Continuing Studies.

For more information about APDL, visit http://apdl.rice.edu.

—Kristal M. Scheffler
Marketing Specialist
Susanne M. Glasscock
School of Continuing Studies

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EL DÍA QUE ME QUIERAS (THE DAY YOU’LL LOVE ME)

“El día que me quieras, no habrá más que armonía,” croons 1930s tango star Carlos Gardel in El Día Que Me Quieras, a highly entertaining play by José Ignacio Cabrujas. The play, which centers around Gardel’s arrival in Caracas, Venezuela, and the visit he pays the Ancizar family that changes all of their lives, recently was performed at Hamman Hall by Gente de Teatro, an all-volunteer theater company. Both the cast and the audience come largely from outside the Rice community.

Marcela Salas, Rice senior lecturer of Spanish, has been directing the group’s plays in Houston for 11 years. Gente de Teatro’s mission is to present works by Latin American playwrights in Spanish. Salas hails from Buenos Aires, where a job as a director’s assistant made her realize her love for the theater. Though the demands of a full-time teaching load are rigorous, she continues her involvement in theater for “amor al arte,” or love of the art. “[Theater] is something that gives us a lot of pleasure,” she says. “All the plays we’ve done have something important to give to the community.” Salas believes there is still more room for Hispanic theater to develop, but she says, “We need much more support to reach out to the public with our work in terms of publicity and in terms of financing.”

A sense of esprit de corps exists among the actors, as well as an admiration for the work Salas does with theater. Ana Iviento Scuseria, who portrayed María Luisa Ancizar in the recent production, says, “Marcela has a special ability to put all the pieces of the puzzle together and make a scene. She’s very talented.” Claudia Soroka, who portrays Elvira Ancizar in the play, loves working with Salas and declares, “I wouldn’t change it for anything.”

The group takes pride in its work and its impact on the community. Salas says, “To see what happens with the community in a theater and to feel like part of that community, that is our prize.”

Gente de Teatro receives support from the Department of Hispanic Studies and the Center for the Study of Languages at Rice University, as well as from the Institute of Hispanic Culture and Casa Argentina de Houston.

For more information about Gente de Teatro, visit www.gentedeteatro.org/.

—Maria-Elisa Heg
Martel College Sophomore

*Translation: The day you’ll love me, there will be nothing but harmony.
SHEPHERD SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM REACHES OUT TO YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

Since 1998, Just for U Music Program (JUMP!) has been providing a stimulating introduction to classical music. JUMP! offers six concerts yearly at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music for school groups and senior citizens. Using the inreach concept, which is an outreach program conducted in-house, JUMP! offers fun, interactive, and informative classical music experiences in the intimate setting of Duncan Recital Hall.

“If even one or two children can be inspired to go to college, it’s worth it.”

In addition to the free concerts at the Shepherd School of Music, some school groups include a campus tour in their visit to Rice. For many, it is their first experience on a college campus. As one faculty member observed, “Who knows what dreams can come from these experiences? If even one or two children can be inspired to go to college, it’s worth it.” An Alief Independent School District teacher remarked, “This is the fifth time my fifth-grade classes have had the opportunity to visit your campus and attend the JUMP! series, and I am thrilled that the project continues. This is such a fine example of what field trips can be—a lasting, positive impression on our young people. As a teacher, I feel that this program has a great impact on the future of our students. It serves the music education aspect so beautifully, while also introducing our students to expanded possibilities. I have had several instances where my students have specifically cited this field trip as the reference point or tuning point for their aspirations in life.”

More information about JUMP! is available at www.rice.edu/jump.

—Janet Rarick
Artist Teacher/Wind Chamber Music
Shepherd School of Music

PROFESSIONAL MASTER’S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM BRINGS TOGETHER SCIENCE STUDENTS AND INDUSTRY

Thanks to a program from Rice University and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, students interested in science in the corporate setting can now opt for a professional science master’s (PSM) degree.

Rice’s program, which is in its fourth year, includes degree tracks in subsurface geoscience, nanoscale physics, and environmental analysis and decision making. The degrees are offered through a 21-month curriculum that requires both coursework and hands-on training in the form of an internship, which prepares students by providing management and communication exposure, in addition to educating them in science. Instead of a thesis, PSM students take required courses in management and team training, science policy and ethics, as well as a seminar series featuring faculty, student speakers, and speakers outside of Rice.

Internships must last at least three months, but six-month positions are strongly encouraged. Most students complete their internships in Houston with companies like Groundwater Services Inc., Trinity Consultants, CDM Environmental, Argent Consulting, Total E&P USA, and others. However, students also have found positions in other states. The program actively solicits corporate involvement and offers many opportunities for industry engagement, such as supporting corporate employees to attend Rice’s professional master’s program, collaborating with students through case studies, becoming mentors for our students, becoming a regular internship provider for our students, and establishing corporate scholarships to support students. Such corporate involvement is crucial to the continued success of the program and is extraordinarily beneficial to the corporations themselves. As Walt Lynn, chief operating officer of Lynn Co., states, “The Rice PSM program provides a win–win for industry participants and the student interns. Our experience with two interns from the Subsurface Geoscience Program during 2005 was nothing short of excellent. Both students had the basic education, a keen interest, and great work attitudes to quickly pick up the additional skills and concepts to provide significant contributions to a very sophisticated and complex commercial geophysical analysis.”

For more information on the program, visit www.profms.rice.edu.

—Dagmar Beck
Program Administrator
Professional Master’s Program
NANOKIDS PROJECT EXPANDS SCOPE TO HISPANIC COMMUNITY

The NanoKids Project is in its fifth year of developing instructional materials to introduce nanoscale science and engineering to students in grades 6–12, their teachers, parents, and caregivers.

As an outgrowth of this project, it was determined that a serious outreach to the Hispanic community is necessary to meet the needs of this burgeoning population. The purpose of this effort, called NanoKids Project Hispanic Outreach, is to develop a statewide network of advocates and sponsors to arrange and promote interactive workshops to inform laypeople in Hispanic communities about the future impact of nanoscale science and technology.

Previous research indicates that the support of the family is critical in enabling Hispanic students to pursue higher education. What’s more, the emerging technical workforce will need greater knowledge and skills than previously required. These workshop presentations will help the community to understand what nanotechnology is and enable the community to define its roles in developing and using the technology.

The presentations use bilingual instructional materials developed especially for this audience. The goal is to level the playing field for Hispanic children by making adult family members aware of the potential opportunities in the science and engineering workforce. The first workshop was held in late March in San Angelo, Texas.

The goal is to level the playing field for Hispanic children by making adult family members aware of the potential opportunities in the science and engineering workforce.

The project will run for three years, expanding in breadth and content each year. It also will serve as a model and viable self-sustaining network for disseminating other important information to the Hispanic community.

The NanoKids Project Hispanic Outreach is expected to affect tens of thousands of people. At the end of the three years, the materials will continue to be available to the network and offered to Hispanic communities throughout the nation and its territories.

The NanoKids project is funded in part by the National Science Foundation through the Center for Biological Environmental Nanotechnology and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration through the Texas Institute for Bio/Nano Materials and Structures for Aerospace Vehicles. Halliburton Foundation provided additional funding for this outreach.

For more information, visit http://cohesion.rice.edu/naturalsciences/nanokids/mission.cfm?doc_id=8402.

—Suzanne Lamminen
Project Development
Department of Chemistry
Rice University

LEADERSHIP RICE COLLABORATES WITH TEXANS KICKER

In 2005, a group of eight Leadership Rice students collaborated with Houston Texans kicker Kris Brown and Texas Children’s Hospital to create the Kris Brown Kick Club Youth Leadership Program. The parties were united under the common goal of establishing a program for local high school students to teach and promote leadership development, as well as to benefit Texas Children’s Hospital.

Kris Brown’s Kick Club raises thousands of dollars a year for charity care programs at the hospital. The addition of a leadership component creates another avenue for people to help deserving children and families. The Youth Leadership Program provides an opportunity for Houston-area high school students to experience and gain knowledge of leadership skills while increasing community awareness and funds for the Texas Children’s Hospital charity care program. Six Leadership Rice certificate students designed the initial concept of the program and serve as mentors for the high school teams. They meet with the high school students and implement leadership practices and group-interaction techniques. Currently, four Houston high schools—Bellaire, Episcopal, Memorial, and Reagan—are participating in the inaugural year of the Youth Leadership Program. Each school is responsible for creating and sustaining a group project that will raise money and awareness for the hospital.

Upon completion of the 2005–2006 projects, all of the schools will come together for a Leadership Day celebration and share their projects with the other participants of the program. Leadership Day also will include special guest speakers and the presentation of four scholarships to exemplary program participants. The Youth Leadership Program expects to extend its community reach over the next two to three years with the goal of producing effective leaders while putting smiles on the faces of children in the Texas Children’s Hospital charity care program.

Houston Endowment, Inc. and The Virginia and LE Simmons Foundation have generously underwritten the Kris Brown’s Kick Club Youth Leadership Program.

