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NOTES
FROM THE
**KENDALL
CENTER**

Summer research collaborations: Engaging students outside the traditional classroom

by **Thomas Huber**

One of the hallmarks of a Gustavus education is close faculty-student interaction in classrooms, labs, and studios. On-campus summer internships allow Gustavus students to devote a significant amount of time with a faculty mentor pursuing a research, scholarship, or creative project. During the summer of 2012, more than 45 students were involved in on-campus projects with faculty.

The projects spanned a wide range of disciplines. As one example, a major grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) was used to support ten students in biology, chemistry, and physics. A special feature of this HHMI grant is to encourage an early research experience for students; seven of the recipients have just completed their first year, and the other three were continuing projects that they began the previous summer. Grants from the National Science Foundation and other agencies were used to sponsor additional faculty/student research collaborations in physics and chemistry.

There were other students who were supported by endowments that were established by alumni and friends of the College to facilitate student research. In particular, there were 12 excellent research teams that applied for Gustavus's Presidential Faculty-Student Collaboration Grants. This program requires a joint application by the faculty member and student that defines not only the research project, but also an explanation of how this project fits into the faculty member's and student's career goals. This year, funds were available to fully support four of these research projects, with partial funding for a fifth: Julie Bartley (geology) & Tara Selly '13, "Fossilization Trajectory (termed taphonomy) of Modern (living) Organisms"; Leila Brammer (communication studies) & Anna Morton '13, "Public Discourse Students"; Pamela Kittelson (biology) & Mike Howe '14, "Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystems"; Micah Maatman (theatre/



Photo by Matt Thomas '00

*Biology and environmental studies majors **Mike Howe '14** (left) and **Mary Patterson '14** (right) logged many hours last summer conducting research in the Coneflower Prairie with Professor **Pamela Kittelson** (center). Patterson's research project, an ecological assessment of the prairie, was funded through a grant the Environmental Studies program received in 2011 from the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation. Howe's research was funded through a Presidential Faculty-Student Collaboration Grant and was designed to complement Patterson's. His focus was on pollen limitation and plant demography—how many juveniles grow to become adults, and how their seed set compares to open pollinated flowers.*

dance) & Jessica Van Kempen '14, "The Design of a New Production in Physical Theatre for the Minnesota Fringe Festival 2012"; and Kristian Petersen (religion) & Claire Curran '12, "Contemporary Islamic Movements through the Media." (To learn more about these and other projects, see <https://gustavus.edu/kendallcenter/grant-opportunities/presidential-grant.php>.)

These types of faculty/student summer internships are among the many exciting ways that Gustavus professors engage students outside of the traditional

classroom. If you are interested in learning more about how you can support undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry, please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement, advancement@gustavus.edu or 1-800-726-6192. ■

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