Faculty member named Outstanding Science Teacher Educator of the Year

By Feliza Casano

Dr. Rebecca Schneider, UT associate professor of curriculum and instruction, has been selected Outstanding Science Teacher Educator of the Year by the Association for Science Teacher Education (ASTE).

She received the award last month at the ASTE International Conference in Clearwater, Fla.

ASTE is a worldwide organization, more than 800 members strong, that promotes excellence in science teacher education.

“ASTE members are known across the country as leaders in science teacher education,” Schneider said. “Others in my field recognize this as an important award, and it’s very exciting. The organization is proud of this award and the people who receive it.”

Candidates must be nominated by an ASTE member and have letters of support from three additional colleagues before being scored on six criteria: competency in teaching, development of science teacher education programs, research activities, science curricula, leadership in science teacher education and external leadership experience.

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UT Alumni Association plans new Glass Bowl pavilion

By Sherry Stanfa-Stanley

The University of Toledo alumni are the heart and soul of the institution. The achievements of UT graduates have worldwide impact, from medicine to business to the arts and humanities.

Representing more than 115,000 graduates, the UT Alumni Association also serves as host for more than 200 events each year, both on campus and on the road.

The organization is seeking support to create the Alumni Pavilion, a unique place on Main Campus that will recognize the success of UT graduates while serving as an outdoor
include three ongoing projects at UT:

- The one-year Licensure and Alternative Master’s Program focuses on science teacher learning progressions and is supported by the Woodrow Wilson Ohio Teaching Fund;
- A graduate-level course sequence for new mentor science teachers concentrated on classroom-based teacher education and leadership; and
- A learning community of teachers, which is an online workspace for educator collaboration focused specifically on the needs of science teachers new to mentoring and e-learning used in the Licensure and Alternative Master’s Program.
UT Early Learning Center to hold open house Feb. 9

By Paul Webb

The UT Early Learning Center will hold an open house Thursday, Feb. 9, from 5 to 7 p.m.

“We want everyone to be able to see the awesome facility that we have to offer,” said Caryn Salts, director of the center. “And the center currently has spaces available for new families to enroll.”

The UT Early Learning Center is located at 1932 Birchwood Ave. near Health Science Campus and offers quality care, education and activities for children between the ages of 18 months and 5 years; an adventure program for school-aged children also is offered during the summer months.

The center has been in operation for more than 50 years and is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs; this is a rigorous voluntary process by which early childhood programs demonstrate that they meet national standards of excellence. The center is one of only seven child-care facilities in Toledo to achieve the accreditation, according to Salts.

“Our professional teaching staff hold associate and bachelor’s degrees and are trained in early childhood education,” she said. “And we have great staff longevity. We have teachers who have been here anywhere from 11 to 23 years.”

Visitors to the open house will be able to see what the center has to offer and its double-sized classrooms, full-sized gym and two outdoor playgrounds.

The center is convenient and a great resource for UT employees, Salts said, but it also is open to community members.

The center’s staff will be on hand during the open house to give tours.

For more information about the open house, call Salts at 419.530.6710.

Public meeting to detail designs for Ottawa River restoration project

By Vicki L. Kroll

Imagine crossing the bridges on Main Campus and seeing a vibrant Ottawa River — water rippling over rocks and flowing around locked logs, native plants and trees flourishing on the banks, ducks dipping to dine on insects.

Thanks to a $235,000 grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and a $111,000 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that vision of the President’s Commission on the River is moving toward reality.

A public meeting to unveil and discuss preliminary river restoration plans will take place Tuesday, Feb. 14, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Student Union Room 2591.

A team from the Buffalo District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will unveil concepts and field questions at 9:30 a.m.

“The idea is to use a variety of techniques that use natural materials — rock, tree trunks, wood material — to create changes in the river flow to enhance the aquatic habitat and provide increased shelter for fish and aquatic organisms,” said Dr. Patrick Lawrence, professor and chair of the Department of Geography and Planning, and chair of the President’s Commission on the River.

“Right now the river almost functions like a concrete drainage ditch; the water is flat, and there are no changes in the way it moves, no change in materials. Natural streams have much more diversity in terms of how water moves and have different materials in the river channels,” he explained.

Plans call for recreating nature in various ways in five sections of the river.

“Each section will have different types of structures appropriate for that location,” Lawrence said. “There’ll be a range of in-stream restoration features along the river, and signage will explain the work and why it’s there.”

In addition, this demonstration and education project will mean more fish and wildlife.

“We want to attract more fish and the critters fish eat, and improve the diversity of plants and other animals that call the river home,” Lawrence said. “Forty species of fish already have been identified in the Ottawa River, but we want to do much better and have an improved aquatic habitat for plants and animals.”

At 10:45 a.m. at the meeting, Lawrence and Matt Horvat of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, which is a subcontractor to help manage the restoration project, will discuss a plan for vegetation plantings along the river’s edge and banks.

Last May, some 120 test plantings started taking root along the river. The growth of these trees, shrubs, plants and vegetation is being monitored and will determine what would be best-suited to grow along Ottawa River to help improve habitat and decrease bank erosion. Additional plantings will go in next fall and in spring 2013 as part of the project.

The restoration plans will be finalized by April, Lawrence said, with improvements slated to begin this summer on the entire 3,700 feet of the waterway on campus.

“Our hope is to improve conditions on campus and to educate and inform the University and local communities about what can be done with urban streams,” he said.

Weather permitting, the meeting also will include a walking tour of the river to highlight the improvements planned.

For more information about the free, public meeting, contact Lawrence at 419.530.4128 or patrick.lawrence@utoledo.edu.
Abundant engagement opportunities identified in Higher Learning Commission’s Criterion 5

By Kim Goodin

If there’s been a common reaction among those involved with UT’s continuing accreditation process, it has been surprise at what they’ve learned.

Dr. Mojisola Tiamiyu is no exception. The associate professor of psychology echoed statements from colleagues who helped prepare UT’s self-study report: “I was very pleasantly surprised to learn of the variety, the diversity, the number of initiatives our institution offers as part of our mission to improve the human condition. There is so much happening at individual college levels. Our challenge was to narrow it down to the things we’re doing that meet the requirements of Criterion 5.”

The final criterion from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools focuses on engagement and service, specifying, “As called for by its mission, the institution serves them in ways both value.”

Tiamiyu said the addition of community members to the Criterion 5 team was valuable to its evaluation process. “We were looking into engagement and service to our greater community, so we thought it would be a good idea to have what could be called neutral participants from outside the University to give us a real taste of how they felt our institution interacts with our neighbors,” Tiamiyu said.

Internally, Tiamiyu said student engagement opportunities on Health Science and Main campuses are abundant, with more than 200 professional and social organizations available to students at all levels; hundreds of academic collaborations, internships and co-ops offered through each college; study abroad programs; and service through medical missions and programs, such as the Jefferson Awards for Community Service.

Athletic endeavors touch the lives of those on and off campus throughout the year. Athletics and Main campuses for budding athletes, intramural programs and various activities at the Student Recreation Center and the YMCA Morse Center.

Not surprisingly, Tiamiyu’s team found that with so many points of engagement occurring on a day-to-day basis, keeping track can be difficult. In the self-study report, the Criterion 5 team reinforces a proposal from UT’s Directions 2011 strategic plan that a clearinghouse office be established as a “user-friendly gateway for all University constituents, as well as a database of faculty expertise in community outreach and engagement.”

This office, the team noted, would be helpful for a number of purposes, including strategic planning, budgeting and curricular development.

A method of better gathering feedback also would be beneficial, Tiamiyu said.

“Our team also noted that, as part of collecting feedback from our various stakeholders, UT needs to establish a system to measure repeat business from our customers, whether they are students at various levels, alumni or donors, so we can sustain valuable partnerships.”

Additional Criterion 5 team members were Brad Corlett, Dr. Patricia Hogue, Dr. Lisa Kovach, Barbara Miner, Dr. Kelly Phillips, Dr. Brian Randolph, Dr. Kathleen Salyers, Sabina Elizondo-Serratos, Tina Skeldon Wozniak and Dr. Linda L. Smith.

UT’s self-study report can be viewed at utoledo.edu/accreditation/pdf/selfstudy.pdf. An executive summary is available at utoledo.edu/accreditation/pdf/execsummary.pdf.
Two UT employees are diving back into community theater.

Annette Blair and Charlene Hansen hope to make a splash in the Waterville Playshop’s production of “The Dixie Swim Club,” which will be performed Friday through Sunday, Feb. 10-12, at the Maumee Indoor Theatre, 601 Conant St.

Written by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten, the play is about five Southern women who met on their college swim team and remain friends, getting together each weekend each summer to catch up.

“It’s the story of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” said Hansen, administrative secretary in the Department of Chemistry. “The teammates meddle in each other’s lives. There’s lots of love, divorces, losses.”

And lots of laughs served with Southern hospitality.

“It’s a good story for what everyone goes through in life. One of the writers [Wooten] was a writer and producer for ‘The Golden Girls.’ The play has a ‘Steel Magnolias’ feel,” Hansen said.

“The play is a heart-warming comedy,” said Blair, supervisor of the Transplant Immunology Laboratory in the Department of Pathology at UT Medical Center. “It’s an absolutely delightful script. It’s a story about women, a story about friendship that we all share.”

Blair plays Sheree Hollinger, the spunky captain of the swim team.

“She’s kind of bossy, the leader of the group,” Blair said of her character. “Ask anyone who works for me and they’ll say, ‘Yeah, that’s Annette.’ I’m kind of loud myself. It’s a good fit.”

Hansen read for the role of Sheree, but co-directors Dee Resnick and Marty Beaber cast her as Lexie Richards, the pretty, pampered one.

“My character is a man magnet. She’s always going after men. She’s fun,” Hansen said. “She has her share of losses, several marriages, and always wants the best of everything.”

The play focuses on four of the friends’ reunions at the same cottage on North Carolina’s Outer Banks over 33 years.

“Growing old is never fun, but I try to make Lexie fun,” Hansen said. “During the play, the ladies will be 44, 49, 55 and 77.”

Makeup, wigs and accessories will help with the transformations.

“Our directors are working with us on changes in speech patterns and physical movements in the older characters,” Blair said.

Both women are returning to the stage after taking time off for family and work.

Blair’s last performance was with the Waterville Playshop in 1995.

“I really enjoy bringing a character to life,” she said. “I also really enjoyed my theater experience because I made so many wonderful friends.”

For Hansen, it was a 15-year break from the spotlight that ended last year when she played Ethel in the Waterville Playshop’s “Music Man.”

“I love the camaraderie of working on a production,” she said. “And it’s a great creative outlet. I can be somebody different.”

Starring in “The Dixie Swim Club” with Blair and Hansen are Dotty Dewulf as Dinah Grayson, Sara Ledzianowski as Vernadette Simms and Mary Wood as Jeri Neal McFeeley.

Curtain time is 8 p.m. for Friday and Saturday, and 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

Tickets — $10 for adults, $8 for students and seniors, and $5 for children 12 and younger — can be purchased at the Maumee Indoor Theatre or online at watervilleplayshop.org. Advance tickets can be purchased for $8 for adults from those outlets or any cast member. Theatergoers will be entered to win a Valentine’s special — $80 gift certificate to Fifi’s Restaurant, box of chocolates and champagne.

For more information on “The Dixie Swim Club” or the Waterville Playshop, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary, go to watervilleplayshop.org.