—Jennifer Murray
Interim Director
Leadership Rice
SUCCESS TAKES MORE THAN VALUES

Despite our best efforts to integrate, the city’s neighborhoods are still divided by race and wealth lines, said Rice sociology professor Michael Emerson.

In his lecture “Succeeding in Life: Personal Values and Social Structures,” Emerson analyzed the causes and effects of the divide.

“Values matter, but they aren’t the only thing that matters,” explained Emerson.

Emerson spoke at the Community Dialogue Luncheon sponsored by the Office of Minority Community Affairs. The luncheon took place in the elegant Founder’s Room of Rice University on February 17. More than 20 community leaders attended the quarterly luncheon. They included academic, cultural, legal, religious, media, and political professionals from Houston.

The luncheons are designed to provide an informal gathering conducive to an engaging discussion and sharing of ideas. They also help to bring together people from various backgrounds.

In his lecture, Emerson presented a color-coded map showing the symmetry between white and rich versus minority and poor neighborhoods. He focused on the root of the split between the races, touching on opportunity, background, academic performance, and moral values. Emerson expressed his query in this equation: Equal Ability + Equal Opportunity + X = Unequal Outcome.

In his search to solve for X, Emerson asked: “Is it differences in academic characteristics and abilities? Differences in character? Differences in motivation and preparedness for work?”

Emerson continued, “Believe in yourself, work hard, and you shall receive.” One of the assumptions of this line of thinking is that we all have equal opportunity.” However, using the study referenced in Race and the Visible Hand by Deirdre Royster, Emerson theorized that the main difference between the groups and source of inequality is in social networks.

Playing on the old adage, Emerson stated, “It’s not who you know, but how you know them. It is sharing the right sort of bonds with the right people that influence what those people would be willing to do to assist you.”

Emerson used examples such as the way children are raised. He argued, “We don’t believe that if our children work hard enough in school, they will succeed. We get them into the right activities to get them into the best schools.” The fact that we ask, “Are our children around the right people?” according to Emerson, demonstrates the importance of social networks.

Although race-based networks do not seem exclusive or immoral and are not illegal, they do exist, and dialogue, it seems, is the first step to opening them, he explained.

For more information about the Office of Minority Community Affairs and upcoming events, visit www.staff.rice.edu/staff/home.asp.

—Lilia Fabry
Staff Assistant
Office of Minority Community Affairs

REAP–INTERNATIONAL TRAVELS GLOBE SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT RICE

In an effort to raise the university’s global visibility, international students are serving as unofficial ambassadors for Rice through the Rice Experiences Advertised to Prospects–International program (REAP–International). In just one month after its launch, 15 students visited 37 institutions (high schools, universities, colleges, and overseas advising centers) or spoke on television in their home countries during school vacations about studying in the United States and at Rice. Countries represented to date include Argentina, China, Colombia, India, Lebanon, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.

To participate in the program, students must log into the website and propose their visit sites and contacts, which must consist of a minimum of two institutions: a high school and either a university, college, or an overseas advising center. Then several steps and approvals are completed online between the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) and the student “ambassadors.” The OISS mirrors the Office of Admission’s “Holiday Visits Program” for REAP–International guidelines.

During their visits, students share their personal experiences of studying in the United States, as well as things specific to Rice University. Questions concerning admission to Rice are fielded to proper links on the Rice homepage. Audiences vary from a small classroom of 15 students to an auditorium of 800 faculty, staff, and students to unlimited viewers of a local television station.

Once their REAP–International visit is complete, the students return with a letter from the institutions, complete a short report, and receive a certificate of appreciation with a small honorarium. The feedback from the visiting institutions has been positive. For example, a department chair from a South Korean university wrote that the program “will be a bridge to connect us to your school from now on.”

More information about the program can be found at www.rgs.rice.edu/oiss/.

—Adria Baker
Director
Office of International Students and Scholars
RUSMP CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE MATHEMATICS EDUCATION COMMUNITY

The Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP) will celebrate 20 years of service to the education community with a two-day event on September 8–9, 2006, on the Rice University campus. The event will bring together about 500 teachers, administrators, and other members of the education community who have played major roles in defining and supporting the work of RUSMP.

RUSMP was established in 1987 with a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to provide a bridge between the Rice University mathematics research community and Houston-area mathematics teachers. The mission of RUSMP is to help teachers and administrators better understand the nature of mathematics, the effective teaching and assessing of mathematics, and the importance of mathematics in today’s society.

