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**Graduate Students Study Carrollton GreenBelt**

By Suresh Neupane

The much-vaunted GreenBelt trail connecting most of the communities, including the University of West Georgia in the city of Carrollton is half way through, thanks to Friends of Carrollton GreenBelt, which oversees the construction of the project.

Almost half of the 16 miles trail, which is the longest looping greenbelt in Georgia, has been completed, said Erica Studdard, an executive director of Friends of Carrollton GreenBelt. The whole project is expected to be completed by 2016.

According to recent studies, the GreenBelt, which passes through major city centers, is estimated to reach nearly half of the demographic in Carrollton bringing prospects of social as well as economic opportunities in the local communities.

In two separate research studies authored by Aron Hall and Kelsey Mucci Stephens at the Department of Sociology, University of West Georgia, it was found that the project has potential to radically alter the social and political landscape of the City of Carrollton. “Along Alabama Street, one of the main arteries that come off of the town center ‘Downtown’, one sees the clear distinctions between races and socioeconomic status,” Mr. Hall says, adding that the trail would essentially connect every neighborhoods and major thoroughfares of the city.

The GreenBelt, according to Mrs. Stephens’ study, passes by some “economically depressed” shopping centers such as the First Tuesday Mall shopping center where the trail has been “granted an easement, and the hope is that the foot traffic generated by the trail will rejuvenate dwindling businesses.”

The reports say that the GreenBelt Project has received $100,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund; $280,000 from the High Priority Project Funding; $300,000 from the State and Georgia DOT Transportation Enhancement Grant; and City of Carrollton Grant Matches equaling $250,000. Continued page 2
“What really got the ball rolling,” Hall quotes Studdard as saying, was the contribution of Laura Richards, who chairs the organization.

Mrs. Richards, who has previous experience leading a bicycle tour company, has promised a one million dollars fund for the completion of the project. In Jan 2012, Mrs. Richards spearheaded the first official Friends of the Carrollton GreenBelt meeting—bringing icon Ed McBrayer with PATH to the planning team. “PATH is the guide that took the concept plan and turned it into the master plan which was adopted in 2012, and in the spring of 2012 the implementation plan got underway,” said Mrs. Richards.

The communities in Carrollton are always striving for a bike-friendly environment. With the construction of the GreenBelt, Hall sees hopes that the trail would bridge “communities and people across races and classes---to the way the path is built through environmentally conscious means.” The GreenBelt is anticipated to bring children under 18, who make up nearly 24 percent of the population in the city, access to unstructured and semi-structured play, all of which will bring the child in direct contact with the natural world.

Besides the University of West Georgia, the trail connects major industry points including Southwire, North America’s leading manufacturer of wire and cable, and Tanner Health System, a gigantic medical complex housing a 201-bed hospital and a Cancer Center.

Southwire has already set aside acreage on its large campus in order for the trail to go right through, giving countless cyclist, joggers, and walkers access to its wooded area and lakes. Mrs. Richards praises supports that her organization received from communities about the project. “There has been lots of generosity of spirit and giving. Lots of people have wanted to help and get involved,” she was quoted in the report as saying.

To be open from dusk to dawn, the trail can also be used as an alternative to vehicular travel. With an increase in population and sedentary lifestyles, the GreenBelt provides an opportunity to integrate recreation with transportation, combatting several of the negative health trends impacting Carrollton, according to the organization’s website.
Sociology Students Study Abroad in Europe

By Chelsea Sutton

Attention all UWG undergraduates and graduates, there is an opportunity waiting for you here in our Social Science department that will make a lifetime impact on your education and experience as a collegiate! My name is Chelsea Sutton and I am speaking from firsthand experience on the amazing Study Abroad opportunities here at the University of West Georgia. This past May I found myself packing and finishing up my course work to travel to Europe for a 17 day adventure through 7 countries and countless cities. Not only did I get the chance to experience new and amazing cultures, food, drink and people, but I was also able to realize the potential for my degree in Sociology and the ability for me to further my education. Study Abroad opportunities are an excellent opportunity for students to travel the world in a short amount of time while relating the experience to education. This trip was a perfect option for a student like me to fulfill 6 credit hours of graduate requirements while learning useful and relevant information about the political and economic systems of the countries I was visiting. Our group had the pleasure of traveling with Dr. Mbaye who taught us how to conquer any subway system whether under the streets of London or in the deep tunnels of Paris and brought a level of appreciation to each student on our trip of our day to day experiences by having us keep a journal. Early mornings filled with bus and train rides provided a feeling of really living in these countries for a few short days as well as ample amounts of free time to wander and explore as adults in a foreign country. By far I would have to say Switzerland was my favorite stop of our journey as the people in the small town of our hotel and the awe inspiring scenery has left a permanent and unforgettable mark in my heart!

