College of the Sciences

Dr. Kirk Johnson received his Ph.D. and M.A. from Washington State University and his B.A. from University of Washington. He was chair of Central Washington University's department of Sociology from Fall 1997 through Spring 2007. He began part-time service as Associate Dean in Summer 2006. As of Fall 2007, Dr. Johnson will devote himself entirely to administration in the position of Dean. Dr. Johnson's research has focused on the testing and extension of social control theory, the social construction of deviance among adolescents, criminal victimization, and the social construction of law and criminal sanctions.

Dr. Dave Darda received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley and his B.S. from the University of Illinois. He has been a professor of Biological Sciences at CWU for the past 26 years. His primary areas of biological interest are vertebrate morphology, evolution, and herpetology. He has conducted fieldwork in California, Mexico, and the Pacific Northwest, and is a coauthor of the book, "Reptiles of Washington and Oregon". In 2002, Dr. Darda was honored as the CWU Distinguished University Professor of Teaching, and he has twice served as Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences.

Kari Anderson, College of the Sciences Development Officer

Kari received her BA in Communication from Pacific Lutheran University. While at PLU, she focused on public relations, sports administration, coaching and sports psychology. A chance work study appointment in PLU’s development department has turned into a career devoted to non-profit fundraising. Kari has spent her career in the development sector, leading staff, board members and volunteers, and loves to connect people with their passions, specifically connecting dollars to causes people hold dear.

ANTHROPOLOGY

How long has the department been active at CWU?
Since the late 1960’s. The first anthropologist hired was in Political Science, Dr. Clayton Denman. The first department chair was hired soon after, Dr. Marco Bicchieri.

How many faculty, staff, students reside in Anthropology?
We have 14 full-time tenure/tenure/track faculty and 2-3 adjunct faculty, one department administrator, Penny Anderson, one museum staff person, Lynn Bethke, and one NAGPRA specialist, Lourdes Henebry-DeLeon. The latter two also teach in our Museum Studies and Biological anthropology/archaeology curriculum, respectively.

What are the growth plans for your department?
We’re working on increasing our collaboration with high school and community colleges to make students aware of anthropology, because it is not taught in high school. If students can become aware of it earlier, then they can start their course work before they get here or as soon as they become CWU students.

If you were stopped in the airport by someone you don’t know and asked about CWU, what would you share?
You can get a stellar education in anthropology at CWU, small class sizes, taught by full-time faculty, with opportunities to do research with faculty as an undergraduate. Our facilities in anthropology are excellent.
WHAT ARE SOME LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS ABOUT THE ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT AT CWU?

She never sought public recognition.

All Ruth Harrington wanted to do when she started organizing luncheons to raise money for scholarships at CWU was build better relationships within the community while promoting a worthy cause.

Forty years later, she is regarded as an influential, albeit unassuming, force within the community she loves, and not just because of the scholarship luncheon program that has now raised nearly $900,000.

Donor Profile

January 2014 - CWU College of the Sciences

Ruth Harrington

Department Updates, Awards and Accolades

Professor Blaise Dondji – Biological Sciences, received M.J. Murdock funding ($89,000) and W.M. Keck funding ($250,000) to develop and implement research experiences for undergraduates using flow cytometry.

Professor Martha Kurtz – Science Education, attended a three-day professional development workshop on Building Capacity for Next Generation Science Standards with a team of regional higher education science faculty to plan for regional implementation of the national science education standards that were adopted by Washington State in October. The workshop was held in Tukwila, WA, Dec. 10-12, 2013.

Help us name the COTS newsletter!

Entries will be judged by students, faculty and staff. The winning entry will be proudly displayed on the banner of the College of the Sciences newsletter, and win a HUGE gift bag of CWU goodies! Plus, we’ll feature you in a Spring 2014 edition of the COTS newsletter.

