

## STRATEGIC BUDGET PRIORITIES

This winter, the Science Center Directors responded to a call from the Provost's Office to identify budget priorities tied to strategic planning. Together with Science Planning Committee and informed by our local strategic plan, *Vision for the Future 2015*, we identified four broad areas that would benefit from future investments:

- ❖ Responsible fiscal stewardship of our scientific equipment assets
- ❖ Investment in SURF support
- ❖ Funding for course-based research pedagogies
- ❖ Administrative services support

We have some very good news to report! In response to science faculty concerns about the loss of HHMI funding, **President McCartney and the Provost's Office are pleased to announce a \$100,000 addition to the SURF operating budget.** In 2017, \$90,000 will go towards student stipends and \$10,000 will be used for research supplies. Look to future newsletters for details re: this new supplies fund!



# FROM THE CLARK SCIENCE CENTER DIRECTORS' OFFICE

January/February 2016

## The Critical Role of Role Models



*Inside Higher Ed* announced an unusual collaboration as part of National Engineers Week. The website Funny or Die teamed with the National Academy of Engineering and the University of Southern California Viterbi School of Engineering to create a video wondering, [What if we covered engineers like celebrities?](#) The video features diverse engineers working on a range of contemporary issues, from cybersecurity to driverless cars, while paparazzi shout questions and a breathless fan asks to take a selfie with her (engineering) idol. With its humorous bent, the video is trying to change public perceptions of the relevance of engineering to society while expanding notions of who belongs in the field.

Efforts to improve the diversity of media and other representations of scientists, mathematicians, and engineers are gaining momentum. These efforts go beyond STEM. In *The Washington Post* this week, Smith's own Kim Yi Dionne and seven female colleagues published an op-ed piece called [Here is a list of smart women political scientists. They know stuff, too.](#) In it, they note research finding female underrepresentation in [scholarly citations](#) in their field. The same problems abound in STEM. [One 2013 Nature paper](#) found global gender disparities using bibliometric analyses of citation rates for women versus men in prominent authorship positions (sole, first, or last).

Smith's [strategic plan in the sciences](#) imagines a future where "our graduates will change the face of science." To make that happen, we must take seriously the importance of providing visible, successful, and inspiring role models for our students. And we do. At a raucous Rally Day ceremony, President McCartney announced that Megan Smith, the United States Chief Technology Officer for the Obama White House, will be this year's [commencement](#) speaker and local astronaut, Stephanie Wilson, will receive an honorary degree. Later this spring, Smith will [welcome Dr. Maria Klawe](#), President of Harvey Mudd College and a fierce champion of women in STEM.

To create the next generation of role models, we must also invest in our own students' learning and leadership. As such, we are delighted to announce good news about SURF (see sidebar). We will also continue talking about our Smith College Science Collaborators or (SC)<sup>2</sup> grant to HHMI (see next page).

We do not need celebrity. But we do need more just treatment and representation for diverse STEM workers and academics now and into the future. Solutions to today's global challenges depends on *all* this talent.

--Patty DiBartolo

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## CLARK SCIENCE CENTER FACULTY DIRECTOR, 2017-2020

The Provost's Office in collaboration with Science Planning Committee is about to launch the search for our next Faculty Director, to succeed Patty DiBartolo when her term ends, June 2017. Both self- and colleague nominations for the position will be sought. Look for the formal announcement of the search's launch in the next couple of weeks. In the meanwhile, Margaret Lamb can answer your questions about the search and Patty DiBartolo would be happy to provide detail about the position itself.

### More on Curricular Innovation



Throughout the fall, the Sherrerd Center sponsored a Teaching Circle once a month on *Building capacity for fostering student learning and persistence in the sciences*. These conversations informed our HHMI grant submission, proposing the development of the Smith College Science Collaborators or (SC)<sup>2</sup>, using two interlocking and empirically-informed interventions (course-based research experiences and student learning assistants) aimed to achieve inclusion of diverse women in sciences. As we wait to hear back from HHMI about the status of our pre-proposal this May, we will continue conversations focused on this topic this semester. The first meeting is listed down in the Announcements section below.

We hope these conversations will help: 1)-to catalogue where we are doing inquiry-based work with students as our partner in our curriculum currently; 2)-to articulate principles and models of success for these kinds of innovations; and 3)-to discuss what kinds of faculty development opportunities could foster more pilots consistent with our pre-proposal, given a plan to offer a sustained workshop for faculty on this topic over the summer. So please come grab lunch and share your ideas!

#### A New Look!

Over the January break, contractors were hard at work creating a new suite of administrative offices in Burton. The administrative team previously scattered across McConnell and Burton is now in one place—Burton 115. You can find the Directors (Patty DiBartolo & Margaret Lamb) as well as the following administrative assistant team members in this new space: Amy Avard, Donna Kortes, Kristin Morse, and Heather McQueen.

Margaret's former office in McConnell (SR-214) is now a conference space, available for Science Center use (and appropriate for groups of 8 to 10). You can reserve this room through any member of the Science Center Administrative Assistant team.

#### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

February 26 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Teaching Circle, <i>Building capacity for fostering student learning and persistence in the sciences</i> , at noon in Seelye 207
February 26 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Deadline to apply for <i>Celebrating Collaborations</i>
March 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2016	Seventh Annual AEMES Scholars' Research Symposium, McConnell Auditorium, 4:30 pm
March 11 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Teaching Arts Lunch, <i>Experiments in transforming classrooms by engaging students as collaborators on big questions that matter</i> , Patty DiBartolo & Kevin Shea
April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2016	Teaching Arts Lunch, <i>A discussion of AEMES mentoring programs in the sciences</i> , Sara Pruss
April 12 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Presidential Colloquium with Dr. Maria Klawe, more detail to follow

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