Help continue the tradition of high quality instruction, research, and service in the Department of Sociology by making a gift to the Department’s Foundation. These funds go to support students student activities, such as conferences and travel, and awards. We are grateful to all our alumni and friends for your generous support.

You can make a gift online by clicking here. Under “Gift Designation,” please choose “Other” and then specify “Sociology Department.”
Speakers Visit Social Work Class

Thanks to these and the many other speakers who contributed to the success of the class!

Dave Ayers, a former UWG instructor, visited to speak on Social Work in the prison system.

Dr. Kathleen Scott-Myhre of UWG spoke on her Social Work experiences with homeless youth in US and

Stephanie Love, of the GA Department of Juvenile Justice, discussed her work with juvenile justice and mental health.

Krystal Roberts, of Troup County DFACS discussed Social Work in PA and DFACS differences between GA & PA

Dr. Tara Quinn, a Carroll County School Social Worker, spoke on School Social work in GA and other states.
Internship Art!

By Mark Miller

I was blessed with an opportunity to do an internship at the Carrollton Club which is an independent senior living establishment. I was asked to help with an activity to do with some of the members and I decided to make Mosaic Trivets which are like hot plates. I know a local artist in the community and was blessed with their help with all the supplies I needed to do the project. The pictures are of me and some of the ladies grouting the trivets or as I called it playing in the mud.

Prague Summer Schools 2014

The Prague Summer Schools are seven-day academic programs designed to bring together undergraduate and graduate students of various nationalities and academic backgrounds to enjoy their summer holidays in the unique academic and cultural environment. The Prague’s Center for Public Policy is pleased to announce the forthcoming Prague Summer Schools on the following topics:

- European Summer Institute on the Future of Europe: Lobbying in Brussels
- Summer School on Crime, Law, and Psychology
- Summer School on European Politics: Interests versus Culture?
- Summer School on China: A World Power—Myth or Reality?
- Summer School on New Development Corporation: Breaking the Chains of Poverty
- Summer School on Education: The Future of School
- Summer School on Globalization: The End of Consumption As We Know It

When? 5-12 July 2014 Where? Summer Schools will take place in Prague, Czech Republic

We invite you to visit our website www.praguesummerschools.org to discover the details about the upcoming programs. The website will direct you to the individual page of each summer program containing information on academics, logistics, photos, alumni feedback, guidelines to application process, and online application.

We also encourage students to submit their applications to Prague Summer Schools 2014 by Early Bird Application Deadline of January 31, 2014. The Final Deadline is February 15, 2014.
Announcing the **Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)** program at The University of Alabama at Birmingham

*Using the Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Mathematics to Study Crime*

June 6 – July 25, 2014


This NSF summer program is designed for undergraduate students who want “hands-on” research experience and for those who are interested in pursuing post-graduate degrees in fields such as Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Criminal Justice, Forensic Science, Public Policy, and Sociology. The program is targeted to current undergraduate students with at least 60 hours of college credit. Twelve (12) students will be selected. Per NSF guidelines, only undergraduate students who are U.S. citizens, U.S. Nationals, or permanent residents of the United States will be eligible. Students who complete an undergraduate degree before June, 2014 will **not** be eligible. Students from underrepresented groups and from teaching-intensive universities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Students will have the opportunity to work closely with faculty from UAB’s Department of Justice Sciences and Department of Computer and Information Sciences. The REU faculty members are nationally recognized for their expertise in working with large data sets, data mining and manipulation, quantitative and qualitative data analysis, and DNA analysis. Students will conduct research in one of three core areas:

- **Criminal Justice**
- **Digital Forensics**
- **Forensic Science**

Students will work with a faculty mentor in their research track for 40 hours per week to complete one or more projects during the summer experience. In some cases students may work with a local criminal justice agency as part of their project. Each Friday during the program, students will attend a luncheon that includes presentations from local criminal justice professionals. Students will make a presentation of their research experience during the final luncheon. Students will also receive tours of several major criminal justice agencies in Alabama.