Please email your entry to Kari Anderson at kanderson@cwu.edu

ENTRIES DUE BY FEBRUARY 15

BECOME A PART OF THE COLLEGE OF THE SCIENCES LEGACY.
Tell us about you...where were you born and raised, and how did you arrive at CWU?

I was born and raised in a suburb outside of Minneapolis, MN. I have been interested in both science and education my entire life. Throughout graduate school, I continued to engage in both of these pursuits through scientific research, as well as scientific outreach to local schools. In my final year of graduate school, I saw the biology/science education job posting at CWU, and I applied because I thought it was the perfect fit for me. They offered me the job and I took it, and I’m very happy that I did.

How long have you worked in your role at CWU? What other positions have you held here, or at other institutions?

This is my 5th year at CWU. Before coming to CWU, I worked at a postdoctoral position at the University of Georgia. I also taught at the community college, Metropolitan State University for a semester in my last year of my Ph. D at University of Minnesota.

What do you most enjoy about teaching?

Working with a diversity of students. My position gives me the opportunity to work with science and education students, freshman through seniors, graduate students, and K-12 students of various ages.

What is the most challenging aspect of your research?

My primary research field is evolutionary ecology and genetics of plants. I think the most challenging and enjoyable part of research is the problem-solving. Good research tackles questions that have never been addressed before, thus there are always new challenges that need to be met in order to move forward.

What did you think you were going to do “when you grew up”?

Most years I thought I would be a teacher. I was interested in being a veterinarian for the first year of college, but I changed my mind after working at an animal hospital for a summer. After that, I wanted to go to graduate school and become a science professor.

When you’re not on campus, what are some favorite things that you do to relax and unwind?

A number of different athletic pursuits in the great outdoors, such as hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing and kayaking.

If you were to describe CWU in a sentence to a prospective student, what would you say?

CWU has the small class sizes, involved professors, and extracurricular and professional opportunities of a small private college, all for the great price of a public institution!

What is something that most folks at CWU don’t know about you?

I enjoy skijoring with my dog, Baxter.

What inspires you about CWU?

I love working with faculty who truly care about creating the best educational environment for students. Biology and Science Education are continually working to provide better programs and experiences for students.

Where do you want to be in 10 years?

Fulfilled in my personal and professional life.
UPCOMING EVENTS

CWU NATURAL SCIENCE SEMINARS
February 7 and 21, 4-5 p.m.
Science Building Auditorium – free of charge
cwu.edu/biology

FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION
February 1 and February 22
cwu.edu/science-education

DARWIN WEEK
February 10-14,
cwu.edu/biology

February 10th
12:00-12:50 pm | Science Building, Room 147
Dr. Jennifer DeChaine: Epigenetics: A New Dimension to Understanding Disease, Behavior, and All that Makes You, You.

February 11th
12:00-12:50 pm | Science Building, Room 101
Dr. David Darda: Oddball Anatomical Structures and the Stories They Tell: The Governor of the Testes.

February 12th
Keynote Speaker & Book Signing
7:00-8:00 pm | Science Building, Room 147
Dr. Lixing Sun: The Fairness Instinct: The Robin Hood Mentality and Our Biological Nature.

February 13th
12:00-12:50 pm | Science Building, Room 147
Dr. Dominic Klyve: Darwin vs. Mendel: The Historical Grudge Match for the Soul of Biology.
5:30-6:30 pm | Dean Hall, Museum Lobby
Dr. Joe Lorenz, Love in the Time of the Pleistocene.

COTS MISSION

The College of the Sciences prepares students for enlightened and productive lives through the intertwined endeavors of learning and research in the classroom, laboratory, and field. As practitioners of scientific inquiry, students and faculty create and apply knowledge to solving human, social and environmental problems. The college values instruction, research, and service as interdependent activities that enable human curiosity and discovery.

COTS COMMITMENTS

All departments within the CWU College of the Sciences are committed to teaching excellence; faculty and student research; scholarship and professional service; and community outreach, demonstrating the practical applications of our academic specialization.