Since RUSMP’s inception, nearly 5,000 teachers have participated in its programs, and the program’s success is evidenced by its national and statewide awards and recognitions. In addition to the original NSF grant, RUSMP has received funding from two other NSF grants—most recently, a $3.8 million grant for the Rice University Mathematics Leadership Institute (MLI). The United States Department of Education Eisenhower and Teacher Quality Programs along with corporations, foundations, and school districts also provide funding for RUSMP programs.

RUSMP has developed an extensive array of programs and courses available to teachers and administrators. These include long-term, intensive, professional development for teachers; daylong workshops; and opportunities for networking across schools and districts. In addition, RUSMP has undertaken several collaborative projects with districts, schools, and other community members in the Houston area, as well as with programs statewide and nationally. These programs and activities are anchored by a common curriculum and approach to instruction that gives coherence to the diversity of RUSMP’s outreach efforts.

For a more detailed look at RUSMP’s work, visit the RUSMP website at www.rusmp.rice.edu.

—Anne Papakonstantinou
Director
Rice University School Mathematics Project

Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP) Calendar of Events

**June 5–29, 2006**
20th Annual RUSMP Summer Campus Program
*Pin Oak Middle School*

**June 5–29, 2006**
Rice NSF Mathematics Leadership Institute (MLI) Summer Leadership Institute
*Pin Oak Middle School*

**June 12–14, 2006**
RUSMP/HISD Career and Technology Education Measurement Course
*Pin Oak Middle School*

**June 21, 2006**
RUSMP and MLI Administrator’s Day

**June 26–30, 2006**
RUSMP/The Math Forum
Math Tools Workshop
*Pin Oak Middle School*

**July 21, 2006**
Conference for the Advancement of Mathematics Teaching Reception for RUSMP and MLI Participants
*Four Seasons Hotel*

**September 8–9, 2006**
Celebrating 20 Years of Service to the Mathematics Education Community: RUSMP
*Duncan Hall, Rice University*

The seventh annual Powwow, organized by the Native American Student Organization, attracted hundreds of performers, dancers, vendors, and craftsmen to the Rice campus. The event was open to the public and provided a glimpse into the traditions of Native Americans. Powwow is held every year in April.

*Photo by computer science student Deian Tabokov*

“Rice at Large”
Continued from page 1

including its neighborhoods and schools. To that end, the Educational Outreach website, supported by the Office of the Associate Provost, is designed to give visibility in one location to all existing outreach programs. It is categorized by target area at www.rice.edu/outreach.

These programs are the result of dedication, passion, and a call to civic duty and responsibility of our faculty, staff, and students. We hope that the stories presented in this new publication, *Rice at Large*, will help inform the greater public about the many collaborations, outreach initiatives, and exciting programs that take place at Rice every day of the year.

—Roland B. Smith, Jr., EdD
Associate Provost
Rice University
These were some of the first words spoken to me during my 2005 summer mentorship at the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) in Washington, D.C.

John Hatch, my mentor and founder of FINCA, transforms big dreams into big realities. In 1984, he outlined a financial model that enables the world’s poor to help themselves out of poverty. By confronting risk head-on, John proposed a system of lending to poor women, most with families and living on less than $1 a day. Many women had held no previous employment, and most were unable to generate income to support their families. John believed the poor lacked neither ambition nor skill, simply resources. Now FINCA lends such women about $100 each, providing a mechanism for millions of them to bring themselves out of poverty. John’s Poverty Museum is ambitious, but he and FINCA have faced risk, overcome discouraging obstacles, and flourished.

Before arriving at FINCA, I welcomed classroom lectures about vision, but I always bounded them with realism. Risk plagued me in making decisions, and the possibility of failure constantly made me hesitate. My ambitions often succumbed to imaginary obstacles that I constructed in my mind. I was enamored of big dreams, but my fears inhibited my ability to craft lofty goals and my willingness to pursue them. After my time with John, I am a changed man.

My time with FINCA has encouraged me to pursue nonprofit career opportunities in microfinance that will allow me to continue some of the work I began during the summer mentorship.

While before I might have shied away from pursuing a career outside of a large commercial corporation, I now can see that nonprofit agencies yield equally satisfying rewards. The opportunity to end poverty entices me, despite the risk of change, methodological uncertainty, and even failure.

I know from personal experience that fear of failure impedes more visions than it should. John’s ability to transform ambitious dreams into plausible visions proves that risks can be confronted to create brilliant possibilities for our future. My new motto is this: May my own visions be inspired by dreams, rich in ambition, and bounded by nothing.

—Mark Thomas Wanek
Leadership Rice Student
Hanszen College Senior

“When I’m an old man, I’m going to take my grandchildren to the Poverty Museum. In the next two decades, we’re going to make poverty a thing of the past.”