

FELLOWSHIP UPDATES

Please encourage your sophomores and juniors to consider an application for a [Goldwater Fellowship](#) (internal deadline, 12/4/13). Smith College may nominate four students.

The Goldwater is an opportunity for STEM majors with high academic achievement, significant research experience, and plans for graduate study and a career in research. Applicants must be US citizens, US nationals, or US permanent residents.

Thanks to all the faculty mentors, letter writers, and mock interview panelists who help Smith students compete for prestigious national and international awards and superlative opportunities!

FROM THE CLARK SCIENCE CENTER DIRECTORS' OFFICE

November 2013

THE SCIENCES AT SMITH: VISION FOR THE FUTURE 2015

In early November, on behalf of this and last year's Science Planning Committees, I shared a draft of our white paper, *The Sciences at Smith: Vision for the Future 2015*. The purpose of this paper, created in anticipation of President McCartney's inaugural year, was to represent the richness and complexity of the current status of the sciences at Smith in a brief report. In it, we assess three broad categories: the curriculum; facilities and equipment; and student opportunities for research and teaching.

In mid-November, Science Planning hosted a series of open meetings in order to gather responses to the paper from the science community. Over 30 staff and faculty members attended one of these meetings. Our conversations were lively and wide-ranging, generating a variety of suggestions for the *Vision* document as well as our future work together. My colleagues wanted the paper to emphasize how our approach to science education fits well with the mission of the college as well as the four directions President McCartney highlighted in her inaugural address. Moreover, many staff and faculty members wanted to highlight the collaborations of Division III faculty, staff, and centers with others outside of the sciences. Committed to educating the next generation of female scientists, my colleagues were also clear in embracing our place at a liberal arts college where we do not want to miss opportunities for fostering scientific literacy beyond our majors or collaborating with our colleagues across

campus and the Valley. Based on these conversations, I will polish the *Vision* document and forward it first to the science community and then beyond. Thanks to all who attended.

One thing was clear from our conversations: this is an exciting time in Division III. Increasing numbers of women are attracted to the sciences here at Smith during a time when leaders in politics, education, and academia are calling for better gender representation across the STEM fields. The sciences at Smith have so much to offer but there is much that remains to be done. Perhaps the most essential part of the white paper is the series of action items it articulates. These provide a roadmap for the work of Science Planning Committee as well as my agenda as your Faculty Director. Some of that work is already underway (see below). There will be plenty of opportunity for further lively conversations. I look forward to them.

Patty DiBartolo, Faculty Director of the Sciences



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Nate Derr, Patty DiBartolo, Gary Felder, Mary Harrington, Bob Newton, Stan Scordilis, Cristina Suarez. One of the first projects about which I will consult the committee is an inventory of current holdings of Science Center major equipment.

Margaret Lamb, Administrative Director

SUMMER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

In the summer of 2013, a record-breaking number of Summer Undergraduate Research Fellows (almost 170) collaborated with 57 faculty members in the sciences to conduct a substantive research project. Given the success of the SURF program, it appears time to engage in careful study that articulates our collective goals for the program, its student outcomes, the costs and benefits to participating faculty, and creative and long-term funding solutions (especially since HHMI SURF funding will end in the near future).

Science Planning has begun this work. At November's meeting, we discussed the shape of our 2013 program as well as the 2014 application process. In December, we will examine the considerable data gathered by Institutional Research on SURF's student outcomes. This fall, we are also working with Development to examine sources of sustainable funding and are hoping to launch an on-line application process. Look for updates on our ongoing work in this newsletter.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

December 4th 2013
December 13th 2013
February 17th 2014

Internal deadline for Goldwater Scholarship (see Margaret's email dated 10/7/13)
Annual Science Center holiday/end of semester party, 3-5:30 pm, Ford Seasons Room
Application deadline for SURF Program (full details available online 12/2/13)

The Sciences at Smith: Vision for the Future 2015 articulates strengths and challenges in three broad categories: curriculum; student opportunities; and facilities and equipment.

EQUIPMENT

One of the strategic initiatives for the sciences for 2013-2014 is to evaluate and address the Clark Science Center's equipment needs. This project involves thinking about the types of equipment necessary to support our future science curriculum, hands-on student engagement in the classroom and lab, and research by students and faculty.

There is also an insistent need to keep the equipment that we currently use running and in good condition. This is how we serve current teaching and research requirements. Every dimension of equipment maintenance, repair, replacement, and new acquisition carries with it a financial puzzle. We cannot talk about equipment without talking about the sources and adequacy of funding.

A Science Center Equipment Committee, which I will chair, has been formed. The committee will help shape our long-term equipment policy and practices, as well as provide me with advice as I make day-to-day financial and operational decisions. Committee members are: