



VSU Connection

For the Faculty, Staff and Members of the Valdosta State University Community

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Schloss Named President of Valdosta State University

Dr. Patrick J. Schloss, president of Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota, was named the eighth president of Valdosta State University (VSU) by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG).

Schloss is expected to assume his new post in July. He replaces Dr. Ronald Zaccari, who retires on June 30, 2008 after six years as president.

Regent Elridge McMillan served as the chair of the Special Regents' Committee charged with interviewing presidential finalists submitted by the campus-based Presidential Search and Advisory Committee and making a recommendation to the chancellor and full Board of Regents for final approval. "Dr. Schloss has the right combination of leadership skills temperament and experience needed to take Valdosta State University to the next level," McMillan said. "He is the perfect fit for Valdosta State."

"We are enormously fortunate to have recruited Dr. Schloss as the next president of Valdosta State," said Dr. Susan Herbst, USG executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer. "He is a scholar of tremendous accomplishment, a bold and strategic academic administrator, and someone with the innovative ideas to strengthen all aspects of VSU. The future of VSU is bright, and Dr. Schloss is the person to lead the way,"

During his tenure as president of Northern State University, Schloss initiated a strategic planning process titled the "Margin of Excellence." The plan focused on three institutional priorities including recruitment, retention, and faculty scholarship. Over the first four years of the program, headcount



Dr. Patrick J. Schloss

enrollment increased 12 percent. Other "Margin of Excellence" accomplishments included a four percent increase in student retention, substantial growth in support for faculty scholarships, and creation of a budget process linking institutional objectives to campus resources. The latter achievement was cited by

the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) as being "worthy of emulation" by similar institutions. The Commission accredited Northern, with no further review, for the next ten years. U.S. News & World Report recently ranked Northern State as second among public undergraduate institutions in the Midwest.

Prior to arriving at Northern, Schloss served Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania in several capacities,

including acting president, provost and vice president for academic affairs, and assistant vice president and dean of Graduate Studies and Research. Schloss also served as director of the Office of Research in the College of Education and professor and chair of the Department of Special Education at the University of Missouri, and professor-in-charge of special education at The Pennsylvania State University.

Schloss has published over one hundred peer reviewed articles and ten books. His latest book is *Instructional Methods for Adolescents with Learning and Behavior Problems*. He has served as editor or consulting editor for a number of journals relating to issues and methods for supporting individuals with disabilities.

Schloss received his Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education from the University of Wisconsin (1979), a M.S. in Counseling from Illinois State University (1976), and a bachelor's degree in Special Education from Illinois State University (1974). ■

PSST! The Stage is a World of Entertainment



Each summer, a company of some 60 professional actor-singers, dancers and technicians blend their talents to assemble a nine-week rotating repertory of musical theater classics. The 2008 Peach State Summer Theater season presents "Singin' in the Rain," "Disney's Aladdin" and "Ragtime."

Check out the 2008 Peach State Summer Theater schedule and performance descriptions at www.valdosta.edu/psst/.

Sawyer Theater Box Office

For tickets, call (229) 257-7770

Open: Tues.– Sat. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sunday 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

A scene from the opening of "Singin' in the Rain."

IT Helpdesk-Distance Learning Partnership Recognized for Innovations

The University System of Georgia recognized Valdosta State University's Information Technology Helpdesk and VSU Distance Learning for their innovative use of WebCT Vista to meet campus training and professional development needs.

GeorgiaVIEW, the program that manages services associated with USG online information technology, featured VSU's online training programs in the "GeorgiaVIEW Accomplishments 2007" publication (which may be viewed at www.alt.usg.edu/gaview/).

In 2006, VSU Distance Learning and the IT Helpdesk collaborated to develop online training for student workers in the Information Technology Division at VSU. This highly successful training initiative was selected for presentation at the 2007 BbWorld conference for WebCT Vista and Blackboard users, as well as at state conferences and USG sponsored webinars. Jon Sizemore, assistant director of Public Services for VSU Distance Learning, said the online training program is particularly successful because it empowers student workers to not only receive online training, but to become active participants in the development of online training materials.

"Virtually 90 percent of all VSU students will login to WebCT Vista at some point



Standing (from left): Joe Newton, Eric Jackson, Beatriz Potter, Kathy Sundin, Allen DeVane. Seated (from left): Joe Sizemore and Benjamin Li.

during the semester. By involving the IT Helpdesk student workers in the active use of WebCT Vista for training and development, VSU is preparing these students to provide highly effective, experience-based technical support for all students, faculty and staff," Sizemore said.

IT Helpdesk Coordinator Benjamin Li said shifting the training from ad-hoc, one-on-one instruction scenarios to standardized, easy-to-use training modules has streamlined the training process and ensured that all employees receive key training and information.

"VSU has pioneered this process of online student worker training,

and we have expanded it to include many employee and organizational development training programs, like utility cart training," Li said. "Before, people would not be able to make training classes, and we could only hold sessions at certain times. Now people can take these training modules on their schedule."

The core development team for this effort consisted of Beatriz Potter and Eric Jackson in Distance Learning and Benjamin Li, IT Helpdesk Manager. Student Brandi Bolduc also made outstanding contribution to the development effort.

"This training program is a flexible, resilient and transmittable vehicle to promote the ongoing support of users of IT at VSU," said Joe Newton, Director of Information Technology at VSU. ■

GeorgiaVIEW provides USG institutions with an integrated academic enterprise solution: Blackboard Learning System – Vista Enterprise License. It supports both on-campus and off-campus learning experiences through a framework offering communication, resource access, testing and management that serves the learning and communication needs of faculty, students and administration.

Have Some Hurricane Hindsight

Let History be a Motivation to Prepare for the Future

Less than four years ago, Hurricane Katrina — the United State's costliest storm at \$82 billion in damages — consumed states along the Gulf of Mexico with its 150-mile-per-hour winds and crippling rains. This year the National Weather Service predicts the formation of 15 named storms and eight hurricanes, of which four could become major hurricanes of Category 3 strength or higher.

History has proven that residents of Southern states cannot cling to the "it

won't happen to me" mentality. Proactive measures must be taken to ensure you and your loved ones take necessary precautions to minimize risk in the event of a storm.

National Weather Service reports indicates that Brooks, Echols and Lowndes are among the 19 Georgia counties in particular risk of damage during the 2008 hurricane season, which lasts from June to November 30. Please review information on the links

to the left, and direct any questions or concerns about hurricane preparedness at VSU to the Office of Environmental & Occupational Safety, located on the first floor of Ashley Hall room 118 or at (229) 293-6171.

Everything you ever need to know about Hurricanes — prevention tips, sample family disaster plans, forecasts, etc. — is on the National Weather Service National Hurricane Center's Web site www.nhc.noaa.gov. ■

Review the recommended disaster supply kit:

www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/prepare/supply_kit

Follow instructions about how to prepare a family disaster plan:

www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/prepare/family_plan

VSU Hurricane Preparedness Information:

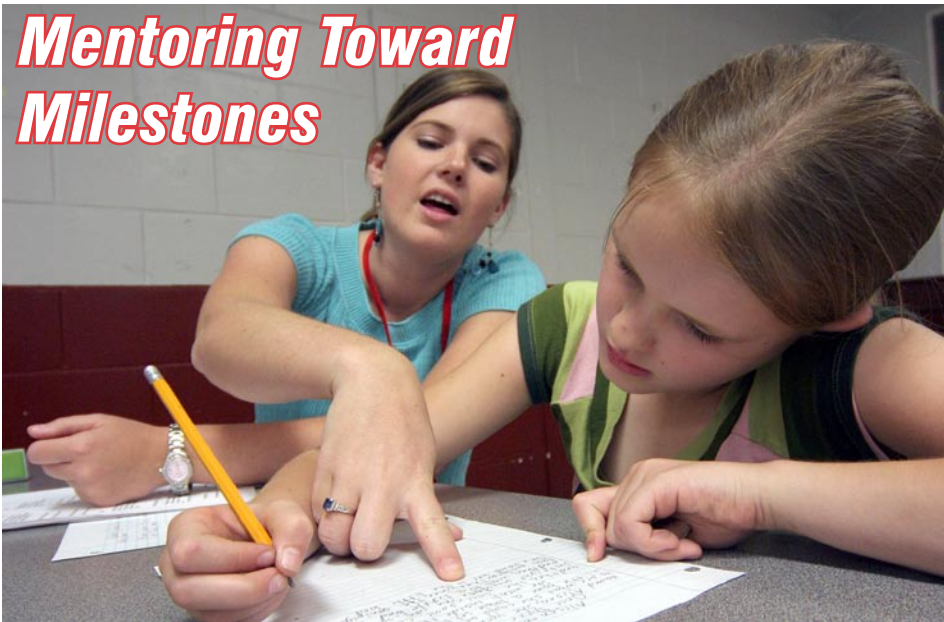
www.valdosta.edu/safety/HurricanePreparedness

Environmental/Occupational Safety Tips:

www.valdosta.edu/safety/SafetyTips



Mentoring Toward Milestones



Right: VSU senior education major Megan Evans, helps Leah Powell, a third grader at Parker Mathis Elementary School, with a writing assignment. Evans, along with fellow early education majors in VSU's Reading 4100, serves as a mentor to third graders. The partnership contributed to Powell and her classmates passing this year's reading and language arts standardized test.

VSU education majors guide third graders through reading and language arts.

Summer has officially begun and third graders at Parker Mathis Elementary are celebrating — and with good reason, the entire third grade class passed the reading portion of the Criterion-Reference Competency Test (CRCT). The students reached this milestone with assistance from Valdosta State University education majors, who mentored the third graders and provided support in the areas of reading and language arts.

The mentoring program has been in existence for several years at various elementary schools in the Valdosta area, and this year's program at Parker Mathis Elementary School was directed by Dr. Evan Ortlieb, assistant professor, Early Childhood and Special Education. More than 70 VSU students enrolled in Reading 4100, a senior level early education course, spent one-on-one mentoring time with the third graders. The program benefits both the elementary and college students through three main objectives that included developing reading and writing skills in an effort to increase levels of success, providing real-life teaching opportunities and practicum experience for students in VSU's teacher education program, and assisting classroom teachers in their quest to develop lifelong readers and learners.

The program provides an opportunity for college students to combine theory with practical field experience and engage in direct interaction with school-age children. College students provide a buddy-system that uses interactive methods such as guided reading and writing and vocabulary-based activities to improve literacy development.

"The partnership Parker Mathis has with Valdosta State University symbolizes the perfection of teamwork."

"It is quite rewarding to have VSU students and professors assist our students in the area of reading," said Creacy Sermons, principal of Parker Mathis Elementary School. "Our boys and girls look forward to each session and the opportunity to work with their VSU Study Buddy."

Scores from the CRCT are used by the Federal Government to determine if a school meets "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act. According to the Georgia Department of Education, the CRCT is designed to measure how well students acquire skills and knowledge outlined in the Georgia Performance Standards and Quality Core Curriculum and measure the knowledge and skills taught in Georgia's classrooms.

"This was the first time Parker Mathis has had 100 percent success and the only school in the district with all of its third graders passing the reading area on the CRCT," said Ortlieb. "We are all

so proud of both the collegiate tutors, classroom teachers and the hard-working third graders — they deserve to be recognized for their accomplishments."

In 2007, 91 percent of Parker Mathis third graders passed the reading portion of the CRCT and school officials credit a team concept for the 100 percent success this year.

"The partnership Parker Mathis has with Valdosta State University symbolizes the perfection of teamwork," said Dr. Steve Smith, Lowndes County School System Superintendent. "The university students served as excellent role models. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with VSU, and look forward to other opportunities in the future."

Educational collaborations have been a long-standing tradition between VSU and area public school systems. As one of the major teacher colleges within the University System of Georgia, the Dewar College of Education plays a leadership role in public education and serves as a resource for area classroom teachers, counselors, and other school leaders. ■



VSU senior education major Talarie Harris, helps third-grader Devon Holmes read "Akimbo and the Snake" by McCall Smith Alexander.

Barnett Honored for Commitment to Small Businesses

The Georgia Small Business Development Center Network recognized Suzanne Barnett as the 2007 Consultant of the Year for her efforts to reach out to and guide small businesses in the community. The Area Director and Business Consultant for the Valdosta State University Small Business Development Center will represent the Georgia SBDC Network at a national conference in September.



Suzanne Barnett

professor. She has served as a board member for the Lowndes/Valdosta Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Lowndes, a local leadership training initiative. In 1999, the Association of Small Business Development Centers recognized Barnett as a Star Performer. This national organization awarded the honor to only ten SBDC business consultants throughout the United States that

year. The Georgia Economic Developers Association also has honored her for her work in Lowndes County and the State of Georgia.

"I think what we do at the Valdosta SBDC is so important to the vitality of this region," said Barnett, who was given a plaque and cash prize for earning the coveted title. "The vast majority of the economic base of any community is its small business owners. They pay lots of taxes; they are our friends and neighbors. They are the core of our community. We at the SBDC provide them with the knowledge and resources needed to succeed in their endeavors."

As State Director Allan Adams presented the award, he spoke of

Barnett's dedication to serving small business clients in South Georgia.

"Suzanne has established the kind of reputation in the Valdosta area that we would like for all of our consultants to have," he said at the ceremony. "She is a critical player in local entrepreneurial efforts and activities."

In 1998, the SBDC became part of the Langdale College of Business and is housed in Thaxton Hall. The Valdosta SBDC is one of 18 locations that are part of the University of Georgia SBDC network. The Georgia SBDC Network provides low cost training and free consulting services including assistance with business plan development, market analysis and marketing strategies, financial analysis, compliance and legal issues, and preparation of loan submissions for individuals who want to start their own businesses or expand an existing one.

Since 1977, the SBDC program has worked with over 131,000 individuals helping develop business plans, providing financial analysis, identifying sources of capital, and assessing marketing strategies. In addition, over 360,000 participants have taken part in SBDC-sponsored training programs to help them improve their knowledge of issues ranging from taxes to personnel management to customer service. ■

VSU Alumni Win Area Business Plan Competition

Suzanne Barnett and the Valdosta State University SBDC were instrumental in aiding the 28 participants vying for the \$15,000 prize of the Guardian Bank Business Plan Competition. Partners and Valdosta State University Alumni, Baha Zeidan, Dan Henry and Douglas Swords were selected as the winners of the competition because of the innovative plans of their new company, Azalea Health Innovations, Inc., which provides Electronic Medical Records systems and support, professional medical billing services, and custom web applications for the healthcare community in South Georgia and North Florida.



Participants of the competition, which began in 2005, were challenged to create a business to address the professional needs of local students who obtain technical diplomas or college degrees. ■

Don't miss the feature article about Azalea Health Innovations, Inc. and its VSU alumni founders in the August Alumni VOICE magazine.

Interested in VSU Small Business Development Center resources?

www.valdosta.edu/sbdc/
Call: (229) 245-3738

Got some news to share?
Send it our way — news@valdosta.edu

VSUConnection

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The VSU Connection is a semimonthly newsletter designed to inform VSU personnel and students about the latest campus-wide news. Check out the Connection online at www.valdosta.edu/news/.

For more information about the Connection or to submit a story idea, e-mail Kate Heine, Communications Specialist, Communications Unit, at kaheine@valdosta.edu.