

Education

Participatory learning key to science

Corvallis--A university educator who decries the lack of scientific understanding among today's students--and has innovative approaches to address the problem--was named the 1996 Oregon Professor of the Year.

Jamine Trempy, an Oregon State University associate professor of microbiology who is spoken of as a mentor, inspiration, helper and friend, was honored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

A state such as Oregon that increasingly looks to high technology and other advanced professions for its economic future cannot tolerate students who lack basic understanding of scientific concepts, the ability to think independently and to collaborate in teams, Trempy says.

OSU, she said, not only allowed but encouraged her to do something about decades of science courses that provided stale lectures, abysmal student retention of knowledge and alienation of students not majoring in science.

The results have been impressive. Taking one particularly popular class from Trempy "turned out to be the most dramatic turning point in my academic career," said Scott Mogull, an OSU student who blended majors in psychology and microbiology.

Another student said Trempy's "presence is commanding enough to keep even the drowsiest student

awake, and she makes even the most difficult material easy to follow." A liberal studies major said, "I was scared to death to take an upper division science class, but Dr. Trempy made the material both approachable and fun."

"The conventional methods for teaching science to the non-science major, Trempy says, are essentially a failure."

Lynette Bennett, a sociology student, said "OSU students are fortunate to have a professor like her challenging the old systems and...break away from traditional teaching techniques. Janine encouraged us to think, and challenged us to reach beyond our personal expectations for learning."

The conventional methods for teaching science to the non-science major, Trempy says, are essentially a failure.

Only one adult out of 10 in the United States feels informed about science and technology, she said.

A vast majority of the nation's students decide against science as a major or career.

Those who do not take courses often retain very little information. Industry leaders are shocked and alarmed.

The problems, Trempy said, run from poorly-prepared K-12 teachers to college courses that alternately

bore, frighten or alienate students.

"If it was anything like my experience, general science classes in college were equated to long-winded lectures, intimidating tests and non-applicable lab experiments," Trempy said.

To address that, Trempy joined the OSU faculty in 1990 determined to create courses where students acted, rather than just listened. Where they worked together to solve real problems. Where they remembered what they learned. And where students ranging from philosophy to physical education worked together to share their expertise and learn directly from each other.

These ideas reached their ultimate fruition in one of the university's most popular courses, "The World According to Microbes." It was Trempy's brainchild and it's working wonders.

The course is taken by a broad spectrum of students from across the university, with academic advisers in several colleges helping to fashion a diverse student mix.

In the course, small groups of about four students each are required to solve a contemporary, real problem involving microbes.

A group, for instance, was recently assigned to recommend alternative ways to clean up the toxic waste left in mining processes.

They broke into separate roles as scientists, environmentalists, engineer and lawyer.

They gathered information from multiple sources, prepared reports and a video, considered political and legal angles, the economic costs of the issue, the public relations implications.

They created a plan, presented it to the class, defended their conclusions and their rationale.

In the process, one team member became so enthralled she decided to change majors from liberal arts to microbiology.

"When done properly, the students learn how to discriminate between fact and fiction," Trempy said. "They experience highly charged public debate relating to a controversial issue. And the barriers, the stereotypes that once separated science and non-science majors get broken down."

"In the past we have forgotten," she said, "that it is the process of acquiring knowledge, and not the knowledge itself, that empowers a person to learn. Students want to become experts and to share their expertise."

An active learning approach does that, she said, and it may hold the key to future jobs, an educated public and scientifically-literate citizens.

Head Start brings national speaker

Albina Head Start and Black United Front are hosting guest speaker Felton "Buddy" Johnson, award winning principal from the South Bronx. Thursday, October 17, 1996, 7:00pm at King Neighborhood Facility, 4815 NE 7th Ave. Child care provided.

He is a 27 year veteran teacher and administrator in the New York School

System. While there, Mr. Johnson introduced mastery learning and raised reading scores in a school that had been one of the worst in the city.

After 12 years of consistent successes, he was commended by the White House and his school was named one of the nation's exemplary

junior high schools.

In 1988 Mr. Johnson was asked to direct New York Working, a school-business partnership program that operates employment centers in high schools.

Labor Secretary Elizabeth Dole and New York Governor Mario Cuomo hailed this program as one of

the best in the country. Mr. Johnson is currently Vice President of Public Education Services at Sylvan Learning Systems.

This is the second workshop presentation in a series designed to help parents improve public education and their children's academic performance.

Nike representative featured at reception

Ron Williams, director of corporate diversity for Nike, Inc., will be the keynote speaker at a reception for African American high school students in Portland.

The reception, sponsored by the Linfield College Black Alumni Association, will be held Thursday, October 24, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Red Lion Lloyd Center.

