
Biology Faculty, Drs. Cohen, Goellner, and Sharlin, and their undergraduate research students attended the Midbrains Conference at the University of St Thomas in St. Paul. Students from each lab presented posters that highlighted their undergraduate research projects. Midbrains is the annual undergraduate neuroscience conference which provides a forum for undergraduate students in the Midwest to present research findings, to attend research lectures and special panels, and to meet other undergraduate students interested in the neurosciences. Congratulations to Jaden Roddick from Dr. Cohen's lab who was awarded a Poster of Distinction. Only three total awards were presented to students.

Presentations

Fraley, P. and Ruhland, C.T. 2016. The effects of leaf optics on photodegradation of Artemisia tridentata litter sampled along an elevational gradient. 2016 Botanical Society of America’s annual meeting in Savannah, Georgia. (NSF DOE DE-FG36-08GO88156 ). Detailed findings as part of Dr. Ruhland’s National Science Foundation grant “Photodegradation in deserts: litter optical and structural considerations”
Sharlin, D. 2016. Adaptations to thyroid disrupting chemicals. 86th Annual Meeting of the American Thyroid Association, Denver, CO.

Cohen, R.E. 2016. The brain on steroids: How the brain and steroid hormones interact in a lizard species. Department of Biology Seminar, St. Catherine University, St. Paul, MN.

*Abdilahi, A., Day, A.B., and Cohen, R.E. 2016. Seasonal variations in the dorsolateral and medial cortex, the reptilian homologue of the hippocampus. Society for Neuroscience, San Diego, CA.


Publications

Steven D. Mercurio, professor of biology, recently published "Understanding Toxicology: A Biological Approach" through Jones and Bartlett Learning in Burlington, Mass. To accompany the book, Mercurio also produced lectures, a test bank in the book and an additional test bank with answers for instructors and an instructor's manual through Jones and Bartlett Learning on each chapter. Mercurio's book is described as a novel approach to toxicology and the first book aimed at undergraduate and graduate students alike.


Presentations


Minnesota State Mankato's **Department of Computer Information Science** was recognized with an Excellence in Curriculum Programming Award during a ceremony at a Minnesota State Academic and Student Affairs Leadership Conference on Thursday, Oct. 20. The Department of Computer Information Science was noted for being a frontrunner in its constantly advancing, dynamic field. Its program and majors were noted as being a leader within the Minnesota State system in terms of recruitment and employment of its graduates and more. The department's graduates have applied their knowledge and leadership skills while being hired for jobs in companies such as 3M, General Mills, Brown Printing, Thompson-Reuters, GMAC-RFC, Federated Insurance, and Securian.

**Christophe Veltsos**, associate professor in the department of computer information science, has been working for nearly six months with IBM’s Institute for Business Value to provide input into the design of a study, the analysis of the results and the write-up of the results. The study of "700 Computer Information Security Officials and other security professionals in 35 countries, representing 18 industries" sought to "better understand what security challenges organizations are facing, how they are addressing these challenges and how they view cognitive security solutions and their potential." A link to IBM's Cognitive Security landing page is [here](#).
During his sabbatical year, Christophe Veltsos wrote over 30 articles on cyber-security for IBM’s SecurityIntelligence blog. (Link https://securityintelligence.com/author/christophe-veltsos/) Chris also authored a white paper for a MN-based business, entitled "Maturity Assessment, Profile, and Plan - A MAPP to Clearer Information Security." Chris also co-founded and is Executive Board Member of the Minnesota Cyber Careers Consortium (MnC3), a partnership between industry and academia to develop Minnesota’s workforce in cybersecurity.

Dr. Rajeev Bukralia from Computer Information Science (CIS) department recently started a student club (Recognized Student Organization or RSO) in data science and data analytics. The club is called DREAM (Data Resources for Eager & Analytical Minds). More than 40 students have become members since its launch in November 2016. DREAM students will work collaboratively on data analytics projects (such as hackathons and competitions). In addition, guest lectures from industry and academic experts are being planned. IBM recently approved a request for free access to IBM Watson Analytics for students and faculty so DREAM students will be provided access to Watson Analytics.

**Opportunities**

A two-day SAS analytics training organized by the SAS instructors on our campus is scheduled for March 24-25, 2017. The training will be open to students, faculty, and staff. The registration information will be shared in February. For additional information, contact Dr. Rajeev Bukralia.

**Presentations**


**Publications**


Mohammed Diab was elected chief operating officer/president-elect of the Project Management Institute-Minnesota Chapter.

Mohammed Diab was accepted to Kiewet’s Faculty Scholar Program which gives faculty an opportunity to receive work experience to enrich their careers and transfer to the classroom. He spent summer 2016 working on the Highway 53 Relocation Project near Virginia, MN.

Three teams from the Construction Management Program competed in the Quiz Bowl Competition at the University of Minnesota. All teams performed professionally. One of the teams placed second, one point behind the first place team from the University of Minnesota.

Publications


The following students from the Integrated Engineering Department presented research at the 2016 National Conference on Undergraduate Research:

Cole Goodyear, Damaris Onchaba, Therez Ranta: "A Methodology for the Development of an Index of Cardiac Dyssynchrony."


Zhejian Wang, Sung Woo Choi: "Enhancing an Offline Transcriber for the Speech Recognition Virtual Kitchen (SRVK) Toolkit."

John Her: "Experimental Determination of Flow through Porous Filter Media."


Jacob Tilley, Billy White, Robert Mclean: "Development of an air quality sensor network to measure the dispersion of aircraft pollution near the Minneapolis-Saint Paul airport."

Presentations


Refereed Abstracts


Publications


Ka-Wah Wong was recently awarded research grants from NASA to study black hole accretion and interstellar medium of a starburst galaxy using the Chandra X-ray Observatory.

Presentations


Publications


Jessica Nelson and Le Sueur River Watershed Network partners are attending a series of Watershed Network Leaders Workshops to share stories with others watershed leaders working in Agricultural Watersheds across the Midwest.
Presentations


Grants

Citizen's Guide for Water Quality in the Minnesota River Basin. McKnight Grant partnering with Dovetail Partners. $15,000 (6/2016-6/2017)

Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework Mapbooks. Yellow Medicine River Watershed District Grant. $9,000 (11/2016 -12/2016)

Watonwan Terrain Analysis. GBERBA Grant. $49,885.50 (07/2016 – 12/2017)

Integrating Targeted Watershed Planning Tools with Citizen Involvement. LCCMR Grant. $169,000. (07/2016 - 06/2019)

Submissions for the Next Issue of “Good News”

Email achievements (conference presentations, grants, fellowships, publications, etc.) to Deb Spreng (deborah.spreng@mnsu.edu) to be included in the next issue of “Good News.”