Welcome to all WISE students, Faculty, Staff and alumnae! I hope everyone had a fun and restful summer break. We are very excited to announce that we have enrolled 46 freshmen into our program. I am pleased to report that 22 are College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS) majors, 21 are College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) majors and three are Marine Science Research Center (MSRC) majors. Many of our returning WISE students participated in exciting research opportunities over this past summer both here and abroad. Please read on to learn more about research and internship opportunities that are available at Stony Brook, Brookhaven and in the greater community.

Along with the Friends of WISE Advisory Board and Working Group, I am pleased that we have three graduate students working as graduate mentors. The three women have different areas of interest and will assist with various programs. Their names are: Lauren Macri, a Biomedical Engineering graduate student; Andrea Harrington, a graduate student in Geosciences and Nadege Waithe, a graduate student in the School of Social Welfare. We have hired 10 junior mentors (upper division undergraduate students) to work with our freshmen. Under the guidance of Dr. Sarah Sternglanz and our graduate assistants, the junior mentors will assist our freshman women to make a smooth academic and social adjustment to college.

We have moved our residential WISE student community to Gray College in Mendelsohn Quad. The finishing touches are being put on our computer center, office and study area. We are looking forward to having this added feature to our community.

WISE holds academic advising sessions three times per year. We invite faculty and staff from the key areas of science, math, and engineering to come and make themselves available to our students. With everyone in one place, it's a one stop shopping experience that allows for smooth planning and preparation of schedules. Topics regarding majors and courses are covered, and a tasty lunch is served too!

We come armed with course listings and copies of the undergraduate bulletin to assist students in scheduling their classes for the upcoming semester. Whenever the students have any questions, there are guaranteed to be lots of answers provided by the faculty and staff in attendance. The WISE mentors also come to guide their mentees.

One of the things I like best about WISE Academic Advising is the close contact with faculty. Students really benefit from their insight and knowledge. To gain information first hand from an expert is the ideal way to learn about classes and majors. Bringing everyone together adds to the close-knit community WISE students enjoy.

WISE students are first introduced to academic advising at orientation to plan their fall schedules. Fall's academic advising event is for the upcoming spring, and spring’s advising session is for the next year's fall classes.

Aside from the formal academic advising sessions, students can always come by the WISE office to have a chat about whatever academic issue they are dealing with.

If you need help enrolling in a course or modifying your schedule, please come by and see me! We are located in the Physics building, room P120. Our office is open until 5:00 PM on weekdays.
Profiles by Sharon Pavulaan

Marianne McNamara is seen here floating in a holding tank while a porpoise swims past.

Graduate Student and WISE Project Mentor Tara Duffy (center) is a Marine Scientist who devotes time to WISE.

If you are a WISE high school or college student you will likely cross paths with Tara Duffy and Marianne McNamara. For the past few years these two women from the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences have worked as an integral part of the WISE community.

Having completed their undergraduate studies elsewhere, both were attracted to Stony Brook because of the excellent reputation of its marine sciences program, as well as the myriad of opportunities on and off campus.

Tara spent one semester as an undergraduate at a marine lab in Scotland and later interned at the Alaskan Fisheries Science Center in Oregon. Her current research is looking at the interaction between a species of fish (Atlantic silverside) and its environment by looking at characteristics such as growth and reproduction. She tries to answer questions about environmental influences on growth and responses to environmental contamination.

Marianne recently completed her Master’s degree and will soon begin her doctoral research on food web dynamics of zooplankton in the eastern Pacific. Many students of marine science express an interest in working with marine mammals and Marianne actually gets to do this, not as part of her formal studies, but through her volunteer work at the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Preservation and Research. She has interned at the Blue Ocean Institute, where she ranked seafood on an “ocean-friendly” scale.

This fall, she will spend a month in the eastern tropical Pacific and later in the year, two-months aboard a research vessel in Antarctica!

Both women sail for a racing team out of Mt Sinai Harbor and enjoy things such as SCUBA diving, hiking, and nature photography. So when do they have time for WISE? When asked why they decided to help with WISE Marianne said that she enjoys sharing her knowledge and love for marine science with young people. Similarly, Tara replied that she’d participated in programs similar to WISE during her high school and undergraduate studies and they helped her decide what she did and didn’t want to do. Her broad interest and experience in various areas within science help her relate to younger students who are trying to carve their own paths.

WISE SLC by Deb Klein

The WISE Student Leadership Council (SLC) was started in Fall 2004 as a way for students to become more involved in the WISE program by planning events to help WISE women grow personally, professionally and academically. The SLC also assists the WISE director and staff with recruitment of students, high school WISE programs, and board meetings.

Since our start at the end of Spring 2007 the current SLC e-board has held three events. Our first was an informal social event last April where WISE students got together for fondue and karaoke. This was the perfect way to de-stress while getting ready for finals. We have had requests to hold this event again and plan to have a similar program this academic year.

Starting off the 07-08 year, we had a summer barbeque for the incoming freshmen. We held this event on the local scenic West Meadow Beach as a way for the incoming freshmen to get to know each other and us to become friends even before moving in this September.

At the SLC’s first general body meeting we had huge participation and lively discussion where we brainstormed with new ideas for fun and informative events. Soon after we had our first event of the semester, a scavenger hunt. Working in groups, WISE students went all over campus in search of obscure items, answered questions and shared tips for photographing. Everyone had a great time, and learned a lot about campus in the process!

Our next event will be our annual “Research 101” program where upper division WISE students, graduate students and faculty will get together with WISE students and share their own experiences and tips for getting involved in research.

The SLC has formed a sub-committee to begin planning and fundraising for the second annual WISE Banquet.