The Linfield Black Alumni Association was organized by a group of Linfield alumni to provide role models and support to African American students attending Linfield. The program matches each African American student with Linfield alumni from similar backgrounds. It launched in 1990 as an effort to provide support for African American students at the

college. Members of the Mentorship group include Baruti Artharee, director of the Oregon Department of Housing and Community Services; Shirlee Peterson of Portland; Joe Simpson, vice principal of Grant High School; James Taylor, vice president for Albina Community Bank, and Mitch Whitehurst, integration specialist coordinator at Lincoln High

School.

Linfield representatives who will attend the reception include John Reed, dean of enrollment services; Holly Colbert, director of multicultural programs; Dave Hansen, dean of students; and several Linfield students and faculty members.

For more information, contact Holly Colbert, 434-2574.

Ventura Park launches school savings program

Starting Oct. 25, 1996, students at Ventura Park Elementary will begin saving for the future when they make the first deposit to their new Washington Mutual School Savings account. The school is teaming with Washington Mutual to offer the innovative program that teaches children the habit of saving and managing their money.

"It's important for children to learn how to manage money at and early

age," said Debra Barnum, Manager of Washington Mutual's 102nd & Halsey Financial Center, which established the new School Savings partnership with Ventura Park. "Washington Mutual's School Savings program helps children learn by using their own savings accounts."

During weekly "Bank Days," Ventura Park students will be able to open School Savings accounts with as little as 25 cents. Each week, the

students can make a deposit to their School Savings account, which have average balances of \$100. Parent volunteers serve as tellers, using Macintosh computers to track deposits and print receipts and helping children practice their math skills as they total their balances.

More than 25,000 children participate in School Savings at more than 200 schools throughout the West. There are no service fees for School

Savings accounts, which earn a competitive rate of interest and are FDIC-insured.

Established in 1923, School Savings is a program of Washington Mutual CAN! (Committed Active Neighbors), the company's community involvement program. Known as The Friend of the Family, Washington Mutual operates more than 300 offices in Oregon, Washington, Utah, Idaho and Montana.

Scholar of African American studies to speak at OSU

Gerald Early, a noted author, scholar and social critic, will deliver a lecture at Oregon State University on Thursday, October 17, entitled "Elvis Presley, Martin Luther King, and the Redemption of the South."

The free public lecture will begin at 7:30 p.m. in LaSells Stewart Center, 26th Street and Western Boulevard in Corvallis.

Early is the Merle Kling Professor of Modern Letters at Washington University in St. Louis, where he directs the African and Afro-Ameri-

can Studies Program and the American Culture Studies Program.

His writings compass a broad spectrum of topics, from prizefighting and baseball, to Motown and jazz, to love and fatherhood. Early has helped organize major conferences on race and science, and on musician Miles Davis. He has been featured on Ken Burns' PBS television series on baseball, and he has edited anthologies of African American writings.

"Professor Early has also become a major figure within that increasing-

ly prominent group of black intellectuals that includes Cornell West, Henry Louis Gates, Michael Eric Dyson, William Julius Wilson and others," said Michael Oriard, a professor in OSU's Department of English, which is sponsoring Early's appearance.

Early has written several books, including "The Culture of Bruising: Essays and Literature, prizefighting and Modern American Culture," which won the 1994 National Book Critics' Circle for Criticism.

Other Early books include "Tuxedo Junction: Essays on American Culture," "Daughters: On Family and Fatherhood," and "How the War in the Streets is Won: Poems on the Quest for Love and Faith."

Among his current projects, Early is writing essays on African Americans and Jews for Harper's magazine and for the Black-Jewish Relations Journal Project. He also is writing a book on "Fisk University and the Role of Black Higher Education."

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Black College Fair at Cascade Campus

17th annual Black College Fair will be held at Portland Community College, Cascade Campus Student Center, located at 705 N. Killingsworth Saturday, Oct. 26, 1996, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Registration begins at 8 a.m. cost is \$15 and includes lunch. For more information, please call 275-0664.

Conference Highlights include keynote speaker Robert Walls, President and CEO of the consortium foundation, Indianapolis, Indiana; computer workshop "Locating Black colleges on the Internet; Black college recruiters in spotlight sessions; networking and information sharing.

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Lewis & Clark College admissions counselor to visit area schools

Portland, Ore.--An admissions representative from Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Ore., will answer questions about Lewis & Clark and discuss admission opportunities. Warren will visit the following schools:

- * Jefferson High School, 5210 N. Kerby St., Portland, 9 a.m. For more information, contact Barbara Ward, (503) 916-5180.
- * Grant High School, 2245 N.E.

36th Ave., Portland, 10:30 a.m. For more information, contact Carl Solomon, (503) 916-5160.

* Benson Polytechnic High School, 546 N.E. 12th Ave., Portland, 11:51 a.m. For more information, contact Suzanne Berg, (503) 916-5100.

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