Students selected for the program will receive free lodging, food (up to $25 per day), and travel (up to $250) to UAB. Students will receive a stipend of $475 per week, which will be paid every two weeks according to UAB’s biweekly compensation plan. Students will enjoy access to UAB libraries, labs, dining facilities, and the Campus Recreation Center. Tours of the Birmingham area and special events are also planned.

The application is available on the program’s website at [http://www.cis.uab.edu/UABCrimeREU](http://www.cis.uab.edu/UABCrimeREU). **The submission deadline is February 14, 2014.** All materials must be submitted electronically. Please contact **Dr. Kent Kerley** at krkerley@uab.edu if you have questions.
The Face of Poverty At Home

By Paula Roddenberry

Poverty, homelessness, hunger…what do they look like in our nation? In our community? Images of the poor are too often presented in the form of statistics and percentages; almost intangible elements of our society rather than human beings. The people suffering from the effects of poverty are our neighbors, relatives, and friends. They are the elderly woman sitting next to us at church, the young mother working for minimum wage at a fast food restaurant, and the college student studying at the library. The face of poverty is varied and many and exists in our own backyards in astounding numbers.

As part of an off-campus class assignment for Professor Tiffany Parsons’ American Class System course, I had the pleasure of being introduced to two programs working to combat the devastating effects of poverty in the Carrollton community: Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church’s Manna House food pantry and Impact International, Inc.’s HOPE Center for the homeless. So many of us go about our daily lives without any consideration of the very real presence of poverty, hunger, and homelessness that exists in our very own community, but these programs are making a positive impact on the lives of those suffering. This experience put faces and names to the abstract concept of poverty and cemented it as a reality so close to our own homes. Seeing the men, women, and children lining up outside the food pantry and knowing that that food may be all they have to keep themselves and their children from going hungry had a sobering effect. In addition to regular food donations, Manna House also participates in several mobile programs that help deliver food to needy families. One such program, playfully termed The Lunchbox, operates out of a renovated school bus that functions like a mobile diner to deliver food to children at risk of hunger. This program is especially beneficial to children over summer breaks when their access to food is more unstable.

The HOPE Center for homeless men is another program that is run by Professor Parsons’ own non-profit organization, Impact International, Inc., which provides many services to assist homeless men in our community. This center offers support for homeless men who want help regaining control of their lives to enter back into mainstream society with job search assistance, interview skills training, daily living skills encouragement, lessons on financial responsibility, and much more. The HOPE Center can house twelve men at a time and boasts a 100% success rate for those that complete the program. Homelessness is often disguised and has compounding effects that make it extremely difficult for the homeless to overcome their obstacles, but the HOPE Center is making a difference. These programs are prime examples of sociology being applied on a local level.

Continued page 8
Center does indeed offer hope of success. These programs are prime examples of sociology being applied on a local level and represent the great need for more community involvement in these issues. With the upcoming holiday season, Manna House anticipates serving 700 to 900 local families and the HOPE Center often has a waiting list. Poverty has a face and is a daily reality for upwards of forty million Americans and for many in our own community. Professor Parsons’ non-profit organization Impact International, Inc. along with Mt. Pleasant Baptists Church’s Manna House food pantry are doing great work in the Carrollton and surrounding areas to help our neighbors, relatives, and friends combat the devastating effects of poverty. To get more information about the services they offer, or for information on volunteering or making donations, please contact tparsons@westga.edu.

Students observe at Manna House.

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**Dynamics of Water and Societal Systems**

**An Interdisciplinary Research Program at the Virginia Tech StREAM Lab**

2014 NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU)

Program Dates: June 2 – August 1, 2014

Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

**Application will be Reviewed Starting February 15th, 2014**

Applications are invited from qualified and motivated undergraduate students (rising sophomores, juniors and seniors) from all U.S. colleges/universities to participate in a novel, interdisciplinary, 9-week summer research program at Virginia Tech centered within the university’s STREAM Lab (http://www.bse.vt.edu/site/streamlab/). All REU fellows will serve within several interconnected group projects dealing with issues of water sustainability, ecosystem resilience, and environmental stewardship. As our REU fellows address their specific research questions, they will be mentored by interdisciplinary faculty groups, providing them with a rich and unique perspective on their specific target issues, as well as a more mature and holistic view of watershed management.