We will be holding bi-weekly general body meetings throughout the semester. We encourage all WISE students to come and give their input. Check your emails regularly for messages from us. Also be sure to monitor our Blackboard site for information about programs, scholarship and research opportunities, tutoring help and more. Our discussion board is also a great forum to post ideas and suggestions if you cannot make it to our meetings.

Good luck this year, and we hope to see you often!
Spotlight On...

Sheena Joseph

Sheena Joseph is a junior (Class of 2008) from West Nyack, NY. Her major is Chemical & Molecular Engineering (CME). Sheena’s personal interests are art, music, and dance, particularly an Indian classical dance known as Bharatanatyam. Her awards and accomplishments include being a Dean’s List scholar and member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Golden Key and Sigma Beta Honor Societies. She has served as an executive board member of the Chemical Engineering Society, and as senator in the Stony Brook Undergraduate Student Government. Sheena plans to pursue a business management minor to use towards a consulting career with the EPA/DOE with a focus on alternative renewable energy.

For her work at Brookhaven National Lab, the URECA Program (Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity) has named Sheena Joseph as September 2007 Researcher of the Month.

The following is excerpted from the story published on URECA’s website:

Sheena met her research supervisor, Dr. Devinder Mahajan at a WISE banquet in 2005 and agreed to work on his research project being undertaken at Brookhaven National Lab. Sheena returned to Dr. Mahajan’s group each subsequent summer. This past summer, Sheena’s work at BNL was funded through a Battelle Summer Research Program award. Her project is entitled “Green Processors Synthesis of Higher Oxygenates Using Transition Metal Catalysts in Aqueous Phase.”

Sheena recognizes that being part of WISE bolstered her confidence to make contact with professors. She learned that professors are more approachable than they first appear. Sheena also realizes that not everyone is going to get a lucky opportunity where a professor invites you to do research. She says that if you are a student interested in getting into a research lab, it is always good to take the initiative to find out about the research conducted by professors here at Stony Brook. Her advice is to visit their websites and send email to faculty whose projects sound interesting. Says Sheena, “Explore your opportunities.”

For the complete story on Sheena and more information about undergraduate research, visit the URECA website at www.stonybrook.edu/ureca.

Director’s Message (continued from page 1)

space for our students to meet to study and enjoy being together!

I encourage all WISE students to get involved with the Student Leadership Council (SLC). This is an excellent way to impact the program and meet our wonderful community of WISE students. The group will be meeting to plan and sponsor events. Read on for more information from Deb Klein, the President of the SLC.

Please check your e-mails regularly as this is how we communicate to you. The WISE office hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Our doors are open and we encourage you to come in to see us! If you have time to volunteer in the office you are certainly encouraged and welcome!
What We Did in the Summer of 2007

Miran Brigham: I took two physics classes here at Stony Brook and worked at a restaurant.

Tejas Gawade: I extended my research project under Dr. Sanford Simon of the Biochemistry and Pathology Department. With help from my other mentors, Elizabeth Roemer and Katarzyna Sawicka, I presented the project titled, “Pertussis Toxin Composite Nanofibers as a Non-Invasive Whooping Cough Vaccine,” at the Society of In-Vitro Biologics Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Priya Madhavan: I first did research in Dr. Molly Frame’s lab. Then I went to India and volunteered at a clinic for the poor. I also visited a school called HOPE that is set up for handicapped children of all ages.

Brandi Peters: I interned at the New York Aquarium in Brooklyn. I worked under the supervision of various keepers in different departments. My responsibilities included maintaining the water quality of the tanks, preparing food for the animals and feeding them. Some of the different animals that I cared for are many species of fish and sea jellies, tortoises, turtles, crabs, eels, rays, and sharks.

Ruksana Rangwala: I took EMT classes at LaGuardia Community College. I had the opportunity to go on a rotation at Long Island College Hospital as well, to get a hands-on experience on the ambulance before I completed my course.

Pyanka Relan: For the beginning of the summer for one month I went to study abroad in Tanzania. Since I came back I have been applying to medical school and studying for the MCAT.

Veronica Scorcia: I interned at the Sesame Street Workshop in the corporate sponsorship department.

Johanna Sisalima: I worked in Manhattan for a construction management firm called the Turner Construction Company. They’re a general contractor so I was exposed to the business end of technology while sharpening my skill sets.

Karin Wang: I went to Taiwan for a Language-Study Program via OCAC at Tamkang University. We had classes in language (written/oral), dialect (Taiwanese/Hakka), culture (calligraphy, Chinese knotting, flower pressing, Chinese puppets, kung fu, and shiatsu) and field trips to temples, tea houses, and mountains.

Lisa Jue Wang: I worked as an intern in the SULI (Summer Undergraduate Laboratory Internship) program at Brookhaven National Laboratory in the Biology department. I submitted a paper entitled “Purification of Chromatin-binding Protein YieF for Cancer Prodrugs.” It was a very rewarding experience and I learned a lot about research, as well as more about the area of genetics and molecular biology.

Christina Zayas: I did research at Brookhaven National Lab’s National Synchrotron Light Source. My research was comprised of further determining the structure of proteins via x-ray absorption spectroscopy.

High School WISE

High School WISE involves about 30 new 10th grade students each year from local schools to engage young women who show academic promise in math, science and engineering. By participating in projects conducted on campus, the students gain hands-on experience and are gradually introduced to the research experience.

For our second joint meeting with ASM: The Materials Information Society and the College of Engineering, on November 14, Stony Brook senior design students will present poster displays and give presentations to the WISE high school sophomores, Stony Brook faculty and industry members. Through this joint venture, we hope students gain insight into the engineering field through their interactions with the college students and professional engineers. Last year’s event was a success, and we’re hoping this year’s meeting to be just as rewarding for all involved. For more information please see http://www.matscien.g.sunysb.edu/asm.