PIANO MAN: Dr. Peter Amstutz will visit the University this weekend as part of the Dorothy MacKenzie Price Piano Series. He will give a master class Saturday, Feb. 11, at 10 a.m. and perform a recital Sunday, Feb. 12, at 3 p.m. in the Center for Performing Arts Recital Hall. Amstutz, professor of piano and coordinator of keyboard studies at West Virginia University, will play selections by Liszt and Beethoven at the recital. The pianist who has received awards at numerous international piano competitions and was a Fulbright Scholar at the Vienna Academy of Music has presented concerts and master classes in the United States and around the world, most recently in Japan and China. For more information on the free, public events, go to www.utoledo.edu/cvpa/music.
University announces 2012 class for Varsity ‘T’ Hall of Fame

By Paul Helgren

Six former student-athletes and one former head coach will become members of The University of Toledo Varsity ‘T’ Hall of Fame Friday, Feb. 24, in Savage Arena. Social hour for the event will begin at 6 p.m. and dinner will follow at 7 p.m.

The Varsity ‘T’ Hall of Fame also will present the Distinguished Service Award to longtime supporters of UT Athletics Dr. Clinton Longenecker, UT professor of management, and posthumously to Dr. Alice Skeens, dean of the College of Languages, Literature and Social Sciences, and former faculty athletics representative, who passed away in November.

Tickets for the Varsity ‘T’ Hall of Fame induction dinner are $40 and can be purchased by calling the Athletic Development Office at 419.530.5347.

The 2012 Varsity ‘T’ Hall of Fame inductees are:

**Tia Davis, Women’s Basketball (1999-2003).** She was a three-year starter for the Rockets, earning first-team All-Mid-American Conference (MAC) honors as a senior in 2002-03. Davis, who ranks 16th all-time in scoring at UT with 1,099 points, missed the final 10 games of the 2002-03 season with a knee injury. She finished the year averaging 18.1 and 7.0 rebounds. As a sophomore, Davis averaged 9.9 points and 5.2 rebounds. She also helped lead UT to a MAC Tournament Championship, earning All-Tournament honors, and a trip to the NCAA Tournament that season. As a junior, Davis averaged 11.2 points and 5.0 rebounds.

**Bruce Gradkowski, Football (2001-2005).** He was the starting quarterback for the Rockets from 2003 to 2005 and set 27 school passing records. During his three years at the helm, Gradkowski led UT to a 26-11 record, a MAC Championship, two MAC West Division titles and two bowl games. Gradkowski is the Rockets’ career leader in passing yards (9,225), passing completions (766) and touchdown passes (92), just to name a few. As a sophomore in 2003, Gradkowski completed a school-record 71.2 percent of passes for 3,210 yards and a UT-record 29 TDs. Among the Rockets’ eight wins that season was a 35-31 victory over No. 9 Pittsburgh. In 2004, Gradkowski set the school record with 3,518 passing yards, completing 70.2 percent of his passes and throwing for 27 scores. He memorably played the second half of the 2004 MAC Championship Game with a broken throwing hand. Nevertheless, he threw three TDs in the final 30 minutes, leading the Rockets to a 35-27 comeback victory over Miami. In 2005, Gradkowski tied his own record with 29 TD throws and led UT to a 45-13 romp over UTEP in the GMAC Bowl. Since graduating from the UT College of Business in 2005, Gradkowski has played six seasons in the NFL for Tampa Bay, Cleveland, Oakland and Cincinnati.

**Jay Gast, Men’s Basketball (1981-1985).** He won four letters at UT. As a senior, he was team captain and led the Rockets in scoring (17.1 points per game) while shooting 52.0 percent from the field and 80.5 percent from the line. He also grabbed 4.6 rebounds and passed for 120 assists. As a junior, Gast averaged 12.4 points and shot 60.0 percent from the field (fifth-best mark in school history) and 83.5 percent from the line. He led the team in steals as a sophomore, junior and senior and is 14th on the all-time scoring list. He is a 21-year veteran of the Toledo Police Department and has been a detective for 17 years. In addition, Gast has been a color analyst for BCSN for two years, broadcasting UT men’s and women’s basketball and high school basketball games.