U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents are eligible to apply. Successful applicants may be current students in a number of relevant engineering, science, and social science undergraduate disciplines. The research program is funded through the National Science Foundation – Research Experiences for Undergraduates (NSF REU) program. The 9-week internship will begin on May 31st (arrival day) and end on August 2nd (departure day). The research internship includes a stipend of $4000, subsistence costs (dormitory and most of the meals) and round trip travel expenses (up to $500) per person to Virginia Tech. In addition, expenses will be covered for travel to a conference, most likely the American Ecological Engineering Society conference in Charleston, SC (June 9-11).

For links and more information: [www.bse.vt.edu/site/reu-streamlab/](http://www.bse.vt.edu/site/reu-streamlab/) or [https://www.facebook.com/StreamLabReu](https://www.facebook.com/StreamLabReu)

**Research Activities:** Although specific research questions will differ for each cohort of fellows, this REU will broadly focus on introducing students to the complex interactions between the natural Stroubles Creek watershed system and the upland anthropomorphic influences of the Blacksburg and Virginia Tech communities. Fellows will also be encouraged to develop critical thinking and communication skills through a series of “Society and Science” evening lectures and discussions designed to promote cross-disciplinary interactions and networking, and through the guided design of outreach activities intended to engage minority middle school students in summer science camps.

We will begin reviewing application submission on **February 15, 2014**. Successful applicants will be informed by March 1, 2014. Please contact **Dr. W. Cully Hession** (540-231-9480; chession@vt.edu) or **Dr. Leigh Anne Krometis** (540-231-4372; krometis@vt.edu) for more information or with any questions. [NSF-Engineering Education and
Senior Seminar Students Present Research
Congratulations to Our Graduates!

**Spring 2013**

**Bachelor of Science**

Deborah Denise Andrews  
Marta Maria Arroyo  
Tashnique Caroline Artrey  
Bethany Caitlin Austin  
Yasmine Lakaterica Bailey  
Kimberly Michelle Brown  
Tanyashae S. Chin  
Katherine Ann Conger  
Justin A. Davis  
James William Duke  
Shavonte Anjanique Ferrell  
Misty Dawn Finbar  
Tequila Herring  
Ian Duane Houston  
Sta’Nesha La’telle Johnson  
Sharrita Chantell Jones  
Geary E. King, Jr.  
Eboney Vanesha Munoz  
Lea Erica Perez  
Christopher Alphonso Richards  
Lourdes Marie Sanjurjo Lopez  
Nickesha Melisa Scarlett  
Kierra Rashaun Simmons  
Maile Nichole Stephenson  
Priscilla Rose Sutton  
Alexandra Camille Taylor

**Spring 2013 continued**

Hannah Ruth Wells  
Darrius D. Wilborn  
Daniel James Youssif

**Summer 2013**

**Bachelor of Science**

Bridgett E. Adams  
Chelsea Brooke Allen  
Sarah Louise Conklin  
Jennifer Sue Cunningham  
Ryan Andrew Decos  
Kenneth A. Douglas  
Ina Melissa Ledford  
Megan Brittany Lightcap  
Grace Bwanga Mbungu  
Elisa Erwin-Brown Royster  
Brittani Elizabeth Smith  
Laura Morgan Swinney  
Meck Xayavongsa  
Daniel James Youssif

**Summer 2013**

**Master of Arts**

Katie Nichole McIntyre Reece
Jennifer Beggs Weber, PhD

- Doctorate of Philosophy in Sociology University of Missouri – Columbia, May, 2013. “‘You Gotta Man Up and Take Care of It’: Masculinity, Responsibility, and Teen Fatherhood.”


- Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of West Georgia, 2013.

Pamela Hunt, PhD


Paul Luken, PhD


Neema Noori, PhD


- ‘Does Academic Freedom Globalize? The Diffusion of the American Model of Education, the Academy, and Academic Freedom.’ Paper presented at the 7th General Conference of the European Consortium for Political Research in Bordeaux, France. September 2013. Susanna Sierra from the University of West Georgia and Pia Anderson from the American University of Sharjah were co-authors.

- Outstanding Teaching Award: Neema Noori (Sociology) 2013, awarded by the College of Social Sciences.
Emily McKendry-Smith, PhD
- Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of West Georgia, 2013.

Tiffany Parsons, MA

Winston Tripp, PhD
- Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of West Georgia, 2013.