**Todd France, Football (1998-2001).** One of the greatest place-kickers in UT history, France was known for both his accuracy and distance on field goals. A three-time All-MAC kicker, France made 56 of 81 field goals and 152 of 154 extra points. He holds school records for longest field goal (55 yards vs. Western Michigan in 2001) and extra point percentage (98.7 percent), and is second in career field goals (59), career field goals attempted (84) and field goals in a season (18). He made five field goals in one game vs. Eastern Illinois in 2000, one shy of the school record. France made second-team All-MAC as a sophomore in 1999, making 18 of 26 field goals with a long of 51 yards. He earned first-team All-MAC honors as a junior, nailing 15 of 19 kicks and making all 49 extra points. As a senior, he earned honorable mention All-MAC, making 12 of 17 kicks and 44 of 45 extra points. France may go down in history as the player who converted one of the wildest plays ever pulled off by a Rocket — the famous “nerd up the middle” in which he scored a 16-yard TD on a fake field goal to put UT ahead in a 41-36 victory over Marshall in the 2001 MAC Championship Game. France also may have been one of the smartest players ever to don the midnight blue and gold. He was a two-time Academic All-American who graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering. Since his days ended at UT, France has played six seasons of professional football, including brief stints in the NFL with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Philadelphia Eagles.

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Nick Kaczur, Football (2001-2004). He was one of only two Rocket football players to ever make All-MAC four times (the other being Barry Church). A starter at left tackle in all 51 games of his four-year career, Kaczur made second-team All-MAC as a freshman in 2001, then earned first-team honors in 2002, 2003 and 2004. He played on MAC Championship teams in 2001 and 2004, and bowl teams in 2001, 2002 and 2004. Kaczur blocked for current NFL stars Chester Taylor (2001) and Gradkowski (2003 to 2004). In his senior season, Kaczur was a Lombardi Award candidate for the nation’s best lineman, linebacker or tight end, and an Outland Trophy candidate for the nation’s best interior lineman. He played in the 2005 East-West Shrine Game and the 2005 Hula Bowl. He was drafted in the third round of the 2005 NFL Draft by New England and played six seasons with the Patriots as a starting right tackle. He played in the 2008 Super Bowl with the Pats and was named to their All-Decade Team at right tackle. Kaczur earned his degree in recreation and leisure from UT in 2005.

DeSeana Williams, Women’s Volleyball (1990-1993). A three-time All-MAC selection, Williams is the only Rocket to ever be selected first-team All-MAC (1992). Voted MAC Freshman of the Year in 1990 (the only Rocket ever to receive this honor), Williams also earned a spot on the second-team All-MAC teams in 1991 and 1993. She was one of only three Rockets to earn a spot on the MAC All-Tournament Team. She is ranked second in school history in kills per game in a season (4.19), career kills per game (3.78) and career digs per game (3.63); third for career kills (1,491); and fifth in most kills in a season (411 in 1992) and digs in a season (3.74).

In memoriam

Virginia M. (Tucholski) Grell, Holland, a charter member of the Satellites Auxiliary, died Jan. 26 at age 94. She assisted with the Escapade International Program for many years.

David Lee Keil, Toledo, a member of the Satellites Auxiliary, died Jan. 26 at age 65. He helped the organization with a variety of office work.

Mitchell Liberman, San Ramon, Calif., a UT graduate who taught music at his alma mater, died Jan. 25 at age 96.
Saturday, Feb. 18 Noon

Rockets vs. Western Michigan

$3 group tickets with purchase of 15 or more!

Rockets for the Cure t-shirts on sale at the Rocket Shop for $15!
Proceeds benefit the Susan G. Komen for the Cure of Northwest Ohio.

See YOU at the GAME!

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